

Consultation on the European Child Guarantee

Feedback from the European Food Banks Federation (FEBA)

The Political Guidelines of President Ursula von der Leyen announced the adoption of a Child Guarantee to help ensuring that every child in Europe at risk of poverty or social exclusion has access to the “most basic of rights like health care and education” and also nutrition.

In 2018 in the European Union 33 million people were not able to afford a quality meal every second day (Eurostat, 2018). The daily activity of Food Banks belonging to the **European Food Banks Federation (FEBA) contributes to food insecurity reduction through food waste prevention**. Indeed, Food Banks recover and collect safe and good food from the food supply chain that otherwise would become food waste. The food is then sorted, stocked and redistributed to a network of affiliated charitable organizations – such as food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, communities, etc. – that help people in need. In 2019 FEBA network redistributed 768,000 tons of food to 45,283 charities assisting 9.5 million deprived people in Europe.

The COVID-19 has brought not only grief and suffering but also a new food emergency where children are hit hard. In a survey conducted among European Food Banks of the FEBA network in September 2020, European Food Banks are recording an **increased food demand of around 30%**¹. Furthermore, most of the respondents declared that their affiliated charities are experiencing a sharp increase in the number of final beneficiaries. The social and economic consequences are emerging, and these results can be clear warning signals. There is a **new kind of poverty**: almost 90% of the respondents declared that these new poor are people who have lost the job due to the COVID-19, more than **60% declared that they are families with children who relied mainly on school meals** and elderly people living alone².

As underlined by the crisis generated by COVID-19, children in need are more likely to suffer from undernutrition, micronutrient-related malnutrition and overweight, obesity and diet-

¹ FEBA, [European Food Banks today : commitment, creativity, and openness to change](#), September 2020.

² FEBA, [European Food Banks today : commitment, creativity, and openness to change](#), September 2020.

related non-communicable diseases. The proportion of children living in households lacking one meal with meat, chicken, or fish (or vegetarian equivalent) at least once a day is 21.4% in Hungary and 40% in Bulgaria³.

In this context, the European Food Banks Federation welcomes the European Child Guarantee to foster a policy framework at EU level, as well as a set of service areas to which Member States should provide or strengthen the access for children in need.

Food redistribution, which is the best destination when surplus food occurs since it ensures the highest value use of edible food resources,⁴ is proven to be the most effective approach not only to contribute to food insecurity and manage surplus food but especially for preventing food losses and waste at source and shifting from a linear to a circular economy.

Not only does the activity of Food Banks belonging to the European Food Banks Federation address the immediate challenge of providing food and promoting food security, it provides huge benefits to wider society, the environment, the economy, and food chain resilience. Food redistribution is good for people and the planet, it is aligned with many EU policies such as the Circular Economy Package and the Farm to Fork Strategy. It provides a multitude of support to individuals by not just providing food assistance but providing community-based food programs through local charities. Through the collaboration with charities, it accesses a wide network of people who are often hidden such as children. It introduces more food into the food chain, increasing food chain resilience during times of shocks and crises.

The European Food Banks Federations is willing to give its strong and active contribution to collaborate with the European Commission and all the organizations and stakeholders involved to better face this challenge in the upcoming years to support the younger generations.

To have more information on the current context and the impact of COVID-19 on European Food Banks, please learn more on FEBA Report [European Food Banks today: commitment, creativity, and openness to change](#) published on the occasion of the 1st International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (29 September 2020).

³ European Commission, Understanding the housing conditions experienced by children in the EU, March 2020.

⁴ European Commission, [EU guidelines on food donation](#), 2017/C 361/01, 25 October 2017.



About FEBA

The European Food Banks Federation (FEBA) is a European non-profit organization and works in collaboration with 24 Full Members and 5 Associate Members in European countries. For 35 years, FEBA mission has consisted in representing its membership at European and international level, supporting, and strengthening Food Banks in Europe by providing training, sharing best practice and knowledge, and developing partnerships, and fostering the creation of new Food Banks. FEBA brings together 430 Food Banks which are committed to fight against food waste and to feed the most deprived. Our members provide 4.2 million meals each day to 9.5 million most deprived people through 45,283 charitable organizations thanks to the professionalism of 32,280 co-workers (84% volunteers). In addition to surplus food from the food supply chain, FEBA members also redistribute food from the Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived (FEAD) and the Fruits and Vegetables withdrawal scheme, as well as from individual donations.

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