

The West University of Timisoara
Center for Regional Development, Transfrontier Studies
and Territorial Development (CDR-START)

With the support of:

Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie

Organizes the International Interdisciplinary Symposium:

***"Health territories: agri-food production, nutrition,
food security"***

PANSa-TS

Timișoara, 27-28 October 2017

With the collaboration of:

**University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Timisoara, University of Agricultural
Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Banat Timisoara, University of NoviSad,
University of Szeged**

**The social context of concerns about health,
nutrition and food security**

Issues related to nutrition and health are of great relevance and have an increasingly high social impact. Their responses have an increased social impact, relying on, at least, two essential gains of technology and contemporary society, including:

- the ability to exploit high-quality natural resources with nutritional value, but also the possibility of introducing artificial modifications for a growing number of food products, whether basic or sophisticated (1);

- the amplification and diversification of the means of communication and information, vehicles by which valid information circulates, but also manipulations, even imposture, disguised as miracle solutions, for commercial purposes (2).

The European Union has early seized the potential for research and innovation in the field, as well as the need to introduce rigor and respect for the citizen in all areas directly or indirectly related to human health. Consequently, the issue of nutrition and food security as factors influencing health status is a priority strategic objective for the 2014-2020 programming cycle of European development.

Creation of the regional university network in the fields of health, Nutrition and Food Security (SaIN)

In this context, the **Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) in Central and Eastern Europe (ECO)** has launched the initiative to create a Regional University Network in the field of health, nutrition and food security, resources and expertise in higher education and research in the region. The intention is to attract other actors with responsibilities, activities and interests in food safety and security: public management, agencies and offices, associations, companies, specialized law firms, etc. In addition to the resources of the AUF and the universities involved, the network intends to attract other support resources, then expand and orient itself towards the selection and promotion of research and development projects and training for European funding.

The initial meeting of the network took place in Bucharest on 15 June 2017 at the AUF-ECO headquarters, which laid the foundation for the support structures: the Scientific Committee and the Steering Committee composed of representatives designated by the universities participating in the meeting, from Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova. To these members, will be added the representatives of universities of other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, according to their interest and their participation in the activities of the network.

The University of West Timisoara (UVT), founding member of the network, expressed interest in taking an active part in setting up and strengthening this network. The complexity of its actions will gradually increase, depending on the reactions of the academic community and the socio-economic integration environment, as well as on the projects put forward by the initiators. With a view to their realization, the UVT gives priority to the principles of inter-institutional cooperation, scientific quality, interdisciplinary dialogue and social responsibility.

The International Symposium *Territories of health: agro-food production, nutrition, food security (PANSa-TS)*

A first activity proposed by the West University of Timisoara, approved by the Scientific Committee of SaIN and supported by the AUF in ECO, is the organization - in Timisoara - of an ***internationalinterdisciplinary symposium***, developing contacts, debates and interconnection, on the basis of shared experiences.

This collaboration will subsequently lead to targeted, interdisciplinary thematic applications, both in research and training, and in the dissemination of good practices in organic agricultural production, nutrition and food security.

The theme of the symposium organized by the West University of Timisoara, with the collaboration of other universities in the region, is: "***The Territories of Health: agro-food production, nutrition, food security***".

By the *health territories* we understand not only the geographical areas of differentiation of dietary habits and health status, induced by the types of nutrition, but above all, the areas of knowledge and scientific focuses, developed in order to improve the health status of the population, especially children and young people.

Nutritional knowledge and the modeling of population behavior became subjects of great

importance, as economic competition has stimulated productivity practices and the production of seductive but potentially hazardous food products, affecting the functional equilibrium of the human body.

As initiator and main organizer of the symposium, the West University of Timișoara wishes to bring together and put into dialogue skills and actions in the field of nutrition and food security so that the impact of food on public health become increasingly mediated by knowledge, regulation and accountability.

The symposium proposes *four main themes* of reflection and debate, corresponding to the fields of application of different research, training and dissemination activities, namely:

Topic 1: Issues and challenges of ecological agro-food production;

Topic 2: Representations, nutrition practices and health status of the population;;

Topic 3: Consumer economics and food security issues;

Topic 4: Public policies and private strategies for nutrition and healthy eating.

Conclusion

As one of the first transversal activities of projects launched by the *SaIN Network*, the main expected result of the colloquium's work will be to help strengthen the main orientations of knowledge and action proposed by it. The second expected outcome is to see the network expanded by new competencies from Central and Eastern Europe, of a complementary nature, the mobilization of which could increase the potential impact of ongoing and future projects.

Presentation of the symposium themes:

Theme 1: Challenges of ecological agro-food production

Within the framework of this theme, papers are expected to reflect the level of knowledge of the different types of organic farming, in terms of cropping techniques, but, above all, from a pragmatic point of view: where are the main concentration of organic agro-food production regions, with what problems they face, what is the success in the organic market, what are the trends in these areas, and so on.

Communications related to experimental research in various research centers in the region are also expected to improve the performance of local species, the combination of organic nutrients and healthy and active ingredients, including production, design or conditioning of organic foods. It is recommended that these communications respect the interdisciplinary spirit of the symposium, avoiding the technicalities of the research.

Theme 2: Representations, nutrition practices and health status of the population

The theme is open to communications about the subjective perceptions of different categories of the population, their expectations, convictions and beliefs. Also relevant are communications that analyze the nutritional behaviors of groups and individuals, conditioned by a variety of mental representations, as well as by other influencing factors that are combined with perceptions such as culinary traditions, the economic resources of the families / individuals, the nutritional behaviors mimetic (food model), the degree of scientific knowledge of the effects of certain foods, the opportunities of the agro-food markets, etc.

Finally, the theme also covers studies on the effects of different types of diets on the vitality and health of the population, especially on children and young people, the prevalence of obesity, causes and means of combat, the role of outdoor activities, weight loss cures and anorexia, the impact of consumption of energy products, etc.

Theme 3: Consumer Economy and issues of food security

Consumption economy has a number of virtues, because it is a direct result of free market mechanisms and has contributed decisively to the material well-being of the population. In all modern societies, one of the main tendencies (even aspirations) is to arrive at a way of life "as in advanced countries" characterized by abundance and widespread consumption economy.

Unfortunately, on the one hand, the consumer economy has negative consequences on health, in developed countries, where society is better prepared to deal with this. On the other hand, in developing and emerging countries, abundance is a novelty that only certain sections of the population have access to. Other structures in society simply mimic consumer habits by buying cheap, low-quality products, depending on their purchasing power. The consequences on the health of the population can therefore sometimes take dramatic forms.

However, in these countries, the activity of the structures empowered to ensure that food safety standards are respected is less effective, due to the lack of skills and experience, limited resources, higher incidence of corruption. Papers that reflect these aspects and, in particular, articulate strategies and solutions to address the negative effects of the consumption economy on food security and the health status of the population are addressed by this theme of the symposium. Of course, food security is a very broad area, which goes beyond food control bodies and has an impact, including on the strategic interests of States, insofar as they are able to identify and to defend them, in the context of an increasingly liberal and competitive agro-food market.

Theme 4: Public policy and private strategies in nutrition and healthy eating

Previous themes require communications that deal with issues of public policies and private strategies including strategies of local associations in the field of nutrition and food. Public actors, the private sector or NGOs have each of the concerns, interests and responsibilities in the area of nutrition, food security and the health of the population.

One of the main functions of public actors and associations is to find the best strategies to ensure a wide dissemination of knowledge about healthy nutrition, on the pitfalls of the market, about the dangers of bad habits food, on the models of risk behaviour. These characteristics are reflected in public policies and action strategies, the role of pedagogy and of control.

On the other hand, private food sector operators have developed their own strategies for success, depending on the effectiveness of public control, the activism of the associative movement and the changes in attitude and behaviour of consumers. The concerns of the authorities, associations and certification bodies must cover both control of marketed products, that information and training of consumers as shapers of supply on the market, and not victims.

PUBLICATION/DISSEMINATION

The abstracts accepted by the Scientific Committee will be joined in the proceedings of the Conference PANSaTS 2017. Scientific communications written in the form of articles to be published will be published in the journal *Geographica Timisiensis*, BDI/IDB indexed journal, published by the West University of Timisoara (subject to positive assessment and acceptance by the Scientific Committee, which will evaluate each article). The rules of writing of articles to publish in the journal *Geographica Timisiensis* are available here: [Publication requirements](#). The articles in final form will be sent to the address: geographica.tm@e-uvt.ro, with the words „for the special

issue PANSaTS”.

The expenses of publication of texts received in final form will be supported by the organizers of the Conference.

Authors who want to enhance their communications also can do, based on their interests. However, a mention of the Symposium where articles have been disclosed is strongly recommended. Deadline for submission of articles in final form for the journal Geographica Timisiensis: October 28, 2017.

Organizational Details

The working language of the colloquium: French (or English, with PPT support in French)

Online registration: form available on line ([click here](#), then fill in).

Deadline for registration: September 30, 2017.

Registration fees / participant: 75 lei or 18 euro (doctoral students: 50 ron or 13 euro), to be paid by bank transfer on the following account numbers:

- in lei (ron): RO71BACX0000000832118001

- in euro: RO44BACX0000000832118002

opened at UniCredit Bank: 3, Carol Telbisz Str., 300001, Timișoara, Romania

SWIFT: BACXROBU

Account holder: Fundatia UNIVERSITATEA DE VEST DIN TIMISOARA, CIF: 31027065

Mandatory information on the payment document: "PANSaTS col symposium tax + Participant's name and first name (s).

For those who request an **invoice**, we need (by e-mail):

- NOC and address of the participant (if payment and account will be made in personal name);

- CUI / CIF and address of the institution (if the payment and the account will be made on the name of the institution of affiliation).

Questions: to send to the e-mail address: nicolae.popa@e-uvt.ro

The symposium Program and other details will be sent to you in the second Colloquium Circular (half of September 2017), or will be available on the conference website ([click here](#)).

Steering committee:

Prof. Dr. Nicolae POPA - President

Conf. Dr. Catalina ANCUTA

Lect. Dr. Ramona IVAN

Asist. Dr. Alexandru DRAGAN

Asist. Dr. Ionut ZISU

Dr. Andrei DORNIK

Timișoara, 05.09.2017

Prof. Dr. Nicolae POPA,

West University of Timișoara,

Chairman of the SaIN Network Steering Committee

President of the Organizing Committee of Coll. PANSaTS