



press release

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Elior and the Hera Group sign a pact for sustainability

The country's leading catering company and the Emilia-Romagna based multi-utility have forged a circular economy partnership

Elior, Italy's foremost catering company, and the Hera Group, one of the nation's main multi-utilities, have signed a memorandum of understanding to collaborate on projects geared towards the circular economy, environmental sustainability and sustainable mobility.

The agreement, presented on Earth Day, 22 April, will be valid for two years and will unfold by gradually implementing a series of environmental actions and initiatives, starting with catering outlets located mainly in the areas served by Hera, and later gradually extending the scope of action to other regions.

Sustainable mobility, circular economy and environmental sustainability pilot projects launched

Faced with the economic, environmental and social changes currently underway, it is becoming increasingly important for companies to join forces and work on common objectives. The circular economy is a key element for both companies, who have set themselves the goal of working together to ensure maximum value for resources, with a sustainable approach integrated into their business strategies. With this agreement, Elior and Hera are thus launching a collaboration that will start with specific pilot projects, particularly in the field of sustainable mobility, the circular economy and environmental sustainability. The organic waste produced in catering outlets can be used to produce biomethane and compost in the Hera Group's S. Agata Bolognese (BO) plant, while separately collected exhausted vegetable oils (those that remain at the end of food preparation, for frying or to preserve food) can be used to produce biodiesel, thanks to the partnership signed by Hera with Eni. Furthermore, electric vehicle recharging points may be built.

The two companies will evaluate collaborations involving projects for recycling and reusing the plastic used in catering outlets and for preventing waste production, making the most of any waste. Hera will also be able to provide support on how to sort and treat the waste produced. Lastly, extensive environmental communication campaigns will be developed jointly, dedicated for both employees and customers. The figures in question are significant: in Italy, over 95 million meals are prepared every year by Elior, with 10 thousand people working in more than 2 thousand restaurants and sales points.

Constant attention to sustainability

Elior dedicates constant attention to sustainability, as certified, for example, by its membership in the Global Compact, the United Nations programme fostering corporate social responsibility, to create a virtuous circle in the area of catering by working in synergy with suppliers, customers, end users and employees. As regards the Hera Group, it has always been committed to sustainably developing the areas it serves, thanks to active communication with local communities and cooperation with stakeholders. Hera will bring all its experience in the field of waste management to this partnership: it is the leading national operator in terms of the amount of waste treated, and in 2021 it reached over 65% in sorted waste collection (with a recovery rate of over 90%), serving more than 180 municipalities and 3.2 million citizens, meeting years in advance the targets set by the European Union for the general and specific recycling rates for packaging and the use of landfills. Moreover, Hera was the first utility, and the second company in Italy, to join the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, which brings together the companies most active globally in the transition to the circular economy.



“The transition towards a circular economy is a challenge made up of many actions implemented on an ongoing basis, and this agreement with Elior is one further example”, comments **Stefano Venier, CEO of the Hera Group**. “Another step towards achieving concrete results, it allows us to share our experience in the field of sustainability and further strengthen a commitment that accompanies all our work.”

“A commitment to making our daily activities more sustainable is a priority in our business strategy. This is why we aim to involve all our stakeholders in activating virtuous processes capable of reducing waste of all kinds, thanks to circular economy mechanisms”, adds **Rosario Ambrosino, CEO of Elior**. “The collaboration with Hera that we are presenting today is an excellent example of this approach, and we are confident that the pilot projects we are launching together can lead to significant results which benefit the community.”

Hera Group

The Hera Group is one of Italy’s largest multi-utilities and operates in the waste management, energy and water cycle sectors, with more than 9,000 employees engaged every day in meeting the multiple needs of roughly 5 million citizens located mainly in Emilia-Romagna, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Marche, Tuscany and Abruzzo. Listed on the Italian Stock Exchange since 2003, it is among the top 40 Italian companies in terms of capitalisation (and is part of the FTSE MIB Index) and in 2020 it was included in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index, both World and Europe.

<https://eng.gruppohera.it/>

Elior

Elior, **Italy’s leading company in Collective Catering**, serves over **95 million meals** a year in more than **2,200 restaurants and sales points, through 10,000 employees**. It provides its services to many sectors, including **companies, schools, social and health-care institutions, hotels, the armed forces, museums and travelling**, with catering on board Trenitalia’s trains.

Elior takes care of the **needs of each individual customer**, with balanced catering solutions and comfortable environments, as well as diversified and innovative services that meet all tastes and desires. The **flexibility solutions** offered by Elior are designed for all needs and spaces, so that a break for food is always a moment of well-being and relaxation.

Elior is committed to quality on a daily basis, as proven by its constantly renewed certifications and its membership in sustainability protocols, such as the **Global Compact**, the United Nations programme on Corporate Social Responsibility. This is the groundwork for Elior’s Corporate Social Responsibility strategy, the **Positive Foodprint Plan™**, which aims to create a **virtuous circle in the world of catering, from the field to the dinner table**, working in synergy with suppliers, customers, end users and employees.

