




# EFSA's Reputation Barometer

67th Advisory Forum meeting,  
Utrecht, The Netherlands,  
6 February 2018

# Background – Reputation Barometer 2017

- Stems from EFSA strategy 2020 – prioritise public and stakeholder engagement
- Aim: measure EFSA's reputation  identify opportunities to improve it
- Pilot study, first of its kind
- Designed to complement and inform EFSA's external evaluation
- Participants: EC, MS, Business, NGOs, Scientific Community, MEPs

# 12 Attributes of Reputation for EFSA

- Approach to providing **scientific advice**
- The **quality** of EFSA's risk assessment opinions
- The **efficiency** of EFSA in producing risk assessments
- The identification and characterization of **emerging risks** by EFSA
- EFSA's work to **harmonize** risk assessment methods
- EFSA's **independence** and objectivity
- The level of **transparency** at EFSA
- How EFSA **communicate risks**
- **Engagement** by EFSA with external partners
- EFSA's provision of **scientific and technical assistance** to Member States for crisis management
- The quality of EFSA's **governance**
- EFSA's **innovativeness**

# Fieldwork and analysis

## ■ **Sampling:**

- Member States: Advisory Forum
- European Commission: DG Sante, DG RTD, DG AGRI
- The European Parliament: limited, “convenient” sample of MEPs involved in food chain debates
- Stakeholders: list of EFSA registered stakeholders
- Scientific Community: “convenient” sample of scientists involved in regulatory risk assessments around the world

## ■ **Online Survey**

## ■ **Follow up interviews**

## ■ **Analysis:**

- Assessment of the tool’s appropriateness
- Calculation of the reputation score

# Response rates

| Audience  | Sample     | Responses  | Rate       |
|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Member State authorities (Advisory Forum)                 | 62         | 26         | 42%        |
| European Commission                                       | 38         | 12         | 32%        |
| Business and food industry, farmers and primary producers | 61         | 12         | 19%        |
| Consumers and thematic organisations                      | 14         | 5          | 35%        |
| Scientific community                                      | N/A        | 51         | N/A        |
| European Parliament                                       | 18         | 3          | 17%        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>193</b> | <b>109</b> | <b>30%</b> |

# Limitations

- Some untested assumptions – e.g. degree of homogeneity of different groups
- Sampling strategies differed across all groups for practical reasons
- Participation was low from certain groups
- Missing audiences – e.g. the EP and risk managers in MS

# Overview – Reputation scores

On a scale from -100 to +100, EFSA's reputation within the 5 following audiences in 2017 is:

| Member state authorities | European Commission | Businesses, farmers and primary producers | Consumers and environmental NGOs | Scientific community |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 46                       | 33                  | 20  | 3                                | 42                   |

# Member States

| Attributes                       | Performance (on a -100 to +100 scale) | Weighting (on a 1-6 scale) | Reputation score (on a -100 to +100 scale) |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Approach to scientific advice    | 53                                    | 5.25                       | 46   |
| Quality of opinions              | 53                                    | 5.6                        |  |
| Efficiency in risk assessments   | 31                                    | 5                          |  |
| Emerging risks                   | 45                                    | 5.1                        |  |
| Harmonization of RA methods      | 52                                    | 5.3                        |  |
| Independence and objectivity     | 43                                    | 5.5                        |  |
| Transparency                     | 48                                    | 5.2                        |  |
| Risk communication               | 52                                    | 5.2                        |  |
| Engagement with partners         | 40                                    | 4.6                        |  |
| Assistance for crisis management | 42                                    | 4.9                        |  |
| Governance                       | 37                                    | 4.9                        |  |
| Innovativeness                   | 50                                    | 4.4                        |  |

- Highest reputation score overall among surveyed groups
- Highest scores: approach to scientific advice & quality of opinions
- Lowest score: efficiency in risk assessments
- Indications that the group is mixed (wide range of responses for some attributes)
- Sentiment is very positive overall



# European Commission

| Attributes                       | Performance (on a -100 to +100 scale) | Weighting (on a 1-6 scale) | Reputation score (on a -100 to 100 scale) |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Approach to scientific advice    | 38                                    | 5.3                        | <b>33</b>                                 |
| Quality of opinions              | 41                                    | 5.6                        |   |
| Efficiency in risk assessments   | 21                                    | 5.3                        |   |
| Emerging risks                   | 39                                    | 5.2                        |   |
| Harmonization of RA methods      | 29                                    | 5.2                        |   |
| Independence and objectivity     | 52                                    | 5.5                        |   |
| Transparency                     | 37                                    | 5.2                        |   |
| Risk communication               | 30                                    | 5.1                        |   |
| Engagement with partners         | 36                                    | 4.7                        |   |
| Assistance for crisis management | 41                                    | 4.8                        |   |
| Governance                       | 29                                    | 5                          |   |
| Innovativeness                   | 33                                    | 4.5                        |   |

- Positive reputation score overall
- Relatively high scores across all attributes
- Highest score: independence and objectivity
- Lowest score: efficiency in risk assessments
- Indications that the group is mixed (wide range of responses across most attributes)
- Sentiment positive but half of all respondents disagreed with the statement "EFSA acts in the interest of the EU economy"

# Businesses, farmers and primary producers

| Attributes                       | Performance (on a -100 to +100 scale) | Weighting (on a 1-6 scale) | Reputation score (on a -100 to 100 scale) |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Approach to scientific advice    | 27                                    | 5.3                        | <b>20</b>                                 |
| Quality of opinions              | 36                                    | 5.6                        |   |
| Efficiency in risk assessments   | -4                                    | 5.7                        |   |
| Emerging risks                   | 36                                    | 5.2                        |   |
| Harmonization of RA methods      | 7                                     | 5.2                        |   |
| Independence and objectivity     | 33                                    | 5.2                        |   |
| Transparency                     | 29                                    | 4.8                        |   |
| Risk communication               | 26                                    | 4.6                        |   |
| Engagement with partners         | 14                                    | 5.1                        |   |
| Assistance for crisis management | 20                                    | 4                          |   |
| Governance                       | 12                                    | 4                          |   |
| Innovativeness                   | 19                                    | 4.4                        |   |

- Reputation score “low positive”
- A few attributes received low or negative scores
- Highest score: quality of opinions & emerging risks
- Lowest score: efficiency in risk assessments
- Some discrepancies within the group (wide range of scores for some attributes)
- Sentiment is good overall but half of all respondents disagreed with the statement “EFSA acts in the interest of the EU economy”

# Consumer and environmental NGOs

| Attributes                       | Performance (on a -100 to +100 scale) | Weighting (on a 1-6 scale) | Reputation score (on a -100 to 100 scale) |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Approach to scientific advice    | 13                                    | 5.6                        | <b>3</b>                                  |
| Quality of opinions              | 11                                    | 5.8                        |   |
| Efficiency in risk assessments   | -14                                   | 5.2                        |   |
| Emerging risks                   | 17                                    | 4.6                        |   |
| Harmonization of RA methods      | 33                                    | 4.6                        |   |
| Independence and objectivity     | -4                                    | 5.8                        |   |
| Transparency                     | -11                                   | 5.6                        |   |
| Risk communication               | 3                                     | 5.4                        |   |
| Engagement with partners         | 7                                     | 4.2                        |   |
| Assistance for crisis management | 0                                     | 4.8                        |   |
| Governance                       | 0                                     | 5.4                        |   |
| Innovativeness                   | -8                                    | 4.6                        |   |

- Overall reputation score is neutral
- Scores across attributes vary
- Highest score: harmonization of risk assessment methods
- Lowest score: efficiency in risk assessments
- A consistent group (but this is based on only 5 respondents)
- Sentiment mixed. Positive views on EFSA as an organisation but not on whether EFSA acts in the interests of the environment (40% disagree, 40% undecided) or consumers (20% disagree, 60% undecided)

# Scientific Community

| Attributes                       | Performance (on a -100 to +100 scale) | Weighting (on a 1-6 scale) | Reputation score (on a -100 to 100 scale) |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Approach to scientific advice    | 54                                    | 4.9                        | <b>42</b>                                 |
| Quality of opinions              | 52                                    | 5.5                        |   |
| Efficiency in risk assessments   | 37                                    | 4.8                        |   |
| Emerging risks                   | 50                                    | 5.2                        |   |
| Harmonization of RA methods      | 45                                    | 5                          |   |
| Independence and objectivity     | 44                                    | 5.5                        |   |
| Transparency                     | 50                                    | 5.1                        |   |
| Risk communication               | 48                                    | 4.9                        |   |
| Engagement with partners         | 37                                    | 4.6                        |   |
| Assistance for crisis management | 40                                    | 4.1                        |   |
| Governance                       | 48                                    | 4                          |   |
| Innovativeness                   | 43                                    | 4.4                        |   |

- Generally positive reputation score overall
- High scores across all attributes
- Highest score: approach to scientific advice
- Lowest score: efficiency in risk assessments
- Indications that this is a heterogeneous audience (wide range of responses across all attributes)
- Sentiment very positive overall (30% disagree that EFSA acts in the interest of the EU economy, 10% disagree that it acts in the interest of consumers)

## Attributes receiving lowest scores

- **Efficiency in risk assessments**
  - Consistently scored the lowest across all groups
  - Concerns with timeliness and predictability of EFSA's risk assessment work
  - An area where EFSA could improve its reputation across all groups
- **Independence and objectivity**
  - Scores were not poor overall
  - However, interviewees across all groups identified this as a problematic area
  - Views on what should be done were inconsistent from one group to the next
  - It would be challenging to address the concerns of all groups

## Next steps

- “Insider survey” with EP: 2018
- Detailed stakeholder mapping: 2018
- Next edition of reputation barometer: 2019



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