

WP6 : Focus groups

National report overview

*Institute of Public Health of the Republic of
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Recruitment

- Focus groups planned in the frame of WP 6 of the Focus Balkans Project in Macedonia were held on 25.11.2009 for elderly over 50 years and on 2.12.2009 for mothers having children up to 15 years of age
- Elderly – 8
- Mothers – 7
- Compensation of 1000 Macedonian Denars (1000 MKD = 16 Euros)
- Participants were recruited by phone by two recruiters
- We didn't encounter any problems during the recruiting process
- Participants were willing to participate and give their contribution

Associations

- **Food and healthy lifestyle** - clear association
- Healthy food was mentioned as one of the main, if not most important contributors to healthy lifestyle

- **Food and health (collage)** - most of the participants have chosen pictures of fit sportsmen/sportswomen together with healthy food like fruits, vegetables and drinks like fruit juices and tea
- Majority of them said that it is very important for them food to originate from regions with clear environment for the fresh food, and to be thermally processed for the processed food

Choice, image

- **Choice** - Products that are traditionally present at the market for a long time regardless of having or not any type of claim
- That choice was particularly indicated in the focus group of elderly consumers

- **Image of a person buying yogurt with probiotics**
- Female, age 30-40 which is living in a family and household of 4 persons
- Cares for hers and for the health of her family
- Motives for buying are its low fat content and helping in food digestion
- Home of this person looks nice and comfortable

Difference among different types of claim

- The difference among health, nutritional and commercial claim was noticed by the participants in both focus groups after the conversation about the types of claims and after different claims were displayed to them
- Still, when making their first choice, majority of participants have chosen the product with commercial claim
- Product's commercial claim was association that it is the most natural product from the three products offered
- Majority of participants showed that that they didn't know how to make difference between different types of claims
- Mothers group, even most of them also have chosen the product with nutritional claim still they showed more rationalization in their choice. Some of the mothers talked about labels of the products and stated that the label should be guiding orientation when choosing product, not the claim

Perception and comprehension of nutritional information

- Participants usually look at the expiration date of the product when buying it
- Both group respondents stated that they rarely look at the nutritional information of the product when buying them
- Mothers - when they changing product with the one which they haven't tried before then they read the nutritional information and make choice according to it

Products with nutritional and health claims: motives for consumption, trust, expectations

- Usually believe to the information displayed at the product
- Predominant attitude that the product with health claims are usually more expensive and they make their choice based on previous experience
- Buying products they traditionally consume it regardless of having claim or not
- Both focus groups have stated that women are the ones who purchase these kinds of products in the family
- They think that all products have to have nutritional claim, but particularly that is important for dairy products, bread and cereals
- All read what is written in the newspapers and magazines about the products and claims
- It is nice if the products with health claims are usually separately exposed at the supermarkets where they usually purchase it

Products, elderly

Product category (Margarine)	Product group (e.g. Light Margarine)	Brand name	Remark (e.g. the oldest, traditional brand on the market)
Margarine	Light, 2,5%	Dobro jutro	
Margarine	Light, diet	Kristal soft	
Margarine	Slightly salted	Bords Eve	
Margarine	With omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids, for protection of blood vessels	Omegal	
Margarine	Classic	Rama	
Margarine	Classic	Kristal	Traditional brand
Product category (Biscuits)	Product group (e.g. Biscuits for diabetics)	Brand name	
Biscuits	Cookies	Noblice	
Biscuits	Cookies with chocolate chips	Elbisco	
Biscuits	No sugar	Vitalix	
Biscuits	Integral cookie with oat flakes, rich in dietetic fibre	Welness	
Product category (Yogurt)	Product group (e.g. Yoghurt with probiotics)	Brand name	
Yogurt	Balans +, with probiotics, 1% fat	Bimilk	
Yogurt	Balans +, with probiotics, 1% fat	Imlek	
Yogurt	3,2% fat, classic	Bitolski	Traditional brand
Yogurt	0% fat	Fit Imlek	
Yogurt	0,1% fat	Jogurt PPM	
Yogurt	3,2% fat, classic	Dukat	



Products, mothers

Product category (Fruit juices)	Product group (e.g. Fruit juice with added vitamins and Ca)	Brand name	Remark (e.g. the oldest, traditional brand on the market)
Fruit juice	100% orange	Fructal	Traditional brand
Fruit juice	100% pineapple		Domestic brand
Fruit juice	Apricot and apple nectar	Fructal	
Fruit juice	Peach nectar	Bitolski	
Fruit juice	ACE multifruit and carrot nectar	Viva	
Fruit juice	Red cocktail, A and C vitamins and fibre		
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Bisquits	Cookies with chocolate chips	Elbisco	
Bisquits	No sugar	Vitalix	
Bisquits	Integral cookie with oat flakes, rich in dietetic fibre	Welness	
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