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FEBA NETWORK / Updates

European Food Banks in a post COVID-19 Europe

JUNE / 2020

"Today, 109 million persons are at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Europe. About 24 million of them are in severe material deprivation. In other words, 5.6% of the European population is in a state of food insecurity. Prediction by the World Food Program is that the number of persons victims of food insecurity will double as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. So, will the COVID-19 pandemic be followed by a hunger pandemic? In these times of many challenges such as global warming, conflicts or insecurity and economic pandemonium, we have a growing challenge in front of us. Fight hunger and malnutrition with maximal efficacy and greater energy. To achieve this, we have to continuously adapt as will the food supply chain do.

[...]

Europe needs a new growth strategy which transforms the European Union into a modern economy, competitive and efficient in the usage of resources, with a ZERO net emission of greenhouse gases in 2050, where the growth is dissociated from the resources and where no one is left behind."

*Extract from the speech of Jacques Vandenschrik,
President of FEBA, on the occasion of
FEBA General Assembly 2020 on 29 June 2020*

In Europe in the last 4 months the COVID-19 crisis has brought not only grief and suffering but also a new food emergency. The demand for food has increased up to 50% compared to the pre-coronavirus period. The outlook for the coming months is certainly not better.

On 5 May 2020, **2 months after the breakout of the coronavirus, FEBA circulated a second survey to its membership** in order to have an updated overview on how the situation evolved and assess the new main challenges and needs for European Food Banks.

- Over **90%** of European Food Banks are experiencing an **increase in demand for emergency food assistance**;
- More than **50%** of the respondents declared that they would continue to involve the **new young volunteers** in Food Banks' activities for the upcoming period.
- **95%** of the respondents declared that they will continue collaborating with **partners and corporates that supported Food Banks during the emergency** establishing long-lasting partnerships also for the post-COVID period.

To read the full FEBA Report, please access [here](#).



Press Release

GERMAN EU COUNCIL PRESIDENCY / Press Release

“Together. Make Europe strong again”

1 JULY / 2020

The German Federal Cabinet adopted on 24 June 2020 the program for the German EU Council Presidency in the second half of 2020.

Federal Minister of Economics Peter Altmaier declared that the motto of German Presidency is "Together. Make Europe strong again". To get out from the crisis caused by COVID-19, the economic policy will be a central focus in the German Presidency. Mr Altmaier underlined that it is important to implement the reconstruction plan and strengthen independence in Europe.

Social cohesion, social security and solidarity are the cornerstones of a fair Europe. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to major infringements on the daily lives of many Europeans and has exacerbated inequalities. [...] Our goal is to overcome the economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic sustainably and inclusively and thereby help shape the transition to a sustainable economy.

The guiding principles of the German presidency program are:

1. The permanent overcoming of the COVID-19 pandemic and the **economic and social recovery**;
2. a stronger and more innovative Europe
3. a **fair Europe**
4. a **sustainable Europe**
5. a Europe of security and common values
6. a strong Europe in the world.

In the programme (part III “A fair Europe”) it is underlined how **social cohesion, social security and solidarity are the cornerstones** of a fair Europe. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to major disruptions on the daily lives of many Europeans and has exacerbated inequalities. In fact, promoting the economic and social recovery together with a focus on intergenerational solidarity is another key priority of the Germany’s Presidency. This particularly applies to the protection of children and the elderly, who are especially vulnerable in times of crisis.

In Part IV (Sustainable Europe) it is declared how one of the main goal is to **overcome the economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic sustainably and inclusively and thereby help shape the transition to a sustainable economy**. Priorities to this end are an ambitious climate, environmental and biodiversity policy, a focus on the **United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and sustainable agriculture**.

The German Semester happens in a period of an unprecedented economic and social crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and public institutions, stakeholders and actors of the civil society will have to play a crucial role to support especially the most deprived of our societies, developing even more a fair and just sustainable economy.

Related documents:

- German EU Council Presidency's work programme download [here](#)
- Main topics of the German EU Council Presidency [here](#)
- The Trio Programme of the Council of the European Union (1 July 2020 – 31 December 2021) / Germany, Portugal and Slovenia link [here](#)

EUROSTAT / Research Paper

Sustainable development in the European Union – Overview of progress towards the SDGs in an EU context

22 JUNE / 2020

Sustainable development is firmly anchored in the European Treaties and has been at the heart of European policy for a long time. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015, have given a new impetus to global efforts for achieving sustainable development.

The EU is fully committed to playing an active role to maximise progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

This [publication](#) is the fourth of **Eurostat's regular reports monitoring progress towards the SDGs in an EU context**. The analysis in this publication builds on the EU SDG indicator set, developed in cooperation with a large number of stakeholders. The indicator set comprises around 100 indicators and is structured along the 17 SDGs. For each SDG, it focuses on aspects which are relevant from an EU perspective.



The monitoring report provides a statistical presentation of trends relating to the SDGs in the EU over the past five years ('short-term') and, when sufficient data are available, over the past 15 years ('long-term'). The indicator trends are described on the basis of a set of specific quantitative rules.

- Chapter dedicated to **Goal 1 (No Poverty)** p. 35
- Chapter dedicated to **Goal 2 (Zero Hunger)** p. 53
- Chapter dedicated to **Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production)** p. 219

To download the **full report** please click [here](#).

Contextually, it was also published a **brochure** which highlights that "on average, over the last five years of available data — based on the mean scores of the selected indicators — the EU has made progress towards almost all goals. Progress in some goals has been faster than in others, and within goals there has been movement away from the sustainable development objectives in some areas." For instance, the report points out that there has been significant progress as regards the reduction of material deprivation (SDG 1) while the shift towards a circular economy (SDG 12) has in part stalled.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION / Statement

EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste - remarks by Commissioner Kyriakides

15 JUNE / 2020

On 15 June 2020, the 8th meeting of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste took place online.

In the panel "Food loss and waste prevention initiatives in the context of Covid-19. Update from the Commission and exchange with members" FEBA had the chance to make a presentation together with its Irish member [FoodCloud](#): "How COVID-19 shone a light on the role of Food Banks for food security".

Related documents:

- Read the article on FEBA Newsletter [here](#)
- All the presentations and the proceedings of the 8th Meeting of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste are available on the [event page](#).

Remarks by Commissioner Kyriakides as opening statement:

Ladies and Gentlemen, colleagues,

I am delighted to join you today to kick off the first virtual meeting of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste. The Covid-19 pandemic has forced us to rethink our 'status quo' and adapt to a new reality.

It has underlined the importance of a resilient food chain and the impact of any disruption or dysfunction.

Farmers, food businesses, food banks and other non-governmental organisations have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to ensure food is available to citizens across the EU.

I read your recent newsletter with interest – and the many initiatives taken by members of this platform.

The children's drawing contest in Hungary, to illustrate and educate on food waste prevention.

The pre-packed "fast boxes" to distribute essential items in Italy.

The Slow Food Youth Network's socially distanced Disco Soup Day, connecting young people around the world to share recipes and ideas to reduce food waste.

These stories are inspiring and uplifting; they give hope that the real change that is needed is also possible.

I am very grateful for your efforts and for sharing these valuable experiences.

We need to use this momentum to drive broader efforts to ensure the sustainability of food systems and feed a green recovery from the COVID crisis.

Farmers, food businesses, food banks and other non-governmental organisations have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to ensure food is available to citizens across the EU.

On 27 May, the Commission proposed a major EU Recovery Plan, with the European Green Deal at the heart of it.

A key part of this is the new Farm to Fork Strategy - which aims to support a transition to healthier food systems, rebuilt with the environment, equality, and sustainability in mind. Today, food systems account for nearly a third of global greenhouse gas emissions.

They consume large amounts of natural resources and impact negatively on biodiversity and public health.

They are also wasteful, and inherently unfair and unequal. We can no longer accept this.

The Farm to Fork Strategy will reduce the environmental and climate footprint of the EU food system and strengthen

its resilience – which is essential to equip us for future challenges and crises – like COVID.

Ms Nikolakopoulou will explain the full details shortly.

I will just highlight a few of the key elements.

First, it includes ambitious targets to address the environmental and public health concerns linked to the use of pesticides, fertilisers and antimicrobials in farming and aquaculture, and to increase the agricultural land under organic farming.

Secondly, it proposes ambitious measures to create a healthier food environment for EU citizens – making the healthy choice, the easy choice.

It also recognises the importance stopping food loss and waste.

This Platform's work will make an essential contribution to this.

In 2023, the Commission will introduce legally-binding targets to reduce food waste, based on the results of the first round of EU-wide monitoring using common methodology. We will also consider further opportunities to integrate food loss and waste prevention in other EU policies.

And we will revise the EU rules on date marking, to improve their use and consumers' understanding of them.

With your help – we must look at ways to scale up and mobilise action across the EU and promote evidence-based best practice.

In particular, we must encourage uptake of the Platform's recommendations of last December.

The first International Day on Food Losses and Food Waste on 29 September will also provide new impetus for collective action at global level.

Before closing, I would like to say a few words on the EU's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, specifically in the area of food.

The Commission took a number of measures to support the agri-food sector and ensure deliveries of food and basic materials could continue in a safe environment.

This included the purchase of protective equipment for those delivering food aid via the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived.

Public authorities in Member States also adopted temporary solutions to allow greater flexibility in food labelling to ensure food security and prevent food and packaging waste, without jeopardising food safety.

Others national measures, helped to facilitate donation of food of animal origin in line with EU food hygiene rules.

Cooperation was also stepped up - between actors in the food supply chain and between the public and private sectors.

- New tools were launched to find alternative destinations for surplus food - like business-to-business marketplaces and short supply chains linking producers directly to consumers.
- Some retailers worked with suppliers to introduce more flexibility in product specifications - to ensure products could remain on shelves to prevent food waste.
- Cities facilitated the organisation of food redistribution to prevent food waste from school canteens.
- Food banks and charities reacted swiftly to the increased demand for food aid and the challenge of recovering and redistributing surplus food, despite a shortage of volunteers, protective equipment, and other resources.
- And throughout the EU, consumer campaigns were organised to encourage responsible shopping and provide advice on storage and food preparation.

To conclude, let us build on the solidarity borne out of COVID, and the momentum it has created for change.

In the last few months, our systems have been exposed at their weakest, but we have seen our citizens at their strongest and most innovative.

Let us build on this – and create more stories, and solutions like those in your recent newsletter.

By working together – and with your help - we can redesign a food system that minimises waste and ensures healthy diets and a healthy planet.

Thank you.


 Press Release

EUROPEAN COMMISSION / Press Release

Food Safety management systems for food retail activities, including food donation

12 JUNE / 2020

On 12 June 2020, European Commission published a [Commission Notice](#) providing guidance on food safety management systems for food retail activities, including food donations.

Some relevant parts to underline:

“In accordance with Article 4 of [Regulation \(EC\) No 853/2004](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, all food business operators (FBOs) shall comply with the general hygiene requirements laid down in the Annexes I (primary production and associated operations) or II (other FBOs) of the Regulation.

Food donation often occurs at retail level and the consideration and possible identification of additional hazards due to this activity must be included in the hazard analysis. **Facilitating food donation is a priority under the [Circular Economy Action Plan](#) of the Commission as a means of preventing food waste and promoting food security, in line with the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#). This objective may in some instances be challenging from a food safety point of view given the involvement of additional actors (e.g. Food Banks and other charity organisations) and given that food which is redistributed may be approaching the end of its shelf-life when considered for food donation”.**

Section 5 of the Commission Notice is dedicated to food donation

“Overview of additional preventive practices (PRPs) most relevant for retail involved in food donation”

As regards food donation, four PRPs have been recommended by EFSA that apply to all FBOs involved in food donation, both donors and recipients.

- Shelf-life control
- Handling returned foods (e.g. food returns from supermarkets to central distribution centres)
- Evaluation for food donation including assessment of remaining shelf-life
- Freezing food intended for donation

You can access the Commission Notice 2020/C 199/01 in EU official languages [here](#).



EUROPEAN COMMISSION / Research Paper



Food redistribution in the EU: Mapping and analysis of existing regulatory and policy measures impacting food redistribution from EU Member States

25 JUNE / 2020

Food waste is an issue of importance for global food security and good environmental governance. It can be directly linked to environmental, economic and social impacts. Drivers of food waste are diverse and can be associated with technical, socio-economic and institutional (legislation and policy) factors.

The primary focus of food waste prevention should be to act at the source by limiting the generation of surplus food at each stage of the food supply chain. However, when food surpluses occur, the best destination, which ensures the highest value use of edible food resources, is to redistribute these to human consumption.

This report gives an overview and analysis of the regulatory and policy measures impacting food redistribution in the EU Member States.

The structure of the report consists in a general overview on the literature review and scoping interviews, on the mapping and overview of policy measures and a comparative analysis among Member States. Afterwards, it starts analysing country by country the current policies with an overview of current and foreseen regulatory and policy measures focusing on national strategies for food redistribution, fiscal incentives, legal measures, voluntary agreements, communication initiatives and other initiatives for food redistribution.

To download the full report in all EU official languages, please click [here](#).

EUROPEAN COMMISSION / Press Release

Press Release



Common Agricultural Policy and the Green Deal

30 JUNE / 2020

The **Common Agricultural Policy** (PAC) plays a key role in supporting Europe's agricultural sector – even more at present due to COVID-19 pandemic that is also putting a strain on the resilience of European farmers.

It will be an important instrument in managing the transition to sustainable food production systems and strengthen the efforts of European farmers to contribute to the climate objectives of the EU and to protect the environment. In January 2020, the **European Parliament announced its Resolution on the European Green Deal**, which includes a **specific request to the Commission to analyse the contribution of the CAP reform proposal to the EU's environmental, climate, and biodiversity protection commitments in order to fully align it to the goals set in the European Green Deal**.

European Commission has analysed the links between the CAP reform proposals and the Green Deal and its associated strategies such as the Farm to Fork Strategy.

The document underlined in conclusion that, the capacity of the future CAP to accommodate the Green Deal's ambitions depends on various aspects, ranging from a suitable share of the EU budget devoted to each pillar of the CAP to the key provisions of the Commission's proposal, which need to be maintained in the final CAP legislation.

To read the full document please access [here](#).

Transition to new EU farm policy: partial deal on key provisions for after 2020

Parliament and Council negotiators reached a partial agreement on the second batch of rules to ensure a smooth transition from current EU farm policy to the future one. The provisionally agreed text extends the application of existing Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) rules, which are due to expire at the end of 2020. It ensures the continuation of payments to farmers and rural development beneficiaries and provides predictability and stability for the sector.

The text provisionally agreed by MEPs and the Croatian Council Presidency still needs to be updated with relevant figures from the future EU long-term budget, which has not been agreed yet. **Once the deal on the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) is reached, the Parliament and Council negotiators will meet again to finalise the transitional CAP rules for 2021-2022.**

The final text will then have to be approved by both, the Parliament and the Council, before it can enter into force.

Background

The draft regulation is the second of two proposals tabled by the European Commission to ensure a **smooth transition to the post-2020 CAP**. The first set of transitional rules was [approved](#) by the Parliament in December 2019.

Parliament [warned](#) in its 10 October resolution that delaying the future EU's long-term budget would harm EU citizens and businesses and urged the Commission to table a contingency plan to avoid disruptions in EU funding to beneficiaries.

The CAP reform is closely linked to the work on the EU's long-term 2021-2027 budget. The future EU farm policy laws will be co-decided by the European Parliament and Council of the EU (agricultural ministers).

To have further information, please access [here](#).



Summary report on the implementation of the FEAD in 2018

8 JUNE / 2020

In 2018, the European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) reached 13 million people, the Summary Report on the FEAD implementation says. The estimate was done by the partner organisations which deliver the support. FEAD helps the most deprived, in particular to alleviate the worst forms of poverty in the EU such as food deprivation, child poverty and homelessness.

The Commission adopted this [summary report on the implementation of the FEAD in 2018](#) based on the reports submitted by the Member States. FEAD support continued in 2018 in 26 Member States, building on the progress made in previous years.

Children at risk of poverty are an important target group

The profile of end recipients of FEAD support has remained also broadly stable. As children account for 29% of those who received food, basic material or social inclusion assistance, the report focuses on some examples of how FEAD reaches out to children.

To summarize, in 2018:

- an estimated 12.6 million people benefited from FEAD food assistance
- 1 million received basic material assistance and
- 39,000 benefited from social inclusion support.

Whilst taking account of some overlaps in those figures, the overall estimate is that FEAD reached almost 13 million people in 2018.



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