Milan Pact Awards 2025	**BARCELONA (2)**						
Country	Spain						
Population	1,702,547						
Title of practice	FOODBACK						
Subtitle	It is a food utilisation centre, a pioneer in surplus management at Barcelona's wholesale market (Mercabarna)						
MUFPP Recommended Action	34. – Convene food system actors to assess and monitor food loss and waste reduction at all stages of the city region food supply chain, (including production, processing, packaging, safe food preparation, presentation and handling, re-use and recycling) and ensure holistic planning and design, transparency, accountability and policy integration. - FOOD WASTE						
Starting year	01/02/2022	**Ending year (if any)**				☐already submitted in the past	
Actors and stakeholders' involvement	**Municipal departments**	**Other public institutions**	**NGOs CSOs**	**Research centres**	**Private sectors**	**International organizations**	**Other**
	1	2	4	2	2		1
Budget	The budget for 2025 amounts at € 404,000. It will be mainly funded through contributions from Mercabarna and 'la Caixa' Foundation, along with other subsidies from the Barcelona City Council and the Government of Catalonia.						
Brief description	This is one of the crucial pillars of the surplus and organic plant waste management system, aimed at reducing food waste by recovering surplus fruit and vegetables that are not marketable but are still suitable for human consumption, generated within the Food Unit. The product is assessed from a food safety perspective, sorted, and then either distributed primarily to social entities or processed to increase its utilisation. In this project, food is prevented from turning into waste and it has a second life, in a process that has a positive impact on both the environment and society. The project is the evolution of the collaboration between Mercabarna and the Food Bank since 2002, where operators could voluntarily bring their surplus. Foodback has been designed to improve the efficiency of the sorting and logistics distribution process and to ensure food safety of the recovered products. Making it a compulsory part of Mercabarna's management system has been a vital step forward.						
Innovation	Foodback is a pioneering project that seeks to maximise its social, environmental, and economic impact: - A co-designed project (Mercabarna, Food Bank, Training and Work Foundation, and the College of Engineers of Catalonia), with each partner contributing with its experience and expertise. - A co-managed service between Mercabarna, the Training and Work Foundation, and the Food Bank Foundation. - Creation of the Chair for the Fight Against Food Waste (2021-2023), aimed at assessing (quantifying) food waste within the Food Unit and understanding its causes. - It is part of Mercabarna's organic plant waste management system structure, and participation is compulsory - wholesalers cannot take palletised surplus to the Green Point – (MOV waste management for compost or biogas) - without first having it assessed by Foodback for recovery possibilities. - The system provides companies with management data to support their prevention and reporting plans. - It offers financial incentives for companies: zero cost for management and tax benefits (the recovered product is considered an in-kind donation to the Food Bank). - The infrastructure is strategically built within the Food Unit to support companies' logistics management.						

	- It promotes the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders - public, private, social, and academic - linked to the aim of reducing food waste.
Impact	Social, Environmental, and Economic Impact (2024): - 838 tons of products recovered and distributed for social purposes - 9 tons of products processed by social enterprises, with 14,200 units of transformed products distributed - 305 entities and community kitchens attending people in vulnerable situations benefited - 92 companies contributed products - Reduction of 1,034,784 kg CO_2 equivalent and 4,683,965 m^3 of water (according to the Joint Research Centre's food loss prevention calculator) - € 231,500 in tax benefits obtained by contributing companies - € 73,000 in savings for companies due to zero-cost product management through Foodback - The recovered food has an estimated financial value of € 186,138.
Inclusion	Foodback promotes the participation of various actors and stakeholders, following a holistic approach that integrates public, private, social, and academic collaboration. This collaborative model is present throughout the project's design, co-management, co-governance, and-co-financing phases. Actors involved: 1. Mercabarna. General Coordination. Initiator of the project and facilitator of the food recovery management service, in coordination with operating companies. 2. Mercabarna Wholesalers. Suppliers of recoverable fresh food surpluses. 3. Training and Work Foundation. Responsible for hiring, training, and job placement of people who are at risk of social exclusion. 4. Barcelona Food Bank Foundation. Responsible for redistributing food to social entities that support people in vulnerable situations. 5. Social Organisations/NGOs. Final recipients and distributors of food to people in a situation of food insecurity. 6. Municipal Government. Supports the initiative by establishing operational frameworks together with the municipal public health agency and aligning the project with local social and environmental goals. 7. Regional Government. Supports the initiative with the aim of fostering the prevention and reduction of food waste. 8. Private Foundation: Provides partial funding for the project.