



Using Epidemiological Studies in Health Risk Assessments: Relevance, Reliability and Causality

International Conference, 2nd Announcement

9–10 November 2023, Berlin

International Conference on Using Epidemiological Studies in Health Risk Assessments

The International Conference on Using Epidemiological Studies in Health Risk Assessments will take place November 9 – 10, 2023 in Berlin, Germany.

Observational epidemiological studies can provide valuable evidence for health risk assessments in various areas including food and feed safety, chemical and product safety, occupational health, environmental health and animal health.

However, the use of epidemiological data to assess health risks is often not systematic. The presumed inability of observational studies to demonstrate a causal relationship may even lead to their exclusion from the evidence assessment although they may provide valuable evidence for example in a weight-of-evidence approach.

Risk assessors may encounter challenges when using epidemiological data for their assessments. Some of these are related to the approaches for the critical appraisal of the evidence of individual studies. For example, the critical appraisal should consider uncertainties in the methods used to determine exposures, risk factors and outcomes. Uncertainty about the causal nature of an observed association is a central question in the use of epidemiological evidence in health risk assessment.

At this conference, epidemiologists, health statisticians, risk assessors, other users of epidemiological evidence (e.g. toxicologists and nutritionists) as well as risk managers and stakeholders are invited to share and discuss their experiences to promote the use of epidemiological data for health risk assessments. Please have a look at our confirmed keynote speakers. The final programme will be published in the 3rd announcement.

Preliminary conference programme

The conference is a two-day event with preconference workshops and will be composed of invited and submitted talks and poster sessions.

Thursday, 09 November 2023

08:00 am–02:00 pm	Registration
09:00 am–11:45 am	Workshops
01:00 pm–05:30 pm	Scientific programme
06:00 pm–10:30 pm	Social programme

Friday, 10 November 2023

08:00 am–11:00 am	Registration
09:00 am–04:00 pm	Scientific programme
04:00 pm–04:15 pm	Closing

All events take place at the conference venue. Online streaming of the conference will be available to registered delegates.

Confirmed key-note speakers

- **Sander Greenland**, Ph.D., Research Professor and Emeritus Professor of Epidemiology and Statistics – University of California.
- **Judy Lakind**, Ph.D., President of LaKind Associates, Adjunct Associate Professor at the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health – University of Maryland.
- **Julian P.T. Higgins**, Ph.D., Professor of Evidence Synthesis in the Population Health Sciences department – Bristol Medical School, Head of the Bristol Appraisal and Review of Research (BARR) group.
- **Joachim Schuz**, Ph.D., Head of the Environment and Lifestyle Branch of IARC/WHO, International Agency for Research on Cancer, World Health Organization.
- **Barbara Hoffmann**, MD MPH, Professor and Head of Environmental Epidemiology, Deputy Head of the Institute of Occupational, Social and Environmental Medicine at the Centre for Health and Society – Heinrich-Heine-University of Düsseldorf.
- **Holger Schünemann**, MD Ph.D., Professor of Clinical Epidemiology and Medicine – McMaster University, Director at Cochrane Canada and McMaster GRADE centre.

The scheduled panel discussions will also feature elected speakers from EFSA's scientific panels.

Submission of abstracts for papers

Abstracts for oral and/or poster presentations can be submitted online on the website of the BfR-Academy

<https://akademie.bfr.berlin/133467>

Important dates

July 15, 2023	2 nd announcement
August 11, 2023	Extended deadline for abstract submission
August 25, 2023	Notification of acceptance
August 25, 2023	Publishing of programme & 3 rd announcement
October 25, 2023	Registration closes

Topics

Topic 1

Using epidemiological studies in health risk assessments

Discussion and exchange on the current state of the use of epidemiological evidence in risk assessment.

Keywords: risk assessment context and requirements – case studies – limitations – challenges – good practices

Topic 2

Critical appraisal of individual epidemiological studies

Critical appraisal of the body of evidence plays a central role in the field of risk assessment and therefore requires well-established and standardized methods. Established methods and tools as well as new developments in the field of critical appraisal and risk of bias (RoB) of epidemiological studies assessment will be presented and discussed.

Keywords: critical appraisal – evidence based methods – risk of bias – automatisisation /natural language processing

Topic 3

Appraising the epidemiological evidence on causality

Within this topic, current perspectives on how evidence from epidemiological studies can be used to answer causality questions will be presented and discussed.

Keywords: casual pathways – causality and artificial intelligence – statistical learning – weight of evidence

Workshops

Pre-conference, workshops will be held on selected topics of the conference. They will provide an opportunity for interaction, in-depth discussions and practical experience. The topics of the workshops will be announced together with the full conference programme.

All workshops will be free of charge and held in presence. The number of workshop places is limited.

Scientific Committee

Marios Georgiadis

Senior Scientific Officer, Epidemiologist at European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Cornelia Weikert

Professor and head of Unit Risks of Subpopulations and Human Studies and Human Study Centre Consumers Health Protection, German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR)

Thor Halldorsson

Professor at Faculty of Food Science and Nutrition, School of Health Sciences, University of Iceland; Senior researcher, Department of Epidemiology Research Statens Serum Institut, Copenhagen, Denmark

Katja Ickstadt

Professor at Department of Statistics, TU Dortmund University

Matthias Greiner

Professor at University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Foundation, German and Head of Department Exposure, German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR)

Organizational information

Venue

German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR)
Lecture theatre
Diedersdorfer Weg 1
12277 Berlin (Marienfelde)



Directions

www.bfr.bund.de/en/location-marienfelde.html
Destination stop (www.bahn.de, www.bvg.de/en)
Nahmitzer Damm/Marienfelder Allee (Berlin)

Organiser

German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR)
Max-Dohrn-Straße 8 – 10
10589 Berlin, Germany
www.bfr.bund.de/en

Registration

Participation to the conference and workshops is free of charge. Please register online at <https://www.bfr-akademie.de/english/events/EpiStud2023.html>.

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
Via Carlo Magno 1A
43126 Parma, Italy
www.efsa.europa.eu

Please note that the number of registrations for the conference and for the workshops is limited and participants will be considered on a first come first served basis.

Hotel information

The **Hotel Steglitz International** in Berlin-Steglitz is conveniently located for transport to the venue.

Schlossstraße/Albrechtstraße 2
12165 Berlin

Contact

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About the BfR

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). It advises the Federal Government and the federal states (“Laender”) on questions of food, chemicals and product safety. The BfR conducts its own research on topics that are closely linked to its assessment tasks.

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