**Law N.º 11/2017**

**Establishes a mandatory regime for the existence of vegetarian options in the public canteen´s menus**

The Portuguese Republic Assembly decrees hereby, in accordance with item c) of the article 161º of the Portuguese Constitution, the following:

**Article 1  
Object**

The present law establishes the obligatory existence of a vegetarian meal option in the menus of public canteens and mess rooms.

**Article 2  
Scope of application**

This law shall apply to canteens and mess rooms managed by sovereignty bodies, as well as services and Public Administrative bodies, central, regional and local, especially those that are located at:  
A) National health service units;  
B) Nursing homes and day centers;  
C) Primary and secondary education establishments;  
D) Higher education establishments;  
E) Prison and educational institutions;  
F) Social services.

**Article 3  
Provision of vegetarian meals**

1 - The public canteens and mess rooms service referred to in the previous article includes, in all of its daily menus, at least one vegetarian option.

2 - For the purposes of clarification, the «vegetarian option» mentioned in the previous item is understood to be a meal that does not contain any animal based products.  
3- In accordance with the political framework of food waste prevention, the canteens referred to in items a) and c) from the previous article may be exempted from complying with the mandatory inclusion of a vegetarian option when there is no demand for it.   
4- In the case of reduced demand for the vegetarian option, the public canteens managing bodies may establish a regime of previous subscription applying to those who require a vegetarian option.

**Article 4  
Nutritional training and balance**

1- The vegetarian menus are programmed under the guidance of qualified technicians and take into account the composition of the meal, ensuring its diversity and the availability of nutrients that provide a healthy diet.  
2- In accordance with the previous item, capitations, fact sheets and menus shall be produced in order to ensure the adequate provision of vegetarian meals.  
3 - In the framework of obligations arising from this law, it is the responsibility of each public canteen and mess room management entity to determine the way of providing the vegetarian option.

**Article 5  
Oversight**

With no impairment to the powers conferred by law to other entities, it is the responsibility of the Food and Economic Security Authority (ASAE) to ensure the compliance with this law dispositions.

**Article 6  
Transition period**

1- In cases of direct administration of canteens or mess rooms, the management entity shall have a period of adaptation corresponding to a maximum of six months, beginning upon the official implementation of the present law, to ensure the full provision of the vegetarian option.

2. In all other remaining cases, when existing contracts for the supply of meals on the date of implementation of the present law do not predict the obligation of the supplier to provide vegetarian meals, the respective management entity is exempted from supplying that option until the end of the above referred contract, with no impediment to the inclusion of such obligation in the responsibilities of new procedures or contracts yet to be concluded.

**Article 7  
Implementation**

This law shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following its publication.

Approved on March 3rd, 2017  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC ASSEMBLY,  
(Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues)