

Framework Statement:

Serving Europe and the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity & Health

The one presented below is a broad statement covering the sector of branded food and beverage service chains and has to be read in combination with the specific commitments of individual members, as develop over time.

A. Serving Europe's Engagement

Serving Europe is the association of branded food and beverage service chains operating in Europe. Our companies are trusted by around 20 million customers every day in Europe. We are the leaders in the food service sector, with a duty to set the highest of standards in our operations. The varied menus we offer are always based on safe, high quality foods and drinks.

The welfare of our customers is at the core of what we do as companies. To ensure this, we not only respect the law wherever we operate, we often go beyond legal requirements.

We have committed to play our part in tackling the broad societal need for balanced diets and healthy lifestyles, including appropriate levels of physical activity. So it is only natural that we take a very serious interest in diet and nutrition and that we support the objectives of the EU Platform on Diet, Health and Physical Activity. We remain committed to the EU Platform process and to working together with relevant actors, notably the European Commission and Member State authorities.

Serving Europe (formerly the European Modern Restaurant Association) was a founding stakeholder in the EU Platform and initiated three common commitments in the 2006 to 2016 period.

Today, the EU Platform aims to support the EU Member States in achieving 6 new objectives:

1. Reducing the dietary intake of salt, saturated fat, trans fat and added sugars;
2. Increasing the intake of fruit and vegetables;
3. Reducing the exposure to and impact on children of marketing of foods high in salt, saturated fat, trans fat and added sugars;
4. Increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour;
5. Increasing the rate of exclusive breastfeeding for an adequate period according to national recommendations, such as in the first months, with continued breastfeeding thereafter, followed by an introduction of adequate complementary foods free from excess of salt and added sugars, and,
6. Reducing diet- and physical activity-related inequalities between Member States, age, sex and socio-economic groups.

Serving Europe members may be able to make a contribution to some of these. To this end, many of our member companies commit to identify and implement individual, company-specific commitments as of 2017. These may be run for a single year or be multi-annual, as most appropriate to the objectives in each case.

B. Serving Europe's Framework for Commitments relating to improving dietary intake

Serving Europe members recognise the need to improve dietary intake where possible. In recognition of the wide variety of offerings made available to customers by Serving Europe member companies, it is appropriate to develop commitments that are specific to the particular businesses of individual member companies, while also taking account of the business and reporting cycles they already operate.

Therefore, member companies will determine the details of their own commitments and the most appropriate duration for such commitments in function of the specificities of their own businesses.

Serving Europe is establishing a framework under which individual member companies may develop specific commitments helping consumers achieve a balanced diet and that are relevant for their offerings and operations, addressing one or more of the following:

- *Providing a wide range of choices to suit different dietary needs, including different portion sizes*
- *Promoting the consumption of fruit and vegetables*
- *Improving product composition where appropriate by reducing salt, saturated fat, trans fat and added sugars*
- *Helping consumers make informed choices, notably by providing them with nutrition information*
- *Affecting consumer behaviour in a positive manner.*

C. Serving Europe and marketing to children

Serving Europe member companies respect the legislation in place around Europe relating to advertising and marketing standards. As mentioned above, we endeavour to set and respect the highest standards.

Indeed, some Serving Europe members have signed up to the EU Pledge on marketing to children. We encourage any Serving Europe member for whom advertising to children may be relevant to consider signing up to the EU Pledge.

D. Other commitments

In addition, Serving Europe encourages members to take commitments on other EU Platform priorities that fit with their business operations (for example, in relation to physical activity or to facilitating breast feeding). Commitments may also encompass research into influencing consumer dietary behaviour in a positive way.

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About branded food & beverage service chains

The companies represented in Serving Europe are focused on bringing together different ingredients to create a wide variety of menus, meals and other food combinations, which often vary from season to season or marketing period to marketing period. These meal options are often composed by customers themselves.

This makes it difficult in practice to establish “industry-wide” commitments in regard to product formulation that can be followed by a range of different companies offering products that vary widely – from made-to-order sandwiches to ice cream sundaes; from coffee and baked goods to home-delivered pizza; from hamburgers to chicken specialities.

In this regard, branded food and beverage service chains are distinctly different from the food manufacturing industry which, for the most part, is focused on the manufacturing and marketing of individual food or beverage products, where applying a reformulation programme across a relatively homogenous category of food or beverage can be relatively straightforward to implement and document.

The heterogeneity of the food service sector presents challenges to the nature and length of commitment that can be feasibly undertaken as a sector. It also presents significant obstacles to collecting and correlating coherent outputs/results for reporting purposes. This variety requires a pragmatic approach to commitments under the EU Platform.

With this in mind, commitments in the area of food reformulation will not be undertaken by Serving Europe in a common way. Rather, Serving Europe is establishing a framework under which individual member companies will develop specific commitments related to improving dietary intake that are relevant for their offerings and operations. These will be developed in line with the operational constraints, timelines and reporting periodicity of their businesses.

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