



## **Royal Decree 315/2025, of 15 April, establishing rules for the development of Law 17/2011, of 5 July, on food security and nutrition, for the promotion of healthy and sustainable eating in educational centres.**

### I

Article 43 of the Spanish Constitution mandates the public authorities to organize and protect public health through preventive measures and the necessary benefits and services and to promote health education, physical education and sport.

Malnutrition in all its forms currently affects all countries and tackling it globally is essential to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2 "Zero Hunger" contemplated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations.

For more than two decades, both in Spain and in the rest of Europe, obesity has been a serious health problem and a real public health challenge. In Spain and according to the most recent data from the "ALADINO 2023 study: a study on Food, Physical Activity, Childhood Development and Obesity in Spain" of the Autonomous Body Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition (AESAN), 15.9% of children aged 6 to 9 are obese, 3.6% of schoolchildren have severe obesity and 36.1% excess weight (overweight and obese). In low-income families, we can see that the prevalence of excess weight continues without improvement. Thus, the prevalence of excess weight in families with an income of less than 18,000 euros reaches 46.7%, compared to 29.2% in families with an income of more than 30,000 euros. This is associated with serious health consequences in both the short and long term. In addition, and according to the World Health Organization, about 60% of the child population with excess weight will carry their excess weight into adult life.

In addition, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989 and ratified by Spain in 1990, recognizes in its articles 24 and 27 the rights of children to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and adequate nutrition, and General Comment No. 15 (2013) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child highlights the need to adopt measures aimed at guaranteeing access to safe, nutritionally adequate and culturally appropriate food.

Likewise, the Conclusions of the Council of the European Union "Healthy Eating for Children: A Healthy Future for Europe" (2018/C 232/01), call for ambitious and effective prevention policies by integrating health into all policies. They also call for special attention to be paid to children from the most disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and in vulnerable situations.

### II

The demand for sustainable and healthy school canteens is an emerging reality that relates to the growing social concern for the implications of the food system on health, the economy and the environment, and is increasingly present, especially after the signing of the Milan Pact on urban food policy.

Given the amount of time that children spend in school, as well as the fact that many schoolchildren consume at least one main meal daily in school, the school environment is key to promote healthy behaviours and eating patterns throughout the population and across different social classes. It should be noted that the requirements and criteria that guide the supply and planning of the menus served in school canteens and the consumption frequencies that are established for each food group refer to the lunch offered in the school canteen from Monday to Friday, a meal that is complemented by the food supply in the family environment at other mealtimes, such as breakfast, afternoon snack and dinner, as well as by all the weekend meals, which allow a balance and adjustment to the dietary recommendations established for the whole week.



The school canteen is a key element in reducing child poverty, as well as being in many cases the only resource that many children and adolescents have to access one healthy meal a day. Likewise, it highlights the importance of nutrition education as a cross-cutting element in the school children's learning processes. The acquisition of healthy eating habits during childhood and adolescence not only impacts performance and development in a positive way but also promotes a culture of preventive health that extends throughout life. In this sense, it is important to take into account the dietary guidelines at the school stage as well as the food recommendations prepared by the reference bodies in food safety to reduce the exposure of this population group to certain contaminants.

The objective of guaranteeing access to quality food and nutrition pursued by this Royal Decree is also aligned with the State Action Plan for the Implementation of the European Child Guarantee (2022-2030), the II National Human Rights Plan (2023-2027) and the National Strategic Plan for the Reduction of Childhood Obesity (2022-2030), which recognizes, in its measure 81, that adapted menus will be guaranteed for students who require it for health or cultural reasons (ethical and religious), and in its measure 75 which cites that the provision of school canteens at all educational stages, will be guaranteed promoting healthy eating and prioritising the availability of its own kitchen and sustainability.

### III

Article 6 of the General Health Law 14/1986, of 25 April, provides that the actions of public health administrations must be aimed at the promotion of health, and article 18 determines the need to adopt actions aimed at the prevention of health risks derived from food products, including the improvement of their nutritional qualities.

Law 17/2011, of 5 July, on food security and nutrition, establishes the basic regulatory framework in the field of nutrition, dedicating its chapter VII to the development of measures aimed at promoting healthy eating, physical activity and the prevention of obesity. Article 40 of this chapter provides for a relevant set of special measures aimed at the school environment.

Likewise, article 41 of Law 17/2011, of 5 July, provides that when public administrations tender concessions for catering services, they will have to introduce requirements in the technical specifications so that the food served is varied, balanced and adapted to the nutritional needs of the users of the service. These requirements must be subject to special consideration within the contract award criteria.

The fifth final provision of Law 17/2011, of 5 July, establishes in favour of the Government a regulatory authorization for the regulatory development of this Law. This Royal Decree is based on that provision.

In turn, article 16 of Law 33/2011, of 4 October, on Public Health, establishes that health promotion actions will have to pay special attention to the educational field.

Given that public authorities' annual expenditure on food and beverages is extremely high, it is key that such public expenditure is made in accordance with the highest standards on the basis of nutritional and sustainability criteria. In this sense, Law 9/2017, of 8 November, on Public Sector Contracts, which transposes into Spanish law the Directives of the European Parliament and of the Council 2014/23/EU and 2014/24/EU, of 26 February 2014, prioritizes the best value for money in order to achieve social, environmental, innovation and competitive objectives.

Also, Royal Decree 6/2018, of 12 January, establishing the Interministerial Commission for the incorporation of ecological criteria in public procurement, underlines the importance of these as a tool for the achievement of environmental policies.

Likewise, articles 22 and 31 of Law 7/2021, of 20 May, on climate change and energy transition, explicitly mention the relationship between food and climate change, underlining Law 7/2022, of 8 April,



on waste and contaminated soils for a circular economy, the importance of minimising the adverse effects of waste generation and management on human health and the environment.

#### IV

On the other hand, the European Commission has adopted the "Farm to Fork" Strategy, which proposes measures to improve availability and promote healthy and sustainable diets in institutional catering services with minimum mandatory criteria for the procurement of food.

Healthy and sustainable eating is a priority in the educational and social fields, being fundamental for the development and well-being of schoolchildren. In this context, the Mediterranean diet acquires special relevance, not only for its health benefits, but also for its recognition as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity by UNESCO.

Likewise, both the European Action Plan on Food and Nutrition 2015-2020 of the World Health Organization's Regional Office for Europe, and the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity 2014-2020, considered the school environment as an essential environment in the prevention of childhood obesity. This aspect was also addressed at the United Nations Food Systems Summit in 2021, where the importance of the school canteen as one of the strategies to guarantee citizens' access to safe, healthy and sustainable food was highlighted.

The importance of this issue is broadly contemplated in article 40 of Law 17/2011, of 5 July. Section 6 of this article establishes that in kindergartens and schools, the sale of food and beverages with a high content of saturated fatty acids, trans-fatty acids, sugars and salt will not be allowed, adding that these contents will be established by regulation.

In July 2010, the Plenary Session of the Interterritorial Council of the National Health System approved the Consensus Document on Food in Educational Centres. The recommendations contained in that document have inspired public procurement in the educational field, through their inclusion to a greater or lesser extent in the technical specifications for that procurement. Although the criteria established for the food offered by vending machines, canteens and kiosks in educational centres included in this consensus document have been fully provided for in different regulatory texts of some autonomous communities, there is a need to review them and articulate the necessary mechanisms to guarantee their full use by all the competent public administrations competent in this field.

Subsequently, in December 2020, the Institutional Commission of the Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition (hereinafter, AESAN) approved the fourth National Official Food Chain Control Plan (PNCOCA) 2021-2025, which includes Program 16 of school menus, vending machines and school canteens. In the context of this program, in March 2022, the Institutional Commission agreed on a protocol of minimum criteria for the evaluation of food supply in schools, with a regulatory basis that supports these criteria at a national level being pertinent. Ensuring that all educational centres meet the minimum criteria for a healthy, quality and sustainable diet is one of the specific objectives contemplated in the National Strategic Plan for the Reduction of Childhood Obesity (measures 83, 84 and 85), which includes the need to ensure that the entire food supply in educational centres complies with the provisions of Program 16 of PNCOCA 2021-2025.

#### V

For all these reasons, and in accordance with article 129 of Law 39/2015, of October 1, on the Common Administrative Procedure of Public Administrations, this Royal Decree complies with the principles of necessity and effectiveness, by aiming to guarantee a high level of protection of the health of schoolchildren, promoting a healthy and sustainable diet through the inclusion of nutritional and sustainability criteria for the contracting, acquisition and supply of food and beverages in educational centres, established in the context of the NAOS Strategy on Nutrition, Physical Activity and Prevention of Obesity, of AESAN.



The principle of proportionality has been taken into account, as the necessary and essential provisions for the improvement of nutrition are included and the principle of legal certainty has been guaranteed, since this rule is consistent with the legal framework, both with the state and regional legislation in force, as well as with the European Directives and the recommendations of international health organizations.

In accordance with the principle of legal certainty, the Royal Decree refers to the sanctioning regime already established in Law 17/2011, of 5 July. Moreover, the second final provision provides for a deferred entry into force for certain criteria whose compliance by educational centres may present greater difficulties, establishing a sufficient period of time for food supply contracts to be able to adapt to the new provisions.

The principle of transparency has been observed, clearly defining in this preamble the objectives and justification of the regulation and making it possible to access the documents during the process of preparing it, in accordance with Law 19/2013, of 9 December, on transparency, access to public information and good governance. In addition, in the process of preparing this Royal Decree, the procedures of prior public consultation and public information have been upheld.

This Royal Decree is issued under the provisions of article 149.1.16.<sup>a</sup> of the Spanish Constitution, which reserves to the State the exclusive competence in matters of bases and general coordination of health.

Finally, in application of the principle of efficiency, this regulation does not entail more administrative burdens than are strictly necessary.

The autonomous communities and the cities of Ceuta and Melilla have been consulted, in accordance with article 26 section 6 of Law 50/1997, of November 27, of the Government, and article 17.1 of the Statute of the Autonomous Body Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition, approved by Royal Decree 697/2022, of August 23.

Likewise, the affected sectors and the associations of consumers and users have been consulted, and the Interministerial Commission for Food Management has issued a report.

By virtue of this, at the proposal of the Minister of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and 2030 Agenda, the Minister of Education, Vocational Training and Sports, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Youth and Children, in agreement with the Council of State, and after deliberation of the Council of Ministers at its meeting on 15 of April of 2025,

I HEREBY ORDER:

CHAPTER I

### **General provisions**

#### **Article 1. Objective.**

This Royal Decree aims to establish the measures that, in accordance with the provisions of articles 40 and 41 of Law 17/2011, of 5 July, on food security and nutrition, must be adopted in the school environment to guarantee a healthy and sustainable diet. In particular, it establishes the minimum criteria of nutritional quality and sustainability that must be observed in the procurement of services and supplies related to the supply of food and beverages in schools, as well as the requirements applicable to the planning of school menus.

#### **Article 2. Scope of application.**



This Royal Decree applies to public educational centres, affiliated centres and private centres, which provide preschool and primary school education, special education, compulsory secondary education, baccalaureate or vocational training cycles of basic or intermediate level.

### Article 3. *Definitions.*

1. For the purposes of this Royal Decree, the definitions set out in the European Union, national and regional regulations on nutrition, food security and sustainability shall apply.

2. For the purposes of this Royal Decree, the following shall be understood as:

- a) Fresh food: those food products that are not processed and not subjected to thermal preservation processes.
- b) Added sugars: refined sugars used in food preparation, as well as table sugar.
- c) Free sugars: added sugars plus sugars naturally present in honey, syrups, fruit juices and fruit juice concentrates.
- d) Short distribution channel: that distribution chain in which a limited number of economic agents are involved and the geographical and social relationships of proximity between producers, processors and consumers.
- e) Processed meat: meat processed by salting, curing, fermenting, smoking or other processes to improve its flavour or preservation.
- f) Seasonal fruits and vegetables: those contemplated in the seasonal fruit and vegetable calendars published by the General State Administration or by the regional administrations.
- g) Saturated fats: all fatty acids that do not have a double bond, as defined in Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers and amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC, and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004.

## CHAPTER II

### **Nutritional and sustainability criteria for the contracting, acquisition and supply of food and beverages in educational centres**

#### Article 4. *Nutritional and sustainability criteria for the procurement of food in school canteens.*

1. The following criteria shall be applied to food procurement in school canteens:

- a) Food supply in educational centres will be mainly composed of fresh, seasonal foods from short food supply chains such as vegetables, pulses, preferably whole grains, fruits, nuts and olive oil, which also includes a moderate consumption of protein sources of animal origin such as fish, eggs, dairy and meat, preferably poultry and rabbit.
- b) At least 45% of the fruit and vegetable portions offered will be seasonal.
- c) At least 5% of the total purchase cost of food offered will be from organic production. Alternatively, at least 2 main courses of food per month will be organic.
- d) Priority will be given to the purchase of food whose production complies with the rules of integrated production, in accordance with article 2.a) of Royal Decree 1201/2002, of November 20, which regulates the integrated production of agricultural products and that of the most environmentally friendly marine and aquaculture food products, according to certifications or distinctions of sustainability and traceability, such as the MSC standard, the ASC (sustainable aquaculture) certification or other similar.



- e) Elements aimed at reducing waste generation and food waste to a minimum, as well as their separate collection for subsequent recycling, and at reducing environmental impact throughout the life cycle of the product or service will be introduced, in accordance with the provisions of Law 7/2022, of 8 April, on waste and contaminated soils for a circular economy.
- f) Priority will be given to using healthier culinary techniques such as baking, steaming, boiling, grilling, stir frying and tomato sauces, over others such as frying, battering, and preparations with other sauces.
- g) The oil used to dress the salads will be virgin or extra virgin olive oil and for cooking and frying, olive oil or high oleic sunflower oil will preferably be used.
- h) For environmental reasons, the excess culinary oil must be deposited in the recycling circuits.
- i) Iodized salt will be used and the amount added in the preparations will be reduced, replacing it with the use of spices as an alternative.
- j) The use of broth concentrates, or other flavour enhancers will be limited in food preparation and, if used, the options existing in the market with a 25% reduction in salt shall be used.
- k) The use of single-dose containers will be reduced, in accordance with the mandate provided in article 55 of Law 7/2022, of 8 April. In any case, single-dose containers of salt, sugar, virgin olive oil, vinegar and other sauces shall contain a maximum of the following quantities: 3 grams for sugar, 0.8 grams for salt, 10 ml for virgin olive oil, 8 ml for vinegar, and 10 grams for other sauces.

2. The criteria set out in paragraph 1 apply to public, affiliated and private educational centres referred to in article 2.

*Article 5. Prohibition of the sale of food and beverages with a high content of saturated fatty acids, trans-fatty acids, salt and sugars in schools.*

1. In accordance with the provisions of article 40.6 of Law 17/2011, of 5 July, the sale of foods and beverages with a content of saturated fatty acids, trans-fatty acids, salt and sugars, which exceed the following nutritional criteria per serving, is prohibited in food and beverages vending machines installed in educational centres and its cafeterias:

- a) They should not contain more than 200 kilocalories.
- b) A maximum of 35% of the kilocalories shall come from fat, with a maximum content of 7.8 grams of total fat per packaged portion. This limit shall not apply to whole milk, yoghurts and nuts without added fat.
- c) A maximum of 10% of the kilocalories shall come from saturated fats, with a maximum content of 2.2 grams of saturated fats per packaged portion. This limit shall not apply to whole milk, yoghurts and nuts without added fat.
- d) They will not contain trans-fatty acids, except those naturally present in dairy and meat products.
- e) A maximum of 10% of the kilocalories shall come from added or free sugars, with a maximum content of 5 grams of added or free sugars per packaged portion. This limit shall not apply to fruit and vegetables that do not contain added sugars, or fruit juices and vegetable-based drinks that do not contain added sugars. In milk and milk products, the sugar naturally present in milk (lactose) that approximately corresponds to 4.8 grams per 100ml shall not be taken into account when applying this limit.
- f) They shall contain a maximum of 0.5 grams of salt (0.2 grams of sodium) per packaged portion.

2. In the school food supply system, school cafeterias will prioritise vegetable products, pulses, preferably whole grains, fruits, nuts, characteristic of the Mediterranean diet, which also includes a moderate consumption of protein sources of animal origin such as fish, eggs, dairy and meat, preferably poultry and rabbit.

3. The criteria referred to in paragraph 1 do not apply to meals prepared in the centre.



*Article 6. Prohibition of the sale of packaged products with a high caffeine content in educational centres.*

1. In schools, the sale of packaged products with a caffeine content greater than 15 mg/100 ml will not be allowed.

2. This prohibition shall not apply to the acquisition of such products by adults in spaces not accessible to students.

*Article 7. Additional requirements to the supply of food in vending machines in educational centres.*

1. Food and beverage vending machines will not be located in areas that can be accessed by preschool and primary school students.

2. Food and beverage vending machines will not have advertising of any food and beverage or any other product.

*Article 8. Measures to promote access to drinking water.*

1. Public administrations will favour access to water through the implementation of properly marked water sources that offer drinking water free of charge, in common and recreational spaces, throughout the school day and extra-curricular hours, including lunch periods.

2. Drinking water jugs will be available on the tables of the school canteens, unless it is not possible due to supply conditions, in which case large reusable containers will be prioritized.

### CHAPTER III.

#### **Measures aimed at the planning school menus**

*Article 9. Requirements and criteria for the planning of school menus.*

1. Meals served in schools must be balanced and adapted to the nutritional needs and food safety recommendations of each age group. To this end, they must be supervised by professionals with accredited training in human nutrition and dietetics.

2. School menus, served from Monday to Friday, will be prepared taking into account the dietary frequencies for the different food groups, based on the traditional structure of the components of the midday meal in our culture:

a) First courses:

1. Vegetables: one to two servings per week.
2. Pulses: one to two servings per week.
3. Rice: one serving per week.
4. Pasta: one serving per week.

b) Main courses:

1. Fish: one to three servings per week.
2. Eggs: one to two servings per week.
3. Meats: maximum three servings a week. Maximum one serving of red meat a week. Maximum two servings of processed meat per month.



4. Dishes based on plant-based protein foods: one to five servings per week. In those schools that offer a vegetarian menu, the five second courses will be based on foods that provide exclusively vegetable protein.

c) Side dishes:

1. Assorted salads: three to four servings per week.
2. Other side dishes (potatoes, vegetables, pulses): one to two servings per week.

d) Desserts:

1. Fresh fruits: four to five servings per week.
2. Other desserts, preferably yoghurt and curd without added sugar, fresh cheese: maximum once a week.

3. Other requirements:

- a) Water as the only beverage. The presence of drinking water as the only beverage shall be guaranteed, unless it is not possible due to supply conditions.
- b) Wholemeal bread will be offered at least twice a week.
- c) At least four times a month the rice or pasta will be wholemeal.
- d) Oily and white fish will be prioritized alternately, and crustaceans and molluscs may be included.
- e) Salads and side dishes of fresh vegetables will be preferred to other forms of presentation.
- f) The consumption of whole nuts in children under 6 years of age will be prohibited due to the risk of choking.
- g) Fried foods shall be limited to a maximum of one serving per week.
- h) The consumption of pre-cooked dishes such as pizzas, cannelloni, croquettes, dumplings, fish or battered meats, vegetable analogues, among others, will be limited to a maximum of one serving per month.
- i) Use of iodized salt, in limited amounts.

*Article 10. Availability of special menus.*

1. Educational centres must have special menus for students with a medical diagnosis of food allergies or intolerances or other diseases that require it, and that by means of the corresponding medical certificate accredits the impossibility of consuming certain foods that harm their health or, where appropriate, they will have adequate cooling and heating means so that the special menu provided from home can be preserved and consumed, without danger to the health of the students affected.

2. Educational centres must have special menus for students who require it, for ethical or religious reasons, or, where appropriate, adequate cooling and heating means will be available so that the special menu provided from home can be preserved and consumed, without danger to the health of the students affected.

*Article 11. Information on menus for the family environment.*

1. The educational centres will inform the families, guardians or persons responsible for the students of the monthly planning of the menus that will be served in a clear and detailed way and will guide them with appropriate menus so that supper is complementary to the midday meal, in accordance with the current dietary recommendations of the health authorities.

2. In the case of menus prepared specifically for students with special needs, the parents, guardians or managers will also be provided with the information in the previous paragraph.



3. The information will include the name of the dishes, the cooking technique, the types of sauces and side dishes and the list of allergens present in each of the dishes. With regards to desserts, the variety in the case of fruits or the type of dairy will also be indicated.

4. All the above information will be available on the bulletin boards, on the websites of the schools or in any other easily accessible medium to all families, guardians or those responsible for the students who make use of the school canteen service, either continuously or occasionally. This information will also be accessible to people with disabilities.

## CHAPTER IV

### Control and sanctioning regime

#### Article 12. *Official controls.*

The competent authorities will carry out official controls, in the manner and with the frequency which they may order, within the framework of the National Official Food Chain Control Plans, on compliance with the provisions of this Royal Decree.

#### Article 13. *Sanctioning regime.*

Failure to comply with the provisions of this rule may be subject to sanction by the competent administration, in accordance with the provisions of article 50.2.c) of Law 17/2011, of 5 July.

Single additional provision.

The provisions of this Royal Decree shall not result in an increase in the total cost of the menu for the families.

Single repealing provision. *Regulatory repeal.*

Any regulations with equal or lower rank that contradict the provisions of this Royal Decree are repealed.

First final provision. *Competent title.*

This Royal Decree is issued under the provisions of article 149.1.16.<sup>a</sup> of the Spanish Constitution, which grants the State the exclusive competence in matters of bases and general coordination of health.

Second final provision. *Entry into force.*

This Royal Decree shall come into force twelve months after its publication in the "Official State Gazette". However, the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 3 of article 4 shall enter into force twenty-four months after their publication in the "Official State Gazette".

Madrid, 15 of April of 2025.