

EURRECA: Development of tools to improve the alignment of micronutrient recommendations.

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Introduction

In Europe most countries have established their own nutrient requirements. Dietary recommendations serve as a basis for:

- nutritional educational programs,
- national and/or regional nutrition policies,
- food regulations such as nutrition labelling.

Dietary recommendations for micronutrients reflect intakes that prevent deficiency disorders at one end or toxicity at the other. These recommendations are also taken into account when calculating dietary intakes for optimal health. However, currently there is no standard approach for deriving micronutrient recommendations and large differences exist both across Europe and globally causing confusion among consumers, food producers and nutrition policy makers. Harmonization is needed to improve nutrition policy and public health strategies.

Aim

To develop generic tools for systematically establishing, and updating, micronutrient reference values or recommendations.

Results

Three different types of instruments have been identified and developed (overview see Table 1):

1) Training instruments: Interactive digital learning materials can be used within courses that are taught by one or several lecturers from partner institutions through online or blended (including both online and face-to-face activities) learning. Potential audiences for these e-modules include university students, scientists, non-nutritionists, policy makers, members of industry (see Figure 1).

2) System for collecting different information sources: These information sources are collections of existing data and/or knowledge; no new data is gathered, although new analyses are undertaken on the collated data. The purpose of the majority of these information sources is to provide guidance on best practice for use in a wider scientific community and for users of and stakeholders for reference values. (see Figure 2)

3) Decision trees or frameworks: The purpose of these tools is to guide non-scientists in decision making based on scientific evidence.

Table 1: EURRECA Instruments name and short description.

Name	Short Description
Interactive digital training module	Insight into principles of evaluation studies in nutritional research
EURRECAWIKI	Collation of key software programmes for dietary assessment
Nutri-RecQuest	Web-based search tool on micronutrient recommendations, collation of the micronutrient recommendations of 37 European countries/organisations and eight key non-European countries/regions, comprising 29 micronutrients
NutPlan	Nutritional software that supports nutrition planning for individuals and groups, recipe calculation, diet planning, creating food labels and nutrient intake assessment
Measurements of quality Factsheet	Factsheet on micronutrient analysis methods for food labeling and micronutrient intake
Best Practice Guideline for Biomarkers	Guidance on biomarkers which provide useful information about the effect of dietary exposure, and the levels of each marker which indicate that nutrient intake is optimal
Micronutrient WIKI	Information source on micronutrients including the following topics 1) Introduction, 2) Biological Function, 3) Catabolism, 4) Diseases / Conditions Related to Nutrition, 5) Other (Monogenic) Disorders, 6) Nutritional Information, 7) Markers of homeostasis and / or health, 8) Determinants of status and 9) Other resources.
Literature review databases	Collation of scientific papers on micronutrient intake-status, status-health and intake- health associations.
Nutritional survey Scoring system	Scoring system to rate the quality of data in surveys for nutrient intake adequacy assessment
Scientific Triage micronutrients	Prioritisation of micronutrients for the purpose of reviewing their requirements

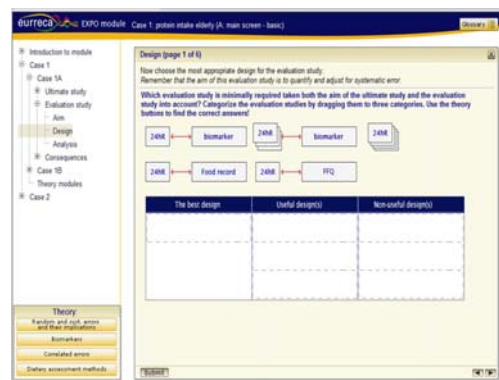


Figure 1: example of a 'drag-and-drop' exercise that aims to give the student insight into the relationship between the aim and the design of the evaluation study.

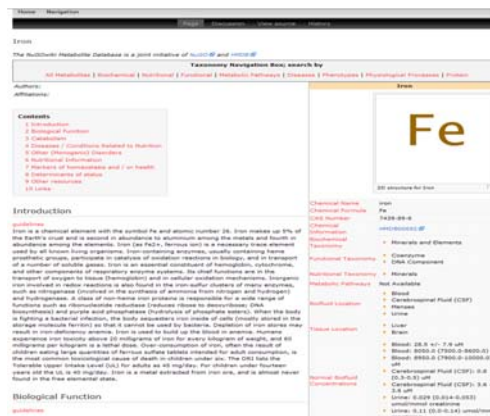


Figure 2: example of the WIKI page for Iron.

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