

FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe

32nd Session, 16 – 20/05/2022

Agenda Item 7:

Implementation of the Codex strategic plan 2020-2025

Member States Competence

Member States Vote

The Member States of the European Union (MSEU) thank Kazakhstan for the document on the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic - which has severely affected the functioning of Codex Committees - the MSEU are pleased that two of the five strategic objectives have been substantially advanced in 2020 and 2021. The creation of a register of contact points in the European region on food fraud, the completion of a survey on data collection and submission by Codex members in the European region, and the holding of a virtual workshop on supporting effective participation in Codex activities organised by Kazakhstan are evidence of the involvement of the Regional Coordinator and of all CCEURO members in advancing the Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

The MSEU support the proposal that the 2022-2023 regional plan should give priority to the implementation of strategic objectives 3 and 4, which could not be pursued in the previous regional plan. At the same time, the MSEU reiterate that the efforts initiated with regard to objectives 1 and 2 should be continued. In general, the MSEU underline the importance of providing CCEURO with an ambitious programme, particularly as regards work of interest to the region, but insist that the programme should be realistic and feasible. In this context, the MSEU consider that the revised proposal from Germany in CX/EURO 22/32/CRD02 constitutes an appropriate basis for establishing the CCEURO's roadmap for 2022-2023, bearing in mind the feasibility of this programme, in a context where usual Codex activities have not yet fully resumed.

Furthermore, the MSEU wish to highlight the following elements:

- the promotion of the use of Codex standards encouraged by Objective 3 will help to achieve better consumer health protection and promote fair practices in international food trade. The use of Codex standards should be an integral part of the ongoing efforts towards sustainability of food systems. At the Agriculture and Fisheries Council held on 21 February 2022, the EU Agriculture Ministers recalled the essential work of Codex to ensure that food products meet the highest possible health safety standards. With respect to the standards adopted at the last CAC, the MSEU recognise in particular the importance to strengthen efforts on antimicrobial resistance (AMR).
- it is essential to deepen efforts on Objective 4, which aims to facilitate the participation of all Codex members throughout the standard setting process. For the CCEURO, which with its 52 members represents the FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee with the largest number of members, it is essential to ensure the proper participation of all parties in order to reflect this

diversity and thus enrich the discussions within Codex. On the other hand, the Covid 19 pandemic has reminded us of the importance of maintaining links with our partners and has underlined the need to adapt our ways of communicating and working to achieve Objective 4. The MSEU are particularly grateful to Kazakhstan for having actively worked to exchange information and communicate with the countries of the European region on the work of Codex throughout its mandate. The efforts made in this regard have not only helped members to establish and strengthen permanent national structures for Codex follow-up, but also to disseminate continuous information on the work in progress, thus facilitating the setting of priorities for each member. These remarkable advances, given the challenges posed by the Covid 19 pandemic, will need to be deepened to consolidate skills in knowledge, monitoring, and participation in Codex work.