

Supervisory Activities in 2019

Today, EIOPA published its report on supervisory activities in 2019 highlighting activities and achievements throughout the course of the year, covering both prudential and conduct of business supervision.

A key area of work in 2019 focused on proposing amendments to Solvency II in the context of the 2020 Review of Solvency II as a result of the identification of inconsistencies in the implementation of some areas of Solvency II. This knowledge led in some cases to proposals to amend the legislative framework while in others it allowed for the identification of areas where further work is needed from a supervisory convergence perspective. Both approaches should contribute in the future to ensuring a more consistent application of the framework. Also in the context of Solvency II, EIOPA published a Supervisory Statement on the application of the proportionality principle in the supervision of the Solvency Capital Requirement.

To promote a common supervisory culture, as a result of findings from a thematic review on consumer protection issues in travel insurance, EIOPA issued a warning to insurers and insurance intermediaries to tackle high commissions for travel insurance products as a supervisory response.

To minimise risks to the internal market and level playing field, EIOPA took important steps on the use of product intervention products, with market monitoring of consumer trends highlighting areas where conduct risks are emerging or continue to persist. In addition, peer reviews continued as a valuable tool to identify areas for convergence in supervisory practice, as well as good practices. In 2019, EIOPA conducted a peer review on the Regular Supervisory Report.

In the area of supervision of emerging risks, EIOPA concluded a thematic review on the use of Big Data analytics in motor and health insurance and carried out a public consultation on draft Guidelines on information and communication technology security and governance.

Throughout the year, EIOPA continued its oversight activities with active participation in 53 cross-border colleges, cooperation of cooperation platforms focused on undertakings operating cross-border and bilateral engagement with national supervisors. EIOPA also strengthened its oversight activity on conduct of business, initiating bilateral visits to National Competent Authorities.

Looking ahead, EIOPA will focus its supervisory work on activities set out in its [Supervisory Convergence Plan](#).

[Read the report](#)

Pigs at slaughter: measures to address welfare concerns



Most of the hazards related to welfare of pigs at slaughter are due to inadequate staff skills and poorly designed and constructed facilities. That is one of the main conclusions of EFSA's latest advice on welfare of animals during the slaughter process. EFSA highlights the lack of skills and/or training of the staff working in slaughtering as a serious welfare concern.

The scientific opinion published today is the latest in a series of updated assessments on animal welfare at slaughter requested by the European Commission. It proposes measures to address the welfare hazards most commonly associated with the slaughter of pigs for food production and follows similar opinions on [poultry](#) and [rabbits](#). A further opinion on cattle will follow later this year.

Marta Hugas, EFSA's Chief Scientist, said: "As part of its new Farm to Fork strategy, the European Commission is reviewing current provisions on animal welfare, with the aim of creating a more sustainable food system in the EU. This series of opinions, plus others that we will deliver in the next few years, will provide the scientific basis for that review.

"Having high standards of animal welfare improves animal health and food quality, reduces the need for medication and can help preserve biodiversity. Healthy, well looked-after animals are essential to a healthy food chain."

The comprehensive overview on pigs covers the slaughter process from arrival and unloading of pigs through stunning to bleeding and killing. It identifies a number of hazards that give rise to welfare issues – such as heat stress, thirst, prolonged hunger and respiratory distress – and proposes preventive and corrective measures where possible.

As with the previous opinion on poultry, most of the hazards – 29 out of 30 identified – are the consequence of staff failings due to factors such as lack of training and fatigue. Preventive measures can be put in place for all the hazards, EFSA says, with site management identified as having a crucial role to play in prevention.

The scientific opinions on slaughter are based on the latest available scientific knowledge and are being developed in consultation with animal welfare experts from EU Member States.

The findings will be used by the European Commission in discussions with the World Organisation on Animal Health (OIE) aimed at aligning approaches to animal welfare at slaughter.

Invitation letter by President Charles Michel to the members of the European Council ahead of their video conference on 19 June 2020



Dear colleagues, I am looking forward to our videoconference on Friday 19 June 2020.

The central theme of the meeting will be the Multiannual Financial Framework and the Recovery Plan. It will be the first time we discuss the package since its publication on 28 May. A lot of work has been done in the Council to help prepare the ground and to allow all delegations to get a clear understanding of the various parts of the proposal. It is now time for the members of the European Council to discuss the package in depth.

I think we are all aware of the complexity of the proposals and the time needed to deal with them. Our meeting on Friday should be a crucial stepping stone towards an agreement at a subsequent physical meeting.

I would like us to confirm our understanding on a number of points where I feel a consensus is emerging:

- the EU needs an exceptional response to this unprecedented crisis, commensurate with the magnitude of the challenge;
- the response should be financed through Commission borrowing on the financial markets and, to allow for that, we need to increase the own resources ceiling;
- our effort should be targeted towards the most affected sectors and geographical parts of Europe;

- the next MFF should be adjusted to take account of the crisis and should be considered together with the Recovery Plan;
- the overall package should not just deal with the immediate crisis, but also presents an opportunity to transform and reform our economies and help them embrace a green and digital future.

At the same time, we need to have a constructive and in-depth debate on the elements that require further clarification or where views still need to converge, such as:

- the size and duration of the various elements of the Recovery Plan;
- the best way to allocate the assistance and the issue of loans and grants;
- questions relating to conditionality and governance;
- the size and content of the MFF and its financing, including own resources and rebates.

Our ultimate goal is to reach a deal as soon as possible. There is still quite some way to go towards an agreement, so we will need to work hard in the coming days and weeks. We will succeed if we enter talks with a sense of responsibility and the willingness to come out of this major challenge united and strong.

In relation to the practical running of the meeting, the videoconference will start at 10.00 a.m. with the traditional exchange of views with the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli.

We will then begin our meeting with a short presentation by Prime Minister Plenković on the results of the Croatian Presidency of the Council. I would like to thank him very warmly for his hard work and dedication at a particularly challenging time. After that, Commission President von der Leyen and I will report on the videoconference with the UK Prime Minister held on 15 June. The President of the European Central Bank will then brief us on the economic situation. At the end of the meeting we will briefly touch on the state of play of the implementation of the Minsk agreements.

[Visit the meeting page](#)

Venezuela: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the latest developments



On 10 June, the Venezuelan Supreme Court (TSJ) issued a decision giving a 72-hour deadline to the Electoral Nominations Committee established last November within the National Assembly to identify the names of the candidates for rectors of the Electoral Council (CNE). On June 12, the Venezuelan Supreme Court appointed the rectors of the CNE. On 15 June, the same court suspended the current board of directors of “Accion Democratica” (AD), one of the main opposition parties and a member of the G4 opposition group, and appointed an ad-hoc board.

These decisions reduce the democratic space in the country to a minimum and create additional obstacles to the resolution of the profound political crisis in Venezuela.

Free and fair legislative and presidential elections that respect international standards are key to overcome the crisis in Venezuela. An independent and balanced CNE as well as a level playing field enabling the participation of political parties and candidates is a cornerstone for a credible electoral process. The EU calls on the Government and opposition to engage in meaningful and inclusive negotiations towards the constitution of the CNE and the lifting of bans on opposition parties. All national actors should go back to the negotiating table, in the interest of all Venezuelans.

At a time when a complex humanitarian situation adds to the political crisis, all parties in Venezuela must join forces to address human suffering and find ways towards a sustainable and inclusive political solution. The EU reiterates its support to any meaningful effort in that direction as well as its long-term commitment to the people of Venezuela, and stands engaged in working with Venezuelans and with the international community, including through the International Contact Group, towards a peaceful return to democracy and the rule of law.

Media advisory – Press briefing ahead of the video conference of the members of the European Council



The press briefing ahead of the video conference of the members of the European Council of 19 June 2020 will take place via **video conference on Thursday 18 June 2020 at 11.15.**

This briefing is “off the record”.

In order to follow the briefing and to be able to ask questions remotely, **EU accredited journalists** and journalists who had a **EUCO accreditation from June 2019** European Council meeting or later, can register using [this link](#).

Journalists who already registered for high-level press conferences (European Council, EU-Western Balkans summit) in April or May don't need to register again.

Deadline: Thursday, 18 June 2020, 10.00

Further instructions will be sent to all registered participants approximately half an hour after the deadline.

Visit the [video conference page](#).

[Visit the meeting page](#)