

vaccines | childhood | nutrition | energy

 **science media centre**
ESPAÑA

What you need when science makes the news



Pampa García Molina, director

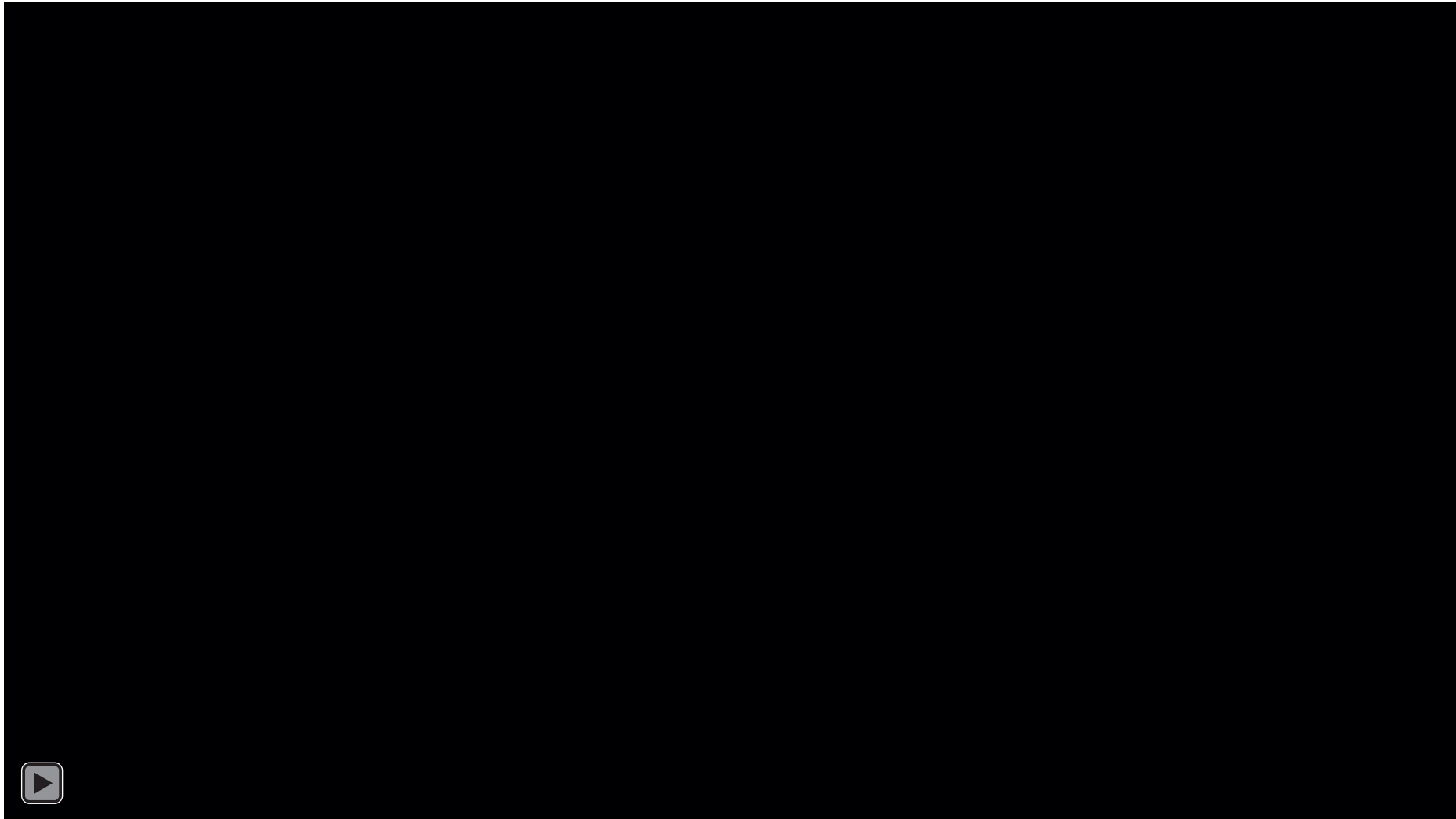
What is a Science Media Centre

- It is an independent communications office that:
 - helps to ensure that the public has access to the best **scientific evidence** and **knowledge**
 - through the **media**
 - when science hits the **headlines** and generates **social debate and controversy**.



25 March 2022,
Madrid





www.smcglobal.org



UK
2002



Australia
2005



NZ
2008



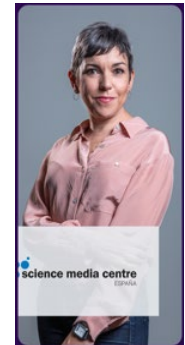
Germany
2015



Taiwan
2017



AfriSMC
2020



Spain
2022

Team



Pampa García Molina
Coordinator of SMC Spain

Science journalist, coordinator of the SMC Spain and before that, of the SINC agency from 2011 to 2022. Graduate in Physics and master's degree in Science Journalism.



Laura Chaparro
Editor of SMC Spain

Science journalist. With 15 years of experience in media and press offices. Graduate in Journalism. Master in Science Communication.



Jesús Méndez
Collaborator of SMC Spain

Freelance journalist and science writer. Degree in Medicine, PhD in Biochemistry and former researcher in cancer epigenetics. Master in Science Communication.



Sergio Ferrer
Collaborator of SMC Spain

Science journalist for 10 years. Degree in Biology, master's degree in Microbiology and master's degree in Science Communication.



Tania Rabesandratana
Collaborator of SMC Spain

Freelance science journalist, specialising in European research policy. Master's degree in Biology and Master's degree in Science Communication.



Context

- During the pandemic, public needs quick, reliable, relevant and well-checked information in a context of **uncertainty**.
- **Preprints** storm: science is happening live before our eyes.
- Science has been demanded an absolute predictive power. Frustration has left room for **disinformation**.
- Noise from various sources: **media overexposure, infodemics, polarised discourse** and **misinformation**.
- We need journalists specialized in science and **expert sources** in the media.

SMC Spain: objectives

- To provide journalists with **reliable information** and **sources** on current science-related news.
- To **work with the scientific community** to engage as a source with national and international media, thanks to SMC's global network.
- To serve as a speaker for **press offices** to amplify the messages of research staff.
- To encourage the public to be informed about **controversial scientific issues** in order to **improve the quality of public debate**.

Our features

- We depend on FECYT (public funding), but we are studying multi-funding with donations that do not compromise our editorial independence.
- We publish in Spanish and English.
- We have a Creative Commons license.
- We have Twitter and Facebook.
- We have a statute and an advisory board to ensure editorial independence.

Advisory Board

This voluntary team of independent experts provides expertise and advice to the SMC Spain team.

[Read more](#)



Rocío Benavente



Carlos Centeno



María del Carmen
Climént



Romano Corradi



Patricia
Fernández de Lis



Manuel Franco



Miguel G. Corral



Elea Giménez
Toledo



Federico Kukso



Coral Larrosa



María Martínón-
Torres



María Mayán



Alicia Pérez-Porro



Eduardo Suárez



Victoria Toro



Alfonso Valencia



Fernando
Valladares

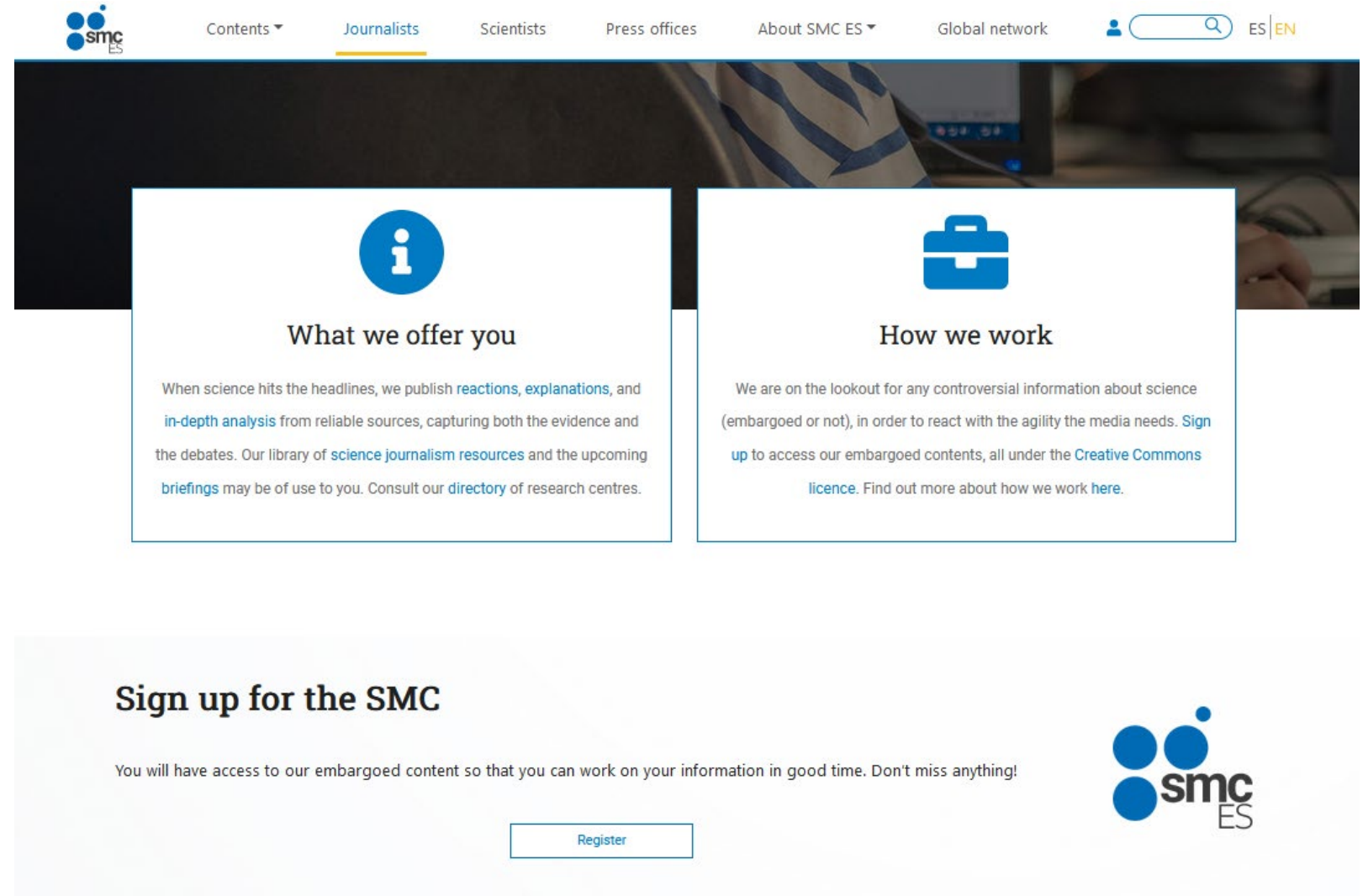


Sonia Zúñiga

Our features

We communicate with **registered journalists** through emails with embargoed or not embargoed content.

Registered journalists sign an **embargo agreement**.



The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with the SMC ES logo, a search bar, and language options (ES | EN). The main content area features two columns: 'What we offer you' with an information icon and 'How we work' with a briefcase icon. Below these is a 'Sign up for the SMC' section with a 'Register' button and the SMC ES logo.

Contents ▾ Journalists Scientists Press offices About SMC ES ▾ Global network ES | EN

What we offer you

When science hits the headlines, we publish [reactions](#), [explanations](#), and [in-depth analysis](#) from reliable sources, capturing both the evidence and the debates. Our library of [science journalism resources](#) and the upcoming [briefings](#) may be of use to you. Consult our [directory](#) of research centres.


How we work

We are on the lookout for any controversial information about science (embargoed or not), in order to react with the agility the media needs. [Sign up](#) to access our embargoed contents, all under the [Creative Commons licence](#). Find out more about how we work [here](#).

Sign up for the SMC

You will have access to our embargoed content so that you can work on your information in good time. Don't miss anything!

[Register](#)

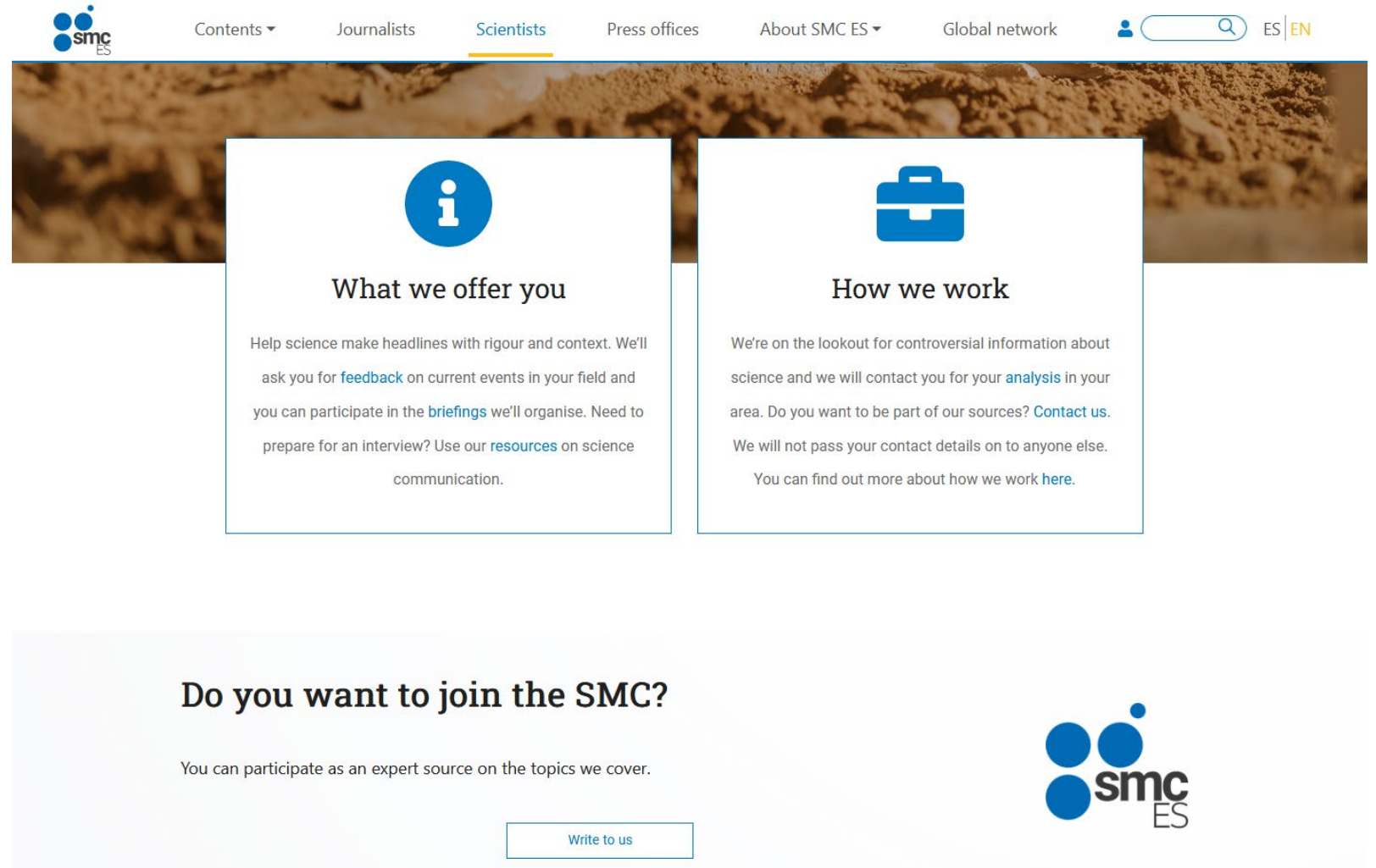


Our features

We **encourage scientists** to join us as information sources.

We offer **science communication resources**.

We never pass their contact details on to anyone else; if a journalist asks us for the contact details of a scientist, we refer him or her to his or her **press office**.



The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with the SMC logo and menu items: Contents, Journalists, Scientists (highlighted), Press offices, About SMC ES, and Global network. A search bar and language selector (ES|EN) are also present. The main content area features two white boxes on a brown background. The first box, titled 'What we offer you' with an information icon, describes services like providing context, feedback, briefings, and resources. The second box, titled 'How we work' with a briefcase icon, explains the search for controversial information and the policy of not sharing contact details. Below these is a section titled 'Do you want to join the SMC?' with a 'Write to us' button. The SMC logo is in the bottom right corner.

Contents ▾ Journalists Scientists Press offices About SMC ES ▾ Global network ES|EN

What we offer you

Help science make headlines with rigour and context. We'll ask you for [feedback](#) on current events in your field and you can participate in the [briefings](#) we'll organise. Need to prepare for an interview? Use our [resources](#) on science communication.


How we work

We're on the lookout for controversial information about science and we will contact you for your [analysis](#) in your area. Do you want to be part of our sources? [Contact us](#). We will not pass your contact details on to anyone else. You can find out more about how we work [here](#).

Do you want to join the SMC?

You can participate as an expert source on the topics we cover.

[Write to us](#)



Our formats

SMC Contents

We offer you different formats with more or less depth and immediacy depending on current events. They have a Creative Commons licence and you can use them quoting SMC Spain as the source.



Reactions



Expert voices



What we know



Resource library



Training



Briefings

Reactions

When science hits the headlines, we seek the views of expert sources who assess the news rigorously and quickly, according to the available evidence.



climate change

Reactions to the loss and damage fund and other agreements reached at COP27

SMC Spain

After two long weeks of negotiations and outside the official deadline, COP27 has reached an agreement to create a loss and damage fund to help the most vulnerable countries face the impacts of the climate crisis. However, other issues such as greater ambition in mitigation strategies to avoid exceeding 1.5°C of warming and less dependence on fossil fuels have not achieved the commitment of all parties.



animal health

Reactions: sales of antibiotics for animal use have fallen by almost 50 % in the last ten years

SMC Spain

The EMA's annual European Surveillance of Veterinary Antimicrobial Consumption (ESVAC) report shows that sales of antibiotics for animal use have decreased by 47% between 2011 and 2021. In addition, sales of antibiotics considered "critically important" for use in humans have also decreased.



ophthalmology

Reactions: five genetic variants increase the risk of myopia with schooling

SMC Spain

Using genetic data from more than 340,000 participants of European descent, research has identified five genetic variants that make people more susceptible to myopia in combination with intensive schooling, especially university studies. The results are published in *PLOS Genetics*.

Expert voices

In-depth analysis by experts on current scientific issues. In general, they are not as quick as the reactions.



heat

Extreme heat in April, an extraordinary event that heralds the future

Dominic Royé, Robert Monjo, Darío Redolat

The current situation is only the beginning of what may come in the coming decades, which should lead us to increase efforts in mitigation and adaptation strategies: more green and shaded areas, energy efficiency in buildings and avoiding working outdoors in extreme temperatures.



gender

Why we should be concerned that mathematics research is less attractive to women

Marta Macho-Stadler

This year's theme for 8M is "For an inclusive digital world: innovation and technology for gender equality". If we want to innovate for everyone, there must be women doing research in mathematics, an essential discipline in the fields of technology, finance and health. However, the future of mathematical research in Spain has a male profile and this is worrying: advances and major decisions will be made excluding half of the population.



earthquake

Earthquakes in Turkey and Syria: what the historical record of the East Anatolian fault tells us

? What we know

The SMC team produces explanatory articles on topical issues to answer society's questions, with the necessary context and depth.



endocrine disruptors

Bisphenol A: why has EFSA lowered the tolerable daily intake, and what are the health risks?

SMC Spain

A few weeks ago, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) said that exposure to bisphenol A through food is a risk to human health. The agency recommended a much lower tolerable daily intake dose than it had its own previous recommendations. In this explainer, we review key facts and documents to cover this issue—which will continue to make the headlines in months and years to come.



climate change


What is El Niño, when will it arrive and what will it mean for Spain this summer and autumn?


SMC Spain

After three years in which the planet's climate has experienced a phenomenon known as La Niña, in 2023 it will give way to its opposite, El Niño. This has led the World Meteorological Organization to warn that this event, added to climate change, could cause the 1.5 °C limit to be exceeded in the next five years. But what are these "children", how do they affect Spain, how long will they last?

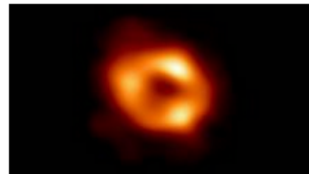
Resource library

How do you read a scientific article? What are the phases of a clinical trial? What are the differences between climate change and global warming? These guides answer questions for journalists and communication departments. Other specific guides help research staff when dealing with the media.

 Journalists

 Scientists

 Press offices



cosmology

A brief guide to understanding black holes

SMC Spain

After many decades of study and thanks to the use of very precise techniques, we know more and more about these mysterious and huge bodies in the cosmos. Astronomers around the world are networking with powerful telescopes to better understand them.



science communication

Types of scientific papers: beyond “according to a study”

SMC Spain

“According to a study” is a phrase that is as used as it is inaccurate: not everything that journals publish is a study, nor have all their articles been peer-reviewed. As in traditional media, there are different genres ranging from Letters to Editorials. Here are some of the most important ones.



science communication

Comparative anatomy of the scientific and journalistic article

SMC Spain

Briefings

We bring together journalists and scientific sources to answer questions and discuss current issues. These can be face-to-face or virtual. Registration is required.



urbanism

Extreme heat and urban health: how to adapt our cities to climate change

SMC Spain

Heat waves and other events accentuated by climate change affect health, especially for the most socially vulnerable people. To counteract these effects, mitigation and adaptation plans for cities are designed based on scientific evidence, the implementation of which belongs to the local political sphere. Two experts in urban health and climate governance analysed these problems and their possible solutions in a briefing organised by SMC Spain.



drought

Drought in Spain: aggravated by rising temperatures and overexploitation of water resources

SMC Spain

The hydrological, meteorological and agricultural drought that is being experienced in Spain, especially in some regions, comes after a 2022 that was the warmest and one of the driest since records have been kept. Researchers Sandra García Galiano (UPCT) and Annelies Broekman (CREAF) participated in an informative session of SMC Spain in which they analyzed the causes, consequences and possible solutions to face this complex natural phenomenon.



obesity

Obesity: a growing epidemic that won't be stopped by drugs

SMC Spain

Training

The SMC Spain team provides practical training on science journalism and science communication adapted to different profiles: journalists or research staff.



Media impact

- More than 3,500 impacts, most of them in the Spanish media.
- Also in international publications such as The Washington Post, AP, El Espectador or Factchequeado.

Media using our content



Media impact

- We ask to be cited (**CC license**) for branding and impact monitoring.
- We value the **invisible impact**: to be used as a source of inspiration or to contact expert sources on our topics.
- We even value the **negative impact**: when the media use our reactions to finally decide not to cover a paper that does not deserve media coverage.

Learning by doing

Speed is key to get impacts and visits

Agility in very quick reactions to immediate current affairs and **breaking news**.

Examples: Nobel prizes, monkeypox, childhood hepatitis, COP27.

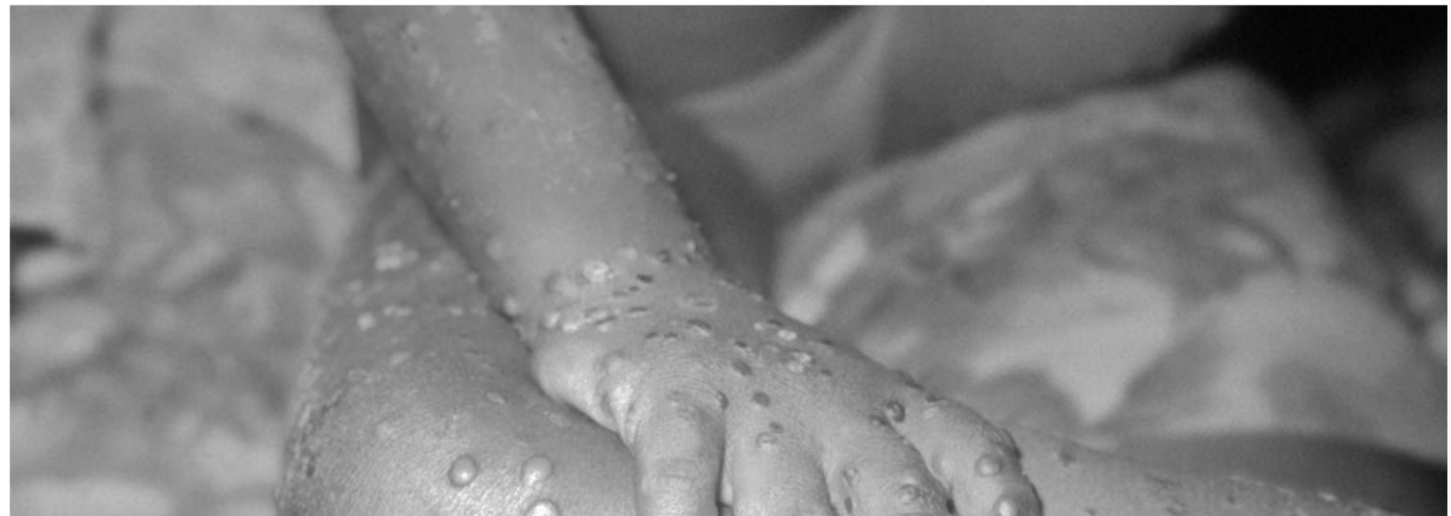
What we know about the new monkeypox outbreak

Following the detection of several cases of people infected with the simian smallpox virus in the UK, health authorities are concerned that there may be EU-wide transmission with undetected infections, both within and outside the country. In Spain, the Community of Madrid has identified 23 possible cases of infection.

SMC Spain 18/05/2022 - 08:30 CET

[Versión en castellano](#)

Update 19/05/2022 - 09:48 CET Updated information on new suspected cases in the Community of Madrid.



Learning by doing

Don't be afraid of political issues related to science

We focus on politically controversial issues. Examples: Mar Menor Law, Science Law, Animal Protection Law, transgender minors.

Reactions to the adoption of the new Science Law

The extraordinary plenary session of the Congress of Deputies today approved the reform of the Law on Science, Technology and Innovation. After being passed in the Lower House without any votes against it on 23 June, the bill was approved in the Senate on 20 July with an amendment referring to indefinite-term contracts, which was rejected today in Congress.

SMC Spain 25/08/2022 - 17:46 CET

[Versión en castellano](#)



Expert reactions

María Blasco

CNIO Director

[Spanish National Cancer Research Centre CNIO](#)

Science Media Centre Spain

“ The first thing I would like to stress is that the approval of this reform of the Law on Science, Technology and Innovation is news to celebrate, because it takes up the historic demands of the Spanish scientific community.

The text, as approved, aims to guarantee that science will have stable and growing public funding. It

Learning by doing

We act as prescribers of papers for the media

- Selection of weekly scientific publications that merit embargoed reactions and sending these reactions days in advance is key.

What they say about the SMC

“

Perusing the SMC Spain's content has already become a part of my daily work routine. Not only for obvious reasons, such as using quick reaction roundups to feed our reporting. I also read each SMC email thoroughly for three reasons: the statements help me to make sure I don't miss anything important, to quickly assess the significance of a study, and they provide informed opinions to know if there is a certain level of consensus or controversy around a study. Bonus: they also put valuable sources on my radar for future reporting.

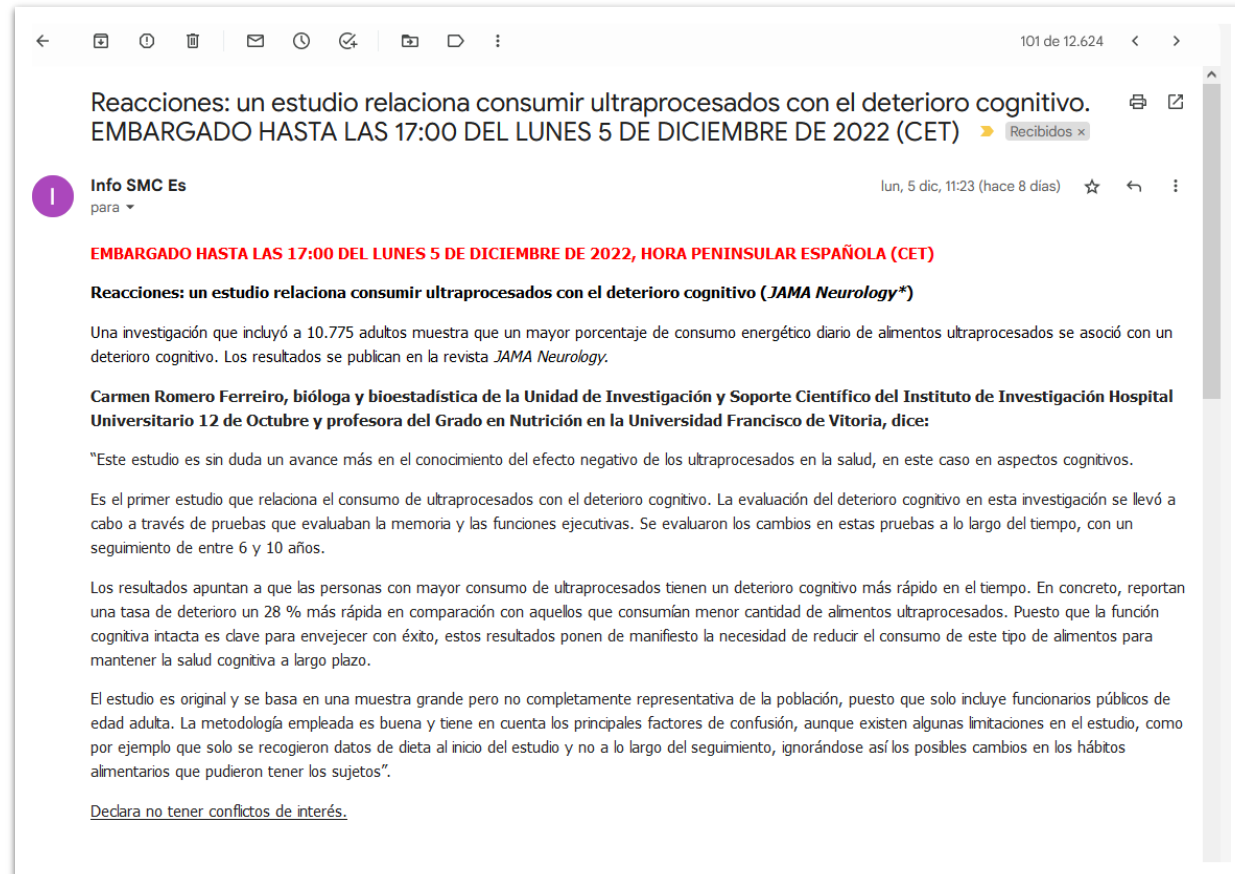
”

Javier Salas, head of El País's Science, Health and Wellness, Technology section

Learning by doing

Anticipation

- Sending embargoed reactions days in advance is essential.



Learning by doing

Media like explainers

- Monkeypox, the possible Alzheimer's fraud or the glass of wine.
- Quality content useful for journalists, added value.

What we know about the health impact of drinking a glass of wine a day

"The level of alcohol consumption that does not harm health is zero," says a review of dozens of studies conducted in recent years on the effect of light drinking. The 20 or so authors of the paper, and other experts, insist that "alcohol is carcinogenic from the first drink". In their view, this message should be conveyed more clearly to the public.

SMC Spain 09/05/2022 - 11:04 CEST

[Versión en castellano](#)



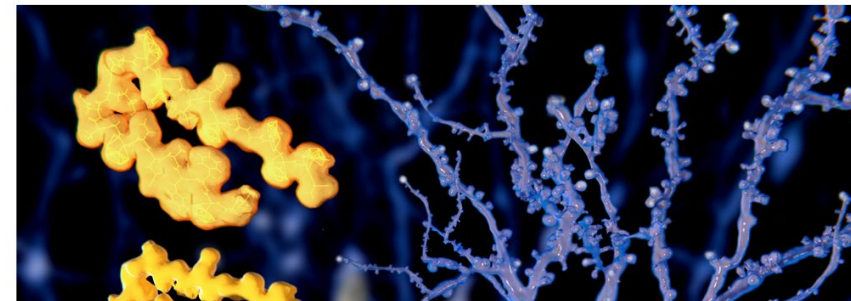
Potential fraud in major Alzheimer's research: what are the implications?

Science magazine has published a report revealing multiple indications of fraud in one of the most cited publications on Alzheimer's disease. We explain what it means for the science that studies this disease.

SMC Spain 03/08/2022 - 10:30 CEST

[Versión en castellano](#)

Update 17/08/2022 - 12:20 CEST Added the statements by Juan Fortea



Learning by doing

“Expert voices” also have an impact and visitors

- Relevance and link with current affairs is key: fires, drought, Fields medal...



Contents ▾

Journalists

Scientists

Press offices

About SMC ES ▾

Global network



ES | EN

EXPERT VOICES

Europe in drought: a perfect storm

The lack of rainfall and the decrease in available water resources have caused 47% of European territory to be on drought pre-alert and 17% to be on alert. The lesser experience of northern countries in managing this phenomenon and the high vulnerability of southern regions mean that this drought is having a major impact on various economic sectors, in addition to supply cuts.

Dominic Royé, Pilar Paneque 18/08/2022 - 09:15 CEST

[Versión en castellano](#)



A woman walks through an unusually parched Hyde Park in London, UK, on 10 August. EFE/ Andy Rain.

Learning by doing

SMC global network is more than the sum of its parts

- Sharing daily discussions and experiences with journalists from seven countries enhances the work of each SMC.
- We collaborate, exchange content and give scientists an international voice.
- “A truly global network with collective impact”.



SMC global



42 members

This Press Briefing is a cooperation of the SMC UK, the SMC Spain and the SMC Germany. It will be held in English. SMC Germany is responsible for the content and organization of this event.

Science Media Centres' background briefing

What? Avian influenza – a devastating pandemic for birds and threat for global health?

When? Friday 10th February, **11:10am UK time** (12:10 CET)

Where? Zoom webinar (details below)

Speakers:

Ursula Höfle, PhD

Contract professor at the SaBio (Health and Biotechnology) Research Group, National Game and Wildlife Research Institute (CSIC-UCLM-JCCM), University of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain

Prof. Ian H. Brown

Head of Virology at the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), Weybridge, Surrey, UK

Prof. Martin Beer

Head of the Institute for Diagnostic Virology (IVD), Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut, Bundesforschungsinstitut für Tiergesundheit, Greifswald-Insel Riems, Germany

Details for Dialling In

This briefing will take place on Zoom and run by our colleagues at the German SMC.

Virtual Press Briefing, [available at this link](#). This press briefing will take place via the webinar provider Zoom.

Our achievements so far

- We are recognized as a trusted source of information for news agencies and other media, specialized and general, international, national and regional.
- Scientists call us to collaborate with us as sources. We get the right experts to talk about each topic and they feel safe.
- In an environment marked by polarization and a lack of expert voices in the media, we enhance the public conversation on controversial current science-related issues.

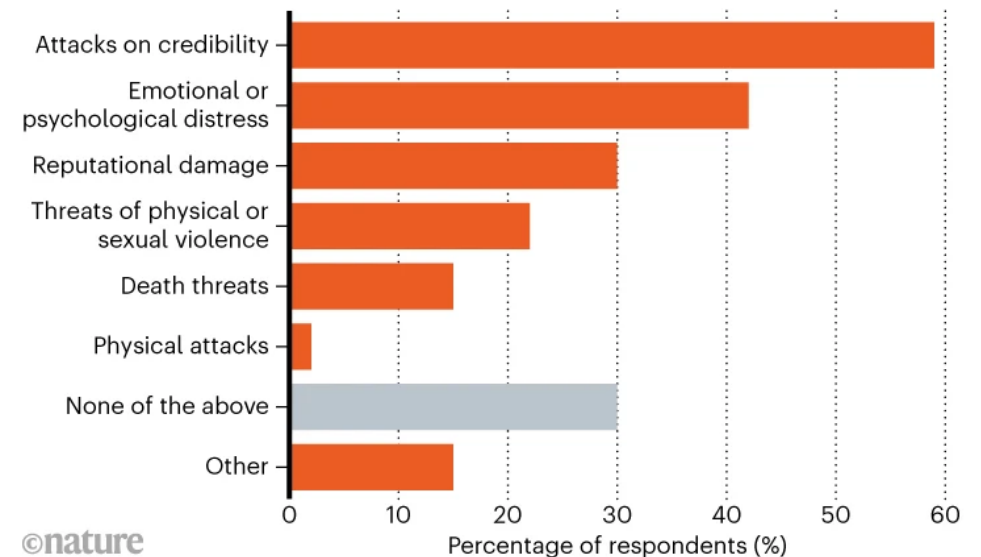
Next steps

- Latin America.
- New partners.
- New staff!!!!
- Infographics, more audios, videos, weekly newsletter, podcast...
- Study on **harassment** suffered by scientists in Spain due to their presence in the media, following the surveys done by other SMCs and *Nature*.
- Study on **gender differences** in the participation of scientific sources in the contents of SMC Spain
- External funding.
- Extend the global network to new countries.

NEGATIVE IMPACTS

In a *Nature* survey of scientists who have commented about COVID-19, 15% of 321 respondents said they had received death threats.

Question: Have you experienced any of the following negative impacts after speaking about COVID-19 to the media, or posting on social media? (You may select multiple options.)



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Thank you

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