Building Social Muscle to Transform Food Systems:

Insights from the European local public policy landscape

Think piece series Food for Thought No.2

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1. Introduction

In the face of growing inequality and ecological crisis, the global peasant movement, La Vía Campesina, has put forward the idea of food sovereignty as a way to transform the corporate controlled food system (Box 1). This proposal puts control over the decisions about how food is produced, processed, distributed and consumed back into the hands of small-scale food producers and local communities. To do this, diverse examples of initiatives pushing for change, from small-scale agroecological farms, to local food networks, to neighborhood pantries, have popped up throughout Europe. Now, peasant organizations and allies have increasingly directed energy towards influencing public policies as a way of linking together and scaling up potential for social transformation.[1]

This report explores some historical examples of social movements channeling their energy for change towards public policy in Europe in order to draw out some relevant insights. Next, it highlights some of the specific local policy areas that social movements are proposing as essential to food sovereignty. Examples from different parts of Europe show some of the ways these policy ideas are being put into practice. What becomes immediately clear is that food sovereignty represents a broad political agenda for system change that requires the involvement of many sectors and institutions. Local public policy must be holistic and incorporate policy change beyond agrarian policy in order to create the conditions necessary for food sovereignty. Taken together, this collection of experiences reveals a number of insights:

BOX 1

"Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests and inclusion of the next generation. It offers a strategy to resist and dismantle the current corporate trade and food regime, and directions for food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems determined by local producers and users. Food sovereignty prioritises local and national economies and markets and empowers peasant and family farmer-driven agriculture, artisanal - fishing, pastoralist-led grazing, and food production, distribution and consumption based on environmental, social and economic sustainability. Food sovereignty promotes transparent trade that guarantees just incomes to all peoples as well as the rights of consumers to control their food and nutrition. It ensures that the rights to use and manage lands, territories, waters, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those of us who produce food. Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social and economic classes and generations."

– Nyéléni Declaration, 2007

• **Who is involved?** Given the scope of change required to build food sovereignty, mobilization of small-scale food producers at the local level is essential but not sufficient. Most cases involve coalitions and alliances with other civil society groups, social movements (i.e. social and solidarity economy or feminist movements) and local authorities. As the number of actors increases, how participation is structured matters. Attention to power dynamics within and between groups is essential if historic patterns of marginalization are to be overcome. This includes incorporating gender justice into language, process and outcomes.

• **The way knowledge is generated, shared, documented, used and reflected upon in policy processes is highly political.** It will have lasting impacts on who benefits and who is heard in policy processes from preparation to implementation, to monitoring and evaluation. It will also shape the potential for generational turnover among leaders for social change.

• **Sparking and sustaining change:** Many initiatives are framed as a solution to some form of crisis which gives rise to a political opening. But no political opportunity can be seized upon or sustained if, on one hand, the social muscle required to guide policy making towards the construction of food sovereignty is not constantly being strengthened and, on the other hand, if institutional mechanisms for ongoing democratic participation are not established.

2. Using local public policy to create social change: what does history tell us?

Approaching municipal governance and local public policy as a site of social transformation is not new in Europe. Pushing for change at the level of city government was common, for example, among socialist activists at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. They demanded new policy to address the consequences of massive rural to urban migration and a growing class of precarious urban workers. This went hand in hand with a strategy of networking. They set up national and regional federations of town and provincial authorities anywhere socialists were vying for public office (including e.g. the International Union of Local Authorities, IULA, formed in 1913). Some key ingredients in this networking were publications for information sharing, and events, which brought key actors together.[2] They organized regular conferences that brought together delegates representing hundreds of municipalities from all over Europe in the period between the two world wars. Alliances were made with trade unions, cooperatives and consumer and tenants' associations. These kinds of channels of written and in-person exchange were essential then - as they are now - to providing new leaders with knowledge and strengthening alliances.

Socialist leaders, May 1, 1932 in Brussels. Fernand Brunfaut, Léon Meysmans, Marius Renard, Emile Vandervelde and Emile Vinck (general secretary of IULA and national secretary of the Federations of Socialist Town Councillors) Photo: Acta

In terms of coalition building, the large size of the network brought opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, linking up so many different municipalities generated a more consolidated voice and, as the international human rights system emerged, this network found itself well positioned to engage with international institutions such as the League of Nations and the International Labor Organization, which later became part of the United Nations upon its founding in 1945.[3] On the other hand, the expansion of the network brought increased internal diversity and tensions between members and organizations. This came in the form of differences between socialists who saw organizing at the municipal level as a step towards revolution, and bourgeois reformists who sought to respond to the negative social and environmental impacts of industrialization and urbanization.[4] Finally, as these networks matured, the dependence that they had developed on key individuals became sadly apparent when older leaders died or retired.[5] This shows the importance of mechanisms that build social muscle to ensure generational turnover in political processes.

It is clear that today's context is different. Efforts for social change via public policy in the early 1900's primarily dealt with emerging urban issues. Food sovereignty movements show growing attention from rural movements towards municipalities and cities. Consequently, rural issues are increasingly being incorporated into more holistic or territorial perspectives about what municipal policy must address.

After a period of focus on national level political parties, we are seeing a surge in attention by social movements refocusing on local level public policy. As Borras points out, the period from the Mexican Revolution of 1910 to the 1980 peace settlement in Zimbabwe saw many experiments and peasant efforts to gain state power through national institutions and political parties. Since then, as many of those revolutions and parties have been weakened and/or violently undermined, what have emerged in their place are different kinds of movements. "Most are non-party social movements and are zealously protective of their autonomy from political parties".[6] While it is not new to see municipal and state institutions as especially relevant sites of potential social change in Europe, this history of peasant movements brings up challenges and dilemmas about the institutionalization of food sovereignty.

3. Public policy as a tool for building food sovereignty

The role of the state (and therefore public policy) in the construction of food sovereignty is a hotly debated issue.[7] At the core of food sovereignty is a demand for peoples, communities and territories to have the right to define and control their own food systems. This means that the authority (sovereignty) of the nation state is constantly being challenged.[8] **When food sovereignty movements engage in policy making spaces, they must navigate this tension between the need to collaborate with public institutions, while not losing touch with the contentious politics of challenging state authority which is part of their DNA.** Commons scholar, Restakis argues that:

> [T]his requires a wholly new relationship between the state and civil society. It is a relationship that embodies fundamental principles of shared power, of collaboration and co-construction of public policy, and the creation of new institutions capable of transitioning to a model of Partner State in which the state is the enabler and promoter of civic values and the common good as the primary aims of government.[9]

Of course, the self governed, autonomous initiatives that pave their own way without public support or even in direct conflict with the state are equally important. These types of projects exercise social muscle and light a path for an emergent 'partner state' to follow.[10] But this report focuses primarily on experiences of engagement with public institutions to explore *to what extent a partner state that enables the construction of food sovereignty might be emerging*.

In Europe today, growing income inequality has emerged as a pressing political and societal concern: since the crisis in 2007, income inequality and distribution of wealth remain at all time highs. According to the OECD, "10% of wealthiest households hold 50% of total wealth; the 40% least wealthy own little over 3%".[11] Meanwhile mainstream policy solutions are not providing satisfactory answers. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) was born in 1962 as a way of increasing productivity to guarantee food security across Europe. However, after years of reforms and a changing political landscape, the CAP has increasingly shifted its focus towards subsidizing export-oriented production, giving the majority of aid to

Figure 1:
Food Insecurity in Europe
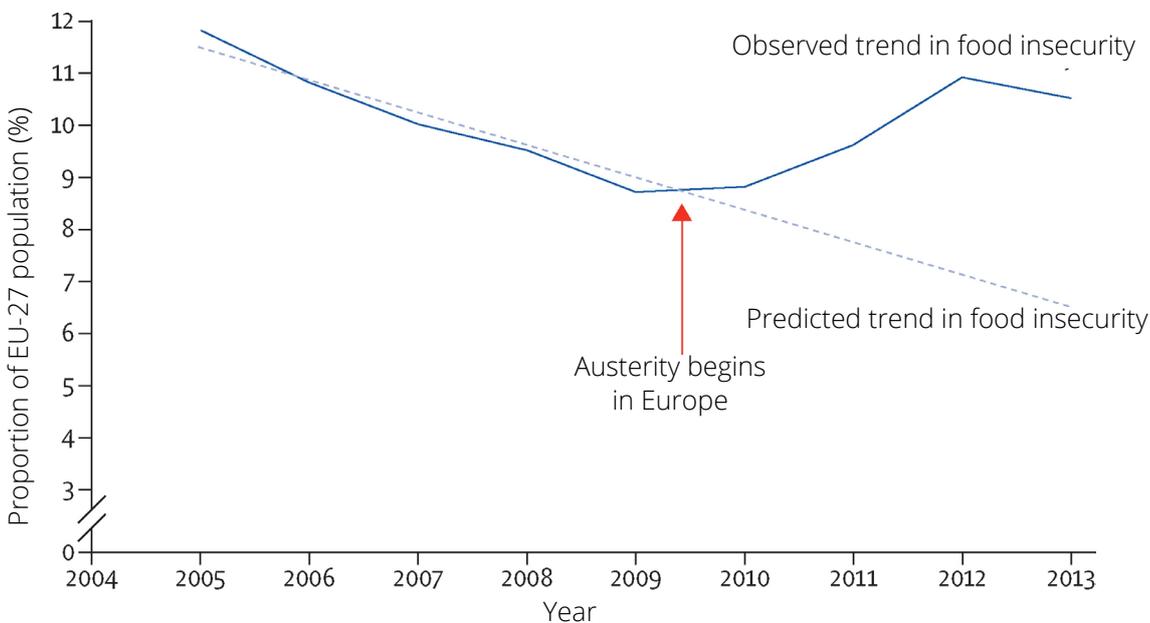
Source: Loopstra et al. 2015[13]

large-scale industrial agriculture. Accounting for some 40% of the total EU budget spend, the CAP is fomenting inequality in the countryside. Similarly, the Common Fisheries Policy gives the majority of fishing quotas to the ocean's largest polluters.[12] Meanwhile, a decade of austerity policies have decreased social safety nets and weakened the public sphere. Austerity policies have also made many municipal governments bear a disproportionate share of the burden of budget cuts. This means that local authorities may be looking for new solutions in the wake of failed neoliberal policy that has left them with shrinking budgets and massively privatized services and assets. This coincides with increasing food insecurity in Europe, driving people to look for ways to shift control over food out of foreign markets and into their own hands. Increasingly, people are turning to local governments and agroecological models in rejection of corporate controlled industrial modes of production and the failures of the CAP, the CFP and EU austerity policy.

The **municipal level** is also important because experimenting with local and tangible solutions can be seen as a laboratory for bigger changes, both structural and in terms of social consciousness.[14] Given the massive scope of the challenges people are facing in Europe, changes are coming from many sectors. Indeed, the policy areas that are relevant to food sovereignty naturally center around agrarian policy but also range from public infrastructure to health care to education. Experiences from towns and communities throughout Europe reflect this breadth and show the potential of developing policy alternatives that open up space for food sovereignty to grow.

To explore some of these proposals, we build on the framework laid out in the 2015 "Sowing Sovereignties" report, published by Etxalde (Basque coalition for food sovereignty) with Basque NGO, Bizilur[15] in order to explore the ways in which public policy is being used as a tool to build food sovereignty. Authors suggest that one way to think about food sovereignty is as **an intersection of sovereignties**, each of which has policy implications. The spheres they identify include: natural resources; local food systems; energy; autonomy and rights of women; and the control over the production of knowledge. This approach to food sovereignty encourages a holistic and inclusive logic of change, where 'food' is an entry point, but the vision is in fact broad reaching. **The kind of public policies we are interested in here are those that can contribute to system change grounded in peasant, small-scale fisher and agroecological economies.** Broad system change is required to effectively support agroecological production because currently these initiatives are fighting an uphill battle just to survive. Rules, norms, infrastructure and gender relations that sustain agribusiness models of production and extractive economies must be dismantled at the same time as food sovereignty alternatives are being built. Importantly, attention to gender dynamics in the architecture of policy making, implementing and monitoring processes, is as, if not more, important for ensuring women's sovereignty and autonomy than local policies targeted at women's rights or incorporation into the food system. This report, like the 2015 one, is grounded in work in the Basque Country, but we also draw on a number of examples throughout Europe in the spirit of broadening the scope and tapping int networks for information sharing.

Seed saving and sharing. Photo: D. Gabriner

4. Sovereignty over natural resources

Central to food sovereignty is the issue of access to and control over the natural resource base needed for food production (as well as energy production and social reproduction), like seeds, forests, land and water. As the graphic below illustrates, land concentration is increasing across the region, putting many small farms out of business. And of those smallholders that survive, as of 2009, only 28% of the land was held in a woman's name, even though women make up 41% of the family labor force.[16] Only 31% of cash transfers from the Common Agricultural Policy of the EU go to women, who typically receive less due to the fact that they tend to own smaller parcels of land (De Gonzalo, 2012, cited in Urretabizkaia 2017, 39). The issue of access to land in particular has gained significant traction among food sovereignty movements throughout Europe, reflecting the urgency of the situation today. Many farmers and rural populations also rely on communal forest and grazing lands, in addition to their individual parcels.

Stop Land Grabbing at Paris Climate March 2015, Photo: TNI

In this context, a number of local level policy initiatives have emerged to try to address the challenge of land and naural resource access for small-scale farmers and local communities. Some of these include specific criteria prioritizing women. From the outset, it must be recognized that the way land is governed in Europe is largely framed by a public-private dichotomy. But, many ideas and practices "operate beyond the public-private binomial" as a commons (Box 2)[17] guided by people and their relationships with nature and each other rather than the state or the market. These forms of 'commoning' often remain "invisible, undervalued or dismissed as archaic and non-modern".[18] In many ways **this understanding of food and natural resources as commons captures the collective spirit of food sovereignty and the social and ecological relations it stands for.** But in a legal world structured by public-private models of ownership and governance, how might support for the commons be expressed or enabled in the public policy sphere?

Increasing public control over natural commons

At the local level, attempts to redistribute ownership or return natural resources to communal use are primarily happening via market mechanisms in a piecemeal fashion. In many cases we see a process of privatization through the sell-off of public assets, which goes against the logic of food sovereignty. But in some cases, the reverse is happening: cities and regions are retaking control in order to make space for natural resources to be managed as a commons. Everything from woodland and marine areas to drinking water is being put back into communal or public control for a range of uses including, sanitation, drinking, grazing, forestry, foraging, recreation and conservation. This is often referred to as **remunicipalisation**.

Shrinking budgets and increased ecological concerns in the context of a changing climate are also contributing to changes in management of forest, grazing and fishing grounds. Some local governments like Zerain in the Basque Country have attempted to purchase formerly privatized forestlands to put back into communal use. However, the funds required to sustain this type of initiative put strain on small rural municipalities. Another Basque town, Atxondo, set out in 2016 to

move away from the model of monoculture pine forest that covers much of the Basque landscape by harvesting and selling the existing timber on public lands. With those funds they plan to purchase more private lands to put into public title and do the same. In each place, the plan is to allow for the native forest grow back naturally to replace the pine.[19]

The case of remunicipalisation of water services is especially instructive. Here, rather than opening up space for new private groups of farmers or community organizations to manage public assets, city governments are re-asserting control over water assets. France is home to some of the largest water multinational corporations in the world, after massive privatization of water services during the 1970s and 1980s. Some 70 percent of people in France relied on private companies for their water supply. In the 2000s, frustration with poor service quality and undesirable contract terms led to one of the most widespread movements of cities retaking control of water management. France is home to 106 of these cases, including the hallmark experience in the city of Paris.[20] Eau de Paris is seen as a "democratic breakthrough that inspired others".[21] Its staff, users and civic associations are all represented on the Board, with full voting rights.

Figure 2
Land Concentration in Europe
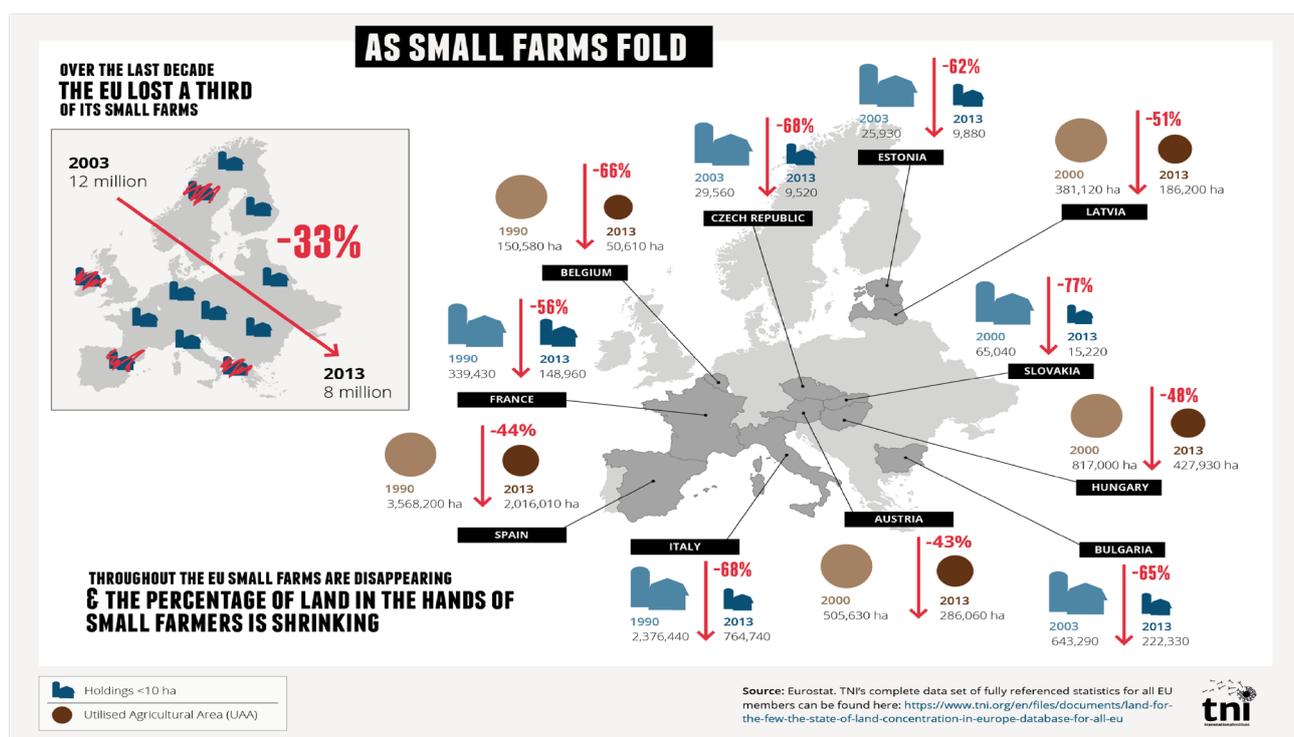
How did they do this? Certainly not overnight. Remunicipalisation in Paris began in 2003 but wasn't complete until 2010. Le Strat says, "The return to public management and the creation of the Paris Water Observatory have revitalized civil society participation. This is paradoxical because when we decided to remunicipalise in the early 2000s, Parisian civil society was not very active on the issue of water. We were quite isolated".[22] Le Strat, former president of Eau de Paris, brought her personal activism into the institution.[23] In this case change was triggered from within the institution and, as space opened up for people to develop and deploy expertise around policy impacts, social muscle was strengthened.

What lessons can we take from these experiences? Christopher Lime, president of the association of public water operators, France Eau Publique, highlights some key issues that he learned throughout this trajectory, which underscore the main points of this report.

First, civil society coalitions were able to exert social pressure and push for action, but alliances with "political champions" within the government are crucial. Political champions in France range from conservative to progressive governments.[24]

Second, the loss of public expertise after years of privatization is a big challenge. To recover this knowledge, the support of peers via networks of city councils can be instructive. But alliances with local small-scale and artisanal food producers who maintain knowledge about natural resource management can open up possibilities for important input and participation. Knowledge building is also important before remunicipalisation actually takes place, via planning and preliminary studies as well as feedback from other experiences.[25] The control over knowledge required for water services remains contested territory. As a response to the remunicipalisation wave in France, water multinationals, Suez and Veolia are looking for ways to recover from market losses. This includes new offers of technological packages and data management solutions, which they sell to public water operators. "This could lead, in the future, to new forms of 'quasi privatisation' of water services, because of technological dependence and because of the long-term costs of these technologies".[26]

Finally, these efforts are framed largely as responses to a crisis of private management, which has inspired municipalities to seek alternatives.[27] However, the character of public governance over resources is not a given, and conflicts over how things should be handled inevitably come up. The establishment of institutional mechanisms to ensure democratic process

is therefore a key component of a state that enables change towards food sovereignty and collective management/commoning. Montpellier and Paris offer useful models for citizen participation, via Water Observatories and 30% civil society representation on the boards of the new public operators.[28]

Land banks and land leases: facilitating access and reallocating public asset management

To address more specifically the issue of land access for small-scale farmers, some local public policies are focusing on facilitating lease and rental agreements. Many of these efforts are being called 'land banks'. These land banks often involve the municipal government serving as an intermediary that helps identify potentially farmable land, **and facilitates access at favorable terms for farmers to both privately and publically held property.**

Red Terrae in Spain, for example creates a space where land banks help activate agricultural rental markets in the context of massive depopulation of rural areas. In the case of Red Terrae, which began in 2011, the land bank is one of the central elements of a nation wide network linking some 40 municipalities that are focusing on developing agroecological public policies. In a climate of ecological crisis and dwindling municipal populations, this bank is presented as a solution, which comes with a wealth of training resources and organizes information for local authorities. The bank is essentially an online platform where local facilitators of agroecological initiatives (DILAS – dinamizador de iniciativas locales agroecologicas), typically working in local government offices, manage and encourage private and public holders of unused or abandoned land to include it in the list of approximately 147 parcels made searchable by this platform. People looking for land can also post their needs and search available supply. There are currently around 2200 users in total. Rental contracts tend to be up to 5 years, and a minimum of 2 years. This online tool is accompanied by educational materials and courses for municipal governments seeking to develop policies in line with food sovereignty and agroecology. There are a range of political parties represented among the participating municipalities, all of whom have taken the initiative to dedicate personnel and resources to these types of policies. Therefore relationships and/or political alliances between potential beneficiaries and local authorities can make or break such initiatives.

Not all land banks in the Spanish state are part of this network however. In Zeberio in the Basque Country for example, as part of the integrated rural development plan, "Nekazalgune", the local government opened a call for proposals in 2014 for projects that would revive the primary sector, providing job opportunities, entry points into agriculture for young people, and care for the environment. Again, this land bank sought to provide alternatives for a town with an aging rural population and outmigration of youth. Proposals were evaluated based on the following criteria: viability, sustainability, agroecology, inclusion of gender perspectives, job creation, and community vision. In two years, a total of 4 projects were granted land with leases for 10 years (one recipient opted not to take the land). However, what was initially conceived of as an annual call for proposals was suspended after local elections brought a new political party to power. This example highlights the challenge of sustaining projects like land banks when they depend entirely on the will of the party in power.

Maskilu collective food preserving center connected to land bank recipients' farm, Zeberio, Basque Country. Photo: Zoe W. Brent

Similarly, but not always referred to as a land bank, some municipal governments are reviewing their land portfolio in order to make public land available to private users for farming. For example Organiclea on the outskirts of London is managing 4.9 hectares of land owned by the local authority under a 25-year lease. The organization functions as a worker-owned cooperative and provides educational programs in organic agriculture, a vegetable box scheme, and start-up support for new farmers. When the former nursery site became available, the group put forward a proposal. One founding member reflects that one of the factors that helped facilitate the process was having built up existing networks and relationships with local council members before going into the negotiations.[29] This was particularly relevant in the UK where local government budgets have been cut more than any other area of government.[30] This has also meant that personnel has been cut, and with that, loss of expertise about managing the land under public title. However, these difficulties can also be opportunities for change. As Brian of Organiclea suggests, "the key thing is to offer them solutions to problems rather than be another problem."[31]

Some questions that arise regarding this strategy include: Do 5-25 year leases provide enough stability for the next generation of farmers? For some land bank recipients and activists, there is also a need to build up a critical mass of people who might push for deeper, more redistributive reforms, and using public and/or rented land as an incubator to support these groups is one step in that direction. Once enough social muscle is generated, then political pressure can be channeled towards more significant land reforms or other measures.[32]

These examples show a range of responses by state institutions in the face of crisis. For some local authorities, depopulation of rural areas and an ailing agricultural sector is reason for putting energy and resources towards connecting new farmers to existing landholders. For others, a climate of austerity is a moment to search for ways to relieve the burden of land management by offering leases to farmers. And for others still, a crisis of corporate management opened up political space for rethinking the terms of governance and bringing control back into the public sphere. **While no one size fits all model exists, the size of the municipality, state of the budget, demographic changes and local economy are all factors likely to shape the way local governments see the most pressing problems. Leveraging the expertise, knowledge and problem solving capacity of social movements and small-scale food producers means that these problems can be opportunities for input and influence.** What these land banks and lease arrangements appear to lack however, are institutional changes to secure spaces for ongoing democratic participation in how these programs are developed and managed. In cases like Zeberio we see how this makes such initiatives weak once the governing party changes.

Both remunicipalisation as well as land banks and lease arrangements represent vibrant areas of policy changes going on throughout Europe. Many of the services affected by remunicipalisation relate predominantly to urban populations, while land banks and leases are responding more directly to the needs of small-scale farmers. Both are necessary for food sovereignty. This suggests that through policy processes, alliances can be strengthened and cultivated, especially across urban and rural divides.

5. Sovereignty over local food systems

In the European context, the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy profoundly shape the room for maneuver that local authorities have when engaging in food policy changes. Nonetheless, many municipal governments have found ways to shape local food systems within their political spheres of authority: from supporting local farmers markets, local currencies, food processing and slaughter facilities, municipal kitchens as well as providing technical, coordination, financial, research and/or political support to local initiatives.

Public procurement

One especially dynamic arena for local government involvement is via public procurement in a range of public institutions. These types of initiatives have potentially significant impacts on local peasant and small-scale fisher economies by securing markets for their production. Providing secure markets for local producers also affects gender relations by providing public support to areas where women traditionally work. On the producer side, women tend to work at points

of sale in farmers markets, thus providing demand by pubic institutions potentially relieves the stress on this position. On the side of those receiving locally grown food, the quality of food at public institutions like school cafeterias, hospitals and elderly care facilities has gendered implications. The care and education sectors tend to employ more women than men, and if children and elderly people are sick or unhappy because of food quality, the burden of dealing with and finding solutions falls disproportionately on women in the household. Conversely, if kid's and grandparents' food is local, free from agro-chemicals and nutritious, the benefits to the rest of the family will likely be felt most by the women in the house.

Farmers market in Guernika. Photo: D. Gabriner

Public procurement is a strategic place for local authorities to express their support for particular models of food production. For example, Vitoria-Gasteiz, the seat of the Basque government, spends 37% of its annual budget on goods and services. Throughout Europe there are many examples of initiatives that have pushed local authorities to give new meaning and vision to these daily decisions about what food and from whom to purchase.

The UK Sustainable Food Cities Network has provided a platform for public procurement programs throughout the country. This network of cities shares information, gives recognition and awards and leverages the buying power of hospitals. What is most unique to this network is its sustainable fish-purchasing program, referred to as 'Sustainable Fish Cities.' The city of Cardiff managed to get the National Health Service of Wales Shared Services Partnership to sign a sustainable fish pledge that will be effective in all hospital meals that include fish in the city. According to Jessica Bearman, a lead dietician there, "As an organisation, we buy 120 tonnes of fish a year so when it comes to sustainability, we can make a difference in terms of scale. Hospitals can still serve fantastic fish dishes and we can continue to enjoy traditional favorites like battered cod, but it'll be sustainably sourced." This strategy has been complemented by similar pledges by Cardiff's elementary and high schools as well as the University of South Wales, totaling five million fish meals per year.[33]

At this scale, public procurement relies on certification schemes to guide sustainable purchasing. Like in agriculture, the issue of sustainable certification schemes is subject to much debate about how much small-scale producers are actually benefitting. The costs of certification can be prohibitive. And not all certification means locally sourced. The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), the certifier in the sustainable cities network, has been criticized by small-scale fisher advocates for favoring large scale fishing[34] in its certification and critiqued by environmental NGOs for approving fish caught under conditions that generate high levels of by-catch.[35] One of the appeals of MSC is the high quantity of fish included in their certification scheme. This points to the challenge that active public procurement policies create for small scale producers to be able to meet the demands of such large institutions. In part this is a bureaucratic hurdle and in part there is an issue of coordinating supply coming from many small producers in order to fill very large orders.

In smaller towns, filling demand may be less of a problem, but the absence of strong direct links with small-scale fisher organizations presents different challenges. Rather than choosing an international certifier, municipalities like Orduña in the Basque Country are proposing to work directly with the local fish monger to service the municipal kitchen set to open in 2018. Despite the hurdles, the potential for incorporating small-scale fishers into public procurement schemes is an under developed component of local food policy in many cases.

School kitchens: kids and education as a vehicle for food system transformation

From health and nutrition to science, outdoor education and diversity awareness, the way children interact with food at school can have profound impacts on their lives and their communities. For this reason thinking differently about the role of food in schools opens up many possible avenues for change.[36] Recognizing this potential the French region of Isère uses its school cafeterias to support local ecological food production. There are 96 schools in the region, of which 58 are served by 7 centralized kitchens, and are managed by the local government. Of the 21,000 meals served by those 7 facilities, they have managed to ensure that 25% of the ingredients are locally sourced and 16% are organic.[37]

This growth in sales of local produce has created at least 10 new jobs in agriculture in the area. But in order to achieve this, producers and local authorities had to overcome similar hurdles highlighted by the previous example. Not being used to filling such large orders, local producers had to organize themselves in groups to meet the new demand and navigate the regulations that came with public procurement opportunities. This created the need for an administrative support body, which now employs 3 people.[38] This example shows **how taking a holistic approach to food system change channels the potential of separate initiatives into something larger than the sum of its parts**. [39] [40]

BOX 3

Territorial Markets

At the international level there is also work happening to support local food systems, especially public procurement as a key component of what are called 'territorial markets'. Social movements working in the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) on this issue for the past two years explain:

We propose to call the markets in which the vast majority of smallholders are engaged (and through which most food consumed in the world is channeled) "territorial" because they are all situated in and identified with specific areas. The scale of these areas can range from the village up to district, national or even regional, so they cannot be defined as "local". Their organization and management may incorporate a weaker or a stronger dimension of formality but there is always some connection with the competent authorities, so they cannot be defined as purely "informal". They meet food demand in different kinds of areas: rural, peri-urban and urban. They involve other small-scale actors in the territory: traders, transporters, processors. Sometimes these other functions are performed by smallholders or their associations. Women are the key actors here, and so these markets provide them with an important source of authority and of revenue whose benefits are passed on to their families (CSM 2015 cited in Kay 2016, 12).

However, a serious lack of data exists about territorial markets, despite the fact that some 80% of food consumed globally passes through these markets. A policy document adopted by the CFS on 'Connecting Smallholders to Markets' makes specific reference to the need for public procurement to benefit local small-scale food producers through:

"involvement of smallholders in the development of institutional procurement contracting arrangements to ensure that they meet their needs" (art. 9); and

"inclusive agreements with adapted modalities, which include simplified language, waiving of performance bonds, fast, regular and advance payments and manageable quantities and timeframes" (art. 10v). An accompanying civil society mechanism report to support this policy document also points out that there are European Union Directives (24 and 25) that "support public procurement policies that favor groups of small-scale producers" (Kay 2016, 26-27).

Strengthening social and solidarity economies for local food systems

Other components of local food systems that have gathered momentum in Europe include Community Supported Agriculture programs (CSAs) and complimentary, social or local currencies. Both of these areas of work represent activities that bridge the social and solidarity economy (Box 4) with food sovereignty. This intersection of transformative ideas has been highlighted in a number of events in Europe in recent years,[41] but the implication of public institutions has lagged behind the activities of community groups, farmers and individuals. The following examples show how areas where strong social muscle has been built can draw the attention of local authorities and help shift towards a more enabling kind of partner state.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) refers to a collection of different models that seek to bring producers and consumers closer together. "A CSA is a community based organization of growers and consumers. The consumer households live independently, but agree to provide direct, upfront support for the local growers who produce their food. The growers agree to do their best to provide a sufficient quantity and quality of food to meet the needs and expectations of the consumers. In this way the farms and families form a network of mutual support".[42] As of 2013, in Europe at least 4,000 farms and 400,000 consumers were involved in CSAs.[43] Much is written about CSAs and models vary widely, but initiatives coming from consumers and urban populations can draw new farmers into the sector by demonstrating demand for their products before they even start, as was the case with the Basque farmers' union's Nekasarea network. The French model called AMAP (Association for Maintaining Small-Scale and Family Farming, for its initials in French), has found ways to make CSAs accessible to low-income families by allowing payment in local currency, called the SOL. Also, public grants were obtained to cover the costs of solidarity boxes.[44]

> ### BOX 4
> ## Social and Solidarity Economy [SSE]
>
> The Social Solidarity Economy is an alternative to capitalism and other authoritarian, state-dominated economic systems. In SSE ordinary people play an active role in shaping all of the dimensions of human life: economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental. SSE exists in all sectors of the economy production, finance, distribution, exchange, consumption and governance. It also aims to transform the social and economic system that includes public, private and third sectors. SSE is not only about the poor, but strives to overcome inequalities, which includes all classes of society. SSE has the ability to take the best practices that exist in our present system (such as efficiency, use of technology and knowledge) and transform them to serve the welfare of the community based on different values and goals. (…) SSE seeks systemic transformation that goes beyond superficial change in which the root oppressive structures and fundamental issues remain intact.
>
> – RIPESS 2015 Global Vision for a Social and Solidarity Economy: Convergences and Differences in Concepts, Definitions and Frameworks

Another challenge to transforming local food systems is how to finance the areas that are not economically profitable on the one hand, and on the other hand, how to break dependence on global financial institutions and banks? Food sovereignty movements have made clear that a key piece of building local agroecological economies is to, "Support the development of alternative financial infrastructure, institutions and mechanisms to support both producers and consumers".[45] One method of building this alternative infrastructure is through the development of alternative currencies (also referred to as local, social, or complementary currencies). "Social currencies can tackle scarcity by providing liquidity where the conventional currency is in short supply. However, unlike these currencies, social currencies do not intend to be an 'all-purpose currency.' In other words, they are normally designed and implemented to address a specific social need".[46] Can social currencies be used to support the construction of food sovereignty? As the example of the French CSA indicates, many people think so. The city of Ghent in Belgium for example makes public land available for vegetable gardens in exchange for rent paid in Torekes.[47] According to a survey conducted, members of RASTRU, the Asturian barter network in the north of Spain who have incorporated the use of the Copino into their CSA network also agree.

Figure 3

Social currency's impact on local food consumption

Provided 1 is "completely disagree" and 10 is "completely agree", rate the following sentence: "as a result of my participation in Social Currency I increased the consumption of local produced food"
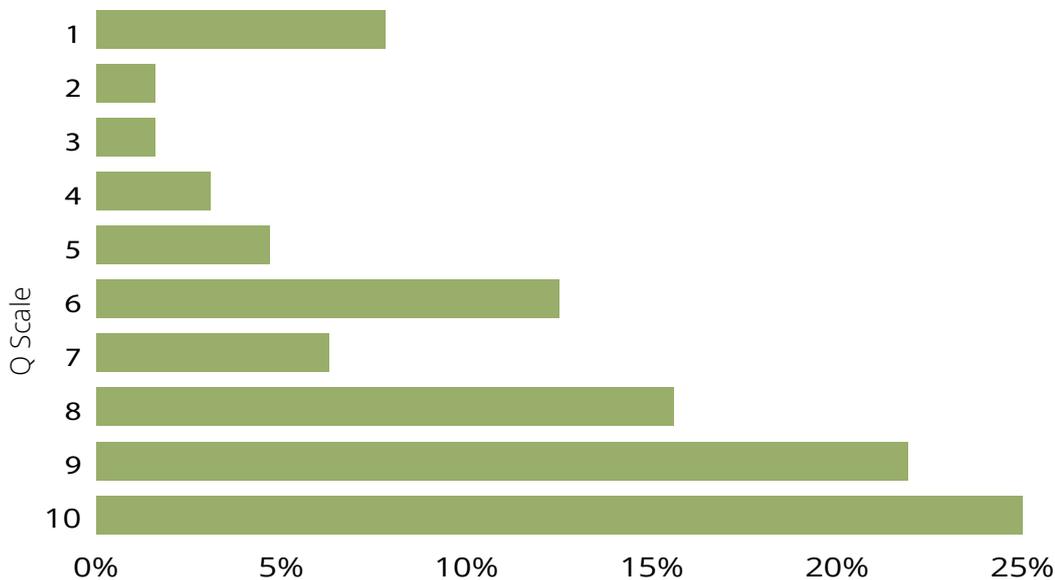
Source: Rivero Santos 2017[48]

However Llobera, coordinator of the Red TERRAE points out that the majority of networks of alternative currencies that are supporting agroecological production and working towards food sovereignty in the Spanish state do not have public support.[49]

The work on the ground to increase sovereignty over local food systems is wide-ranging and diverse, but a number of general insights can be drawn from these examples. First, the **systematization of information** about these initiatives has been an important way of giving them coherence as part of a common political struggle. Actively generating research and information about CSAs in Europe acts as a vehicle for consolidating these separate groups into one movement. In turn, this has given the CSA movement a voice in debates about policy. Collaborative research designed by Urgenci, for example was carried out for three reasons: 1.) To "define their common ground"; 2.) To analyze differences among the movement; and 3.) Advocacy, CSA is increasingly being identified by decision-makers as a movement promoting important social innovations. Therefore, there are calls for the CSA movement to take a position on various policy issues. In the recent past, such requests, if not answered by Urgenci, would have been answered by others in the name of the CSA movement....the CSA movement cannot hide anymore. It is necessary that we take a position, otherwise somebody else will, without any guarantee that they will do so in the interest of the CSA activists and farmers.[50]

Second, CSAs' incorporation of alternative currencies is strengthening **the bridge between the social and solidarity economy and food sovereignty**. This alliance joins two movements with distinct trajectories, yet significant commonalities. Broadening the scope of action from the farm to the local food economy has also opened up space for change to come from new groups and actors, not just food producers. In the case of CSAs, the spark comes from different actors depending on the context. However, this has been an area where the increased leadership of consumers is clearly evident.[51]

Finally, a holistic perspective of local food economies in turn offers **increased opportunities for new types of governance, and increased citizen participation in deciding how the food system works**. According to Renting et al., new relationships to food that things like CSAs generate, "form the basis for (re-)creating linkages with state and market parties, and thus lay the basis for new configurations of agri-food governance mechanisms".[52] What do some of these new configurations look like?

People's participation in the governance of local food systems

The concept of a **food policy council** has been gaining traction in recent years, especially in the UK and North America. These councils vary in structure, but in general they attempt to provide an institutional architecture for people's engagement in policy spaces dedicated to food issues. Some sit squarely within government institutions, with funding and participation by elected officials. Others are volunteer-based, groupings of civil society representatives, which are separate from, but engage with governments.

A key debate emerges in the context of food policy councils: opt for broad coalitions, which include competing political parties and risk very slow action, or engage only with the party in power and risk losing the council space when power shifts hands? Reflections from members of the Bristol food policy council reveal that focusing on convincing influential individuals of the need for change can be an effective way to create food policy 'ambassadors'. Strengthening personal relationships that go beyond party politics, documenting successes and garnering international recognition are all ways they have sought to overcome the tensions that can emerge in broad coalitions. And importantly, official recognition and institutionalization is not a prerequisite for action. In other words, "Act as if you have the authority, don't wait until it is given to you".[53]

Broad coalitions can be risky in other ways as well. When representatives from civil society and the private sector with opposing views about the model of food production desired are all allowed to participate, potentially transformative policy spaces can be coopted for different agendas. McKeon critiques this kind of multistakeholder approach to governance. She asks sarcastically, "Are Equity and Sustainability a Likely Outcome When Foxes and Chickens Share the Same Coop?".[54]

Another, more social movement driven approach, is for local farmers and allies themselves to develop food policy proposals by way of civil society consultations. The UK Land Workers Alliance for example spearheaded the writing of a comprehensive 'People's Food Policy' for England by way of consultations with over 150 organizations throughout the country. Some people from existing food policy councils joined the effort. But this push by a diverse coalition of civil society organizations was not invited to participate via an institutionalized channel like a food policy council. Rather, a self-organized process initiated the development of clear policy proposals on a range of issues including governance, food, health, land, labor, environment, knowledge, trade and finance. The proposals included in the final report call for institutional mechanisms, called "Food Partnerships" to be established in "each regional, metropolitan and local authority in England built on broad civil society and cross-sector participation." Participation, it says, must ensure "representation across food system constituencies and guarantee adequate participation of women, farmers and workers across the food system, people from marginalised backgrounds, those experiencing food insecurity, young people, and religious and cultural minorities".[55] The report highlights the unique opportunity that the 'post-Brexit moment' has created for new policy ideas. And it emphasizes the importance of strengthening alliances to push for change from the bottom up.

6. Energy sovereignty

The way energy is produced influences the way food is grown, processed, packaged and sold. Industrial food production in particular relies heavily on fossil fuels. From the production of agrochemicals to fuel for mechanization and long distance transportation, this kind of production is responsible for one third of global green house gas emissions.[56] Fossil fuel based production and the resulting acceleration of climate change is not gender neutral. Since women in Europe on average earn less than men, they are at a disadvantage when faced with increasing costs of adaptation yet they tend to be less present in decision-making about climate policy. Care work is furthermore performed more often by women, who will bear a disproportionate share of the burden of growing health problems or natural disasters caused by climate change.[57] **Building food sovereignty means dismantling an ecologically destructive fossil fuel based system**. To democratize the decisions about energy, and begin this transformation, many groups and movements are calling for energy sovereignty. In other words, "Energy sovereignty has appeared as a concept from which to stand, act and think about an energy transition".[58]

System change not climate change and Vía Campesina flag, Paris climate march, 2015. Photo: Zoe W. Brent

Similar to the transformation of water services in France, Germany has spearheaded remunicipalisation efforts in the energy sector. Since 2005 there have been 284 remunicipalisations in the German energy sector.[59] After years of privatizing and outsourcing of management in the 1980s and 1990s, municipalities throughout Germany are pushing for increased local public control over energy services from procurement to production, supply and network operation. Some see remunicipalisation as a viable option because it "will create local benefits for the local budget rather than global benefits for the federal budget".[60] And it also appears to be more capable of shifting to renewable energy than large providers. Wagner and Berlo look at 72 municipal utilities in the electricity sector that were founded since 2005, and find that 12% of services were dedicated to renewable energy, compared to an average of 5% among the 4 largest energy companies in Germany.[61] These numbers are promising in terms of the ability to respond to the ecological crises facing the planet, which the food sovereignty vision holds central to its priorities.

In Catalonia, the municipal government approved a plan in 2016 to restructure its energy production towards energy sovereignty and 100% renewables by 2050. A budget of 130 million euros was allocated for this process.[62] According to Janet Sanz (Advisor on Ecology, Urban Planning and Mobility) and Eloi Badia (Advisor on Water and Energy), "The time has come for change, for energy sovereignty, to confront the current model and strengthen alternatives. In Barcelona we are in a moment of transition towards energy sovereignty".[63] Based on rounds of collective debate and consultation since 2013, as well as exchanges with German activists involved in the remunicipalisation of energy in Munich and Berlin, interviews with electricity providers and the Barcelona Energy Agency, a plan was developed to guide this transition that focuses on 5 areas: Food, Mobility, Housing, Recreation and the Commons. Special emphasis is put on agricultural land and land use, distribution of commons, electricity, labor mobility, work, and primary goods.[64] Kick-starting this work, in November of 2016 Barcelona hosted a gathering of local officials from cities which work towards similar goals including Copenhagen, Grenoble and Frankfurt, in order to exchange ideas and proposals.

Energy sovereignty brings together a range of actors who have not historically been engaged in the food system. This presents an opportunity and a challenge for food sovereignty movements to reach out and build links with new allies to push for change in how energy is controlled. In the case of remunicipalisation of energy, the potential for change will largely be shaped by the political will of decision makers, as well as, "local constellations of actors, local traditions in service provision, [and] the financial situation of the municipality".[65] But German towns from across the political spectrum have pushed for municipal control. In other words, "party affiliation on a left wing–right wing spectrum does not strongly predict whether a city council favours remunicipalisation".[66]
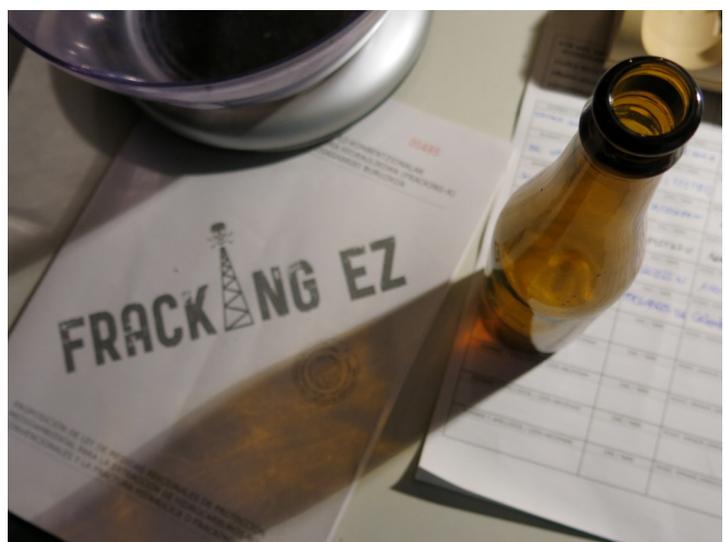
No Fracking pamphlet in local food market, Aramaio. Basque Country. Photo - D. Gabriner

Momentum towards energy sovereignty has gathered across Europe. Different cities have set into motion transition processes in diverse ways. Similar to the importance of systematization of the CSA movement, a number of key insights about how to sustain these processes have been collected by Energy Cities, a network of over 1000 local authorities from 30 countries. This provides a key way for cities and towns to learn from previous experiences and creates a sense of a movement.

A long-term vision is important, but it takes time so it is also key to set immediate and midterm goals. In Barcelona for example, as in many other cities, greening the energy infrastructure in municipal buildings and infrastructure is a good starting point. Some seek to first work towards decreasing energy consumption and then reassert control over energy production. Others seek greater urban-rural linkages in order to supplement energy generated within the city with energy sources coming from surrounding territories. In Germany, the transition to local control of energy services has also opened up more space for participation and peoples' influence over how services are managed.[67] Creating greater transparency, and opportunity for engagement by local populations helps to infuse the process with more dynamism and momentum.[68]

7. Women's sovereignty and autonomy: adopting a gender lens in policy making

This report is about changing both the content of public policy and changing the way policy is created. Human societies are made up of diverse peoples, each affected in different ways by inequalities based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age and/or class. **If the goal is to create public policies for food sovereignty that are truly transformative, an appreciation of this diversity and inequality must be built into the way these initiatives are developed and implemented**.

Many feminists and feminist scholars have helped to highlight and analyze the way these inequalities are created in the case of gender. The division of labor within the current capitalist system has invisibilized care and reproductive work, like child raising, food provision and housekeeping, mostly carried out by women for centuries. This dynamic also permeates the food system. Authors like Deere[69], O'Laughlin[70] and Agarwal[71] have pointed out how many classic studies of agrarian political economy have portrayed the peasantry and the family farm as one homogeneous unit. This hides the fact that within farming households there are complex sets of class, gender and power relations. Not all resources are necessarily pooled nor is all labor shared nor recognized. And not all families conform to hetero-normative stereotypes. Women are less likely to own land and more likely to confront barriers to participation in agrarian organizations like unions. The reproductive and care work done predominantly by women within the food system is on the one hand invisibilized and undervalued by capitalist ideas of what farm and food work looks like, while on the other hand capitalism would not function without it. In other words, capitalism needs patriarchy to survive. The work of ecofeminist scholars like Mies and Thomsen[72] and Herrero[73] has also deeply influenced food sovereignty movements today. Building on these ideas, proposals coming from Guatemala[74] as well as Basque women's collective for food sovereignty, Etxaldeko Emakumeak, are calling for 'agroecofeminism' as a key part of their struggle. Transforming gender relations is also an important component of food system transformation and ultimately a key pillar of food sovereignty. In terms of public policy, this means thinking about policies through a feminist lens in a way that corrects historic discrimination against women and LGBTQ people, while also establishing new political logics that create space for different, more just gender relations (also referred to here as gender justice).

In Europe there are a number of initiatives that focus on gender and public policy. Many of these emphasize the need for more women to be represented in public office. While important, if the structural barriers to participation in politics are not resolved, these efforts will have limited impact. This requires much more than policy efforts that simply focus on women as the targets of development, and see them as key recipients of aid and protection. This means rethinking agrarian and natural resource policy, energy policy, and food policy. Each of the sections of this report talks about a policy arena that is in fact relevant to **gender justice**.

"To Enter, You Have to Come Out" Festival Agrogay, Ulloa.
Photo: Raquel Rapado

In order to correct historic exclusion of women from positions of leadership and control over natural resources in the food system, some local policy initiatives have explicitly prioritized women. This is the case for example in the land bank in Zeberio mentioned above, which in the call for proposals set explicit criteria for land recipients as follows: "Inclusion of a gender perspective: It is considered a specific objective to promote and facilitate the incorporation of women interested in the agrarian sector. Therefore the degree to which proposals reflect this dimension will be evaluated."[75] Traditional family formats are also evolving and changing in rural areas. Festivals like Agrogay in Galicia shed light on the sexual diversity that already exists in rural areas. It is important that policy is attentive to these realities as well. But the way policy is enacted and the logic behind it also matters. For example the Agrogay festival in Monterroso has inspired other towns to celebrate the gender diversity in their communities. In 2016, after the success of the Agrogay festival, the government of neighboring municipality, Lalín decided to create a space in their food festival called "cooked with pride" for the LGBT communities of Galicia, including the Agrogays. However, according to one founder of the Monterroso festival, Ángel Amaro, the logic of the local government was one based on marketing. In his view they "incorporated a gay element to attract more people to a heterocentric food festival, which effectively gentrifies the recognition of a collective…running the risk of trivializing LGBT issues".[76]

Rethinking care work and the politics of participation

Besides who is selected for leadership positions or invited to meetings, there are structural factors that perpetuate gender inequalities and the ability for women and LGBTQ people to effectively participate. Politics is dominated by masculine logic: competition, hierarchy, public debate, imposition, etc. A **feminization of policy spaces** introduces other priorities like: care, work in networks, valuing everyday activities, negotiation and agreement.[77] Plus, without a transformation of the way care work has been historically divided among men and women, participation in political spaces becomes an additional burden on women's already limited free time. On the one hand this can be addressed by developing public policies that reach these, often invisibilized, areas of society. This means providing things like public child care or free education to defray some of this burden. Work on 'new masculinities' has also reinforced the importance of men's contribution to care work and transforming gender relations.[78]

On the other hand, there is also a need to bring care work into politics, 'put life at the center,'[79] or 'feminize' politics.[80] This means finding new and more effective ways of making space for the emotional labor that is also part of policymaking. Putting life at the center of politics also means reassessing the priorities embedded in policymaking spaces. In other words feminist policymaking is about making policy that recognizes and supports care work in society, while also finding ways of prioritizing care work in the process of making policy itself. None of these strategies would be complete without rethinking the role of men and masculinity.

The transformation of gender relations requires policy targeted at men, women and LGBTQ people, which actively breaks down existing patriarchal gender roles. Saxonberg calls for degenderizing policy as opposed to genderizing policy. In the area of family and social policies, Saxonberg argues that the key question is the degree to which policies "give women incentives to work or to stay at home, and whether they give fathers incentives to share in child-raising tasks, because these policies have the greatest impact in terms of promoting or discouraging gender equality".[81] Public maternity leave but no paternity leave and/or not having high quality public childcare services can become incentives for women to stay out of the labor market and reify patriarchal gender roles. In contrast, combined maternity and paternity leave with

incentives for fathers to assume childcare and/or high quality public care options can help diminish existing gender roles and expand labor and care options for families. In sum, while it may seem only distantly related, **degenderizing family policy is in fact a crucial component of a food sovereignty policy agenda**.

Today in the area of family or social policy there are three main types of support: leave entitlements (i.e. maternity and paternity leave), cash transfers, and provision of services (i.e. child care, education).[82] Although most of these initiatives typically fall within the jurisdiction of national governments, France provides a good example of how municipalities have opted to provide municipal daycare services above and beyond the average. France spends 1.1% of its GDP on childcare and early education, compared to the 0.7% average across OECD countries. Some 48% of French children younger than three are enrolled in some type of formal care. And in the period between 2008 and 2012 municipalities and local authorities covered 38% of the cost of this service.[83]

Taking the gender dimension of food system change seriously forces us to broaden our thinking about what truly holistic and feminist policy making for food sovereignty might look like. This highlights the importance of alliances between feminist and farmers movements. This wide lens approach also means that much greater collaboration among public institutions in rural and urban areas is needed to bring historically separate policymaking spaces into a collective conversation. One example of how such integration is being promoted is through the production of educational materials. The training manual developed by the Basque government Institute for Women, EMAKUNDE, seeks to support the incorporation of a gender perspective into local and regional development.[84] Documents like this and many of the policies for food sovereignty discussed throughout this report are likely to have some very important impacts on gender relations. However, there is still much work to be done. To sustain this work, the frame of policy proposals for food sovereignty must explicitly make gender justice a more consistent component of policy language, process and outcomes.

Banners from Basque feminist and farmer's movements, above a table of seeds shared among women from around the world. Photo: Zoe W. Brent

8. Sovereignty over the production of knowledge: building social muscle to sustain transformative public policy making

Regardless of how perfect public policy is on paper, the realities of the political landscape in which it is developed and implemented will ultimately shape its impact. No policy is self-interpreting nor self-implementing.[85] As stated in "A People's Food Policy" report from England, "Policies may be put in place by Westminster politicians or by local authorities, but progressive change starts in our communities, on our streets, around our kitchen tables, in our gardens, and on our farms".[86] Sustaining local public policy making for food sovereignty requires social muscle. What are communities doing to keep that muscle strong?

Over and over again, reflections from policymaking experiences highlight a key barrier: lack of information and reliable data. Whether it is an incomplete land registry,[87] lack of understanding about how territorial markets work,[88] or the real contribution of women's labor to the food system -- **who controls the collection of data and the production of knowledge deeply shapes the policymaking process**. Research and educational processes are never neutral. Preliminary studies to inform policy makers are crucial, and below we highlight some tools, which have been developed to ensure that control over these processes is held locally. Additionally, the assessment of policy impact is also an opportunity for empowerment. Bottom up monitoring can strengthen the multiple sovereignties that are being sewn within the project

of food sovereignty – in particular control over knowledge. In practice, the assessment of impacts and preliminary studies for future policies are not separate activities. Ideally tools for analysis of the challenges and opportunities for local public policies provide an accountability mechanism for ongoing feedback, evaluation and adaptation so that policies can be responsive to people's needs and evolving contexts.

Informing and monitoring policy: don't wait for the state

The Basque socio-economic observatory, Gaindegia, has partnered with Basque farmers' union, EHNE Bizkaia to develop a new open source mapping software to serve as a vehicle for articulating participatory land policies. This tool collects and organizes cadastral data that is currently dispersed among different local and regional authorities, as well as geographic features, like sun exposure and soil quality plus tenure information. The hope is to provide mapping tools that the farmer's union can use to articulate clearly its alternative vision of territorial planning that would contribute to food sovereignty. This initiative is inspired by the idea that social movements do not need to rely only on government data to develop their policy proposals. In a sense this can be seen as an attempt to assert peoples sovereignty over the data that informs policy making. However, this also brings up important debates about how to maintain control over data. If made open source, what kinds of protections exist to prevent investors with different economic interests from using these detailed maps to develop a different plan for capital expansion into new areas? As long as these kinds of information gathering tools are in use, they are harder to coopt and use for other purposes. Plus the act of compiling information to inform new policy and monitor existing policy, is a good way to keep social muscle strong.

There are a number of international tools that can help to add extra impact to this cycle of informing and monitoring policy. Using human rights language can also change how demands are perceived or provide guidance to local authorities about policy implementation. Instruments like the Tenure Guidelines,[89] the Small Scale Fisheries Guidelines,[90] CEDAW,[91] and Right to Food[92] all provide normative backing to many of the local level policy initiatives outlined in this report. However, these human rights frameworks to which nearly all states are signatories often go ignored. Here we highlight a few examples of how organizations have decided not to wait for the state to uphold human rights.[93] Appropriating such frameworks, adapting them to local contexts and giving meaning to human rights on the ground can help people take control over the production of knowledge about policy impacts and needs. In the Basque Country for example the Charter on Social Rights represents a process bringing together 6 unions and 6 social movement organizations that decided not to wait for the state. "For this reason, we assume the responsibility to put forward a Charter of Social Rights, the objective of which is to guarantee basic social and economic rights in order to ensure that all people who make up Basque society have the ability to make their own decisions about and access to the conditions necessary for dignified lives".[94]

Invoking human rights in a different way, organizations like FIAN have begun to use guidelines like the Tenure Guidelines (TGs) as the basis for community audits of existing tenure situations. In a 2014 study of land access by FIAN Belgium, the analysis is written in language of approved human rights declarations and guidelines. So the study – carried out by social movements and NGOs – becomes a way of monitoring the implementation of the TGs. In the same way, at an international level, in 2016 the Global Right to Food Network, has been developing a participatory monitoring mechanism:

> This initiative seeks to develop a human rights-based food sovereignty counterpoint to the existing monitoring tools; demonstrate the impacts of popular participation, human rights-based accountability and policy coherence in operationalizing human rights obligations; create greater synergy between global and local movements and policy processes.[95]

Incorporating these frameworks at the local level strengthens advocacy work with the use of arguments grounded in human rights. At the same time, people's monitoring efforts can put more transformative interpretations of human rights declarations and local policy into public debate. The process brings together different groups and lays the groundwork for developing strategies for future action.

Education and political formation for generational turnover

Strong leaders are certainly important, but a dependence on a few individuals to keep networks and mobilisations functioning can be a major weakness in the long term. To address the challenge of generational turnover in food sovereignty movements a number of notable educational initiatives have emerged. Some like postgraduate, MA and PhD programs at European universities including the University of Coventry, the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Universidad de Cordoba, Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, Universidad del País Vasco (UPV), among others, have created research communities which cultivate scholar-activism especially focused on agrarian political economy, political ecology, social movements and agroecology.[96] Other programs like the collaboration between EHNE Bizkaia and UPV, Baserritik Mundura, have translated the Brazilian landless people's movement (MST) model of political formation (developed at the Escuela Nacional Florestan Fernandes, ENFF) to the Basque context in a post graduate program on food sovereignty. One of the class modules in the launch of the program in 2016 was specifically dedicated to local public policies for food sovereignty. Another module in the 2017 edition focuses on feminism and food sovereignty, and care work is built into the student's responsibilities throughout the year. Other platforms like the Nyéléni pan-European Movement for Food Sovereignty has since 2011 been working to consolidate the European network of organizations working towards food sovereignty. At the second pan-European forum in Romania in 2016, specific workshops were organized to discuss public policies for food sovereignty. Importantly, many efforts are ongoing that focus on training new farmers and food producers and providing education about issues ranging from agroecology as a movement, a practice and a science to mechanisms for land access and health and safety regulations. With less than 5% of the population employed in agriculture in most European countries, a key part of strengthening the social muscle behind food sovereignty depends on expanding and providing training for the next generation of food producers, as well as linking up with other allies and leaders for food system change.

Library at ENFF, Brazil. Photo: Zoe W. Brent

Networks

In order for each of these strategies to work, just like in the case of European socialists working on municipal policy, mechanisms to strengthen and connect local experiences regionally and internationally are important. These include, official associations, or trans-local networks, conferences and workshops to bring leaders in the field together,[97] and the use of publications and online platforms to share information.[98] In the context of work around local public policies for food sovereignty a number of networks are emerging. Some consist primarily of municipal governments, like The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, which has garnered the support of 160 municipalities, or the network of municipalities for the commons in Spain. Water remunicipalisation efforts have coalesced into a network called Aqua Publica Europea to defend public water management at the European level and provide an alternative voice to powerful corporate water lobbies in Brussels. Others consist primarily of social movement organizations and their allies. The Hands On The Land Alliance for Food Sovereignty alliance for example consists of 16 organizations including a number of the organizations behind the initiatives mentioned throughout this report, like FIAN, the European Coordination of La Via Campesina, and EHNE Bizkaia. Events like the international seminar on local public policies for food sovereignty in November 2016, organized in the context of this network, sought to bring together experiences and share lessons learned. And indeed this report is a product of this network.

9. Conclusions

This report brings together a small portion of the many examples of innovative policy making at the local level happening throughout Europe today. These initiatives are largely a response to the failures of the corporate controlled food system, which generates inequality and ecological degradation. Food sovereignty is a lens for understanding how these diverse initiatives can work towards broad based system change. What becomes clear, **however, is that to cultivate the intersecting sovereignties that provide the foundation for food sovereignty many more people than farmers are needed**. In other words, people's control over natural resources, food systems, energy, women's autonomy and knowledge can't be enabled by the state if treated as separate and unconnected policy areas. A shift towards a more holistic approach to the content of public policy is needed in order to build food sovereignty. But the political process also needs to change. The cases we looked at here suggest that peoples' participation and feminizing politics are both important in the way policy gets created. But using public policy to scale up the construction of food sovereignty must be a thoughtful and intentional process. There is no one size fits all model.

The following insights are offered to help tie together some aspects of a public policy agenda for transformative food system change and food sovereignty:

- **Who is involved matters.** Local authorities play a key role, but diverse coalitions of social movements are also essential. From activists focused on renewable energy to gender justice, from fishers to health care providers – this scan of the European landscape shows that working people in urban and rural areas are the ones pushing local governments to act, providing solutions to crises, collecting data, and taking ownership over policy making. Networks that connect different scales of action from the local to the global are also key.

- **The way information is used to shape these processes matters.** Information and knowledge building strategies that empower local communities can be seen as the engine for sustaining peoples' participation. Training programs have emerged to ensure that the social muscle required for this work stays strong. Informing and monitoring policy processes are important ways of using data gathered, getting people involved and tapping into local knowledge. In sum, these processes are not neutral. The way knowledge is generated and controlled has political consequences.

- **The institutional mechanisms and social movement processes put in place to sustain public policies matter.** The examples in this report reveal a wide range of formats and strategies for initiating and sustaining this work in a meaningful way. But participation is not just a matter of holding an open meeting. Here we have focused especially on highlighting how obstacles to participation are disproportionately felt by women. But many kinds of exclusion exist, based for example on race, class, age and ability. Participatory policy making therefore means dismantling these structural barriers to participation for all marginalized groups and building new institutional arrangements that enable effective participation by the people who are most negatively impacted by the corporate controlled food system. Only in this way will we begin to see a glimmer of a different kind of state, a partner state that enables food sovereignty.

Each of the cases in this report is an ongoing living process of engagement, political formation and dialogue between public institutions and civil society. The many ways this relationship is emerging shows that with the vision of social movements, policy can be more than a bureaucratic exercise and provide real strategies for confronting political problems. At the same time, initiatives to build food sovereignty on the ground, with the support of public policy can become more than a collection of isolated projects. Despite the many challenges, engagement with local public institutions represents fertile ground for sowing sovereignties.

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Endnotes

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7   Annette Aurelie Desmarais, Priscilla Claeys, and Amy Trauger, Public Policies for Food Sovereignty: Social Movements and the State (Routledge, 2017); Daniel López Garcia et al., eds., Arraigar Las Instituciones; Propuestas de Políticas Agroecológicas Desde Los Movimientos Sociales, Cartografías Del Vivir (Madrid: Libros en Acción, 2017).policies, and programs. While the literature on food sovereignty continues to grow in volume and complexity, there are a number of key questions that need to be examined more deeply. These relate specifically to the processes and consequences of seeking to institutionalize food sovereignty: What dimensions of food sovereignty are addressed in public policies and which are left out? What are the tensions, losses and gains for social movements engaging with sub-national and national governments? How can local governments be leveraged to build autonomous spaces against state and corporate power? The contributors to this book analyze diverse institutional processes related to food sovereignty, ranging from community-supported agriculture to food policy councils, direct democracy initiatives to constitutional amendments, the drafting of new food sovereignty laws to public procurement programmes, as well as Indigenous and youth perspectives, in a variety of contexts including Brazil, Ecuador, Spain, Switzerland, UK, Canada, USA, and Africa. Together, the contributors to this book discuss the political implications of integrating food sovereignty into existing liberal political structures, and analyze the emergence of new political spaces and dynamics in response to interactions between state governance systems and social movements voicing the radical demands of food sovereignty.","ISBN":"978-1-315-28179-7","note":"Google-Books-ID: E4U0DwAAQBAJ","shortTitle":"Public Policies for Food Sovereignty","language":"en","author":[{"family":"Desmarais","given":"Annette Aurelie"},{"family":"Claeys","given":"Priscilla"},{"family":"Trauger","given":"Amy"}],"issued":{"date-parts":[["2017",9,7]]}}},{"id":2655,"uris":["http://zotero.org/users/1648053/items/RWA3P9SK"],"uri":["http://zotero.org/users/1648053/items/RWA3P9SK"],"itemData":{"id":2655,"type":"book","title":"Arraigar las Instituciones; Propuestas de Políticas Agroecológicas desde los Movimientos Sociales","collection-title":"Cartografías del Vivir","publisher":"Libros en Acción","publisher-place":"Madrid","event-place":"Madrid","editor":[{"family":"López Garcia","given":"Daniel"},{"family":"Casadevante Kois","given":"Jose Luis Fernandez"},{"family":"Morán Alonso","given":"Nerea"},{"family":"Oteros Rozas","given":"Elisa"}],"issued":{"date-parts":[["2017"]]}}}],"schema":"https://github.com/citation-style-language/schema/raw/master/csl-citation.json"}

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