

## Leave no food behind. Feed who is in need.

### Who is behind this challenge?

Corinna Doll is a TUM student of political science who did an internship in Brussels where lobbying events are taking place throughout the year. The discrepancy of well paid people eating and drinking for free, while some people are having a hard time to get along just around the corner, created a strong and unbearable impression. But the problem is complicated. Many smart people are necessary to disentangle the problem and work on practical solutions. Corinna wants to support the project group(s) with her knowledge of the situation and a network of contacts that could be asked for more detailed information.

### Introduction

Brussels is the melting pot of the EU where lobbying is taking place throughout the year. Institutions that are active in Brussels are for example federal states (Free State of Bavaria), regions or foundations. These institutions host events in order to discuss political issues or bring specific interests forward. They invite stakeholders like trade associations, researchers, politicians and EU commission representatives, and employees of public and private organizations. Almost every hosted event comes with free food and drinks. Besides the vibrant world of political discussions of the societal elite and well paid people, poor and homeless people are just around the corner. In winter, metro stations turned into camps which were their protection from the fierce wind, the rain and the cold. Some welfare organizations and volunteers give their best to help, but it is difficult.

On the one hand, there is leftover food – often paid by tax payers' money -. We do not want to waste it. On the other hand, there are persons in difficult situations and they are hungry, and there are organizations that try to help them.

Can't we connect the ones who have leftovers with those who would be thankful to receive? Don't we need coordinated long-lasting approaches that support professional social workers?

### Problem Definition:

Food is usually left over after caterings for events. In compliance with the host's guidelines, the employees might be allowed to eat the leftovers. However, food will often be thrown away. How can this food be saved for people who need it? There is a variety of obstacles that need to be overcome.

## What is the waste challenge?

*Leave no food behind: Feed who is in need.*

- What is the current legal situation?
- How can collection of leftovers and transportation be realized? (technical aspects, coordination, communication, ...)

### **Relevant Factors:**

#### **1. Timing:**

Events are taking place regularly but not every week, and not always at the same day of the week.

#### **2. Food Object:**

The amount of leftover food varies.

The form of leftover food varies.

The kind of food varies.

#### **3. Legislation:**

Probably, several laws exist to restrict the transfer of leftover food.

#### **4. Logistics and Communication:**

Who will collect the food?

How can it be transported and distributed?

#### **5. Partnerships:**

Are institutions willing to cooperate?

What can catering companies contribute to the solution?

## Desired Impact of Challenge:

The goal is to make use of leftover food to help people in need instead of wasting it. This could be a first step to disseminate the change to all kind of events where food is served and left over.

## Skills needed/recommended

- Understanding of legal requirements (at least one person per group)
- Language skills:
  - Legal texts/information: It would be great to have someone with French/Dutch skills in the group because some information about requirements in Belgium or the legal texts could be in French/Dutch, or access to information may be easier in French/Dutch.
  - Communication/contact: It would be great to have someone with French/Dutch skills in the group in order to reach out and communicate with Belgian organizations that take care of people in need.
  - It would be great to have someone with German skills in the group for starting out with one German Federal State Representation.
  - Logistics: It would be great to have someone in the group who already has some knowledge on logistics.

## Relevant considerations for the challenge / theme:

Avoidance of leftovers is not the focus. The focus is optimization of donating leftovers. Probably, you will come across legal restrictions that deal with hygienic considerations. Ethical questions could also become an issue. Do not hesitate to get feedback from experts (social workers, padres from St. Bonifaz near TUM).

## Relevant links

- Website of the **Bavarian Representation in Brussels** <https://www.bayern.de/staatskanzlei/bayern-in-bruessel/bavaria-in-brussels/>  
(in German: <https://www.bayern.de/staatskanzlei/bayern-in-bruessel/>)
- Typical **catering** business in Brussels: <https://www.esstragon.eu/EN/Start,14.html>
- **Welfare organizations** taking care of homeless and poor:
  - o Sant'Egidio: A donation based restaurant for homeless people and a young people who visit the poor and bring food to them.  
French website: <https://www.santegidio.be/fr/associations/kamiano/>
  - o Red Cross of Belgium (Croix Rouge) takes care of homeless and poor persons  
Website in French: <https://www.croix-rouge.be/precarite/>
  - o Samusocial: <https://samusocial.be/en/> takes care of homeless people