

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

THE ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF ILSI EUROPE

What is ILSI?

ILSI is a global, non-profit scientific organisation where scientists from industry, academia, and the public sector collaborate to generate scientific information and encourage scientific dialogue for the improvement of public health.

What is the role of ILSI Europe?

ILSI Europe is an organisation that operates for the public interest and is unique in fostering collaboration among the best scientists from industry, academic and public sectors to provide evidence-based scientific consensus on nutrition and food safety leading to the improvement of public health.

How does ILSI Europe work?

ILSI Europe (the European branch of the International Life Sciences Institute based in Washington DC) has the mission to provide evidence-based scientific consensus on nutrition and food safety leading to the improvement of public health. ILSI Europe identifies issues that are key for public health primarily in the areas of nutrition and health promotion, food safety, risk assessment, and the environment. Renowned experts from academia, industry and the public sector are invited to address these issues and to publish the results of their work. ILSI Europe publications are peer-reviewed and are based on a consensus among the experts involved.

How does ILSI Europe choose its activities?

All of ILSI Europe's projects must have a primary public purpose and benefit. ILSI Europe identifies emerging issues, and address topics of broad public health interest. Topic areas and project ideas are submitted to our Scientific Advisory Committee and the Board of Directors for review and approval. Both of these governing bodies are equally made up of academic and industry scientists.

What is the benefit to have industry, academia and the public sector work together?

Scientists from industry, academia, and the public sector collaborate in an open and transparent manner within the ILSI Europe framework because these scientists believe complex science and health issues must be addressed together. That way, each sector contributes its unique scientific knowledge, in order to help find solutions for today's complex food and health challenges.

How does ILSI Europe help “improve public health”?

ILSI Europe aims at providing the best scientific knowledge from industry, academia and the public sector so that decisions affecting public health and safety are based on good science. ILSI Europe is a perfect and unique forum to bring these different parties, with different strengths, together. ILSI Europe believes its scientific output, as part of the larger body of scientific information, supports the production of safe and healthy food providing effective and practical guidance to safeguard health. ILSI Europe does not advocate any position. We

publish the results of all our studies regardless of outcome. This contributes to the global store of health-related knowledge in the public domain.

Who are ILSI Europe's members?

ILSI Europe members are mainly companies from the food industry, but also from other sectors like agricultural, chemical, pharmaceutical, cosmetic and biotechnology industries.

ILSI is by some sources considered to be a lobby organisation: is this true?

No, it is not true. ILSI Europe has a very high reputation among the scientific community. People who believe ILSI is a lobby organisation only do so because they misperceive what ILSI Europe does and what it does not do. ILSI Europe brings scientists from all disciplines together to discuss key complex topics, and contributes to the advancement of public health and safety. ILSI's Code of Ethics and Organizational Standards of Conduct expressly prohibit all forms of lobbying and we do not make policy recommendations. All scientific activities are conducted in an open and transparent manner and all scientific outcomes are made available to the public to ensure confidence in the integrity of the process and outcomes.

If ILSI Europe's members are companies, doesn't that make it a lobby organisation?

No this is not correct. Because ILSI receives a majority of its operating and research funding from the private sector, it is sometimes assumed to be a lobbying organisation. ILSI does not lobby. ILSI's Code of Ethics and Organizational Standards of Conduct expressly forbids any lobby activities. ILSI Europe supports the use of science in matters affecting human and environmental health, but it does not make policy recommendations or seek to influence legislative outcomes toward a particular decision.

Is industry-funded science reliable?

ILSI Europe believes good science can be funded by a wide variety of organisations, in both the public and private sectors. ILSI Europe maintains all science should be judged on the merits of study design, methodology, and validity of the conclusions regardless of funding source. Improvement of scientific knowledge needs collaboration from government, academia and industry. Regulatory agencies and governments provide rules for fair competition, and promote public health and safety by appropriate regulations; academic scientists generate knowledge and industry scientists convert that knowledge into products that provide funding for more research.

Why do certain NGOs or politicians refer to ILSI as a lobby organisation?

People or organisations that do so usually mainly look at the industry source of funding of ILSI. When ILSI is evaluated based on its scientific output and the variety of the scientific topics it covers, interested parties usually acknowledge the quality of the science that we produce and they better understand our mission to provide evidence-based scientific consensus for the improvement of public health.