



**The fragility of trust in regulatory science:
challenges, opportunities and prospects**

Online | 28/10/20

Understanding trust

Things that mean the world for our communication and engagement

Stories from social research

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Trusted science for safe food

A black and white photograph of five wooden blocks arranged in a row on a wooden surface. Each block has a single letter carved into it, spelling out the word 'TRUST' from left to right. The blocks are light-colored with a visible wood grain, and the letters are dark and bold. The background is a dark, textured wooden surface.

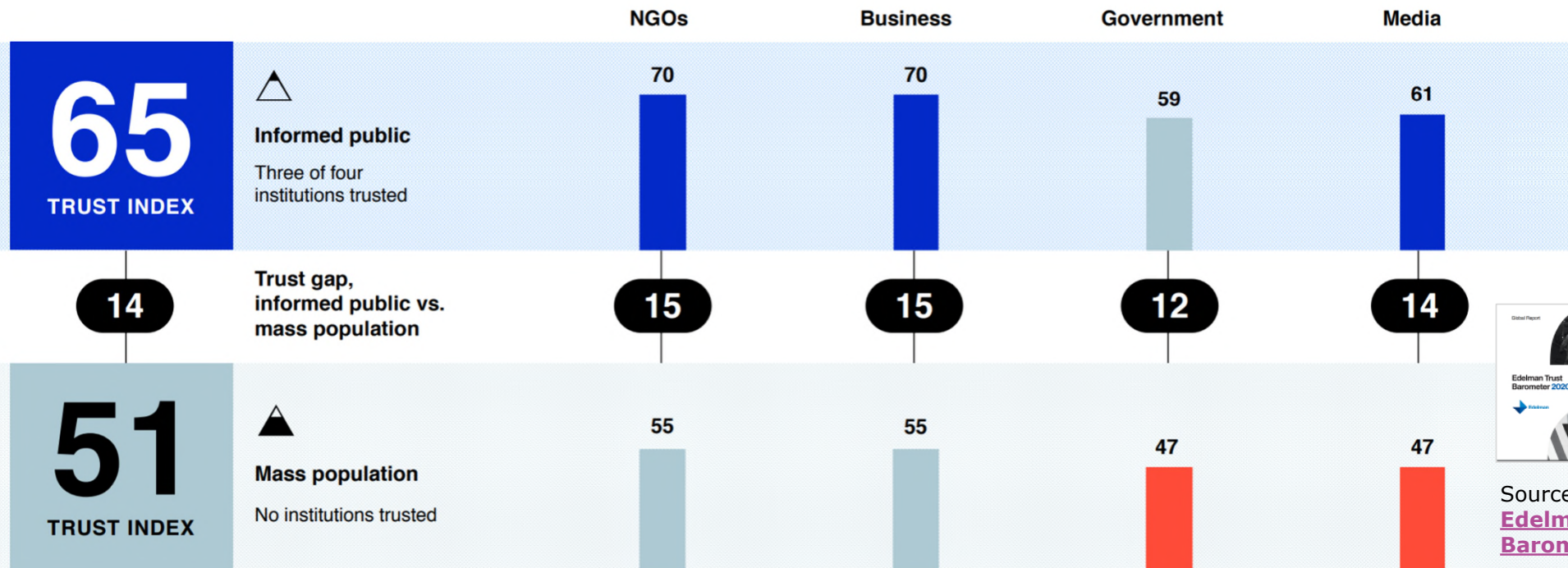
TRUST

A tricky concept

Evolving global trends

TWO DIFFERENT TRUST REALITIES

Percent trust



Source:
[Edelman Trust Barometer \(2020\)](#)

2020 Edelman Trust Barometer. TRU_INS. Below is a list of institutions. For each one, please indicate how much you trust that institution to do what is right. 9-point scale; top 4 box, trust. Informed public and mass population, 28-mkt avg.

What can institutions aspire to?

Trust

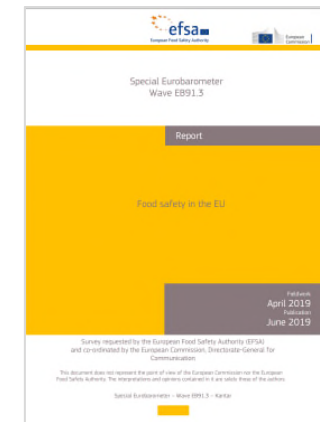
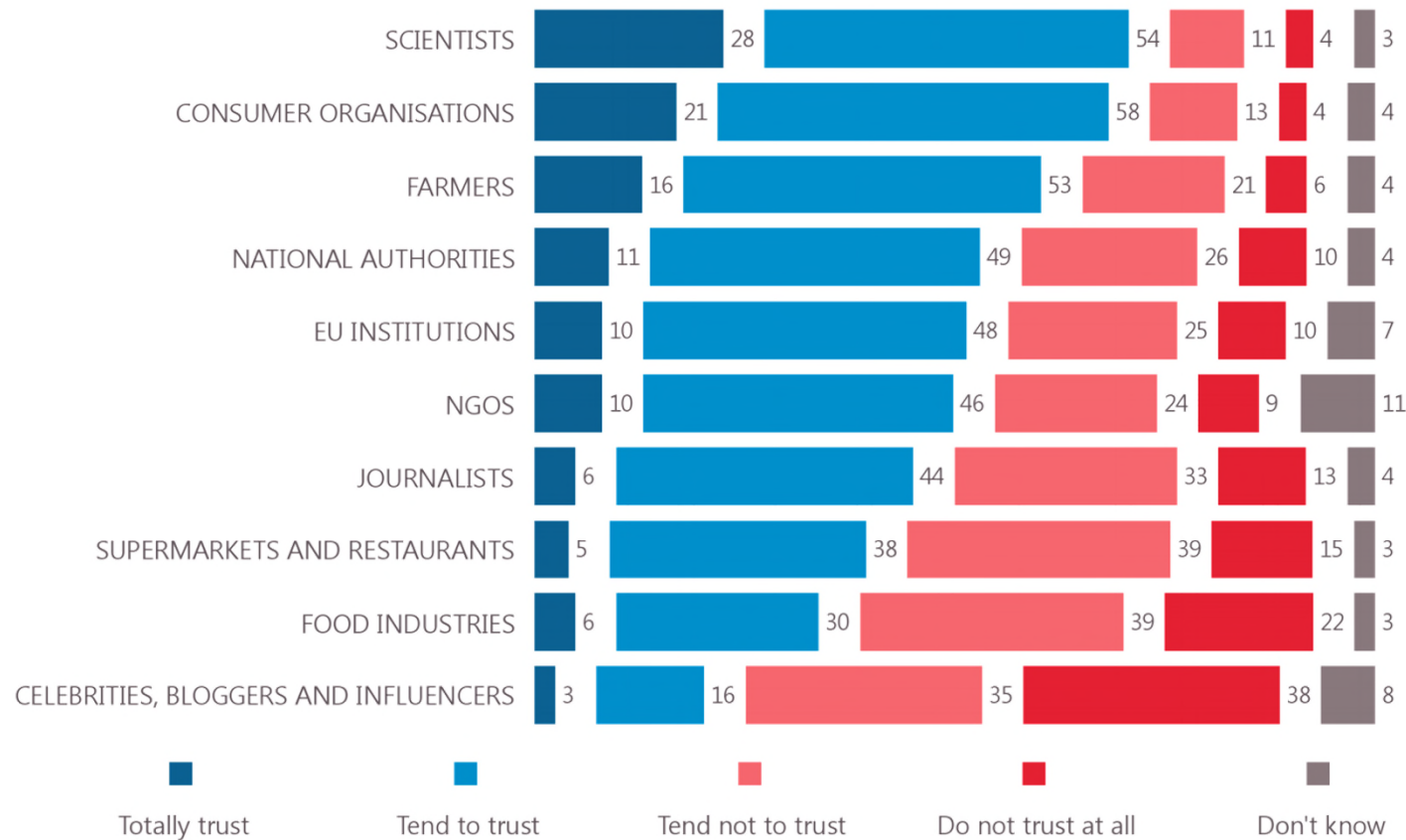
Trustworthy



Trying to understand trust and food safety in the EU

A very simple view

QD7 Please tell me to what extent you trust the following sources or not for information on food risks.
(% - EU)

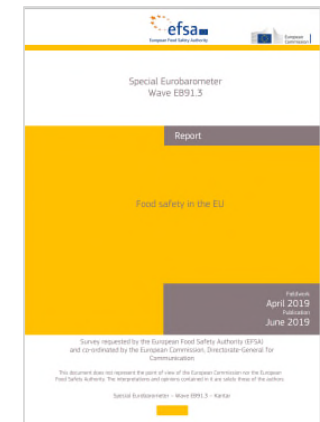
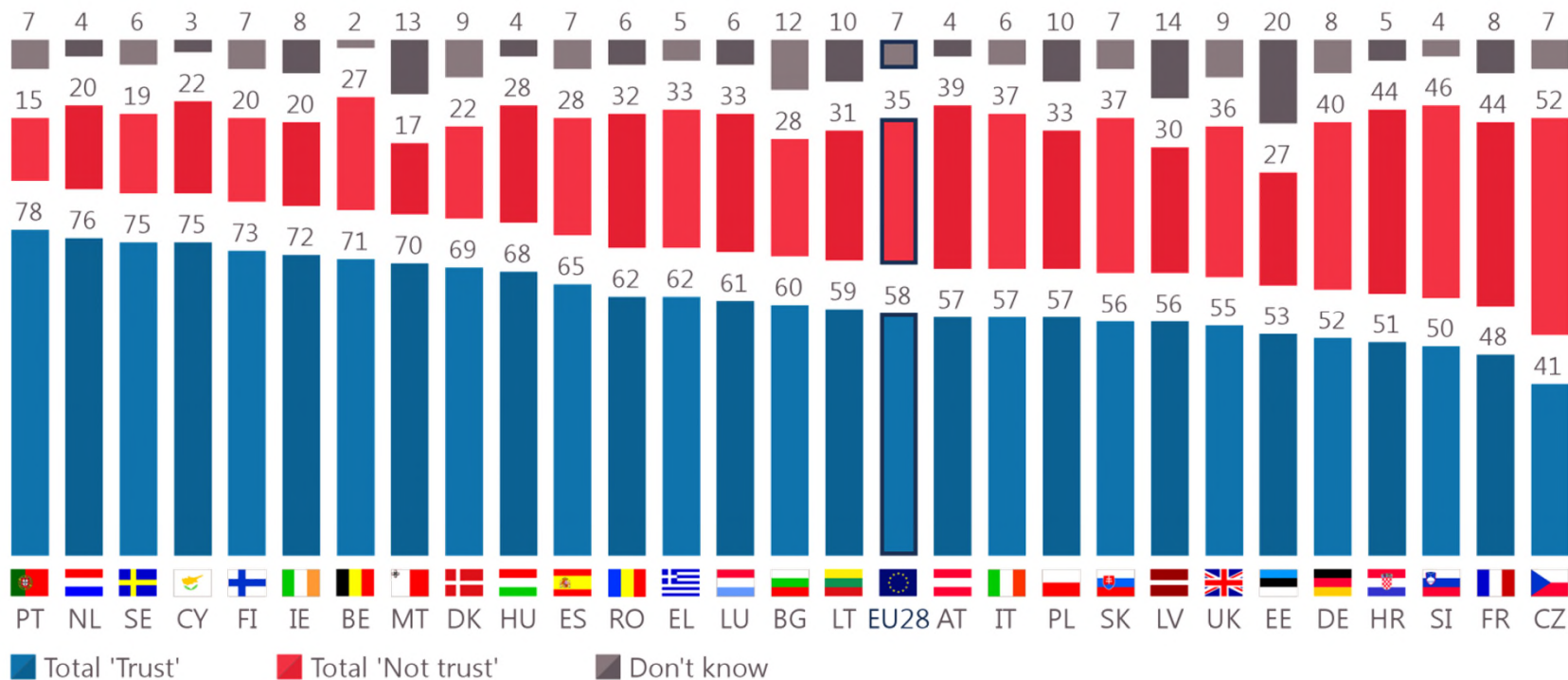


Source:
[EB Food Safety in the EU \(2019\)](#)

There are big differences across the EU

QD7.5 Please tell me to what extent you trust the following sources or not for information on food risks.

EU institutions (%)

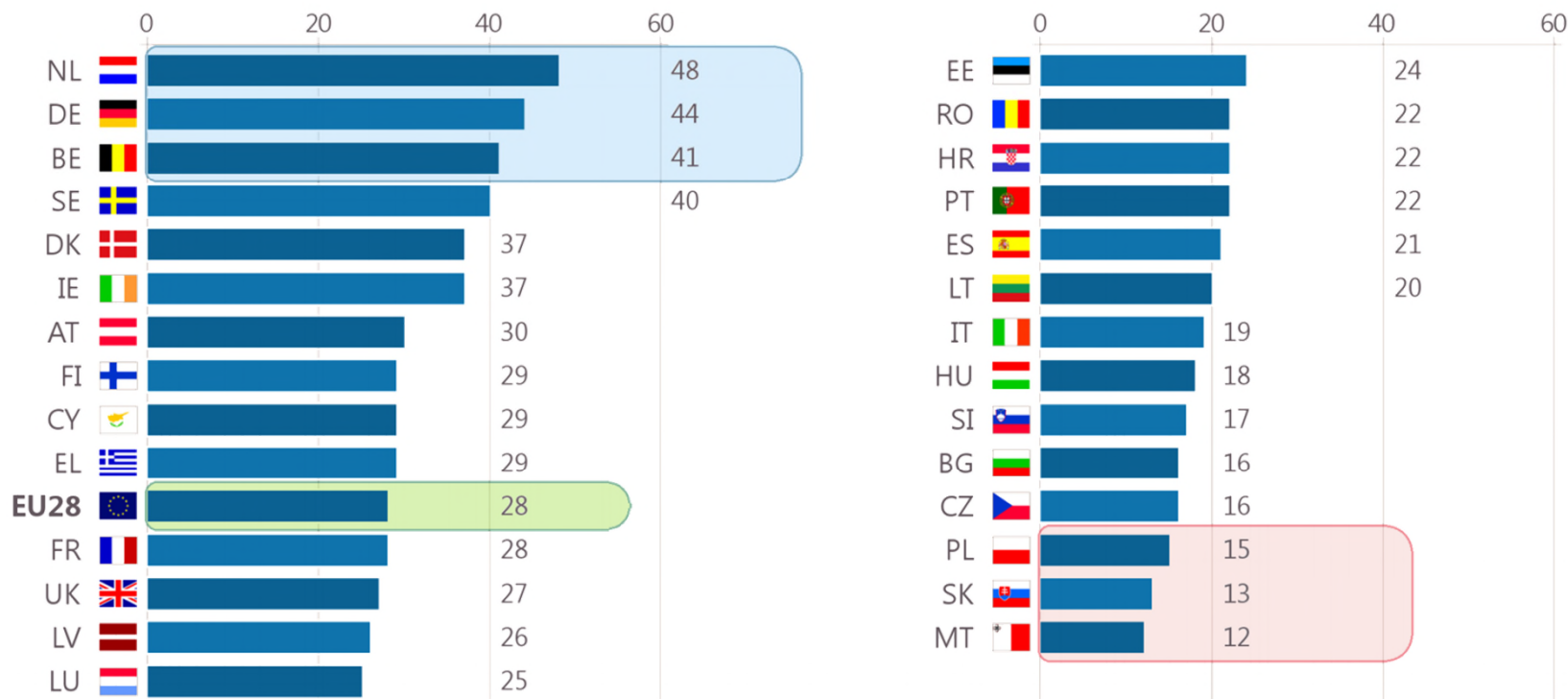


Source: [EB Food Safety in the EU \(2019\)](#)

The scientist - EU institution link not that obvious

QD8 Please tell me which of the following statements you agree with: (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

(% - TO DECIDE HOW RISKY SOMETHING COULD BE FOR YOU TO EAT, THE EU RELIES ON SCIENTISTS TO GIVE EXPERT ADVICE)



Source:
[EB Food Safety in the EU \(2019\)](#)

People are simply **different**

Member State	2018	2019	2020
Austria	0.000	0.000	0.000
Belgium	0.000	0.000	0.000
Bulgaria	0.000	0.000	0.000
Croatia	0.000	0.000	0.000
Cyprus	0.000	0.000	0.000
Denmark	0.000	0.000	0.000
France	0.000	0.000	0.000
Germany	0.000	0.000	0.000
Greece	0.000	0.000	0.000
Italy	0.000	0.000	0.000
Latvia	0.000	0.000	0.000
Lithuania	0.000	0.000	0.000
Malta	0.000	0.000	0.000
Netherlands	0.000	0.000	0.000
Poland	0.000	0.000	0.000
Portugal	0.000	0.000	0.000
Romania	0.000	0.000	0.000
Slovakia	0.000	0.000	0.000
Slovenia	0.000	0.000	0.000
Spain	0.000	0.000	0.000
Sweden	0.000	0.000	0.000
United Kingdom	0.000	0.000	0.000

Source:
Statistical data
analysis of **EB Food
Safety in the EU
(2019)**

**"Generic" trust
Trusts everyone**

**Concerned
Trusts market
and themselves**

**Relaxed
Trusts systems
in place and
authorities**

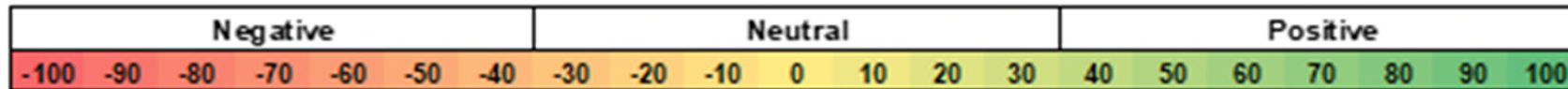
**Concerned
Mistrusts
markets and
authorities**

A network diagram consisting of approximately 15 circular nodes, each containing a white silhouette of a person. The nodes are interconnected by thin white lines, forming a complex web. The background is a grayscale image of a person in a business suit pointing at a screen, with the network diagram overlaid on top. The text "What do those 'closer' to our work say?" is centered in white.

What do those "closer" to our work say?

Findings from our reputation research

Reputation (of public institutions/systems) is "determined by cumulative experiences and historic accounts of **trustee-trustor relationships**" (Rousseau et al., 1998)

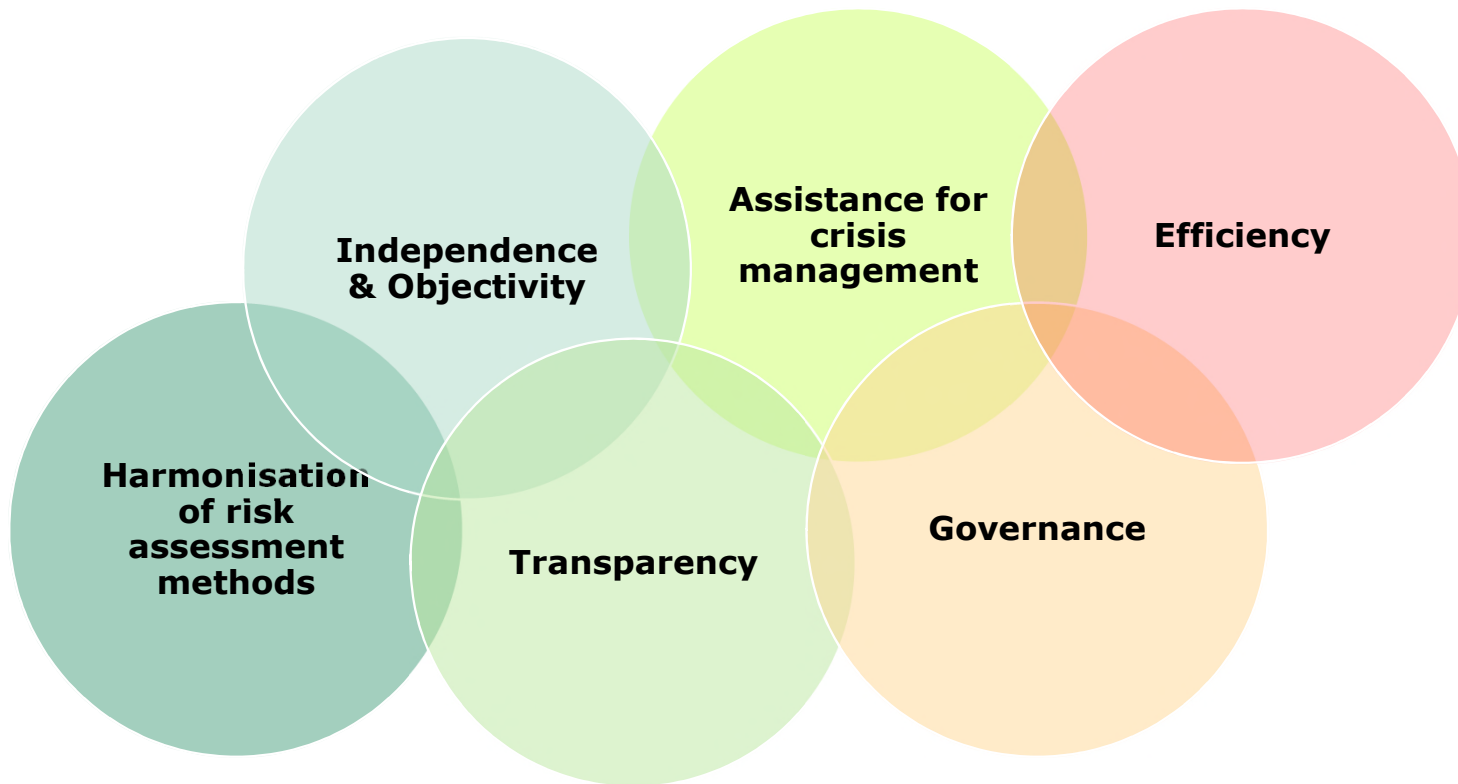


Member State authorities	European Commission	Business, farmers and primary producers	Consumers and thematic organisations	Scientific community



Source:
EFSA Reputation Barometer 2.0
 (publication Q4 2020)

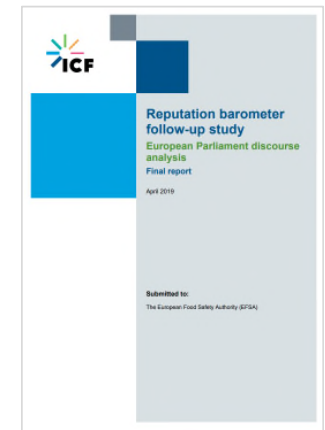
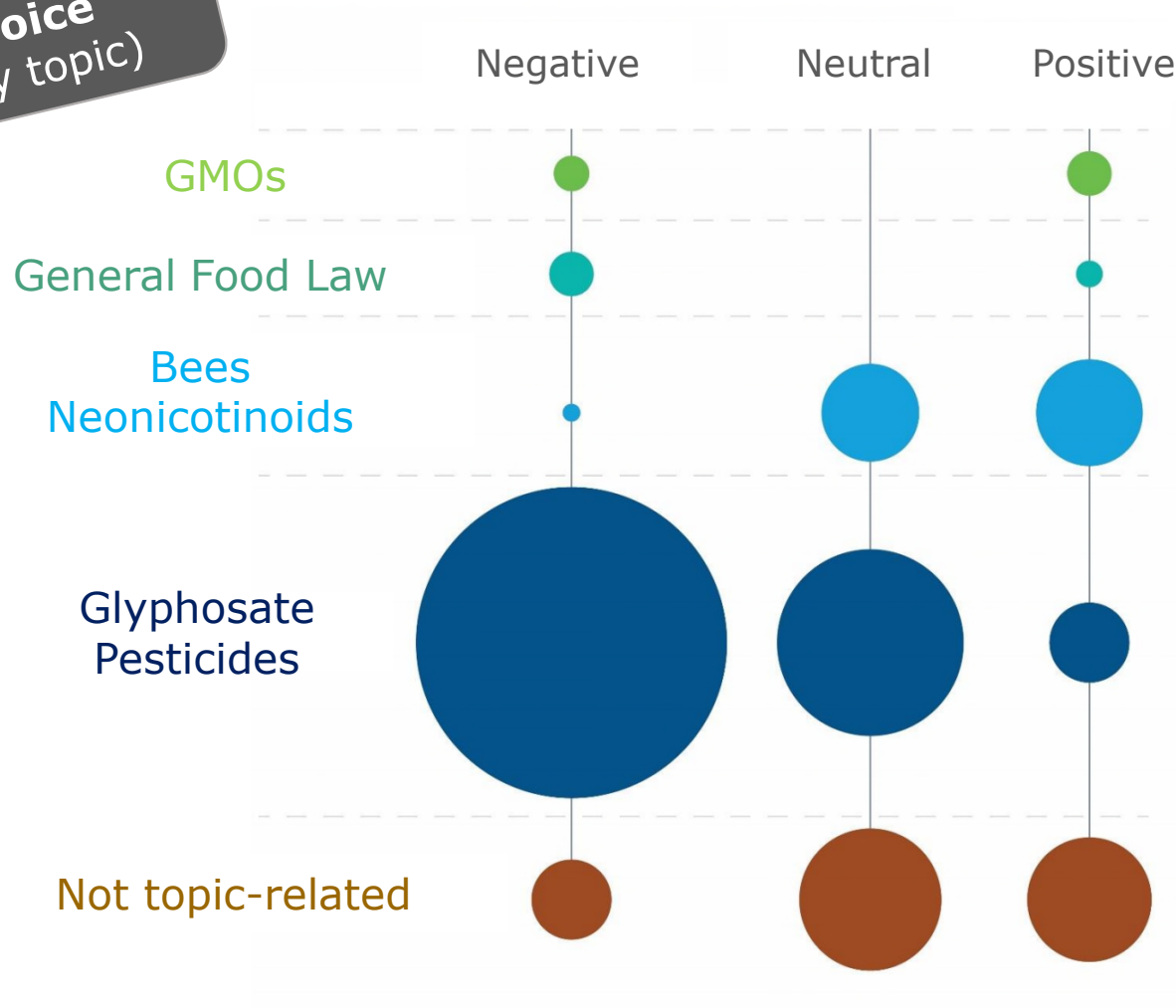
Some determinants of our 'trustworthiness'



Source:
EFSA Reputation Barometer 2.0 (publication Q4 2020)

A single topic can dominate the sentiment

MEP tone of voice
(by topic)



Source:
[European Parliament
2017-2108 discourse
analysis](#)



Can we (try to) measure this better?

We asked our **peers** what they think



Some **improvement** ideas

1

Systematic approach to analysis of **media and social media data**



2

Find out a "formal" way of analysing **"informal" feedback**



3

Definition and measurement **harmonisation among peers**



Communication and engagement leading the way



Our established **communication** toolbox

MULTIMEDIA

- Videos
- Interactive tools
- Infographics
- Data visualisation

EFSA JOURNAL

- All EFSA scientific outputs

EFSA WEBSITE

- News
- Topics
- Alerts
- Newsletter
- Lay summaries
- Factsheets
- Events

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Twitter
- Linked In
- YouTube

SCIENTIFIC OUTREACH

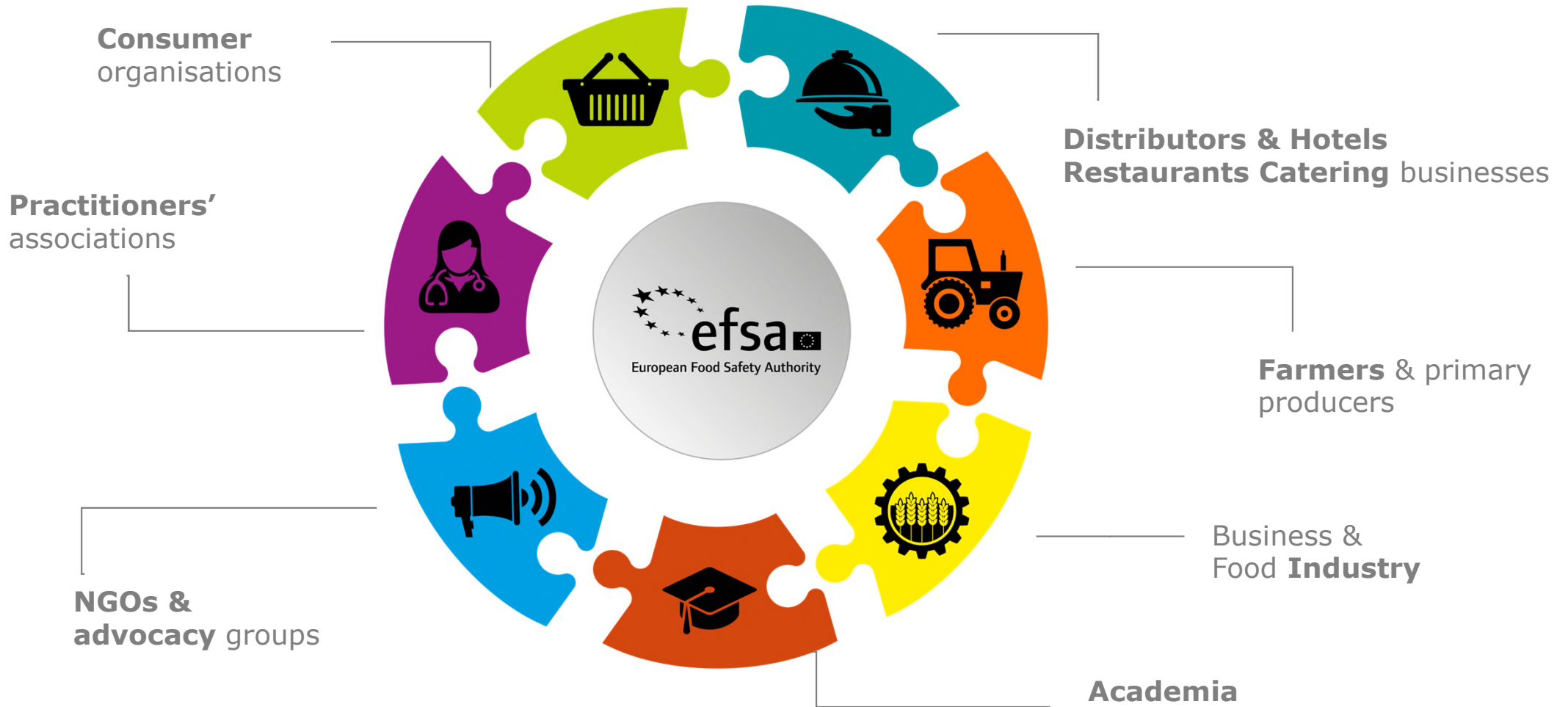
- Science networks
- Infosessions
- Scientific conferences
- Webinars

MEDIA RELATIONS

- Media monitoring & analysis
- Interviews
- Media enquiries
- Press conferences & briefings
- Media training



The way we engage with stakeholders



Audience-first approach

Coordinated communication

Quality of science

Preparedness

Stakeholder dialogue



Guided by
[EC Transparency Regulation 2019/1381](#)

Thank you!



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