# EFSA's Reputation Barometer

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efsa
European Food Safety Authority

# Background – Reputation Barometer 2017

- Stems from EFSA strategy 2020 – prioritise public and stakeholder engagement
- Aim: measure EFSA's reputation → identify opportunities to improve it
- Pilot study, first of its kind
- Designed to complement and inform EFSA's external evaluation
- Participants: EC, MS, Business, NGOs, Scientific Community, MEPs

# 12 Attributes of Reputation for EFSA

- Approach to providing **scientific advice**
- The **quality** of EFSA's risk assessment opinions
- The **efficienc**y of EFSA in producing risk assessments
- The identification and characterization of **emerging risk**s by EFSA
- EFSA's work to **harmonize** risk assessment methods
- EFSA's **independence** and objectivity
- The level of **transparency** at EFSA
- How EFSA **communicate risks**
- **Engagement** by EFSA with external partners
- EFSA's provision of **scientific and technical assistance** to Member States for crisis management
- The quality of EFSA's **governance**
- EFSA's **innovativeness**

# Fieldwork and analysis

- **Sampling:**
  - Member States: Advisory Forum
  - European Commission: DG Sante, DG RTD, DG AGRI
  - The European Parliament: limited, "convenient" sample of MEPs involved in food chain debates
  - Stakeholders: list of EFSA registered stakeholders
  - Scientific Community: "convenient" sample of scientists involved in regulatory risk assessments around the world
- **Online Survey**
- **Follow up interviews**
- **Analysis:**
  - Assessment of the tool's appropriateness
  - Calculation of the reputation score

# Response rates

| Audience | Sample | Responses | Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| Member State authorities (Advisory Forum) | 62 | 26 | 42% |
| European Commission | 38 | 12 | 32% |
| Business and food industry, farmers and primary producers | 61 | 12 | 19% |
| Consumers and thematic organisations | 14 | 5 | 35% |
| Scientific community | N/A | 51 | N/A |
| European Parliament | 18 | 3 | 17% |
| **Total** | **193** | **109** | **30%** |

# Limitations

- Some untested assumptions – e.g. degree of homogeneity of different groups
- Sampling strategies differed across all groups for practical reasons
- Participation was low from certain groups
- Missing audiences – e.g. the EP and risk managers in MS

# Overview – Reputation scores

**On a scale from -100 to +100, EFSA's reputation within the 5 following audiences in 2017 is:**

| Member state authorities | European Commission | Businesses, farmers and primary producers | Consumers and environmental NGOs | Scientific community |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 46 | 33 | 20 | 3 | 42 |

# Member States

| Attributes | Performance (on a -100 to +100 scale) | Weighting (on a 1-6 scale) | Reputation score (on a -100 to +100 scale) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Approach to scientific advice | 53 | 5.25 | 46 |
| Quality of opinions | 53 | 5.6 | |
| Efficiency in risk assessments | 31 | 5 | |
| Emerging risks | 45 | 5.1 | |
| Harmonization of RA methods | 52 | 5.3 | |
| Independence and objectivity | 43 | 5.5 | |
| Transparency | 48 | 5.2 | |
| Risk communication | 52 | 5.2 | |
| Engagement with partners | 40 | 4.6 | |
| Assistance for crisis management | 42 | 4.9 | |
| Governance | 37 | 4.9 | |
| Innovativeness | 50 | 4.4 | |

- Highest reputation score overall among surveyed groups
- Highest scores: approach to scientific advice & quality of opinions
- Lowest score: efficiency in risk assessments
- Indications that the group is mixed (wide range of responses for some attributes)
- Sentiment is very positive overall

# European Commission

| Attributes | Performance (on a -100 to +100 scale) | Weighting (on a 1-6 scale) | Reputation score (on a -100 to 100 scale) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Approach to scientific advice | 38 | 5.3 | 33 |
| Quality of opinions | 41 | 5.6 | |
| Efficiency in risk assessments | 21 | 5.3 | |
| Emerging risks | 39 | 5.2 | |
| Harmonizartion of RA methods | 29 | 5.2 | |
| Independence and objectivity | 52 | 5.5 | |
| Transparency | 37 | 5.2 | |
| Risk communication | 30 | 5.1 | |
| Engagement with partners | 36 | 4.7 | |
| Assistance for crisis management | 41 | 4.8 | |
| Governance | 29 | 5 | |
| Innovativeness | 33 | 4.5 | |

- Positive reputation score overall
- Relatively high scores across all attributes
- Highest score: independence and objectivity
- Lowest score: efficiency in risk assessments
- Indications that the group is mixed (wide range of responses across most attributes)
- Sentiment positive but half of all respondents disagreed with the statement "EFSA acts in the interest of the EU economy"

# Businesses, farmers and primary producers

| Attributes | Performance (on a -100 to +100 scale) | Weighting (on a 1-6 scale) | Reputation score (on a -100 to 100 scale) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Approach to scientific advice | 27 | 5.3 | 20 |
| Quality of opinions | 36 | 5.6 | |
| Efficiency in risk assessments | -4 | 5.7 | |
| Emerging risks | 36 | 5.2 | |
| Harmonization of RA methods | 7 | 5.2 | |
| Independence and objectivity | 33 | 5.2 | |
| Transparency | 29 | 4.8 | |
| Risk communication | 26 | 4.6 | |
| Engagement with partners | 14 | 5.1 | |
| Assistance for crisis management | 20 | 4 | |
| Governance | 12 | 4 | |
| Innovativeness | 19 | 4.4 | |

- Reputation score "low positive"
- A few attributes received low or negative scores
- Highest score: quality of opinions & emerging risks
- Lowest score: efficiency in risk assessments
- Some discrepancies within the group (wide range of scores for some attributes)
- Sentiment is good overall but half of all respondents disagreed with the statement "EFSA acts in the interest of the EU economy"

# Consumer and environmental NGOs

| Attributes | Performance (on a -100 to +100 scale) | Weighting (on a 1-6 scale) | Reputation score (on a -100 to 100 scale) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Approach to scientific advice | 13 | 5.6 | 3 |
| Quality of opinions | 11 | 5.8 | |
| Efficiency in risk assessments | -14 | 5.2 | |
| Emerging risks | 17 | 4.6 | |
| Harmonization of RA methods | 33 | 4.6 | |
| Independence and objectivity | -4 | 5.8 | |
| Transparency | -11 | 5.6 | |
| Risk communication | 3 | 5.4 | |
| Engagement with partners | 7 | 4.2 | |
| Assistance for crisis management | 0 | 4.8 | |
| Governance | 0 | 5.4 | |
| Innovativeness | -8 | 4.6 | |

- Overall reputation score is neutral
- Scores across attributes vary
- Highest score: harmonization of risk assessment methods
- Lowest score: efficiency in risk assessments
- A consistent group (but this is based on only 5 respondents)
- Sentiment mixed. Positive views on EFSA as an organisation but not on whether EFSA acts in the interests of the environment (40% disagree, 40% undecided) or consumers (20% disagree, 60% undecided)

# Scientific Community

| Attributes | Performance (on a -100 to +100 scale) | Weighting (on a 1-6 scale) | Reputation score (on a -100 to 100 scale) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Approach to scientific advice | 54 | 4.9 | 42 |
| Quality of opinions | 52 | 5.5 | |
| Efficiency in risk assessments | 37 | 4.8 | |
| Emerging risks | 50 | 5.2 | |
| Harmonization of RA methods | 45 | 5 | |
| Independence and objectivity | 44 | 5.5 | |
| Transparency | 50 | 5.1 | |
| Risk communication | 48 | 4.9 | |
| Engagement with partners | 37 | 4.6 | |
| Assistance for crisis management | 40 | 4.1 | |
| Governance | 48 | 4 | |
| Innovativeness | 43 | 4.4 | |

- Generally positive reputation score overall
- High scores across all attributes
- Highest score: approach to scientific advice
- Lowest score: efficiency in risk assessments
- Indications that this is a heterogeneous audience (wide range of responses across all attributes)
- Sentiment very positive overall (30% disagree that EFSA acts in the interest of the EU economy, 10% disagree that it acts in the interest of consumers)

# Attributes receiving lowest scores

- **Efficiency in risk assessments**
  - Consistently scored the lowest across all groups
  - Concerns with timeliness and predictability of EFSA's risk assessment work
  - An area where EFSA could improve its reputation across all groups

- **Independence and objectivity**
  - Scores were not poor overall
  - However, interviewees across all groups identified this as a problematic area
  - Views on what should be done were inconsistent from one group to the next
  - It would be challenging to address the concerns of all groups

# Next steps

- "Insider survey" with EP: 2018
- Detailed stakeholder mapping: 2018
- Next edition of reputation barometer: 2019

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