Exploring the Implementation of a Measurement Standard in contract catering

Successes and Challenges

Objectives

Objective: Implementing a measurement standard that aligns with UNEP and EU methodologies.
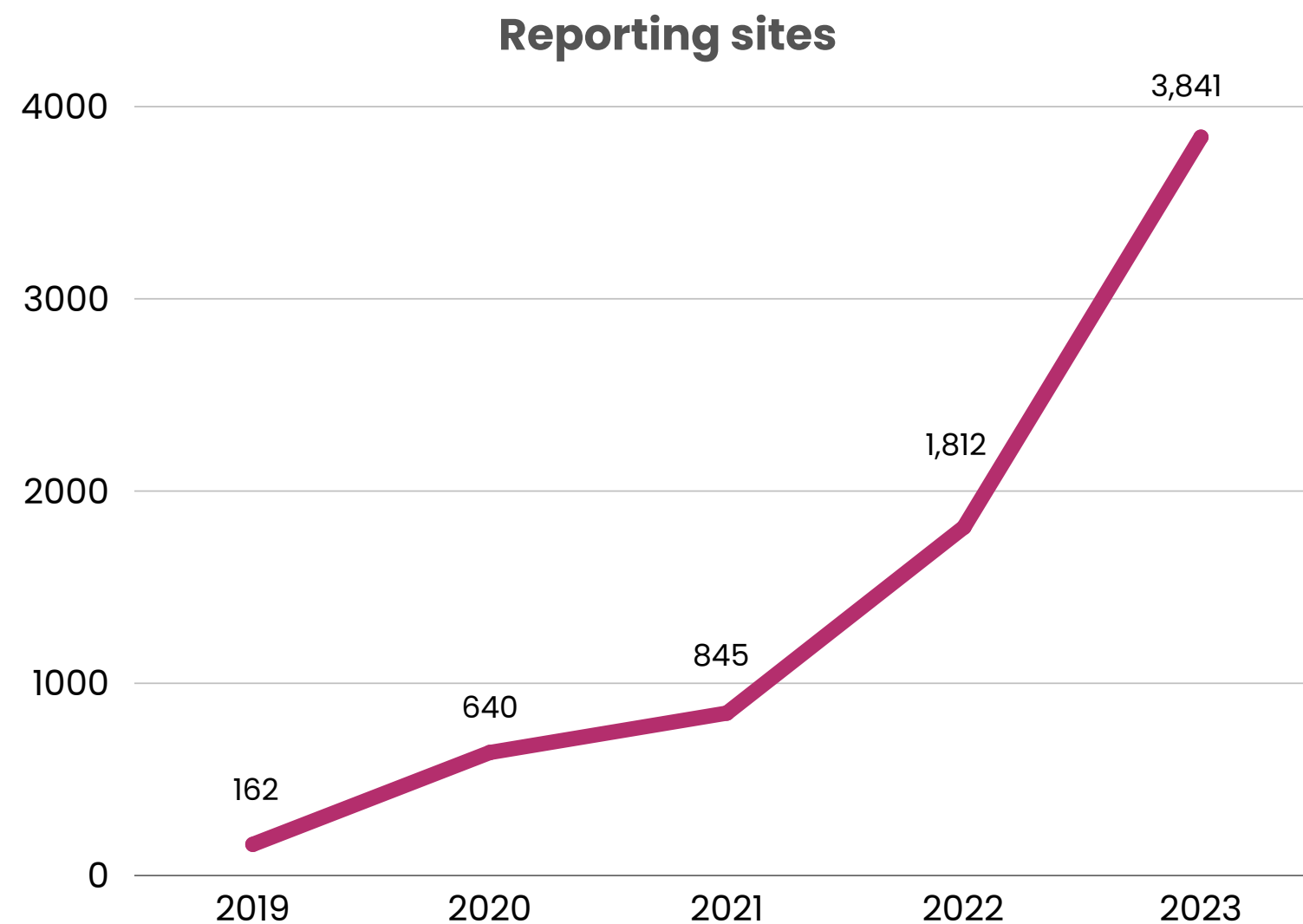
- Implement a standardized food waste reporting for 50% (25,000) of IFWC Members' sites in Europe

- Attain a 50% reduction in food waste by 2025

- Produce a reliable and comprehensive report on food waste in the HaFS sector

- Identify the best-performing site and aid in establishing reduction goals

INTERNATIONAL
FOOD
WASTE
COALITION

Achievements

Reporting Sites

Reporting now covers nearly 4,000 sites spanning across 16 countries, which is twice the number from 2022 and correspond to 11% of IFWC European sites
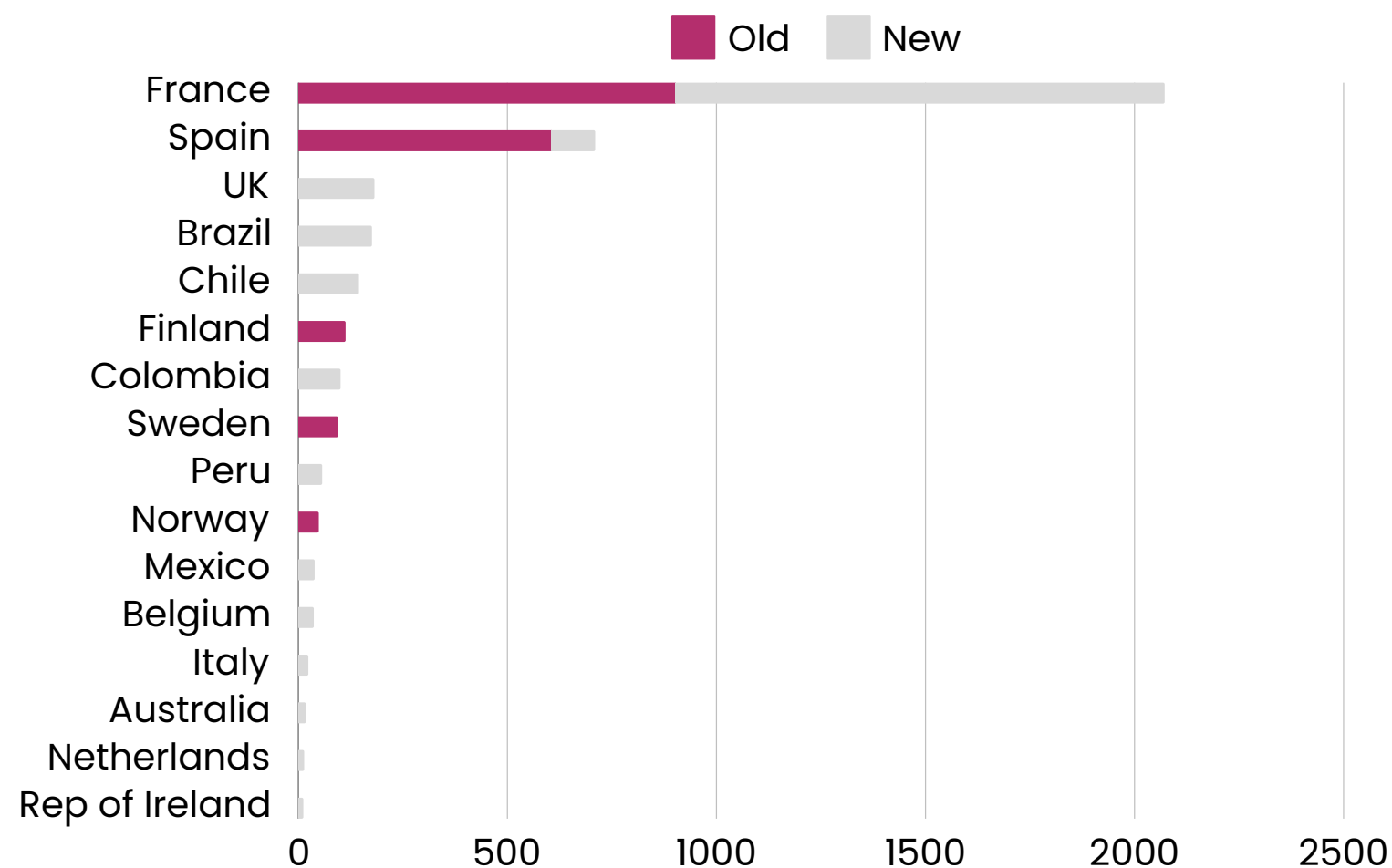
Reporting sites

- The number of sites monitoring and reporting compliant food waste data is doubling each year, reaching 43841 sites in 2023.

- Europe is at the forefront, hosting 85% of these sites, while the majority of the remaining 15% are located in the rest of the world

- In 2023, around two-thirds of all sites are providing partial data sets, often missing information on preparation waste.

Geographic Spread

Although IFWC food waste reporting originated in Europe, it is quickly spreading to other regions, such as South America.
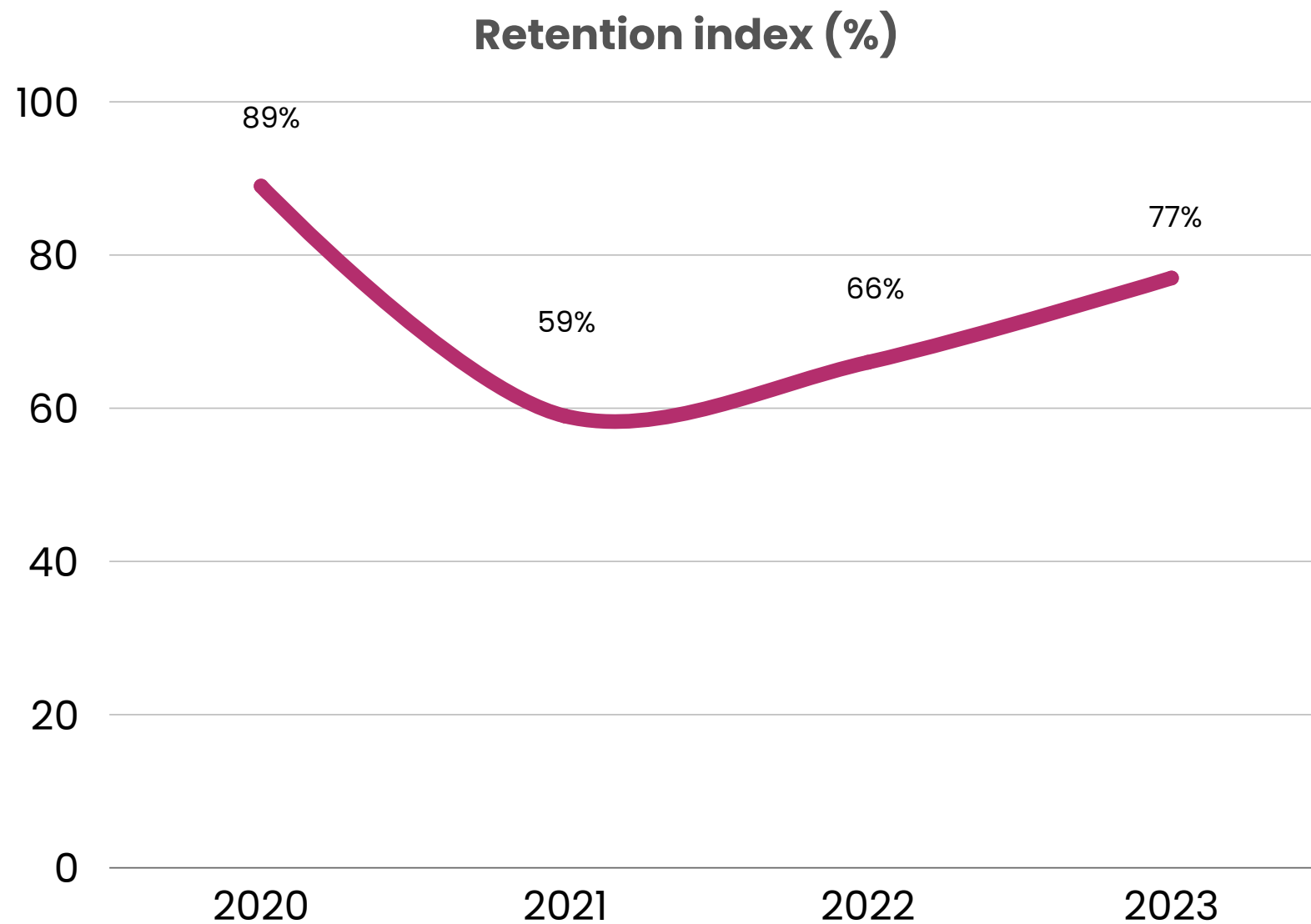
Reporting sites per countries in 2023

- France remains overrepresented at 50%, with Spain following at 20% and the UK at 5%. However, the geographical distribution is quickly expanding in both Europe and South America.

- Data collection has commenced in 12 new countries across Europe and South America.

- Data from North America could not adhere to the IFWC reporting methodology in 2023 and will be included starting from 2024.
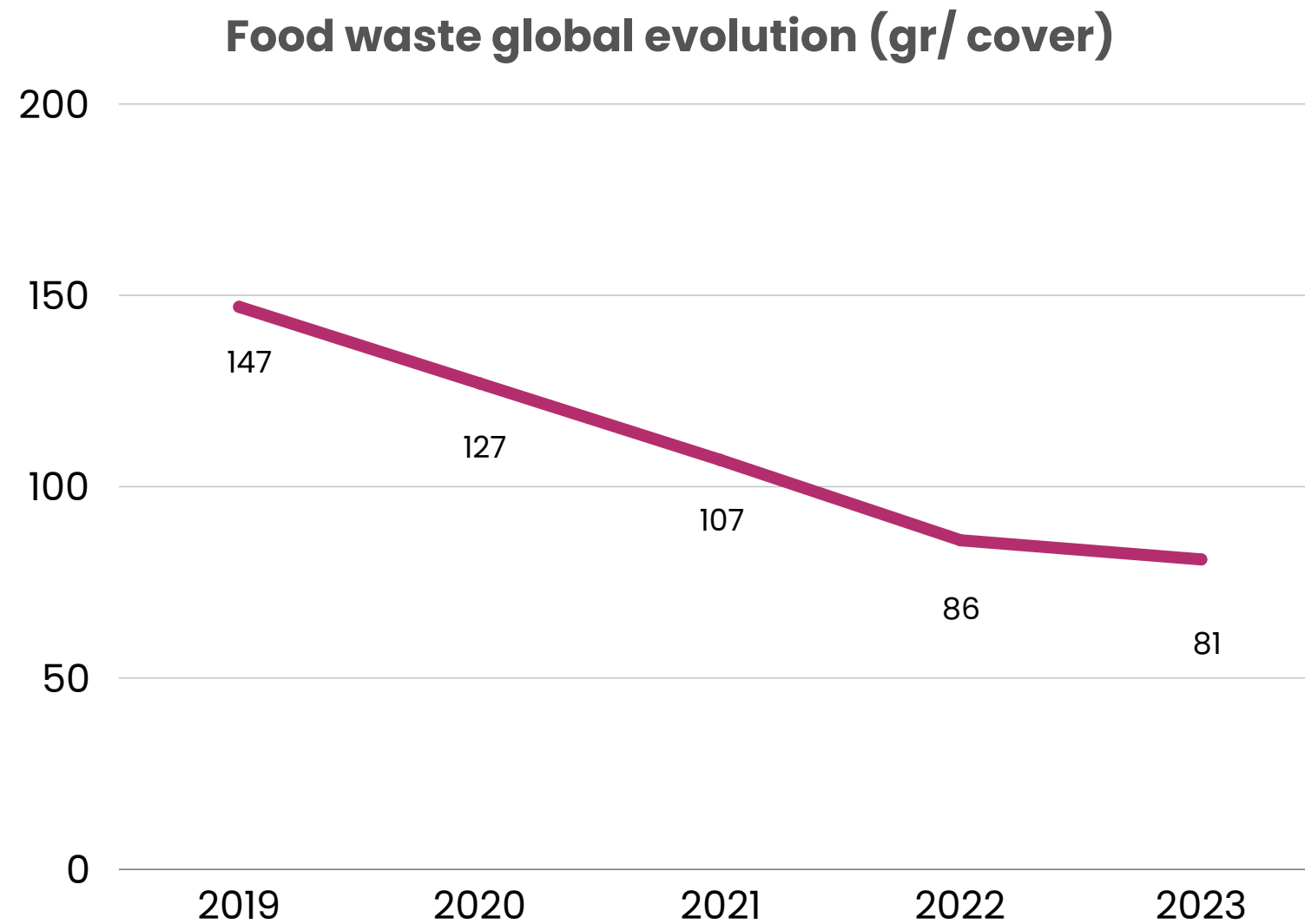
Retention Index

The retention index reached an impressive 80%, indicating that sites are likely to persist in measuring food waste once they begin.

Retention index (%)

- The retention index calculates the proportion of sites that consistently maintain measurement and reporting practices once they are implemented throughout the year.

- An 80% retention index indicates that food waste monitoring becomes quickly integrated into the site's routine once introduced.

- The remaining 20% of sites adopt more casual practices, particularly during the post-pandemic period (2020–2022) when they encountered resource constraints.
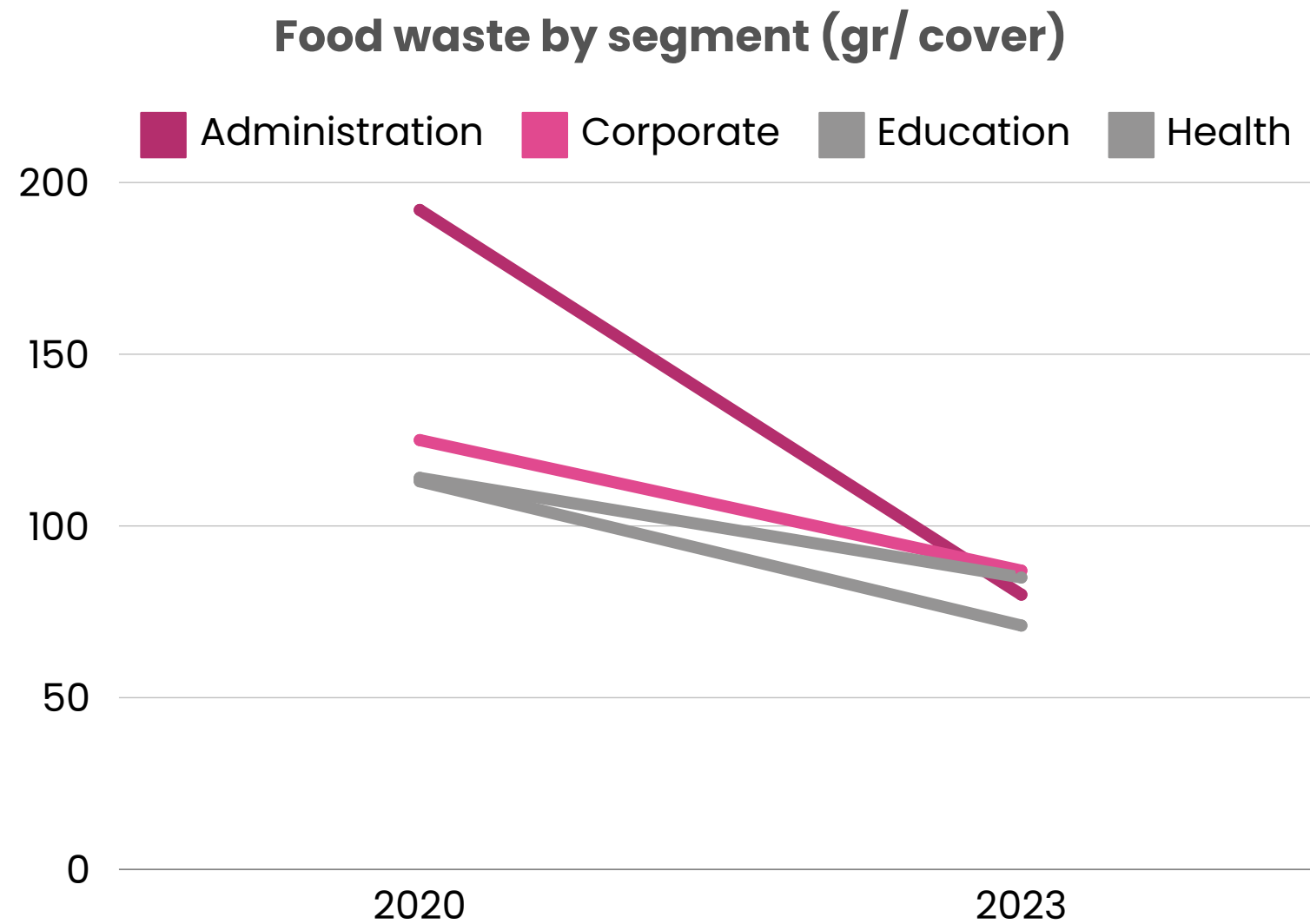
Food Waste - Global

An impressive ongoing reduction rate in food waste to 81 gr/cover, with a recent slow down, prompting the need for increased efforts.

Food waste global evolution (gr/ cover)

- The reduction in food waste has consistently decreased by 15% between 2019 and 2022, showcasing the site's capacity to efficiently reduce waste through straightforward actions.

- The decrease in the rate of food waste reduction has slowed down to 5% last year, indicating that further progress will demand increased and more robust efforts.

Food Waste - Segment

Effective food waste reduction practices are implemented across all contract catering segments.

Food waste by segment (gr/ cover)

- Since 2020, all sectors have displayed encouraging trends in reducing food waste.

- Particularly noteworthy is the significant decrease in food waste within the education and administration sectors (prisons, military, state administration).

- This can be attributed to these sectors' enhanced ability to predict guest numbers accurately and adjust their food preparations accordingly. The increasing use of predictive A.I tools and pre-reservation apps is expected to further bolster this positive trend in the near future.

Food Waste Reduction

A 25% reduction in food waste over the past five years when compared to a baseline.

Food waste reduction (%)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Food waste (gr/cover)	147	127	107	86	81
Baseline (gr/cover) - cumulative	155	130	117	108	108
Food waste reduction (%)	5%	2%	9%	20%	25%

Comments on the baseline

- The baseline comprises the initial data point (a complete business week of data collection) for sites entering the database.

- **Pros:** Accurately measures food waste reduction by comparing the baseline with the latest dataset.

- **Cons**: The baseline fluctuates as new sites with lower food waste values join the database, potentially leading to an underestimation of the food waste reduction indicator.

Learnings & Challenges

Learnings

Positive momentum is seen as food waste reduction becomes fully integrated into the strategies of contract caterers.

- Positive momentum is building up.

- Food waste reduction stands as a crucial pillar for large-scale caterers.

- The top-down approach, supported by incentives, is achieving significant success with a growth of over 100% in sites annually.

- Implementing simple actions like pre-ordering and portion control is yielding immediate and positive outcomes.

Challenges

Initial gains have been achieved effortlessly, yet additional effort will be required to further decrease food waste.

- Engaging sites remains a challenge.

    - Economic benefits at the site level are still modest.

    - Limited staff/resources and constraints on investments (e.g., smart devices) are slowing down the adoption.

- Achieving unity in metrics (e.g., gr/cover) is challenging as data on the number of covers is not readily available.

- Simple actions lead to quick progress, but further reductions will demand increased effort.

- Establishing a baseline is still a complex task.