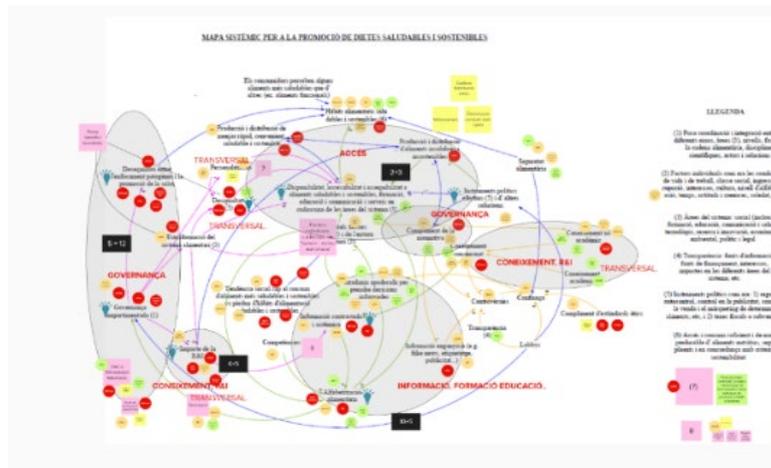




## EDUCATIONAL MODULE; SHORT EXERCISE

# Promoting healthy and sustainable diets: Where is change needed?



### In a nutshell

This activity aims to facilitate reflection and learning around the system of promotion of healthy and sustainable diets by building consensus on a shared vision and identifying areas of the system where changes are needed.

### Food 2030 focus



#### What for?

- To explore and understand the food system
- To work with my community on transforming the food system
- To improve R&I policy coherence and alignment
- To train or educate people on food system transformation

#### How long?

2h and 4 5 minutes



#### For whom?

Policy makers, Researchers, Businesses, Funders, Students, Non-Governmental Organisations / Civil Society Organisations, Professionals



#### Created by

Living Lab for Health at IrsiCaixa within the Barcelona "la Caixa" Living Lab (Barcelona, Spain) with contributions from the participants of the community of practice Fit4FoodBcn



### Something to share?

Leave us a comment about this tool on the [FIT4FOOD2030 Knowledge Hub](#). We encourage you to share your results with the Living Lab: [livinglab@irsicaixa.es](mailto:livinglab@irsicaixa.es).

This tool was developed as part of the FIT4FOOD2030 project; find this tool and many more on the [FIT4FOOD2030 Knowledge Hub](#).

Date of creation: December 2020

How to cite?

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## What will you gain from this?

After implementing this multi-stakeholder exercise, participants should be able to:

1. Understand the complexity of the system of promotion of healthy and sustainable diets (HSD) and the need to address its problems taking into account different variables (system knowledge).
2. Explore the main factors and dynamics where each participant would like to see change in the different areas of the system (health, food, social, economic, environmental, technological, political) (transition knowledge).
3. Build a shared vision describing the main elements of a future desired model of promotion of HSD (target knowledge).
4. Reflect on the importance of a system approach as a problem-solving method.



## PROMOTING HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE DIETS: WHERE IS CHANGE NEEDED?

The food system is facing multiple challenges that are affecting human and planetary health. The way we are tackling these challenges is not effective enough to solve them and there is a need to implement new approaches that better take into account the complexity of the food system. Several organisations suggest that these new approaches should promote systemic transformations inspired by: system thinking, Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) and theories of change such as the Multilevel Perspective (MLP), that should deliver new ways of thinking and acting both in the food system and in the R&I food system.

If you want to know more about the need and the importance to promote a systemic transformation, you can read the introduction of the tool '[Promoting healthy and sustainable diets: Why is it so complex?](#)'.

### What is this exercise about?

**This exercise is focused on the challenge of promotion of healthy and sustainable diets (HSD)**, which is a complex challenge that needs to be addressed with a systemic transformation to find impactful solutions.

It is the second part of a series of exercises based in a three-phase process intended to be facilitated within multi-stakeholder workshops:

- 1<sup>st</sup> phase: to explore the complexity of the current system
- 2<sup>nd</sup> phase: to collectively define a shared vision on a desired future, and
- 3<sup>rd</sup> phase: to design strategic and actions plans as roadmaps to promote the needed change to achieve such vision.

The 1<sup>st</sup> phase can be carried out with a first Short Exercise named '[Promoting healthy and sustainable diets: Why is it so complex?](#)', and it is finalised during this second Short Exercise in which participants identify factors in different areas where change is needed. This second exercise also covers the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase, where participants collectively define a shared vision. In this manner, participants explore the change needed in the present to move towards the desired future with a roadmap that can be developed within the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase described in the Training and Educational Module '[Promoting healthy and](#)

[sustainable diets: Roadmaps for change](#)'. This roadmap will include solutions targeting the previously identified factors and will be implemented in coordination among different stakeholders from different areas of the system.



#### TIPS & TRICKS

Even though this exercise can be piloted on its own, we recommend you to implement first the exercise 'Promoting Healthy and Sustainable Diets: [Why is it so complex?](#)'. Subsequently, you can build on the shared vision with an exercise devoted to design roadmaps for change in your region, city, neighbourhood or school: '[Promoting healthy and sustainable diets: Roadmaps for change](#)'.

This exercise has been specifically designed to be implemented in a non-formal education context with a wide variety of professionals (see target audience) and it can be facilitated in face-to-face or online formats.

However, it can be adapted to different scenarios and targets. For example, it could take place:

- Within a governance initiative organised by a government where key stakeholders from the country reflect on the needs for change to promote HSD,
- Within a local context with representatives of different projects that aim to transform the local system of promotion of HSD,
- Within a classroom aiming to build knowledge around the complexity and the needed changes to implement in the food system by exploring it within the promotion of HSD, or
- During a congress for participants to build knowledge around the complexity of the promotion of HSD and the needs for change.



#### TIPS & TRICKS

Before implement this exercise with professionals in a multi-stakeholder context, you can look for opportunities to practice it with different audiences, for example with students from higher education. It will be a learning experience which will bring you the opportunity to improve the exercise by adapting it to the needs and expectations of your local context.

## Thematic areas

Visioning, Food system approach, Responsible Research and Innovation, Nutrition, Innovation, Co-creation, Multi-stakeholder approach, Stimulating change, Digital-proof tool, Healthy and sustainable diets, Health promotion

## Target audience

Stakeholders representing different sectors and disciplines related to food systems: research and innovation communities, industry representatives, policy makers, civil society organisations and the education community. Some examples are: policy makers in charge of food innovation, public health experts, health care providers, patients' associations, consumers' organisations, food and agriculture producers and industry, researchers working in a wide variety of disciplines, innovators, research and innovation funding organisations, educators, communicators and journalists and environmental organisations.

However, this module can also be adapted to other audiences such as students in Higher Education (as the activity covers a wide range of disciplines, it can be appropriate for different degrees and subjects), families, local businesses and citizens.

## Age of participants

18+

## Number of participants

20 people as a maximum, divided in groups.

## Number of facilitators

1 facilitator for face-to-face activities

At least 2 facilitators for online activities, one of which focused on technical aspects

# GETTING PREPARED

## Materials and resources

For the face-to-face and online formats, you will need to prepare:

- A presentation to introduce the complexity of the food system and the challenge of promoting healthy and sustainable diets. To prepare it, you can get inspired by the introduction of this activity and the previous one and use the [Video on food system's complexity](#) developed by The Lancet. You can also include information from your local area and/or country. (This is not necessary if you have implemented the exercise recommended for the 1<sup>st</sup> phase.)
- A presentation to introduce the 'System map for the promotion of HSD' (see Appendix B) with the narrative combined with questions for collective reflection. (If you have implemented the exercise recommended for the 1<sup>st</sup> phase, you can share the resulting system map and its narrative and give just a summary of the content of the map.)
- An evaluation questionnaire
- An informed consent

For the **face-to-face format**, you will need:

- Room with several tables and chairs for working in groups of 5-6 people
- Tables to display the materials
- Tables for the facilitators
- Computer and projector: make sure they work well
- 100 yellow cards
- 20 sticky notes / A5 papers
- Bookmarks: make sure that the bookmarks stick well on the surface; if not, use another sort of glue or surface
- 1 'Visual Thinking Tool: The Food System' printed in DINA2 for each workgroup. Extracted from: Parsons K, Hawkes C, Wells R. Brief 2. What is the food system? A food policy perspective. London: Centre for Food Policy, 2019 (see Appendix A)
- 1 'System map for the promotion of HSD' printed in DINA2 for each workgroup (see Appendix B or use the system map resulting from the exercise in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase)
- [Trend cards produced by FIT4FOOD2030](#)
- Office supplies (pencils, pens, marker pens, blank sheets, etc.): minimum 1 set per participant

For the **online format**, we suggest you to use:

- A digital workspace such as Mural or Miro: you need to prepare a workspace as described in the 'Set the scene' section of this document

## Prior knowledge required for participation

For facilitation: None. However, the level of knowledge needed will differ depending on the expected results.

For participation: The activity is designed for professionals. If the aim is to validate a robust system map, the more knowledge participants have, the richer the result will be.

- A video conferencing software such as Zoom

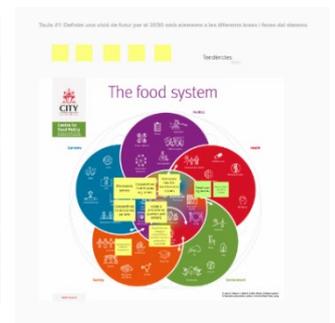
## Set the scene

For the **face-to-face format** we recommend you to set up a space on a wall to display the yellow cards and the system map as described in the steps below.

For the **online format**, we recommend you to use a videoconferencing software combined with a digital workspace, such as MURAL or MIRO. There are tutorials available to learn how to use them on their respectively websites.

However, in case you have difficulties in using these programmes, it is also possible to use a slide presentation, shared using the screen share function by the facilitators. In that case, participants can express their ideas through the chat while facilitators can include them in the slides presentation shared live. Although we do not recommend this option as it makes participation difficult, we understand that it may be an option for those that do not feel confident with digital workspaces.

In case you decide to use a digital workspace, you will need to create a template and invite participants to join it. You can get inspired by the template you will find in the Appendix C.



*Figures 1 and 2. Different workshop settings (face-to-face and online meetings) organised by the Living Lab for Health at IrsiCaixa.*

# FLOW

STEP 1: Welcome, introduction and participants' presentations – 35 minutes

STEP 2: Development of a shared vision - 1 hour

Break - 10 minutes

STEP 3: Reflection around the factors and areas of the system where participants would like to see changes - 45 minutes

STEP 4: Wrap up and evaluation - 15 minutes

When applying the steps, you may need to (1) put the selection of steps in a meaningful sequence and (2) slightly adapt them for context-specific circumstances (e.g. participant knowledge and skills levels).

## FACILITATOR TIPS

During multi-stakeholder dialogues, you as a facilitator (or moderator) have an important role to play to ensure the active participation of all the participants in the given time frame while also reaching the session goals.

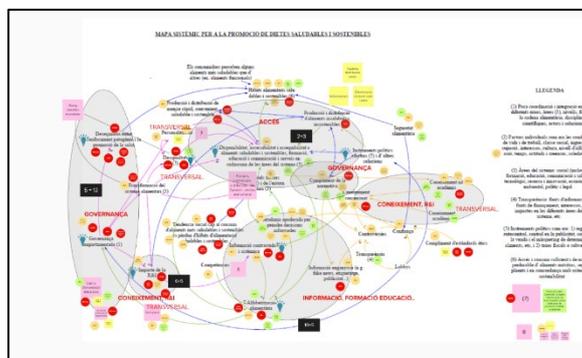
As a facilitator you need several skills and competences, such as verbal and non-verbal skills, negotiating skills, flexibility, and leadership. You will need to create an environment in which all participants feel secure, are able to speak up and give their perspective on issues being discussed.

A brief guide with facilitation tips is provided in this address: <https://knowledgehub.fit4food2030.eu/facilitatorstips>

Some recommendations that we would highlight:

- Create a comfortable environment
- Make sure all the participants express their perspectives and avoid that some of them lead too much the discussion
- Support all the ideas that have been said
- Manage well the time spent
- Make sure the discussion focuses on the aims of the workshop

It is preferable that when implementing this exercise as an online workshop, one facilitator focuses their work on the technical aspects of the meeting.



Figures 3-6. From top to bottom: participants in a face-to-face and online reflections about visioning and about the areas in which changes are needed.

# STEP 1: WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND PARTICIPANTS' INTRODUCTIONS

DURATION: 35 minutes

1. Welcome the participants and introduce the objectives and the programme of the session.
2. In case you did not implement the exercise recommended for the 1<sup>st</sup> phase ([‘Promoting healthy and sustainable diets: Why is it so complex?’](#)), give a brief presentation about the complexity of the food system and the challenge of promoting HSD.
3. Ask participants to introduce themselves (1 minute each).  
If this is the first exercise you implement, ask them to sign the informed consent prepared in advance.



## TIPS & TRICKS

If you want to provide extra information about the topic, you can invite an expert to give a short speech.

# STEP 2: DEVELOPMENT OF A SHARED VISION

DURATION: 1 hour

1. **Introduction of the activity, explanation of the system map and definition of a shared vision (40 minutes):**
  - Explain that the aim of this activity is to define a shared vision for the promotion of HSD. Visioning is a methodology used to define a desired future that participants wish to achieve. Stakeholders reflect on what they would like to see or happen in the HSD system considering its interconnected subsystems. For the visioning exercise, we suggest you to use the following methodology adapted from the FIT4FOOD 2030 project ([visioning exercises](#)):



## TIPS & TRICKS

To inspire participants, you can also prepare cards with facts or bring photographs/pictures depicting elements of the (local) food system to share examples of facts that illustrate problems, opportunities and trends at local, national or international level. Alternatively, you can ask people to bring them and/or use the [trend cards from the FIT4FOOD2030](#).

Another idea is to use cards from this [PlayDecide](#) game on food systems.

- To start the activity, divide participants in small groups of 5-6 people organised with diversity of profiles.
- In the **face-to-face format**, distribute the office supplies, the yellow cards/A5 papers and the ‘Visual thinking tool’ and System map between the groups. If you are preparing an **online format**, you can organise ‘breakout rooms’ and display on the digital workspace different areas (one for each group) with the ‘Visual thinking tool’, the System map and some sticky notes. To divide participants in breakout rooms you can use a functionality available in Zoom. In case you use another software, check whether this functionality is available. If it is not available, prepare other rooms with different links in advance. For those who have difficulties to enter in the digital workspace, you can also share the screen on the videoconferencing software. For the online format: give the instructions before you split the participants and after the individual and small group reflections, bring all the participants back to the plenary.
- Participants first work in small groups using yellow cards (for the face-to-face format) or sticky notes (for the online format). They start with an individual reflection (one idea per yellow card/sticky note) followed by a small group discussion, and then, they come back to plenary where they present the results of their reflections.

- They reflect using the ‘System map for the promotion of HSD’ (Appendix B) and also the ‘Visual thinking tool’ (Appendix A) that help them to think about factors in the different areas of the system and phases of the value chain. For the online format, remind participants how to add sticky notes.
  - In case you implemented the exercise recommended for the 1<sup>st</sup> phase ([Promoting healthy and sustainable diets: Why is it so complex?](#)), briefly present the resulting System map and its narrative.
  - In case you did not implement the previous activity, present the ‘System map for the promotion of HSD’ using the narrative based on the one provided in Appendix B. You can combine your presentation with questions to stimulate collective reflection.
- Ask participants to think about an upcoming year (e.g. 2030) and envisage how the system of promotion of HSD looks like. Ask participants to reflect about how the problems have been solved and how the system has taken advantage of the opportunities in the different areas and phases by exploring those represented on the system map and on the ‘Visual Thinking Tool’.
- Ask them to write down their thoughts on at least 2-3 yellow cards/sticky notes (only one idea per card/sticky note) and then to share them with the small work group. They locate the cards/sticky notes in the corresponding areas or phases of the ‘Visual Thinking tool’ and/or on the different factors of the System map. Participants can use more cards/sticky notes if needed.

- 2. Cluster of problems and opportunities (20 minutes):** Participants share the results while you, as a facilitator, cluster the results using sticky notes or A5 papers + bookmarks on the digital workspace/wall. After each participant presents one sticky note, the other groups also add cards/sticky notes in case they belong to the same cluster. Once all the information is clustered, the facilitator presents a summary of the results and facilitates a group reflection. Ask participants for a final consensus of the vision. In case of discrepancies, reflect about the root causes and explore if a consensus is possible. If not, the conclusion can be that there are controversial issues to solve.



#### TIPS & TRICKS

You can use international visions, for example from European strategies, and national/local visions to build on as starting point.

*At this stage we suggest to have a break*

## STEP 3: REFLECTION AROUND THE FACTORS IN THE DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE SYSTEM WHERE PARTICIPANTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE CHANGES

**DURATION: 45 minutes**

- 1. Identification of factors and areas (30 minutes):**

- Based on the vision, participants are asked to reflect on the factors and areas of the map where they would like to see changes. They can work again in small groups (we recommend to swap the members of the groups to allow more interaction between participants). First they work individually, and then, share their perspectives with the work group. Afterwards, the discussion happens with the bigger group.
- Distribute sticky notes with 2 different colours one for each: factors where we would like to see change and factors where changes are already happening but there is a need to promote more.

- Ask participants to reflect at individual level around the following questions:  
*Imagine you are now in 2030 and the aspired vision has been realised successfully. Which factors from the map have been key to achieve the defined vision, and have enabled us to be more successful in promoting healthy and sustainable diets? Have changes been implemented on these factors to achieve the vision?*

Individually, they mark with the 2 coloured stickers the factors in which they would like to see changes. Afterwards, the small workgroup reflects on the results and prioritise the top 5 factors where they would like to see change.

- Finally, participants share their 5 priority factors with the rest of the group in plenary while they mark those on a collective map. Meanwhile, you as a facilitator count the votes for each factor and mark with a round circle the areas with more voted factors. These areas will be the ones in which change is needed.
- Once all the results are introduced on one single map, facilitate a final discussion to validate these factors and areas highlighted.

## STEP 4: WRAP UP AND EVALUATION

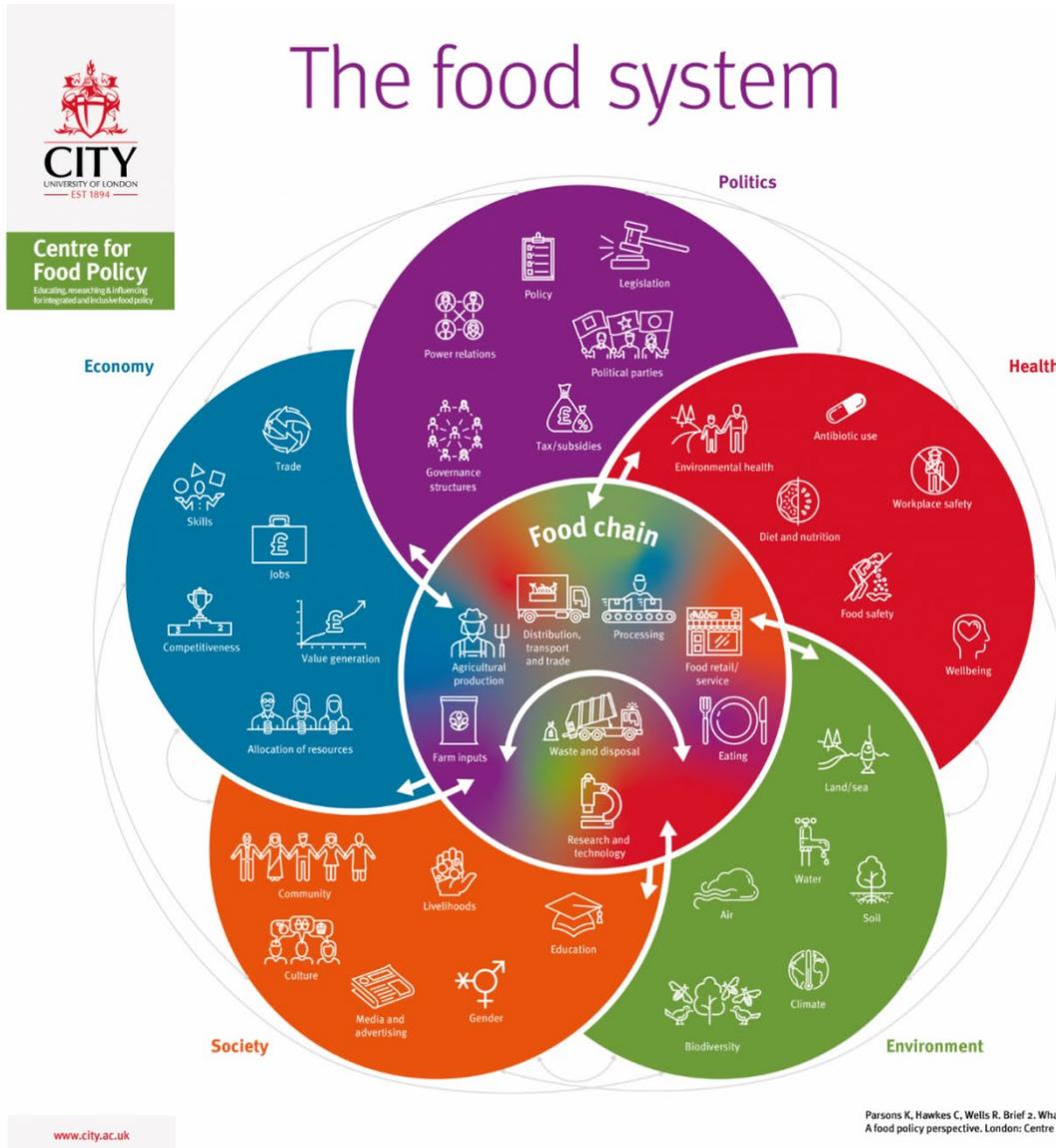
### DURATION: 15 minutes

To close the activity, summarise the main outputs: the aspired vision and the factors and areas where change is needed. Highlight the importance of defining these elements based on the analysis of the complexity of the challenge. Highlight that it could not have been possible without the participation of such interesting professionals, and thank all the participants for their contribution.

As you know, this activity is part of a series of tools for implementing changes in the way we promote HSD. If you are willing to organise further activities to facilitate systemic change, you can explain those now.

Finally, ask participants to share some words about what they learned during the activity and next ask them to fill in the evaluation form. Optionally, you can send a summary of the results to all participants after the workshop and invite them to validate the shared vision and the factors and areas where change is needed until consensus is reached.

# APPENDIX A: VISUAL THINKING TOOL



*Visual Thinking Tool: The Food System' printed in DINA2 for each workgroup. Extracted from: Parsons K, Hawkes C, Wells R. Brief 2. What is the food system? A food policy perspective. London: Centre for Food Policy, 2019*



## NARRATIVE TO INTRODUCE THE 'SYSTEM MAP':

This narrative describes the complexity of the current situation in the promotion of healthy and sustainable diets and will help you to understand the interconnections and dynamics represented on the 'System Map'. In order to facilitate to locate the areas on the map that are described in the narrative, throughout the text you will find some coloured words, which correspond to the colours of the arrows within specific areas of the map.

We propose to begin the narrative with a first factor named "**Transdisciplinary and multicultural knowledge consensus**": it relates to the multiple problems linked to the lack of consensus of knowledge between different social actors. This lack of consensus can be found either within and among academic researchers and non-academic stakeholders including citizens. This fact becomes evident for example when disseminating health related messages, such as when recommending alcoholic beverages such as wine, or the adoption of non-conventional diets, such as vegan or vegetarian diets. This lack of consensus generates **controversies** and confusion inside and outside the scientific community, and, it contributes to diminish social trust. On other occasions, it is not the lack of consensus between different actors that generates controversies and confusion among citizens, but rather the dissemination of **misleading information** through social media, television, advertising, food labelling, among other channels. This misleading information often disseminates false messages with lack of scientific evidence and ethical rigor and sometimes lacks **transparency** when it comes to informing about the sources of information, the financing sources, the hidden stakeholders' interests, the impact of the product in different areas of the system such as the environment, among others. Again, this lack of **transparency** encourages **controversies** and decreases **trust** among the different stakeholders.

Trust is also affected by **lobbies**, which sometimes provoke conflicts among the different stakeholders (for example between the industry and the public health authorities) due to different interests that they pursue. This fact can also impact on the effectiveness of specific **political instruments** such as policies, food regulations and on the dissemination of misleading information. However, sometimes even though a regulation is fully implemented, it may not be accomplished entirely or can lead to errors when implementing it, as it happens sometimes with the advertisements and EU labelling regulations. For example, regarding the EU labelling common mistakes are: not highlighting in the list of ingredients certain substances or products causing allergies or intolerances, using unjustified nutrition and health claims (statements about the helpful effects of a certain food consumed within a healthy diet on a person's health) or using an inappropriate name of the food product. On the other side, it can also happen that a current regulation may be generating **controversies**, as it happens with Nutriscore in some EU countries, a labelling system to classify food taking into account the nutrient profiling. The controversies that has generated this system are related with the way that negatively categorises some products, like olive oil or cheeses. Even though these products have high content in fats and proteins, can be consumed in moderation within a healthy diet. Therefore, it can be noticed that the **lack of confidence** and **trust** is not caused by just one factor, but by multiple interconnected factors.

In some contexts, there are already initiatives that encourage **knowledge consensus** among different scientific disciplines and also with other social actors from outside academia. An example is the EAT-Lancet, a group of experts that has published some articles on transdisciplinary and systemic knowledge that bring light to some controversies, like how dietary patterns should look like in order to achieve a healthy and sustainable planetary food system model. This knowledge contributes not only to health with information focused in nutrient profiling but also to the benefits for the environment.

However, we realise that we are only at the beginning of this knowledge consensus, as there are still more controversies to be solved and some of them will require to generate more **systemic information** about the interconnections among the different areas of the food system and the phases of the value chain. The **contrasted and systemic information**, not only has to take into account the impact on the environment and health areas, but also has to consider other aspects in other areas (social, technological, political, economic...) and phases of the value chain, such as the impact of food processes on the environment, the benefits and potential risks of products

and processes in different areas derived from technological advances, the coherence and alignment of food policies from different areas, etc. Once this knowledge will be generated, it will still be necessary to adapt it to local contexts.

If contrasted and systemic information is disseminated, it contributes to people's **food literacy**, understood as the acquisition of systemic knowledge, **competences, skills** and attitudes needed to **make more informed decisions** taking into account all the impacts derived from the food system activities in the different areas (social, economic, environmental, etc.). Some competences that could be fostered in order to better take into account complexity when adopting healthy and sustainable diets are competences related with science and nutrition, meals planning, culinary techniques, socialization when eating, reducing food waste, etc. Therefore, increasing **food literacy** will **empower** citizens to improve **eating habits** as it will be easier for them to **access** verified and truthful information and discern between truthful and untruthful information. However, not only **food literacy** will promote better **eating habits**, those are also influenced by other factors in the food environment, such as the influence of the family and the community or **food availability, accessibility and affordability** within supermarkets and local stores, where it is easy to access unhealthy and unsustainable food. Recently, there is a **growing trend for the demand of healthier foods** which is stimulating the food industry to continuously innovate and bring new products to the market that are healthier and sustainable.

Improvements in this direction are also being fostered with **collaborative governance** approaches in other areas of the system, such as in the implementation of smart labelling systems or of healthy eating strategies in collaboration among different departments of governments, or in collaborative agreements for **shared responsibility** among different industries to improve food composition. All those examples show how the complexity involved in promoting healthy and sustainable diets requires a **food system transformation** that encompasses systemic and collaborative actions and the reduction of the current **fragmentation of the system**.

Nowadays, there are multiple strategies to accelerate the transition towards a more sustainable food system at economic, social and environmental levels, and there are many of those that claim that such a transformation needs to be addressed with a more relevant **impact of Research and Innovation** in order to **align at different levels with the Sustainable Development Goals**. Some examples of these strategies are the European Commission Policy Framework FOOD 2030 and the "From Farm to Fork" strategy. In Spain (national level), Catalonia (regional level) and Barcelona (local level), there are also existing strategies devoted to this mission. For example, at regional level (Catalonia) there is a food policy that has created a Food Council with a wide variety of stakeholders, including representatives of the administration, food industry representatives, civil society organisations and research organisations, among others. At municipal level, another example is the creation of a new strategy for Barcelona that will be strengthened due to the fact that the city will be MUFPP host in 2021.

If these new strategies are developed with systemic and participatory approaches, they will also better address **personalization** as the **needs of the different stakeholders** will be better addressed, including the **reduction of inequalities** among others. In conclusion, these new strategies seek to respond in a better way to the complexity of the system and to find better solutions with higher impact towards a future-proof food system.





Coordinated by:



Partners



OSLO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY  
WORK RESEARCH INSTITUTE AFI



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