

Press Release

MEPs and citizens agree: children should have access to healthy and sustainable food in schools.

Brussels, 16 May 2023

The European Parliament adopted on 9 May a resolution on implementation of the EU School Scheme for fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products. Meanwhile a new poll has revealed that the majority of citizens believe that there should be guarantees for high standard food in schools. Both of these demonstrate that citizens and MEPs agree: **schools should not only impart knowledge but also the habit of eating healthy and sustainable food.**

Public procurement has transformative potential when used properly, both for local farmers and for children. Public expenditure should lead by example and set high standards of local and seasonable food in school and hospitals, as well as show kids the path towards healthy eating patterns.

The poll, which surveyed a representative sample of over 3,000 people, was conducted by Buy Better Food, a coalition of civil society organizations calling for good public sector procurement. The results indicate that citizens across Europe overwhelmingly support good public sector food and for guaranteed standards.

Europeans have spoken clearly and loudly. When it comes to public canteens and spending public money, 93% of the respondents stated that food offered should contribute to a healthier society and a healthier planet.

According to 88% of respondents public money should be spent in support of common good, such as providing healthy and sustainable menus in schools and hospitals. Furthermore, spending should also contribute to mitigate climate change, by buying local and seasonable products (82% of survey respondents).

“These results are very positive. They demonstrate a clear consensus among European citizens for guaranteed high-standard food in public canteens and are a mandate for the EU commission action. We are asking anyone who agrees to join us in supporting the [Buy Better Food manifesto](#)” said the coordinator of the Buy Better Food Coalition, Giorgia Dalla Libera Marchiori.

Moreover, considering increasing costs of living, these meals might be the only warm meal children from low-income households have access to.

However, the Parliament has failed to include plant-based drinks, as alternative to milk, turning away those children living with lactose intolerance.

European public procurement, together with the minimum mandatory sustainability criteria, will be further regulated in the upcoming [Framework for Sustainable Food Systems](#), the flagship piece of legislation of the [Farm to Fork Strategy](#), which aims to accelerate the transition towards a greener future.

Note for editors – not for publication:

About Buy Better Food

[Buy Better Food Coalition](#) is a network of non-profit entities, including local and regional governments, as well as civil society organisations sharing the commitment to improve human, societal and environmental health by transforming the EU's agrifood system. We strive to represent a diverse pool of members with different backgrounds, affiliations, and expertise from all European countries.

Questions or inquiries? Get in touch with Buy Better Food Coordinator at info@buybetterfood.eu