

Transparency in risk assessment: a new era begins

New rules on transparency and sustainability are set to transform the way EFSA carries out its role as risk assessor in the EU food safety system.

A [new regulation passed by the European Parliament and Council of the EU](#), which will apply from 27 March, will bolster the Authority's ability to carry out its risk assessments in accordance with the highest transparency standards.

The regulation will strengthen the reliability and transparency of the scientific studies submitted to EFSA and reinforce the governance of the Authority to ensure its long-term sustainability.

Bernhard Url, EFSA's Executive Director, said: "This is a pivotal moment for the assessment of risks in the food chain in the EU. EFSA is grateful to the European Parliament, to the European Commission and to the EU Member States for giving us this opportunity to bring citizens and stakeholders closer to our work and to benefit from greater scrutiny of our working processes and practices."

Among other initiatives to support implementation of the regulation, EFSA has rolled out new tools and a dedicated web portal to help stakeholders adapt to the new arrangements. The new portal will be live from 30 March.

A series of [training sessions and webinars](#) has also been organised.

The implementation process has been executed [in collaboration with EFSA's stakeholders](#) and partners such as the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) and Member States .

The new arrangements will apply to new mandates and applications and cannot be implemented retroactively. This means that there will be a period of adjustment during which much of EFSA's ongoing work will continue to be carried out under the previous rules and legal provisions.

Mr Url said: "This is a big logistical challenge, and we have committed significant resources to ensuring that the transition to the new system is as smooth and inclusive as possible for our stakeholders."

What is the Transparency Regulation?

The regulation was developed in response to a [European Citizens' Initiative on pesticides](#) and the findings of the [review of the General Food Law Regulation](#) that was completed in January 2018.

Among other things, the new regulation:

- **Allows** citizens access to scientific studies and information submitted

to EFSA by industry early in the process of risk assessment.

- **Embeds** public consultations in the process for assessing applications for approval of regulated products.
- **Ensures** that EFSA is notified of all commissioned studies in a particular area to guarantee that companies applying for authorisations submit all relevant information.
- **Gives** the European Commission the option of asking EFSA to procure additional studies.

Further down the line, the regulation will also transform the way EFSA is governed by adding Member State representatives to its Management Board. Work is also under way to make assessment and management of risks in the food chain more accessible to EU citizens by improving communication and engagement tools and practices.

You can find out more on the [European Commission website](#).

[embedded content]