

The weight of evidence process

It all starts with a question: does a chemical, physical or biological agent pose a risk to human health or the environment? To find the answer, the Scientific Committee on Health, Environmental and Emerging Risks (SCHEER) determines the weight of the evidence and the uncertainties involved in the development of the risk assessment. The scientific evidence consists of observations, experimental and model results and expert judgements that serve to support, refute, or modify a scientific Opinion.

A transparent approach for weighing the evidence for a scientific Opinion will allow a conclusion on the solidness of the risk assessment. This will better support European decision making. For example, if an agent is judged to pose a risk to health, legislative action might be taken to lower or eliminate that risk. But what is this weight of evidence process the SCHEER uses to make these important risk assessments?

