

Review of the EU school fruit, vegetable and milk scheme

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

About this consultation

This consultation aims to gather views from stakeholders and members of the public on how they think the EU school fruit, vegetable and milk scheme ("[EU school scheme](#)") is working, and on possible options for its review.

Why we are consulting

The EU school scheme, applicable since 2017, supports the distribution of fruit, vegetables, milk and milk products to schoolchildren, from nursery school up to secondary school. It also includes educational activities to increase consumption of these products and to help instil healthy eating habits.

While the scheme already addresses the common agricultural policy (CAP) objective to improve the EU agriculture sector's response to societal demands on food and health, there is scope for enhancing its contribution to sustainable food production and consumption in line with the objectives of the new [CAP 2023-2027](#).

The Commission has launched a review of the EU school scheme as part of the [Farm to Fork Strategy](#) with the goal of creating a favourable food environment that makes it easier to choose a healthy and sustainable diet.

The review will contribute to Europe's Europe's [Beating Cancer plan](#) to improve health promotion through access to healthy diets and to the [Action plan for the development of organic production](#).

It will also take into account the Council recommendation establishing the [European Child Guarantee](#).

The review will draw lessons from the ongoing evaluation which aims to assess to what extent the EU school scheme has been effective and efficient in achieving its objectives, coherent with other EU and national agricultural, health, education and environmental policies, relevant in the light of evolving consumption patterns and trends, as well as its EU added value. It also seeks to simplify and reduce the administrative burden.

This consultation will inform the review of the EU school scheme.

It takes into consideration the feedback to the combined [evaluation roadmap/inception impact assessment](#) that took place between 29 June and 27 July 2021.

Target groups

Everyone is welcome to contribute, notably:

- schoolchildren and their parents or guardians;
- educational establishments (from early childhood education and care to secondary-level education) and their associations;
- businesses and their associations active at all stages of the food supply chain, notably small and medium enterprises (SMEs);
- non-governmental organisations active in the agriculture, food, health, nutrition, consumer protection, environment, education, and children's rights sectors;
- public authorities in charge of agriculture, food, health, nutrition, consumer protection, environment, education, and children's rights;
- research institutes, universities and academia.

This consultation includes general questions for all respondents and additional questions for specific target groups, notably:

- schoolchildren and/or their parents/guardians;
- educational establishments and their associations, as well as organisations active in education on food, nutrition and health;
- businesses and their associations active in the agriculture and food sector;
- public authorities.

How can you contribute?

The questionnaire is accessible in all official EU languages. You can pause at any time, saving your draft, and continue later. Once you have submitted your answers, you will be able to download a copy of your completed questionnaire.

Please note that this consultation does not intend to obtain data relating to identifiable persons. Therefore, if you describe in your replies a particular experience or situation, please do it in a way that will not allow it to be linked to a particular individual, either yourself or somebody else.

By submitting/sending your contribution you agree to its publication on [Europa 'Have you say' portal](#). It is therefore important that you read the contribution publication privacy settings attached to this consultation for information on how your personal data and contribution will be dealt with.

About you

* Language of my contribution

- Bulgarian
- Croatian
- Czech
- Danish
- Dutch

- English
- Estonian
- Finnish
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Irish
- Italian
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Maltese
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Slovak
- Slovenian
- Spanish
- Swedish

* I am giving my contribution as

- Academic/research institution
- Business association
- Company/business organisation
- Consumer organisation
- EU citizen
- Environmental organisation
- Non-EU citizen
- Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- Public authority
- Trade union
- Other

* First name

Marleen

* Surname

KESTENS

* Email (this won't be published)

mkestens@ehnheart.org

* Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

European Heart Network

* Organisation size

- Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (250 or more)

Transparency register number

255 character(s) maximum

Check if your organisation is on the [transparency register](#). It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

3606882168-35

* Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Afghanistan | <input type="radio"/> Djibouti | <input type="radio"/> Libya | <input type="radio"/> Saint Martin |
| <input type="radio"/> Åland Islands | <input type="radio"/> Dominica | <input type="radio"/> Liechtenstein | <input type="radio"/> Saint Pierre and Miquelon |
| <input type="radio"/> Albania | <input type="radio"/> Dominican Republic | <input type="radio"/> Lithuania | <input type="radio"/> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines |
| <input type="radio"/> Algeria | <input type="radio"/> Ecuador | <input type="radio"/> Luxembourg | <input type="radio"/> Samoa |
| <input type="radio"/> American Samoa | <input type="radio"/> Egypt | <input type="radio"/> Macau | <input type="radio"/> San Marino |
| <input type="radio"/> Andorra | <input type="radio"/> El Salvador | <input type="radio"/> Madagascar | <input type="radio"/> São Tomé and Príncipe |
| <input type="radio"/> Angola | <input type="radio"/> Equatorial Guinea | <input type="radio"/> Malawi | <input type="radio"/> Saudi Arabia |

- Anguilla
- Antarctica
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Aruba
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bermuda
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bonaire Saint Eustatius and Saba
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Bouvet Island
- Brazil
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Eswatini
- Ethiopia
- Falkland Islands
- Faroe Islands
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- French Guiana
- French Polynesia
- French Southern and Antarctic Lands
- Gabon
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Gibraltar
- Greece
- Greenland
- Grenada
- Guadeloupe
- Guam
- Guatemala
- Guernsey
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Martinique
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mayotte
- Mexico
- Micronesia
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Montserrat
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar/Burma
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Caledonia
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Sint Maarten
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Svalbard and Jan Mayen
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syria
- Taiwan
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand

- British Virgin Islands
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Cayman Islands
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Christmas Island
- Clipperton
- Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Heard Island and McDonald Islands
- Honduras
- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Isle of Man
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Jersey
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kosovo
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Niue
- Norfolk Island
- Northern Mariana Islands
- North Korea
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Palestine
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Pitcairn Islands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Qatar
- Réunion
- Romania
- Russia
- The Gambia
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tokelau
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States
- United States Minor Outlying Islands
- Uruguay
- US Virgin Islands
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Vatican City
- Venezuela
- Vietnam
- Wallis and Futuna

- Curaçao
- Cyprus
- Czechia
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Laos
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Rwanda
- Saint Barthélemy
- Saint Helena
- Ascension and Tristan da Cunha
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Western Sahara
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

The Commission will publish all contributions to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would prefer to have your details published or to remain anonymous when your contribution is published. **For the purpose of transparency, the type of respondent (for example, 'business association', 'consumer association', 'EU citizen') country of origin, organisation name and size, and its transparency register number, are always published. Your e-mail address will never be published.** Opt in to select the privacy option that best suits you. Privacy options default based on the type of respondent selected

* Contribution publication privacy settings

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

Anonymous

Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.

Public

Organisation details and respondent details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published. Your name will also be published.

I agree with the [personal data protection provisions](#)

Your profile

* If you are replying on behalf of an organisation, what type of organisation is it?

- School (nursery-preschool-primary-secondary)
- Business or business organisation/association in the agricultural and food sector
- Health and/or nutrition NGO
- Environmental NGO
- Animal welfare NGO
- Other (specify)

If you are replying on behalf of an NGO, what is its area of interest?

- NGO in the public interest
- NGO in business interest

Awareness and knowledge of the EU school scheme

Have you ever heard of the EU school fruit, vegetable and milk scheme?

- Yes, and I know the details
- Yes, but I don't know the details
- No, I have never heard of it

Questions related to the evaluation of the scheme

In your opinion, how well has the current EU school scheme responded to the following aims:

| | Fully | To a large extent | To some extent | Not at all | I don't know |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Increased children's consumption of fruit and vegetables | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased children's consumption of milk and dairy products | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increased children's knowledge of a healthy diet | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Contributed to lowering children's consumption of unhealthy food products (high in fat, saturated fat, salt and sugars) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Contributed to the consumption of organic products | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Guaranteed that tax payers' money is put to good use | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

In your opinion, how important are the following objectives for the EU school scheme?

| | Very important | Fairly important | Not very important | Not at all important | I don't know |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Contributing to a healthy diet for children | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Encouraging school children's consumption of fruit and vegetables | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Encouraging school children's consumption of milk and milk products | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Helping to promote sustainable food production and consumption | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Encouraging school children's consumption of organic products | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

In your opinion, should the EU school scheme pursue any other objectives?

In your opinion, is there any advantage of having a school scheme at EU level over having it at national/regional/local level?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know

Questions related to the review of the scheme

In your view, how important are the following factors for children's eating habits?

| | Very important | Fairly important | Not very important | Not at all important | Don't know |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Eating habits at home | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| School canteens/ Procurement of school food/ vending machine offer | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Advertising/sponsoring | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Social media | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

| | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| School and public educational programmes | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Children's knowledge of food origin | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Children's knowledge of healthy diets | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Parents' knowledge of healthy diets | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Children's involvement in cooking | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Teachers, friends & relatives' eating habits | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other (specify): | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Currently, the EU school scheme finances the distribution of fruit, vegetables, milk and certain milk products to schoolchildren, from nursery to secondary school, generally outside school meals. In your opinion, considering children's need for a healthy diet, which of the following products should be distributed through the EU school scheme? (*multiple answers possible*)

- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- Processed fruits and vegetables such as fruit juices, vegetable soups
- Plain milk
- Plain yoghurt, curd and other fermented or acidified milk products (excluding cheese)
- Cheese
- Plant-based drinks made from oats, almonds or soya, for example
- Nuts
- Whole grains/cereals (whole bread, muesli, whole cereal bars ...)
- Other (specify)
- I don't know

Comments:

- The school scheme should assure that nutrition guidelines for all food products are respected.
- Comments to the list provided above;
- The scheme should contribute to increasing consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.
 - Processed fruits and vegetables, such as fruit juices can be included provided these contain no added sugar
 - Vegetable soups should be included provided it contains low salt (less than 1.5gr/100gr or /100ml)
 - Plain milk: The aim of the school fruit scheme should not be to increase consumption of milk or milk products, but rather to promote low fat and unsweetened milk products.
 - Cheeses may not be needed if skimmed or semi-skimmed milk and yoghurts are provided. Appropriate levels of calcium should be respected for all age categories.
 - Nuts: Can be included, if unsweetened and unsalted
 - Whole grains/cereals: If products under the school fruit, vegetable and milk scheme are to be served as a snack (which is the case now), the focus should be on providing more fruits and vegetables and not whole grains and cereals. However, if served as part of a meal (e.g. breakfast or lunch), bread and muesli could be included.
 - Evidence for the nutritional health benefits of plant-based drinks from oats, almonds or soya is lacking. Therefore these products should be left out of the scheme.

Under the current EU school scheme, added sugar, salt, fat, sweeteners and artificial flavouring is generally not allowed. However, health and nutrition authorities in EU countries may allow, as an exception, limited quantities of added salt, fat and - for milk products - sugar. In your opinion, what approach should the EU school scheme take on added sugar, salt and fat in the distributed products?

- Full prohibition of added sugar, salt and fat
- General prohibition of added sugar, salt and fat with exceptions approved by the national health/nutrition authorities and according to maximum limits defined under EU law
- General prohibition of added sugar, salt and fat with exceptions approved by the national health/nutrition authorities
- Other approach (specify)
- I don't know

Comments:

EHN advocates to increase the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables and decrease the consumption of processed foods.

What factors do you consider the most important for the choice of products provided under the EU school scheme? Pick the three most important.

between 1 and 3 choices

- Wide variety of products to account for diversity of taste
- Seasonal products

- Organic food products
- Low environmental and climate impact
- Local and short supply chain
- Minimal packaging, with little or no plastic
- High animal welfare standards
- Other (specify)

Please specify:

High nutritional quality is the most important factor for EHN but is unfortunately not considered in the list above.

Seasonal products are equally important to EHN.

Currently, children receive fruit, vegetables, milk and milk products under the EU school scheme generally outside regular school meals. In your opinion and experience, which of the following arrangements would work best for the future scheme? Rank from more relevant (top) to less relevant (bottom):

Use drag&drop or the up/down buttons to change the order or [accept the initial order](#).

☰ Breakfast at school

☰ Contribution to the lunch

☰ Healthy morning snack

☰ Healthy afternoon snack / 'goûter'

☰ Other (specify)

Please specify (if 'other'):

Fruits and vegetable consumption should be included in a meal, whether breakfast or lunch, and not as a snack. If meals contain the right nutritional value per age group there is no need for in between snacking.

The decision whether to include this food in either breakfast or lunch should be left to local, regional or national authorities (or the school itself).

The EU school scheme includes educational activities on agriculture and healthy eating habits, such as lessons, farm visits, school gardens, tasting and cooking workshops, theme days and games. In your opinion, which educational topics should the EU school scheme cover? Pick the five most important

between 1 and 5 choices

- Agriculture and how food is produced

- Value and cost of food produced
- Healthy, balanced and nutritious diets
- Environmental impact of food
- Food sustainability
- Food labelling (nutrition declaration, ingredient list, sustainability labelling)
- Food preparation (tasting, cooking)
- Local and short supply chain products
- Seasonal products
- Organic
- Low environmental and climate impact farming
- Sustainable trade
- Animal welfare
- Food waste
- Advertising and marketing of foods
- Other (specify)
- I don't know

Comments:

Food sustainability and environmental impact of food are also important

Currently, up to 15% of the annual EU budget for the EU school scheme can be used for educational measures. Participating countries can use national public or private funds, instead. Please give us your opinion on the future system of financing for educational measures:

| | Totally agree | Somewhat agree | Somewhat disagree | Totally disagree | I don't know |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| The system should continue as it is | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| A minimum percentage of the EU budget should be set aside for educational measures | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| The maximum EU budget for educational measures (15%) should be increased | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |

Comments:

EHN has no opinion on this topic

Currently, the EU school scheme is for schoolchildren from nursery school to secondary school. In your opinion, the beneficiaries of the future scheme should include: (*multiple answers possible*):

- Nursery
- Pre-school
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- Afterschool care, summer camps
- Other (specify)
- I don't know

Comments:

As many children as possible should be able to profit from the school fruit, vegetable and milk scheme. In the ideal situation, ALL children should be able to profit from the scheme.

Currently, the EU school scheme does not specifically target children who, due to their socio-economic status or other factors, may have less healthy and sustainable diets.

In your opinion, should priority be given to areas/schools with more of those children?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Comments:

ALL children should benefit from the scheme, but IF groups need to be prioritised (which should be avoided) then yes funds should go to children who, due to their socio-economic status or other factors, may have less access to healthy and sustainable diets.

Currently, the budget for the EU school scheme is allocated by country, based on the number of children and the level of development of the regions. In your opinion, what should be the criteria for allocating the budget in the future scheme?

| | Totally agree | Somewhat agree | Somewhat disagree | Totally disagree | I don't know |
|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| The criteria for the allocation of the budget should not change | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Performance criteria (e.g. good use of the budget, targets to be achieved) should also be taken into account | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Needs-based criteria (e.g. prevalence of child overweight and obesity, consumption patterns, socio-economic backgrounds) should be also taken into account | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Other criteria / comments:

Every child should have access to the scheme; if this is not possible, socio-economic prioritisation should be considered with priority access to children from lower socio-economic income groups.

What is your view on the governance of the EU school scheme?

| | Totally agree | Somewhat agree | Somewhat disagree | Totally disagree | I don't know |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| The Member States' public authorities in charge of agriculture, health/nutrition, education, social and environmental issues should play a role in the design and implementation of the scheme | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| The Member States should ensure an effective involvement of the economic and social partners, and the relevant bodies representing civil society in the design and implementation of the scheme | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Other / comments:

health stakeholders should be included, but also social and educational stakeholders.

Document upload and final comments

Should any other issues or improvements be addressed in the review of the EU school scheme? If so, please specify:

Feel free to upload a concise document, such as a position paper. The maximum file size is 1MB.

The document is optional and serves as additional background reading to better understand your position.

Only files of the type pdf,txt,doc,docx,odt,rtf are allowed

Contact

AGRI-School-Scheme@ec.europa.eu