



Preventing food waste, promoting Circular Economy: Commission adopts common methodology to measure food waste across the EU

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Each year around 20% of food produced in the EU is lost or wasted, causing unacceptable social, environmental and economic harm. EU is committed to solving this problem and putting its food system onto a sustainable path. To be able to take effective action, we need more data on food waste than we currently have.

In order to address this knowledge gap, the Commission has adopted a Delegated Act laying down a common food waste measurement methodology to support Member States in quantifying food waste at each stage of the food supply chain. Based on a common definition of food waste, the methodology will ensure coherent monitoring of food waste levels across the EU.

Preventing food waste was identified as one of priority areas in the Circular Economy Action Plan adopted by the Commission in December 2015. Furthermore, food waste is one of ten major indicators of the [Circular Economy Monitoring Framework](#), telling us how advanced we are in the transition from linear "make-use-dispose" to circularity, where loss of resources is minimised.

Frans **Timmermans**, First Vice-President, said: *"Food waste is unacceptable in a world where millions still suffer from hunger and where our natural resources, which make human life and wellbeing possible, are becoming increasingly scarce. That is why we have defined food waste prevention as a key priority in building a circular economy and a sustainable society. To deliver change, we have to be able to properly measure food waste. I am pleased to see the EU developing the first ever comprehensive food waste measurement methodology and blazing the trail globally."*

Jyrki **Katainen**, Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, in charge of Health and Food Safety, said today in a keynote address to the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste: *"The business case for food waste prevention is convincing. Research shows a 14:1 return on investment for companies which integrated reduction of food loss and waste in their operations. I count on the active participation of food business operators to measure, report and act on food waste levels. In food waste, as in life, what gets measured, gets managed. To be able to implement effective national food waste prevention programmes and promote circularity in the food chain, we need to know where, what, how much and why we are losing food resources. We are making the decisive step to get this knowledge."*

Thanks to the [revised EU waste legislation](#), adopted in May 2018 as part of the [Circular Economy Action Plan](#), specific measures on food waste prevention have been introduced which will provide the EU with new and consistent data on food waste levels. The new waste legislation requires Member States to implement national food waste prevention programmes and, importantly to reduce food waste at each stage of the supply chain, monitor and report on food waste levels.

The EU's action plan to fight food waste aims to help achieve the global [Sustainable Development Goal Target 12.3](#) to halve per capita food waste at the retail and consumer level by 2030, and reduce food losses along the food production and supply chain.

While the Delegated Act defines what needs to be measured as food waste at each stage of the food supply chain and how this should be carried out, it provides flexibility as to how data collection should be carried out at national level. With support of the [EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste](#) and other relevant expert groups, the Commission will closely follow the implementation of the Delegated Act, organizing regular exchanges with Member States in order to facilitate practical implementation and share learning. Based on the methodology, Member States are expected to put in place a monitoring framework with 2020 as the first reporting year in order to provide the first new data on food waste levels to the Commission by mid-2022. The EU reporting framework will help standardize reporting of food waste levels by business and contribute to global monitoring of SDG Target 12.3.

Next steps

The Delegated Act is subject to scrutiny by co-legislators and will be sent to the Parliament and the Council by the end of July.

More information:

- [Text of the Delegated Act](#)
- [CEAP](#)
- [CE Monitoring Framework](#)
- [Questions & Answers: The fight against Food waste: Where are we now?](#)

For further information on EU action to fight food waste and on food waste measurement, please see:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/food_waste_en

https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/food_waste/eu_actions/food-waste-measurement_en

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