



EUROPEAN FOOD BANKS
FEDERATION (FEBA)

FEAD, REACT-EU, and the European Food Banks Federation

2021 Implementation Report

KEY FINDINGS





FEAD and REACT-EU: overview

Striving to alleviate the worst forms of poverty, such as food deprivation, child poverty, and homelessness, within the European Union by supporting Member States' action, **the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)** was set up in 2014. For the seven-year programming period (2014 – 2020), over **EUR 3.8 billion** in current prices have been earmarked by the EU to pursue this objective. **Complemented by the Member States' own resources**, the value of the fund amounts to a total of **EUR 4.5 billion**.

The fund can be used by Member States in **two ways**:

- for a **food and/or basic material assistance** operational programme (OP I)
- and/or*
- for a **social inclusion** operational programme (OP II).

In 2020, almost **15 million people in 27 EU Member States** were supported with food aid, approximately **1.96 million people** received material assistance, and **30,000 people** benefitted from social inclusion measures.¹

To enable a targeted response to the needs of both the Partner Organisations and the end beneficiaries provoked by the **challenges emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic**, the **FEAD Regulation** was amended twice:

- **April 2020: Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus (CRII+)**²
- **February 2021: Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe (REACT-EU)**,³ under the umbrella of Next Generation EU. **€50.6 billion** in total (current prices) to provide fresh resources to existing cohesion policy programmes for the years **2021 and 2022**. The funding is divided **into two tranches: €39.8 billion in 2021 and €10.8 billion in 2022**. The allocation is adjusted for Member States' respective relative wealth, the drop in GDP levels, and the rise of unemployment rates. The resources are

¹ European Commission, *Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Summary of the annual implementation reports for the operational programmes co-financed by the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived in 2020*, 20 July 2022.

² Official Journal of the European Union, *Regulation (EU) 2020/559 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2020 amending Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 as regards the introduction of specific measures for addressing the outbreak of COVID-19*, 23 April 2020.

³ Official Journal of the European Union, *Regulation (EU) 2021/177 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 February 2021 amending Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 as regards the introduction of specific measures for addressing the crisis associated with the outbreak of COVID-19*, 10 February 2021.



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distributed from the European Social Fund (ESF), FEAD, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), and the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI).

Among others, the regulatory changes opened the **possibility for Member States to allocate part of their REACT-EU resources for 2021 and 2022 to FEAD programmes**. The funds can be spent until the end of 2023, therefore bridging the gap between the emergency crisis response and the long-term recovery supported by the new programmes under the MFF 2021-2027 (e.g. ESF+). The amendments also strengthened the liquidity in Member States making it possible to provide a **100% co-financing rate** for one accounting year to ensure that Member States had sufficient financial means to swiftly implement measures to assist the most deprived. Moreover, they allowed Partner Organisations, such as FEBA Members, to **financing the purchase of personal protective equipment as well as technical assistance and capacity building measures** required to expediently respond to the coronavirus outbreak.

FEAD, REACT-EU, and FEBA Members in 2021

Since 2019, **FEBA has continuously monitored the implementation of the FEAD across EU Member States** in order to paint a coherent picture as regards **challenges and opportunities the Fund entails for the Food Banks in their role as Partner Organisations**. Moreover, by conducting this exercise, implications of food and material assistance as well as social inclusion measures on the charities and end beneficiaries receiving FEAD food through FEBA Members can be exposed.

The results have been summarised and published in two reports:

- [**FEAD and the European Food Banks Federation: 2019 Implementation Report**](#)
- [**FEAD and the European Food Banks Federation: 2020 Implementation Report**](#)



[Read the 2019 report here](#)



[Read the 2020 report here](#)



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On the occasion of the **FEBA Annual Forum for Food Aid and Social Inclusion 2022**, titled *Strengthening food systems by supporting the resilience and capacity of Food Banks* which is held on 14 November 2022, FEBA releases its new publication “**FEAD, REACT-EU, and the European Food Banks Federation: 2021 Implementation Report**” with the aim to communicate concise insights on the implementation of these Funds on the ground, taking into account amendments and their expediency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to analyse both the support received through FEAD and the REACT-EU initiative, and disclose particularities regarding implementation and impact, the new report is based on **two sets of qualitative and quantitative data** stemming from responses from **10 FEBA Members**, who received either FEAD or REACT-EU or both, to two online surveys.⁴ The questionnaires were tailored to further shed light on **challenges and opportunities related to administration and the collaboration with the national Managing Authority**.

In the following, the key findings will be outlined.



⁴ No information from FEBA Member in Portugal.



Key findings

- **10 FEBA Members** received food financed through FEAD and/or REACT-EU resources in 2021: Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, and Spain.
 - Among the countries mentioned, the FEBA Member in **Estonia** is the only organisation who was involved **solely in REACT-EU**.
 - FEBA Members in **Ireland Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, and Spain** redistributed **only FEAD** food and/or material assistance.
 - FEBA Members in **Belgium, Czech Republic, and France** were engaged in **both programmes**.

- **70% of FEBA Members** responding the surveys consider FEAD and REACT-EU assistance (food and non-food) as important parts of their composition of products for redistribution.

- **Use of the FEAD in 2021**
 - **All FEBA Members** benefited from **foodstuff, 4 members (44.4%)** from **non-food items** (such as hygiene products), and **1 organisation (11.1%)** received **assistance to improve their technical capacities** as well as support Partner Organisations.

 - **6 FEBA Members (66.7%)** of the responding FEBA Members undertook **accompanying measures**, among them workshops on food waste prevention and social inclusion, building skills related to dietary needs, healthy eating, or budgeting. Moreover, some organised specific food redistribution measures for particularly vulnerable groups, such as elderly people, and provided information on available social services.

 - **All 9 FEBA Members (66.7%)** involved in the FEAD received **economic reimbursement** of some kind for conducted activities:



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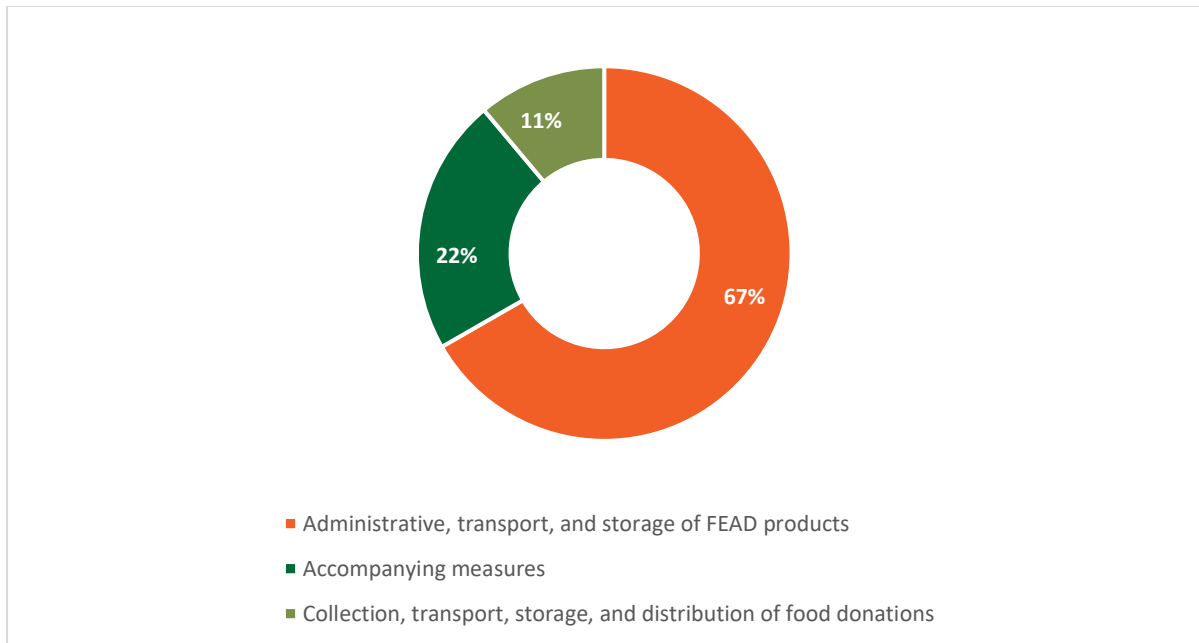


Fig. 1: Economic reimbursement received through FEAD in 2021

How did the FEAD implementation change between 2020 and 2021?

Compared to 2020, **44.4%** of the responding Food Banks noted an **increased quantity of food received**, while 33.3% could not identify a change. In two cases (22,2%), a reduced amount is stated. The large majority highlight that the **quality as well as the nutritional value** of FEAD food products **remained similar (77.8% and 88.9%, respectively)**. No organisation reports an aggravation as regards the ability of the items to meet the dietary needs of end beneficiaries.

Being asked to examine the **variety in contrast to 2020**, over half (**55.6%**) describe it as **equal** and **33.3%** perceive an **increase**.

Just of half of the respondents (**55.5%**) evaluate the **frequency** in which they receive FEAD food for redistribution as being **excellent or good**. 2 FEBA Members though consider it

➤ Use of REACT-EU in 2021

- **All 4 FEBA Members** involved in REACT-EU received food products, **2 members (50%)** were also provided with non-food items for redistribution.



➤ **Total amount of FEAD and/or REACT-EU food received by 10 FEBA Members⁵**

- **168,532 tonnes** of FEAD and/or REACT-EU food products have been redistributed by FEBA Members in Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, and Spain.
- This amount is equal to **19%** of the total amount of food redistributed by the entire FEBA network in 2021.
- FEBA Members received quantities of FEAD and/or REACT-EU food ranging from **1% (Luxembourg) to 57% (Poland)** of the amount of food redistributed at national level.

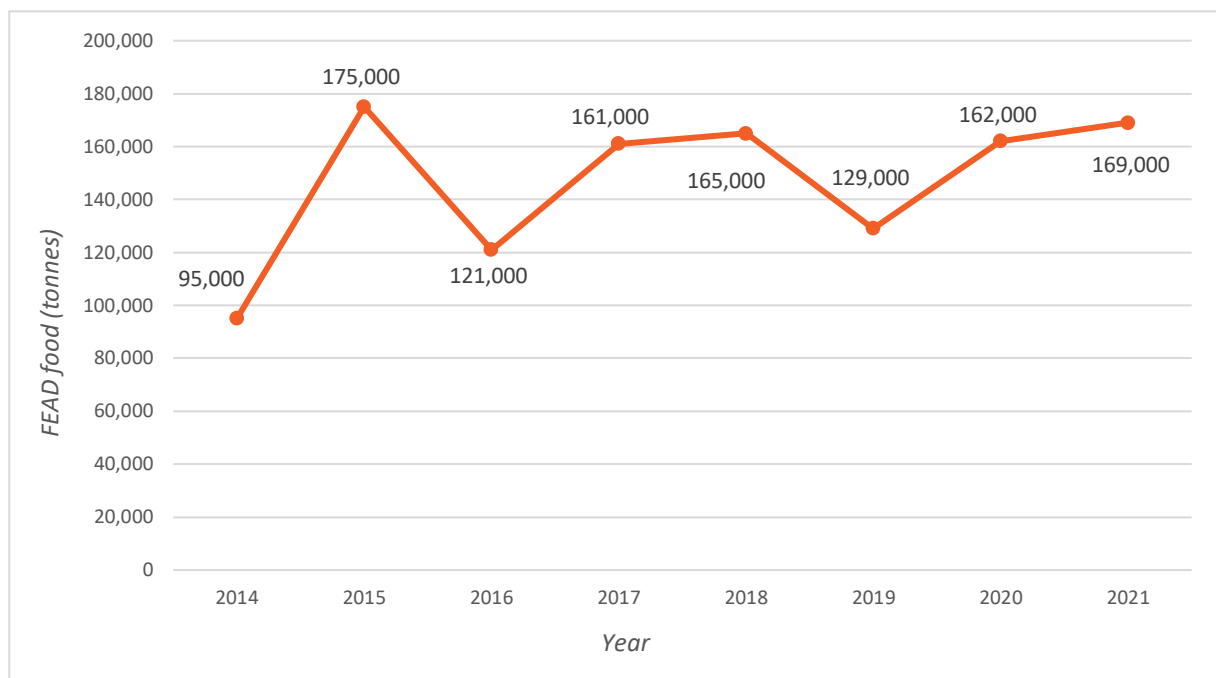


Fig. 2: Quantities of FEAD food redistributed by FEBA Members between 2014 and 2021 (in tonnes)

- **Over 15,000 local charitable organisations** benefited from food and/or material assistance financed through FEAD and/or REACT-EU and redistributed by FEBA Members.⁶
- **Over 3.5 million end-beneficiaries** received FEAD and/or REACT-EU assistance through FEBA Members in Belgium, Estonia, Italy, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, and Spain.⁷

⁵ The numbers have been calculated based on information communicated through the online data collection platform underlying the FEBA Observatory on Food Donation.

⁶ No data available from FEBA Member in Czech Republic.

⁷ No data available from FEBA Members in Czech Republic and France.



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- **7.2 million deprived people** benefited from **food products** financed through FEAD and/or REACT-EU as well as stemming from other sources (e.g. surplus or donated food originating from the supply chain or food collections) thanks to the daily operations of FEBA Members in Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, and Spain.





FEAD and REACT-EU products: a closer look

The **FEAD and/or REACT-EU food** includes a wide range of products and can vary between the receiving organisations.

All 10 FEBA Members responding to the survey received **canned fish and/or meat**, as well as **staple food products**, such as rice, pasta, or flour. **A large majority** further were provided with **canned fruits and/or vegetables (80%), oil (80%), dairy products (70%), and/or other canned food items (70%)**. **40%** reported **coffee and/or tea** while **30%** further claim that **baby food and “comfort food”**, for instance chocolate, cookies, or chips, were amongst the items financed through the Fund. A few food banking organisations also received **beverages, frozen food, breakfast cereals, porridge oats, and ready-made meals**, such as soups.

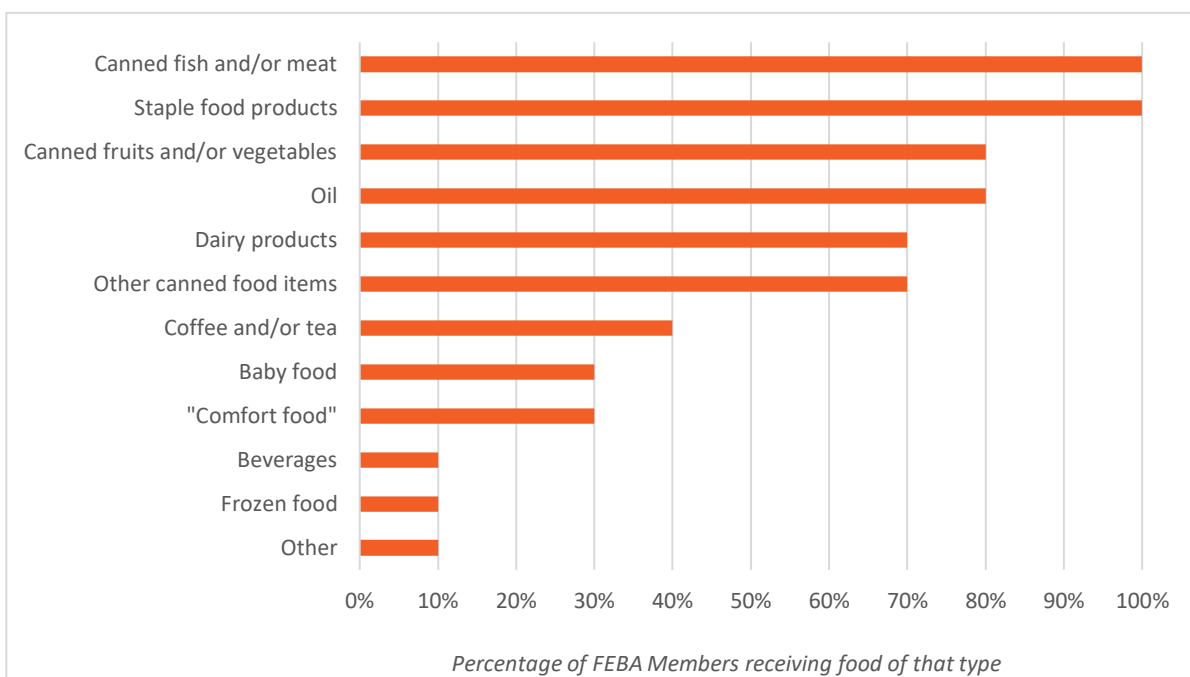


Fig. 3: Typologies of FEAD and/or REACT-EU food products received and redistributed by FEBA Members in 2021

Considering the **quality, quantity, variety, and nutritional value** of the FEAD and/or REACT-EU food received in 2021, the respondents painted a positive picture.



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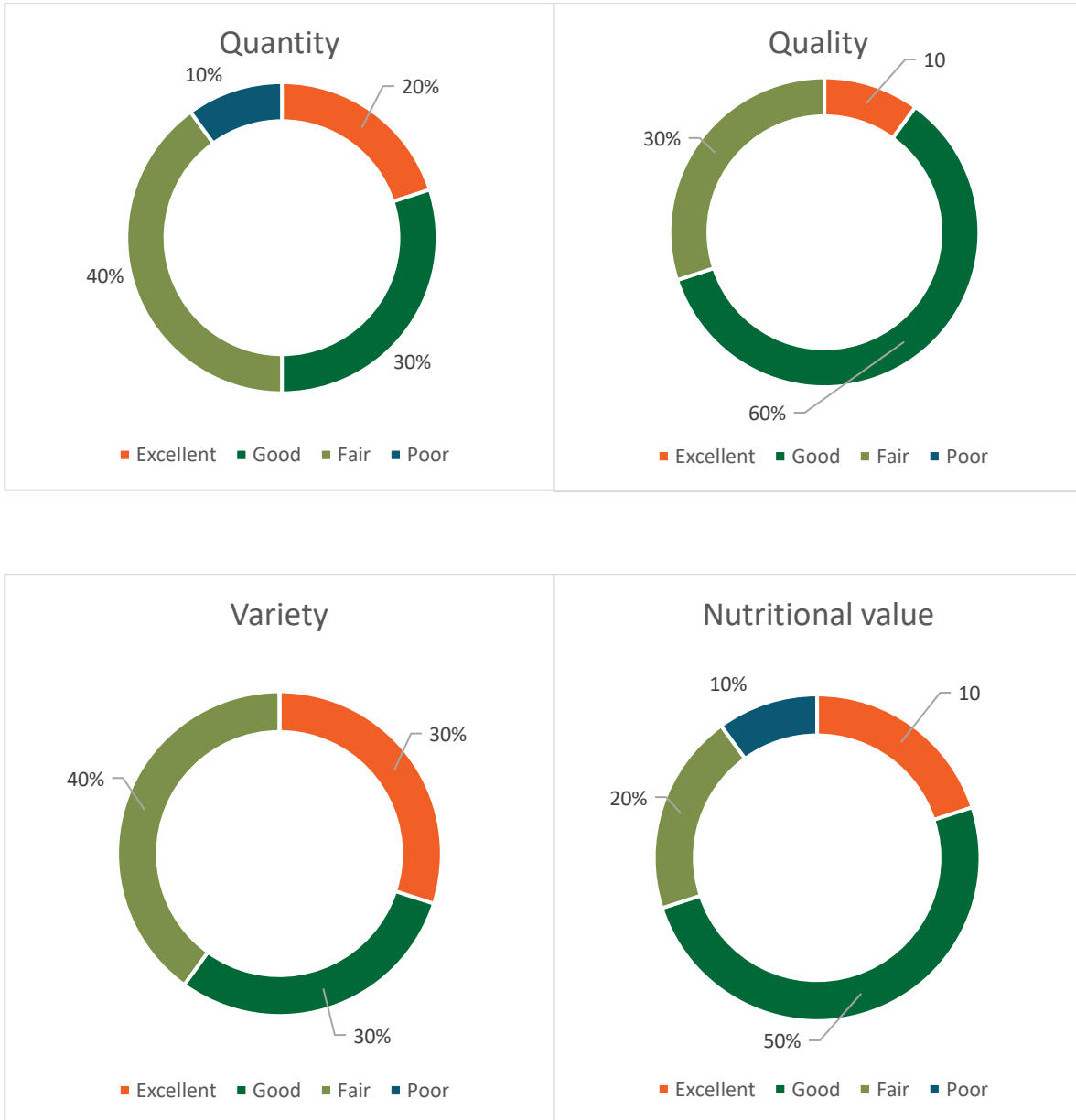


Fig. 4: Evaluation of quantity, quality, variety, and nutritional value of FEAD and/or REACT-EU food received in 2021

In addition to food assistance, 4 FEBA Members were provided with **non-food products** of different kinds, with **personal hygiene items** being the most frequent type (44%), followed by **sanitary equipment** like disposable face masks (22%). **Baby nappies, home cleaning goods, and female hygiene products** have also been received by 11% of the responding organisations, respectively.



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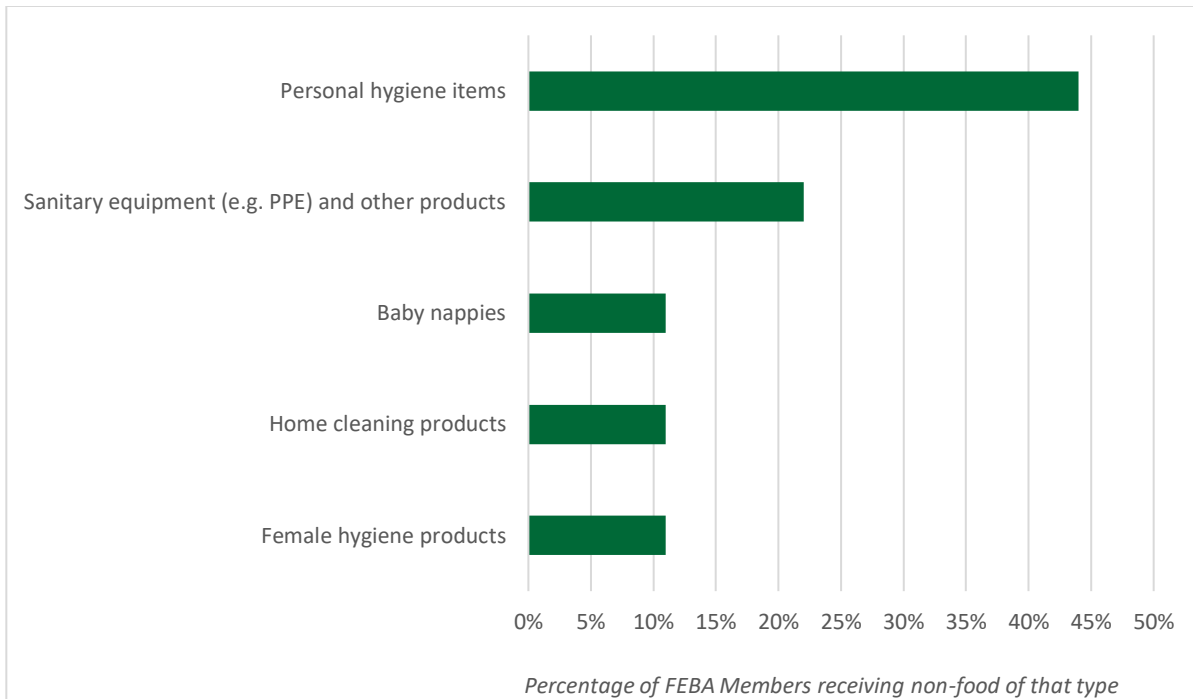


Fig. 5: Typologies of FEAD and/or REACT-EU non-food products received and redistributed by FEBA Members in 2021

Main challenges in 2021

The surveys further disclosed the main challenges FEBA Members faced in 2021 in relation to FEAD and/or REACT-EU. Amongst the most acute issues were **storage and logistic problems** (40%) as well as the **insufficiency of economic resources** for administrative, transport, and storage activities (30%). Both the **lack of collaboration with Managing Authorities** and the **unsatisfying quality of food products** received have been experienced by one fifth (20%) of those Food Banks responding to the survey. Single respondents further name delays in the start of the 2021 programme, difficulties concerning the delivery of individual products, as well as cancellation of tenders as problematic factors negatively impacting the implementation of the FEAD and/or REACT-EU. Presumably, these aspects were closely interlinked with **supply chain interruptions and procurement problems** caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.



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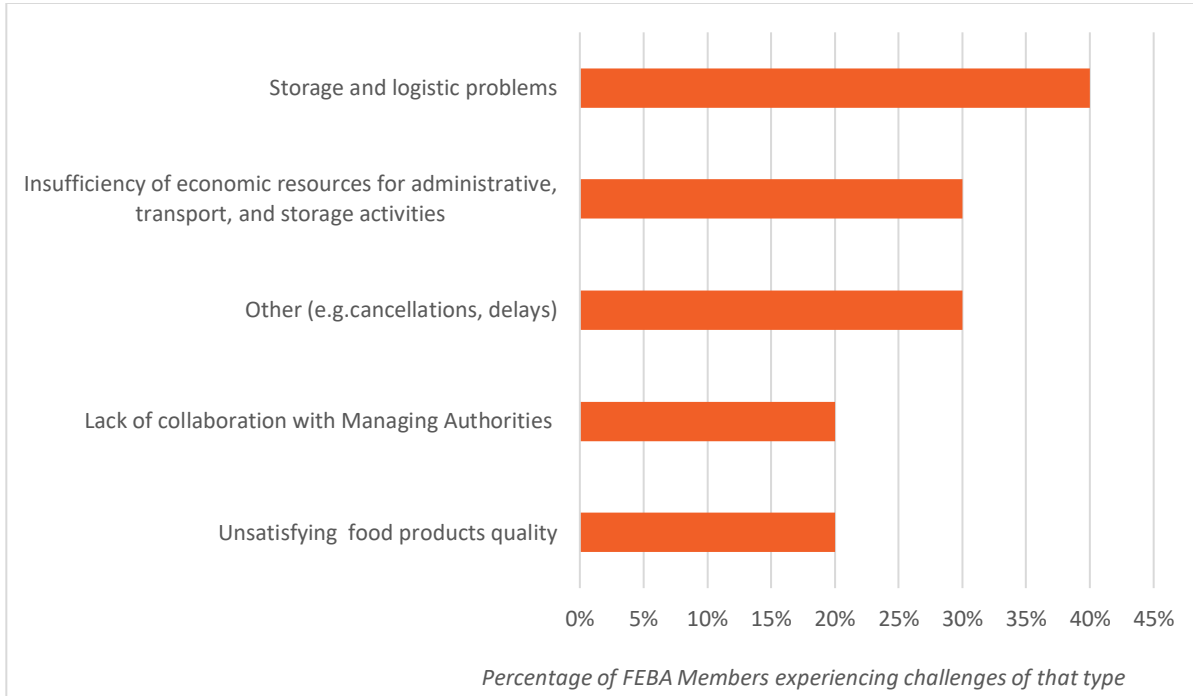


Fig. 6: Main challenges experienced by FEBA Members in relation to FEAD and/or REACT-EU in 2021

However, other challenges that have been reported in 2020, such as the reluctance of local charitable organisations to accept food aid, or difficulties regarding the collection of data and the cooperation with other Partner Organisations involved in the implementation of the Fund, do not seem to be of critical relevance during the analysed period.

Main opportunities in 2021

The survey further strived to gather insights on **main advantages** related to Partner Organisations' involvement in the FEAD and the impact of the Operational Programmes on end beneficiaries. Based on the insights of the 9 FEBA Members involved in the implementation of the Fund, **several positive aspects** could be disclosed:

- **89%** state that the FEAD had a positive impact on the diet of the most deprived due to the quantity and variety of FEAD food redistributed;
- **67%** confirm that the availability of FEAD facilitated addressing the needs of local charities regarding food and non-food products;
- **67%** notice a facilitated cooperation with local charitable organisations;
- **67%** acknowledge the important contribution of the FEAD as regards the inclusion of charitable organisations and final beneficiaries in the local community;
- **67%** declare a smoother collaboration with regional entities (e.g. social service, public administration);



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- **56%** affirm that the FEAD fostered the involvement of charities and end recipients in social inclusion measures (e.g. training programmes, job searching); and
- **40%** declare that the availability of FEAD allowed local charitable organisations to shift their economic and non-economic resources towards other social inclusion activities (e.g. health, education, or vocational training)

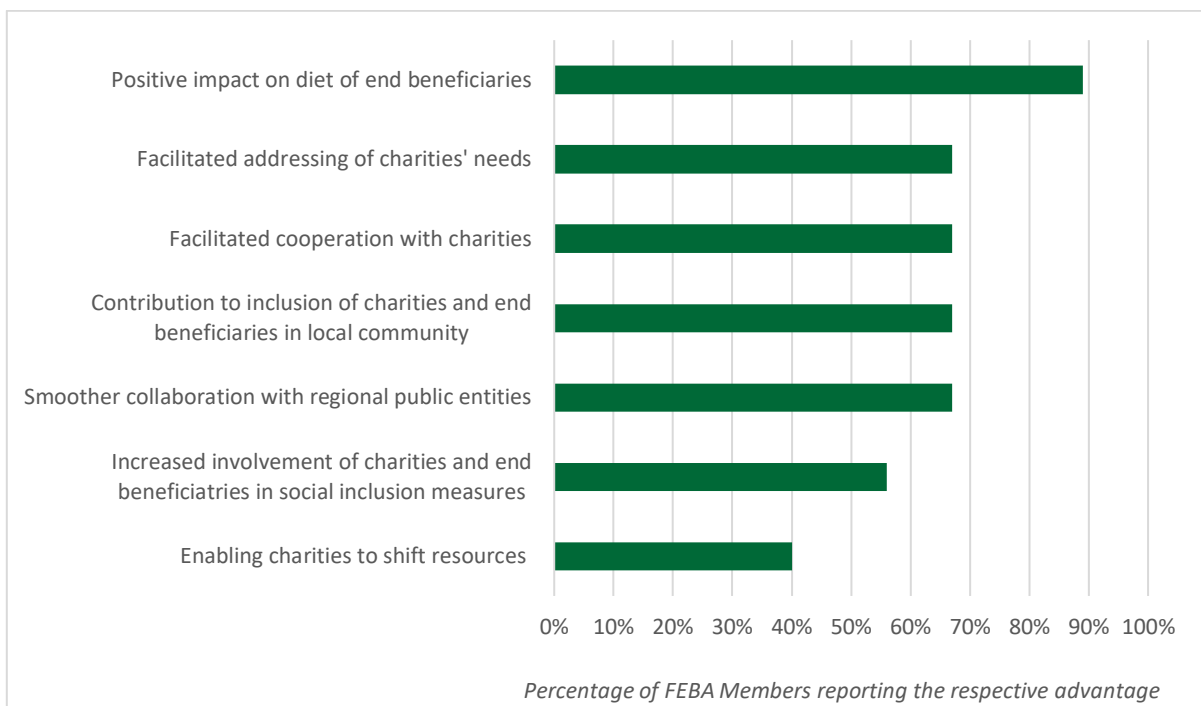


Fig. 7: Main opportunities of FEAD assistance in 2021



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Co-funded by
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Released 2022, Brussels.
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