

Market Dialogues for Sustainable and Healthy School Food Procurement

As part of the **SchoolFood4Change project**, ICLEI Europe developed the City-specific Market Engagement and Dialogue Report – a practical guide that documents how **18 European cities organised, tested, and evaluated market dialogues** to advance **sustainable, healthy, and innovative school food procurement**. The report outlines the step-by-step approach to support cities in conducting structured early engagement with suppliers, caterers, farmers, and other stakeholders, helping administrations understand market capacities while preparing suppliers for more ambitious sustainability criteria.

Different cities need different solutions

The cities' **diverse procurement operational models** cause city-specific challenges such as limited supplier readiness, logistical constraints, administrative burdens for small farmers, and lack of prior experience with dialogues. The report showcases how tailored coaching sessions, templates, and tools enabled cities to run effective one-to-one meetings, roundtables, and multi-stakeholder events as part of the market dialogues.

An initiative with long-lasting impact

The report presents concrete results: **clearer procurement strategies** (e.g., in Lyon), **better-prepared markets for ambitious tenders** (e.g., in Nuoro, Viimsi), increased supplier interest (e.g., in Malmö), and **new local networks formed** (e.g., in Slovakia, in the Czech Republic). It also emphasises the **long-term impact**, showing that many cities are now **institutionalising market dialogues** as an integrated step before publishing tenders demonstrating their importance for achieving procurement sustainability, health and social equity targets.



Find more information here:

