Food and nutrition literacy in Austria - results of a representative study
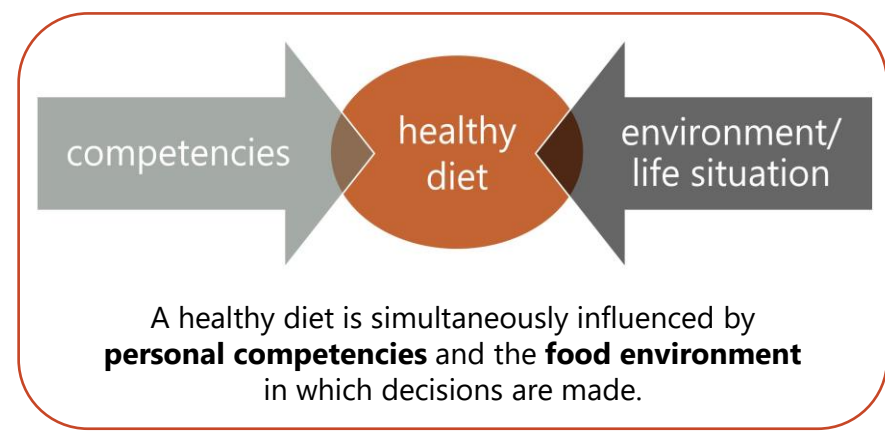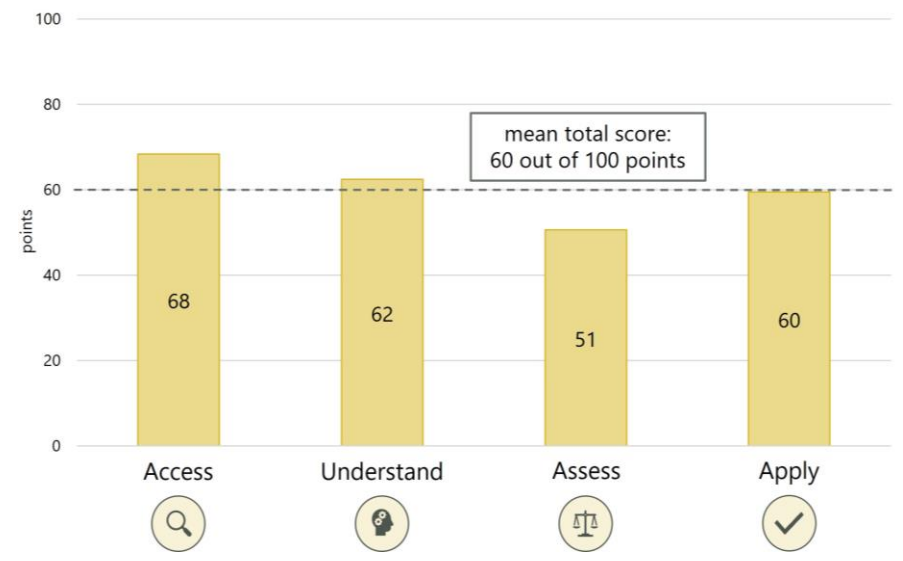
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2.993 respondents aged 18+ years	online survey (CAWI)	Oct. - Nov. 2021

Nutrition health literacy

- encompasses the motivation, knowledge and skills to **find**, **understand**, **assess** and **apply nutrition-related information** to make decisions for a healthy diet in everyday life
- measured with the **Nutrition Health Literacy Scale (NHLS)**: newly developed instrument based on Sørensen et al. (2012) to measure self-assessed difficulties in dealing with information on healthy eating
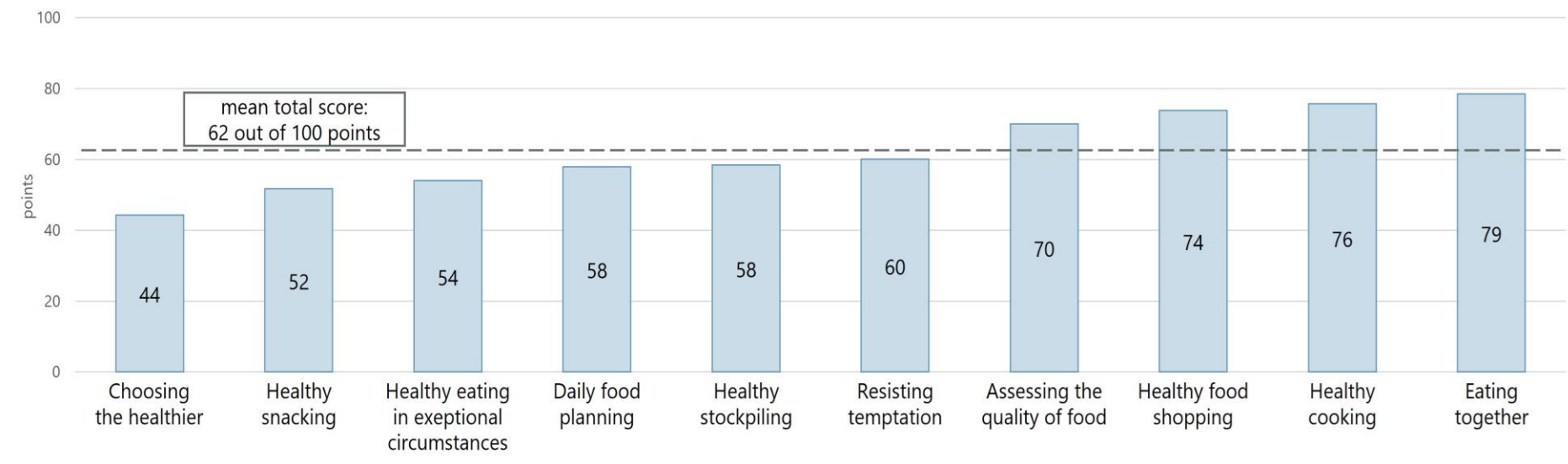

mean total score: 60 out of 100 points

Access	Understand	Assess	Apply
68	62	51	60

A healthy diet is simultaneously influenced by **personal competencies** and the **food environment** in which decisions are made.

competencies → healthy diet ← environment/life situation

Food literacy

- refers to **competencies and practices of healthy eating**, ranging from meal planning to socio-cultural practices of eating
- measured with the **Self-Perceived Food Literacy Scale - Short Form (SPFL-SF)**: shortened and slightly adapted version of the Self-Perceived Food Literacy Scale by Poelman et al. (2018)

mean total score: 62 out of 100 points

Choosing the healthier	Healthy snacking	Healthy eating in exeptional circumstances	Daily food planning	Healthy stockpiling	Resisting temptation	Assessing the quality of food	Healthy food shopping	Healthy cooking	Eating together
44	52	54	58	58	60	70	74	76	79

Populations facing the greatest challenges:

males	**50+ years**	**low education level**

Populations facing the greatest challenges:

males	**<65 years**	**low education level**
low income	**no partner**	**children aged 7-17 years**

Conclusion:
- there is potential for improvement in both nutrition health literacy and food literacy
- the biggest challenge is to evaluate and use nutritional information and to stick to a healthy diet without making exceptions

Recommendations:
- provision of quality-assured and target-group-specific information
- implementation of appropriate tools to facilitate the assessment of foods
- measures to strengthen assessment skills, digital health literacy, food and nutrition skills

Publications