



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE
Directorate F - Health, Consumers & Reference Materials (Geel/Ispra)
Director

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Call for laboratories in EU Member States to participate in proficiency tests organised by the JRC

Striving for a better knowledge base in the area of microplastics in food, feed and environmental samples

Background

Microplastics and possibly also nanoplastics are becoming widely spread throughout the environment and concerns are growing that they may present a risk to the environment and human health via contamination of water, food, soil and air. However, the lack of harmonised analytical procedures (including sampling) and quality assurance tools such as validated methods and reference materials is hindering the generation of reliable and comparable data. This deficiency has to be urgently tackled in order to reduce the existing data gaps about the occurrence of microplastics in the environment and in particular the exposure through food, including drinking water.

In order to tackle this problem the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) will be taking action as described in the following:

Planned JRC actions

Initially, the JRC will produce various microplastics test materials for use in inter-laboratory comparison (ILC) studies, including proficiency testing, while at a later stage (certified) reference materials will also be developed.

The JRC will promote the harmonisation and standardisation of methods for the analysis of microplastics by organising method validation studies and/or proficiency tests for supporting the establishment of standard operation procedures (SOPs) and the validation of analytical methods. This will include inter-laboratory validation of the most promising methods with the aim to introduce them as work items to standardisation bodies. Interested competent laboratories across Europe are invited to take part in these studies.

As a first step, the JRC will organise a proficiency test (PT) on specific microplastics (food grade PET material) in water (bottled water, drinking water). The results will be discussed with all participating laboratories in a dedicated workshop in order to exchange best practices and to discuss further steps necessary.

Call for participating expert laboratories in EU Member States

The first PT will be organised in autumn 2019. All interested experts laboratories in EU Member States are kindly invited to express their interest for participating until **1st September 2019** via the email address:

JRC contact: jrc-microplastics@ec.europa.eu

Interested laboratories will receive further information about the details of the PT including the official invitation by 15 September 2019. Please note that the number of participating laboratories will be limited to 70.