

GUATEMALA

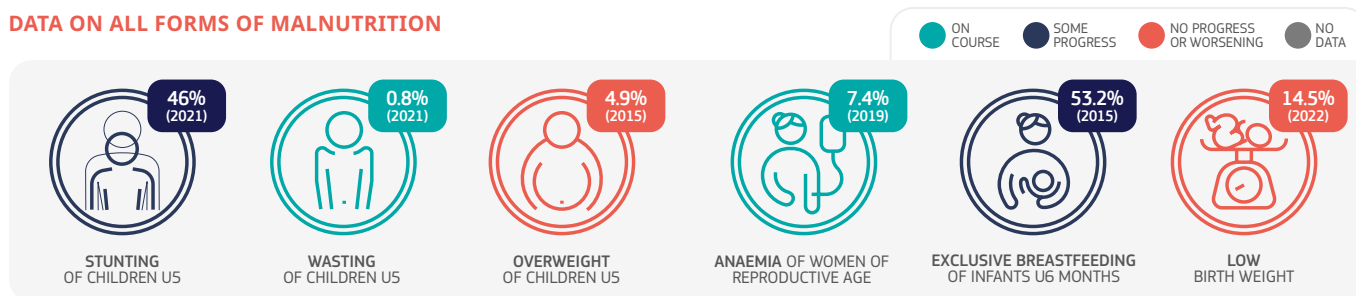
Nutrition situation in Guatemala

AT A GLANCE

Guatemala has a population of 18.1 million people which is estimated to reach 19.9 million by 2030¹. The country has made the fight against stunting a top commitment. According to FAO² data, in the period 2019-2021, 20.7% of the total population of Guatemala was facing severe food insecurity. With almost half of children under five stunted, Guatemala is not on track to meet its national stunting target. The country's socioeconomic situation presents a significant urban-rural gap, with high poverty and malnutrition rates concentrated in rural areas. The indigenous communities are specially affected with 70% of children stunted and an alarming rise in obesity among women. Poor infant and

young child feeding practices, declining dietary quality, limited education and teenage pregnancies, along with other persistent gender and ethnic inequalities³, contribute to undernutrition. Recurrent natural disasters also exacerbate social and food vulnerabilities. Undernutrition alone costs the country at least 11% of GDP⁴. Women are often impacted disproportionately by the effects of vulnerabilities and are prevented from participating equally in governance processes due to harmful gender norms, inadequate legal frameworks, low access to education and other basic services. Guatemala has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.477 and is ranked as 117 of 166 countries in 2022.

DATA ON ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION



The data reported in the 2023 EU Nutrition Country Profiles is drawn from the UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates and the Global Nutrition Report (GNR).

NUTRITION GOVERNANCE

- Guatemala joined the Scaling Up Nutrition movement in December 2010.
- The National Development Plan 'K'atun 2032', adopted in 2014, and the Government's General Policy 2020-2024 (which implements the K'atun 2032 over the next five years) constitute the national long-term development policy, in which food security and nutrition (FSN) are among the top 10 priorities.
- Nutrition is a top political priority for 2020-2024 through the government's recently launched 'Great Crusade for Nutrition', which aims to reduce child stunting to 24.5% by 2030⁵.
- The financial architecture to fund the nutritional interventions of the Great Crusade was recently analysed and reinforced in a joint exercise between the Secretariat for food and nutrition security (SESAN in Spanish) and the implementing partners (UNICEF, UNDP)⁶.
- A baseline survey was carried out May 2021-March 2022 to inform the planning and M&E of nutritional interventions.
- The National Policy of Food and Nutrition Security (POLSAN in Spanish) for 2022-2037 has been reviewed and updated to be in line with the current reality in Guatemala.

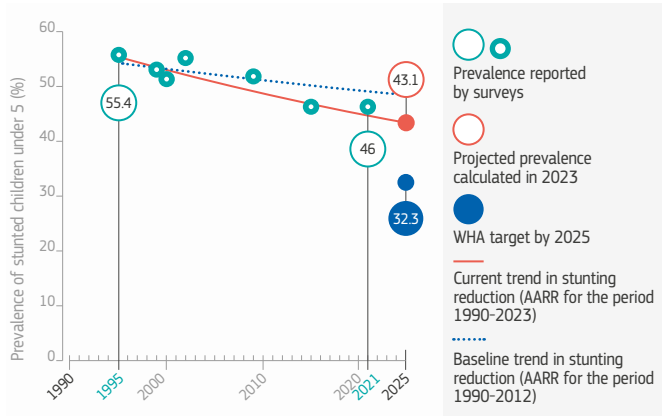
Example of EU support

The European Union (EU) in Guatemala is funding the 'Integral approach to build resilience in communities vulnerable to food insecurity and climatic shocks, especially droughts in Guatemala (PRO RESILIENCE)' project with a EUR 15 million contribution (for a project total of EUR 17 million). The project is implemented during 2020-2025 by the World Food Programme (WFP). It aims to improve the food security and nutritional status, especially of women and children, in the eastern 'dry corridor' of Guatemala. This is achieved through efforts to increase household incomes and the adoption of environmentally sustainable and climate resilient methods for food production.

The programme is part of a coordinated approach with other EU-funded Food Security and Nutrition programmes which are implemented by the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) and UNICEF. With an emphasis on the first 1 000 days of life and targeting 22 municipalities in four departments, both programmes aim to improve nutrition through strengthening hygiene knowledge and changing behaviours, as well as increasing coverage and quality of health and nutrition interventions.

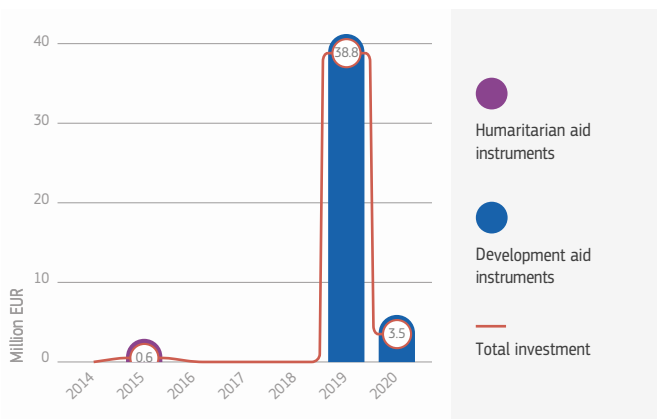


Progress on the two EU pledges for nutrition



TREND, PROJECTION AND TARGETS IN THE PREVALENCE AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN (U5) STUNTED

Guatemala has experienced a slight decline in stunting prevalence since the mid-1990s, and the number of children stunted has not really changed due to population growth. The rate of decline in the number of children stunted has accelerated from 0.40% in 2012 to 0.83% in 2022. If this trend continues, the country is unlikely to reach the national target to reduce chronic malnutrition to 24.5% in 2025. Recent projections are expecting nearly 788 000 children to be stunted in 2025.



EU FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO NUTRITION BETWEEN 2014 AND 2020 – TOTAL OF EUR 42.9 MILLION⁷

The EU contributed up to EUR 42.3 million to fight malnutrition through development aid instruments. In 2019, EUR 38.9 million were committed to nutrition programming: (i) EUR 20 million to support the primary health care system to combat chronic malnutrition in Guatemala, implemented by PAHO; (ii) EUR 15 million to support the comprehensive strategy to fight chronic malnutrition, implemented by UNICEF; and (iii) EUR 3.9 million to build resilience in communities vulnerable to food insecurity and climatic shocks implemented by WFP (PRO RESILIENCE). In 2020, EUR 3.5 million to improve food and nutrition security of populations most affected by COVID-19, focused on households in rural areas. Furthermore, in 2022 the EU has committed EUR 40 million for the project 'Fostering Green Transition in Petén'.

Planning for nutrition 2021-2027

In the last decade, Guatemala saw formal and structural improvements in its level of development, including upgrading food and nutrition security to be protected by law. Despite the progress made, Guatemala has the 6th highest level of chronic malnutrition in Latin America and the Caribbean (46.5% of children under 5 years of age are chronically malnourished). More determined efforts are needed to improve education, health and especially fight against malnutrition, despite the efforts outlined in the K'atun 2032.

During the 2021 Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit and as listed in the [annex](#) of the [N4G Compact](#), the Guatemala government has committed to reduce chronic malnutrition in children under 5 years of age by 7 percentage points, based on the 46.5% identified in the national maternal and child health survey (ENSMI) 2014/2015 (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA)). The Guatemala Government has committed as well in the UN Food Systems Summit strategic national pathway document ([23.09.2021](#)), to ensure food security and to eradicate undernutrition and malnutrition.

Nutrition forms part of the 360-degree approach of the EU's Global Gateway. The EU's overarching goal of the Multi-annual Indicative Programme for Guatemala (MIP) 2021-2027 is to reduce inequalities by improving living standards of rural population, with a focus on youth, women and indigenous populations. Its first priority area, *Fostering Green Transition*, has as main objective the fight against climate change as well as the protection of the environment and the preservation while promoting nutrition-sensitive value chains. Environmental protection and water resources management are considered in the government plans as key factors to ensure a sustainable and resilient development, especially in those areas structurally affected by climate shocks or suffering from overexploitation of natural resources and consequently, food insecurity and severe malnutrition. Reducing malnutrition rates is among the specific objectives and results for this priority area.

The action *Fostering Green Transition in Petén* is a good example of the EU commitments in Guatemala in line with the first priority of the MIP. To be implemented in the period 2024-2027, the Team Europe intervention (with Sweden, Germany and Spain) is a comprehensive multi-sector and multi-level intervention that aims at the socio-economic development of Petén with environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources by (1) improving the policy framework and funding for inclusive green economic development in Petén, (2) increasing sustainable production and productivity of agriculture, livestock, forestry and tourism and (3) improving services in waste and wastewater management of the municipalities of watershed Petén-Itza. Specifically on nutrition, under the specific objective (2), the action will help to improve the capacities of farmers for sustainable agricultural practices and resilient food production and the access to nutritious food, food diversification and food safety.

1 - United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs [World Population Prospects 2022](#), population estimate for July 2023.

2 - <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FS>

3 - 20% early childbearing by age 18; 43% female secondary education enrolment (GNR 2019).

4 - [El costo de la doble carga de la malnutrición. Impacto social y económico en Guatemala](#). ECLAC/WFP, 2020.

5 - Based on the target set in the National Development Plan K'atun nuestra Guatemala 2032.

6 - [Resumen costeo Gran Cruzada Nacional por la Nutrición](#)

7 - Data in this section excludes some regional, global and policy/research/information commitments that could not be disaggregated by beneficiary country. The European Commission applied the methodology of the SUN Donor Network for nutrition resource tracking 2014-2020 and the OECD DAC's nutrition policy marker from 2021 onwards. Data for 2022 are preliminary.