



# AgriFoodBoost

Project title  
**Boosting Excellence in Experimental Research  
for Agri-Food Economics and Management**

## *Deliverable 2.1*

### ***1<sup>st</sup> year report on WP2 activities***

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**Project leader:** Marija Cerjak

WP2 - Enhancement of FAZ scientific excellence in experimental economics

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#### **Dissemination Level**

<b>PU</b>	Public	X
<b>PP</b>	Restricted to other programme participants (including the	
<b>RE</b>	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the	
<b>CO</b>	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	





**This report is a summary of all WP2 activities performed in the first year of the project.**

Period covered by the report: **from 01/10/2020 to 30/09/2021**

## **Abbreviations used in the text:**

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AUA - Geoponiko Panepistimion Athinon

FAZ - Sveučilište u Zagrebu Agronomski fakultet

SLU - Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet

UNIBO - Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna

## **Introduction to the project**

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The University of Zagreb Faculty of Agriculture (FAZ) has qualified scientists in the field of agri-food who are willing to improve their scientific, innovative and academic capacities in order to become competitive in the scientific market, but also to offer new expertise to the agri-food sector. For this reason, a 3-year project was developed in collaboration with 3 partners from Italy, Greece and Sweden, focusing on the application of experimental economics to the agriculture, food and environment sectors. The project was developed in collaboration with the University of Bologna (UNIBO), Agricultural University of Athens (AUA) and Swedish University of Agricultural Science (SLU). The AgriFoodBoost project will support FAZ to become a regional leading Centre for experimental agri-food economics and management. The project is aligned with the EU and Croatian Smart Specialisation Strategies and addresses sectors that are among the most competitive in Croatia. AgriFoodBoost activities include researcher exchanges, thematic summer schools and workshops, expert visits, participation in conferences, the establishment of an experimental economics laboratory and a research HUB, which aims to bring together universities, industry and public administration. Special attention has been given to early stage researchers, including long-term visits and dual supervision, participation in summer schools, workshops and PhD conferences. A specific task will help improve the project management/administration skills of FAZ researchers and administrative staff. Communication, dissemination and exploitation activities include efforts to raise awareness of recent developments in experimental economics among the scientific community in Croatia and the neighbouring region. In addition, these activities target businesses and policy makers with the aim of improving their awareness and understanding of the purposes of the experimental economy, its potential areas of application and its benefits. It also aims to promote experimental economics to the general public as a support for rational and responsible decision-making in order to achieve positive social and economic impacts on society.

## **Objectives of the project**

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The overall objectives of the project are:

- 1) to enhance the scientific excellence and technological capacity of the Faculty of Agriculture in Zagreb (FAZ) in experimental research for agri-food economics and management





- 2) to raise the research profile of FAZ and its scientists by increasing their knowledge and research capacity in economic experiments and decision-making in the agri-food sector, that can be translated into effective and efficient practice
- 3) to address the existing networking gap by increasing knowledge exchange and collaboration between partner institutions and researchers familiar with challenges of applying experimental economics in the agri-food sector.

In addition to the overall objectives specific to FAZ, two further objectives have been identified:

- 1) to establish a research HUB for experimental economics that supports networking between faculty and industry, including regional as well as external research centres (starting with partner institutions)
- 2) to advance research and scientific knowledge in the field of experimental economics by conducting research that addresses questions of general relevance in the field of experimental economics (methodological issues).

Following are the specific objectives that would allow the achievement of the overall objectives:

- 1) To **upgrade and intensify the scientific research** of FAZ researchers through the use of **modern/ new methodological achievements** in the field of experimental economics in the agri-food sector. This will be enabled by knowledge transfer from internationally-leading EU institutions through innovative training activities such as expert visits, summer schools, workshops.
- 2) To **foster integration** of FAZ and its researchers into the **European Research Area** (ERA) by increasing our scientific visibility (e.g. publications, presentations at conferences) and communication (e.g. participation in open events) as well as by expanding our international cooperation ending with the submission of funding proposals (such as H2020)
- 3) To **boost scientific capacity of early stage researchers** to ensure the sustainability of the research group
- 4) To **improve university-industry collaboration** to ensure a bi-directional flow of information between research and practise and to integrate experimental economics into the Croatian agri-food sector
- 5) To **strengthen the research management and administrative skills** to improve FAZ proposal preparation and project management/administration skills
- 6) To identify and prioritize **follow-up strategy** to use the knowledge gained, but also to expand the insights gained during project implementation.

## **Objectives of the WP2 “Enhancement of FAZ scientific excellence in experimental economics”**

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The objective of this work package is to enhance the scientific excellence of FAZ by improving the knowledge and skills of its researchers in conducting experiments in the field of agricultural and food economics. More specifically:

- 2.1 To increase FAZ researchers’ understanding of the role of experiments in testing economic theories and developing new theories





- 2.2 To advance know-how of FAZ researchers in designing economic experiments in the field and in the laboratory settings
- 2.3 To build know-how of FAZ researchers in experimental methods (e.g. choice experiments and experimental auctions, bargaining experiments)
- 2.4 To improve FAZ researchers' skills in analysing experimental data through the use of experiment management software (Z-Tree) and statistical software packages (e.g. Stata or R)

## Explanation of the work carried out within the framework of WP2 (M1-M12)

The work of the WP2 is divided into 6 tasks:

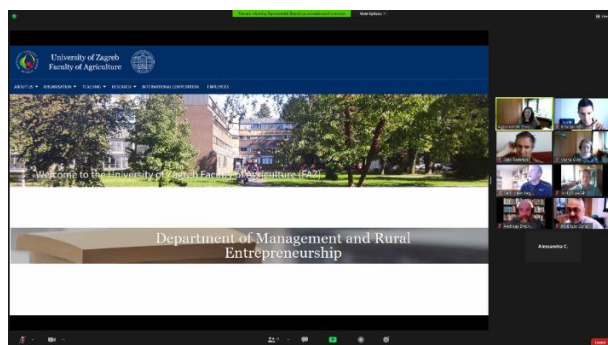
Task number	Task name	Month
Task 2.1	Long-term and short-term mobilities	M 6-33
Task 2.2	Summer schools	M 9-29
Task 2.3	Workshops	M 5-31
Task 2.4	Experts visits	M 4-35
Task 2.5	Joint conferences /seminars	M 18-32
Task 2.6.	The laboratory for experimental economics	M 6-33

In view of the global epidemiological situation with Covid-19, all **long-term** and **short-term mobilities** as well as **summer schools** and **workshops** have been postponed and will start with the first workshop and summer school in October and November 2021 respectively.

In line with the aforementioned situation, due to the epidemiological measures, **expert visits** were also held in an online environment in the form of online consultations and online thematic meetings.

The aim of the expert visits was to deepen the discussion on relevant topics in the field of experimental methods for the agri-food sector, to work on joint research and scientific papers and to develop joint proposals. These goals were also pursued in the online environment.

A total of 8 online consultations were held, 5 of



which were individual online consultations in which foreign project partners presented their scientific profiles and experiences. In addition, three online consultations were held at departmental level: the Department of





Agricultural and Food Sciences (UNIBO), the Department of Management and Rural Entrepreneurship (FAZ) and the Department of Marketing in Agriculture (FAZ). All online consultations conducted so far have been done via the Zoom Meetings application. The short presentations of the scientific profiles lasted 30 minutes, followed by a 30-minute discussion.

Online consultation	Institution	Date	Discussion topics
Andreas Drichoutis	AUA	23 December 2020	consumer behaviour, experimental auctions and experimental economics methods
Achilleas Vassilopoulos	AUA	10 February 2021	behavioural economics, behavioural marketing, discrete choice modelling
Vilma Xhakollari	UNIBO	17 February 2021	marketing research, functional food, consumer behaviour,
Jens Rommel	SLU	24 February 2021	consumer behaviour, institutional economics, consumer research
Anna Kristina Edenbrandt	SLU	24 February 2021	food economics and individuals' choices, choice analysis and decision-making
Department of Management and Rural Entrepreneurship	FAZ	12 May 2021	farm management, production economics, bioeconomy, modelling, agroeconomic efficiency of sustainable agriculture, risk analysis and insurance in agriculture
Department of Marketing in Agriculture	FAZ	26 May 2021	laboratory meat, insects based food, familiarity in wine, seafood consumption, consumer behaviour
Department of Agricultural and Food Sciences	UNIBO	14 July 2021	agri-food market, food chemistry, functional food, consumer behaviour etc.

In addition to the online consultations, several thematic online meetings were held. At these meetings, which were organised in smaller teams, specific research projects were discussed. Each team included 2-4 researchers from Croatia and leading experts from the partner institutions. In the first year of project implementation, joint work started on three research projects in the field of experimental economics (choice experiment with egg consumers, farmers' risk preferences, sensory analysis of olive oils).





To give FAZ researchers the opportunity to expand their know-how in planning and conducting economic experiments in the laboratory and in the field, the Experimental Economics Laboratory was set up. The lab is equipped with 15 laptops (workstations) and a central computer (server). The laboratory is an integral part of the Centre for Experimental Economics, which was established at the working meeting of Faculty Council of the University of Zagreb Faculty of Agriculture, held on July 2021.



#### List of relevant WP2 Milestones

Milestone number	Milestone name	Related work package(s)	Due date (in month)	Status
MS10	The laboratory for experimental economics established	WP2	10	Done
MS11	One summer school realised in year 1	WP2	12	Postponed to November 2021
MS12	Two workshops realised in year 1	WP2	12	Postponed; first workshop postponed to October 2021

**MS10** - The laboratory for experimental economics established

**MS11 & MS12** - The first two **workshops** and a **summer school** were to be held in Year 1. Due to the Covid 19 situation and restrictive measures in response to risky travel, all partners have agreed to postpone the first two planned workshops and summer school. As there are no visible obstacles so far that would prevent the organisation of the first workshop and summer school, the partners agreed to hold these events in October and November respectively.

