

## PRACTICE ABSTRACT

### Influence of social norms on food waste (FW) behaviour in Food Services

Chorizo aims to understand the influence of social norms on FW behaviour and to identify descriptive actions to reduce FW. As a part of the project, an empirical case study in Slovenia, targeted at food service consumers, found that most respondents feel that they are not compelled to finish their meals to conform to social norms or avoid negative judgments from others, with 73% of respondents suggesting they don't feel the need to clean their plates to avoid appearing greedy. However, a significant proportion of respondents acknowledge a connection between dietary aspirations and plate clearing. While taste remains the most important aspect of emptying the plate, results also indicated that portion sizes have proven to be quite important, as individuals who valued portion sizes for meal enjoyment were more sceptical about the measure of reducing portions to minimize food waste. About a third of respondents acknowledged food waste's ethical implications, requesting leftover packaging.

In addressing FW in the food services sector, various measures were identified, including **pre-ordering, promoting taking leftovers home and training the kitchen staff**. The findings suggest that price discounts are effective motivators for pre-ordering, and offering a variety of different dishes when ordering ahead can also be a compelling factor for some customers, though it's not a decisive factor for everyone. The strongest motivator for pre-ordering is making it a requirement to reserve a table, with a significant majority of respondents in favour.

Overall, the findings underscore the complexity of FW reduction efforts in the food services sector, highlighting the interplay between consumer behaviour, social norms, and incentives.

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