

# Expert Group on Metropolitan Gastronomy (related to the EU From Farm to Fork policy)

## 1. Introduction and Background

### 1.1 Introduction

- Wider European context

The Farm to Fork Strategy is one of the most important parts of **the European Green Deal**. Its aim is to make food systems fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly.

**Food systems will be resilient to crises if they are sustainable.** We need to redesign our food systems which today account for nearly one-third of global GHG emissions, consume large amounts of natural resources, result in biodiversity loss and negative health impacts (due to both under- and over-nutrition) and do not allow fair economic returns and livelihoods for all actors, in particular for primary producers.

Putting our food systems on a sustainable path also brings new opportunities for operators in the food value chain.

New technologies and scientific discoveries, combined with increasing public awareness and demand for sustainable food, will benefit all stakeholders.

**The Farm to Fork Strategy aims to accelerate our transition to a sustainable food system** that should:

- have a neutral or positive environmental impact
- help to mitigate climate change and adapt to its impacts
- reverse the loss of biodiversity
- ensure food security, nutrition and public health, making sure that everyone has access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, sustainable food
- preserve affordability of food while generating fairer economic returns, fostering competitiveness of the EU supply sector and promoting fair trade”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/food/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy\\_pl](https://ec.europa.eu/food/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_pl)

- EU Policies and funding programmes including the reasons behind the initiative

The transition to sustainable food systems is possible thanks to **The Common Agriculture Policy** and **the Common Fisheries Policy**. **Horizon Europe** proposes to spend EUR 10 billion on R&I on food, bio-economy, natural resources, agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture and the environment as well as the use of digital technologies and nature-based solutions for agri-food. A key area of research will relate to microbiome, food from the oceans, **urban food systems**, as well as increasing the availability and source of alternative proteins such as plant, microbial, marine and insect-based proteins and meat substitutes.

To speed up innovation and accelerate knowledge transfer, the Commission will work with Member States to strengthen the role of the European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability' (EIP-AGRI) in the Strategic Plans. In addition, the European **Regional Development Fund** will invest, through smart specialisation, in innovation and collaboration along the food value chains.

**The InvestEU Fund** will foster investment in the agro-food sector by de-risking investments by European corporations and facilitating access to finance for small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) and mid-cap companies.

- Project and wider connections

The subject that will be the area of work of the Expert Group is also discussed by other international organizations, i.e. **the United Nations**, which undertakes activities related to such issues as:

- **Supply chain** - By prioritizing local companies and national first responders as much as possible, for both our emergency assistance and our resilience-building projects, we contribute to more sustainable agricultural systems, more dynamic retail sectors, more robust transport networks.
- **Sustainable livelihoods and ecosystems** - The World Food

Programme (WFP) helps countries and the most vulnerable and food insecure communities manage natural resources sustainably. This enables them to meet today's livelihood needs and safeguard these resources for future generations. Interventions – involving soil conservation and fertility measures, water harvesting and flood control – bolster agro-ecological productivity and reduce the loss of biodiversity.

- **Smallholder market support** - Thanks to large demand for staple foods, farmer-directed procurement processes and locally-g geared supply chains, many smallholders gain an entry point into formal markets. Encouraged to form associations, they are able to negotiate better, sell more, lower their transaction costs and extend their customer base.
  - How does the project tie in with other running programmes, projects, research etc?

In many regional areas of Europe, the issues mentioned above are the subject of policies and projects. As part of METREX's work, **we need an expert group that will help us strengthen our individual activities in this topic, but also combine and integrate these initiatives to make their impact more effective.** We want to start a joint discussion in order to start activities in the future not only at the national level, but also at the international and supra-regional level.

- What other networks or communities are working on this topic as well, with possibly other objectives.

**Délice Network is a tool for cities that consider food and gastronomy as a boost for economic development, city attractiveness, and urban sustainability.** It brings together city representatives involved in implementing food-related projects and initiatives. The specificity and added value of Délice Network is to consider food with a holistic approach. Food system transformation can only succeed if the food culture and food industry are considered in the process. This specificity brings real legitimacy to the organization to participate in international cooperation programs such

as the EU Commission's Farm-to-Fork Strategy. Thanks to the support of a hired Programme Developer, Délice intends to propose its expertise as a global City Network within various European and non-European programs.

Members of the DÉLICE Network are members of METREX, among others Lyon, Riga, Helsinki, Birmingham, Turin and Wrocław are applying for membership.

#### 1.2 Project deliveries

- What are main deliveries, related to for members usable aspects.

As part of the "From farm to fork" Expert Group, **we want to research, analyse and compare the state of work of individual cities and metropolitan areas on such topics as: shortening the supply chain, sustainable agriculture, promotion of local gastronomy, food safety.**

Another area of our activity will be the implementation of joint initiatives and programs, such as the exchange and education of human resources, the creation of a common food policy, the implementation of innovative tools (e.g. financed from EU funds), which will help us develop in this area.

- Here the relation to EU funding programmes is key to mention.

**Horizon Europe** may be a key point for the implementation of projects within the group. It is this fund that provides extensive co-financing for initiatives - in particular interregional - in the field of implementing solutions related to sustainable food production, ensuring food security, and environmental education.

**ESPON**

**INTERREG**

**URBACT**

#### 2. Objectives

- This should specify the objectives of this expert group initiative

The main objective of the Group's activity should be to **support the sustainable development of its members, in particular in building food safety, shortening supply chains, promoting healthy and ecological food, and popularizing sustainable agriculture.**

As specific objectives, it is worth mentioning:

- creating a common food and agricultural policy;
- promoting local gastronomy;
- support in the education of entrepreneurs dealing in food and gastronomy (study visits, internships, scholarship programs);
- establishing and tightening cooperation with other cities and organizations that are already active in this area;
- exchange of experiences on the effectiveness of implemented solutions;
- undertaking joint initiatives (financed from external funds) that will accelerate the implementation of reforms.

### 3. Directions and constraints

As members of the METREX network, partner regions and cities work within the policy framework of their own regions and cities, at the same time as making use of the network and space provided for discussions and innovative thinking through exchange of ideas and practices.

EU will not normally work directly on urban planning matters. Due to the principle of subsidiarity, responsibility for urban planning is clearly placed at the level of member states (for legislation) and cities and regions (for planning decisions).

There is no external funding available for the Expert Group from the EU or other source. However, the Expert Group members could be partners in applications for EU funding (Horizon, INTERREG, etc). METREX will offer maximum support in such application process.

The real threat, observed in most expert groups, was the lack of involvement of members, initial enthusiasm, and rapid burnout. However, the online opportunities have changed that, as it allows easier access and participation.

#### 4. Description Project

##### a. Products

- **2 general meetings per year** (real if possible, will be the best), e. g. kick-off meeting – working session as a side event during METREX annual conference in Torino (May'22), second – in Wrocław – during autumn/winter 2022
- **2 online meetings on specific topics** (the number could be larger depending of the needs; first could be with the participation of interested members of the Délice Network)
- Summarising documents and reports spreading to the other members

##### b. Project deliveries

Meetings and conferences, Study visits, International internships, Scholarship programmes, Expert opinions, Reports, Presentations

##### c. Time schedule

To be coordinated with other METREX activities.

#### 5. Involvement and participation

The most important thing is to select **the right people to the Expert Group** and maintain their commitment. Maybe we can introduce a kind of certificates for members of the METREX Expert Group, it can be a value in personal development and development of the organization. We propose to start and continue the result of METREX conference in Nurnberg – “From Farm to Fork” and to ask them to lead the Group. As operational managing resource could be Wrocław.

##### a. Cooperation with other projects and networks

DÉLICE Network, ngo's: Food tank, Bio-based Industries Consortium (BIC).

We aim to also include 'on demand' support from the scientific community, as expressed in the METREX Mission Statement on Expert Groups.

b. Local participation

Involving local authorities but also active associations to spread the ideas and knowledge.

Local organizations and associations of entrepreneurs in the gastronomic and food industry, e.g. **Wrocław Gastronomy Council**

c. Media strategy (including dissemination)

To be coordinated with other METREX activities.

6. Project management

Wrocław, support of Economic Development Office

7. Resources

a. Principles of participation

**We want to invite METREX Members that are involved in food and gastronomy policies.**

We would like to invite all interested METREX members.

It is also very important to obtain an official letter of intent from the Member institution / organization about the involvement in the work and the appointment of a person by the organization.

We also allow the possibility of involvement in the activities of a group of cities from outside METREX (e.g. members of the DÉLICE network who are interested in joining our organization).



- b. Staff and time expenditure  
Depending on Member capacity and will.
- c. Human and financial resources  
Coordinator and small METREX budget are foreseen.