



Connecting local and national ideas on research  
and innovation to European and International  
organizations



Centar Izuzetne Vrednosti  
u oblasti istraživanja ishrane i metabolizma  
Centre of Research Excellence  
in Nutrition and Metabolism

## CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN NUTRITION IN BALKAN REGION

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**CAPNUTRA**  
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN NUTRITION  
[www.capnutra.org](http://www.capnutra.org)

# CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (CD)

- **To initiate and support food & nutrition CD activities in research and training in Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries based on country/region specific needs in 2005**, the United Nations University (UNU), Food & Nutrition Program, and the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN), **encouraged the formation of Network for Capacity Development in Nutrition in Central and Eastern Europe (NCDNCEE).**
- **CD in food and nutrition is more than formal training. It includes human resource development, organizational, institutional and legal framework development with aim of enhancing knowledge and skills**
- **CD is a long term, continuing process**, which gives primacy to national priorities, policies, plans and processes.

## OBJECTIVES

- The main objective was to **stimulate CD in food and nutrition in CEE through identifying research infrastructure (RI) status and needs, specific education/training needs, food systems elements status and to establish networking with European countries through collaboration with EC & international research projects, UN organizations and networks.**
- **NCDNCEE/CAPNUTRA works toward the enhancement of individual, institutional and organizational capacity in food and nutrition research, including identification of the challenges and needs, development of strategies, frameworks and planning guidelines for CD in nutrition in CEE and Balkan countries (BC).**



Accurate dietary intake assessment at individual and population level, dietary surveys and nutrition surveillance systems requires harmonized methodology and validated nutritional tools.



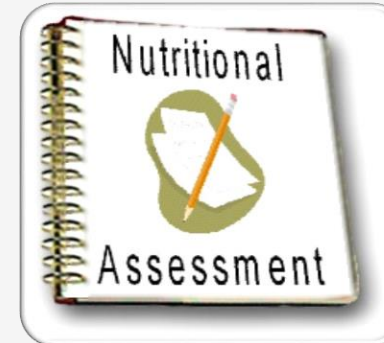
Research infrastructure (RI) and Capacity Development (CD) are essential for harmonized public health nutrition (PHN) research and nutrition epidemiology (NE).



In CEE/Balkan countries lack of RI and CD in PHN&NE were identified, particularly Food Composition Data Bases (FCDB), data base management, dietary assessment tools and lack of standardized dietary intake data.



Institute for Medical Research (IMR), Serbia & CAPNUTRA through several EU projects (EuroFIR & EuroFIR–Nexus, EURRECA, CHANCE, EFSA projects) and FAOREU worked on development of food and health RI and CD in CEE/Balkan countries.



Specific focus was on the development of harmonized food composition database (FCDB) and dietary assessment tools and their multilateral linkages, following European standards and recommendations.

## Capacity Development in Nutrition Research in Balkans in last decade-initiated creation of contemporary, harmonized Research Infrastructure (RI) compliant to European standards

One of the fundamentals of this RI is an innovative new technology tool, DIET ASSESS & PLAN

### DIET ASSESS & PLAN (DAP)

advanced nutritional online tool for food consumption data collection, comprehensive dietary intake assessment and nutrition planning



DAP platform represents important research infrastructure for nutrition epidemiology and public health nutrition research and consists of:

DAP web application for diet planning and 24h, FFQ / FPQ evidence and evaluation,

Food Composition Data Base Management (FCDM) web application,

Serbian online food composition data base (FCDB) -EuroFIR

Balkan food platform with Regional FCDB

Nutrient recommendation datasets



[www.serbianfood.info](http://www.serbianfood.info)

Glibetić, M., et al., Management of food composition database harmonized with EuroFIR criteria using a web application. Journal of Food Composition and Analysis, 2010.

Gurinović, M., et al, Establishment and advances in the online Serbian food and recipe data base harmonized with EuroFIRTM standards. Food Chemistry, 2016

Gurinovic M., et al, Development, features and application of DIET ASSESS & PLAN (DAP) software in supporting public health nutrition research in Central Eastern European Countries (CEEC), Food Chemistry, 2016



# EFSA project - Support to National Dietary Surveys in Compliance with the EU Menu methodology (sixth & seventh support)-DAP implementation in Balkan countries



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**“The adults’ survey”, including subjects from 10 to 74 years old, 2017-2021**  
**(Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro)**



**“The children’s survey”, including subjects from three months up to 9 years old, 2017-2021**  
**(Serbia and North Macedonia) & Montenegro (seventh support) 2018 to 2023.**

# Conclusions

- CAPNUTRA network with CENM/IMR has **delivered impressive food and nutrition CD results in the field of public health nutrition research, research infrastructure (RI), especially regionally harmonized methodology in food consumption and dietary intake assessment for evidence-based nutrition policy**
- Active **participation in EC research projects** and cooperation with other European partners and networks **enhanced nutritional training, exchange of information, knowledge transfer and successful regional CD in food, nutrition and public health research.**
- **CD can stimulate and contribute to Food Systems transformation in Balkan region.**



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**Thank you for your attention!**



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**Capacity development in food and nutrition in central and Eastern Europe:  
A decade of achievements**



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