

## TFK programme, funded projects 2025

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| <b>Project title:</b> Nutrition Science and Food Technology Alliance: Building Sustainable Academic Pathways with Ukraine |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Coordinator</b><br><br>University of Helsinki<br><br>Maijaliisa Erkkola, maijaliisa.erkkola@helsinki.fi                | <p>This project strengthens academic collaboration between the University of Helsinki (UH) and the State University of Trade and Economics (SUTE) in Ukraine, focusing on two disciplines: Human Nutrition and Food Technology. It builds upon a three-year institutional partnership, formalized by a collaboration agreement and supported by ongoing joint research, including a study funded by the Juho Vainio Foundation (since 2023) that investigates changes in Ukrainian children's eating behavior due to war-related stress and relocation to Finland. Amid wartime disruptions to Ukrainian higher education, the project addresses urgent needs for curriculum modernization, educational resilience, and long-term academic collaboration. It focuses particularly on closing the gap in public health nutrition education within Food Technology university level programs in Ukraine and embedding a health promotion perspective into future teaching.</p> <p>Planned activities include the co-development of a "Human Nutrition" MSc curriculum at SUTE, mobility exchange for MSc and PhD students in Food Technology, and teaching staff. The project also includes an intensive virtual course training titled "Sustainable Healthy School Meals" in alignment with WHO and EU initiatives (e.g., Food 2030, WHO-COSI, and "Investing in Children"), along with virtual and on-site lectures, and a Summer School for PhD students titled "Innovations in Food Technologies." The Sustainable School Meals virtual course will also be offered as a non-formal education certificate for school catering professionals. The project will contribute to Ukraine's integration into European education and health-preserving space. It will help develop a new generation of experts in the field of public health nutrition and food technology who are aware of EU policies and practices.</p> <p>Mobility exchanges (6 months for one PhD and one Master's student) will focus on gluten-free intolerance special diet needs as well as plant-based protein foods, addressing mutual concerns about gluten intolerance and sustainable food production. The project also supports SUTE Professor (Food Technology) Dina Fedorova's PhD at UH, studying Ukrainian refugee children's eating behaviors in collaboration with Prof. Maijaliisa Erkkola (UH), Carola Ray (Folkhälsan Research Center), and Prof. Kirsi Peltonen (University of Turku), who are supervising her study. SUTE staff will plan mobility to UH (7 days) for 'Human Nutrition' curriculum collaboration, staff training, and teaching.</p> <p>As a result of our project's ambitions, new generations of university graduates, academic staff, and catering professionals will gain up-to-date knowledge on human nutrition and healthy school meal programs that address food poverty, childhood obesity, and related social and environmental concerns. This foundation will prepare them to meet the challenging tasks of post-war economic recovery in Ukraine.</p> |
| <b>Partners</b><br><br>State University of Trade and Economics                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

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