



Strengthening European Food Chain Sustainability by Quality and Procurement Policy

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¹ This document reflects the views only of the authors, and the Agency cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Academic Partners

1. **UNEW**, Newcastle University (United Kingdom)
2. **UNIPR**, University of Parma (Italy)
3. **UNED**, University of Edinburgh (United Kingdom)
4. **WU**, Wageningen University (Netherlands)
5. **AUTH**, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece)
6. **INRA**, National Institute for Agricultural Research (France)
7. **BEL**, University of Belgrade (Serbia)
8. **UBO**, University of Bonn (Germany)
9. **HiOA**, National Institute for Consumer Research (Oslo and Akershus University College) (Norway)
10. **ZAG**, University of Zagreb (Croatia)
11. **CREDA**, Centre for Agro-Food Economy & Development (Catalonia Polytechnic University) (Spain)
12. **UMIL**, University of Milan (Italy)
13. **SGGW**, Warsaw University of Life Sciences (Poland)
14. **KU**, Kasetsart University (Thailand)
15. **UEH**, University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam)

Dedicated Communication and Training Partners

16. **EUFIC**, European Food Information Council AISBL (Belgium)
17. **EUTA**, European Training Academy (Serbia)
18. **TOPCL**, Top Class Centre for Foreign Languages (Serbia)

Stakeholder Partners

19. **Coldiretti**, Coldiretti (Italy)
20. **ECO-SEN**, ECO-SENSUS Research and Communication Non-profit Ltd (Hungary)
21. **GIJHARS**, Quality Inspection of Agriculture and Food (Poland)
22. **FOODNAT**, Food Nation CIC (United Kingdom)
23. **CREA**, Council for Agricultural Research and Economics (Italy)
24. **Barilla**, Barilla Group (Italy)
25. **MPNTR**, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (Serbia)
26. **Konzum**, Konzum (Croatia)
27. **Arilje**, Municipality of Arilje (Serbia)
28. **CPR**, Consortium of Parmigiano-Reggiano (Italy)
29. **ECOZEPT**, ECOZEPT (Germany)
30. **IMPMENT**, Impact Measurement Ltd (United Kingdom)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Five training courses were delivered by EUTA during years 1 to 4 of Strength2Food. These targeted early career researchers to improve their skills related to successfully undertaking the project's research activities and maximising their impact. Course 1 (Task 2.5.1), a workshop on effective project participation, gender action activities, H2020 rules was given during the Kick-Off Meeting to explain the H2020 rules, requirements and obligations for effective project participation (including aspects of reporting and financial management). This course was attended by all project partners at the Kick-Off Meeting. Course 2 (Task 2.5.2), training on knowledge management and research ethics: explaining operation of the KMREC, aspects of Open Access for research publications, procedures for abstracts, and obligations regarding research ethics, was also given at the project Kick-Off Meeting. Course 3 (Task 2.5.3), a workshop on transdisciplinary and academic–practitioner joint research and co-creation of knowledge to support implementation of WP9 (multi-actor approach), was undertaken in April 2017. The workshop explained how the role played by different elements of the work in Serbia would contribute to an effective action research approach and how ethical standards would need to be considered and interpreted in this context. Course 4 (Task 2.5.4), a training course on media and communication skills, was given to partners as part of the 4th Annual Project Meeting in Belgrade, Serbia in May, 2019. This half-day course gave advice on how to communicate project information effectively to the media and to give interviews, and included interviews of participants with feedback. Course 5 (Task 2.5.5) was a one-day course in February, 2020 on scientific writing and presentation skills, focusing on ensuring project manuscripts are suitable for high-impact journals, and on maximising impact of project posters and oral presentations at conferences.

FIVE TRAINING COURSES

Steve Quarrie and Ratko Bojović

1. INTRODUCTION

A series of half- and one-day training courses and workshops (sub-tasks 2.5.1-2.5.5) was organised by the consortium's partner with expertise in this field, EUTA (formerly BSN). These were to ensure that every partner would be able to contribute effectively to stakeholder communication and engagement, and to maximise project impact and sustainability. Because several of the courses would be essential to maximise project effectiveness and impact during the project, they were organised as soon as possible once the project started - during the project Kick-Off Meeting. The final course was organised in the second half of the project, once project results were available for dissemination.

2. DETAILS OF THE TRAINING COURSES

2.1 WORKSHOP ON EFFECTIVE PROJECT PARTICIPATION AND OPERATION OF KMREC

A workshop on effective project participation, gender action activities, H2020 rules and establishing hybrid forums (sub-task 2.5.1) was delivered by the UNEW management team and EUTA on the final day of the London Kick-Off Meeting in March 2016. Around 65 participants were present for this 3-h workshop. Information in the workshop was presented on the following aspects of project management:

- Project governance, overview of roles and responsibilities (Profs Steve Quarrie and Matt Gorton, 15 Powerpoint™ slides)
- Gender action (Dr Mary Brennan, 13 Powerpoint™ slides)
- Deliverables and quality control procedures (Dr Barbara Tocco, 8 Powerpoint™ slides)
- Financial management (Hilary Noone and Ross Wilson, UNEW, 21 Powerpoint™ slides)
- Demonstration of reporting system (Steve Hall, UNEW, 2 Powerpoint™ slides)
- Knowledge management - data, publications, EU rules on communication of project findings (Prof Steve Quarrie, 20 Powerpoint™ slides)
- Ethical issues (Matt Gorton, Steve Quarrie and John White, external ethics advisor, 12 Powerpoint™ slides)

Pdf slides presented at the workshop were shared with all project partners and are available upon request.

2.2 TRAINING ON KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH ETHICS

Explaining operation of the KMREC, including aspects of Open Access for research publications, procedures for abstracts, and obligations regarding research ethics was also given during the project Kick-Off Meeting. Partners were given a short refresher course to remind

them of the role of KMREC and their responsibilities at the 2nd Annual Meeting in Barcelona, April 2017.

2.3 WORKSHOP ON TRANSDISCIPLINARY ACADEMIC – PRACTITIONER JOINT RESEARCH

This workshop (sub-task 2.5.3) on transdisciplinary and academic–practitioner joint research and co-creation of knowledge to support implementation of WP9 (the multi-actor approach) was given to Strength2Food partners in Serbia in April 2017 by Dr Richard Simmons (EUTA). Fifteen project participants from Serbia were present for the workshop in which Dr Simmons explained how the role played by different elements of the work with a range of stakeholder groups (producers, schools and policy-makers) in Serbia would contribute to an effective action research approach and how ethical standards would need to be considered and interpreted in this context. Dr Simmons used a blackboard to illustrate his points. Further training on action research was delivered by Dr Simmons within the framework of the 2nd Interim Project Meeting in Edinburgh (October 2017), which was attended by 34 people. This ensured that training in effective action research was extended to other Strength2Food partners.

2.4 TRAINING COURSE ON MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The half-day training course on media and communication skills (sub-task 2.5.4) was organised as part of the Strength2Food 4th Annual Project Meeting in Belgrade, Serbia in May 2019. It was organised by EUTA and delivered by Ana Davičo, a life-skills trainer and journalist. In total, 14 project participants were given advice on how to communicate project information effectively to the media in their own countries and languages, and how to give interviews. As well as presenting 66 slides, the trainer interviewed each participant and provided individual feedback and tips for improvement. Pdf slides presented at the training course were shared with project partners and are publicly available at: <https://www.strength2food.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/EUTA-Managing-media-interviews-with-logo.pdf>

2.5 TRAINING COURSE ON SCIENTIFIC WRITING AND PRESENTATION SKILLS

The one-day training course on scientific writing and presentation skills (sub-task 2.5.5) was held in February, 2020 in Belgrade, Serbia. In the morning, Professor Quarrie, EUTA, gave 18 participants advice on preparing manuscripts based on Strength2Food research for submission to high-impact journals, and how to make an impact with project posters and oral presentations at conferences. The course covered: marketing strategy, different types of research papers, selecting a suitable journal, journal instructions for authors, preparing the abstract, recommendations for Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, data presentation, and how to improve the text and English writing skills.

The afternoon presentation covered important aspects to consider for posters, identifying the pros and cons of different poster styles, and how to put together and deliver an effective PowerPoint presentation at a scientific conference.

This training course was not given in Croatia and Brussels as originally intended because of budget restrictions and the timing of the Deliverable, which preceded the Final Project Meeting planned in Brussels. Slides and training materials were shared with PhD students, post-doctoral researchers and other early career academics, and the two sessions were videoed, so that those who could not be present in person, were able to benefit from the information presented. All training material is available upon request.



The Strength2Food project in a nutshell

Strength2Food is a five-year, €6.9 million project to improve the effectiveness of EU food quality schemes (FQS), public sector food procurement (PSFP) and to stimulate Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC) through research, innovation and demonstration activities. The 30-partner consortium representing 11 EU and four non-EU countries combines academic, communication, SMEs and stakeholder organisations to ensure a multi-actor approach. It will undertake case study-based quantitative research to measure economic, environmental and social impacts of FQS, PSFP and SFSC. The impact of PSFP policies on nutrition in school meals will also be assessed. Primary research will be complemented by econometric analysis of existing datasets to determine impacts of FQS and SFSC participation on farm performance, as well as understand price transmission and trade patterns. Consumer knowledge, confidence in, valuation and use of FQS labels and products will be assessed via survey, ethnographic and virtual supermarket-based research. Lessons from the research will be applied and verified in 6 pilot initiatives which bring together academic and non-academic partners. Impact will be maximised through a knowledge exchange platform, hybrid forums, educational resources and a Massive Open Online Course.

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