Recommendations for successful substantiation of new health claims in the European Union

Increasingly, attention is brought to the diet of populations around the world. Indeed, the shift towards the over-consumption of foods high in fat, sugar and salt has led to rising rates of obesity and non-communicable diseases. Since 2006, Health Claims have been harmonised across the European Union. Today, “all claims need to be scientifically assessed by the European Food Safety Authority and pre-approved.” As an EU-funded project, REDICLAIM aimed “to understand the impact of legislation in the “Reduction of Disease risk” CLAIMs on food and drinks.” The overall aims of the project were to achieve effective compliance with better regulation and to contribute to the enhancement of innovative and competitive products.

The project used existing guidance documents, analysis of scientific opinions on new health claims applications and interviews with experts involved to identify key points in the process of authorising new health claims. Ultimately, the project resulted in the formulation of a number of recommendations. These emerged from thorough consultation processes with experts from the food industry, research consultancy providers specialised in the health claims, academics, the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority. Overall, “the key recommendations outlined were identified to support applicants in preparing successful submissions in all phases for new function claims and reduction of disease risk health claims in the European Union.”