



LET'S FOOD

OVERVIEW OF TERRITORIAL FOOD POLICIES IN EUROPE

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND GOOD PRACTICES
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LET'S FOOD

Let's Food is a non-profit association that supports territories in building sustainable and resilient food systems through territorial cooperation and the exchange of best practices at local, national and international levels.

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ABOUT

At the international as well as the European level, food is today an environmental, socio-economic and public health issue. The current food system is responsible for 30% of greenhouse gas emissions and a strong pressure on resources. Faced with the multiple negative externalities of the model, governments, private and associative actors along with NGOs are actively looking to develop solutions and alternatives.

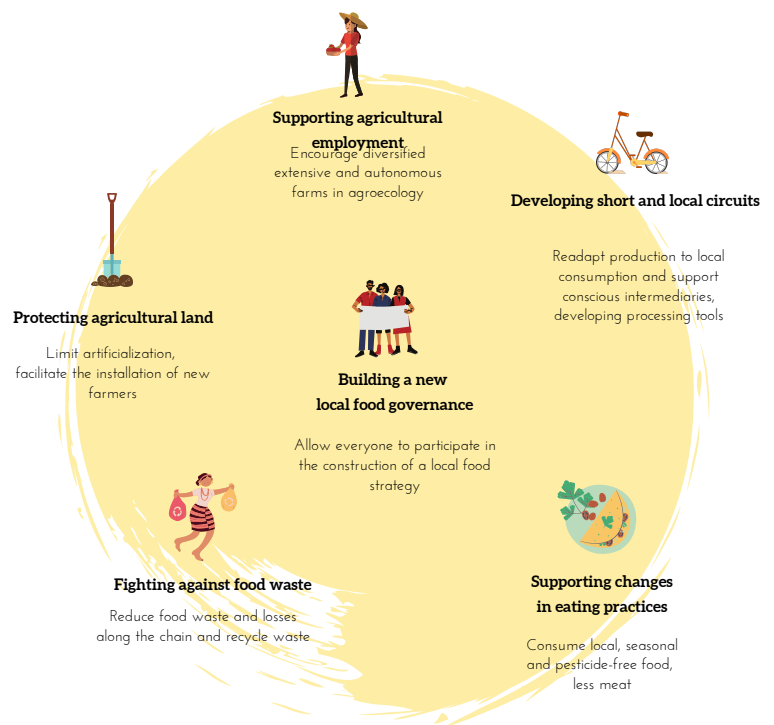
Local governments are particularly well placed to initiate the transition to more sustainable food models, but they alone cannot transform the entire system without state support and coordination at national and international levels. This report provides an overview of territorial food policies in Europe in order to identify the obstacles to their implementation and the levers. National frameworks largely determine the progress of territories on the various issues related to food. Throughout Europe, decentralization and skills transfer to local governments must be accelerated, as well as access to substantial funding. It is also necessary to train governments, local elected officials and technicians in the construction of territorial food policies.

The various examples studied in European territories show that territorial food policies are all the more systemic and efficient when they start with the establishment of local governance involving all the stakeholders in the food system.

A SYSTEMIC AND MULTI-ISSUE APPROACH THROUGH THE PRISM OF FOOD

The systemic approach allows all the links of the food system to evolve in a parallel and connected way. Within the framework of a territorial food policy supported by a collectivity, the objectives of sustainability will be all the easier to reach that the competent issues and actors will have well integrated interdependencies and opportunities for synergy. It is thus essential to preserve agricultural land in order to install new farmers and allow changes in practices towards more local food. In the same way, short and local circuits imply an adequacy between supply and demand; treating the food issue only from an agricultural point of view could be counterproductive.

>> Go further: Let's Food, Methodological guide, Building nourishing territories, 2021



11 DEVICES TO IMPLEMENT FOR AN INTEGRATED FOOD POLICY

Local authorities can take action by implementing various measures or a series of actions aimed at achieving the following objectives (see details of each measure in the guide "Let's Food, For a global approach to food, 2021"). It is through this reading grid that the food policies of European cities and territories have been analyzed:

1. **PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF OF AGRICULTURAL LAND**
2. **AID FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND SUPPORT OF ORGANIC OR REASONED FARMING**
3. **DEVELOPMENT OF SHORT AND LOCAL CIRCUITS**
4. **VALORIZATION OF LOCAL PRODUCTS THROUGH AGRI-FOOD PROCESSING**
5. **EDUCATION ON HEALTHY AND CLIMATE-FRIENDLY DIETS**
6. **SUSTAINABLE COLLECTIVE CATERING**
7. **FIGHT AGAINST FOOD INSECURITY AND CREATING SOCIAL COHESION**
8. **VALUATION OF THE LOCAL TERROIR OR LAND**
9. **URBAN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF HOUSEHOLDS**
10. **MANAGEMENT OF BIO-WASTE AND THE FIGHT AGAINST FOOD WASTE**
11. **LOCAL FOOD GOVERNANCE**

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FOOD: A HEALTH, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE THAT EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES ARE TAKING ON IN THE NAME OF THE GENERAL INTEREST



FOOD: A HEALTH, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE

In 2020, 811 million people were suffering from hunger worldwide (FAO & al., 2021). At the same time, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 59% of European adults are overweight or obese (WHO, 2022), with a high prevalence among economically disadvantaged populations (WHO, 2014). These figures show unequal access to sufficient, healthy and balanced food at the global and European levels, making food a public health issue but also a social and economic issue directly linked to the distribution of wealth.

In addition to these health impacts, the transformation of our current food systems also has strong environmental and climatic implications. On the one hand, the global food system is responsible for 30% of greenhouse gas emissions and for significant pressure on natural resources, causing soil erosion, loss of biodiversity and water stress (OECD, 2021). On the other hand, global warming and the environmental changes it causes make our current agricultural models unsustainable in the long term, as monocultures are not very resilient in the face of repeated extreme climatic events and increasingly scarce water resources. The productive capacity of our territories is already being impacted, with global yields of rice and wheat - the two most consumed cereals on Earth - decreasing by an average of 0.3% and 0.9% respectively each year (The conversation, 2019; Let's Food, 2022).

These negative externalities are now amplified by urbanization, the concentration of populations in cities - 70% of the world's population by 2050 (World Bank, 2020) - and the acceleration of associated lifestyles that favour the consumption of ultra-processed products by consumers and the multiplication of intermediaries in supply chains (FAO & al., 2021).

In urban centres, largely disconnected from agricultural areas, access to healthy food is conditioned by the economic and social environment. Thus, residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods have little access to a quality local food offer (via local markets or organic grocery stores, for example) (IPES, 2017).

On the decision-making side, the capitalist and productivist logic of current societies hinders the necessary paradigm shifts, particularly those concerning the food and agro-ecological transition. Member States favour short-term solutions - such as the use of food banks or temporary aid for small-scale facilities - and have difficulty in assuming the radical approach that is essential in the face of the scale of the challenges. In European countries, the excessive use of pesticides, food waste and loss - more than 87 million tons each year (European Council, n.d.) - and non-communicable diseases linked to the over-consumption of sugar and animal products now concern all territories.

By supporting mainly large intensive farms and imposing certain rules of competitiveness on the European market, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) also hinders the development of local food policies. The new CAP 2023 - 2027 has 3 objectives:

- To ensure a more targeted support to small farms;
- To strengthen the contribution of agriculture to the EU's environmental and climate objectives;
- To give Member States more flexibility to adapt measures to local conditions.

However, according to the coalition *Pour une Nouvelle PAC* (now *Collectif Nourrir*):

- The new CAP is not up to the economic, social and environmental challenges and even less the national declination - the French National Strategic Plan (NSP). The NSP did not take into account the citizen consultation "ImPACtons!", i.e. 1 083 recommendations having mobilized 12 656 citizens.
- In particular, aids per hectare, which maintain the advantage of large farms, in particular cereal farms, compared to the fruit and vegetable sector, which occupies less surface area, are reproached.
- Finally, the eco-regimes, which are supposed to remunerate environmental practices, will not be able to play their "role in transforming practices" (*Collectif Pour une Autre PAC*, 2022).

However, a large majority of consumers seem to be open to changes in practices, provided that they are supported by governments. According to the WWF, 4 out of 5 Europeans say they are in favour of national and European governments providing legal and financial support to help them make more sustainable food choices. Half of them are also in favour of the EU encouraging its inhabitants to consume less animal products (WWF, 2022).

This aid - especially financial - would be particularly welcome in the face of growing food insecurity: in France, up to 4 million people would be affected (Vie Publique, 2022a).

THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES RECOGNIZED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Faced with these health, social and environmental challenges, many European actors are now addressing the food issue. The European Commission's "Farm to Fork" strategy is included in the European Green Pact, and aims to promote sustainable food production, food security, the transition to healthy and sustainable diets and the reduction of waste. The main objectives are the reduction of pesticide use, the development of organic agriculture and the establishment of economic incentives for consumers - for example through the reduction of the VAT rate on organic fruit and vegetables, which is currently under discussion (European Union, 2020). This strategy recognizes the role of the different levels of local authorities, which are particularly relevant to act on the relocation of part of the food production, the promotion of short circuits or the support of changes in the practices of the stakeholders (consumers, distributors, processors, producers, etc.).

Although European cities do not currently have any "food" competences (and few have agricultural competences), they can call upon many public policy mechanisms to act in favour of more sustainable food systems: territorial planning, waste management, sustainable collective catering or raising children's awareness, etc. These competencies are available to varying degrees throughout Europe. For example, in the area of education and school canteens, Finnish authorities control the education system from kindergarten to tertiary education. In France, on the other hand, this responsibility is divided between the local authorities, the departments and the regions, subject to compliance with national laws, whereas in Germany this responsibility falls to the *Länder*.

Similarly, responsibility for urban and regional planning is not distributed in the same way across countries. In Austria, it belongs to the local authorities, but is shared between the different levels in France and Belgium, while in Spain it belongs exclusively to the regions (CEMR, 2016).

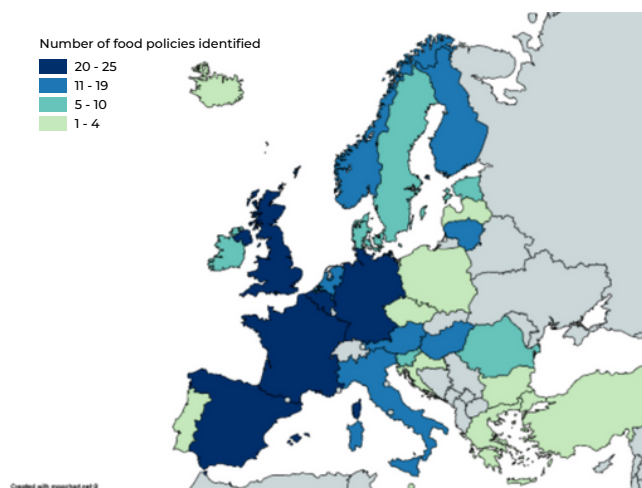
Taking on the competence for food is therefore particularly interesting for local authorities: it allows them to act simultaneously in several areas, including health, social inequalities, waste reduction and greenhouse gas emissions.

FOOD POLICIES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: THE RISE OF TERRITORIES AS FOOD ACTORS

The territories then become crucial players in the food transition. For the most advanced ones, they co-construct with stakeholders a territorial food policy, which should enhance the role of local actors and initiatives in order to support a living and innovative ecosystem. These multi-actor projects can be supported by the State: this is the case, for example, of the Territorial Food Projects (PAT) in France, which are included in the Law on the Future of Agriculture.

Maps of food policies in Europe
Source: FIT4FOOD2030

FIT4FOOD2030 has carried out a census of national and European policies that influence the food system in order to support decision-makers in the development of important food policies (identification of under-invested fields of intervention, under-supported categories of actors, etc.).



Denmark also has many national laws and strategies to increase the sustainability of its food system (UN FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT, 2021). Moreover, networking between territories also allows them to increase their capacity for action, by promoting cooperation, knowledge sharing and the exchange of good practices. In terms of integrated food policies, the Milan Pact for Urban Food Policies is now a reference.

VARYING DEGREES OF SUCCESS ACROSS EUROPEAN TERRITORIES

Despite the existing cooperation frameworks, territorial food policies are progressing at varying speeds across Europe. Few communities have implemented a systemic food policy as defined by the Milan Pact.

Western European countries (France, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom) are currently the most advanced, particularly in terms of supplying collective catering with organic and local products, food education and reducing food waste.

This study proposes an overview of territorial food policies in Europe in order to identify the brakes and levers for the generalization of ambitious and systemic policies in favour of sustainable, healthy, fair and resilient food systems.

An initial overview of existing territorial food policies at the European Union level allows us to identify the issues most dealt with by the territories. An in-depth study of a few examples then illustrates the levers for the emergence of certain exemplary food policies while identifying the needs to go further.



1. FOOD ISSUES UNEQUALLY ADDRESSED BY EUROPEAN TERRITORIES

MEMO

- Major advances in the territories concerning food education, collective catering and the reduction of food waste;
- A significant margin of progress on local supply and the distribution of added value;
- The areas of action that are the most involved depend on municipal competencies;
- Favourable legislative frameworks at the national level are essential for the development of impactful food policies.

Among the different themes and actions necessary for an integrated and systemic approach to food (see 11 schemes identified above), not all are treated equally by cities and local authorities in Europe. The issues of food education, collective catering or the reduction of food waste benefit from strategic objectives and ongoing actions - partly due to restrictive legislation conditioning access to funding -, while other aspects of food policies such as the diversification of local supply and distribution channels or the fight against food insecurity are not or hardly dealt with by municipalities.

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND FOOD WASTE REDUCTION, TWO APPROPRIATE THEMES

On a European scale, policies related to waste management and the fight against food waste are implemented by a large majority of territories, through innovative collection methods or through the awareness of the general public to the issues of these policies.

The city of **Warsaw** (Poland) has set up a system to collect unsold fruit and vegetables from 6 markets in the city. The objective is to redistribute them to people in need, through aid associations. Between April and September 2022, 15 tons of food waste were thus avoided and redistributed (Warszawa, 2022).

The **city of Murcia** (Spain) has implemented the "**Murcia's circular economy strategy**", which includes the evaluation of the waste management system, aiming to establish the amount of waste discharged by the city, the main waste emitters and the ways to improve the waste collection and sorting system. The strategy also aims to improve bio-waste management through awareness campaigns, promotion of compost or monetary incentives to encourage companies to donate and/or recover their waste. In this sense, the municipality has already implemented the "brown garbage can" - modeled on the yellow garbage can - to collect bio-waste, with positive results in the La Flota neighborhood. However, the model is not yet producing tangible results at the city level due to the lack of awareness among citizens and the private sector. In addition, the downstream recovery chain is not structured: this is one of the key points on which the city now intends to work (Ayuntamiento de Murcia, 2021).



THE GROWTH OF HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD AWARENESS

Similarly, raising awareness of the health and environmental issues related to eating habits is a lever regularly mobilized by municipalities to promote healthier and more sustainable eating habits. Whether in schools, through public signs in the city or with municipal services, many actions are implemented to raise awareness of food issues.

In **London**, for example, the City Council is operating on all three fronts to combat unhealthy eating habits and in particular non-communicable diseases such as obesity and diabetes. It is working with **Transport for London** to remove advertising for foods and drinks that are too fatty, too sweet or too salty from public spaces. In public services and businesses, the City Council encourages the signing of the "**Healthy workplace charter**", through which employers commit to promoting healthy diets in their companies (healthy snacks, local offer at events, etc.) (Greater London Authority, 2015). The City of London is also taking action with schools and their direct environment, gradually implementing a town planning policy prohibiting the establishment of fast food restaurants within 400 meters of schools. Finally, the City is working to establish a partnership between fast food outlets and the "**Healthier Catering Commitment**", a program that encourages restaurant operators (both public and private) to offer healthy and sustainable alternatives by reducing the amount of saturated fat, salt and sugar and by offering smaller portions on demand. With several hundred businesses engaged, this program has meshed all 21 city neighbourhoods with healthy and sustainable restaurant offerings (Greater London authority, 2018; London Food Link, 2022; Association of London Environmental Health Managers, 2010).

COLLECTIVE CATERING, AN IMPORTANT LEVER FOR ACTION

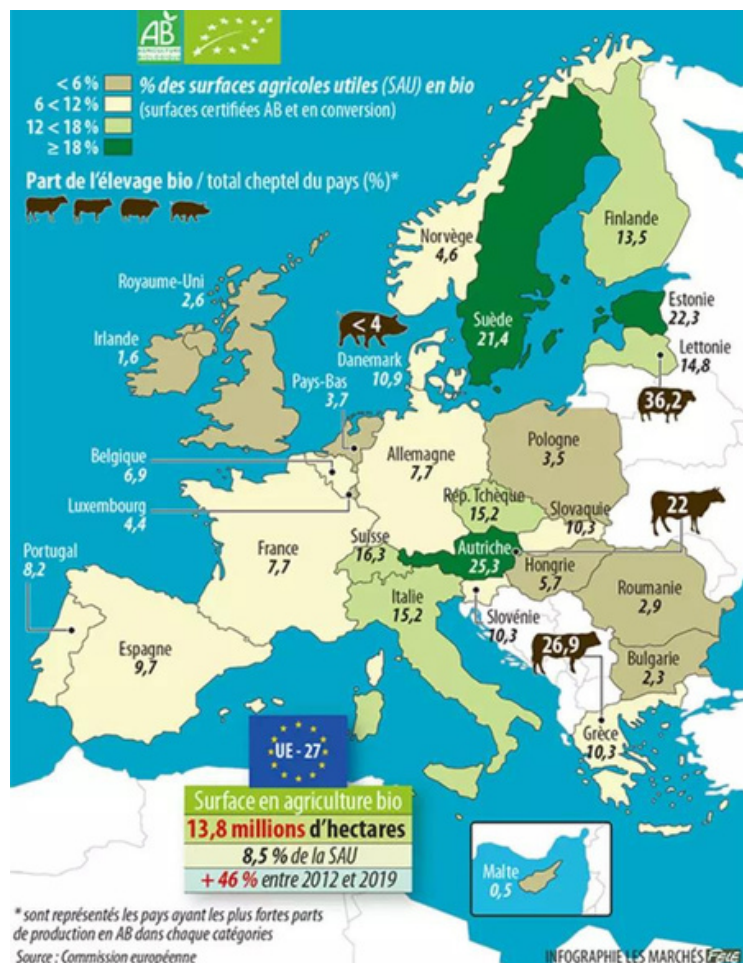
In particular, mass catering is an important lever that European cities have used to accelerate the transition to more sustainable and healthier diets. Indeed, due to the market share it represents, mass catering can induce changes through consumption, and also has an educational vocation since it can influence the eating habits of households. School catering in particular is doubly important in the dietary transition, as childhood is a key stage in learning, and schoolchildren must acquire, through the canteen, eating habits that they will keep throughout their lives. Lastly, the volumes required can help structure quality channels at the local level, particularly for organic products.

However, the European frameworks still do not provide sufficient support for the supply of organic products in canteens and the development of organic farming. The objectives of the "Farm to Fork" (F2F) program (the food and agricultural component of the Green Pact - Europe's ambition to achieve zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050) remain unclear on this subject: "To determine the best modalities for establishing minimum mandatory criteria for sustainable food procurement in order to promote healthy and sustainable food, including organic products, in schools and public institutions" (Chambres d'agriculture de France, 2020)

In parallel, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is introducing green payments (financial aid dedicated to environmental practices) in 2018. The F2F strategy aims to increase the European organic agricultural area by 25% by 2030 (European Commission, 2020). But the real impact of these measures remains controversial: unequal distribution of CAP financial aid, to the benefit of large farms, unambitious environmental practices financed, lack of budget allocated to the European Green Pact to achieve its objectives, etc. (Platform for an Alternative CAP 2022).

Share of agricultural land dedicated to organic farming in the different European countries in 2019

(Source: European Commission)



Some cities are at the forefront of organic supply in school canteens, such as Bologna or Copenhagen, where 80-90% of the food served is organically produced (Comune di Bologna, 2021, Copenhagen House of Food, n.d.). In Italy, the issue of organic food in school catering is covered at the national level, with local initiatives developing since the 1980s, complemented by national and regional laws in the 1990s and 2000s (Nielsen & al., 2009). In particular, the 2000 Financial Law provides since 1999 that "in order to guarantee the promotion of organic and quality agricultural production, the public institutions that manage school and hospital canteens shall provide in the daily diet for the use of organic, typical and traditional products as well as those with protected designations (Parlamento Italiano, 1999)

As Cécile Michel, project manager for the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) Secretariat, notes with the example of Milan, "La Milano Ristorazione prepares 87,000 meals a day, and obviously when we prepare 87,000 meals a day we have the power to shape the food system, via the food we buy we have the possibility to modify the markets around us. In fact, European cities are now working a lot on collective catering".

The city of **Bologna** has developed many projects aimed at improving the eating habits of children. For example, the projects "Merende e Spuntini di frutta" (fruit snacks), "MELAinghiotto" (swallowed apple) and "Primi! Una questione di secondi" aim to increase the consumption of fruit at snack time and vegetables at lunch time in Bologna schools, while the project "Rilevazione scarti" (weighing of waste) aims to raise awareness of the fight against food waste in schools (Comune di Bologna, 2021). More generally, food education is a sector in which Italian cities are very much involved, in Milan and Rome for example.

The French law EGALIM voted in 2018 imposes a minimum rate of 50% of quality products including 20% of organic products in public service canteens, including schools but also universities, from January 1, 2022 (Légifrance, 2018). This legal framework participates in developing in a simultaneous and virtuous way the supply and demand of quality.

URBAN AND PERI-URBAN AGRICULTURE, OLD PRACTICES BROUGHT UP TO DATE

Urban and peri-urban agriculture is also a lever that European communities are seizing. Today, we are witnessing a proliferation of initiatives promoting the installation of shared vegetable gardens, urban farms, or other innovative agricultural practices such as agricultural regimes, agricultural test areas, etc.

In terms of urban agriculture, the **city of Berlin** is now a model, with more than 200 community gardens within the city, whose development is supported by the "Gemeinschaftsgarten Berlin" (Berlin community gardens) program, which aims to support existing gardens and create new ones through participatory approaches involving all citizens (Plattform Produktives Stadtgrün, n.d.; Senatsverwaltung für Umwelt, Verkehr und Klimaschutz, 2021)

In **France**, the development of Territorial Food Projects is giving rise to innovative initiatives in terms of urban agriculture, via, for example, the installation of agricultural test spaces. This is the case in Limoges, where the city has developed the Pouss&Bio space that allows organic neo-producers to test their project before setting up (Limoges Métropole, 2018).

In **Bologna**, the city also developed the Parco Città campagna (City-Country Park) project in 2009, in order to preserve its agricultural spaces. In 2013, the city assigned the management of these spaces to the Arvaia cooperative, a community of farmers and citizens cultivating in organic and local agriculture, and selling their products in the markets of Bologna (Città Metropolitana di Bologna, 2010; Arvaia, n.d.). Thanks to this, in 2018-2019 the collective distributed 666 quintals of organic and seasonal vegetables in the 8 distribution points of the city, thanks to the nearly 500 members now invested in the cultivation of the space (Arvaia, n.d.).

THE PROMOTION OF SHORT CIRCUITS: EFFORTS HAMPERED BY THE LACK OF INTEGRATION OF EUROPEAN POLICIES

Cities and communities are also developing more and more tools to promote short and local circuits. In rural areas in particular, they are implementing and managing Local Action Groups (LAGs), a program created and supported by the European LEADER program, one of whose objectives is to bring producers and consumers closer together, notably through the promotion of direct sales (Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, 2013).



The LEADER program, "Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale", is a European support to rural territories. It allows "to carry out actions relating to the implementation of development strategies defined locally by a set of public and private partners", the objective being "to promote a balanced local development that responds as closely as possible to current and future territorial challenges" (French Rural Network, 2020).

Some territories focus on raising citizens' awareness of local products. During the Covid-19 crisis, the city of Strasbourg, which has greatly developed direct sales on its territory, mapped out the local product offer.

Apart from some farmers' markets or the promotion of local producers within wholesale markets, the majority of initiatives relating to the development of short circuits emerge from civil society and not from local public actors or producers, who are faced with European policies that are still too discouraging.

Chantal Clément, deputy director of IPES food (International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food), believes that :

"Many policies hinder the development of sustainable food policies. The CAP puts obstacles in the way, notably through a European-wide competitiveness policy that encourages marketing via long-distance channels. It is also forbidden to specify the origin of products in public contracts, which complicates the task of local authorities wishing to source locally, especially for their school canteens.

Certain elements of the 2nd pillar of the CAP support the local level but the majority of subsidies are directed towards industries and large farms to the detriment of small producers".

Short circuits therefore represent a very small share of the European food market: today, only 2% of the total volume of fresh products are sold directly from producer to consumer (IPES Food, 2019).

How can it be explained that certain issues related to food are not addressed by European communities?

The development of agricultural land is not very present in the priorities of urban policies - it is a competence that falls mainly to the regions, in particular recipients of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty, 2021). And the fight against food insecurity or the co-construction of local food governance are fields that are still not sufficiently identified by the local authorities.



The association Initiatives France-Europe Centrale et Orientale (IFEKO), was created 5 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall with the objective of strengthening the links of cooperation between Eastern and Western Europe. IFEKO leads a network of partners in the fields of local governance and agroecological and energy transition. In particular, it facilitates cooperation between French and Central European LAGs (Local Action Groups), a region still marked by 40 years of forced collectivization which caused a strong rural exodus, a grabbing of arable land and strong pressures on agricultural land.

In Romania, for example, the **GAL Dealurile Târnavelor** aims to promote short circuits, with the project "Food near us" conducted between the women's district of Saschiz and 14 producers-processors of vegetables, fruits, dairy products and honey from the Târnava region. In addition, the association supports cooperation between the **LAGs of Garrigues en Costières** (Nîmes) and **Felső-Bácska** (city of Bácsalmás, Serbian border). The exchanges aim to support small producers by using local products in collective catering, and to promote cooperation between small producers.

Contribution by José Osete,
Director of IFEKO

"Many policies are encumbering the development of sustainable food policies, the CAP is putting obstacles in particular via a European-wide competitiveness policy."

Chantal Clément,
Deputy Director of IPES Food

2. DIFFERENCES PARTLY DUE TO NATIONAL AND SUPRANATIONAL POLICIES

MEMO

- Legislative frameworks are essential for the development of food policies, but to date they remain unevenly developed depending on the theme.
- Financial aid programs focused on certain issues are necessary.
- The distribution of competences can slow down the development of integrated food policies at the local level: the most invested fields of action depend on municipal competences.

LEGISLATIVE AND INCENTIVE FRAMEWORKS THAT ARE MORE OR LESS FAVOURABLE

The implementation of national legal frameworks strongly encourages or even obliges territories to take up certain subjects. This concerns above all waste reduction policies and, in some countries (such as France and Italy), collective catering, which is becoming increasingly regulated, or even regional coordination.

In France, for example, cities can be beneficiaries of ADEME's Circular Economy Fund, dedicated to the reduction of bio-waste (ADEME, 2021). In 2021, the city of Nantes benefited from this fund for a canteen project of food waste cooked and distributed at low prices (ADEME, 2021)

At the European level, many measures are progressively being implemented to reduce waste, grouped together in the strategy for a circular economy - circular economy action plan (European Commission, 2020). This action plan gathers more than thirty actions - legislative or not - to be implemented during the next decade in order to reduce the waste produced in the EU. These include, for example, sustainability obligations at the production stage, destruction bans for professionals - especially in the textile industry - and harmonization of waste sorting and treatment systems. The new legislation also sets new recycling targets for 2030, such as a target of 70% recycled packaging (European Union, 2020).

In France :

- The **EGALIM law** passed in 2018 imposes a minimum rate of 20% organic products in public service canteens, thus including schools, as of January 1, 2022 (Légifrance, 2018).
- The **anti-waste law for a circular economy of February 10, 2020 (AGEC Law)** makes it mandatory to sort bio-waste at source for :
 - Producers of more than 5 tons of biowaste per year: from January 1, 2023
 - All producers of biowaste (including households): from January 1, 2024 (Ministry of Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion, 2022)

In **Italy**, the Gadda Law (2016) encourages companies to donate products that are still consumable and provides regulatory television time for waste reduction awareness campaigns (Banco Alimentare, n.d.). A similar law, known as the "Garot Law," also exists in France since the same year (Légifrance, 2016)

Spain is working on a law proposal to penalize the rejection of still consumable food by supermarkets and catering companies (Ministerio de agricultura, pesca y alimentación, 2022)

Since 2014, French local authorities have benefited from the National Food Program (PNA), a unique device in Europe, which finances territories in the process of co-construction of a territorial food strategy, called "Territorial Food Projects" (PAT). With more than 370 TAPs recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty as of April 1, 2022, this mechanism seems to be effective today in promoting the implementation of integrated food policies (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty, 2022). Moreover, recent crises (COVID19, impacts of the war in Ukraine) have shown that TAPs allow territories to be more food resilient, via easier coordination between local actors (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty, 2020).

The health crisis has accelerated the government's awareness of the importance of the local level in rethinking food: since September 2020, the national plan "France Relance" has provided over 80 million euros to territories to amplify the approaches of PAT, sustainable school canteens, projects to fight against food insecurity and urban agriculture.

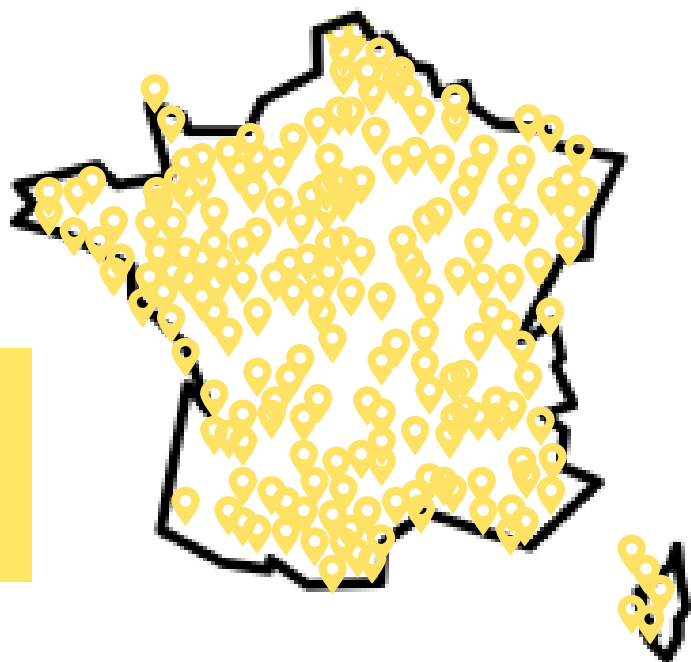
In addition to the EGALIM law and its obligations regarding collective catering, the National Food Program and the France Recovery Plan provide incentive frameworks and funding for the development of local food policies.

Created in 2022, the **Alliance for Agriculture and Food Transitions (ALTAA)** brings together over 100 local and national organizations committed to ambitious food transitions. ALTAA is a space for exchange and cooperation to strengthen action and increase collective competence through a systemic approach. The Alliance aims to amplify the impact of committed actors, to shake up the dominant narratives and to participate in the evolution of national and European policies.

The **BioCanteens Transfer Network** promotes the exchange of good practices between participating European cities in the field of sustainable school catering, based on the experience of Mouans-Sartoux (France), which has succeeded in achieving the objective of 100% organic school catering, with a majority of local products and a drastic reduction in the amount of waste (URBACT, n.d.). Thanks to this program, other European cities have benefited from this experience and have been able to greatly increase the proportion of organic and local food in their school canteens (URBACT Transfer Network BioCanteens, 2021).



Over 370 Territorial Food Projects on the French territory, spread over 98 departments.



AREAS OF ACTION DETERMINED BY MUNICIPAL JURISDICTIONS

Thus, food issues are unevenly covered by national frameworks, which partly explains why local authorities have taken them on to a greater or lesser extent. Another explanation comes from the different levels of decentralization and transfers of competences from the State to local administrative levels.

Thus, municipalities are often traditionally responsible for waste management and the fight against food waste, as well as canteens and implementing sustainable eating habits in collective catering. At the European Union level, nearly twenty countries assign the competence for waste management to the local level (cities or inter-municipalities) (CEMR, 2016).

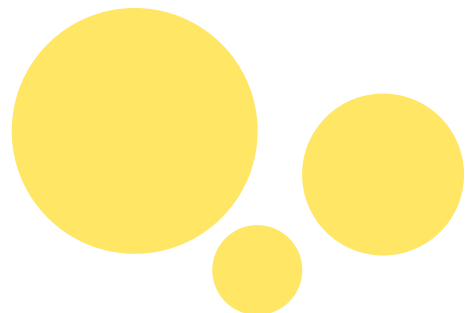
Similarly, primary education is the responsibility of municipalities in more than 20 countries (to a greater or lesser degree of exclusivity), while 6 of them extend this competence to secondary and/or university education (CEMR, 2016). The same is true for urban agriculture, which can be easily implemented by municipalities due to their land-use planning competence.

In Europe, local authorities have a general competence clause, which allows them to extend their field of intervention beyond a list of defined competences. Municipalities can thus intervene in "all matters of local public interest as long as they do not encroach on the competences attributed by law to the State or to another territorial authority" (Vie Publique, 2022b). In the food sector, this leaves communities with a relatively large margin of manoeuvre to take on many subjects that they consider not covered or insufficiently covered by the higher levels.

This is the case, for example, of the EPCIs of Arche Agglo and Rhône-Crussol (Ardèche - Drôme, France), which have taken on the responsibility of agricultural development by providing €2,000 in support for the installation of new farmers, with an additional €500 for an organic farming installation (Let's Food, 2022).

How can we support local authorities towards systemic food policies? What are the levers and obstacles identified in the different territories?

To go further towards integrated policies, it is also necessary to build food governance in cities, a key element to link the different policies, to associate associative and private actors and to set up a coherent scheme. This presupposes that local authorities have acquired maturity and legitimacy with regard to food issues among the stakeholders in the territory. In this respect, governance and reflection on the actors to be associated pushes for a systemic and integrated approach in order to pool objectives and indicators and find synergies from the field to the compost, including health and economic development issues.





3. TERRITORIAL FOOD POLICIES: OBSTACLES AND LEVERS FOR AN INTEGRATED FOOD APPROACH

MEMO

- The concept of "territorial food policy" is still recent and requires time to be appropriated by the collectivities and the stakeholders of a territory.
- Networking and cooperation are key points for the sustainability of the actions undertaken: it is necessary to build a new food governance at the local level

STRENGTHENING COLLECTIVITIES CAPACITY

According to Cécile Michel, project manager for the Milan Pact secretariat, the concept of "urban food policy" is still very recent and needs to make its way to local authorities. The latter often lack competent technicians on food-related issues: the implementation of a food policy suggests a political will as well as a new coordination of the different services and public policies under the food prism (management of school canteens, waste collection or urban planning, etc.) which sometimes requires the creation of a new department dedicated to food within the community.

Lack of training can be a barrier to reading and analyzing food systems data.

"There is still not a lot of solid data that measures the impact of the policies put in place, so it is difficult to inform policymakers and communicate the results."

Cécile Michel,
Project Manager, Secretariat of
the Milan Pact for Urban Food
Policies

The challenge of training actors was highlighted by IPES in the case of the "Healthy Weight Program" (literally "healthy weight program", aiming to reduce overweight and obesity in the Amsterdam population). The program initially faced a lack of understanding from some of the actors involved, as "including public space in thinking about food was so new to the officers of the Department of Public Health," and city planners "had little idea of how their actions affect health" (IPES Food, 2017).

In **France**, the **Let's Food association** has developed a training course for local elected officials on the territorial approach to food and the levers available to local authorities to act. **AgroParis Tech** and the association **Terres en Villes** run the training "Food at the heart of territorial action" for agents of local authorities. Finally, the **UNESCO Chair in World Food Systems, Cap Rural and the CNFPT** have also developed a training course entitled "Co-constructing a territorial food approach" open to all. At the European level, **EIT Food** (a pan-European organization promoting innovation for sustainable food systems, supported by the EU) offers an online training course dedicated to circular economy models for developing sustainable urban food systems. It focuses in particular on how such thinking can be integrated into local agriculture and food policies.

FINANCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL OBSTACLES

Finally, there are also financial and institutional obstacles to the development of food policies in the territories. As Alizée Marceau, former coordinator of the British network Sustainable Food Places, points out, in the United Kingdom, the lack of resources of local authorities is a major obstacle.

On the other hand, it is important to note that local public actors are not without resources in the development of food policies: private actors can be of great help, and in particular foundations such as the Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation in France and Spain or The Food Foundation and The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation in the UK. The latter offer human and financial support to public actors, but also to companies or civil society organizations, notably through calls for projects and networking.

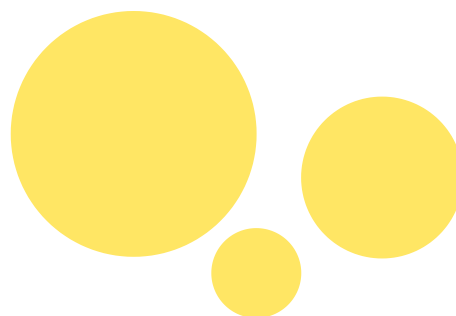
IPES Food also notes that "weakly supportive national policies, lack of necessary skills at the local level, lack of management and consideration of ideological conflicts, lack of resources, and lack of freedom in the use of allocated funds" are all obstacles to the implementation of sustainable and effective territorial food policies (IPES Food, 2017).

INITIATE A FOOD POLICY BY SETTING UP A GOVERNANCE BODY

A strategy for the emergence of integrated territorial food policies can be to start by setting up solid and inclusive local governance frameworks. As Cécile Michel points out, "if we first work on governance, we will have human resources dedicated to food policy, and possibly an elected official or political decision-maker associated with this issue. Thinking about governance allows us to quickly consider all the activities related to food and the diversity of actors to be invited to the discussion table. This specific body for food issues must be able to steer the future "food strategy". This is the case in France in territories with a PAT, which must have a dedicated governance body in order to be certified by the Ministry (Ministry of Agriculture and Food, 2022).

This body can take the form of a Food Policy Council, which is now present in the majority of territories that have successfully implemented an integrated food policy. Depending on the case, these councils bring together members of civil society who are committed to addressing food issues, experts in the food sector - in the fields of agriculture, the environment, health, distribution, etc. -, private actors and members of local government.

In terms of consideration of territorial food policies at the national level, France is currently an exception. The State's support for the emergence of "Territorial Food Projects" (TFP) has no equivalent in other countries, where territorial action in the area of food remains the exclusive responsibility of local authorities and civil society.



Established in 2011, the **Bristol Food Policy Council** is the first of its kind in the UK. It is now made up of 10 experts covering the production, distribution, catering, health and education sectors, from local government, private companies or NGOs and civil society. Its main actions are to oversee the design and implementation of the Good Food Plan (Bristol's food strategy) in a coordinated manner with other city departments and stakeholders; to evaluate progress; and to advocate at the regional and national levels for policies that promote healthy, sustainable and resilient food systems (Bristol Food Policy Council, n.d.)

These bodies aim to bring together the various stakeholders and to set up mechanisms of engagement. In its dedicated publication, the IPES Food recommends creating governance bodies that "set rules of engagement to strengthen commitment and empower stakeholders" (IPES Food, 2017).

They must be inclusive because "taking civil society into account and setting up participatory processes in the design of policies allows for a more englobing vision of the territory's issues, better popular support and policies that are more adapted to real needs," guaranteeing both their sustainability and their effectiveness (IPES Food, 2017). For Cécile Michel, an active and invested civil society is a prerequisite for effective territorial food policies: "the cities that are most successful in having a food council are where civil society is active and the administration is available to listen to them."

Created in 2017, the **Bordeaux Metropole Agriculture and Food Council** (formerly the Bordeaux Metropole Sustainable Food Governance Advisory Board (CCGAD)) is the first territorial governance body dedicated to sustainable food in France. It aims to "co-construct strategies to support the transition of the Bordeaux metropolis towards the emergence of a sustainable territorial food system" (CCGAD, 2020). It relies on a significant transversal approach in order to ensure the coherence of the various sectoral public policies related to food (CCGAD, 2021). The objectives of the CCGAD are based on four major missions: reinforce food accessibility, fight against food waste, reinforce the agricultural capacity of the territory, and relocalize the sectors (CCGAD, 2021).

Today, this is a trend that is increasingly followed by local actors, notably through the implementation of calls for projects launched by local authorities in order to support companies or associations whose work advances the food transition.

The City of Lyon's call for projects aims to "support projects that contribute to an inclusive, quality, and short-circuit food system" (City of Lyon, 2022), the City of Bordeaux has published an annual call for "food resilience" projects for the past 3 years. Departments and regions also offer similar schemes: for example, in 2021 the Occitanie Region initiated the call for contributions "Your solutions for sustainable food" allowing citizens to vote for initiatives submitted by local actors who will then be eligible for financial support. The inclusion of these diverse actors promotes a robust and sustainable food system, addressing the environmental, health, social and economic challenges of the food transition.

In terms of participatory governance processes in the construction of food policies, the city of **Brussels** is now a pioneer. Building on the experience of a first food strategy for the period 2016-2020, Brussels has set up its Good Food 2.0 Strategy (2022-2030) via the Good Food Participatory Council. Initially an Advisory Council, it has evolved into a Participatory Council during the Good Food 1 Strategy, and now brings together public and institutional actors, private actors and associative actors, from the fields of agriculture, health, distribution, social aid and consumer associations (Good Food Brussels, 2022). From March 2021 (beginning of the reflection) to June 2022 (publication of the strategy), the 300 or so people making up the Participatory Council were mobilized from the definition of the main orientations and objectives to the publication of the strategy, including concrete actions to be implemented (Good Food Brussels, 2022).

NETWORKING AND COOPERATION TO AVOID MISTAKES AND ACCELERATE THE AGRO-ECOLOGICAL AND FOOD TRANSITION OF TERRITORIES

Networks of territories committed to food are multiplying, both at the national and supranational levels. On a global scale, the Milan Pact for Urban Food Policies is now one of the most active, bringing together 225 local authorities around the world. At the European level, the Working Group on Food within the Eurocities network now includes some 50 cities across the continent. National networks are also multiplying, from the most established such as RnPAT in France or Sustainable Food Places in the United Kingdom, to the most recent such as the Spanish network "Red de Municipios por la agroecología".

Faced with the lack of skills, and sometimes the isolation of territories in terms of food policies, these networks are crucial in the production and sharing of knowledge, in the support for the implementation of effective food policies and in the support of food issues at national and supranational levels. In the first instance, the networks "allow member territories to organize themselves, to have access to knowledge and to partners on targeted subjects.

Networks promote the exchange of good practices and put territories in contact with each other to be part of a community, which always helps" (Cécile Michel, MUFPP).





The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP, Milan Pact): one of the biggest breakthroughs of the Milan EXPO 2015, the Milan Pact was signed on October 15, 2015 by more than 100 cities (now 225). Through this Pact, the signatory cities commit to work "towards the development of sustainable, inclusive, resilient, safe and diverse food systems."

To this end, the Pact has defined a framework for action composed of six themes to address food-related issues from production to waste management:

- Establish new governance at the local level to ensure an enabling environment for action
- Promote sustainable food and good nutrition
- Ensure social and economic equity
- Support food production
- Improve food supply and distribution
- Prevent food waste.

These themes are broken down into 37 actions, with concrete examples of measures for each action (Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, n.d.). Today, the Milan Pact is one of the most influential networks on food issues at European and global levels. It has led to the creation of the "food" working group within the Eurocities network, the identification of nearly 400 good food practices and the rewarding of numerous cities for their actions through the annual "Milan Pact Award"..

Cécile Michel also underlines the interest of networks managed by cities or territories directly, as is the case of the Milan Pact: "The Milan Pact is the only network that is not managed by private individuals but by a city directly, and the difference is that it works between peers, so it opens up many more possibilities for communication, we talk to each other and it creates a fairly high level of trust".

Thanks to this contact and horizontal discussion mode, the networks allow the diffusion of skills and knowledge from pioneer cities to less advanced cities. The networks also make it possible to federate the various actors around the food issue and to encourage long-term commitment, via systems of reward recognized by peers and rewarding for the territories. The latter offer recognition of the capacity of territories to act on food issues, enhancing their action with peer territories.

In addition, the networking made possible by the networks facilitates the setting up of joint inter-city projects to access funding, particularly European funding. For example, the Food Trails project aims to strengthen local food policies by promoting the exchange of practices between 11 European cities (Grenoble, Milan, Bergamo, Tirana, Thessaloniki, Bordeaux, Birmingham, Groningen, Copenhagen, Warsaw and Funchal). This funding allows for the financing of positions to lead the territorial food strategy.

Finally, thanks to the networks, the territories can raise issues at both national and international levels. The networks can then carry out action campaigns to coordinate large-scale advocacy based on the example of local actions carried out by their member territories. The latter can quickly mobilize their local network to carry out targeted thematic actions (ALTAA, 2022).

Thus the Glasgow Declaration on Food and Climate 2021 has contributed to the recognition of the role and commitment of local governments. They urged national governments to "take coordinated action on food and climate" (Glasgow Declaration on Food and Climate, 2021).

On the other hand, the most influential networks also allow for the integration of food issues in large city networks that are not specific to food. For example, it was through the Milan Pact that the C40 Cities network adopted a food component by creating the Food Systems Network, signed by 14 C40 member cities and committing them to implementing healthier and more environmentally friendly food systems by 2030, according to a charter drafted by C40 (C40 Cities, n.d.).



The UK Sustainable Food Places network brings together nearly 100 UK cities to share best practices, strengthen national advocacy and improve access to resources - financial, professional and informational - for member cities.

Born in 2013 from a civil society initiative via three NGOs, the network is based on an approach in terms of "partnerships" rather than projects: in order to join, a stakeholder in a territory must set up a partnership destined to be sustainable between several actors in the food sector (local authorities, associations, companies, researchers...), who must define together an action plan for the implementation of territorial food policies according to a systemic approach. As underlined by Alizée Marceau, former coordinator of the network from the beginning, "the framework of the partnership makes it possible to engage the different strategic actors beyond the project, it is a long-term process and is more perennial than a simple project".

The **Sustainable Food Places** network is based on the experience of three cities that have already set up autonomous food governance bodies, and has drawn on these three experiences to build a "**toolbox**" designed to help territories build solid food governance and design systemic food strategies, which is a condition for joining the network.



The **Sustainable Food Places**

Awards: In order to recognize the efforts and success of territories that are committed to integrated food systems transformation and have achieved significant positive change, Sustainable Food Places has established an award system through the awarding of bronze, silver and gold medals. With 43 territories awarded medals to date, including two with gold, Bristol and Brighton (Sustainable Food Places, n.d.), the network allows for a certain amount of emulation between territories, encouraging the emergence of a systemic approach, "the three levels requiring a systemic approach, even if only at the bronze level, which requires a major inventory of what is being done in the territory on all food-related issues" (Alizée Marceau, 2022).



Rn PAT

Réseau national
des Projets Alimentaires Territoriaux



The **National Network of Territorial Food Projects (RnPAT)**:

Created in 2015, the RnPAT brings together all the local authorities involved in territorial food projects. Its objective is to promote the co-construction and shared implementation of territorial food projects within the territories. To do this, it supports communities in the implementation of TAPs. Since 2018, the RnPAT has also been organizing the evaluation of the TAP system and its impacts on territories, in order to bring the results of this evaluation to the national level and thus contribute to the coherence of food policy at different scales and between territories (RnPAT, 2018).



La Red de Municipios por la Agroecología:

Created in 2018, the Red de Municipios por la agroecología (Network of Municipalities for Agroecology) is a Spanish network that now includes nearly 25 cities committed to building healthy and sustainable food systems.

The objective of the network is "to help administrations build sustainable, resilient and environmentally friendly local food systems; inclusive, safe and diversified to ensure healthy, sustainable and accessible food for the whole population while promoting local employment" (Red de Municipios por la agroecología, n.d.). To achieve this, the network organizes meetings and webinars where participating cities can exchange their respective experiences and practices. It also provides partner cities with technical support and access to a wide range of resources to help them set up solid projects and find funding (Red de Municipios por la agroecología, 2022).



TERRITORIES ON THE MOVE, BUT PROGRESS TO BE CONSOLIDATED AND SYSTEMIZED

Cities and territories are progressively asserting themselves as key players in this respect, acting on their own scale and through the competences conferred on them to establish ambitious food policies.

This overview of territorial food policies in Europe offers a non-exhaustive overview of the progress made by the territories. The issues of reducing food waste, raising awareness and supplying collective catering are fairly well understood in Western Europe. It is now necessary to integrate all the issues to build an integrated strategy.

At the same time, many European territories have not yet begun to think about food issues - because they have not yet identified the subject as a priority, or because of a lack of resources, skills or political will - and can therefore benefit greatly from the experience of their neighbours in order to launch integrated food strategies.

To achieve this, the establishment of solid, sustainable and inclusive food governance bodies must accompany the definition of a multi-stakeholder action plan and coordinate its implementation by the various departments of the local authorities and the associative and private players. The territories can rely on the networks of territories to increase their skills and have their needs recognized at the national level.

But this collective organization and the development of integrated territorial food strategies should not be done solely between political actors: the comparison of the current progress of territorial food policies in different European countries shows that the strong involvement of civil society in the co-construction of food strategies is essential for their effectiveness and sustainability. Moreover, the transition to more sustainable food systems will not be achieved without national and European commitments. The weight of the Common Agricultural Policy in the shaping of food systems, via the subsidies it grants, today prevents any real paradigm shift without evolution of the latter and of the national and international frameworks that support it: the transition towards more sustainable food systems must be done on all scales.

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