

WhoEUGrain - A European Action on Whole Grain Partnerships -

Dear Mr/Mrs,

This is the fifth newsletter of the WhoEUGrain project. It is prepared twice per year in order to inform all the interested public about the European project, achievements and results.

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Enjoy your reading,
WhoEUGrain consortium

WHAT HAPPENED...

DVA and CCIS-CAFE visit in Bosnia and Herzegovina (8-10 December 2021)

Two WhoEUGrain project partners - DVFA and CCIS-CAFE visited the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MCA) and its affiliated entities (Institute of Public Health of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Institute of Public Health of the Republic of Srpska). The main purpose of the visit was to gain a better understanding of our partners in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republic of Srpska to support and include them in the WhoEUGrain project and to provide consultations on the next steps in establishing their sub-national partnership. For more information about the event please click [HERE](#).



Warm-up event to the WhoEUGrain Spring School (15 March 2022)

The WhoEUGrain spring school warm-up event, co-hosted by The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration and Food Nation gave you business insights and perspectives from both the public and private sector on why engaging in a public-private partnership is a win-win for all.

The event was the first event in a series of interconnected events held during the spring of 2022 under the EU-funded WhoEUGrain project, which aims to transfer the success of the Danish Whole Grain Partnership and the lessons learned from building a successful public-private partnership to a broader European context.

For more information about the event please click [HERE](#).

WARM-UP EVENT TO THE WHOLEUGRAIN SPRING SCHOOL



WhoEUGrain Spring School 2022 (29 March 2022)

The WhoEUGrain project consortium organized the WhoEUGrain Spring School.

The event gave us the opportunity to go even further and try to incorporate the whole grains into every aspect of our lives. With this purpose speakers from around the world talked about: health and sustainability aspects of whole grains, whole grains and new business opportunities, communication and labelling of whole grains and establishment of whole grain partnerships.

For more information about the event please click [HERE](#).



MEET PROJECT PARTNERS FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

We caught up with Aida Filipović Hadžomeragić from Institute of Public Health of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and with Dragana Stojisavljević and Stela Stojisavljević from Public Health of the Republic of Srpska to learn more about their organizations and work to increase whole grain intake and to see their future challenges and priorities in the whole grain area.



1. When were your organizations established?

The Institute of Public Health of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was established in 1998 and Institute of Public Health of the Republic of Srpska in 1992.

2. How do you work to increase grains and legumes consumption in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Work to increase of grains and legumes consumption in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Whole Grain Partnership initiation is set by Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Chronic Non Communicable diseases of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2019-2025 which also includes promotion of consumption of whole grains.

In the Republic of Srpska there are guidelines which include recommendations for consumption of whole grain products. The Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Chronic Non Communicable diseases of the Republic of Srpska 2019-2026 includes the creation and conduction of campaigns related to the promotion of healthy nutrition including the promotion of consumption of whole grains.

3. How do you engage with industry to support them?

In order to find best way how to approach and engage industry in the process both organizations joined to WhoEUGrain project as affiliated entities with purpose to learn more from Danish best practice model for whole grain partnership. Both organizations conducted initial mapping of stakeholders and invited them to events organized in the framework of WhoEUGrain project.

4. Is it common knowledge among people that whole grains have health benefits and are one of the most climate-friendly food?

It can be said that people in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina are aware of health benefits of whole grains in some extent but not fully particularly when it comes recognition of whole grains as the most climate friendly food. Therefore raising awareness of population on importance of consumption of whole grain is one of priority promotional activities of public health sector.

In the Republic of Srpska the research from 2015 indicates that their population has not adopted the correct rules regarding the daily consumption of whole grains. Experiences in working with preschool institutions regarding the improvement of nutrition of preschool children and in preschool institutions showed that interventions aimed at improving nutrition would give results since most of the institutions with which they worked since 2014 intervention in public the procurement included whole grain products in preschool institutions and that they significantly introduced them into the diet in preschool institutions.

5. Which communication/marketing initiatives have worked well in your country?

Institute of Public Health of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been using different communication strategies but when it comes to promotion of healthy nutrition ones that really worked well were initiatives conducted in kindergartens and schools. WHO Initiative Nutrition Friendly School Initiative was implemented in kindergartens and accreditation of kindergartens into "Nutrition Friendly Kindergarten" gained a lot of positive response and changes.

In the Republic of Srpska, in 2014 they started with the intervention "Nutrition Friendly School/Preschool Initiative" with the help of the UNICEF Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The results indicated that it is possible to change habits, attitudes, and practices if interventions are set up correctly. Through this Initiative it was recognized that social networks, live words, and the media are a way to establish communication, promote something and thus influence the acquisition of knowledge and change attitudes and practices.

6. What is the biggest challenge you face in increasing the whole grains intake?

The biggest challenge is complicated administrative organisation of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina which is consisted of 10 cantons functioning independently that hardens formation of whole grain partnership task force, determination of responsibilities and implementation of whole process. Other things that need to be mentioned are: willingness of producers to engage in reformulation and development of new products, insufficient capacity of different stakeholders for conduction of assigned tasks as well as lack of financial resources for implementation and lack of data (on WG intake and supply, consumers knowledge, buying behavior etc.).

In the Republic of Srpska the main challenges are: administrative procedures, short time for the implementation of the project, public stakeholders need a long period of time to recognize their role in the WhoEUGrain project and limited commercial interest in the population health.

7. What is the biggest force/opportunity you have for increasing grain intake?

In Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina the recent data on food behaviour show increased awareness of population on health and climate benefits of whole grains, changes in consumer demand for more and domestic whole grain products and consequently increasing interest of industry for reformulation are solid ground for undertaking variety of activities for increasing of whole grain intake.

In the Republic of Srpska the biggest opportunities are: scientific evidence, the intervention being conducted, the availability of products on the market, the willingness of producers to reformulate and improve product quality, and other project activities that support the increased intake of whole grain.

8. Have you seen any changes in the ways consumers behave during the pandemic?

Study on Food Behaviour Changes during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Bosnia and Herzegovina revealed that the pandemic transformed consumers' shopping behaviours and food sourcing, reducing shopping frequency and increasing food bought on each trip. It revealed that consumption of local food items increased due to food safety concerns and that awareness of Bosnians towards food improved with a decrease in food waste. Also people tried to have healthier diets during the pandemic. This looks like opportunity for promotion of more sustainable food consumption and lifestyles.

9. What are your best advices to increase grains in your daily diet?

Institute of Public Health of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina advises people to base at least one meal a day around a whole grain and that oatmeal with some fruit on top for breakfast is practical and easy option.

Institute of Public Health of the Republic of Srpska adds that the daily level of the total recommended cereals provide 35-40% of the total daily energy needs, at least 50% should be whole grain products.

10. What is your next goal in the WhoEUGrain project?

The next goal for Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is to officially establish intersectoral Whole grain working group and to start working on preparation of action plan and determination of responsibilities.

The next goal for Republic of Srpska is to organize focus groups and define what are the weaknesses and strengths of decision-makers, consumers, and producers, as well as the media, and what are the challenges and threats to the increased intake of whole grains. After that the results will be presented to the intersectoral body and the general public with purpose to develop a strategy to increase the intake of whole grains.

11. How do you see future challenges and priorities in the whole grain area in your country?

The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has priority to establish functional intersectoral group and to get as many whole grain products producers on board. Another priority is also to conduct wide campaign to raise awareness of population on health and climate benefits of whole grains.

They see challenges in long administrative procedures related involvement of public authorities and challenges related to involvement of industry.

The priority of Republic of Srpska is to use the acquired knowledge in order to establish the functional work of the intersectoral working group and create conditions for increasing the intake of whole grains through changing the environment, raising awareness and knowledge, and changing practices. They expect that the results of the focus groups will guide them in terms of designing the campaign and defining the goals of their campaign.

Stay tuned and follow WhoEUGrain on...



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