



Press release

September 29, 2022

International Awareness Day on Food Loss and Waste

Food production and distribution systems are under increasing pressure. Climate change, crises such as the Covid19 pandemic, and conflicts have implications for food security in the EU and globally. Reducing food loss and waste is key for the transition to sustainable food systems. In addition, measures to prevent food waste help fight climate change, "rescue" nutrients in food for human consumption, while reducing costs for producers, companies and households.

In the European Union an estimated 20% of food produced is lost or wasted, while 36.2 million people cannot afford a quality meal (i.e. a meal containing meat, fish or a vegetarian protein alternative) every other day.

To address this issue, in 2015 the United Nations (UN) adopted the reduction of food waste as one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. Thus, through Sustainable Development Goal 12.3, it is requested to halve the per capita food waste produced, at retail and consumer level, and the reduction of food losses, throughout the food supply chain, including those from primary production. The European Union, following its commitment to sustainable development and waste prevention, adopted this goal and developed an analytical and coherent framework for measuring food waste and developing actions to reduce it.

With the ultimate goal of contributing to the achievement of the qualitative and quantitative goals that our country has set for the reduction of food waste, the LIFE-IP CEI-Greece project "Circular Economy Implementation in Greece" coordinated by the Ministry of Environment & Energy, under the scientific supervision of the Harokopio University of Athens, develops a series of actions that support and shape the effort to quantify and reduce food waste throughout the food supply chain: primary production, processing, retailing and other food distribution, consumption in catering services, and households.

The actions of the project in this area are:

- Research and specification of a **measurement methodology for food waste** appropriate for each distinct stage of the food supply chain.
- The **calculation of the amount of food waste in Greece**, at all stages of the food supply chain. For this calculation in households and retail sales, primary data from Harokopio University surveys were used. For the calculation of the quantities in the processing stage, data from the Electronic Waste Register were used, which were processed by the Ministry of Environment & Energy. Research is being planned for the next period to estimate the amounts of food losses and waste in primary production and catering.
- The development of a **Special Food Waste Prevention Program**, which specializes and complements the actions for the prevention of food waste generation of the National Waste Prevention Program (NWPP) 2021-2030, covering, in parallel with this, the country's obligation based on the revised Directive on waste (2028/851/EU), as well as the implementation of the MSW.8 measure "Action Plan for the Reduction of Food Waste" of the new National Plan for Waste Management (ESDA) 2020-2030.
- The creation of a **Forum for Food Waste Prevention** . The 1st Meeting of the Forum will take place in Crete, within the framework of the 2nd [International Conference RETASTE 2022, www.retaste.gr](https://www.retaste.gr) on the topic of measurement, management and prevention of waste in the field of hotel units.