Basic information

2021/2205(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
School's scheme for fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products foreseen by the Common Market Organisation Regulation **Subject** 3.10.03 Marketing and trade of agricultural products and livestock 3.10.05.02 Milk and dairy products 3.10.06.01 Fruit, citrus fruits 3.10.06.02 Vegetables 4.20 Public health 4.40.03 Primary and secondary school, European Schools, early childhood	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	AVRAM Carmen (S&D)	09/09/2021
	Shadow rapporteur DE MEO Salvatore (EPP) MITUȚA Alin (Renew) WIENER Sarah (Greens /EFA) ILČIĆ Ladislav (ECR) LEBRETON Gilles (ID) HAZEKAMP Anja (The Left)	

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Health and Food Safety	KYRIAKIDES Stella

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
25/11/2021	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/03/2023	Vote in committee		
30/03/2023	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0096/2023	Summary
08/05/2023	Debate in Parliament		

09/05/2023	Decision by Parliament	T9-0135/2023	Summary
09/05/2023	Results of vote in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2021/2205(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Implementation
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AGRI/9/07480

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE734.306	08/09/2022	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE736.484	21/10/2022	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0096/2023	30/03/2023	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0135/2023	09/05/2023	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2023)377	29/08/2023	

Meetings with interest representatives published in line with the Rules of Procedure

Rapporteurs, Shadow Rapporteurs and Committee Chairs

Transparency

Name	Role	Committee	Date	Interest representatives
DE MEO Salvatore	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	10/10/2022	Copa-Cogeca
MITUȚA Alin	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	07/10/2022	European Vegetarian Union
TARABELLA Marc	Rapporteur	AGRI	29/09/2022	Coldiretti
DE MEO Salvatore	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	29/09/2022	Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori
TARABELLA Marc	Rapporteur	AGRI	28/09/2022	Eurogroup for animals

TARABELLA Marc	Rapporteur	AGRI	28/09/2022	European Vegetarian Union
DE MEO Salvatore	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	28/09/2022	European Vegetarian Union
DE MEO Salvatore	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	28/09/2022	Confederazione Nazionale Coldiretti
WIENER Sarah	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	28/09/2022	European Vegetarian Union
MITUȚA Alin	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	22/09/2022	AbbVie
MITUȚA Alin	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	21/09/2022	Eurogroup for Animals
WIENER Sarah	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	21/09/2022	Max Catering Österreich
WIENER Sarah	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	20/09/2022	CopaCogeca
WIENER Sarah	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	08/09/2022	Eurogroup for Animals
DE MEO Salvatore	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	06/09/2022	Copa-Cogeca
MITUȚA Alin	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	14/07/2022	Copa Cogeca
DE MEO Salvatore	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	12/07/2022	Copa-Cogeca
HAZEKAMP Anja	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	23/06/2022	Oatly AB

Other Members

Transparency		
Name	Date	Interest representatives
ROPĖ Bronis	26/04/2023	European Milk Board Kjartan Poulsen Silvia Däberitz

School's scheme for fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products foreseen by the Common Market Organisation Regulation

2021/2205(INI) - 09/05/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 534 votes to 57, with 23 abstentions, a resolution on the implementation of the school scheme for fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products under the Common Market Organisation Regulation.

Members recalled that a healthy lifestyle, including regular physical activity, is an increasingly important issue and should become a priority for society. Promoting a healthy diet is a preventive measure against disease and an investment in public health. One in three children in the EU between the ages of 6 and 9 is overweight or obese. Nutrition education is essential to stimulate healthy eating habits and should therefore be improved across the EU.

Parliament's main conclusions and recommendations are as follows:

Budget

Members regretted that in many cases the amount of EU funding received by Member States is **insufficient** to reach all target groups in all regions, to encourage all schools to participate and to achieve the desired impact. They regretted that some Member States do not make full use of the available budget, mainly due to the high number of administrative and bureaucratic procedures.

The Commission is invited to:

- **increase the total budget** for the school scheme for fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products and to consider a fair redistribution among the participants of the scheme, so as to reallocate amounts not used by some Member States to others that demonstrate their willingness and capability to use more than their indicative allocations;

- take into account the situation of children with severe food allergies, intolerances and other dietary restrictions and to allocate additional funds for the purchase of diversified alternative products within the scheme to ensure its inclusiveness;

- assess the possibility of synergies between the school scheme and existing healthy breakfast initiatives and regular school meal programmes, as well as other sources of funding;

- take steps to ensure that Member States guarantee a **minimum quality level** for the products covered by the scheme.

Parliament recalled that products that do not meet the quality criteria have a negative impact on the implementation of the scheme by contributing to **food waste**. The Commission and Member States are invited to evaluate the amount of food waste generated by the school scheme and to identify potential causes, clarify the issue of unused products and provide guidance on curbing food waste associated with the scheme.

Educational measures

Members recognised the importance of educational measures to raise awareness of the nutritional value of fruit and vegetables, in particular fresh, seasonal, local and regional produce, as well as milk and dairy products. They stressed that farm visits are an essential tool for children and young people to reconnect with agriculture and learn about sustainable farming practices and the key role that EU agriculture plays in ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food and its contribution to environmental protection. Teachers and other school staff as well as relevant competent authorities should be better involved in educational measures.

Member States are invited to ensure that at least **10% of the funds allocated** each year to the schools programme from EU and national assistance are used for educational measures.

Scope of application

Parliament stressed that the products for distribution should **originate in the EU and essentially be unprocessed**, where applicable organic, locally produced and, if possible, with European quality indications.

Members called on the Commission to introduce obligations to ensure that products meet **objective criteria**, including health, environmental, quality and ethical considerations, animal welfare, seasonality, variety, availability of local products, giving priority to short supply chains. They encourage the distribution of at least **25% organic products** in the EU's school programme.

Members insisted that products containing sugars, fats, salt or sweeteners should not be permitted within the scheme. Exemptions allowing for the distribution of certain types of products with limited sugar and fat content should be analysed, in view of their strict limitation or removal.

Members suggested placing self-service juicers in schools to allow the production of natural orange juice (without the addition of water).

Streamlining the administrative process

Parliament called on the Commission and Member States to **reduce the administrative burden** of implementing the scheme, especially in the context of distribution measures, in order to increase participation rates and the use of national budgets. It suggested **simplifying procurement procedures**, extending running times of the contracts and in doing reducing the administrative burden associated with inspections so that schools wishing to participate do not have to shoulder the administrative burden. The resolution stressed that procurement procedures should ensure that equal access and fair competition are in place so that large suppliers are not unfairly advantaged to the detriment of farmers participating in the scheme.

Members proposes to create a **forum** to encourage Member States to share best practices in order to identify successful ways to streamline the implementation of the scheme.

Lastly, the Commission should develop an enhanced **communication and publicity strategy** in order to boost the take-up of the scheme by schools in the Member States, especially those with low participation rates.

School's scheme for fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products foreseen by the Common Market Organisation Regulation

2021/2205(INI) - 30/03/2023 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted an own-initiative report by Carmen AVRAM (S&D, RO) on the implementation of the school scheme for fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products under the Common Market Organisation Regulation.

Members recalled that a healthy lifestyle, including regular physical activity, is an increasingly important issue and should become a priority for society. Promoting a healthy diet is a preventive measure against disease and an investment in public health. One in three children in the EU between the ages of 6 and 9 is overweight or obese. Nutrition education is essential to stimulate healthy eating habits and should therefore be improved across the EU.

The main conclusions and recommendations of the report are as follows:

Budget

Members regretted that in many cases the amount of EU funding received by Member States is **insufficient** to reach all target groups in all regions, to encourage all schools to participate and to achieve the desired impact. They regretted that some Member States do not make full use of the available budget, mainly due to the high number of administrative and bureaucratic procedures.

The Commission is invited to:

- **increase the total budget** for the school scheme for fruit, vegetables, milk and dairy products and to consider a fair redistribution among the participants of the scheme, so as to reallocate amounts not used by some Member States to others that demonstrate their willingness and capability to use more than their indicative allocations;

- take into account the situation of children with severe food allergies, intolerances and other dietary restrictions and to allocate additional funds for the purchase of diversified alternative products within the scheme to ensure its inclusiveness;

- assess the possibility of synergies between the school scheme and existing healthy breakfast initiatives and regular school meal programmes, as well as other sources of funding;

- take steps to ensure that Member States guarantee a **minimum quality level** for the products covered by the scheme.

Educational measures

The report noted the need to align the educational measures with the objectives of the Farm to Fork strategy and Europe's Beating Cancer Plan. It stressed that **farm visits** are a critical tool to enable children and adolescents to reconnect with agriculture, to familiarise themselves with sustainable farming practices. It underlined the need to better involve teachers and other school staff, relevant competent authorities in the educational measures and to promote the participation of other stakeholders in the educational measures.

Members called on the Commission and Member States to increase the use of digital tools and digital learning materials, building on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, to complement face-to-face educational activities where necessary. They invited Member States to ensure that at least **10% of the funds** allocated each year to the schools programme from EU and national support are allocated to educational measures.

Scope of application

The report stressed that the products for distribution should **originate in the EU** and essentially be unprocessed, where applicable organic, locally produced and, if possible, with European quality indications.

Members called on the Commission to introduce obligations to ensure that products meet objective criteria, including health, environmental, quality and ethical considerations, animal welfare, seasonality, variety, availability of local products, giving priority to short supply chains. They encourage the distribution of at **least 25% organic products** in the EU's school programme.

Members insisted that products containing sugars, fats, salt or sweeteners should not be permitted within the scheme. They suggested placing self-service juicers in schools to allow the production of natural orange juice (without the addition of water). While future implementation of the programme should focus on nurseries, kindergartens and primary schools, attention should also be paid to secondary schools.

Streamlining the administrative process

Members called on the Commission and Member States to **reduce the administrative burden** of implementing the scheme, especially in the context of distribution measures, in order to increase participation rates and the use of national budgets. They suggested simplifying procurement procedures, extending running times of the contracts and in doing reducing the administrative burden associated with inspections so that schools wishing to participate do not have to shoulder the administrative burden.

The report stressed that procurement procedures should ensure that equal access and fair competition are in place so that large suppliers are not unfairly advantaged to the detriment of farmers participating in the scheme. Member States should reduce and **simplify the level of documentation** required of the beneficiaries of the scheme in order to alleviate the administrative burden they face.

Members propose to create a forum to encourage Member States to share best practices in order to identify successful ways to streamline the implementation of the scheme.

Lastly, the Commission should develop an **enhanced communication and publicity strategy** in order to boost the take-up of the scheme by schools in the Member States, especially those with low participation rates.