

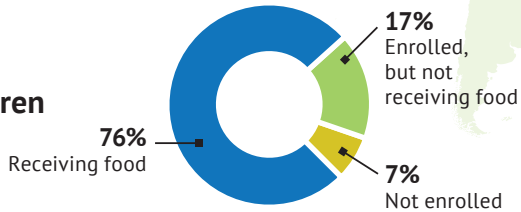


REPUBLIC OF
Latvia

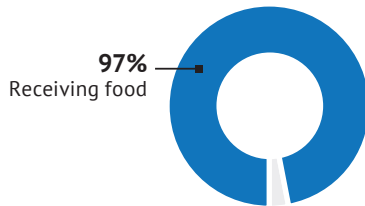


School Meal Coverage (2022-2023)

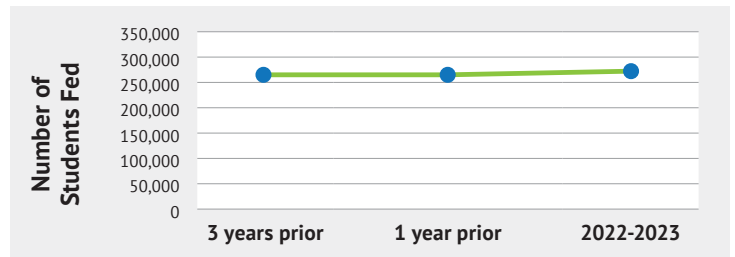
All Primary and Secondary School-age Children



Only Enrolled Primary Students



School Level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving Food
Preschool	137,850	97,934	95,486
Primary School	182,002	186,131	181,477
Secondary School	55,321	35,166	0
TOTAL	375,173	319,231	276,963



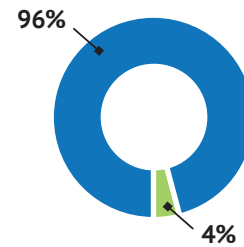
National Laws, Policies, and Standards

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

The country had ...

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

Budget



Total: **USD 33,863,170**

- Government: 32,383,124
- International donors: 0
- Private sector: 0
- NGOs (domestic): 0
- Other donors: 1,480,045*

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

- Line item in the national budget for school feeding

School Foods and Beverages

- Whole grains
- Refined/milled grains
- Blended grain-based products
- Legumes
- Nuts and seeds
- Eggs
- Dairy
- Poultry and game meat
- Red meat
- Processed meat

- Fish and shellfish
- Deep orange vegetables and tubers
- White roots and tubers
- Fruits
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Cruciferous vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Deep-fried foods
- Sweets

- Liquid oils
- Semi-solid and solid fats
- Salt
- Dairy milk
- Yogurt drink
- 100% fruit juice
- Other fruit drink
- Tea
- Other sugar-sweetened beverages

Prohibited food items

Soft drinks

Food Sources

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

Special Notes: None

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...

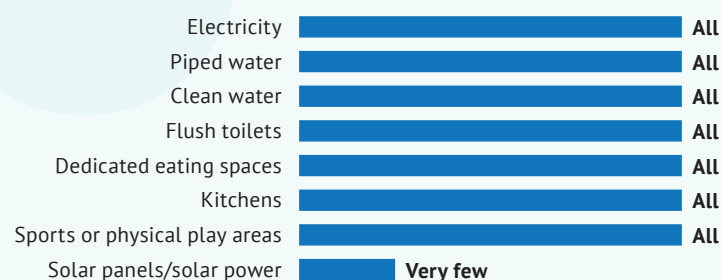
- On school grounds**
- To school age children**

Additional Information

Nutritionists employed by local government and caterers were involved with the Free meals (Brīvpusdienas) program during the 2022-2023 school year. Only specific types of beverages were allowed; sweet treats and salt were restricted. Prohibited items and restrictions were in place to limit obesity and malnutrition, teach healthy habits, and support parents and the local community. In addition to those beverages listed, other beverages served included sour milk products, kefir, and homemade drinks from berries.

Infrastructure, Employment, and Complementary Features

Share of Schools with ...



Employment

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

- 100% paid
- 75-99% women

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**

Additional Information

Complementary education also included addiction prevention and general safety (i.e. traffic, on water, etc.). Both small- and medium-/large-scale farmers supplied roots, tubers, dairy products, eggs, meat, poultry, fruits, and vegetables to the Free Meals (Brīvpusdienas) program. Farmers received support through agriculture subsidies and mobile or electronic payments.

Environmental Sustainability

Targeted climate-friendly foods

- Yes No

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

When sorting waste, institutions followed the FIFO principle (first in, first out). Uneaten/unused food was composted off-site. Use of local products was prioritized to reduce transport emissions, and legumes were sometimes used as a source of proteins instead of meat (e.g., once per week). Green Public Procurement (GPP) criteria were obligatory for sourcing food and catering services in state and local government institutions. GPP systematically incorporated environmental and social considerations into procurement processes and was one of the environmental policy instruments through which it was possible to reduce environmental impact, foster social progress, and achieve budget savings.

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

During the 2022-2023 school year, Latvia experienced severe food price inflation, yet school meal programs' access to food remained unaffected. To mitigate the emergency's impact, strategies included seeking alternative food sources or suppliers, establishing new supply routes or transport methods, and collaborating with local producers/suppliers to reduce dependence on global supply chains.

Successes and Challenges

Successes

1. Revised recommendations on energy and nutrient intake for the Latvian population have been integrated into the nutritional normative regulation for students in 2022.
2. Kindergartens have been included in the EU Fruit, Vegetables and Milk Scheme, which was initially available only to primary schools.
3. Amendments have been made to student nutritional norms to mandate educational institutions to offer vegetarian and specialized diets for students with confirmed allergies, intolerances, or illnesses.
4. To ensure healthy diets tailored to age, sample menus for preschoolers (3-6) and students in grades 1-4 with lactose intolerance, diabetes, celiac disease, and vegetarian preferences have been updated.

Challenges

1. Rising food and service prices have made it challenging to align with available funding.

Free meals

(Brīvpusdienas)

Management

- Lead implementer(s): The Ministry of Education and Science, responsible for finances; the Ministry of Health, responsible for regulation; the Ministry of Agriculture (Food and Veterinary Service), responsible for monitoring and control
- The national government managed the program (Centralized decision-making).
- Local government procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	0	–	–
Primary School	80,186	–	–
Secondary School	0	–	–
TOTAL	80,186	–	–

Foods and Beverages

- Whole grains
- Refined/milled grains
- Legumes
- Nuts and seeds
- Eggs
- Dairy
- Poultry and game meat
- Red meat
- Processed meat
- Fish and shellfish
- Deep orange vegetables and tubers
- White roots and tubers
- Fruits
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Cruciferous vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Sweets
- Liquid oils
- Semi-solid and solid fats
- Salt
- Dairy milk
- 100% fruit juice
- Tea

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 meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To prevent or mitigate obesity

Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school meals

Frequency and Duration

- 5 times per week
- During the school year

Targeting

- Grade levels (grades 1-4)

Food Sources

Yes - Purchased (domestic)
Yes - Purchased (foreign)

No - In-kind (domestic)
No - In-kind (foreign)

Additional Information

This program started operating in 2008. Both public and private schools participated in this program (including boarding schools). In 2024, the Ministry of Agriculture established a collaborative working group comprised of ministries, organizations, food manufacturing associations, and others to enhance the school feeding program. The main objective was to provide nutritious and delicious meals using locally sourced ingredients. A Nutrition Council served as a coordinating and consultative body, aiding in the implementation of nutrition policies by analyzing public health issues related to nutrition and proposing effective solutions.

EU Scheme for School Fruit, Vegetables and Milk

(Piens un augļli skolai)

Management

- Lead implementer(s): The Rural Support Service
- The national government managed the program (Centralized decision-making).

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	95,486	–	–
Primary School	181,477	–	–
Secondary School	0	–	–
TOTAL	276,963	–	–

Foods and Beverages

- Dairy
- Other vegetables
- Fruits
- Dairy milk

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 meet educational goals
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To prevent or mitigate obesity
- To meet agricultural goals

Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school snacks

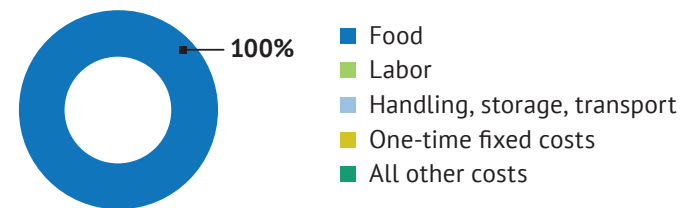
Frequency and Duration

- 3 times per week
- During the school year

Targeting

- Grade levels (pre-schools and grades 1-9; children up to +/- 15 years)

Expenses



Food Sources

100% Purchased (domestic)
0% Purchased (foreign)

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

Additional Information

The School Milk Program began in 2004, followed by the School Fruit and Vegetables Program in 2010. After initially operating independently, they were integrated into a single program in 2017 called the EU Scheme for School Fruit, Vegetables and Milk.

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