

What is the ECO project?

The “*Empowering Consumer Organisations: towards a harmonised approach tackling dual quality in food products*” (ECO) is a European project funded by the DG Justice of the European Commission under the Consumer Programme. The ECO project aims at limiting dual quality practices in food and strengthening consumer organisations in the EU and intends to strengthen the capacity of consumer organizations to test food products for dual quality, disseminate test results, and identify and report potential unfair practices.

Objectives of the project

Our project wants to reach consumer organisations in order to provide the relevant authorities (at national and EU level) with a full and accurate assessment on dual food quality in the EU. By raising the awareness of the relevant authorities on this issue and by providing them with full and accurate information, our project will help to tackle this problem. Thus, the main project’s objectives are to:

- Develop a guidance to test products;
- Empower consumer organisations;
- Foster cross-national cooperation;
- Improve advocacy to have better policies in the EU.

Activities and deliverables

Based on the EU harmonised testing methodology developed by the JRC (Joint Research Center) of the European Commission, the project aims to develop a harmonised guidance for testing products and identifying misleading branding strategies. To this aim, the project has developed training materials to accompany consumer organisations to test products:

- A guidance
- A manual
- A tutorial video
- A platform (link to the platform): This platform will contain a database which will report and share misleading branding strategies with results of products uploaded by consumer organisations.

The project also aims to create a certification system with the registration of companies to improve the defence of consumer organizations. We also seek to foster cooperation between consumer organizations, competent authorities and private stakeholders by organising a European conference where the test results will be presented.

Who are we?

ADOC is an Italian association of consumers recognized by the Ministry of Economic Development. ADOC is present in all 20 Italian regions with bureaus which give information and support to the public.

SAFE – Safe Food Advocacy Europe is a European NGO; whose objectives are to ensure that consumers’ health and concerns remain at the core of the EU’s food legislation

Infocons is a Romanian consumer organization founded in 2003 with the aim of protecting the right of consumers and raising awareness among consumers.

The three partners all bring valuable expertise and connections to the project consortium, in order to ensure smooth and effective implementation of the project activities to achieve the objectives, to assure effective collaboration, communication and update, to closely monitor and evaluate the project