

## 10.O. Workshop: Responsible and healthy food demand and supply

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*Organised by: EUPHA (FN), WHO EURO*

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Hard evidence about the food system's unsustainability has grown over recent years, in parallel to the evidence about diet's impact on non-communicable disease. Two threats to planetary and human health from one source: food. This double burden has gradually – perhaps too slowly – been accepted at the global level by UN, Bretton Woods and other institutions, who have documented how trends in both production and consumption contribute to a wide range of diet-related ill-health alongside the environmental risks from climate change, biodiversity loss, water stress, and other problems over land use.

The EUPHA Food and Nutrition section and the WHO office for the European region organise a collaborative workshop on responsible and healthy food demand and supply. The session will focus on current policy implementation and what kind of insights/learning can be drawn from that. The overall objective of the session is to support country leadership on Agenda 2030 and integrated policies on sustainable development and responsible consumption and production in particular.

This session will be a learning platform for developing a research and policy agenda on:

1. Lesson learnt (from practice) on implementing policies and voluntary initiatives that integrate health and the environment.
2. Prioritization of health and environmental objectives in policies integrating climate action, health and responsible consumption and production.

The workshop is organised in 3 parts. First, Prof. Tim Lang, author of “Ecological Public Health” and “Sustainable diets” and member of the Lancet series on sustainable diets will set the scene. Second, 2 presenters representing national authorities or voluntary initiatives in Europe will present ongoing work to promote healthy and sustainable food demand and supply. Third, a plenary discussion will be organised to determine state of the art and way forward with regard to knowledge and development of evidence-based interventions for sustainable food demand and supply in Europe.

### Key messages:

- A policy reorientation away from the 20th century ‘productionist’ policies is needed to ensure sustainable food supply and demand in Europe
- Actors at a city/local/community level in Europe implement interesting initiatives towards sustainable food systems and provide useful lessons learned to scale up and inform national policy-making

### Towards Sustainable Production & Consumption

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At the regional and national levels, numerous studies have contributed to the generation of an implicit analysis that there is now a key tension between production, ecosystems services and health, and that society must choose what to do to reduce that tension. In part, the UN Sustainable Development Goals are intended to face this tension. While the aspirations at the high level might be clearer than a decade ago, there is less unity about what to do at the local, sub-national or national level. Policy-makers are nervous about challenging consumption patterns and what might be termed ‘choice culture’, the

primacy of consumers in marketplaces. They are also locked-in to a productionist approach to food supply: pouring resources (particularly oil-based fertilisers) in maximising output. A new policy approach is needed but how can it be adopted and win supply chain support? What kind of farming, manufacturing, retailing, logistics and culinary cultures are required? Some argue that there must be a huge investment in increased productivity at field and factory level, requiring new technologies. Others champion a ‘softer’ nutrition-sensitive agriculture, injecting nutrition demands into the field. Less policy debate has arisen until recently about how or whether to change consumption, yet without changing consumption patterns, the threats to both human and ecosystems health are unlikely to be overcome. Over- and mal-consumption now outweigh the ‘old’ but persistent problem of hunger and under-consumption. What is required is a new policy package which addressed the entire food system and consumption

### Sustainable Food Consumption- a focus for the Swedish National Food Agency

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The Swedish National Food Agency is commissioned to contribute to safe food and drinking water, fair practices in the food trade and healthy eating habits. Sustainable and healthy foods must be one out of six priority areas for the national implementation of the Agenda 2030 for Sweden to fulfil the goals. The Agency will use the Agenda as the platform for healthy and sustainable food consumption, with a focus on evidenced methods for changes among those having the worst food habits. The National food strategy highlights that the public sector shall increase knowledge about food production, food and meals, both generally and specifically among children and young people, ideally working in partnership with local food operators. Small and medium sized suppliers shall easier be able to tender for public contracts for food and catering services. A Commission for Equity in Health was appointed to submit proposals that can reduce health inequalities with a focus on socioeconomic differences. A conclusion is that we need to work both with the general welfare system to balance for inequalities in circumstances and environment but also to develop relevant support for healthy lifestyles for population groups in socially vulnerable conditions. Together with the Public Health Agency we have described the need for national leadership, evidenced based policy tools and the need for considering taxes and marketing restrictions on foods in a recent report to the government.

The Agency develops dietary guidelines and compiles knowledge base on the environmental impact of different food groups. Two years ago, national dietary guidelines were issued that integrated health and environmental aspects into practical dietary advices to the public. We also run a competence development centre for the public sector catering and developed guidelines for meals served in schools, preschools and elderly care. We also developed guidance and engaged in intersectoral collaboration to reduce food waste.

### En Garde food policy in GENT, Belgium

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In 2013 the City of Ghent, Belgium launched ‘Gent en Garde’, a food policy that paves the way for a sustainable food system for Ghent. The food policy is guided by a council that consists of

about 25 members from various sectors, i.e. agriculture, associations, knowledge institutions and commerce. Five strategic goals were decided upon based on various stakeholder discussions, input from the city administration and political agreement.

1. A shorter, more visible food chain
2. More sustainable food production and consumption
3. The creation of more social added value for food initiatives
4. Reduce food waste
5. Optimum reuse of food waste as raw materials

The policy sets out a plan for an inclusive and sustainable food system, based on participation, figures and analyses. The presentation will discuss successes and challenges such as those related to ensuring multi-stakeholder action, development of cross-cutting policies. In addition, it will reflect on the processes that are required to support local food systems and to encourage participation of citizens, organizations and entrepreneurs. Issues around government legitimacy and efficiency will be dealt with as well as linkages between the urban market and the countryside.

## Panel and plenary discussion

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After the presentations, a plenary discussion will be organised to:

- (i) Discuss the knowledge gaps to scale up and sustain ongoing efforts;
- (ii) Determine effective ways of evaluation of activities and measuring success.

The panel will consist of Adrien Liep (European Commission – Joint Research Centre, Institute for Environment and Sustainability, Climate Change Unit), Dr Sirpa Sarlio-Lähteenkorva (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland), Line Gordon (Stockholm resilience centre, Sweden).