



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL  
HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY  
Directorate HR.D - Health & Wellbeing - Working Conditions  
**The Director**

Brussels  
HR.D.2 [REDACTED]  
PER35.45/09

### Reply by DG HR

**Inter-service Consultation of DG SANTE: 2020/01398**

**Approval - subject to taking comments into account**

**Reference:** Ares(2020)1333725

**Subject:** **Inter-service consultation on the Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system.**

**Contacts** [REDACTED]

DG HR welcomes the document that will certainly contribute to the Green Deal strategy.

DG HR is pleased to approve the document, provided that the following comments/modifications are taken into account and integrated in the consolidated version.

- (l) Page 8: “To that end, the Commission will lead by example and will place the highest sustainability standards at the core of its catering contract for its canteens as for 2021”. This sentence should be removed because :
  - (a) This measure is not in line with the purpose of the document and not part of the draft action plan,
  - (b) The highest sustainable standards do not refer to any precise specific reference,
  - (c) The Commission has many canteens across Europe and the contract referred to in this sentence only refers to Brussels. Furthermore, the date of the start of the latter is not decided yet.

- (d) This commitment has inherently budget consequences but the document does not include a financial assessment<sup>1</sup>,
- (e) The Commission, as any other organisation, is subject to the market offers, consequently such commitment would lead to continuous challenge as not every “highest standard” will be available. The implementation and the response of the sector usually comes several years after launching policies.

The only reason to avoid such commitments is avoiding non-realistic expectations and subsequently exposing the Institution to non-justified criticism. DG HR would like to clarify that the Commission endeavours to implement the highest possible standards in its catering policy not only for the Brussels contract but also for all contracts (or in house catering services) across Europe. The Green Deal is a key priority of DG HR.

- (2) Page 8: “The Commission will also review the EU school scheme to focus it on healthy and sustainable food and strengthen the educational messages on the importance of healthy nutrition, sustainable food production and reducing food waste.” DG HR Understands by “EU School” the European Schools. If this is correct, the sentence is not appropriate and should be deleted or modified, because :

- (a) The Commission is not competent for the EU schools. The authority is shared with the Members States and up to now the Commissions has no power to impose the scheme of the EU schools including the educational programme,
- (b) The canteens of the European Schools are managed by the Parent’s Associations which are not controlled by the Commission,
- (c) Ultimately the Commission could commit to support healthy and sustainable food and related education in the relevant boards.

e-signed  
Christian ROQUES

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<sup>1</sup> In addition, staff when paying their meals support the financing of the catering. Such commitment should be verified ex ante with the staff representative unions with a clear evaluation of the possible costs.