

SPRING 2022 | ISSUE 1

FENS NEWS

The newsletter of the Federation of European Nutrition Societies



Articles in this issue include

- Introducing the Georgian Nutrition Society
- FENS 2023 Themes Announced

Message from the FENS President

Professor Philip Calder

Welcome to the first issue of FENS News.

FENS is an umbrella organisation that brings together the national nutrition societies of 26 different countries from across Europe – from the North to the South and from the West to the East.

FENS exists to promote the advancement of nutrition science, research and development through international cooperation. If we are to cooperate then communication is important - communication of FENS with its member societies and communication between the member societies.

But also important is communication to the rest of the nutrition, and the wider stakeholder community about what FENS is doing, what the member societies are doing, what opportunities there are and what events are coming up.

Message from the President

Continued

FENS already has its website (<https://fensnutrition.org>), but a newsletter will complement this, and provide a different type and style of communication. In this first issue, you can read about our newest member society from Georgia, about the FENS Presidential Activity on "Improving standards in the science of nutrition", about the FENS Symposium at the International Congress of Nutrition scheduled for December this year in Tokyo, and about the FENS Conference scheduled for late 2023.

There is other news too and an upcoming events page. A great way to start. I really want to thank Tracy Bogan from the FENS Secretariat for pulling this wonderful first issue together. We plan that FENS News will be a regular publication.

So, enjoy this issue and watch out for the next one!



Professor Philip Calder

President
Federation of European Nutrition
Societies

FENS Member Profile: Georgian Nutrition Society

Welcome to one of our latest member Countries.

In each newsletter, we will feature a profile introducing one of our member societies in more depth. In this edition we are joined by Dr Manana Stanley, President of the Georgian Nutrition Society, a young society and recent new member of FENS, to tell us more about Nutrition in Georgia and her society.



Dr Manana Stanley

President
The Georgian Nutrition Society



In 2018 we approached the Nutrition Society to help set up the Georgian Nutrition Society (GNS), with the aim of improving the health of the Georgian public by supporting excellence in research, education, and the pursuit of associated activities to advance the knowledge and application of Nutrition Science. This resulted in a UK scientific delegation visiting Georgia to take part in the Inaugural Nutrition Symposium in Tbilisi. The symposium led to the establishment of the GNS. In the same year, we started our dedicated website. We ran a follow-up conference in May 2019 and had a Spring conference in 2020.

Since its establishment, our members have seen real benefit from their membership, as it has enabled them to attend several international virtual conferences, which Georgian scientists and health professionals would not have had the opportunity to attend previously. The GNS is now planning to run webinars and short courses to further raise the profile of nutritional science.

In 2020 we were accepted into FENS which give GNS the opportunity to collaborate closely with our European partners.

Georgia's rich gastronomic traditions, variety of food and eating habits and lifestyle deserve exploring. The health beneficial effects of a Mediterranean diet have been well researched, with many western countries recommending it to their population; applying similar reasoning, it would be interesting to look at our own regional diets in the Caucasus, especially given traditional longevity in the region. This underlines the importance of developing collaborative links with international partners.

As Georgia has become more westernised, eating habits and lifestyles have changed significantly. Similar trends seem to be the case in neighbourhood countries. Such major changes create additional health challenges so there is a great deal that we can learn in terms of current developments in nutritional science.

We are now planning to hold an international conference in February 2022 in Tbilisi: 'Nutrition Science in Georgia and South Caucasus: Status, Challenges, and Opportunities with the support of the Nutrition Society. It will focus on the medical importance of nutrition and explore the role of nutrition in the incidence of non-communicable diseases linked to modern eating habits and lifestyles. It will also consider the potential for collaboration with international partners.

In the longer term, we are looking to have the well-known Georgian ski resort Bakuriani as an international conference venue for 2023 and are exploring the possibility of establishing a regular Forum on Nutrition and Health (FNH). This forum would provide a platform for academics and health professionals together with policymakers, farming industries and food companies in the region and beyond, to share knowledge from across multiple disciplines for the benefit of all.



The Georgian Nutrition Society

In the longer term, we are looking to have the well-known Georgian ski resort Bakuriani as an international conference venue for 2023 and are exploring the possibility of establishing a regular Forum on Nutrition and Health (FNH). This forum would provide a platform for academics and health professionals together with policymakers, farming industries and food companies in the region and beyond, to share knowledge from across multiple disciplines for the benefit of all.

“

FENS gives GNS the opportunity to collaborate closely with our European partners.

Would you like your society to be in the next FENS Newsletter?
Contact: office@fensnutrition.org

FENS Announces Themes For its 2023 Conference

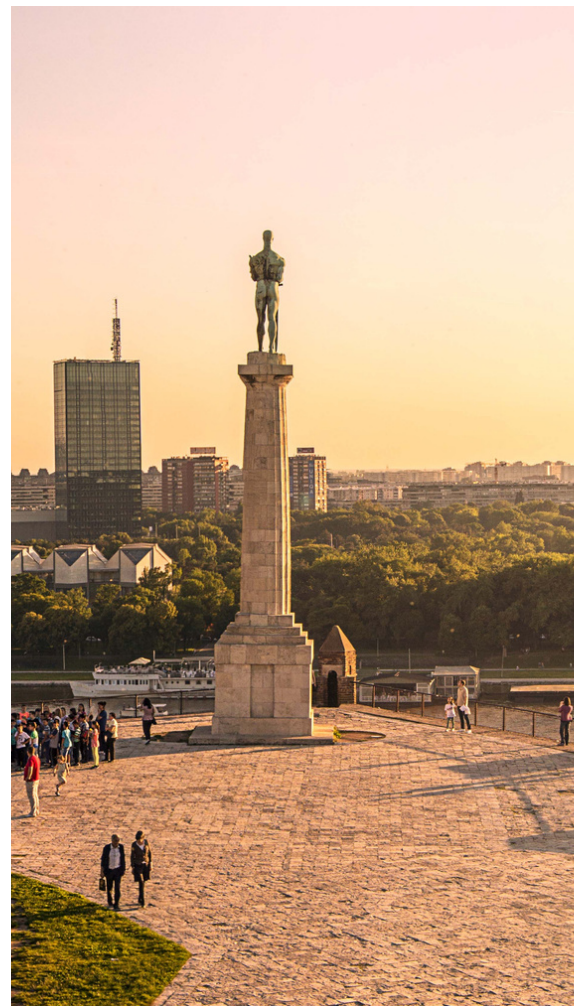
Sladjana Sobajic

University of Belgrade,
Belgrade, Serbia
President-Elect of FENS
Chair of the 14th European
Nutrition Conference

The 14th European Nutrition Conference will take place in Belgrade in October 2023. The FENS Board is delighted to announce the ten themes ("tracks") for the scientific symposia that will form the backbone of the scientific programme. These themes are:

- **Nutrition across the life course**
- **Nutrition, metabolism, and chronic diseases**
- **Dietary studies, guidelines, and recommendations**
- **New technologies in nutrition research**
- **Personalized nutrition**
- **Nutrition and the environment, sustainability, and diversity**
- **Food science**
- **Dietary bioactives**
- **Nutrition education, consumers, and practitioners**
- **Cultural, societal, and behavioural aspects of diet and nutrition**

Within each theme, there will be four symposia. Some of these symposia will be organised by committees (one for each theme) that have been established by the FENS Board, while some will be organised by FENS member societies, sister organisations, NGOs, research project consortia, universities, and suchlike. It is anticipated that details of some of these symposia with the topics and speakers will begin to be announced in mid-2022.



FENS To Host Symposium At The 22nd IUNS International Congress of Nutrition

Philip C. Calder & Sladjana Sobajic

FENS will host a symposium at the 22nd IUNS-ICN to be held in Tokyo in early December 2022. The symposium will act as a dissemination event for the current FENS Presidential activity on "Improving standards in the science of nutrition." Each of the three working groups will present their key findings.

The speakers will be Hinke Haisma (the University of Groningen, The Netherlands) who will speak on "Why ((concepts and methods) medical science) ≠ ((concepts and methods) nutrition science)," F.J. Armando Perez-Cueto (University of Copenhagen, Denmark) who will speak on "How can the credibility of nutrition science be improved?" and Charlotte Debeugny (Nutrition in Paris, France) who will speak on "Building trust - tools to enhance nutrition science communication." This will be an exciting event with plenty of time for discussion and debate.

The symposium is currently scheduled for Thursday, 8th December 2022 from 13:15 to 14:45 Tokyo time.



FENS Working Groups

An update on the FENS Working Groups on "Improving Standards in the Science of Nutrition"

The Federation of European Nutrition Societies (FENS) has established three working groups on the topic of improving standards in the science of nutrition [1]. The overall aims of the activity are outlined elsewhere [1] and the tasks of working groups are related to 1) concepts and methods, 2) organization, capabilities and funding and 3) internal and external communication. The working groups will produce statements and guidance related to the conduct of nutrition research and its funding and to the communication of the findings of research in nutrition science to different stakeholder groups. FENS will champion the implementation of its guidance throughout Europe and will act internationally in conjunction with other societies such as the American Society of Nutrition and the Nutrition Society of Australia. Members of the working groups represent FENS member societies [2].



At a first virtual workshop held on 29 March 2021, each working group presented its progress on the defined tasks and this was critically discussed considering potential overlaps between working groups and next steps. The working group on "Concepts and Methods" has produced a conceptual framework and based on this, three sub-activities have been defined. Due to the overlapping interest and aims, as well as already executed extensive work within the Foodball JPI-project on biomarkers and their definitions [3], subgroups 1 and 2 are working together. The first subgroup is discussing how to determine a cause-and-effect relationship in nutrition, taking into account the totality of evidence and the level of acceptable certainty. The Bradford-Hill criteria have been taken as a starting point. The second subgroup is discussing the predictive reliability of biomarkers and how to apply them credibly in nutrition and health-related studies. Valid biomarkers may enable the application of relevant criteria to establish a cause-and-effect relationship and they are used to complement any subjective reporting methodology. Modern methodologies such as metabolomics analysis of foods, blood, urine and other tissue specimens have enormous potential to identify the new and more reliable biomarkers for nutrition research, but their validation is demanding. The third subgroup is considering the utility of alternative study methodologies and models, such as participatory science, citizen science and N-of-1 trials, in research on the effects of diet, nutrition on health. In contrast to classical research methods where expert scientists determine the generation of data, participatory science is based on a bottom-up approach. It is used to give voice to those who have not been heard and is thus well suited for marginalized individuals or population groups, providing insights into different causal patterns that otherwise would not have been identified for further study. Due to its qualitative methodology, it is ranked at the bottom of the hierarchy of evidence.

FENS Working Groups

Continued

However, it must be better recognized that much can be learned from this approach and that science is not an entirely top-down exercise. The working group will frame its considerations around examples such as sugar and obesity, preventive effects of vitamin D, and overweight/obesity in those of lower socioeconomic status and the question of how health can be made consistently measurable in relation to nutrition and prevention of disease will be a central theme. The working group on "Organisation, Capabilities and Funding" is reflecting on how nutrition science can be best defined and what other disciplines are needed to better understand the role of diet and nutrition in life-long health and well-being. To reach this aim a questionnaire has been developed to investigate and map the diversity of financing and funding systems in nutrition-related research across Europe. Moreover, this working group is implementing an inventory of nutrition education in Europe considering that the organization of nutrition research is dependent on the fields where nutrition education is embedded, as their scope would be different if students are formed in, for example, agriculture or medicine. The funding of nutrition research in Europe is a central theme for this working group as is the means to secure scientific integrity irrespective of funding source. The working group on "Internal and External Communication" is creating a series of best practice guidelines in order to ensure the consistency, transparency, clarity and quality of nutrition science communication. This is fundamental for ensuring the public, patients, health professionals and regulators can have confidence in nutrition science.

Two main sub-activities have been identified. The Science subgroup is updating the reporting guidelines for nutrition intervention studies. Various guidelines have been identified that have been developed to strengthen the reporting of research studies in health. The overall aim of such guidelines is to ensure that a published manuscript can be understood, that the research is replicable, that if applicable, health professionals can use research findings in their clinical decision-making, and that any data are sufficient to be included in a systematic review. Additional guidelines are available for case report studies, preclinical animal research and economic evaluations. Extensions to several guidelines have been created including for N-of-1, pilot studies and studies with a non-standard design. However, to date, there exists only one extension with a focus on nutrition research: STROBE-nut for epidemiological studies in nutrition [4, 5]. Yet, there are many human nutrition studies conducted that involve an intervention, the reporting of which could be enhanced through specialized guidelines for study reporting as well as protocol preparation and reporting. The focus of the Science Subgroup is therefore to develop additional extensions to guidelines commonly used in nutrition research, starting with CONSORT and SPIRIT; this is being explored through interaction with others interested in such developments. The Public subgroup is assessing nutrition scientist views on the existing research-to-press communication process. A survey has been conducted and the results of this research are currently under analysis. Initial analysis highlights that not all institutions across Europe have press offices, that there is a desire for a unified approach to guide the dissemination of research in nutrition science, and that the majority of the respondents think that nutrition research findings should be released when having a direct and applicable consequence or health advice.

FENS Working Groups

Continued

Within institutions that do have press offices, the decision to disseminate research findings is often not made by the researchers themselves. All three working groups are composed of a mix of junior and senior scientists with a variety of backgrounds. There is a very positive working atmosphere which is illustrated by the respectful and creative collaboration within and between the working groups.

- **Hinke Haisma**
 - University of Groningen, Groningen, The Netherlands
- **Marjukka Kolehmainen**
 - University of Eastern Finland, Kuopio, Finland
- **F.J. Armando Perez-Cuerto**
 - University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark
- **Alessandra Bordon**
 - University of Bologna, Cesena, Italy
- **Charlotte Debeugny**
 - Paris, France
- **Helen M. Roche**
 - University College Dublin, Dublin, Republic of Ireland
- **Jan de Vries**
 - De Vries Nutrition Solutions, Gorssel, The Netherlands
- **Philip C. Calder**
 - University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom

1. Calder PC, Feskens EJM, Kraneveld AD, Plat J, van 't Veer P, de Vries J (2020) Towards "Improved Standards in the Science of Nutrition" through the establishment of Federation of European Nutrition Societies Working Groups. *Ann Nutr Metab* 76, 2–5.

2. FENS News (2020) *Ann Nutr Metab* 76, 443–444

3. Foodball, the Food Biomarker Alliance. See <https://food-metabolome.org/>.

4. Lachat C, Hawwash D, Ocké MC, Berg C, Forsum E, Hörnell A, Larsson C, Sonestedt E, Wirfält E, Åkesson A, Kolsteren P, Byrnes G, De Keyzer W, Van Camp J, Cade JE, Slimani N, Cevallos M, Egger M, Huybrechts I (2016) Strengthening the reporting of observational studies in epidemiology-nutritional epidemiology (STROBE-nut): An extension of the STROBE statement. *PLoS Med* 13, e1002036.

5. Hörnell A, Berg C, Forsum E, Larsson C, Sonestedt E, Åkesson A, Lachat C, Hawwash D, Kolsteren P, Byrnes G, De Keyzer W, Van Camp J, Cade JE, Greenwood DC, Slimani N, Cevallos M, Egger M, Huybrechts I, Wirfält E (2017) Perspective: An extension of the STROBE statement for observational studies in nutritional epidemiology (STROBE-nut): explanation and elaboration. *Adv Nutr* 8, 652–678.

FENS Summer and Winter Schools

Open Call to all Members

Apply now to host the next FENS School

For many years FENS has run a scheme to fund FENS member societies to host a capacity-building short course for students. Sadly, the pandemic has meant the last in-person school, titled "Scientific basis for FBDGs – new challenges" took place 19-23 August 2019 in Belgrade, Serbia. The Summer School focused on translating scientific findings into nutritional recommendations and was hosted by the Serbian Nutrition Society and the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade.

A virtual event was held in 2020 - "Methodology and experiences in FBDG development and application". The success of this virtual school opens the door for us to expand the scope of the FENS Schools to include virtual or hybrid schools, especially for 2022.

The schools are usually aligned with academic holiday dates and are typically aimed at capacity building of PhD students and post-docs working in the nutritional, epidemiological or public health fields. Hosting a school provides excellent opportunities for societies to promote their work and can provide early-career nutritionists with chances to gain experience in organizing academic events. The students attending the FENS schools can network with peers in the field of nutrition and associated disciplines, as well as meeting and learning from eminent lecturers.

As we begin to see the end of the pandemic in sight FENS would like to re-establish the student school's programme. All FENS members (in good standing) are eligible to organise and host a winter or summer school. The format proposed could be either in person, virtual or hybrid.

If your society would like to organise a future FENS Summer or Winter School, please get in contact via email to office@fensnutrition.org.



Belgrade Summer School 2019:
Students attending the School



Belgrade Summer School 2019:
River Cruise

Bulletin Board

Health Claims Unpacked

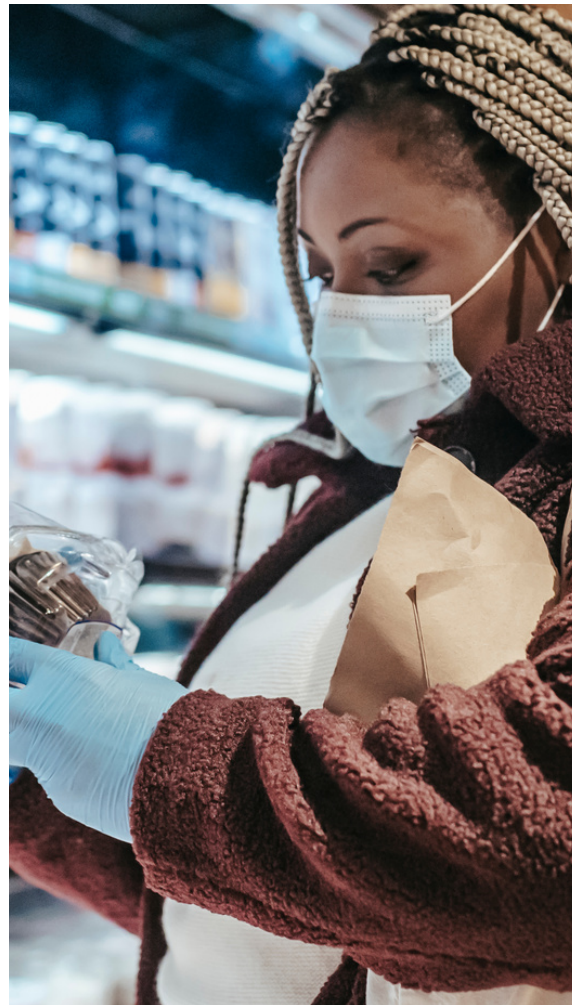
Health Claims Unpacked a new EU based project developing a digital toolkit aiming to improve how health claims on foods are communicated to consumers. Developed by a multidisciplinary team the platform is informed by linguistics, information design, nutritional science and behavioural economics. The project aims to use the information gathered to help manufacturers and marketers communicate more effectively about the health benefits of food and lead consumers to make more informed choices.

BNF has partnered with organisations including the University of Reading and the Technical University of Munich, to develop an EU-funded project investigating the communication of health claims on food labels which is being led by the University of Reading

<https://www.healthclaimsunpacked.co.uk>.

They would like to disseminate the project results to relevant university departments and wish to create a list of universities across Europe that offer nutrition science degrees, similar to the list of UK accredited courses that is available on the Association for Nutrition website

<https://www.associationfornutrition.org/degree-accreditation/accredited-programmes>. In the absence of an accrediting body within a particular country, a list held by a nutrition society of courses/programmes recognised by the society would also be useful.



Upcoming Events

Conferences in 2022

FENS is always ready to share the news and events of our members and associated organisations. If you have an event to announce please email the FENS Secretariat: office@fensnutrition.org

ONE – Health, Environment, Society – Conference 2022

Hybrid: Brussels and Online,
<https://www.one2022.eu/>

Collaboration and partnership for a more sustainable Europe are the key drivers of the ONE – Health, Environment, Society – Conference 2022 which will be held in Brussels and online on 21 – 24 June 2022.

The four-day scientific programme will examine food and feed safety from the broad perspective of sustainable food systems, focusing on the need to implement a “One Health – One Environment” approach and exploring possible developments of risk assessment science.

The event is co-designed by EFSA and its sister agencies – the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) the European Environment Agency (EEA), the European Medicines Agency (EMA) – and the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC).

By bringing together scientists with diverse backgrounds and expertise, the conference will be an important opportunity to share knowledge and contribute to a crucial debate, addressing key topics on the EU political agenda.

22nd IUNS International Congress of Nutrition

THE POWER OF NUTRITION :
FOR THE SMILES OF 10 BILLION PEOPLE
Tokyo, Japan
6-11 December 2022

The call for abstracts and award applications for the 22nd IUNS - ICN closes on **18 March 2022**.

For more information and to submit an [abstract](#) or an [award](#) application visit icn22.org for more information.

About IUNS – ICN 22

Tokyo is looking forward to welcoming the world to the 22nd IUNS - ICN in December and to celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of IUNS, as the first meeting took place in 1946.

The population of our planet is projected to grow to 10 billion over the course of this century. Nutrition has the power to provide health and happiness to people living today, as well as to future generations, as we head towards the 22nd century. Accordingly, we have chosen as the theme of the congress, “The Power of Nutrition: For the Smiles of 10 Billion People.” The congress will be an ideal opportunity for participants to reaffirm or rediscover their mission to help realize good health and happiness for future generations.



Save The Date

The 3rd World Mediterranean Diet Conference

**The 3rd World Mediterranean Diet Conference will take place in Bari, Italy on Wednesday 28th September 2022.
Further information will be available soon.**



Contact Us

Federation of European Nutrition Societies (FENS)

c/o The Nutrition Society
Boyd Orr House
10 Cambridge Court
210 Shepherds Bush Road
London
W6 7NJ

office@fensnutrition.org

www.fensnutrition.org

**The Federation
of European
Nutrition
Societies**

