

A step closer to EU standards: strengthening consumer protection in Albania

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The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) and the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL) provide expertise in consumer health protection in Albania: On behalf of the European Commission and in cooperation with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), talks and discussions take place in Tirana from the 7th to 11th October, 2019, in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The event is supported by the European Commission's "Technical Assistance and Information Exchange" (TAIEX) instrument. Through their support, the BfR and the BVL contribute to aligning the risk assessment, risk communication and risk management of Albania, a candidate for EU accession, with EU standards. Therefore, food safety and consumer health protection in Albania should be strengthened sustainably.

In September 2019, the German Bundestag approved the opening of European Union membership talks with Albania. Next, the EU Council must decide on the opening of negotiations.

The aim of the TAIEX Expert Mission is to adapt the risk assessment, risk communication and risk management structures in Albania to EU standards. In cooperation with the National Food Authority of Albania, food safety procedures should be further developed and managers of official food controls should be supported with scientific know-how.

The BfR and the BVL support the five-day event by providing demonstrable expertise in risk assessment, communication and management. Experts from EFSA's Focal Point, based at the BfR as the central contact point of EFSA in Germany, and the BVL provide an overview of the EU food safety system through a series of lectures. Particular emphasis is placed on international standards for safe food. The section about scientific risk assessment looks at EFSA's cooperation with national food safety agencies in the EU member states.

The event showcases findings of the BfR in crisis prevention, risk communication and stakeholder management. The results of the biannual BfR Consumer Monitor help to understand and provide a basis for discussion of developments in consumer risk perception. Using practical decision analysis, the participants discuss what a risk profile for assessment processes in Albania could look like.

The BVL contributes information and experience on risk management in Germany and at EU level. A description of food control processes in Germany is provided. Within this context, it is outlined how risk assessment, risk communication and risk management function reciprocally. In addition to risk management, crisis management processes are presented for selected examples, such as the 2017 discovery of the insecticide fipronil in eggs in several European countries.

Further information on this subject on the BfR website

https://www.bfr.bund.de/de/efsa_focal_point_bfr_koordiniert_die_gesundheitliche_risikobewertung_auf_nationaler_ebene-24930.html

About the BfR

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) in Germany. It advises the federal government and federal states on issues relating to food, chemical and product safety. The BfR conducts its own research on topics that are closely linked to its assessment tasks.