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FOOD WASTE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION BY SECTOR OF ACTIVITY

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Abstract: Food waste is one of the most critical concerns of our time, is an alarming and deeply unacceptable issue. Unfortunately, food waste is a global problem that affects both developed and developing economies. It is not only a loss of valuable resources, but also a threat to the environment. This issue brings to the fore a number of critical questions about how we manage food resources, agricultural production and our responsibility to the environment.

• Introduction

Food waste is the total amount of food produced for human consumption that is wasted before it even reaches the plate. [1] Production, storage, processing, distribution, retail and food services and finally consumption in consumers' homes make up the value chain. Every stage has problems that are specific to that stage's sector, and the longer the supply chain, the more waste there is likely to be. [13]

• Material and method

The study presents a research based on external data, related to the amount of food waste in the European Union by sector of activity and by households excluding food losses (food not harvested or food that wasn't allowed to be marketed for safety reasons), related to the NACE rev.2 classification.

• Results and discussions

Around 131 kg of food waste per capita was produced in the EU in 2021, the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic. 54% of the food waste, totaling 70 kg per capita, was produced by households. Waste that was produced upwards in the food supply chain made up the remaining 46%. [3]

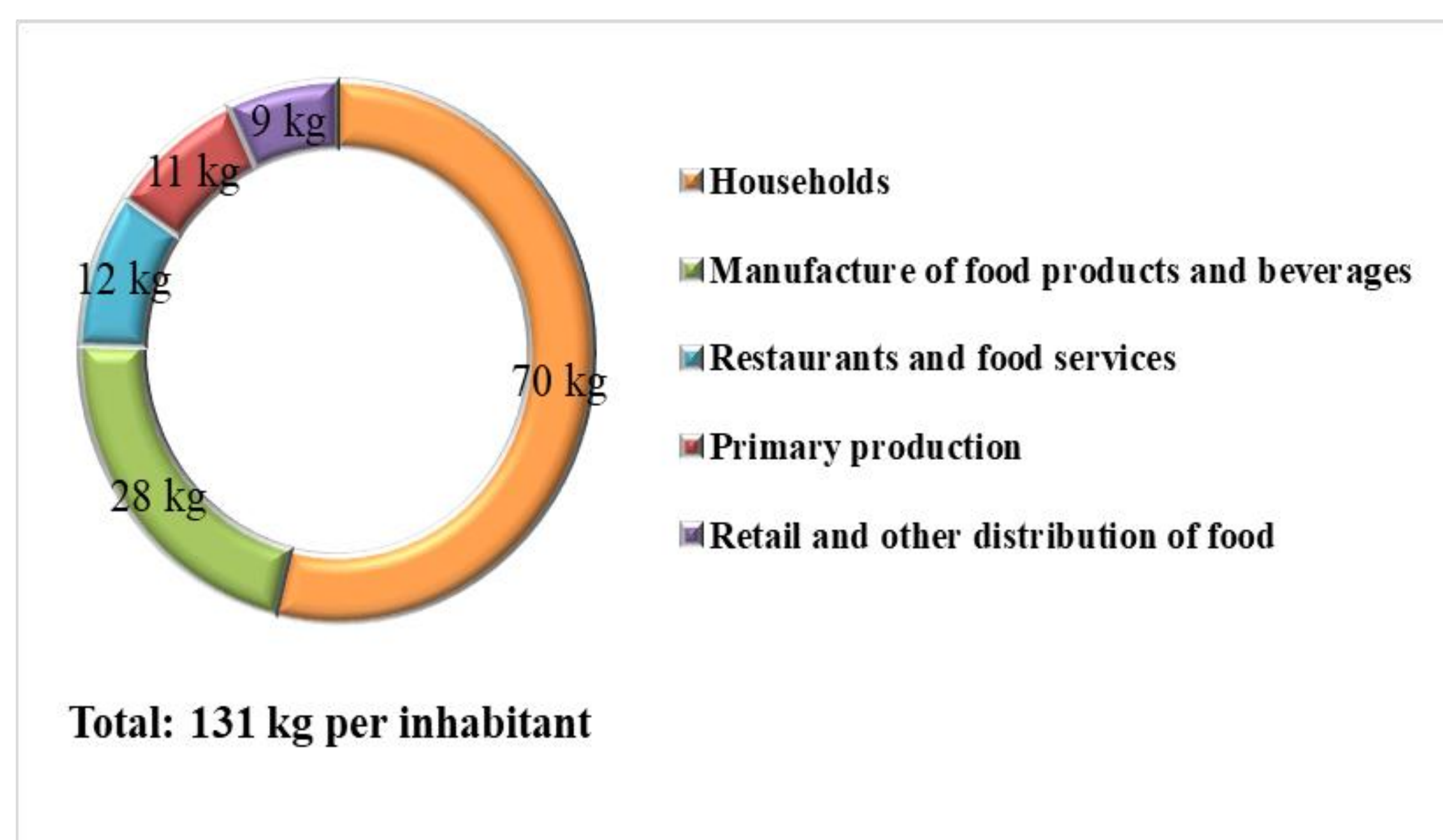


Figure 1. Food waste in the EU by main economic sectors, 2021 (kg per inhabitant)

Source: Authors own adaptation by [10]

• Conclusions

The current global food waste should be a much better managed priority than it is today, at the level of each country, but also in a global context. Minimizing food waste is one of the objectives of the United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030.