

19/09/2019

FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe

30/09/2019 - 04/10/2019 - Almaty, Kazakhstan

European Union comments on

Agenda Item 4:

**USE OF CODEX STANDARDS IN THE REGION
(CX/EURO 19/31/6)**

*Mixed competence
Member States Vote*

The European Union and its Member States (EUMS) thank the Secretariat for the paper on “Use of Codex Standards in the Region” and for the information gathered from the survey on the use of Codex standards. The information gathered is useful in feeding into the discussion on this topic and to answer the questions provided by the Secretariat.

One of the main difficulties identified by members of the CCEURO with the use of Codex standards seems to be the “*lack of awareness of Codex provisions by national stakeholders*”. It would be important to further explore the reasons why this issue continues to occur as one of the main reasons hindering the use of Codex standards, despite capacity building efforts over the years to develop Codex structures in CCEURO member countries.

Monitoring the use of international standards is a difficult endeavour given differing approaches to food safety worldwide. That being said we do understand that there are useful reflections that can be made as a result of the information gathered and in that sense, the results should be stored for future reference. The biennial regional surveys are also important as they serve as an indicator for Objective 3.2 (Support initiatives to enable the understanding and implementation/application of Codex standards) of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025.

The surveys up to now have concentrated on Codex food safety standards. In future surveys, it would be interesting to have a look at how Codex commodity standards are used by Codex members. Concerning the frequency of surveys, the EUMS prefer to maintain the current frequency, i.e. every two years prior to regional coordinating committee sessions.

Lastly, the EUMS note that the monitoring of the use of international standards is becoming more and more relevant in Codex and that CCGP thoroughly discussed the matter at its 31st session in Bordeaux in March 2019. In that context, CCGP agreed that France would prepare a discussion paper, which will give an overview of available data and potential data sources, identify possible gaps and set out suggestions for taking this work forward. Against this background, it is important to note that the monitoring of Codex standards needs to be addressed not only at the regional but also at the global level.