



Food waste

Action 6.3

FOOD POLICY

Fight against food waste in school canteens

KEY WORDS

Food waste,
school canteens

✓ OBJECTIVES

- To support municipalities in their reduction of food waste to 50% by 2030.
- To boost the local food economy (local short trade channels).
- To bring together local producers and collective catering actors to reduce food waste and improve the taste quality of meals.

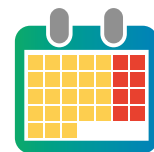
📄 POLICY DESCRIPTION

This policy stems from two national policies: the *Egalim law* and the *Agec law*, which recommend a 50% reduction of food waste between 2015-2025. Within the framework of the PAT (Project Alimentaire Territorial, a French proposal to develop territorial food projects), the Urban Community of Le Havre Seine Métropole has set up a collective catering scheme to support the municipalities and their school collective catering (at nursery and primary levels) to reduce food waste and to reinject the economic savings generated into healthier, more local and better quality food.

The first step is to conduct a diagnosis to measure the amount of food waste generated and to understand how the canteen functions (number of staff, on-site or central kitchen, self-service or served food). Then, actions to reduce food waste are conducted. Some of these actions can be implemented easily and immediately (such as distributing bread at the end of the meal service) and others are more complex and are rather introduced in the medium term (changes in the service provider, in how the system operates). The implementation of the policy is guaranteed by an external provider specialised in food waste, and in some municipalities by the Urban Community. At the end of the school year, an assessment is carried out based on indicators of the weight of the food waste.

The Urban Community has supported several municipalities simultaneously and has set up a collective approach through the organisation of meetings between agents and councillors to share experiences and facilitate exchanges among peers. In this sense, there is an online platform available for the municipalities with two sections: food waste and food supply. In addition, a complementary action called "Empty Plate Challenge" is carried out twice a year, in which the municipalities have the same menu for a week and weigh and compare the results in terms of food waste.

CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The scheme started in 2020 with the aim of being maintained until 2023. Then, an assessment will be carried out. The objective is to extend it beyond the educational sector, to companies, hospitals and nursing homes with collective canteens, all being subject to the Egalim and Agec laws.



🏠 DEPARTMENTS IN CHARGE

Directorate of Economic and Agricultural Development (at the initiative and implementation of the project)

Partnership with the Directorate of Waste Cycle (for the contractualisation with partners for food waste reduction and implementation of the weighing system)



BENEFICIARIES

15,300 nursery and primary school children.

BUDGET

12,000 € for the initial launch of the project.
12,000 € on average per year for food waste reduction actions contract with an external company.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

2 external actors specialised in food waste reduction:

CREPAN: environmental association

ECOGEOS: consulting company

ASPIRATIONAL QUANTITATIVE OBJECTIVES

15,300 meals served in nursery and primary schools, integrating the criteria of the Egalim and Agec laws. 30 grams of avoided food waste per user per day, representing an average of 7 tonnes per year for primary and nursery schools.

Overall aspiration of the food policies committed to The Barcelona Challenge:

<https://toolkit.thebcnchallenge.org/challenges/report/239>

STRENGTHS AND SUCCESS POINTS

One of the strengths achieved by the initiative is the elimination of barriers between communities and fostered exchanges among them. Another aspect is linked to taste education, which is an indispensable component of the policy. A very brief training course is planned as part of the initiative, but it is not enough and further work is still needed. The school of taste is a permanent component set up by the commune of Harfleur and it has been extended to two other municipalities.

The transversal approach of the initiative is one of its successful aspects: bringing together an elected official, a cook, a canteen worker, etc within a municipality. Also, the change produced in the way some municipalities operate; for example, moving from working with an external service provider, to working with a local caterer that uses local products.

CRITICAL POINTS

The involvement and training of the staff accompanying meal times is crucial, as they play a very important role regarding children. Another challenge is the significant staff turnover. Indeed, in the municipalities where staff are very active, the policy works very well. In those where the staff do not stay long, there is little involvement.

OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS

The constraint linked to public bidding that establishes quantities with the suppliers. One solution to that was to hold meetings with them to make those quantities more flexible and adaptable to what is actually needed.

It would be helpful to enable the municipalities to consider another way of operating for collective catering and accompanying them in that change. For instance, the Urban Community has sourced service providers with the municipalities.



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FURTHER INFORMATION

#BienMangerauHavre à la cantine aussi / Restaurant scolaire et menus