



ZeroW: A JUST TRANSITION TO ZERO FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

ZeroW & CHORIZO Joint Final Conference

16 September 2025

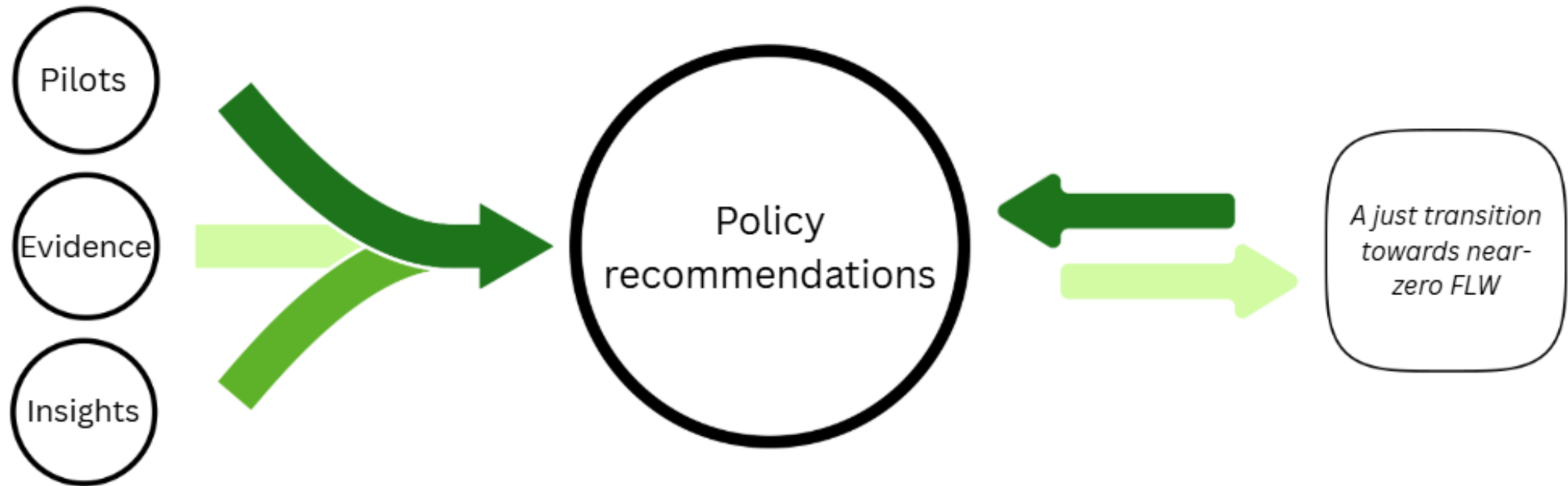
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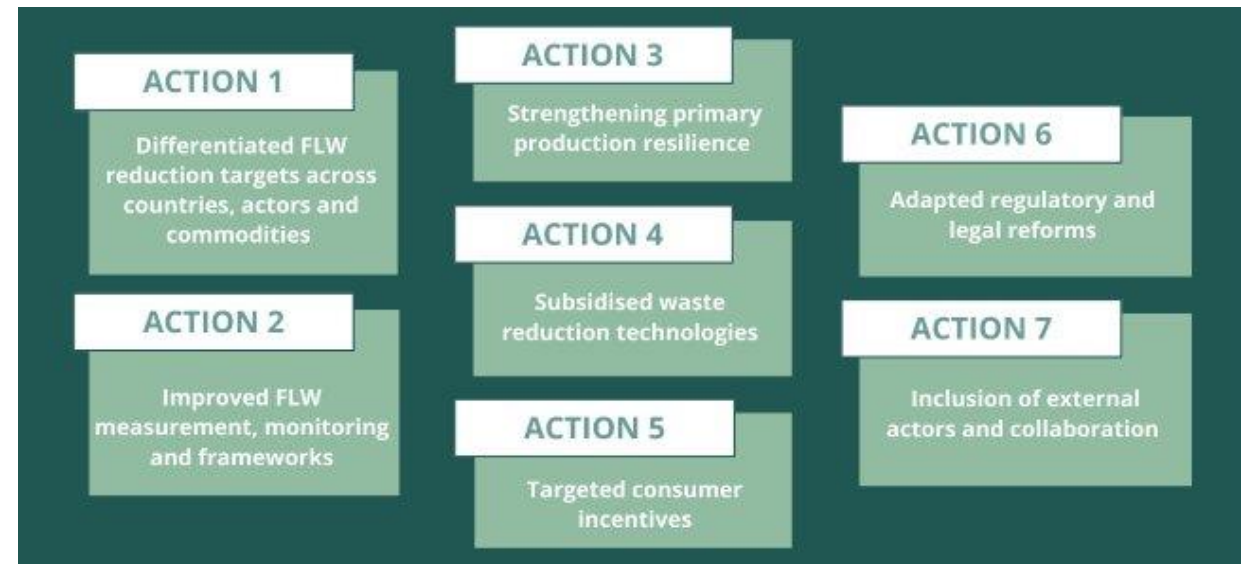
Policy recommendations within the ZeroW project

ZeroW SILLs



Final proposal for just and realistic intermediate FLW reduction targets

Food waste reduction target on	Mandatory 2030 FW reduction target	Voluntary 2030 FW reduction target
Primary production	n/a	10%
Processing & Manufacturing	10% (absolute amount in mass units)	For higher target levels
Retail & Consumption	30% (per capita)	For higher target levels



ZeroW EU Policy briefs

1. Food actor specific: **Building consumer capacity** for a just zero food waste transition
2. Food actor specific: **Empowering farmers** for a just zero food waste transition
3. Food chain specific: **Transforming food chain structure** to reduce food loss and waste
4. Governance specific: **Effective governance** for a just zero food waste transition
5. Context specific: **Participatory local governance and empowerment** for just zero food waste transition within the urban context



POLICY BRIEF
EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE FOR A
JUST ZERO FOOD WASTE
TRANSITION



ZeroW tackles Food Loss and Waste (FLW) through a coordinated set of innovations piloted in nine real-world Systemic Innovation Living Labs (SILLs) aiming to achieve significant reductions across all stages of the food supply chain - from pre-harvest to consumption. A dedicated Policy Team complements this work by defining a 'Just Transition Pathway' toward near-zero FLW, offering a practical framework to bridge systemic barriers and on-the-ground FLW solutions. Drawing on economic modelling and insights from the stakeholders and the SILLs, the team identified seven Actions and key recommendations promoting a flexible, equity-focused transition.

Addressing FLW requires coordinated governance that balances incentives, accountability, and collaboration across diverse food system actors. This policy brief presents evidence-based recommendations to support inclusive, transparent, and effective governance frameworks aligned with the EU's Just Transition, which will guide the action plans of Member States for the newly adopted binding food waste reduction targets.

Policy Problem

FLW amounts remain high due to the lack of a coherent governance framework that ensures transparency, accountability, and coordinated action across the food supply chain. Companies are not consistently required to measure or report FLW, and current policies offer limited incentives for prevention, data sharing, or collaboration.

Key insights from ZeroW project

- Non-punitive, progressive, positive incentive-based approach, such as tax breaks for verified food waste reduction and tiered taxation based on business size or waste volume, is both effective and equitable.





<https://www.zerow-project.eu>



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Key recommendations across the briefs

- Foster **social innovation** and reframe food waste **perceptions**
 - Targeted consumer incentives, social innovation (e.g., Hungary's project “Wasteless”) and inclusive behavioural change.
- Support small-scale farmers’ **digital transition**
 - Digital and physical infrastructure investment (e.g., communications services, data collection platforms, regulations on data ownership/privacy) , training, co-created tools, hybrid pathways.
- Strengthen **Short Food Supply Chains** for resilient primary production
 - Targeted interventions by investing in local food networks, logistics infrastructure, equitable access to innovation.



Key recommendations across the briefs

- Establish a **non-punitive, incentive-based** approach to food waste governance
 - Combining incentives with targeted enforcement (e.g., Spain's Food Waste Prevention Law 1/2025).
 - Rewarding measurable achievements.
- **Revising procurement standards** and fostering the adoption of **new monitoring tools**
 - Integrate quantitative and qualitative metrics (e.g., participation equity).
 - Follow and enhance leading practices (e.g., Sustainable Food Procurement Manifesto).





Thank you for your attention!

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CHORIZO: KEY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS & INSIGHTS FROM CITY INTEREST GROUP

INTRODUCTION

 The CHORIZO policy brief is **addressed to:**

- EU policymakers and institutions
- National governments
- Regional and local authorities
- Civil society organisations and practitioners engaged in food systems

 It is based on **CHORIZO's key takeaways**, including:

- Stock taking of FLW prevention actions in Europe
- Sectoral case studies across schools, restaurants, hotels, retail and households

 It aims to provide **guidance on how to embed food loss and waste (FLW) reduction into EU and national policies.**



PILLAR #1

REFRAME THE CHALLENGE

PILLAR #1: REFRAME THE CHALLENGE

Food loss and waste is more than a supply chain inefficiency; it reflects deeper **social norms and perceptions**.

Recommended policy priorities:

- **Embed FLW prevention** into cross-cutting policies on climate, food, and social welfare.
- **Strengthen legal clarity and economic incentives** for food donation & redistribution.
- **Invest in tailored awareness campaigns** and **foster local ownership**, such as through community-led food sharing.
- **Use behavioural tools and behavioural data platforms** to set baselines, monitor progress, and assess intervention impacts.
- **Fund applied research on social-norm-based interventions**, integrating perspectives such as gender and cultural diversity.



PILLAR #2

LEAD WITH STRATEGY

PILLAR #2: LEAD WITH STRATEGY

Addressing food loss and waste requires systemic action that **targets the root causes** of surplus, not just downstream disposal.

Recommended policy priorities:

- **Enact and operationalise binding national FLW targets**, with sector-specific KPIs, aligned with EU ambitions on food security and autonomy.
- **Invest in robust national baseline data systems and public monitoring frameworks to track progress.**
- **Encourage multi-actor collaboration across the value chain.**
- **Support innovation** such as smart packaging, digital redistribution tools, and novel valorisation processes, while ensuring affordability.



PILLAR #3

MAKE CITIES THE ENGINES OF CHANGE

PILLAR #3: MAKE CITIES THE ENGINES OF CHANGE

Municipalities are **uniquely positioned** to drive systemic food waste solutions: they are responsible for public food procurement in hospitals, schools, and care facilities, they manage waste services, and they maintain close ties to citizens and community initiatives.

Recommendations for cities:

- **Integrate FLW reduction criteria into catering and procurement contracts** across schools, hospitals and other public institutions (e.g. portion planning, surplus redistribution).
- **Leverage schools to pair practical food waste reduction with education**, helping children form long-term habits that influence households and communities.
- **Empower local ambassadors** (e.g. chefs, teachers) to promote low-waste behaviours and sustain public engagement.
- **Engage food service providers & retailers** by offering certification schemes to recognise sustainable practices and providing fiscal incentives such as tax reductions for businesses that cut food waste.
- **Scale up redistribution platforms** and ensure supportive legal frameworks for food safety and donation.

PILLAR #3: MAKE CITIES THE ENGINES OF CHANGE

👉 Recommendations for the EC – based on direct feedback from city practitioners who exchanged as part of the CHORIZO City Interest Group:

- **MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE**

More policy coherence and coordination is needed **across levels of government** (EU, national, local) and **across departments** (education, waste management, social services).

- **FUNDING**

Municipalities need stable budgets and dedicated staff to **move from pilots to scale** – which requires **earmarked, long-term national and EU funding**.

- **DATA & MONITORING**

Comprehensive **monitoring frameworks** are needed so cities can measure food waste across households, schools, HoReCa and redistribution streams and integrate **local data** with **national reporting**, enabling consistent targets, tracking and comparison.

THANK YOU

JOINT FINAL EVENT

CHORIZO
PROJECT

ZERO^W
innovations for zero food waste

