



Executive summary

Establishment of validated SOP for gathering information from stakeholders

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* a deliverable is a formal output produced by a (EU) project

Content Summary

A number of deliverables associated with MoniQA require analysis of information from stakeholders (e.g. food businesses), often referred to as a survey. However, the word survey can be defined in a number of ways and for the purpose of this exercise it is a *qualified view*.

Within the European Union, and most countries represented by consortium members; irrespective of which criterion is used, the food industry is heterogeneous. It is unlikely that MoniQA has the necessary resources to obtain a truly representative view of the food industry. It can, however, undertake “surveys” that recognise this fact and thereby obtain a *qualified view*.

The very act of conducting a “survey” as well as any subsequent analysis of information generated inevitably exposes the MoniQA brand. Properly conducted, “surveys” accompanied by intellectually rigorous assessment of the data will enhance brand awareness by stakeholders. The converse is equally true, poorly conducted and/or assessed “surveys” will diminish it.

Contact with stakeholders is heavily reliant on consortium members’ contacts. These are a commercial asset; thus a MoniQA “survey” not only impacts on its own brand but also on the brand of individual consortium members.

Given that for MoniQA purposes a “survey” represents a *qualified view*, data to inform that view can be obtained through a variety of mechanisms including use of questionnaires, workshops and expert panels. Irrespective of the method of gathering information, data obtained from it must be collected and stored in a manner that ensures its integrity. Equally, any analysis undertaken at the time or retrospectively must be of a high intellectual standard.

Given their complexity, “surveys” need to be undertaken in a co-ordinated manner. This requires the generation of infrastructures within MoniQA, particularly in terms of assuring content format, analysis and reporting. The need for information from a broad respondent base (WP 5.2) means a questionnaire format is the favoured approach.



The rationale underpinning the generation of questionnaires compatible with maintaining the brand profile of both MoniQA and its consortium members has been generated. This rationale takes into account both operational issues and other important factors (relevant to both consortium members and stakeholders) such as commercial, cultural, ethical and legal issues at both national and supra-national levels.

A standard operating procedure based on the experience of applying these principles to a questionnaire developed by NTUA (GR) has been developed. Thus, in a parallel exercise questionnaires meeting our requirements have also been developed.

If considered suitable by the relevant project managers, the questionnaire could be made available for dissemination to stakeholders by selected consortium members and thereby continue the validation process necessary in developing a robust standard operating procedure.

One of the consequences of this process is a radical change in the environment within which MoniQA “surveys” involving significant numbers of stakeholders and consortium members are performed. These changes will affect the time necessary to both undertake distribution and collection of questionnaires as well as their subsequent analysis. The extent of these changes could not have been foreseen during preparation of the Year 2 Joint Programme of Activities (JPA). Consequently, although this report has been submitted for discussion in a timely manner; **it is recommended that dates for the completion are reconsidered to better reflect the time taken to develop approach and the data processing and analysis requirements set out in the draft standard operating procedure.**

About MoniQA – www.moniqa.org

MoniQA ("Monitoring and Quality Assurance in the Food Supply Chain") is a Network of Excellence (NoE) funded by the European Commission under the 6th Framework Programme. The Network aims to make food safer by harmonising methods for food analyses. The project is coordinated by the Vienna-based International Association for Cereal Science and Technology (ICC). More than 155 researchers and scientist from 33 international partners from 20 countries are involved in MoniQA.

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MoniQA offers associated partnerships for interested organisations, SMEs and institutions. For more information see <http://www.moniqa.org/associates> or contact:
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