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Policy Chat

Does manipulation of food culture impact food system policy?

www.feast2030.eu



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FEAST

Food  systems that support
transitions to healthy  and
sustainable  diets



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FEAST's in simple terms:

*Make it **easy** for every person in Europe to eat a **delicious, healthier and more sustainable** diet.*

easy: equal opportunity for everyone

every person: all people, not just citizens

delicious, healthier and more sustainable: support the transition

European Food Systems: Lose-Lose-Lose-Win

People: LOSE

- Poor-quality diets - leading cause of death and a top contributor to Non-Communicable Disease (NCD – high BP, diabetes, obesity/overweight)
 - NCDs: ~75% of all diseases in Europe
 - NCDs: ~ 85% of all deaths in Europe
- Entrench health inequalities

Environment: LOSE

- 26% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- 50% of global habitable land use
- 70% of freshwater use
- 78% of eutrophication
- 60% of biodiversity loss

Public Sector/Society: LOSE

- EU governments spend about €700 billion/year to treat NCD
 - ~70% of the ~€1 trillion (7-10% of GDP) EU governments spend annually on healthcare
- Cost of overweight/obesity to increase from \$2 trillion to \$4 trillion by 2035

Large Multinationals: WIN

- Processed foods sales: ~\$350 billion, ~7% profit margin
- Soft drinks – sales: ~\$100 billion, ~14% profit margin
- Fast food – sales: ~\$75 billion, ~13% profit margin

FEAST: Transition to Win-Win-Win-Win

NEEDS

political decision-making that determines the overall context of the collective choices of food system actors that shape food environments

procurement of healthy and sustainable food by producers, retailers and the food industry, and how this creates food environments that influence food cultures

individual dietary choices shaped by food cultures & environments

STAKEHOLDER GROUP LEVELS

Macro

EU Commission & policymakers, National authorities

Meso

Provincial/Municipal/Local authorities, Large food industry (producers, retailers distributors), Hospitality/Catering, Health-care providers, Education system (schools, universities)

Micro

EU citizens, diverse vulnerable groups, non-governmental consumer, community & patient organisations, SMEs, small farmers

ACTIVITIES

Macro + Meso

- Develop systemic transition models,
- Get/create multi-level perspective on socio-technical transitions,
- Implement transition management,
- Design strategic niche management and the technological innovation
- Capture relevant barriers and enablers of food system actors to improve food environments.

Meso + Micro

- Development of innovative, effective tools and strategies
- Use of digital tools for self-management Monitoring of policy impacts.

Micro

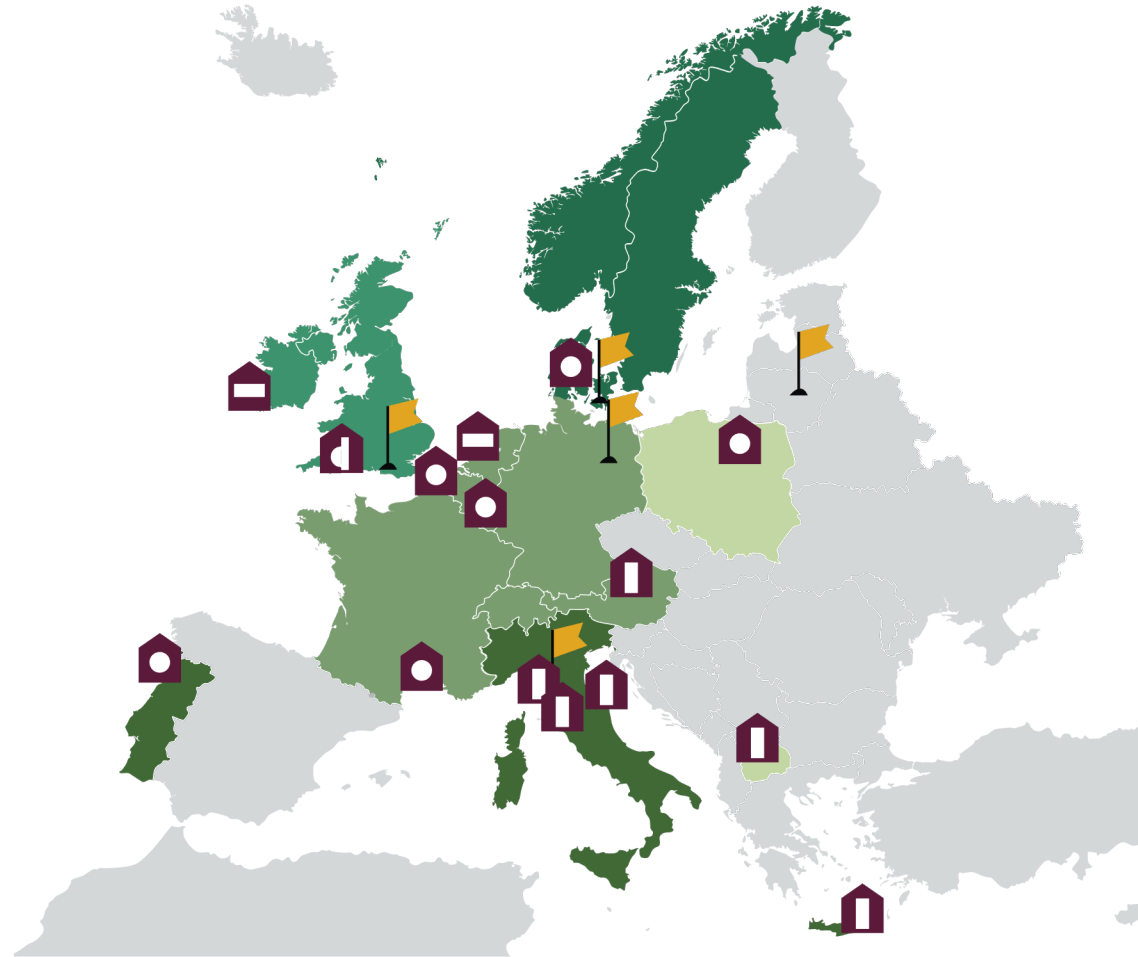
- Model of social transformation in food behaviours
- Identify individual determinants of dietary choices
- Identify social practices of food (e.g. food cultures).

FEAST Consortium

15 countries

35 partners

13 living labs

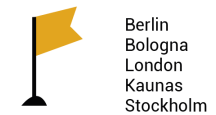


LIVING LAB



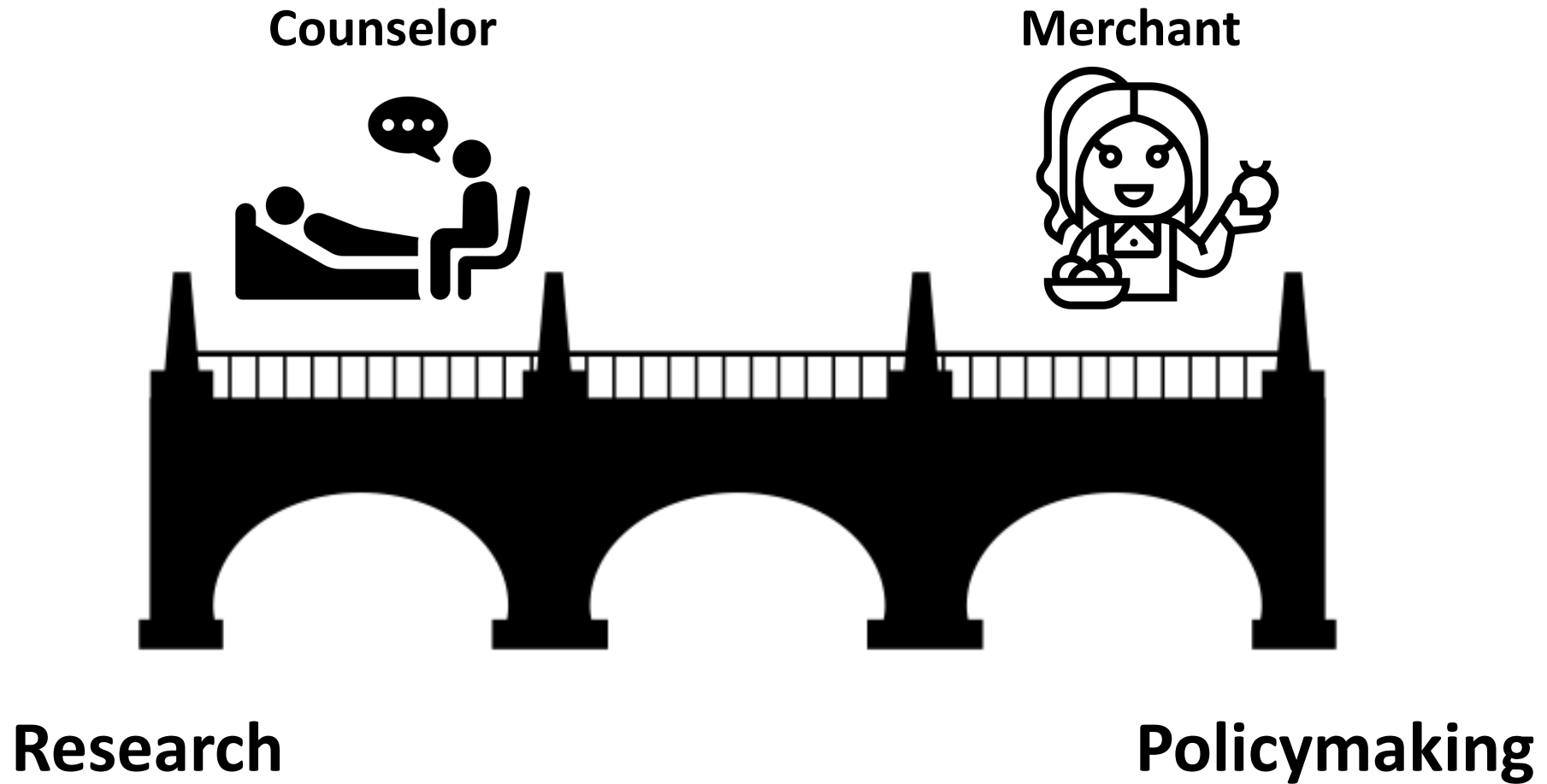
- Anglosaxon group**
Cork Oxfordshire (GFO)
- Central European group**
Rotterdam (ROT) Avignon (AVI)
Leuven (LEU) Ghent (GEN)
LEADER Region Weinviertel-Donauraum (LEA)
- Scandinavian group**
Guldborgsund (GUL)
- Southern group**
Alto Minho (CIM) Sitia (SIT)
Lucca Valli Etrusche (TNO)
- Eastern European group**
Lodz (UL) Prilep (PRI)

ASSOCIATED SITES

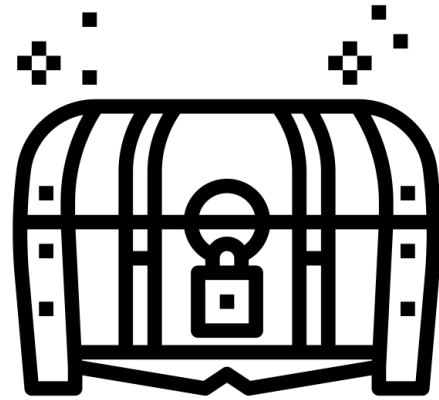


https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fsufs.2022.1039127/full?trk=organization_guest_main-feed-card_reshare_feed-article-content

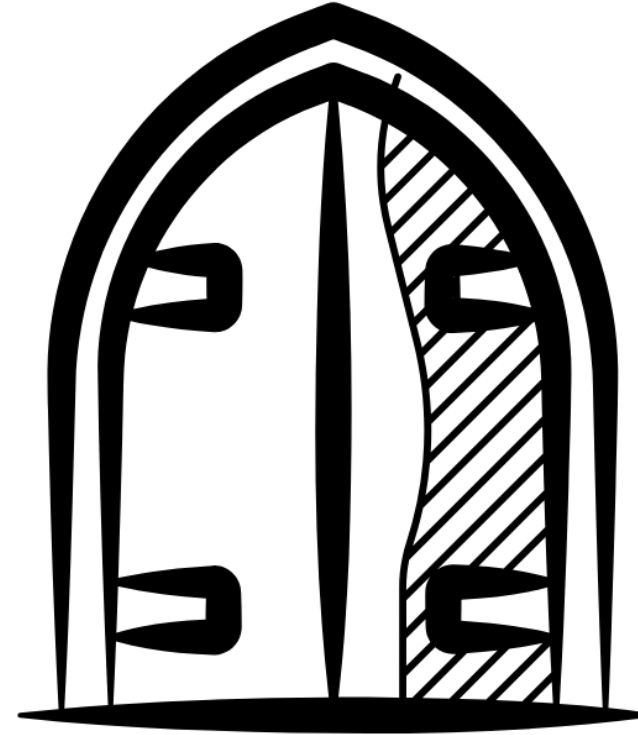
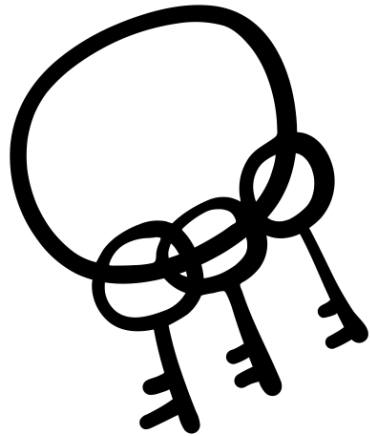
What does a Policy Work Package do?



We want a healthier and more sustainable food system

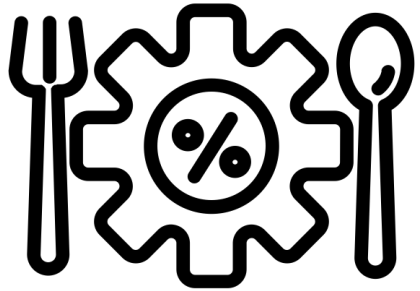


FEAST WP7 Policy Chats/1

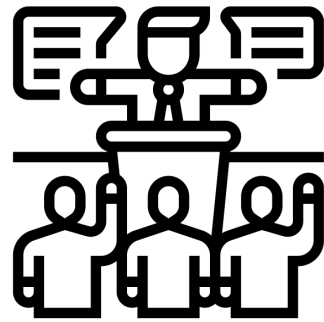


If the gate does not open, could the problem be also the we have kept trying only with the same set of keys?

FEAST WP7 Policy Chats/2



1. Sustainability and equity



2. Research and political involvement



3. Food Security



4. End of the F2F



Does manipulation of food culture impact food system policy?
eventbrite.de • 2 min read

5. Public webinar of policy and food cultures (26/03/24)

House rules for today

- 40 minutes presentation with plenty of time for Q&A
- Use the Q&A section to write your question. If it does not work, write in the chat
- We are great also in the background, so feel free to take a break when you need to
- We will provide contacts for any follow-up



Introduction: Why food cultures?

Sofia Romagosa, FEAST WP7 team member
Research Officer, EuroHealthNet



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What is food culture?

Set of beliefs, values and practices around food

It's about how we eat, how we prepare and how we consume our food

Expresses identity and meaning



Food culture evolve with time

The way that we **engage
with and consume food
changes with time**

Example: Italian cuisine



Why do we eat, what we eat?

Why do we prepare and consume the food the way we do?



- Individual factors
- Social environment
- Cultural environment
- Physical setting
- Economic environment
- Informational environment

They influence food choice and the way we behave around food



Adopting a food culture lens

Provides a **holistic picture** of complex societal structures and processes that influence:

- Food choices, beliefs, and food-related behaviours

To design and implement **interventions** (like food policies) that:

- Promote **healthy and sustainable** food choices, by advocating for positive food cultures
- Take into account social, environmental and cultural factors

Food cultures are not static

- Have continuously changed and evolved throughout history
- We need to explore this evolving nature to understand:
 - If food cultures could be an **opportunity** for the transition to **healthier and more sustainable diets**
 - If they could enable/prevent policy change
 - Who influences the most food cultures



Let's go more in depth on how food cultures develop and shape our food behaviour

- 1. When food becomes national: food and nationalism, by Atsuko Ichijo**
- 2. Media strategies to influence how people perceive food cultures, by Tim Smits**
- 3. How food cultures influence food policies – a law perspective, by Lorenzo Bairati**



FEAST:

Thank you!



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Policy
Chat

Online Webinar
10 am - 12.30 pm
26/03/2024

How Gastronationalism influences food systems

Atsuko Ichijo,
*Associate Professor,
Faculty of Business and Social Sciences, Kingston University*

FEAST Policy Chat webinar

How gastronationalism influences food systems

26 March 2024

Atsuko Ichijo, Kingston University

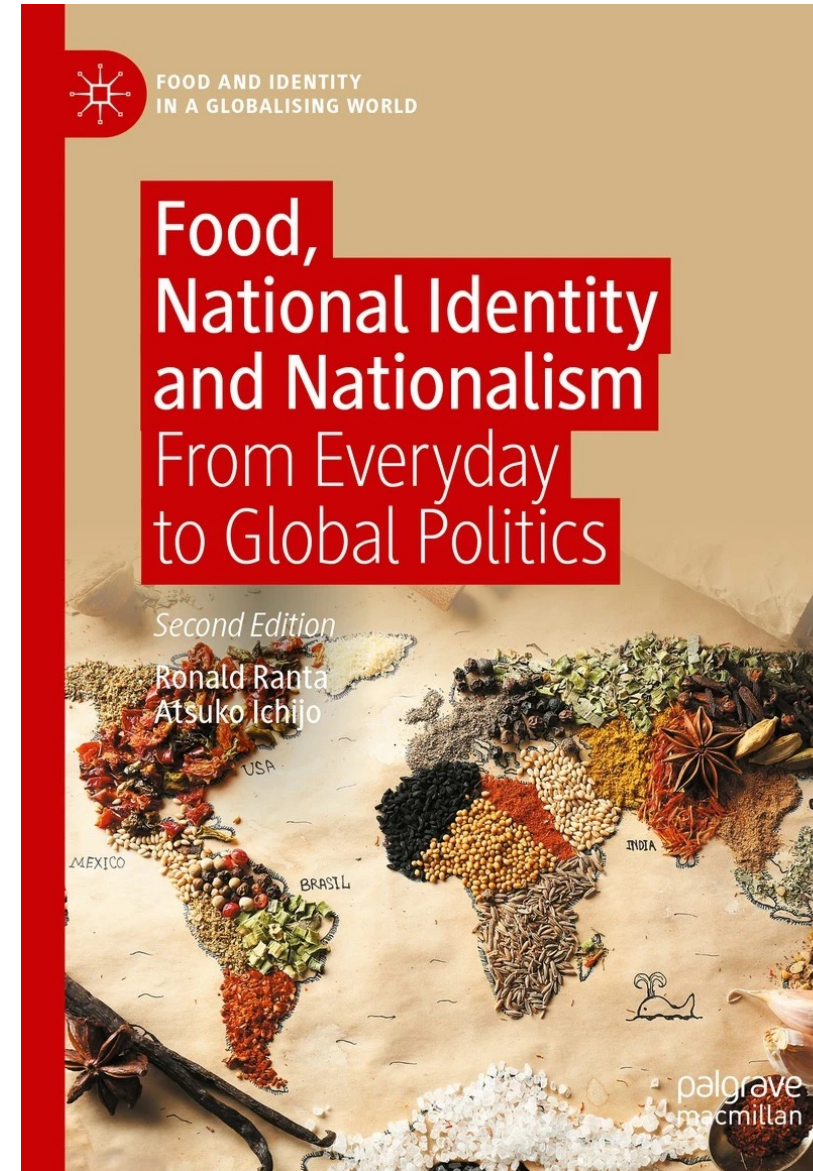
a.ichijo@kingston.ac.uk

The presentation

- The webinar is on ‘the connection between food cultures and policy implementation’;
- > With a specific focus on influence gastronomicalism and food industry exert on food culture;
- My remit: to explore the relationship between nationalism and food system policies through a range of examples;
- My aim: to illustrate complex ways in which nationalism ‘works’ in reference to food.

Shameless self-promotion

- Ranta, Ronald and Ichijo Atsuko (2022) *Food, National Identity and Nationalism: From Everyday to Global Politics* (2nd edition), London: Palgrave Macmillan



The case of Japan: the recent milestone

- The inscription of Washoku (Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese, notably for the celebration of New Year) onto UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list (the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity) in December 2013.

Japanese cuisine wins cultural heritage status

Honor by UNESCO expected to boost foreign tourist numbers, exports of food overseas



UNESCO and intangible cultural heritage (ICH)

- Otherwise known as ‘living heritage’;
- ‘... oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts’;
- ‘important ... in maintaining cultural diversity in the face of growing globalization’;
- ‘Gastronomic meals of the French’ and ‘Traditional Mexican cuisine – ancestral, ongoing community culture, the Michoacán paradigm’ in 2010; as of 2021, there were 25 food-related elements.

Garba of Gujarat

joins the prestigious UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity





Washoku: a case of gastrationalism?

- Yes: As recognition of uniqueness of Japanese culture (the sprit of the Japanese, 'Japanese respect for the nature', etc.) and its importance as the shared heritage of humanities – recognition of its identity and importance -> national branding

Washoku: a case of gastrnationalism?

- No: The application was driven mainly by concern, worries or even anxiety about Japanese traditional food culture and the future of the Japanese nation;
- The introduction of shokuiku in the early 2000s;
- The application for the inscription initiated by Murata Yoshihiro, a kaiseki chef, owner of Michelin starred *Kikunoi*.



Shokuiku (食育): 'Food and nutrition education/promotion' according to MAFF

- 2005: Basic Law of Shokuiku
- 2008: School Health Law

Concerns behind legislation: schoolchildren skipping breakfast, children purchasing meals at a convenience store instead of eating with their parents, families not eating meals together and the perceived decline of Japanese style diet (rice consumption).



From *A Guide to Shokuiku* (MAFF 2012)

Japanese-Style Food Life

Japan's climate and environment is suitable for producing rice for staple dishes, fish, meat, and so on for main dishes, and vegetable, seaweed, legumes, and so on for side dishes. These diverse ingredients combine in different ways to create our Japanese-style food life.

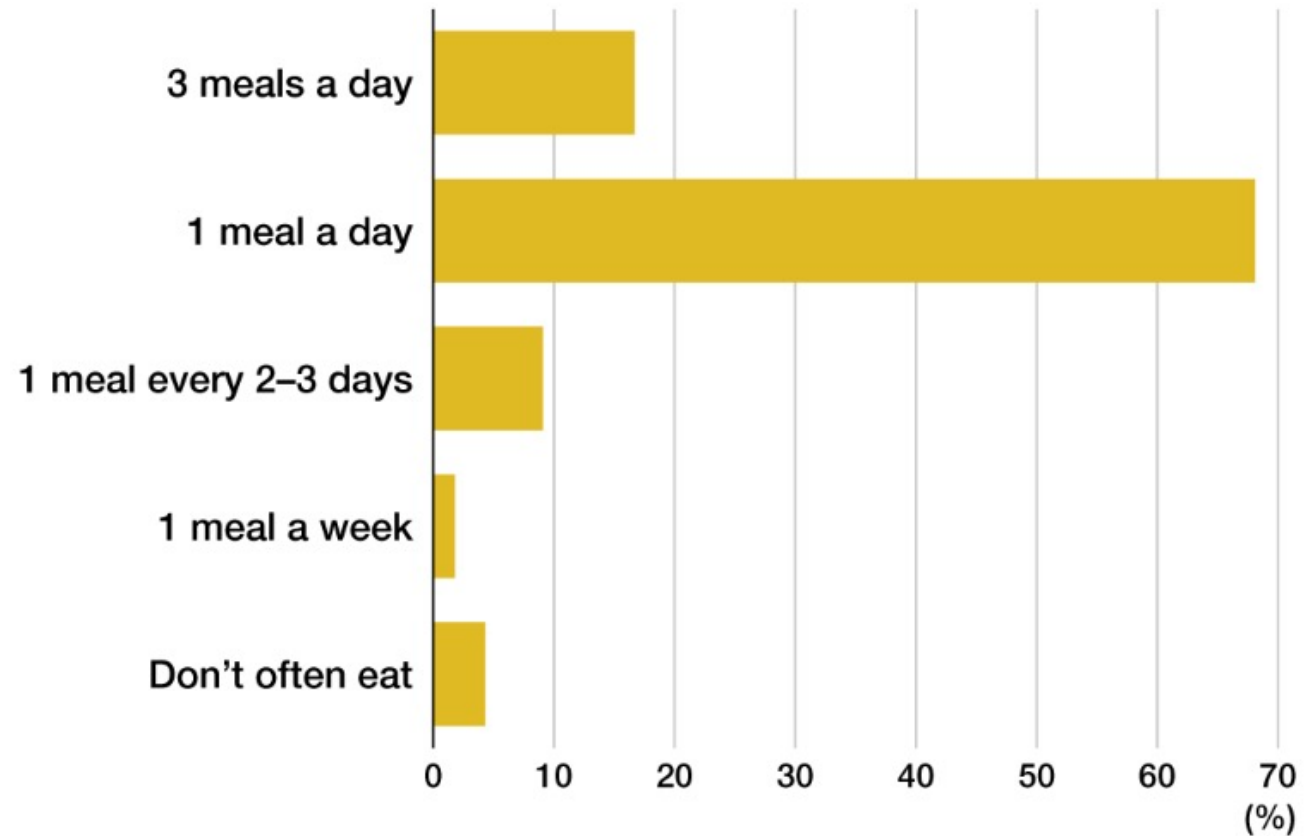
Not only are foods from throughout Japan nutritionally balanced, but eating them together provides a rich food life. This is all connected to improving Japan's food self-sufficiency rate, and continuing the food traditions of local areas in Japan.

Eating locally

This means eating foods grown or caught or gathered in your area.
Let's be aware of our local area's foods.

A decline in
Japanese-
style diet?

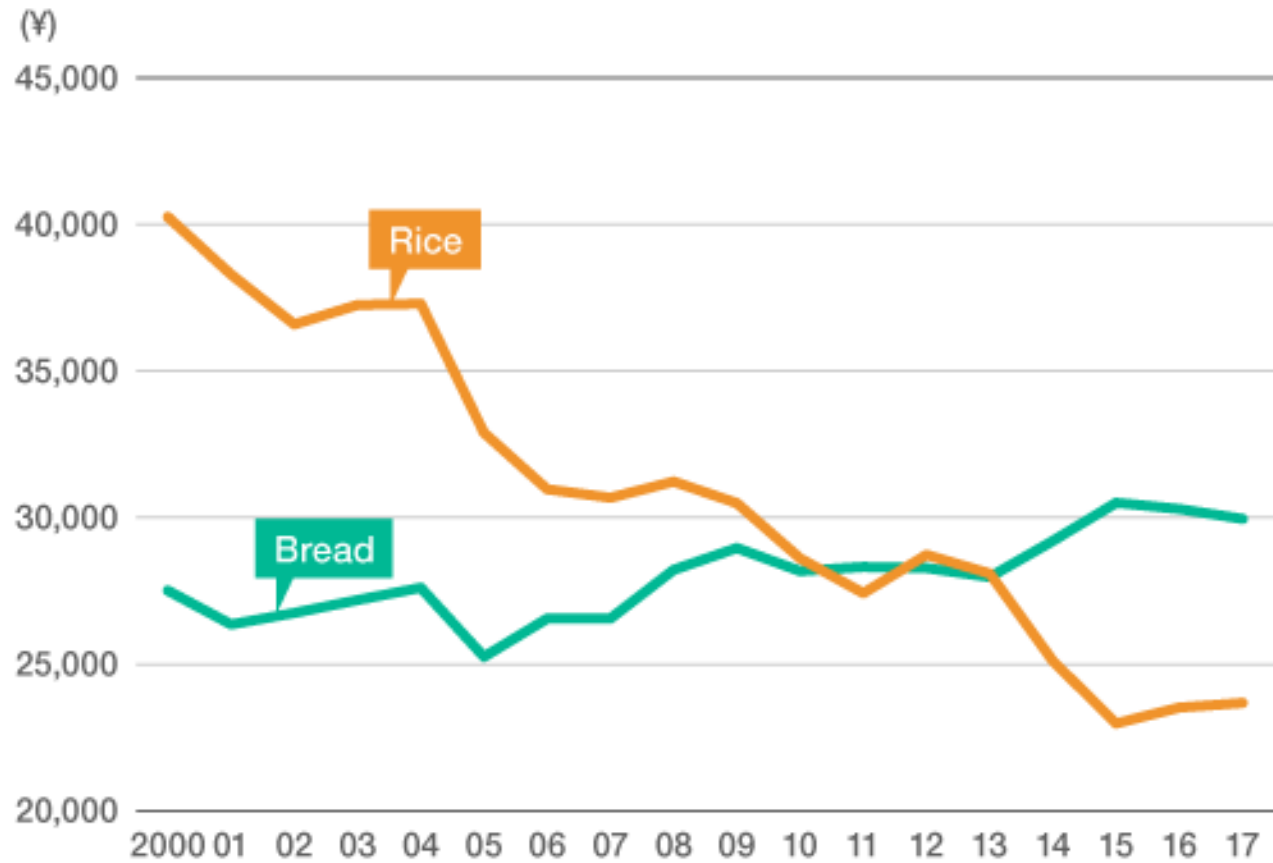
How often do you eat rice?



Created by *Nippon.com* based on data from Makino for 1,012 respondents.

Rice consumption in Japan

Spending on Rice and Bread in Japan



Compiled by *Nippon.com* based on data from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Family Income and Expenditure Survey (households with two or more members).



Impact on rice farming in Japan

- 1994: Abolition of the system of government-controlled rice production;
- 2004: Further liberalisation of sale and distribution of rice / a shift in the policy of reducing acreage;
- 2018: The end of the acreage-reducing policy -> producer-led cultivation, sales and distribution including diversification -> the reduction in rice acreage and the stabilisation of rice price.

The inscription of Washoku

- The use of an international scheme to revive what is perceived to be a declining national culture;
- Asking for international support for the preservation of Japanese culture

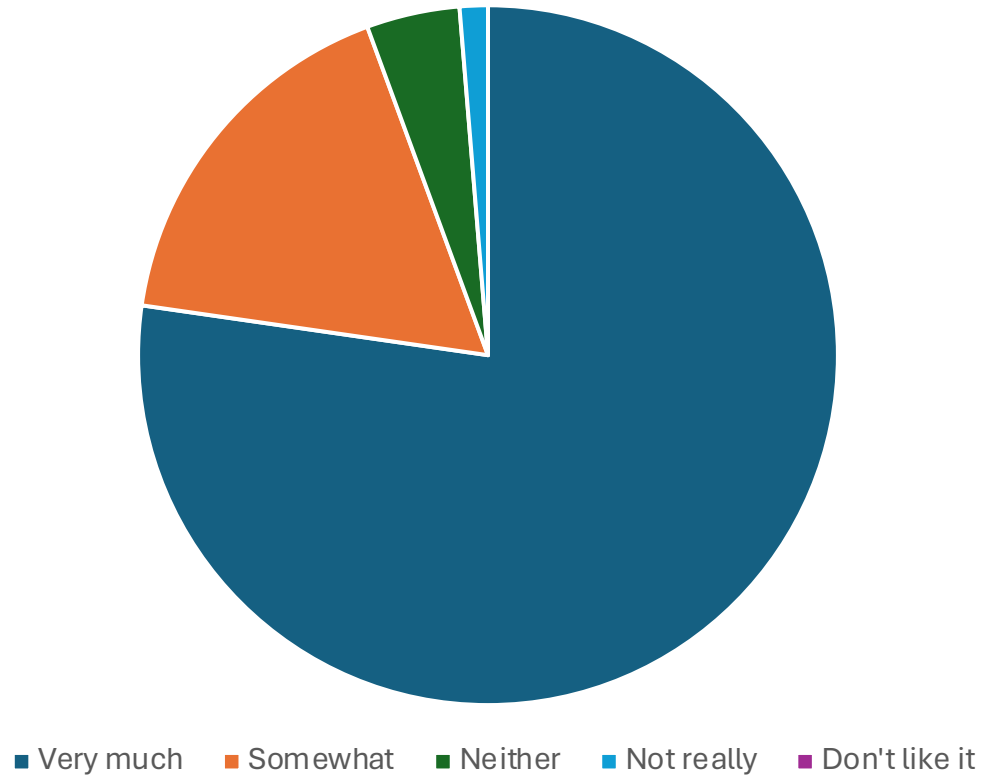
-> A defensive move, not aggressive projection of the nation's greatness (national branding)



But the Japanese still like rice

(survey of 10,000 people by Navit in September 2022;
<https://prtimes.jp/main/html/rd/p/000000490.000080271.html>)

Do you like rice?





And anything 'Japanese style' is popular

- Japanese style pasta sauce;

The consumption of pasta

- 95,000 tons in 1975
- 265,000 tons in 2009
- 286,000 tons in 2023

-> What makes 'pasta' Japanese:
certain ingredients, seasonality,
health benefits – corresponding to
general discourse on Japanese
food



Inscription of Washoku has inspired ...

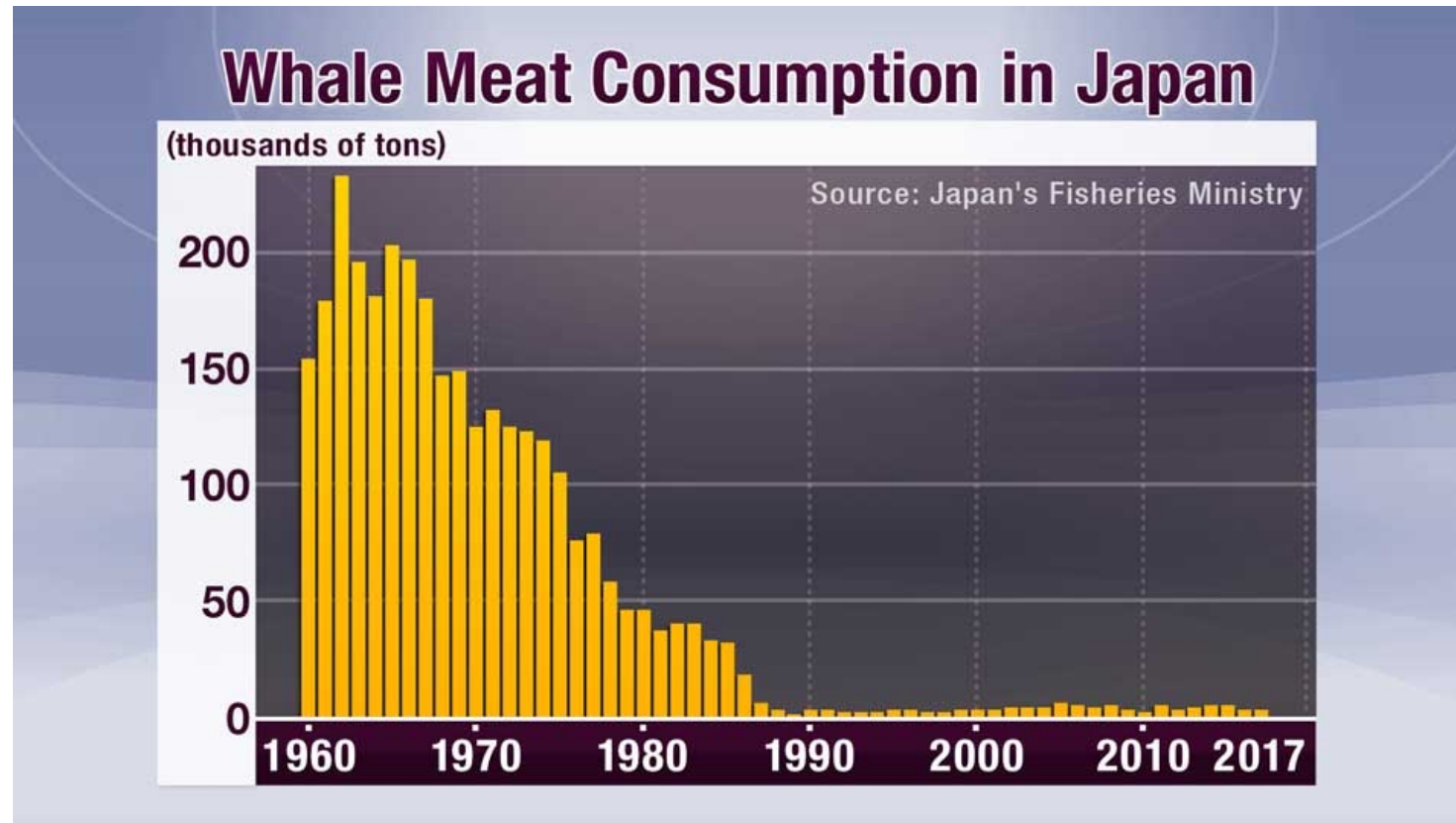
- Gastronomy tourism;
- The number of foreign visitors hitting 32 million in 2019, plummeted to 4.1 million in 2020, 0.25 million in 2021 and recovered to 25 million in 2023.

Whale meat eating as cultural heritage

- December 2018: Japan withdrew from the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW);
- ‘In its long history, Japan has used whales not only as a source of protein but also for a variety of other purposes. Engagement in whaling has been supporting local communities, and thereby developed the life and culture of using whales. Japan hopes that more countries will share the same position to promote sustainable use of aquatic living resources based on scientific evidence, which will thereby be handed down to future generations’ (Chief Cabinet Secretary, December 2018);
- Since then, engaged with whaling in Japanese territorial waters and exclusive economic zone.

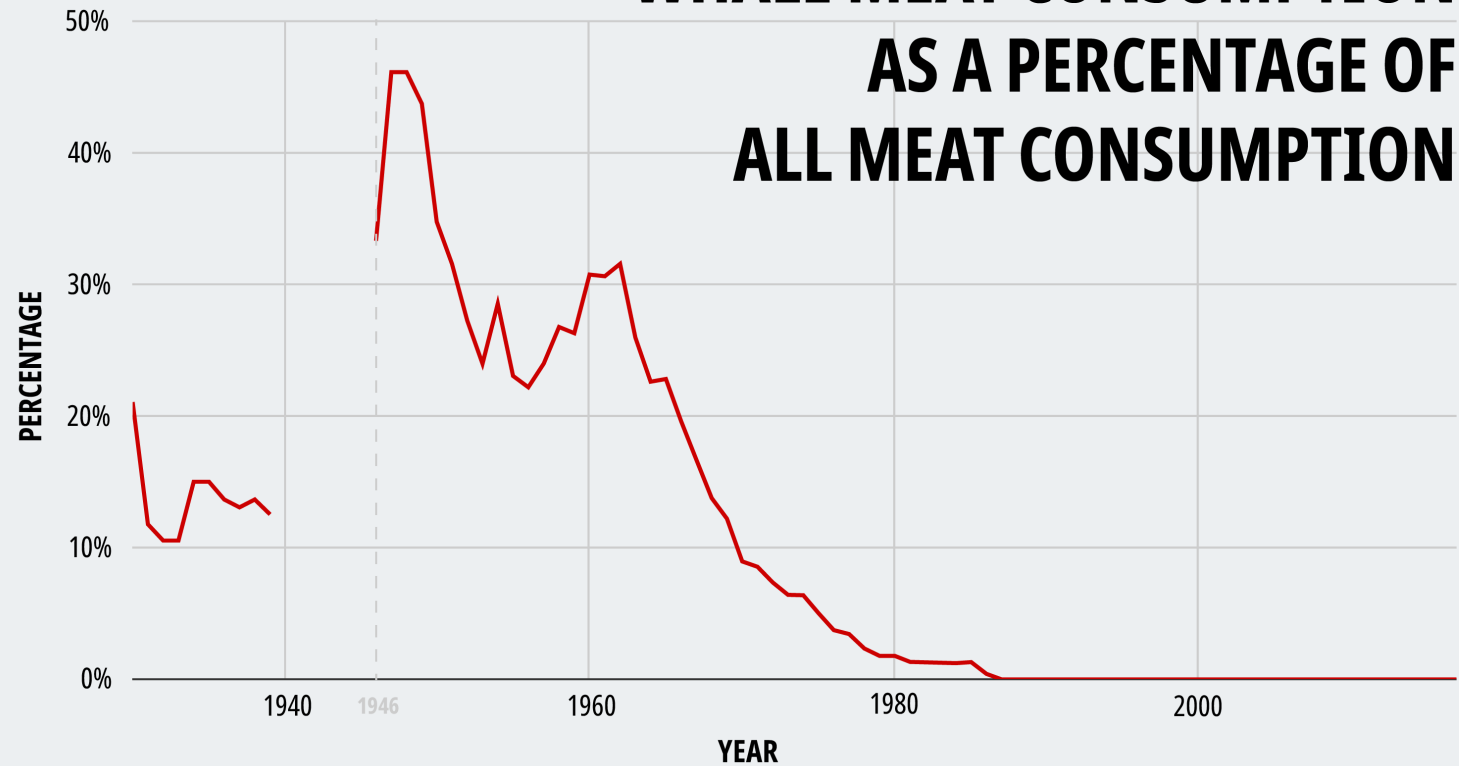
However...

The consumption of whale meat in Japan has all but disappeared (NHK 2019)



No longer significant in Japanese diet (The Diplomat, 11 August 2021)

WHALE MEAT CONSUMPTION AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL MEAT CONSUMPTION



Gastronationalism in whale meat

Contestation against the perceived cultural/ethical imposition -> not an aggressive projection of the nation



Conclusion

- Gastronationalism can take various forms, can be state-led or bottom-up;
 - It reflects how the world is perceived by certain actor at certain point of time;
 - Nationalism's function to give meaning;
 - The state's power in resource mobilisation;
 - The commercial sector's involvement
- > Nationalism is complicated.



Thank you for
your attention





Policy
Chat

Online Webinar
10 am - 12.30 pm
26/03/2024

Media strategies to influence how people perceive food cultures

Tim Smits,
*Professor Persuasion and Marketing Communication,
Institute for Media Studies, KU Leuven*



FEAST



Media strategies to influence how people perceive food cultures

Tim Smits – Institute for Media Studies, Leuven University

Collaboration: Yara Qutteina, Lotte Hallez, Käbi Vanwinkelen, ...



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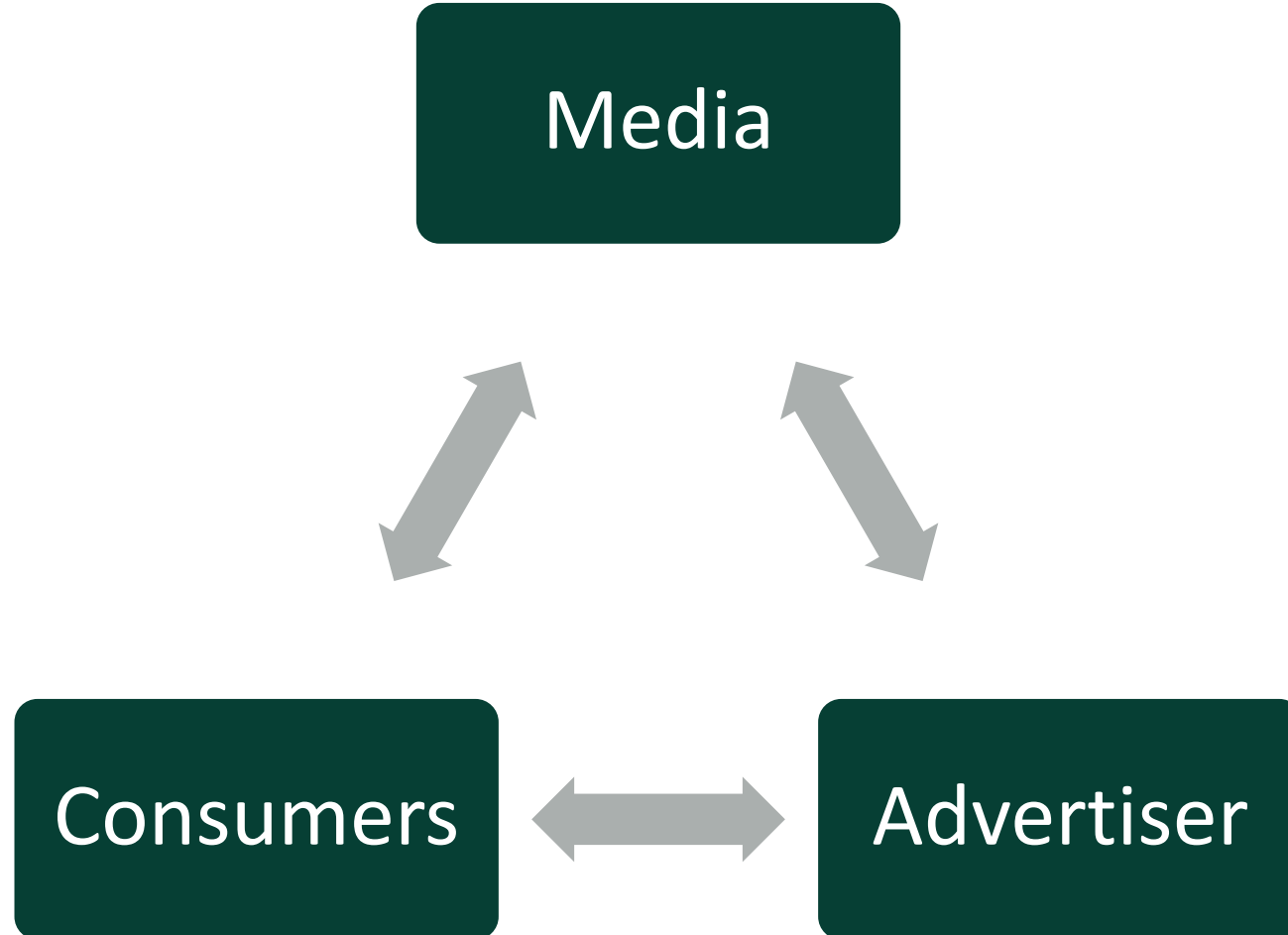


Media & strategies: paid, owned, earned

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Paid media | Mass media ads (TV, internet, radio, newspapers, ...) |
| | Specialized media ads (magazine, movie theatre, blogs, ...) |
| | Outdoor advertising (billboard, train station, etc) |
| | Sponsorships |
| | Influencers |
| | Point-of-purchase marketing; premiums, ... |
| Owned media | Direct marketing (mail, email; ...) |
| | Sales; packaging |
| | Trade fairs, webcasts, ... |
| | Brand websites, fan pages, own social media |
| Earned media | Word-of-mouth (consumers, press, influencers*) |



The media eco-system





Food culture and marketing strategies

From Cairns (2019):

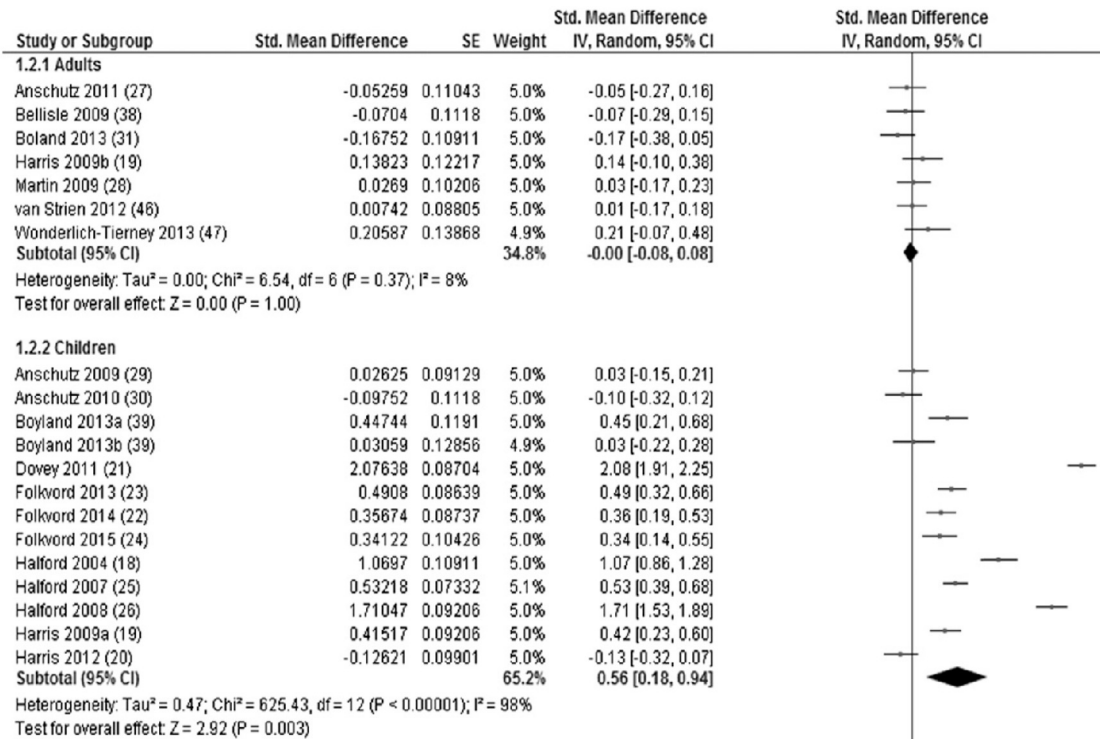
“**Food culture** is an umbrella term for socially accepted values, norms and practices regarding food purchase, provisioning, preparation and consumption. It is also used to describe habitual behaviours and eating patterns. Food cultures are dynamic and increasingly transitional phenomena. They reflect and facilitate functional and symbolic transformational food system change; and a means of expressing world views and belief systems (Fieldhouse, 1996; Germov & Williams, 2004).”



Food marketing strategy's effects

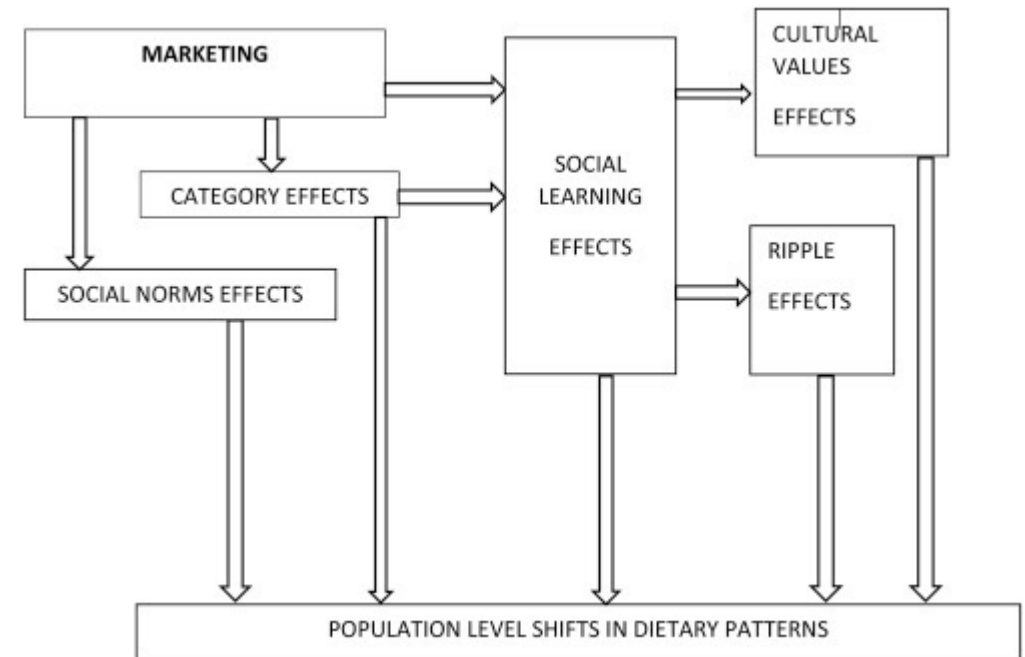
Individual effects

Boyland et al. (2016)



Sociocultural effects

Cairns (2019): Only few studies on the macro level effects



See also Qutteina et al. (2019a)



An example of subtle effects: (suggested) portion size

Neyens, Aerts & Smits (2015)

See also McGale et al (2019)



a small image-size

b large image-size

Aerts & Smits (2017)



Fig. 2. Amount of consumption (in grams) per package size and popcorn type condition.



Where are the effects situated?

Market equalisation/democratisation VS normalisation of existing imbalances

Traditional media

- Paid media advertising: normalisation; economy of scales
- Owned media: equalisation to some extent, because communication investment in time (rather than money) also brings returns

What about digital media?

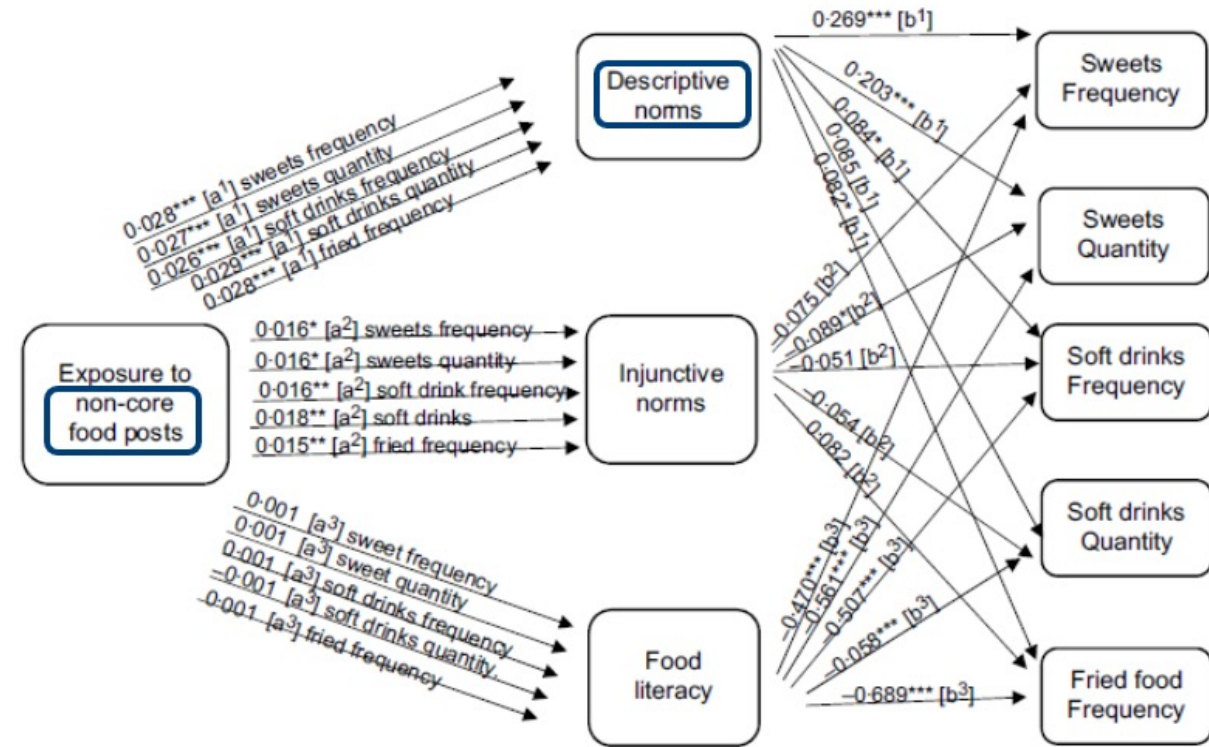
- Many media start from a perspective/ambition of democratisation
- In the initial business model they attract a niche market of innovators, both for consumers and brands
- Once they mature, they adopt traditional media business dynamics
- Resulting in normalisation of existing imbalances: “reach” becomes the currency, tailored towards the largest brands
- Some evidence from communication science (e.g. popularity of cultural media)
- Evidence from political marketing (Gibson et al., 2014)



Effects of social media exposure?

Qutteina et al. (2022): survey among 1002 adolescents

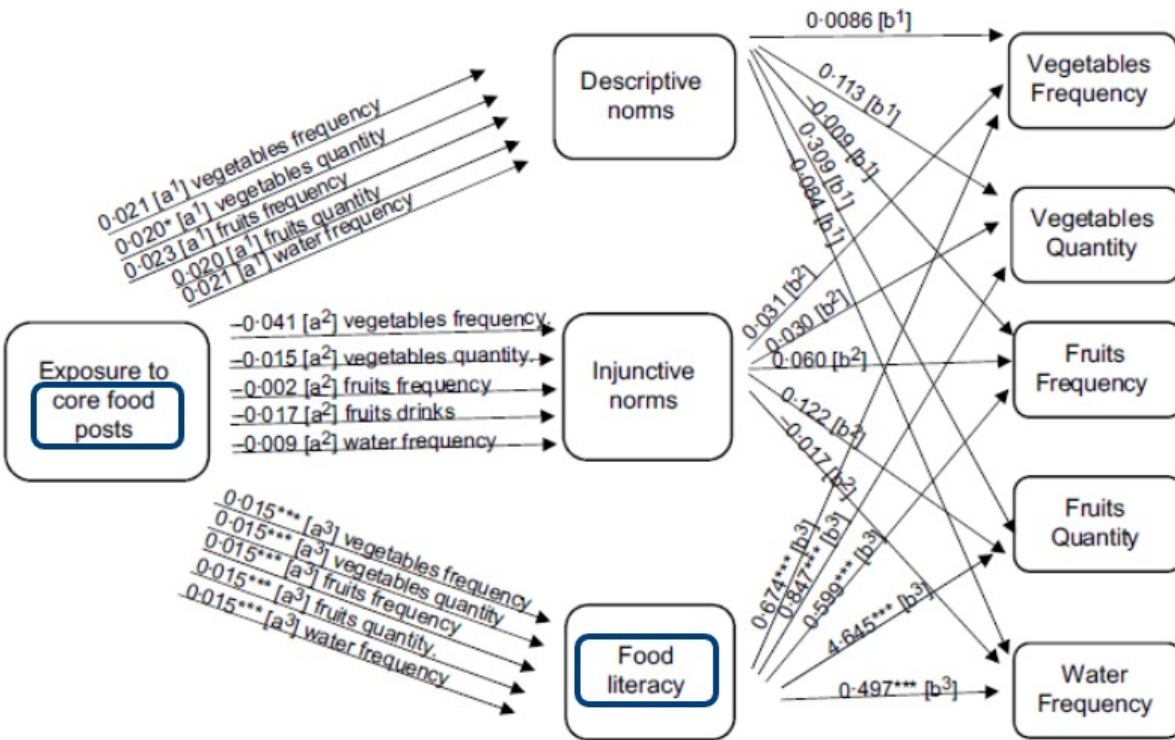
| Variable | Mean | SD |
|------------------------------------|------|------|
| Food preferences | | |
| Core food | 3.67 | 0.82 |
| Non-core food | 4.03 | 0.88 |
| Perceived healthiness | | |
| Core food | 4.35 | 0.78 |
| Non-core food | 1.53 | 0.73 |
| Perceived descriptive norms | | |
| Core food | 2.92 | 0.81 |
| Non-core food | 3.81 | 0.86 |
| Perceived injunctive norms | | |
| Core food | 4.54 | 1.18 |
| Non-core food | 2.12 | 0.95 |
| Food literacy | 3.31 | 0.48 |





Just-Copy-Amazon fallacy

Can the core/sustainable foods just do what works for the noncore foods?



- Dose-response issues?
- A massive cultural language bias in the way we talk about foods, where healthy often seems to suggest “untasty”. See Turnwald et al. (2022) for an impressive study demonstrating this in a huge collection of various media types
- Food literacy is part of one’s socialisation. Enriching the framework of Bourdieu, Richard Peterson coined the concept of “cultural omnivorousness”, which seems very apt to also study food culture(s)



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Thank you!

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Tim Smits (@timsmitstim)

See also the CUES project for upcoming research on

Consumer's understanding of Eating Sustainably  Funded by the European Union

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/cues-eu-project/>

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Policy
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Online Webinar
10 am - 12.30 pm
26/03/2024

Food culture and food governance: a global law perspective

Lorenzo Bairati,

*Associate Professor of Comparative Private Law,
Faculty of Gastronomic Sciences of Pollenzo*

Food culture and food governance: a global law perspective



Prof. Lorenzo Bairati

University of Gastronomic Sciences - Pollenzo

*FEAST Policy Chat Webinar on Food Cultures.
Does manipulation of food culture impact food system policy?
March 26, 2024*

Introduction

- Food culture and legal culture: an introduction.
- Food governance and its cultural roots.
- Labelling regulation as a cultural outcome.
- Conclusions.

Food Culture and Legal Culture

- **Food culture**: the complex of practices, attitudes and beliefs as well as the networks and institutions surrounding the production, distribution, and consumption of food.
- **Legal culture**: unclear concept, referring to both something that the law expresses as well as something the law needs to address. It spans history of law, the law itself, the content of the law, the institutional settings within which the law is applied, the people applying the law and the people affected by the law.
- Used as an **explanatory device** rather than an object of enquiry.
- Used to characterise differences between systems.
- Both are evolving because of the permanent interaction between actors and between layers of governance.

Food governance and its cultural roots

- Cultural connotations of food governance also in legal terms.
- Legal traditions, types of practices, attitudes, expectations and ways of thinking.
- Methodological tool to analyse: similarities and differences of legal solutions in different legal systems; imitations among legal orders; resistance to homologation.
- **Different layers** of governance.
- **Different actors**: institutions, businesses, consumers.
- A case study: food labelling regulation in the EU and in the US.

Labelling regulation as a cultural outcome

Institutions

- **What is food from an institutional perspective?**
- **The institutional culture about consumer interests, preferences and risk perception.**
- **Paternalism vs. autonomy.** What is the goal of institutions when regulating food labelling? Guaranteeing the right to information or nudging toward a “better” (healthier, more sustainable) choice?

Labelling regulation as a cultural outcome Businesses

- **Culture and marketing techniques.**
- **How do they interact with institutions?**
Lobbying – Filling the gaps.
- **Relationship between private standards and public regulation.**

Labelling regulation as a cultural outcome

Consumers

- **Culture and consumer preferences.**
- **Culture and consumer rationality.**
- **Culture as a distinctive element.** There is no such thing as an “average” consumer.
- **Culture as a tool to interpret labelling.**

Food Labelling in the EU and the US

- **GMO Labelling.**
- **COOL Labelling.**
- **Nutritional Traffic Light.**

Conclusions

- **Labelling: only the tip of the iceberg** (Food safety, risk and precautionary principle; territory as a food quality attribute).
- **Circular patterns of interactions** among food culture and economic, cognitive, political, institutional and social variables.
- **Discrepancies** depending on cultural divergences. Technology/Tradition; Autonomy/Paternalism; Cost – Benefit Analysis/Precautionary Principle.
- At the same time: **many similarities**, potential convergences and room for **reciprocal imitation**.
- **Food cultures** are dynamic; they are the outcome of interactions; they are non homogeneous; they do not coincide with nation states or legal systems; they are often misunderstood and misused and underpin stereotypes.

Thanks for your attention!



Prof. Lorenzo Bairati

University of Gastronomic Sciences - Pollenzo