



HOW CAN THE EU FARM TO FORK STRATEGY CONTRIBUTE?

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD ENVIRONMENTS

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EPHA is a change agent – Europe's leading NGO alliance advocating for better health. We are a dynamic member-led organisation, made up of public health civil society, patient groups, health professionals, and disease groups working together to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe. EPHA is a member of, among others, the Social Platform, the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), the Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics, the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD). Transparency Register Number: 18941013532-08

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Disclaimer: This is a discussion paper and does not prejudice policy positions of the respective organisations.

Authors extend their sincere gratitude to all interviewees who have provided input for the case studies collected. Interviewees are not responsible for any recommendations or views expressed in this paper. All views and opinions can be attributed to authors only.



Co-funded by
the Health Programme
of the European Union



The European Public Health Alliance has received funding under an operating grant from the European Union's Health Programme (2014-2020). The content of this document represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency or any other body of the European Union. The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.

HCWH Europe gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the European Commission's EU Life+ programme. HCWH Europe is solely responsible for the content of this publication and related materials. The views expressed do not reflect the official views of the European Commission.

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Executive summary

Public procurement of food is a much-discussed policy instrument - and for good reasons. Public food procurement is a ‘carrot’-type policy tool that allows to use government buying power to promote health, environmental, socio-economic, animal welfare and other food policy objectives. But are we making the best use of this instrument? And how to accelerate the adoption of sustainability-oriented public food procurement policies across Europe?

This discussion paper aims to contribute to the European Union (EU) ‘Farm to Fork’ Strategy for sustainable food, which should be launched early in the EU’s 2019-2024 legislative cycle.¹ The paper discusses the potential of public food procurement to leverage a sustainable food systems transition, and explores how the EU can contribute to advance national and local strategic public food procurement policies.

This exploration feeds into the need to find concrete, ambitious and realistic policy pathways to accelerate the move towards a sustainable future, in line with the objectives of the flagship European Green Deal.² It also aligns with calls to overcome policy silos and advance more coherent forms of policy-making for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and for finding concrete ways of putting the ‘Health in All Policies’ principle into action.

1 European Commission (2019) President-elect von der Leyen’s Mission Letter to Stella Kyriakides

2 Von der Leyen (2019) A Union that strives for more. My Agenda for Europe: Political Guidelines for the Next European Commission 2019-2024

Main take-aways

- A sustainable food system is a cornerstone of a prosperous future. There is an increasing consensus that the European food system is unsustainable and needs to be decisively transformed. By leveraging public sector buying power, public food procurement policy offers the potential to drive significant health, environmental, socio-economic and other sustainability co-benefits.
- Public procurement is a dynamic policy area with many innovative experiments being carried out across Europe. Such local, municipal and national initiatives point to a more widespread willingness to progressively adopt sustainable public food procurement practices. Achieving an effective transition in procurement however involves costs, which are not always covered by the budgets available.
- Despite the EU's aim to promote 'strategic' public procurement, the current landscape governing the procurement of food appears fragmented and not fully up-to-date to enable a sustainable transition.
- The upcoming EU 'Farm to Fork' strategy offers a momentous opportunity to recognise and enhance the positive role public food procurement can play in supporting a food systems transition. The strategy should particularly consider ways to:
 1. Leverage EU funding to support sustainable innovation in national and local public food procurement policies;
 2. Create an integrated European Sustainable Public Food Procurement Guide;
 3. Establish an EU network of food procurement professionals;
 4. Advance the introduction and use of sustainable healthy dietary guidelines;
 5. Support the elaboration of new sustainability standards;
 6. Launch a process to further update the Public Procurement Directives.

1. Public procurement of food: transformative potential

A sustainable food system is key to the well-being of people and planet. There is increasing consensus that Europe's food system is unsustainable and needs to be transformed in order for it to realise its contribution towards a prosperous future. This section explores why strategic public food procurement can foster the transition towards sustainable food systems, while delivering multiple 'co-benefits' to society.

What is a sustainable food system? A sustainable food system "ensures food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition of future generations are not compromised."³ In this light, sustainability is not a fixed end point, but a "moving target".⁴ The quest for sustainability involves a reflexive process, framed by an evolving understanding of what is a safe and desirable "operating space" for food system activities.⁵

Seven main pillars of a sustainable food system can be identified, as follows:⁶

1. **Environmental** (e.g. climate change; biodiversity; quality of water, air and soil; availability of water; land and resource use; chemicals use);
2. **Health** (e.g. diets and nutrition; food safety; antimicrobial resistance (AMR); occupational safety; chemicals use; environmental health);
3. **Economic** (e.g. economic viability, income across the supply chain; employment; added value);
4. **Social** (e.g. access to good food for all; cultural adequacy; inequities in production and consumption; labour standards)
5. **Ethical** (e.g. animal welfare; bioengineering);
6. **Quality** (e.g. organoleptic qualities; taste);
7. **Resilience** (e.g. maintaining and increasing diversity in the system; enhancing capacities to create knowledge, innovate and anticipate change).

While hardly anyone disagrees that food systems should be sustainable, moving towards sustainability involves making changes, and change is a highly political affair. Even if shared agreement can be found on the main building blocks of a sustainable food system, the details are, and will likely remain, to be contested.⁷ For instance, different perspectives may exist on the actual meaning of the different sustainability components, their desired degree of fulfillment, their relative importance, comparative prioritisation in case of trade-offs and the means used to achieve them.

3 High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (2017) Nutrition and food systems

4 Aiking (2014) Protein production: planet, profit, plus people? Am J Clin Nutr.

5 Rockström et al. (2009) A safe operating space for humanity. Nature

6 Drawing on: Paula Mason & Tim Lang (2017) Sustainable Diets. How Ecological Nutrition Can Transform Consumption and the Food System. Routledge;

and: Galli et al. (2018) A transition towards sustainable food systems in Europe. Food policy blue print scoping study. Laboratorio di Studi Rurali Sismondi

7 Food Climate Research Network, Food Source. What is environmental efficiency and is it sustainable?

What are co-benefits and why do they matter? Transforming the food system involves pursuing different parallel objectives and taking account of multiple, often competing interests. Policies that aim to contribute to one set of objectives may impinge on another set of objectives. It has been argued that a deep restructuring of the food system is required to convert the conflicts inherent in the current system into positive synergies.⁸

At the same time, the urgency to deliver progress demands action now. This action can be facilitated by policy measures that are able to achieve multiple benefits at once, allowing to maximise gains and minimise opposition. The concept of “co-benefits”, described as the “additional benefits of tackling multiple issues simultaneously”,⁹ provides a useful lens for designing policy pathways that maximise support for a sustainable transition. However, not all business models can be part of a sustainable food future, and hard choices will have to be made. Political leadership is required to address the most pressing food system challenges, particularly those that may lead to irreversible outcomes if certain ‘tipping points’ are reached.¹⁰

Public procurement as a co-benefits policy. Public procurement of food is a policy instrument that can contribute to different sustainability objectives, including socio-economic, health, environmental, ethical and quality, at the same time.

Public food procurement covers food purchases for settings such as public canteens, education establishments, healthcare facilities, social and welfare services, armed forces and prisons. It represents a significant part of purchases in national food economies; the food service market is roughly estimated at €82 billion per year in the EU. It also represents a considerable portion of the food people eat every day. For instance, according to estimates, school food may well deliver more than half the daily energy requirement for many children in the EU.¹¹

Public procurement has an important transformative potential in that it allows connections to be made between food production and settings where food is consumed, and does so through positive incentives (i.e. public money). This creates the opportunity to set standards and utilise buying power in favour of environmental, health and other objectives by rewarding forward-looking economic operators whose activities and business models fit within sustainability premises. At society-wide level, public procurement can help steer markets towards sustainable options and contribute to durable changes in eating habits and preferences.

Why is food procurement a lever for a sustainable food system? The food systems perspective shows that eating patterns, or diets, are not passive end-points in the food supply chain, but are dynamically shaping the food system and food system outcomes. It recognises that collective shifts in eating patterns can significantly contribute to multiple sustainability objectives, and that changes in consumption are, alongside improvements in production practices, unavoidable if sustainability is to be approached.

8 Parsons & Hawkes (2018) Connecting food systems for co-benefits: how can food systems combine diet-related health with environmental and economic policy goals? Co-benefits paper. WHO European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

9 Parsons & Hawkes (2018) Connecting food systems for co-benefits: how can food systems combine diet-related health with environmental and economic policy goals? Co-benefits paper. WHO European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

10 Environmental tipping points and food system dynamics: Main Report (2017) The Global Food Security programme

11 Caldeira et al. (2017) Public Procurement of Food for Health: technical report on the school setting. European Commission Joint Research Centre

*Changes in consumption are,
alongside improvements
in production practices,
unavoidable for a
transition towards a
sustainable food system.*

Understanding how consumption patterns are developed is key to finding effective and acceptable ways to shift them. Rather than trying to inform and educate consumers to make ‘the right’ choices, a practice that has limited effect^{12 13} and unjustly places the burden of responsibility on the individual,¹⁴ evidence overwhelmingly supports the need to affect structural changes to ‘food environments’ so they enable, empower and facilitate healthy, sustainable eating.¹⁵

‘Food environments’ are the physical, economic and socio-cultural surroundings that shape the availability, accessibility, affordability and attractiveness of foods, thereby affecting our consumption decisions and eating habits.^{16 17} The foods and meals on offer in canteens, hospitals, schools and other places are core constituents of food environments. Public procurement policy can significantly influence these.

Effects of public procurement policies

Studies have identified several ways in which public procurement policies can support public health and sustainable development.

- The implementation of health-sensitive public procurement was found to enhance the availability of healthy options and to be effective in increasing the consumption of healthy foods, while simultaneously reducing exposure to foods associated with unhealthy diets and related ill-health.¹⁸
- Repeated exposure to healthy options was found to improve attitudes towards healthy eating and generate healthy eating habits also beyond the particular food setting.^{19 20}
- When coupled to educational components, public procurement can be particularly effective in enhancing nutrition literacy and bridging the disconnect between people and traditional diets.²¹
- The benefits of health-sensitive procurement policies are experienced by all consumers equally regardless of socio-economic differences, which helps overcome structural barriers to healthy eating.^{22 23}
- Economic modelling suggests that an effectively and broadly implemented government

12 Adams et al. (2016) Why Are Some Population Interventions for Diet and Obesity More Equitable and Effective Than Others? The Role of Individual Agency, PLOS Medicine

13 Wakefield et al. (2010) Use of mass media campaigns to change health behaviour, The Lancet

14 Swinburn et al. (2019) The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition, and Climate Change: The Lancet Commission report. The Lancet

15 Garnett et al. (2015) Policies and actions to shift eating patterns: What works? Food Climate Research Network and Chatham House

16 Swinburn et al. (2015) Strengthening of accountability systems to create healthy food environments and reduce global obesity. The Lancet

17 Herforth & Ahmed (2015) The food environment, its effects on dietary consumption, and potential for measurement within agriculture-nutrition interventions. Food Security

18 Niebyski et al. (2014) Healthy Food Procurement Policies and Their Impact. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health

19 Lachat et al. (2009) Availability of free fruits and vegetables at canteen lunch improves lunch and daily nutritional profiles: a randomised controlled trial. British Journal of Nutrition

20 Caldeira et al. (2017) Public Procurement of Food for Health: technical report on the school setting. European Commission Joint Research Centre

21 Stefani (2017) Public Food Procurement: A Systematic Literature Review. International Journal on Food System Dynamics

22 Bagnall et al. (2019) Whole systems approaches to obesity and other complex public health challenges: a systematic review. BMC Public Health

23 Lassen et al. (2018). The Nutritional Quality of Lunch Meals Eaten at Danish Worksites. Nutrients

healthy food procurement policy could reduce disease rates and healthcare costs.²⁴

- Health-sensitive public procurement can have wider repercussions on the food system, for instance by helping shape the demand and supply of under-consumed healthy products and drive food reformulation.²⁵
- Public procurement can benefit small-scale producers by offering them a more secure place in the food market and allowing them to better plan production.²⁶
- Procurement policies can contribute to environmental benefits such as tackling greenhouse gas emissions.^{27 28}

Sustainable, healthy diets as a focus for public procurement strategies. Sustainable diets, or sustainable healthy diets, are “those diets with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy life for present and future generations”.²⁹

To date, sustainable diets have been authoritatively addressed from the perspective of providing co-benefits for (certain) environmental and nutritional health objectives. This has yielded a scientific consensus that when it comes to eating, the interests of health and environment generally coincide. There is robust evidence that, in high-income countries, a strategy focused on dietary change towards more plant-rich diets in line with healthy eating guidelines can both improve environmental outcomes and nutrition.³⁰

While the debates about sustainable diets have mostly focused on environment and nutrition, many other co-benefits could also be linked to a transition to such eating patterns, including AMR prevention, socio-economic benefits, animal welfare, quality gains and others. Some of these co-benefits pathways however still require better description and quantification.

Effects of public procurement policies

Eating well is a cornerstone of health and well-being. But paradoxically, today unhealthy diet is a leading risk factor for the burden of mortality and diseases in the EU.³¹ It is a key driver of obesity and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as cardiovascular diseases, cancers and type-2 diabetes. Unhealthy diets are characterised by eating patterns with excessive energy intake, high in fat, sugar and salt and processed and red meat, and are associated with an overall high intake of highly-processed, energy-dense and nutrient-poor foods. At the same time, such eating patterns are low in fruit and

24 Gase et al. (2011) Estimating the potential health impact and costs of implementing a local policy for food procurement to reduce the consumption of sodium in the county of Los Angeles. *Am J Public Health*

25 Baker (2017) Generating political priority for regulating interventions targeting obesity prevention: An Australian case study. *Social Science & Medicine*

26 De Schutter (2014) The Power of Procurement Public Purchasing in the Service of Realizing the Right to Food. Briefing note. United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food

27 Cerutti et al. (2016) Carbon footprint in green public procurement: Policy evaluation from a case study in the food sector. *Food Policy*

28 Wickramasinghe et al. (2016) Contribution of healthy and unhealthy primary school meals to greenhouse gas emissions in England: linking nutritional data and greenhouse gas emission data of diets. *EJCN*

29 UN FAO and Bioversity International (2010) Sustainable Diets and Biodiversity

30 Springmann et al. (2018) Health and nutritional aspects of sustainable diet strategies and their association with environmental impacts: a global modelling analysis with country-level detail. *The Lancet*

31 Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. Global Burden of Disease. EU, 2017, all ages, Risk factors for DALYs, based on the Global Burden of Disease study

vegetables, whole grains, nuts, legumes and fibre. Diet-related ill-health is a challenge closely linked to socio-economic inequities.³²

Diets in high-income countries, such as in the EU, are also associated with global harm to the biosphere, including by driving food system-related greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions, biodiversity loss, deforestation, and land, soil, water and marine pollution.³³ The share of animal products in the diet is the most important factor determining the climate footprint of EU food consumption.³⁴ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) identifies “low GHG-intensive food consumption” as a main pathway towards not exceeding a 1.5°C increase in global temperatures.³⁵ It also finds that a shift towards diets “featuring plant-based foods, such as those based on coarse grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds, and animal-sourced food produced in resilient, sustainable and low-GHG emission systems” represent an important opportunities for climate adaptation and mitigation.³⁶

Moreover, a major international assessment by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) highlights a “dangerous decline” of nature globally and urges to implement “transformative changes”, including in agricultural and food systems.³⁷

Various studies have attempted to quantify the benefits of shifting towards different types of more environmentally friendly and healthy eating patterns compared to the current diet. A recent comprehensive study published in 2019 by a transdisciplinary team of researchers put forward a proposal for a “planetary health diet” which could feed 10 billion people by 2050 worldwide without exceeding planetary boundaries, while providing adequate nutrition in a culturally acceptable way.³⁸

This diet implies roughly doubling the consumption of foods such as fruit and vegetables, whole grains, legumes and nuts, and cutting by half meats (primarily by reducing excessive consumption in wealthier countries) and products containing added sugars.³⁹ Similarly, reducing by 50% meat and dairy consumption by 2030, while transitioning to ‘better’ animal products, is advocated for by an alliance of non-governmental organisations in the UK.⁴⁰

As a further confirmation of these findings, a recent review study projects that the land-based sector could contribute to 30% of total GHG mitigation efforts to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C by 2050. Achieving this potential involves a range of activities, with a shift to more plant-rich diets identified as a fundamental and high-impact component.⁴¹

32 Loring & Robertson (2014) Obesity and inequities. Guidance for addressing inequities in overweight and obesity. WHO/Europe

33 See: Food Climate Research Network. Food Source for an overview of the various issues connected to food systems.

34 Sandström et al. (2018) The role of trade in the greenhouse gas footprints of EU diets. Global Food Security

35 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2018) Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5C. Summary for Policymakers

36 IPCC (2019) Climate Change and Land: An IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems

37 Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019) Media Release: Nature’s Dangerous Decline ‘Unprecedented’; Species Extinction Rates ‘Accelerating’

38 Willett et al. (2019) Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT-Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems. The Lancet

39 EAT (2019) Summary Report of the EAT-Lancet Commission

40 Eating Better. Better by half: A roadmap to less and better meat and dairy

41 Roe et al. (2019) Contribution of the land sector to a 1.5 °C world. Nature Climate Change

2. EU framework for strategic public food procurement: lacking a comprehensive approach

Public food procurement represents a powerful opportunity to help transform the food system and achieve multiple societal benefits at the same time. This section provides a short overview of the existing European regulatory instruments and soft law tools that set the EU legal and intellectual framework for the public procurement of food.

The EU legal framework for strategic public procurement. In 2014, a series of EU Directives were adopted setting the framework for a ‘new generation’ of public procurement rules.^{42 43 44} Adopted as part of the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth,⁴⁵ these reforms were meant to provide Member States with the tools to modernise their procurement practices, to digitally transform public procurement, and to move from simply regulating procurement to implementing ‘strategic’ public procurement.

Overall, the reform aimed to support the transition to a resource-saving and low-GHG emissions economy, for instance by encouraging a wider use of green public procurement; to improve the entrepreneurship environment, especially for innovative small and medium size enterprises (SMEs); and to guarantee an efficient use of public funds and the EU-wide accessibility to procurement markets.

The reform was also meant to support ‘innovation procurement’, a practice aimed at stimulating innovation both in terms of products and services purchased, and in the purchasing process itself.⁴⁶ Examples of this in recent years include different eco-innovation trends that have emerged in the area of food and catering services.^{47 48}

Strategic public procurement: is it working? In 2017, the Commission published a Communication where it discusses the national uptake of the EU’s 2014 modernisation of public procurement rules.⁴⁹ While describing certain successes, the Communication expresses concern that strategic procurement opportunities are insufficiently used.

In particular, the Communication highlights that in more than half of procurement cases the lowest price remains the only award criteria used. This while Directive 2014/24/EU offers the possibility to include a range of award criteria and allows contracting authorities to select tenders on the basis of the best price-quality ratio. The latter means that authorities can choose the offer that provides best value for money, not limited to cost alone. The Communication also points out that despite the adopted simplifications, current EU procedures are still perceived to be too complex.

42 Directive 2014/23/EU on the award of concession contracts

43 Directive 2014/24/EU on public procurement (main instrument governing public food procurement)

44 Directive 2014/25/EU on procurement by entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors

45 European Commission, COM(2010) 2020 final, Europe 2020, A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

46 European Commission, C(2018) 3051 final, Guidance on Innovation Procurement

47 INNOCAT. Procurement of eco-innovative catering

48 EcoQUIPeu

49 European Commission, COM(2017) 572 final, Making Public Procurement work in and for Europe

Furthermore, and with particular reference to the procurement of food, many organisations often point to the limitations imposed by EU law which prevents the inclusion of award criteria linked to the locality of production.⁵⁰ This is often perceived to be an important barrier to achieving strategic procurement, especially with a view on possible socio-economic co-benefits linked to local supply chains.⁵¹

Green public procurement. The EU's Green Public Procurement (GPP) Criteria for food, catering services and vending machines, updated in 2019, are both a policy instrument and a technical tool to help improve the environmental impacts of public purchases.⁵² Next to the environmental criteria, the GPP also contains some fair trade and animal welfare standards. While not binding, the criteria provide a common basis for developing specifications and other procurement criteria that can be directly applied by contracting authorities throughout Europe.

The updated criteria focus on a select number of approaches to minimise key environmental impacts related to food procurement activities, promoting in particular:

- An increased uptake of organic food products;
- More environmentally responsible marine and aquaculture products;
- An increased offer of plant-based menus;
- More environmentally responsible vegetable fats;
- Better food and beverage waste prevention;
- Improved prevention, sorting and disposal of other wastes;
- Lower energy use and water consumption in kitchens;
- Reduced emissions from food transportation;
- Products produced following higher animal welfare standards;
- Products labelled in accordance with fair and ethical trade standards;
- Staff training on the aspects covered by the GPP criteria.

Healthy public procurement. Nutritional health criteria are not included as part of the GPP. At the same time, all EU Member States have national food-based dietary guidelines in place, which will, to varying degrees, be relied on to set nutritional standards for food procurement policies.⁵³

In 2017, the Joint Research Centre produced a technical report with examples of how countries have used nutritional criteria in school food policies.⁵⁴ The report describes a variety of specifications covering foods, nutrients and other variables. Specifications include criteria for fruit and vegetables (including variety and seasonality-related criteria), meat products (including origin criteria), snacks, fats, fibre, protein, micronutrient requirements, cultural diversity requirements and many more.

While the report does not, in a structured way, propose specifications that can be directly taken over by procurement authorities, as in the case of the GPP, it does show that a wide range of award criteria can be used to encourage tenderers to deliver improved services and products in relation

50 IPES-Food (2019) Towards a common food policy for the European Union

51 Santini et al. (2013) Short Food Supply Chains and Local Food Systems in the EU. A State of Play of their Socio-Economic Characteristics. European Commission Joint Research Centre

52 European Commission, SWD(2019) 366 final, EU green public procurement criteria for food, catering services and vending machines

53 European Commission Joint Research Centre, Food-Based Dietary Guidelines in Europe, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Knowledge Gateway

54 Caldeira et al. (2017) Public Procurement of Food for Health: technical report on the school setting. European Commission Joint Research Centre

to health and menu diversity.

Social public procurement. In 2011, the European Commission published a guide on socially responsible public procurement.⁵⁵ The document sets out the case for using public procurement as a social policy tool and explains the opportunities provided by EU law to do so. It also proposes a stepwise planning guide to establish a social public procurement strategy.

Considering the adoption of the 2014 Public Procurement Directives, which expand the opportunities for social public procurement, the ongoing experiments with social procurement practices⁵⁶ and the increased interest to use public procurement to promote social and professional inclusion and to buy ethical products and services, the guide may need to be modernised and made more practically applicable.

No systematic guidance to promote sustainable food procurement. The above overview indicates that, if one looks carefully enough, some form of EU guidance on public food procurement is available which relates to most components of a sustainable food system. Among these guidance documents, the GPP criteria are the most readily applicable and the most comprehensive, as they also include wider criteria than environmental ones, such as on animal welfare and fair trade.⁵⁷

However, taken together, and despite the EU's aim to promote 'strategic' public procurement, the current EU landscape governing the procurement of food seems fragmented and not fully fit to act as a transition enabler. In particular, the current framework offers only weak guidance for national and local public authorities on how to design a public food procurement strategy that can comprehensively contribute to a sustainable food system.

In particular:

- The various existing EU guidance documents are not similar in style or functionality, making it difficult to gain a clear overview of the various procurement criteria on offer. Also, not all criteria are presented in a way to make them directly applicable in a procurement setting.
- Not all food system sustainability components may be covered by an appropriate number of procurement criteria. For instance, a more elaborate set of criteria appear to be needed for socio-economic factors and animal welfare.
- Only few countries have added environmental sustainability requirements to dietary guidelines,⁵⁸ and no methodological support appears to be available at the EU level on how to establish such sustainable dietary guidelines. This hampers the composition of menus that are both nutritionally healthy and environmentally beneficial.

⁵⁵ European Commission (2011) Buying Social - A guide on taking account of social considerations in public procurement

⁵⁶ Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare. Social Innovations and Employment through Public Procurement (SIEPP)

⁵⁷ Neto et al. (2018) The use of green criteria in the public procurement of food products and catering services: a review of EU schemes. Environment, Development and Sustainability

⁵⁸ Fischer and Garnett (2016) Plates, Pyramids, Planet - Developments in national healthy and sustainable dietary guidelines: a state of play assessment. FAO and FCRN

3. Case studies: lessons from transitions

The debate about public food procurement's potential to contribute to a sustainable food future is not an abstract one. Many examples exist of cities, and also countries, making steps forward by experimenting with new approaches, thereby extending the boundaries of the possible.

Below, six different case studies of transition are briefly described, each showing the steps made towards a more holistic and strategic approach to food procurement. The case studies also highlight some of the barriers faced but also aspirations for the future, cementing the impression of public procurement as a dynamic, innovative and high-potential branch of public policy.

The cases were selected taking into account the geographical diversity of EU Member States, and are meant to be illustrative and in no way exhaustive: much more could be said of each case study and many more innovative initiatives exist across Europe. Experiences were gathered through questionnaires and telephone interviews throughout 2019.

Case study 1: Ghent (Belgium)

For many years, the City of Ghent has taken a lead on sustainability and has established itself as a frontrunner in experimenting with sustainable innovations. This is also reflected in its food strategy and public procurement, which procures for the city, the social services and public schools and kindergartens, and which revolves around seven main pillars:

1. Minimising environmental impact;
2. Encouraging sustainable employment of disadvantaged groups;
3. Encouraging sustainable product innovation;
4. Fostering local economies;
5. Incorporating fair trade principles;
6. Encouraging sustainable entrepreneurship;
7. Striving towards excellence in procurement.

With regard to food procurement, some elements of this strategy include cutting food waste through reduced portion sizes, phasing-out single-use plastics, reducing the size of tenders to make them better accessible to smaller-scale suppliers, conducting market research surveys to better understand the needs and challenges faced by local suppliers, reserving certain tenders for actors in the social economy, specifying environmental standards for delivery vehicles and so forth.

To conduct this strategy, the City of Ghent has established both a structure for interdepartmental and external collaboration. Tamara Bruning, who heads the City's cleaning and catering services, underlines the importance of having both a close understanding of the market dynamics and of what the science on sustainability says. Both are important for convincing colleagues and suppliers.

The procurement strategy acts as a tool to steer the market with incentives: governments spend a lot of money and have the ability to promote change. For example, the city tries to increase demand for organic products. If the city can ensure a stable demand for organic food in considerable volumes, it may inspire farmers to make the switch as they feel more confident that there will be a market for their products.

This, of course, requires time, and some extra resources. According to Tamara, sustainability does cost money, but if you take the whole life cycle into account, it is not more expensive. While choosing organic can in the short-term increase costs, just as buying an electric car, or doing logistics by bicycle, there are vast long-term profits attached, both for the quality of soils and water, lower GHG emissions, improved air, greater socio-economic well-being and so on.



Picture: Stad Gent, Bart Cloet

"As a government you have to set an example and try to push the market towards a greener and more sustainable offer. A government should be a game changer where possible."
- Tamara Bruning, Head of Cleaning and Catering Services for the City of Ghent

Case study 2: Copenhagen (Denmark)

The Municipality of Copenhagen provides approximately 80,000 meals each day to a range of locations including kindergartens, schools, elderly homes and day-care centres for people with learning disabilities or in socio-economically vulnerable situations. This represents around €40 million annually, or around 10% of total food procurement in Denmark. The Municipality has ambitious targets for sustainability, and sees food as central to health and well-being.

“The people of Copenhagen will eat the best public food” - Ms. Ritt Bjerregaard Mayor of Copenhagen 2006-2009

This ambition started with the political commitment of the Mayor of Copenhagen who set a goal of achieving 90% organic food procurement by 2015, both as a way to preserve groundwater and act on water pollution in Denmark and beyond. From that moment onward, the Municipality decided to develop a holistic approach to support healthy, delicious meals in the public sector.

Over the past ten years, the development and implementation of Copenhagen’s public food procurement strategy has been led by Betina Bergmann Madsen. It has four key features:

Picture: Martin Kaufmann



- **Gradual conversion to achieve 90% organic food in public kitchens.** To achieve this goal, the Municipality has gone through a gradual process of understanding and stimulating the market for organic produce. It has established an open dialogue with market players, which has led to improved mutual understanding, trust and quality of outcomes. For instance, it has become an established practice to ask suppliers to provide samples of their produce to be tested for quality and taste as part of the evaluation criteria.
- **Enhancing food diversity.** Apart from organic, the strategy also favours a diverse and seasonal supply of products. Dedicated procurement requirements were designed and are used to achieve a greater (bio)diversity of fruit and vegetables. For instance, one tender included 86 different varieties of apples from 7 different wholesalers who introduced a bid, with many apples from small and medium-sized suppliers.
- **Training of kitchen staff.** A key lever in ensuring the success of the strategy, both in terms of containing costs, improving the appeal and nutritional value of meals and enhancing work satisfaction, is a training programme for kitchen staff implemented alongside changes in procurement. The training aims to improve cooking and menu composition skills so that meals can be prepared from basic ingredients, rather than from pre-processed foods.
- **No cost increases.** A central requirement of the strategy is that the move to organic should not be accompanied by an increase in procurement cost. This requirement is met particularly by reducing the amount of animal products in procurement, while increasing fruit and vegetables. This move, incidentally, fully aligns with recommendations for a ‘planetary health diet’. Other strategies include reducing waste, buying whole animals and ensuring that kitchens use all animal parts, and requesting seasonal fresh fish.

While the costs of procurement contracts themselves may not have increased, an approximate €5.5 million has been invested in knowledge, education and counselling to facilitate this change.

Case study 3: Finland

Each year Finland serves around 383 million public meals and spends some € 350 million on food procurement. Free school meals have been served since 1947. In 2016, the Finnish Government adopted a new policy to increase the quality and overall sustainability of publicly procured food. The policy prioritises products produced using more environmentally friendly and higher animal welfare methods. Nutritional and social welfare criteria are also part of the policy. To assist government purchasers, a guide to promote responsible food procurement was produced.⁵⁹

The latest Finnish dietary recommendations were published in 2014.⁶⁰ These guidelines encourage reduced red meat consumption and recommend choosing white meat, fish and plant-based protein instead. They also recommend at least half a kilo of vegetables, fruit and berries per day. These recommendations contain some guidelines for procurement. Likewise, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry also runs programmes promoting the consumption of organic and local food in public food services. A guide for this is also available.⁶¹

According to Auli Väänänen, Senior Specialist in Healthy and Sustainable Food Procurement at the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, one of the most important elements of the Finnish policy is that it provides for systematic monitoring. Results from the surveys of 2016 and 2018 show that the criteria for animal-based products are among the most used sustainability criteria. Interestingly, the use of these criteria has increased the share of domestic meat procured. For instance, the use of antibiotics in agriculture is strictly regulated in Finland and an animal health monitoring system is in place. Demanding high standards of antimicrobial stewardship therefore carries a likelihood of enhancing the proportion of domestic meat purchased.

Rolling-out the policy for more sustainable and responsible food procurement has involved a constant flow of activities, including producing guidelines and organizing events and trainings around the country. A network-based consortium that supports Finnish communities in public procurement has also been operationalised.⁶²



Picture: Auli Väänänen

*Quote box: "In 2030, Finnish consumers eat tasty, healthy and safe Finnish food that has been produced sustainably and ethically. Consumers have the ability and possibility to make informed choices." - Finnish Government vision from "Food 2030"**

59 Motivan hankintapalvelu (2017) Guide for Responsible Procurement of Food. Recommendations for requirements and evaluation criteria

60 Suomalaiset ravitsemussuositukset 2014

61 Ekocentria (2013) More local food for the customers of public-sector kitchens

62 Keino: Competence Centre for Sustainable and Innovative Public Procurement

* Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland. Food 2030 - Finland feeds us and the world

"By procuring organic food, we can influence the market, increase the demand considerably and thus facilitate the growth of organic agriculture in order to make an important contribution to saving our environment" -

Astrid Engel, City of Munich

Case study 4: Munich (Germany)

Munich is the third largest city in Germany with a population of around 1.45 million people. The City of Munich has a long tradition of working on sustainable public procurement and promoting fair trade. In 2013, Munich adopted a Decree requiring at least 20% of the food procured to be organic. In 2016, another resolution was adopted focusing on meat, which specifies that at least 30% of the meat purchased should be organic. These criteria are applicable for all public institutions, including schools and events.

Kindergartens have additional criteria. For instance, at least 50% of all food and 90% of meats must be organic, all fish is to be from organic aquaculture or carry a sustainability certificate, eggs must be organic or free range, and no genetically modified foods are allowed, including in additives and processing aids. The City of Munich sees the procurement of organic food as a means to alleviate the impacts of farming systems on the environment and as a way to drive-up animal welfare.

Astrid Engel, who works at the City of Munich as part of the "Biostadt München" programme,⁶³ is currently engaged in the implementation of these political priorities. According to Astrid progress is being made, but there are also challenges. These include insufficient awareness about the need for sustainable diets, the lack of financial resources to cover additional costs, and the lack of time, given human resources constraints.

One of the stumbling blocks remains the fear that purchasing organic products will involve additional costs. At the same time, it has proven possible to balance at least part of the shift to organic by optimising kitchen management, reducing the meat content of meals, buying more seasonal produce and reducing costs associated with waste. Contract performance clauses are included to avoid packaging material as far as possible, with priority given to reusable packaging, and four training courses of three hours each on the preparation of menu components to assist the kitchen staff. Suppliers are also required to provide advice to kitchen staff on the preparation of food at the request of the client.

In the course of a successful implementation of the procurement strategy a further enhancement of criteria will be considered. Clearly, additional resources would be welcome to create the conditions to expedite the transition.



Case study 5: Latvia

In 2014, it has become mandatory in Latvia to apply green public procurement (GPP) criteria in the procurement of food and catering services in both state and local government institutions, including schools.⁶⁴

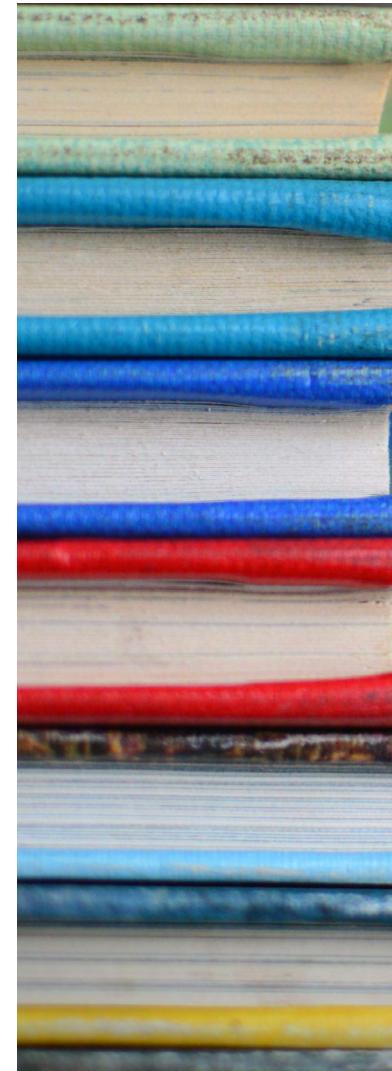
Some of the main GPP principles for food procurement include:

- Prioritising products covered by an organic certificate, or a recognised national food quality scheme or product quality indicator;
- Excluding genetically modified (GM) foods, or products with GM ingredients or produced with GM processing aids;
- Prioritising fresh and seasonal products;
- Purchasing in whole-sale, environmentally-friendly or reusable packaging.

Moreover, the Ministry of Health has introduced new rules for menus in educational facilities, enabling vegetarian choice while ensuring nutritionally-balanced menus. Prior to these changes, rules were quite strict in demanding the inclusion of meat protein and potatoes, which created barriers to the roll-out of more plant-based healthy options. According to Jana Simanovska, who works as a consultant with the Circular Public Procurement project team at the Latvian Environmental Investment Fund, the focus on menu design is an important step forward, but also comes with a challenge. Municipalities usually do not have their own nutritional experts, so it can be a difficult task to judge the nutritional quality of offers.

Another main challenge experienced in procurement practice is the difficulty to ensure the participation of small-scale producers. In most tenders, rather than the most economically advantageous offer, the lowest price remains the main criterion used. Also, small-scale producers often lack storage capacity and cannot offer a sufficiently wide range of products in order to ensure a regular and diverse supply. Cooperation among smaller-scale farmers could help overcome this barrier.

There is a clear perception that should municipalities and schools have more financial resources at their disposal, they would be willing to transition towards more sustainable procurement practices, such as increasing the share of organic products, offering more fruits and vegetables, and developing recipes for more plant-based menus. The same counts for upgrading the skills and knowledge of food service workers and enhancing public awareness of healthy and sustainable eating.



To procure more sustainable food we have to work with both recipients and suppliers. Local suppliers and farmers need to be motivated to participate in procurement, and schools need to monitor supply, educate pupils and work on strategies to reduce food waste. Since these actions require engagement, many organisational changes are needed, requiring support from diverse stakeholders."
Jana Simanovska, consultant at the Latvian Environmental Investment Fund

⁶⁴ For further information see the Requirements and Procedures for Green Public Procurement (in Latvian)

"We have been working in the field of nutrition for children and adolescents for many years now, and in recent times we have been working with parents who actively encourage and participate in devising healthy nutrition plans for their children." - Ana Repse, National Assembly



Case study 6: Ljubljana (Slovenia)

Most kindergartens in Slovenia provide four meals per day including breakfast, a morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack, covering over 70% of a child's energy needs. Public institutions, such as kindergartens, procure food according to the Slovenian law on public procurement. Contracting authorities may order on the basis of the lowest price or the most economically advantageous offer. The order should also comply with Green Public Procurement regulations. Different criteria can be used, including for seasonal and ecologically produced foods, traditional specialties, and foods with other acknowledged quality characteristics. Contracting authorities must in public procurement define 15 % (by quantity) organic food and 20% (by quantity) from quality schemes (protected designation of origin, protected geographical indication, traditional specialty guaranteed etc.).

Slovenia's Ministry of Health issued a guide to apply quality standards for food purchases in educational institutions. This guide, among others, supports the purchasing process from local farmers and cooperatives. Contracting authorities have the option of using short supply chains by opting out of the procedures provided by the public procurement law if the value of the order is below a certain total amount and does not exceed a fifth of the value of total procurement.

According to Ana Repse from Ljubljana, procuring high quality food for kindergartens begins by dividing the contents of the tender into several food groups and subgroups, for instance meat, fruit and vegetables, milk, and so on. Each food group is further divided into subgroups for specific products, such as apples, potatoes, vegetables, or baked goods. Dividing-up orders in this way facilitates the purchase of seasonal and locally produced foods with the potential to increase quality, cut transportation and achieve socio-economic added value.

In recent years, attempts are being made to involve parents in creating healthy nutrition plans for their children. Such plans should be balanced in energy and nutritional value, and consist of different combinations of foods from all food groups, while emphasising fruits and vegetables, moderating the amounts of foods of animal origin, taking special care to reduce salt and sugar intake. The taste of dishes is preferably enhanced through the use of herbs.

Monitoring of the cost of procurement is carried out by each institution and is reported on a regular basis on a dedicated public procurement portal. This allows the purchaser to track expenditures and keep the composition of menus within budget. The higher cost and lower availability of organic foods can pose difficulties. Also, there is a wish to further facilitate the ordering of locally produced foods. This both by facilitating farmers to get together in cooperatives and lifting limitations on local purchasing.

Case study 7: Valencia (Spain)

With almost 800,000 inhabitants, Valencia is the third largest city in Spain. As a result of a strong social movement on the right to land and food, which has allowed to put the issue of food high on the municipal agenda, the City launched a food strategy in 2015. Following the signature of the Milan Pact and a period of consultations and dialogue between various actors from civil society, the local administration and with the private sector, a municipal Food Council was established, as well as a municipal action plan on food. A working group of the Food Council, after more than a year of work, is now in the process of finalising a guide to improve the tendering process, including multiple criteria - social, ethical, environmental, nutritional - when procuring food for public institutions, particularly schools.

For Raquel Álvarez Herranz, who takes part in the public purchasing working group of Valencia's Food Council, the following criteria and approaches are especially worth mentioning:

- Priority for products from short-supply chains, or from close distance, where the supplier has tried to minimise transport-related GHG emissions;
- Priority for fresh foods that have not undergone excessive cooling or freezing;
- Priority for foods that align with Spanish guidelines for a healthy and sustainable diet;
- Priority for products from organic farming and fishing, or those certified by the Committee of Ecological Agriculture of the Valencian Community;
- Priority for products with positive biodiversity characteristics and traditional varieties;
- Ensuring adequate labour standards and decent income, respecting production costs;
- Environmental criteria related to plastics and food waste reduction;
- Criteria related to the availability of vegan and vegetarian menus and to cater for needs related to religious and other special requirements;
- Staff training and public awareness raising campaigns.

Importantly, the working group is also proposing to ensure that, when evaluating offers, the relative weight attributed to the cost criterion cannot exceed 30% of the total scale. This is important because in the past price has had more weight in the decision-making process, often to the detriment of quality and other sustainability criteria.

Among the main challenges highlighted by Raquel is the difficulty of including small-scale producers into public procurement, despite efforts by the municipality to incentivise young farmers to produce organic food on the city's agricultural land. To this end, more measures and actions are necessary to promote the access of small and medium-sized operators. Looking ahead, the City Council looks forward to progressively ensure an integrated approach to food policy to allow access to health-promoting food for everyone, to develop sustainable regional food systems with a reduced carbon footprint, and revitalise the Valencian orchards farming system.



"The recommendations from the public procurement working group have been agreed upon in a participatory process in which more than a dozen organizations from the public and private sectors, and civil society that come from different fields. This diversity legitimizes the proposals and increases their viability" - Ms. Raquel Álvarez Herranz

*Existing experiments confirm
public food procurement
is a dynamic, innovative
and high-potential branch
of public policy.*

4. Farm to Fork: leveraging public procurement for food systems transition

Farm to Fork: a strategic approach to transform the food system? The 2019-2024 European Commission has committed to launch a “Farm to Fork” Strategy for sustainable food early in its mandate. This has been announced both in the Commission President von der Leyen’s political guidelines⁶⁵ and the Mission Letters to several Commissioner-designates, including for Health,⁶⁶ who will lead the creation of the strategy; for Environment and Oceans;⁶⁷ Agriculture,⁶⁸ who will contribute to the strategy; and for the Executive Commission Vice-President, who will coordinate the work on the strategy.⁶⁹

While at the moment of writing information remains scant, the strategy has been described as one that will cover every stage in the food chain from production to consumption; will consist of different instruments including regulatory and non-regulatory; and is meant to create buy-in from local and regional actors, as well as Member States and other EU Institutions. Read in this light, it seems to create a framework that could respond to calls that have been made for the development of an integrated EU food policy overseen by a Commission Vice-President.⁷⁰

Joining the dots: how the Farm to Fork Strategy can facilitate strategic public food procurement. So far, this discussion paper has briefly explored the potential of public procurement policy to contribute to food system transformation. It has provided an overview of the EU policy framework governing the public procurement of food, including the gaps; described several case studies of innovative procurement experiments; and highlighted how the new Farm to Fork strategy appears to be the instrument of choice to advance a comprehensive approach towards the food system.

Joining these dots, it would appear natural for the Farm to Fork Strategy to support national and local sustainable transitions in public food procurement. Below, several ways how the strategy could contribute are highlighted:

1. Leverage EU funding to support sustainable innovation in national and local public food procurement policies. A clear message from the case studies is that transition involves costs. Even if a more sustainable procurement contract is not necessarily more costly, which some of the case studies show is possible, different accompanying measures will be needed to effectively operationalise a sustainable procurement strategy. This will, at least temporarily, involve additional costs. Such costs include training, the additional time and effort needed to review procurement processes, investments into enabling infrastructure and so forth. While some cities and public authorities have provided budget for this, others may lack the means. By opening new financing opportunities, the EU could provide significant added value to communities that would like to innovate with sustainable public

⁶⁵ Von der Leyen (2019) A Union that strives for more. My Agenda for Europe: Political Guidelines for the Next European Commission 2019-2024

⁶⁶ European Commission (2019) President-elect von der Leyen’s Mission Letter to Stella Kyriakides

⁶⁷ European Commission (2019) President Von der Leyen’s Mission Letter to Virginijus Sinkevičius

⁶⁸ European Commission (2019) President-elect von der Leyen’s Mission Letter to Janusz Wojciechowski

⁶⁹ European Commission (2019) President-elect von der Leyen’s Mission Letter to Frans Timmermans

⁷⁰ Joint Open Letter | Calling for a Commission Vice-President for food systems transition

food procurement policies, but have not been able to find or allocate adequate resources.

The EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is one of the major EU funding mechanisms that could offer such opportunity. However, the CAP is not the only possible option. For instance, the updated Cohesion Fund and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) offer many entry points to provide transition funding for local and regional initiatives.⁷¹ The Farm to Fork Strategy could consider how to leverage available funding possibilities, or appropriate a specific budget from different funding streams, to enable sustainable public food procurement innovations.

Is sustainable public food procurement a fit for the CAP?

Over the years, the CAP has evolved from a supply-led policy towards a more market-based, and therefore demand-oriented one. In its Communication on the CAP, the European Commission observed that the new policy would “help farmers anticipate developments in dietary habits and adjust their production according to market signals and consumers’ demands”.⁷²

What the Commission left out however is a reflection on how the CAP itself may contribute to shaping this demand. This omission is even more surprising given that demand-oriented measures are not new to the policy.

- The School Fruit, Vegetables and Milk Scheme, with a budget of €250 million per year, supports the distribution of food products to schoolchildren across the EU.⁷³
- The Wine Sector Support Scheme, with an annual budget of around €1,1 billion spends approximately 20% of these funds on promotion measures aimed at stimulating demand.⁷⁴
- The support scheme for the fruit and vegetables sector will co-finance actions by producer organisations to increase the “consumption of the products of the fruit and vegetables sectors”.⁷⁵
- Similarly, activities on “promotion and marketing” will be co-financed by the CAP for certain other sectors.⁷⁶
- Although using a separate budget, the Promotion of EU Farm Products Policy, with an annual budget of €200 million by 2020, supports promotion activities designed to create market opportunities for farmers and the wider food industry.⁷⁷

In this light, it is worth noting that funding to reinvigorate public procurement policies is money spent within the food system and which can bring new dynamism to food supply chains. It also fits with an increasingly widespread vision of agricultural policy as promoting a ‘nutrition-sensitive’ form of agriculture.⁷⁸

The CAP could also help small-scale producers to organise in a way to make better use of public tender

⁷¹ European Commission, New Cohesion Policy

⁷² European Commission, COM/2017/0713 final, The Future of Food and Farming

⁷³ European Commission, School fruit, vegetables and milk scheme

⁷⁴ European Commission. Wine CMO : Financial execution of the national support programme 2014-2018

⁷⁵ European Commission, COM/2018/392 final, Proposal CAP Strategic Plans Regulation, Article 42

⁷⁶ European Commission, COM/2018/392 final, Proposal CAP Strategic Plans Regulation, Article 59

⁷⁷ European Commission. Promotion of EU farm products

⁷⁸ UN FAO Toolkit on nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems & Key recommendations for improving nutrition through agriculture and food systems

procedures. The new national CAP Strategic Plans can contribute to a territorial policy around urban areas that could attract farmers to produce for local markets, improving access both to public buyers and other networks of distribution and retail.

2. Create an integrated European Sustainable Public Food Procurement guide. The brief exposition in section two of this discussion paper highlights some of the gaps in today's EU framework for strategic and sustainable public food procurement. The introduction of coherent, practical and user-friendly guidelines for sustainable public food procurement that integrates at least the environmental, health, social, local, animal welfare, fair trade, quality and cultural aspects of food sustainability could be considered. This integrated Sustainable Public Food Procurement (SPFP) guide could serve to support contracting authorities in drawing-up procurement tenders.

3. Establish an EU network of food procurement professionals. As the case studies indicate, there is significant dynamism in the public procurement world and many different experiments are being conducted in different locations in Europe. To allow a better and more structured exchange of knowledge and experience, the Commission could consider creating and funding a transnational network of public procurement professionals with the explicit aim to accelerate the roll-out of innovative sustainable food procurement practices. Such a network would also contribute to an integrated vision for sustainable public food procurement, to help elevate the role of public procurement officer as a creative and strategic function and help further professionalise their activities.⁷⁹

4. Advance the introduction and use of sustainable healthy dietary guidelines. As already observed, while all EU countries have nutritional guidelines, and while bringing eating patterns closer to such guidelines would involve environmental co-benefits, only a few countries have explicitly included environmental dimensions. As part of the Farm to Fork process, the Commission could consider facilitating the creation and use of sustainable dietary guidelines. Guiding principles for sustainable healthy diets have already been produced jointly by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and World Health Organization (WHO).⁸⁰

In this regard, the EAT-Lancet Commission study provides a comprehensive and detailed proposal on what balance of food groups a diet that is both healthy for people and planet could be based.⁸¹ An evidence-based sustainable dietary guideline would set the parameters for establishing varied, tasty, nutritionally balanced and ecologically responsible menus.

5. Support the elaboration of new sustainability standards. As part of a process of continuous improvement and enhancement of the Sustainable Public Food Procurement guide referred to above, new sustainability standards designed for easy integration into procurement tenders could be considered. Areas where further development may be needed include social obligations, animal welfare standards, both for land and marine animals, and criteria on diversity and the use of direct and or local supply chains.

⁷⁹ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2017/1805 of 3 October 2017 on the professionalisation of public procurement - Building an architecture for the professionalisation of public procurement.

⁸⁰ FAO and WHO (2019) Sustainable healthy diets – Guiding principles

⁸¹ Willett et al. (2019) Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT–Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems. The Lancet

6. Launch a process to further update the Public Procurement Directives. A more effective implementation of the Farm to Fork Strategy may warrant an update of the Public Procurement Directives. In this light, different aspects could be considered as part of the modernisation, including making sure that cost can no longer be the only consideration when awarding public contracts, making mandatory the application of elements from the new Sustainable Public Food Procurement (SPFP) guide and opening a discussion on ways and conditions which allow the inclusion of locality criteria in tenders.



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