



PRESS RELEASE
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FoodServiceEurope publishes Manifesto for the Contract Catering Sector in the 2024-2029 EU Mandate

Brussels, 18 September 2023 – Today, FoodServiceEurope, the voice of the contract catering sector in Europe, is proud to present its [Manifesto](#) for the contract catering sector in the 2024-2029 EU mandate. With the aim of addressing the challenges faced by the catering industry, FoodServiceEurope calls on policymakers to empower the contract catering sector to continue providing nutritious, healthy, and sustainable meals to millions of EU citizens.

The contract catering sector serves around 67 million EU consumers daily, ensuring access to affordable meals, especially for vulnerable groups. However, recent crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the energy price spikes, labour shortages and fixed-price contracts have heavily strained the sector. For the 2024-2029 EU mandate, FoodServiceEurope calls for empowering the sector in three key areas to secure its role in providing billions of meals annually to EU citizens:

1. Mandate Best Value and Flexible Public Procurement

The current practice of awarding public sector contracts primarily based on the lowest price hampers quality and sustainability. We call instead for contracts to be awarded based on quality criteria and the "economically most advantageous offer." Additionally, contracts must be flexible enough to account for cost increases in raw materials and labour. To this end, the EU Public Procurement Directive must be revised to prioritize quality criteria over the lowest price.

2. Leverage the Social Function of the Contract Catering Sector

Contract catering plays a vital role in delivering meals to vulnerable consumers, particularly in the face of increasing poverty levels. To address these challenges, FoodServiceEurope calls on levelling the playing field between public and private sector entities and mandating the universal provision of free school meals.

3. Empower the Contract Catering Sector to Drive Sustainability

The contract catering sector is committed to contributing to a more sustainable food system but requires financial support. FoodServiceEurope recommends including sustainable food procurement as a priority in future EU funding mechanisms, providing training for public authorities in Sustainable Public Procurement, and leveraging the EU Code of Conduct for Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices.

'The 2024 – 2029 EU mandate provides policymakers with an opportunity to build a better, more resilient and more sustainable European society. In this context, we call for a vision that recognises the important role of the contract catering sector and helps alleviate some of the challenges it has faced in recent years,' said Rocco Renaldi, FoodServiceEurope Secretary General.

FoodServiceEurope Manifesto for the Contract Catering Sector in the 2024-2029 EU Mandate can be found on our [website](#).

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Note to the Editor:

FoodServiceEurope represents the interests of the European contract catering sector at EU level. As employers of over 600,000 people across Europe and delivering over 6 billion meals every year, we are a key stakeholder in the EU policymaking process.

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