



Note to the Management Board: Update on the implementation of the EFSA Social Science Roadmap

1. Background

EFSA's use of evidence and expertise from the field of social science was formalised in 2018 - the commitment to build a function within the Authority resulted in the [first iteration of EFSA Social Science Roadmap](#). Last year, EFSA prepared an updated [social science roadmap](#), aligned to the objectives of the [Strategy 2027](#). This included three priorities identified for the period 2022-2027, as follows:

1. Supporting the delivery of trustworthy assessment and communication of risks from farm to fork
2. Evolving the social science methods and capabilities available to EFSA
3. Employing social science methods in support of EFSA's organisational agility

During the [89th EFSA Management Board meeting](#) (December 2021), the Authority presented the updated roadmap to the members and committed to providing periodic update on progress on the above priorities. The Management Board is therefore kindly invited to take note of EFSA social science activities implemented during 2022.

2. Social science implementation at EFSA in 2022

EFSA made progress across all the roadmap priorities during the year, in strong cooperation with Member States and international partners. Most notably:

- **Priority 1** Social research activities continued to support coordinated risk communication efforts. The [Eurobarometer study on food safety](#) across EU27 was published in September - the results, including country factsheets in national languages, received wide attention across the EU. EFSA also finalised a project that delivered localised communication content to explain the difference between the concepts of hazard and risk. Work is ongoing on three mandates that require social research support - [request for technical assistance in the area of plant health risk communication](#), an integrated [mandate on fish consumption and effectiveness of advice on contamination with mercury](#) and [the self-tasking mandate on update of risk-benefit assessment guidance](#). Research targeting users of EFSA digital platforms also started during the year, covering EFSA website and OPEN EFSA.
- **Priority 2** EFSA continued to implement new modalities to gather social insights: i) expanded the use of social media listening to gauge online discourse of main food safety topics under EFSA's remit, and ii) added a new "flash poll" modality to EFSA's public opinion research toolkit. Calls for roadmaps were launched in "[Evidence-based risk communication](#)" - a topic identified as a strategic research need. This, together with the expansion of the Working Group on Social Research Methods and Advice, is part of EFSA's ambition to evolve into a knowledge hub for risk communication science. The topic featured prominently during the [dedicated social science session](#) of the ONE Conference 2022.
- **Priority 3** In its first year of Strategy implementation, EFSA introduced a new tool for measuring its reputation among customers, stakeholders and partners. The results of this first Annual Strategy Survey will be published in late December and used for both performance reporting vis-a-vis EFSA 2027 Strategy as well as identification of areas for continuous improvement. The survey will run annually.



3. Next steps

Progress made across the different priorities of the roadmap will be communicated to the Board through existing performance reports. EFSA will undertake a mid-term review of its ambitions, with an update of the roadmap either in Q4 2024 or Q1 2025.