Co-funded by the European Union

Gastropreneurs

Empowering Youth Entrepreneurship on Gastronomy

2024-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000294275

WP3/A3 A4. Elaborating Training Content Template

Developer: Fondazione ENAIP Lombardia

Date: March 2026

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LEARNING UNIT 8

Learning Unit

OPERATIONS, PROCUREMENT & SUSTAINABILITY IN PRACTICE

Theoretical Core of the Learning Unit

Theoretical Core

This section will clarify the general theoretical framework relevant to the different units, without going into the details of the gastronomy-related topics. (minimum 2 pages)

In contemporary gastronomy, operational efficiency and sustainability are no longer separate objectives. They form a single strategic framework that defines the success and resilience of entrepreneurial initiatives. This theoretical core introduces learners to the idea that every operational decision has economic, social and environmental consequences.

1. Operations as Strategic Management

Operations in gastronomy are often perceived as purely technical tasks. This unit reframes them as strategic processes that connect resources, people and time. Learners explore the theoretical foundations of operational management, understanding how workflows, planning and coordination influence productivity, service quality and employee well-being.

The concept of process optimisation is introduced, showing how small improvements in routines can generate significant gains in efficiency and sustainability.



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Source: Canva

2. Procurement and supply logic

Procurement is not simply about buying at the lowest price. This section develops a theoretical understanding of value-based purchasing, where cost, quality, reliability and sustainability are balanced.

Key theoretical elements include:

- The role of supplier evaluation.
- The importance of local sourcing for territorial development.
- The integration of ethical and environmental criteria into purchasing decisions.

Learners will understand procurement as a strategic lever to reinforce local economies and reduce environmental impact.



Source: Canva

3. Inventory management and resource control

Inventory management stands at the intersection of efficiency and sustainability. This core explains theoretical models of stock control and their relevance for gastronomy entrepreneurship.

Students are introduced to:

- FIFO and FEFO principles and their role in quality preservation and waste reduction.
- The logic of shelf-life management and cold chain continuity.
- The relationship between inventory accuracy and financial sustainability.

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These concepts are framed not as abstract tools, but as everyday practices that support responsible operations.



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4. Food waste prevention and economic sustainability

Food waste represents one of the greatest contradictions in modern food systems. This unit provides a theoretical perspective on waste as a managerial issue, linking it to cost control, menu planning and customer satisfaction.

Learners explore how indicators such as food cost percentage, waste ratio and stock turnover help entrepreneurs monitor performance and make informed decisions. Waste prevention is presented as both a moral responsibility and a pathway to improved profitability.



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5. Energy, water and environmental efficiency

Sustainability in gastronomy also depends on the responsible use of natural resources. This section introduces the theoretical foundations of energy and water efficiency, explaining how operational choices influence environmental footprints.

Students gain awareness of:

- Basic concepts of resource auditing.
- The impact of equipment selection on long-term consumption.
- The role of behavioural change in daily operations.

The aim is to develop a mindset of environmental accountability embedded in routine practices.



Source: Canva

6. Sustainable supply chains and social impact

The final part of the theoretical core broadens the perspective to the entire supply chain. Learners are introduced to the concept of sustainable and ethical sourcing, understanding how gastronomy businesses can contribute to fair trade, decent work conditions and community development.

Connections are made with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and European green transition policies, situating local entrepreneurial action within a global framework.

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Source: Canva

7. From operations to leadership

The unit concludes by reframing operational management as a form of leadership. Young entrepreneurs are encouraged to see themselves not only as service providers, but as agents of change capable of influencing consumption patterns, supplier relations and community practices. This theoretical core empowers learners to approach operations and sustainability as integrated dimensions of entrepreneurial identity, ensuring that gastronomic ventures are not only economically viable, but also socially and environmentally responsible.



Source: Canva

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