# Adapt to changes – Vision of the Hungarian food system

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Keywords: food system, Hungary, FIT4FOOD
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FIT4FOOD2030 supports the development and implementation of the European Commission's FOOD 2030 policy framework – to find solutions to the challenges facing our food systems, such as obesity, malnutrition, hunger, climate change, scarce resources, and waste through research and innovation. It provides insights into food system trends and related R&I policy frameworks, best practices (showcases) and future R&I breakthroughs. Further objective of the work is to execute effective and targeted communication and dissemination activities adapted to different stakeholders and to develop a plan for continued communication beyond the project, thereby maximising the impact of FIT4FOOD2030's outputs and policy recommendations.

In order to collect detailed background information on national level the project works on two levels. 'City Labs' develop educational activities that meet community needs and build competences (Hungarian coordinator: Environmental Social Science Research Group), while 'Policy Labs' (Hungarian coordinators: Hungarian Chamber of Agriculture and NARIC Research Institute of Agricultural Economics) responsible for – taking into account the FOOD2030 priorities and the involvement of relevant stakeholders – the developing and running of a stakeholder network from the most relevant actors of the food system, as well as the mapping of the Hungarian food system, alignment of action points and drawing up of recommendations.
The aim of the present paper is to give a short overview about the results of the Hungarian Policy Lab so far.

## Materials and Methods

In order to gather more detailed information about the strengths/weakness, challenges and knowledge gaps of the Hungarian food system, as well as to draw up of the vision two focus group interviews (September 2018 and March 2019) were organized with the relevant stakeholders. The Hungarian stakeholder network – built with the help of snowball method – after the second workshop consists of 43 members from different organizations (NGO/CSO, policy makers, knowledge centres, business, funding agencies, SCAR Food Systems Strategic Working Group, Copa Cogeca) covering the whole food system. The interviews were semi-structured and the guidelines were developed ahead. Besides asking of questions word associations were also applied. After the interviews the note maker and the moderatos briefly evaluated the results ('debrief'). The word associations were analysed quantitatively, while other results by qualitative content analysis (Vicsek, 2006).

## Results

During the first focus group discussion, with the help of word associations the strength and weakness, the challenges, the changes needed, as well as the characteristics of the ideal Hungarian food system were explored. According to the answers, the Hungarian food system is based on conventions and traditions and supervised by complex authority structure. However, it also has inherent difficulties: lack of cooperation among sectoral players and skilled workforce, as well as low level of consumer awareness. The Hungarian food system will face global market and social challenges, labour force shortage, as well as large-scale processors have to restore their reputation among consumers. Thus, several changes needed like strengthening of cooperation, increasing the intensity of education, as well as enhancing R&I activity. From the characterization of the ideal food system a draft graph of the Hungarian food system vision was developed.

One of the aims of the second workshop was to finalize the vision of the Hungarian food system. Sixty 'trend cards' with the most relevant trends influencing the food system was utilized (Wepner et. al., 2018). During the interview a number of visions associated to the food system elements have been drawn up. Production should work in accordance with the environment, react to challenges and use up-to-date technologies. Logistics sector has to be adapting to global concentrations and digitalization and should take advantage of the potential in short supply chains. Food processing needs to adjust to consumer needs and health by producing high-quality, processed foods under efficient, sustainable conditions. Packaging and marketing sectors should strive for minimal waste, while meeting the consumer needs and providing adequate information on food labels. Members of the distribution sector should apply fair trade practices, as well as focus on concentration and the demands of online consumers. Consumers have a key role in the future-proof development of the Hungarian food system. They should make their food purchasing and consumption decisions in a conscious, responsible and open-minded way. Resource and waste recovery sectors should aim at maximum recycling and minimum waste

generation, in accordance with the actual regulatory system. Furthermore, the whole food system needs to integrate several general principles, like food safety, environmental consciousness, digitalization, utilization of alternative protein sources, and prevention of non-communicable diseases (Figure 1).

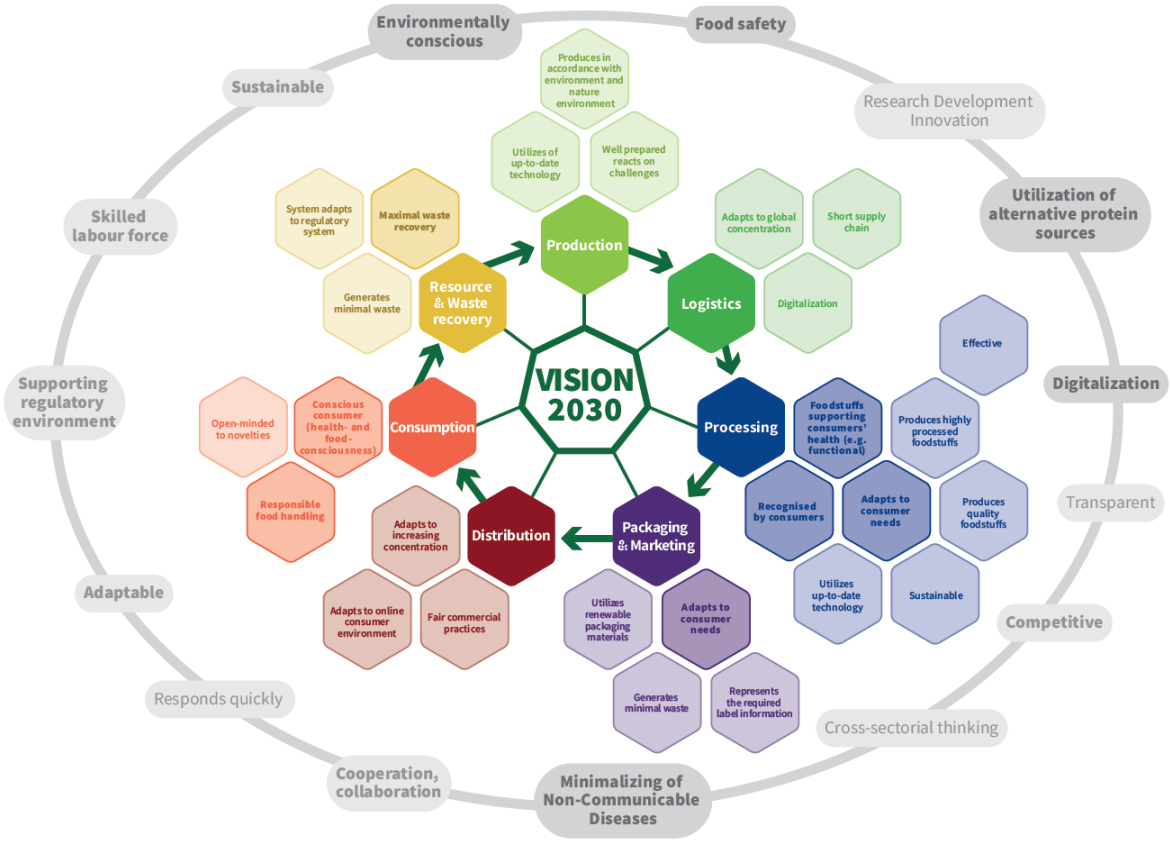


Figure 1. Vision of the Hungarian food system

## Conclusions

Preparing the food supply system for the future challenges is a must. Careful planning and implementation requires the active involvement of all stakeholders concerned – including R&I –, as well as the promotion and dialogue between the various sectors. The present work pointed out that the Hungarian food supply system has its strengths that can provide an adequate starting point for the transformation. However, it is also struggling with a number of shortcomings that should be overcome for creating a future-proof system.

## Acknowledgment

This work was prepared in the frame of the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 774088.

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