

# RENEWAL OF EFSA SCIENTIFIC PANELS AND THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE 2024-2029

## Report on the Outcome of the Call for Expressions of Interest for Membership of EFSA Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee 2023



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## List of Abbreviations

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| AHAW   | Panel on Animal Health and Welfare                                |
| BIOHAZ | Panel on Biological Hazards                                       |
| CEP    | Panel on Food Contact Materials, Enzymes and Processing Aids      |
| CONTAM | Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain                           |
| DoI    | Declarations of Interest  |
| FAF    | Panel on Food Additives and Flavorings                            |
| FCM    | Panel on Food Contact Materials                                   |
| FEEDAP | Panel on Additives and Products or Substances Used in Animal Feed |
| FEZ    | Panel on Food Enzymes   |
| GMO    | Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms                           |
| NDA    | Panel on Nutrition, Novel Foods and Food Allergens                |
| PLH    | Panel on Plant Health   |
| PPR    | Panel on Plant Protection Products and their Residues             |
| EMC    | Expert Management Committee                                       |
| SC     | Scientific Committee  |
| SP     | Scientific Panel  |



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with Article 28(5) of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter “the Regulation”) and Article 4(2) of the Implementing Rule of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority laying down the rules on the selection, appointment and operations of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panels and of their Working Groups<sup>2</sup> (hereinafter “the Implementing Rule”), EFSA published a call for expression of interest for membership of the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee (hereinafter “the call”) on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023. The deadline for submission of applications was 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 (extended from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023).

To promote the call, EFSA developed a communication plan and conducted a number of promotion and dissemination activities to attract potential applicants. These included, besides the publication of the call in the Official Journal of the European Union and the EFSA website, notifications in leading scientific publications, job boards, social media platforms, targeted mailing, advertisement through key EFSA bodies and stakeholders as well as Member States, and a dedicated webinar open to the public.

A total of 1529 candidates applied to the call from 70 different countries; 1264 applicants were deemed eligible. Compared to the previous renewal of EFSA’s Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee, the call saw an increase by 40% in the overall number of applicants and an increase in the share of female applicants from 45% to 48%.

The evaluation of eligible applications has been carried out according to the selection criteria and expertise required listed in the published call for expressions of interest.

On the basis of the applications received, the Executive Director of EFSA drew up a draft list of suitable candidates, including more than twice the minimum number of candidates necessary to fill the posts in the Scientific Committee and the Scientific Panels. The draft list of suitable candidates included 797 candidates and represents an increase of 60% compared to the outcome of the previous call for renewal of panels.

Considering the needs for specific multidisciplinary expertise in the Scientific Committee and each Scientific Panel, and on the basis of the draft list of suitable candidates, the EFSA Executive Director delivered a proposal for their membership, with due consideration on gender balance as well as broad geographical representation.

Candidates included in this proposal were screened for their interests with respect to membership in the respective Scientific Panel or the Scientific Committee, as well as with respect to possible chairmanship of the same scientific body. Only candidates with a Declaration of Interests compatible with EFSA’s Independence policy and rules were further considered for membership.

The Management Board is provided with a draft list of suitable candidates and a proposal for memberships of the Scientific Committee and the Scientific Panels including an indication of the specific multidisciplinary expertise needed.

Each Panel can be composed of 11 to 21 members depending on the expertise required and workload foreseen during the course of the mandates. In case missing expertise is identified

<sup>1</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02002R0178-20220701&qid=1697637908507>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-10/paneloperation.pdf>



in a Panel, additional members will be proposed to be appointed by the Management Board during the course of the Panel's mandate, insofar as the concerned Panel has not yet reached the maximum number of 21 members, which cannot be exceeded.

As a result, 183 candidates are proposed for appointment as members as follows: Panel on Animal Health and Welfare (AHAW) 18; Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ) 16; Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain (CONTAM) 19; Panel on Food Additives and Flavorings (FAF) 17; Panel on Food Contact Materials (FCM) 12; Panel on Food Enzymes (FEZ) 13; Panel on Additives and Products or Substances Used in Animal Feed (FEEDAP) 16; Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) 17; Panel on Nutrition, Novel Foods and Food Allergens (NDA) 14; Panel on Plant Health (PLH) 21; Panel on Plant Protection Products and their Residues (PPR) 14; Scientific Committee (SC) 6; and 614 candidates are proposed for inclusion in the reserve list for all the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee.

In accordance with Article 28(5a) of the Regulation and Article 5(1) and (3) of the Implementing Rule, the Management Board will appoint the members of the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee and draw up a reserve list.

The reserve list will consist of candidates from the draft list who have not been appointed. The reserve list will serve for future appointment needs for members of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panels and Working Groups and will remain valid until the end of the term of office of members appointed.

Upon appointment by the Management Board, EFSA will notify the experts and invite them to respond whether or not they accept the appointment. EFSA will also notify the candidates on the reserve list.

The Management Board is invited to adopt the list of candidates proposed for membership of the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee as well as the list of candidates suitable for placement on the reserve list.

This report refers to the renewal of the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee. This includes the envisaged setting up of the Panel on Food Enzymes (FEZ) and the Panel on Food Contact Materials (FCM) which are intended to replace the existing Panel on Food Contact Materials, Enzymes and Processing Aids (CEP).

This report contains the following ANNEX, not disclosed in the public version of this report.

ANNEX I: Draft list of suitable candidates



## INTRODUCTION

The Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee<sup>3</sup> of EFSA are responsible for providing the scientific opinions of the Authority and other advice as appropriate, each within their own spheres of competence. They produce scientific opinions and advice for risk managers to provide a sound foundation for the formulation of European policies and legislation, and to support risk managers in taking decisions.

This report refers to the renewal of the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee. This includes the envisaged setting up of the Panel on Food Enzymes (FEZ) and the Panel on Food Contact Materials (FCM) which are intended to replace the existing Panel on Food Contact Materials, Enzymes and Processing Aids (CEP). This review has been requested to the Commission by EFSA, on the basis of Article 28(4) of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, considering the high workload in these areas. This move also will improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Authority's scientific work reflecting the technical and scientific developments in the respective fields. At the time of publication of this report, the current Panels' set up still foresees one single Panel competent for food contact materials, enzymes and processing aids (CEP Panel) with the procedure for the adoption of the delegated act of the Commission establishing the two new Panels (FEZ Panel and FCM Panel) currently underway. EFSA expects to receive information on the finalisation of the legal procedure after 18 March 2024.

The Implementing Rule of the Management Board describes the rules on the detailed organization and timing of the procedure on the selection and appointment of members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels.

Pursuant to Article 28(5) of the Regulation and Article 2(1) of the Implementing Rule, members of EFSA's Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee will be appointed for a 5 years' term of office.

In view of having the new members starting their mandates on 1 July 2024, a call for expressions of interest has been published and a related selection procedure was organised by EFSA in 2023. Considering this timeline, and in line with the transitional measures laid down in Article 10(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1381<sup>4</sup>, the terms of office of the current members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels will end on 30 June 2024.

To facilitate the submission of applications to the call for expressions of interests and manage the procedure for the selection of members, EFSA used an Oracle Cloud system, thus guaranteeing efficiency, quality, and auditability of the process.

In line with EFSA's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 002<sup>5</sup>, the steps of the selection procedure performed are hereby outlined below.

The selection procedure was governed by an internal committee of EFSA - Experts Management Committee - and supported by the Human Capital Unit, ensuring the process management of the talent selection functional area.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/science/scientific-committee-and-panels>

<sup>4</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32019R1381>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/SOP-002\\_S.pdf](https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/SOP-002_S.pdf)



The Experts Management Committee (EMC) is an internal committee of EFSA, tasked to oversee and provide support throughout the selection procedure for the renewal of EFSA's Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee. The EMC is steered by a Chair and its composition of members ensure appropriate representation of the scientific areas and subject matter of units concerned.

## CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

### Publication

In accordance with Article 28(5) of the Regulation and Article 4(2) of the Implementing Rule, EFSA published a call for expressions of interest for membership of the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee on 1 February 2023 on its website and in the Official Journal of the EU<sup>6</sup>. The deadline for submission of applications was 17 April 2023, extended from 3 April 2023, in order to ensure a sufficient number of applicants.

The call outlined the key responsibilities of the members, the working conditions, the steps of the selection procedure, the criteria and expertise required.

In accordance with Article 28(5) of the Regulation, EFSA ensured that the Member States, represented in this case by the "Expert group on General Food Law and sustainability of food systems", were informed of the criteria and expertise required before publishing the call.

### Communication campaign

To advertise the call, EFSA developed a multichannel promotion plan and implemented a number of dissemination activities to attract potential applicants. The primary objective of the campaign was to raise awareness of the call among target audiences and to motivate experts from different disciplines and affiliations to apply. The secondary objectives were to contribute to strengthening EFSA's reputation as a leading science-driven workplace and to promote EFSA's commitment to openness and transparency across all processes, including the recruitment of experts.

Members of EFSA's Advisory Forum, Focal Points and the Communication Expert Network discussed with EFSA the priorities related to the renewal of EFSA's panels during a dedicated engagement workshop with specific sessions focusing on how to improve the attractiveness of the position and tailor the communication. Suggestions were made on possible tools and solutions to support EFSA and the Member States in the outreach and the dissemination campaign.

Targets were set in terms of quantity and quality of applicants, broad geographical representation, gender and age balance, and the mix of multidisciplinary expertise from all relevant disciplines.

The promotion campaign included key messages that can be summarised as follows: "EFSA's work is crucial to ensuring food safety in Europe. By working as an independent expert for EFSA, you can make a difference to human, animal, and plant health, as well as the environment, against the backdrop of climate change and sustainability issues, in a flexible,

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<sup>6</sup> OJ C2023/039A/01, C2023/120/08



inclusive, and collaborative workplace where you can grow your network and career in a truly multi-disciplinary environment.”

The communication activities directed visitors to a dedicated landing page on the EFSA website, which served as an information hub for candidates, and received high levels of traffic and visits.

The communication campaign was supported by new multimedia products: an animation illustrating the selection process, a video with testimonials from current experts and motivational messages from EFSA staff.

On 7 March 2023, EFSA organised a webinar to inform interested experts about the selection and appointment process, how EFSA's Scientific Panels and Committee work, and to answer questions about the call.

The campaign extensively relied on the support of several multipliers who actively engaged in “spreading the word” and disseminating the call to their respective networks. These included established EFSA groups from Member States (e.g., Advisory Forum, Focal Points, Communication Expert Network, Article 36 organisations) as well as EFSA staff and current experts.

A key empowering tool to support the multipliers was the communication toolkit, which included relevant materials and templates to facilitate dissemination in different contexts and through different channels. The kit was made available to the Member States for their dissemination activities, in view of their enhanced role in supporting EFSA in the promotion and dissemination of the call, as formally required by Article 28(5) of the Regulation.

EFSA rolled out a social media campaign on various channels (Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook) during the application period with a dedicated editorial plan, the official hashtag being #EFSAPanels.

Other activities included internal and external newsletters and alerts, targeted mailing lists (scientific societies and networks, academia, registered stakeholders, partners), announcements in leading scientific publications, journals, and relevant job boards.

The campaign’s marketing mix proved successful in reaching out to potential candidates. On the basis of self-reports by applicants, candidates mostly learned about the call for applications from the EFSA website (directly or routed from external links), EFSA Focal Points, social networks or referrals.

## **Applications**

Candidates were requested to complete and submit their application in English online via the EFSA Careers website at <https://careers.efsa.europa.eu/Expert>

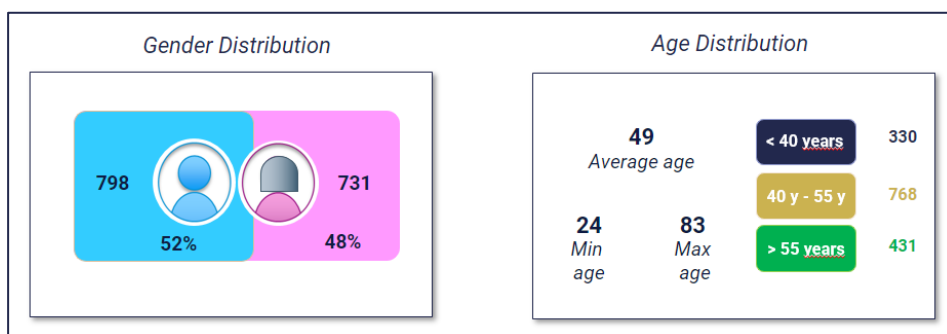
Candidates had to indicate in the application form the Scientific Panel and/or the Scientific Committee for which they wished to apply, and which best matched their areas of expertise (as described in [ANNEX I](#) of the call). Candidates could indicate an additional Scientific Panel/Scientific Committee as a second choice, in cases where their areas of expertise fell within the remit of more than one Scientific Panel and/or the Scientific Committee.



A total of 1529 candidates from 70 different countries responded to the call, of which 87% were from EU Member States. The total number of applicants represents an increase of 40% compared to the previous call for the renewal of panels. The top 5 nationalities, representing 57% of the total applicants, were Italian, Spanish, Greek, German, and French. This call also generated an increase in the overall proportion of female applicants compared to the 2017 call (from 45% to 48%). Members currently serving on EFSA Scientific Panels/Committee (term of office 2018-2024) represent 9% of the total number of candidates. Figure 1 below shows the general characteristics of the applicants' profiles.

**Figure 1**

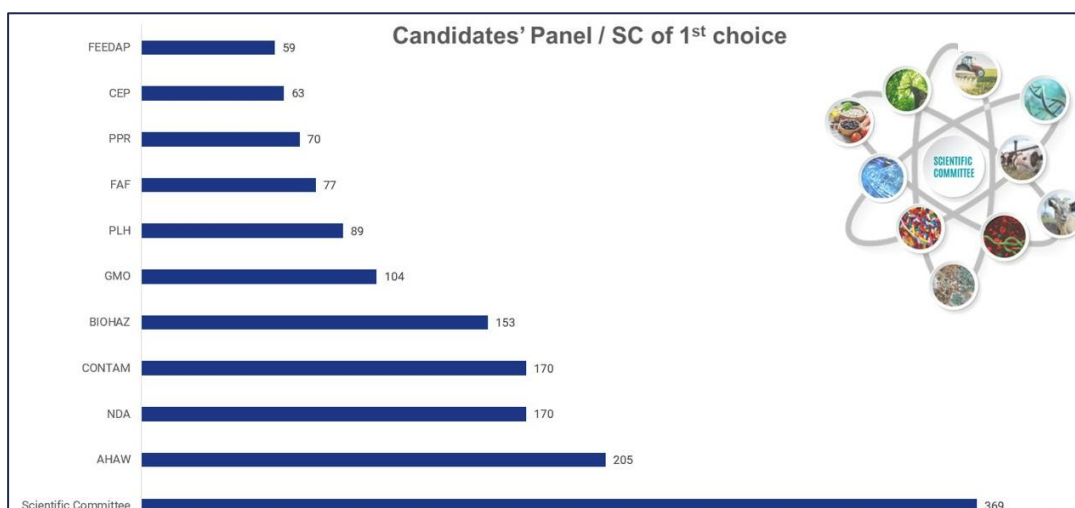
*Candidates' general characteristics*



The distribution of applications per panel of choice is shown in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2**

*Candidates per Scientific Panel/Scientific Committee of choice*





## DRAFT LIST OF SUITABLE CANDIDATES

### Evaluators

Before the assessment phase started, the EMC appointed the evaluators, who were assigned the task of assessing the applications. Following their appointment, the evaluators were informed of the requirements on confidentiality and independence to which they confirmed their commitment by means of a declaration.

In order to establish an objective and consistent assessment methodology, EFSA designed an evaluation guide, which included the definition and interpretation of the criteria and the detailed scoring grid. In addition, a training session was organised for the evaluators, which included instructions and practical examples, to ensure common understanding and a valid and reliable assessment of applicants. Quality reviews of samples of applications were as well performed during the procedure to ascertain the robustness of the assessments.

### Eligibility screening

On completion of the period for submission of applications, the evaluators screened all candidates on the basis of the eligibility criteria as set out in the call for expression of interest.

Out of the 1529 applicants, 1264 were deemed eligible, which represented 83% of all applications received. The main reasons of exclusion were due to the eligibility criteria “active scientific production” and “professional experience”.

### Selection criteria evaluation

To appraise the level of scientific expertise, applications meeting the eligibility requirements were assessed by the evaluators on the basis of the selection criteria indicated below, in relation to their first Scientific Panel or Scientific Committee of choice. Each selection criterion was attributed a weighting factor and the minimum cumulative threshold to pass the evaluation was 50 points out of 100.

Selection criteria:

- Experience in scientific assessment: *Experience in carrying out scientific assessment in fields related to safety of the food chain, in the areas of competence and expertise of the preferred Scientific Panel/Scientific Committee* (40 maximum points out of 100);
- Scientific excellence: *Scientific excellence in one or several fields linked to the area covered by the preferred Scientific Panel/Scientific Committee and proven through scientific publications in peer reviewed journals published in English* (40 maximum points out of 100);
- Experience in reviewing scientific work: *Experience in reviewing scientific work and ability to analyse complex information in the areas covered by the preferred Scientific Panel/Scientific Committee* (20 maximum points out of 100).

Eligible applications that passed the selection criteria evaluation (equal or above the cumulative threshold of 50 points) were considered suitable for placement on the draft list of suitable candidates for all the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee. In accordance with Article 28(5) of the Regulation and Article 4(3) of the Implementing Rule, the Executive



Director of EFSA drew-up a draft list of suitable candidates, including 797 candidates, which represents more than twice the minimum number of candidates necessary to fill the posts (#232) in the Scientific Committee and the Scientific Panels.

The draft list represents 63% of the eligible applicants and, out of the candidates placed on this list, 89% were nationals of the EU. The top 5 nationalities had a share of 57% of the total number and were represented by Italian, Spanish, German, French and Greek. Overall, the average age of candidates which passed the threshold was 50 years and the gender ratio 46% female versus 54% male. Members currently serving on EFSA Scientific Panels/Committee (term of office 2018-2024) constitute 18% of the total number of candidates included in the draft suitable list.

Applicants placed on the draft list of suitable candidates are presented in ANNEX I, not disclosed to the public version of this report.

### **Expertise Mapping and Assets**

Applications placed on the draft list of suitable candidates were further mapped for the evidence of multidisciplinary expertise of the specific Scientific Panel/Scientific Committee's remit as well as in relation to competencies considered as assets (experience in scientific project management, experience in scientific communication and chairing meetings).

To this end, the evaluators categorised the expert's proficiency level in the areas of expertise relevant to the specific Scientific Panel/Scientific Committee as well as in relation to the assets.

The results of the expertise mapping are outlined in ANNEX I, not disclosed in the public version of this report.

## **PROPOSAL FOR APPOINTMENTS AND RESERVE LIST**

### **Proposal for appointments**

The Executive Director assessed the specific multidisciplinary expertise needed in the Scientific Committee and each Scientific Panel (outlined below) and, on the basis of the draft list of suitable candidates, delivered a proposal for their membership.

The proposal for appointments took the following criteria into account:

- high level of scientific expertise;
- independence and absence of conflict of interests;
- meeting the needs for the specific multidisciplinary expertise of the Scientific Panel or Scientific Committee.

Gender balance and broad geographical distribution were also given due consideration, where candidates had equivalent scientific expertise.

Each Scientific Panel is composed of minimum 11 to maximum 21 members depending on the expertise required and workload foreseen during the course of the mandates.



## **Declarations of Interests**

Candidates proposed for appointment were asked to submit a Declaration of Interests (DoI). The DoIs of candidates proposed for appointment were screened by EFSA with respect to membership of the respective Scientific Panel or the Scientific Committee, as well as possible chairmanship of the same scientific body, in accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management<sup>7</sup>.

To this end, 93% of the DoIs screened were deemed valid.

Candidates were considered suitable for appointment for a Scientific Panel or the Scientific Committee, subject to the validation of their DoI.

## **General composition of all Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee**

The proposal for appointments for all Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee includes 183 candidates and represents 23% of the applicants placed on the draft list of suitable candidates.

In total, 26 countries are represented, with 95% of the candidates being EU nationals. The top 5 nationalities, namely Italian, German, Spanish, French and Dutch, collectively account for a 62% share.

The gender distribution of candidates proposed for appointments is 52% male versus 48% female. The proportion of female candidates has increased by 11% compared to the 2018 renewal.

Overall, the average age of candidates is 56 with a distribution of 52% of candidates having more than 55 years, 44% between 40 and 55 years, 4% less than 40 years.

Candidates' affiliations are clustered as follows: 40% university, 38% government/public research institute, 14% national risk assessment body, 8% other (including retired, self-employed).

Members currently serving on EFSA Scientific Panels/Committee (term of office 2018-2024) constitute 51% of the total number of candidates proposed for appointment.

## **Composition of Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee**

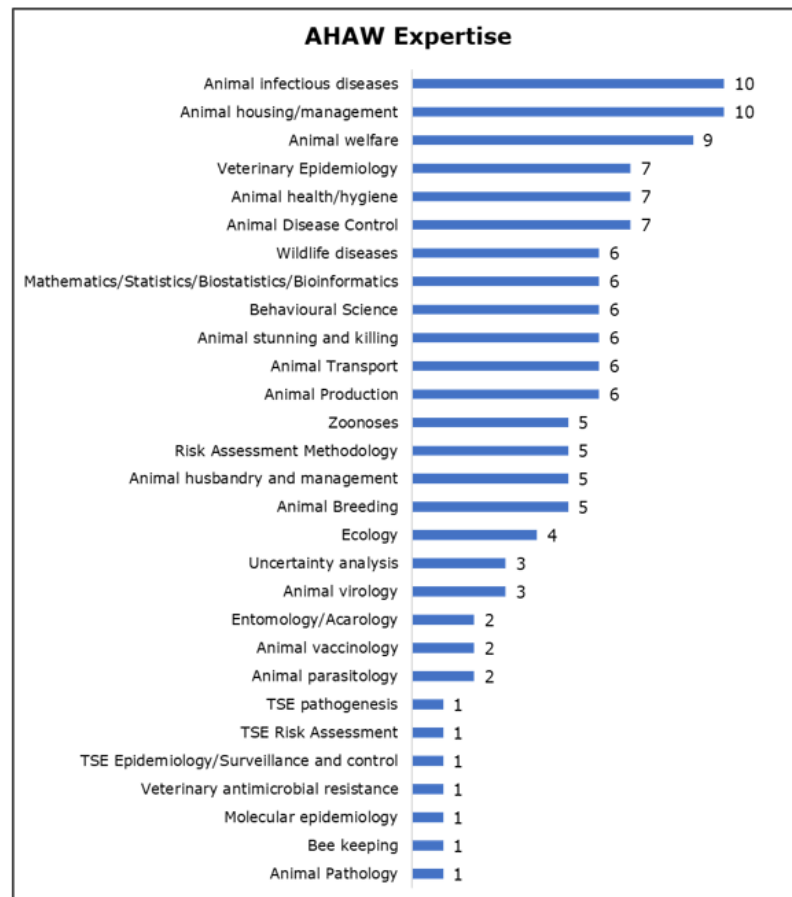
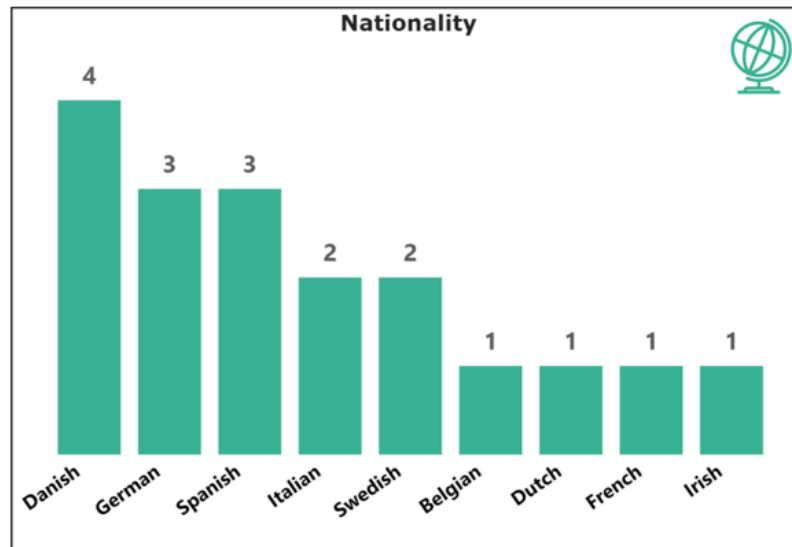
An overview of key features of the proposed composition of Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee, including the specific multidisciplinary expertise needed and coverage by the proposed candidates, is presented below.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/howwework/independentscience>

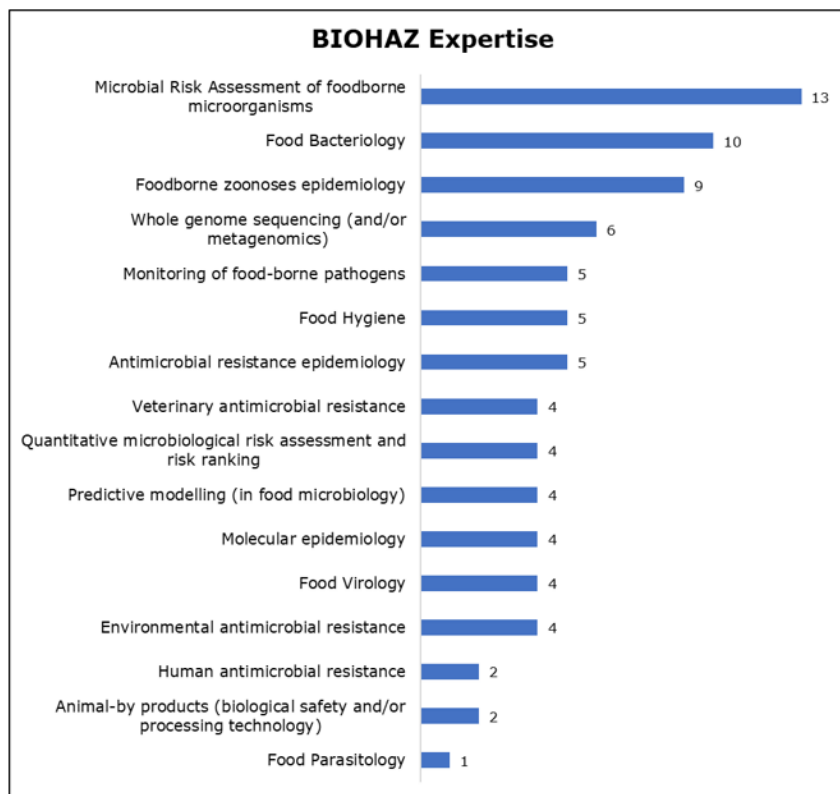
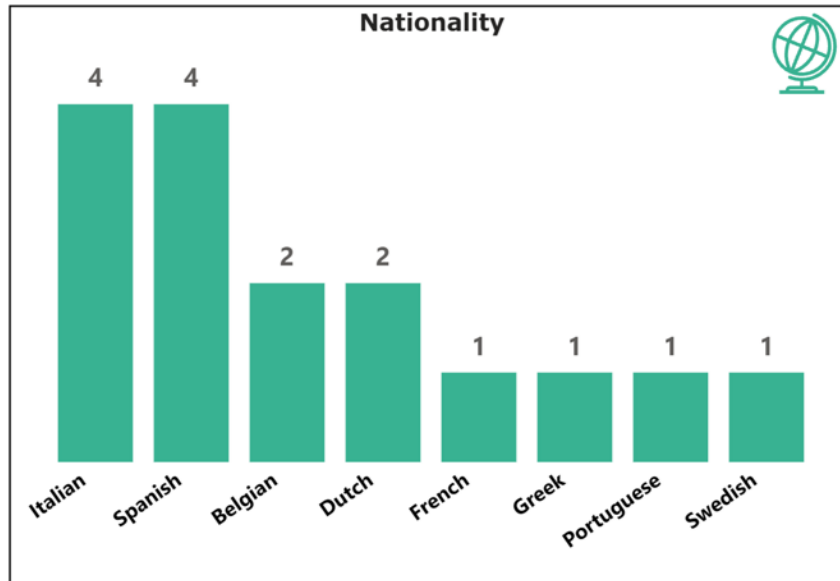
### AHAW Panel composition proposal

Following the selection procedure, 18 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the AHAW Panel and key statistics are provided below.



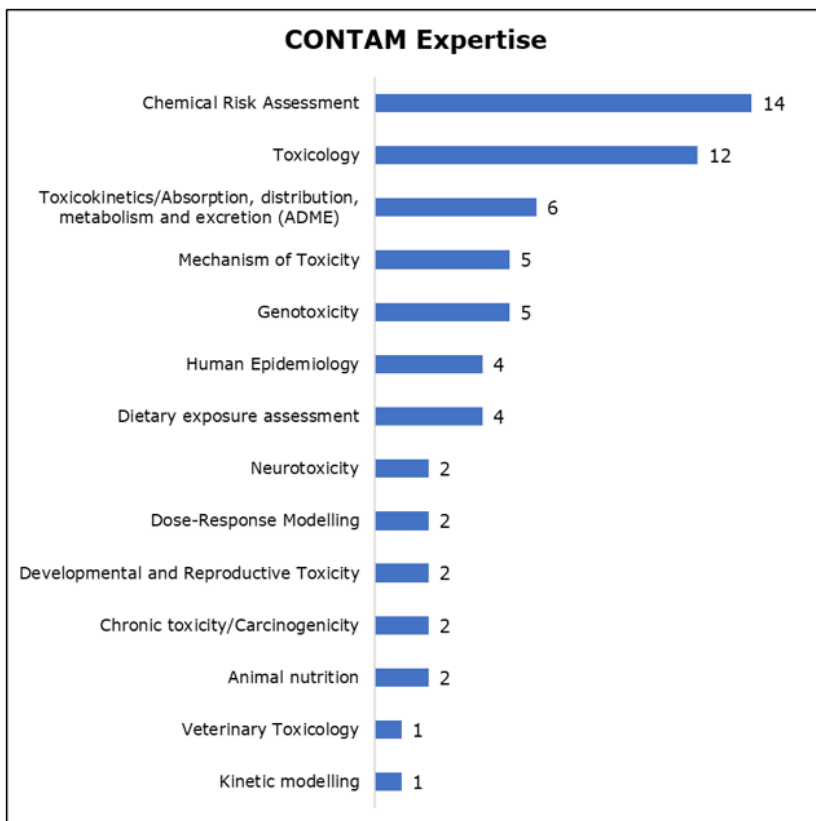
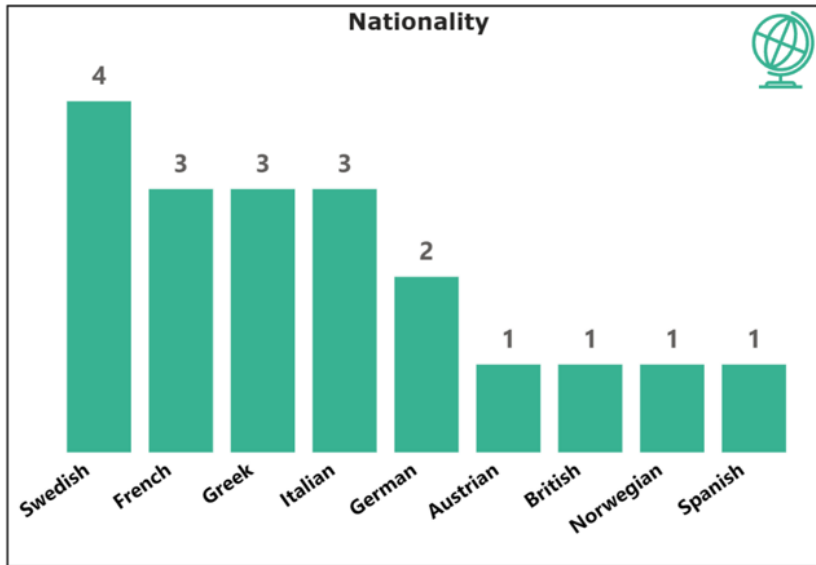
### BIOHAZ Panel Composition proposal

Following the selection procedure, 16 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the BIOHAZ Panel and key statistics are provided below.



### CONTAM Panel Composition proposal

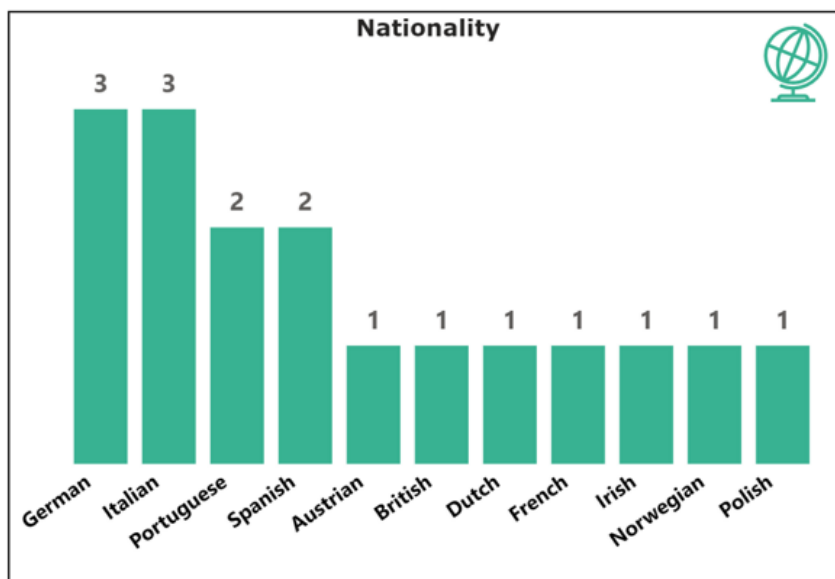
Following the selection procedure, 19 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the CONTAM Panel and key statistics are provided below.





### FAF Panel Composition proposal

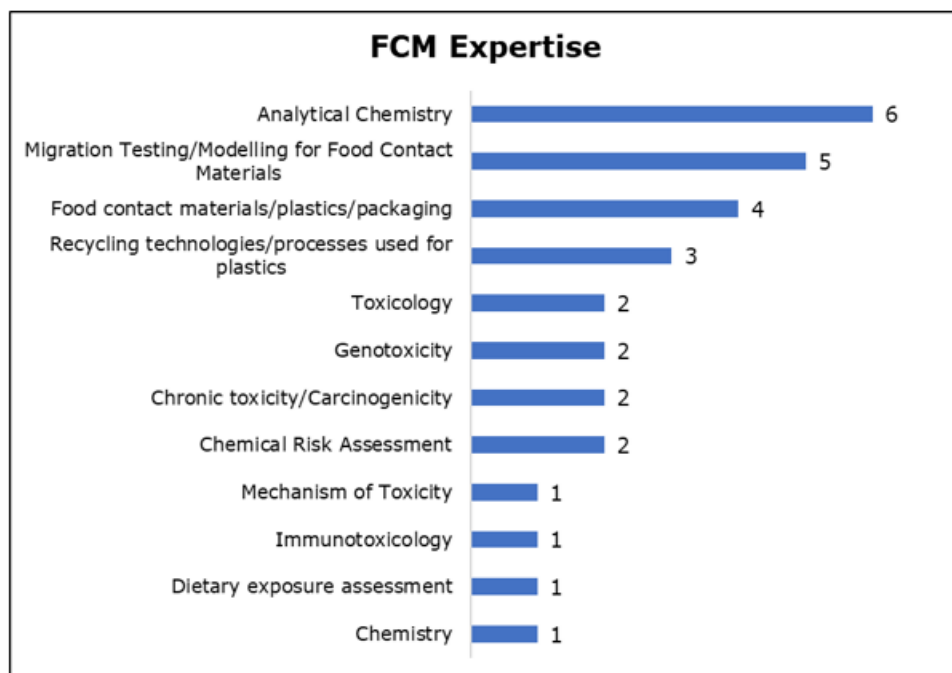
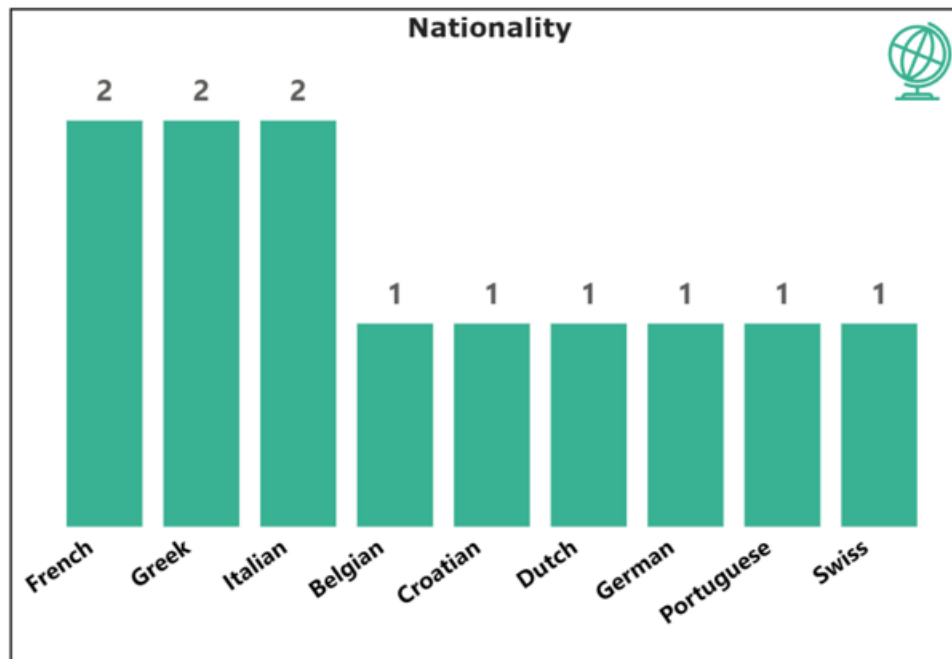
Following the selection procedure, 17 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the FAF Panel and key statistics are provided below.





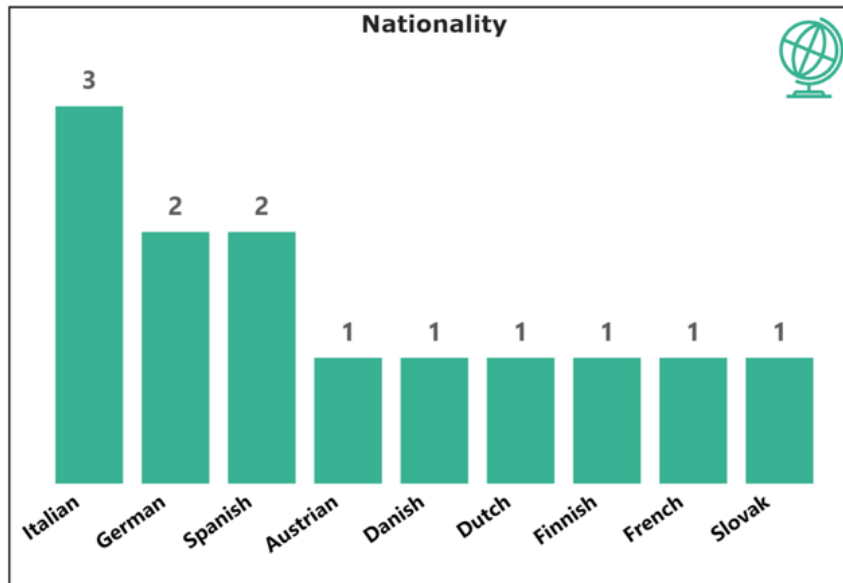
### FCM Panel Composition proposal

Following the selection procedure, 12 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the FCM Panel and key statistics are provided below.



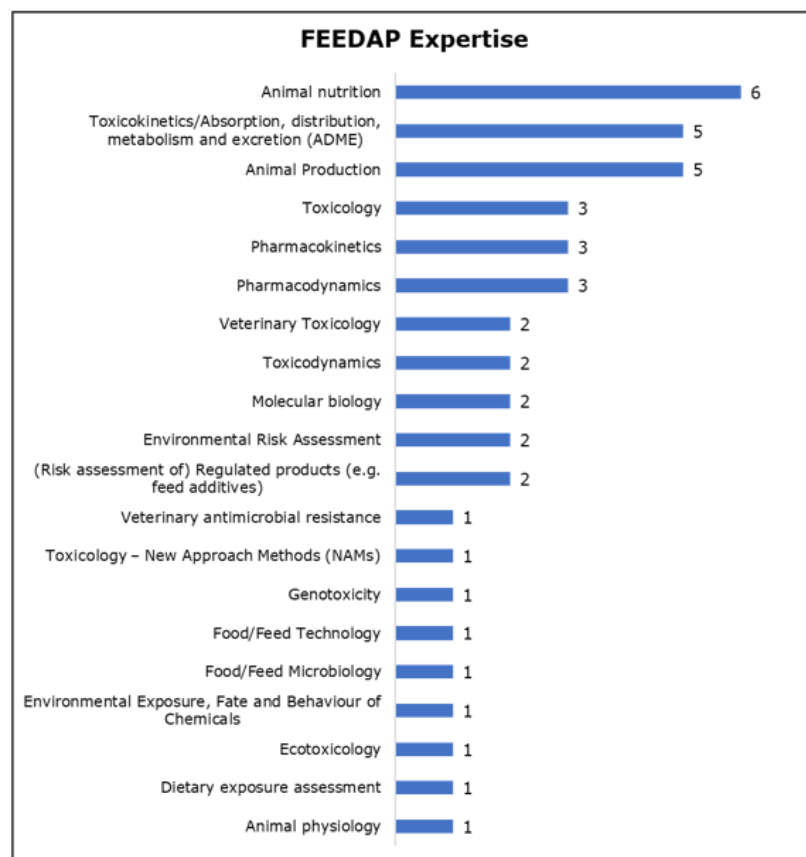
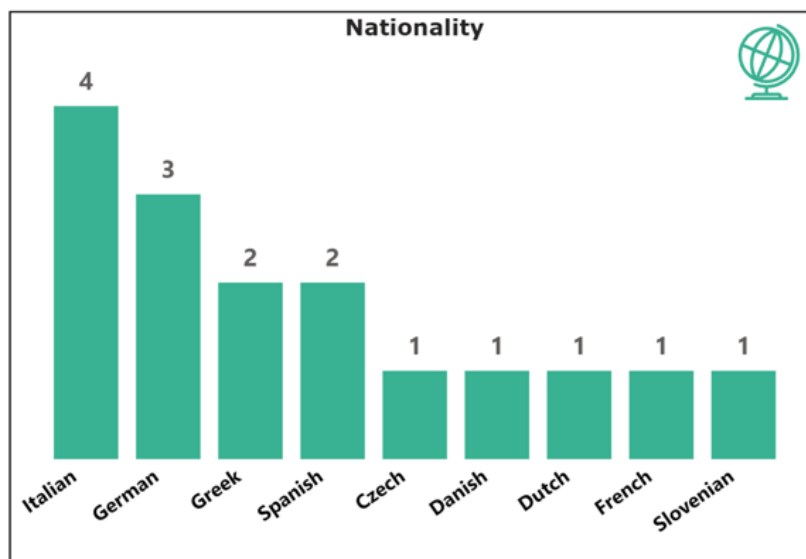
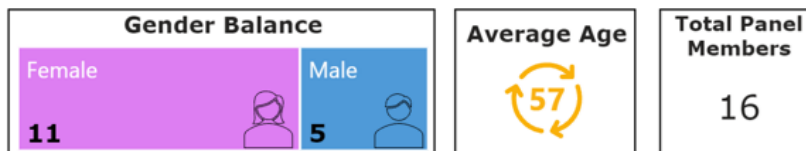
### FEZ Panel Composition proposal

Following the selection procedure, 13 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the FEZ Panel and key statistics are provided below.



### FEEDAP Panel Composition proposal

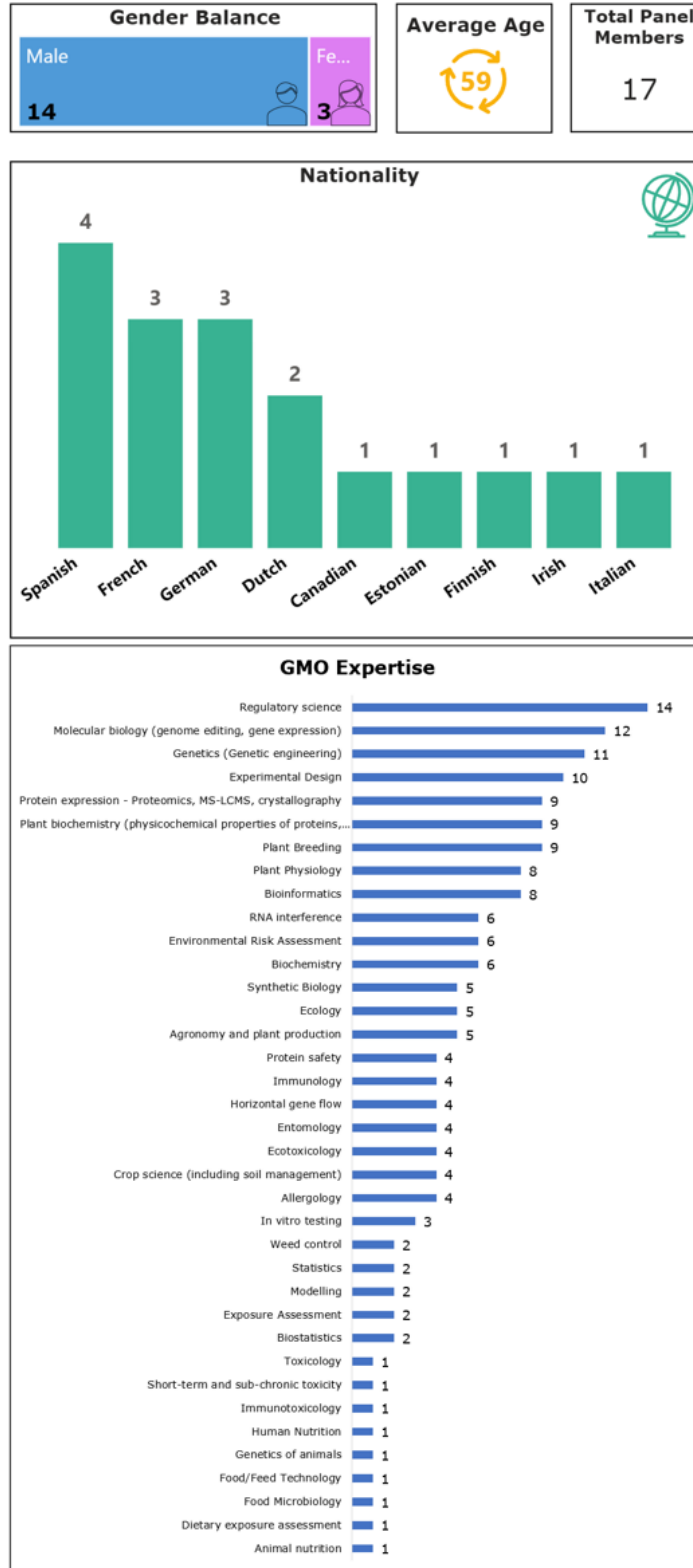
Following the selection procedure, 16 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the FEEDAP Panel and key statistics are provided below.





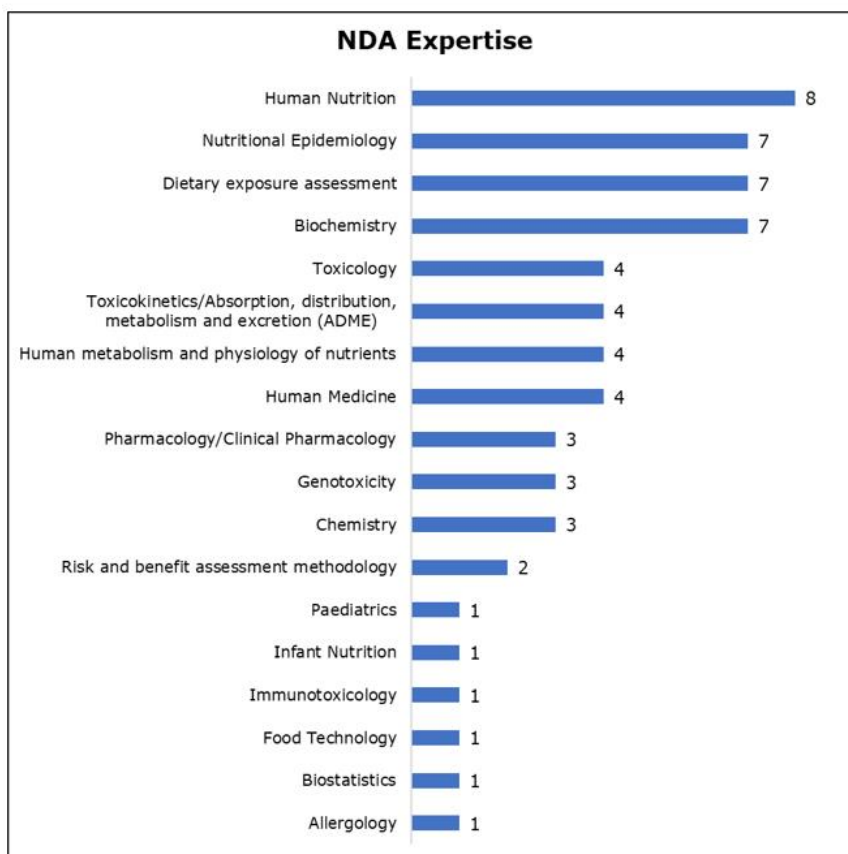
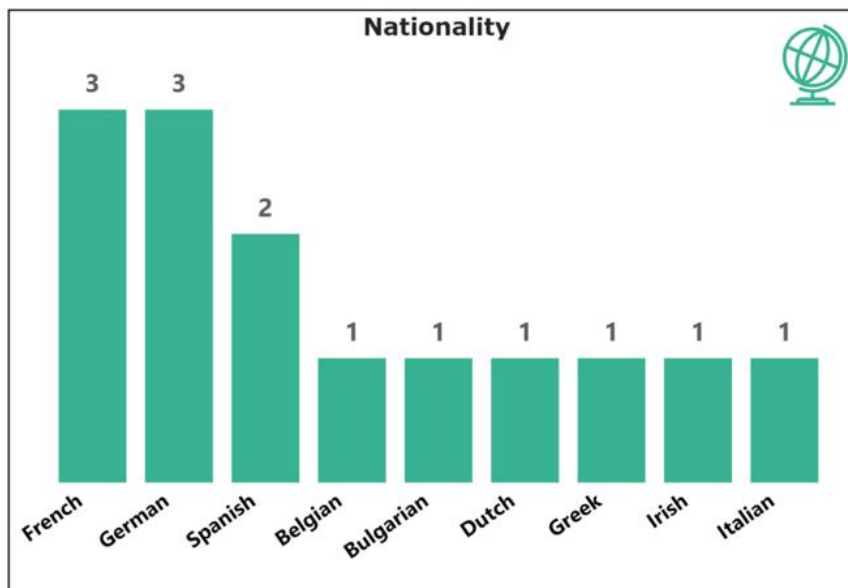
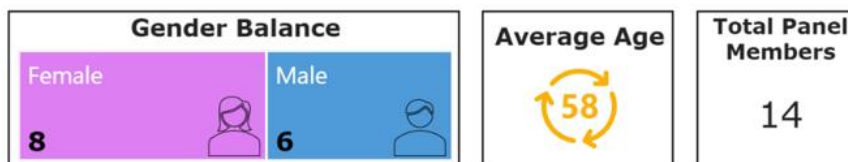
### GMO Panel Composition proposal

Following the selection procedure, 17 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the GMO Panel and key statistics are provided below.



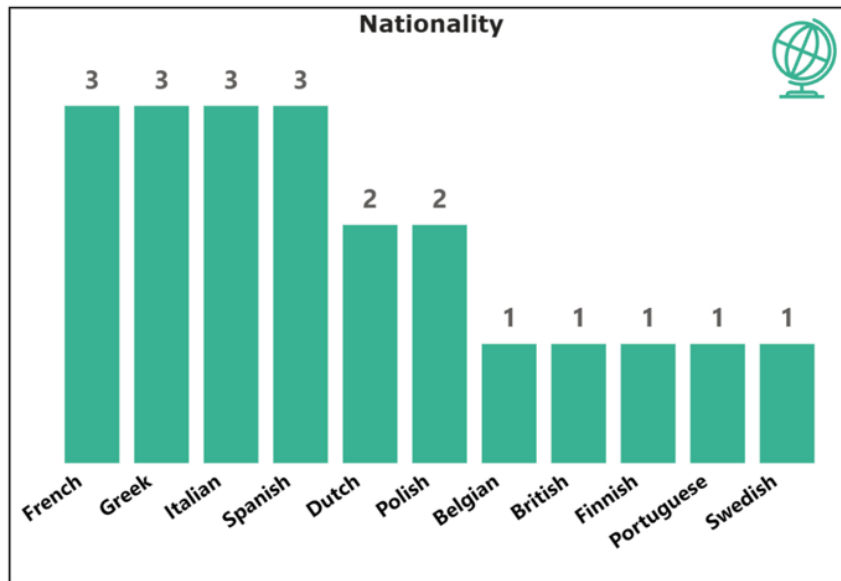
### NDA Panel Composition proposal

Following the selection procedure, 14 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the NDA Panel and key statistics are provided below.



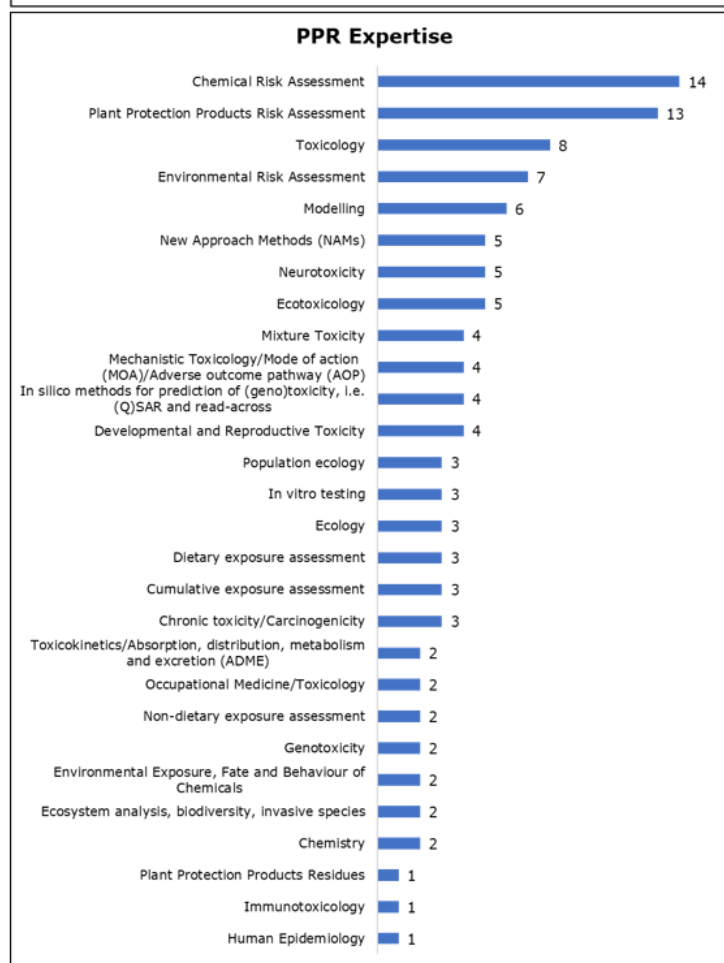
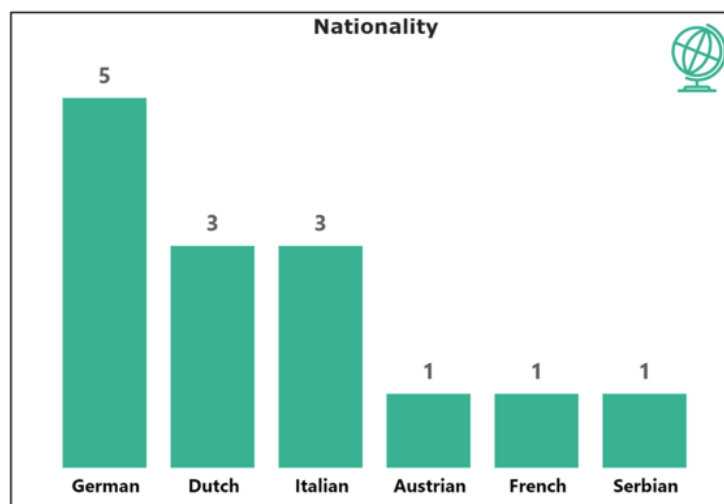
### PLH Panel Composition proposal

Following the selection procedure, 21 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the PLH Panel and key statistics are provided below.



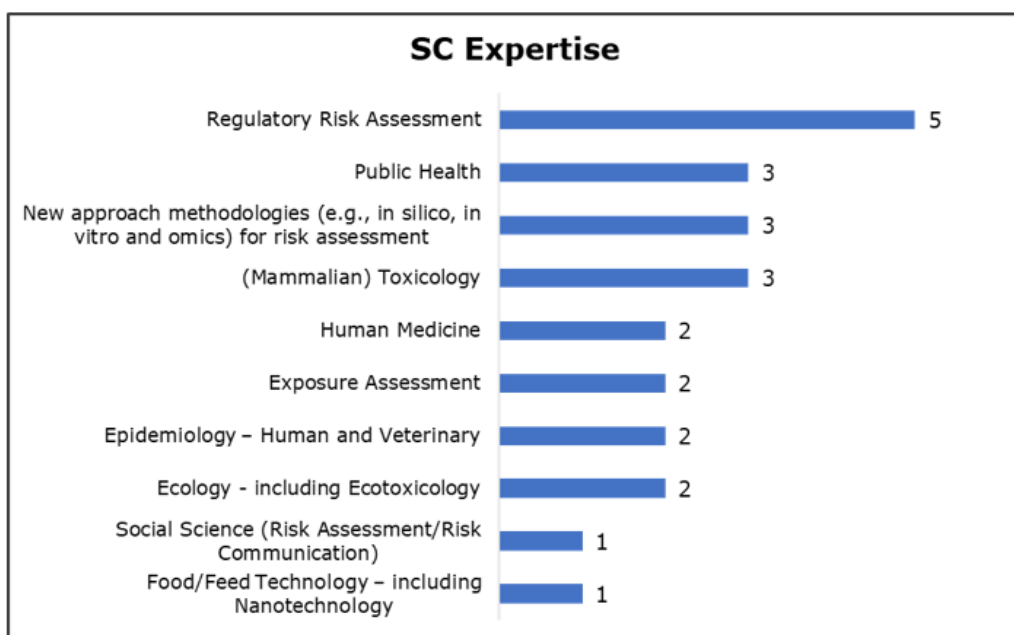
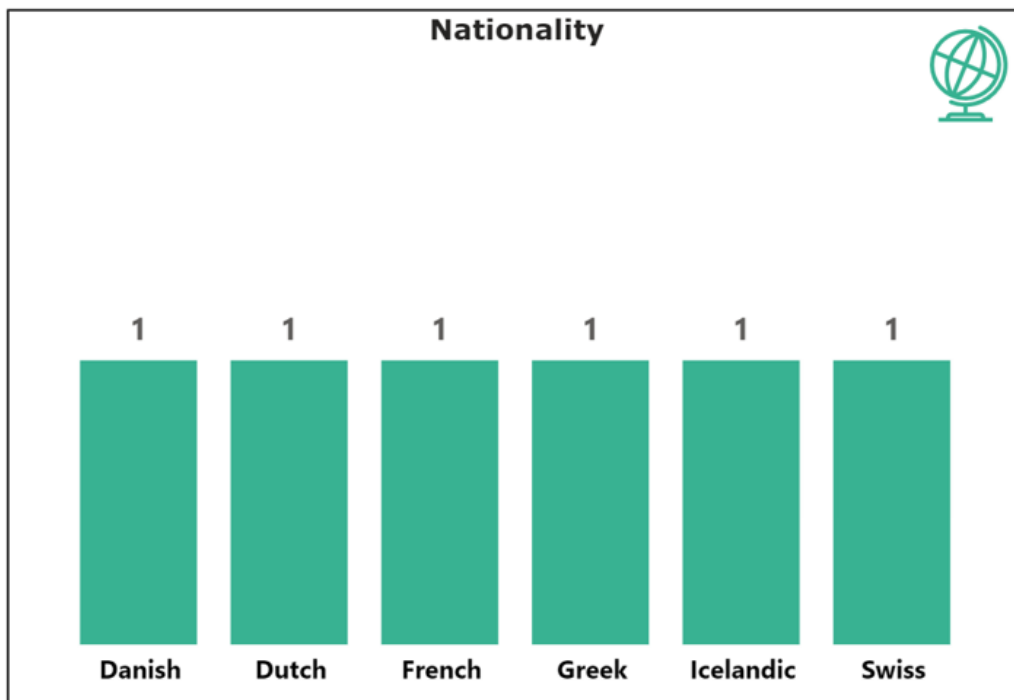
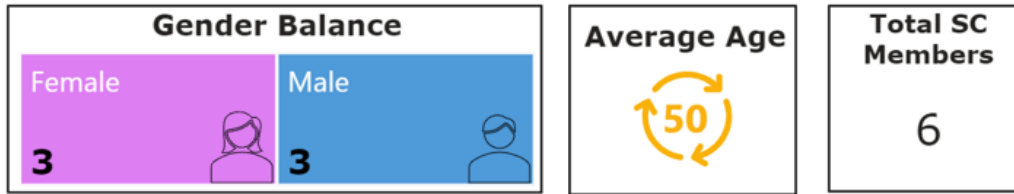
### PPR Panel Composition proposal

Following the selection procedure, 14 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the PPR Panel and key statistics are provided below.



### Scientific Committee Composition proposal

Following the selection procedure, 6 candidates are proposed for appointment as members of the Scientific Committee and key statistics are provided below.







### **Proposal for Reserve List**

The proposal for a reserve list consists of candidates placed on the draft list of suitable candidates who have not been proposed for appointments. The proposed reserve list includes 614 candidates. The reserve list will be used to identify and appoint members of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panels and Working Groups in the future if needed, and will be valid until the end of the new term of office of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels (30 June 2029).

## **CONCLUSION**

The Executive Director of EFSA herewith provides to the Management Board with a draft list of suitable candidates, together with a proposal for membership of each Scientific Panel/Scientific Committee, including the indication on the specific multidisciplinary expertise needed in each of them, as well as a proposal for a reserve list.

In conclusion, the Management Board of EFSA is invited to adopt the list of candidates proposed for appointment in the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee of EFSA and the list of candidates suitable for placement on the reserve list.