RETASTE Conference Abstracts
RETASTE-PLW-1529-In-person Poster
Rethymno, September 16-18, 2026
© Author(s) 2026 CC BY 4.0 License
DOI:10.5281/zenodo.23678372

From Food Waste Prevention to Surplus Food Redistribution: The SYDNA Project in South Attica, Greece

Lasaridi Katia[1,*], Fortatos Stathis[1], Boikou Konstantina[1], Bobotas Agorakis[2], Chroni Christina[1] and Abeliots Konstantinos[1]

[1]*Harokopio University, Greece*
[2]*No Waste Technologies, Greece*

ACCEPTED

Abstract

Food waste in restaurants and other food service businesses is closely linked to everyday decisions on purchasing, storage, preparation, cooking and serving. Under the EU framework (European Parliament and Council, 2018), food waste refers to food that has become waste and may consist of both edible and inedible parts. Prevention is therefore the priority. When food is safe and suitable for human consumption, but a business no longer needs it, redistribution keeps it in the food system rather than allowing it to become waste (European Commission, 2017).

The SYDNA project brings this logic into practice across three municipalities in South Attica, Greece. It connects local authorities, food service businesses, researchers and social support structures, with prevention at source at the centre of its work. At the same time, the project addresses citizens and households, recognising that reducing food waste also depends on everyday choices made at home.

In the food service sector, the work begins with a better understanding of how food waste is generated and managed. Local businesses are mapped and surveyed to record their operating characteristics, current practices and measures already taken to prevent waste. In selected restaurants, digital monitoring will provide more detailed information on the quantity and type of food discarded at different stages of operation (Eriksson et al., 2019; Sigala et al., 2025). This evidence is combined with practical guidance on purchasing, storage, preparation, cooking, serving, and plate waste, so measurement can inform decisions relevant to daily restaurant practice.

Surplus food redistribution forms another important part of the initiative. A dedicated digital platform provides the basis for coordinating donations between participating businesses, municipal services and social support structures. It brings together information on available food, quantities, collection locations and suitable collection times, while also supporting the organisation of collection routes. Combined with refrigerated transport, this system is intended to make the safe transfer of donated food easier to organise at the local level.

The work also extends to households. Diary-based recording improves understanding of food waste generation (Sigala et al., 2024), while citizens receive information and digital tools that link food choices to their environmental impact. This adds a consumer perspective to the wider prevention effort and brings the issue closer to everyday life.

By combining prevention in food service businesses, surplus food redistribution and household engagement, SYDNA treats food waste as a shared local challenge. The project positions municipalities as coordinators, connecting businesses, social services, and citizens while

keeping prevention the top priority and human consumption the preferred destination for suitable surplus food.

Keywords: food waste prevention, food service, surplus food redistribution, digital monitoring, municipalities

References

European Commission, 2017. Commission Notice, EU guidelines on food donation (2017/C 361/01). Official Journal of the European Union, C 361, pp. 1–29

European Parliament and Council, 2018. Directive (EU) 2018/851 of 30 May 2018 amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste. Official Journal of the European Union, L 150, pp. 109–140

Eriksson, M., Malefors, C., Callewaert, P., Hartikainen, H., Pietiläinen, O. and Strid, I., 2019. What gets measured gets managed - Or does it? Connection between food waste quantification and food waste reduction in the hospitality sector. Resources, Conservation & Recycling: X, 4, 100021. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rcrx.2019.100021.

Sigala, E.G., Chroni, C., Boikou, K., Abeliotis, K., Panagiotakos, D. and Lasaridi, K., 2024. Quantification of household food waste in Greece to establish the 2021 national baseline and methodological implications. Waste Management, 190, pp. 102-12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wasman.2024.09.012

Sigala, E.G., Gerwin P., Chroni C., Abeliotis K., Strotmann C., Lasaridi K., 2025. Reducing food waste in the HORECA sector using AI-based waste-tracking devices. Waste Management, 198, pp. 77-86. hpps://doi: 10.1016/j.wasman.2025.02.044

Acknowledgments: This work was carried out within the Project "Actions for the prevention and valorisation of food waste in the food service sector, and development of an information and awareness campaign on the prevention and source separation of bio-waste" (MIS 6018251) of the Programme "Attica 2021-2027", co-funded by the European Union.

ACCEPTED