



Public consultations

TOOLKIT



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What is EFSA ?

Main responsibilities

- 01 Scientific advice to risk managers
- 02 Communication on food chain risks
- 03 Cooperation with interested parties
- 04 Promotion of EU scientific advice coherence
- 05 Scientific foundation for laws and regulations

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is an **agency of the European Union set up in 2002**. Its purpose is to **serve as an impartial source of scientific advice to risk managers** and to communicate on risks associated with the food chain.

EFSA provides the scientific basis for laws and regulations to protect European consumers from food-related risks and cooperates with interested parties to promote the coherence of EU scientific advice.

EFSA's remit covers food and feed safety, nutrition, animal health and welfare, plant protection and plant health. EFSA acts as a risk assessor to support the work of risk managers and policy makers.

RISK ASSESSOR

EFSA

- Evaluate risks associated with the food chain
- Provide scientific advice to support decision-making by risk managers



RISK MANAGERS

European Commission, EU Member State authorities, European Parliament

- Responsible for making decisions and creating legislation about food safety

For more information about EFSA, check out the [EFSA website](https://efsa.europa.eu/).



2

How can you get involved with EFSA's work?

Stay informed

Keep up-to-date with the latest news and developments from EFSA by visiting the website and following the social media channels.

Use EFSA online platforms

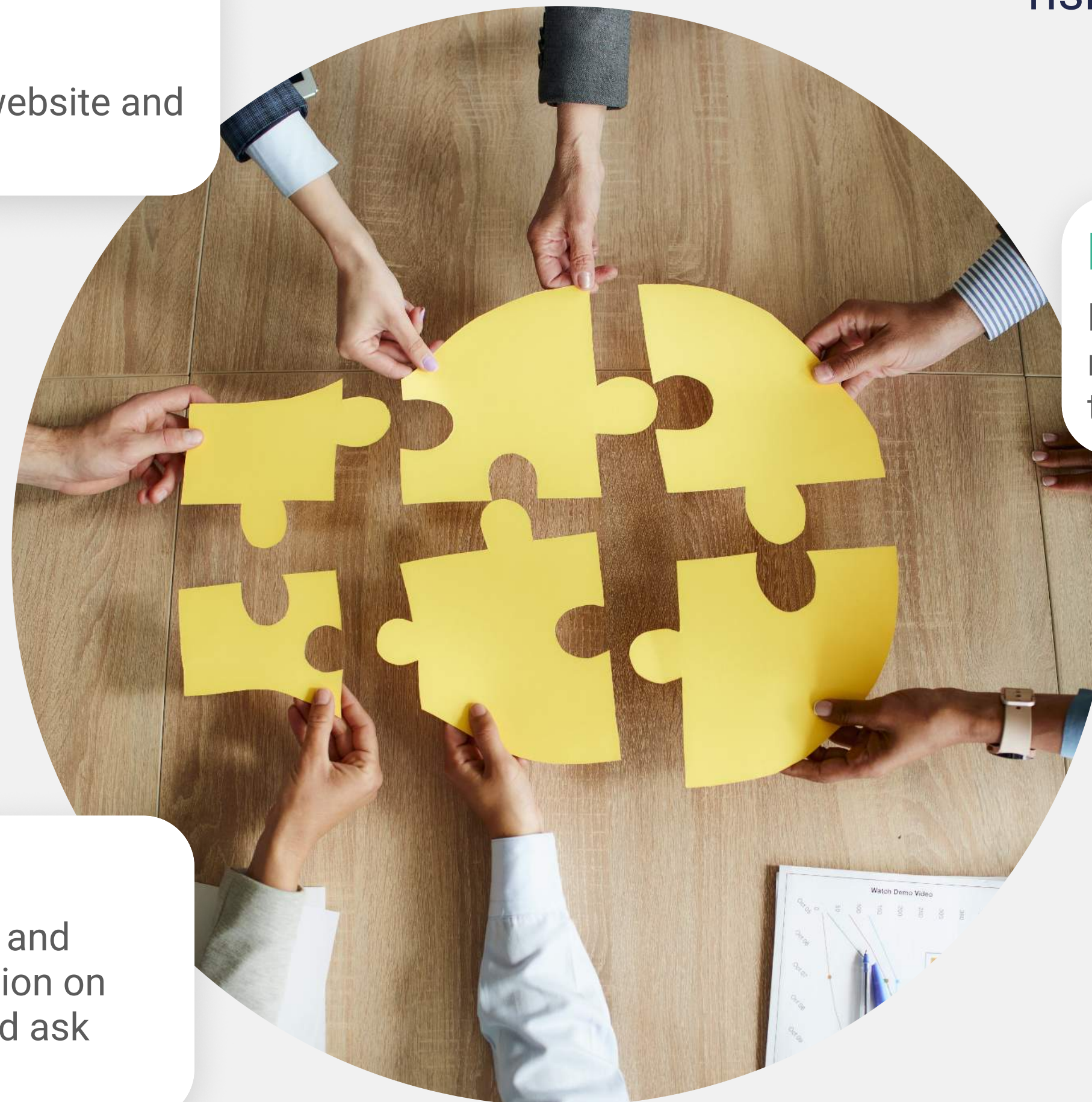
EFSA has two online platforms, Open EFSA and Connect EFSA, where you can find information on public consultations, submit comments, and ask questions.

EFSA wants to hear from you! As a key player in ensuring the safety of the food and feed chain, EFSA relies on input from interested parties to inform its risk assessment.

Using your insights, data and feedback, EFSA ensures that a wide range of views and scientific information is taken into consideration in the advice provided to risk managers.

Participate in public consultations

EFSA regularly holds consultations on various topics related to food safety. You can share your input on these topics to support EFSA's scientific work.



EFSA wants to hear from you!



What are public consultations?

1 Enhance transparency

2 Foster quality

Public consultations are a method for EFSA to engage with and collect input from external third parties.

They aim to enhance the transparency of the risk assessment process and foster the quality of EFSA's scientific production by collecting evidence, data, and information available outside EFSA.

EFSA consults on draft scientific outputs through different types of consultations explained in 3.7.

In some cases, public consultations may be complemented by other engagement activities, such as webinars or info sessions, aimed at illustrating the draft output and related public consultation.

EFSA public consultations represent one of the many engagement activities available, including thematic discussion groups, public events, open meetings of EFSA's Scientific Panels and Scientific Committee, and calls for data.





3.1

How do public consultations work?

What are public consultations?

3



Launch

The public consultation is published on Connect EFSA and includes

- Scope of the public consultation
- Scientific area
- Opening & closing date
- Data protection notice
- Legal notice
- Documents for consultation and other relevant documents



Promotion & Dissemination

- Automated notifications sent to those that registered interest in specific scientific domain
- Targeted mailing
- Publication in EFSA highlights newsletter
- Promotion on EFSA social media

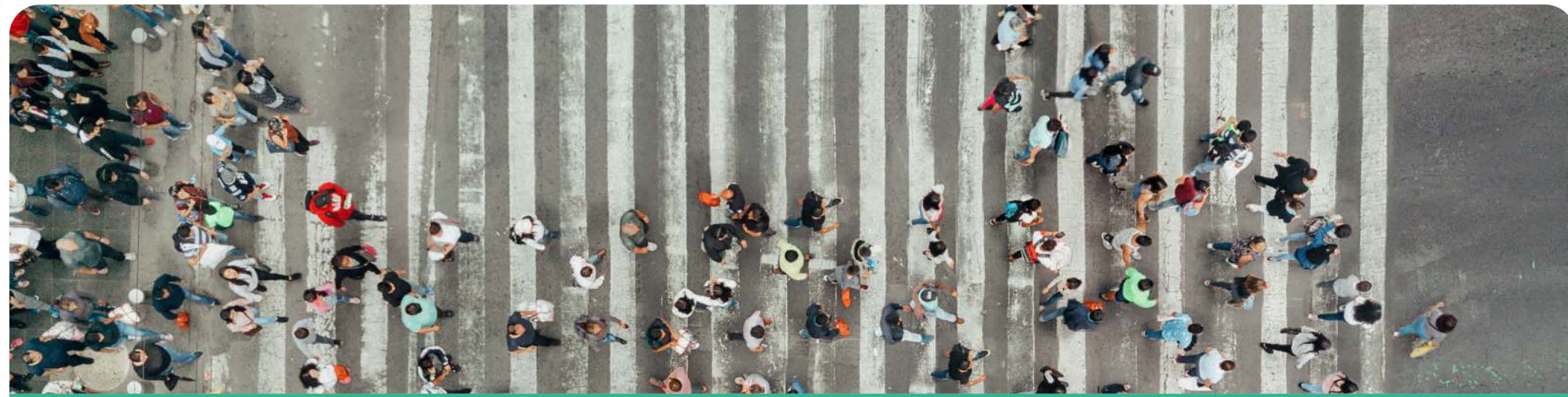


Active consultation period

- All interested parties can submit comments
- EFSA receives comments and associated attachments

Who can participate in public consultations?

Public consultations are **open to everyone** willing to contribute.



Publication of outcomes

Comments with their individual replies from EFSA are published as an annex in the EFSA Journal (under the supporting information section) and on Open EFSA in case of public consultations on DAR (Draft Assessment Report)/RAR (Renewal Assessment Report) for pesticides, in parallel to the relevant scientific output.



Closure of active consultation period

- Comments and attachments are automatically published on Open EFSA
- EFSA downloads & analyses received comments



Why should I get involved in a public consultation?

By participating in one of EFSA's public consultations, interested parties contribute to ensuring that EFSA's scientific assessment is based on the best scientific knowledge available, e.g. providing new or more comprehensive data, indicating missing scientific papers of possible significance, and that EFSA's scientific outputs are comprehensive, clear and relevant to the intended recipients.





3.4

What are public consultations?

3

How can I submit comments on a public consultation?

01

Select the open public consultation you would like to comment on.

You can do this via [Connect EFSA](#).

Connect EFSA 

02

Click on
Log in / Register

or

Continue as a guest

03

Upon registering/logging in or continuing as a guest a form will open to

1. Include your personal information
2. Accept the Legal and Data Protection notices
3. Request anonymous publication of comments if submitted in a private capacity
4. Draft and submit comments and supporting documents on the section(s) of your choice

04

If comments are entered as a logged in user, they can be saved and submitted later.

or

If comments are entered as a guest, they need to be submitted before closing.

Guest – without login

No possibility to save drafts of the comments or keep a record.

Personal account with login

Comments can be saved as draft version and finalised later. The account will serve as a repository of all the comments submitted.



3.5

What are public consultations?

3

How can I ensure my comments are considered by EFSA?

All comments provided in the right format by the specific deadline are duly considered by EFSA.

However, only those within EFSA's remit can be used to inform the assessment.

The guidelines explain how to make sure your comments and additional data or files can be considered.

Comments

Considered

- ✓ Submitted by the closing date of the consultation
- ✓ Containing relevant statements and remarks
- ✓ Scientific contributions directly related to the assessment
- ✓ Submitted according to the instructions and through the relevant tool

Not considered

- ✗ Saved in "draft" status in the tool (but not submitted by the closing date)
- ✗ Containing personal accusations, or offensive statements or material
- ✗ Policy issues such as social, ethical or economic aspects
- ✗ Sent by e-mail or in any other form outside the tool

Files attached to the comments

Considered

- ✓ Submitted using the digital form in the tool
- ✓ Searchable and downloadable documents
- ✓ Include complementary information and clearly link to a comment

Not considered

- ✗ Submitted by email or through other channels outside the tool
- ✗ Scanned and/or unsearchable documents
- ✗ Copy of what is already inserted in the comment fields



3.6

What are public consultations?

3

How are comments published?

When submitting comments through a public consultation you should know how they will be used and published.

How will comments be published?

Third-party comments will be **made public automatically** and in their original form upon closure of the consultation, without further editing.

- ✓ Comments submitted by individuals in a personal capacity will be published indicating the author's first and family name, unless anonymity is requested.
- ✓ Comments submitted on behalf of an organisation will be attributed to the organisation in question.
- ✓ Comments will be made public again at the end of the risk assessment as an annex in the EFSA Journal (under the supporting information section) or on Open EFSA as applicable. The annex will include all the comments and relevant replies.

Can anonymity be requested?

YES – interested parties commenting in a personal capacity can request that their name is not made public. This can be done by ticking the relevant box in the comment submission form. **HOWEVER**, the requestors need to ensure they are not identifiable either from the comments or the file attachments as comments and file attachments are published in their original form without further editing.

Comments provided on behalf of an organisation are attributed to the organisation while name and surname of the person commenting are not made public.



What types of public consultations are there?

EFSA runs various types of public consultations that fall into two main categories: generic mandates and applications.

GENERIC MANDATES

The following types of public consultations are not intended to be exhaustive but serve as examples of the most common types typically held for generic mandates.

Type	Purpose	Examples	Publication/Launch	Publication of outcomes
Public consultation on the draft risk assessment protocol	To gather information, data, views and sources helping EFSA define the scope and/ or approach/ methodology for the work to be conducted	Protocol for risks to human and animal health from presence of bromide in food and feed	<div>All public consultations on generic mandates are published on Connect EFSA.</div> <div>The consultations can also be viewed via Open EFSA.</div>	<div>Submitted comments are automatically published on Open EFSA upon closure of the consultation.</div> <div>Comments with replies are published in the EFSA Journal.</div>
Public consultation on the mandate's draft terms of reference		Protocol for human health risk assessment of fluoride in food and drinking water taking into account all sources of exposure		
Public consultation to collect input on the framing of a question		Scoping paper on the revision of the opinion on the Margin of Exposure for chemicals which are both genotoxic and carcinogenic		
Public consultation on the draft scientific output before adoption	Conducting groundwater monitoring studies in Europe for pesticide active substances and their metabolites in the context of Regulation (EC) 1107/2009 Gimsing et al. (2019)			
	To gather feedback to ensure the completeness, clarity and robustness of the conclusions reached by EFSA and its experts	Draft Scientific Opinion on the risks to human and animal health from the presence of bromide in food and feed Draft guidance for establishing and applying tolerable upper intake levels for vitamins and essential minerals		
Duration			<div>The average duration for public consultations related to generic mandates is 6 to 8 weeks. However, different timelines are possible.</div>	

APPLICATIONS

Type	Purpose	Duration	Examples	Publication/Launch	Publication of outcomes
Public consultations on list of intended studies	To review lists of intended studies for their relevance and design, to support a possible application for renewal	3 calendar weeks	List of intended studies for the renewal of the authorisation of Fumaric Acid as feed additive List of intended studies for the renewal of approval of bupirimate as a pesticide active substance	All public consultations on generic mandates are published on Connect EFSA . The consultations can also be viewed via Open EFSA.	Submitted comments are automatically published on Open EFSA upon closure of the consultation. Comments with replies are published in the EFSA Journal, except for the ones related to the consultations on DAR/RAR of pesticides, which are published on Open EFSA.
Public consultations on the final non-confidential version of a validated application dossier	To identify whether other relevant scientific data, studies and information that should be part of, or supporting, the submitted dossier, are available; and gather comments on the dossier itself	3 calendar weeks Pesticides Application for Renewal of the approval (AIR): 60 days	Application for the authorisation of the recycling process Starlinger viscotec_viscoZERO PET to produce recycled plastic for food contact uses		
Public consultation on the draft DAR (Draft Assessment Report)/ RAR (Renewal Assessment Report) for pesticide active substances prepared by the Rapporteur Member State	To gather feedback on the draft assessment report drafted by the Rapporteur Member State to feed and support the peer review of the assessment of the active substance subject of the consultation itself	60 days	Assessment Report on the active substance Dodine Assessments following the clock stop on endocrine disruption properties for the active substance pirimiphos-methyl in the context of pesticides peer review		

4

How does the commenting process work?



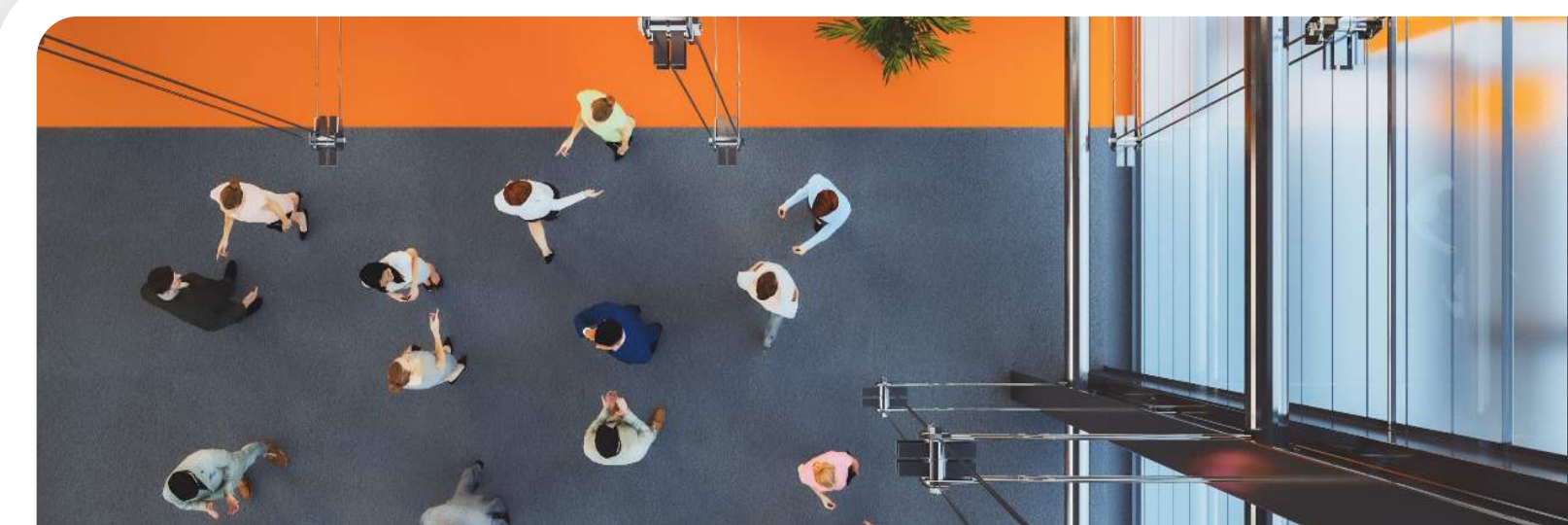
Active consultation period *

All interested parties can submit comments.

Once comments are submitted, interested parties receive an automatic email notification confirming the successful submission.

EFSA receives the comments and possible associated attachments.

* *differs depending on the type of public consultation*



Closure of the consultation

Once the consultations is closed, no further comments can be submitted.

Comments received by email (during and after) will not be considered.

Upon closure of the consultation:

- All submitted comments and related attachments become automatically public on Open EFSA
- EFSA downloads all the comments and documents received and begins the analysis process.



EFSA analysis and replies

EFSA staff together with the relevant scientific experts analyse all the comments and draft replies.

In the case of PC on DAR/RAR of pesticide active substances, the comments are collected in a reporting table along with the comments received by MS, EFSA and the applicant(s). EFSA draws its conclusions after the comments are analysed by the RMS and replied by the applicant(s).



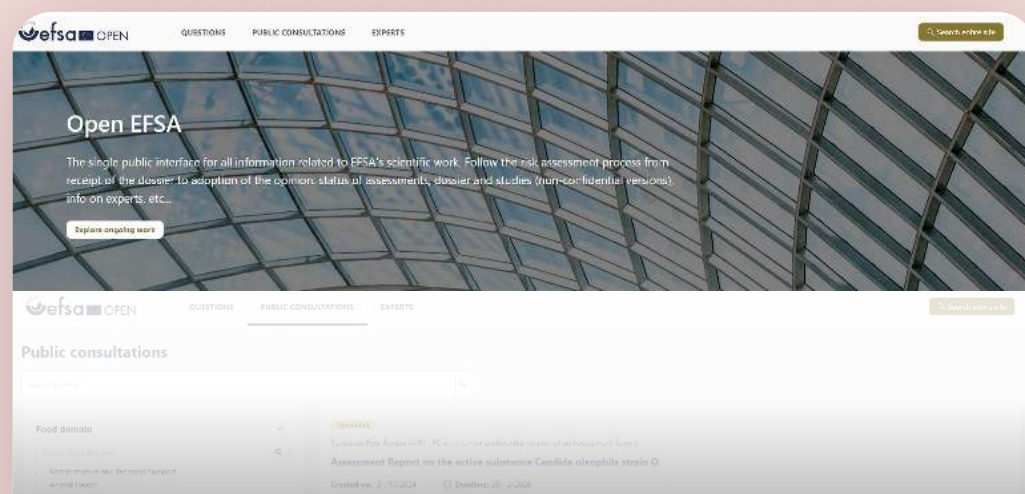
Publication of outcomes

Comments with their individual replies from EFSA are published together with the relevant scientific output as an annex in the EFSA Journal (under the supporting information section).

In the case of PC on the DAR/RAR of pesticide actives substances, the final document including the comments and EFSA's conclusions is published at the end of the peer review process on Open EFSA (under the supporting information section).

5

Where can I find information?



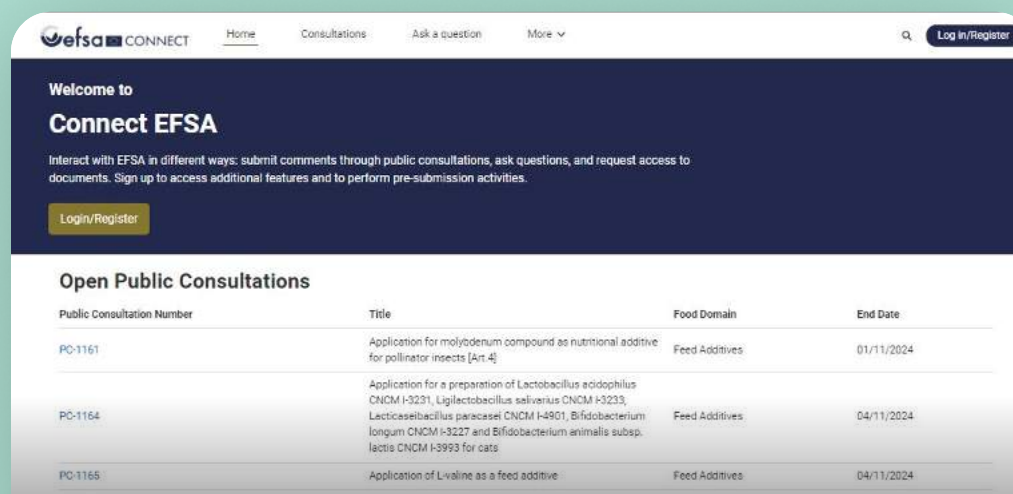
Open EFSA

Gives access to information related to EFSA's scientific work and provides a transparent view of EFSA's risk assessment work.

What can I find here?

- Risk assessment process
- Status of assessments
- Non-confidential versions of studies and dossiers

[Open EFSA](#)



Connect EFSA

A point of access to interact with EFSA, specifically to submit comments through public consultations, ask questions and request access to documents.

What can I find here?

- Information on consultations (upcoming, open, closed)
- Frequently asked questions

[Connect EFSA](#)



EFSA website

Main EFSA hub which collects all information about EFSA, its work and different platforms available to different types of users.

What can I find here?

- EFSA mission and activities
- EFSA collaborations and partnerships
- Public information and news

[EFSA Website](#)

Where can I find information?

5



Welcome to EFSA's subscription centre,
Please view or update your subscription type and your
areas of interest below.

*First Name
*Last Name
*Email
Area of professional occupation

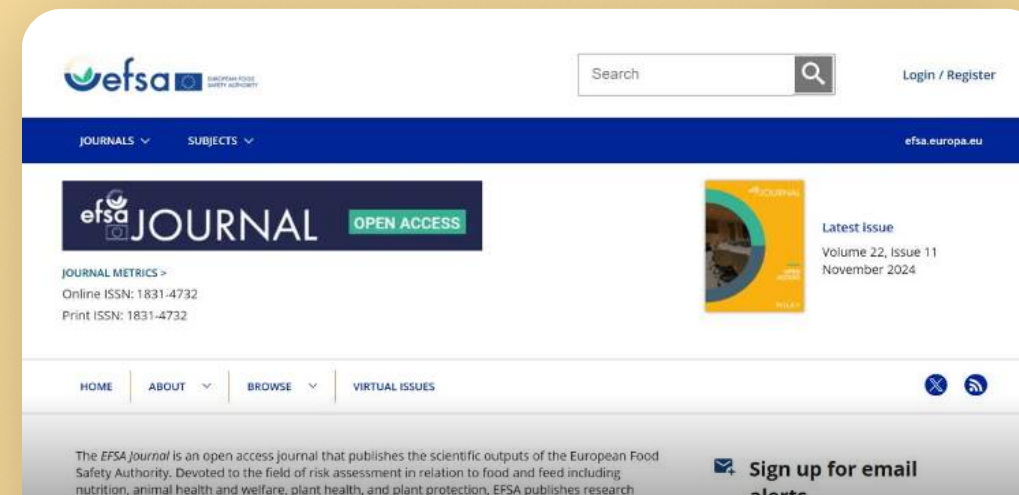
EFSA Subscription Center (Connect EFSA)

Keep subscribers up to date on the latest EFSA news, information and work.

What can I find here?

EFSA Highlights Monthly Newsletter
Daily Alerts
EFSA Thematic News
Public Consultation Notifications

[EFSA Subscription center](#)



EFSA Journal

An open-access journal that publishes EFSA's scientific outputs.

What can I find here?

All EFSA's scientific outputs
Supporting documents

[EFSA Journal](#)



5.1

Where can I find
information?

5

What can I find on Open EFSA?

Open EFSA is the platform making EFSA's work open to the public. Look at the examples for guidance on navigating the platform when it comes to consultations.

Consultations are available under this tab.

Search using titles or keywords.

Filter by food domain, status and dates.

When you click on a public consultation, you will land on the following page.

Where can I find information?

5

Consultation Details



Draft Scientific Opinion on the Tolerable Upper Intake Level for Vitamin E

[See details](#)

Closed

Status of the public consultation

[Link to Connect EFSA](#)

General Info

Food Domain: Nutrition
Consultation Type: PC on the draft scientific output before its adoption
Start Date: 13/05/2024
Deadline: 09/06/2024
Linked question: [EFSA-Q-2021-00368](#)

All documentation linked to the public consultation can be consulted and downloaded

Documents

File Name	Size	
Annex A. Protocol.pdf	711 kB	Download
Annex E. List of excluded papers at full-text.pdf	628 kB	Download
Draft Scientific Opinion on the Tolerable Upper Intake Level for Vitamin E_Draft opinion for public consultation.pdf	3.49 MB	Download

Comments

[Download all comments](#)

[1.3 Interpretation of the Terms of Reference: PC-0940 5](#)
In the background provided it states that: Tolerable Upper Intake Levels should be presented separately for the age group from 4/6 months onward until 3 years of age and the general population group from 3 years onwards, taking into account, as appropriate, the varying degree of sensitivity of different consumer groups. As foods intended for the general population are also consumed by young child... Expand
The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration

For closed consultations this section contains all comments received with links to possible attachments.

All received comments with links to attached files can be downloaded as a PDF file.

[4. Conclusions: PC-0940 72](#)

Where can I find information?

5

The screenshot displays the EFSA Open website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the EFSA logo and the word 'OPEN', followed by three tabs: 'QUESTIONS' (which is highlighted with a blue underline), 'PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS', and 'EXPERTS'. Below the navigation bar, the main heading is 'Questions'. A search bar is present with the placeholder text 'Search by: question no., food domain, description, question type, substance, mandate no., dossier no., output no., appli...'. The main content area is titled 'PESTICIDES PEER REVIEW - OTHER AREAS' and 'Art 31 - Scientific and technical assistance'. Below this, it shows 'EFSA-Q-2019-00308 | Status: Published' and 'Last updated: 07/12/2023'. The 'Subject' section describes the revision of guidance on the risk assessment of plant protection products on bees. The 'Output' section lists the output number (ON-7989), type (Other Scientific Output), and publication date (11/05/2023). The 'Supporting documents' section lists two PDF files: 'EFSA's reply letter Mandate to EFSA to revise the Guidance on the risk assessment of plant protection products on bees' (132.2KB) and 'Updated charter' (834.3KB). A 'Timeline' section is located on the right side of the main content area, showing a vertical timeline with events: '11-05-2023 Output Published', '31-03-2023 Risk Assessment Deadline', and '30-03-2023 Output Approved'. A callout box highlights a specific event: 'From 18-07-2022 to 03-10-2022 Revised guidance on the risk assessment of plant protection products on bees...'. A 'See detailed timeline' button is at the bottom of the timeline section. A 'General Info' section is partially visible at the bottom.

QUESTIONS PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS EXPERTS

Questions

Search by: question no., food domain, description, question type, substance, mandate no., dossier no., output no., appli...

PESTICIDES PEER REVIEW - OTHER AREAS

Art 31 - Scientific and technical assistance

EFSA-Q-2019-00308 | Status: Published | Last updated: 07/12/2023

Subject

Revision of the guidance on the risk assessment of plant protection products on bees (Apis mellifera, Bombus spp. and solitary bees)

Output

Output Number: ON-7989
Output Type: Other Scientific Output
Publication Date: 11/05/2023
View published version of the output: See details

Supporting documents

Document Type | Download file

EFSA's reply letter Mandate to EFSA to revise the Guidance on the risk assessment of plant protection products on bees | PDF (132.2KB)

Updated charter | PDF (834.3KB)

Timeline

- 11-05-2023 Output Published
- 31-03-2023 Risk Assessment Deadline
- 30-03-2023 Output Approved

2023

From 18-07-2022 to 03-10-2022
Revised guidance on the risk assessment of plant protection products on bees...
Public Consultation Finished
See details

2022

See detailed timeline

General Info

You can also consult the timelines of specific public consultations by going through the "Questions" tab on Open EFSA and opening a specific question.

The timeline includes information on the public consultation(s), if any.



5.2

What can I find on Connect EFSA?

Where can I find
information?

5

The screenshot shows the 'All consultations' page on the Connect EFSA website. The page has a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Consultations', 'Ask a question', and 'More'. Below the navigation bar, there's a section titled 'All consultations' with a subtitle 'Consultations / All consultations'. A message says 'Use the drop down below to view all open, upcoming, and closed consultations.' Below this, there's a dropdown menu set to 'Open Public Consultations' and a search bar. A table lists 25 items, sorted by Food Domain. The table has columns for 'Public C...' (with a dropdown arrow), 'Title', and 'Food Domain'. The first four items are visible:

	Public C...	Title	Food Domain
1	PC-1132	Application for L-arginine produced with <i>Corynebacterium glutamicum</i> KCCM 80387 as nutritional and sensory additive for all animal species [Art.4]	Feed Additives
2	PC-1133	Application for <i>Saccharomyces cerevisiae</i> NBRC 0203 and <i>Lactocaseibacillus rhamnosus</i> NBRC 3425 as technological additive for all animal species [Art.4]	Feed Additives
3	PC-1145	Application for a preparation of endo-1,4-beta-xylanase and alpha-galactosidase (EC ID 4a33) produced with <i>Trichoderma longibrachiatum</i> CBS 139997 and <i>Aspergillus tubingensis</i> ATCC SD 6740 as zootechnical additive for turkeys [Art.4]	Feed Additives
4	PC-1128	Application for the authorisation of the recycling process Starlinger viscotec_viscoZERO PET to produce recycled plastic for food contact uses	Food Contact Ma

Connect EFSA has information on all upcoming, open and closed consultations, and is the platform allowing interested parties to submit comments.

The search bar allows for searching using keywords, part of the title or the food domain. Please note that 'end date' and 'public consultation number' are NOT searchable.

All information on a public consultation can be viewed by clicking on the public consultation number.

Each entry can be sorted by public consultation number, title, food domain and end date.

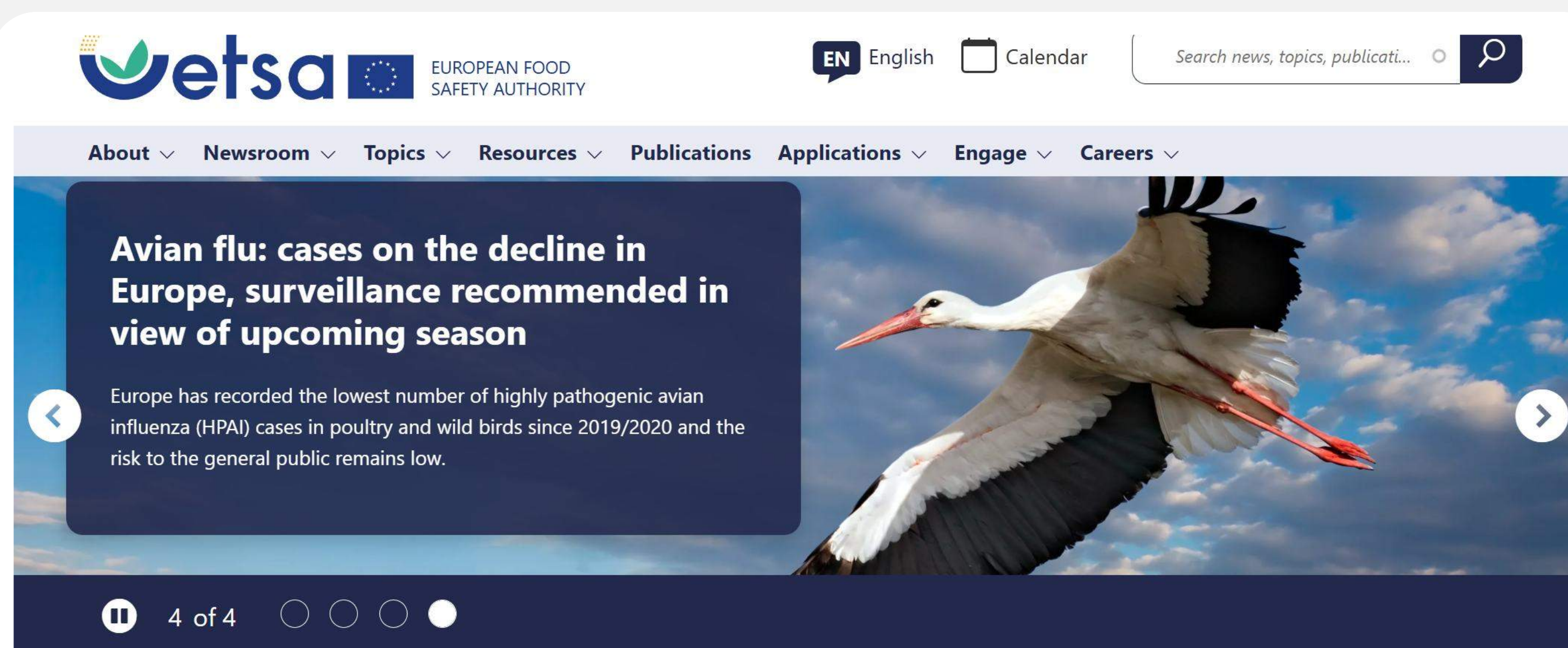
You can also find Frequently asked questions on Connect EFSA, which are available in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

5.3

What can I find on the EFSA website?

Where can I find information?

5



Highlights



Who is Fastidious X, the fearsome killer?

Infographic



Episode 23 – Food additives: Can I have your E number?

Podcast episode



Navigating Novel Foods: what EFSA's updated guidance means for safety assessments

The EFSA website is the main hub which collects and presents all the information about EFSA, its work and different platforms available to different types of users.

Regarding public consultations you can find: direct links to Open EFSA and Connect EFSA, a dedicated public consultations page and, the closed consultation archive (which only includes public consultations launched before the implementation of the Transparency Regulation, i.e. pre 27 March 2021).



5.4

What can I find on the EFSA Journal?

Where can I find information?

5

The screenshot shows the EFSA Journal website. At the top, there is a search bar and a 'Login / Register' link. Below the navigation bar, the 'efsa JOURNAL' logo is prominently displayed with an 'OPEN ACCESS' badge. To the right, a 'Latest issue' section shows 'Volume 22, Issue 11' from 'November 2024'. The main content area features a 'Browse Articles' section with tabs for 'Recently Published', 'Most Cited', and 'Most Downloaded'. A featured article titled 'Commodity risk assessment of *Prunus cerasus* × *Prunus canescens* hybrid plants from Ukraine' is highlighted, listing authors and the publication date (22 November 2024). On the right side, there is a 'Sign up for email alerts' form and a 'Journal Metrics' link.

The EFSA journal is an open-access journal hosting all EFSA's scientific outputs and supporting information.

Regarding consultations, EFSA Journal hosts the outcomes of all public consultations, except those related to the consultations on the DAR/RAR of pesticide active substances, which are published on the Open EFSA platform under the relevant question number.



Who should I contact?

EFSA supports interested parties who have questions, also in relation to public consultations.

To ask your question



FAQ

Consult the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on Connect EFSA

[Go](#)



Questions

Related to applications

[Go](#)



Related to generic mandates

[Go](#)



E-mail

Submit a technical question to the EFSA's IT support team.

servicedesk@efsa.europa.eu





Public consultations - Toolkit