



## European project to identify and address barriers to sweetener use

**29 January 2019** - A new study, led by researchers from the Universities of Liverpool and Copenhagen, has been launched to identify the risks and benefits of sugar replacements in the diet. The Nutrition Research Foundation (FIN), led by Prof. Lluís Serra-Majem, director of the FIN Research Group and Group Coordinator for CiberOBN, Instituto Carlos III, is a collaborating partner that will be involved with epidemiological data analysis and the elaboration of a composition database for sweeteners and sweetness enhancers consumed in Europe.

**SWEET**, a European Commission Horizon 2020 funded project (GA 774293), is supported by a consortium of 29 pan-European research, consumer and industry partners, who will develop and review evidence on long term benefits and potential risks involved in switching over to sweeteners and sweetness enhancers (S&SEs) in the context of public health and safety, obesity, and sustainability.

The 5 year multidisciplinary project engages stakeholders from across the food chain — consumers, patients, health professionals, scientists, policy makers, and regulators — to address the role of sweeteners in weight control, and potentially move viable products to market. Stakeholders, including consumers, patients, health professionals, scientists, policy makers, and regulators will engage in the project.

As part of the five year multidisciplinary project, a two-year randomised controlled trial, involving recruitment of 660 adults and children with overweight or obesity from four European countries (Denmark, Greece, the Netherlands and Spain), will be conducted.

Trial participants will undertake a two-month weight loss diet. During this period, they will be randomised to one of two treatment types. Both groups will receive dietary advice on existing recommendation to reduce consumption of added sugars by 10%. However, one group will be allowed to consume food and drink with sweeteners, whereas the other group will not.

Jo Harrold, Project co-ordinator from the University of Liverpool's Department of Psychological Sciences, said: "Obesity has emerged as a major health issue across Europe and around the world.

"An investigation of the effects of sugar replacements on appetite and food choice on this scale has never been undertaken. Our study will adopt a multidisciplinary approach to examining the impact of prolonged sugar replacement on weight control, appetite and energy intake.

"Understanding the effectiveness of alternative sweeteners will help shape best practice in the future when it comes to weight management."

For more information about the **SWEET** study please visit [sweetproject.eu](http://sweetproject.eu) or contact **SWEET** Principal Investigators:

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