

Omogočimo lažjo inkluzijo: javna pobuda in peticija za zagotavljanje primernih obrokov za vse otroke¹

Boj proti diskriminaciji in neenaki obravnavi, spodbujanje socialne pravičnosti in inkluzija so ključne vrednote demokratične družbe. Kljub obstoječim pravnim osnovam za preprečevanje diskriminacije pa je obseg drugačne obravnave manjšinskih skupin v Sloveniji zelo problematičen (Bajt in dr., 2023). To se jasno odraža na področju prehrane, predvsem v vzgojno-izobraževalnih zavodih, kjer otroci z različnimi kulturnimi, verskimi ali etičnimi načeli mnogokrat nimajo dostopa do obrokov, prilagojenih njihovim potrebam, saj ti niso sistemsko zagotovljeni na lokalni in nacionalni ravni. V tej pobudi se zato spodaj podpisane organizacije zavzemamo za bolj inkluzivno izobraževalno okolje, kar lahko dosežemo z izboljšavami načinov zagotavljanja šolskih obrokov ter z dialogom o ustreznih in zadostnih prehranskih možnostih za vse.

Glavni dokument, ki v Republiki Sloveniji ureja pravico do verske svobode, je Zakon o verski svobodi (2007), ki med drugim določa, da mora biti verska svoboda tudi v javnem življenju zagotovljena in nedotakljiva, kar med drugim zajema različne oblike izražanja vere. Oblika izražanja vere je tudi izbira prehrane, ki je v skladu z verskimi nauki. Verska svoboda mora biti torej zagotovljena tudi v okviru prehranjevanja, čemur pa Smernice za prehranjevanje v vzgojno-izobraževalnih zavodih (Zavod Republike Slovenije za šolstvo, 2023) ne namenjajo dovolj pozornosti.

1 Pripravili migranti in migrantke v okviru projekta BODE+, v sodelovanju z ADRA Slovenija, Društvom Medkulturni dialog in Kulturnim društvom Gmajna, ter ob podpori projekta EMV-LII. Pripravo izjave je vodila Anja Horvat.

V omenjenih smernicah za prehranjevanje je sicer navedeno, da je »temeljni vzgojno-izobraževalni cilj šolske prehrane v vzgojno-izobraževalnih zavodih optimalen razvoj otrok in mladostnikov ne glede na spol, socialni in kulturni izvor, veroizpoved, narodno pripadnost ter telesno in duševno konstitucijo« (Zavod Republike Slovenije za šolstvo, 2023: 10), vendar je to edini del, ki kulturni izvor in veroizpoved sploh omenja. To pomeni, da pri oblikovanju smernic ta načela niso bila upoštevana, zaradi česar ne prispevajo učinkovito k doseganju svojega glavnega cilja.

Medtem ko se zavedamo, da zagotavljanje ustrezne prehrane za otroke, ki ne jedo določenih vrst živil, predstavlja določen organizacijski in finančni napor, moramo upoštevati, da za mnoge otroke nasprotno pomeni, da v šoli cel dan ne jedo ali pa so jim ponujeni le priloga, kruh ali sadje (Porić, 2024), kar nedvomno niso ustrezni nadomestki za polnovreden obrok, ki zadostuje otrokovim potrebam. Mnogi otroci tako domov prihajajo lačni in oslabljeni, poleg tega pa zaradi občutka izobčenosti in drugačne obravnave doživljajo močne čustvene stiske. Takšna situacija predstavlja obliko diskriminacije, saj mnoge otroke postavlja v neugoden položaj v primerjavi z ostalimi učenci, kar pa je s psiho-socialnega vidika popolnoma nesprejemljivo.

Problematika šolske prehrane za otroke, ki zaradi kulturnih, verskih ali etičnih načel ne jedo določenih vrst mesa, je bila že mnogokrat tudi tema posveta z zagovornikom načela enakosti, vendar je postopek po navadi ostal le na ravni posveta, iz zapisnikov primerov (Zagovornik načela enakosti, 2024) pa je razvidno, da je nasprotovanje možnosti alternativne prehrane oz. zadostnih obrokov zagovornik načela enakosti označil za »hujšo obliko diskriminacije«, ko je zaradi dejanskega manjšega vnosa hrane ogroženo otrokovo zdravje. Tako so mnogi otroci deležni diskriminacije oz. drugačne obravnave v vzgojno-izobraževalnih zavodih, saj njihovo kulturno, versko in etično ozadje pri načrtovanju prehrane ni upoštevano, njihove prehranske potrebe pa tako ostajajo neslišane. Državni organi pri tem ne zagotavljajo nobene sistemske rešitve.

Možnost zagotavljanja prehrane brez svinjskega mesa in masti je septembra 2019 na predlog Islamske skupnosti v Republiki Sloveniji že bila tema pogovora na seji Sveta Vlade Republike Slovenije za dialog o verski svobodi, vendar glede na Gradivo k posameznim točkam dnevnega reda omenjene seje (Ministrstvo za kulturo, 2019) ni razvidno, da bi vlada podala kakršen koli zaključen odgovor ali predlog, ki bi olajšal situacijo muslimanskih družin.

Za otroke, ki prispejo v Slovenijo iz drugih držav, je začetek šolanja v novem okolju izjemno stresen. Soočiti se morajo z izzivi prilagajanja novemu izobraževalnemu sistemu, premagovanja jezikovnih ovir in sklepanja novih prijateljstev. Hkrati se pogosto srečujejo tudi z neenako obravnavo in omejenimi možnostmi – še posebej na področju šolske prehrane. Pogosto se šolsko osebje ne trudi

razumeti, da otrokove vrednote niso nekaj, kar lahko upoštevajo le doma, v šoli pa ne. So neločljiv del njihove identitete, ki ostaja z njimi skozi celoten proces integracije v novo okolje. Kljub temu pa se starši neprestano soočajo s komentarji, kot je »šola ni restavracija«, in berejo o tem, kako se mora osebe šol ukvarjati z njihovimi »kapricami« in »željami« (Hajdinjak, 2024).

Ob tem ne smemo spregledati dejstva, da otroci hrane ne smejo prinašati od doma, kar v praksi pomeni, da jim pogosto ne preostane drugega, kot da skoraj cel dan ostanejo lačni. Poleg tega zaradi nejasnosti objavljenih jedilnikov otroci med šolskim kosilom sprašujejo učitelje, katera vrsta mesa je v obroku. Mnogi jim sčasoma začnejo odgovarjati, naj jih tega ne sprašujejo več, kar otroke postavi v zelo neprijeten položaj, saj ne vedo, ali obrok lahko pojedjo ali ne.

Izjave staršev:

Moja hči je vsak dan domov prihajala lačna, saj je v vrtcu pojedla le kakšen kos kruha. Ker osebje kljub našim prošnjam ni bilo pripravljeno pomagati in ji priskrbeti obroka, ki bi ga lahko jedla, smo morali zamenjati vrtec. V novem vrtcu, ki ji omogoča obrok, prilagojen njenim potrebam, se počuti bolj sprejeto in vključeno.
- Družina iz Turčije

Ko je bil moj otrok v prvem razredu, je učiteljico spraševal, kaj je v hrani. Enkrat mu je rekla: 'Zakaj me vsak dan to sprašuješ? Naj tvoja mama pogleda jedilnik in poskrbi za to.' Ko sem pogledala jedilnik, je na njem pisalo le meso – katera vrsta mesa je bila, ni bilo navedeno. Učiteljica mi je rekla, da to ni njen problem in da jih je moj otrok motil s svojimi vprašanji. - Družina iz Alžirije

Moj 5-letni sin se je zaradi drugačne obravnave in nezagotavljanja zadostnega obroka počutil izločenega. Počutil se je drugačnega. In občutek take drugačnosti je bil zelo globok. - Družina iz Turčije

Naše ključno sporočilo je, da zavračanje možnosti alternativne prehrane za otroke z različnimi kulturnimi, verskimi in etničnimi načeli ne bo spremenilo njihovih vrednot, temveč bo le poglobilo občutek izobčenosti in ne vključenosti, čustveno stisko in preprečilo njihov zdrav razvoj.

Z željo po izboljšanju situacije smo pripravili 6 priporočil, ki ponujajo možnosti za razmislek o rešitvah, ki bi močno prispevale k psiho-fizičnemu blagostanju otrok in občutku sprejetosti.

1. Otroci oz. njihovi starši ali skrbniki naj imajo pravico do vpogleda v natančen seznam vseh sestavin, prisotnih v šolskih obrokih, ne le sestavin, ki so razvidne iz imena živil. Pogosto namreč prihaja do prikrite vsebnosti svinjskega mesa in drugih sestavin v obrokih zaradi zavajajočega ime-

na živila. Tak primer je telečja hrenovka, ki lahko kljub svojemu imenu vsebuje tudi do 30 % svinjine. Poleg tega so imena živil na jedilniku pogosto nejasna, zaradi česar so starši v dilemi, ali naj otroka odjavijo od obroka ali ne. Primeri takih imen so: mornarsko meso, mesni namaz, mesni sir, čebulna bržola, štajerska kislja juha, grahovo meso ipd. (Porić, 2024). Transparentni jedilniki so prednost za vse starše, ki želijo slediti prehrani svojih otrok, ne le za tiste, ki določenih živil ne uživajo zaradi kulturnega, verskega ali etičnega ozadja.

2. *Vzgojno-izobraževalni zavodi naj pravočasno objavljajo jedilnike*, vsaj v petek zvečer za naslednji teden, da lahko starši po potrebi otroka odjavijo od obroka. Poznejša objava jedilnika namreč onemogoča staršem, da otroka odjavijo od obroka za ponedeljek. Če je npr. svinjina ali kakšna druga neprimerna sestavina prisotna v obroku v ponedeljek, nekateri otroci obroka ne jedo, starši pa ga kljub temu plačajo, kar je zanje tako finančno kot čustveno obremenjujoče. Poleg tega se z možnostjo pravočasne odjave izognemo nepotrebnemu zavrženju hrane (Porić, 2024).
3. *Vzgojno-izobraževalni zavodi naj ponudijo možnost izbire alternativnih obrokov brez živil, ki jih otroci iz kulturnih, verskih ali etičnih načel ne jedo*. Omejenim otrokom se mora zagotoviti polnovredne obroke, pri čemer ponudba le priloge, kruha ali sadja ne zadostuje. Najprimernejšo alternativo je najbolje izbrati na podlagi dialoga s starši, katerih otroci obiskujejo določeno izobraževalno ustanovo. Inkluzivno izobraževanje pomeni tudi vključevanje dialoga s starši in prisluhniti potrebam njihovih otrok.
4. *Državni organi naj ponudijo sistemske rešitve*, ki bodo vsem otrokom omogočile možnost izbire polnovrednega obroka v vzgojno-izobraževalnih zavodih, ne glede na njihovo kulturno, versko ali etično ozadje. Rešitve na individualni ravni, kot so dogovori z učitelji in kuharji, niso ustrezna alternativa. Sistemske rešitve naj se oblikujejo na nacionalni ravni, obenem pa naj posamezni vzgojno-izobraževalni zavodi naredijo analizo različnega ozadja svojih učencev. Tako bodo lahko bolje prepoznali njihove potrebe in jih pri organizaciji šolske prehrane po svojih zmožnostih upoštevali.
5. *Vzgojno-izobraževalni zavodi naj verskih prepovedi in etičnih načel ne enačijo z izmišljevanjem* (Porić, 2024), saj to vodi do posredne diskriminacije na podlagi drugačne obravnave otrok, ki pripadajo skupini z drugačnimi kulturnimi, verskimi ali etičnimi načeli. Učitelje in ostalo šolsko osebje naj se ozavešča o različnih prehranskih potrebah otrok in se med njimi spodbuja strpnost.
6. *Opravi naj se ponoven pregled Smernic za prehranjevanje v vzgojno-izobraževalnih zavodih in vanje vključi tudi napotke glede omejitev, ki vključujejo*

potrebe različnih družin oz. otrok. S tem bodo smernice tudi boljše stremele k doseganju temeljnega vzgojno-izobraževalnega cilja šolske prehrane v vzgojno-izobraževalnih zavodih, ki je »optimalen razvoj otrok in mladostnikov ne glede na spol, socialni in kulturni izvor, veroizpoved, narodno pripadnost ter telesno in duševno konstitucijo« (Zavod Republike Slovenije za šolstvo, 2023: 10).

Skozi pogovore z udeleženci fokusnih skupin smo kot delno ustrezno alternativo prepoznali *zdrav polnovreden obrok, ki temelji na rastlinski prehrani*, saj ta pokriva najboljše spekter oseb, ki zaradi različnih razlogov določenih živil ne jedo. V večini primerov problem namreč predstavlja ravno meso, pa naj gre za način zakola in priprave (halal), prepovedano vrsto mesa (npr. svinjina) ali pa etično spornost. Z uvedbo možnosti izbire obroka, ki temelji na rastlinski prehrani, bi torej dosegli razbremenitev kuharjev, saj bi bilo treba za širok spekter oseb, ki določenih živil ne jedo, pripraviti *le eno dodatno vrsto obroka*. Take rešitve se poslužujejo tudi že nekatere šole v tujini, npr. na Finskem (Giorda in dr., 2014).

Ker v Sloveniji mnogo šol objavlja ustrezne mesečne jedilnike, nekatere pa otrokom omogočajo možnost izbire obroka brez svinjine ali brez mesa (Porić, 2024), je jasno, da naši predlogi ne predstavljajo nekaj neizvedljivega. Glede na mnoge izkušnje staršev je za vsakega možno najti ustrezno rešitev, če je odprt prostor za dialog. Prav tako praksa iz drugih držav, kot so Anglija, Francija in Finska, kaže, da šolska jedilnica z različnimi obroki, ki upoštevajo kulturno, versko in etično prepričanje otrok, ne zagotavlja le enake obravnave, temveč predstavlja tudi prostor za razvijanje spoštovanja in razumevanja različnosti (Giorda in dr., 2014).

Avtorji pobude si prizadevamo za širjenje razumevanja, da živimo v družbi, kjer sobivamo ljudje z različnimi vrednotami in prepričanji. Raznolikost, tudi pri prehranskih izbirah, ne ogroža nikogar in ne spodkopava identitete, temveč družbo bogati. Ključno vprašanje je, ali želimo vzgajati otroke v duhu strpnosti in sprejemanja ali pa nadaljevati prakso izključevanja. V skladu s tem pozivamo k odprtemu dialogu in vključevanju staršev k iskanju rešitev, ki bodo omogočile inkluzivno šolsko okolje za vse.

Pobudo in peticijo podpira 429 posameznikov in naslednje organizacije: Infokolpa; Platforma SLOGA; Krščanska adventistična cerkev; Slovenska filantropija; Mirovni inštitut; Kulturni center Danilo Kiš; Humanitas; Zavod Krog; Pravni center za varstvo človekovih pravic in okolja – PIC; Zavod APIS; Amnesty International Slovenije; Islamska skupnost v Sloveniji; Društvo Raznolikost; Inštitut ČKZ; in Slovensko vegansko društvo.

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Enable Faster Inclusion: Public initiative and petition to provide suitable meals for all children¹

Preventing discrimination, unequal treatment, promoting social justice, and inclusion are key values of a democratic society. Despite the existing legal basis for preventing discrimination, the extent to which minority groups are mistreated in Slovenia is a serious concern (Bajt et al., 2023). This is clearly reflected in the provision of school meals, especially in educational institutions, where children from different cultural, religious, or ethical backgrounds often do not have access to meals adapted to their needs. Inclusive school meals are not systematically provided at the local and national levels. Therefore, through this initiative, the undersigned organisations advocate for a more inclusive educational environment. This can be achieved by improving the methods of providing school meals and by engaging in dialogue to ensure appropriate and sufficient nutritional options for all students.

The main document regulating the right to religious freedom in the Republic of Slovenia is the Freedom of Religion Act (2007), which stipulates that religious freedom must be guaranteed and remain inviolable in public life, including in various forms of religious expression. A form of religious expression is also the choice of food that aligns with religious teachings. Religious freedom must therefore be guaranteed in the context of school meals as well, which the *Nutri-*

1 Prepared by migrants within the BODE+ project, in cooperation with ADRA Slovenia, Intercultural Dialogue Society, and Gmajna Cultural Association, with support from the EMV-LII project. The preparation of the press release was led by Anja Horvat.

tional Guidelines for Educational Institutions (National Education Institute Slovenia, 2023) do not adequately address.

The Nutritional Guidelines state that “the fundamental educational goal of school nutrition in educational institutions is the optimal development of children and adolescents regardless of gender, social and cultural origin, religion, nationality, and physical and mental constitution” (National Education Institute Slovenia, 2023: 10). However, this is the only part of the document that mentions cultural origin and religion. This suggests that these principles were not fully considered when the guidelines were created, which is why they do not contribute effectively to achieving their stated fundamental goal.

We are aware that providing adequate nutrition and meals for children who do not eat certain foods requires considerable organisational and financial effort. However, we must also recognise that, for many children, this means they go without eating at school all day or are offered only a side dish, bread, or fruit (Porić, 2024), which are undoubtedly not adequate substitutes for a full meal that meets a child’s needs. Many children thus come home hungry and weak, and they also experience substantial emotional distress due to the feeling of being excluded and treated differently. Such a situation constitutes a form of discrimination, as it places many children at a disadvantage compared with other students, which is utterly unacceptable from a psychosocial perspective.

The issue of school meals for children who, due to cultural, religious, or ethical principles, do not eat certain types of meat has frequently been the subject of consultations with the Advocate of the Principle of Equality. However, these procedures have generally remained at the stage of consultation only. Case records show that the Advocate of the Principle of Equality (2024) has described resistance to providing alternative or sufficient meals as a “severe form of discrimination”, noting that a child’s health may be endangered by the resulting lower food intake. As a result, many children face discrimination or improper treatment in educational institutions, as their cultural, religious, and ethical backgrounds are not considered when planning meals, leaving their nutritional needs unmet. State and local authorities do not provide any systemic solutions in this regard.

The possibility of providing food without pork and lard was already a topic of discussion at the session of the Republic of Slovenia’s Government Council for Dialogue on Religious Freedom in September 2019, at the suggestion of the Islamic Community in the Republic of Slovenia. However, according to the agenda of the mentioned session (Ministry of Culture, 2019), it is unclear whether the government will provide any completed response or proposal to ease the situation of Muslim families.

For children who arrive in Slovenia from other countries, starting school in a new environment is highly stressful. They have to face the challenges of adapting to a new educational system, overcoming language barriers, and making new friends. At the same time, they often encounter unequal treatment and limited opportunities—especially in school nutrition. Often, school staff do not understand that children's values are not something they can only follow at home, but not at school. They are an integral part of their identity that stays with them throughout the integration process into a new environment. Nevertheless, parents constantly face comments such as “school is not a restaurant,” and read about how school staff have to deal with their “whims” and “wishes” (Hajdinjak, 2024).

We should also not overlook that children are not allowed to bring food from home. This means they often have no choice but to go hungry for almost the entire day. In addition, because the menus are vague, children ask teachers at lunchtime what type of meat is in their meal. Many teachers eventually tell them not to ask anymore, which puts the children in a very uncomfortable position as they do not know whether they can eat the meal.

Parents' statements:

My daughter used to come home hungry every day because she would only eat a piece of bread at kindergarten. Despite our requests, the staff were unwilling to help or provide her with a meal she could eat, so we had to change kindergartens. In the new kindergarten, which provides her with a meal adapted to her needs, she feels more accepted and included. – Family from Turkey

When my child was in first grade, he asked his teacher what was in the food. One time she said, 'Why do you ask me that every day? Let your mother look at the menu and take care of it.' When I looked at the menu, it only said meat – it didn't say what kind of meat it was. The teacher told me that it wasn't her problem and that my child was bothering them with his questions. – Family from Algeria

My 5-year-old son felt excluded because of the wrong treatment and the lack of adequate meals. He felt different. And the feeling of being different was profound. – Family from Turkey

Our key message is that denying children with different cultural, religious, or ethical backgrounds alternative food options will not change their values. Instead, it will only deepen their feelings of exclusion and emotional distress and prevent their healthy development.

With the aim of improving the situation, we have prepared 6 recommendations that provide opportunities to explore solutions that would significantly enhance children's psychophysical well-being and sense of acceptance.

1. *Children, their parents, or guardians should have the right to see a detailed list of all ingredients present in school meals, not just the ingredients that are evident from the name of the food.* Often, meals contain hidden pork and other ingredients because the food is mislabelled. One example is a veal hot dog, which, despite its name, can contain up to 30% pork. In addition, the names of menu items are often unclear, leaving parents in a dilemma about whether to cancel their child's meal that day. Examples of such names are sailor's meat, meat spread, luncheon meat, onion meat, Styrian sour soup, meat with peas, etc. (Porić, 2024). Transparent menus are an advantage for all parents who want to monitor their children's diet, not only for those who do not consume certain foods due to cultural, religious, or ethical backgrounds.
2. *Educational institutions should publish menus in advance, ideally by Friday evening for the following week, so that parents can unenroll their child from the meal scheme if necessary.* If the menu is published too late, parents cannot cancel their child's meal for Monday. For example, if the meal contains pork or another ingredient that some children are unable to eat, the parents still have to pay for it, which can be a financial and emotional burden. In addition, the option to unenroll in time avoids unnecessary food waste (Porić, 2024).
3. *Educational institutions should offer the possibility of choosing alternative meals without foods that children do not eat for cultural, religious, or ethical reasons.* These children should be provided with wholesome meals. Offering only side dishes, bread, or fruit is insufficient. The most suitable alternative should be chosen through dialogue with the parents whose children attend a particular educational institution. Inclusive education also involves engaging with parents and listening to the children's needs.
4. *Governments should provide systemic solutions that enable all children to access nutritious meals in educational institutions, regardless of their cultural, religious, or ethical background.* Individual arrangements, such as agreements with teachers or kitchen staff, are not an adequate alternative. Systemic solutions should be developed at both national and local levels, while individual educational institutions should assess the diverse backgrounds of their students. This will allow them to better identify students' needs and take them into account when organising school meals
5. *Educational institutions should not equate religious prohibitions or ethical principles with children being fussy about food* (Porić, 2024), as this leads to indirect discrimination by treating children from different cultural,

religious, or ethical backgrounds differently. Teachers and other school staff should be made aware of children's diverse nutritional needs, and a culture of tolerance should be encouraged among them.

6. *The Nutritional Guidelines for Educational Institutions should be reviewed and updated to include guidance that considers the dietary restrictions and needs of diverse families and children.* This will also better align with the fundamental educational goal of school nutrition in educational institutions, which is “optimal development of children and adolescents regardless of gender, social and cultural origin, religion, nationality, and physical and mental constitution” (National Education Institute Slovenia, 2023: 10).

Through discussions with focus group participants, we identified a plant-based meal as a partially suitable alternative, as it accommodates the widest range of individuals who avoid certain foods for various reasons. In most cases, the issue is meat—whether due to the method of slaughter and preparation (halal), a prohibited type of meat (e.g., pork), or ethical concerns. Introducing the option of a plant-based meal would therefore reduce the burden on kitchen staff, as only one additional meal type would need to be prepared for a broad group of people with dietary restrictions. Such solutions are already implemented in some schools abroad, for example in Finland (Giorda et al., 2014).

Since many schools in Slovenia publish monthly menus and some allow children to choose meals without pork or meat (Porić, 2024), our proposals are achievable. According to many parents' experiences, it is possible to find suitable solutions for everyone if there is an open space for dialogue. Moreover, examples from countries such as the UK, France, and Finland show that providing different meals in school canteens that respect children's cultural, religious, and ethical beliefs ensures equal treatment and creates an environment of respect and understanding for diversity (Giorda et al., 2014).

The authors of the initiative strive to spread the understanding that we live in a society where people with different values and beliefs coexist. Diversity, including in food choices, does not threaten anyone or undermine identity, but rather enriches society. The key question is whether we want to raise children in a spirit of tolerance and acceptance or continue the practice of exclusion. Therefore, we call for open dialogue and for parents' involvement in finding solutions that will enable an inclusive school environment for all.

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