

# Science

The **food transition** is one of the ways in which the **ecological transition** is taking place, and involves profound and lasting changes to our consumption habits and contemporary food environments. Added to this green revolution is a major technological revolution, that of **artificial intelligence**, whose influence on the world of food is as much expected as feared. Those involved in public health, **catering** and **industry** need to get to grips with these profound upheavals, which affect consumers and food professionals alike.

The team at the Institut Lyfe Research Centre **is working with the various players in the food** and health sectors to meet these contemporary challenges and offer **solutions based on scientific evidence**.



Collaborative research projects, carried out by researchers from different disciplines and specialities at the Research Centre, help to:

- i) understand the decision-making mechanisms underlying contemporary eating behaviour,
- ii) identify the acceptability factors (psychological, cultural, etc.) for new foods or eating practices,
- iii) measure the congruence between marketing promises and actual consumer experience,
- iv) enable different populations to enjoy healthy, sustainable and tasty food.

The results of the various projects are published in prestigious peer-reviewed international journals and presented at world-renowned scientific conferences. The Centre's team is also expert at translating these results into deliverables that can be put to use in business: proposing reliable target market segmentation/consumer insight, testing the penetrability/acceptability of a product innovation, transferring design thinking/creativity methods, formulating recommendations/tools to support change, identifying societal developments.

## Social Sciences



Food Cultures  
Culinary Practices  
Meal sharing  
Sustainability

## Cognitive Sciences



Multy-sensory perception  
Development of food preferences

[Research in Social Sciences](#)

[Research in Cognitive Science](#)

[Research in Nutrition and Eating Behaviour](#)

## 1. Research in Social Sciences

The social science research group is interested in the **role of social and cultural dimensions in contemporary food transitions** towards food models that are more respectful of health, the environment, producers and animal welfare. The research focuses on four main themes:

### 1- Acceptability of dietary change

The imperative of changing dietary practices necessarily implies diversifying the products consumed, and therefore introducing or rediscovering new products. On the one hand, this raises the question of cultural acceptability for consumers: how can healthier, more responsible products be integrated into a given cultural context? How can we encourage the evolution of practices that are strongly integrated into social routines? On the other hand, the position of professionals in the food sector, particularly in the restaurant trade, is also an important angle: how do restaurant owners position themselves with regard to sustainability issues? What role can they play, both in terms of their expertise and their media impact?

### 2- Production, transmission and reception of knowledge about food transitions

The importance of the issues involved in changing food models generates a wealth of information and discourse in society, which is appropriated, disseminated and mobilised in a variety of ways and with a variety of interests. In this context, what role does - and should - scientific knowledge play? What links should there be with civil society, and what place should there be for the participatory dimension? How can we inform people and raise their awareness without adding to the confusion or reinforcing the circulation of unreliable information? What role can alternative forms, particularly artistic ones, play in these exchanges?

### 3- Food heritage and transitions

The growing interest in food as a heritage can be seen in the large number of food-related practices and knowledge that have been included on UNESCO's lists of intangible cultural heritage since 2010. However, just as the notion of heritage has a variety of definitions, the issues surrounding these food heritages are diverse, and can serve the interests of sustainability just as well as being in tension. How are heritage projects constructed? What role do they play? What role can they play in food transitions, particularly in a context where climate change is calling into question the characteristics, or even the viability, of so-called traditional food products?

### 4- Changing social relations around food

Food is often presented as a space for sharing and exchanging, whether through the sharing of the meal itself (commensality) or the associated activities: cooking, provisioning, etc. It is therefore seen as having the virtues of creating 'social links' and combating 'isolation'. Conversely, certain discourses (scientific, media or institutional) sometimes underline the impression that these links are being broken through practices that are more individualised. However, the nature of the links created is highly variable, and these discourses are often more a matter of impression than knowledge. We need to investigate the nature of these links in order to clarify the conditions under which the social relationships that develop around food can contribute to healthier, more sustainable practices.

Most of the research is qualitative and comparative, using disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, social psychology and geography. Quantitative approaches can also be used to work on a broader scale.

**Group leader:** [Maxime Michaud](#)

**Members:** [Raúl Matta](#), [Olga Melique](#), [Maeva Piton](#), [Maxence Blanchet](#), [Marie D'Antimo](#), [Calixte Engelberg](#)

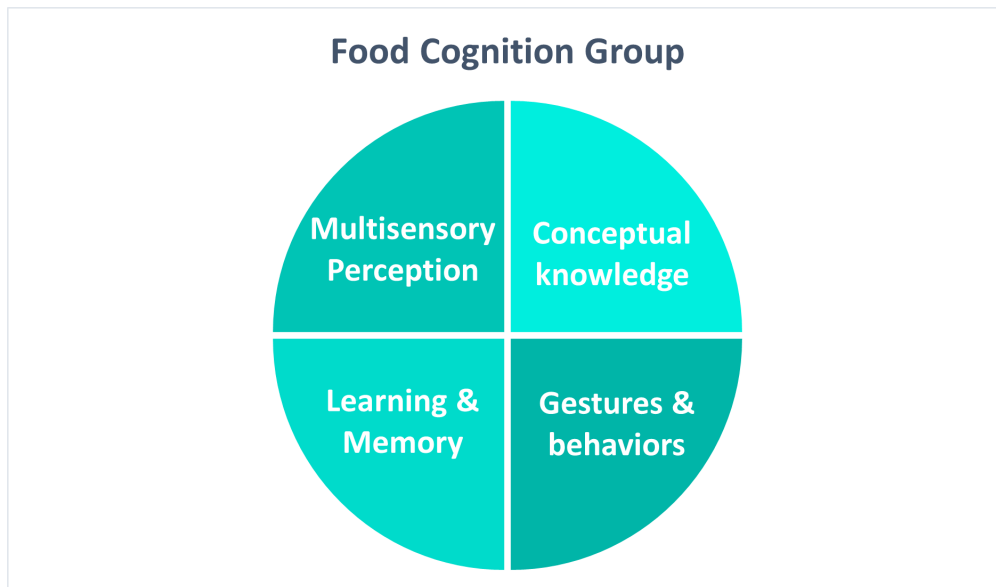
## 2. Research in Cognitive Science

The **Cognition and Food Research Group** studies the cognitive and neural mechanisms underlying mental representations of food, flavours and eating behaviour. Our research interests cover the perception of the sensory properties of food and drink, eating behaviours and the decision-making mechanisms that underlie them.

Our research group is interdisciplinary and addresses theoretically grounded research questions using robust

methodologies from developmental and cognitive psychology, and cognitive and computational neuroscience. We study these questions in children and adults, in sensory and culinary experts, and in patients with eating disorders and sensory deficits.

To achieve a truly multidisciplinary approach to food cognition, we focus our research on four fundamental interconnected domains: multisensory perception, conceptual knowledge, learning and memory, and gestures and behaviour.



**Group leader:** [J r mie Lafraire](#)

**Members:** [Anne-Lise Saive](#), Carol Coricelli, [Damien Foinant](#), [Juliette Greco](#), [Matteo Gandolini](#), [Laura Gagliardi](#), [Sabrina Boulkour](#), [Adoracion Guzman](#), Fateme Aliyari, [Maxime Barbier](#)

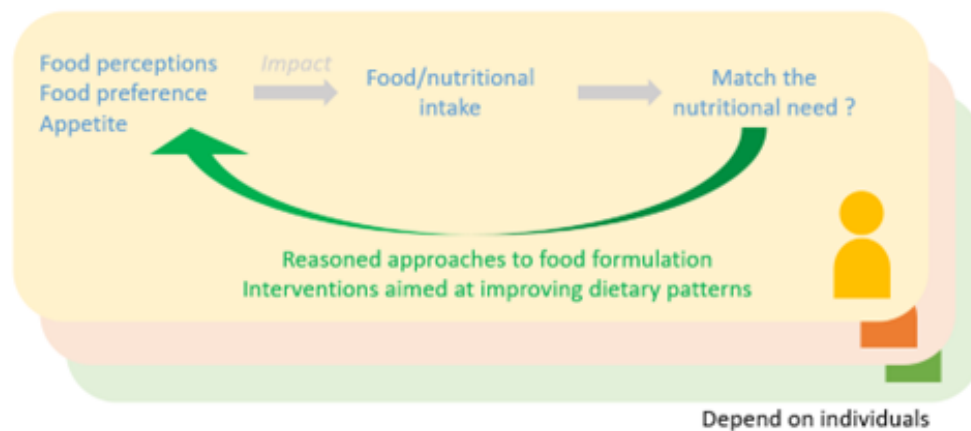
### 3. Research in Nutrition and Eating Behaviour

The Nutrition and Eating Behaviour Group investigates the key factors underlying perceptions and food preferences, appetite and food intake across different cultures and life stages.

Our research activities are focused in three key areas:

- Exploring the hedonic and physiological aspects of food intake in relation to weight status.
- Modulating the sensory and nutrition profile of meals considering interindividual differences in relation to health
- Strategies to encourage healthy eating by balancing meal enjoyment and nourishment

Our research work is using a multidisciplinary approach, and a diversity of observational and interventional methods to move forward the knowledge on the impact of the nutritional and sensorial properties of meals on optimising food intake. Our ambition is that this work can contribute to better stratification and characterisation of individuals for the development of personalised dietary interventions to ultimately improve health in its entirety and complexity.



**Group leader:** [Anestis Dougkas](#)

**Members:** [Audrey Cosson](#), [Samia Saraya](#), [Reisya Rizki Riantiningtyas](#), [Angelica Lippi](#), [Caterina Franzon](#), [Sarah Domingie](#), [Nina Ritsch](#), [Anne Louveau](#), [Anaëlle Venturini](#)

A multi-disciplinary vision of research is developed through the projects, and also through activities of knowledge transfer led at the Research Center: [scientific publications](#), [research seminars](#), [international symposiums](#).

## Research & Innovation Center - Institut Lyfe

Château du Vivier - Ecully - France  
Tel: +33 (0)4 72 18 02 20

### Contact

Raphaëlle Mouillefarine  
*Partnerships Development*  
[Send an email](#)  
+33 (0)4 26 20 97 63