

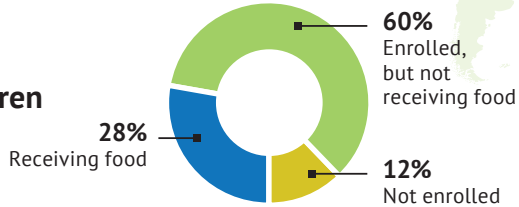


REPUBLIC OF Bulgaria

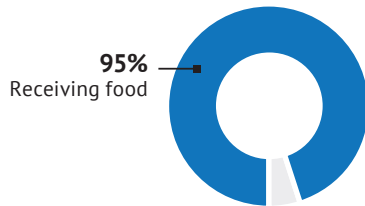


School Meal Coverage (2022-2023)

All Primary and Secondary School-age Children



Only Enrolled Primary Students



School Level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving Food
Preschool	261,014	215,666	194,614
Primary School	271,324	237,737	226,379
Secondary School	538,501	476,175	0
TOTAL	1,070,839	929,578	420,993



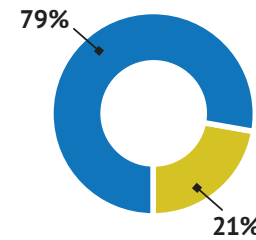
National Laws, Policies, and Standards

- National school feeding policy
- Nutrition**
- Health**
- Food safety**
- Smallholder farms**
- Agriculture (apart from smallholders)**
- Climate/environment policy**
- Private sector involvement
- Other policy**

The country had ...

- Inter-sectoral coordination committee for school feeding
- National system for monitoring school feeding**

Budget



Total: **USD 15,292,432**

- Government: 12,134,471
- International donors: n/a
- Private sector: n/a
- NGOs (domestic): n/a
- Other donors: 3,157,961*

* Includes funding from the EU school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme

- Line item in the national budget for school feeding**

School Foods and Beverages

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole grains | <input type="checkbox"/> Fish and shellfish | <input type="checkbox"/> Liquid oils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refined/milled grains | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep orange vegetables and tubers | <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-solid and solid fats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blended grain-based products | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> White roots and tubers | <input type="checkbox"/> Salt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legumes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fruits | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dairy milk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nuts and seeds | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dark green leafy vegetables | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yogurt drink |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eggs | <input type="checkbox"/> Cruciferous vegetables | <input type="checkbox"/> 100% fruit juice |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dairy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other vegetables | <input type="checkbox"/> Other fruit drink |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poultry and game meat | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep-fried foods | <input type="checkbox"/> Tea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red meat | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweets | <input type="checkbox"/> Other sugar-sweetened beverages |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Processed meat | | |

Prohibited food items

None

Food Sources

- Purchased (domestic)**
- Purchased (foreign)
- In-kind (domestic)
- In-kind (foreign)

Special Notes: Population and school enrollment numbers from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) were used to complete this report.

Nutrition

School feeding program(s) include/involve the following

- Fortified foods
- Bio-fortified foods
- Micronutrient supplements
- Nutritionists involved**
- Special training for cooks/caterers in nutrition
- Objective to meet nutritional goals**
- Objective to reduce obesity**

Limitations on food and beverage marketing...

- On school grounds**
- To school age children**

Additional Information

On school premises, there were specific marketing limits for drinks and foods high in sugar and savoury snacks high in fat or salt (HFSS foods/drinks), among other products. Several approaches were used to address overweight/obesity, including food and nutrition education, health education, and physical education.

Infrastructure, Employment, and Complementary Features

Share of Schools with ...

Electricity		All
Piped water		All
Clean water		All
Flush toilets		All

Employment

Total number of cooks/caterers: **Unknown**

- Percent paid: Unknown
- Percent women: Unknown

There was a focus on creating job opportunities for...

- Women
- Youth
- Other Groups

Complementary Activities

- Handwashing with soap**
- Height measurement
- Weight measurement
- Testing for anemia
- Deworming treatment
- Eye testing/eyeglasses
- Hearing testing/treatment
- Dental cleaning/testing
- Menstrual hygiene
- Drinking water**
- Water purification
- School gardens**

Complementary Education Programs

- Food and nutrition**
- Agriculture**
- Environment/climate/sustainability
- Hygiene
- Health**
- Reproductive health
- HIV prevention
- Physical education**
- Mental health

Environmental Sustainability

Targeted climate-friendly foods

- Yes
- No
- No response**

Steps taken to limit food waste

- Sealed food storage
- Fumigation/pest control in storage area
- Use of hermetic bags or larger hermetic storage system
- Routine testing/monitoring of dry food storage
- Use of nearly-expired food**
- Use of usable but "imperfect" commodities or produce**
- Campaign to reduce how much food students throw away**

Steps taken to limit package waste

- Re-use of bags/containers**
- Recycling**
- Use of compostable materials
- Use of "bulk serve" containers
- Prohibiting specific types of packaging

Additional Information

Educational visits to farms/dairies and tasting/cooking workshops were included in the curriculum to introduce children to agricultural processes for growing and producing agricultural products. Produce from school gardens was consumed by students. A National Plan on Waste Management (2021-2028) was adopted in 2021, inclusive of a food waste prevention program.

Emergencies

Experienced disruptions to school feeding due to emergencies

Yes No

Strategies to address the impact of emergencies

- Seek alternative food sources or suppliers
- Changes in numbers of students fed
- Negotiate better prices with existing suppliers
- Establish alternative supply routes or transportation methods
- Source different or alternative food
- Release of food reserves
- Increase funding or budget allocation for school feeding
- Collaborate with local producers or suppliers to reduce dependence on global supply chains
- Changes in delivery method
- Changes in feeding modality
- Changes in feeding frequency
- No particular strategy was used

Additional Information

The Scheme in Bulgaria was not affected by any emergencies during the 2022-2023 school year.

Successes and Challenges

Successes

1. School-age children significantly reduced their consumption of “harmful” foods and drinks. The consumption of carbonated drinks, crisps, sugar confections, and other items was strictly limited in schools.
2. Children and students not only recognized different fruits and vegetables, but also liked eating them. This reveals a change in attitudes towards healthy foods.
3. The number of portions distributed to children in schools has increased over the years, reaching up to 94 portions of fruit, vegetables and milk products per year.
4. The Scheme had a strong impact on children whose families could not provide them with the necessary quantities of fruits, vegetables, milk, and milk products.

Challenges

1. For some parents, the school scheme is not an ancillary program, but instead functioned as the main source of fruits, vegetables, milk, and milk products for their children. This misunderstanding strongly affected the image of the scheme, as the program was then wrongly considered as failing to fulfill its obligations. It is important to communicate clearly regarding the objectives of the school scheme.

Scheme for the provision of fruit, vegetables, milk and milk products in kindergartens, schools and special educational support centres

Management

- Lead implementer(s): The State Fund Agriculture
- The national government managed the program (Centralized decision-making).
- National government procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	194,614	–	–
Primary School	226,379	–	–
Secondary School	0	–	–
TOTAL	420,993	–	–

Foods and Beverages

- Dairy
- Other vegetables
- White roots and tubers
- Dairy milk
- Fruits
- Yogurt drink
- Dark green leafy vegetables

Elements of Home-Grown School Feeding

- Objective for small-scale farmers to benefit from access to a stable market
- Local food sourcing
- Small-scale farmers involved by selling directly (or through their farmer organization) to the program or the schools
- Additional support provided to small-scale farmers
- Country had a law/policy/standard related to small-scale farmers and school feeding programs
- Preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies in tendering procedures
- Effort is made to reduce food miles

Objectives

- To provide a social safety net
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To prevent or mitigate obesity

Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school snacks

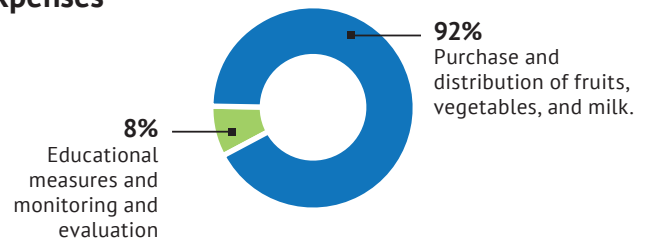
Frequency and Duration

- Fruits and vegetables were distributed on the day of delivery during the morning/afternoon break between classes, separately from the main meals, in the form of an individual portion per child.
- During the school year

Targeting

- Schools that applied for participation in the Schemes

Expenses



Food Sources

- 100% Purchased (domestic)
- 0% Purchased (foreign)
- 0% In-kind (domestic)
- 0% In-kind (foreign)

Additional Information

The “Fruit and Vegetable” and “Milk” Schemes were not viewed as school feeding programs, as such. They aimed to instill lasting habits in children to consume fresh fruits and vegetables and quality dairy products. They had a fairly narrow focus and were implemented separately from national child nutrition programs.

The Global Survey of School Meal Programs® collects data from government sources and is funded, in part, by the United States Department of Agriculture. Contact info@gcnf.org for more information.

Citation: Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF). 2024. Global Survey of School Meal Programs Country Report, Bulgaria.

<https://gcnf.org/country-reports/>