



MEETING OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON FOOD LOSSES AND FOOD WASTE
EU support to Member States to improve measurement of food waste and help implement food
waste prevention programmes – Single Market Program 2024
30 April 2024, 11:00 – 12:30 CET
Chaired by A. Alvizou, Deputy HoU, SANTE E1

1. Introduction by the Chair

The chair opened the meeting, highlighting that the grants for Member States under the Single Market Program (SMP) have been available since 2022 and the SMP work programme 2024-2027 of the Single Market Program had been [published](#). The scope of grants for 2024 has been extended to actions linked to the implementation of food waste prevention programs, in addition to food loss and waste monitoring actions funded in previous years. These projects will be co-funded by the Commission at a 50% funding rate (the other half would be covered by Member States).

2. Presentation of the 2024 Grants to support Member States by DG SANTE and European Health and Digital Executive Agency - HaDEA and exchange with participants.

DG SANTE presented the extended scope of the EU grant for national competent authorities, which has a total budget of € 2 million. The scope of the projects for 2024 and the following years has been expanded and has gone beyond food waste monitoring. Thus, project proposals could cover one or several of the following topics: monitoring of food waste levels; development and /or implementation of actions foreseen in food waste prevention programmes (new or ongoing); evaluation of the effectiveness of food waste prevention initiatives and their related impacts.

Member States will be asked to designate by 28 May 2024 the national competent authorities that would receive the official invitation to apply. Given the scope of the grants, the designated national competent authorities should have competences relating to food waste monitoring and reporting or those implementing actions as part of food waste prevention programmes.

HaDEA informed that the national competent authorities, once designated, will be invited on 18 June to submit a proposal before 31 October 2024. The invitation will be sent to designated competent authorities by email and will contain a link to the [Funding and Tenders Portal](#), through which applicants can submit their project proposal. Following the submission of the proposals, the evaluation period will last until January 2025. In February 2025, the competent authorities will receive a letter with the evaluation result. In case of a positive evaluation of the project, the relevant national competent authorities will need to prepare the grant agreement (based on a model agreement), including information regarding financial and legal entity data. **HaDEA** will organise an information session about the features of the call soon after sending the invitations, in June 2024.

Croatia asked about the selection criteria for the projects and whether the eligible costs can support national schemes for third beneficiaries such as NGOs or food business operators. **HaDEA** replied that the eligibility criteria will stay the same as in the previous calls, namely: relevance, quality and impact. Relevance criteria are linked to the objectives, the planning priorities, contribution to the EU strategic context. Quality criteria relate to how the project has been designed, technical qualities, and how potential risks are addressed. Impact criteria are

linked to the dissemination strategy, the sustainability, and the results. Further information on the criteria will be provided during the information session to be organised towards the end of June by HaDEA. **HaDEA** highlighted that after the submission of the projects, the designated national competent authorities will receive feedback on their proposals in the evaluation report and may be asked to improve the proposal before signing the grant agreement. **HaDEA** further explained that financial support is directed only to participants and cannot be used to transfer money as grants for third parties.

Belgium inquired whether the projects must start after mid-May 2025. **HaDEA** replied that projects normally start on the 1st day of the month after the signature of the grant agreement, however, there will be flexibility. The grant agreement can also be signed earlier than the grant agreement deadline (30 June 2025) if all project documentation has been prepared. **DG SANTE** inquired whether the project proposals could be a part of bigger projects run by Member States. **HaDEA** replied that this was possible, but the project tasks should be clearly described in the proposal to ensure that the principle of no double funding is respected.

Denmark requested further details on the application process. **HaDEA** replied that the designated national competent authorities will need to indicate the project tasks organised as work packages, milestones and deliverables in the Funding and Tenders Portal (IT submission system). The IT system allows national competent authorities to ask questions directly and receive answers from HaDEA. Once the grant agreement is signed, the whole history of communication within the project will be visible on the portal. The IT system also allows national competent authorities to submit a project, edit or withdraw it before the deadline for applications.

3. Experiences of previous grant beneficiaries, presentations by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and the National Food Chain Safety Office of Hungary

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency shared information about their SWEFOODWASTE - New food waste data for reference year 2022 from the manufacturing sector and from the retail and distribution sector in Sweden.

Hungary received two EU grants, in 2022 and in 2023, through which the country established a reporting system on household food waste, and it extended this system to the hospitality and food services sector. Hungary explained that it was easier to submit project proposals for the SMP grants than for other EU funding programmes (e.g. LIFE Programme or INTERREG).

Denmark asked about the number of Member States which had applied in the past. **HaDEA** replied that all Member States that had applied previously had received funding in the past: in 2022, 5 projects were funded (Hungary, Croatia, the Netherlands, Italy, Sweden) summing a total of €507,258 (out of €1.5 million total budget available) while in 2023 3 projects (Italy, Belgium, Hungary) were funded, summing a total of approximately €300k (out of €600k total budget available).

France inquired how many projects per country can be co-financed and whether there would be a money limit per Member State. **HaDEA** replied that normally there was one project per designated national competent authority. **Hungary** asked whether the grants would be awarded annually until 2027. **DG SANTE** replied that this would be the case, however the Commission would decide on the budget to be allocated to the grants on an annual basis. The budgets for 2024 and 2025 (€ 2 million per year) are already set in the [Annex III](#) to the Commission Implementing Decision (C(2023)8926)).

4. Conclusions

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking all participants for their questions and interest in the grants. She encouraged all Member States to reply to the letter [sent by DG SANTE on 7 May, with a deadline to reply by 28 May] and designate the national competent authorities, explaining

that a reply does not oblige Member States to apply for the grants. In closing, the Chair invited all Member States to prepare their budgets and projects proposals for the launch of the invitation to apply for the grants (to be sent on 18 June).