



# Annual Report 2023

*“empowering and facilitating  
healthier and more sustainable  
food choices”*





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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1. About us</b>                                                                                                     | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>2. A letter from our Director General</b>                                                                           | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>3. Highlights of the year</b>                                                                                       | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>4. What we do</b>                                                                                                   | <b>10</b> |
| <b>LGT 1.</b> To build food & health science literacy and promote evidence-based decision-making                       | <b>12</b> |
| <b>LGT 2.</b> Facilitate a healthy & sustainable diet shift<br>Knowledge-base contributions and sharing best practices | <b>19</b> |
| <b>LGT 3.</b> Support the prevention of diet and lifestyle-related non-communicable diseases                           | <b>23</b> |
| <b>LGT 4.</b> Empower food waste reduction at the consumption level                                                    | <b>27</b> |
| <b>5. Publicly funded projects</b>                                                                                     | <b>32</b> |
| <b>6. EUFIC's governance</b>                                                                                           | <b>38</b> |
| <b>7. Testimonials from EUFIC Members</b>                                                                              | <b>44</b> |
| <b>8. Our finances</b>                                                                                                 | <b>46</b> |

# 1. **About us**



## About us

The European Food Information Council (EUFIC) is a consumer-oriented, non-profit organisation founded to make the science behind food and health more accessible and easier for the public to understand. For more than 25 years, EUFIC has provided food-related knowledge to inspire, empower and facilitate healthier and more sustainable diets and lifestyles among European citizens.



## Our vision

A world where we live healthier and more sustainable lives because we all know how.

## Our mission

We want to empower citizens and facilitate healthier and more sustainable diets and lifestyles. We recognise that achieving this mission requires more than good intentions; it demands action grounded in scientific evidence and practical solutions. At EUFIC, we are dedicated to providing science-based information and activities that equip individuals with the tools they need to make informed choices about their health and the environment.

## Our philosophy

We believe that information has the power to transform and that knowledge is not only empowering but also essential for driving meaningful change. Our team, comprised of passionate scientists, project managers and science communicators, is committed to this philosophy. We understand that by improving citizens' knowledge of food and health, we can catalyse positive shifts in behaviour that benefit both people and

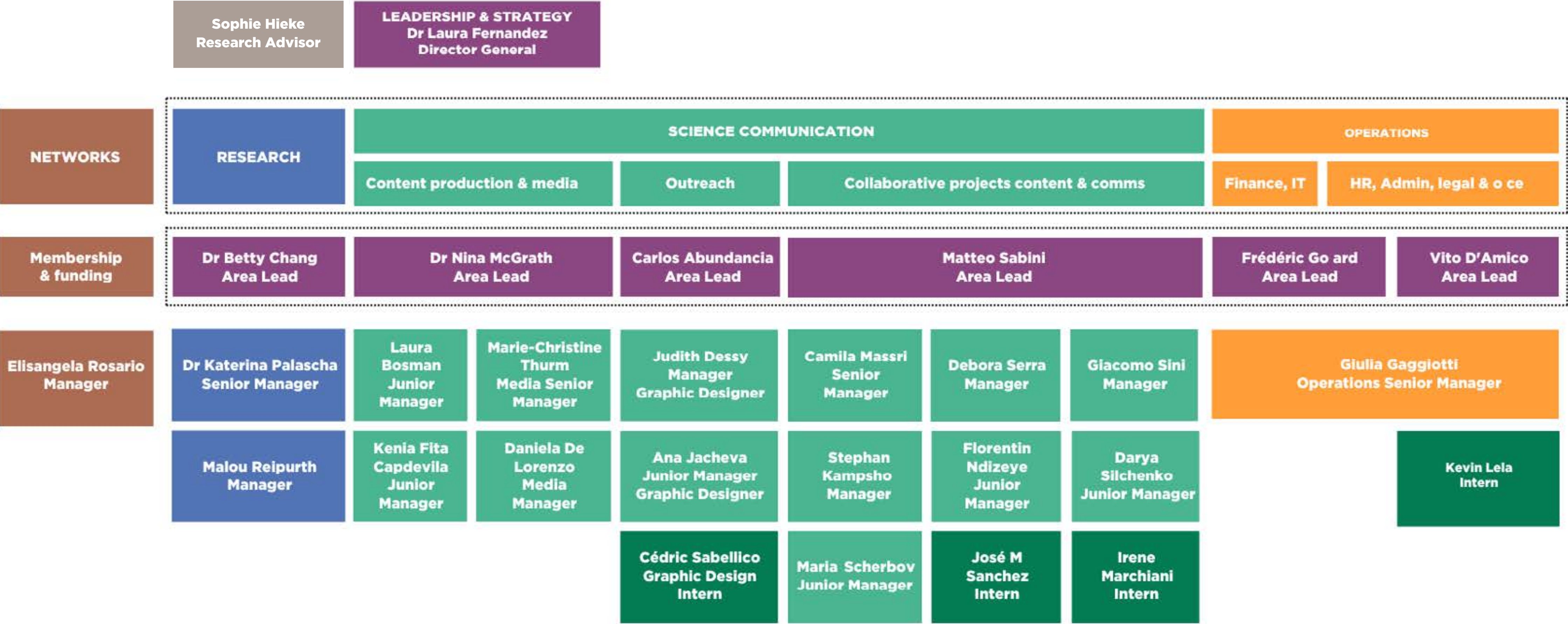
the planet. This philosophy guides everything we do, from the development of educational resources to our engagement with stakeholders and the public. It's not just about disseminating information; it's about sparking meaningful conversations, fostering critical thinking and empowering individuals.

## Our values

At EUFIC, our values are the foundation for building our work and relationships. Integrity and transparency are key to us: we are committed to the highest standards of accuracy and impartiality in all our scientific communication. We value collaboration, recognising that meaningful change requires collective effort. Respect guides our interactions and fosters inclusivity, empathy and understanding.

In 2023, our team had 31 staff members from 13 different countries. We assigned ourselves to three primary teams: Collaborative Projects, Content and Outreach, and Research.

# EUFIC ORGANIGRAMME



2.

# **A letter from our Director General**





Dr. Laura Fernández Celemín

As we reflect on the achievements and challenges of the past year, I am proud to report on the continued effort and progress towards promoting healthier and more sustainable diets and lifestyles across Europe. Our commitment to collaboration and our position as a neutral convener has enabled us to drive positive change within the food system.

In 2023, we successfully secured new funding sources primarily from the **Operating Grant** under the European Commission's EU4Health programme. This has provided us with the necessary resources to pursue our mission with continuity and vigour and expand our team, partnerships and collaborations with external partners. Throughout the year, we remained dedicated to our purpose-driven, long-term goals focused on science literacy, healthy and sustainable diet shifts, non-communicable diseases, and food waste. These goals guide us as we work to achieve impact at scale.

In addition to our ongoing efforts to ensure financial sustainability, I am pleased our organisation has completed the first term of our **new gover-**

**nance model** comprised of a General Assembly and Board of Directors whose representatives act in an individual capacity with science as the majority voice. That, coupled with a pan-European Scientific Advisory Board, has been instrumental in shaping our direction and priorities.

On the activity front, we have intensified our focus on increasing the relevance of our actions with specific population groups and countries. We've made significant strides in **reaching vulnerable groups** through initiatives in partnership with key stakeholders such as Caritas Trieste, part of Caritas International. We aim to tailor information about healthy and sustainable diets to the needs of individuals with low socio-economic status (SES) and make healthy and sustainable diets accessible to all. Moreover, by **targeting countries** where the issues we address are most salient, we have amplified our impact and expanded our reach, primarily through targeted online media campaigns in partnership with local organisations. This has included campaigns on science literacy in countries where citizens had low confidence in

recognising disinformation, such as Estonia and Poland, or where consumption of whole grains is limited, such as Belgium.

Finally, 2023 was a year of expansion in our **science communication capacity-building** work. We developed a comprehensive business plan for the EUFIC Academy to scale our impact. We conducted a training session focused on key areas of science communication, testing various themes and exploring diverse learning approaches. The analysis of the insights from those sessions and a survey showed a clear interest in such professional training and a willingness to invest in it. This lays a solid foundation for the EUFIC Academy, and we are excited to continue to enhance our training offerings in the coming years and share our expertise to enable others to communicate science effectively.

A big thank you goes to all EUFIC collaborators for their continued support, which enables us to remain at the forefront of the field every day and positively impact the food system and the lifestyles of Europeans.



# 3.

## Highlights of the year



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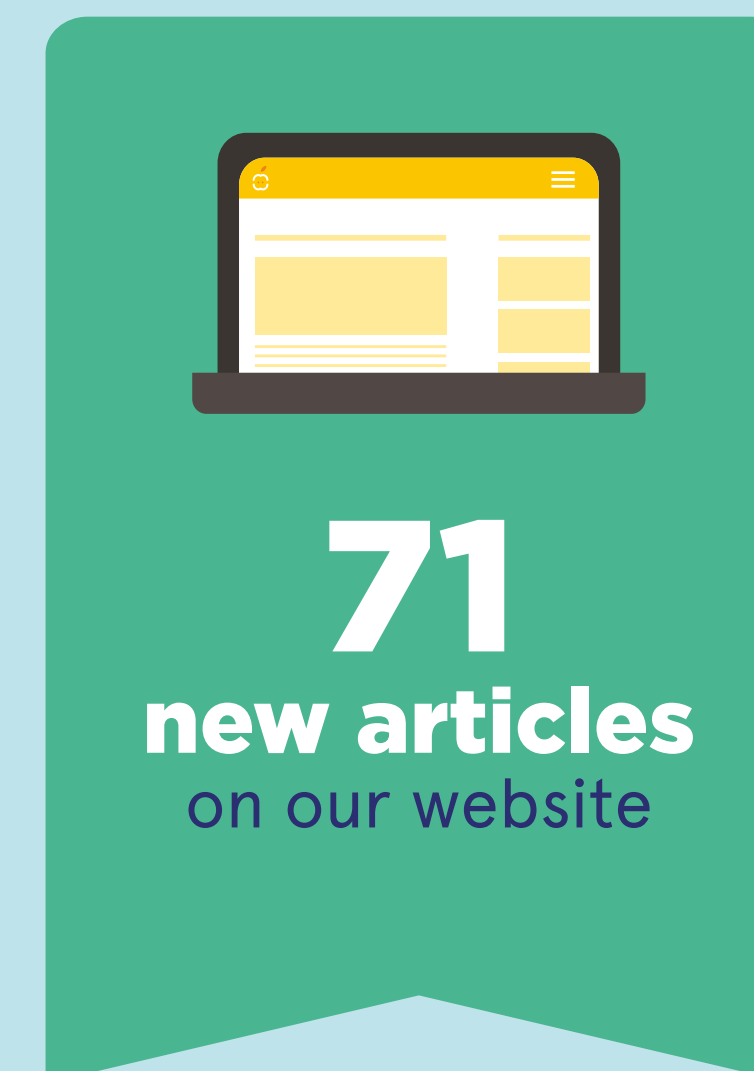
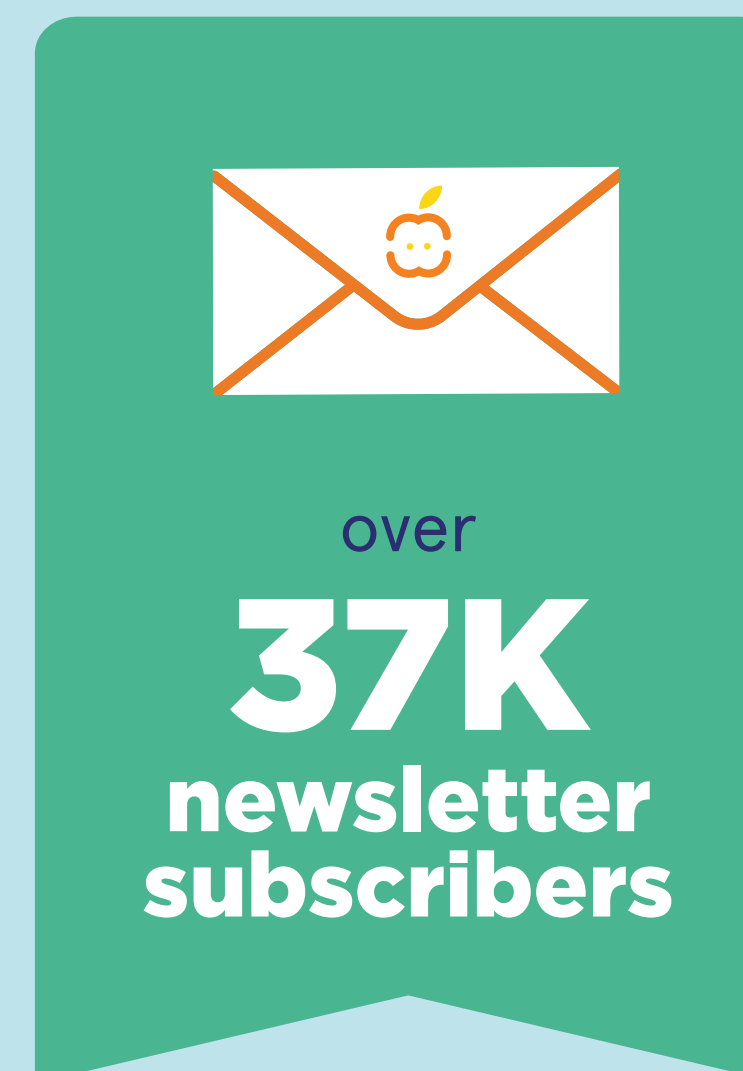
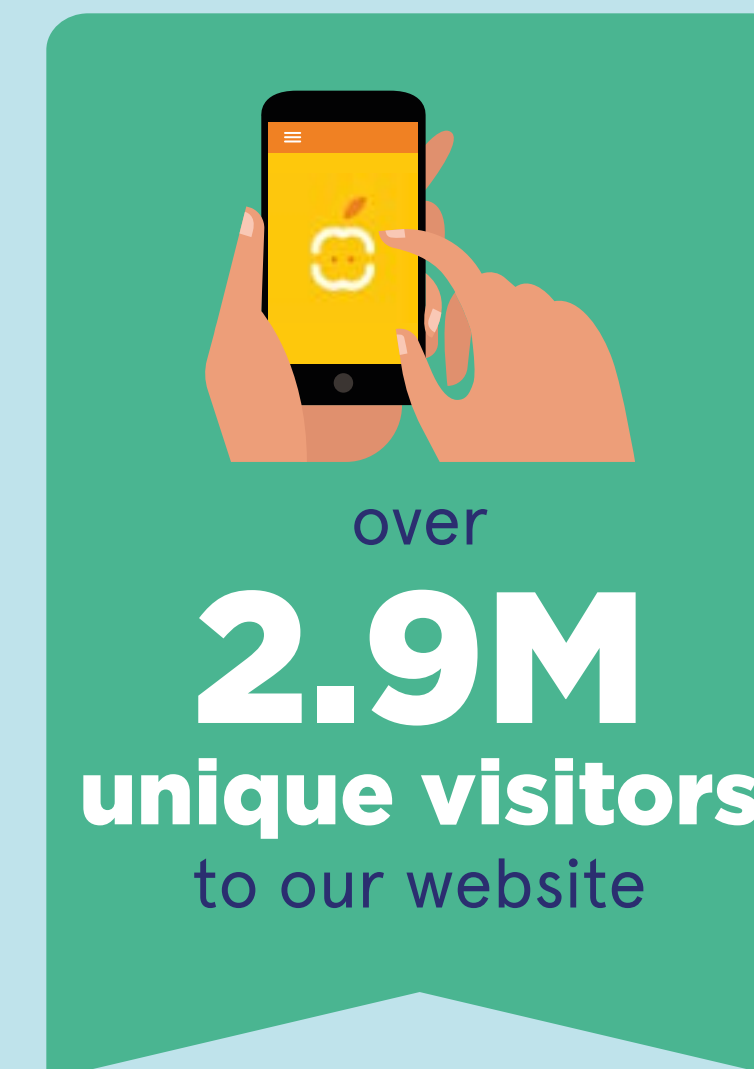
We remain instrumental in reaching a growing audience throughout Europe through our website, **eufic.org**, and our social media presence on platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. We use these platforms to present science-based information in an engaging and appealing way. The results are reflected in our impact statistics from 2023.

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## IN 2023, WE WERE ABLE TO ACHIEVE:

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4.

**What we do**

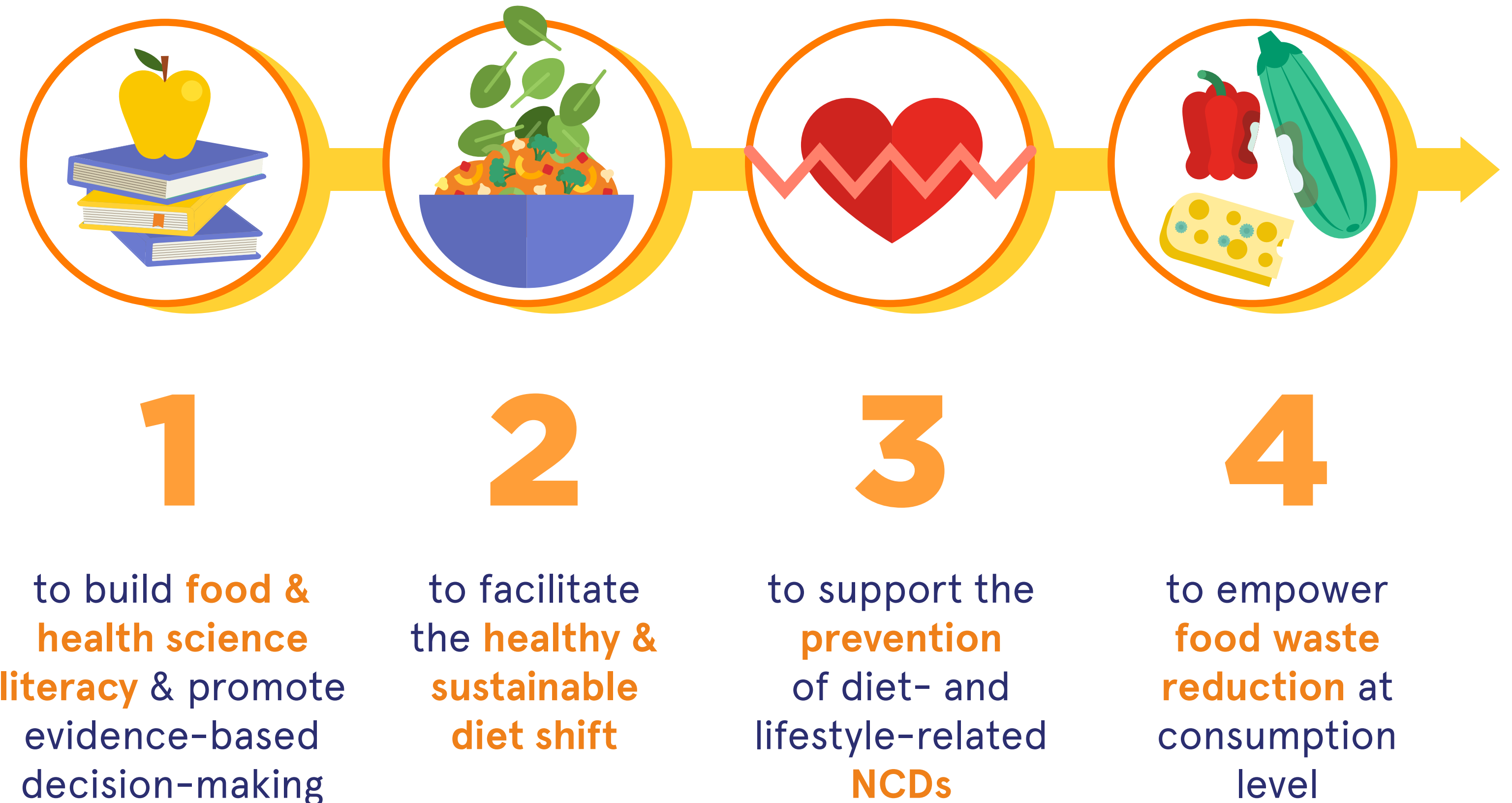


## WHAT WE DO

We realised our purpose with 4 long-term goals (LTGs). All our work contributes to these high-level goals. We developed them as a stable framework for daily planning and decisions to increase our focus and quality and enable us to better report to funders on our impact.

In 2023, with the support of the Operating Grant from the EU4Health (EU4H) Programme managed by the European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA), we were able to make significant progress in these priority areas under the banner 'Food facts for healthy choices'. The activities carried out under each LTG are outlined here.

## OUR LONG-TERM GOALS



# LGT 1

## To build food & health science literacy and promote evidence-based decision-making



Access to trustworthy information is essential to help people make healthier choices and improve public health in Europe. EUFIC took steps to tackle this challenge through a range of actions to enhance science communication and counter misinformation. This included providing high-quality capacity-building for scientists and health practitioners. They learned to communicate effectively at scale, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue on complex or ambiguous topics to promote aligned messaging. They addressed the misreporting of food and health science in the media. Additionally, EUFIC worked to improve public science literacy and misinformation recognition while also breaking silos within the food system by hosting and managing an online community of practice.

## EUFIC SYMPOSIUM ON FOOD EDUCATION & SCIENCE COMMUNICATION TRAINING AT FENS 2023

As part of our commitment to advancing food and health science literacy, we actively engaged in scientific dialogues and provided training. For example, we attended the **14th European Nutrition Conference**, organised by the **Federation of European Nutrition Societies** (FENS), in Belgrade, Serbia from 14-17 November for **communication capacity-building for scientists and health practitioners**.

EUFIC organised the **Food Education and Engagement, in the Classroom and Beyond** symposium where leaders in European educational initiatives shared their success stories with approximately 70 attendees.

They presented initiatives that educate the public on nutrition or food science in various environments, such as schools, science museums, community and city-based programmes, and the media. The conference was an excellent opportunity to increase EUFIC's visibility and demonstrate the impact of case studies in education to a large audience of scientists working in nutrition and food science.

Furthermore, EUFIC gave a poster presentation on communicating about healthy and sustainable eating to vulnerable groups with low socio-economic status (SES) in collaboration with Caritas Trieste (Italy).

Friday 17 November, 9.00-10.30 CET

### Food education and engagement, in the classroom and beyond

Hosted by EUFIC at the FENS 14th European Nutrition Conference

 Nina McGrath

 Laura Fernández Celemín

Meet our speakers:

 Keren Dalyot  
FoodEducators & Weizmann Institute of Science

 Helin Haga  
Science Centre AHHA Foundation

 Kirstie McAdoo  
Airfield Estate

 Ali Atıf Bir  
Sabri-Ülker Foundation

## INTERACTIVE ONLINE EVENT 'MOBILISING CITIZENS FOR CHANGE'

The world's food systems are currently facing various challenges that require immediate action and a stronger collaboration of all its actors. Among them, citizen engagement remains a challenge in this transformation process, particularly concerning involvement in public policy processes.

We partnered with the projects FOODTRAILS, ALL-Ready, CLEVERFOOD and FOODPathS to address this and hosted the interactive online event, '[Mobilizing Citizens for Change: Joining Forces for Sustainable Food Systems](#)' on 24 October. The event showcased success stories highlighting the role of citizens in transforming food systems. It brought together over 90 participants, including representatives of European institutions, international organisations (e.g. UN body, OECD, etc.), local and national authorities, academia, civil society and the food industry.

The panel discussion identified existing gaps that need to be filled to ensure access to safe and nutritious food while also contributing to more sustainable food systems that respond to the evolving needs of society.



## SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM NETWORK

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The Sustainable Food Systems Network (SFSN) is a network that facilitates cooperation across the food system, gathering diverse actors to work together beyond silos. In 2022, EUFIC implemented a strategic engagement plan for the SFSN; in 2023, EUFIC's mission was a **comprehensive rebranding process**. This included the creation of subgroups, such as the Microbiome group, with unique visual identities to ensure consistency and cohesion.

As a result, the SFSN grew substantially, expanding from 1,500 to nearly **2,200 members**.

The growth of the network was driven by targeted social media promotions, organic referrals, interactive posts, biweekly newsletters as well as individual conversations with members. EUFIC also organised four webinars, explaining how to use the network, showcasing specific EU projects and initiatives, and promoting networking sessions. Community managers proved a unique advantage that set the SFSN apart from other social networks.



## FOOD FACTS – WORKING TOGETHER TO COUNTER MISINFORMATION

To improve food and health literacy and foster trust in science, EUFIC addresses misleading or oversimplified food and health-related news by providing ‘rapid responses’. These responses are timely and reliable; they provide scientifically accurate information by including summaries of the issues and expert quotes. They give guidance on how to read the science behind the news. EUFIC proactively publishes the briefings on social media to reach the wider media and stakeholders.

In 2023, we shared five rapid-response briefings with a network of European scientists, communicators, journalists and organisations. These briefings covered various contentious topics, such as ultra-processed food, sweeteners, aspartame and cancer. Thirty-four articles covered EUFIC briefings, with over 150,000,000 potential readers.

In October, EUFIC launched the online community ‘[Food Facts](#)’, a group within the Sustainable Food Systems Network (SFSN). The group aims to connect

scientists and science communicators. Communicators, such as journalists and media professionals, are encouraged to improve the accuracy of their reporting by tapping into a network of experts, expanding their sources, and accessing authoritative quotes for their stories and quick responses to their doubts and queries. Scientists can increase their visibility in the news and enhance their science communication experience.

EUFIC’s community managers sparked discussions between members via newsletters, webinars, individual support sessions and free ambassador partnerships to help foster the community.

In addition to the Food Facts media outreach, the EUFIC media hub proactively reached out to media on a variety of topics, such as the complex topic of New Genomic Techniques (NTGs), and responded to ad-hoc media requests. In total, we attained 879 media mentions with more than 1.9 million potential readers.



## SCIENCE LITERACY CAMPAIGN

On International Literacy Day in September, EUFIC launched a month-long campaign on [science literacy](#). It emphasised the crucial role of food and health literacy in empowering the public to make well-informed diet and lifestyle choices. We asked our audience to submit their questions and analysed Google search queries on the topic. Based on these insights, our content addressed common concerns and questions on nutrition research, identifying trustworthy sources online, and understanding cognitive biases and misleading information. For example, we wrote articles such as [‘The levels of evidence in nutrition research’](#) and created infographics such as [‘How to read graphs’](#).

With the help of local media agencies, we specifically targeted citizens in Estonia and Poland because their citizens have low confidence in recognising disinformation according to the Eurobarometer’s 2022 Media and News Survey. We also shared our materials with EU-wide media and on our social media channels. Our statistics showed we reached over **1.7 million impressions** and over **33K engagements**; we achieved **33 media mentions** (15 in Poland, 11 in Estonia and 7 EU-wide mentions, including interviews with EUFIC staff).



## TRAINING PROGRAMMES WITH THE EUFIC ACADEMY

In 2023, EUFIC worked to promote the capacity for science communication among researchers and health professionals. In particular, we trained them to fine-tune their message to a specific audience, explained the main concepts of science communications, provided practical examples and best practices, and instructed them in using social media.

This year we provided a total of **6 formal trainings**, keynote speeches and mentoring activities in the following contests:

- FENS Congress 2023: Food education and science communication training for scientists and health practitioners (2 formal training modules)
- University of Parma: Science communication training for young researchers

- JA Europe: 'How to pitch' mentoring for young researchers
- Word Mycotoxin Forum: 'Communicating with consumers: how to talk about food risk' presentation for stakeholders, academics, and industry and policy representatives
- University Federico II: Science communication training for young researchers

Essentially, we doubled our efforts since 2022, paving the way for more training opportunities.

We also **conducted a survey among early-career researchers and health professionals** to improve our training offers and to better plan future activities in capacity-building.



# LGT 2

## Facilitate a healthy & sustainable diet shift



The urgency of transitioning to a more sustainable food system is widely recognised, yet public discussions often remain fragmented, focusing separately on health, quality of taste or sustainability. EUFIC bridges these gaps through innovative citizen engagement, encouraging people to see that a tasty meal can also be healthy and sustainable. To effectively drive this shift, EUFIC focuses on three key levers: targeted education for different groups, highlighting the cultural value of food, and leveraging social media and grassroots movements to influence social norms.

In 2023, EUFIC specifically aimed to better understand the needs and barriers low-SES groups face in adopting healthy and sustainable diets. We also worked with these communities to co-create practical tools and messages to support action and amplify these efforts through an online information campaign developed in collaboration with influencers.

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION TOWARDS COMMUNITIES WITH LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

EUFIC is committed to effectively communicating with vulnerable populations, particularly those with low socioeconomic status (SES), who face multiple challenges that make pursuing a sustainable and healthy diet harder. So, together with **Caritas Trieste in Italy**, we conducted a research project with social supermarket beneficiaries (native Italians and immigrants) to understand how to communicate about healthy and sustainable eating most effectively.

In the **first study**, we conducted **focus groups** with beneficiaries of the Caritas Trieste social supermarket and professionals of the Caritas organisation. The aim was to understand the hurdles to adopting healthy and sustainable diets as well as the information needs and preferences of consumers with low SES. Based on these insights, we created tailored and actionable communication materials (e.g. infographics). In a **second study**, we tested the effectiveness of these

**materials** in a larger group of the target population via an online survey.

The research found that communication about healthy and sustainable eating holds the potential for behaviour change within low-income communities and provided some evidence-based **recommendations for effective communication**. Understanding the cultural context, the food environment and the key barriers of low-income communities is crucial for targeting messages strategically. Visual elements, practical recipes and raising awareness about the advantages of healthier and more sustainable dietary choices are essential. Researchers found that focusing on food-related risks of climate change (e.g. higher food prices, lower food quality and reduced availability) rather than general recommendations about healthy and sustainable eating may be more effective, at least in certain groups such as native Italians.

### benefits of healthy & environmentally friendly eating



## benefits of healthy & environmentally friendly eating



They also found that the availability of health information and multilingual communication needs to increase to reach groups with limited access to such information (e.g. migrants). In combination with initiatives to make healthy and sustainable food more affordable and accessible, health communication could have more pronounced effects on people's motivations, actions and opportunities to make the diet shift.

EUFIC shared the results on several channels, such as a [live webinar](#) with over 150 registered viewers from various fields (e.g. science communicators, health professionals, NGOs/civil society organisations, policymakers, researchers and industry) and countries. For more impact, we broadcasted the recording on all EUFIC online channels. In addition, we shared our insights achieved in collaboration

with Caritas Trieste via [newsletter articles](#), a scientific poster at the FENS 2023 event and an oral presentation at the 11th EuroScience Open Forum in Katowice in June. We also published the results of this research in the scientific journal [Appetite](#).

The research findings provided the foundation for a [toolkit with evidence-based recommendations](#) on communicating to consumers with low SES about healthy and sustainable diets. We shared the toolkit via our website and the Caritas Trieste network, and we promoted it directly to relevant stakeholders (e.g. food banks, charity organisations, policy experts, retailers/industry associations, dietetic associations, communication experts) to help empower vulnerable groups to follow healthier and more sustainable diets.

## PLANT-BASED DIET CAMPAIGN

One of the main barriers consumers face when shifting from animal to plant-based protein sources is concern about getting enough protein, along with uncertainty about how to cook with plant-based proteins. Therefore, building on the work from 2022, we further developed the [plant-based cooking guide](#), extending its reach by collaborating with various influencers and recipe bloggers and incorporating eight additional plant-based, nutritious, and affordable recipes.

We worked with the influencer agency Beinfluence, which specialises in micro- and nano-influencers. We focused on three countries with relatively high meat consumption – Spain, Portugal and Austria – to increase effectiveness.

The results: **1 million impressions and over 40,000 engagements**. Our high engagement rate (5.1%) and the number of saves (+22K) were great indicators of the relevance and interest

in the recipes. This guarantees that the content will be revisited and remain relevant longer than the campaign.

Both influencers and users appreciated that we were not advocating for vegan diets but rather acknowledging the importance of following a more plant-based diet. This approach made it more realistic and achievable for them.

In another approach to promote plant-based diets, [EUFIC joined forces with the Beans is How movement](#), an initiative of the Advocacy Hub for the Sustainable Development Goal number 2. They aim to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030. Since pulses are an important part of a nutritious, sustainable and affordable diet, Beans is How pledges to double the global consumption of beans (as well as peas, lentils and other pulses) 2028.



# LGT 3

## Support the prevention of diet and lifestyle-related non-communicable diseases

The core objectives of EUFIC's strategy are general health promotion and prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) through healthier lifestyles. Recognising diet and physical activity as key levers of change, as highlighted by the WHO, EUFIC supports this effort with mass media campaigns and nutrition education, providing science-based information to help consumers make informed dietary choices.

To advance this goal in 2023, EUFIC aimed to raise general awareness of the link between diet and NCD risk and encourage greater consumption of fruits, vegetables, pulses, and whole grains while reducing salt, sugar, and saturated fat intake. We ran a dedicated challenge to boost whole grain consumption. Additionally, EUFIC launched a social media campaign to clarify microbiomes and their role in NCD prevention.



## PACKAGING OUR CONTENT ON NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDS) FOR THE MEDIA

In 2023, EUFIC created science-based content packages for the media. We reviewed our existing content and created new articles, such as [What are non-communicable diseases and how can we reduce our risk?](#) or [What is processed food?](#) In addition, based on the latest scientific consensus and Google searches, we updated several existing articles, e.g. [Whole grain \(Q&A\)](#), making it relevant to the public. This content was used for a series of **content packages distributed in three mass media campaigns**. The goal was to achieve coverage, particularly in popular and lifestyle media, ensuring that more high-quality content reaches the public and raises awareness of the link between diet and NCDs.

Our strategic priorities focused on key diet components with a high health and/or environmental impact

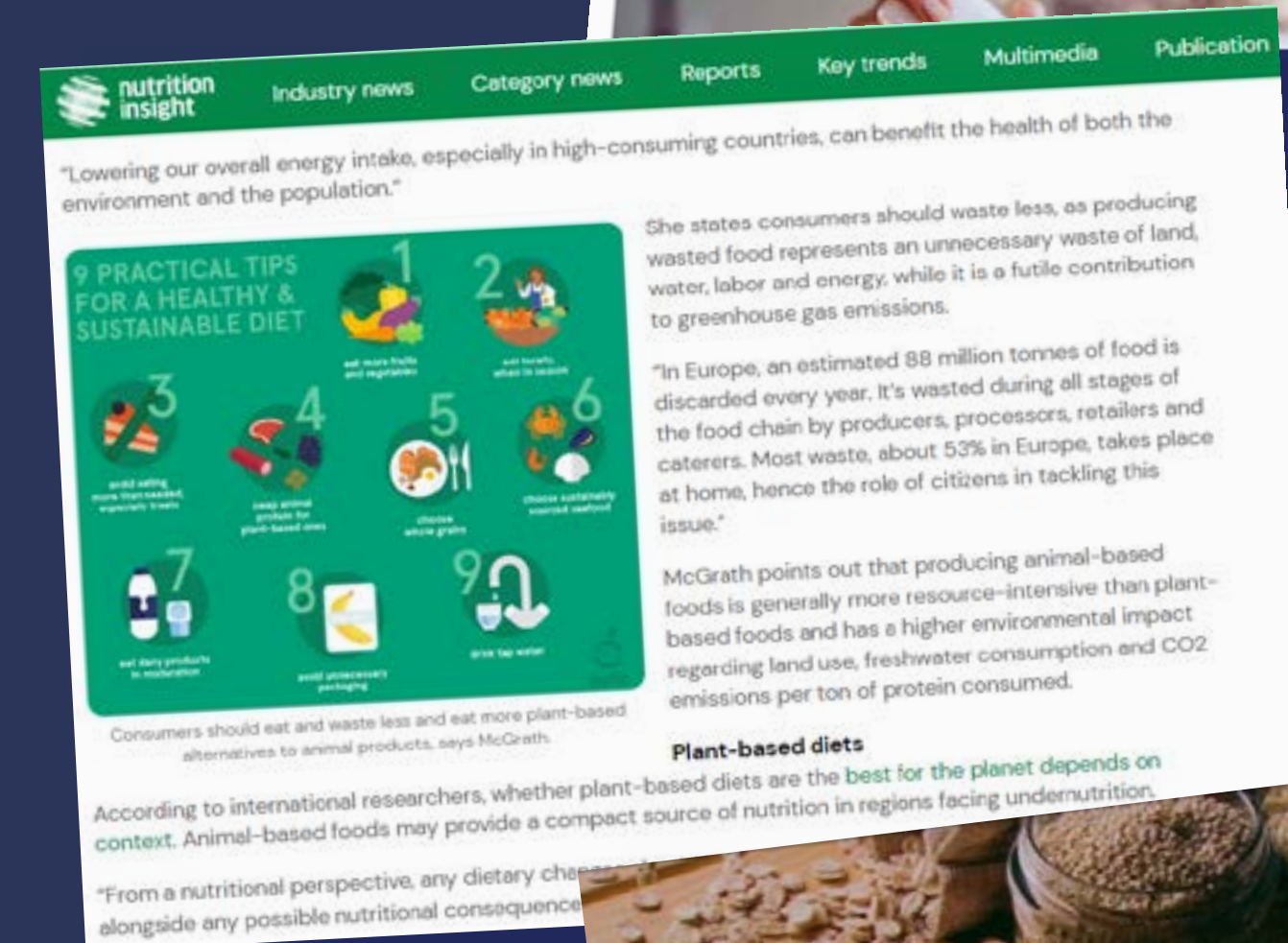
in Europe. Then we carried out media outreach campaigns during **three high-profile World Days** in 2023: World Salt Awareness Week (15–21 May 2023), World Environment Day (5 June 2023) and International Whole Grain Day (15 November 2023). We partnered with a Belgian press agency for whole grain outreach because Belgium has one of the lowest whole grain intakes in Europe. This allowed us to create a targeted outreach with local impact.

In total, these campaigns led to around **14.5 million impressions**, which means that our content could reach around 14.5 million people across six languages (English, Italian, Spanish, French, Greek and Dutch). This includes a television reportage broadcasted on 'La Une', one of Belgium's most popular TV channels.

### Semaine de sensibilisation à la réduction du sel : 10 questions pour mieux gérer sa consommation

Le sel a été utilisé pour conserver les aliments et leur donner de la saveur pendant des milliers d'années. Nous avons tous besoin d'une certaine quantité de sel pour être en bonne santé, mais prudence quant à une consommation excessive susceptible d'augmenter notre tension artérielle, et ainsi les risques de cardiopathies. A l'occasion de la Semaine de sensibilisation à la réduction du sel 2023 qui se déroule du 15 au 21 mai, Version Femina fait le point sur ce sujet, avec l'aide du Dr Nina McGrath, membre de l'European Food Information Council (EUFIC).

ALEXANDRA BRESSON



#### Plant-based diets

According to international researchers, whether plant-based diets are the best for the planet depends on context. Animal-based foods may provide a compact source of nutrition in regions facing undernutrition. "From a nutritional perspective, any dietary change should be considered alongside any possible nutritional consequences."



## DRIVING AWARENESS OF DIET AND NCD RISK ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In 2023, our social media campaigns aimed to raise greater awareness of the connection between diet and the risk of NCDs, including the health benefits of reducing salt and sugar consumption and increasing fruit, vegetable and pulses consumption. The campaigns provided practical advice, including cooking and food preparation tips. They ran on EUFIC's social media platforms (mainly Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram) throughout the year, particularly in the months of June (Microbiomes) and July (Fruits and vegetables). We also used specific events and international days to spread our content, as engagement tends to be higher during those days.

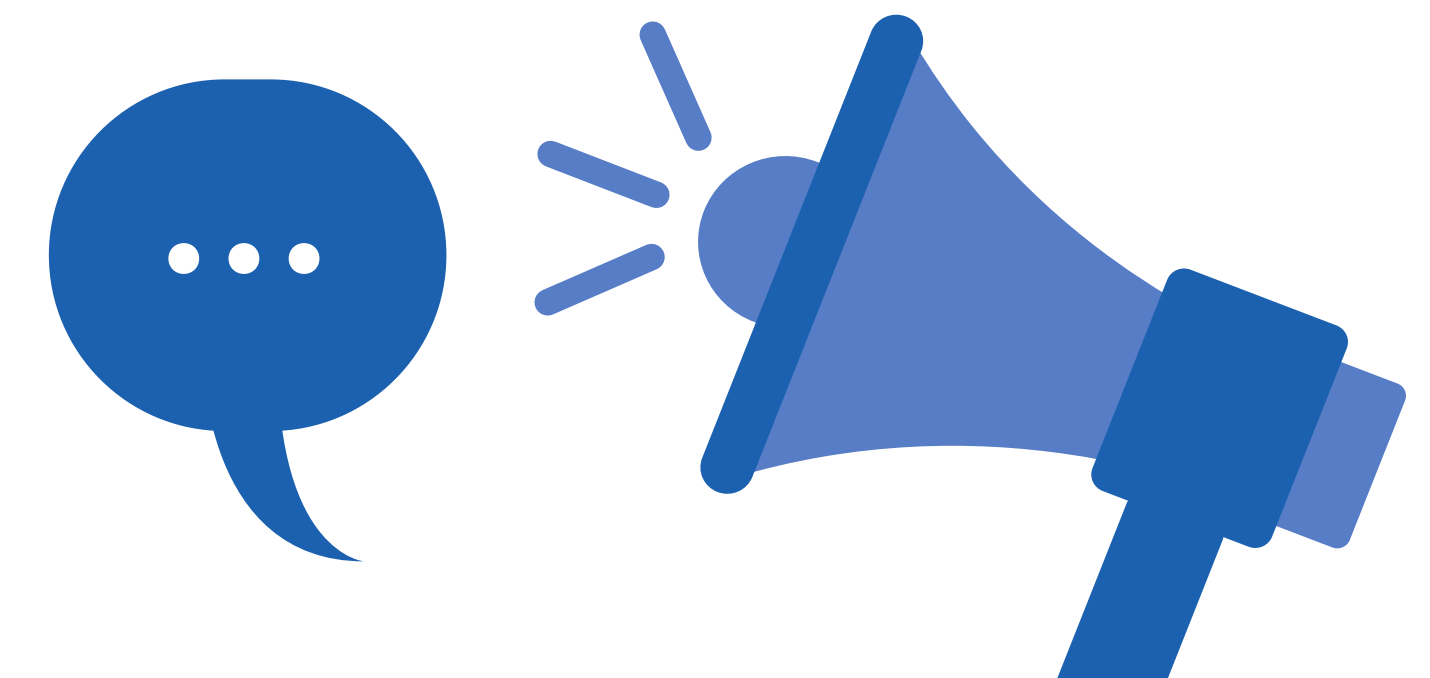
This year, we placed special emphasis on establishing collaborations with key initiatives to maximise impact. For example, we joined forces with the Beans is How initiative for World Pulses Day and the Whole Grain Initiative for International Whole Grain Day. For World Microbiome Day, celebrated on 27 June, we teamed up with APC Microbiome Ireland and several EU-funded projects to highlight the critical role of microbiomes in promoting sustainable and healthy diets. A variety of activities, including resources and social media posts, explained the connection between diet, microbiomes and their influence on health, food production and sustaina-

bility. In addition, we organised a [webinar](#) featuring expert insights and interactive Q&A sessions that were well received with over **500 participants**.



Paid advertisements boosted our campaign's impact and also helped us tap into audiences beyond our existing community. They were focused, for example, on specific at-risk groups such as the elderly, pregnant women and children when relevant. In addition, as concerns about overweight and obesity increase, particularly among European children, we focused our activities on those who influence the food environments of young children (e.g. parents and educators).

The results were far beyond our expectations, with **3.6 million impressions and 100K engagements in total** from the platforms where we're active. The most interesting overall trend was that the posts with the most engagement across all platforms were about plant-based topics, such as pulses, fruits, and vegetables, and their links to health and environmental benefits.



## THE WHOLE GRAIN CHALLENGE – A COLLABORATIVE CAMPAIGN THROUGHOUT NOVEMBER 2023

Consumption of whole grains is associated with reducing the risk of developing non-communicable diseases. Therefore, this was one of our key campaigns on this topic.

With the International Whole Grain Day on 15 November, the whole grain social media campaign ran throughout November. The campaign highlighted the positive impact of whole grains on nutrition, well-being and sustainability, aiming to motivate citizens to integrate these nutritious choices into their daily diets.

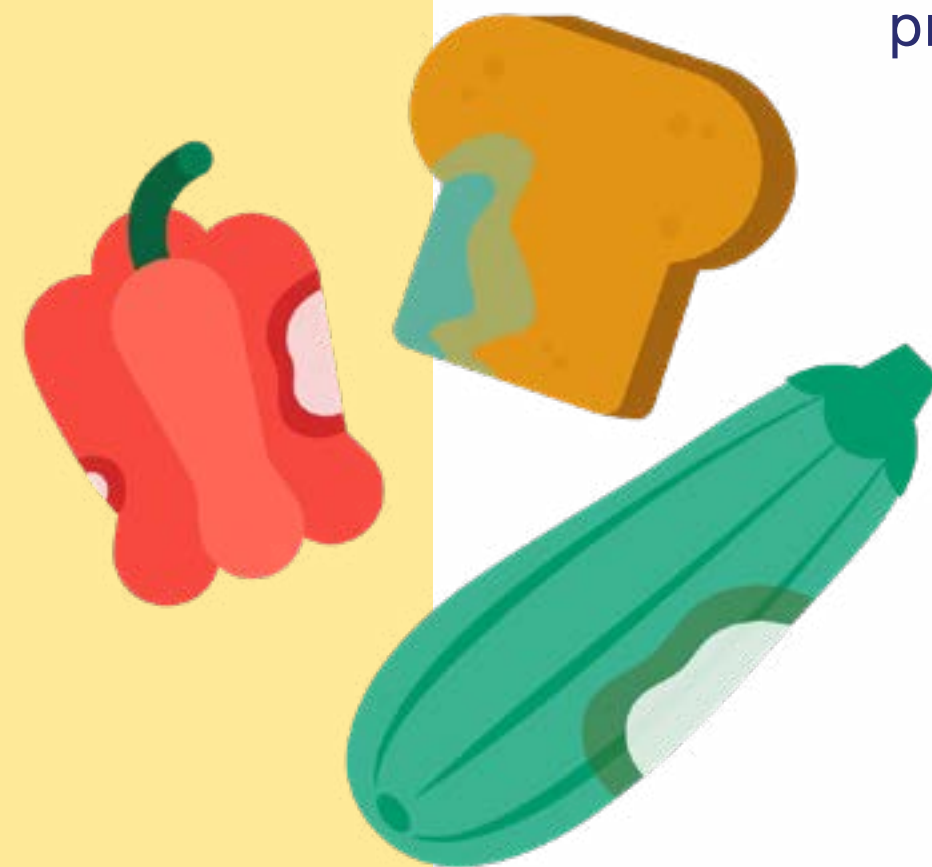
To increase our outreach to young adults, we engaged **influencers active on Instagram** with the support of the European-wide influencer marketing agency, BeInfluence. According to data from the European Commission's Health Promotion and Knowledge Gateway, Romania, Italy, Portugal and Spain are countries with the lowest average daily intake of whole grain foods. Therefore, we focused on content creators in these countries whose values and content aligned with the campaign's objectives. Their challenge was to create healthy recipes using whole grain ingredients and share these in videos on their Instagram channels over a 4-week period starting on 15 November.

Considering EUFIC's own posts and the influencers' posts, the campaign achieved a total of **567K impressions** and **30.5K engagements**.



# LGT 4

## Empower food waste reduction at the consumption level



Food waste reduction at the household level presents a major opportunity to minimise the environmental and climate impact of our food system, as households account for approximately 55% of all food waste. EUFIC encourages people to tackle food waste at home through culturally relevant initiatives, focusing on three key levers of change: improving food management habits among students, promoting social norms and providing policy input.

In 2023, EUFIC worked to equip students with actionable food waste reduction tips, ran a social media campaign with micro- and nano-influencers, identified cultural differences in food waste to develop more effective interventions, and co-organised a high-level event with FAO Brussels and CEMAS to promote joint action and share best practices.

## EUFIC X FAO X CEMAS HIGH-LEVEL EVENT UNDER THE SPANISH PRESIDENCY

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The Valencia World Sustainable Urban Food Centre (CEMAS), in collaboration with EUFIC, hosted the high-level event '[A multi-stakeholder perspective on food loss and food waste reduction strategies](#)' in Valencia on 3 October, celebrating the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste.

It aimed to bring together stakeholders from universities, civil society, city networks as well as local, regional, national and European authorities and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The key objectives were to raise awareness about food waste and food

waste reduction strategies, promote collaboration and dialogue across the food value chain, understand global initiatives and policies and how to replicate them, and foster concrete commitments to reduce food waste.

The event was a great success, with **190 in-person attendees** and **263 on-line attendees**. We also successfully gathered individuals engaged in policy at the regional, national and international levels, as well as consumer and industry representatives, academic researchers, public health professionals and media to participate in and contribute to sector-specific discussion groups.



## FOOD WASTE: BEHAVIOUR AND KNOWLEDGE QUIZ & SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

On 29 September, on the occasion of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), we launched a one-month food waste campaign. For this, we introduced a new quiz '[Evaluate Your Food Waste Practices!](#)' to encourage citizens to take simple steps at home and positively contribute to the larger challenge.

EUFIC's Research and Science Communication teams developed the quiz together to provide citizens, particularly young adults, with practical, personalised food waste recommendations to reduce food waste. We paid special attention to young adults, as they are considered one of the primary groups contributing to food waste across Europe.

Our advice focused on five food-related household practices based on

our research in 2022: 1) Planning, 2) Purchase, 3) Storage, 4) Preparation & Serving and 5) Consumption. Twenty-eight questions aimed to analyse consumers' food waste patterns. After completing the 7-minute quiz, the participants received personalised tips on how to limit the food that ends up as waste. These tips were tailored to address the issues where they had scored poorly.

We promoted the quiz on various channels – the most important among these was our social media campaign that ran throughout October. EUFIC's posts focused on providing people with practical advice that they could implement to reduce food waste. Additionally, we used paid ads to boost the visibility of our food waste quiz.



### Evaluate Your Food Waste Practices!

Did you know that one-third of all the food produced for humans to eat is lost or wasted, and much of this waste occurs at home?



Take this quiz to help us identify the best ways for you to reduce food waste. As a result, we will provide you with practical, personalised tips on how to minimise food waste. By implementing these suggestions, you can help the environment, save money, and reduce your chances of food poisoning!

  Co-funded by the European Union

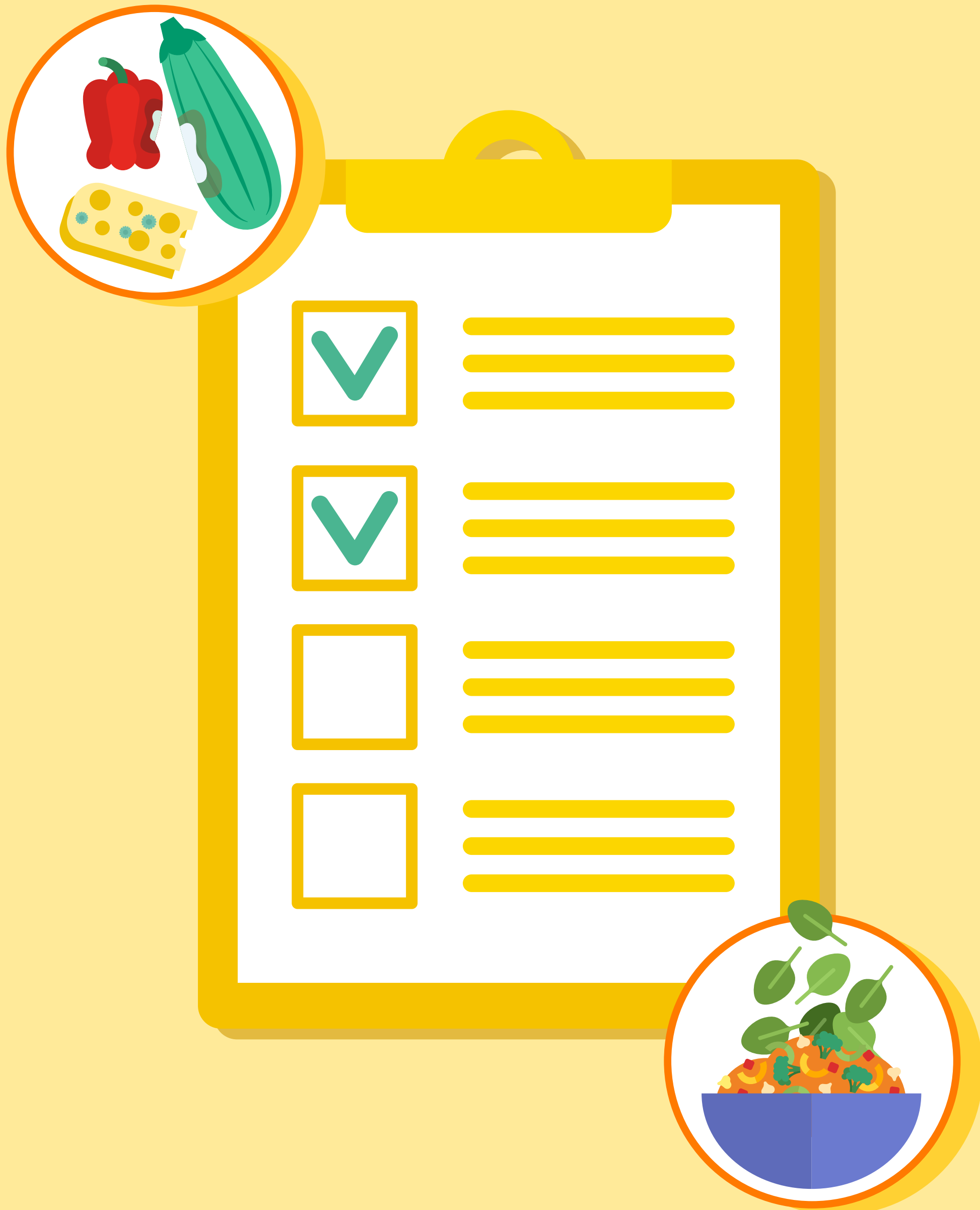
The campaign ran on Instagram, in particular, to collaborate with micro- and nano-influencers with resonance among young audiences. The influencer agency Beinfluence helped us identify and engage key food waste and/or zero waste lifestyle influencers who aligned with our values and purpose and could communicate in one of the languages of the quiz.

EUFIC's food waste activities were well received by the media, leading to over 23 media mentions with a potential reach of over 21 million. The most significant response came from 'El Diario de Sevilla' in Spain with a potential reach of almost half a million.

EUFIC engaged 4,200 participants in the quiz with a competition rate of 72-82%, a good baseline for continuous improvement of the quiz and further promotion in the coming years. Moreover, a survey of a subset (84) of the participants showed that the tips provided improved several of the skills assessed (i.e. meal planning, pantry inventory, proper food storage, assessing if the food is edible, knowing the difference between use-by and

best-before dates, measuring portion sizes, and preparing the right amount of food). However, the participants reported improvement in only one of the behaviours (preparing the right amount of food) in response to the tips.





## CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN HOW PEOPLE RELATE TO FOOD WASTE

Understanding how households of different cultures relate to food waste can enable us to better tailor food waste campaigns to national or regional contexts.

To shed light on why some countries may waste more food than others, we surveyed people of different target countries that reported relatively high vs. relatively low household food waste in the northern, southern, western and eastern regions of Europe. Based on the United Nations Environment Programme Food Waste Index (United Nations Environment Programme, 2021) report and stakeholder consultation on existing national household food waste surveys, we selected the following seven target countries: Denmark, Ireland, Greece, Slovenia, Hungary, France and Austria.

We examined the frequency with which people reported throwing

away different types of food; their knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour towards food waste; social norms; and which types of information about food waste reduction they found useful. We found that younger adults, males, larger households and those who eat dinner out more reported throwing away food more frequently. Frequently discarding food was associated with buying more than needed and not knowing what to do with the food (e.g. how to prepare it). The types of information consumers found most useful for reducing food waste were behavioural tips and information about how long various foods could be stored in the fridge and freezer.

We shared the results of our food literacy survey in a [report](#) and a [webinar](#).

# 5. Publicly funded projects



“

*European-funded projects play a vital role in helping EUFIC achieve its long-term goals. These projects enable us to pursue societal impact by fostering collaborations with a wide range of research institutes, universities, companies, public administrations and other initiatives in the food and health sectors. We conduct research to understand consumers' perspectives on the project topics, and we communicate about the projects, developing message campaigns, and targeted outreach to share the research effectively. All of this provides us with opportunities to enhance our strategy and achieve our goals!*

”



*Matteo Sabini /  
Collaborative Projects -  
Area Lead*

PROJECT INVOLVEMENT BY LONG-TERM GOALS

|                                                                                     |                                                                                      |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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To build food and health science literacy and promote evidence-based decision-making



To facilitate the healthy and sustainable diet shift



To empower food waste reduction at consumption level



To support the prevention of diet- and lifestyle-related non-communicable diseases

## NEW PROJECTS IN 2023



**Connects labs for empowering versatile engagement in radical food system transformation**

CLEVERFOOD engages citizens and connects the [FOOD 2030 Networks](#) to foster collaboration and drive transformative change in the food system. Through Policy Labs, Living Labs and Europe-wide engagement, it aims to mobilise society for a circular, plant-based, fair, healthy and sustainable future.

EUFIC coordinates communication, dissemination and exploitation activities across FOOD 2030 projects and initiatives, leveraging the Sustainable Food Systems Network (SFSN).



**Preventing obesity through biologically and behaviourally tailored interventions for you**

BETTER4U tackles the growing issue of global obesity by examining its complex causes and developing practical solutions. By studying how genetics, lifestyle and environmental factors interact, the project works to create personalised, evidence-based strategies for managing weight, supported by international experts and AI.

EUFIC leads communication and dissemination, and contributes to reviewing scientific data to assess the impact of genetic and socio-economic factors on obesity.



**Harnesses the potential of fermenting for healthy and sustainable foods**

DOMINO examines the health effects of fermented food-based diets in both healthy individuals and those with metabolic syndrome. Six case studies will guide the development of plant-based prototypes and improve our understanding of the nutritional benefits of fermented foods. Living labs and outreach activities ensure strong citizen and stakeholder engagement across the food value chain.

EUFIC leads communication and dissemination activities, supporting the living labs with tailored materials to enhance the project's impact.



**New sustainable proteins for food, feed and non-food bio-based applications**

InnoProtein addresses food security by researching alternative proteins, including those derived from bacteria, microalgae, fungi, and insects. These sources will be utilised to create soluble protein powders for foods such as smoothies, dips, and sauces, while also providing sustainable animal feed for swine, poultry, and aquaculture.

The project adopts a zero-waste approach, converting all residual biomass into bio-based products, including bioplastics, biostimulants, and biofuels.

EUFIC leads communication and dissemination, and supports research on product requirements and consumer acceptance.

## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT 2023



### Innovative down-scaled food processing in a box

FOX developed flexible, mobile technologies tailored to small and medium-sized fruit and vegetable producers in Europe. These units use mild processing techniques—from preservation to packaging—and rapid quality control to support healthier food production. Piloted across major production regions, the project evaluated its social, business, environmental and health impacts, and explored new business opportunities.

A European Interest Group is now promoting FOX results, and highlights from the final conference are available on the [project website](#).



### Multi-stakeholder platform for food safety in Europe

FoodSafety4EU has created the EU Food Safety Forum, a network of over 50 organisations—including research institutes, food safety agencies, universities, companies, and NGOs—collaborating to strengthen the European food safety system. Outputs and actionable knowledge are shared through the project's [digital platform](#).

EUFIC developed a [co-creation methodology](#) to support more effective communication strategies, which will be applied to topics such as media reporting on sweeteners.



### Scaling up microalgae production & preparing the market uptake of microalgae proteins as ingredients for sustainable food & feed products.

ProFuture advanced microalgae cultivation and scaled up the production of sustainable food and feed ingredients. It also explored market potential, consumer acceptance and the sustainability of microalgae-based processes through tests, studies and exploitation strategies.

At its 2023 final conference, project partners shared results and hosted discussions on alternative proteins and future policy directions. Full recordings are available [here](#) or on the [project website](#).



### Smart technologies for personalised nutrition and consumer engagement

Stance4Health marked a step forward for personalised nutrition as a future pillar of public health. The project investigated how various foods, raw materials, and processing methods impact the gut microbiota, which is considered a potential biomarker for preventing non-communicable diseases.

Final results, [including policy and practice notes](#), are available on the project website and [YouTube channel](#).

## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT 2023



**Healthier eating for type 2 diabetes self-management: Co-creating a novel nutrition education program with culinary medicine**

Cook2DIAbeat conducted focus groups with individuals living with type 2 diabetes and healthcare professionals in Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, and Spain. Insights from these sessions were validated through a wider survey of 212 participants.

These findings will inform a tailored nutrition education programme for people with type 2 diabetes, which will be shared through the upcoming Cook-2DIAbeat methodology guide.



**Supermarkets and consumers collaborate to make sustainable consumption easy**

In 2023, SUCCESS added 40 new retailer initiatives to its [online supermarket database](#)—now totalling 103—from Belgium, Finland and Poland, covering protein shift and food waste strategies. The database was presented at a [high-level event](#) at the Valencia World Sustainable Urban Food Centre (CEMAS) and will be promoted in 2024 via EUFIC channels.

In parallel, EUFIC and Food Bank Poland conducted interviews with 15 food system stakeholders to explore the roles of retailers in reducing food waste and promoting plant-based diets. These findings will feed into broader project recommendations.



# 6.

## **EUFIC's governance**



OUR GOVERNANCE



*Transparency, inclusivity and scientific integrity are the defining values of EUFIC's governance.*

A strong and impartial governance structure, separate from membership, is crucial to fulfilling EUFIC's mission and achieving its goals. Our governance is a core strength of the organisation, incorporating key stakeholder groups essential to our work: the scientific community, healthcare & science communication professionals, the private sector and civil society. This diverse composition ensures balance, objectivity, practicality and various perspectives.

The composition of these governing bodies intentionally prioritises representation from the scientific community, reflecting the central role of science within EUFIC and ensuring the independence and impartiality of our activities. Representatives in our governance serve on a voluntary basis, acting individually. They are required to complete an annual declaration of interest. They also adhere to a strict [Code of Conduct](#) and [Operating Principles](#).

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



**Marta Baffigo**  
*R&D Scientific & Regulatory Affairs and FSQR Regional Regulatory Lead EMEA, Cargill*



**Edouard Casala**  
*Scientific and Regulatory Affairs Manager, Bunge*



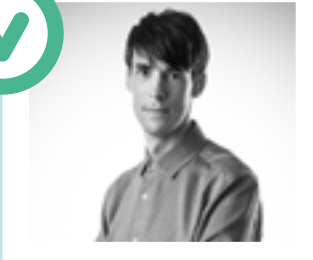
**Catherine Franche**  
*Executive Director, Ecsite*



**Maria Kapsokefalou**  
*Professor in Human Nutrition, Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, Agricultural University of Athens*



**Wineke Remijnse**  
*Executive Director, European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians (EFAD)*



**Igor Pravst**  
*Director, NUTRIS Nutrition Institute*



**Philip Calder**  
*President, Federation of European Nutrition Societies (FENS); Professor of Nutritional Immunology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Southampton*



**Paul Finglas**  
*Managing Director, EuroFIR; Head of the Food Databanks National Capability, Quadram Institute*



**Klaus Grunert**  
*Professor, Department of Management and Director of the MAPP Center, Aarhus University*



**Arja Krauchneberg**  
*President, Lifelong Learning Platform, European Civil Society for Lifelong Learning*



**Tanya Footman**  
*Senior Nutrition & Health Advocacy Manager Europe, Unilever*



**Ana M. Troncoso Gonzalez**  
*Professor, Food Science & Nutrition, University of Seville*



Four members of the Board are also elected as Executive Committee, and together they represent each one of the four stakeholder categories.

The external Scientific Advisory Board is composed of renowned food and health scientists, representing a wide cross-section of scientific, educational and communication competencies, including both fundamental and social sciences. It ensures that the different geographical regions of Europe and its cultural diversity are duly represented and that gender diversity is achieved. The Scientific Advisory Board oversees the scientific direction and accuracy of EUFIC communications by reviewing its messages to ensure they are relevant, factually correct and representative of the views of the broader scientific community. Additionally, they provide independent advice on EUFIC's scientific direction, research and outreach programs.

In 2023, the composition of EUFIC's Scientific Advisory Board underwent a change. We sincerely thank Christine Williams for 8 outstanding years of knowledgeable contributions and, at times, challenging reflections that helped inform EUFIC's scientific and strategic discussions. She has been a great friend and ambassador of EUFIC and an incredible help in developing the organisation.

## SCIENTIFIC ADVISORS & ETHICS COMMITTEE



### Keren Dalyot

*Dr. Keren Dalyot is a Weizmann Institute of Science Senior Research Associate and the EIT Food Youth Mission Implementation Leader.*



### Christine Williams

*Professor of the institute for Cardiovascular and Metabolic Research and Proo Vice Chancellor of Research and Innovation, University of Reading, UK*



### Hugo De Vries

*Dr. Hugo de Vries is Research Director at INRAE, Science Directorate Food and Bioecenomy, and President of the European Federation of Food Science and Technology (EFFoST)*



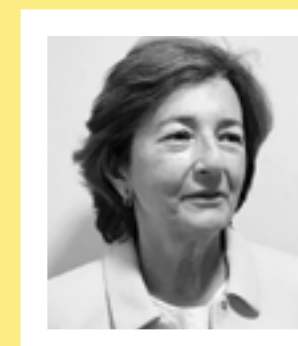
### Alexander Gerber

*Professor Alexander Gerber is a Full Professor and Programme Chair of Science Communication at Germany's international Rhine-Waal University and Research Director at the extramural Institute for Science and Innovation Communication (inscico).*



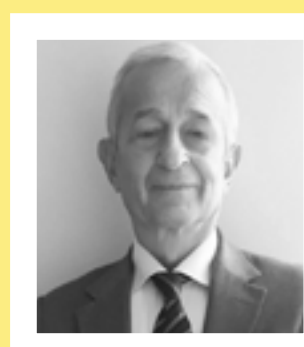
### Michael Siegrist

*Professor for Consumer Behavior at the institute for Environmental Decisions (IED), ETH Zurich, Switzerland*



### Ana M. Troncoso Gonzalez

*Professor in Food Science and Nutrition, Department of Nutrition, Food Science, Toxicology and Legal Medicine, University of Sevilla, Spain. Former Chief Executive Officer of the Spanish Food Safety and Nutrition Agency (Agencia Española de Seguridad Alimentaria)*



### Sandro Dernini

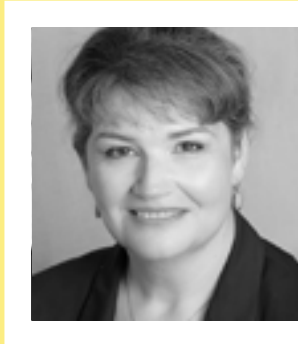
*Dr. Sandro Dernini is Secretary General of the International Foundation of Mediterranean Diet (IFMeD)*



### Alan Reilly

*Chairman of the EUFIC Scientific Advisory Board, Adjunct Professor, Institute of Food and Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Population Science, School of Veterinary Medicine Science Centre, University College Dublin*

## ETHICS COMMITTEE



**Siân Astley**

*Secretary General, EuroFIR, Belgium*



**Giovanni Sogari**

*Assistant Professor in Consumer Behaviour,  
University of Parma, Italy*

The EUFIC Ethics Committee, established in 2023, aims to ensure rigorous ethical and scientific standards in the research conducted at EUFIC.

When EUFIC undertakes research involving human participants, the ethical considerations and data management, including the necessary procedures (e.g., informed consent, anonymising data), are formally assessed. The EUFIC Ethics Committee, comprised of two independent research and ethics experts, manages this assessment



# MEMBERSHIP IN 2023

● associate members    ● full members

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|  |  |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |  |
|  |  |  | <p>We would like to express our thanks to all members of EUFIC for their support. Their assistance has allowed us to stay at the forefront of our field and effectively convey evidence-based information about food consumers throughout Europe in an actionable and appealing approach.</p> |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |

**7.**

# **Testimonials from EUFIC Members**



“

*“The EUFIC mission fits perfectly well with Cargill’s purpose and behaviours. In particular, we value the EUFIC approach of working together with other organisations and institutions to share experiences, learn from each other and enhance efforts to promote sound science and clear messages to facilitate healthier and more sustainable diets. We also share a passion for innovation. EUFIC is always at the forefront of communication techniques and likes to experiment with new things. As an organisation, we also admire their capacity to remain relevant, adapt and work in an agile manner. All this makes EUFIC a fantastic source of reliable and instructive scientific material which we share within our organisation and are very proud to also refer to in our external communication.*

**Marta Baffigo**

*Director, R&D Scientific and Regulatory Affairs and FSQR Regional Regulatory Lead EMEA, Cargill*



“

*“EUFIC’s emphasis on collaboration and partnership underscores its mission to empower individuals and communities to make healthier choices. Their commitment to clarity and transparency is evidenced in the content, helping to navigate the complex landscape of nutrition in a world where misinformation about food and health abounds. By working with experts, the team ensures resources are informative, relevant and impactful, and EUFIC’s willingness to engage in open discussion fosters a collaborative environment, leading to informed decision-making. Partnering with EUFIC has cultivated a culture of dialogue and learning, ultimately benefitting EuroFIR and the stakeholders of both organisations.”*

**Siân Astley**

*Secretary General  
EuroFIR*

“

*“Our long-standing collaboration with EUFIC holds great significance for us at Nestlé. Together, we share a common belief in empowering individuals. When people have access to accurate, science-based information on nutrition and health, they are empowered to make informed choices about their food. As a food company, we place a high priority on transparent communication with our consumers. We strive to provide clear and easily understandable information, whether it’s on our packaging or websites. EUFIC is a highly regarded organisation that helps to educate a broad audience of consumers and policymakers on the different approaches and understanding towards food, sustainable and healthy diets, the role of food safety, as well as many other key scientific and societal topics.”*

**Emmy Meerveld**

*Nutrition, Health & Wellness Manager  
Nestlé*



8.

# Our finances



INCOME IN 2023 (€)

|                                          |             |
|------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Membership                               | 743,725     |
| Operating Grant                          | 532,629     |
| Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects | 917,381     |
| EIT Food projects                        | 70,647      |
| Erasmus+                                 | 54,659      |
| Restructure                              | 3,836       |
| Other                                    | 57,482      |
| Total                                    | + 2,380,359 |

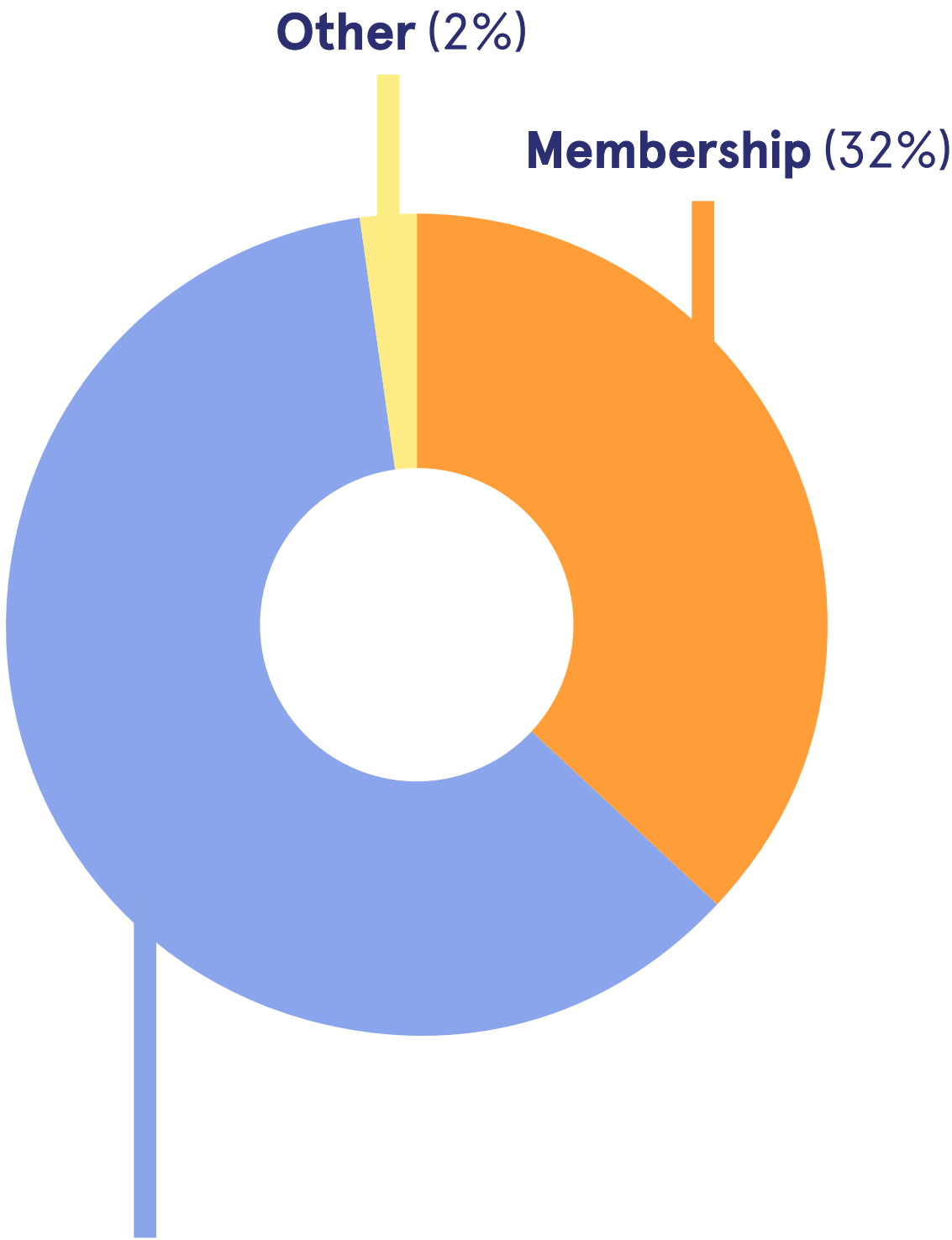
EXPENSES IN 2023 (€)

|                                                     |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Staff costs                                         | 1,661,156  |
| Administrative charges                              | 129,254    |
| All members projects                                | 36,609     |
| Food & health communication & other core activities | 63,619     |
| Horizon 2020 and Horizon projects costs             | 160,934    |
| EIT Food projects costs                             | 13,235     |
| Erasmus+                                            | 5,070      |
| Operating grant costs                               | 209,540    |
| Total                                               | -2,279,417 |

FINAL RESULT 2023 (€)

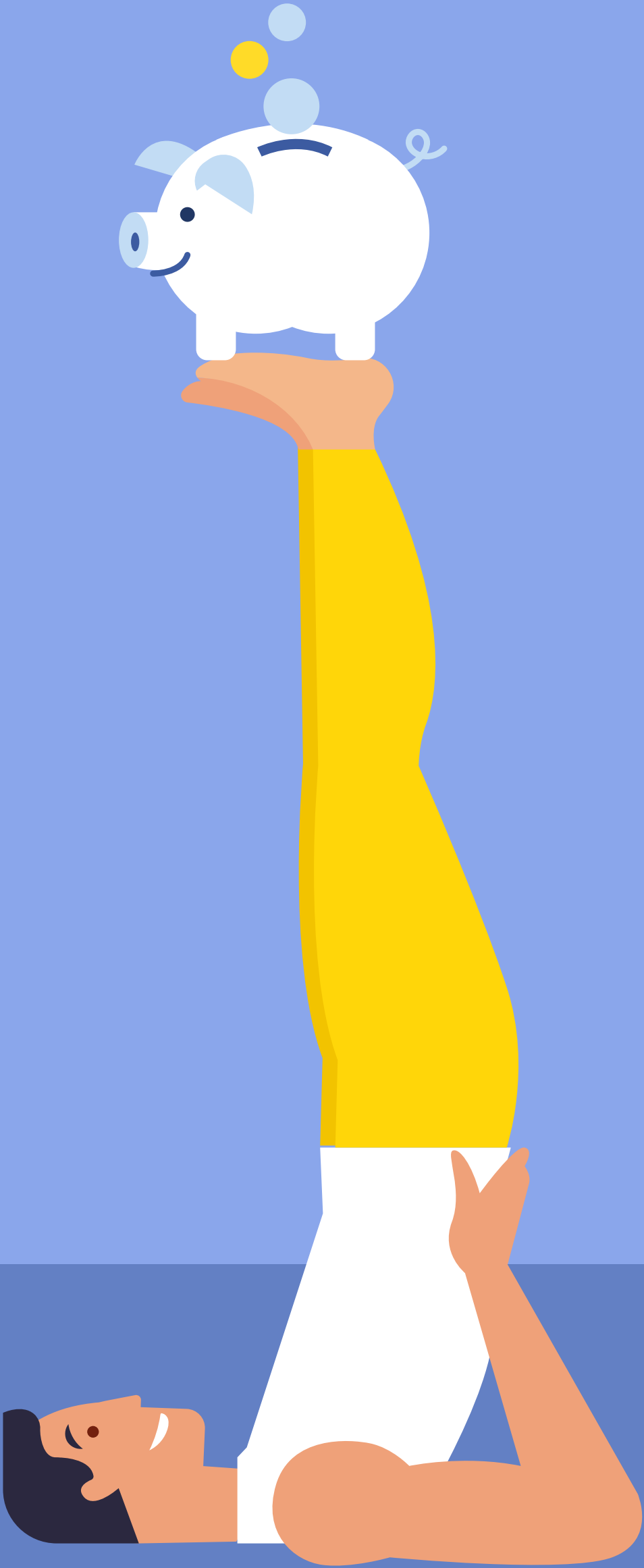
|          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| Income   | 2,380,359 |
| Expenses | 2,279,417 |
| Total    | +100,942  |

% OF INCOME



Public sources (66%)

- Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects (41%)
- EIT Food projects (3%)
- Operating Grant (22%)





**Thanks!**

