

Cyprus - The 'LIFE – FOODPRINT' project

Title of inspiring practice	The 'LIFE – FOODPRINT' project [<i>To έργο «LIFE - FOODPRINT»</i>]
Geographical area	The initiative is implemented at national level. However, the project is co-financed by the LIFE Programme of the EU and by national resources.
Period of implementation	The project started in September 2020 until May 2023.
Rationale	The project "Life FOODPRINT" promotes ideas and proposals according to the actions, challenges and good practices which has to be implemented in order to reduce food waste. Additionally, the project could be useful to others because of the emphasis on the effort to change consumer behaviour, education and the participation of the interested bodies of society, such as businesses and local authorities.
Scope of the practice	Initial Vocational Education and Training, Continued Vocational Education and Training, Higher Vocational Education and Training
Educational level	Level 4 and Level 5
Introduction and context	<p>The key stakeholders(s) involved in the initiative are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIAS Publishing House Ltd: DIAS Publishing House Ltd is the largest and most comprehensive Media Group in Cyprus entertaining and informing on a daily basis hundreds of thousands of viewers, readers, listeners, and internet users via electronic and printed media. Through its projects, the organisation has created an extensive network of associates from the EU and neighbouring countries. <p>Opinion & Action Services Ltd: The group provides a broad framework of consulting services in the field of communication, strategic planning and analysis and offers support and promotion services of EU policies, ideas and strategies.</p> <p>Website: https://www.diasmedia.com/enCyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation: OEB is the most representative national employer organisation with more than 10 000 members/enterprises. The Energy & Environment Division of OEB organises informative events to transfer knowledge related to energy and environment to its members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parpounas Sustainability Consultants Ltd: Parpounas Sustainability Consultants specialises in the provision of services in the environmental and waste management sectors. <p>In recent years, food waste has been one of the main topics of concern both at the EU and national level. However, despite the efforts made, the amount of waste generated is not decreasing resulting in negative effects on the environment, national economies and EU citizens. The decoupling of waste generation from economic growth will require considerable effort across the whole value chain and in every home. Recent studies have revealed that per capita, Cyprus ranks third amongst EU Member States in annual food waste with 327kg/person after Netherlands (541kg/person) and Belgium (345 kg/person) (EP, Food Waste infographic, 2019). Food waste in Cyprus is mainly driven by consumers routinely buying more food than needed (48%). Another deficiency of the island is the lack of infrastructure for the separate collection and management of organic waste.</p> <p>The key objective of the project is to directly involve stakeholders from the food and hospitality industries of Cyprus as well as social actors such as local authorities and NGOs</p>

	<p>in creating a 'Collaboration Network' for 'social food donation'. The network will benefit both businesses and society and will strengthen the collaboration between all actors of the food supply chain which is crucial in achieving more sustainable food systems and practices.</p> <p>The project will implement a number of consultations among stakeholders followed by trainings to professionals and students from the food and hospitality sectors. Participants in the consultations and trainings will further be expected to apply what they have learnt to their businesses and future employments.</p> <p>In this project, awareness will also be raised through the implementation of communication activities and the use of communication tools foreseen mainly addressing consumers and the general public.</p> <p>Moreover, the project will contribute to the EU effort to meet SDGs adopted in September 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly, which targets to halve per capita food waste at retail and consumer level and reduce food losses along the food production and supply chains by 2030.</p> <p>On a national level, the project will support the process of achieving the national targets set regarding the circular economy aiming a 10% reduction of the total municipal waste going to landfills by 2035.</p> <p>The project is co-funded by the LIFE Programme of the European Union.</p>
<p>Key activities and outcomes</p>	<p>Action B.1 "Development of Collaboration Network for Social Food Donation" facilitates the implementation of future actions and initiatives by giving access to participating stakeholders to the online platform and the networking events.</p> <p>Action B.2. "Workshops and Consultations with stakeholders" has the goal of ensuring the achievement of the project objectives by involving key stakeholders and reaching the targeted audiences.</p> <p>Action B.3. "Development of project material" aims at delivering knowledge on food waste prevention to businesses and households/consumers through the development of specific project material with practical information.</p> <p>Actions C will allow the monitoring of the project impact and results using quantifiable data regarding the environmental, socio-economic and awareness-raising impacts.</p> <p>Action D.1 takes care of the organisation of a comprehensive public awareness campaign, which will be implemented through the project website, the development of mobile app and other promotional material and activities.</p> <p>Actions E. will guarantee the proper technical and financial management of the project.</p> <p>The initiative targets businesses operating in the Food and Hospitality industries of Cyprus, professionals, students, local authorities, policy makers, NGOs, civil society organisations and the general public, which includes households, consumers, school children.</p> <p>The Food and Hospitality industries will be involved in the development and operation of the 'Collaboration Network' and the 'Social Food Donation' initiative of the project, while professionals will be engaged in the development of sustainable solutions and practices to prevent and reduce food waste.</p> <p>Students following a programme related to the hospitality and food industry are expected to implement what they learn in their future employment.</p> <p>Local authorities, NGOs and civil society organisations will represent the 'social actors' of the Collaboration Network and will act as the connecting link between businesses and the recipients of the 'Social Food Donation' initiative. Also, they will participate in the consultations at the beginning of the project and will be at the front line for pushing policy guidelines.</p>

	<p>Policy makers will include representatives of the national government and large municipalities. A policy report will be created in the context of the project and presented to policy makers to facilitate the creation of economic incentives and legislation towards businesses for application of the waste hierarchy.</p> <p>Among the tools developed and implemented as part of the initiative, it is worth to mention the “Collaboration Platform” and “Food waste calculator”. The LIFE FOODPRINT project supports the implementation of the ‘Roadmap to a Resource-Efficient Europe’ which calls for ambitious action to tackle food waste. The project will encourage the adoption of sustainable practices in the food and hospitality industries of Cyprus as well as among consumers to have a direct or indirect environmental and economic impact. This goal will be achieved by training professionals and/or students of the food and hospitality industry on the ways to prevent food waste, by informing businesses and/or professional organisations of the food and hospitality industry and consumers through horizontal media campaign. The collaboration between private and public actors will be key in contributing to the success of the initiative.</p> <p>The obstacle to be overcome was how to achieve the maximum possible participation and the notification of the campaign in general. The initiative has already been the subject of broad media coverage.</p>
<p>Other information</p>	<p>The Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training (DSTVET) belongs to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth of Cyprus and is responsible for the organisation, supervision, and coordination of all the educational and administrative issues related to public VET in Cyprus. The DSTVET supervises the smooth operation of eleven Technical and Vocational Schools, as well as VET programmes that are hosted in the premises of general education schools.</p> <p>The Department offers the following initial, continuing and higher VET programmes addressed to eligible gymnasium graduates and adults:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secondary Technical and Vocational Education (morning classes) 2. Evening Schools of Technical and Vocational Education (second chance schools) 3. Lifelong Learning programmes of VET (Afternoon and Evening Classes) 4. Apprenticeship System of VET 5. Public school of Higher VET <p>The Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training (DSTVET) offers formal and informal VET programmes to children and adults (working or unemployed). The age range of the programmes are from 15 years old and over.</p> <p>The DSTVET also offers the preparatory apprenticeship programme, which is designed for students that have not completed compulsory education (third year of Gymnasium-lower secondary education). Students who complete preparatory apprenticeship may proceed to the core apprenticeship level or, if they wish, and they succeed at a special set of exams, they may re-enter the formal education system.</p> <p>Within the framework of the Strategic Planning and following the Decision by the Council of Ministers on 15 April 2015, the Directorate of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training implemented the Technical and Vocational Education and Training System (STEEK) with the core aim of addressing the impact of the economic crisis, of adapting to the continuous economic changes as well as of developing, suitably qualified and flexible human resources with specialised skills.</p> <p>Additionally, a major challenge that the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training (DSTVET) is facing, is the need of increasing the proportion of in lower secondary education students, who choose to follow VET. Cyprus has one of the lowest percentage of students attending VET programmes amongst EU Member States. The achievement of this objective is very important for Cyprus, as VET</p>

	<p>systems can lead to a decrease in school dropout and unemployment rates and, as a result, contribute to the prosperity of the country's society and economy. The low percentage of people in Cyprus enrolled in VET is due to two main factors.</p> <p>The first factor is the lack of social acceptability of VET, where people believe that the educational level in VET schools is worth less than the one provided by general education schools.</p> <p>The second factor behind the low participation of Cypriot students to VET is the lack of valid information regarding the perspectives of VET. Many parents believe that VET is a dead-end pathway that only leads to the world of work and that their children will only be employed in the field they have graduated from. This belief is sometimes very discouraging also for the students, as they have to decide about their field of study at the very early age of 15, when many times they are not in a position to decide what career they wish to follow and they falsely believe that, in the case they will change their mind, this decision will trap them for the rest of their lives.</p> <p>The organisation aims at changing all the above false beliefs and prejudice that the parents and society have about VET, by strengthening and upgrading even more the Cyprus VET System and by making it more attractive and flexible. To achieve this, the DSTVET needs to increase its "success stories" of VET graduates who have a successful professional career with the help of their VET degree. It is therefore important to make people understand, through real evidence and good results, that the high quality VET programmes that the DSTVET offers are designed to meet the needs of the labour market and the economy and can equip citizens with the necessary skills and knowledge that will help them to progress professionally, enhance their employability and encourage their active citizenship.</p>
Contacts and sources	<p>https://www.foodprintcy.eu/</p> <p>https://www.foodprintcy.eu/wp-content/uploads/FOODPRINT-BROCHURE.pdf</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/foodprintcy/posts/-food-waste-in-cyprus-is-mainly-driven-by-consumers-routinely-buying-more-food-t/311724487406916/</p>
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