

# Engaging consumers in co-creation of new food products

*EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs*

University of Warsaw

[www.timo.wz.uw.edu.pl/cel](http://www.timo.wz.uw.edu.pl/cel)



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## Co-creation

- Involvement of consumers in defining product concepts and developing new products
- Communication between consumers and producers – joint processes of conceptualisation and new product development
- Helps better address specific needs of target customers, promotes empathy and increases new product success rates
- Particularly difficult and rarely used in food sector



- University of Warsaw developed an innovative co-creation methodology used by EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs project to facilitate collaboration between consumers and producers, yielding new food product concepts
- Implementation done locally through dedicated workshops and commercialisation planning, based on standard methodology and toolsets





Food

Consumer Engagement Labs



Coherent target group

Joint place, time and methods

Developing concepts of new food products

Consumer co-creation sessions



## Focus on senior consumers

- Seniors - consumers aged 65+ as target group usually overlooked by food producers
- 2019: pilot in 4 countries
  - Lithuania (0.5m seniors) • Poland (6.1m seniors) • Portugal (2.1m seniors) • Spain (8.7m seniors)
- 2020: roll-out to further 6 countries
  - Southern Europe: 2 countries (Italy, Greece)
  - Central and Eastern Europe: 4 countries (out of: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia)
  - call for local consortia-subcontractors in 2020



# Tangible outcomes of project in 2019

- Over 60 consumers actively engaged in co-creation (4 countries with 15 or more consumers participating)
- 4 scientific institutions coordinating local consortia in Lithuania, Poland, Portugal and Spain
- 4 startups, 4 food retailers, 4 food producers involved in each of the 4 countries
- Numerous publications about the project in local and international media
- Excellent outreach involving non-governmental organisations and senior community
- Development and testing of the innovative methodology



Design Thinking w pracy z seniorami 60+

– Jako PPIW od wielu lat pracujemy metodami rywalizacji prezentacji. Stwierdziliśmy że w pracy z firmami, naukowcami i studentami. Jednak nie możemy doświadczyć w pracy kreatywności z grupami seniorów. Byliśmy przekonani, że przyniesie rezultaty – mówi Jan Chelkowski z Pomorskiego Parku Naukowo-Technologicznego.

Metodyka warsztatów angażująca starzytkich konsumentów w proces interaktywnych zadań spotkała się z bardzo pozytywnym odebraniem. Dzięki aktywacji udało im się wcielić się w rolę badaczy konsumentów, co było dla nich nowym doświadczeniem. Wynikiem było zaprojektowanie seniorów, uwzględniając ich specyficzne potrzeby i wyobrażenia. Istotną wartością było dla nich poczucie, że są widzieli partycypować w projektowaniu, a nie biernymi uczestnikami badania.

Seniorzy pracowali w grupach 4-8 osobowych. Moderatorzy ściśle dopinając tempo pracy do grupy dyskusyjnej i przeprowadziła uczestników przez serię nowych dla nich zadań, wykorzystujących techniki kreatywnego

# Call for participants 2020

- Consortia consisting of 3 organisations
  - all from the same country
  - scientific organisation (university or research institute) + company (food retailer or food producer) + startup
  - scientific organisation coordinates the consortium and implements consumer workshops (April-July 2020)
  - company and startup select the most viable new product concept, prepare commercialisation plan (by October 2020) and introduce new product to the market (by June 2021)



# Applicant organisations

- Legal persons
- Operating in the same country, covered by the call (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia)
- Able to sign subcontracting agreement with EIT Food (=cannot be EIT Food partner)
- Application consists of 3 forms, each signed by a representative of scientific organisation + food company + startup





## Scientific organisation

- Needs to be experienced in qualitative consumer research
- Needs to describe experiences of 3 experts-moderators
- Has facilities to organize local workshops for ~15 consumers
- Delivers the local workshops (2 daily sessions, separated by ~one week interval, scheduled for April-July 2020)
- Organizes call for participating consumers and selection
- Follows the Labs manual/script and records all sessions
- Prepares workshop report with transcripts/translations, conducts interviews with companies (with transcripts/translations)
- Subcontract agreement for 8,000€

## Food retailer/food producer and startup

- Need to be interested in senior consumers as target market
- Select the category of food products for co-creation workshops (matching their expertise, focus of existing product portfolio)
- Required to commercialise by June 2021 at least one new food product co-created with consumers through the workshops
- Required to submit commercialisation plan by October 2020
- Required to ensure two publications each (non-paid publications in local language in printed press describing the project or its outcomes)
- Subcontract agreement for 6,000€ each



University of Warsaw helps organizing the workshops by providing project manual with workshop script, English-language version of tools and forms, and transfers know-how to scientific organisation responsible for the local workshop

Workshop X Workshop Y Workshop Z

	ROOM 1	ROOM 2	ROOM 3
30 min	A	B	C
30 min	C	A	B
30 min	B	C	A

unmatched participants: 21

Gender: M 10-11 (9) F 10-11 (20) 8-12 (8-9)  
(E) Education Higher 10-11 (19-8) This higher 10-11 (8-9)  
Place of res. City Rural  
Living category Yes/No  
Study Yes/No (for itself 10-11)

DAY 1 8.11.2019  
21 ~~27~~ people  
P. 21 people (7 people)  
LT. 21?  
9 people 9 people 9 people  
1 2 3  
HOMEWORK  
1 2 3  
DAY 2 15.11.2019  
25 people (group of 5 to 6 people)  
21  
 $9 \times 7 \times 1 = 17$   
 $4 \rightarrow A$

# Open calls for consumers

Panels of ~15 senior consumer in each country, matching multiple selection criteria to ensure diversity

The screenshot shows the Polish version of the my60+ website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: STRONA GŁÓWNA, REKLAMAREDAKCJA, PRENUMERATA, PARTNERZY, KONTAKT, ARCHIWUM, and DYPLOMACJA. Below the navigation bar, there is a main headline: "Super zadanie dla seniorów – ruszają Laboratoria Zaangażowania Konsumentów". The text below the headline describes the project's goal: "Czy interesujesz się gotowaniem lub przygotowaniem posiłków? Czy często robisz zakupy spożywcze? Chcesz podzielić się swoimi doświadczeniami i poznać ludzi o podobnych zainteresowaniach? Jeśli tak, to dla Ciebie jest zaproszenie do wzięcia udziału w ciekawych zajęciach grupowych związanych z żywnością i konsumpcją. Weź udział w projektowaniu nowych produktów spożywczych!". There is also a small image of a group of people and a logo for "Lato w mieście".

The banner features the EIT Food logo at the top left. The main text in Portuguese reads: "Labs de envolvimento do consumidor" and "Co-criação de novos produtos alimentares com os consumidores". At the bottom, there is a website URL: "www.timo.wz.uw.edu.pl/eit". The banner also includes logos for the European Union and the Polish government.

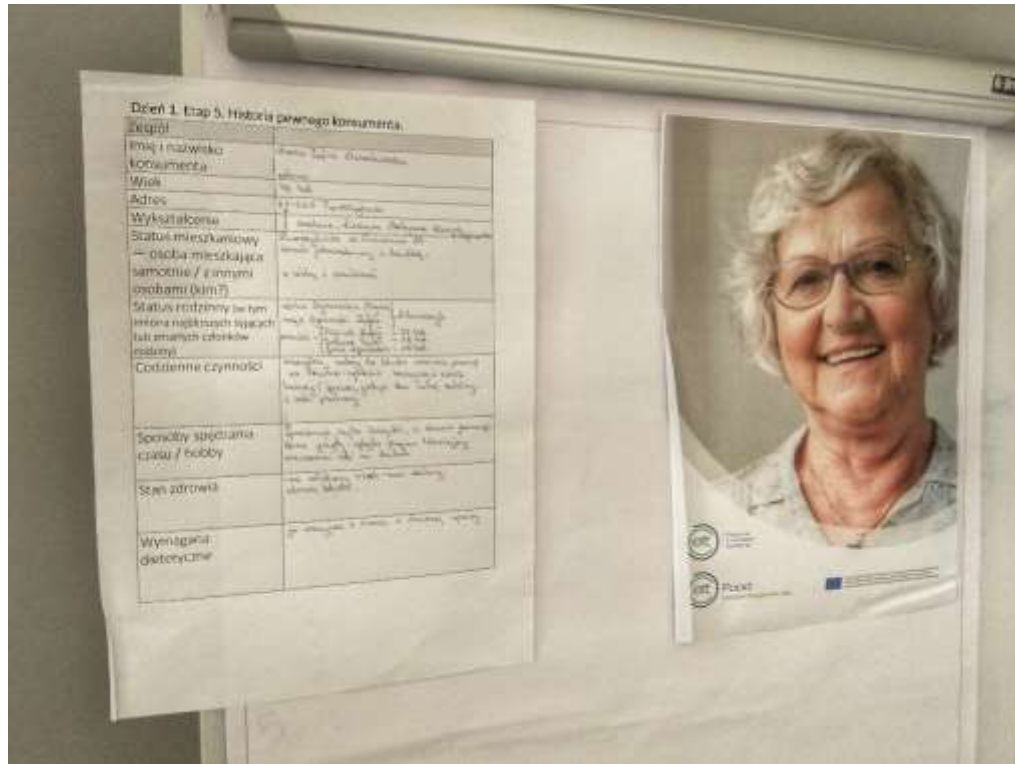
The poster has a yellow header with the text "Bezpłatne warsztaty dla osób 65+". Below the header is a photograph of several people's hands reaching towards a central bowl of food on a wooden table. The bottom section of the poster is yellow and contains the text: "LABORATORIA ZAANGAŻOWANIA KONSUMENTÓW" and "WEŹ UDZIAŁ W PROJEKTOWANIU NOWYCH PRODUKTÓW SPOŻYWCZYCH!".

The poster features a photograph of an elderly couple smiling. The text in Spanish reads: "Si tienes 65 años o más, participa en el LABORATORIO DEL CONSUMIDOR" and "8 y 15 de noviembre de 2020 a las 10:00h Campus Universitario de Sabadell". There is also a phone number: "1436220. Hazen".

## Two days of co-creation workshops

- Day 1: use of projective techniques to understand consumer behaviours, build consumer teams, create psychological attachment and stimulate creativity
- Homework: „field research” with consumers visiting supermarkets and discussing purchasing habits
- Day 2 (week after day 1): generation of new product concepts, selection of the best proposals and pitching session in front of companies
  - Afterwards: companies work on selecting the new product candidate and plan its commercialisation

# Day 1. Projective techniques



Several hours of indepth discussions about consumption patterns and preferences of fictional consumers, allowing participants to project their own characteristics (recorded and transcribed, invaluable consumer insights)

## Day 2. Generation of new food product concepts



Spain



Poland

Teams of senior consumers generate new product concepts using a sequence of tasks, drawing on gamification principles

## Day 2. Selection of the best new food product concepts



Poland



Lithuania

Teams of senior consumers pitching new product concepts in front of selection panels, consisting of food companies



## Day 2. Selection of the best new food product concepts



Spain



Portugal

Teams of senior consumers pitching new product concepts in front of selection panels, consisting of food companies

Don't underestimate the creative potential and skills of senior consumers – companies in 2019 were surprised by consumer insights and usefulness of product ideas



# RIS CEL workshops were also a lot of fun for participants



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## New food products as outcomes of RIS CEL

- Companies in each local consortium develop and introduce one product based on workshops
- New products: sensory aspects, combinations of ingredients, convenience for senior consumers (incl. packaging), added nutritional benefits
- Commercialisation plans by October 2020
- New product market introductions by June 2021
- Experiences of 2019: categories of the new food products:  
Lithuania: grains/bakery products • Poland: vegetable preserves • Portugal: biscuits • Spain: spreads/pates



## EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs

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