

MILAN FOOD POLICY

A COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVE TO MAKE THE FOOD SYSTEM MORE SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT AND INCLUSIVE

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In 2015, the City of Milan promoted the adoption of a Food Policy to make the city's food system more sustainable, resilient and inclusive.

The process to define the priorities of the city's Food Policy began in July 2014, in view of the Expo "**Feeding the planet, energy for life**".

The Municipality of Milan and the Cariplo Foundation have signed an agreement which, after the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the urban food system, led to the drafting of the contents of the Food Policy through a public consultation and to the adoption of a Resolution of the City Council stating the 5 priorities of Milan's Food Policy.

Since 2015, the Food Policy of Milan has developed pilot actions and launched projects involving the different departments of the Municipality and several public and private local actors, including research bodies, universities and NGOs.

The five priorities of the Food Policy are:

- 1. Ensure healthy food for all**
- 2. Promote the sustainability of the food system**
- 3. Educate on food culture and healthy and sustainable life styles**
- 4. Fight against food waste**
- 5. Support and promote research in the agri-food field**

The Food Policy Area stands within the Education Department and since 2017, the responsibility for the Food Policy has been entrusted to the Vice Mayor Anna Scavuzzo.

The 2015 City Council resolution also approved the birth of the **Milan Urban Food Policy Pact**, the international pact signed by over 280 cities around the world which commits the mayors toward the making of more sustainable food systems, ensure healthy and accessible food for all, preserve biodiversity, fight against waste.

The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact was signed at Palazzo Reale on 15 October 2015 and presented to the Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon on 16 October 2015, during the celebrations for World Food Day.

The school meals programme in Milan

The city of Milan promoted the access to public school meals since the beginning of 1900. After many years of direct management, the City supported the establishment of **Milano Ristorazione**, the in-house company owned by the City of Milan, that manages the school canteens service for almost all schools in Milan.



It serves **83,000 meals a day, over 14 million a year**, to nurseries, kindergartens schools, primary and the first grade of secondary schools, shelters for the elderly, child care centres. disabled, including meals on wheels for the elderly and non-self-sufficient people.

The company has over 800 employees, it is certainly one of the main players in the city's Food Policy and in 2020 it celebrated 120 years of activity.

The school program is the most direct tool for achieving several key objectives, from inclusion to sustainability within city's food system, involving families, children, and educational and school staff.

Since 2015, a strong commitment has been taken **to reduce the environmental impact of menus**, through the introduction of menus richer in **vegetables and legumes and by reducing meat**.

In all the schools served by Milano Ristorazione there are two seasonal menus, one for the winter period and one for summer one. Short supply chain and 0 km products are foreseen are used in the preparation of the meals.

In recent years, the City of Milan has decided to join the **Cool Food Pledge initiative**, promoted by the World Resources Institute (WRI), to monitor the impact of the changing in the menu towards a more sustainable offer.

The WRI certified that the canteens of Milan, through these actions, have generated a significant reduction in CO2 equivalent emission levels between 2015 and 2022, **that is equal to - 34%**.

The City of Milan and Milano Ristorazione also promote numerous food educational activities to engage children, families and parents commissions to learn more on healthy and sustainable diets and to be an active part of the Milan school meals programme. Teachers and educators are also involved in training activities as well as chefs and kitchen staff.



Agriculture: farm land and farmers' markets



The Municipality of Milan, as part of the implementation of the Food Policy priorities, has developed a **strong commitment in the connection between local Milanese and metropolitan production and access to healthy and sustainably grown food**.

They are part of the **agricultural heritage** of the Municipality of Milan:

- **farmsteads**: 14 municipal and 29 private
- **farmers' markets**: 11 on public land and 19 on private land
- six **agricultural parks**: Parco delle Cave, Parco del Ticinello, Parco della Vettabbia, Parco Forlanini, Parco Lambro and Parco Nord
- **agricultural districts**: DAM (Distretto agricolo milanese), DAVO (Distretto agricolo Valle Olona), DAMA (Distretto agricolo adda martesana), Distretto Riso e Rane, DINAMO

Due to this significant environmental heritage, the Municipality of Milan has undertaken actions to **promote local production** for several years, with the aim of **encouraging the short supply chain** and the possibility of also **supplying the city's school meals**, as is the case, for example, of rice cultivation.

Food aid and food waste prevention

THE EARTHSHOT PRIZE

Local Food Waste Hubs



Food Aid



The Municipality of Milan has turned the **prevention of food waste** into one of the **pillars of its activities** from 2015 to date, catalysing numerous projects and initiatives on the territory and **promoting innovation** in this field by **involving public and private partners** already active in these new initiatives.

The **Local Food Waste Hubs** have been the most visible and important example of this, combining two important and distinctive aspects for the City of Milan in redefining its food system as sustainable yet inclusive: **food waste prevention** and **food aid**.

Thanks to the successful activity of the Local Food Waste Hubs, launched as a **pilot project** in 2017 with a **memorandum of understanding between the Municipality of Milan, Fondazione Cariplo, Assolombarda and Politecnico di Milano** and made concrete in 2019 with the opening of the first Hub in Isola, the Municipality also achieved the important milestone of winning the 2021 edition of the **Earthshot Prize**, on the best solutions to protect the environment, set up by The Royal Foundation chaired by Prince William.

The prize, which offered £1 million for each winner, has enabled the City to start the process of **strengthening existing hubs, fostering the opening of new ones, and integrating new actions to recover from the markets**.

To date, **8 Hubs** are active in the area, three of which were recently opened.

The Covid-19 pandemic required the development of specific actions concerning **access to food** for some of the most fragile individuals to **guarantee the supply of food** to the greatest number of people in the area. The Municipality of Milan has thus activated a series of initiatives in favour of citizens in synergy with a multitude of actors in the city, including **food aid initiatives**.



The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact

The **Milan Urban Food Policy Pact** is the main legacy of the Universal Exhibition "Expo Milan 2015" Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life.

The Pact is a **global commitment of mayors from around the world** that considers food as an entry point for the sustainable development of growing cities. It represents the main framework for cities and international stakeholders active in the **definition of innovative urban food policies**.

Today, it gathers more than **300 cities**, representing a total of **500 million inhabitants** over the **6 MUFPP regions**.

It is the result of a participatory process among 46 cities that worked together in 2014, under the guidance of a technical team of international experts, on the **definition of 37 recommended actions** structured into **6 integrated categories**:

- Governance
- Sustainable Diets & Nutrition
- Social & Economic Equity
- Food Production
- Food Supply & Distribution
- Food Waste

The Milan Pact is fully involved in the definition of the **global food agenda**. Over the last years, the MUFPP Secretariat has been working to **raise the attention on urban food policies** and catalyze synergies of international stakeholders towards the Milan Pact's objective.

Within the activities of the Pact, significant is the **agreement** signed in 2022 with the **Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)** to foster cities' actions all over the world focusing on developing more sustainable and inclusive food systems.

Another valuable **partnership** is the one established with the **School Meals Coalition** led by the World Food Programme to drive actions that can urgently improve and scale up school meal programmes all over the world that result in the establishment of the **Cities Feeding the Future initiative**, guided by the MUFPP.



European projects

The City of Milan is involved in a **large range of European projects in multiple funding lines**, including Horizon, Urbact, Erasmus+, and more.

Objectives of this activity are:

- the **exchange of good practices** between European cities
- the **implementation of pilot actions** for the promotion of innovation in cities in the food policy's domains such as: school meals programme, agriculture, food waste reduction, food aid, food education, and research;
- the **launching of international advocacy initiatives** with key stakeholders related to the above-mentioned topics.

Recent projects led or participated in by the Food Policy Area of the Municipality of Milan include:

- Horizon 2020 Food Trails
- Horizon 2020 School Food 4 Change
- Horizon Europe AfriFOODlinks
- Horizon Europe CLEVERFOOD
- Horizon Europe Cultivate
- Urban Agenda for EU Partnership on Food
- Erasmus+ Healthy Wave

