



Ostend Action Plan

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Project information

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Executive Summary

The Action Plan for Oostende, developed within the Bauhaus Bites project, outlines a transformative approach to food environments.

The focus area is the lighthouse district in Oostende. A neighbourhood on the northern edge of the city, separated from the rest of the city by the harbour channel. The connection with the city center by public transport, on foot and by bike is challenging and adds to the isolated location. Due to this, the neighbourhood sometimes feels forgotten. The closure of the discount supermarket LIDL made the residents of the old fishing district feel as if they were not important enough to keep it open.

The food environment has changed significantly in recent years: traditional bakers and butchers have disappeared, replaced by mini-markets and fast food restaurants. The health survey among the population shows a trend indicating the effects of changes in the food environment: 49% of the inhabitants of Ostend are obese or overweight, and only 11% consume the daily recommended amount of fruits and vegetables.



Figure 1 © Kathy Belpaeme - Mural fishers wives

Thanks to Bauhaus Bites, Oostende is working towards a healthier food environment in the lighthouse district. This is a new concept for the city, but it has

already shown its usefulness and provides opportunities to connect food with other policy areas. The Bauhaus Bites values of beauty, sustainability and inclusion and broader New European Bauhaus (NEB) ambitions will be integrated in the approach.

Together with experts from various policy domains, four objectives were proposed:

Objective 1: Enable better access to healthy food (environment) through an increased diversity of food points

Objective 2: Unite a diverse community through social spaces and food

Objective 3: Increase food literacy

Objective 4: Increase edible green spaces

For each of these objectives concrete actions have been defined, in a co-creative manner, together with the key stakeholders in the area.

The Action Plan for Oostende offers a replicable model for a healthier food environment that is beautiful, just and inclusive.

1. Introduction

Oostende has about 72,000 inhabitants of 130 nationalities and a surface area of 37,7 km². It is the main city on the Belgian coastline and its population keeps growing. The city has lots of newcomers and a high percentage of elderly. Tourism is one of the economical strengths of the city. On top days the population welcomes up to 300,000 people.

Oostende has a strong fishing history, with locally caught shrimp as the flagship species for the local fisheries.

Besides the sea and the sandy beaches as one of its major attractions, Oostende has lots of other highlights in art, culture, leisure and green spaces.

Oostende has a very diverse population, with also a high degree of poverty. In the province of West-Flanders, which has 64 municipalities and population of 1.2 million, 27% of the inhabitants in underprivileged neighbourhoods live in Oostende. One third of all inhabitants in West-Flanders who are entitled to receive food aid, live in Ostend.

The three most deprived neighborhoods in Oostende are: 'Westerkwartier' in the West of the city, the city center and the Vuurtorenwijk/lighthouse district. The Bauhaus Bites (BB) project in Oostende emerged as a response to the need to improve the food environment in the city. Healthy food for the citizens is a policy objective of the city council.



Figure 2: © Tourism Ostend - Shrimp fishing

88,2% of the Flemish population lives in an area with more unhealthy food points than healthy food points (this is called a 'food swamp'). Around schools there is an

increase of fast food or delivery points of 21,2% for primary schools and 24,5% for secondary schools (situation 2008 compared to 2020, Vandevijvere & Smets, 2024). In Oostende 49% of the population is overweight or obese (Flemish health report 2021-2022).

The lighthouse district is the key focus area in this project. This is one of the cheapest areas for housing in the city and therefore attracts specific groups. Historically, this was the area where the fishermen lived.

2. Bauhaus Bites Oostende goal and objectives

Bauhaus Bites Food Environments are urban and peri-urban ecosystems that commit to implementing sustainable, healthy diets, amplified by the New European Bauhaus (NEB) (European Commission 2025) and fortified with Nature Based Solutions (NBS), ensuring that the transformed food environments of tomorrow are sustainable, inclusive, and beautiful. By merging the key perspectives of European and global strategies such as the Farm to Fork (European Commission 2020) and FOOD 2030 (European Commission 2024) strategies, the Planetary Health Diet (Willett et al., “Food in the Anthropocene,” 450) and with the New European Bauhaus values and principles, Bauhaus Bites offers a unique approach not yet seen in food system transformation projects, that will reimagine these food environments together with local, culturally diverse communities, customised to meet their needs, and anchored in social meeting spaces that carry meaning for them.

The goal of the short-term action plan is to define the activities that need to be implemented in order to successfully and sustainably create the Bauhaus Bites food environment for the lighthouse district in Oostende.

The food environment of the district was analysed using the Eat & Step methodology of the Institute for Healthy living ([Hap & Stap](#) methodology). Not all aspects in this Action Plan can be tackled within the Bauhaus Bites project, but it is important to look at the food environment in a holistic way also considering aspects such as spatial planning, mobility, public transport, accessibility, etc.

The objectives for Oostende are:

Objective 1: Enable better access to healthy food (environment) through an increased diversity of food points

Objective 2: Unite a diverse community through social spaces and food

Objective 3: Increase food literacy

Objective 4: Increase edible green spaces



Figure 3: © Kim Vanbesien – Vegetable marketstal

3. Oostende Action Plan for People, Places and Policy

The goal of the Action Plan for Oostende is to define the necessary steps for the preparation and implementation of the pilot actions, which will significantly improve the food environment of the lighthouse district, taking into account the standards specified in the New European Bauhaus program. Methodologically, the plan has been co-created with city services that will participate in the implementation, as well as in cooperation with citizens and organizations in the area.

Through planning and co-creation, the values of New European Bauhaus are considered at different steps of the project: in the sustainable use of city resources, by working to ensure citizen involvement and engagement in different stages of the development of the action plan, and through the cooperation with partners in the district who can play a role in the implementation.

People

Oostende has about 72,000 inhabitants of 130 nationalities and a surface area of 37.7km². The project focuses on one of the three most deprived neighborhoods, the 'Vuurtorenwijk' or lighthouse district.

Traditionally, this was the area where the fishermen and their families lived. Today the inhabitants are very diverse. 30% of the population in the area has non-Belgian origin, of which 23% are non-European. 39% are 1-person households and 36% are 2-person households.

New developments on the Northern side of the lighthouse district close to the sea, attracted financially better situated people and second home owners. This has led to a remarkable contrast with the older part in the South where houses are old and cheap.

There are two schools in the neighborhood, multiple social organizations (because of the vulnerable population), scientific institutes and the circular hub O.666 which is situated on the border between the old and the new developments. Key stakeholder organizations will be involved. We can build on a long-term partnership with this team (called the 'gebiedsteam', chaired by the city's district manager).

Additionally key-stakeholders, like food-processor Revi food, traditional local crafts food shop Deschildre, food market De Cierk, oyster hatchery De Oesterput, will be involved to join for action, which can play a significant role in the food system transformation.



Figure 4: © Yves Mahieu – O.666 Circular hub

Places

The 'Vuurtorenwijk'/lighthouse district consists of two parts: the old part OPEX (= Ostend Phare et Extension, an extension of the city which started in 1924) and the East bank of the harbor entrance ('Oosteroever'). The Oosteroever has gone through a complete transformation in the last 10 years, with the development of high-end apartment buildings.

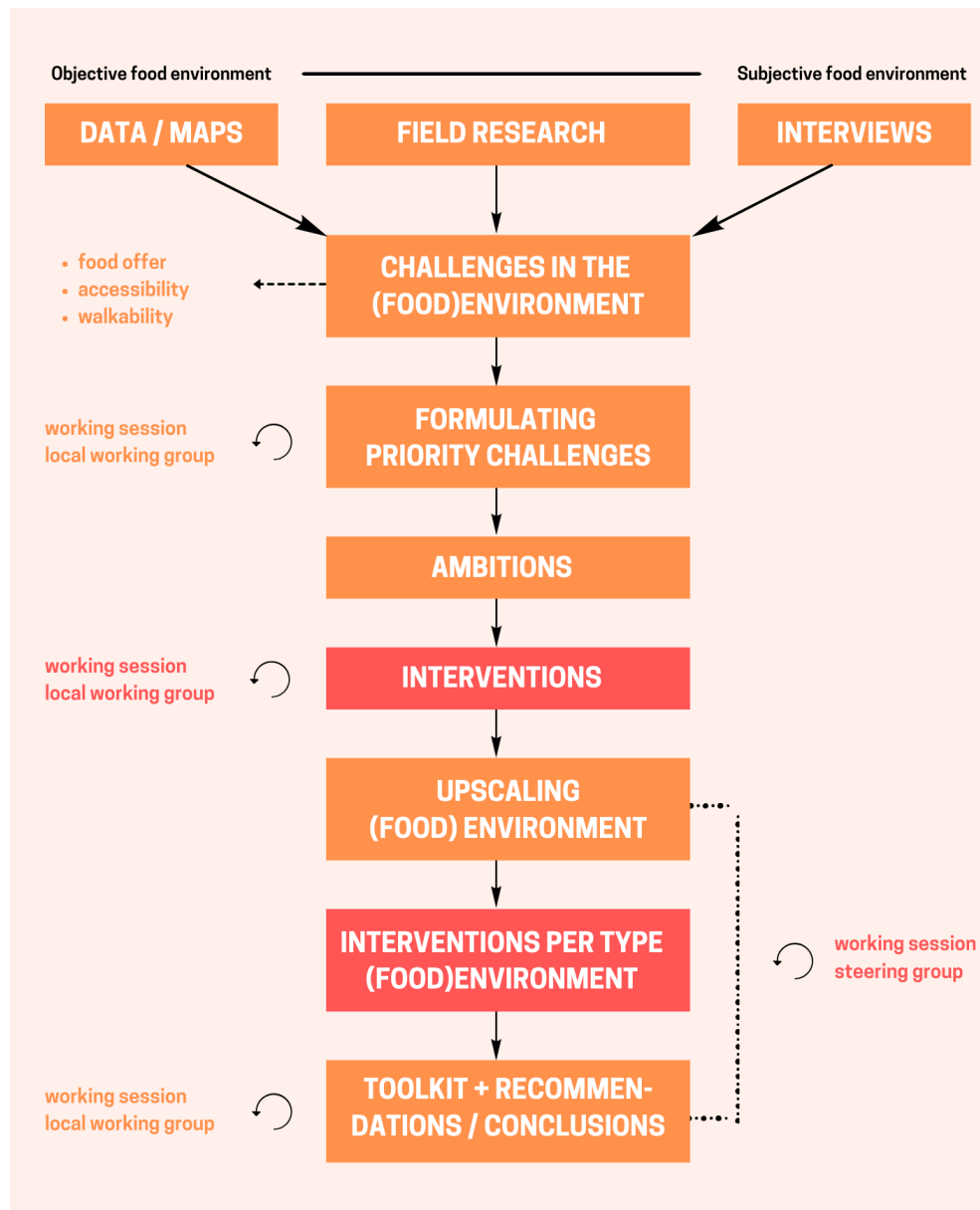
The OPEX is one of the cheapest areas for housing in the city and therefore attracts specific groups. It is separated from the rest of Oostende by the harbour entrance.

The discount supermarket LIDL in the OPEX closed in 2022. The inhabitants complain there is nothing left for them to shop for food items. This concern was the reason for Oostende to choose the lighthouse district as a pilot in Bauhaus Bites.

As part of the Bauhaus Bites project, the food points were mapped in detail using the 'Eat & Step' methodology of the Flemish Institute for healthy living ([Hap & Stap](https://www.flemishinstitute.be/en/eat-and-step) methodology).

The methodology uses three phases to describe the food environment: (1) gather data and maps; (2) field research; (3) interviews. Each food point is mapped in detail, considering the exact location, pictures of the current situation, specific

observations on the food supply, opening hours, distance to public transport, accessibility and commercial information. This information is combined to make the challenges in the food environment visible based on the current situation. In the next step the challenges are prioritized using a consultation process, and objectives and actions (= interventions) are formulated. All of these steps are an integral part of the Bauhaus Bites Action Plan.



The analysis showed that food places were still well represented. The number of traditional food shops such as bakeries and butchers has declined, but a new type of shops – the mini markets – have appeared.

The food points were visualized on a map, which shows there are a lot of food points. But the situation changes quickly and frequently: food points disappear, change or appear.

The situation at the end of December 2025 was as follows, there were:

- 14 fisheries related food points (shops for direct sale, wholesale, retail)
- 12 restaurants
- 4 fast food restaurants
- 11 food stores, of which 8 mini-markets, 1 supermarket, 1 craft & local food shop 1 fair trade shop
- 4 bakeries/sandwich bar
- 6 cafés
- 1 butcher (fresh meat)

Because there is still a variety of food points present in the neighbourhood, the focus of the actions within Action Plan will not be attracting extra food points, but preferably working with the present food point to improve their offer and visibility.

The Vuurtorenwijk has a lot of green spaces: play areas, parks, allotments gardens, a community garden. This offers opportunities for planting edible green areas and creating meeting spots such as BBQ areas and picnic places.

The proximity of water (the North Sea, the harbor, and the Spuikom) makes it a unique and pleasant area to live. The link to the fishing history and sea food is very obvious here.

There are several community spaces in the area to bring people together: the circular hub O.666, the new community center 'Sluisvliet', the meeting center 'De Ballon', and the youth center 'Duin & Zee'.

The green spaces and community spaces play an important role in the Bauhaus Bites Action Plan.



Figure 5: map of food points in the lighthouse district

Policies

The city of Oostende is aligning Bauhaus Bites within its broader local food governance system, particularly the Food Strategy 'Oostende Harvest'. This provides a strong policy backbone, guarantees political support and enables coherence between local pilots and city-wide ambitions. The work in Bauhaus Bites will help to realize the strategic objectives of the food strategy of Oostende.

The work in Bauhaus Bites will also link to the policies of:

- Local and healthy food
- Circular economy (reuse of material, preventing food waste, ...)
- Greening of the built-up environment
- Climate strategy
- Health
- Welfare & combating poverty
- Neighbourhood improvement contracts

The internal project group of Bauhaus Bites within the city brings representatives of different city departments together to align all these ambitions.

Bauhaus Bites will also link up with other projects in the city, for example Potvis, focusing on adding value to fishery products and re-valuing traditional conservation methods.



Figure 6: © Lars Cattrijsse – Allotment Gardens

3.1 Localised Vision toward BB Impact Pathway for Oostende

The local Bauhaus Bites vision for the lighthouse district in Oostende strives to connect people, places, and policy, by actively involving the community in the co-design of a more sustainable and healthy local food system. It seeks to operationalize the values of the New European Bauhaus – sustainability, inclusion and aesthetics – through a concrete set of actions.

The vision for the lighthouse district needs to take into account the typical characteristics of the neighbourhood. A neighbourhood that feels often forgotten, because it is a somewhat isolated location from the rest of the city. It is separated by the harbour and is split in two by a busy 4-lane-road. The fishing history and activity is still there, but clashes with the new development where gentrification is happening.

With the Bauhaus Bites vision food system in the Oostende Lighthouse district will transform towards a more sustainable system through:

- Improving the availability and knowledge about sustainable, healthy and fresh food
- Securing better access to food aid for vulnerable groups
- Increasing quantity of edible plants in public green spaces
- Increasing social inclusion & food literacy
- Improving cross-sectoral collaboration

3.2 Oostende's Community of Practice

The city of Oostende traditionally uses a focused-oriented approach towards the challenges within the districts and their specific characteristics. The city is divided into 8 districts. The lighthouse (Vuurtoren) district in the North-East is very different from other districts. In each of the districts, a district manager works closely with the community. The district team gathers monthly to discuss strategic and operational matters.

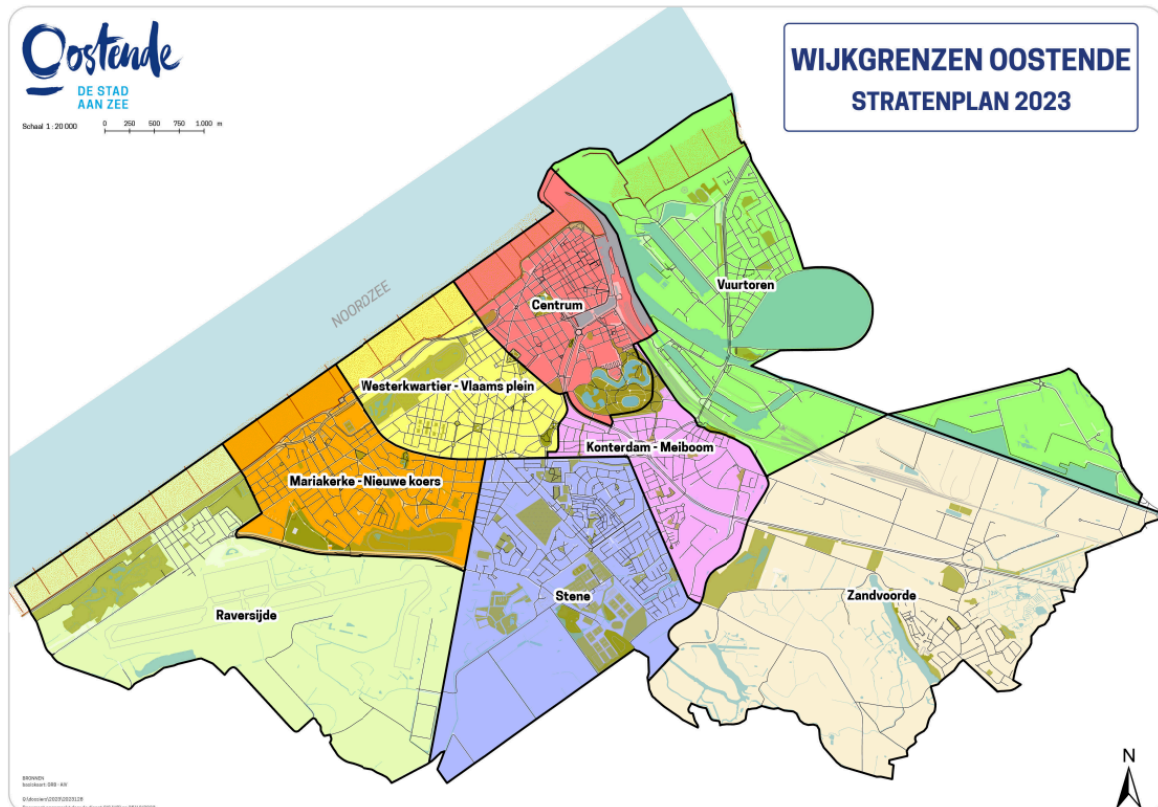


Figure 7: Lighthouse/Vuurtoren district in green.

This team was a good starting point to establish a local action group for Bauhaus Bites.

The members of the district team are coming from the following organisations:

- City district manager
- O.666, circular hub
- Welzijnspunt Vuurtoren, Welfare organisation
- Arktos, children and teenagers care organisation
- SAAMO, community development organisation, working mainly with women and children in this district
- Katrol, study and education advise at home
- Community Health Worker
- Woonsprong, social housing organisation
- Public meeting center De Ballon

- Child care workers
- Dyade, organisation for people with an impediment
- Community guard
- District police

Not all these representatives are equally interested in the food environment, but the team provides a good structure for collaboration and follow-up of implementation of the Action Plan even after the project. Additionally, for specific meetings and co-creation sessions, we also invite other relevant organisations, identified by mapping the key actors in the food system in the district:

- Economic development agency
- Akkerwinde, allotment garden organisation
- Klein Verhaal, participatory culture organisation
- FMDO, organisation focussing on diversity and integration of immigrants
- Avansa, center for adult education, where one of the topics is food & sustainability
- Duinhelm, organisation for people with an impediment
- Flanders Marine Institute, research institute on marine science and fisheries

The actors mentioned above were invited to two co-creation workshops (22 Sept and 24 Oct) in 2025. During the first workshop, challenges were defined. In the second workshop solutions and priority actions were formulated. The outcomes of the workshops are explained further in 3.3.



Figure 8: © Kathy Belpaeme – Community Cafe April 2025

They will also be involved in the implementation of the Action Plan, where responsibilities of specific organisations are defined.

Dedicated smaller groups are set-up for implementing specific actions, for instance the mobile kitchen and the social restaurant.

The following stakeholders do not have the possibility to attend meetings or workshops, but will be involved through bilateral contacts or interviews:

- 2 primary schools: 'De Morootjes' & 'OLVO Vuurtoren'
- Revi food, food processing company which plays an important role in the local economy (employment, innovation, local products)
- De Oesterput, oyster hatchery and educational space
- 2 elderly care homes: 'Duinpieper' & 'Godschaelck'
- Deschildre regional product shop, demonstrating traditional craftsmanship.

In the area, there are also other organizations that could be involved in a later stage:

- Youth organisations: Horizon Educatief, Sea scouts 2de FOS, Sea scouts De Schorre, Chiro Nelle.
- Sport organizations

3.3 From Vision to the Pilot

Structured around four priority areas, healthy food, community, food literacy, edible green, the Action Plan translates Oostende vision into a framework for transformation that is both place-based and people-driven. Each area includes short-term actions that contribute to systemic change, while also laying the foundations for longer-term impacts beyond the duration of the Bauhaus Bites project.

Guided by the principles of the New European Bauhaus — sustainability, inclusion, and aesthetics — the chosen pilot area in Oostende is designed to respond to the specific urban context, the local needs and the broader goals for a healthy food environment.

The city acknowledges food as a powerful connector between people, places, and policies. It integrates diverse dimensions of local development in the district: sustainable food systems, identity & history, social inclusion, and education.



Figure 9: Figure 9: © Kathy Belpaeme - Community cafe November 2025

The key actors mentioned in 3.2 were invited to two co-creation workshops (22 Sept and 24 Oct) in 2025. During the first workshop challenges were defined. In the second workshop solutions and priority actions were formulated. Stakeholders highlighted a number of shared concerns and aspirations during the first workshop, including:

- The closure of the LIDL, which served as both a food source and a meeting place, has created the perception that there is a limited supply of fresh and healthy food, which is also expensive.
- The neighbourhood is isolated from the rest of the city, making mobility by foot, bike, or public transport difficult.
- The social grocery store situated on the other side of the city is hard to reach
- There is a large offer of unhealthy food/fast food points
- There is no public kitchen for activities
- The availability of culturally diverse food is limited.

The concerns and challenges were the basis to start working on solutions and concrete actions in the second workshop.

Oostende will apply the values of the New European Bauhaus during the pilot actions in the following ways:

Sustainable use and maintenance:

- Plan for low-input gardening, recycled material, seasonal planting, biodiversity benefits and collaboration with nearby residents.
- Look for opportunities to increase rainwater infiltration through depaving of paved areas.
- Look for possibilities to include recycled materials in interventions, for example the mobile kitchen, social restaurant and new food aid point

Aesthetic enhancement:

- Integrate plants/green in the public domain
- Work with artists for interventions & exhibitions (e.g. photo exhibition on hidden sugars in food; murals)

Cultural sustainability:

- Use the identity and history of the place and the people, also taking into account the identity of newcomers.

Design of spaces:

- Professional expertise and participatory design processes will shape public and green spaces (e.g. renewed area around the Carrefour supermarket and surroundings).

The Action Plan for the pilot area is shaped by 4 objectives, each operationalised through a set of actions. These actions were developed and validated through a co-creation process involving local stakeholders.

The following tables present the full list of actions under each objective, including a brief description, expected results, and timeline for implementation.

Objective 1: Enable better access to healthy food (environment) through an increased diversity of food points (shops, restaurants).

Description of the Action:	This action will result in better access to healthy food in the lighthouse district. The starting point is mapping the food environment in detail (using the Eat & Step methodology of the Flemish Institute for Healthy Living). Public and private actors (supermarkets, shops, restaurants) and NGOs can all play a role in helping to create a healthy environment. All actors are involved in the dialogue. A communication campaign will play an essential role in this action.
Objectives:	1) Opening of a new meeting place for the neighbourhood, 'Wijkpunt Vuurtoren'. This place will be used to bring citizens and specific target groups together, using food as a connector. The space will also host a food aid distribution point for the neighbourhood, which was lacking (although there are 8 food distribution points in other areas of the city). 2) Renewed and visibly healthy offerings at retailers and restaurants, who will be advised by professionals to change their offer.
Links to other city policies or strategies:	Food policy, health policy, action plan on healthy food, poverty policy, food aid policy, values and principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB)
Entity responsible for coordinating the action:	City of Oostende
Local partners to involve:	Decision-makers, local institutions with potential interest, local NGOs.
Time required for implementation:	12 months (January 2026-December 2026) Possibly the communication campaign will last longer than this period.
Potential risks to implementation:	State of the building for the 'Wijkpunt': old building, essential renovation works will be done, but the state might limit the possibilities for the food aid point (multiple freezers, fridges). Furthermore, many local actors want to use the space, so multifunctional design will have to be kept in mind. Lack of engagement by restaurants and retailers.

Objective 2: Unite a diverse community through social spaces and food

Description of the Action:	This action aims to establish collaboration with stakeholders around food in the lighthouse district. A stakeholder analysis will map all the actors. Additionally, the social meeting spaces will be mapped (allotment & community gardens, parks, the circular hub, the meeting center, the wijkpunt, etc). Each of these spaces can play a role in bringing a diverse community together. A joint calendar of activities will form the framework for a lively program on food. O.666, the circular hub of the city, will play a key role in the area, as the coordinator of a mobile kitchen and a social restaurant. It will also explore if the kitchen can be opened for activities by other organisations.
Objectives:	1) Mobile kitchen: the mobile kitchen will be used to go where the people are. To start the conversation on good food, on challenges, on opportunities, and invite people to visit the social restaurant and join food related activities in the neighbourhood. The mobile kitchen will also be used for educational purposes (link with objective 3). 2) Social restaurant: O.666 submitted a proposal to function as a social restaurant, the first one of its kind in Oostende. It will include a social employment aspect, with training opportunities for low-skilled people and people, with less access to the labour market in general. The aspect of circularity in food and food waste prevention will be incorporated in the operation of the restaurant. For that purpose, a collaboration with Foodsavers (a service which picks up excess food from retailers) will be established. At the heart of the restaurant, there will also be local products, such as local fish, vegetables and herbs from their own community garden.
Links to other city policies or strategies:	Food policy, health policy, action plan on healthy food, poverty policy, food aid policy (Foodsavers), social economy, policy on circularity, values and principles of the New European Bauhaus
Entity responsible for coordinating the action:	City of Oostende & O.666
Local partners to involve:	Decision-makers, local institutions with potential interest, local NGOs (e.g. Duinhelm, SAAMO, Arktos, Klein Verhaal), Foodsavers.
Time required for implementation:	12 months (February 2026-January 2027)
Potential risks to	Collaboration between the different interested users of the

implementation:	mobile kitchen and the kitchen of the social restaurant (financed by the city) will have to be formalised and well managed by O.666.
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Objective 3: Increase food literacy

Description of the Action:	This action aims to make different target groups more aware of healthy and sustainable food. A primary focus is on primary school children (and their parents), youngsters, people dealing with food insecurity.
Objectives:	1) Organizations incorporate food literacy into their activities: many actors are active in the neighbourhood. Within Bauhaus Bites we want to assist and stimulate them to consider food literacy as an integral part of their program. This can be done in many ways; traditionally through growing, cooking and tasting, but also using cultural interventions. 2) Establish a harvest team: this team organizes activities and ensures that ripe edible greenery in the neighbourhood is harvested and redistributed according to agreements.. The city invests in edible green spaces (see objective 4), but without a good communication and harvest team, products will go to waste.
Links to other city policies or strategies:	Food policy, health policy, action plan on healthy food, cultural participation strategy, education, values and principles of the New European Bauhaus
Entity responsible for coordinating the action:	City of Oostende
Local partners to involve:	Institutions with interest, the community meeting center team, local NGOs (O.666, SAAMO), 2 schools.
Time required for implementation:	20 months (January 2026-October 2027)
Potential risks to implementation:	Lack of interest from specific target groups. Difficult to reach out (language barrier, trust). Lack of volunteers for the harvest team.



Figure 10: © Kathy Belpaeme – Picking walk giant apple

Objective 4: Increase edible green spaces

Description of the Action:	This action aims to increase the quantity of green spaces
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	with edible food in the lighthouse district. This includes herbs, edible flowers, nuts, fruit, vegetables, which everyone can pick for free when ripe. The city will plant additional edible greenery in playgrounds & parks, develop edible green stepping stones, plant trees, etc. Communication will be an important aspect of this action: people will need to be informed about what they can harvest, when, how much and what they can do with it – can differ depending on the season.
Objectives:	1) Pick-your own healthy and free vitamins: children love picking berries, fruit and nuts. Free edible plants in the public space can be of added value for everyone and can be part of your seasonal vitamin intake. 2) Make edible green known: map the edible green, develop a harvest walk, communicate through different channels.
Links to other city policies or strategies:	Food policy, health policy, action plan on healthy food, poverty policy, food aid policy, green spaces policy, education, values and principles of the New European Bauhaus
Entity responsible for coordinating the action:	City of Oostende
Local partners to involve:	Local institutions with interest, the community meeting center team, local NGOs (O.666, SAAMO), the 2 schools.
Time required for implementation:	17 months (June 2026-October 2027)
Potential risks to implementation:	Knowledge gap: people are scared to harvest and/or don't always know what to do with the harvest (herbs, vegetables). Unfair behaviour: picking too much, or too early.

3.4 Oostende Long-Term Strategy Plan for People, Places and Policy

The City of Oostende is committed to a long-term strategic approach that ensures continuity, learning and replication of the concept of healthy food environment and related actions beyond the project duration.

The project will allow us to test a range of actions, monitor and evaluate what works in the specific context of the lighthouse district. It will serve as a model to replicate the concept of a healthy food environment in other parts of the city. The Lighthouse district was selected for several reasons: the departure of the discount supermarket LIDL in 2022 marked a significant change for the neighbourhood. Residents were left with the feeling that there is nothing left in

the district and that they are not important. Being on the edge of the city and separated from the rest of the city by the harbour channel, they sometimes feel lost.

However, the district has many assets that the city wants to use as leverage to address the challenges in the area. There is an abundance of open green and blue spaces (parks, community gardens, the 'Spuiikom' water basin for water recreation and nature, and the seaside with dunes and beaches), there are many new developments in the district, and there are active community actors who can play a role in the transformation.

The theme of food is also linked to several other future strategies:

- Further greening of the district; the plan is to do this in both public and private domains, so that edible greenery becomes a flagship feature of the district.
- Improving the accessibility and mobility within the district: this will also lead to better access to food points.
- Spatial planning: the city uses the instrument of neighbourhood structure sketches to make the district future-proof. The food environment is also part of the considerations.
- Climate strategy: the city of Oostende is also a partner in the EU project SMARTER looking at a systemic transformation towards local and regional climate resilience. Within SMARTER the city wants to reduce the vulnerability of the city's population by implementing both technical and nature-based solutions to improve water retention in the area and relieve heat stress. Providing extra green spaces is part of the implementation strategy, including edible green.



Figure 11: © Kim Vanbesien – Market airview

4. Oostende Innovations and Exploitable Results

Thanks to the participation in Bauhaus Bites, the City of Oostende explores and tests the concept of healthy food environments for the first time.

It is quite a new concept for cities to implement, but with increasing urgency to focus on. The number of fast food places is increasing. In the vicinity of primary schools in Flanders, there is an increase of 21.2% between 2008 and 2020, for secondary schools an increase of 24.5%.

74% of the built-up area in Flanders provides more unhealthy than healthy food places. 88% of the citizens in Flanders live in these so-called 'food swamps', where you sink away in unhealthy food (Vandevijvere & Smets, 2024). In Oostende, 49% of the population is overweight or obese. Just 11% eat the recommended amount of fruit and vegetables (Flemish health questionnaire, 2021-2022).

Key innovations and exploitable results include:

- Applying and evaluating the Eat and Step Methodology, of the Flemish Institute for Healthy Living (see Chapter 3): this methodology is used to map the food environment and identify the challenges and will result in formulating solutions and actions. The methodology also includes community engagement: co-design workshops, interviews and participatory governance.
- Participatory co-designing and shared stewardship: active involvement of citizens, schools, civil society organizations, and municipal actors in planning and implementation will lead to fostering long-term ownership. The harvest team is an example of such a shared stewardship.
- Building experience with a social restaurant for a mixed audience: the city has a long tradition of food aid with 8 food aid points in the city (within Bauhaus Bites a new one will be established in the lighthouse district), but a social restaurant aimed at welcoming a mixed group of visitors, applying adaptable rates depending on the income and functioning as a training space is an innovation in Oostende. The mobile kitchen will complement the social restaurant to reach out to specific places in the district, combined with education and food literacy. The restaurant as well as the mobile kitchen will be coordinated and managed by O.666, but in shared use with other social organisations. This is a new and innovative model of management.
- Involving the private sector in a healthier food environment: we want to start a dialogue with the remaining supermarkets, restaurants and shops to provide more healthy food and put this in the spotlight.
- Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for climate resilience: planting of extra (edible) green spaces will support the implementation of NbS in the urban

context, including soil regeneration, biodiversity-friendly planting, and microclimate improvements. We also want to work with the private sector, e.g. depaving the foot path in front of the flower shop and planting edible green.

- Offering a transferable model for combining food & culture, in line with NEB values. The photo-exhibition on hidden sugars in food is an example where cultural activities can open the dialogue on healthy food.
- Harvesting protocols: there is a need for semi-structuring the harvesting of edible green in the public space, taking into account the season, the use and fairness principles. The protocols can be targeted towards different groups, for example schools who harvest with the children and use the harvest in school activities; the women group of SAAMO harvesting together for their families and community activities; individuals who harvest to add healthy fresh food to their menu.

All innovations are being documented for inclusion in the Bauhaus Bites Playbook through case studies, methodologies, and lessons learned. In this way, the City of Oostende offers a replicable and adaptable model for cities seeking to implement the principles of the New European Bauhaus within long-term healthy food environments.

Because of the novelty of the food environment approach, Oostende is also in contact with Flemish cities Gent and Leuven, who are working on a healthier food environment as partners in the project FEAST.



Figure 12: © Nathan Debusschere – Courtyard orchard

5. Oostende Impact Monitoring, Evaluating and Measuring

The monitoring and evaluation approach for the food environment of the lighthouse district will be designed as a practical and adaptable framework to understand the health, social, inclusivity and learning effects of the interventions. The City of Oostende applies a combination of quantitative indicators and qualitative insights, with a focus on learning and improving over time.

Quantitative indicators can include:

- the number of restaurants and shops that increase the offer of healthy food;
- the number of activities of the mobile kitchen;
- the number of visitors to the social restaurant;
- the number of educational activities related to food in schools;
- amount of extra edible green spaces planted;
- the number of citizens participating in the healthy food communication campaign;
- the number of people receiving food in the food aid point.

Special attention will be given to tracking engagement among vulnerable groups, such as elderly residents, children, and people with low income. Qualitative insights can be collected through interviews, testimonials, stories from users and participatory feedback sessions. This will be important to understand the appreciation of the interventions.

The monitoring & evaluation framework will be developed under Work package 6 with the support of University of Copenhagen (UCPH). The deadline for this first monitoring and evaluation report is December 2026. These insights will feed into the Bauhaus Bites Playbook and inform future interventions in Oostende and other cities.

6. Oostende Inclusivity, Diversity and Ethics Consideration

Inclusivity, diversity, and ethical responsibility are at the core of all activities of the City of Oostende. These principles are not treated as separate concerns but are embedded across decision-making and community participation. The project aligns with the New European Bauhaus values, sustainability, inclusion, and beauty, and ethical frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (right to participate in cultural life) and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (integration of persons with disabilities).

6.1. Diversity

The lighthouse district houses a diverse community. From 2014 to 2024, the percentage of the population with a non-Belgian origin doubled, and is now 30%. This increase was higher than in other parts of the City. It is therefore very important to take cultural diversity into account.

The City works together with organisations to ensure diversity. The following organisations are active in the lighthouse district and will be involved in the project and will participate to the activities with their people:

- Duinhelm: working with people with an impediment
- Arktos: a center of expertise that empowers children and young people in vulnerable situations and persons with disabilities where necessary, and supports parents, schools, partners, governments, and the broader society in doing the same.
- SAAMO: community development organisation, the organisation stands for fighting inequality together. They support people in vulnerable situations, often women and children with a migrant background.
- FMDO: federation for global and democratic organisations. They connect and strengthen people in the superdiverse world of today.
- Samen Divers: independent welfare organisation working with people with a migration background with the aim of living together as equals.

6.2. Inclusivity

We will actively and intentionally create an environment where diverse individuals feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute.

- Physical accessibility: the public meeting center and Wijkpunt Vuurtoren follow the accessibility standard.
- In the Eat & Step methodology, accessibility is one of the assets looked at in the inventory of food points.

- Cultural and dietary inclusion: activities and educational programs celebrate cultural diversity and accommodate various dietary needs.
- New Food aid point: the volunteers are trained to treat everyone with respect and to act discretely and fairly. In the food point, special attention is paid to maximum free choice of food, so the experience feels like a normal shop and not as a food donation with fixed products. The City also provides a mobile service for disabled people entitled to shop at the social grocery.
- Mobile kitchen: will be used to reach out to people who are difficult to reach: elderly, persons with a disability or reduced mobility.

6.3. Ethical reflection

The project includes regular evaluation, open communication, and community feedback, ensuring that inclusivity, respect, and trust remain central to every action.

The city also pays special attention to people in a vulnerable situation. A vulnerability scan will be performed together with experts in the City administration.

7. Oostende Risk and Mitigation Measures

Risk and mitigation measures are fundamental components of effective project management and organizational planning. In the context of Bauhaus Bites, risk refers to the potential for events or conditions that could negatively impact the achievement of project objectives, timelines, or outcomes. These uncertainties may arise from internal factors such as resource constraints or external influences like policy changes or stakeholder engagement challenges.

To proactively address such uncertainties, mitigation measures are developed and implemented to reduce the likelihood or impact of potential risks. A robust risk management strategy enhances preparedness and resilience, enabling the project team to respond effectively to challenges and maintain progress toward its goals. Moreover, it supports informed decision-making and fosters a culture of accountability and adaptability within the consortium.

Risk management in Bauhaus Bites involves a systematic process of identifying, assessing, controlling, and recording risks. This includes highlighting potential consequences and managing mitigation actions in a transparent and traceable manner. Risk assessment methods will be applied throughout the project lifecycle to minimize deviations from expected results and timelines, ensuring that corrective actions can be taken swiftly when needed.

In the Grant Agreement and Consortium Plan, we have listed all critical risks. These risks have been revisited and updated to reflect the perspectives and experiences of the participating cities, ensuring that local contexts and evolving conditions are taken into account.

Beyond the risks listed in the consortium plan and Grant Agreement, specific risks related to specific objectives are described in Chapter 3.3.

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About Bauhaus Bites

The Bauhaus Bites project serves over 1000 people by providing affordable, healthy, and nutritious food that is environmentally friendly. It raises awareness and engages individuals about the benefits of nature and the significance of sustainable food, empowering them to become ambassadors in their communities. Additionally, it implements over 20 place-based and community-based interventions and innovations. Ultimately, innovative ways to tailor policy responses to the specific challenges and needs identified at various levels of governance contribute to the implementation of interconnected European strategies.

The Bauhaus Bites Food Environments are urban and peri-urban ecosystems that commit to implementing sustainable, healthy diets, amplified by the New European Bauhaus and fortified with Nature-Based Solutions. They will ensure that the transformed food environments of tomorrow are sustainable, inclusive, and beautiful.

List of Abbreviations

BB	Bauhaus Bites
EU	European Union
ESG	Environmental, Social, & Governance
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations



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