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*“Clear, accurate information on probiotics empowers consumers, supports responsible production, and fuels innovation—positioning Europe as a leader where science, health, and food culture meet”. This was the key message at the **IPA Europe event** held in Brussels, on December 2, 2025, titled **“Exploring Probiotics in the EU: From Policy Dialogue to Socio-Economic Impact and Consumer Awareness”**”*

Central to the discussion was a **new socio-economic assessment** commissioned by IPA Europe, conducted using OECD and EU Better Regulation methodologies. The study shows that changes to the current EU regulatory framework that unlocked greater use of probiotic foods and supplements across the EU would generate significant economic benefits, primarily from reduced healthcare costs.

The event featured a rich programme of presentations and discussions. **George Paraskevakos**, Executive Director of IPA, opened with insights into current market trends and consumer expectations, highlighting the growing interest in probiotics across Europe. This was followed by a scientific overview from **Prof. Ger T. Rijkers**, of the University College Roosevelt, who presented “Recent Advances in Clinical Research on Probiotics: A Scientific Perspective,” summarizing key findings from global clinical studies. Out of approximately 2,500 studies reviewed, 504 publications were selected, covering a total of 73,558 patients across categories such as gastrointestinal and metabolic disorders. Notably, 72% of these clinical studies reported improvements in predefined clinical parameters and in quality of life, as reported by participants. The vast majority of probiotic studies demonstrate measurable benefits in people, providing strong evidence of their positive effects.

The results of the new socio-economic assessment were presented by **Michael Holland**, outlining the public health and economic benefits that greater use of probiotics could bring to Europe. The assessment explores the benefits of increased probiotic use across a range of common conditions across gut, respiratory, oral, women’s and mental health. The study concluded that **“even modest improvements in health outcomes arising from greater use of probiotics would correspond with large economic benefits, with at least €10 billion in cost savings estimated per year”**.

The programme concluded with a lively panel discussion, where experts from diverse sectors—Lazaro Mojica Jonas (DG GROW), Debora Serra (EUFIC), Karen Vokes (Chair IPA Europe Regulatory Com), and Prof. Bruno Pot (ILSI Europe)—exchanged perspectives and engaged in an open dialogue with the audience, exploring the challenges and opportunities in the probiotic sector.

Despite probiotics being recognized globally since the WHO/FAO definition in 2001, the EU still lacks a harmonized legal category for probiotic foods and supplements.



This regulatory gap creates costs for businesses, even as consumer interest continues to grow. The event underscored that harmonized regulation would not only support industry and innovation but also maximize public health benefits across Europe. The two summary pages are available [here](#).

Visit the [EVENT PAGE](#)

About IPA Europe:

IPA Europe represents the European probiotic sector, advocating for science-based regulation, consumer information, and innovation in the field of probiotics.

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