

CALL FOR PAPERS

Nutrition information as a tool of consumer empowerment and public health protection ?

Organisers:

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Dates: 25 and 26 January 2018

Venue: Université de Lausanne, Switzerland

On 1st of April 2016, the General Assembly proclaimed the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, 2016-2025, thus recognising the need to end hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition worldwide. Over two billion people suffer from micronutrient deficiencies, 1.9 billion people are affected by overweight of which around 500 million are obese, and 793 million people remain chronically undernourished. The UN Decade of Action on Nutrition will provide an umbrella for a wide group of actors to work together to address these pressing nutrition issues in order to achieve the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in particular SDG 2 (greater food security and improved nutrition) and SDG 3 (a reduction by one third of premature mortality from non-communicable diseases).

The provision of nutrition information to consumers, particularly via food labels, has become a privileged regulatory strategy to promote healthier diets and therefore address obesity and other diet-related diseases. Encouraging consumers to make informed food choices through the provision of food information, ultimately allows the responsibility for healthier food choices to be shared between, on the one hand, consumers, who are expected to process the information made available to them when purchasing food, and, on the other, regulatory authorities which must ensure that this information is sufficient, clear and neither false nor misleading.

This conference, organised jointly by the Universities of Lausanne, Liverpool and Nantes, will focus on the role that nutrition information can play in promoting healthier food choices (food being defined broadly to include alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages). It proposes to adopt an interdisciplinary – or even transdisciplinary – viewpoint; we would particularly welcome contributions by lawyers but also by economists, public health experts, psychologists... We would also welcome contributions focusing on specific case studies – looking at the experience gathered in countries that have evaluated the effectiveness of their food information rules in promoting healthier diets.

It is anticipated that the conference will cover the following questions:

- *What is the evidence base supporting the provision of nutrition information to consumers as part of effective nutrition strategies? In particular, what role can nutrition information play in promoting healthier diets? (Evidence)*
- *What contribution have existing nutrition information measures made to improve diets? (Empirical Analysis)*
- *What information should be covered by the notion of 'nutrition information'? In particular, how far should food claims and other promotional information fall within its scope? (Definition)*

- *How do the fields of nutrition, food safety and advertising regulation relate to each other? (Boundaries)*
- *What type of information should be provided to improve nutrition? How personalised should this information be? (Effectiveness)*
- *How should nutrition information measures – if adopted – be designed to be as effective as possible? In particular, what is the potential of interpretive front-of-pack labelling to facilitate consumer choices? (Design)*
- *Who should the main policy actors be in the development of nutrition information policies at national / regional / global level? (Policy Actors)*
- *How does international economic law – and World Trade Organization and European Union internal market law more specifically – affect the regulatory autonomy of Member States in designing their own national nutrition information schemes? (Legality)*
- *How far should Codex and other relevant international bodies contribute to the standardisation of food information? How far should the European Union harmonise the laws of Member States on nutrition information? (Harmonisation)*
- *Who should be entrusted with implementing nutrition information rules? What sanctions should be envisaged to 'encourage' compliance with nutrition information rules? In particular, what could the role of litigation be in promoting such compliance? (Implementation)*
- *What can researchers in law learn from other disciplines in ensuring that consumer food information rules are fit for purpose? (Multidisciplinarity)*

If you are interested in presenting a paper, you should submit an abstract of no more than 500 words as well as a short biography by email: nutritioninformation2018@unil.ch. Submission deadline: **21 October 2017**. We are hoping to invite several early career researchers to present their work.

Selected papers can be presented in either English or French. However, all participants should be fluent in English to understand, take questions and otherwise participate in the conference that will primarily take place in English.

The conference budget will cover accommodation costs in Lausanne (where necessary) and/or part of the travel costs. This will be discussed with participants whose papers have been selected on an individual basis.