

# **The Spanish Healthy Food Basket**

## **Complete Report**

**Pilot project for the development of a common methodology on reference budgets in Europe**

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**FUNDED BY THE**  
**EUROPEAN COMMISSION. DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion**



**JULY 2016**

**Acknowledgements:**

We are grateful to Bea Cantillon, director of the project, Loredana Sementi, project manager and Tim Goedemé and Bérénice Storms, project leaders, respectively. We also thank Jordi Longás for his support in organizing the focus groups discussions, Inma Rodríguez from Focus Castelló (Madrid) and all the focus groups participants that contributed to this research.

**Financial support:**

*Pilot Project for the development of a common Methodology on Reference Budgets in Europe* was funded by the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (contract N°. VC/2013/0554).

Elena Carrillo Álvarez held a PhD grant from the Spanish Training University Lecturers Programme (Formación de Profesorado Univeristario - FPU) from the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports MECD (AP2010-3946), 2011-2015.

Irene Cussó Parcerisas holds a PhD grant from the Spanish Training University Lecturers Programme (Formación de Profesorado Univeristario - FPU) from the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports MECD (FPU12/06640), 2013-2017.

**Bibliographic information:**

Carrillo Álvarez, E., Pintó Domingo, G., Cussó Parcerisas, I., & Riera Romaní, J. (2016). *The Spanish Healthy Food Basket. Complete Report. Pilot project for the development of a common methodology on Reference Budgets in Europe*. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2072/266434>

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A synthesis of the Spanish Healthy Food Basket Report can be found in English and Spanish in:

European Commission. (2015). *The Spanish Food Basket-Madrid (13/10/2015)*. European Commission. Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. doi:10.2767/121311. ISBN 978-92-79-50198-2.

The full report of the project can be found in English in:

Goedemé, T., Storms, B., Penne, T. & Van den Bosch, K. (eds.). (2015). *Pilot project for the development of a common methodology on Reference Budgets in Europe. The development of a methodology for comparable reference budgets in Europe – Final Report of the pilot project. October 2015*. Brussels: European Commission. Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. doi: 10.2767/096631.

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## ABSTRACT

Reference Budgets (RBs) are priced baskets of goods and services that represent a given living standard for well-described types of families. *The Pilot Project for the development of a common methodology on Reference Budgets in Europe* aims to develop cross-national comparable RBs in all EU Member States, taking as a reference the capital cities. This report presents specifically in detail the results of a Healthy Food basket for Spain, developed within this project. The results establish a budget threshold below which healthy eating is not possible for various family types in our country for an adequate social participation.

**Keywords:** healthy food, reference budgets, social participation, social inclusion.

## RESUMEN

Los presupuestos de referencia (PR) – “*reference budgets*”, en inglés – son cestas de bienes y servicios que representan un nivel de vida determinado para diferentes tipologías de familia. El proyecto *Pilot Project for the development of a common methodology on Reference Budgets in Europe* tiene como objetivo desarrollar de manera comparable PR en los diferentes Estados Miembros de la UE, tomando como referencia las capitales de los estados. Este informe presenta específicamente en detalle los resultados de la cesta de la Alimentación Saludable para España, elaborada en el marco de este proyecto. Los resultados establecen el umbral por debajo del cual no es posible llevar a cabo una alimentación saludable para diferentes tipologías de familia en España para una suficiente participación social.

**Palabras clave:** alimentación saludable, presupuestos de referencia, participación social, inclusión social.

## RESUM

Els pressupostos de referència (PR)– “*reference budgets*”, en anglès – són cistelles de béns i serveis que representen un nivell de vida determinat per a diferents tipologies de família. El projecte *Pilot Project for the development of a common methodology on Reference Budgets in Europe* té com a objectiu desenvolupar de manera comparable PR en els diferents Estats Membre de la UE, agafant com a referència les capitals dels estats. Aquest informe presenta específicament en detall els resultants de la cistella de l’Alimentació Saludable per Espanya, elaborada en el marc d’aquest projecte. Els resultats estableixen el llindar per sota del qual no és possible dur a terme una alimentació saludable per diferents tipologies de família a Espanya per a una suficient participació social.

**Paraules clau:** alimentació saludable, pressupostos de referència, participació social, inclusió social.

## **Introduction**

In this report we present the development and content of the Spanish Food Basket. The report is divided in 5 sections. First of all, we describe the dietary guidelines in our context. Secondly, we elaborate the content of the food basket following the dietary guidelines and using nutritional criteria. In a third step and taking into account the focus group discussions (FGs) held in Madrid (see in Annex the FGs Report), we explain the decisions taken for the pricing of the Spanish Food Basket. Finally, the Spanish Food Basket is presented and we make some conclusive remarks.

## **Spanish food-based dietary guidelines**

The Spanish Agency of Food Security and Nutrition (AESAN<sup>1</sup>), along with the Spanish Society of Community Nutrition (SENC<sup>2</sup>) is the institution that sets the nutritional recommendations for the Spanish population. These recommendations are built upon the current scientific evidence on the nutritional needs of healthy individuals and take into account the main diet-related Public Health challenges as well as cultural habits of the Spanish population to promote healthy eating and regular physical activity.

The Spanish Healthy Eating Pyramid is based on the principles of the Mediterranean Diet. It represents the lifestyle and the traditional eating habits of the Mediterranean countries and it appears to be an effective instrument for promoting health and general well-being.

In the last decades, the Spaniards have moved away from the Mediterranean Diet while the prevalence of diet-related chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia and obesity increased sharply. The National Survey on Nutritional Intake (Spanish Agency of Food Security and Nutrition, 2011) showed that Spaniards do not meet the nutritional recommendations: the consumption of meat products is clearly above the reference, the intake of carbohydrates is below the 4-6 recommended portions, nut consumption is occasional instead of the 3-7 portions recommended per week and only about 40% of the population consumes the advised 5 daily portions of fruit and vegetables. On the other hand, Spanish fish consumption' seems to be within the amount and frequency advisable.

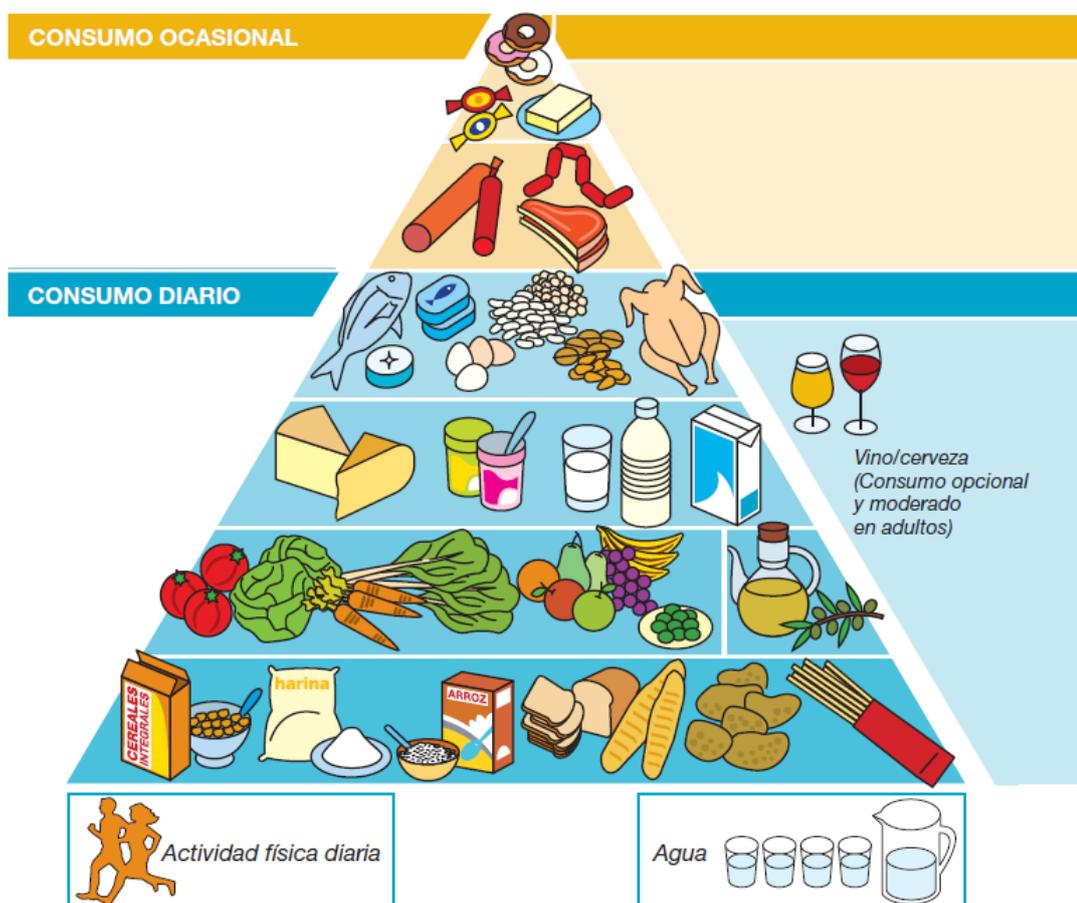
The Spanish Healthy Eating Pyramid (see Figure 1) considers 7 basic food groups: (1) grains and potatoes, (2) vegetables, (3) olive oil, (4) dairy products, (5) fish, meat, eggs, legumes and nuts, (6) processed meat products, (7) sweets. In addition, it includes water, physical activity and, optionally for adults, wine and bear in moderation. All food groups are significant. They make up a healthy diet or not depending on the proportion or each group, as well as on their frequency of consumption.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://aesan.msssi.gob.es>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nutricioncomunitaria.org/>

Figure 1. Healthy Eating Pyramid.



Source: SENC (2004).

For that reason, the Spanish Healthy Eating Pyramid places in the lower levels vegetal foods. They provide key nutrients and other protective substances that contribute to a balanced diet and, consequently, to an overall better health. So they should be the basis of a healthy diet and should be consumed more frequently than the foods placed in the central or upper levels, which despite of being necessary, have to be eaten occasionally or in moderate amounts. Furthermore, the Healthy Eating Pyramid adds recommendations of hydration and physical activity, also two key elements for a healthy living.

The Spanish Healthy Eating Pyramid was developed in 2004. Whereas it is valid for all age groups, it only gives recommendation of portion quantities for adults. To establish the dietary needs for children, we make use of the recommendations elaborated within the PERSEO Programme (Pilot Programme in Schools for Health and Physical Exercise and against Obesity<sup>3</sup>). The PERSEO Programme is a set of health promotion actions developed in 2006 by the Spanish Government to promote the learning of healthy eating habits and to encourage regular physical activity among schoolchildren, in order to prevent obesity and other chronic diseases. It constitutes the specific line of interventions for children and teenagers in the framework of the NAOS Strategy (Strategy for Nutrition, Physical Activity and

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.perseo.aesan.msssi.gob.es>

the Prevention of Obesity), which aims to address the current Spanish obesity situation through an approach that involves families, communities, schools, health centres and the private sector (Neira M & de Onis M, 2007). Table 1 synthesizes the food-based dietary guidelines used to develop the Spanish Food Basket.

Table 1. Food-based dietary guidelines used to develop the Spanish Food Basket.

	<b>Recommended frequency</b>	<b>Portion weight for ADULTS</b>	<b>Portion weight for CHILD (6-10y old)</b>	<b>Portion weight for CHILD (11-14y-old)</b>
<b>Potatoes, rice, bread, pasta</b>	4-6 portions a day	60-80g rice, pasta 40-60g bread 150-200g potatoes	60-80g rice, pasta 40-60g bread 150-200g potatoes 30g breakfast cereals	60-80g rice, pasta 40-60g bread 150-200g potatoes 30g breakfast cereals
<b>Vegetables</b>	≥2 portions a day	150-200g	200g	200g
<b>Fruits</b>	≥3 portions a day	120-200g	120-150g	120-150g
<b>Olive oil</b>	3-6 portions a day	10ml	10ml	10ml
<b>Dairy products</b>	2-4 portions a day	200-250ml milk 200-250g yogurt 40-60g mature cheese 80-125g cottage cheese	250ml milk 125ml yogurt 30-40g mature cheese 80g cottage cheese	250ml milk 125ml yogurt 30-40g mature cheese 80g cottage cheese
<b>Fish</b>	3-4 portions a week	125-150g	100-120g	140-150g
<b>Lean meat</b>	3-4 portions a week	100-125g	80-100g	120g
<b>Eggs</b>	3-4 portions a week	100-125g	60-120g	60-120g
<b>Legumes</b>	2-4 portions a week	60-80g	60g	80g
<b>Nuts</b>	3-7 portions a week	20-30g	20-30g	20-30g
<b>Fatter and processed meat</b>	Occasional and moderate	-	-	-
<b>Sweets and snacks</b>	Occasional and moderate	-	-	-
<b>Butter and pastries</b>	Occasional and moderate	-	-	-
<b>Water</b>	4-8 portions a day	200ml approx.	250ml approx.	250ml approx.
<b>Beer or wine</b>	Optional and moderate	50-100ml wine 100-200ml Beer	-	-
<b>Physical activity</b>	Daily	≥30 minutes	60 minutes	60 minutes

Source: own elaboration based on SENC (2004) and PERSEO (2007).

## **The content of the Spanish food basket**

The Spanish Healthy Food Basket has not the purpose to prescribe what people should eat, but to establish a budget threshold below which healthy eating is not possible. Delicacies such as cakes, crisps, biscuits, take-away meals or eating out will not be included in the healthy food basket, but will have a place in other baskets as 'entertaining social relations', 'safety in childhood' and 'recreation and leisure time'. Alcohol for social consumption will also be considered within these other baskets we have included in the Spanish Food Basket the optional daily amount of wine and beer contemplated by the Spanish Healthy Eating Pyramid (50-100ml wine/100-200ml Beer).

### **Before consultation of the focus groups**

Since different foods from the same food group do not contain the same types and amounts of nutrients, variation within the different food groups is necessary. To guarantee this balance among the various foods for adults, we followed the frequencies of consumption recommended by the AESAN, along with the SENC, and for children and adolescents, we relied on the nutritional objectives laid down in the Guide for Families from the PERSEO program (see Table 1). For women, we took the lower threshold as a reference, while the upper one has been applied to men. For children, since recommendations are given for age intervals (6-10 years old and 11 to 14 years old), the upper reference has been used in both cases (boy 10y-old and girl 14y-old).

As a rule, those foods that according to the Spanish National Survey on Nutritional Intake are consumed below the recommendations, are promoted in front of those whose intake is excessive. For example, as we wish to compose a balanced food basket for a minimum budget, as a rule, the cheapest option is selected from the available preferential products. For instance, although olive oil is the recommended fat in Spain due to its benefits for cardiovascular health and the fact that is highly produced in our country, we have also included in the fat group little amounts of sunflower oil (for being a cheaper fat) as well as nuts (for being consumed below the recommendations).

For the determination of the quantities of the various food products for different age groups, we started from the amounts mentioned in Table 1. For fresh fruits and vegetables we increased the net amounts with a waste percentage of resp. 22% and 28%. For fresh fish it was increased in a 30% and fatter meat in a 20%. We have not considered any waste percentage for lean meat, since it is very common in Spain to buy it ready to cook. When it is not the case (i.e. when buying an entire chicken), the price per kilo is always cheaper, so the final price is similar.

In order to compose well-varied baskets of fruits, vegetables, meat and fish, we chose for including at least seven different food products per week based on nutritionist criteria. We calculated the average price of the 7 cheapest products and next calculated the average price of all the other products in the same food category except for the 10% most expensive products. Finally, we calculated the average price for the food category weighting the average price of the seven cheapest products 5 times a week and the others 2 times.

With a view to the acceptability of the reference budgets to individuals on a low income, we took account of certain remarks in the focus groups insofar as they were not incompatible with existing recommendations as detailed below. We consecutively compiled food baskets for adult women, adult men, primary school age children (6-11 years) and adolescents (12-17 years).

In addition to a healthy diet, physical activity is very important for a good health and to maintain the energy balance. With physical activity, moderate efforts are meant that let

heart beat faster, breath slightly faster than normal and sweating lightly. Daily activities for 30 minutes (60 for children and teenagers), including walking, cycling and housework can be mentioned in this context. Because of that, it was suggested to include a budget for paid physical activity in order to bring some variations in the physical activity group.

Finally, we included the necessary kitchen equipment to conserve, prepare and eat the various food ingredients. As may be seen, we included a freezer, whose size varies on family size. The inclusion of a freezer is essential because it not only allows families to buy their food more economically (frozen foods are often cheaper than fresh) but it also allows families to deal economically with leftovers. Families who do not have a freezer are obliged to spend to at least 10% more on food.

## **After consultation of the focus groups**

### **Introduction**

We tested the acceptability and feasibility of the Food Basket through focus group (FGs) discussions. The FGs involved 30 people in total (10 per group) and were carried out in March 2015 FGs in Madrid. For detailed information of the design, timing, organization and involvement of the participants in the FGs, please see the complete report and information in the Annex.

### **Acceptability and feasibility of the healthy food basket and the kitchen equipment**

#### ***Acceptability and feasibility of the healthy food basket***

The content of the healthy food basket was considered to be acceptable and feasible by the FGs participants. There was a general agreement that such a diet was desirable and would be "like the kind of diet that a doctor would prescribe you", but that very few people eat this way, especially because of convenience and time concerns.

When confronted to the menu (annex 1), there were few specific comments on the foods included. One participant claimed for more meat and less fish; someone said that it was not healthy to eat a sandwich every morning and another one suggested including natural juices instead of whole fruit in the morning. In our opinion these comments reflect both, personal preferences and cultural practices –especially in the case of meat.

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that some of the participants took the menu with them, as something they wanted to use at home with their families.

#### ***Acceptability and feasibility of the kitchen equipment basket***

The participants considered that, in general, the list of the kitchen equipment was acceptable (annex 2). However, there was consensus in the three FGs that an eggcup, a steam basket and a coffee transporter were not necessary. They also questioned that a pedal bin (opposite to a manual lid bin) was needed. All the participants agreed in the need of microwave and dish-washer, because the tight schedules of living in a big city.

It was also mentioned in two of the three FGs that current kitchen cover filters are washable, thus it would not be necessary to include them as a replaceable item.

Then some individual contributions referred to the desirability of having a juicer, a toaster and a pressure cooker, but there was not a general agreement. On the other hand they pointed out that paper napkins were not included, and neither were bin bags.

## **Other functions of food**

The participants mentioned other functions of food such as celebrations or cultural occasions (weddings, traditional holidays), social (inviting someone home, going out), emotional (in cases of boredom, stress). Special changes due to sport practice were also alluded in two of the three FGs.

The pre-defined list was, in general, considered acceptable. The religious meaning was not clear for everyone, and it was suggested that it could be included in the cultural function of food. The exchange function was also considered not very frequent in our context, particularly in an urban environment such as Madrid city: people exchange different types of foods depending on their specialty, but food was not exchanged for other goods or services.

They gave ideas mainly related with receiving visitors at home. In general, there was agreement that it was expected to invite people twice a month, and that the kind of food offered would depend on the moment of the day. If visits came in the early afternoon, then coffee (tea or hot chocolate in the case of children) with cookies or pastry would be offered. When visitors were later in the evening, it would be common to offer wine, soft drinks, chips, olives, charcuterie, bread, etc.

With regard to the acceptable monthly minimum they agreed of about 3-4 cans of olives, 2-3 chips bags, a couple of cookies cases. The participants were not able to specify a minimum for drinks.

## **Adaptations to the food basket**

Few adaptations were made to the initial food basket, none of them being in the healthy food part. The main reason for the no changes has to do with the fact that this basket had been already validated through FGs in the ImPRovE project about a year ago. The same is true in the case of the food for social functions, where the exercise of establishing the type and amount of foods necessary in these occasions had been done in the ImPRovE project. The comments in the present FGs were aligned with the previous lists of foods and products included and, on the other hand, discussions were not precise enough to make changes.

In the next paragraphs we specify them:

- Removal of the kitchen equipment considered as no necessary by the FGs: eggcup, steam basket, coffee transporter and kitchen cover filters.
- Inclusion of paper napkins and plastic bags.

## **The pricing of the Spanish food basket**

### **The pricing of food**

By adding up per household type, while taking due account of the required quantity, quality and the storage life, we were looking for the appropriate packaging at the lowest possible price. As it is highly impractical to frequent different shops for regular purchases such as food, a choice was made for combined purchases from a single supermarket chain namely "Mercadona". This choice was made upon a study of the Spanish Consumers' Association (OCU, 2012), in which the different retailers in Spain were analysed and compared in different ways: a "basic basket" (which included white brands), a "typical basket" (that compared products of exactly the same brand and

package), and a "fresh basket" (which included fresh vegetables and fruit). This comparison was made country-wide and also for the main cities in Spain. After studying the different possibilities, Mercadona, was selected for being a retailer wide spread across Spain and with prices in the three baskets being 10% more expensive than the cheapest one, which gives a little margin. Besides, is a retailer very convenient in almost every city in Spain, because it is inside the cities themselves -while Carrefour or Alcampo, which have slightly lower prices are normally in big shopping areas at the outskirts, not being easily reachable for all people, especially non-car owners. Sufficient own production of food was seen for the FGs participants as an option not feasible when living in an urban environment.

### **The pricing of kitchen equipment**

Concerning the kitchen equipment the chosen establishments were those mentioned in the focus groups. The main shops mentioned were Mercadona stores, Ikea and Carrefour. All of them are national and international companies. Also it was seen as common to buy products through second-hand internet shops as Amazon.es, because it was acceptable by focus group participants to buy on those establishments. We always chose the most economical product to include in the Excel list.

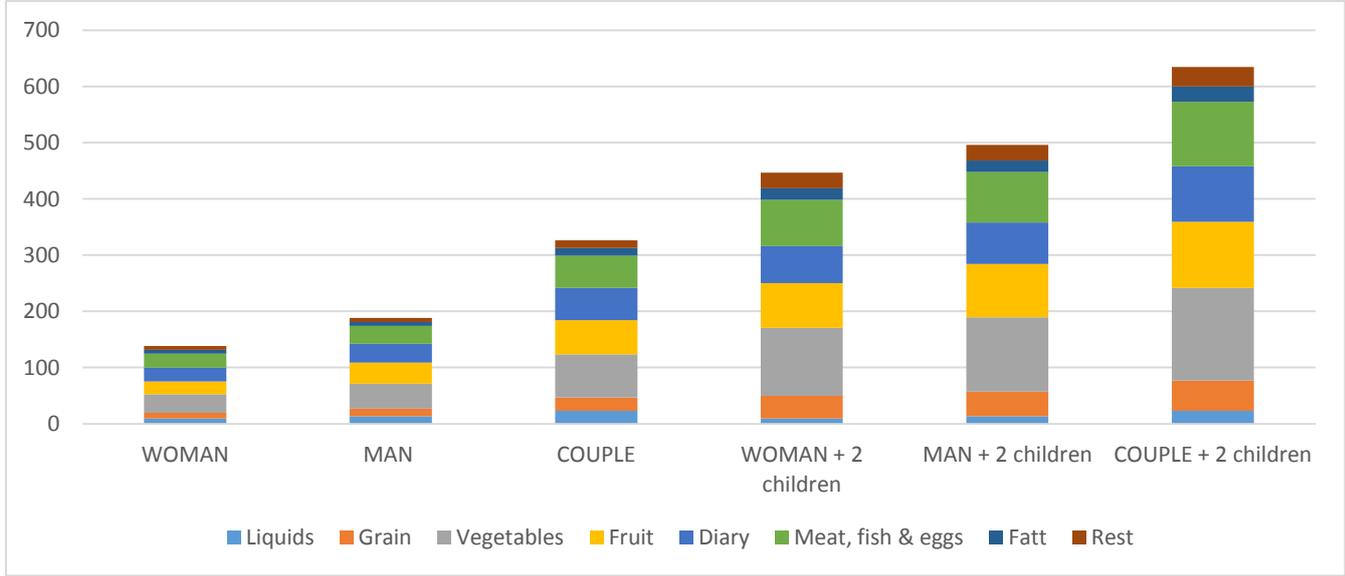
### The Spanish Food budget

Figure 2 shows the monthly cost of the different food groups for the six types of family. The total cost of this part of the food basket ranges from 138,48€ in the case of a single woman to 634,33€ for a couple with two children. The biggest relative cost of these baskets is due to the cost of vegetables, which are included in moderate-high amounts, following the precepts of the Mediterranean Diet and the Spanish Food Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDG).

In agreement with popular belief, typical sources of protein such as meat, fish and eggs are the second most expensive food group, followed by fruits and dairy products, which together account for more than one third of the total food basket in all family types. Grains, potatoes and pulses are more affordable foods.

The exact figures can be seen in Table 2.

Figure 2. Monthly cost in Euros of the Spanish Healthy Food Basket for the different family types and category of food. 2015.



Source: Own calculations.

Table 2. Monthly costs in Euros of the Spanish Healthy Food Basket for the different family types by category. 2015.

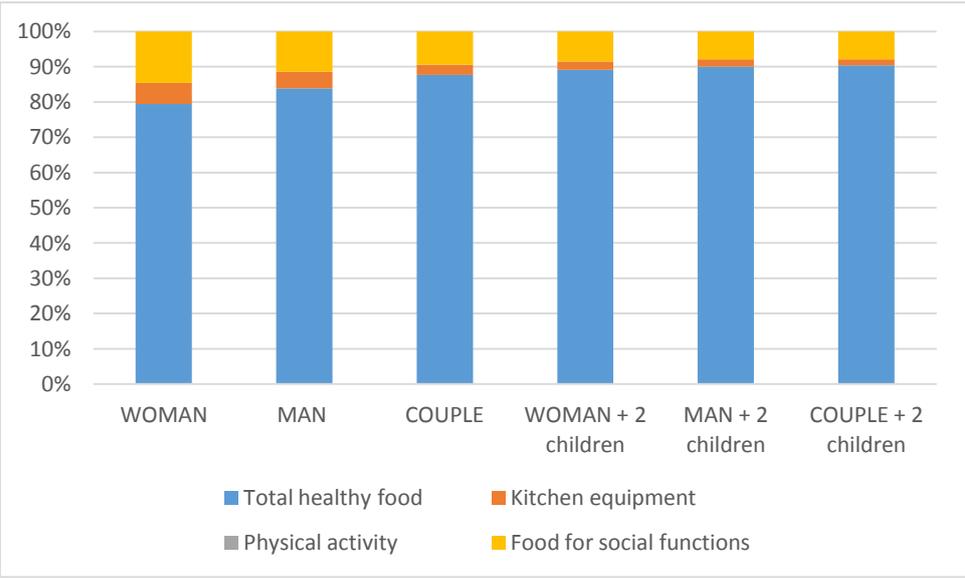
	<b>WOMAN</b>	<b>MAN</b>	<b>COUPLE</b>	<b>S. WOMAN + 2 CHILDREN</b>	<b>S. MAN + 2 CHILDREN</b>	<b>COUPLE + 2 CHILDREN</b>
<b>Healthy food basket</b>						
Liquids	9,64	13,09	22,73	9,64	13,09	22,73
Grain	9,86	14,04	23,90	40,00	44,18	54,04
Vegetables	33,00	43,99	76,99	120,99	131,98	164,98
Fruit	22,74	37,89	60,63	79,58	94,74	117,47
Diary	24,46	33,09	57,55	65,55	74,18	98,64
Meat, fish & eggs	25,19	31,96	57,15	82,72	89,50	114,68
Fatt	6,62	6,98	13,60	20,22	20,58	27,20
Rest	6,93	6,93	13,86	27,64	27,64	34,58
<b>Total healthy food</b>	<b>138,43</b>	<b>187,99</b>	<b>326,42</b>	<b>446,34</b>	<b>495,90</b>	<b>634,33</b>
<b>Kitchen equipment</b>	<b>10,47</b>	<b>10,47</b>	<b>10,92</b>	<b>11,89</b>	<b>11,89</b>	<b>12,20</b>
<b>Physical activity</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>
Take away food	3,93	3,73	7,66	7,29	7,09	11,02
Eating out	1,93	1,73	3,66	4,67	4,46	6,39
Invite people at home	16,98	16,98	17,01	17,06	17,06	17,09
Food on day trip or holiday	1,09	1,18	2,27	5,16	5,25	7,01
Food for celebrations	1,52	2,06	4,47	8,56	9,51	13,90
<b>Other functions of food</b>	<b>25,44</b>	<b>25,67</b>	<b>35,07</b>	<b>42,73</b>	<b>43,37</b>	<b>55,41</b>
<b>Total food</b>	<b>174,35</b>	<b>224,13</b>	<b>372,41</b>	<b>500,97</b>	<b>551,16</b>	<b>701,94</b>

Source: Own calculations.

Healthy food is one of the components of the total food basket, along with the kitchen equipment necessary to conserve, prepare and consume safe and nutritious food, physical activity, and the necessary budget to fulfill other functions of food such as the consumed for gastronomic, cultural or social purposes. Nevertheless, given the purpose for which these baskets have been developed, namely the necessary budget for an adequate food intake, the budget to maintain a healthy diet account for the 80-90% of the total cost, depending on the type of family.

The higher relative cost of the kitchen equipment and other functions of food budget in single types of family is due to the non-use of scale economies (i.e.: the amount of kitchen tools does not differ that much for a single woman or a couple with two children, and the same is true for the amount of food considered for celebrations or receive acquaintances at home). Because we chose not to include paid options for physical activity due to the high cost of it, the price of this element is 0 in all family types.

Figure 3. The relative cost of the different components of the food basket for the different types of family. 2015.



Source: Own calculations.

### Discussion and conclusion

In the previous pages, the development and content of the Spanish Food Basket built as a part of the pilot project for the development of a common methodology on reference budgets has been presented. It is necessary to mention that Madrid has been taken as a reference city, and, as such, consumption patterns, acceptability and prices have been focused in this city. These data complement the Spanish Food Basket that was developed within the framework of the ImPRovE project Workpackage 13<sup>4</sup>, for which the reference city was Barcelona. Interestingly, differences are not major, suggesting that living conditions are very similar in these two cities. In this direction, further research lines are needed and should include the development of the food basket for smaller municipalities and rural areas, apart from the inclusion of a larger number and diversity of family types.

The figures presented above represent the minimum budget need for an adequate food intake, estimated using a common methodology involving other 27 EU-countries. This fact, along with the above mentioned city of reference, invite us to read this data very carefully, especially when generalizing. The procedure that we have used ensure that budgets are cross-nationally comparable, but extending these results to all Spanish households with the same characteristics than the chosen family types is still hazardous, and more research is needed especially with regard to consumption practices and the pricing the food items. For example, home-economy practices (gardening, re-use of foods for different dishes, etc.), have not been taken into account in the construction of these budgets because of a lack of representative data about the spreading of these practices. We should also clarify that the proposed Spanish Healthy Food Basket is not sensitive to ethnic diversity on dietary needs and ethnic culinary practices that exist in our context and that in a way also influence our culinary culture. This research issue would be interesting to take into account in the future.

<sup>4</sup> <http://improve-research.eu/>

In any case, the work done allow to have a proper idea of the cost of a healthy diet, and the cost of food for an adequate food intake for different hypothetical family types living in the Spanish capital city.

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## Annex 1: Menu presented to the participants of the Focus groups (in Spanish).

LUNES	MARTES	MIÉRCOLES	JUEVES	VIERNES	SÁBADO	DOMINGO
1 pieza de fruta 2 tostadas con mermelada 1 vaso de café con leche	1 pieza de fruta 2 tostadas con mermelada 1 vaso de café con leche	1 pieza de fruta 2 tostadas con mermelada 1 vaso de café con leche	1 pieza de fruta 2 tostadas con mermelada 1 vaso de café con leche	1 pieza de fruta 2 tostadas con mermelada 1 vaso de café con leche	1 pieza de fruta 2 tostadas con mermelada 1 vaso de café con leche	1 pieza de fruta 2 tostadas con mermelada 1 vaso de café con leche
Bocadillo de jamón dulce	Bocadillo de queso	Bocadillo de pechuga de pavo	Bocadillo de jamón	Bocadillo de jamón dulce	Bocadillo de queso	Bocadillo de pechuga de pavo
Pasta con verduritas Lomo a la plancha con guarnición de tomate 1 pieza de fruta	Ensalada verde con atún Lentejas con arroz Yogur	Judías verdes con patata salteadas con taquitos de jamón Perca a la pancha con ensalada 1 pieza de fruta	Espaguetis con salsa de tomate y queso rallado Brochetas de pavo con ensalada 1 pieza de fruta	Ensalada verde con atún Lentejas con arroz Yogur	Ensalada verde Pollo al horno con patatas y samfaina 1 pieza de fruta	Ensalada verde Arroz guisado con costillas de cerdo 1 pieza de fruta
1 pieza de fruta 4 nueces	1 pieza de fruta 4 nueces	1 pieza de fruta 4 nueces	1 pieza de fruta 4 nueces	1 pieza de fruta 4 nueces	1 pieza de fruta 4 nueces	1 pieza de fruta 4 nueces
Acelgas con patata Dorada a la papillote Yogur	Sopa de pasta Tortilla de espinacas Con pan con tomate 1 pieza de fruta	Puré de calabacín Sepia a la plancha con guarnición de arroz yogur	Ensalada verde Tortilla de patatas con pan con tomate 1 pieza de fruta	Bróquil con patata gratinado Caballa a la plancha Yogur	Sopa de pasta Tortilla francesa con ensalada de tomate y pan tostado Yogur	Ensalada verde Pizza casera Yogur

## Annex 2: Kitchen equipment for a couple with two children

Item	Description	Quantity	Shop	Brand name	Price	Life span	Shop Cost	Monthly cost
Rack	stainless steel easy to assemble 46x36x184 cm	1	IKEA	omar	38,99	180	38,99	0,22
Combi refrigerator	DAEWOO FN15A2 TOP TABLE. FRIGORÍFICO 1 PUERTA	1	CARREFOUR	DAEWOO	199	120	199	1,66
Jars for freezer	Set of 17	1	IKEA	PRUTA	3,99	120	3,99	0,03
Plastic bags for freezer	BOLSA CONGELACION GRANDE 30X45CM (ENVASE GRIS), BOSQUE VERDE, PAQUETE 30 U	5	MERCADONA	Bosque Verde	0,93	12	4,65	0,39
Tinfoil	PAPEL ALUMINIO 60 M, BOSQUE VERDE, U	2	MERCADONA	Bosque Verde	2,79	12	5,58	0,47
Cling film	FILM TRANSPARENTE 75 M., BOSQUE VERDE,	2	MERCADONA	Bosque Verde	0,95	4	1,9	0,48
Jars	5 jars, plastic lid	4	IKEA	REDA	1,99	120	7,96	0,07
Thermos jug	shatterproof glas dubble wall	2	IKEA	SLUKA	19,99	60	39,98	0,67
Table	moisture and scratch-resistant finish (125*75)	1	IKEA	melltorp	39,99	180	39,99	0,22
Tablecloth	a moisture- and scratch-resistant finish (175*75)	1	IKEA	CAJA	12,99	60	12,99	0,22
Chairs	solid / easily washable / stackable / wide enough / sturdy back / table fit	6	IKEA	MARTIN	24,99	120	149,94	1,25
Deep plate	GRES - 14cm	4	IKEA	LUGN	0,69	120	2,76	0,02
Plate	GRES - 23cm	4	IKEA	LUGN	0,69	120	2,76	0,02
Desert plate	Glass - 20cm	4	IKEA	GODTA	1,99	120	7,96	0,07
Glass	Glass	4	IKEA	POKAL	0,49	120	1,96	0,02
Cutlery	Cubertería 24 piezas, ac inox	1	IKEA	FORNFUT	9,99	180	9,99	0,06
Coffee cup and saucer	GRES - 6 units	4	IKEA	DINERA	9,99	120	39,96	0,33
Detergent	LAVAVAJILLAS MANO (TAPON BLANCO), BOSQUE VERDE, BOTELLA 1300 CC	1	MERCADONA	Bosque Verde	0,89	3,5	0,89	0,25
Dishcloth	BAYETA SUAVE ROLLO 200 X 40 CM.AMARILLA, BOSQUE VERDE, U	2	MERCADONA	Bosque Verde	1	12	2	0,17
Tea towel	4 units	6	IKEA	ELLY	1,99	60	11,94	0,20
Dish sponge	ESTROPAJO ESPONJA VERDE, BOSQUE VERDE, PACK 3 U	1	MERCADONA	Bosque Verde	1	10	1	0,10
Bin	Cubo de basura pedal, ac inox	1	IKEA	STRAPATS	14,99	180	14,99	0,08
Napkin	SERVILLETA PAPEL 1 CAPA 30X30 CM BLANCA, BOSQUE VERDE, PAQUETE 200 U	4	MERCADONA	Bosque Verde	0,95	4	0,95	0,24

Cooking (gas butano)	CANDY CLG64SPX BG. PLACA GAS BUTANO	1	CARREFOUR	CANDY	155	120	155	1,29
Hand blender (mixer)	TAURUS LIQUAFRESH. LICUADORA	1	CARREFOUR	TAURUS	39	60	39	0,65
Garde	Acero inoxidable	1	IKEA	KONCIS	2,99	60	2,99	0,05
Ladle	5 kitchen products: ladle, tong, 2 skimmer, spatula	1	IKEA	GNARP	3,95	180	3,95	0,02
Wooden spoon	Wood, soft for all pans	1	IKEA	Rort	1,49	24	1,49	0,06
Kitchen knife	stainless	1	amazon.es	brabantia	35	120	35	0,29
Craving knife	stainless	1	amazon.es	brabantia	28,33	120	28,33	0,24
Tomato knife	stainless	1	amazon.es	brabantia	13,28	60	13,28	0,22
Chopping board	polietilene/ set of 2	1	IKEA	LEGITIM	2,99	60	2,99	0,05
Food peeler	plastic ABS, stainless steel	1	IKEA	STÄM	0,99	60	0,99	0,02
Grater or rasp	stainless steel	1	IKEA	IDEALISK	4,99	120	4,99	0,04
Multit-pupose scissors	polipropilene plastic, stainless steel	1	IKEA	TROJKA	2,99	60	2,99	0,05
Tin-opener	stainless steel, plastic cover	1	IKEA	STÄM	1,99	60	1,99	0,03
Bottle opener (cork)	nickel-plated	1	IKEA	IDEALISK	1,99	60	1,99	0,03
Pot with lid	2 pot with lid (2 units) + sauce pan + frying pan - 1l // 3l // 5l // 24cm	1	IKEA	SNITSIG	25,99	180	25,99	0,14
Frying pan	14cm	1	IKEA	SKANKA	3,99	60	3,99	0,07
Colander	plastic	1	IKEA	FLÄCKIG	0,99	60	0,99	0,02
Measuring jug	plastic	1	ikea	FLÄCKIG	1,5	120	1,5	0,01
Jug	glass	1	Ikea	Vänlig	2,99	60	2,99	0,05
Coffee maker	6 cups, stainless steel	1	IKEA	RADIG	19,99	120	19,99	0,17
Filter for cooker hood	NYTTIG FIL 900	1	IKEA	carbon filter	10	12	10	0,83
Microwave oven (for working people)	BLUESKY BMO 17 Z-13. MICROONDAS SIN GRILL	1	CARREFOUR	BLUESKY	45	96	45	0,47

only)								
Spoon to dish up	dishwasser safe	1	IKEA	dragon	4,5	180	4,5	0,03
Serving bowl	glass	2	IKEA	TRYGG	0,99	60	1,98	0,03
Oven dish	glass	2	IKEA	MIXTUR	4,99	120	9,98	0,08
Oven cloths	cotton, polyester	1	IKEA	IRIS	1,99	120	1,99	0,02
Pot stand	cork, 3 units	1	IKEA	HEAT	1,99	120	1,99	0,02
								<b>12,20</b>

**Annex 3: Focus groups Report**



# **Analysis of the focus groups discussions in Madrid**

## **Pilot project for the development of a common methodology on reference budgets in Europe**

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Funded by European Commission.

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion



Barcelona, 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015

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## 1. Introduction

In this report we analyse the results of the Focus Group (FGs) discussions we carried out in Madrid for the *Pilot project for the development of a common methodology on Reference Budgets in Europe*.

The report is divided in 2 parts. First, we explain the organisation and planning of the FGs discussions. In the second part, we summarize the findings regarding the 3 main themes in the discussion: i) social participation and needs; ii) food and iii) purchasing patterns. Finally, we draw some conclusions.

## 2. Description of the Focus Groups

In this section we describe how we dealt with the planning and organisation of the FGs discussions and the detailed description of participants.

### 2.1. Planning the FGs in Madrid

The first step we developed was the translation of the script and materials needed for the FGs discussions. In parallel, we started to plan strategically the recruitment.

Our first choice was to recruit the participants through social entities that we knew in Madrid. We contacted them and informed about the research. But this option turns out to be very demanding on time and we realised that we could encounter difficulties in accomplishing the selection criterias. In addition, the fact that the FGs should be carried in the capital cities of the Member States, in our case, Madrid, it was very important to arrange a concrete planning in order to minimize the journeys from Barcelona to Madrid (600 km). For these practical reasons, finally, we requested the recruitment to a specialised bureau that could guarantee the recruitment and organisation of the FGs in two weeks time and provide us with the material and devices needed for the FGs (computer, screen, furnished room in Madrid city centre).

The recruitment process was the following. First of all, we explain to the bureau the selection criterias. Secondly, they started to recruit people that matched with the required characteristics and the [recruitment questionnaire](#) was filled online for each selected participant. So, before the starting of the focus groups we could check the information and see if the composition of each FGs was correct. Finally, we developed the 3 Focus Groups the following days and time: 6<sup>th</sup> March afternoon (1<sup>st</sup> FG) and 7<sup>th</sup> March (2<sup>nd</sup> FG in the morning and 3<sup>rd</sup> FG in the afternoon).

Table 1 summarizes the different activities we developed and the calendar. In total the work took 10 weeks.

In general, we are really satisfied with the recruitment process through a specialised recruitment bureau. Their task was done really fast and with no inconveniences. If we take into account the quality of the whole service we value it as being not expensive. The only thing that made it a bit expensive was the compensation of 45€/per participant. We

gave them an individual card to exchange for goods/services in one of the biggest shopping mall more spread in Madrid.

**Table 1.** Summary: FGs planning & time schedule.

Activity	Weeks					
	19-30 Jan. 2015 (2 weeks)	2-13 Feb. 2015 (2 weeks)	16-20 Feb. 2015 (1 week)	23-27 Feb. 2015 (1 week)	2-7 March 2015 (1 week)	9-27 March 2015 (3 weeks)
Document Translation						
Planning Strategically the Recruitment						
Request to Specialised Bureau						
Starting the recruitment process following the selection criteria						
Filling the online recruitment questionnaire for the selected participants					4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> March	
Final confirmation of the participants					6 <sup>th</sup> March	
Moderating the 3 FGs in Madrid					6 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> March	
Analysing FGs & Writing the FGs Report						

## **2.2. FGs composition**

Each FGs group was composed of 10 people between 33 and 51 years old, in good health, Spanish and living in the city of Madrid and that have never participated in a research about reference budgets. The FGs were mixed, composed by people living in families with children, which represent a majority in the overall sample, single persons or people living in couples without children. In terms of gender composition the three focus groups were equilibrated. Regarding the socioeconomic status we had in each FGs the following composition: 5 people (low and medium-low); 3 (medium-medium); 2 (medium-high or high). See Table 2 for a detailed overview of the FGs composition.

## **2.3. Development of the FGs**

The 3 FGs took place in a furnished room provided by the recruitment bureau in Madrid city centre.

The 3 FGs were developed without any incident or criticism. All participants were actively involved in the discussion, although there were a couple of dominant persons that influence the discussion in each focus group.

All the questions were well understood. The most difficult part to be understood by the participants was the discussion about 'social positions'. It was the first subject asked and it required more abstract thinking, while the discussion about activities, goods and services, food and purchasing patterns was easier for the participants to follow because it is something more linked to quotidian life.

Each FGs had a duration of 2 hours without pause. We offer the participants soft drinks. During the discussion the Power Point of the reference family and the food basket was projected and we also make use of a blackboard to note down the elements said by the participants instead of writing down in the PowerPoint slides. Particularly, we used this method during the discussion about social participation and needs and also for the purchasing patterns. The focus groups were conducted by us through a person that acted as a moderator and the support of the assistant and reporter. We only change the moderator role in the second part. All the information was recorded.

**Table 2.** Focus group composition and number of participants by characteristics.

	Date	Nº participants	Socio-economic background			Family situation				Sex		Employment status	
			High	Medium	Low	Single	Couple	Single with children	Couple with children	Male	Female	Working	Non-Working
<b>FG1</b>	06/03/2015	10	2	3	5	4	0	1	5	5	5	6	4
<b>FG2</b>	07/03/2015	10	2	3	5	3	1	0	6	5	5	7	3
<b>FG3</b>	07/03/2015	10	2	3	5	1	3	0	6	5	5	8	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>

Source: Recruitment questionnaire.

### 3. Results

In this section we summarize the findings regarding the 3 main themes of the discussion: i) social participation and needs; ii) food and iii) purchasing patterns.

#### 3.1. Social participation and social needs

##### 3.1.1. Social participation and social positions

#### Q1. Which social positions were mentioned for adults and children during the brainstorm?

The next table summarizes the social positions for adults and children that were mentioned during the brainstorm, though the list was not very exhaustive.

**Table 3.** Social Positions (brainstorming all 3 FGs together).

Adults	Children
-Family member (includes all the roles, son, daughter, partner, wife/husband, etc).	-Pupil / Student
-Friend	-Family member (includes all the roles, son, daughter, grandchild, etc).
-Employee	-Friend
-Housewife (participants clarified that not only referred to women, also males can have this role)	-Member of an association
-Neighbour	-Sports-boy / Sports-girl
-Member of an association (e.g. sport association)	-Educators
-Educators	-Consumers
-Carer	-“Being Children”
-Voter	-Volunteer
-Sports-man / Sports-woman	-Class Delegate
-Consumers	

Source: FGs discussions.

The most interesting aspect to remark regarding the children social positions mentioned was seeing children also as ‘educators’ and also the role of children ‘being children’ itself. Regarding adults it was interesting that they mention the position of ‘carer’ of other family members (the tasks of looking after parents or children) and ‘voters’ positions.

**Q2. Was there agreement? Why / why not?**

There was agreement in the social positions mentioned by participants in each focus group.

**Q3. Which reasons were mentioned to include them (or exclude them)?**

There was not much debate about the social positions. All the participants saw these positions as essential.

**Q4. Have any changes taken place after the pre-defined list was shown? Which arguments were put forward for (not) changing the original list? Could people agree on this?**

There was a common agreement on the pre-defined list shown and they all agreed to add the complementary social positions mentioned during the brainstorming, both for adults and children that did not appear in the pre-defined list, see Table 4.

**Table 4.** Social Positions Added to the pre-defined list.

Adults	Children
-Friend	-Friend
-Housewife (participants clarified that not only referred to women, also males can have this role)	-Sports-boy / Sports-girl
-Educators	-Educators
-Carer	-Consumers
-Voter	-“Being Children”
-Sports-man / Sports-woman	-Volunteer
-Consumers	-Class Delegate

Source: FGs discussions

Regarding adults there was a critical comment about being member of a trade union as this is not compulsory in our context. So, it could be seen as not an essential role in our society. However, everybody agreed on the fact that people should form part of an association (in general terms).

**Q5. Did things change if the assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children,...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and illustrate with the arguments given.**

The changes in working status were seen as a condition that altere the social positions in the sense that some of them could be not possible to fulfil due to less financial resources in the household. For example, being member of an association.

**Q6. Did people, holding different characteristics (family situation, socio-economic background, gender) respond accordingly? Can you see a pattern (different priorities, interests, focus,...)?**

We could notice that participants with children could argue better the roles for children.

**Q7. Do you have other general remarks about this question?**

In general, this was the most difficult part to discuss in the focus groups, mainly because it is an abstract subject. Moreover, the fact that it was asked in the first part of the discussion made more difficult to reach an active interaction because we did not know yet very much the participants.

### 3.1.2. Human needs and satisfiers

#### Q1. Which activities and broad categories of goods and services were mentioned during the brainstorm for each social position?

The next tables synthesize the brainstorming about activities and goods and services for adults and children.

**Table 5.** Activities & Goods and Services for Adults. Source: FGs discussions.

Activities	Goods and Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Participation in sport clubs/associations</li> <li>-Help other people (e.g. neighbours)</li> <li>-Take care of elderly people in the family</li> <li>-Comradeship with work colleagues</li> <li>-Going to the cinema</li> <li>-Doing sports</li> <li>-Taking care of the house and domestic affairs</li> <li>-Going shopping</li> <li>-Accompany children to activities</li> <li>-Play with children (include different activities: sing, tell stories, walk in the city, play with toys)</li> <li>-Educate children and teach them things, helping them with homework</li> <li>-Spend leisure time with the family</li> <li>-Going on a holiday</li> <li>-Going on excursion</li> <li>-Attend family meetings</li> <li>-Going out with friends to drink/eat something</li> <li>-Watch TV</li> <li>-Listen to other people</li> <li>-Invest in lifelong learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Fee for participation in sport clubs/associations</li> <li>-Food</li> <li>-Adequate clothing</li> <li>-Toys</li> <li>-School Material</li> <li>-Contract and additional teacher for helping children in school work</li> <li>-Cinema Tickets</li> <li>-Car and Parking tickets</li> <li>-Medicines</li> <li>-Enrolment to adult courses</li> <li>-Money (in general)</li> </ul>

**Table 6.** Activities & Goods and Services for Children. Source: FGs discussions.

Activities	Goods and Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Study</li> <li>- Activities related to Extra School support (e.g. receiving help for studying)</li> <li>- Extracurricular activities</li> <li>- School trips</li> <li>- Play with friends</li> <li>- Play with ICT devices (e.g. videogames)</li> <li>- Comradeship with siblings and friends</li> <li>- Help other people (e.g. neighbours)</li> <li>- Activities during leisure time</li> <li>- Going to museums</li> <li>- Going to parties</li> <li>- Going to summer camps</li> <li>- Eating</li> <li>- Playing sports</li> <li>- Participation in associations</li> <li>- Listen to other people</li> <li>- Make relationships</li> <li>- Development of creativity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Books</li> <li>-Adequate clothing (e.g. everyday life and for playing sports)</li> <li>-School material and school clothes</li> <li>-Additional material for school trips</li> <li>-School enrolment</li> <li>-Food</li> <li>-Mobile phone</li> <li>-ICT devices (e.g. videogames)</li> <li>-Internet connection</li> <li>-Bike</li> <li>-Babysitting</li> <li>-Special material for parties and celebrations</li> <li>-Pocket money</li> </ul>

**Q2. Was there agreement? Why / why not?**

Yes, they agreed. The list of activities was quite exhaustive for adults and children. The list for goods and services was vaguer. Some participants pointed out that in order to do these activities you need, in general, money, although we clarified that not always was necessary (e.g. sing or tell a story to a child).

**Q3. Which reasons were mentioned to include them (or exclude them)?**

All these activities and the goods and services associated were seen as essential.

**Q4. Did things change if assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children,...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and illustrate with the arguments given.**

In the 3 FGs participants argued that the change in the assumptions will influence the frequency of the activities, but the list will be not altered. For example, in the case of a change in the family situation (e.g. without children), participants said that you do not play with your own children, but you might play with children from relatives. Also if you do not have children you could have a wider range of leisure activities and go more often for holiday trips because you are less limited than when you go on a trip with children that it is normally more expensive and also the type of activities will be different. So, the travel offer will be different. Regarding changes in working-status, people said that you might spend more time in professional training courses while being unemployed than when you are employed, because of the need of finding a job or update your competences. In conclusion, the main activities that people should be able to do and goods and services that people should have at the minimum for an adequate social participation do not change, but what changes is the intensity of these activities.

**Q5. Did people, holding different characteristics (family situation, income level, employment situation,...), respond accordingly? Can you see a pattern (different priorities, interests, focus,...)?**

We could notice that participants with children could have a wider vision of the activities and goods and services needed for children and they could illustrate this with examples.

**Q6. Do you have other general remarks about this question?**

In general, this part of the discussion was quite dynamic and more interactions took place between the participants.

**Q7. Which underlying intermediate needs were mentioned by the participants?**

The participants mentioned the main intermediate needs we had in the pre-defined list: adequate housing, food, adequate clothing, education, leisure, rest, social relations, personal care, health care & mobility.

**Q8. Was there agreement? Why/why not?**

There was a common agreement on the list of needs.

**Q9. Which reasons were mentioned to include them (or exclude them)?**

**Q10. Did things change if assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children,...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and illustrate with the arguments given.**

No, there are no changes.

**Q11. Have any changes taken place after the pre-defined list with intermediate needs was shown? Which arguments were put forward for (not) changing the original list? Could people agree on this?**

The list mentioned by the participants matched with the pre-defined list. Only we could notice small differences in the expression of concepts. For example, 'social relations' was defined in the pre-list as 'significant primary relationships'. Also in the participant's list were missing the following intermediate needs: Security in Childhood and Life Long Learning and Security, but they agreed to include them.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> FGs after the pre-defined list was shown, some participants added the need of having a job. There was a common agreement from other participants that the need of a job was really important to develop an adequate social participation. In addition, in the 1<sup>st</sup> FG there was added the need of political and economic freedom and the need of legal and labour framework to have sufficient security.

**Q12. Did people, holding different characteristics (family situation, income level, employment situation,...), respond accordingly? Can you see a pattern (different priorities, interests, focus,...)?**

No, in the case of intermediate needs there was a common agreement, we cannot appreciate differences between participants' characteristics.

**Q13. Do you have other general remarks about this question?**

In general, we were highly surprised on the quick brainstorming while identifying the intermediate needs.

**Q14. Do you think that after part I, everyone understood adequate social participation in the same way?**

Yes.

**Q15. Do you think that after part I, you have good arguments to develop reference budgets for adequate social participation in your country starting from the list of baskets discussed?**

Yes, there is sufficient information.

## 3.2. The food basket

### 3.2.1. The healthy food basket

#### **Q1. In general, was the content of the healthy food basket considered to be acceptable and feasible? Why/ why not?**

The content of the healthy food basket was considered to be acceptable and feasible. There was a general agreement that such a diet was desirable and would be "like the kind of diet that a doctor would prescribe you", but that very few people eat this way, especially because of convenience and time concerns.

When confronted to the menu, there were few specific comments on the foods included. One participant claimed for more meat and less fish; someone said that it was not healthy to eat a sandwich every morning and another one suggested including natural juices instead of whole fruit in the morning. In our opinion this comments reflect both, personal preferences and cultural practices –especially in the case of meat.

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that some of the participants took the menu with them, as something they wanted to use at home with their families.

#### **Q2. Was there agreement? Why/ why not?**

See explanation above.

#### **Q3. Where items added or deleted to the food basket and kitchen equipment? For which reasons? Which changes (deleted or added items) to which categories of food and kitchen equipment were made and for which reasons?**

The participants considered that, in general, the list of the kitchen equipment was acceptable. However, there was consensus in the three FGs that an eggcup, a steam basket and a coffee transported was not necessary. They also questioned that a pedal bin (opposite to a manual lid bin) was needed. All the participants agreed in the need of microwave and dish-washer, because the tight schedules of living in a big city.

It was also mentioned in two of the FGs that current kitchen cover filters are washable, thus it would not be necessary to include them as a replaceable item.

Then some individual contributions referred to the desirability of having a juicer, a toaster and a pressure cooker, but there was not a general agreement. On the other hand they pointed out that paper napkins were not included, and neither were bin bags.

#### **Q4. Did things change if assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children,...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and illustrate with the arguments given.**

There were mixed opinions with regard to the effect of changes in the family composition in the healthy food basket. For some, there were not changes at all; while for others (mainly participants with children) families without children or single adults would eat better because they would have more time to cook and still for a third group (mainly single participants or without children) adults co-habiting

with couple and/or children would have better eating habits because the social reinforcement, and because "cooking for one is not attractive".

In relation to the working status, if income was not a problem there would be no necessary changes.

**Q5. Did people, holding different characteristics (family situation, income level, employment situation,...), respond accordingly? Can you see a pattern (different priorities, interests, focus,...)?**

The only pattern we could perceive, as mentioned above, was the perception of all other family types –different from one's actual family type- would have more opportunities to eat better. But when asked whether if people had the motivation to eat better this healthy food basket would be appropriate for everyone all participants agreed it was.

### 3.2.2. Other functions of food

**Q1. Which other reasons of people needing food besides ensuring a good health were mentioned? Q2. Was there agreement? Why/ why not? Q3. Which reasons were mentioned to include them (or exclude them)?**

The participants mentioned reasons such as celebrations or cultural occasions (weddings, traditional holidays), social (inviting someone home, going out), emotional (in cases of boredom, stress). Special changes due to sport practice were also alluded in two of the three FGs.

**Q4. Have any changes taken place after the pre-defined list was shown? Which arguments were put forward for (not) changing the original list? Could people agree on this?**

The pre-defined list was, in general, considered acceptable. The religious meaning was not clear for everyone, and it was suggested that it could be included in the cultural function of food. The exchange function was also considered not very frequent in our context: people exchange different types of foods depending on *their speciality*, but food was not considered something to be exchanged for other goods or services.

**Q5. Which other kind of food regarding the other functions of food was mentioned and what was considered to be an acceptable minimum?**

They gave ideas mainly related with receiving visits. In general, there was agreement that it was expected to have visitors twice a month. The kind of food offered for that occasions would depend on the moment of the day. If visits came in the early afternoon, then coffee (tea or hot chocolate in the case of children) with cookies or pastry would be offered. When visits were later in the evening, it would be common to offer wine, soft drinks, chips, olives, charcuterie, bread, etc.

With regard to the acceptable monthly minimum they agreed of about 3-4 cans of olives, 2-3 chips bags, a couple of cookies cases. The participants were not able to specify a minimum for drinks.

**Q6. Which other food-related items/satisfiers needed for adequate participation in society were mentioned? In which circumstances and related to which positions? Q7. Was there agreement? Why/ why not? Q8.**

**What was conceived in this regards to be an acceptable minimum? Q9. Was there agreement? Why/ why not?**

Participants agreed that everyone should be able to enjoy local typical dishes every once in a while (not frequency specified), and to celebrate traditional occasions such as Christmas, Easter or Lent with their traditional foods and dishes.

**Q10. Did anything change if the assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children,...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and the arguments given.**

No. There would not be changes.

**Q11. Did people, holding different characteristics (family situation, income level, employment situation,...), respond accordingly? Can you see a pattern (different priorities, interests, focus,...)?**

There were no changes with regard to the different types of families.

**Q12. Do you have any other general remarks about part II?**

No.

### 3.2.3. Assumptions

**Q1. Were the assumptions regarding the food basket (home cooking, healthy, tasty and well-varied cooking, shop economically) considered to be acceptable? Which were and which were not? And why? In which circumstances? Where other suggestions or changes made? Q2. Was there an agreement? Why/ why not?**

The participants agreed that if people had the willingness to eat healthy, everyone was able to cook at home, healthily and tasty. However, there was a general agreement that current ways of living made it very difficult. Some also mentioned that if their children were fussy eaters it affected the quality of the diet of the whole family.

In general, there was agreement that in Madrid it was difficult to shop economically, but people could do it to the best of their abilities (meaning that given that things, in general, are expensive, people is able to make the most of their budgets). Additionally, part of the participants mentioned that the proposed menu would make up an expensive diet.

**Q3. Did anything change if the assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children,...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and the arguments given.**

No changes were applicable if the assumptions were modified.

**Q4. Did people, holding different characteristics (family situation, income level, employment situation,...), respond accordingly? Can you see a pattern (different priorities, interests, focus,...)?**

No, it was not the case.

### 3.3. Purchasing patterns

In this section we describe participant's opinion regarding purchasing patterns. While discussing about this subject we did not add other information sources.

#### 3.3.1. Goods and services

**Q1. According to the focus groups to get access to food & kitchen equipment/clothing/ furniture/electronic devices/personal hygiene products /mobility/education/health care for which goods and services should people like the ones in our reference family rely on? If possible, please illustrate with additional survey data and expert knowledge.**

There was general agreement among the participants that the private market is the primary source for acquiring food and kitchen equipment, clothing, furniture, electronic devices and products related to personal hygiene.

In the case of food, some participants said that it is frequent to exchange products or to produce their own grown vegetables, but it is only possible if they have friends or family who live outside the city (where it is easier to have a garden).

Exchanges are also common for children clothes and textbooks. However, participants agreed that it is not possible for everyone to access clothes and textbooks through exchanges.

For education and healthcare, participants generally thought that services are provided at sufficient quality by the public sector.

Last, in the case of mobility participants thought that the public transport network is not accessible enough if you live in the suburbs or outside the city center. Also, they mentioned that for a household composed by 4 people using a car was cheaper than public services.

**Q2. Was there agreement? Why/why not?**

Yes.

**Q3. Which reasons were mentioned to include some of the purchase patterns (or exclude them)?**

People agree with the purchase patterns offered by experts, as mentioned above.

**Q4. Is it realistic/feasible for all people living in the circumstances like our reference family? And for other people? Why? Why not?**

Yes, in general are realistic for all people. In general people agree that differences in the purchase patterns come from the amount of free time that, for example families without children would have.

**Q5. Do most people rely on them? Who does/doesn't? Why? How often?**

Yes.

**Q6. Are the public goods and services that are mentioned sufficiently accessible, of sufficient quality and variety? Does this suffice? Why? Why not?**

Yes, as explained in Q1.

**Q7. Are people expected to pay informal payments for making use of the public good or service that is mentioned? (With special focus on health care, the educational system, mobility,...) in which circumstances? Should we take this into account in a minimum budget for social participation? Please illustrate with additional survey data and expert knowledge.**

In Spain informal payments are not expected.

**Q8. Does anything change if the assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children, having a car...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and the arguments given.**

No. There would not be changes.

### 3.3.2. Second hand shops

**Q1. For which items the focus groups thought they could be bought in second hand shops and in which circumstances? If possible, please illustrate with additional survey data and expert knowledge.**

They thought that the second hand items could be for example clothes, technological devices, vehicles, books and textbooks. It applies to any social status.

**Q2. Was there agreement? Why/why not?**

Yes, there was a clear agreement. They thought that, for the circumstances of citizens of Madrid the second hand items are acceptable.

**Q3. Does anything change if the assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children, having a car...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and the arguments given.**

No. There would not be changes.

### 3.3.3. Choice of items

**Q1. For which kind of food related items the focus group thought, it is defensible that people should always rely on low priced products and in which circumstances? Please illustrate with additional survey data and expert knowledge. If possible, please illustrate with additional survey data and expert knowledge.**

People agree in general that white label products are good for all kinds of family groups and people. Participants mention especially dairy, dry products, such as pasta or legumes.

They also agree that meat, fish and fresh fruits and vegetables are also acceptable to be bought in the same markets that offer white-label products.

**Q2. Was there agreement? Why/why not?**

See explanation above. Only few people mentioned that not all products of white-label are good and acceptable.

**Q3. Which reasons were mentioned to include them (or exclude them)?**

The reasons to exclude this products are the subjective feelings of these products' taste or low quality.

**Q4. Does anything change if the assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children, having a car...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and the arguments given.**

No. There would not be changes.

**3.3.4. Bargaining about prices**

**Q1. In which situations and for which kind of products bargaining about prices is considered to be appropriate? If possible, please illustrate with additional survey data and expert knowledge.**

The people do not consider appropriate bargaining in Madrid.

**Q2. Was there agreement? Why/why not?**

Yes.

**Q3. Does anything change if the assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children, having a car...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and the arguments given.**

No comments.

### 3.3.5. Choice of shops

**Q1. Which shops were mentioned to be appropriate for the reference family? If possible, please illustrate with additional survey data and expert knowledge.**

The participants mentioned big popular supermarkets. The most mentioned are the cheapest, like Mercadona, Carrefour or Alcampo. Some people also mentioned neighborhood shops.

Few people mentioned ethnic stores, such as Chinese stores, where you can buy all kind of cheap products. But, shopping malls were the most mentioned for most people.

About electronic equipment, technology and appliances, people mentioned Internet platforms like Amazon or BuyVip.

About clothes, some cheap shops like C&A, Primark or Internet outlets from big companies like H&M or Mango.

**Q2. Was there agreement? Why/why not?**

Yes, all opinions are respected and acceptable to all persons with few exceptions.

**Q3. Which reasons were mentioned to include certain shops (or exclude them)?**

Few people did not agree with some of the shops above because they argued that some clothes or products have very low quality – but, they did not suggest any alternative.

**Q4. Does anything change if the assumptions (working status, tenure status, having children, having a car...) regarding the reference family were altered? If so please give examples and the arguments given.**

No changes.

**Q5. Did people, holding different characteristics (family situation, income level, employment situation, having a car or not,...), respond accordingly? Can you see a pattern (different priorities, interests, focus,...)?**

No, people have the same opinion.

**Q6. Do you have any other general remarks about part III?**

No.

## 4. Conclusion

After analysing the content of the FGs discussions we conclude that we have sufficient information in order to continue the process of building the References Budgets for Madrid.

Regarding the social participation and needs we observe that in the 3 FGs the same social positions emerged and the intermediate needs mentioned were the same as the ones pre-listed in the research theoretical framework. So, we conclude that the starting theoretical point has been validated in the Spanish society.

About the healthy food, we foresee that some adaptations should be made; mainly regarding the kitchen equipment. In addition, the discussion about the social functions of food was also very extensive and this information will be really useful to complete the other baskets that should be developed, such as maintaining social relations.

Concerning the purchasing patterns we obtain a lot of specific information for the capital city that was common in all three FGs. So, this emphasised that there exist common purchasing practices, which will surely facilitate the pricing procedure in Madrid.

Finally, the satisfactory development of the FGs discussion and the equilibrated composition of the FGs according to the selection criteria agreed guarantee that the results and opinions we obtained are valid and representative for our context.

## Annex 1: Debriefing notes

### Debriefing FG1

<p>Country: Spain. City: Madrid.          Number focus group: FG1          Date: 06<sup>th</sup> March 2015          Duration: 2h          Number of participants: 10</p>	
<p>Debriefing notes on :          Active involvement of the participants          Understanding of the questions          Critics          Special events</p>	<p>No special events happened.          Although there was a couple of dominant persons, all the participants were actively involved in the discussion.          All the questions were well understood, despite that the fact that the discussion about the social positions was a little bit abstract.          Nor critics or special events took place.</p>
<p>Do respondents agree on the essential social positions* that everybody should be able to take? If not, what were the main discussion points?</p>	<p>Yes, the participants agreed on the essential social positions.</p>
<p>Do respondents agree on the activities that people should be able to play? If not, what were the main discussion points?</p>	<p>Yes, they agreed although the list (see report) was not exhaustive.</p>
<p>Do respondents agree on the intermediate needs*?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>What are the main points of agreement and disagreement regarding the healthy food basket?</p>	<p>There was a general agreement. They considered no necessary for a healthy diet the eggcup, the steam basket and the pedal bin, coffee transporter.          On the other hand they agreed in considering the “menu” as “like the one that the doctor would prescribe you”, but very few people eat this way.</p>
<p>What are the most important other functions of food that were mentioned?</p>	<p>Social, pleasure, emotional, cultural, celebrations, sport.</p>
<p>What are the most striking points (agreements/disagreements) regarding the purchasing patterns?</p>	<p>There was general agreement that all goods and services are accessed through the commercial market.          They also agreed that health assistance and education can be relied on public provision except for the case of the dentist, drugs and school supplies. Textbooks can sometimes be obtained through family and friends if they have children of similar ages.          Similarly, clothes and items for children can also be obtained from family or friends with older children.          Buying second hand goods is acceptable for tools; sports items, kitchen equipment, cars, ICT and baby stud; Madrid</p>

	<p>has a wide second-hand market.  It is acceptable to buy white brand products.  Most accepted stores to buy goods were: Mercadona, Alcampo, Primark, MadiaMarkt, Amazon.</p>
<p>Were the assumptions about the reference household sufficiently specific? Did participants mention other characteristics that were relevant for the discussion, but which were not pre-defined (e.g. working or not; tenure status)?</p>	<p>No. The working status was limiting in economic terms, but other than that all the assumptions would remain true for all kinds of family and also for working status.</p> <p>Car is necessary to save time and money (public transportation is seen as expensive).</p>

## Debriefing FG2

<p>Country: Spain. City: Madrid.          Number focus group: FG2          Date: 07<sup>th</sup> March 2015          Duration: 2h          Number of participants: 10</p>	
<p>Debriefing notes on :          Active involvement of the participants          Understanding of the questions          Critics          Special events</p>	<p>No special events happened.          Although there was a couple of dominant persons, all the participants were actively involved in the discussion.          All the questions were well understood, despite that the fact that the discussion about the social positions was a little bit abstract. Nor critics or special events took place.</p>
<p>Do respondents agree on the essential social positions* that everybody should be able to take? If not, what were the main discussion points?</p>	<p>Yes, the participants agreed on the essential social positions.</p>
<p>Do respondents agree on the activities that people should be able to play? If not, what were the main discussion points?</p>	<p>Yes, they agreed although the list (see report) was not exhaustive.</p>
<p>Do respondents agree on the intermediate needs*?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>What are the main points of agreement and disagreement regarding the healthy food basket?</p>	<p>There was a general agreement. They considered no necessary for a healthy diet the eggcup, the steam basket and the pedal bin, coffee transporter.          On the other hand they agreed in considering the “menu” as “like the one that the doctor would prescribe you”, but very few people eat this way.          I would be feasible to cook all the meals at home.          Kitchen filters are not common, because they are washable (replaceable filters date from 20 years ago).</p>
<p>What are the most important other functions of food that were mentioned?</p>	<p>Social, pleasure, emotional, cultural, celebrations, sport.</p>
<p>What are the most striking points (agreements/disagreements) regarding the purchasing patterns?</p>	<p>There was general agreement that all goods and services are accessed through the commercial market.          They also agreed that health assistance and education can be relied on public provision except for the case of the dentist, drugs and school supplies. Textbooks can sometimes be obtained through family and friends if they have children of similar ages.          Similarly, clothes and items for children can also be obtained from family or friends with older children.</p>

	<p>Buying second hand goods is acceptable for tools; sports items, kitchen equipment, cars, ICT and baby stud; Madrid has a wide second-hand market.</p> <p>It is acceptable to buy white brand products.</p> <p>Most accepted stores to buy goods were: Mercadona, Alcampo, Primark, MadiaMarkt, Amazon.</p>
<p>Were the assumptions about the reference household sufficiently specific? Did participants mention other characteristics that were relevant for the discussion, but which were not pre-defined (e.g. working or not; tenure status)?</p>	<p>No. The working status was limiting in economic terms, but other than that all the assumptions would remain true for all kinds of family and also for working status.</p> <p>Car is necessary to save time and money (public transportation is seen as expensive).</p>

### Debriefing FG3

<p>Country: Spain. City: Madrid.          Number focus group: FG3          Date: 07<sup>th</sup> March 2015          Duration: 2h          Number of participants: 10</p>	
<p>Debriefing notes on :          Active involvement of the participants          Understanding of the questions          Critics          Special events</p>	<p>No special events happened.          Although there was a couple of dominant persons, all the participants were actively involved in the discussion.          All the questions were well understood, despite that the fact that the discussion about the social positions was a little bit abstract.          Nor critics or special events took place.</p>
<p>Do respondents agree on the essential social positions* that everybody should be able to take? If not, what were the main discussion points?</p>	<p>Yes, the participants agreed on the essential social positions.</p>
<p>Do respondents agree on the activities that people should be able to play? If not, what were the main discussion points?</p>	<p>Yes, they agreed although the list (see report) was not exhaustive.</p>
<p>Do respondents agree on the intermediate needs*?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>What are the main points of agreement and disagreement regarding the healthy food basket?</p>	<p>There was a general agreement. They considered no necessary for a healthy diet the eggcup, the steam basket and the pedal bin, coffee thermo.          On the other hand, they would consider to add a dish-washer, a juicer, a toaster, paper napkins, bin bags, a sandwich maker, an oven, and a pressure cooker. But there was not a general agreement.          They also said a dish-washer would be necessary for the family type.          Fruit juices were considered desirable, especially at breakfast.          Time was a concern in order to cook all the meals at home.</p>
<p>What are the most important other functions of food that were mentioned?</p>	<p>Social, pleasure, emotional, cultural, celebrations.          Religious function was considered rare in Spanish society, and they suggested it could be included in the cultural function.</p>
<p>What are the most striking points (agreements/disagreements) regarding the purchasing</p>	<p>There was general agreement that all goods and services are accessed through the commercial market.          They also agreed that health assistance and education can be relied on public provision except for the case of the</p>

<p>patterns?</p>	<p>dentist, drugs and school supplies. Textbooks can sometimes be obtained through family and friends if they have children of similar ages.</p> <p>Similarly, clothes and items for children can also be obtained from family or friends with older children.</p> <p>Buying second hand goods is acceptable for tools; sports items, kitchen equipment, cars, ICT and baby stuff; Madrid has a wide second-hand market.</p> <p>It is acceptable to buy white brand products, although some products do not have the same quality.</p> <p>Most accepted stores to buy goods were: Mercadona, Alcampo, C&amp;A MadaMarkt, Amazon, ebay, decathlon, H&amp;M, Zara.</p> <p>In this case, Primark was considered of not enough quality.</p>
<p>Were the assumptions about the reference household sufficiently specific? Did participants mention other characteristics that were relevant for the discussion, but which were not pre-defined (e.g. working or not; tenure status)?</p>	<p>No. The working status was limiting in economic terms, but other than that all the assumptions would remain true for all kinds of family and also for working status.</p> <p>Car is necessary to save time and money (public transportation is seen as expensive).</p>

