



## SETTING THE SCENE

FOR HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE DIETS IN DIABETES

**Rogério Ribeiro**

European Parliament, April 18<sup>th</sup>



With the support:





# Agenda

- Type 2 Diabetes sustained incidence and lifestyle risk factors
- Plant-based diets in diabetes therapeutic education: guidelines and challenges
- Eat better, Live Better initiative
- Glimpse into project results:
  - Literature review
  - Social Marketing Survey
  - Food Workshops
- Take-home message and acknowledgments

# Type 2 Diabetes

A Modern Epidemic



**1 in 11**

European Adults (20-79 years)  
have diabetes  
**61 million people**



**19.6%**

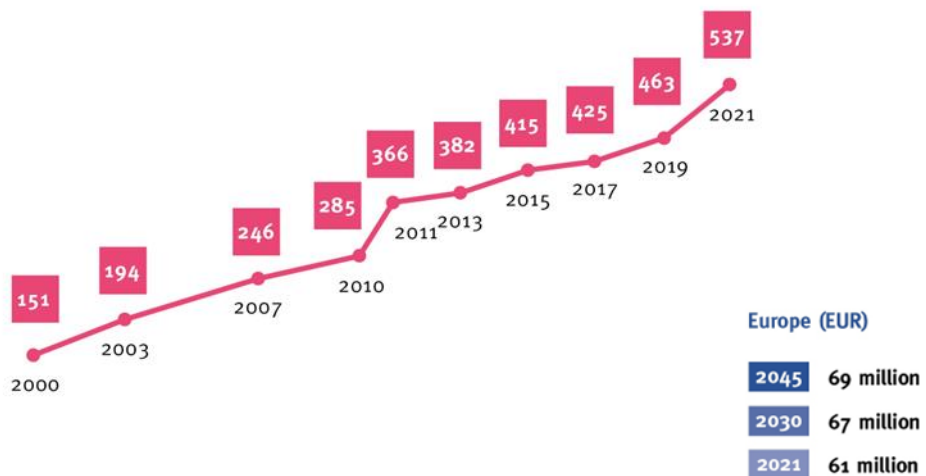
Diabetes-related expenditure in  
Europe (**USD 189 billion**)



# Type 2 Diabetes A Modern Epidemic



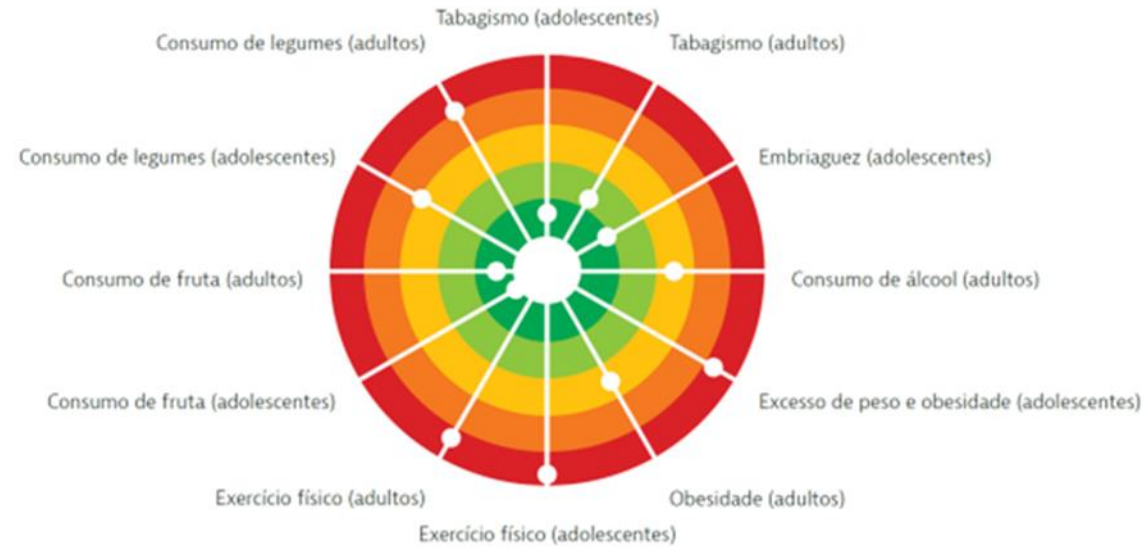
Estimates of the global prevalence of diabetes in the 20–79 year age group (millions)



↑ 13% increase

(IDF Atlas 10th Edition, 2021)

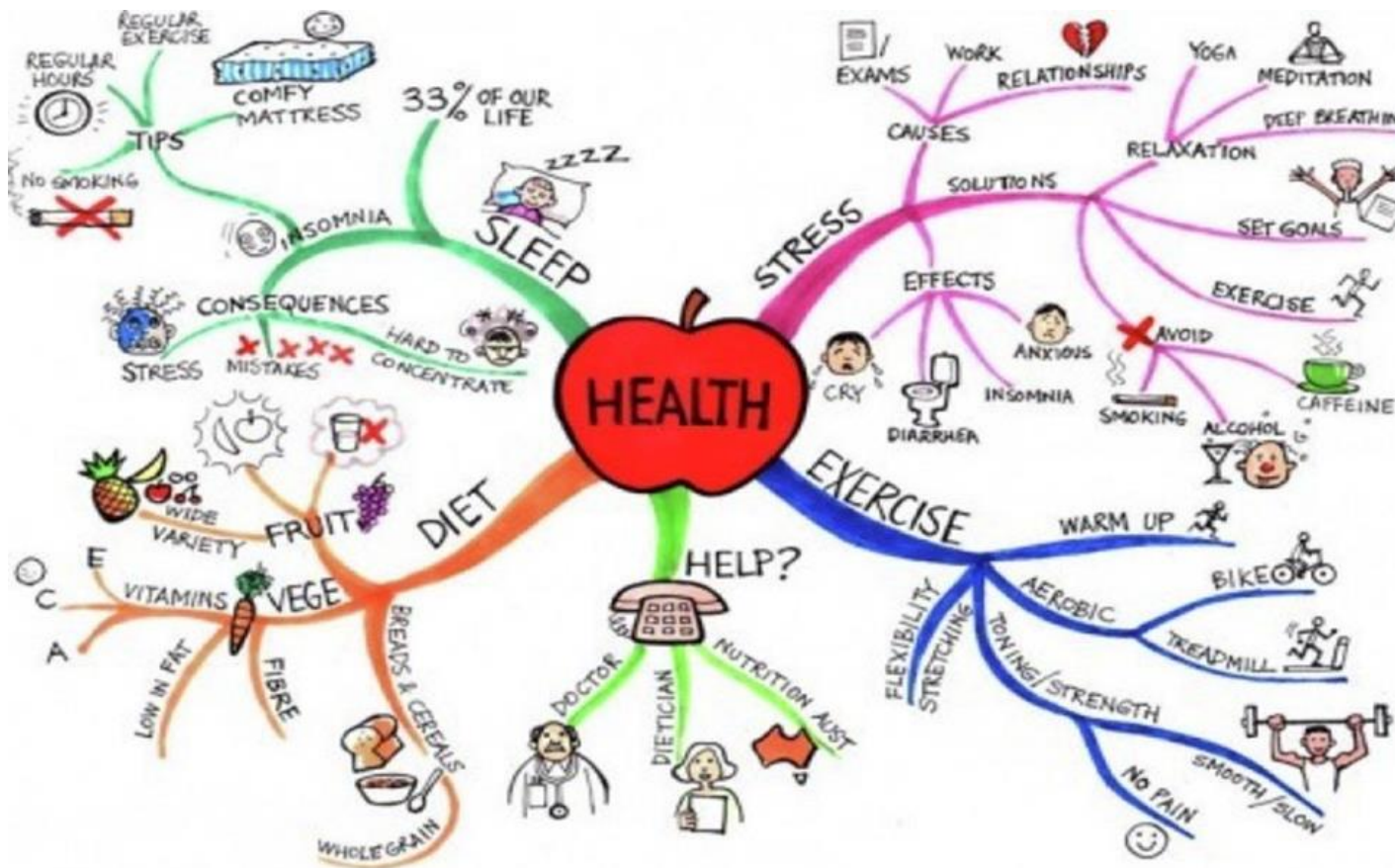
# Type 2 Diabetes Lifestyle Risk Factors Driving Incidence



*Nota: Quanto mais próximo o ponto estiver do centro, melhor é o desempenho do país comparativamente aos outros países da UE. Nenhum país está na «zona branca», porquanto existe margem para realizar progressos em todos os países em todos os domínios.  
Fontes: Cálculos da OCDE com base no inquérito HBSC de 2017-2018 para os indicadores relativos aos adolescentes, nas estatísticas da saúde da OCDE, nas estatísticas EU-SILC de 2017 e nas estatísticas baseadas no EHIS de 2014 e 2019 para os indicadores relativos aos adultos.*

This sustained increase is supported by poor health behaviours, mainly in terms of nutrition, physical activity and sleep/stress management.

# Type 2 Diabetes The challenge of support



People with diabetes are expected to juggle a complex network of daily activities...  
And healthcare professionals are expected to provide support, based on little information

# Type 2 Diabetes Nutritional guidelines

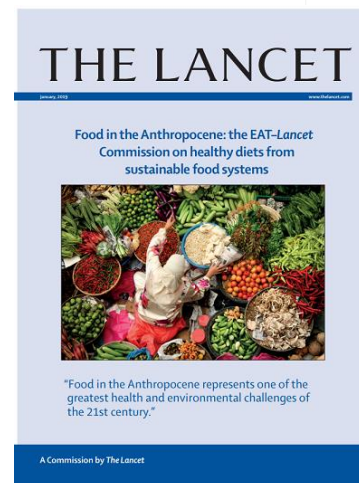
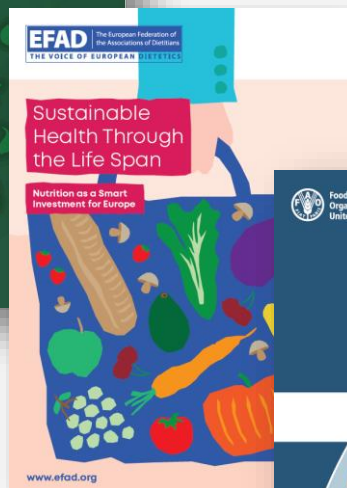
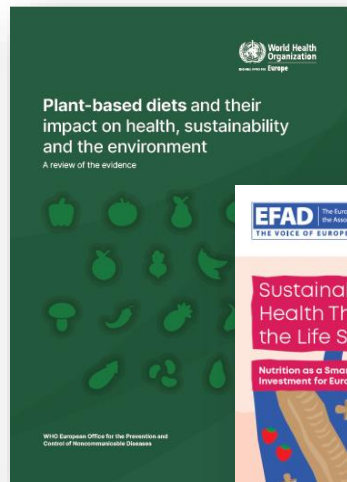


- **Eating pattern(s) or food pattern(s).**  
The totality of all foods and beverages consumed over a given period of time. An eating pattern can be ascribed to an individual, but it is also the term used in prospective cohort and observational nutrition studies to classify and study nutrition patterns. Examples of eating patterns include Mediterranean style, Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH), low-carbohydrate vegetarian, and plant based (139).

## Recommendations

- A variety of dietary patterns emphasising the consumption of whole grains, whole vegetables and fruit, legumes, nuts, seeds and non-hydrogenated non-tropical vegetable oils, while minimising the consumption of meat (especially red and processed meat), sugar-sweetened beverages, sweets and refined grains are recommended. These patterns include:
  - Mediterranean dietary pattern to improve glycaemia and other cardiometabolic risk factors (⊕⊕⊕⊖ Moderate) and reduce risk of CVDs and all-cause mortality (⊕⊕⊖⊖ Low to ⊕⊕⊕⊖ Moderate).
  - Nordic dietary pattern to improve BMI (⊕⊕⊕⊕ High) and other cardiometabolic risk factors (⊕⊕⊖⊖ Low to ⊕⊕⊕⊖ Moderate) and reduce the risk of CVDs (⊕⊕⊖⊖ Low to ⊕⊕⊕⊖ Moderate).
  - Vegetarian dietary pattern to improve glycaemia and other cardiometabolic risk factors (⊕⊕⊕⊖ Moderate).

# Plant-based Diets Healthy and Sustainable “Double Hit”





# Plant-based Diets Healthy and Sustainable “Double Hit”

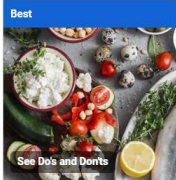
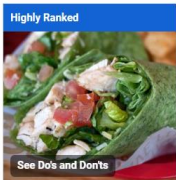
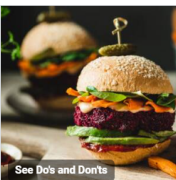



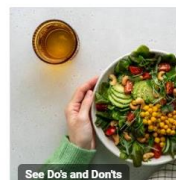
## Best Diabetes Diets 2024

Updated January 1, 2024

U.S. News has ranked 30 diets based on input from a [panel of health experts](#) and identified those that are most effective at managing diabetes or prediabetes. These diabetic diets include food lists that favor whole foods and minimize added sugars and refined carbohydrates.



 <p>Best</p>	<h3>Mediterranean Diet</h3> <p>The Mediterranean diet focuses on quality and lifestyle rather than a single nutrient or food group. Numerous studies have shown that this dietary model reduces the risk of certain chronic health conditions, such as cardiovascular disease and Type 2 diabetes, while promoting longevity and improving quality of life. <a href="#">Read More »</a></p>	<p>Best Diabetes Diets Score <b>100</b></p> <p>Best Diabetes Diets Rank 🏆 #1</p> <p>Best Diets Overall Rank » 🏆 #1</p>
 <p>Highly Ranked</p>	<h3>DASH Diet</h3> <p>The heart-healthy DASH diet is a flexible and balanced eating plan developed by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. Learn more about what the DASH diet is and its role in reducing blood pressure and the risk of heart disease, along with its pros and cons and what you need to buy at the grocery store. <a href="#">Read More »</a></p>	<p>Best Diabetes Diets Score <b>50</b></p> <p>Best Diabetes Diets Rank 🏆 #2</p> <p>Best Diets Overall Rank » 🏆 #2</p>
 <p>See Do's and Don'ts</p>	<h3>Flexitarian Diet</h3> <p>With a flexitarian diet, also known as a semi-vegetarian diet, you don't have to completely eliminate meat to reap the health benefits associated with vegetarianism. Instead, you can be a vegetarian most of the time, but still enjoy a burger or steak on special occasions. <a href="#">Read More »</a></p>	<p>Best Diabetes Diets Score <b>33</b></p> <p>Best Diabetes Diets Rank #3</p> <p>Best Diets Overall Rank » 🏆 #5</p>

 <p>See Do's and Don'ts</p>	<h3>MIND Diet</h3> <p>The MIND diet, which stands for Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay, takes two proven diets – DASH and Mediterranean – and zeroes in on the foods that improve brain health to potentially lower your risk of mental decline. <a href="#">Read More »</a></p>	<p>Best Diabetes Diets Score <b>30</b></p> <p>Best Diabetes Diets Rank #4</p> <p>Best Diets Overall Rank » 🏆 #3</p>
 <p>See Do's and Don'ts</p>	<h3>Vegan Diet</h3> <p>The vegan diet requires eliminating all animal products from your diet. It's a healthy option for many reasons, as long as you're purposeful about getting certain nutrients that can be more challenging to get from plants, such as calcium and B-12. <a href="#">Read More »</a></p>	<p>Best Diabetes Diets Score <b>22</b></p> <p>Best Diabetes Diets Rank #5</p> <p>Best Diets Overall Rank » #10</p>

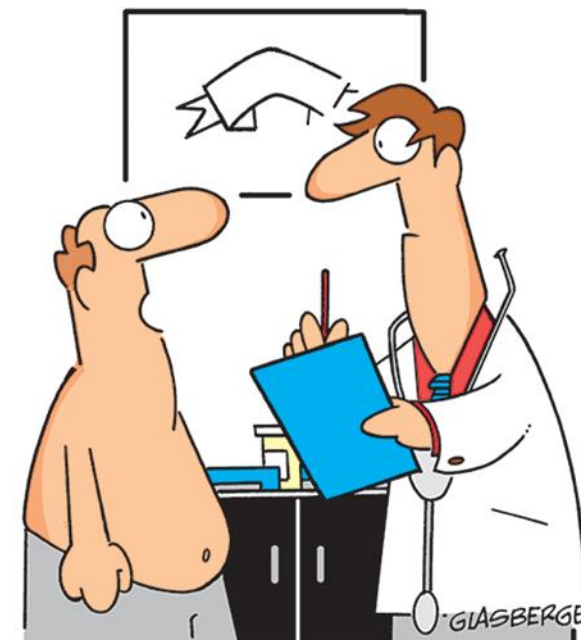


# Plant-based Diets

What about HCP support?



- More than half of the healthcare professionals surveyed had poor knowledge (<2/5) regarding plant-based diets, and/or were unaware of their potential role in diabetes management;
- Only 15% admitted to advising people with diabetes;
- One of the reasons given for the lack of greater support was the unavailability or incapacity of the patients themselves.



**“Everyone knows food is bad for you, but I don’t know what else to eat!”**

# Plant-based Diets

Healthy Food Healthy Planet



[www.healthyfoodhealthyplanet.eu](http://www.healthyfoodhealthyplanet.eu)



# Healthy Food Healthy Planet



*We aim at...*

... creating more synergies between existing movements and coalitions in Europe, catalysing change towards a joint vision of healthy, just, sustainable food systems that are accessible and affordable to everyone.



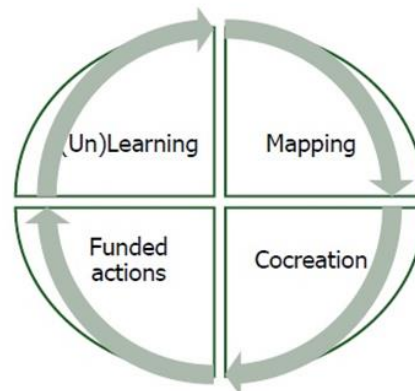
# Healthy Food Healthy Planet



## Core Activities

We provide 'opportunities' to **cross-pollinate**, share **learning** and drive **momentum**.

HFHP **weaves** between health, climate change, biodiversity, animal welfare, labour rights, transitional justice, ...



HFHP **engages** in cycles of mapping, cocreation, funded actions and (un)learning.

At the **CORE** of what we do:

- **Movement Building**
- **Grantmaking**

Answered the call of societal change by focusing on Health Engagement and Narratives

# Pan-European Initiative



# Eat Better Live Better



## Food Literacy in Type 2 Diabetes Initiative

The main objective is to explore and promote the role of **the transition to greater inclusion of plant-based foods in people with type 2 diabetes**, in a healthy, safe and sustainable way;

Supporting the **practical integration of the concept of territorial diets**, such as Mediterranean and Nordic diets, into real-world dietary patterns;

**Nutrition education** and **focus on options** presented to Europeans with diabetes and prediabetes.

# Plant-based Diets | Literature Review



## Benefits:

- ✓ Insulin sensitivity;
- ✓ Anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant;
- ✓ HbA1c;
- ✓ Fasting blood glucose;
- ✓ LDL cholesterol;
- ✓ Non-HDL cholesterol;
- ✓ Body weight, BMI, and waist circumference;
- ✓ Hepatic steatosis;
- ✓ Mortality due to cardiovascular diseases.

(Ribeiro et al, in preparation)

## Limitations:

- Diverse (or lack of consistent) definitions;
- Disparate methodologies and study designs make it difficult to draw concrete conclusions;
- In general, studies have a limited sample size and lack of power;
- Many studies have short-term intervention, making it difficult to translate the results into a real and sustainable context;
- Many studies do not assess the quality of the plant-based diet.



# Social Marketing Survey



- Survey structured from a Social Marketing perspective, with expert review;
- Validated responses from 242 (Portugal) and 590 (France) adults with Type 2 Diabetes, residing in the national territories;
- Study focused on views, attitudes and habits regarding plant-based food patterns;
- Further analysis designed to identify clusters of “consumer” people with type 2 diabetes.

# Social Marketing Survey



## Main take-aways:

- People with diabetes express low knowledge regarding plant-based diets beyond “Mediterranean Diet”.

This is aligned with low recommendation by healthcare professionals;

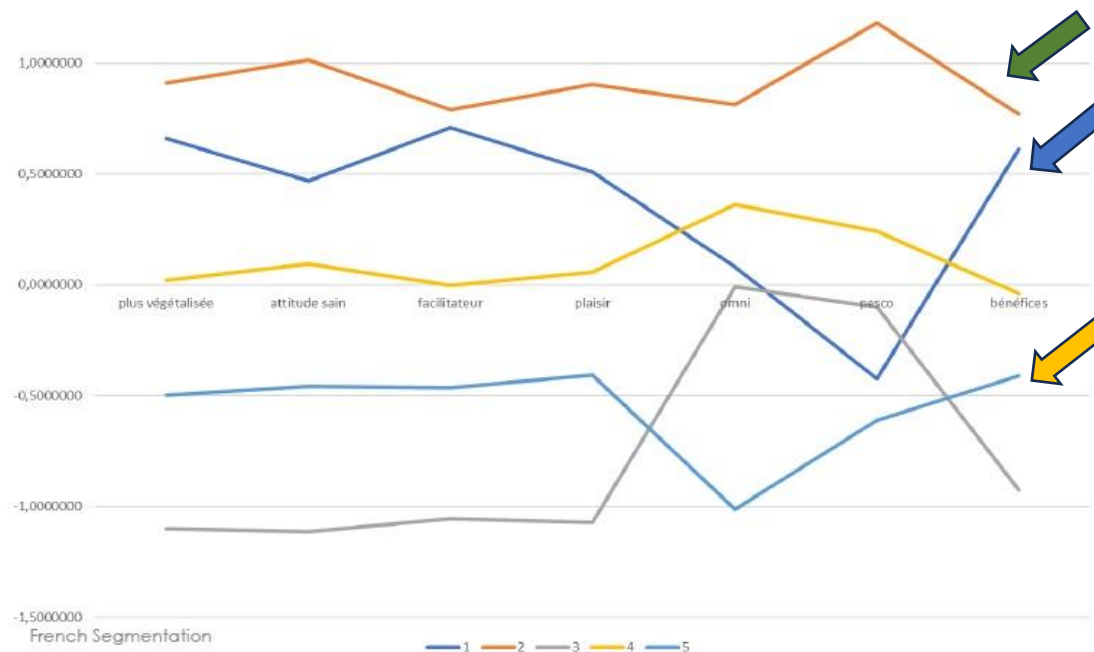
- However, they have a positive attitude towards the inclusion of plant-based products in the food

pattern of people with diabetes;

- Likewise, a third of the respondents intend to increase plant-based foods consumption. Over 10%

exclude or intend to exclude meat-based products.

# Social Marketing Survey



16%

Already there  
(Champions?)

21%

Ready to go, need  
support (practice?)

25%

Not concerned  
(need knowledge,  
value creation?)

# Food Workshops

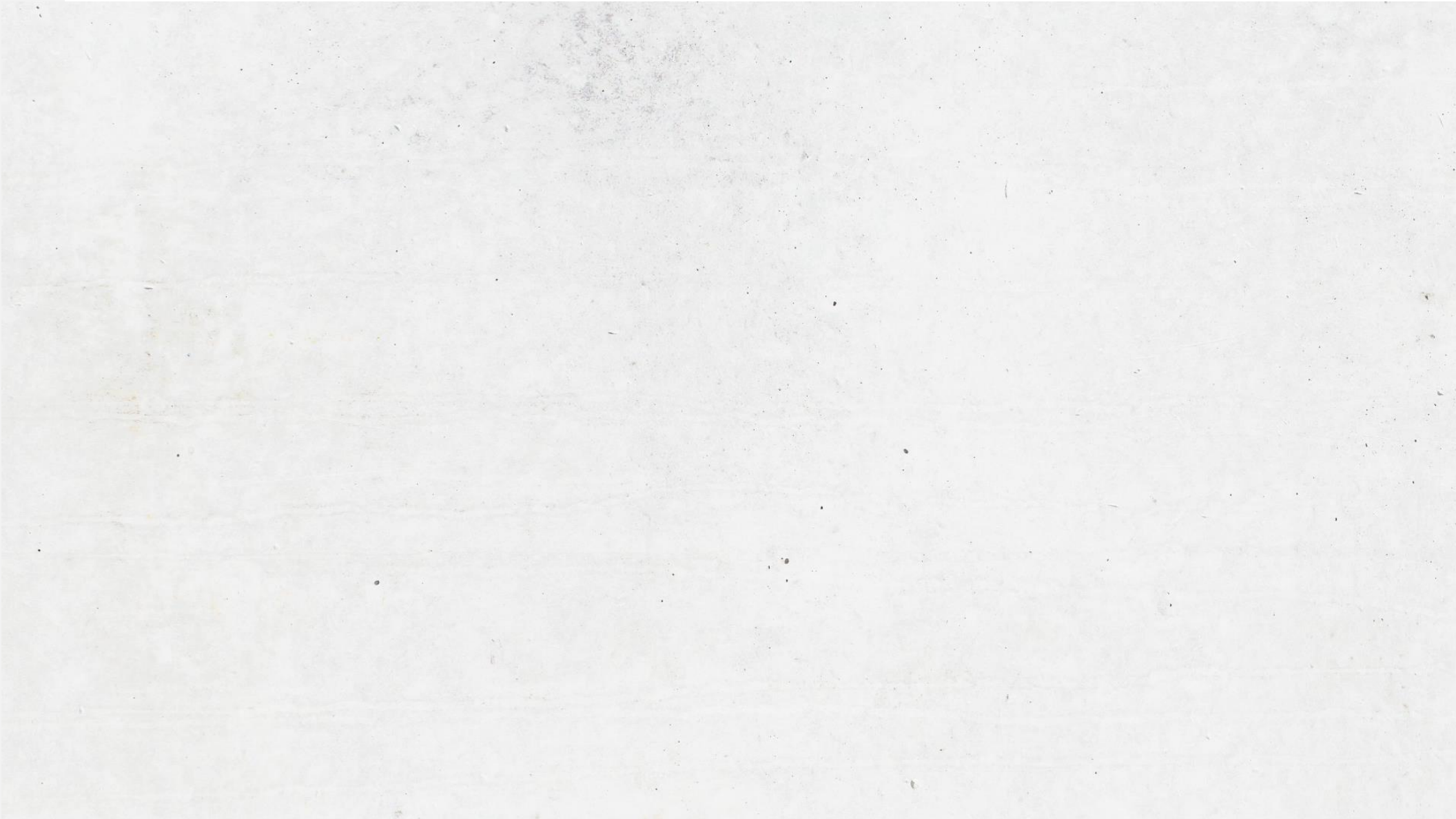


- 8 workshops conducted so far
- Peer dynamic in PwD and HCP
- 50 participants
- Hand-on approach: Learn, Prepare, Enjoy!
- Emphasis on practical knowledge, on taste and visuals, on purchase and storage tips, to overcome adoption barriers.

# Setting the Scene...



- ✓ Diets rich in plant-based products, when properly planned, can contribute to improving health outcomes in people with Type 2 Diabetes;
- ✓ To support implementation within diabetes therapeutic education, it is necessary to involve health professionals and train people with diabetes;
- ✓ People with Type 2 Diabetes demonstrated a positive attitude toward increasing the consumption of plant-based products and decreasing the consumption of meat-based products;
- ✓ Hands-on food workshops were shown to be effective in conveying practical knowledge and motivation.
- ✓ The social marketing profile identified potential target groups for tailored intervention.



# Acknowledgments



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eat  
better  
live  
better<sup>®</sup>

**Thank you for your attention**

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