



# EFSA's Reputation Barometer

Management Board Meeting  
21 March 2018

## 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

## Definitions

Reputation is:

**“a set of symbolic beliefs about the unique or separable capacities, roles, and obligations of an organization, where these beliefs are embedded in audience networks\*”**

Three key elements:

**Attributes** – “unique or separable capacities, roles, and obligations” of EFSA.

**Audiences** – “embedded in audience networks”.

**Temporality** – EFSA’s reputation can be understood as a contemporary, historical or forward-looking construct.

\*Carpenter, *Reputation and power: Organizational image and pharmaceutical regulation at the FDA*, 2010

## Preliminary data collection

Literature review



Media analysis



Exploratory  
interviews



## 12 Attributes of Reputation for EFSA

- Approach to providing **scientific advice**
- The **quality** of EFSA's risk assessment opinions
- The **efficiency** of EFSA in producing risk assessments
- The identification and characterization of **emerging risks** 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%
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>30%</b>

## Limitations

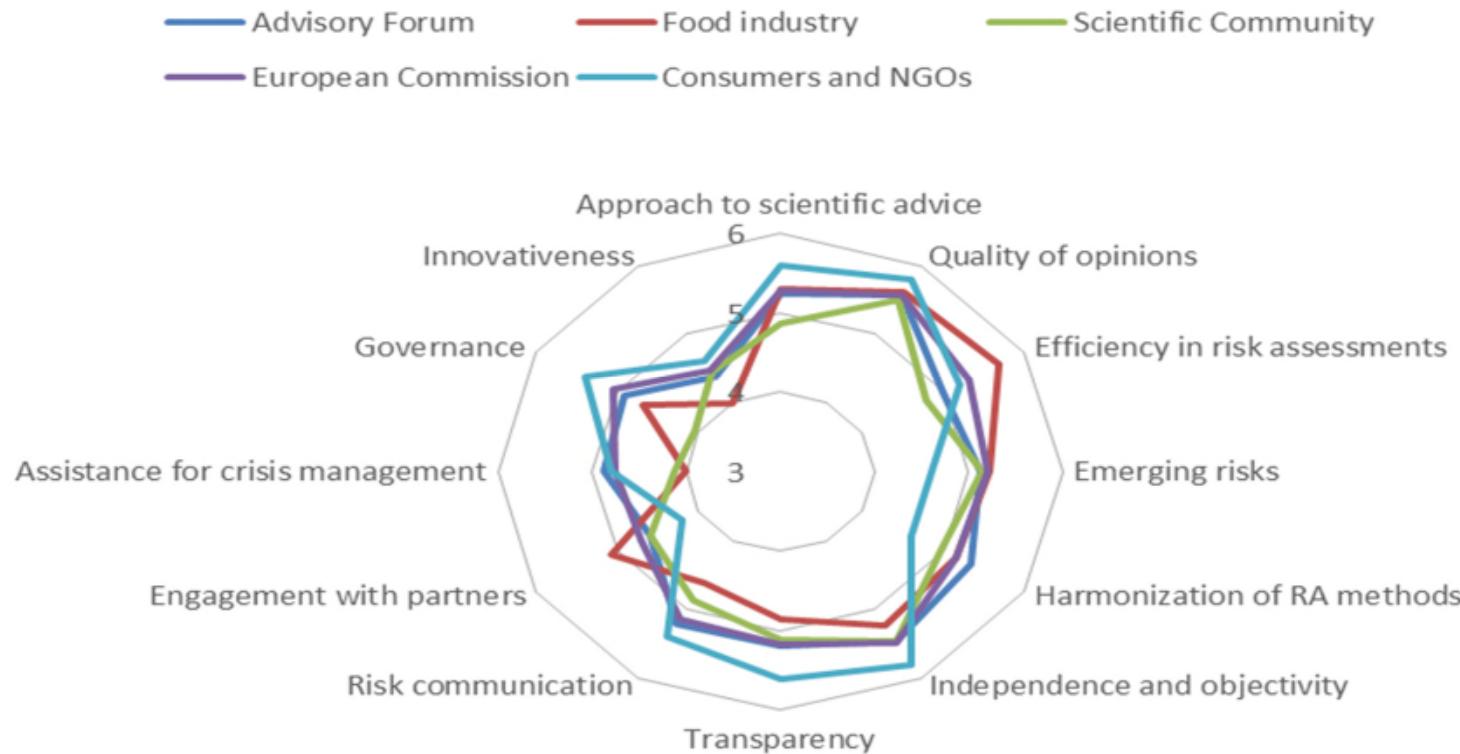
- Some untested assumptions – e.g. degree of homogeneity of different groups
- Sampling strategies differed across all groups for practical reasons
- Participation was low from certain groups
- Missing audiences – e.g. the EP and risk managers in MS

## 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

## Overview – importance scores per attribute and per audience



## 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	
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	

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- 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	
Harmonization 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	
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	

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- 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
- 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
- **Conflicts of interest / 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