

NOTE TO THE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Proposal for the adoption of a revised Anti-Fraud Strategy

1. The importance of the fight against fraud

Fraud involving EU funds significantly impacts EFSA's and the EU's reputation as it affects the image of the EU, reduces the effectiveness of its administrative action and ultimately may put the EU project at risk¹. This is acknowledged at the highest level within the Union legal system, as it is shown by Article 325 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

2. Main purpose and changes brought forward by the revised Anti-Fraud Strategy

In October 2021, EFSA adopted its second Anti-Fraud Strategy and the related Action Plan.² The said Anti-Fraud Strategy and related Action plan prescribed the initiation of a review of the AFS in place by the end of 2024, with the possibility for the Executive Director of tabling a revised AFS for discussion and adoption by its Management Board.

The present Anti-Fraud Strategy is the result of a revision that was developed considering, among others, the priorities set by the European Commission's latest Anti-Fraud Strategy and Action Plan, OLAF guidance, the outcome of the Fraud Risk assessment carried out in 2024, and the list of red flags identified at the end of the same year for the processes most exposed to fraud. It was also developed following an ex-post evaluation of the previous version of the AFS, an extensive internal consultation process and the external consultation with EFSA's Partner Directorate General of the European Commission, i.e. DG Health and Food Safety, as well as with OLAF.

The main changes brought to the previous version of the Strategy include:

- a. An updated section describing EFSA's operating environment;
- b. A broader scope, including the different management modes as well as operational and administrative appropriations;
- c. A list of resources devoted to anti-fraud activities;
- d. An action plan implementing the Strategy directly into the document;
- e. A revised final section, clarifying entry into force, validity and review process.

¹ European Anti-Fraud Office, "Methodology and guidance for anti-fraud strategies for EU decentralised agencies", Ref. Ares (2013)3560341, dated 25.11.2013 and the European Anti-Fraud Office "Methodology and guidance for anti-fraud strategies for DG's anti-fraud strategies", Ref. Ares (2016)931345 dated 23.02.2016.

² EFSA's Anti-Fraud Strategy 2021 adopted on 14 October 2021, available online at https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-02/anti-fraud-strategy-efsa-2021_3.pdf.

3. Proposed way forward

In line with the approach explained above, EFSA proposes that the Management Board adopts the revised Anti-Fraud Strategy enclosed to the present note.

