



24 February 2022

Mandate of the sub-group established under the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste to support EU activities to facilitate food donation

1. Background

As provided for in the Terms of Reference of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste (FLW)¹ and its Rules of Procedure, the Chair of the Platform may set up sub-groups for the purpose of examining specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the Platform. At the inaugural meeting of the EU Platform on FLW under its second mandate (2022-2026), it was agreed that a subgroup would be established in order to support the work of the Commission and all Platform members in relation to food donation and food waste prevention.

Reducing food waste is one of the objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy², which will also contribute to achieving a circular economy. Redistribution of surplus food for human consumption, in particular through food donation, where safe to do so, ensures the highest value use of edible food resources while preventing food waste, and also has an important social dimension.

In the Platform's first mandate, the sub-group on food donation supported the Commission in the preparation of [EU food donation guidelines](#) (adopted in 2017 as part of the 2015 Circular Economy Action Plan) and contributed to the implementation of an EU Pilot Project on food redistribution and its related deliverables³. The sub-group supported Platform members in sharing best practices, information and learning related to the recovery and redistribution of surplus food, in line with the waste hierarchy. Feedback from Platform members, collected at the end of its first mandate⁴ confirmed the importance of maintaining this sub-group under the new mandate of the expert group (2022-2026).

¹<https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/core/api/front/expertGroupAdditionalInfo/41511/download>

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0381>

³ [Mapping and analysis of existing regulatory and policy measures impacting food redistribution from EU Member States; Redistribution of surplus food: examples of practices in the Member States](#)

⁴ Ahead of the re-establishment of the Platform for a new mandate, members were asked to reply to a survey on the role and the operations of the expert group (48 contributions received). When asked about the relevance of the Food donation subgroup, more than 3/4 of the respondents considered it very important (54.17%) or important (22.92%).

2. Objectives

The sub-group on food donation will support the work of the Commission and members of the EU Platform on FLW to facilitate safe food donation practices, ensuring that surplus food arising in the food supply chain is made available, as a priority, for human consumption, in line with the waste hierarchy⁵.

More specifically, the group aims to:

- 1) identify practices, guidelines and rules existing in Member States in relation to food donation for sharing with Platform members (*e.g.* freezing of meat at retail level for food donation, redistribution of food past the ‘best before’ date, traceability *etc.*);
- 2) identify and assess both the barriers to food donation and opportunities to facilitate this practice as well as priority areas for action (including both regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives);
- 3) develop evidence-based best practice to support transfer of experience and knowledge.

3. Principal tasks:

- 3.1. Support the Commission in identifying and prioritising EU actions to facilitate safe food donation practices and overcome identified barriers (including possible future revision of the EU food donation guidelines).
- 3.2. Support all members in identifying and implementing appropriate actions to facilitate safe food donation practices (at national, regional and local levels) and overcome identified barriers in line with EU actions.
- 3.3. Monitor implementation of the [recommendations for action](#)⁶ of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste as regards food donation.
- 3.4. Provide best practice guidance for implementation of effective food donation strategies and initiatives, including provision of incentives for application of the waste hierarchy and information activities to encourage food business operators to donate food.
- 3.5. Information sharing on food donation activities in Member States: provide information and input on national/sectorial guidelines, recent studies and reports on food redistribution activities in view of their sharing with Platform members and publication on the [European Food Loss and Waste Prevention Hub](#).

4. Participants:

Based on interest expressed by Platform members in their applications and via the survey, the Commission invites the following Platform members to participate in the work of the sub-group on food donation:

Public entities (2): Food and Agriculture Organisation, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

⁵ as laid down in the [revised Waste Framework Directive](#) (articles 4 and 9).

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2021-05/fs_eu-actions_action_platform_key-rcmnd_en.pdf

Member States (12): Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia.

Private sector organisations (13): BOROUME, Euro Commerce, Euro Coop, Europatat, FEBA - European Food Banks Federation, FoodCloud, FoodServiceEurope, HFBA - Hungarian Food Bank Association, HOTREC, LASTMINUTEMARKET, Les Restaurants Du Cœur, Too Good To Go, WUWM - World Union of Wholesale Markets.

Taking into account the field of activity of this sub-group and its relevance for all members represented in the EU Platform, the participation might be extended on a case-by-case basis to other Platform members, as well as ad hoc experts⁷, if needed.

5. Co-chairs of meetings

In line with the Platform's Terms of Reference, '*sub-group meetings may be co-chaired by DG SANTE and Platform members, as appointed by DG SANTE based on their expertise and expressed interest to coordinate work related to their field of expertise.*' Co-chairs appointed from among the Platform membership may request to hold meetings of their respective sub-groups, propose agenda items and topics for discussion. Co-chairing will be done through rotation, for those members who have expressed an interest in acting as co-chair in their application form. Expressions of interest in co-chairing may be updated during the course of the Platform's mandate.

The Commission will update the **co-chairing calendar** based on the interest expressed by members.

Organisation	Year
European Food Banks Federation	2022
Les Restaurants du Cœur	2023
Denmark	2024
WUWM - World Union of Wholesale Markets	2025
Food and Agriculture Organisation	2026

6. Overall timeline and working procedures:

The sub-group on food donation will support the Platform's work in this area for the duration of its mandate (ie until end 2026).

The sub-group is expected to meet twice yearly (in addition to the Platform's plenary meetings) and will also provide comments and input on written documents related to the tasks outlined in section 3.

The working language for sub-group meetings will be English.

⁷ Terms of Reference EU Platform on FLW, <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/core/api/front/expertGroupAdditionalInfo/41511/download>