

**May 2021**

## **Fighting dual food quality: updates on our European project**

*The ECO-"Empowering Consumer Organisations: towards a harmonised approach tackling dual quality in food products" is a one-year project funded under the Consumer Programme of the DG Justice. Together with the partners ADOC (Italy) and InfoCons (Romania) the project strives to provide tools to consumer organisations for testing products for possible dual food quality practices. To this effect the consortium organized a successful information session for European consumer organisations in April and saw its project website launched. Please don't hesitate to follow us on Social Media on [Twitter](#) and on [Facebook](#) for regular updates on the project!*

### **LAUNCH OF THE PROJECT WEBSITE**

The ECO- project saw its own dedicated website launched in April at [www.fighdualfood.eu](http://www.fighdualfood.eu). The partners are proud to present the website, which includes a presentation of the project and its partners and hosts all the project materials. The written outputs of the project are freely downloadable and available in four languages for the time being (English, Italian, Romanian and French). Furthermore, the website hosts an interactive platform where testing results for food products regarding dual food quality can be reported.

This interactive platform allows visitors to observe all the tested products, that can be filtered either by countries or by the category of products. Each product is presented on its own product sheet page, which includes information on the methodology of testing, the countries of sampling, the composition and the front of pack appearances. In case certain products present significant differences in ingredients and nutritional values, the project consortium will reach out to the brand owners for comments and include said comments on the product sheets.

### **ONLINE INFORMATION SESSION FOR EUROPEAN CONSUMER ORGANISATIONS**

As the project aims at empowering European Consumer organisations to better identify possible misleading marketing strategies and therefore test and study dual quality in food products, the consortium decided to organize an online information session to raise awareness on dual food quality and disseminate the project materials.

The information session took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April and brought together consumer organisations from all around Europe. Indeed, the partners were joined by more than 10 consumer organisations interested in learning more about the issue and exchanging ideas and best practices.

The information session was launched by our Secretary General, Floriana Cimmarusti, who welcomed the participants, introduced them to the ECO-Project and presented SAFE as an organisation. The session continued with an intervention from the Project Coordinator ADOC, who presented the problem of dual food quality. The third presentation was made by SAFE and explained the project and its activities more in detail. Finally, the information session was concluded by a session of questions and answers, which was conducted in a roundtable format allowing for easy exchange among the participants. The partners were very happy with the interactions which ranged from exchanges of best practices from other dual quality grant beneficiaries, to practical questions regarding the possible involvement of their organisations.

The information session was all in all very successful and provided a valuable possibility to create links between European consumer organisations to cooperate on important topics.

### **NEXT PROJECT STEPS**

To further disseminate the project and its results, the project partners are organizing a big European online conference on the **29<sup>th</sup> of June**. The conference will be an opportunity to further raise awareness on dual food quality, to present the main findings of the project and to allow the exchange among various stakeholders. We warmly invite everyone to attend this event!

Furthermore, the partners, along with the collaborating consumer organisations another are conducting tests on food products for dual food quality. The consortium is currently performing the first phase of the testing campaign, namely collecting data for the comparison of ingredients lists and the packaging of food products. Should the compared products present clear differences, these will further be studied through sensory analysis and laboratory tests.

Finally, the three partners are developing a certification system aimed at companies who wish to show their commitment against dual food quality practices. Companies will obtain a certificate after having proven their product does not present any issues of the kind.