

## HabEat partners



**INRA** – Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, France

**DLO-FBR** - Stichting Dienst Landbouwkundig Onderzoek, the Netherlands

**INSERM** - Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale, France

**ULeeds** - The University of Leeds, United Kingdom

**WUR** - Wageningen Universiteit, the Netherlands

**UCPH** - Københavns Universitet, Denmark

**UCL** - University College London, United Kingdom

**FMUP** - Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade do Porto, Portugal

**HUA** - Harokopio University, Greece

**UNIBRIS** - University of Bristol, United Kingdom

**IT** - INRA Transfert SA, France

## HabEat contact

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**Determining factors and critical periods in food habit formation and breaking in early childhood**



**[www.habeat.eu](http://www.habeat.eu)**



Recent surveys have shown that diets of young children in many European countries are not ideal, in particular because they contain too many lipids and not enough fruit and vegetables. Early nutrition may have an impact on their health in later life (diabetes, obesity, heart problems..).

The **HabEat** project brings together 11 European beneficiaries from **6 European countries** with a multidisciplinary approach (psychology, epidemiology, behavioural science, nutrition, sensory science) **to enable a key breakthrough in the understanding of how food habits are formed and can also be changed, in infants and young children (< 5 years).**

This European FP7 project started on January 2010, for a duration of 4 years, and will receive 2.9 million Euros in funding, from the 7<sup>th</sup> European Union Framework Programme under the "Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Biotechnology" priority.

## 2 APPROACHES: EPIDEMIOLOGICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL

On one hand, **the epidemiological work** will exploit existing data from several cohorts from 4 European countries: Eden in France, ALSPAC in United Kingdom, Generation XXI in Portugal and EuroPrevall in Greece.

The work will enable the **identification of critical periods and critical factors.**

On the other hand, **the experimentation** will come in two sections. The first will focus mainly on the **key mechanisms of learning** and will concern children from the age of six months and up to three years. The second will aim at studying, beyond three years and up to five years, **new strategies for breaking habits, i.e. for changing from poor to healthy habits.**



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONNALS

By 2013, the results from the HabEat project should lead to **recommendations in parental practices for feeding infants and children.** These recommendations will be addressed to early childhood professionals, paediatricians, political decision-makers in charge of defining nutritional policies but also to baby food industry .



## EXPECTED IMPACT

The European added value lies in capitalising on the variety of food choice within Europe. Research in this area is rather limited in Europe. The results would support development of European policy directed towards healthier food habits. This research will help to increase understanding of the critical ages and periods when food habits and eating patterns form in infants and children and to support effective intervention strategies for habit-breaking and behavioural change directed towards healthier food choices.



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