

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
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- Danish
- Dutch

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- Finnish
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Irish
- Italian
- Latvian
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- Maltese
- Polish
- Portuguese
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- Slovak
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- 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

Dorota

* Surname

Sienkiewicz

* Email (this won't be published)

D.Sienkiewicz@eurohealthnet.eu

* Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

EuroHealthNet, a European not-for-profit partnership of public health statutory bodies for improving health, equity and wellbeing

* 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.

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* 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 |
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- Bosnia and Herzegovina
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- Ethiopia
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- Faroe Islands
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- French Southern and Antarctic Lands
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- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Gibraltar
- Greece
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- Grenada
- Guadeloupe
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- Guatemala
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- Guinea-Bissau
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- Chad
- Chile
- China
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- 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
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- Kosovo
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- Kyrgyzstan
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Niue
- Norfolk Island
- Northern Mariana Islands
- North Korea
- North Macedonia
- Norway
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- Uganda
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- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States
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- Uruguay
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- Vatican City
- Venezuela
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- Wallis and Futuna

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- Czechia
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Laos
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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)

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 checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increased children's consumption of milk and dairy products	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Increased children's knowledge of a healthy diet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guaranteed that tax payers' money is put to good use	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encouraging school children's consumption of organic products	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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

In addition to the above important objectives, EuroHealthNet suggests to link the EU scheme to the EU's objective of reducing poverty, social exclusion, and reducing inequalities in health and the enjoyment of social rights; it is also in our interest to stronger link the scheme to the objective of addressing the climate emergency thereby contributing to the EU green transition. All of the above should also directly contribute to the EU's collective effort to the post-pandemic Recovery and Resilience building.

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 checked="" type="radio"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Children's knowledge of food origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please specify:

- affordability of foods (especially ultra-processed foods and those high in salt, sugar and fats - HFSS)
- family affluence, socio-economic background
- quality of food environments in which children - as consumers - live (food desserts)
- beyond advertising, the marketing techniques, packaging and presentation at the point of purchase

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:

- freshly processed vegetables in a form of vegetable soups
- plain (unsweetened, unflavoured) milk and products, ideally of low fat content

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:

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)

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](#).

⋮ Healthy morning snack

⋮ Healthy afternoon snack / 'goûter'

⋮ Contribution to the lunch

☰ Breakfast at school

☰ Other (specify)

Please specify (if 'other'):

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:

We suggest to cluster some of the proposed themes above as some seem overlapping or redundant. A menu of options for national authorities should be offered whereby stakeholders can pick and mix, pending the local context and needs. In addition, we feel the themes could always be 'tweaked' with an EU-added value dimension - what is the EU doing for you in this area?

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:

It is our opinion that the best value (cost-effective, likelihood of sustainable impacts) could be achieved through investments in the early years of child development, up to the age of 12. Furthermore, educational and care services which usually capture the most deprived groups of children (afterschool & weekend remedial activities, summer holidays) should be under the target audience here.

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:

While responding yes, we strongly advocate for a proportionate universalism approach here - where all the population is covered with the intensity and urgency according to the need. That is to say, we advocate for all children being offered the scheme while paying particular attention to children from socio-economically deprived backgrounds. This being said, a non-discriminatory and non-stigma approach should be called for.

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?

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	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 checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input 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:

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:

While we indicate to totally agree on both accounts, it is our view that the EC should ensure at least a minimum level of the said governance, in particular with regards to an effective involvement of the relevant bodies representing cross-sector civil society in the design and implementation of the scheme. This could be achieved by regular exchanges, strategic dialogues and/or reporting requirements on the evaluation of the design and implementation of the scheme.

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:

While revising the EU scheme, a synergy between this scheme and other legislative reviews in the context of the Farm to Fork Strategy should be ensured. We welcome the intention to expand the products range to be covered by the scheme, as well as looking into other factors within the food system that positively and negatively affect children's diets (advertising, marketing, labelling, social media influences). Children's food environments have changed significantly since the last update of the policy underpinning the scheme, hence we welcome the EC's intentions to give the kindergarten and schoolchildren best nutrition possible and as early as possible.

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