25 June 2026 – 9:30 A.M.
MINUTES

104th 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)
Gergana BALIEVA (Bulgaria)	Pedro GULLÓN* (Spain)
Darja SOKOLIĆ (Croatia)	Kristina GRANELLI (Sweden)
Stelios YIANNOPOULOS (Cyprus)	**European Parliament**
Martin ŠTĚPÁNEK* (Czechia)	Astrid THORS
Cecilie SOLSTAD (Denmark)	**European Commission**
Pille TAMMEMÄGI* (Estonia)	Claire BURY*
Sebastian HIELM (Finland)	Gijsbertus SCHILTHUIS*
Loïc EVAIN* (France)	**Civil Society and Food Chain Interests**
Marie-Luise TREBES (Germany)	Floriana CIMMARUSTI* (Consumer Org.s)
Antonis ZAMPELAS (Greece)	Martin DERMINE (Environmental NGOs)
Szabolcs PÁSZTOR (Hungary)	Annette TOFT (Farmers Org.)
Greg DEMPSEY (Ireland)	**European Free Trade Association**
Ugo DELLA MARTA* (Italy)	Hrönn Ólína JÖRUNDSDÓTTIR (Iceland)
Egidijus PUMPUTIS (Lithuania)	Ingunn MIDTTUN GODAL (Norway)
Patrick HAU* (Luxemburg)	Margrét Björk SIGURÐARDÓTTIR (EFTA S.A.)
Ingrid BORG (Malta)	

*Participation online

Apologies: Sanja Musić Milanović (European Parliament), Industry Organisations.

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

Also attending:

Laurence CASTLE*, Chair of the EFSA Scientific Panel on Food Additives and Flavourings.

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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 opinion on EFSA's accounts for the financial year 2025.
- The decision appointing a new member of the BIOHAZ Panel.
- The amendment to EFSA's 2026 budget, incorporating the contribution agreements with the Directorate-General for Enlargement and the Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST) and the Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV).
- The updated list of Article 36 competent organisations designated by Member States.

In addition, the Management Board noted:

- EFSA's Performance Report (P1), which provided an update on the implementation of the Single Programming Document 2026–2028, covering the activities undertaken and the outcomes achieved up to April 2026.
- A presentation on the strategies introduced by EFSA to enhance the performance of its risk assessment activities.
- The Chair's presentation highlighting the main achievements of the Management Board since it began its term on 1 July 2022.
- The feedback from the Audit Committee Chair on the meeting held the previous day.
- A presentation on EFSA's global cooperation, which updated the Management Board on EFSA's activities with global partners.
- A presentation on EFSA's scientific publishing activities, which updated the Management Board on their performance and the feedback received from users.
- The update from the Chair of the Panel on Food Additives and Flavourings, Prof Laurence Castle, who provided an overview of the current state of play of EFSA's FAF Panel, including its role, assessment approaches, ongoing work and key challenges.

Item 1: Welcome by the Chair.

1. Aivars Bērziņš, Chair of the Management Board, opened the 104th Management Board meeting and welcomed the Board members, Executive Director, EFSA's Management Team, EFSA staff present, and external observers. 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 agenda was adopted with the following items under Any Other Business: (1) Feedback from the Chair on his participation in the EFSA Stakeholder Bureau meeting of 21 April 2026, and (2) Feedback from the Chair on his participation in the EFSA Advisory Forum meeting of 10-11 June 2026. 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: EFSA accounts 2025 financial year.

4. Based on the presentation introduced by Pedro Pinhal, EFSA's accountant, and noting the feedback provided by Patrick Hau, Chair of the Audit Committee, the Management Board gave a positive opinion on EFSA's financial accounts for the previous year by consensus. The Management Board was pleased to note that the European Court of Auditors had no observations regarding the accounts of the 2025 financial year. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.
5. **Action**: EFSA to notify the Management Board's opinion on EFSA's accounts 2025 to the EU competent Institutions by 1 July 2026.

Item 5: Appointment of a member of the BIOHAZ Panel.

6. The Management Board adopted by consensus the Decision on the appointment of a new member of the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards, as well as the updated reserve list of experts for the Scientific Committee and the Scientific Panels. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

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

7. The Management Board adopted by consensus the updated list of Article 36 competent organisations designated by the Member States. The list now includes six new organisations designated by Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland, bringing the total number of organisations designated by the Member States to assist EFSA in implementing its mandate to 361. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 7: EFSA Performance Report.

8. Nikolaus Kriz, Executive Director, and Dirk Detken, Head of Management Services Department, introduced the EFSA performance report to the Management Board, covering the period from 1 January to 30 April 2026. The document provides an overview of EFSA's performance against the Programming Document 2026-2028. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

9. Noting the first performance report of the year, Management Board members welcomed the overall positive performance, while underlining the need to further progress on timeliness, especially in the pesticides area. Board members sought clarifications on EFSA's cooperation with Ukraine and Moldova, the scope and uptake of the EU-FORA fellowship programme, and the possible implications of the simplification package and related legislative initiatives for EFSA's workload. The audio-file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 8: Amendment of the EFSA budget 2026.

10. Dirk Detken, Head of Management Services Department, presented the third amendment to EFSA's 2026 budget, explaining that it amounted to EUR 3.21 million and was linked to two contribution agreements. The first agreement, with the Commission's Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood, concerned support under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) for the Western Balkans and Türkiye, and under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) for Ukraine and Moldova. The second agreement, with the Directorate-General for Environment, related to EFSA's additional responsibilities under the One Substance-One Assessment legislation, in particular the establishment of the European Common Data Platform on Chemicals. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.
11. The Management Board adopted the third amendment to EFSA's 2026 budget by consensus. The audio-file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 9: Update on speed of Risk Assessment.

12. Guilhem de Seze, Head of Risk Assessment Production Department, and Bénédicte Vagenende, Head of Risk Assessment Services Department a.i., introduced the item by recalling that speed, together with innovation and joining forces, is one of the key priorities guiding EFSA's evolution. Guilhem de Seze stressed that accelerating risk assessments must be achieved without compromising scientific excellence and independence, and presented the indicators used to monitor performance, including stakeholder satisfaction, scientific output, stock of questions, legal timeliness and end-to-end throughput time. He explained that recent analyses had identified four main pillars for improvement: receiving more mature applications, streamlining risk assessment processes, increasing assessment capacity, and ensuring fit-for-purpose outputs. Bénédicte Vagenende presented the practical measures being implemented under these pillars, including enhanced support to applicants and Member States, strengthened pre-submission advice, targeted training initiatives, stricter management of dossier quality, reduced reliance on repeated clock stops, digital monitoring tools, and improvements to guidance documents. She also reported on the first positive results achieved and the ambitious targets set to further reduce assessment times in the coming years. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for further details.
13. The Management Board welcomed EFSA's comprehensive and systematic approach to improving the speed of risk assessment and acknowledged the progress achieved to date. Members supported the objective of increasing timeliness while maintaining scientific excellence, independence and a high level of consumer protection. The discussion highlighted the need for continued efforts to improve dossier quality, strengthen cooperation with Member States, streamline regulatory processes and enhance early coordination across risk assessment and risk management actors. Some members emphasised the importance of addressing persistent structural bottlenecks, including delays linked to applicants and national authorities, and encouraged EFSA to continue exploring innovative approaches and partnership models to further increase the efficiency and responsiveness of the EU risk assessment system. The French representative suggested strengthening early coordination between EFSA, national agencies and risk managers to avoid duplication of work and better align priorities before mandates are formally issued. He also proposed providing the Board

with an annual summary of progress against the four pillars of EFSA's speed improvement strategy. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

14. **Action**: EFSA to provide the Management Board with an annual update on progress in implementing measures to improve the speed of risk assessment.

Item 10: Management Board mandate 2022-2026.

15. The Chair introduced the item by recalling that this was the last meeting of the Management Board in its current composition. He reflected on the achievements of the Management Board during its 2022–2026 mandate, highlighting the successful transition to the governance framework introduced by the Transparency Regulation and the Board's role in strengthening EFSA's governance and strategic direction. Key milestones included revisions to governance documents, the adoption of a revised Independence Policy, the appointment of EFSA's Executive Director, and the launch of preparations for EFSA Strategy 2028–2034.
16. The Chair emphasised the Board's focus on supporting initiatives on speed, innovation and strengthened cooperation with Member States. He acknowledged the important contribution of the Audit Committee and the Management Board Sub-Groups, whose work provided strategic input on key governance, independence and strategy matters, supporting the Board's decision-making throughout the mandate. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for further details.
17. The Management Board members expressed their appreciation for the leadership and commitment of the Chair and Vice-Chair throughout the mandate, recognising their role in fostering a constructive and collaborative working environment. They also acknowledged the significant contribution of the outgoing members and thanked them for their dedication and service in supporting EFSA's governance, strategic development and effective functioning over the past four years. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 11: Feedback from the Audit Committee.

18. The Management Board noted the presentation by Patrick Hau, Chair of the Audit Committee, on the Committee's meeting held the previous day. Besides the review of EFSA's 2025 annual accounts, already addressed under the agenda item no. 4, the Audit Committee had received updates from EFSA on the implementation of the outstanding audit recommendations, the evolution of EFSA's budgetary expenditure, and the outcome of the discharge procedure for EFSA's 2024 budget. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 12: Global cooperation: Methodology development and engagement.

19. Barbara Gallani, Head of Communication and Partnership Department, highlighted the importance of coordination and joint work at global level, particularly in relation to capacity building, harmonisation of methodologies and access to data. She explained that EFSA's priorities in these areas are aligned with its current Strategy and include the provision of technical and scientific support to the European Commission, as well as cooperation with third countries, international organisations and pre-accession countries. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.
20. In the discussion, the French representative suggested that EFSA consider establishing a tool through which Member States could share and regularly update information on their cooperation agreements or protocols with third countries, with a view to improving coordination and avoiding duplication of efforts. EFSA welcomed the suggestion, noting that similar discussions had taken place in the Advisory Forum and Heads of Agencies context, and referred to the need of mapping memoranda of cooperation and training activities that

are ongoing or planned. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

21. **Action**: EFSA to consider the feasibility of putting in place a tool through which Member States could share information on their cooperation agreements or protocols with third countries, and report to the Management Board.

Item 13: EFSA Journal: Performance and developments.

22. Barbara Gallani, Head of Communication and Partnership Department, presented an update on the EFSA Journal, highlighting its continued growth in publications, downloads and citations, as well as the increasing success of "Food Risk Assess Europe", which now includes more than 100 articles produced by national food safety authorities. User feedback identified areas for improvement, including data accessibility, search functionality, clarity of language and publication speed, which will inform the next procurement procedure. Barbara Gallani also outlined plans for the future development of the Journal, with a focus on maintaining its reputation and impact while enhancing efficiency and user experience. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

23. The French representative sought clarification on the procurement procedure for the next EFSA Journal contract, including the costs-benefit assessment of alternative publication models, the duration of the contract and the need for flexibility in light of developments in scientific publishing. EFSA explained that alternative platforms had been assessed but that the current model remained the most suitable option for ensuring visibility and predictability. EFSA also highlighted the intention to build sufficient flexibility into the next contract to accommodate future technological and operational developments and undertook to share the procurement specifications once the call is launched. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

24. **Action**: EFSA to provide the Management Board with the specifications of the procurement call for the next EFSA Journal contract once the call is launched.

Item 14: Update from the Panel on Food Additives and Flavourings.

25. The Management Board noted the presentation of Prof Laurence Castle, Chair of the Panel on Food Additives and Flavourings (FAF), who presented the Panel's work highlighting its responsibilities, organisation and recent achievements. A PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

26. The Management Board members noted the stock of questions regarding the re-evaluation of food additives and the challenges associated with completing the programme. They also exchanged views on the potential links between food additives, ultra-processed foods and chronic diseases, with the Panel Chair noting that these issues are being considered, including through epidemiological evidence. The audio file of the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this link.

Item 15: Any Other Business

27. The Chair provided feedback on two events in which he had participated on behalf of the Management Board. He first referred to the meeting of the renewed Stakeholder Bureau, held online on 21 April 2026, noting the importance of maintaining dialogue with stakeholders, understanding their priorities and supporting their contribution to EFSA's work, including in preparation for forthcoming workshops and the Stakeholder Forum. He also informed the Management Board of his participation in the 100th meeting of the Advisory Forum, held in Parma on 10–11 June 2026. He underlined the value of regular exchanges between the Management Board and the Advisory Forum, including in relation to the development of EFSA's future Strategy and the engagement of the Advisory Forum in that process.

28. In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked all Management Board members for their active engagement and valuable contributions, expressing particular appreciation to the outgoing members for their commitment and service to EFSA throughout their mandates. He also thanked the Executive Director, the Management Team, all EFSA staff and the Management Board Secretariat for their continuous support, professionalism and dedication in ensuring the effective functioning of the Management Board.

Summary of actions

Action reference	Action	Deadline	Status
June 25, 2026 – 1	EFSA to notify the Management Board's opinion on EFSA's accounts 2025 to the EU competent Institutions.	1 July 2026	DONE
June 25, 2026 – 2	EFSA to provide the Management Board with an annual update on progress in implementing measures to improve the speed of risk assessment.	June 2027	OPEN
June 25, 2026 – 3	EFSA to consider the feasibility of putting in place a tool through which Member States could share information on their cooperation agreements or protocols with third countries, and report to the Management Board.	2027	OPEN
June 25, 2026 – 4	EFSA to provide the Management Board with the specifications of the procurement call for the next EFSA Journal contract.	Once the call is launched	OPEN