



**MIESTO  
LABORATORIJA**



# **FOOD WASTE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS RAISING CASE STUDY / 2024**



Funded by  
the European Union



## PROJECT IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATION

“**City Lab**” is a sustainable and environmentally friendly educational community centre in Vilnius (Lithuania). The main objectives of “City Lab” are to bring together and activate the surrounding community and to contribute to the dissemination of ideas for a more sustainable and environmentally friendly lifestyle.

The main source of income for the “City Lab” is the community café. The café is open 6 days a week and employs 12 staff, including 1 cook and 1 kitchen manager (as of November 2024). The café has an annual turnover of EUR 339 418 (2023 data). The kitchen concept is comfort food (cosy, seasonal, homemade, large portions). The kitchen has the same requirements as all the activities of the centre: to work in an environmentally friendly way and to be guided by ecological ideas.

The following factors have motivated us to measure food waste and find solutions to prevent and reduce it:

- ✓ the need to reduce café costs - food, energy, labour, waste management and other costs that are rising every year due to inflation;
- ✓ the desire to meet the organisation’s sustainability objectives, as social, environmental and economic sustainability is a priority for the organisation.

As part of our environmental mission, we aimed to implement a demonstration-education project - an experiment open to the public.

# SOLUTIONS FOR MEASURING, PREVENTING AND REDUCING FOOD WASTE

Between 2023 and 2024, we implemented the European Union part-funded project “Food waste prevention and awareness raising” No. 101111865. The project budget is EUR 102824,86. The project location is Vilnius (Lithuania).

As part of the project, we have introduced new organisational processes in our organisation - measuring, preventing and reducing food waste, i.e.:

- ✓ we designed, tested and implemented smart technical solutions.
- ✓ designed, tested and implemented innovative organisational solutions.

More information about the steps: read [here](#) and [here](#).

The project has helped us install advanced equipment (smart scales with software and a smart cash register with software). The project has also helped to train staff, carry out long-term measurements of food waste, implement strategies to prevent and reduce food waste on customers' plates and in the kitchen (control portion sizes, optimise menu management, carry out communication actions to present the results, control kitchen waste from cutting and peeling food products, take proactive measures to avoid out-of-date products and spoiled food, and educate customers directly).

## Some examples of implemented solutions



Smart cash register



Intelligent food prevention scales



An information table with records of the amount of waste produced



# KEY FOOD WASTE MONITORING DATA

The statistics are recorded in our café for the period from 30-10-2023 to 30-11-2024 (13 months in total):

## Total value and quantity of food waste, number of transactions

WASTE VALUE

**€2,084.73**

WASTE WEIGHT

**936.04 KG**

WASTE TRANSACTIONS

**1,074**

On average, 72 kg of waste was generated per month, with a value of €160.36.

## FOOD WASTE BY PLACE OF GENERATION

Kitchen waste accounted for the majority of waste: 66 % by value and 76 % by weight.



### KITCHEN WASTE

WASTE VALUE

**€1,382.50**

WASTE WEIGHT

**715.21 KG**



### LEFTOVER CUSTOMER PLATES

WASTE VALUE

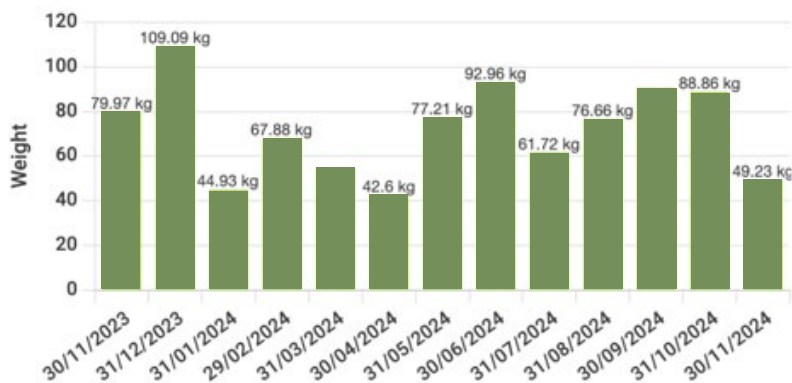
**€702.23**

WASTE WEIGHT

**220.83 KG**

## Food waste by month

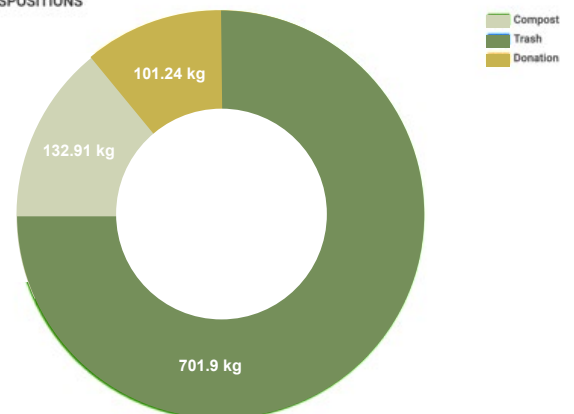
### WASTE TREND



! The amount of food waste varies according to the seasonality of the café.

## Ways of managing food waste

### TOP DISPOSITIONS



! Only 14% of food waste went in the bin, most of it was to the seasonality of the café composted or distributed.

! Vegetables formed the main share of kitchen waste - 69% by volume and 32% by value.

! The main causes of kitchen waste were vegetable scraping and unusable parts of products, while spoiled products and overproduction were the most significant costly.

## ACHIEVED RESULTS

Food waste measurement data showed that there is potential for savings even in our micro-enterprise café. In the period from 30/10/2023 to 30/11/2024, we avoided more than 0.9 tonnes of food waste. In 13 months, we managed to reduce waste by almost 50%! These savings, expressed in terms of environmental and social value created, meant that 6.6 metric tons of CO2 emissions were avoided, water equivalent to over 22,000 baths was not used, and 1,674 portions of food were not thrown away (thus contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12.3: to halve global food waste and food loss by 2030). For our café, these are impressive numbers! Meanwhile, the financial savings (more than €500) have allowed us to partially absorb the price rises due to inflation.

Avoided food waste - quantity, value and impact - recorded in our café for the period from 30-10-2023 to 30-11-2024 (13 months in total):

### Prevention impact

Reduction (by Weight)	Food Waste Prevented	Financial savings
» 49.92%	» 908.51 kg	» €508.41

### Environmental and social impacts of avoided food waste

Food waste prevention impact is equivalent to...



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Citizens' Initiatives (City Lab) has implemented a project "Food waste prevention and awareness raising" No. 10111865, partly funded by the European Union. Project duration: 2023-2024. Project budget: 102824,86 EUR. Project location: Vilnius (Lithuania).

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