

EUROBAROMETER 2025: THE COST OF FOOD IS THE TOP PRIORITY FOR EUROPEAN CITIZENS



Increasingly, European citizens are familiar with how the **EU food safety system** operates; however, today, **the cost of food has become the top priority, surpassing factors such as taste and even safety**. This is revealed by the new “[Eurobarometer 2025 Survey on Food Safety in the EU](#)”, carried out every three years by **EFSA** and covering not only the 27 EU Member States but also the seven candidate countries.

Food cost and taste influence consumer decisions more than safety

[The survey paints a clear picture](#): **public interest and awareness of food safety are growing, but so too are concerns about the impact of rising prices** on everyday choices. In fact, 7 out of 10 Europeans (72%) say they are personally interested in food safety, a two percentage point increase [compared to 2022](#). However, **food safety ranks only third (46%) after cost (60%) and taste (51%) among the factors influencing consumer decisions**. Concern over costs has risen sharply, up six percentage points since 2022. It is now the dominant criterion in 20 Member States, highlighting the real financial pressures many European households face in making ends meet.

An increasing number of European citizens also report being aware of the 15 specific food safety topics covered in the survey. The most familiar remain **food additives (71%) and pesticides (67%)**, in line with previous surveys. Awareness has nonetheless grown significantly regarding **animal diseases (65%, +5 points)**, **microplastics in food (63%, +8 points)**, and **foodborne illnesses (62%, +5 points)**.

On the concerns front, consumers continue to identify **pesticides (39%)**, residues of **antibiotics, hormones, or steroids in meat (36%)**, and **food additives (35%)** as their main worries. However, these figures are slightly lower than in 2022. In contrast, **concern about microplastics in food is rising sharply: 33%** of respondents now consider it a top priority, up four percentage points from 2022 (29%).

A growing trust in the European system and healthy diets

The survey also highlights growing trust in the European system: **8 out of 10 citizens (79%) believe that effective regulations exist to ensure food safety**, a 6-point increase from 2022. Likewise, 76% think that the EU relies on scientists for expert advice, a 6-point increase from the previous survey.

Regarding awareness of **healthy diets**, about four out of ten European citizens (41%) report paying equal attention to both **healthy eating and food-related risks**, a decrease of 5 points compared to 2022. The share of those more focused on healthy eating (34%) has increased by 3 points, while the share of those more concerned about food-related risks (23%) has risen slightly by 2 points.

Consistent with 2022 data, **the majority of Europeans continue to believe that animal-related issues (53%) and environmental issues (51%) have a strong impact on human health**. However, regarding environmental and plant-related concerns, there has been a shift in perception: more citizens now consider the impact to be moderate rather than strong, indicating **a decline in attention to the link between the environment and health**.

An encouraging finding concerns trust in information sources: **nine out of ten citizens (90%) continue to consider general practitioners and medical specialists as the most reliable sources of information for food-related risks**. High levels of trust are also reported for scientists at universities and publicly funded research institutions (84%), consumer organisations (82%), and farmers and primary producers (82%). **Trust in national authorities (70%, +4 points) and EU institutions (69%, +3 points) has also increased**, albeit more moderately.

Proper information and healthy food for everyone

More than half of European citizens **(55%) identify television as one of their main sources of information on food-related risks, remaining the most widely used channel**. However, it has decreased by six percentage points compared to 2022. This is **followed by exchanges with family, friends, neighbours, or colleagues (42%) and online search engines (38%)**. The use of social networks and blogs (25%) has increased by four percentage points since the last survey. While awareness of food safety and the functioning of the European system is increasing, **the growing concern over food costs highlights a crucial challenge: ensuring that safety and quality are not privileges for a few but rights accessible to all**. The future of the European food system will depend on the ability to combine safety, sustainability, and affordability: only in this way can consumer trust be strengthened and the fundamental right to safe and healthy food be guaranteed for everyone.

