

Delivering on EU Food Safety and Nutrition in 2050 – Future challenges and policy preparedness

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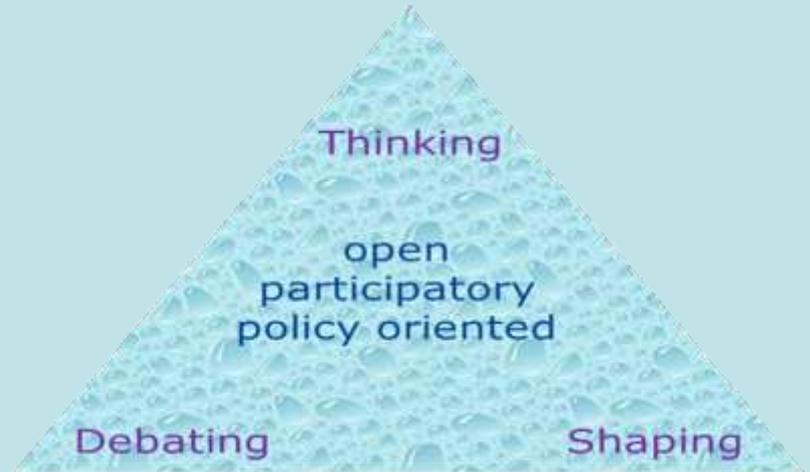


Objectives

- To identify possible future challenges to the EU food safety and nutrition policy and regulatory framework
- To assess whether the current food policy and regulatory framework is sufficiently resilient to deal with the challenges and, if appropriate, identify research needs and develop policy recommendations

Foresight approach

- Does not predict the future; considers it as something that can be shaped
- Assumes that there are numerous possible futures, alternative developments
- Gathers anticipatory intelligence from a wide range of knowledge sources in a systematic way
- Enhances future thinking beyond established pathways and links it to today's decision making



Driver	“Global Food”	“Regional Food”	“Partnership Food”	“Pharma Food”
Global trade	Full liberalisation	Disrupted and fragmented	EU trade focus on the US & Canada	Full liberalisation
EU economic growth	Medium	Decoupled, GDP no longer used as indicator	Stagnation	High
Agro-food chain structure	Concentration	Diversification, alternative food chains	Concentration	Concentration
Technology uptake	High	High with focus on environmental sustainability	High	High with focus on nutrition & health
Social cohesion	Low	High	Limited to local community	High
Food values	Low	High with focus on local production & quality	Low	High with focus on nutrition & health
Climate change	2°C threshold of temperature increase will be reached by 2050			
Depletion of natural resources	Progressive natural resource depletion towards 2050			
World population growth	World population will increase to about 9 billion by 2050			

Scenario: Global Food

2015

2050

Little climate change mitigation

2030

Climate change impacts rural areas, agri-food chain

Increased urbanisation

"Emerging" economies- EU one of many players

Trade as an answer to resource scarcity

Major WTO deal – full liberalisation



modern food technology

Challenges Global Food	Policy options
Differences in the handling of food in 3rd countries & Ability to perform official food-related controls	... (see report)
Increased sedentary behaviour & Diets based on highly processed foods and decreased availability of fresh produce	<p>Fiscal measures -> food taxation or other (des)incentives</p> <p>Reformulation towards healthier food options</p> <p>Zoning & incentives for fresh food markets</p> <p>Standards for healthier options in public food procurement</p> <p>National and European actions on balanced diets and access to fresh produce (inc. education and provision of information)</p>
Abundance of voluntary food information, increased opportunity for misleading information	Harmonisation of labelling at international level beyond language barriers

Scenario Regional Food

2015

Little climate change mitigation

2030

Climate change impacts rural areas, agri-food chain

EU society reacts – environmental sustainability

Profound resource scarcity

2050

EU abandons international trade agreements

Uphill struggle for the EU

Trade disruptions – food safety scares



Challenges Regional Food	Policy Options
<p>Greater reliance for food safety on individuals engaging in food production</p>	<p>Scope of the General Food Law, hygiene regulations and related controls to include "<i>individuals engaging in food production</i>"</p> <p>Registration and vaccination of all livestock</p> <p>Food safety education</p> <p>List of "high-risk" products</p>
<p>Temporary shortages of fresh produce and food poverty in a self-sufficient food system</p>	<p>Emergency mechanisms for food re-distribution</p> <p>Production quotas to ensure balanced diets during temporary shortages</p> <p>Education -> adequate nutrition during temporary disruption of fresh produce</p>
<p>Failure to provide appropriate food safety information to the consumer</p>	<p>Social networks and ICT use by "<i>individuals engaging in food production</i>" to provide food information to their peers</p>
<p>Re-introduction of food waste and organic side-stream products in the food chain</p>	<p>Scope of the General Food Law as above</p> <p>Communal food waste handling or recycling centres</p> <p>Education -> re-use of food waste</p>

Scenario Pharma Food

2015

2030

2050

NCDs prevalence – public health expenditure

Slow EU economy recovery

R&D prevention NCDs

EU citizen health-aware

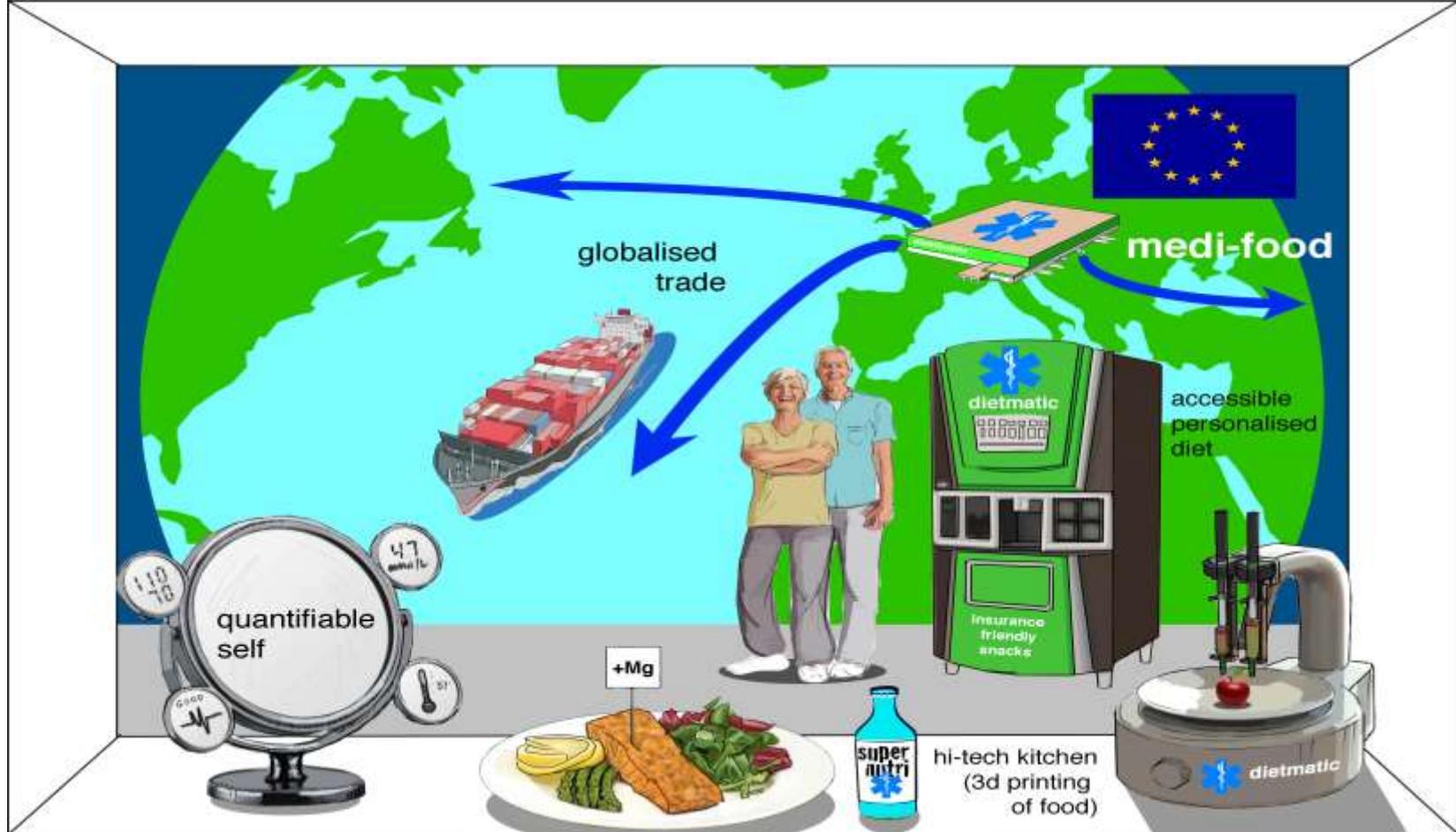
Science breakthroughs - food & health

Evidence-based, targeted diets

Food – pharma merge

Personalised nutrition mainstream

Buy-in for all



Challenges Pharma food	Policy Options
Potential drawbacks of personalised nutrition and “phoods”	Adapt or create an effective regulatory framework Redefine health and nutrition claims
Ability to perform official food-related controls (e.g. prosumer)	Regulate “phood” manufacture by introducing a “Phood licence” Enhance post-market monitoring and “nutrivicilance” controls Expand third country controls
Suitability of current EU risk assessment for new food ingredients, food products and food-related technologies (inc. suitability of exposure data and maximum residue levels)	Deal with cumulative effects and long term exposure

Key insights

The legislative framework governing food safety in the EU is robust and appropriate

Harmonisation of risk assessment approaches and inclusion of other legitimate factors such as health benefits and socio-economic consequences

Adaptation of official control and inspection services to future needs

Action needed for improving the effectiveness of EU nutrition policies

Investment in providing food safety and nutrition education to the public

Win-wins and trade offs

Compromising food safety for achieving sufficiency?

Stretching the limits to ensure food safety - compromising local food sufficiency?

Can consumer scepticism compromise innovation and food sufficiency?

And could innovation for nutrition and health compromise food safety?

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Viewpoint

Viewpoint: Future of food safety and nutrition - Seeking win-wins, coping with trade-offs

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ABSTRACT

The possible implications of global trends such as climate change and resource scarcity on food security are high on the political agenda. While the food sufficiency aspect of food security takes centre-stage, the future of food safety and nutritional quality of diets often seems to be taken for granted. This paper builds on the results of a foresight study on EU food safety and nutrition towards 2050 to discuss potential future points of tension for food policy. Increasing food production while using fewer resources and reducing food waste while ensuring food safety are just two examples. Innovation at different levels in the food system will be needed to address future challenges. For stakeholders' uptake and the launch of new food-related products can put pressure on the ability to deliver timely risk assessments, the scope of which might also need to cover other legitimate factors. Future food policies need to be more sensitive to aspects on food safety and nutrition and health aspects. A holistic food systems approach must be taken to identify and discuss in advance possible tensions and trade-offs and to address them upfront in a systematic and transparent manner.



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