26 March 2026 – 9:00 A.M.
MINUTES

103rd meeting of the EFSA Management Board – public session

Location: EFSA (Parma) and online

Management Board participants	
Member States	Janusz CIOK (Poland)
Aivars BĒRZIŅŠ – Chair (Latvia)	Ana BATALHA (Portugal)
Ana VILORIA – Vice-Chair (Netherlands)	Laszlo CSUTAK-NAGY* (Romania)
Ulrich HERZOG* (Austria)	Martin CHUDÝ (Slovakia)
Christine ROMEYNS (Belgium)	Jernej DROFENIK* (Slovenia)
Koycho KOEV* (Bulgaria)	Andrés BARRAGÁN URBIOLA* (Spain)
Darja SOKOLIĆ (Croatia)	Christina NORDIN* (Sweden)
Stelios YIANNOPOULOS* (Cyprus)	**European Parliament**
Jindřich FIALKA (Czech Rep.)	Sanja MUSIĆ MILANOVIĆ
Cecilie SOLSTAD (Denmark)	Astrid THORS
Triin KÖRGMAA (Estonia)	**European Commission**
Marjatta RAHKIO (Finland)	Claire BURY
Loïc EVAIN (France)	Gijsbertus SCHILTHUIS
Marie-Luise TREBES* (Germany)	**Civil Society and Food Chain Interests**
Antonis ZAMPELAS* (Greece)	Floriana CIMMARUSTI (Consumer Org.s)
Szabolcs Pásztor* (Hungary)	Martin DERMINE (Environmental NGOs)
Greg DEMPSEY (Ireland)	Annette TOFT (Farmers Org.)
Ugo DELLA MARTA (Italy)	**European Free Trade Association**
Egidijus PUMPUTIS (Lithuania)	Hrönn Ólína JÖRUNDSDÓTTIR (Iceland)
Patrick HAU (Luxemburg)	Ingunn MIDTTUN GODAL (Norway)
Ingrid BORG (Malta)	Janne Britt KRAKHELLEN (EFTA S.A.)

Apologies: Industry Organisations.

Staff of the European Food Safety Authority	
Nikolaus KRIZ (Executive Director)	Guilhem DE SEZE
Lucia BILARDI	Dirk DETKEN
Gian Luca BONDURI	Barbara GALLANI
Carlos DAS NEVES	Bénédicte VAGENENDE
Peter DE PAUW	Luisa VENIER

*Participation online

Also attending:

Susanne HOUGAARD BENNEKOU, Chair of the EFSA Scientific Committee; Veronica MANFREDI*, Director of Zero Pollution, Water Resiliance & Green Urban Transition at the Directorate-General for Environment of the European Commission; and Holger ZORN*, Chair of the EFSA Scientific Panel on Food Enzymes.

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Notice

These minutes have been drafted with the support of AI-assisted transcriptions of the meeting discussions, ensuring full human oversight. The transcriptions were reviewed and used as additional reference by the Management Board Secretariat to prepare the draft minutes of the meeting, which were subsequently adopted by the Management Board of EFSA in accordance with the procedure outlined in Article 11 of its Rules of Procedure.

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

The Management Board adopted:

- The Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2025, which presents the results achieved in the implementation of the 2025 work programme.
- The assessment of the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2025 prepared by the Audit Committee.
- The amendment to the EFSA 2026 budget, incorporating the bank interest accrued by EFSA in 2025.
- The updated list of Article 36 competent organisations designated by Member States, now including nine new organisations designated by Belgium, Finland, Italy, Malta, Norway, Poland and the Netherlands.

In addition, the Management Board noted:

- The presentation by the Commission's Directorate-General for Environment on the One Substance, One Assessment legislative package.
- EFSA's presentation on joining forces and partnerships, which focused on framing partnerships as a core lever to achieve the strategic priority of joining forces.
- EFSA's presentation on the implementation of its Social Science Roadmap, which provided a concise overview of EFSA's social science activities.
- The update from the Chair of the Panel on Food Enzymes, Prof. Holger Zorn, who presented the activities carried out by the Panel and its work plan.

Item 1: Welcome by the Chair.

1. Aivars Bērziņš, Chair of the Management Board, opened the 103rd Management Board meeting and welcomed the Board members, Executive Director, Chair of the Scientific Committee, EFSA's Management Team, EFSA staff present, and external observers. As this was their first Management Board meeting, he gave a special welcome to Triin Körgmaa (Estonia) and Andrés Barrágan Urbiola (Spain). The audio file for this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda.

2. The Management Board adopted the agenda of the meeting by consensus. The audio file for this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 3: Board members' Oral Declarations of Interests.

3. The Chair invited the Management Board members to declare any potential interests related to the agenda items, as well as any interests in addition to those already disclosed in their Annual Declarations of Interest. No additional declarations of interest were made. The audio file for this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 4: Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2025.

4. Nikolaus Kriz, Executive Director, introduced the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2025 (CAAR 2025) to the Management Board, highlighting a strategic shift towards accelerating EFSA's overall performance through organisational efficiency, digital enablement, and strengthened partnerships. The report concludes that, in 2025, EFSA delivered solid scientific output, effective risk communication, and sound organisational performance, while recognising the need to further simplify processes, enhance data digitalisation, and improve the timeliness of assessments. Dirk Detken, Head of the Management Services Department, complemented the presentation with an overview of resource management in 2025, confirming financial stability and sound budget execution. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for further details.
5. Patrick Hau, Chair of the Audit Committee, reported on the Committee's review of the CAAR 2025 and the draft Management Board assessment. The Committee examined performance results, resource management, internal control, audit outcomes, and stakeholder satisfaction.
6. By consensus, Management Board members adopted the CAAR 2025, acknowledging EFSA's strong overall performance and sound financial management. The Board discussed the balance between speed, innovation, and scientific excellence, stressing that measures aimed at improving the speed of risk assessment must not entail any relaxation of EFSA's scientific standards. The importance of maintaining independence and methodological rigour was reiterated. Members reflected on the role of pre-submission advice in improving dossier quality and reducing delays, while noting the need for clear safeguards. Regarding the assessment of plant protection products (PPP), the French representative highlighted the need to address insufficient capacity in this area. In the context of the reflections on the EFSA Strategy 2028–2034, he reiterated France's position in favour of EU-level marketing authorisations for PPPs, following an approach similar to that applied by EMA for veterinary medicinal products. He also invited EFSA to give greater visibility to Food Risk Assess Europe (FRAE), which is designed as an open-access repository of selected scientific outputs from national food safety agencies across the EU.
7. In accordance with Article 47 of the Financial Regulations applicable to EFSA, and based on the report by Patrick Hau, Chair of the Audit Committee, the Management Board also adopted the assessment of the CAAR 2025 by consensus. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at the following link.

8. **Action**: EFSA will notify the competent EU institutions of the CAAR 2025 and make it available online.

Item 5: Amendment of the EFSA Budget 2026.

9. The Management Board adopted by consensus the Decision amending EFSA's 2026 budget to incorporate the bank interest accrued in 2025. The audio-file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 6: Amendments to the Article 36 list of organisations.

10. The Management Board adopted by consensus the updated list of Art. 36 competent organisations designated by the Member States. The list now includes nine new organisations designated by Belgium, Finland, Italy, Malta, Norway, Poland and the Netherlands, bringing the total number of organisations designated by the Member States to assist EFSA in implementing its mandate to 338. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 7: One Substance, One Assessment.

11. Veronica Manfredi, Director of Zero Pollution, Water Resiliance & Green Urban Transition at the Commission's Directorate-General for Environment presented an overview of the One Substance, One Assessment (OSOA) legislative package. The presentation informed the public that the OSOA approach aims to improve the efficiency, coherence, transparency and scientific consistency of chemical safety assessments across the EU legislation through enhanced cooperation, shared data and harmonised methodologies. It also highlighted EFSA's important role in contributing food and feed data to a common EU chemicals data platform, supporting the early identification of risks and stronger protection of human health and the environment. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for further details.
12. Management Board members welcomed the initiative and its strategic importance, while underlining the scale of the challenge and the opportunities it presents for agencies. It was suggested that a future presentation could focus more specifically on the concrete impact of OSOA on EFSA's activities, working modalities and interactions with Member States and other EU bodies. The audio-file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.
13. **Action**: Include in the agenda of a forthcoming meeting an exchange on the impact of OSOA on EFSA's activities and working modalities.

Item 8: Speed, innovation and joining forces – Focus on joining forces and partnership.

14. The Management Board took note of the presentation by Barbara Gallani, Head of the Communication and Partnership Department, and Guilhem de Seze, Head of the Risk Assessment Production Department, on experience gained through partnerships in risk assessment, including achievements, challenges and lessons learned. The presentation set out EFSA's objective of prioritising partnership models and explained how the Authority works with Member States and other EU bodies to maximise collective impact, while clarifying the perceived return on investment. The Executive Director underlined that joining forces with Member States remains a core element of EFSA's future operating model. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for further details.
15. The Management Board recognised partnerships as a strategic necessity for EFSA, particularly in the context of increasing demands and constrained resources. Members highlighted, however, several challenges from a Member State perspective, notably limited predictability of workloads and funding, administrative burden, human resource constraints, and national legal requirements, especially for regulated products. While inviting EFSA to continue monitoring the performance and added value of partnerships, some members suggested reducing administrative complexity where possible, involving Member States in joint

programming actions, and strengthening cooperation on guidance development. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

16. **Action**: EFSA to take note of the remarks, difficulties identified and suggestions for improvement, and to report back to the Management Board at a later stage on the issues raised.

Item 9: Social Science research.

17. The Management Board took note of the presentation by Barbara Gallani, Head of the Communication and Partnership Department, on the implementation of EFSA's Social Science Roadmap. The presentation provided a concise overview of EFSA's social science activities, including key findings and uses of the 2025 Eurobarometer on Food Safety. The work carried out covers social research and social science advice in support of risk assessment, communication and engagement, methodological development, and the assessment of EFSA's own performance, including through surveys. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for further details.

18. The Management Board welcomed the further integration and consolidation of social science research within EFSA's activities, and acknowledged its contribution to strengthening the evidence base for risk assessment, communication and engagement, including in addressing false information and understanding consumer perceptions and behaviour. It underlined the strategic importance of the Eurobarometer survey and flash polls and appreciated the continued development and use of social science research to support Member States and enhance the impact and effectiveness of EFSA's scientific and communication work. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 10: Feedback from the Audit Committee.

19. The Managemetn Board noted the presentation by Patrick Hau, Chair of the Audit Committee, on the Committee's meeting held the previous day. Besides the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2025, already addressed under the agenda item no. 4, the Audit Committee had received an update from EFSA on the implementation of the digital strategy, including the digital financial plan for the coming years, and the roadmap for digital services and artificial intelligence (AI). The Audit Committee discussed in particular the use of AI in administrative and scientific work, the need to ensure AI literacy across EFSA staff, and related challenges, including the reliability of AI outputs and potential implications for risk assessment. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 11: Update from the Panel on Food Enzymes.

20. The Management Board noted the presentation of Prof. Holger Zorn, Chair of the Panel on Food Enzymes (FEZ), who presented the Panel's work highlighting its responsibilities, organisation and recent achievements. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

21. Management Board members exchanged views with the Chair of the FEZ Panel on expertise needs, consumer information and allergenicity considerations, and experience with partnerships with Member States. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 14: Any Other Business

22. No items were raised under Any Other Business. The Chair thanked Management Board members, EFSA management and staff for their contributions, recalled that the June meeting will be the final one of the current Board composition, and closed the meeting. The audio file of the presentation of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Summary of actions

Action reference	Action	Deadline	Status
March 26, 2026 - 1	EFSA to notify the competent EU institutions of the CAAR 2025 and make it available online.	31 March 2026	DONE
March 26, 2026 - 2	Include in the agenda of a forthcoming meeting an exchange on the impact of One Substance One Assessment legislative package on EFSA’s activities and working modalities.	2027	OPEN
March 26, 2026 - 3	Regarding the area of joining forces and partnership in risk assessment, EFSA to take note of the remarks, difficulties identified and suggestions for improvement conveyed by the Management Board, and to report back to the Management Board at a later stage on the issues raised.	2027	OPEN