



GUIDELINES FOR WORKSHOP IMPLEMENTATION



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THESE GUIDELINES HAS BEEEN WRITTEN BY:



ACUFADE is a regional NGO from Tenerife (Spain). Its mission is to provide care and to promote active and healthy lifestyle for seniors, especially for those without resources and/or with physical disabilities. A special focus of its work is dedicated to people suffering from different dementias and to their caregivers.

Contact: proyectosinternacionales@acufade.org

Website: <https://www.acufade.org/>



Anton Trstenjak Institute (IAT), is a Slovenian expert, research and end-user NGO. The head office is in Ljubljana, but its activities are widespread all over Slovenia. The focus is on developing and carrying out social programmes for quality ageing and good relations for all ages.

Contact: info@iat.si

Website: <https://www.inst-antonatrstenjaka.si/eng/institut.asp>



ISRAA is a public health service providers for older adults based in Treviso, Italy. Its goal is to support older adults maintaining the highest level of independence by providing care and tools of prevention. It manages 4 nursing homes and provides at home services to both older adults and family members of people with dementia and Alzheimer's.

Contact: contarin.nicola@israa.it

Website: <https://www.fabbricaeuropa.eu/>



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
CURRICULUM.....	2
Healthy Food and Nutrition as an Element to Prevent Dependencies and Diseases	3
The Importance of Emotional Awareness in Order to Change Eating Habits.....	12
Healthy Food and Nutrition as an Element to Support More Sustainable and Eco-Friendly Life.....	19
WORKSHOP.....	25
CONCLUSION.....	36
SOURCES.....	37
ANNEXES - RESEARCH.....	39



INTRODUCTION

Providing older people with the tools to conduct a **healthy** and **sustainable lifestyle** is the main objective of the Convida+, a small-scale Erasmus+ project that was designed and developed by three partners: ACUFADE (Asociación de Cuidadoras, Familiares y Amistades de Personas con Dependencia, Alzheimer y otras Demencias) from Spain, IAT (Institut Antona Trstenjaka za gerontologijo) from Slovenia and ISRAA (Istituto per Servizi di Ricovero e Assistenza agli Anziani) from Italy, with a budget of 60.000€.

The project's main aim was to provide people over 65 with clear, simple and practical solutions that can help them consider food from **other perspectives**, in order to reflect on healthier eating and consuming habits. In doing so, the project combined three interrelated aspects: nutritional advice, mindfulness as a tool to change habits and eco-sustainable practices.

The contents were created by the partners by bringing together their expertise to design a curriculum that could be adapted to every local context. The main point of strength of the Convida+ project was indeed the flexibility applied by the partners in providing contents and solutions that could be adapted or that could fit diverse needs, without altering the basic concepts.

This guidebook provides an insight on the project's development by presenting the contents of the learning curriculum created by Convida+ partnership, helping the reader understand the bond between healthy eating, mindfulness and eco-friendly practices.

It also acts as a guide in case the reader is interested in replicating the workshops and its contents, explaining in detail how partners implemented the workshops and providing information on costs, time and difficulty of the activities suggested.

In the annexes it is possible to consult and learn more on the state of the art on projects related to older adults and eating habits, by reading the results of the Convida+ research on existing projects and good practices.

CURRICULUM

Contents and Structure

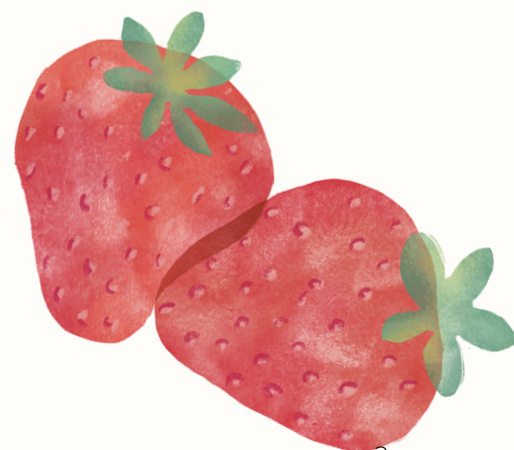
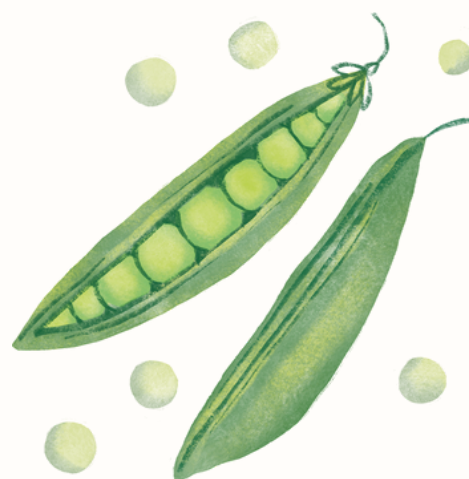
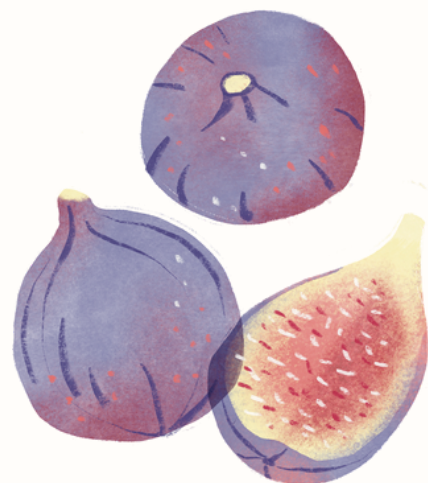
Older population and healthy eating habits are two interrelated topics, that have been the objects of various projects worldwide, aimed at sensitising older adults on the **benefits of a healthy diet** in avoiding the insurgence of chronic diseases and in favouring the process of active ageing.

Researching the existing projects has been a fundamental step in the development of the contents of Convida+, since the results underlined two fundamental aspects: there were no projects that linked the topic of healthy eating and lifestyle with the ones of environment and sustainability and proposed mindfulness as a tool to change eating habits. Combining this **holistic aspect** is innovative and brings a new perspective to the nutrition habits among seniors.

This awareness acted as a groundwork to elaborate the curriculum, which partners developed by using their specific competences, resulting in a 3-parts document:

- *Healthy food and nutrition as an element to prevent dependencies and diseases, by Acufade.*
- *The importance of emotional awareness (mindfulness) for changing eating habits, by ISRAA.*
- *Healthy food and nutrition as an element to support a more sustainable and eco-friendly life, by IAT.*

The contents in the following pages were developed by partners. Each section will provide **theoretical background** and suggest **exercises** to be implemented during the workshops, in order to better engage participants and to easily transfer knowledge and notions.



Healthy Food and Nutrition as an Element to Prevent Dependencies and Diseases

"The doctor of the future will no longer treat the human frame with drugs, but rather will cure and prevent disease with nutrition." - Thomas Edison, Inventor and businessman (1847 - 1931)

INTRODUCTION

Ageing is a natural process that involves changes in different systems of the human body. These changes can lead to a decrease in the quality of life, increasing the vulnerability of older people to chronic and degenerative diseases. One of the most powerful tools to prevent diseases in the older population is healthy eating.

According to a study by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2018), a healthy diet can prevent up to a third of deaths worldwide and is essential for the maintenance of health and well-being at all ages. Therefore, it is important to highlight that a healthy diet is associated with a reduction in the incidence of chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, arterial hypertension, among others (Djousse et al., 2011; Gopinath et al., 2014).

HEALTHY FOOD IN THEORY....

The importance of healthy eating for older people

Healthy eating refers to a balanced diet that includes all the nutrients necessary to maintain good health and prevent disease. A **balanced diet** for older people is associated with a **longer life expectancy**, a better nutritional status, a **decrease** in the appearance of **chronic** and **degenerative diseases**, and an improvement in the quality of life.

According to a study from Harvard University (2018), a healthy and balanced diet can reduce the risk of mortality and improve the quality of life. Likewise, another study carried out in Spain (2015) found that older people who followed a Mediterranean diet, rich in fruits, vegetables, fish, olive oil and legumes, had a lower incidence of chronic diseases.

There are various strategies to promote healthy eating within the older population. One of them is **nutritional education**, which involves teaching older people about the benefits of healthy eating and how to implement it in their daily lives. According to a study conducted in Australia (2017), nutrition education is effective in improving nutrient intake and reducing the incidence of chronic diseases. In addition, it has been shown that participation in healthy eating programs, such as those based on the Mediterranean diet, improves quality of life and reduces mortality among older people (Kokkinos et al., 2014).

Nutritional recommendations for older people

The **Mediterranean diet**, characterized by a high consumption of **fruits, vegetables, fish** and **olive oil**, has been associated with a reduction in the incidence of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer. In addition, the consumption of foods rich in antioxidants, vitamins and minerals can help prevent the appearance of neurodegenerative diseases. (Rodríguez-Monforte M et al 2013) (Limón-Miranda S et al, 2018) Additionally, a Mediterranean diet may also improve the quality of life of older people and reduce the risk of disability and dependency (Gopinath et al., 2015).

Older people have **different nutritional needs** due to the physiological changes that occur with ageing. The intake of proteins, vitamins and minerals is especially important to prevent sarcopenia, loss of muscle mass and osteoporosis (Bauer et al., 2013). Besides this, the consumption of fibre and fluids is crucial to prevent constipation, a common condition in the older population (Kubota et al., 2015).

Importance of maintaining a healthy weight among older population

Maintaining a healthy weight is essential to prevent chronic diseases. A study from 2015 found that obesity of older people increases the risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes (Ho et al., 2015).

On the other hand, **malnutrition** is also a common problem among older people, which can lead to loss of muscle mass, weakness, and frailty (Visvanathan et al., 2015). Therefore, it is important to maintain a healthy and adequate weight to prevent all these conditions.

Importance of the involvement of public institutions

Healthy eating is essential for maintaining good health throughout life. However, in the case of older people, this becomes even more important, since it can prevent chronic diseases and improve the quality of life. In this theoretical framework, the importance of the involvement of public entities in the nutrition of older people and the impact that this has on their health will be discussed.

Public institutions have a fundamental role in promoting healthy eating among older people. This includes the implementation of **public policies** that promote access to nutritious and quality food, as well as the creation of **education and awareness programs** on the importance of healthy eating for older people. In addition, it is important that these institutions collaborate with civil society organizations and the private sector to improve the availability and accessibility of healthy foods for this population (WHO, 2018).

Impact of adequate nutrition on the health of older people

An adequate diet can have a positive impact on the health of an older person. Eating **nutrient-dense foods** like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein can help prevent chronic diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, and cardiovascular disease. Likewise, an adequate diet can improve cognitive function, reduce the risk of depression, and improve the quality of life of older adults.

HEALTHY FOOD IN PRACTICE....

EXERCISE 1

COOKING WORKSHOP

Cost: 🍎 🍎 🍎

Time Needed: 2 hours

Complexity: 🍎 🍎 🍎

Organizing a cooking workshop is an ideal opportunity to put the theoretical aspect of this part of the curriculum into practice. With the help of a professional cook or a nutritionist, participants can learn how to recreate traditional dishes in a healthy and balanced way. Moreover, this could be an opportunity to make participants aware of the importance of reducing food waste, thus reducing environmental damage and spending of raw materials.

If possible, it is recommended to explore recipes that could be made with parts of the ingredients that are usually wasted (like broccoli's stem, overripe fruits) or use more healthy ingredients such as replacing butter with virgin olive oil, changing refined flour for whole wheat flour, or reducing the consumption of red meat and increasing the consumption of legumes.



EXERCISE 2

DESIGN YOUR OWN MENU

Cost: 

Time Needed: 45 minutes

Complexity:  

In this activity participants learn how to plan a healthy menu and combine nutrients and foods using the Mediterranean diet as a base. At the end of the activity participants should be able to plan their own weekly menu by using following eating patterns:

- Use virgin olive oil as the main addition of fat.
- Consume lots of foods of plant origin: fruits, vegetables, legumes, mushrooms and nuts.
- Bread and foods from cereals (pasta, rice and especially their integral products) should be part of the daily diet (in limited quantity).
- Consume fish in abundance, giving special importance to oily fish rich in omega 3, together with a moderate consumption of eggs.
- Fresh fruit should be a usual dessert.
- Avoid processed products.
- Little processed, fresh and seasonal foods are the most appropriate.
- Consume daily dairy products, mainly yogurt and cheese.
- Red meat consumption should be limited and processed meats in even small quantities.

To design your own menu, we have created a simple template with basic indications of the frequency for consuming different types of food.

Design your own menu

		FREQUENCY OF CONSUMPTION
MONDAY		legumes 3 or 4 times a week
TUESDAY		1-4 week egg
WEDNESDAY		Vegetables 2-4 servings a day
THURSDAY		Whole grains 4 servings a day
FRIDAY		Milk and derivatives 2-4 servings a day
SATURDAY		Meat 2-4 servings a week
SUNDAY		Fish: 2 servings a week
		Prioritize virgin olive oil as the main fat
		Fruit: 3 servings times a day

EXERCISE 3

HOW TO INTERPRET THE LABELLING

Cost: 🍏

Time Needed: 1 or 2 hours

Complexity: 🍏 🍏

The aim of this activity is to provide participants with tools to learn how to read food labels. This activity could be implemented with the support of a professional or with the use of scanning labels apps, available in partner and other countries in their respective languages and for free. Most applications are adapted to be used in a particular country, covering the products available there.

BASIC HINTS TO INTERPRET THE LABELLING

READ THE INGREDIENT LIST

Start by checking the ingredients list. Ingredients are listed in descending order of their quantity in the product, with the main ingredient first. Look for products with a **short ingredient list**. Avoid foods with a long list of chemical additives and preservatives.

LOOK AT PORTION SIZES

Understand the portion sizes indicated on the label. This will help you properly calculate the number of calories and nutrients you are consuming. Nutritional information is often based on a specific portion, so you should adjust it according to how much you plan to eat.

AVOID SUGAR

Limit products that contain more than 5 grams of simple sugars (such as sucrose, glucose, fructose) per 100 grams. Excess simple sugars can contribute to obesity and health problems such as type 2 diabetes.

EVALUATE FAT, SUGAR AND SODIUM CONTENT

Pay attention to the amount of total fat, saturated fat, sugars and sodium in the product. Choose foods with **low or moderate amounts** of these components, since too much of them can have negative health effects, such as heart disease and obesity.

HEALTHY FOOD IN PRACTICE....

A small exercise: can you spot the differences between these two labels?



APP TO READ THE LABELS



MYREALFOOD - the app designed by Carlos Rios (dietitian-nutritionist) and his team
<https://myrealfood.app/>



VES KAJ JES - Slovenian Consumers' Association started a website and application which allow users to check the label of products with a quick scan.
<https://veskajjes.si/49-semafor>



YUCA - this app in addition to being able to scan food products, also allows you to scan cosmetic products.
<https://yuka.io/es/>

EXERCISE 4 FOOD MANIFESTO

Cost: 🍎

Time Needed: 1 hour

Complexity: 🍎

The 2022 European Food Summit in Slovenia ended with the signing of the Common Sensitarian Food Manifesto, a document that groups together the main principles of the Convida+ project: healthy food, eating habits and eco-friendly principles.

Read together the Manifesto and use it as a groundwork for a conversation on healthier and climate friendly versions of traditional and everyday meals. Here's the full text:

THE FOOD MANIFESTO

BASIC PRINCIPLES

- THE “COMMON-SENSITARIAN” DIET is not a diet that restricts me in what I can and cannot eat. It is both a personal moral commitment and an appeal for social, economic and political change. It respects planetary boundaries and is necessary for restoring sustainable food systems with a lower negative impact on the climate and the environment.
- THE “COMMON-SENSITARIAN” DIET is a mindset that helps me to develop a positive attitude towards food and makes me aware of the moral implications of my food choices. It is a guide for informed food choices for individuals, food providers, chefs, businesses, NGOs and policy makers that will benefit the climate, the natural environment and human health.
- THE “COMMON-SENSITARIAN” DIET is respectful, responsible and inclusive. It is satisfying because it is good for my body, my soul and our planet, and it is respectful to all stakeholders in the food and beverage supply chains. It is based on a diverse foundation of natural, social and human sciences.

THE FOOD MANIFESTO

COMMON-SENSITARIAN BEHAVIORAL PRINCIPLES

- Food is good for our planet.
- I eat a diet with a smaller environmental footprint, so foods originating from plants make up the majority of my diet.
- I eat less foods of animal origin, especially less processed meat and red meat.
- I include organically produced foods in my meals as much as possible.
- I actively contribute to reducing food waste.
- I buy food from local producers.
- I avoid unnecessary and environmentally unfriendly food and beverage packaging.
- Food is respectful and responsible towards all people.
- I respect people in food and beverage supply chains (food growers, food industry employees, caterers and retail industry employees).
- I am committed to making quality food more accessible to all members of society.
- I respect the dietary choices of people who think differently, the dietary habits of different cultures and culinary heritage.
- I advocate for solutions that encourage local organic produce and small producers.
- I have a responsible attitude toward drinking alcohol.
- Food is good for my well-being.
- I look forward to and enjoy eating, and take the time to do so.
- I eat regularly, not too much and not too little, but I choose food of better quality.
- I see meals as an opportunity for genuine socializing, while creating a kinder and more accepting relationship with myself.
- My “common-sensitarian” eating habits allow for occasional dietary indulgences.
- Food is good for my body.

THE FOOD MANIFESTO

I ENJOY MORE:



Varied and wholesome seasonal food, with a predominance of plant-based foods.

Vegetables (including herbs, spices, microgreens), legumes, wholegrains, mushrooms, nuts and fruit.



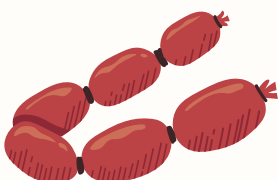
Water, mineral water and teas (fruit, herbal and green).

I EAT LESS:



Excessively salty and sweet foods, fried foods and drinks with added sugar.

Ultra-processed foods containing unnatural preservatives, flavour enhancers, saturated fat and cholesterol.



Processed meat products and red meat.

The Importance of Emotional Awareness in Order to Change Eating Habits

"To me, food is as much about the moment, the occasion, the location and the company as it is about the taste."- Heston Blumenthal, British celebrity chef

INTRODUCTION

Over the last two centuries, the relationship between humans and food has changed radically, thanks in part to easier access to greater quantities and quality of food.

This change has also produced a shift in the way we think about food. A study by Miele et al. (2002), proposes a categorisation along these lines, distinguishing between:

- Food as **fuel**.
- Food as **pleasure**.

The study shows how the culture related to food differs profoundly depending on the target population. In Western societies, food is increasingly seen as fuel, to be consumed quickly.

In the Mediterranean area, however, the conception of food is linked to the idea of **pleasure, sharing and sociality** (it is no coincidence that the Slow Food movement developed in Italy).

Miele et al.'s distinction is not necessarily dichotomous. Food is certainly a fuel for our bodies and a correct intake of nutrients allows us to avoid tiredness, irritability and fatigue, but food is also pleasure and this is also confirmed to us from a neurobiological and evolutionary point of view: the brain is programmed to experience pleasure when experiencing something that is useful for survival.

Developed as a mechanism for subsistence in the days of hunter-gatherer societies, in the contemporary times its presence is not always positive, which is particularly evident when food becomes the only means to relieve stress, combat boredom or as the only way to experience pleasurable feelings.

In support of this issue related to the adaptation of the **reward mechanism**, a study by Blumenthal and Gold (2010) showed how some of the neurobiological pathways involved in food consumption are the same as those implicated in drug abuse: dopaminergic reward pathways are responsible not only for the motivation to consume a food (or substance) but also for the sensation of pleasure produced by the intake (Dager, 2010). For this reason, addiction-related behaviours act not only in the immediate (the moment of taking the substance/food) - leading to the desired pleasure effect - but also at the moment when the substance is not taken, as the organism would otherwise fail to experience pleasurable feelings (Koob, 2009).

Eating without experiencing any pleasure can become frustrating and lead to a lack of motivation to eat, forcing oneself into exhausting diets. On the other hand, if food becomes the only source of pleasure and satisfaction, one runs the risk of becoming over-indulgent with oneself and exaggerating food quantities.

It is good to have the ability to strike the right balance between food as fuel and food as pleasure: to recognise the fact that it is important and necessary to consume a certain amount of nutrients, but also to feel satisfaction in eating healthy and wholesome food (Dennet, 2022).

It is not easy, but if one is aware of the validity of this balance, changing one's eating habits will become easier.

MINDFULNESS IN THEORY...

A **habit** is a learned and automatic mechanism that the brain puts in place to maximise efficiency by minimising the expenditure of energy. Energy that would be required in case of new actions for which one does not already have a procedure to follow (Amaya et al., 2018).

Duhigg (2013) identifies 3 phases in a habit: **signal** (it is a switch that tells the brain to go into automatic mode and which habit to use), **routine** (can be physical, emotional or mental), **gratification** (based on this, the brain decides whether a certain routine is worth memorising).

One is not always aware of one's habits nor of the needs they would satisfy and that is why it is necessary to become aware of the three phases identified by Duhigg and to work on the signal response. When one identifies the stimuli - and, therefore, becomes aware of what activates the signal-routine-gratification process - one can choose whether to continue in this habit or modify it to bring about a change in behaviour.

One method used by psychology to deal with and change habits is **mindfulness**, which focuses on awareness, cultivated by paying attention to every facet of the present moment, to be used in a non-judgmental, non-active manner and as openly as possible (Kabat-Zinn, 2015). Focusing attention in this way allows a person to be aware of her/his actions, preventing the mind from being driven on 'autopilot' while occupied by worries or other distractions. In the case of changing habits, this approach is crucial because "Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom" (Victor Frankl).

This definition helps to add a fourth phase in Duhigg's model: between the signal-stimulus and the routine-behaviour lies the intention, i.e., the willingness to pay attention to what arouses the stimulus in the individual, to be aware of possible response patterns and to decide on the behaviour to be enacted.

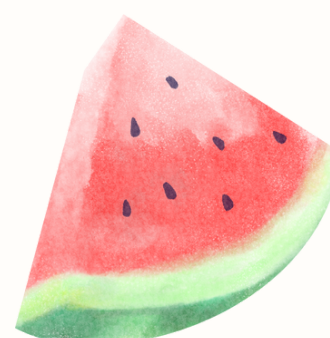
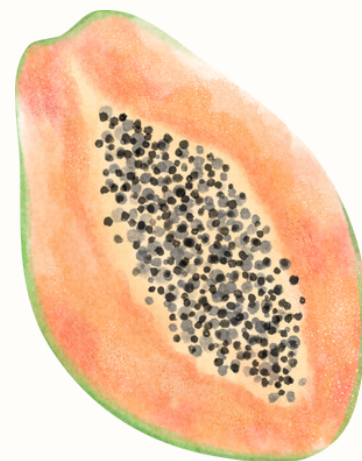
In the same way, one can become mindful (i.e., apply mindfulness) in eating.

The idea can be represented by means of the **mindful plate**: in an ideal plate, attitudes and intentions are placed to be pursued during one's eating. These are divided as follows:

- **OBSERVE:** focus on your body, paying attention to the sensations you feel (sense of satiety, stress...).
- **TASTE:** the focus shifts to the characteristics of the food eaten, from the aroma to the flavour, from the texture to the colour, but also to where it came from and the route it took to arrive on your table. Conceiving of food in this way allows you to have a broader view of what you are eating and to appreciate it more.
- **LIVE IN THE MOMENT:** when eating, a person should do only that, without any distraction or interruption, to be enveloped in the present experience. So, switch off the television, turn off the telephone and devote yourself to your meal.
- **DO NOT JUDGE YOURSELF,** be mindful about the negative thoughts, the rules everyone imposes on themselves or the guilt that arises in their minds. Accept them in a compassionate way, without letting them undermine your personal experience.

Following each of these eating behaviours can be helpful in achieving mindfulness when eating, to make eating no longer an automatic habit or routine but a moment of recollection and meditation (see Exercise 2).

Derived from mindfulness, **Mindful Eating** is a collection of practices designed to bring about changes in eating habits and allow proper intake of necessary nutrients (Monroe, 2015).



The proposed practices are:

EAT 3 SMALLER MEALS AND

3 SNACKS A DAY: in this way, you can get the right amount of nutrients and avoid hunger pangs. The ideal, therefore, would be to eat every 2-3 hours.

CHOOSE UNPROCESSED FOOD:

this is useful for keeping blood glucose levels under control. In fact, the industrial diet does not consider the need for sugar in the blood, thus affecting the quality of life: low energy, irritable mood, poor concentration, are just some of the consequences of incorrect sugar intake. Choosing organic and seasonal food helps keep glucose levels under control leading to more energy, less desire to eat outside mealtimes, better sleep and more concentration.

MAKE MEALS AND SNACKS

AS COMPLEX AS POSSIBLE:

creating complex meals is necessary to better integrate the 3 main food groups (carbohydrates, proteins and fats) and allows you to take in a wide variety of nutrients and maintain balanced blood sugar levels. To make meals more complex, simply combine foods from different food groups; they do not require too much time to prepare, just a little planning and organisation.

HAVE BREAKFAST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER WAKING UP:

breakfast - in terms of health and well-being - is the main meal of the day. When you choose to eat a rich breakfast shortly after waking up, your body uses the energy assimilated to get the day off to a good start because it sets a positive tone for the rest of the day.

MAKING FRIEND WITH FAT:

fat has often been associated with chronic diseases typical of Western society, leading to the belief that it is something to be avoided at all costs. As with proteins and carbohydrates, it is essential to incorporate a wide range of fats into one's diet as a lack of or incorrect intake of them could lead to health problems. The fats that need to be supplemented the most are unsaturated and polyunsaturated fats (contained, for example, in fish and olives), followed to a lesser extent by saturated fats (contained in foods such as sweets, cheese and red meat).

PLAN YOUR MEALS IN

ADVANCE: planning in advance allows you to make conscious and careful choices about what you are going to eat during the day, without relying on chance (or the food in the fridge). You can use a diary in which you write down the meal and the ingredients needed to prepare it, to avoid unnecessary food waste and aim for greater sustainability.

DRINK PLENTY OF WATER:

water is essential to transport nutrients and oxygen to the cells, to regulate temperature and to help dispose of waste products. In terms of hydration, water can hardly be beaten, as other elements such as tea or coffee, fizzy drinks or alcohol tend to dehydrate. However, there is no need to avoid these beverages but simply to reduce their consumption and be aware of one's drinking habits. A good intake of water allows more energy, better concentration and, above all, decreases perceived hunger.

INCLUDE COLOUR AND VARIETY IN YOUR DIET:

if you include a wide variety of foods of different colours in your diet, you can best supplement the nutrients you need, as well as make every meal a feast for the eyes and mouth. This prevents meals from becoming something boring and habit-forming, which could lead to the search for desserts and snacks outside mealtimes.

ALLOW YOURSELF THE FOOD YOU LOVE, IN MODERATION:

this is the simplest yet most fundamental principle of mindful eating. A healthy diet must not lead to restriction or deprivation but, instead, must consider the pleasure that comes from eating. Eating should not become a source of frustration but a way of feeling good about oneself.

MINDFULNESS IN PRACTICE...

Mindfulness distinguishes between **formal** and **informal** practices. The first are those which begin and end, there are clear instructions to follow, and its course is well defined. Informal practices are all daily activities (of any kind and duration) that are transformed into moments of awareness. The first two exercises are formal practices of mindfulness: the first one helps to take awareness off the autopilot and the difficulty of staying focused on the present experience, the second is useful to learn how to involve the 5 senses in tasting a food. The texts should be read in a **calm and relaxed tone** to allow participants to focus only on the words and sensations they are experiencing. It is appropriate to identify the beginning and the end of the exercises with a distinctive sound (a gong or a bell chime) to allow the participants to identify the end of the exercise. Meditation techniques, should be performed while sitting on the ground on cushions or in a chair in a quiet and distraction-free environment. After each exercise, ask the participants for feedback and discuss their feelings, thoughts and ideas.

EXERCISE 1 - RECOGNISING THE UNSTABLE MIND (DO NOTHING)

Cost: 🍎

Time Needed: 5 minutes

Complexity: 🍎 🍎

The exercise is guided by the mentor, who is speaking slowly and observing the participants to make sure they understand and follow the instructions properly.

- Sit comfortably and keep your back straight.
- After sitting comfortably, relax, keeping your eyes open if possible and experiencing the present moment. Feel the weight of your body resting on the chair and the floor. Be aware of the space around you. Notice how easy it is to experience panoramic vision and how you naturally become aware of sounds and other sensory stimuli - for example the smell of food coming from the window next door or the wind gently caressing your cheeks. This practice is simple: you allow yourself to be there, experiencing what happens while you sit and do nothing. You decide to sit and do nothing.
- Very quickly you will find yourself thinking about something, even though you have decided not to do anything. When you realise that you are thinking, simply bring your attention back to being present without doing anything. Again, before you know it, you will be carried away by some thought. And again, when you realise it, return your attention to being present without doing anything.

EXERCISE 2 EATING AWARE

Cost: 🍎

Time Needed: 20 minutes

Complexity: 🍎 🍎

For the development of this exercise, we used raisins, given its particular consistency and texture, but other foods can be used, such as cherries, strawberries or nuts. The important thing is that they allow you to dwell on texture, consistency and flavour. Before carrying out the activity it is important to inquire if any of the participants does not eat the proposed food and find an alternative.

Mentor reads aloud and slowly the following instructions:

We are now going to do a practice that can help us switch off our autopilot.

So now, I invite you to try a short exercise to see what it is like when we bring our full awareness to a simple everyday experience of eating.

Take a raisin in the palm of your hand and imagine that you have never seen anything like it before. You pick it up and look at it closely, with your full attention.

Notice the texture, the colour, the shape, the folds and hollows, the light shining on it. Take the time to really see it and explore it with your eyes.

If your mind wanders to other thoughts, other places, simply notice where it has gone and gently bring your attention back to the raisin.

Now explore what it feels like to feel it, try pressing it with your fingers, maybe even bring it to your ears, see if it makes a sound.

And bring it to your nose, see if it smells and notice if you have any reaction to the smell, maybe in your mouth, salivation increases.

And now bring the object to your lips, notice how your hand know exactly where to go. Perhaps running it along your lips, noticing the reaction, perhaps saliva.

And when you are ready, put it in your mouth, not chewing it yet.

Notice the sensations in your mouth, perhaps exploring it with your tongue.

Finally, get ready to chew it, bring it to the right place, bite it, notice the taste and texture in your mouth.

While continuing to chew, pay close attention to the taste of the object.

And when you feel ready to swallow, notice your intention to swallow, and there actually swallow the raisin, seeing if you can follow it as it descends to your stomach. Notice other sensations.

How do you feel after the exercise?

Now, take the other available object (fruit, nuts or...) and repeat the exercise, slowly exploring this new object with each of your senses.

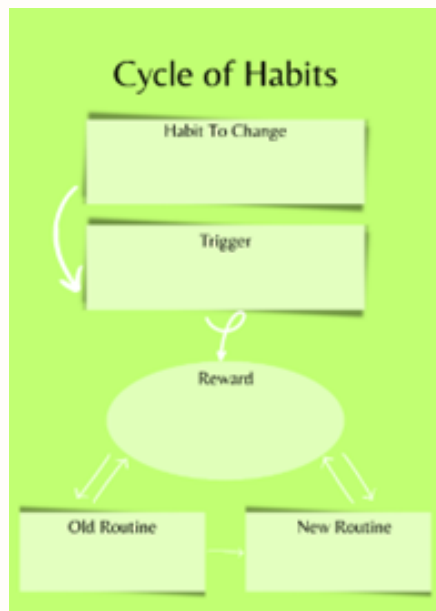
EXERCISE 3

RECOGNISING CYCLE OF HABITS

Cost: 🍎

Time Needed: 5 minutes

Complexity: 🍎



This exercise can be useful to give an example of how one's habits work (Duhigg cycle): the participant identifies a habit that he/she would like to change (sets an intention), identifying what is the trigger that activates it and the gratification that reinforces it. Once these are identified, the old routine used is identified and a new one is proposed.

Do you want to know more about mindfulness and mindful eating?
Check these videos:



TIPS MINDFUL EATING (ENG)

Visual explanation of some of the 6 proposed mindful eating practices



MINDFULNESS IN EATING (ENG)

Rapid explanation about the importance of mindfulness in eating

Healthy Food and Nutrition as an Element to Support More Sustainable and Eco-Friendly Life

"The climate emergency demands action from all of us. We need to get to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and everyone has a role to play"

Niklas Hagelberg, UNEP's Climate Change Coordinator

"The link between healthy people, healthy societies and a healthy planet puts sustainable food systems at the heart of the European Green Deal, the EU's sustainable and inclusive growth strategy. It is designed to boost the economy, improve people's health and quality of life, and care for nature."

From EU Green Deal

INTRODUCTION

Why should we care?

"...Older people may be physically, financially, and emotionally less resilient to the effects of climate change. At the same time baby boomers currently have the highest carbon footprint of any other age group. While older people are concerned about climate change, they do not feel they will be directly affected. Nor do they feel they can personally take action to stop it. Older people want to do their bit to tackle climate change and reduce their carbon emissions but there is uncertainty over which actions are best to take".

Older People and Climate Change: The Case for Better Engagement

The path to a sustainable, climate-neutral society is not possible **without a change in the way we eat**. Food is more than what we eat. It is one of the basic components of our societies and cultures, of our world. But this world has been increasingly affected by the consequences of climate change, which are manifesting in higher temperatures, changed rainfall patterns and more frequent and severe extreme weather events such as storms, droughts and floods.

Good food keeps us healthy and helps us reach our potential. But the way we produce, sell and consume food is harming our environment. This must change, on a global and personal level. Food needs to be grown and processed, transported, distributed, prepared, consumed. Each of these steps creates greenhouse gasses that contribute to climate change.

About third of all human-caused greenhouse **gas emissions** is linked to **agriculture and land use**: methane from cattle's (cow, sheep) digestive process, nitrous oxide from fertilizers used for crop production, carbon dioxide from cutting down forests for the expansion of farmland, other agricultural emissions from manure, rice cultivation, burning of crop residues, and the use of fuel on farms. Many countries, institutions and companies have committed to reduce their emissions while the EU has even set the objective of being "climate neutral" by 2050.

Eating, traveling, heating our homes... all contribute to the emission of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere. Nevertheless, the latest survey by the European Consumer Organisation shows that two thirds of European consumers are willing to change their eating habits for environmental reasons.

Climate-friendly food is:

- Mostly vegetarian (plant-based foods)
- Produced in a sustainable - organic or biodynamic way.
- Produced locally and purchased as directly as possible from local or fair-trade producers.
- Seasonal
- Processed as little as possible.
- Packaged as little as possible.
- Which does not end up in the waste.

For a successful transition to a climate-neutral society, it is important to follow these guidelines for more climate-friendly meals as much as possible.

SUSTAINABLE EATING IN THEORY...


What can be done on the global level?

A climate-friendly eating means rethinking the entire food system. Shifting people to a new diet that is healthier for both the planet and for our bodies requires changes in the way food is grown, sold and eaten. The standard diet – industrially produced with plenty of meat and dairy – is already known to be bad for people's health, but it could also be bad for the environment.

Animal-based foods, especially red meat, dairy, and farmed shrimp, have highest greenhouse gas emissions.

Plant-based foods, such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains, beans, peas, nuts, and lentils – generally use less energy, land, and water, and have lower greenhouse gas effects.

But animal products remain an important source of food security, nutrition, and livelihoods for large numbers of rural populations around the world. Improved feeding techniques can reduce methane generated during cattle's digestion.



Smaller herd sizes, with fewer, more productive animals can also help. And better agricultural practices, such as improved manure and fertilizer management, rotational maintenance of healthy soil to store carbon can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

At the same time, reducing food waste is crucial. Almost 17% of all food available to consumers worldwide – goes into trash bins every year. Producing, transporting, and letting that food rot contribute more than 8 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

What can you do – on the personal level?

CUT YOUR FOOD WASTE

Try to minimize the waste. When you throw out food, you are also wasting the energy used to grow, produce, package and transport it. Only buy what you need – and use what you buy. You can save money, reduce pollution, and help preserve resources for future generations. Some of our food waste can be composted rather than end up in the bin.

EAT HEALTHIER MEALS

Limit red meat consumption, especially beef. Select fish from sustainable fishing (to avoid overfishing). Start eating a more balanced diet and reduce foods that need more natural resources, especially water.

Flexitarian diet (an example of a healthy compromise). Flexitarian is a marriage of two words: flexible and vegetarian. It is a semi-vegetarian style of eating that encourages eating less meat and more plant-based foods. Because there are no specific rules or suggestions, it is an attractive option for people who want to reduce the use of animal products.

BUY LOCAL FOOD

Transporting food around the world takes a lot of energy. Buying local food supports your local economy and lowers the carbon emitted to get that food on your table. Local and seasonal food tastes better. There are different understandings of what is local, it also depends on national and local context. In Slovenia environmental organisation Umanotera has defined local as food that is produced within a radius of 80 km. The British Consumer Organisation classifies as "local" production in an area up to 600 km away, or one day's train journey.

ZERO-KILOMETER CONCEPT

This concept first appeared in Italy. It means that the food has not traveled far or “zero kilometer” before being eaten. This approach to food not only ensures the freshness in flavour but it minimizes the environmental impacts of production as well. The movement proposes reducing the distance between producers, sales and consumers to a radius of less than 100 kilometers.

HOME AND URBAN GARDENING

(also known as urban horticulture or urban agriculture)

is the practice of growing plants and cultivating a garden in an urban environment. It has a positive impact on the economy, the environment, local community and food security. It can be done in front and backyards, balconies, indoor greenhouses, rooftops, or patios. With urbanization and since more people would like to do their farming where they are, urban gardening has proven to be a successful alternative.

PREPARE SUSTAINABLE MEALS

More and more leading chefs and restaurants are focusing on local and organic food and shifting away from meat-heavy meals and fast food. They are joined by a growing movement of people changing the way they cook and eat. Try recipes for dishes that are not only delicious but also good for you and the environment.

USE REUSABLE SHOPPING BAG

Reusable shopping (or grocery) bags have no environmental impact. They are made from recycled or sustainable materials and are designed to be used multiple times.

Besides polluting the ocean and environment, plastic bags clog up sewers and cause irreparable damage to nature. Bring your own reusable bag, it can seriously reduce the amount of plastic waste in our world.

SAVE WATER

Water is a precious resource: using water smartly can help ensure that we continue to have clean water to drink, wash and stay healthy. Do not keep the tap running when washing fruits or vegetables or dishes; or re-use this water for watering plants.

USE ECO-FRIENDLY CLEANING PRODUCTS

A lot of cleaning products have a lot of harmful chemicals in them that are not environmentally friendly. Repeated exposure to these cleaning products can affect your health as well as the environment. Eco-friendly and healthy alternatives: white vinegar, lemon juice, bicarbonate of soda, salt, citric acid.

AVOID PRODUCTS WITH EXCESSIVE PLASTIC PACKAGING

Buy in large quantities. This will save you money on top of reducing packaging waste.

Buy loose products, such as fruits and vegetables, instead of pre-packaged packs. Reuse packaging like paper and plastic bags, tins and wrapping paper whenever possible. When possible, choose cans over glass over plastic.

Carry your own reusable bag, water bottle, coffee cup, straw and utensils.

Small changes can make a big difference in the long run.

EXERCISE 1

GET UP & SIT QUIZ

Cost: 

Time Needed: 40 minutes

Complexity:

Prepare some (at least 10) statements or questions and ask all participants to stand up if they agree and to sit down if they disagree. Keep it short, simple and local.

After the quiz you can have discussions about the statements or questions.

Some example statements:

- I always use reusable bags for shopping for groceries.
- When buying fruits and vegetables in the supermarket I always check where they come from.
- HEvery one of us can help limit global warming and take care of our planet.
- Only young people should act against climate crises; this is their fight!
- I believe you cannot teach an old dog new tricks (it is impossible to change the habits of older people).

EXERCISE 2

TASTING EVENT

Cost:  

Time Needed: 1 hour

Complexity: 

Organise a tasting event with a variety of little healthy snacks made from climate friendly (local, seasonal etc.) and healthy ingredients. You can also ask the participants to prepare their own snacks and bring them to the tasting event. Invite them to share the recipe, where they buy the ingredients, and how they prepared it. Taste, comment, compare, exchange similar recipes.



EXERCISE 3

WHERE DOES THIS APPLE COME FROM?

Ask participants to think of their favourite fruit and vegetable.

Where can you get or buy it? Where do they come from (most likely)?

Ask participants to think of all the possible ways food makes it to their plate. Which fruits are locally produced, and which came from far away? Compare the way how a banana and an apple came to our table.

Cost: 🍏

Time Needed: 30 minutes

Complexity: 🍏



EXERCISE 2

GROUP DISCUSSION

Have a group discussion about topics such as:

- What makes it difficult to buy and consume locally grown food?
- Why are locally grown vegetables usually more expensive than imported, from far-away countries?
- Do you know a recipe for a plant-based version of your favourite meat dish?
- What type of foods or groceries do you usually throw away?
- What foods are currently in season where you live?
- Do you have access to a shop or farmers market with food from local growers?
- Are you willing to change your eating habits for environmental reasons?

Cost: 🍏

Time Needed: 45 minutes

Complexity: 🍏



WORKSHOP

This Chapter will provide suggestions and tips on how to conduct a workshop with older adults and an insight on how the Convida+ consortium handled the recruitment process and the implementation of the activities.

About workshops with older people

When organizing workshops targeted at older people, it is preferable to use a **participatory approach**, where all participants, including the group's mentor are teachers and learners at the same time. Interaction and **active participation** should be enabled and encouraged, participants should be able to share and reflect on their experiences, discuss challenges, listen and learn from each other.

Moreover, the learning process should be supported with **personal experiences** and **life stories**. Namely, older people have many stories to tell, rich in information, containing emotions, knowledge and thoughts. Therefore, the learning content should be linked with the knowledge they have gained in their lives, with their own life experiences, because it is easier to connect new information to their existing knowledge and are better at building on skills they already have. It helps them understand information quicker.

Remember:

- Do not hurry. Take your time with discussions and exercises.
- Keep it specific, practical and focused.
- Give lots of positive feedback.
- Duration of each workshop session: around 2 hours, with a short coffee break included.

About mentorship

Mentor (definition): someone providing guidance, advice, feedback and support to the participants.

The mentoring role is to inspire and motivate, it is more about mutual learning than teaching (or training or lecturing). The relationship between a mentor and group members should be pleasant and friendly.



About the group

Participants

- Number of participants: 6 – 9
- Age: 60+
- Gender: mixed, not important
- Prior knowledge of the topics: not necessary



Recruitment of participants

here it is how the Convida+ partners recruited their participants:

- **Social Media:** partners distributed flyers promoting the events in the following channels: Facebook, WhatsApp, partners' websites.
- **In person interaction:** some participants took part in other activities promoted by partners and during those initiatives the Convida+ project was presented.

Those methods proved to be effective since partners were able to reach (and, in some cases, surpass) the minimum established number of participants for every encounter.

Golden rules of group discussion

Do not forget that some older people are not used to learning in groups, which requires attention to group learning. Namely, it can lead to tension between participants or becomes difficult, tiring and boring for some of them. Most older people live alone and are therefore not used to cooperating with others except from their family. Listening and paying attention to others can be a challenging task.

Therefore, at the very beginning, the mentor of the group is advised to ask the participants to follow these simple tips for a good group discussion (as a reminder):

- Listen to each other
- Do not interrupt while another person is speaking
- Everyone in the group should be given a chance to contribute
- Individual interventions (personal experiences or stories) should not be too long, giving other participants a chance to speak and react
- When speaking, stay on the topic and try to avoid unnecessary details
- It is recommended that the group members sit in a circle, which creates a feeling of connection and a sense of equality. A circle is a safe space which encourages eye contact and connection with others and allows everyone in the group to see others and be seen.

Structure of each workshop session

Preparation: prepare a time schedule (how much time for each activity), the content (e.g., which chapter), how to involve the participants, which exercises to use.

Structured of each workshop:

- Welcome
- Summary of the previous session and feedback
- Short presentation of today's programme: description of the workshop, its objective, duration, coffee break etc.
- Warm up or ice breaking exercise
- "The content" from the Convida+ curriculum, for presentation of the topic and exercises
- (end of the session) Wrapping up, short evaluation - ask participants for their feedback - and farewell.

Some tips and games for the first workshop

Icebreakers are activities or games that will enable participants to get to know one another, to create a relaxed environment and to warm up the group. They are helpful especially when participants do not know each other yet. An icebreaker can get people talking and creates a comfortable atmosphere.

Make sure to clearly explain each game to participants, "how it works", its goals (what we want to achieve with each activity), if it is for the whole group or for pairs, in some cases also duration of the activity, what is needed (pencil, paper, mobile phone or...). The participants are invited to take an active part, but no pressure, they can also decide to just observe others.

Some examples:

NAME

Everyone is sitting in a circle and tells in turn about his or her first or family name. Everyone tells about where his or her name comes from, who gave them their name, what was the reason or story behind and what does the name mean to them emotionally. This exercise helps make contact, helps start a conversation and share a short personal history.

LINE

Stand up and ask everyone to take the right position in a line of alphabetical order based on their first name (from A...). You can repeat this easy exercise in many varieties. For example, create a line in alphabetical order of the family name, month and place of birth, favourite meal or a line in order of height, shoe size etc. This exercise helps make contact and it encourages participants to move around.



3 THINGS ABOUT ME

Participants are divided in pairs, give them five minutes, and ask them to tell three things about themselves to their pair, at least one should be related to food or eating habits. Then each person presents the pair to the rest of the group.



2 TRUTHS AND A LIE

Participants are divided in pairs, give them five minutes, and ask them to tell three things about themselves to their pair, at least one should be related to food or eating habits. Then each person presents the pair to the rest of the group. First create groups of three persons. Everyone writes down three things about himself or herself that others may know and may not know. For example, something about the family, eating preferences, sports, animals. First example: I use public transport a lot. Second: Every week I eat fish. Third: I have a cat. One of those three things is untrue, the other two are true. Each person reads the three items he or she wrote down. The other two guess which two are right and which one is untrue. This exercise is helpful to let the group members get to know each other better.



BUNCH OF KEYS

Everyone takes her/his bunch of keys and tells something about one or two keys. Some keys may represent interesting stories. Others can ask questions. The goal of this exercise is to get to know each other a little better. This exercise can also be done in pairs or smaller groups.



PHOTOS

The best way to do this exercise is in pairs, with the use of mobile phones. Each person shows to his/her pair some photos from the mobile phone and explains the context, where and when it was taken, who, what can be seen etc. When the group is back together, the participants report what they learned about each other and/or what they found particularly interesting.



MAP OF THE COUNTRY

“Design” a map of your country in the room, simply by saying what is North, South, East...

Ask participants to move around and stand still in the place which is located: their place of birth, or their favourite holiday destination, or where they would like to go once (have never been), or their favourite regional cuisine etc

**HAVE YOU
EVER...? (OR
"STAND UP
IF...")**

The mentor calls out different statements (some ideas are listed below) and every participant who agrees with the statement or has already done what is described in the statement, stands up. Ask them to explain more about the situation (when, why, what was the occasion), if they want to share.

- Have you ever baked bread?
- Have you ever eaten frogs' legs?
- Have you ever been a vegetarian for at least one month?
- Have you ever cooked a meal by yourself for more than 10 people?
- Have you ever grown your own vegetables?
- Have you ever been fasting for more than three days?
- Have you ever called for pizza delivery?
- Have you ever milked a cow?
- Have you ever sent food back in a restaurant?
- Have you ever planted a tree?

How to finish a workshop session

Make sure to finish the content part soon enough, to have some time - at least 15 minutes - for:

- Wrapping up (summarise what has been done in this session).
- Evaluation: ask participants for their feedback (did they learn anything new, what they liked and what not, suggestions for improvements...).
- Plans for the next session (if relevant).



The implementation

This section will provide a summary of how partners delivered the contents of each lesson, the feedback they received from participants and the eventual problems or barriers encountered and how they were overcome.

WORKSHOP 1

Healthy food and nutrition as an element to prevent dependencies and diseases.

ACUFADE READING LABELS

Cost: 

Time Needed: 1 hour

Complexity: 

Participants: 18 people

The activity provided participants with the basic know-how on food labelling. The objective was to show how to recognize healthy products, and unhealthy ingredients that should be avoided.

Acufade created a “local supermarket” where most basic products were available. Nutritionists guided participants through the “shop” and showed them healthy and unhealthy examples of different articles by comparing food labels. In addition, a model of a large food label was created to teach participants the basic theory of labelling reading.

IAT VEŠ KAJ JEŠ

Cost: 

Time Needed: 2,5 hours

Complexity: 



Participants: 8 people

Participants introduced themselves with an ice-breaking game: participants were asked to tell their names and a story/anecdote about their first or family name.

IAT's presentation focused on healthy food, ageing process and changing nutrition needs and Mediterranean diet.

For their second part of the lesson, IAT team invited two members of the Slovenian Consumers' Association to present the “Veš kaj ješ” (you-know-what-you-eat) website and application (<https://veskajjes.si/49-semafor>), which allows users to check the label of products with a quick scan by a smartphone, to better understand if a product is healthy or not. The meeting ended with a discussion to gather feedback from participants.

ISRAA MEET THE NUTRITIONIST

Cost: 
Time Needed: 1,5 hour
Complexity: 
Participants: 18 people

With the help of a Nutritional Biologist participants learned:

- the importance of a healthy and balanced nutrition to avoid the insurgence of medically unexplained symptoms, that occur when a patient experiences physical complaints that are not related to a specific medical condition.
- How to read food labels.

To test the effectiveness of the lesson, participants were shown different food images and were asked to choose some of them to design their daily menu. The results were then commented on, and the doctor explained the errors made by the participants and how to improve their choices.

WORKSHOP 2

The importance of emotional awareness in order to change eating habits.

ACUFADE MINDFULNESS WORKSHOP

Cost:  
Time Needed: 2 hours
Complexity: 
Participants: 15 people

The activity provided participants with basic knowledge on mindfulness and show them different ways of consuming food (enjoying and living the moment), something we rarely apply in our everyday lives, and demonstrated basic techniques of this concept.

A mindfulness expert provided the theoretical input (what is mindfulness, why it is important, how it can be implemented in our nutrition habits), which was followed by different relaxing techniques, and food tasting (using grapes) based on the exercise “Eating aware”, as described in the previous chapter.

IAT MINDFULNESS WORKSHOP

Cost: 🍇
Time Needed: 2 hours
Complexity: 🍇 🍇
Participants: 7 people

IAT team presented the topics of food as fuel and food as pleasure, an historic overview and the concepts of mindfulness and mindful eating with a video with six tips for practicing this concept.

The practical part of the lesson began with the “Do nothing” exercise, designed to introduce people to the concept of mindfulness. The second exercise “Eating aware” implied tasting different foods (raisins, pieces of chocolate, strawberries) by following mindful eating instructions by IAT’s colleague, trained in mindfulness. The lesson ended with a discussion to get feedback from participants.

ISRAA MINDFULNESS WORKSHOP

Cost: 🍇
Time Needed: 1,5 hours
Complexity: 🍇 🍇
Participants: 14 people

During this activity participants were guided in the discovery of the cycle of habits and the concepts of mindfulness and mindful eating through a combination of theoretical notions and the following practical exercises: “Recognising the cycle of habits”, “Do nothing” and “Eating aware”.

DON'T FORGET! for these exercises to be actually effective, it is important that the environment they implemented is calm and relaxed with no external noises.



WORKSHOP 3

Healthy food and nutrition as an element to support a more sustainable and eco-friendly life.

ACUFADE COOKING WORKSHOP

Cost: 

Time Needed: 3 hours

Complexity: 

Participants: 36 people

The aim of this activity was to show participants how to create traditional, local recipes in a more healthy and sustainable way. The idea was also to raise awareness of the local food.

Professional chef was invited and guided participants through the cooking process (from food preparation, to cooking and serving) explaining different tricks and hints to reuse food that would otherwise be wasted or to change less healthy ingredients with more healthy ones, without losing the quality or taste.

IAT VISIT AT THE URBAN VEGETABLE GARDEN

Cost: 

Time Needed: 2,5 hours

Complexity: 

Participants: 6 people

The session started an icebreaking activity, in which participants were asked to tell which part of Slovenia they come from along with some memories and traditional meals from that place or region.

In the second part, the IAT team presented environmental - food related topics: why should we care about the environment, how production and consumption of food affect this, about zero waste concept, zero kilometer etc. concepts and other issues related to climate changes; participants received handouts with a summary of the discussed topics.

Participants, with the guidance of Dr. Ramovš, the head of the institute, visited a self-sufficient urban vegetable garden nearby, with a small chicken house for urban chicken keeping. At the coffee break, participants tasted some healthy locally grown and home-made snacks.

ISRAA VISIT AT THE ORGANIC FARM

Cost: 🍇

Time Needed: 2,5 hours

Complexity: 🍇

Participants: 7 people

To better explain the importance of sustainable choices for the planet and the individual, ISRAA organized a lesson at Cooperativa Topinambur, a local farm that cultivates fruits and vegetables using organic methods.

Topinambur's team guided participants in the discovery of the different stages of the production chain, starting from cultivation to the final product and the lesson ended with a focus group in which participants reflected on the sustainability of their daily habits.

DON'T FORGET: if you are planning on taking older people on a field trip verify first the accessibility of the location and make sure that participants do not have mobility related problems that may affect their visit.

Overall evaluation

At the end of each workshop participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire, to provide information on the quality of the workshop by ranking learning materials, contents and the organization and logistics of the workshop logistics on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 was the lowest score and 10 the highest.

This chapter will provide a brief aggregated analysis of the quantitative data extracted from the evaluation forms, while the qualitative data have already been discussed in the above paragraphs.



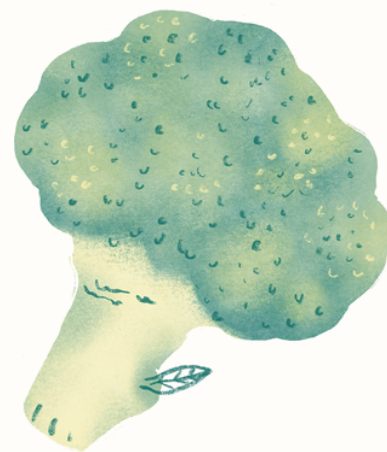
The structure of the questionnaire was divided in 5 parts:

1. **Workshop materials.** In this part, participants were asked to evaluate if the material used by the Convida+ teams was useful for the learning process.
2. **Workshop methodologies.** In this section, participants were asked to express their opinion on the methodologies chosen for conducting the sessions.
3. **Conditions for the workshop.** This part was dedicated to investigating the quality of logistics and of technological devices used for conducting the lessons.
4. **Contents.** In this section of the evaluation form participants were asked to reflect on the effectiveness of the lesson and state if they found it useful and helpful in changing their eating habits.
5. The last question was **open-ended**, and participants were free to leave suggestions, opinions and ideas to improve the Convida+ workshops.

The total number of handled evaluation forms was 116. The results were overall very positive, with the following average grade for every section of the questionnaire:

- Workshop material: 9.5
- Workshop methodology: 9.8
- Conditions for the workshop: 9.7
- Contents: 9.6

Regarding the effectiveness of Convida+ workshop in changing their eating habits, participants rated it at 8.9, proving the contents to be useful in making people understand the importance of a healthy and balanced diet, for both the environment and the individual psycho-physical wellbeing.



CONCLUSION

The main objective of Convida+ was to provide older adults with tools to change their habits towards a healthier and more eco-sustainable lifestyle. In doing so, the consortium developed a curriculum that mixed both theoretical notions and practical exercises, easy to replicate in the everyday routine.

It was up to the partners to decide how to deliver the contents, in order to better adapt them to the socio-cultural contexts of the participants, ensuring effectiveness of the workshops.

The actual implementation of the workshops proved this choice to be wise, since partners were able to implement effective lessons that reached the attention of the participants.

Moreover, by giving partners the possibility to design every meeting, they were able to involve other members of their organisation in the project, resulting in a wider visibility. The involvement of external experts also proved to be effective in disseminating the project and in creating networking opportunities for future collaborations.

Participants were satisfied with the contents of the curriculum, as indicated by the results of the evaluation form that was compiled after every meeting. They also underlined the need for more workshops on the topic of nutrition and healthy eating, since they noted the benefits of receiving more information and having the possibility to ask questions and discuss with professionals like nutritionists and psychologists. Some partners will integrate Convida+ curriculum in some of their regular activities.

Being only a small-scale Erasmus, Convida+ was able to grant only a limited amount of activities, but the positive reception of the project by participants has set the groundwork for future follow up activities that will be developed by partners. Stay tuned!



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HASIC project: <http://www.hasicproject.eu/en>

IAT in-group social learning method:

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fsoc.2019.00063/full>

ANNEXES - RESEARCH

Review Of Previous Projects And Good Practices

In this section it is possible to learn more on existing projects and good practices worldwide.

The first part of CONVIDA+ was dedicated on researching existing projects with the aims of:

- Learning what has already been done and implementing this knowledge in the activities of Convida+.
- Avoiding the repetition of activities that had already been implemented.
- Collecting contacts for the dissemination of the project results.

In the following table there are 10 most influential projects for the implementation of Convida+.

The selected project has been implemented between the year 2000 and 2022.

Title	Duration	Country of focus	Brief Description
Healthy Eating for Seniors		Canada	Healthy Eating for Seniors addresses many of the barriers to healthy eating: time, effort, knowledge and skills, taste and cost. Healthy Eating for Seniors also addresses food safety – which is key for promoting health. It includes information about supplements and how to eat with a chronic disease. And it offers simple ways to eat with less fat and salt, to shop for healthy food on a budget and to read labels. The handbook also includes tips and recipes from other seniors, many of whom are dealing with new ways of eating after learning they have a chronic disease.
OPTIFEL - Optimised Food Products for Elderly Populations	Sep 2013 – Feb 2017	EU (Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye, United Kingdom)	OPTIFEL project aims to define and propose vegetable and fruit-based foods that will improve the nutrition and eating pleasure of elderly populations. As pleasure is an integral part of an adequate diet, the first objective is to identify the requirements and expectations of seniors. These data will then be translated into guidelines to help us conceive, elaborate and test tastier, attractive foods with easy-to-eat textures and of course nutritional interests.
PROMISS - PRevention Of Malnutrition In Senior Subjects in the EU	2016 – 2021	EU (Canada, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, UK)	PROMISS aims at conducting research on prevention of malnutrition among older persons living at home, thus providing concrete recommendations for an active and healthy lifestyle also in later years. To achieve this mission, a multi-disciplinary international consortium will pursue the following objectives, divided in two phases: the understanding of the context and, based on this, the development of solutions to prevent malnutrition.

Healthy eating in European elderly: concepts, barriers and benefits	2001	EU	The promotion of healthy eating is more likely to be effective if based on the understanding of how the elderly perceive their own diets and healthy eating. The objectives of this study were to identify in the elderly European population, the attitudes to food, nutrition and health, in order to define adequate strategies of health promotion.
HASIC - Healthy Ageing Supported by Internet and Community	2014 – 2016	EU (Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Spain)	The general objective of the HASIC project is to empower older people (65+) in Europe to adopt healthy lifestyles which include a healthy diet, physical activity, moderate alcohol consumption and social participation. Together with supporting older people on an individual level, HASIC aims to develop the quality and cost-effectiveness of services for older people by promoting cooperation between regional service providers and by producing policy recommendations on communal elderly services.
TURNTABLE- platform supporting vitality and abilities of elderly	2019 – 2022	EU (Belgium, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia)	TURNTABLE will help motivate older adults to adopt healthy nutritional habits through personalized dietary recommendations and guidelines and assist them in maintaining an active lifestyle involving recreational social agriculture/ gardening activities, reducing feelings of isolation, and acquiring new skills and enjoying outdoor spaces.
Social Eating Programs for Older People - Literature Search	2009	Australia, Canada, Israel, United States	This document presents the results of a literature and internet search to identify a range of models and programs that could be used to support the development of social eating approaches aimed at addressing geriatric nutritional risk in rural communities.
Common Sensetarian Food Manifesto	2022	Slovenia	This manifesto was produced during well-known international culinary event Food summit, in Ljubljana, November 2022. The Manifesto was created by top chefs and culinary experts and food journalists

The *fil-rouge* that unites all the projects can be identified with the assumption that an active lifestyle and good eating habits are fundamental to favour the process of healthy ageing.

What is interesting to notice is the variety of perspectives used to confront this topic:

- PROMISS focuses on the prevention of malnutrition in older people.
- OPTIFEL analyses the needs and expectations of the senior population towards healthy food.
- TURNTABLE approaches the subject by creating a programme that involves older people in outdoor activities.
- HASIC works with regional service providers to empower older people in adopting a correct lifestyle.

The outcomes of these actions were handbooks, guidelines, platforms and strategies to be used by older people and professionals in order to increase awareness and knowledge on the topic.

This activity research was fundamental for the development of Convida+ for the following reasons:

- It pinpointed two fundamental theoretical aspects: none of the above-mentioned initiatives have linked the topic of healthy eating and lifestyle with the ones of environment and sustainability and have proposed mindfulness as a tool to change eating habits.
- It provided precious practical inputs for the development of the workshop, since most of the projects established an active involvement of older people.

Regarding this last point, HASIC project was a valuable source of information about healthy food and eating practices and how to get these topics to the end users - seniors (guidelines for workshops etc.), while the contents of Common Sensetarian Food Manifesto tackles the three main topics of the Convida+ project (healthy, eco-friendly food and eating habits) in a holistic, yet very clear way and was used as a base for discussing daily eating habits of the participants in the Convida+ project.

