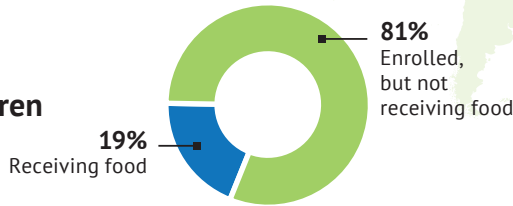


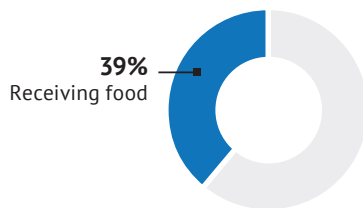


School Meal Coverage (2022-2023)

All Primary and Secondary School-age Children



Only Enrolled Primary Students



School Level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving Food
Preschool	496,069	476,366	154,604
Primary School	940,729	808,151	317,821
Secondary School	805,539	1,174,729	14,054
TOTAL	2,242,337	2,459,246	486,479



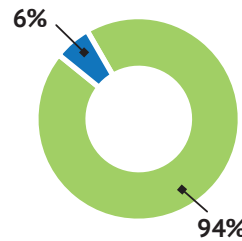
National Laws, Policies, and Standards

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

The country had ...

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

Budget



Total: **USD 4,424,490**

- Government: 256,750
- International donors: 0
- Private sector: 0
- NGOs (domestic): 0
- Other donors: 4,167,741

* 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

No fruits or/and vegetables with added sugar, sweeteners, salt, fats, or flavor enhancers were allowed. Milk with added sugar or chocolate was prohibited.

Food Sources

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

Special Notes: This report for Belgium is inclusive of the Flemish Region (Flanders), the Walloon-Brussels Federation, and the Brussels Capital Region.

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...

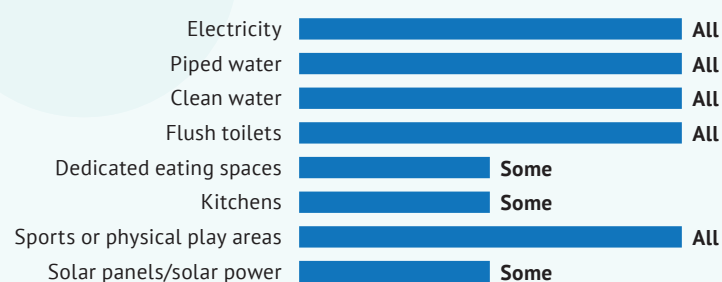
- On school grounds**
- To school age children**

Additional Information

In the Walloon-Brussels Federation, nutritionists were involved in the program. In Flanders, there was also the unsubsidized “Snack and Chill” program, which targeted secondary schools that wanted to focus on healthy drinks and snacks together with their students. Schools set up the project together with their students. Obesity was considered a problem in Belgium, and efforts to prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity included nutritional requirements for school food, food and nutrition education, health education, and physical education.

Infrastructure, Employment, and Complementary Features

Share of Schools with ...



Employment

Total number of cooks/caterers: **0**

- Percent paid: N/A
- Percent women: N/A

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

Students participated in the preparation, serving, and/or cleaning-up of school meals/snacks in both Flanders and the Walloon-Brussels Federation. In Flanders, there were no salaries paid with the school feeding program's resources. Both small and medium/large-scale farmers sold their products to the program. In the Walloon-Brussels Federation, there were two types of public procurement for the European program: a centralized market, where producers were chosen via a public tender conducted by the public service (SPW) and schools received direct deliveries without advancing funds, and a market where schools conducted their own tenders, selected producers, and were reimbursed later. In Brussels, public procurement was handled directly by the schools.

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

Local foods were sourced in an effort to make school food “climate-friendly” and reduce the distance between where the school food is produced and the school. Food sustainability was also one of the objectives of the program in Flanders.

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

In the 2022-2023 school year, Belgium experienced severe food price inflation, though schools remained open and there were no interruptions to school feeding operations. In Flanders, since the subsidy was no longer able to cover increased costs, the budget was increased to convince as many schools as possible to participate in the program. In the Walloon-Brussels Federation, higher prices resulted in slightly decreased accessibility (food availability and affordability), while the budget remained unchanged. To address this issue, supplier prices were negotiated, and the number of deliveries was reduced.

Successes and Challenges

Successes

1. In Flanders and the Walloon-Brussels Federation, there was an increased number of schools and participants.
2. In Flanders, there were proposals to reduce the planning burden on schools.
3. In Flanders, all schools received 20 weeks of subsidy, which was an increase from the previous arrangement.
4. In the Walloon-Brussels Federation, more children had access to varied fruits and vegetables and milk for free.
5. In the Walloon-Brussels Federation, school workshops were implemented to raise students' awareness on healthy nutrition and food origin.

Challenges

1. In Flanders, budget constraints prevented extending subsidized distribution to all schools for the entire school year, limiting it to 20 weeks instead of the desired 30 weeks.
2. In the Walloon-Brussels Federation, there is a desire to increase school participation in the program to enable more children to access fruits, vegetables, and milk.

Oog voor lekkers

Management

- Lead implementer(s): Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; Department of Care; educational providers; Flemish Institute for Healthy Living; Nutrition Information Centre
- The national government managed the program (Centralized decision-making).
- Individual schools procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	91,818	–	–
Primary School	192,899	–	–
Secondary School	12,975	–	–
TOTAL	297,692	–	–

Foods and Beverages

- Fruits
- Cruciferous vegetables
- Other vegetables
- 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 reduce hunger
- 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

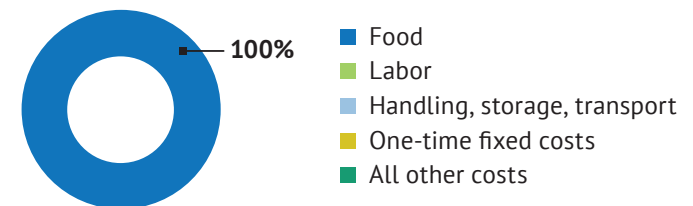
Frequency and Duration

- Times per week: One portion of fruits/vegetables per week and three portions of milk per week. Schools can choose to hand out more frequently.
- During the school year

Targeting

- Individual student characteristics and school characteristics

Expenses



Additional Information

School feeding began in Flanders during the early 20th century, but the Oog voor Lekkens program began operating at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year. The program was supported by a steering group and relied on the expertise of the Flemish Institute for Healthy Living. Additionally, there was an unsubsidized “Snack and Chill” program, which operated in some secondary schools.

European School Milk, Fruit and Vegetable Program (RW) / School Fruit, Vegetable and Milk Program (RBC)*

* RW stands for the Walloon Region (Région Wallonie) and RBC for the Brussels Capital Region (Région Bruxelles Capitale).

Programme Européen lait, fruits et légumes à l'école (RW) Programme fruits, légumes et lait à l'école (RBC)

Management

- Regional governments managed the program (Decentralized decision-making).
- Individual schools procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	62,786	–	–
Primary School	124,922	–	–
Secondary School	1,079	–	–
TOTAL	188,787	–	–

Foods and Beverages

- Nuts and seeds
- Dairy
- Fruits
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Cruciferous vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Dairy milk

Elements of Home-Grown School Feeding

- Objective for small-scale farmers to benefit from access to a stable market
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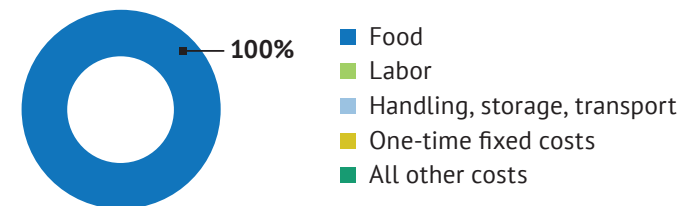
Frequency and Duration

- Times per week: Varies
- During the school year

Targeting

- Universal

Expenses



Food Sources

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

Additional Information

The program started in the 2017-2018 school year and reached approximately 832 public schools during the 2022-2023 school year.

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, Belgium.

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