

Public food procurement in Tukums, Latvia: towards local sourcing?

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BSC | BALTIC STUDIES CENTRE

Green public procurement (GPP) in Tukums



Currently public food procurement is organised only for 2 institutions:

- special educational institution of Tukums county
- Tukums Ice hall

For the rest of Schools and kindergartens (17 institutions) public procurement for catering was organised in 2016 for the period until 2021.

- Green public procurement (GPP) principles are applied:

	Criteria	Max points
1	Price	30
2	Quantity of food products with increased quality (labels of national food quality system, biological quality system etc.)	40
3	Environmentally friendly transport (km of delivery)	20
4	Environmentlly friendly management of packaging	10
Total		100

Tukums success with GPP



Procurement is divided into lots:

- 11 for Ice hall
- 5 for special educational institution of Tukums county

E.g.: meat, chicken meat, bread, confectionery, milk products, eggs, but others lots are wide and specific (tropical fruits, spices, oils etc.)

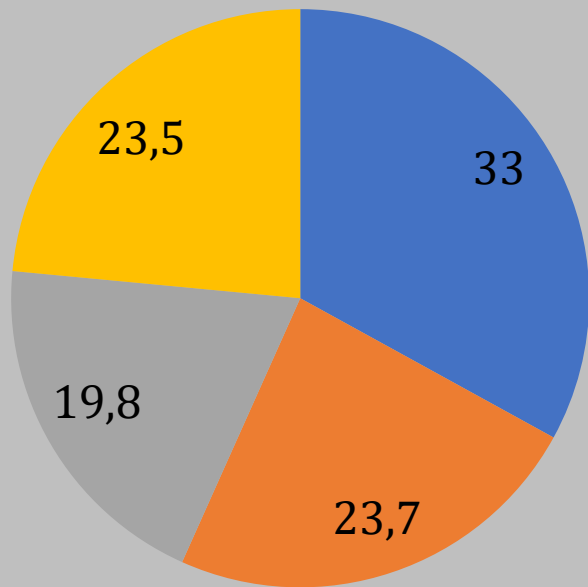
- For the last procurement procedure **only one local wholesaler applied**. None of local producers or farmers!!!
- One of our meat producers applied few years ago and lost due to the lack of «quality certificates». He didn't apply again, because he **perceived he lost because of the ability to offer lower prices** by big wholesalers.

Conclusions:

- a) Communication with local producers has to be improved
- b) Ability to offer food products with national or biological quality marks are crucial for local producers
- c) It is much more interesting for local producers to involve in public procurement when municipality organizes catering inhouse (larger lots)

Who feeds schoolkids in Latvia

Share of pupils fed
(2016)



■ TOP 10 largest caterers

■ Small public inhouse catering

■ Small private inhouse catering

■ Medium private caterers (operating in two or more schools)

Top 10 largest caterers

NO	Name	Number of schools 2016	Number of schools 2012	Number of pupils	% from total
1	SIA "Žaks-2"	30	19	14722	6.19
2	SIA "Baltic Restaurants Latvia"	24	11	13558	5.70
3	SIA "Fristar"	23	9	12259	5.15
4	SIA "Aniva"	31	17	9245	3.88
5	SIA "IRG"	17	10	7830	3.29
6	SIA "Skolu ēdināšanas serviss"	9	NA	5741	2.41
7	SIA "Malta L"	9	NA	4552	1.91
8	SIA "Kantine B"	8	6	3868	1.63
9	SIA "Māras Lācis"	6	NA	3586	1.51
10	SIA "Zālītes A"	7	NA	3138	1.32

Trends and overall characteristics

- There is an ongoing centralisation in the sector
- The largest caterers mainly operate in large urban schools
- The small caterers mainly operate in the smallest schools (with less than 100 pupils)
- The centralisation trend is supported by an ongoing processes in public education (school closures and depopulation)

What are the main challenges

At the regulatory level, all preconditions have been fulfilled to ensure that schools receive high-quality meals. The challenges though remain:

- Green public procurement (GPP) does not work correctly.

On the one hand, the price remains to be the most important criteria for selecting a provider of service. On the other hand, few mechanisms exist that would allow monitoring the implementation of GPP.

- Centralisation and the 'race to the bottom' increases risks

The two factors create an environment where broad groups of pupils are exposed to possible food safety issues. We have estimated that almost 20% of schoolkids were potentially exposed to a recent food contamination scandal.

- Municipalities are hesitant to engage with these issues.

Ensuring school catering is one of the duties of municipalities. However, this duty creates additional work, yet does not promise payoff. Thus, only some municipalities engage with the task.

- The state punishes rather than supports those trying to improve the system.

Recently a private school had to sue the state for fines it imposes on school. The issue that the school and state could not agree was a question – are schools allowed to serve vegetarian meals. The school won the case.

Goals associated with school catering

In 2016, BSC conducted two workshops where we asked participants, what should be the key goals associated with school catering.

Goals	#
all products and all ingredients are produced by local producers	15
kids are able to make healthy choices	12
both kids and parents are taking classes in health education	11
food is served in a way that is appealing to pupils	11
served food is diverse and balanced	8
school infrastructure and time schedule is aligned with what is needed to	
have a healthy meal	8
school cooks are well educated, it is a prestigious profession	8
regulation is aligned with producers possibilities	6
free of charge meals are available to all pupils	5
school curriculum has lessons concerning healthy nutrition	3
effective school food control system is in place	2
increased funding for free of charge meals	2
reduced amount of food waste	1

What resources do we have

As indicated by the participants of the two participatory workshops held in 2016.



GPP



Active youngsters



Public campaigns and public interest in food



Actors able to monitor the processes



Increasing knowledge about food



Increasing knowledge about producers

We still have school canteens



Media interest



Parents that care



Good examples

Political interest in the issue

