

Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR)
Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER)

Request for a scientific opinion by the Secretariat:

Revision of the 'Memorandum on weight of evidence and uncertainties'

According to the Commission Decision C(2015) 5383¹, the mission of the Scientific Committees is to provide the Commission services with scientific advice and risk assessment in the areas of public health, consumer safety and environmental risks, including, when relevant, identification of research needs to address critical information gaps, assessment of proposed future research actions and of research results.

The scientific assessments carried out by the Scientific Committees should always be based on scientifically accepted standards of best practice, and be transparent with regard to the data, methods and assumptions that are used in the risk assessment process. They should identify uncertainties and use harmonised terminology, where possible, based on internationally accepted terms.

The 'Memorandum on weight of evidence and uncertainties' was adopted by SCENIHR in 2012 with the aim to provide greater transparency in the risk assessments carried out by this Scientific Committee, to be an aid to consistency between opinions and to be helpful to stakeholders.

In the light of the new organisation of the scientific committees, namely the merger of two committees to form the Scientific Committee on Health, Environmental and Emerging Risks (SCHEER), there is a need to review this Memorandum to be used by the future SCHEER in formulating their future scientific opinions.

The aim of this exercise is to transfer to the new SCHEER the experience acquired during the term 2013-2016 also taking into consideration the guidance documents used by other EU risk assessment bodies.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The SCENIHR and SCHER are required by the Secretariat to prepare a revised version of the 'Memorandum on weight of evidence and uncertainties' making explicit the approach to be used by the SCHEER for determining the weight of evidence and the uncertainties involved in the development of their opinions. The approach should take into consideration the new available methodology that has been developed by various national and international risk assessment bodies, including Union bodies.

The SCCS might be associated in order to ensure overall consistency between opinions of Scientific Committees.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/docs/call_2015_5383_decision_with_annexes_en.pdf