

## SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)

School year: 2020–2021

- Free meal for elementary school students (*Brīvpusdienas*)
- School milk and fruit (*Piens un augļi skolai*)

**Lead Agency:** Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture

## NATIONAL LAWS, POLICIES, AND STANDARDS

- National school feeding policy
- Nutrition
- Food safety
- Health
- Agriculture
- Private sector involvement

Line item in the national budget...

- Yes  No  No response

## BUDGET

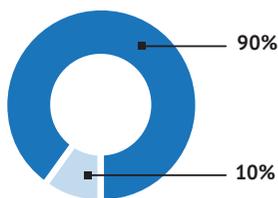
Total: USD 18,774,192\*

- Government: USD 16,981,294
- International donors\*\*: USD 1,792,898
- Private sector: USD 0
- Other donors: USD 0

Includes funding from the United States Department of Agriculture  Yes  No  No response

\* Amounts in USD are approximate.

\*\* This includes support from the European Union's school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme. International donations by United Nations agencies or non-governmental organizations often represent funding from multiple donors.



## INFRASTRUCTURE

All schools in Latvia have electricity, clean and piped water, flush toilets, dedicated eating spaces/cafeterias, and kitchens. The kitchens are equipped with refrigeration, storage facilities, and gas or electric stoves.

## SPECIAL NOTES

Some population numbers from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) were used to complete this report.

## MEALS/SNACKS/MODALITY

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner
- Snacks
- Take-home rations
- Other

- Grains, cereals
- Roots, tubers
- Legumes, pulses, nuts
- Dairy products
- Eggs
- Meat
- Poultry
- Fish
- Green, leafy vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Fruits
- Oil
- Salt
- Sugar

- Dairy milk
- Yogurt drink
- Fruit juice
- Tea
- Water
- Other

**Prohibited food items:** Soft drinks are not allowed, while sweets, fried/processed products, crisps/savory snacks, starchy foods cooked in fat/oil, and salt is restricted.

## FOOD SOURCES

- Purchased (domestic)
- Purchased (foreign)
- In-kind (domestic)
- In-kind (foreign)

## COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

- Handwashing with soap
- Height measurement
- Weight measurement
- Testing for anemia
- Deworming treatment
- Eye testing/eyeglasses
- Hearing testing/treatment
- Dental cleaning/testing
- Menstrual hygiene
- Drinking water
- Water purification

## COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Food and nutrition
- Agriculture
- School gardens
- Hygiene
- Health
- Reproductive health
- HIV prevention
- Physical education

The checked items were provided in most or all participating schools.



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REPUBLIC OF

Latvia



## SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS

### CHILDREN RECEIVING FOOD, 2020–2021

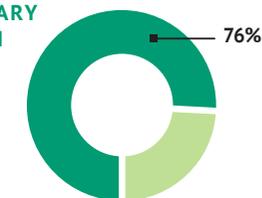
School level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving food
Pre-school	84,755	86,191	86,191
Primary school	179,813	181,766	178,360
Secondary school	54,081	35,734	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>318,649</b>	<b>303,691</b>	<b>264,551</b>



### COVERAGE: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Total number primary and secondary school-age children: 233,894

Receiving school food: 178,360



Food was also provided to some students in...

- Pre-schools
- Vocational/trade schools
- Other

## NUTRITION

School feeding program(s) included/involved the following:

- Fortified foods
- Bio-fortified foods
- Micronutrient supplements
- Nutritionists involved**
- Special training for cooks/caterers in nutrition**
- Objective to meet nutritional goals**
- Objective to reduce obesity**

**Food items fortified/biofortified:**

Not applicable

**Micronutrients:**

Not applicable

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Nutritionists developed the guidelines for the free meal (Brīvpusdienas) program, and sample menus of healthy, balanced, and age-appropriate meals are provided for each grade level.

## STUDIES CONDUCTED

While no research has been focused specifically on school feeding in Latvia, there is research on children's diets, health, and overweight/obesity.

## RESEARCH NEEDED

None specified

## AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

**Jobs created by school feeding programs\***

Cooks and food preparers  
Transporters  
Off-site processors  
Food packagers and handlers  
Monitoring  
Food service management  
Safety and quality inspectors  
Other

*\*If blank, no response was provided.*

**Farmers were involved with the school feeding program(s)...**

- Yes  No  No response

**Other private sector (for profit) actors were involved...**

- Yes  No  No response

**There was a focus on creating jobs or leadership or income-generating opportunities for...**

- Women  Other groups  
 Youth  No response

**There was community engagement (by parents or others) in the school feeding program(s)...**

- Yes  No  No response

**Were there links between food banks and the school feeding program(s)?**

- Yes  No  There are no food banks in this country.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Procurement of food from local sources is prioritized in Latvia, and farmers provide the fruits, vegetables, and roots/tubers used in the school milk and fruit (*piens un augļi skolai*) program. These products are sourced within 300 kilometers of each school.

## CONTACTS: LATVIA

**Agency:** Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture

**Website:** [www.izm.gov.lv](http://www.izm.gov.lv); [www.vm.gov.lv](http://www.vm.gov.lv); [www.zm.gov.lv](http://www.zm.gov.lv)

## SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Recent successes related to school feeding in Latvia include newly revised recommendations on energy and nutrient intake, the provision of vegetarian and specialized foods, and the development of healthy and age-appropriate sample menus for children of 3 to 6 years and 1st through 4th grades. Sample menus for older students are also being developed. Successes in school feeding also include the engagement of the Ministry of Agriculture in implementing the EU school fruit, vegetables, and milk scheme, and the application of "green public procurement" criteria to account for environmental and social considerations in the procurement of food. Challenges related to school feeding include recent increases in prices for food and services, prompting the government to consider increasing the funding for the provision of free meals.

## EMERGENCIES/COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic caused schools to operate remotely for much of the 2020–2021 school year, with some schools re-opening for in-person learning in April 2021. The frequency of school feeding declined, though the number of students reached remained stable. There was a shift from serving in-school meals to making meals/snacks available for pick up and providing two-week packages of ingredients for students and their families to prepare and eat at home. Monetary support was also provided to the families, with the type of support decided by the municipalities.

## FREE MEAL FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS (BRĪVPUSDIENAS)

**Lead implementer(s):** Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture

### OBJECTIVES:

- To meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To prevent or mitigate obesity

### MODALITIES OF PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH FOOD:

- In-school meals
- Take-home rations

### FREQUENCY AND DURATION:

- 5 days per week during the school year
- 1–2 times per week or twice per month for take-home rations (depending on the epidemiological situation and decision of each municipality)

### TARGETING:

Universal (Grades 1 through 4)

### HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2020–2021 SCHOOL YEAR?

School level	# Students	% Girls	% Boys
Pre-school	0	–	–
Primary school	75,882	–	–
Secondary school	Unknown*	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,882</b>	–	–

\*Some students of higher grades do benefit from this program, though numbers are not available.

### FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:

Grains, cereals	Fish	Dairy milk
Roots, tubers	Green, leafy vegetables	Yogurt drink
Legumes, pulses, nuts	Other vegetables	Fruit juice
Dairy products	Fruits	Tea
Eggs	Oil	Water
Meat	Salt	Other beverage
Poultry	Sugar	* fortified

### FOOD SOURCES:

- Purchased (domestic)
  In-kind (domestic)
  Purchased (foreign)
  In-kind (foreign)

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

While only children in grades 1 through 4 received government funded-lunch through this program, lunch is provided in every preschool or primary or secondary educational institution. Each municipality determines whether lunch for other children is paid for by the municipality, by the students' parents, or by the municipality and parents together. If the local government has unused state funds from the Free meal (Brīvpusdienas) program, it can use them for children of higher grades. Another objective of the program is to support parents and the local community.



## SCHOOL MILK AND FRUIT (PIENS UN AUGĻI SKOLAI)

**Lead implementer(s):** Ministry of Agriculture

### OBJECTIVES:

- To meet educational goals
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To meet agricultural goals

### MODALITIES OF PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH FOOD:

- In-school snacks
- Take-home rations

### FREQUENCY AND DURATION:

- 3 times per week during the school year
- 1–2 times per week or twice per month for take-home rations

### TARGETING:

Universal for preschool and by application for students in Grades 1 through 9

### HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2020–2021 SCHOOL YEAR?

School level	# Students	% Girls	% Boys
Pre-school	86,191	–	–
Primary school	178,360	–	–
Secondary school	–	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>264,551</b>	–	–

Milk and fruits/vegetables are provided to students in the 1st through 9th grade. However, disaggregated student numbers by school level are not available.

### FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:

Roots, tubers	Fruits	
Other vegetables	Dairy milk	* fortified

### FOOD SOURCES:

- Purchased (domestic)
  In-kind (domestic)
  Purchased (foreign)
  In-kind (foreign)

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The school milk program started in 2004, and the school fruit program started in 2010. In 2017, these two programs merged, providing milk (including lactose free milk), fruits (including cranberries), and vegetables to children in kindergarten and grades 1 through 9. The European Union covers 34% of the program's cost. In 2020–2021, the program operated in 1,302 schools (preschools and primary schools).