

Facts & Figures

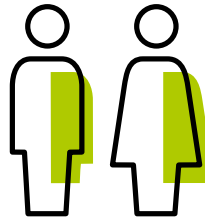
The BfR in brief



4

Locations

Berlin, Jungfernheide
Berlin, Alt-Marienfelde
Berlin, Nahmitzer Damm
Berlin, Marienfelde



1,179

Employees

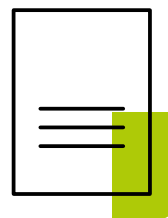


3,995,190

Visits to the BfR
website

Most clicked:

FAQ: Can the new type of coronavirus
be transmitted via food and objects?



884,584

Opinions

Most clicked:

High doses of vitamin D supplements can
affect health in the long term (No. 65/2023)

9

Departments

- Central Department
- Risk Communication
- Exposure
- Biological Safety
- Food Safety
- Pesticides Safety
- Chemical and Product Safety
- Safety in the Food Chain
- Experimental Toxicology
and ZEBET



Approximately

134

million euros



103
Third-party
funded projects




32
Press releases



140
Events



1,207
Enquiries



Facts & Figures 2023

The BfR in brief

About the BfR



Dear readers,

The year 2023 was characterised by the renewed assessment of the BfR by the German Science and Humanities Council. It certified that the BfR fulfils its tasks on the basis of “very good research”: independently assessing potential health risks in food and consumer products as well as informing the public about these risks.

Another focus last year was networking at the national and global level in order to strengthen scientific exchange in consumer health protection – whether as part of the BfR Summer Academy with participants from 20 countries or the expansion of international cooperation, for example by participating in the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF) in Cairo.

The “BfR in brief” format gives a quick overview of the facts and figures of 2023. Are you curious about the projects and publications behind the figures? You can find more detailed information on the BfR website. And if you are interested in the BfR’s core research areas and content in 2023, you can read about them in our science magazine BfR2GO.

Professor Andreas Hensel
President

Identifying risks – protecting health: How can food, chemicals, cosmetics, toys and many other everyday products be made as safe as possible? The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment – BfR for short – provides the answers.

The BfR was founded in 2002 to strengthen consumer health protection in Germany. As a federal authority with legal capacity within the portfolio of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, it advises the federal government and German federal states (“Laender”) on food and feed safety issues and on the safety of chemicals and products.

The BfR’s main tasks include assessing existing health risks and identifying new ones, preparing recommendations on risk mitigation and communicating this process transparently.

All working areas of the BfR – science, assessment, communication and administration – have been certified in accordance with quality standard DIN EN ISO 9001 since 2010.

At the BfR, there are also National Reference Laboratories under Regulation (EU) 2017/625 in the domains of food and feed safety and food hygiene. This means that the BfR is part of an EU-wide network for improved food monitoring.

The BfR is supported in its risk assessment and risk communication by an independent scientific expert network made up of 14 commissions and is advised in its strategic focus by the Scientific Advisory Board.

Work areas



Food and feed safety

Be it ingredients or additives, residues, contaminants or germs and parasites – on the basis of international recognised criteria, the BfR assesses food and feed with regard to toxicological, microbiological and nutritional aspects.

Product safety

The BfR investigates ingredients and their release from products such as cosmetics, toys, clothing or food packaging and containers, and assesses whether the contained substances could be a hazard to human health.



Chemical safety

The BfR also assesses health risks of chemicals, plant protection products, biocide products and hazardous materials to quickly identify undesirable effects.

Risk communication

The BfR examines the risk perception and risk behaviour of the population. To inform the public about health risks, the BfR talks to various stakeholders in society.



Alternatives to animal experiments

The BfR performs the tasks of the “German Centre for the Protection of Laboratory Animals (Bf3R)” and coordinates all activities countrywide with the goal of restricting animal experiments and ensuring the best possible care for laboratory animals.

International

The BfR works closely with various multilateral, international, European and national institutions, ministries and embassies on all continents.

In order to promote cooperation with the 55 partner institutions, the BfR uses a variety of instruments for knowledge transfer and knowledge exchange. These include participation in joint research projects or the implementation of measures in international capacity development. In addition, the BfR is represented in numerous global networks and committees. At the European level, partnership with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is particularly important. As the point of liaison between the EFSA and the various national food and feed safety authorities, the EFSA Focal Point at the BfR is responsible for the work of scientific coordination and for the exchange of information.



bfr.bund.de/en > [The Institute](#) > [Co-operation](#) > [European and international](#)

Capacity building

1

BMZ-funded project for technical cooperation in Tunisia

Time period: 2021–2025

German project partner: Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL)

Objective: Establishing and sustainably strengthening the respective Tunisian authorities in the areas of food safety and consumer health protection

bfr.bund.de/en > A-Z Index > Cooperations > Flyer

2

BMZ-funded project: Boosting Uganda's Investments in Livestock Development (BUILD)

Time period: 2019–2023 (individual activities with ILRI agreed for 2024)

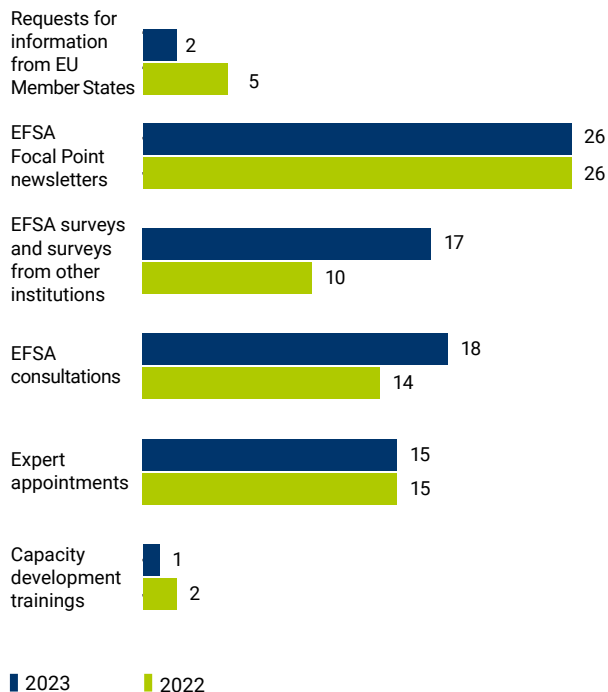
Project partners: International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and 4 German partners (including BfR)

Objective: Strengthening of existing structures for animal health and zoonoses control in Uganda

ilri.org > Research > Projects

EFSA Focal Point

Scientific coordination and information exchange in 2023 und 2022



International activities

International activities in 2023, organised, accompanied and/or implemented by the International Affairs department

17

Network meetings

11

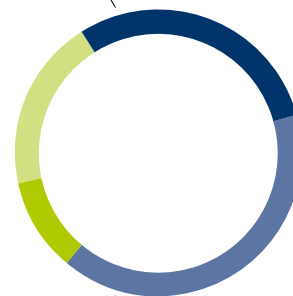
Visitor groups (delegations to the BfR)

6

BfR delegations abroad

23

Capacity development trainings



55

Partner institutions

32 in Europe (EU 27, EU candidate countries, EFTA member states, Russia*)
 12 in Asia
 4 in North and South America
 3 in Africa
 4 international organisations

* Currently projects and programmes with state participation from Russia and Belarus are suspended, subject to compliance with legal framework conditions. BMBF, announcement 17/03/2022

Networks

Partnerships exist in the form of institutional cooperations or joint research projects. Scientists at the BfR actively contribute to the work in a variety of committees. The institutional exchange between experts is also becoming more important.

Participation in committees

638

Committees in which BfR employees are officially involved

150

Committees of other institutions

82

Federal government-federal state ("Laender") committees

47

Committees of the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL)

52

Federal committees

331

national

60

Committees of the European Commission

46

Committees of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

31

Committees of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)

60

Committees of other European organisations

197

European level

54

OECD committees

19

WHO/FAO: Committees of Codex Alimentarius

1

WHO/FAO: Other committees

14

Committees of other United Nations specialised agencies

22

Other committees involved in global standardisation activities

110

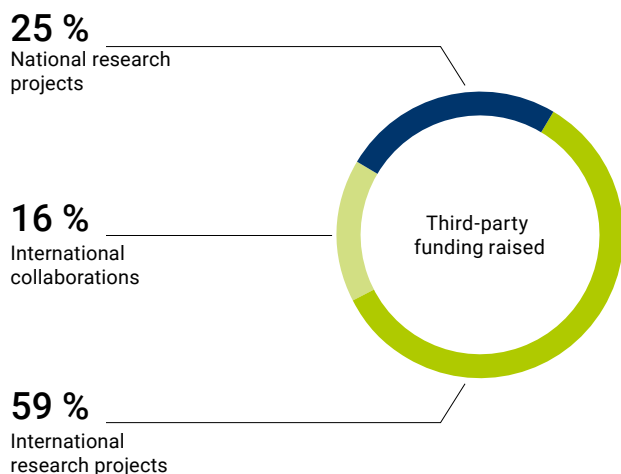
worldwide

bfr.bund.de/en > The Institute > Co-operation

Research

One of the BfR's key competences is independent, application-oriented and cause-related research. The topics are closely related to its assessment tasks. One aim is to close knowledge gaps. Another is to constantly expand the Institute's scientific expertise in risk assessment and risk communication independent of economic, political and societal interests. The BfR is actively involved in numerous national and international research projects.

Third-party funded projects

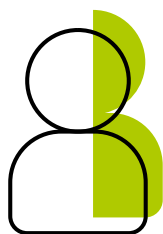


[bfr.bund.de/en > Research > Third-party funded projects](https://bfr.bund.de/en/Research/Third-party_funded_projects)

Third-party funding raised

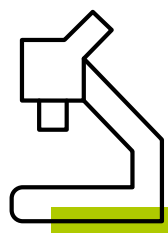
	Funding (in thousands of euros)	Number of projects
National research projects	5,318	41
Federal government	4,068	
DFG	1,237	
Other	13	
International research projects	2,209	52
EU	1,107	
EFSA	920	
Other	182	
International collaborations (EU, EFSA, BMZ and others)	1,425	10
Total	8,952	103

[bfr.bund.de/en > Research > Main research](https://bfr.bund.de/en/Research/Main_research)



Junior research groups

Junior research groups provide young scientists with research and scientific qualification opportunities shortly after completing their PhD. In doing so, the BfR specifically boosts core research areas and junior scientists.

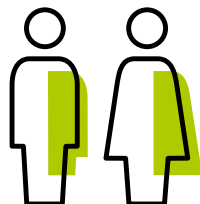


Study centres

The study centres provide long-term prioritisation in strategically important areas of the BfR and pool technical expertise on interdepartmental topics.

Personnel and training

1,179
Employees



161

New appointments,
of which

10

Trainees

Scientists	539
Administrative staff	270
Technical assistants	144
PhD candidates	48
Apprentices/trainees	20
Animal carers	23
Other (e.g. librarians, laboratory assistants, etc.)	135

Focus on human resources development



Training professions

Laboratory chemist

Office management clerk

Animal carer

Plant mechanic

Laboratory biologist

IT specialist

Electronic technician

Trade fair appearances

Sticks & Stones, Berlin

Europe's largest LGBTIQ+ job and career fair

BCF (Bio Chemistry Food)

Career Event, Ghent/Belgium

Largest career event for graduates in life sciences

Stuzubi, Berlin

Study and training fair

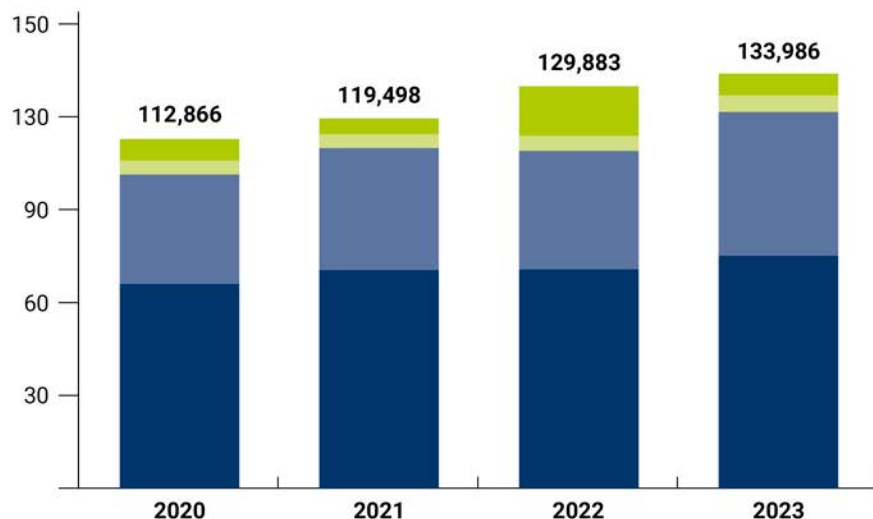
↗ bfr.bund.de/en > Job advertisement

↗ bfr.bund.de/en > The Institute > Working at the BfR

Budget

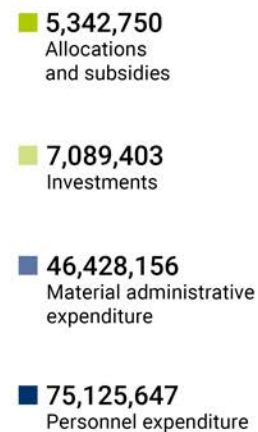
Expenditure 2020–2023

in thousands of euros



Expenditure 2023

detailed, in thousands of euros



In 2023, the BfR spent approximately **134** million euros.

Selected expenditure

Scientific collections and libraries	507,519
Initial and further training	479,996
Public relations work, publishing and documentation	1,729,767
Conferences, trade fairs, exhibitions	612,559

Income

in thousands of euros

123,578
Refund (subsidy) from BMEL

1,456
Administrative and other income

8,952
Third-party funding raised



Publications

The expert opinions of the BfR are risk assessment reports and therefore the basis for advising policy-makers and the public.

They comprise the four elements of a risk assessment (hazard identification, hazard characterisation, exposure estimation, risk characterisation), the uncertainties and their causes and formulate goals and strategies to minimise the risk.

In addition, the BfR fulfils the legal mandate to review the formulations of chemical products and to provide them to the poison information centres (GIZ) for their medical counselling activities.

These product reports make up a large part of the BfR output reported here.

The BfR's risk assessments are always also the subject of the Institute's risk communication.

All of the BfR's published expert opinions can be found at:



[bfr.bund.de/en](https://www.bfr.bund.de/en) > **Publications** > **Opinions**

Opinions

199	Expert opinions for supervisory federal ministries
2,423	Assessments in legally prescribed procedures, e.g. authorisation procedures addressed to the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL) or to the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA)
1,136	Other opinions outside of legally prescribed procedures to authorities, associations, citizens, NGOs and international groups
880,826	Product reports

1,713

Publications

Presentations	973
Journal publications	283
Poster contributions	223
Contributions to conference proceedings	177
Dissertations/postdoctoral qualification/ master theses/diploma theses/bachelor theses	45
Contributions to compilations	7
Contributions to collected editions	3
Reports EFSA	2



Most clicked opinions

- High doses of vitamin D supplements can affect health in the long term (No. 65/2023)
- New studies on antiperspirants containing aluminium: impairments to health unlikely as a result of aluminium uptake via the skin (No. 45/2023)
- Vitamin D supplements – useful or superfluous? (No. 55/2023)

🔗 Overview of all publications
[bfr.bund.de/en > Publications](https://bfr.bund.de/en/Publications)
[bfr.bund.de/en > Science News](https://bfr.bund.de/en/ScienceNews)
openagrar.de

Key publications

Dumit, V. I. et al. 2023. **From principles to reality. FAIR implementation in the nanosafety community.** Nano Today 51: 101923.

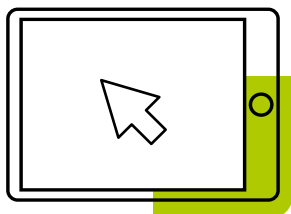
Schmeisser, S. et al. 2023. **New approach methodologies in human regulatory toxicology – Not if, but how and when!** Environment International 178: 108082.

Hackethal, C. et al. 2023. **Chronic dietary exposure to total arsenic, inorganic arsenic and water-soluble organic arsenic species based on results of the first German total diet study.** Science of The Total Environment 859 Part 1: 160261.

Public relations

3,995,190

Visits to the BfR website



Views BfR YouTube channel	46,037
Followers on X (Twitter)	13,383
Subscribers to the BfR newsletter	9,432
Followers on LinkedIn	9,992
Followers on Instagram	2,354
Followers on Mastodon	1,607

1,207 Enquiries

were submitted to the BfR, of which:

859

Enquiries from the public

348

Enquiries from TV, print/online media, news agencies as well as from radio



49

Ingredients and additives in food

23

Residues and contaminants

24

Animal experiments

24

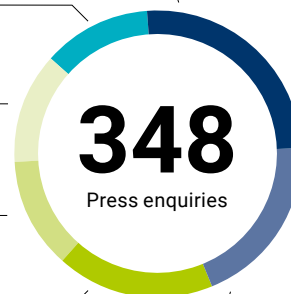
Plant protection products

34

Biological safety

37

Consumer products



140 Events

were organised by the BfR.

bfr-akademie.de/english



50

Information events



90

Scientific dialogues

Legal notice

The BfR in brief: Facts & Figures 2023

Publisher: German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR)
Max-Dohrn-Straße 8–10
10589 Berlin
T +49 30 18412-0
F +49 30 18412-99099
bfr@bfr.bund.de
bfr.bund.de/en

Institution under public law
Represented by its president Professor Dr Dr Dr h.c. Andreas Hensel
Responsible under the German Press Act: Dr Suzan Fiack
VAT Reg No: DE 165893448

Editor: BfR Press and Public Relations
Layout/Realisation: Kern GmbH, Bexbach
Printing: Kern GmbH, Bexbach
Print run: 200 (German), 50 (English)

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This text version is a translation of the original German text,
which is the only legally binding version.

ISBN 987-3-948484-73-6
ISSN 2568-0404 (print)
ISSN 2568-0412 (online)

Twice a year, the compact and knowledge-packed BfR2GO scientific magazine provides current and well-founded information on the research on and assessment of possible health risks of food and feed, chemicals and consumer products. Order, subscribe to or download the magazine free of charge at: bfr.bund.de/en

BfR2GO

German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR)

Max-Dohrn-Straße 8–10

10589 Berlin

T +49 30 18412-0

bfr@bfr.bund.de

bfr.bund.de/en

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Protect Health