Multi-actor collaboration dynamics and capacity building network inside and between AKIS to foster the up-scaling of SFSCs across Europe

Deliverable 4.1

Inventory and guidelines for application of replicable best practices

Responsible partner: KIS

Funded by the European Union

Document Identification

Project Acronym	EU4Advice		
Project Full Title	Multi-actor collaboration dynamics and capacity building network inside and between AKIS to foster the up-scaling of SFSCs across Europe		
Project ID	101059911		
Starting Date	01.10.2022	**Duration**	60 months
H2020 Call ID & Topic	HORIZON-CL6-2021-GOVERNANCE-01-27		
Project Coordinator	INNOGESTIONA AMBIENTAL SL		
Work Package No. & Title	WP4 - Development of interactions with local, regional, national and EU policy makers		
Work Package Leader	KIS		
Deliverable No. & Title	D4.1: Inventory and guidelines for application of replicable best practices		
Responsible Partner	5-KIS		
Contractual delivery date	M24 30.09.2024		
Actual delivery date	10/31/2024		
Author (s)	Agnes Major, Katalin Kujani, Viktoria Nagy		
Contributor (s)	Margaux Colombin, Edelbis López Dávila, Marjolein Elings, Mark Frederiks, Matthew Gorton, Lucie Jeandrain, Christian Jochun, Nonna Joosse, Jorge Molero, Judit Molnár, Sarah Nolan Jana Pitrová, Elize Polderman, Antonio Roman, Friederike Selensky, Maria Sutcliffe-Hetman, Altheo Valentini, Davie Philip		
Review & Edit	Patricia Mora		
Type of Deliverable	R — Document, report		
Dissemination Level	Public		
Version	V3 - Final		

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History of changes

VERSION	AUTHOR	DATE	COMMENTS
V0	Agnes Major Deborah Lettnerne dr. Borbély	07.01.2024	
V1	Agnes Major Katalin Kujani Viktoria Nagy Deborah Lettnerne dr. Borbély	20.08.2024	
V2	Patricia Mora	20.09.2024	revision
V3	Ágnes Major Katalin Kujáni Viktória Nagy	28.10.2024	finalisation after revision
V4	Natalia Palmero	29/11/2024	Inclusion of the EU flag and recognition of funding.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABBREVIATION / ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
SFSC	Short food supply chain
AKIS	Agricultural Knowledge and Information System
RDP	Rural Development Programme
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
ISS	Innovation Support Service
LL	Living Lab

Table 2 Abbreviations and Acronyms

1 Executive Summary

The EU has recognized the importance of SFSCs in promoting sustainability, reducing carbon emissions, and supporting local economies, especially small-scale farmers and producers. These supply chains, which minimize the distance and intermediaries between producers and consumers, align with the EU's goals of fostering more sustainable and resilient food systems.

The document aims to establish replicable best practices of regulations and collaborative governance models to overcome regulatory, logistical, and policy-related barriers to SFSCs.

Key objectives include identifying regulatory frameworks and collaborative practices from across EU member states that successfully promote SFSCs. The goal of the work package 4 is to create guidelines that policymakers, advisors, and stakeholders can use to foster SFSCs, focusing on sustainability, local economic support, and food system resilience. With 21 partners from 13 countries, EU4Advice also aims to provide actionable recommendations for integrating SFSCs into the Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems (AKIS) to support local food systems through more efficient knowledge transfer.

Many legal barriers and obstacles have been already identified in European Horizon projects which were applicable as a basis for further analysis is matchmaking with possible solutions. Therefore, this task prioritized the most relevant legal barriers based on the Living Labs practices in NL ES, HU, and IRL and then tried to find solutions in other Member States. The vast collection of policy best practices pointed out that MSs have variant focuses on the different policy fields. In Member States where the role of small producers is a dominant feature of national strategies, food hygiene, labour and tax facilitation are in place. As these regulatory instruments are interlinked, it is often difficult to analyse them separately as a good example. Nevertheless, it can be argued that there are a number of good legal practices that can provide answers to the problems prioritised by SFSC actors. Particular attention should be paid to small-scale food hygiene regulations, as these are regulated at regional or state level. There are very nice frameworks for the use of small-scale or mobile slaughterhouses, shared processing facilities or small-scale technologies based on traditional processes, and the replicability of their methodology is well supported. Rules that are made at a fragmented level, such as public catering, need further attention at EU level, with EU-level guidance to ensure replicability. Overall, there are responses at Member State level to the most relevant legal barriers and sharing them during WP4 can help to increase the openness of policy makers.

The collected governance models support our hypothesis that they require a multi-stakeholder and multi-level approach. Thus, the replicability of multi-actor governance models needs an analysis that examines and identifies the regulators, actors and process characteristics at each level. The collection of governance models has also shown that their adaptability is not possible in a holistic way, so it is suggested that further use should take into account the identified rules, the territorial social characteristics and the complexity of short food chains. To conclude, for further adaptation at Living Labs level a comparative analysis between the LL and the selected governance model is needed to understand the differences between the social and economic circumstances. Then a strong multiactor collaboration and mutual agreement are necessary to start the construction of a common governance model.

In summary, the paper has collected a number of adaptable and understandable models that can be used to support decision-makers at local level to develop SFSC-related rules in Europe.

2 Introduction

EU4Advice is a multi-actor project funded under the topic HORIZON-CL6-2021-GOVERNANCE-01-27 with 21 partners from 13 European countries. It is the direct successor to SMARTCHAIN (2018-2021), a multi-actor project aimed at stimulating demand-driven innovation in SFSC. The main project goal is settling the foundations and structures required to ensure effective capacity building of short food supply chains (SFSC) through effective knowledge transfer.

Applying the principles of the interactive innovation model, EU4Advice project aims to boost the role of advisors as catalysers of the knowledge flow from research to practice, through the creation of an EU network of advisors with knowledge and expertise on SFSC issues, and the implementation of measures towards the effective integration of SFSC advisors into national AKIS. It must also be mentioned that the SMARTCHAIN project pointed out that the main hampering factor of the short food supply chain is the fragmented policy background and lack of knowledge on the traditional and locally specified food processing and valorisation. That is why EU4Advice aims to observe the legal tools and instruments which might be provided to AKIS actors and EU policy makers for better organised and successful SFSCs.

To reach this aim the consortia believes that showcasing good practices related to the development of short food supply chains in Europe on the example of regulatory and collaborative governance cases may support the EU 4Advice Living Labs and the Member States in setting up measures, funds, and any kind of support in line with their own circumstances and which may boost the development of local food system approaches. In addition, the aim in this project is also focusing on the involvement of policy makers and providing policy recommendations for the EU based on the collection and the policy-maker roundtable events. The good practices may serve as inputs for the recommendations and , highlighting the replicability of the cases, support the further development of SFSCs in the different countries once adapted to local context..

The good practice collection consists of 10 regulatory practices and 10 collaborative governance models from 13 EU countries: France, Germany, Croatia, Italy, Spain, Netherlands, Ireland, Hungary, Romania, United Kingdom, Poland, Malta and Greece.

2.1 Aim of Task 4.1

The overall objective of Work Package 4 is to involve relevant EU, national, regional and local policymakers in the process of adaptation of the key regulatory frameworks, establishing an EU network, to improve the functioning and incidence of SFSCs. To support this overall goal in Task 4.1 the aim is to collect at least 10 case studies from across Europe to be analysed, to draw best practices of SFSC supporting measures, policies and rules, and of collaborative governance models. The scope should include a wide range of SFSC related regulatory issues (based inter alia on SMARTCHAIN roadmap) and consider the interconnection between different policies to foster the development of SFSCs and access to markets.

The main activity of this task is to collect exemplary good practices in regulation and in collaborative governance models based on multi-actor collaboration related to short food supply chains (SFSC) and local food systems across Europe. The reason behind this is the previously identified lack of direct and well-functioning regulatory practices in Europe regarding SFSCs. With this collection the mission is to showcase to the EU countries that at different levels of the supply chain in some cases specific and effective regulations are needed in order to support the SFSC initiatives and to strengthen the sustainable food system in their countries. In line with this it is also stated that collaboration in food systems transformation or

SFSC operation is a key element without which, in some cases, good initiatives may fall apart. This is why the collection of collaborative governance models in Europe was also interesting and useful, specifically for the project Living Labs which may implement some elements from these practices in their own operation.

2.2 Related Specific Objective

SO5 – Interact with relevant national/regional/local policy-makers: According to its multi-actor approach, EU4Advice aims at creating interactions between local, regional, national and EU policymakers in order to involve them in the process of integrating SFSC advisers into AKIS, but also to tackle the most important regulatory barriers to the development of SFSCs. The project will explore the policies, legal and regulatory requirements for successful SFSCs, taking into account the different national and regional contexts, in a co-creative approach involving policy makers, advisors and producers at different administrative levels. Capitalizing on the policy recommendations and roadmap produced in former projects (SMARTCHAIN, Strength2food, etc.), the objective is to provide feedback from the EU network of SFSC advisors to relevant policymakers about SFSC issues, sharing with them their most important needs in terms of regulation and support.

3 Methodology and Tools

3.1 Background from HORIZON2020 SMARTCHAIN project

SMARTCHAIN project occurred in an agri-food system characterized by a lack of options for producers to commercialize and get a decent price from their products, and for consumers to find authentical and sustainable food. SMARTCHAIN contributed to better understand SFSCs and their great diversity, and to define the conditions under which they can actually exist as relevant and sustainable alternatives to the classical schemes of food distribution.

Deliverable 9.5 aimed to give insights about SFSC's perspectives for future, qualifying policy recommendations and a detailed roadmap, bringing out the accuracy and pertinence of their function for farmers and consumers in the present context. It addresses the main policy recommendations of the project, making them as concrete as possible, putting them into perspective with current policies, strategies and regulations, and suggesting relevant policy tools to implement them, following a principle of efficiency and avoiding unnecessary burdensome processes. After a brief analysis of the context, based on project results and literature, and an overall SWOT analysis, a synthesis of 9 main barriers and 17 associated needs are addressed:

SFSCS' BARRIERS AND NEEDS	
BARRIERS	**NEEDS**
1. Lack of definition/differentiation of SFSCs (transversal issue)	Legal criteria and categories to differentiate and protect SFSCs
2. Lack of knowledge and data about SFSCs	Harmonised data collection at EU level
3. Lack of capacities and resources of producers	Improved knowledge and innovation transfer, especially in terms of business models, consumer demands, cooperation modes, etc.
	Support in marketing, sales and communication (services and infrastructures)
	Support for horizontal and vertical cooperation and networking initiatives
	Increased access to funds
4. Unsuitable processing infrastructures	Local processing infrastructures (slaughter houses, mills, processing plants) adapted to handle small and/or seasonal productions
5. Unfair trading practices and limited bargaining power of producers	Increased protection of primary producers in B2B transactions
	Support of most empowering cooperation and association modalities
6. Unsuitable food health and safety standards and control procedures	Increased implementation of flexibility measures (exclusion/adaptation/derogation)
	Proportionate and less invasive quality control procedures
	Support to fulfil health and safety requirements (financial and advice)
7. Limited access to public procurement contracts	Increased access to public procurement contracts
8. Lack of affordability and accessibility	Differentiated tax system
	Sales infrastructures and services
9. Lack of consumer awareness and capacity to make informed choices	Promotion of SFSCs
	Increased transparency

Table 3 Barriers and needs from SMARTCHAIN project Deliverable 9.5

To build upon the SMARTCHAIN results the D9.5 Roadmap towards the adaptation of the EU regulatory framework to SFSCs and D7.5 Legal and policy recommendations for decision makers were taken into consideration. The main objective was to search potential best practices which may provide answers to the above-mentioned issues. However further harmonisation

was required with EU4Advice project objectives and methodology therefore the LL managers were invited to scale the importance of the different policy issues. It was also important for the following Tasks such as T4.2, T4.3 to be able to implement the results to the living Lab Roadmaps. T4.2 will focus on pilot activities and exchanges between the LLs, thus some of the governance models and their aspects will be identified for piloting and testing in the operations of the LLs. Regarding T4.3 this deliverable and the collection supports the establishment of an EU network of policy-makers focusing on the identified and most typical regulatory bottlenecks of SFSCs.

3.2 Defining regulatory and collaborative governance model best practices

3.2.1 Regulating Short Food Supply Chains

The EU has recognized the importance of SFSCs in promoting sustainability, reducing carbon emissions, and supporting local economies, especially small-scale farmers and producers. These supply chains, which minimize the distance and intermediaries between producers and consumers, align with the EU's goals of fostering more sustainable and resilient food systems. However, the European level of SFSC regulations is part of broader agricultural and food policies rather than being a separate, standalone set of rules. Regulation comes primarily through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Food Hygiene Package and initiatives like the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy. The CAP provides financial incentives to farmers and producers who engage in practices that promote sustainability, including participating in SFSCs. Additionally, the Farm to Fork Strategy, a key part of the Green Deal, emphasizes the need to shorten food supply chains to improve transparency, reduce food waste, and promote local production. The Food Hygiene Package guarantees a high level of protection in food and feed supply chains and includes a number of regulations covering all stages of food production, processing, distribution and market introduction- there is a movement towards a new balance between implementing rigorous food safety practices and granting enough flexibility to preserve rural food culture and local food supply chains.

Good Regulatory Practice (GRP) can be defined as a set of principles and practices applied to the development, implementation and review of regulatory instruments – laws, regulations and guidelines – to achieve public health policy objectives in the most efficient way. Successful application of GRP is the hallmark of a modern, science-based, responsive regulatory system in which regulations are translated into desired outcomes.

The necessity of regulating the different forms of SFSC has already been recognised by several Member States and there are several good examples of how national governments regulated different forms of SFSC, granted tax relief or exemptions or provided special support to these practises. It is worth learning from such good regulatory practices how these matters are already being regulated, how these regulations are structured and managed. For example, some countries may have developed efficient models for managing local food safety standards, facilitating market access for small producers, or creating regional networks that connect consumers with local farmers.

3.2.2 Collaborative governance models and short food supply chains

Governance arises as a key aspect of an organization, group, community, or more concretely a farmers' market, a local food shop, a trademark of local products, etc. All SFSC groups cope with challenges of governance and sometimes it may not be obvious how to organize the work, the responsibilities together. As a first step a common understanding on what is a collaborative governance model should be established. For this the relevant literature was revised to serve as

a starting point. Collaborative governance involves the government, community and private sectors communicating with each other and working together to achieve more than any one actor could achieve on its own. The key elements of a collaborative governance model according to Ansell and Gash (2008) are the following:

1. Leadership Initiation: The beginning of the process often is the initiation of the leadership. It should be decided which actors will guide, lead the collaboration.
2. Inclusive Participation: It is required to achieve active participation of all relevant stakeholders in order to have an effective collaboration, and to ensure diverse perspectives.
3. Shared Understanding: Creating a shared understanding of the challenges, aims, mission and the solutions is a key step for the collaboration.
4. Building Trust: The stakeholders should have trust for the cooperation and the mutual accountability.
5. Deliberation: The stakeholders should have negotiations and develop solutions in co-creation which means that in-person deliberations are essential.

Governance is a key aspect of how organizations and communities structure their decision-making processes and collaborate to achieve common goals. EU4Advice is primarily focused on collaborative governance and involves arrangements where public agencies engage non-state stakeholders in a formal, consensus-oriented decision-making process aimed at addressing public policy or managing public programs. It aims to solve problems that cannot be easily or at all solved by single organizations (Cepiku, 2017). Nonetheless, researchers have shown the challenges in collaborative governance, such as insufficient trust prohibiting collaboration, power asymmetry, high cost of time and resources, and conflicting accountabilities (Qi & Ran, 2024).

Therefore, value was found in examining governance from a partnership perspective when reviewing the literature and the diverse cases collected. This focuses on how organizations and communities organize themselves internally, manage resources, and make decisions without necessarily involving public agencies (Ahmad & Omar, 2016). By exploring these cases, we gain practical insights into well-functioning governance models that can inform and improve the collaborative governance approach.

While the project takes a collaborative governance perspective, it also draws useful lessons from partnership governance models, which highlight how groups self-organize to achieve their goals. Together, these perspectives provide a comprehensive understanding of governance practices that can be applied across different contexts.

The aim of this collection is to showcase to the project Living Labs and to the wider audience how collaborative governance models may work well in the SFSC environment, and to show how these models enable sustainability and resilience to achieve better informed decision-making processes, societal engagement and innovation.

3.3 Interviews with LL managers about SFSC regulatory and other obstacles

Living Labs interviews were conducted with each LL manager in August 2023 to ensure the collection based on their needs. The interview questions were based on a deliverable developed in SMARTCHAIN project "D9.5 Roadmap towards the adaptation of the EU regulatory framework to SFSCs". In this deliverable the main 9 barriers and needs of SFSCs in Europe were identified, and the aim was to give insights about SFSC's perspectives for future, qualifying policy recommendations and a detailed roadmap, bringing out the accuracy and pertinence of their function for farmers and consumers (see Table 1).

Based on these barriers and needs a specific questionnaire was developed for the LL managers to identify with them the gaps in terms of regulatory issues and other relevant barriers and needs of short food supply chains in their LL and country. The idea behind was to build on well-developed issues from the SMARTCHAIN and to validate these at LL level, or to identify new gaps if any exist. The questionnaire is available in Annex 1. and the analysis of the interviews is in the next chapter.

3.4 Guidelines for collection and selection of good practices

For the collection process KIS provided a guideline for the project partners and organized several online meetings to ensure the common understanding of the aim of the task and to set the scene for the collection.

As a first step all the partners involved pointed out those existing regulations that may be interesting related to the previously identified needs. Then the collection started by filling in an initial form, following a template introducing several common questions for both regulatory practises and governance cases, and specific questions for each (guideline available in Annex 2).

3.4.1 Selection

The collection finished in spring 2024 counting 17 good regulatory practices and 14 of collaborative governance models across the EU. After the collection KIS analysed the documents and then initiated discussions with the task partners about the next steps and how to select the most fitting ones for the purpose.

Once there was collected a certain amount of regulatory good practices, another questionnaire was prepared and sent to the task members to rate the good practices from replicability aspect. The questionnaire was prepared in such a way that each task member was about to read the description of the collected regulatory practices and in some cases, we have initiated additional questions which were supporting task members to make their proper choice and rating. Additionally, the questionnaire contained more potential good regulatory practices based on the prior experiences of Kislépték with special focus on the daily need of the operation of the small farmers. The rating was from 1 to 5 where 5 was the most replicable. Nine of the 12 task members together with CTCPA filled out the questionnaire and rated the regulatory good practices from a replicability point of view.

COUNTRY	QUESTIONS TO EVALUATE THE GOOD PRACTICE HOW REPLICABLE DO YOU FIND THIS PRACTISE?	SCORE
Czech Republic	Enabling wider participation of SFSC actors in public procurements and public companies' catering	5
France	Creating territorial food projects to promote territorial food systems	4
France	Creating local brands uniting local economic actors and facilitating the creation of associations for this purpose	4
France	Ensuring locality of foods in producers' stores	4
France	Simplifying hygiene rules	4
France	Good practice regarding taxes	4
France	French MIRAMAP organisation supporting community supported agriculture in France	4
France	Maintaining green areas between the city and satellite municipalities	4
Germany	Freiburg Münstermarkt guidelines	4
Hungary	Introduction of temporary markets and facilitated hygiene rules	4
Ireland	Creating urban food growing areas provided by the City Council	4
Italy	Zero-kilometer rule: the supporting measure for SFSCs	4
Malta	Supporting regulation and government infrastructure (i.e. newly established Food Agency) for farmers' market	4
Netherlands	Voucher, educational and project subsidies for small farmers	4
Spain	Ad hoc derogation and adaptation on food hygiene regulations	4
UK	Creating pilot projects to connect producers to consumers	4
Austria	Guideline for small farmers to understand and properly apply good hygiene regulations.	3,3
France	Creating a National Food Program that prioritises food education and territorial anchoring	3
France	Relaxing professional requirements for selling other farmers' products	3
Romania	Hygiene rules accommodated to geographical difficulties	3

Table 4 Rating results on replicability

As the above table shows the first rating and validation by the task members. These results did not allow us to select properly among the good regulatory practices. Therefore, all the good regulatory practices were reviewed from the point of view of which ones contained more detailed regulatory information which made the deeper analysis possible.

The following applied selection criteria were based on SmartChain recommendations for the deeper analysis which then would be piloted in LLs. The main aspect was to select such good practices which are serving the easier marketing opportunities of farmers to sell their agricultural products and to select for deeper analysis such regulations which provide tailor made and easy to use regulations for small farmers.

The selected good practices for deeper analysis were not only chosen as they gave an adequate solution for the needs of the small farmers, but they provided a good and comprehensive description on the regulatory solution.

1. Lack of definition of short food supply chain – zero-kilometre regulations promoting SFSC from Italy
2. Special trading regulations facilitating direct sale of agricultural products determined as agricultural activity – agricultural trade regulation from Poland. The Polish example is similar to the French solution and an interesting example of how a "newly joined" Member State supports the development of SFSC.
3. Supporting diversified farming activity – the diverse regulations for the development of SFSC from Italy.
4. Comprehensive guidelines for small farmers in direct sale (SFSC) to apply food hygiene regulations, the example is from Austria.
5. Regulating farmers' market: examples from Hungary and Malta.
6. Collective sale of farmers (joint sales points/producers' shops), the French example.
7. Mobile slaughterhouses from Germany and Croatia.
8. Local food in public catering, the Czech example.

In the case of the collaborative governance models some new and very interesting cases were included after the first collection closed. This was the case with the Cork Food Policy to the Talamh Beo initiative in Ireland and the case of The Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta's action in Gyulaj changed to the MyFarm Ltd. which is a Community Supported Agriculture type of business model with a strong emphasis on collaboration.

3.5 Regulatory good practices deeper analysis

The main aim of the deeper analysis was to provide explanations, means and tools of a regulation applied in a specific Member State to another Member State towards easier replicability. Therefore, we analysed the following aspects:

Concept and Benefit

In this section, we described the needs and requirements related to each form of operation of the short supply chain and outlined the background necessary for the actors of the short supply chain to operate. We were addressing the obstacles that small producers face, and what kind of supportive policy and regulatory environment they would need. Here we have also indicated which of the given good legal practices answers the problem identified by the Smartchain project.

Introducing the Regulatory Good Practice

This is a short introduction about the subject of the good practice, an overall overview about the benefit of the regulations.

EU Regulatory Framework

The presentation of good practices is always a good indication for legislators, which shows what rules have already been enacted in other countries to handle and settle a specific issue. It shows that a specific legal instrument already exists in the other member state and what legal and support policy instruments were used. Furthermore, if a certain matter is already regulated on an EU-level, in many cases it provides an even more convincing argument for the Member State legislator by demonstrating the existing regulatory basis on the highest hierarchy, and on the other hand, the ruling of the other member state presents the details of the regulation. In the course of the deeper analysis EU regulatory background was not always available for all good practices.

National Implementation

In this chapter, we presented the national regulations in detail. In depth analysis of national, regional or local regulations is necessarily limited by the fact of managing official national language documents usually not available in English. An important effort has been carried out by task leaders to overcome such challenge and provide valuable examples.

Recommendation for Replicability

This part was the most difficult task, because there are many factors in the replicability of a legislation enacted in a given country by another country. Among these, the existence of the legislative intent of the member states is the most essential. The legislator's intention depends on many factors, but mostly on the economic, political, historical, geographical situation of the given country, but also on countless other factors. These include the weight of the issue to be regulated, in our case, how much demand there is in the given member state for the creation of short supply chain and rules that apply to small producers. From the point of view of replicability as a technical issue, the description of the present good practices and the in-depth analysis of its rules provide a technical possibility for the replicability of good legal practice.

3.6 Collaborative Governance Models - interviews and deeper analysis

Initial discussions provided a basis for the collection of the collaborative governance models related to small-scale farming, producing and SFSCs. The partners collected 14 good practices and after a brief analysis 10 were selected to be further investigated.

The ten cases selected as good practices of collaborative governance models are from **Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands (two from the Netherlands), United Kingdom, Romania and Spain.** After the first introduction descriptions of the initiatives the next step was conducting interviews with the contact persons for each selected case, which were made by the partners who suggested the practices. For the interviews a specific questionnaire was developed to discover more information about the practices and to identify those key actions that are essential for the collaboration in the governance models (The interview guideline, questionnaire is in Annex 3.) The interviews were conducted and recorded by the partners, then the deeper analysis was also conducted by the project partners. For the deeper analysis a template was prepared based on the replicability roadmaps outline in the COCOREADO project[1] which provided a sufficient basis for the replicability issue of the good practices identified. The following step after the finalisation of the deliverable is to formulate the collaborative governance good practices into designed two-pagers in order to communicate and disseminate these to the wider audience.

[1] https://cocoreado.eu/roadmaps/

4 Description of Good Regulatory Practices and Collaborative Governance Models

The following chapter intends to present the process of the collection, selection, analysis of Good Regulatory Practices and Collaborative Governance Models. It contains a short resumé of the collected and elaborated information which was provided by the project partners. The aim of this compilation is to give a better understanding on the most relevant SFSC related legal issues identified by LL leaders. Then the purpose is to feed the T4.2, T.4.3, T.4.4 by providing a basis for LL policy workshops, policy recommendations and roadmaps.

4.1 Outcomes of interviews with LL managers about SFSC regulatory obstacles

The outcomes were quite varied in the interviews conducted with the LL leaders from the Netherlands, Spain, Ireland and Hungary. As a starting point the importance of a legal SFSC definition was discussed with the managers, and their answers were quite diverse as on a Likert-scale all the possibilities were covered by them. In the LL of the Netherlands, it was shared that the definition is something that shouldn't be focused on so much that real life models escape the analysis. Similarly in Spain the specific definition is not that urgent as there are several existing definitions in specific regulations that are connected to SFSCs, such as hygiene, so it was clearly stated that a legal definition of SFSC is not that important, or essential for the development of SFSCs in the country. While in Ireland the need for a definition was highlighted because their status of the SFSC and local food system road is at the beginning.

The issues most mentioned were lack of funds and limited influence or bargaining position in the market, lack of information on all levels possible, and lack of cooperation between farmers or other actors in the SFSC. Firstly, concerning finance issues, the problems occurring have many dimensions that make it very difficult for a SFSC to start and also to survive after a few years or grow. There is a general lack of support to help a small-scale farmer start a SFSC. Without this opportunity, willing-to-be farmers must take on loans, in order to start their business. In the Netherlands, after the COVID era, people have – fortunately – started showing interest in financially investing in their own health, in the form of quality food – including producers in the SFSC.

Even if farmers manage to start their business, it doesn't mean it will be viable for long. Opportunities for income are limited for small-scale farmers, as most procurements are directly or indirectly favouring industrial farmers. Small-scale producers are not yet able to comply with requirements specified within these procurements for a variety of reasons, such as hygiene regulation, or sheer scale of supply capacity. This often leads to the problems of unfair trading practices. Since producers don't usually form into communities, whether in a legally defined form, or informally, they don't have a say in pricing. On their own, they have little to no bargaining power on the market. Neither do farmers' organizations, for different reasons, stand by these small-scale farmers in need of help.

Small-scale farmers, trying to provide for themselves and their family, will usually start to diversify their income, creating multiple streams, for example being part of a food hub, going to local farmers' markets and selling directly to consumers online, at the same time. Spain is a good example of how much cooperation can help. It is no secret that Spain is one of the warmest countries in the EU, which also means an elevated need for cooling vans to transport food and cooled warehouses to store them. In the absence of capital to buy these vans or maintain a warehouse – even only for rent –, delivering food either to consumers, restaurants, or maybe simply to the farmers' market, cooperation or excellent organisation skills are going to be a huge factor in whether or not the farmer can make a living.

Being part of a farmers' community, cooperating with other producers, either on a legally regulated or informal level, is always an advantage, as it creates a powerful standpoint on the market, it is more cost-effective profiting off of scale efficiency (e.g. organizing logistics, maintaining warehouses, purchasing any equipment/tool/vehicle, paying for bills, marketing), and it also makes the farmers group a more convenient choice to buy from, let it be by a consumer or procurement. But as the interviews have shown, a large part of farmers are not willing to participate in any cooperation or if they do decide to, these organisations will often fall apart, because of lack of understanding, trust, agreement or simply lack of funds.

Farmers, financially self-dependent, have no other choice, than to offer their products at a higher price. Unfortunately, it seems like average people are very price-sensitive and will choose the option with the best value for money, usually the cheaper option. Because of the unfamiliarity of consumers towards SFSC, local crops have not yet gained „value" in their eyes.

Knowing that farmers have little financial help starting any business activity, as well as a few farmers are reluctant to cooperate with other farmers therefore the most viable solutions support them with information and knowledge. One of the most important elements of such knowledge transfer is the marketing information, including knowledge about marketing their product, including the various and alternative forms of direct marketing, the different forms of short food supply chains. The notion of a short food supply chain is also not so commonly known by consumers either, despite an increasing number of consumers demanding more information and more direct contact with food producers, demanding more information regarding the origin, safety and wholesomeness of the food they purchase. The response to all these consumer demands is a short food supply chain. Spanish LL raised another issue, which is closely linked to its geographical properties: the access to sufficient supply. In Spain, where there are generally large distances, people will often choose conventional food supply chains, as they are more available in urban areas.

It is crucial to raise public awareness on the existence of SFSC, its different forms and its benefits. As the population gathers knowledge on the topic, in parallel, farmers will also get to know alternative forms of food production, but as for now, information and interest on the side of farmers is also very low.

Farmers also face a lack of information on their administrative duties, professional and legal requirements in their specific fields. Economy related problems also occur beside the lack of funding to be able to market themselves, they also lack the capability to do so, often paired with insufficient IT knowledge (e.g. implementation of smart technologies, user level PC knowledge, electronic or online administration), and lack of a confident business-sense. These can all be traced back to not having education or training available that would briefly cover inevitable legal (including administrative and accounting) and economical (business) topics. It is debatable though, whether it's the farmers' responsibility to have these skills, or it should be something to delegate, either to a company, an advisor, an organisation or the community that the farmer might/could be a member of.

Farmers often do not know where to search for the infrastructure they would need – such as slaughterhouses or water mills available –, or the answers for profession-specific problems, for example phytopathological questions.

To enable the free flow of information, to offer financial aid to farmers in any form, and to raise public awareness, the intervention of the state at a policy level would be a huge step forward. Policy makers have noticed the existence and demand for SFSC, but this still has room to improve.

As small-scale production remains an underappreciated form of food production, governmental/official databases stay highly deficient, if existing at all, even though such data would be a breakthrough to farmers finding each other to cooperate, and consumers finding farmers, to increase demand. It is crucial to obtain that data, to improve quality and outcome of policies introduced.

At the end of the analysis of the interview outcomes 8 challenges were identified that were mentioned and highlighted by the LL leaders and which could be a basis for the good practice collection (Figure 1.). These challenges were suggestions to try to focus on while looking for best practices, but those practices that provided solutions for other challenges were not excluded from the collection.



Figure 1 Challenges to focus on while looking for best practices. Source: own edition based on the interview outcomes

The selection of topics was further developed with the project partners, especially putting strong emphasis on the availability of contacts in EU countries related to the topics. At the end of these negotiations the following 9 challenges and possible solutions were identified showcased in Table 6 below.

CHALLENGE	POSSIBLE SOLUTION
1.Lack of definition/differentiation of SFSCs (transversal issue) 1.1 Legal definition of SFSCs 1.2 regulation of sales in the HORECA sector, farmers' shops, collection points, vending machines	Legal criteria and categories to distinguish and protect SFSCs on EU level – determine general legal definition for SFSC, and a specific for subsidy purposes – promote alternative forms of collaboration, other than cooperative – define the alternative forms of SFSC (farmers' market, CSA, basket schemes, etc.) in a form of a guideline revise public catering procurement EU regulation with special focus on local product
2. Lack of knowledge and data about SFSC 2.1 Political decision-makers knowledge and preparation	Harmonised data collection at EU level – make SFSC visible – prepare a methodology for collection (statistical) data about SFSCs

2.2 Inappropriate data about SFSCs	– introduce satellite accounts for SFSC, provide manual expand data collection by the Eurostat (ultimately by Member States)
3. Lack of producers' capacities and resources	Improved knowledge and innovation transfer, especially regarding business models, consumer needs, collaboration methods, etc. – maintain (and update) an EU level SFSC platform on basic and fundamental information on SFSC translated into all 27 Member State language provide targeted subsidy
3.1. Farmers' incomplete marketing, IT, administration and business knowledge	Foster general business knowledge of farmers: – organise special training courses – support SFSC facilitators/advisors help farmers in their business activities maintain and update a national repository for small farmers tailored for their special capacity and needs
3.2 Lack of cooperation between farmers and producers	Support and subsidy for horizontal and vertical cooperation and networking initiatives – encourage financially and legally new forms of cooperations involving ngos and local stakeholders maintain stable and long-term policy for the support of farmers' cooperation
	Increased access to funds
4. Inadequate processing infrastructure 4.1 Lack of infrastructure - for example: slaughterhouses	Local processing infrastructures (slaughterhouses, mills, processing plants) suitable for handling small and/or seasonal production. – subsidise local multistakeholder investments and operations – adjust legal frameworks for a simplified operation support alternative finance
5. Unfair trade practices and limited bargaining power of producers 5.1 Procurement - the market is unfair to small players	Increased protection of primary producers in B2B transactions
	Support for the most effective forms of cooperation and association
	Enhanced implementation of flexibility measures (exclusion/adaptation/deviation)
6. Inadequate food health and safety standards and control procedures 6.1 regulation of sales in the HORECA sector, farmers' shops, collection points, vending machines	Proportionate and advisory based quality control procedures – guideline for national authorities for implementing flexible rules and support harmonised and unified controlling methods in all departments and regional offices of the national authorities
	Support to meet health and safety requirements (financial and consultancy)

	– implementing mentorship and food safety advice into AKIS
7. Limited access to public procurement contracts	Better access to public procurement contracts – legal background to boost local food products use in public catering; revise public procurement law based on green procurement criteria
8. Lack of affordability and accessibility 8.1 regulation of sales in the HORECA sector, farmers' shops, collection points, vending machines 8.2 Lack of infrastructure - slaughterhouses	Differentiated tax system – guideline for national authorities how to implement lightened tax system in order to facilitate micro farm businesses
	Sales infrastructures and services – define the alternative forms of SFSC (farmers' market, CSA, basket schemes, etc.) in a form of a guideline – subsidise local multistakeholder investments and operations
9. Consumers' lack of information and ability to make an informed choice 9.1 Consumers do not trust in SFSC, the products, or the related information	Support for SFSCs – national communication to raise awareness of consumers for local and seasonal products – open call for SFSC promotion at EU level in the frame of EU's promotion policy
	Increased transparency

Table 5 Challenges and solutions for SFSC regulation and operation

These challenges and possible solutions were paired with the discovered good practices. In the case of those challenges for which no good practices were collected by the partners, KIS conducted research to discover and present progress, development in Europe related to SFSCs.

Overall, the final good practice selection was not just based on the interview outcomes, but also on the capacity and network of the project partners, and on the availability of existing and functioning practices related to these topics.

4.2 Collection of Good Regulatory Practices and their replicability

Table 6 shows all the good practices which were gathered as possible answers for the challenges, barriers and needs addressed related to SFSC in Europe. Ten regulatory and ten collaborative governance models were selected into the compilation and were placed in the table based on which challenges may be answered by the practice.

CHALLENGE	POSSIBLE SOLUTION	REGULATORY PRACTICE	COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE MODEL
1. Lack of definition/differentiation of SFSCs (transversal issue) 1.1 Legal definition of SFSCs 1.2 regulation of sales in the horeca sector, farmers' shops, collection points, vending machines	Legal criteria and categories to distinguish and protect SFSCs	Short Food Supply Chain definition and regulation	Network of Municipalities for Agroecology (Red de Municipios por la Agroecología) in Spain
2. Lack of knowledge and data about SFSC 2.1 Political decision-makers knowledge and preparation 2.2 Inappropriate data about SFSCs	Harmonized data collection at EU level	No directly linked good practice collected, but suggestion provided	
3. Lack of producers' capacities and resources	Collaborative and voluntary models to help farmers Strategical thinking (like Slovenia) Small-scale focused support system with low administrative burden	Szekler Product Trademark - Romania; AMA project - Netherlands; Genial Regional trademark; Regulatory - Italy	
3.1 Farmers' incomplete marketing, IT, administration and business knowledge	Marketing, sales and communication (services and infrastructures) support Knowledge transfer (marketing, consumers' segmentation, business models etc.)		Open Food Network (OFN) in Italy; MyFarm in Hungary
3.2 Lack of cooperation between farmers and producers	Support for horizontal and vertical cooperation and networking initiatives		Talambh Beo - Ireland; Dorset and East Devon Flag - UK
	Increased access to funds		Dorset and East Devon Flag - UK
4. Inadequate processing infrastructure 4.1 Lack of infrastructure - for example: slaughterhouses	Local processing infrastructures (<mobile/collaborative> slaughter houses, mills, processing plants) suitable for handling small and/or seasonal production.	Mobile slaugtherhouse regulations - Germany, Croatia	

5. Unfair trade practices and limited bargaining power of producers 5.1 Procurement - the market is unfair to small players	Increased protection of primary producers in B2B transactions	Agricultural trade regulation - Poland	
	Support for the most effective forms of cooperation and association		Van Onze Grond (From Our Land) - Netherlands
	Enhanced implementation of flexibility measures (exclusion/adaptation/deviation)	Farmers' market regulation - Hungary and Malta	
6. Inadequate food health and safety standards and control procedures 6.1 regulation of sales in the horeca sector, farmers' shops, collection points, vending machines	Proportionate and less invasive quality control procedures	Comprehensive guidelines for small farmers in direct sale (SFSC) to apply food hygiene regulations - Austria	
	Support to meet health and safety requirements (financial and consultancy)	No directly linked good practice collected, but suggestion provided	
7. Limited access to public procurement contracts	Better access to public procurement contracts	Local food public procurement - Czech Republic	
8. Lack of affordability and accessibility 8.1 regulation of sales in the horeca sector, farmers' shops, collection points, vending machines 8.2 Lack of infrastructure - slaughterhouses	Differentiated tax system	G.I.E - France	
	Sales infrastructures and services		Chios Gum Mastic Growers Association (CGMGA) - Greece
9. Consumers' lack of information and ability to make an informed choice 9.1 Consumers: they do not trust SFSC, the products, the related information	Support for SFSCs		Dorset and East Devon Flag - UK
	Increased transparency		Myfarm- Hungary; Genial Regional trademark-Germany

Table 6 Summary of the challenges, possible solutions and good practices pairing Source: own edition

4.3 Good Regulatory Practices in-depth analysis

4.3.1 Lack of definition/differentiation of SFSCs, legal criteria and categories to distinguish and protect SFSCs – the practice from Italy

Concept and Benefit

One of the greatest potential for access to market for small farmers is the short food supply chain which developed significantly in the past years all over in Europe. However several studies (EIP AGR Focus Group, 2015, JRC scientific and policy reports, 2013, SKIN report 2017, SmartChain 2021.[2]) pointed out that the definition of the short food supply chain is not clear neither on European Union nor on Member State level, so the potential of diversity and innovation in value chains cannot be exploited. The community supported agriculture, online sales, collective trading, cooperative trading are all such collective actions which serve the economic sustainability of farmers. Although short food supply chains and sometimes related concepts are regulated in most of the countries examined, but neither the detailed rules for commercial forms are defined in law (such as public procurement, forms of retail, their actors and place, delivery of the products, certifications, use of cashier, waste management) nor the forms of intermediary and persons. This means that farmers may not use these new innovative forms of values chains and authorities may not interpret. However, it can also be stated that in principle support exists in most countries.

Introducing the good practice

During the period of activity of the National Rural Network 2014-2020 in Italy, Ismea conducted a series of investigations on the theme of direct sales and short supply chains (called in Italy: filiera corta) to capture the current state and critically analyse this phenomenon[3]. This involved meetings with operators and institutional stakeholders, analysis of successful cases of direct sales and short supply chains, surveys of consumers and intermediaries, mapping of sites and platforms, workshops held in various geographical contexts with the participation of farmers, agri-food companies, local authorities, and professional organizations.

Several regional initiations, including rural development supports and grants as well as regional and local regulation, were introduced as to support local products and their producers, the small farmers, called “zero kilometer products”[4]. These instruments provided legislative grounds for the marketing and consumption of local products, and for informing consumers about their origin, their characteristics and price. It also sets out rules on supporting their supply to private

[2] Kneafsey, M., Venn, L., Schmutz, U., Balázs, B., Trenchard, L., Eyden-Wood, T., Bos, E., Sutton, G. and Blackett, M., 2013. Short food supply chains and local food systems in the EU. A state of play of their socio-economic characteristics. JRC scientific and policy reports, 123.

Kneafsey, M. "EIP-AGRI Focus Group Innovative Short Food Supply Chain management." Final report, Brussels: European Commission (2015).

De Pascale, Gianluigi, et al. "Economic sustainability in Short Food Supply Chain. The case of the Horizon 2020 project" Short Food Supply Chain Knowledge and Innovation Network (SKIN)"." RIVISTA DI STUDI SULLA SOSTENIBILITA' (2017).

[3] Antonella Finizia, Mariella Ronga, Mario Schiano Lo Moriello, Franco Tor: I CANALI COMMERCIALI ALTERNATIVI PER LE AZIENDE AGRICOLE: VENDITA DIRETTA E FILIERA CORTA /Alternative Commercial Channels for Agricultural Enterprises: Direct Sales And Short Supply Chains / October, 2020 - https://www.mymesys.com/wp-content/uploads/canali-commerciali-alternativi-aziende-agricole-vendita-diretta.pdf

[4] The "0 kilometer" food promotion in Italy has evolved from a grassroots movement - Slow Food movement, founded by Carlo Petrini in Italy in 1986 - into a significant cultural and economic force, deeply rooted in the country’s commitment to sustainability, quality, and local traditions. It has successfully raised awareness about the benefits of local food systems and continues to influence consumer behavior, agricultural practices, and food policies in Italy and beyond.

and public catering, to promote sales between farmers and consumers. It defined the terms of "quality products", "traditional products", "seasonal products" and also set forth regulations relating to environmentally sustainable products.

Another relevant aspect is related to the Italian transformative food strategy of the major farmers' organizations, especially Coldiretti, which is becoming a more generalist association in order to promote Italian food, quality and made in Italy production. They are able to exert a profound influence on agricultural and food policies, lobbying policy makers through composite strategies and coalition-building, especially with environmentalists (Legambiente) and COOP (the main delivery and processing cooperative company in Italy). They are the main promoters of campaigns on 'zero kilometer' and 'short food chain', in order to foster 'direct sale' and farmers' markets.[5]

As a result, consumer demand for "zero kilometer" products grew, driven by increased awareness of environmental issues, health benefits, and a desire for high-quality, fresh food. This demand has encouraged more farmers and producers to participate in the movement.

As a final development in Italy in 2022 the definition of "short (food) supply chain" was enacted.

EU Regulatory Framework

Short (food) supply chain was defined on EU level in the CAP period of 2014-2021 by Article 2(1) m) of EU Reg.1305/2013[6] as follows:

"a supply chain involving a limited number of economic operators, committed to co-operation, local economic development, and close geographical and social relations between producers, processors and consumers".

As a supplement, Article 11(1) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No. 807/2014[7] rules that only such "horizontal and vertical co-operation among supply chain actors for the establishment and the development of short supply chains and local markets" were supported by rural development funds which involve "no more than one intermediary between farmer and consumer".

EU Reg. 1305/2013 was repealed by Article 154 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115[8] with the effect of 1 January 2023[9].

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[5] Food Policy in Italy: Renata Lizzia and Maria Stella Righettini , a University of Bologna, Forlì, Italy; and University of Padova, Padova, Italy © 2018 Elsevier Inc. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328185110_Food_Policy_in_Italy/link/5cdacdfd92851c4eab9e0ab5/download?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19

[6] Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005

[7] Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 807/2014 of 11 March 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and introducing transitional provisions

[8] Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013

[9] According to the continuous text of Article 154: "However, it shall, subject to Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 of the European Parliament and of the Council, continue to apply to the implementation of rural development programmes pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 until 31 December 2025. It shall, under the same conditions, apply to expenditure incurred by the beneficiaries and paid by the paying agency in the framework of those rural development programmes until 31 December 2025."

The present CAP regulation[10] still regards short (food) supply chains as an important form of cooperation and regulates to be promoted, however presently there is no EU level definition on short (food) supply chain.

National Implementation

As a recent development of the continuous support of SFSC in Italy Law May 17, 2022, no. 61[11], the "zero kilometer law" was enacted.

This law is very important as "At last, the short supply chain and zero kilometre **become well-defined concepts**, with respect to which consumers can count on greater transparency. After so many years **without a specific regulation**, a new law has been passed that establishes the criteria by which a product can be defined as 'zero kilometre' or 'short supply chain', establishes logos, defines certain tools for valorization and promotion, and sets penalties for illegal use".[12]

This law aims enhancing and promoting the demand and supply of "zero-kilometer" agricultural and food products and those from short supply chains, facilitating their consumption and commercialization and ensuring consumers adequate information about their origin and specifics as well as to stimulate the growth of demand and supply of zero-kilometer agricultural and food products and those from short supply chains, also promoting adequate information to consumers about their origin and specifics.

Municipalities must allocate at least 30% of the market area to agricultural entrepreneurs or fishermen for the sale of zero-kilometer agricultural and food products and those from short supply chains.

In Article 2 there are new definitions for:

a. **zero-kilometer agricultural and food products:** products from agriculture, livestock, including aquaculture, originating from production and processing locations of raw materials or primary agricultural raw materials used within a radius not exceeding 70 kilometers from the sales location, or from the same province as the sales location or the consumption location of the catering service. Also, fresh fishery products from sea and inland waters, originating from landing points within a radius not exceeding 70 kilometers from the sales location or the consumption location of the catering service, caught by vessels registered in the registers of the maritime offices of the competent harbor captaincies for landing points, and by fishery entrepreneurs registered in the fishing license registers held by the competent provinces;
b. **national agricultural and food products from short supply chains**: products whose production chain is characterized by the absence of commercial intermediaries (cooperatives and their consortia are not considered such), or composed of a single intermediary between the producer, individual or associated in various forms of aggregation, and the final consumer.

[10] Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013

[11] LEGGE 17 MAGGIO 2022, n. 61 -- Norme per la valorizzazione e la promozione dei prodotti agricoli e alimentari a chilometro zero e di quelli provenienti da filiera corta. (22G00070) - "Rules for the enhancement and promotion of agricultural and food products at zero kilometers and those from short supply chains" - https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:2022;61

[12] Quoted by Task partner Egina from the article: Short Supply Chain and Zero Kilometer: The Law that Establishes Definitions, Spaces and Key Principles has arrived - https://ilfattoalimentare.it/filiera-corta-chilometro-zero-arrivata-legge.html

Article 3 stipulates that the State, regions, and local authorities may provide measures to promote direct encounters between the producers of products under Article 2 and managing entities, both public and private, of collective catering.

Article 5 declares that within ninety days of the date of entry into force of this law, the "zero kilometer" logo and the "short supply chain" logo are established for the agricultural and food products for „zero kilometer" and „short supply chains". The logo is displayed in places of direct sale, in markets, in commercial or catering establishments or in specially dedicated exhibition spaces or in any case placed in evidence within the premises, including large-scale distribution, and is published on the IT purchasing or distribution platforms that supply the agricultural and food products

The definition of the short supply chain applies the EU Reg.1305/2013 concept, i.e. limits the number of the intermediaries to one, however such a limitation does not apply for cooperatives and their consortia. This regulation even more strengthens the cooperation among farmers.

Recommendations for Replicability

The Italian example shows continuous government and regional policy support in Italy to foster the development of the short food supply chains and by today all alternative channels represent a significant phenomenon for Italian agriculture today. Key characteristics of the policies include transparency of information, connections with the territory, shared values, visibility of the producer, and the enhancement of the farmer's identity.

There were several programmes and initiations to understand the nature of the different forms of SFSCs and actively regulated this type of supply chain. All these works were done with the close cooperation operators and institutional stakeholders and with the participation of farmers, agri-food companies, local authorities, and professional organizations.

This Italian example is replicable since there is a continuous EU support for the SFSC cooperations and even if the EU SFSC definition is repealed the concept may be still applied.

Having a definition of SFSC provides a mutual understanding of the stakeholders and allows to use the same criteria in the various forms of SFSCs. However applying this example, it should be considered that the limitation of the intermediaries to one was not the original intention of the EU lawmakers since this was only applied for rural development support. The widening the numbers of the intermediaries should be regarded to the specific natures of the different forms of SFSCs.

SFSC are explicitly mentioned in several policies and regulations, mainly related to rural development (Reg. 1305/2013 and Reg. 2020/2220) and Farm to Fork strategy. Particularly, the "proposal for a legislative framework for sustainable food system", foreseen to 2023 within the Farm to Fork strategy, could be a good framework to establish guidelines and harmonize these criteria. As far as definition is a transversal issue, they would potentially be aimed to be used in all policies and regulations affecting SFSCs development, in rural development, of course, but also in public procurement, tax systems, HACCP standards application, allocation of NextGeneration recovery funds, etc.

4.3.2 Lack of data about the SFSCs in Europe – suggestions for harmonised data collection at EU level

As the collected regulatory practices missed best practice for data collection in SFSC that is why just recommendations might be pointed out.

It is clearly stated that there is no centralised and formalised data collection for small scale farmers activities which retards the policy decision process. For example, in many MS it is

hard to calculate the portion of the agritourism sector as it is not a clearly defined diversification activity, or the processed products are not registered by the producers.

In some countries like Austria and France the specialised data collection about SFSC farmers and their sales is already organised which may provide better understanding how these activities might be distinguished from the general farms data collection. However, a European guideline would be welcomed that can help Member States to organise their centralised data collection via their national authorities. These Guideline should contain the following instructions:

- How to Establish Data Protocols: Ensure a common data standard across Member States to allow for aggregation, comparison, and analysis of SFSC data on a broader scale.
- How to Use Data Collection Systems: A centralized data collection platform for SFSC statistics enables streamlined data submission, easier monitoring, and consistent standards across regions.
- How to Share Best Practices: Facilitate regular exchanges between Member States on methods, challenges, and successes in SFSC data collection, ensuring continuous improvement.

4.3.3 Inadequate processing infrastructure, lack of infrastructure - mobile slaughterhouses regulation in Germany and Croatia

Slaughterhouse regulation in Germany

Concept and Benefit

A mobile slaughterhouse plant is a self-contained processing unit that can be moved between farms, allowing slaughter to be performed on farm and avoiding the relocation of livestock.[13] Mobile slaughterhouses allow the butcher to come to the animal instead of transporting the animals to the slaughterhouses. While small, regional slaughterhouses are becoming fewer and fewer[14] mobile slaughterhouses could provide a complementary solution to prevent unnecessary transportation of end-of-career animals[15] which is a good tool for serving animal welfare aspects. This particularly necessary in islands and mountain areas as European Parliament Report[16] underlined. Mobile slaughterhouses would be a solution for small farmers with lack of capacities, for example the transport cost of animals is a significant expense for small livestock farmers.

Introducing the good practice

Germany based permitting mobile slaughterhouses on a recent EU regulation that allows that not only butchers, but also previously unauthorised farms to slaughter animals on the farm of

[13] Patterns of livestock transport in the EU and to third countries - Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies Directorate-General for Internal Policies PE 690.883 - June 2021- footnote 7 - https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2021/690883/IPOL_IDA(2021)690883_EN.pdf

[14] some articles on this matter: https://www.euractiv.com/section/agriculture-food/news/eu-parliament-committee-calls-for-more-support-for-on-farm-slaughter-of-animals/ and https://sustainablefoodtrust.org/news-views/what-is-lost-with-the-loss-of-a-small-abattoir/ and https://www.sustainweb.org/news/feb18_the_end_of_locally_sourced_meat/ and https://www.foodunfolded.com/article/small-abattoirs-are-closing-fast-why-does-that-matter

[15] Audit Report 2023 (https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/RV-2023-03/RV-2023-03_EN.pdf)

[16] Report - A9-0350/2021 - REPORT on the investigation of alleged contraventions and maladministration in the application of Union law in relation to the protection of animals during transport within and outside the Union (https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2021-0350_EN.html)

origin. With the approval of the competent authority, up to three cattle, six pigs or three solipeds may be slaughtered per slaughter process using a mobile unit. Due to this new regulation Lower Saxony permitted the operation of mobile slaughterhouses and issued an information leaflet and a guidance.

EU Regulatory Framework

EU Parliament Committee calls for more support for on-farm slaughter of animal and calls the attention[17] that EU legislation allows mobile slaughtering of all kinds of domestic animals by Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009[18] based on Member States enacted national rules to the operation of mobile slaughterhouses.

Another stage of the EU regulatory support for the operation of mobile slaughterhouses is a new amendment to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, namely Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1141 of 14 December 2023[19] extended on-farm slaughter to sheep and goats – whereas [prior] experiments had been limited to horses, cattle and pigs – when there is a risk during transport. Each farmer may now slaughter up to three oxen, six pigs or nine sheep or goats per year[20] on their farm.

All the above shows that it is the Members states responsibility to implement national legislation which allows the operation of mobile or community slaughterhouses, which allows a greater autonomy and potentials for small farmers.

Despite the EU general authorisation for the operation of mobile slaughterhouses there is rarely found any Member State legislation on this matter.

National Implementation

In Germany almost every village used to have their own local slaughterhouse, a local butcher. Sustainable Food Trust explains how traditional local slaughtering from the beginning of the 20th century transformed into a meat processing industry by 2020 in Germany[21] but this certainly applies all to other Member States.

In the wake of the BSE epidemic of the 1990s and other food-related scandals, it became clear that there are numerous shortcomings in Community food regulation and that fundamental reforms are needed in the field of regulation, with a particular emphasis on food safety. In 2004 a Food Hygiene Package[22] was adopted within EU, which, according to the European Commission[23] the merged, harmonised and simplified detailed and complex hygiene requirements previously contained in a number of Council Directives covering the hygiene of

[17] https://www.euractiv.com/section/agriculture-food/news/eu-parliament-committee-calls-for-more-support-for-on-farm-slaughter-of-animals/

[18] Art 14 (3) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing

[19] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2024/1141/oj

[20] https://www.euractiv.com/section/agriculture-food/news/eu-parliament-committee-calls-for-more-support-for-on-farm-slaughter-of-animals/

[21] Small abattoirs in Germany: You get what you pay for (07.05.2021) https://sustainablefoodtrust.org/news-views/small-abattoirs-in-germany-you-get-what-you-pay-for/

[22] In 2004, the EC adopted the so-called "Hygiene Package" which established that all member states must adopt the same criteria for hygiene in food production and that controls of a medical nature are to be carried out according to the same standards throughout the European Union. European Parliament and the Council (Regulation (EC) No 852/2004, 853/2004 and 854/2004)

[23] https://food.ec.europa.eu/safety/biological-safety/food-hygiene_en

foodstuffs and the production and placing on the market of products of animal and non-animal origin.

The Food Hygiene Package was designed with large food industry facilities, which among other actors, were also affected the local slaughterhouses, since it often meant a costly investment to start and maintain operation. Specially since 2009 when new EU regulations required all slaughter facilities, including butchers, to be licensed, most small abattoirs and craft butchers decided to stop their operation.

As mentioned, problems are similar in other parts of Europe: in UK small abbatoirs are closing[24] as they have to face with increasing regulations, among them is that an official veterinarian must present at all times during the killing process[25] which is very costly. Abattoirs in the UK must also have CCTV[26] (similar to Spain which is mandatory from 2022), head restraints for the animals and electrical stunning equipment - expenses many cannot afford.

With the decreasing number of the slaughterhouses the animal transportation distances decrease but there is a need for shortening the distance for animal slaughtering from the animal welfare aspect; on the other hand, there is also a need for small-scale agriculture to find feasible solutions for their slaughtering.

In the past 10 years some nationwide initiatives aimed at using the mobile slaughtering method in Germany. A working group on Meat and Poultry Meat Hygiene and Technical Issues concerning Food of Animal Origin (AFFL) was set up by the Länder Working Group on Consumer Protection (LAV) to examine the legal basis for these initiatives. In May 2017, the AFFL project group presented its ideas on the framework conditions under which a partially mobile slaughter of cattle could be authorised. Since this slaughter is to be regarded as a commercial standard slaughter, it must correspond to the specifications of the EU Slaughter Regulation (ref. leg. 1099/2009), the national Slaughter Regulation (Animal Welfare Ordinance of 20 December 2012, Federal Law Gazette I p. 2982[27]), as well as the EU Hygiene Regulation (ref. leg. 853/2004).[28]

Lower Saxony permitted the operation of mobile slaughterhouses and issued an information leaflet and a guidance[29]. A short summary from the guidance:

Either all stages of the slaughter process (fully mobile slaughter) or only the killing and bleeding (partially mobile slaughter) are carried out on the holding of origin. In the latter case, the dead animal is transported to a slaughterhouse where all further slaughtering work (such as skinning, breaking open and cutting) is carried out.

1. **Scope of Operation**: The mobile slaughterhouse is permitted to slaughter up to three cattle, six pigs, or three equines kept as pets on the premises of their origin (national regulation).

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[24] https://www.foodunfolded.com/article/small-abattoirs-are-closing-fast-why-does-that-matter

[25] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/welfare-of-animals-at-the-time-of-killing

[26] https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/animal-welfare

[27] Verordnung zum Schutz von Tieren im Zusammenhang mit der Schlachtung oder Tötung und zur Durchführung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1099/2009 des Rates - https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/tierschlv_2013/index.html

[28] https://www.eurogroupforanimals.org/files/eurogroupforanimals/2020-12/Eurogroup-for-Animals_A-strategy-to-reduce-and-replace-live-animal-transport.pdf

[29] Slaughter at the holding of origin – approval procedure for the mobile unit

Schlachtung im Herkunftsbetrieb – Zulassungsverfahren für die mobile Einheit / Merkbaltt MFB 08-1345-LV2 - https://www.laves.niedersachsen.de/startseite/lebensmittel/zulassung_von_betrieben/schlachtung-im-herkunftsbetrieb-206881.html

2. **Approval Process**: The mobile unit must be part of an approved slaughterhouse. Incorporating a mobile unit into an existing approval requires an expansion of that approval. The approval can only be extended to include the same animal species as already approved for the base facility.
3. **Ownership Irrelevant**: Ownership of the mobile unit is not a factor; it can be utilized by various slaughterhouses.
4. **Application Process**: The approved slaughterhouse must submit an application for the extension of approval for the mobile unit to the relevant regulatory authority, such as LAVES (Niedersächsisches Landesamt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit - Lower Saxony State Office for Consumer Protection and Food Safety).
5. **Required Documentation**: The application must include:
   - A usage concept outlining the entire slaughter process both within and outside the mobile unit, meeting food and animal welfare regulations.
   - Description of the mobile unit's type and equipment.
   - Chassis number of the mobile unit.
   - An adapted HACCP concept focusing on goods reception control, including verification of transport duration and documentation of arrival at the facility and the start of slaughter, with measures for any delays.
6. **Conditions for Slaughter at Origin:** The slaughter at the origin must follow these steps:
   - A civil agreement (contract) between the animal owner and an approved slaughterhouse for slaughter at the origin.
   - Expansion of the existing approval of an approved slaughterhouse to include the mobile unit by LAVES.
   - Application for permission from the relevant municipal food control authority.
7. **Use of the Mobile Unit:** Utilisation of the mobile unit is only permissible after receiving the necessary extension of approval.
8. **Fees:** The approval process incurs fees calculated according to the fee schedule for administration in the consumer protection and veterinary sector.

The German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture introduced a new funding[30] in November 2022 to promote innovation, projects for the development of new methods and approaches to mobile slaughtering in particular are to be financially supported. In addition to companies, universities and non-university research and development institutions are also eligible to apply.

Recommendations for Replicability

The transport of live animals negatively impacts animal welfare, prompting the EU to legislate and enforce measures for improvement. In the past years EU made adequate legislation for mobile slaughterhouse and some countries implemented on national level[31].

[30] https://www.bmel.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/2023/001-mobile-schlachtung.html

The project call link:
https://www.bundesanzeiger.de/pub/publication/CJNWoJnZgR8dJNdwpxl/content/CJNWoJnZgR8dJNdwpxl/BAnz%20AT%2021.12.2022%20B2.pdf

[31] Galicia (quoted from SmartChain project): https://anafric.es/en/galicia-will-have-the-first-mobile-slaughterhouse-service-in-spain/

Sweden is very sensitive to animal welfare issues, is now a benchmark in this field. It invested heavily in recent years to produce high-quality animal products on a small scale.

Alternatives like transporting meat instead of live animals or moving slaughter closer to production sites could be more sustainable but might not always be economically viable. according to the European Court of Auditors[32] mobile slaughterhouses also face challenges in terms of logistics and profitability. They have high running costs, and their success depends on opportunities to create added value and charge premium retail prices for final products. Despite of this concerns in Germany the mobile slaughterhouse system is well working, even increased its operation during the COVID pandemic time [33].

Therefore, it should be considered that targeted support focusing on the organisation of the operation of the mobile slaughterhouse together with a business plan and feasibility study would foster a viable operation.

Slaughterhouse regulation in Croatia

Concept and Benefit

A business, particularly in agriculture, is not sustainable and cannot provide a decent livelihood if its operational costs exceed its predictable income. Achieving a proper living standard depends not only on the income volume but also significantly, especially for small-scale producers, on operational costs, taxes, government support, and social security contributions. Often, costs are excessively high for small individual farmers because they must adhere to the same hygiene and environmental standards as large-scale farmers. Additionally, they face the financial burden of establishing and maintaining infrastructure and investments that their small production volumes cannot support.

SmartChain identified the problem of the absence of differentiated regulations for small, medium, and large producers, food processors, and rural service providers compared to large-scale industry regulations. There are no specific regulations for small processing plants, such as small bakeries, butcheries, jam producers, and artisan cheese makers, that could operate under guidelines tailored to their size and economic potential. In many European countries, the main barrier to processing meat products is the lack of logistical opportunities for animal slaughter. Constructing slaughterhouses is expensive, forcing farmers to transport their animals over long distances for processing, which is costly and often impractical.

Introducing the good practice

Croatian law recognizes and uses the terms "small capacity slaughterhouses" and "food processing units," setting a precedent for legislation that allows small farmers to process and directly sell their animal-origin products. Granting licences for mobile or small capacity slaughterhouses can facilitate the establishment of numerous small facilities within a geographic area, enabling more farmers to directly access markets.

EU Regulatory Framework

https://www.euractiv.com/section/agriculture-food/news/eu-parliament-committee-calls-for-more-support-for-on-farm-slaughter-of-animals/ - from this articles we know that there are mobile slaughterhouse plants in Sweden - https://pub.epsilon.slu.se/15446/7/hultgren_j_et_al_180503.pdf and https://www.foodnavigator.com/Article/2016/09/21/France-powers-up-Sweden-s-mobile-abattoir

[32] https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/publications?did=63956

[33] Sustainable Food Trust (2021). “The kindness of butchers - why a small, farmer-owned abattoir in southern Germany is thriving (Pt 1)”. SFT. - https://sustainablefoodtrust.org/news-views/small-abattoirs-in-germany-you-get-what-you-pay-for/

The EU of food hygiene regulations state that if the food was produced in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 178/2002[34] and Regulation (EC) 852/2004[35], and in the case of animal product production in accordance with Regulation (EC) 853/2004[36] and placed on the market in accordance with Regulation (EU) 1169/2011[37], it is considered safe within the Union.

Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 was repealed by Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (the Official Control Regulation) on 14 December 2019. The presently applicable regulations for animal origin are collected on the European Union website[38].

The EU food regulations allow for Member States to implement flexible hygienic regulations with the condition that either the activity is occasional, or the production is in small quantities and marginal. These are explained in detail in guidance documents[39]. SANCO/1098/2009 Revision 2023[40] refers to low-capacity establishments: „Another example can be found in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/627[41]. In that Implementing Regulation, thresholds have been used for slaughterhouses and game-handling establishments, to apply flexibility, considering them as low-capacity establishments11 when slaughtering or handling less than 1000 livestock units or less than 150 000 bird, lagomorphs and small wild game per year."

National Implementation

Croatia enacted flexible regulation on regulating, among other small operations, small slaughterhouses[42]. According to this regulation a small slaughterhouse means a slaughterhouse with capacity of up to 20 animal units per week, and for poultry and lagomorphs slaughtering capacity of up to 10,000 units monthly. The small capacity meat and/or fishery product

[34] Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety

[35] Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs

[36] Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin

[37] Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004 Text with EEA relevance

[38] https://food.ec.europa.eu/safety/biological-safety/food-hygiene_en

[39] Guidance document on the implementation of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 On the hygiene of foodstuffs - https://food.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2018-10/biosafety_fh_legis_guidance_reg-2004-852_en.pdf – document was revised by COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Guidance document on the implementation of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 on the hygiene of food of animal origin /SANCO/10098/2009 Revision 2023 / https://food.ec.europa.eu/document/download/ce8efc9d-8750-4b75-9563-7427da889666_en?filename=biosafety_fh_legis_guidance_reg-2004-853_en.pdf -- (accessed on May 27, 2024)

[40] see previous footnote

[41] Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/627 of 15 March 2019 laying down uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 as regards official controls - https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/627/oj

[42] 51/2015 (1003) Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture on simplified hygiene of animal products – original title: Ministarstvo Poljoprivrede Pravilnik o Prodaji o mjerama prilagodbe zahtjevima propisa o hrani životinjskog

podrijetla, NN 51/2015(1003), https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2015_05_51_1003.html

processing facility means where the quantity of processed meat or fishery products does not exceed 5,000 kg per week per raw material

Main requirements relating to small capacity slaughtering facilities for ungulates, ungulates and farmed game and small slaughterhouses for poultry and lagomorphs are the following[43]:

a) no changing room is required if the number of the staff is less than five;

b) no special room for veterinarian is required, in such a case a lockup locker has to be used for the required documentation;

c) no reception room and temporary placement for slaughter animal is required, but animals are slaughtered immediately after their entry to the facility without violating the provisions of animal wellbeing regulations;

d) it is not necessary to provide a quarantining area for sick and disease-suspected animals provided appropriate slaughtering methods are applied in compliance with the requirement of hygiene and sanitary integrity of food;

e) no separate place is required for the cleaning, washing and disinfection of transport vehicles used for the transportation of animals provided there are officially approved places for cleaning, washing and disinfecting the animal transportation vehicles means at a distance of up to 20 km;

f) emptying and cleaning of stomach and the intestines may take place after the slaughtering of the animals at the site of slaughtering, if there are no split carcasses and slaughtered animals in that area. Before any use, the slaughtering and/or splitting area must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected as and when necessary;

g) meat cutting in the area where slaughtering and slaughterhouse processing is carried out is allowed on the condition that the slaughtering and cutting procedures are separated in time and that thorough cleaning and disinfection has been carried out after slaughtering and before cutting. In this case, the cutting capacity must not exceed 250 tons of meat per year.

The same decree regulates operational conditions of mobile slaughterhouses[44] as follows:

a) mobile slaughterhouse operator must inform the competent veterinarian at least 10 days before the start of the slaughter about the place and time of animal slaughter in the mobile slaughterhouse. Competent veterinarian organises the ante and post mortem inspection of animals/carcasses and the prescribed tests of meat and organs.

b) Ante-mortem examination of animals may be performed at the farm of origin of the animals no earlier than 24 hours before slaughter or upon arrival at the mobile slaughterhouse. Post-mortem inspection of carcasses and organs is carried out in accordance with the provisions of the food regulations.

In case of mobile slaughter units, there is no need to create a facility for the receipt of animals and transport vehicles.

The mobile slaughtering units must be suitable for performing the following activities within its building:

– restraining, stunning and slaughtering animals;

[43] Article 6 of NN 51/2015(1003)

[44] Article 2 and article 7 and article 8 of NN 51/2015(1003)

- removing skin, hair or feathers;
- processing of carcasses and organs;
- *post-mortem* inspection of bodies and organs;
- cooling of carcasses;
- separate wardrobe-sanitary space for employed staff.

The official health stamp must be stored at a locked place of the mobile slaughter unit, which is to be locked up by the competent veterinarian after marking split carcasses. The next slaughtering activity may be performed only if the stamp previously placed is not damaged.

Recommendations for Replicability

Based on the general authorisation of the applicable EU regulations Members States are empowered to regulate small capacity processing units with regard to the exemption granted by the EU Hygienic Packaging for flexibility. The Croatian example shows that certain elements of the slaughtering procedures may be simplified by complying with animal welfare and food hygiene regulations. The operation of mobile slaughterhouses is a mean for serving rural development purposes whereby it strengthens the local community cooperation in the remote farm places. This would support small farmers to operate in a more feasible way specially that in many cases the slaughtered animal is returned to the same farm for further processing.

4.3.4 Limited access for small-scale producers to public procurement contracts – local food procurement in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Austria, Italy, Sweden, Scotland

Concept and Benefit

Across Europe, countries have had to face the difficulties in complying with both the Directive 2014/24/EU of the Parliament and Council on public procurement and implementing measures to help short food supply chains to gain access to public procurement - without limiting the competition.

Consumers lack the appropriate knowledge on SFSC options to shop from or trust such sources of food. To improve demand for food originating from SFSCs, public catering, thus also public procurement, seems to be an optimal solution. Although the current legal environment makes it difficult to ensure access to procurement contracts for actors of the SFSCs, there have been good examples in a few countries, where national regulation has successfully been approved by the Council, by realising how the SFSC aligns with the objectives of Green Public Procurement.[45]

SFSCs can gain a reliable demand by participating in public catering, while also being transparent and a reliable source for food. By appearing in public catering, mostly in schools, they not only are able to promote themselves, but also offer an oftentimes healthier and environmentally friendlier food source.

On the other hand, more and more people turn to healthier, local and sustainable food options, as it has slowly become a trend to support the rural areas again. We therefore gain a lot by providing access to Public Food Procurement for SFSC actors: healthy food and a balanced

[45] Barriers and needs: Lack of consumer awareness and capacity to make informed choices and Limited access to public procurement contracts

diet for children, less emission by decreasing distances between farmers and consumers, and a stable source of income for local farmers.

Introducing the good practice

The Czech Republic introduced a bill to amend the current public procurement act by adding optional criteria that can be implemented by contracting authorities, without violating European Directives and free competition.

These new conditions are up to contracting authorities to decide, whether they choose to use them, and if so, in what specific form. The amendment ensures flexibility and a new possibility for authorities to enable participation in public food procurement for small-scale and/or local producers.

The new addition also represents quality improvement in public food procurements, not only by introducing quality schemes and traditional characteristics into public catering but also optionally prescribing organic ingredients thus elevating food nutritional value.

The mentioned amendment is simple, compact and easy to implement, as it is based on legal interpretation and implementation of European principles, ones apart from free competition - which makes it easy for other countries to apply these measures as well.

EU Regulatory Framework

The Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC ['Directive 2014/24/EU'] gives legal framework, which offers some flexibility for Member States and also obligates them to implement regulations in the subject matter.

The Directive states as one of the general rules, that procurement must not narrow competition as either favouring or disadvantaging certain economic operators[46].

But, this same article, clearly, not only gives an opportunity, but also obligates Member States to take different environmental factors into consideration, along with social and labour aspects[47]. In order for SFSC actors to be able to participate in Public Food Procurement, we have to eliminate the issue of violating free competition, by accentuating the environmental and social effects of SFSCs. This is what the Czech Republic managed to accomplish.

In the Directive, Member States are allowed to create special conditions relating to the performance of a contract, provided that they are linked to the subject-matter of the contract, which conditions may include environmental or social considerations[48].

In order to help Member States, there is a guide available for green public procurement in food and catering[49].

The Guide for Green Public Procurement contains voluntary criteria which Member States can implement. Award criteria include organically farmed produce, sustainability and seasonality, minimising waste, increasing plant-based food, animal welfare, fair and ethical trade

[46] Directive 2014/24/EU Article 18, first paragraph

[47] Directive 2014/24/EU Article 18, second paragraph

[48] Directive 2014/24/EU Article 70

[49]EU GPP Criteria for Food, Catering Services and Vending Machines (https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/44278090-3fae-4515-bcc2-44fd57c1d0d1/library/9cd7f542-d33c-43f6-91af-b3838c08c395/details)

products.[50] SFSCs are an excellent solution for these requirements: local and small-scale farming facilitates organic farming and animal welfare considering how much easier it is to create sufficient space for animals as well as keep them clean, but also being local makes it easier to reduce single-use packaging in the process because of the smaller distances of transportation required, but SFSCs are also per definition fair and ethical trade methods. As such, SFSCs are easy to include in Green Public Procurement.

National implementation

Czechia decided to implement the Criteria for Green Public Procurement, in a very easy but effective form. They introduced the bill in June 2019. The amendment to Act No. 134/2016 Coll., on the awarding of public contracts, as amended ("ZZVZ") with effect from 1 January 2022 introduces a new provision § 37a, which allows the awarding party of a public contract for the supply of food to set new conditions for participation in procurement procedure (competition). The contracting authority can now request that it be a delivery of:

a) *"local or regional food from a short supply chain,*
b) *food sales certified quality schemes of Regulation (EU) No. 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on the quality regime of agricultural products and foodstuffs, as amended,*
c) *food produced in an organic farming system."*[51]

In order to avoid violation of the Directive, the ZZVZ lays down in its basic principles[52] that the contracting authority may not restrict the participation of the procurement procedure for those who have their registered office in a Member State, but because the Directive explicitly allows Member States to take environmental impact into consideration, the amendment as voluntary criteria does not violate competition.

Local and regional food from a short food supply chain have two elements to it: local/regional, and the short food supply chain. The locality-regionality factor on its own would discriminate against suppliers from certain areas, including other Member States. While short food supply chains indirectly mean that there is a proximity between the place of production and the place of consumption, it doesn't explicitly mean locality. It is also clear that within rural development, improvement of farmers' position in the value chain is a specific objective[53], regarding that short food supply chains are an explicit form of improving the farmers' position in the value chain[54] as stated in Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 on establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013 ["Regulation (EU) 2021/2115"]. ZZVZ does not create a definition for short supply chains, it is the task of contracting authorities.

The concept of Quality Schemes enables setting up criteria such as protected designation of origin, protected geographical indication, quality and characteristics exclusive to certain

[50] EU GPP Criteria for Food, Catering Services and Vending Machines (https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/44278090-3fae-4515-bcc2-44fd57c1d0d1/library/9cd7f542-d33c-43f6-91af-b3838c08c395/details)

[51] ZZVZ paragraph 37a § (https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2016-134#p37a)

[52] ZZVZ paragraph 6 § (https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2016-134#p6)

[53] Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 Article 6, paragraph 1 (c)

[54] Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 Annex I. Result indicator no. R.10PR and Annex XIV. Core set of indicators no. R.10

specific geographical environments and all stages of production to be taken place in a defined geographical area - just to mention a few -, mean an indirect requirement for proximity, locality or regionality, all as acceptable limitations of competition.

And lastly, organic food, as a higher standard of food quality ensures sustainable production of healthy and high-quality food – with specific characteristics and method of production, regardless of regional definition.

Altogether, though limiting application to a certain distance is generally against the main principles of public procurement, regionality is achievable through other definitions and criteria, as seen above, which makes SFSCs eligible for application.

Recommendations for replicability

The reason the Czech example is easy to replicate in any other country is that it relies on the differences between close but not identical definitions - "local" and short food supply chains - and other quality-based criteria.

"Local" products give a geographical limitation, therefore discriminate against foreign products, thus violate the free flow of products within the Union, which is forbidden. Setting locality as an only criteria for tenders is definitely against EU policies - as it doesn't highlight any legitimate reason to be an exception.

Short food supply chains on the other hand are defined on an EU level and is an accentuated policy[55], meaning it is a perfectly legitimate reason for exceptions from free flow of products. It also has many other elements to it, than only being a chain for local products.

Regulation 1305/2013/EU - in force from 17 December 2013 to 1 January 2023 - defines short supply chains as following: "*[a short supply chain] means a supply chain involving a limited number of economic operators, committed to co-operation, local economic development, and close geographical and social relations between producers, processors and consumers*;" Since it's repeal, Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 has decided not to create a definition for SFSCs, but has set it as a specific objective[56] to include in Member States' CAP Strategic Plans, therefore allowing flexibility.

It is very important in ZZVZ that they used short food supply chains as an additional criterion to locality, because this wording also withholds the reason for exception. The other very important factor is that ZZVZ does not give a legal definition for short food supply chains. It is up to the contracting authorities to decide how they want to define short food supply chains. Contracting authorities, when defining short food supply chains, should not be emphasising locality or regionality - as that would be discriminative -, but emphasise other aspects which make SFSCs different from simple local products, and which also make SFSC products a better choice altogether.

These elements may include ones such as: limiting time from picking to delivery, maximisation of CO2 emissions, limiting number of intermediaries etc. These aspects create harmony between the discriminative local aspect and the legitimate exception of a method of rural development.

[55] Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 Preambule, paragraph (83)

[56] Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 Article 6, paragraph 1 (c)

Quality schemes are based on the same logic: they are a legitimate exception from the rule of free flow of goods in the EU, and therefore do not count as discriminative. The Union's rural development policies, amongst other, include quality schemes[57].

Quality schemes, similarly to SFSCs, are a criteria that unite food qualities worthy to be saved, with regionality, meaning, they also have an added element next to locality, which element is also admirable, accepted and respected within the EU: tradition. This enables contracting authorities to submit tenders that are not only local, but also traditional, and as such, are a legitimate exception and therefore allowed.

Organic production is somewhat different from the previous two criteria in a way that it does not imply proximity in any way. Organic products can come from any EU country, or even outside of it. Organically grown goods are more of a value or quality-based criteria, on the basis of protection of health, the environment, usually even fair trade. This way organic production qualifies to be a green public procurement.

In summary, the three added criteria that can be facultatively required by contracting authorities, as a flexible regulation, are ways to defend exceptions from the rule against discrimination, legitimately and explicitly on the basis of other EU policies, such as rural development and environmental (green) considerations. These added criteria are also easily replicable, as they do not require any special circumstances or legal framework, it is not bound to geographical or other uniqueness of Czechia and is a very compact but meaningful addition to any public procurement regulation across Member States.

Green Public Procurement examples in other Member States

Czechia is not the only country that has managed to implement SFSCs into tenders by passing them as Green Public Procurement. Multiple other countries have also done the same, although with different solutions. We hereby present these solutions, for inspiration.

The Municipality of Copenhagen, Denmark, has published its public tender for 100% organic, seasonal fruits and vegetables to supply 80 kitchens, serving more than 20,000 meals per day, in nursing homes, elderly homes, schools, day-care centres and homes for people with intellectual disabilities. Other supplementary criteria were also set in place, such as passing in front of a quality evaluation team, complying with EU minimum requirements for quality and labelling, receiving and presenting organic certification on the label, accepting only non-PVC and recyclable packaging, and using raw materials and vehicles that have the least possible environmental pollution and impact. Constant monitoring assured that requirements were met throughout the contract periods.[58]

The City of Vienna set a goal for an "organic quota" in its Climate Protection Program, which prescribed at least 30% of all food purchased for public canteens and events to come from organic farming. Vienna's Sustainable Procurement Programme's criteria are applied in the procurement of food products for kindergartens, schools, medical and nursing facilities. The tender's subject matter was weekly delivery of vegetables growing directly in or on the soil, supplying 31 nursing homes, but unlike previously, it set a goal to assure sustainability throughout the entire supply chain. The contract was awarded to the most economically advantageous offer. Green objectives included quality requirements and the reduction of transportation distance. Product specifications required organic certification, elimination of specific insecticides, use of non-hybrid and GMO-free seeds, organic compost fertiliser, reduction of packaging by batching vegetables and use of recyclable or adequately disposed

[57] Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 Preambule, paragraph (83)

[58] https://cocoreado.eu/procurement-of-100-organic-seasonal-food/

packaging, and lastly using renewable energy when growing their own vegetables at a minimum of 50%. Audits ensured that all requirements were met.[59]

The City of Turin, Italy decided to introduce sustainable, low carbon school catering. To achieve this, Turin set up a number of criteria into their current school catering contract to reduce their carbon footprint. This meant including energy efficient appliances for schools, using tap water, using low environmentally impactful transport and reducing packaging and waste by a significant amount. Additional criteria were used to lessen other sustainability impacts, for example using ecological cleaning products and offering a wide range of organic or fair-trade products. Again, monitoring was the key to long-term success.[60]

In Italy, in 2010, Rome's Council decided to adopt Green Public Procurement for food and canteens, in more than 550,000 nurseries, primary and secondary schools, where in 92% of cases, the meals are prepared on site, 69% of them including organic food. Technical specifications took sustainability into account both in non-food and food criteria. Sustainable non-food criteria being, separation of waste for collection, low environmentally impactful detergents and sanitizers, and using either reusable or biodegradable or recyclable materials for serving. Food criteria include specific products to be organic, banning GMO food for both the catering and animal feed, limitation of time from harvest to intake, seasonality, measures to assure meat freshness (vacuum seal, no more than 4 days), and use of quality schemes. The programme integrates nutritionists' and dieticians to give advice and monitor service to guarantee the continuous quality of service.[61]

The city of Helsingborg, Sweden wanted to serve a minimum of 40% eco-labelled food in schools and nursing homes, in the form of awarding a wholesaler who can provide for sustainably certified food, which is nutritious, ethically sourced, delivered and packaged in an environmentally friendly manner. Environmental specifications included EU certified and labelled organic products, easily recyclable packaging, transport vehicles needing to comply with environmental zone criteria of the city, restriction on acceptable products that contain palm oil and requirement of relevant certification (e.g. fair working conditions, protection of land, forest and wildlife etc.), and products having to be ethically produced according to international regulation. Transparent supply chain and animal welfare specifications consisted of information on the country where meat products, dairy products, eggs, fish and vegetables originated from, only using free range eggs, limiting transport time of animals to slaughter house, and other health requirements affecting animals. Tenderers also had to have an environmental management system. Local control ensured that requirements were being met during the contracting period.[62]

The Council of East Ayrshire, Scotland changed its former procurement practices by reducing processed food, organic agriculture, using fresh ingredients and implementing nutritional standards and education programmes for school children. The contract aimed to receive supply and delivery of fresh/organic food to 44 primary and 9 secondary schools. The contract was divided into lots for the supply of meat, poultry, fish, fruit, vegetables, milk, eggs, cheese and dried/bottled goods. Criteria to meet the goals included: requirement of organic certification, compliance with animal welfare standards, HACCP systems or clear details of sourcing, and production and transport arrangements. In the evaluation process, diverse aspects were taken into consideration: the suppliers' proposals in reducing their environmental impact,

[59] https://cocoreado.eu/procuring-healthy-and-sustainable-vegetables-for-viennas-nursing-homes/

[60] https://cocoreado.eu/monitoring-low-carbon-sustainable-catering-services/

[61] https://cocoreado.eu/sustainable-food-procurement-for-schools-in-rome/

[62] https://cocoreado.eu/wholesaler-of-sustainable-food-for-schools-and-elderly-care-homes/

contributing to sustainable development and biodiversity, minimizing packaging and waste, remaining packaging had to be recyclable or compostable, and achieving a higher level of animal welfare than the bare minimum. In this case, the different lots allowed for smaller, local producers and distributors to enter the tender and improve cooperation. The narrow product list per supplier also ensures quality, consistency and reliability.[63]

4.3.5 Unfair trade practices and limited bargaining power of producers, lack of special trading regulations facilitating direct sale of agricultural product – Poland and France

Agricultural trade regulation from Poland

Concept and Benefit

Selling is the final stage of agricultural production. If the sales channels for a farmer are limited, their market position is weakened, wholesalers and large department store chains - like the currently available sales channel - can engage in unfair practices towards farmers. An example of this happening is Directive (EU) 2019/633 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on unfair trading practices in business-to-business relationships in the agricultural and food supply chain created by the EU, which was specifically created to curb these unfair market practices.

Generally, the definition of agricultural activity is defined as agricultural production activity in the field of crops, animal husbandry and farming, horticulture, vegetable growing, forestry and fishery. The trading with agricultural product, in most cases, already regarded as trading (retail) activity.

Introducing the good practice

The Polish good practice is a good example for lessening the administrative burdens of farmers in their direct sale as such trading activity is defined as "agricultural retail activity" which means that a small farmer does not have to qualify as a trader.

Qualifying as a trader means that the special commercial and trading regulations apply to their sale activity in which case there are more administrative burdens, such as demanding a permanent point of sales, prescribing the use of cash machines, require special professional trade education and several others.

EU Regulatory Framework

Trading regulations and taxation in the European Union involve a complex interplay between EU-level policies and Member State sovereignty. While the EU has certain competencies, Member States retain significant control over specific areas.

In terms of trading regulations, the EU has considerable authority. The EU establishes rules for the single market, which ensures the free movement of goods, services, capital, and people across Member States. These regulations include product standards, safety requirements, and consumer protection laws.

Taxation, however, remains largely within the jurisdiction of individual Member States. While there are some harmonized elements, such as value-added tax (VAT) directives and certain corporate tax rules, Member States maintain the power to set their own tax rates and policies. This includes personal income tax, corporate tax, and other direct taxes. The EU's role in

[63] https://cocoreado.eu/sustainable-school-meals/

taxation primarily involves ensuring that national tax policies do not distort competition within the single market or violate EU principles, such as state aid rules.

National Implementation

Agricultural activity in Poland is regarded as business activity[64] and the definition of the agricultural activity only covers the various forms of primary agricultural activities such as crop cultivation, animal husbandry and forestry. Trading with agricultural products fall into the general definition of the trading, commercial activity.

However certain types of trading with agricultural products is exempted from the business law regime as determined by the Polish Personal Income Tax Act[65]. The exempted activity is called "agricultural retail trade". Agricultural retail trade means when farmers sell their products directly form their farms, exhibitions, festivals and fairs to final consumers. Additionally farmers may sell within the "agricultural retail trade" to such retail stores, and other entities, like local restaurants, schools, etc. serving final consumers which are located in the same province (Voivodeships) as the farm.

Farmers may sell raw and processed products of plant and animal origin, as well as complex products. Even further farmers may use up to 50 % products of other farmers for processing together with his/her own product with the conditions that the processing of food ought to be done in a manner "other than industrial". Regulation does not define the term "other than industrial" but it might be assumed that this means processing without the use of production lines or technology-specific for large-scale production and processing.

The other limitation in applying the rule of agricultural retail trade is that both processing and sale of these products may not be, with some exceptions, carried out by intermediaries, i.e. only personally by the farmer or members of the household. Finally, there is an income limitation, up to the "agricultural retail activity" income of PLN 40.000 is exempted from personal income tax, while above the amount of the tax is 2%.

Agricultural retail[66]

Agricultural Retail Trade (RHD) is one of the forms of retail trade for which separate regulations have been adopted in the Polish legal system regarding the supervision of official food control bodies and specific tax preferences have been introduced. Within the framework of such trade, it is possible, among other things, to process and sell the produced food to final consumers, and also, from 1 January 2019 to establishments conducting retail trade intended for the final consumer, located in a limited area.

Within the scope of operations of registered agricultural retail sales (RHD - Rolniczy Handel Detaliczny as agricultural retail), processing of food is allowed in case of sales to end-consumers, and as from 1 January 2019, in case of sale of self-produced products, to small scale traders engaged in sales to end-consumers as well as to restaurants, with a limited territorial scope[67]

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[64] Article 6, § 1(1) The Act of March 6, 2018, Entrepreneurs' Law (consolidated text: Journal of Laws 2019, item 1292, as amended

[65] Article 2 § 2 and article 20 § 2. of the Act of July 26, 1991 on personal income tax (consolidated text: Journal of Laws 2019, item 1387, as amended).

[66] https://www.wetgiw.gov.pl/handel-eksport-import/rolniczy-handel-detaliczny

[67] 5 Dz.U. 2018 poz. 2242 USTAWA z dnia 9 listopada 2018 r. o zmianie niektórych ustaw w celu ułatwienia sprzedaży żywności przez rolników do sklepów i restauracji
http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20180002242/T/D20182242L.pdf

It is however problematic for Polish small scale farmers that the producer may not involve any third party person for the production and sales of products, except in exhibitions, fairs, and festivals promoting food products.

Regulation no. 2159/2016 (December)[68] defines the maximum food quantity that may be sold annually, as a part of a rule relating to sales of agricultural products by small scale producers. The detailed description is set forth in Annex G.3.

Regulation no. 1703/2015[69] on veterinary requirements applicable to the production of animal products made from self-produced raw materials for direct sales to consumers also defines quantity caps. Products that may be directly sold include for example cut bodies or intestines from 2,500 turkeys or 10,000 other poultry or 5,000 lagomorphs slaughtered in the farms from controlled livestock, as well as untreated milk and eggs.

Direct sales to consumers may take place:

- at the place of production or in the farm;
- at markets; or
- in mobile or temporary facilities;
- via small scale trading facilities engaged in direct delivery to end-consumers.

Recommendation for Replicability

Shortening the supply chain is a possible way for small producers to secure a fair income, since the reduction in the number of intermediate actors can ensure a higher income. The European Union's Common Agricultural Policy supports this endeavour by providing support for the development of short supply chains, i.e. direct sales. Small producers can enter the supply chain more easily if the sale of their produced or processed products is classified as an agricultural activity. The Polish example showed that the legislator raised the possibility of direct sales of small-scale agricultural products to the scope of agricultural activities. The situation is similar in Italy, where the definition of an agricultural producer was also modified in such a way that diversified, other activities related to agricultural activity were also included in the activities that agricultural producers can pursue. As we saw in the Polish example, the tax legislation was defined in a way that linked the possibility of agricultural trading to a revenue limit, which ensured that small producers could enter the shorter supply chain locally.

So, the replicability of the regulation lies in the fact that the legislator regulates the definition of agricultural activities in such a way that includes the trading activity and ensures with the taxation rules that this administrative relief, which is so supportive of small producers, only applies to small-scale sales.

[68] 16 Warszawa, dnia 27 grudnia 2016 r. Poz. 2159 ROZPORZĄDZENIE MINISTRA ROLNICTWA I ROZWOJU WSI z dnia 16 grudnia 2016 r. w sprawie maksymalnej ilości żywności zbywanej w ramach rolniczego handlu detalicznego oraz zakresu i sposobu jej dokumentowania, http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20160002159/O/D20162159.pdf

[69] 7 Warszawa, dnia 26 października 2015 r. Poz. 1703 RO ZPORZĄDZENIE MINISTRA ROLNICTWA I RO ZWOJU WSI z dnia 30 września 2015 r. w sprawie wymagań weterynaryjnych przy produkcji produktów pochodzenia zwierzęcego przeznaczonych do sprzedaży bezpośredniej2), http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20150001703/O/D20151703.pdf

Agricultural trade regulation from France, G.I.E.

Concept and Benefit

One of the priorities of the framework EU's rural development policies to support a broad range of farmers' cooperation is to help farmers to face together the challenges posed by increased competition and consolidation of downstream markets in relation to the marketing of their products including in local markets, in short supply chains.[70] SmartChain identified among barriers that farmers lacked capacities and resources therefore there is a need for supporting horizontal and vertical cooperation and networking initiatives. Such cooperation may also be a tool for strengthening the farmers bargaining positions by which the unfair trading practices could be mitigated.

Introducing the good practice

In several countries, joint sales of farmers are possible only in an incorporated form. In France there exist a number of other forms of cooperation, one of them is the joint sales points/producers' shops, in French PVCs (point de vente collectif)[71] may be operated in a number of legal forms, one of them is a very often used form is the G.I.Es (Groupement d'interet économique), or economic interest groups.

This form is beneficial for small farmers as it facilitates collaboration without merging companies; allows for pooling of resources and sharing of risks; and enhances competitive positioning through collective action.

Farmers can diversify their product offerings through a G.I.E., creating a more attractive and varied selection for consumers. This can lead to increased sales and customer loyalty.

EU Regulatory Framework

Generally, through the past rural development programming periods there was an overall focus on supporting farmers' cooperation.

National Implementation

A GIE may be envisaged whenever legal or natural persons wish to create joint services, in particular in order to cut costs, whilst safeguarding their individual status and their complete autonomy. The aim of the G.I.E. is not to make a profit for itself, but solely for the benefit of its members.[72]

Structure and Management:

- Requires a minimum of two members to form, it may be set up with or without capital and must be registered with the relevant Commercial Court ("Greffe du Tribunal de Commerce").
- Governed by its statutes, which outline its objectives, member contributions, management, and operational procedures. Their decisions are made unanimously, one

[70] Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005, OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

[71] It is defined as follows: "Collective points of sale (PVC) represent one of the short-circuit marketing methods, which presents a certain number of advantages, both for the producer and for the consumer: direct link between producer and consumer, promotion of local products, diversification of the activity of producers, reduction of transport costs and intermediaries." - https://lecourtcircuit.fr/index.php?id_cms=12&controller=cms

[72] http://www.lexfori.net/concepts_of_french_law_relating_.html, accessed 11 November 2013.

vote is one person, but they can deviate from these regulations, with no member having a majority vote.
- Managed by one or more managers, who can be members or external individuals.

Taxation:

- G.I.E itself is generally not subject to corporate tax or benefits from a lower tax rate compared to traditional retail entities due to its unique structure and purpose as a G.I.E itself is not primarily a profit-making entity. Instead, profits or losses are distributed among members, who then report them on their tax returns. This is a pass-through taxation model, where profits (or losses) are passed through to the individual members and taxed at their level.
- The typical operation of the G.I.E is that farmers finance the operation of the G.I.E, they hire people to work at the shop, but at least one of the farmers guarantees his/her presence in the shop as well (to improve exchanges with the consumers about the products). Pictures of all associated farmers are displayed in the shops. The software to register sales can read on the barcode of the products the name of producers. On the top of the invoice is written the name of the shop, but next to each listed product there is a code which indicates the producer.

G.I.E is governed by Ordinance No. 67-821 of September 23, 1967.

Recommendations for Replicability

The French government provides tax incentives to encourage the formation of GIEs. These incentives are designed to promote collaboration among businesses, which can lead to greater economic efficiency and competitiveness. GIEs often consist of small and medium-sized enterprises that collaborate to achieve economies of scale. Lower taxes help these smaller entities thrive, supporting local economies and job creation.

Such collaborative operational form ensures that farmers may preserve their tax status. This makes them more evolved in their willingness to cooperate and open new marketing channels.

Rural development is crucial for the economic growth, social stability, and environmental sustainability of the European Union. While granting rural development support has been a traditional approach, tax incentives have proven to be more effective in fostering sustainable economic growth, encouraging business collaborations, and enhancing competitiveness. Unlike one-time grants, tax incentives promote long-term planning and investment. Businesses are more likely to commit to rural areas when they see ongoing financial benefits. Tax incentives can be specifically designed to encourage the formation of similar collaborative entities, such as of Groupements d'Intérêt Économique (G.I.E.).

Streamline the application and compliance processes for tax incentives to ensure they are accessible to all eligible businesses.

Conduct information campaigns to educate businesses about the availability and benefits of tax incentives, ensuring maximum uptake.

Establish clear metrics to assess the effectiveness of tax incentives, such as job creation, business growth, and economic impact on rural areas.

Conduct regular reviews to ensure tax incentives remain relevant and effective, making adjustments as necessary based on feedback and economic conditions.

Farmers' market regulations from Hungary and Malta

Concept and Benefit

Farmers' markets are one of the diverse forms of short food supply chains. Compared to the traditional open markets, where products come from various sources, including wholesale distributors, resellers, and sometimes direct from farms and often have a mix of fresh produce, clothes, electronics, and other goods; farmers' markets offer products directly from farmers and local producers where vendors are usually the farmers and producers themselves or members of their household. Their product diversity is narrower, but the emphasis is on freshness, quality and locality.

Farmers' markets are beneficial for providing fresh and nutritious food, supporting local economies, reducing environmental impact, fostering community connections, ensuring food transparency, offering diverse products, promoting healthier eating habits, and providing educational opportunities.

The SMARTCHAIN project identified as one of the SFSCs' barriers the lack of definition/differentiation of the different forms of SFSCs, including the definition of farmers' market. The other identified barriers were the unfair trading practices and limited bargaining power of farmers/producers. That is, if the farmer sells in a traditional market alongside resellers, the fact that the resellers sell at low prices, in many cases they sell at the level of the wholesale price obtained below the production cost, which results those prices depressed to such an extent that farmers, who sell directly in small series may not earn profit. Further, traditional market operators prefer to rent space to resellers, who "always sell a large variety of products" while smaller producers with a seasonally small product portfolio are at a disadvantage here as well.

Introducing the good practice

This section introduces those good practices from Hungary and Malta. In the Hungarian case it will be lawmakers amended trading regulations to foster the direct sale of farmers, while in the Maltese case it will be explained that the Maltese government set up a special agency for the same purpose.

EU Regulatory Framework

There is a long history of the farmers markets, but farmers' markets began to disappear as a result of improved road roads and high-speed transportation, and also with the influx of grocery stores.[73] Due to the slow emergence of the environmental crisis and market failure of the 1980s–2000s and the challenge of public health issue of the 21st century farmers' market became a popular place for consumers who are conscious about fresh and local food.[74]

There are several regulations in the European Union which regulate the retail trading but there is hardly any which would support the development of the direct sale, the different forms of short food supply chains, including farmers' market.[75]

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[73] A BRIEF HISTORY OF FARMERS' MARKETS SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 - https://coventmarket.com/a-brief-history-of-farmers-markets/

[74] Food Policy in Italy - Renata Lizzia and Maria Stella Righettini , a University of Bologna, Forlì, Italy; and University of Padova, Padova, Italy © 2018 Elsevier Inc.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328185110_Food_Policy_in_Italy/link/5cdacdfd92851c4eab9e0ab5/download?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19

[75] sometimes also mentioned as local food chains, or short supply circuits by the Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

The first mention, as well as definition, to short (food) supply chain together with local (farmers') market was in Rural Development law for the period of 2014-2020[76]. This allowed Member States to direct support for the development of local (farmers') markets.

National Implementation

HUNGARY

The preparatory work for the Rural Development Programme for 2014-2020 revealed plans to support infrastructure for markets selling locally produced products, specifically targeting local markets in small villages. However, there was a concern that these subsidies might go unused due to the absence of regulatory permission for organising temporary markets in transient locations such as parking lots or village outskirts. Farmers were restricted to selling their products exclusively at traditional, permanent marketplaces that adhered to stringent general food and facility hygiene provisions. This concern was particularly acute for small villages, which lacked the capacity to operate permanent markets or invest in marketplace infrastructure that met the standard hygiene regulations.

Civil organisations advocating for local products approached lawmakers, presenting provisions of the EU food law (Regulations No. 852/2004 and 853/2004) that allowed for the application of more flexible or lighter hygiene standards for ambulant or temporary trade, as well as for small quantity trade. This demonstrated that the EU regulations themselves permitted derogations from the general hygiene rules designed for industrial actors, providing a basis for more flexible local market arrangements.

Lawmaker accepted the arguments and in 2012:

- amended Trade Law No. CLXIV of 2005 introducing definition of "local farmers' market" as follows [as amended]: a market where the small producer[77] sells his agricultural or food products from his farm in the county where the market is located, or within a 40 km radius of the market, or, in the case of a market located in Budapest, anywhere in the country.
- amended regulation on fairs and markets [Government Decree No. 55/2009] providing exemption compared to traditional markets, such as determining lighter infrastructure and administrative requirements;
- passed a new regulation [Rural Development Ministry Decree No 51/2012. (VI. 8.)] set out food safety rules applicable on farmers' markets based on the EU Food Law flexible provisions.

Food Safety Authority of Hungary issued a guidance on farmers' market[78] which explained in detail the requirements for the setting up and operation of the local farmers' market.

In November 2012 a Good Hygiene Practice was prepared by civil organisations. This project was implemented based on the assessment and proposal of the Board of the Hungarian National

[76] Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005, OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

[77] Small producer is a special food hygiene category in Hungary regulated originally since 2010 and reregulated by Agricultural Ministry Decree No. 60/2023(XI.15.).

This decree is a derogation rule based on the EU Food Hygiene Packaging allowing to determine flexibly food hygienic regulation for producing in small quantities.

[78] https://portal.nebih.gov.hu/documents/10182/1166172/Helyi+termeloi+piacok.pdf/55ae3c40-4e97-98b7-925c-212e45d53fe1 - Hungarian text

Rural Network, co-financed by the European Agricultural and Rural Development Fund, and approved by the Managing Authority of the National Rural Development Program.[79]

MALTA

The farmers market concept started in 2010 at Ta' Qali in Malta, and it operates on Tuesday and Saturday mornings. The farmers markets are very popular with consumers as one can buy directly from local farmers, fishermen, and producers of their fresh produce, thus supporting the local community, helping keep these sectors thriving, and promoting sustainability. Farmers market vendors set prices that allow them to earn a just income and shoppers receive the freshest and the most flavoured food at fair and reasonable prices that are typically less expensive than grocery stores. These markets provide an alternative for consumers to purchase food products, knowing that the product is local, fresh, and genuine. [80]

The applicable regulation is Subsidiary Legislation 117.31[81], which governs activities of operators in farmers' markets as well as the process of issuing permits to operate stalls at a farmers' market, and related eligibility requirements. Farmers' market is defined as establishments for marketing and sale of local agricultural produce by the farmer to the consumer.[82]

The Malta Food Agency was set up in 2021 to deliver public services in relation to food deriving from farming and fisheries in Malta. The agency was established by the Prime Minister under the Malta Food Agency Establishment Order, 2021.[83] Their main operation focus for supporting and promoting farmers' are:

- Expansion of market locations.
- Organising promotional campaigns for the consumers.
- Providing guidance and assistance to farmers to help them navigate market participation.
- Recruiting operational staff who can effectively guide farmers and focus on securing EU funds.

Recommendations for Replicability

- Amend laws to define and permit local farmers' markets in various locations, including temporary ones including such ruling which allows flexible, lighter hygienic operational regulations for such local markets.
- Issue such regulations which reduce infrastructure and administrative burdens for local markets, including the implementation of flexible food safety regulations tailored for small-scale producers.
- Food safety agencies should develop comprehensive guides and promote best practices for setting up and operating farmers' markets. Provide guidance and assistance to help farmers participate effectively in local markets.
- Secure funds for local market projects, support to obtain grants and subsidised loans.

[79] More details in Hungarian: https://s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/kisleptek.hu/ma_files/07piac.pdf)

[80] https://www.worldfarmersmarketscoalition.org/welcome-on-board-malta-food-agency/

[81] SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION 117.31 FARMERS' MARKETS REGULATIONS 18th February, 2011(L.N. 54 of 2011) - https://legislation.mt/eli/sl/117.31/eng/pdf

[82] Article 3(1) of SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION 117.31

[83] https://foodagency.mt/about/

4.3.6 Inadequate food health and safety standards and control procedures – Comprehensive guidelines for small farmers in direct sale (SFSC) to apply food hygiene regulations, the example is from Austria.

Concept and Benefit

Providing guidelines for small farmers to understand and apply agricultural laws and regulations is essential for compliance, economic stability, sustainability, and market access, ultimately supporting the overall health and growth of the agricultural sector.

SmartChain Deliverable 9.4 on the Long-term Impact Roadmap explained: "In 2015, the FVO emitted a "Overview report on the state of implementation of HACCP in the EU and areas for improvement"[84]. One of the key issues detected was flexibility, that was said to be "the least understood HACCP concept" and to be "inconsistently applied and evaluated", while of "crucial importance", particularly for small businesses. Some related concepts, such as "small [food business operators (FBOs)]" seem to not always be understood by national competent authorities, nor "applied in a consistent manner". According to this report, "a number of factors contribute to this situation, including the absence of or inconsistent national policies on the circumstances and conditions under which flexibility may be granted. The EU Guideline was not seen to provide sufficient clarity. In many situations, flexibility is applied on a case by case basis. Lack of clarity may result in Small FBOs being required to maintain unnecessary levels of documentation". In this context, the report also mentions the "demand from national [competent authorities] and from stakeholder organisations for improved Commission guidance, including examples, on core concepts, and in particular, on prerequisite requirements, hazard analysis, Critical Control Points, verification, validation, monitoring and flexible implementation", as well as a need for "more focused training for national control staff". It finally lists a series of good practices."

Introducing the good practice

Producers, already busy with the production, marketing, and sales of their products, often lack the time, skills, and knowledge necessary to navigate food safety and hygiene standards. Therefore, it is valuable to invest time in understanding the existing flexibility measures applicable to one's specific business in the region or country, to avoid future issues of inconsistency and additional administrative burdens.

There is long desire among the EU small farmers to have national implementation of the flexibility principle provided by the European Food Hygiene Package, in a more consistent and proportional manner, aligned with the actual risks to be prevented. This involves recognizing the specific needs of SFSC (Short Food Supply Chain) operations based on objective and relevant criteria, in order to alleviate them from unnecessary administrative burdens, costly and invasive requirements, and control procedures.

Support is also needed for SFSC actors to understand and implement safety requirements in their businesses in an adapted way. Various forms of support would be beneficial, including financial assistance, advice, and training.

On the other hand, in a number of Member States farmers suffer for the uncertainty on how different food authorities understand and apply regulations. Therefore, SmartChain came to the conclusion that binding instruments could be considered, to foster the application of flexibility measures by national authorities, conditioning the access to some funds to the effective implementation of such measures. Specific training to national competent authorities should

[84] Food and Vetenary Office, Report 2015-7752 "Report on the state of implementation of HACCP in the EU and areas for improvement", https://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/overview_reports/details.cfm?rep_id=78&rep_inspection_ref=xxx

be provided, as well as support to SFSCs (financial, advice and training) for the fulfilment of health and safety requirements should be implemented through RDPs, providing specific guidelines to Member States for their design. Moreover, a specific monitorization of the impact of such support, training and application of flexibility should be carried out, accounting the number of SFSCs benefiting from such measures and characterising their impact on their viability, through the inclusion of ad hoc indicators in the evaluation of RDPs.

The Austrian example introduces the procedure started with the enactment of the Food Hygiene package and last until our days.

EU Regulatory Framework

EU regulated food business among them is the most relevant the Food Hygiene Package[85]. The EU food regulations allow for Member States to implement flexible hygienic regulations with the condition that either the activity is occasional, or the production is in small quantities and marginal. These are explained in detail in guidance documents[86]. There were also passed guidelines how to implement the HACCP and GHP (Good Hygiene Practice) principles[87] including to implement flexible regulations for small operations.

National Implementation[88]

The Austrian Chamber of Commerce (Wirtschaftskammer Österreich, WKO) immediately started to work on the implementation of the national flexible regulations right after the enactment of the Food Hygiene Package. During the process of elaborating national food safety and hygiene guidelines practitioners from dairy and meat sector were involved as well as SFSC practitioners and regional advisory staff were engaged in food legislation. The main objectives and principles of the implementation works was to reduce red tape of the HACCP principle by simplifying the empty forms to manuals with standardised workflows without individual figures and providing individual entries only for deviations. Additionally, it was another goal as to reduce the number of laboratory food testing to the food item with the highest hygienic risk by assuming that all other items of the same food category (using the same raw material

[85] https://food.ec.europa.eu/safety/biological-safety/food-hygiene_en

[86] Guidance document on the implementation of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 On the hygiene of foodstuffs - https://food.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2018-10/biosafety_fh_legis_guidance_reg-2004-852_en.pdf – document was revised by COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Guidance document on the implementation of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 on the hygiene of food of animal origin /SANCO/10098/2009 Revision 2023 / https://food.ec.europa.eu/document/download/ce8efc9d-8750-4b75-9563-7427da889666_en?filename=biosafety_fh_legis_guidance_reg-2004-853_en.pdf -- (accessed on May 27, 2024)

[87]Commission Notice on the implementation of food safety management systems covering prerequisite programs (PRPs) and procedures based on the HACCP principles, including the facilitation/flexibility of the implementation in certain food businesses - https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52016XC0730%2801%29

Replaced by COMMISSION NOTICE on the implementation of food safety management systems covering Good Hygiene Practices and procedures based on the HACCP principles, including the facilitation/flexibility of the implementation in certain food businesses (2022/C 355/01)

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52009DC0403

[88] In the preparation of this section to support of AI was used for discovering information from the following websites: https://www.lko.at/ and https://www.wig.or.at/programme as well as presentations:

A better use of the hygiene and food safety regulatory framework for small food producers – perspective of a competent authority - „Local agriculture and short food supply chains“ Ulrich Herzog Austrian Federal Ministry of Health 20 April 2012, Brussels; https://www.laukutikls.lv/sites/laukutikls.lv/files/copa/3088_2012_04_20_aqa_prezentacija11.pdf)

and Implementation of hygiene rules for local and small-scale production: the Austrian example - DI Christian Jochum, Austrian Chamber of Agriculture - 21 March 2014. - https://www.forum-synergies.eu/docs/presentation_jochum.pdf - https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC80420

and manufactured by the same persons) with less risk are also alright if the item with the highest risk is tested alright.

The WKO actively lobbied the Austrian government and EU bodies to ensure that the unique needs and challenges of small farmers were considered in the implementation of the Food Hygiene Package. This included advocating for reasonable timelines and flexibility in compliance requirements.

The Austrian Chamber of Agriculture has initiated various programs and projects to support food hygiene officers and encourage smallholder farmers to apply flexible food hygiene regulations. They organised workshops and seminars to educate small farmers on the new hygiene requirements. These sessions provided detailed information on the regulations, practical implementation steps, and the benefits of compliance. A trainer programme was developed to align the agreed simplifications with what advisory service staff may apply in the field. These services include on-site visits and detailed hygiene assessments to provide tailored recommendations and support.

Local food hygiene authorities (e.g. food inspectors) were integrated in the training and education programmes to guarantee a maximum of harmonisation between what is advised and what is controlled. The WKO also worked with regulatory authorities to monitor compliance among small farmers, providing feedback and support where needed to ensure continuous improvement. Regular assessments were conducted to evaluate the impact of the new hygiene regulations on small farms, ensuring that the support mechanisms were effective and identifying areas for further assistance.

The Chamber established helpdesk services where farmers could call or email with specific questions about the regulations and receive personalised advice and support.

The WKO developed comprehensive guidance documents, manuals, and online resources that outlined the specific steps small farmers needed to take to comply with the regulations. These documents explain the legal requirements without judicial terms and focusing on that steps of the manufacturing process where problems might occur. One example is the Good Hygiene Practice (GHP) project, which offers training and advice to smallholder farmers to ensure compliance with hygiene standards while minimising economic burdens.[89]

Another project is the "Quality Assurance for Direct Marketers"[90] which provides specially developed guides and workshops to support smallholder farmers. This program aims to ensure the quality and safety of food sold directly to consumers and helps farmers to meet the necessary hygiene requirements. This is a national and regional SFSC scheme called ‘Gutes vom Bauernhof’ (www.gutesvombauernhof.at) which could be translated as ‘Good things from the farm’. The logo (words and graphic representation) is a registered trademark owned by the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture. It was introduced in 1998 and made into a nationwide standard in 2001. [91]

Recommendations for Replicability

[89] Self-control Manual (Handbuch zur Eigenkontrolle) - https://www.lko.at/volltextsuche+2400++1352767+3277?npf_cache=no&fulltext_search=Handbuch+zur+Eigenkontrolle

[90] more details: https://noe.lko.at/qualit%C3%A4ts-und-herkunftssicherung-f%C3%BCr-b%C3%A4uerliche-direktvermarkter+2400+3237950

[91] Kneafsey M, Venn L, Schmutz U, Balasz B, Trenchard L, Eyden-Wood T, Bos E, Sutton G, Blackett M, authors Santini F, Gomez Y Paloma S, editors. Short Food Supply Chains and Local Food Systems in the EU. A State of Play of their Socio-Economic Characteristics.. EUR 25911. Luxembourg (Luxembourg): Publications Office of the European Union; 2013. JRC80420 -

Member States should consider that the Food Hygiene Package allows flexible regulations for the operation of small farmers thus each Member States should implement such regulations.

As noted in recent studies[92], it is important that local actors have a sufficiently binding legal framework that "does not depend on local games" and that authorises and obliges appropriate action. The point is not, however, that the state should impose goals, methods and procedures because it is crucial that "the local approach should assume freedom and flexibility of action; (as) a result a general framework is needed", but it must remain flexible enough to allow actors "in the field to adapt to local circumstances."

Acquaintance with and application of national flexible measures must be encouraged among producers and the authority (training, counselling, guides, field assistance visits, templates). The Austrian example showed the complex and comprehensive approach of how the flexible food hygiene regulations for small farmers were introduced and continuously supporting their proper application not only by farmers but authorities as well. The interpretation of the national flexible measures must be harmonised and updated, and cooperation must be established between the various actors (legislator, authority, inspector, producer).

The Austrian government with the close cooperation of WKO, together with all affected stakeholders implemented EU food food hygiene regulations, adapted exemptions for small farmers, issued (and updated) guidelines; provided specific training not only for farmers, but advisory service staff as well as to local food hygiene authorities.

4.3.7 Lack of producers' capacities and resources - Supporting diversified farming activity – the diverse regulations for the development of SFSC from Italy.

Concept and Benefit

Diversifying farming activities is crucial for small farmers as it provides economic stability, helps spread risk and ensures a more stable income throughout the year. The most common forms of diversification are direct sales and agro-tourism. These offer additional revenue streams. Direct sales, such as selling produce at local markets or through community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs, allow farmers to retain a larger share of the profits by cutting out intermediaries. Agro-tourism adds another layer of financial stability. By offering farm tours, educational workshops, and farm stays, farmers can attract visitors and generate income from sources other than agricultural products. This not only provides a buffer against the fluctuations in agricultural markets but also educates the public about farming practices and the importance of local agriculture.

Farm diversification is understood as the creation of any gainful activities on the farm. These include 'all activities other than farm work, directly related to the holding or having an economic impact on the holding'. 'Directly related' means that either the resources of the holding (area, buildings, machinery, etc.) or its products are used in the activity. Examples include tourist accommodation, handicraft, processing of farm products, and wood processing[93].

Obstacles identified by Smartchain, which can be partly answered by the example:

[92] Bodiguel, Luc. 2020. Partie II: Réflexions sur l'effectivité de la démocratie alimentaire dans les projets alimentaires. In Le droit *à* l'alimentation durable en d*é*mocratie, Champ social *é*ditions. Edited by Dominique Paturel and Patrice N'Diaye. Nîmes: Champ social éditions, pp. 64–78. ISBN 9-791034-605958. in Anna Kapala: Legal Instruments to Support Short Food Supply Chains and Local Food Systems in France - https://www.mdpi.com/2075-471X/11/2/21

[93] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Gainful_activities_of_the_farm

Lack of producers' capacities and resources. It is necessary to improve knowledge and innovation transfer, especially business models, consumer needs, cooperation methods, etc. regarding. The business model of the multi-legged economy is flexible, resilient and can realise higher added value through agrotourism and producer processing.

- Support is required in the areas of marketing, sales and communication (services and infrastructures). Diversification clearly also has a marketing effect; I believe that it conveys the experiences of the programs and products acquired on the farms to the consumer and makes them lovable.
- It is necessary to support horizontal and vertical cooperation and networking initiatives - in our case, this is achieved by enabling agritourism services and the procurement of raw materials for production.
- Increased access to resources is necessary, which in our case also enables multi-purpose tender funding for diversified activities.

Introducing the good practice

Around the year of 2000 Italy fundamentally reworked their agricultural policy and related regulatory system, recognizing the multifunctionality of rural and regional development. Ministry of Agricultural food and Forestry Policies (MINISTERO DELLE POLITICHE AGRICOLE ALIMENTARI E FORESTALI MIPAAF), the government strategy in agri-food policies was reorganised and since the 2000s it is focusing on multifunctionality, sustainability, food security, and support of organic farming and rural activities (like agritourism) (Lang et al., 2012).[94]

The definition of agricultural activity was broadened to include not only primary production like soil cultivation, forestry, and animal husbandry but also secondary activities such as handling, processing, and commercial sale of agricultural products. This broader definition will empower farmers to diversify their income sources.

EU Regulatory Framework

The European Union has supported farm diversification through various regulations and programs since the 1992 CAP reform. The CAP includes several measures under its Pillar II, which focuses on rural development. These measures provide funding and incentives for diversification activities, such as developing non-agricultural businesses, promoting agro-tourism, and supporting direct sales initiatives. The Rural Development Program (RDP) within the CAP specifically targets these activities, encouraging farmers to diversify their income sources and improve their economic resilience.

The LEADER program, initiated in 1991, has also played a significant role in supporting local development projects, including farm diversification efforts, by fostering community-led local development.

National Implementation

Italy already in 2001 passed a new regulation called the Law on Orientation[95] which allowed the diversified farming activity of the peasant farm and the collective sale of farmers through collective actions.

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[94] quote is from Kapala IT

[95] Decree No. 228/2001 on the guidelines and modernisation of agricultural sector (Decreto Legislativo 18 maggio 2001, n. 228 "Orientamento e modernizzazione del settore agricolo, a norma dell'articolo 7 della legge 5 marzo 2001, n. 57) / https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:decreto.legislativo:2001-05-18;228

The Law on Orientation amended Article 2135 of the Codice Civile[96] (Italian Civil Code), the article, which defines the agricultural entrepreneur as follows: (i) agricultural companies, (ii) partnerships and limited liability companies and (iii) cooperatives as well as (iv) individual agricultural entrepreneurs. In 2004 a Decree no. 99[97] aiming to simplify the administration of agriculture was passed as an execution of the Article 2135 of the Codice Civile.

This amendment provides a new concept for agricultural activity with a broader definition, as follows:

- Primary production (cultivation of soil, forestry, animal husbandry);
- Secondary activities, that are handling, processing and commercial sale of products, and;
- Producers may process products obtained from another producer. The proportion of self-produced materials must be a decisive (predominant)[98] quantity. Farmers must receive more income from self-produced products and his activities than that he earned from products made by others. A further condition is that the product of the other farmer shall originate from the same region and they must comply with the local municipality's requirements.
- By the introduction of the new regulations, it is possible to provide services relating to agricultural activities, including the maintenance of the area, and preservation of rural and forestry heritage, or
- Accommodation and catering services determined in the act[99]. Farmers are now allowed to sell products ready for consumption, which may be consumed on the spot.
- Decree 228/2001 allows e-trade as a form of direct selling of agricultural products.

This amendment broadened the scope of the agricultural activity in such a way, that not only limited to the agricultural cultivation, but includes the sale of the agricultural products as a rule, that the sale of agricultural raw materials, being natural, final stage of agricultural production belongs to agricultural activities. Even made it broader as included the processing of agricultural products and their retail sale directly to the consumer which in other Member States not regarded typically as agricultural activity.

As a result, agricultural entrepreneurs may sell their products without the need for a special commercial authorisation, stating that: "individual and associated agricultural entrepreneurs entered in the register of enterprises may sell directly in retail throughout the territory of the Republic, products originating mainly from their own farm, observing the applicable hygiene and health principles.

The Law on Orientation rules the form of direct sale[100]:

- on a farm or at home,
- in an itinerant form, or

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[96] Codice Civile Regio Decreto 16 marzo 1942 , No. 262. Approvazione del testo del Codice civile, Gazzetta Ufficiale No.79 of 04.04.1942, as amended

[97] Decreto Legislativo 29 marzo 2004, No. 99 "Disposizioni in materia di soggetti e attività, integrità aziendale e semplificazione amministrativa in agricoltura, a norma dell'articolo 1, comma 2, lettere d), f), g), l), ee), della legge 7 marzo 2003, n. 38", Gazzetta Ufficiale No. 94 of 22.04.2004. - https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:decreto.legislativo:2004;99~art1

[98] The production in sales should come for the most part from the own agricultural activity.

[99] Legge 20 febbraio 2006, n. 96 "Disciplina dell'agriturismo" https://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/06096l.htm

https://www.reterurale.it/agriturismo/normativa

[100] Article 4 (8bis) d. lgs. 228/2001

- at a permanent point of sale in public places and
- via the Internet
- immediate consumption of the sold product is allowed using the premises and facilities of the agricultural entrepreneur by keeping the hygienic regulations.

This form of direct sale is allowed up to an amount of revenue from the sale of non-farm products that does not exceed 160.000 euro for individual entrepreneurs and 4 million euro for agricultural enterprises.

Since the enactment of the Law on Orientation there were several programs, projects and subsidies to promote and support the concept of filiera corta. Due to the dual legislative system several regional regulations were passed for regulating the diverse forms of short food supply chains.

Recommendations for Replicability

It is worth defining the concept and rules of agricultural activity in a wider circle, which promotes, in addition to risky production, the livelihood of smaller, more diverse farms through the processing of agricultural products and services based on the farm's resources, as well as agritourism activities.

The parts of the rules of diversified agricultural activity, interpreted broadly, must be harmonised along common goals (strategy) between the specialised areas (taxation, hygiene, tourism, etc.) and made easy to apply.

The harmonised rules must be explained to the producers, and also to the authority - with guides and advice.

Feedback on the effectiveness of the initiative must be given to the legislators (with the help of professional associations).

The food governance system, too, has improved coordination, as synergy and cooperation between public authorities and private actors are at present better arranged and partially institutionalised. **More than in the past decades [in Italy], within the producing, processing and delivering chains, farmers' unions, market actors, companies, certification bodies, enforcement inspectorates and consumer associations purse shared objectives.** [101]

The Italian Ministry of Agriculture continues to play a relevant role in food production, especially supporting specialty products and promoting quality production. The main farmers unions are in charge of providing input and expertise to policy makers and legislators and giving advice and support to farmers in the implementation of the policy measures. The agri-food industries and distribution chains encourage and support the common strategy.

The Italian example introduced the means of how diversified farming activity may be adapted into a national legislation. The definition of agricultural activity recognizes a wider range of agricultural activities, including secondary activities such as handling, processing, and commercial sale of agricultural products.

It legalises and promotes ancillary services related to agriculture, such as accommodation, catering, and maintenance of rural and forestry heritage and allows farmers to offer on-site consumption of their products, thereby enhancing the agro-tourism experience and providing additional revenue streams.

Additionally, there was granted supportive taxation up to a certain amount for the farmers.

[101] Food Policy in Italy: Renata Lizzia and Maria Stella Righettini

4.4 Collaborative governance models' in-depth analysis

Collaborative governance is an approach where government agencies engage with non-state actors, including private firms, non-profits, and community groups, to make decisions or solve public problems. This model is particularly useful in addressing complex, multi-faceted issues that require the input and resources of various stakeholders. The reason why it is useful to look for good practices in relation to SFSCs is that collaborative governance may be essential because they encourage and strengthen trust, transparency, and shared decision-making among the stakeholders who are diverse as farmers, producers, consumers, local authorities, governments, NGOs, etc. The structure of collaborative governance fosters cooperation, supports the reduction of conflicts, promotes innovation which may lead to such a food system transformation which is more sustainable and resilient.

During the mapping the partners discovered such practices that may serve as practices to be replicated, adopted in other regions and cases. The chosen practices are from **Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands (two good practices), Spain, United Kingdom and Romania.**

The purpose of the deeper analysis was to reveal in every case the key factors of success and the structure, functioning of the governance practice. Each case can be linked to the challenges identified in Table 6.

The good practices are introduced and analysed based on the challenges, some of them provide a solution related to more, and some challenges haven't been matched with a specific practice as during the mapping no cases were found. All the cases are listed in the document and all of them have questions to check the replicability in the case of the reader. These questions support the reader in analysing if the case may be adapted in their region.

4.4.1 Lack of definition/differentiation of SFSCs, missing legislative framework

The Network of Municipalities for Agroecology (Red de Municipios por la Agroecología) in Spain

Problem identified

In Spain, there is not a legislative framework for food policies, which led some municipalities to propose the creation of a structure aimed at sharing experiences and collaboratively developing innovative solutions to the problems faced by local governments involved in these processes. The lack of coordinated action at the local level hindered the development of sustainable and resilient food systems.



Picture 1: Municipalities for Agroecology group picture Source: RMA, provided by Project Partner

Solution

The creation of the Network of Municipalities for Agroecology (Red de Municipios por la Agroecología) in 2017. This network allows municipalities to share experiences and collaboratively develop innovative solutions for the problems faced by local governments in implementing sustainable food policies. It promotes the creation of a movement of municipalities committed to food sovereignty, contributing to the production of healthy and

tasty local food, stimulating the local economy through Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC), and favouring sustainable land management and environmental improvement.

Funding the solution

Annual budget: 200,000€-250,000€. The network uses a mixed funding model:

- Private foundations (e.g., Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation)
- Public funds (municipalities and ministry)
- European projects (e.g., Horizon Europe)

The network has been successful in diversifying its funding sources, which provides greater capacity to respond to demands but also increases organizational complexity.

Actors involved

1. Associated local entities (technicians and policymakers)
2. Entities adhered to the Social Organizations Council
3. Partners and funders:
    - Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation (FDNC)
    - Entretantos Foundation (FENT)
    - European Climate Foundation (ECF)
4. Other collaborating local entities (e.g., Barcelona City Council)
5. Related entities and networks:
    - Intervegas
    - Por Otra PAC
    - Observatory for the Right to Food in Spain (ODA-E)
    - REAS (Network of networks of the alternative and solidarity economy)
    - Red Terrae
    - Network of Municipalities of Central Catalonia
    - FAO
    - MUFPP

Partnership collaboration and governance

The network operates through a multi-level governance structure:

- General Assembly: The highest decision-making body where the most strategic decisions are made. Meets twice a year.
- Technical Secretariat: Responsible for implementing the decisions of the General Assembly and the Board of Directors. Coordinates the technical, administrative, and economic work arising from the implementation of the action plan. Maintains constant relations with all involved agents.
- Board of Directors: Meets monthly to oversee the network's operations.
- Social Organizations Council (COS): A consultative body that has become fundamental to the network's functioning. Participates in Board of Directors meetings and General Assemblies.
- Working Groups: Focused on specific themes such as Public Procurement, Right to Sustainable and Healthy Food, Small Municipalities and Supramunicipal Entities, Urban Planning, and Public Policy Evaluation.

Exchange Spaces: Regular webinars, seminars, and an annual technical conference to share knowledge and experiences.

Benefits for the actors

Farmers:

- Support in navigating bureaucracy
- Revitalization of agricultural and food processing infrastructures
- Direct support (tax relief, fee reductions)
- Promotion of non-sedentary sales markets and local food brands

Community:

- Sustainable, resilient, and environmentally friendly food systems
- Inclusive, safe, and diversified systems ensuring healthy, sustainable, and accessible food
- Promotion of local employment

Local Administrations:

- Help in building sustainable local food systems
- Knowledge sharing and capacity building
- Access to technical resources and expert support

Consumers:

- Access to healthy, local, and sustainable food
- Increased awareness about sustainable food systems

Environment:

- Promotion of agroecological practices
- Sustainable land management

Good practices that bring benefits

- Creation of knowledge exchange and learning spaces (webinars, seminars, annual meetings)
- Technical support to municipalities, especially smaller ones
- Development of transversal pilot actions (e.g., RURBACT-Ae, Soil Nexus, AESOP4Food, Liveseeding projects)
- Technical training for administrative staff and political officials
- Elaboration of reports and technical documents on various aspects of local food policies
- Collaboration with research centers and universities
- Advocacy for policy changes at regional and national levels

Main factors of success

- Autonomy of the network, independent from higher political structures
- Multi-source funding to reduce risks associated with a single funder
- Specific structures in municipalities with allocated funds and staff
- Training/awareness courses for administrative staff and political officials
- Linking the associative and productive network
- Effective mechanism for capitalizing and systematizing the work carried out
- Flexibility to adapt to changing political and social contexts
- Strong involvement of the Social Organizations Council
- Regular evaluation and planning meetings

- Participation in international projects and networks

Context of the country

Spain has a decentralized governance system where municipalities have limited competencies in agriculture and food. There is no specific legislative framework for food policies at the national level. The political context can affect the participation of municipalities in the network, as changes in local government can lead to shifts in priorities.

There is a growing awareness of the importance of sustainable food systems and agroecology in Spain, partly driven by European initiatives like the Farm to Fork Strategy. The country has a strong tradition of local markets and short food supply chains, which provides a good foundation for the network's activities.

The network's work aligns with the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, of which several Spanish cities are signatories.

Question for self-check

1. Is there an existing network of municipalities working on sustainable food policies in your country/region?
2. Do municipalities in your area have competencies in agriculture and food policies?
3. Is there political interest in your region for sustainable food systems and agroecology?
4. Are there civil society organizations working on sustainable food issues that could collaborate?
5. Is there a possibility of obtaining mixed funding (public and private) for a similar initiative?
6. Do municipalities have technical staff who could dedicate time to these policies?
7. Is there a culture of collaboration between municipalities in your region?
8. Are there universities or research centers in your area that could provide support and expertise?
9. Does your country participate in international initiatives like the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact?
10. Are there local or regional food brands or markets that could be leveraged in a similar network?
11. Is there a need for improved coordination of food policies at the local level in your region?
12. Are there environmental or social challenges in your area that could be addressed through sustainable food systems?

4.4.2 Lack of producers' capacities and resources – good practices and replicability

The capacities and resources of producers, farmers are such a challenge that is known in most of the European countries. They need support and solutions for their everyday work by improving their knowledge on business models, the needs of consumers, collaboration methods and innovation in any type. Three collected cases were identified as possible solutions for this specific challenge: Genial Regional – Brilliantly Regional trademark from Germany; Szekler Product trademark from Romania; and Roll Out for a robust, regional, and regenerative food system in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA) project from the Netherlands.

Genial Regional – Brilliantly Regional trademark from Germany

Problem identified

The Heidelberg region of Germany has diverse agriculture, high-quality regional products, delicious gastronomy and a varied natural landscape. With all it has to offer, plus for environmental reasons and to support local businesses, there was a need to promote the sustainable products produced or processed in the Heidelberg region by making them clearly recognizable to consumers. The initiative for "Brilliantly Regional" started from the administration of the city of Heidelberg in 2017. The aim of the initiative is to provide support for producers and processors, for regional sustainable operations, for the regional food industry in marketing and sales of their products, facilitating consumer access to sustainable, local food, and networking to strengthen the local food industry and economy.

Solution

The producer group set up a limited company as a direct marketing organisation to generate sales. In addition, an association was set up to organise events and presentations for education and awareness in the region, but not for direct sales. The "Genial regional" trademark was developed for regional products within a radius of 50 km to promote recognition among consumers and gastronomy partners. The products are mainly sold in farm shops, a shop in the town centre and recently an online shop was launched but is still under development.

The criteria for becoming a partner and/or supporter and bearing the Brilliantly Regional label are the following.

Criteria for partners

Individuals, companies and associations can become partners in the Brilliantly Regional program if they focus on the areas of agriculture and forestry; gardening, viticulture and hunting; food crafts; grocery trade and logistics; gastronomic, tourist and other related services.

In order to become partners, these individuals, companies, and associations must:

a) Be based in the region. The region includes the city of Heidelberg, the Rhein-Neckar district, the Bergstrasse district and adjacent areas. Exceptions can be made with justification in the partner agreement.
b) Have a significant number of products that meet the Brilliantly Regional criteria. Those products must be produced/processed, and/or distributed or otherwise made available to consumers by the partner.

The quality of the regional products as well as the corresponding production quality is defined via common basic criteria as well as special criteria for specific individual products or product groups. Compliance with these criteria is mandatory, and a violation can result in the termination of the partner and trademark usage agreement. Following the idea of a fair regional

partnership, the Brilliantly Regional products must make up a significant proportion of the partner's entire product range. At the beginning of each financial year, the partners name the volume of the Brilliantly Regional products that they plan to produce, process or distribute.

c) Have recognition and appropriate qualifications, socially fair employment, and offer and/or provide training for jobs with appropriate technical equipment. If it is an association, this requirement applies to each of its members.
d) Help to further develop regional producer-consumer relationships to promote the success of regional marketing and to strengthen traditional crafts. The support required here can come in a variety of ways. This includes participation at least once a year in information events offered by Brilliantly Regional sponsors, as well and annual participation in training and further education on the topics of regional brands, regional marketing, quality management, landscape and cultural preservation, and/or environmentally friendly production and services. Concrete further information is agreed upon in the partnership and trademark usage agreement.
e) Contribute to the preservation of the region's unique cultural and natural heritage. This contribution is based on the partner's respective possibilities and is calculated accordingly for the partnership and trademark usage agreement.

Only people, companies or their associations that meet these criteria can be included as a Brilliantly Regional partner. They must explain the way the program works and the criteria for inclusion to consumers in a comprehensible and transparent manner. Only Brilliantly Regional partners can sign a partner and trademark usage agreement with a sponsoring organisation, and only partners can complete the Brilliantly Regional program and receive the label of origin and quality connection for marketing. The inclusion of Brilliantly Regional partners is determined by the program advisory board in each individual case and will be confirmed by the sponsoring organisation.

Rights and obligations

Only Brilliantly Regional partners are entitled to use the Brilliantly Regional symbol for advertising individual or all products or services. The partner and trademark usage agreement explains to what extent the relevant products and services correspond to the basic criteria and/or special criteria. Brilliantly Regional partners should work with the regional marketing organisation (GeReMO Heidelberg Rhein-Neckar Gmbh) to establish a user contract for the use of the Regional Marketing Platform (RMP), and the associated related services for the sale of their products and services. The partner and trademark usage agreement regulates the details of how and to what extent a partner complies with the criteria or fulfils its obligations, and which financial contributions are to be made. For the first time, when the contract is concluded and thereafter, proof of contributions must be provided every three years. The issuing organisation will carry out spot checks on site. The partner is to permit and support the representatives of the auditing organisation. Partners receive a Brilliantly Region sign that they should place in a clearly visible place. For in-house advertising (especially newspaper advertisements), if the Brilliantly Regional label is used, it should correspond to the guidelines which are integrated into the user agreement. Information materials and presentation options are provided to partners to achieve the goals and activities of the regional partnership. Partners may use the information provided.

Funding the solution

Recognizing the financial needs for project implementation, the organisation secured funding through partnerships with the local bank Sparkasse Heidelberg and Stadtwerke Heidelberg.

Income is generated from sales and events in the shop in Heidelberg and in the farm shops. Membership fees from producers finance the half-time position of the managing director.

Sponsors & partners involved in the initiative

In addition to financial support, the initiative has also received backing from the **Heidelberg Environmental Agency**, which organised the first meetings to bring local family farms and producers together and promote the initiative. The **city marketing department of Heidelberg** supports the initiative by inviting it to local events, providing a platform for presentation and sales. Furthermore, the **city of Heidelberg** partners with the initiative to use regional products in public canteens, such as those in schools, and provides a shop and an event room for its activities. The initiative collaborates with the **SRH Integrative Vocational Training Centre** in Heidelberg, which developed its website and online shop. They further supply the regional hotel management school. The initiative is managed by a part-time manager.

Partnership collaboration and governance

The core of this initiative is a network of regional farmers and producers who exchange their products among themselves and sell them in their farm shops. All producers pay a membership fee, which funds a manager responsible for overseeing the network, handling initial customer requests, and connecting customers with farmers. Once customers from the gastronomy sector are connected with farmers, the farmers themselves manage logistics and transportation. The network of producers and farmers offers greater flexibility to meet specific demands, such as providing peeled asparagus for restaurants. The initiative also works together with local retailers for wine and gastronomy who support the logistics. Private customers can pick up their orders at a farm shop or the city store, though the latter currently only sells dry goods. Additionally, the event room in the city store can be booked for events, with catering provided from the store's assortment.

Good practices that bring benefits

- **Building on existing structures**: Many farmers, processors, and producers already had direct marketing channels, which were integrated to complement their product assortments under a unified label. Authorities and organisations also leveraged their networks to support the initiative.
- **Development of trademark**: The "Genial regional" label certifies the regionality of products, with farms adhering to organic guidelines and the Baden-Württemberg quality seal. This makes it easy for consumers to recognize regional products.
- **Outreaching events**: Participation in regional events and the availability of an event room in the Heidelberg shop, complete with catering from shop products, have enhanced the visibility of the label.

Main factors of success

- **Direct Engagement:** Involving farmers, processors, and consumers in decision-making fosters a sense of ownership and alignment with the initiative's goals.
- **Low Bureaucracy:** Farmers and producers manage their logistics independently, reducing bureaucratic hurdles. The initiative's manager assists only with initial requests from processors or gastronomy.
- **Regional Community Building:** Participation in social events and collaboration with regional stakeholders strengthen community bonds, educate members about sustainable and regional food practices, and foster a sense of belonging.

- **Adaptive Strategies:** Embracing innovation, such as using online platforms and partnering with vocational training centres, shows a commitment to adaptability and operational excellence.

Country context

- **Strong regional support:** The city of Heidelberg context has a cultural appreciation for local and regional products, which supports initiatives focused on promoting regional agriculture and direct marketing.
- **Established infrastructure:** The presence of well-developed infrastructure, including logistics networks and direct marketing, facilitated the implementation of the initiative.
- **Cooperative spirit:** The German cooperative tradition provides a conducive environment for collaborative efforts between farmers, producers, and consumers, enabling the success of initiatives that prioritise community involvement and cooperation.

Replicability and questions for self-check

1. Do you want to connect local farmers and consumers?
2. Are their farms and producers with a variety of products in your region?
3. Is in your region a request for regional products?
4. Do you have local government support?
5. Can you find financial support for your project?
6. Do you plan to educate consumers about local produce?
7. Are you focused on seasonal and regional products?
8. Is building trust in local farming a priority?
9. Do your partners support each other in supplying products?
10. Do your partners already sell their products through direct marketing?

Registration of the trademark of the Szekler Product and development of the control methodology, organisation of monthly fairs in Harghita County

The project was launched in 2009, and the Szekler Product trademark was registered in 2010. The County Council is the owner of the trademark and over the years several internal institutions have been responsible for the project, including a community association involving the County Council and almost all municipalities in the county (ADI). Both are sub-organisations of the County Council. Today the entire Szekler Product trademark and trade fair organisation is under the responsibility of the Development Agency of Harghita County. A year ago, the Committee run by the Association was renewed and the evaluation system improved.

Problem identified

Following a cheese-making course, in response to a request from the community, Harghita County Council recognised that small producers of local products in Harghita County were failing to sell their products for several reasons:

- fear of control bodies due to lack of knowledge on legislation,
- lack of market opportunities,
- low consumer awareness of local products.

Solution

Harghita County Council has started organising monthly local product fairs in the county and has registered the Szekler trademark to help small producers. The trademark sets professional standards for local products. Local inspection bodies were invited to the fairs to answer questions from small producers. All producers with the Szekler trademark are visited beforehand to check the legal framework, food safety requirements and professional needs, but they also continuously deal with new producers who could potentially become trademark owners. They are listening to consumer needs, working with the above-mentioned organisations to help maintain product quality so that consumers in the area can always buy healthy, locally produced products.

Funding the solution

The project received 40,000 euros per year from the budget of Harghita County, and subsequently several European projects were successfully submitted.

The budget mainly includes:

- the costs of organising the fair,
- human resource costs,
- training costs.

Actors involved

- Harghita County Council,
- local small-scale farmers and producers (about 200),
- Veterinary and Food Safety Office,
- Consumer Protection Office,
- Harghita Public Health Directorate,

- Rural Development Directorate,
- Agricultural Directorate,
- Consumers
- Sapientia University

Partnership collaboration and governance

The cooperation was initiated by Harghita County Council. Over the years, an institution has been formed which is now in charge of both the organisation of the fair and the trademark of the Szekler products, called the Harghita County Development Agency, and an NGO is in charge of controlling the trademark.

Other professional partners are the Sapientia University Food Laboratory and Szekler Farmers' Organisations, which help to assess consumer habits and behaviour and provide training and advice to producers and farmers.

Good practices that bring benefits

- The initiative was built on a real need in 2010
- Harghita County Municipality allocated a budget
- Continuous communication with producers, education and advice through co-organisations
- Control bodies have been involved in the process
- They continuously monitor consumer habits and expectations

Main factors of success

- Sensitivity to small farmers' problems from the political side
- Initiating cooperation
- Involving the academic world
- Involvement of control bodies
- Continuous monitoring of the changing local product market, identifying opportunities (e.g. launch of a network of mobile shops in 2024)

Context of the country where the good practice is accomplished

There is no specific legislation in Romania on local products and small producers, so it is very important that public institutions and inspection bodies work together to solve local problems and to ensure that local products are accessible on the market.

Constant attention and flexibility are needed to help local products to be produced and distributed in the context of changing consumer habits and changing economic opportunities. Each country's authorities have different interpretations of what is required from producers, and a county government can provide a strong backdrop for small producers. The existence of a network of village farmers in Szeklerland is a particularly important opportunity.

Replicability and questions for self-check

1. Are there local products in the area?
2. Do local producers meet the requirements of the authorities?
3. Is there a local authority willing to take on the role of moderator?
4. Is there a budget for the initiative?
5. Are there the human resources ensured to run it, to access new funding?

Roll-out of a robust, regional and regenerative food system in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA) in the Netherlands

Problem identified

The transition of our food system involves many challenges between different sectors and stakeholders. Food production competes with infrastructure, climate adaptation, recreation and tourism, housing, economic development, land positions, etc.

More complexity resides in the clash of different governmental structures: EU policy, national policy, regional policies (Province) and local policies (City) do not align and are set in their own framing. Almost all of this complexity comes together at the regional level. Farmers and consumers reach out to each other. They form new chains of trust. This offers a unique momentum to reset the incentives in our democratic structures based on trust and evidence-based practices.

In the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA) there are many initiatives that focus on food transition. They have varying approaches, but in general, they all have in common that they are working towards a food system which eventually only creates sustainable value. Despite the shared goals, they rarely work together. The most dominant narratives are:

Short Food Supply Chain, City Farming, Vertical farming, Healthy Food Environment and Urban Farming: these narratives have lots in common, yet they are in competition, they do not collaborate. We concluded that they effectively are all working towards a regional food system, which is a stepping stone to a regenerative food system. A food system without victims and where all the added values are rewarded.

To achieve a regenerative regional food system AMPED developed the following roadmap (Figure 2.)

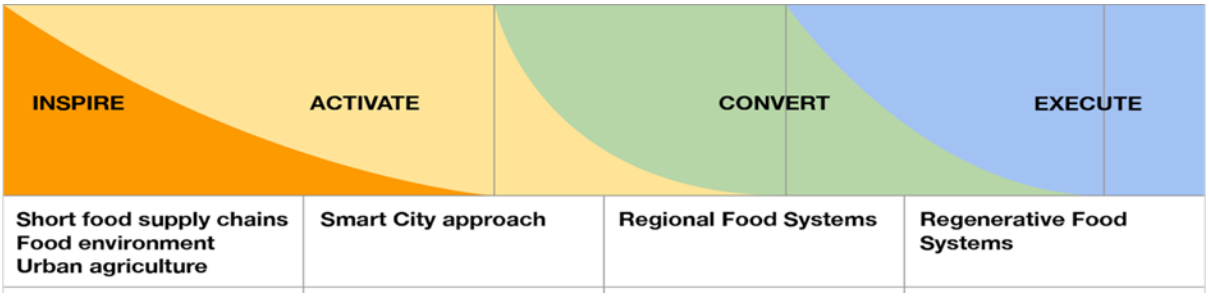


Figure 2 Roadmap to achieve a regenerative regional food system Source: AMPED's own edition

Solution

The transition of our food system involves many challenges between different sectors and stakeholders. Food production competes with infrastructure, climate adaptation, recreation and tourism, housing, economic development, land positions, etc.

More complexity resides in the clash of different governmental structures: EU policy, national policy, regional policies (Province) and local policies (City) do not align and are set in their own framing. Almost all of this complexity comes together at the regional level. Farmers and consumers reach out to each other. They form new chains of trust. This offers a unique momentum to reset the incentives in our democratic structures based on trust and evidence-based practices.

Based on the GAIN Transition Model (short explanatory video here) and our practical project experiences we developed a Transformational Governance Model for the transition towards a robust roll-out of a regional food system in the AMA, including the establishment of a writing

office for building consortia of stakeholders for local, regional, national and international collaboration, and for writing proposals.

The Transformational Governance Model forms the foundation for the AMA Regional Alliance (a covenant between parties for the sake of common benefits or goals), which is jointly drawn up and recorded in a manifesto. The regional alliance provides governance based on a jointly drafted roadmap. The governance model is composed of several elements: alliance formation, governance processes and work processes.

The consortium represents the core group of the alliance in the form of an association that provides guidance to the development of projects and programmes. The already existing connections between the parties provide the necessary trust, from a community-driven process. The following processes serve to strengthen the connection within the consortium:

- Carrying out a network analysis of the consortium partners;
- Executing an innovation ecosystem analysis by performing an inventory scan;
- Setting up a community and providing network activation and communication with user-generated content;
- Structuring of a core consultation process (Doughnut Lab learning journey)

Funding the solution

Blended finance is a form of financing in which network collaboration, cross-sectoral multiple value creation throughout the entire chain, and the aggregation of challenges in the region come together. There is a long-standing development of blended finance that is mainly sector-oriented and does not include, or does not include enough, commons/communities. The approach focuses primarily on emerging countries and not or less on developed countries moving towards regenerative communities through the SDGs. This new form requires a learning governance process that operates from trust.

This new form has significant advantages:

- There is more flexibility in the provision of resources.
- The risk profile of the financing is lower.
- It provides guidance on multiple value chains.
- It contributes to breaking "the tragedy of the commons" into a "strategy of the commons."
- It helps reduce inflation and creates more price stability while incorporating multiple value aspects.
- It breaks current dilemmas in the food transition.

For Blended Finance in the domain of short food chains, it is important to be embedded in robust international research and learning programs for the purpose of codification and dissemination. To achieve this, we will ask several partners, based on the chain of trust, to contribute.

Actors involved

The actors are introduced in details at the partnership and governance section.

Partnership collaboration and governance

A strong management structure is crucial for the successful management of such a rather large consortium. The management structure is designed to meet the challenges involved in a project of this size and scope. The project management structure, illustrated in Figure 8, is based on four management levels:

1. Project management group
2. Coordinator
3. System Building Lab, Product Owners
4. Work Packages Scrum Masters

The Project management group (PMG) will be composed of the key partners of the consortium, Product owners and the Coordinator. The PMG will meet quarterly in a meeting to review progress of the project or more frequently, if considered necessary. The tasks of the PMG include:

- Deciding on the overall roadmap;
- Agreeing on procedures and policies for knowledge management;
- Initiating Challenge Rooms as part of the GAIN Transition Model for co-creation with other regional alliances;
- Deciding on press releases and publications by the partners with regards to the project and to avoid difficulties in the protection of potential intellectual property produced.

Coordinator

The project will be coordinated by Climate-KIC in close collaboration with the PMG. The primary focus will be the integration and orchestration of the research, Work Packages and reaching overall project aims by aligning all elements with the product owner. The Coordinator will ensure that there are no 'gaps' in the coverage of the Work Packages and that in summary the specific objectives of the project will be met. The Coordinator will ensure that all partners are aware of their roles at any given time, and the project Coordinator will cooperate closely with the Product Owners to verify that all their activities are effectively and precisely scoped and ensure that all inputs and outputs across Work Packages match correctly. Where issues or delays arise, the Coordinator will work with the relevant Product Owners and Work Packages Scrum Masters to find a solution and apply it in a timely manner. The coordinator reports progress of the activities to the Project Management Group.

- Manages the entirety of the project, including financial reporting;
- Sets goals for the System Building Labs;
- Makes combined proposals to the PMG for the modalities of use, management and release of joint funds;
- Makes proposals to the PMG for (a) structural adjustments, (b) decisions on the allocation of the project's budget, (c) reviews and proposes the partners' budget reallocations;
- Determines the focus of the System Building Labs.

System Building Lab Product Owner

The System Building Lab's Product Owner plays a key role in the success of the collaboration. Therefore, experts with extensive knowledge and project management experience must be chosen as Coordinators for the four Labs. At the start of the Labs, the Lab's Product Owner will make explicit his/her expectations of each partner involved in the Work Packages and its role and responsibilities, with intensive communication with the Coordinator and Work Packages Scrum Masters.

Part of the tasks within the consortium is to set up a joint writing office. This writing office should be coordinated within the System Building Lab structure, in order to take the work process to the next level. The purpose of this writing office is to build consortia of stakeholders for collaboration on a local, regional, national and international level and setting up a writing

office for proposals. This activity is covered in the System Building Lab Governance & Coordination.

- Makes proposals to the PMG's System Building Lab, in coordination with other System Building Labs;
- Makes proposals to the Coordinator for the modalities of use, management and release of joint funds;
- Instructs Work Packages Scrum Masters with tasks within the sprints;
- Manages his Lab progress based on the roadmap.

Work Packages Scrum Masters

For each Work Package, the Scrum Master is responsible for managing the assigned work by the Product Owners. The Scrum Master builds his team based on the onboarded parties, consortium members and experts. Scrum Masters shall promptly supply the Coordinator or Product Owner all information and documents they need to fulfill obligations, pursuant to the Roadmap and overall activities.

System Building Labs

The established projects and exploitation of all opportunities and new developments can only be achieved through an agile project management structure. The use of System Building Labs aligns with an agile working methodology. The PMG gives direction to the development of projects and programmes through the appointment of Product Owners for each System Building cluster. With this agile working structure, the Product Owners translate the PMG's requirements into concrete projects or activities and transfer them to the Work Packages Scrum Masters.

System Building Lab: Coordination & Governance

Coordinate and harmonize all individual and collective system-building efforts, combine forces, acquire and deploy resources efficiently.

Good practices that bring benefits

- Map the related active initiatives
- Developing a model on how to build the collaboration
- Build a clear structure for the collaboration
- Ensure the funding and background by establishing the "Writing Office"

Main factors of success

- Active leadership ensured by the strong management structure
- Clearly identified roles and responsibilities at the different levels
- Network analysis as a supporting tool for the diversification of activities and knowledge gained

Context of the country where the good practice is accomplished

- **Cooperative culture**: This model is well-understood and widely accepted, making it easier for producers and retailers to collaborate. In other countries, cooperatives might have a negative connotation from the past and require more groundwork to build trust and understanding.
- **Demand for local and sustainable food:** In the Netherlands, the demand for sustainable food products has been growing steadily. An increasing percentage of food sold in supermarkets now carries sustainability labels, with the share rising each year since 2015. Consumer preferences have noticeably shifted towards

sustainable options, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, as more people became mindful of their food choices.

- **Strong Agricultural Sector:** The Netherlands is one of the world's leading agricultural exporters. This supports the cooperative by offering a wide range of producers to participate. Countries with less developed agricultural sectors might find it harder to gather a sufficient number of local suppliers and a diverse assortment.

Replicability and questions for self-check

The transformational governance model applied in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area (AMA) showcases replicability potential for other regions aiming to build sustainable food systems. Its approach combines collaborative governance with a structured roadmap, emphasizing stakeholder onboarding, agile project management, and localized knowledge-sharing through a competence centre. This model's flexibility allows adaptation to diverse regional needs by establishing alliances, defining common goals, and enabling coordinated efforts in research, socio-cultural changes, and market creation. Regions adopting this model can tailor the system-building labs and roadmap to align with local policies, enabling synergies across food production, economic, and environmental sectors. Through blended finance and strategic partnerships, this governance framework can support sustainable economic growth while addressing food security and regional development needs.

Replicability and questions for self-check

1. Have you defined a governance model with clear roles and responsibilities (e.g., project coordinator, product owners, and scrum masters) to ensure effective management and accountability?
2. Is there a structured process for onboarding stakeholders and aligning their interests with the shared vision for sustainable food systems?
3. Are there mechanisms in place for inter-regional collaboration and communication, enabling regions to share lessons learned and innovative practices?
4. Can the roadmap be adapted to align with the specific goals, policies, and cultural values of your region?
5. Have you assessed local needs, regional regulations, and policy frameworks to ensure compatibility and support for the model?
6. Do you have access to sustainable funding sources, such as blended finance or public-private partnerships, to support the transformation process?
7. Are there incentives or funds dedicated to support regional innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in the short food supply chain?
8. Is there a strategy for engaging the local community and changing consumer behaviour toward local and sustainable food consumption?
9. Are there partnerships with educational institutions to foster local talent and equip future leaders with the skills needed for a sustainable food system?
10. Have you established metrics and data collection processes to measure the social, economic, and environmental impact of the transformation?
11. Does the model include provisions for scaling successful initiatives across different areas or sectors within the region?
12. Is there a feedback loop that allows for regular assessment and iteration of the roadmap and governance structures based on project outcomes and stakeholder feedback?

4.4.3 Farmers' incomplete marketing, IT, administration and business knowledge

Another important challenge that the system faces is the lack of knowledge and experience in marketing, IT, administration and business development. It is crucial to provide solutions for them in these areas as it would help them compete effectively, to find new markets for their products and services, and to manage their operation efficiently. Sometimes the knowledge may come from outside, from other organisations or stakeholders, the producers don't have to know everything and most of the time they don't have the capacity to deal with all these besides the production, but through collaborations these might be solved by other actors. In the mapped good practices, one is such a solution which provides the IT background and the marketing for the producers who would like to increase their sales and strength in today's competitive market.

OPEN FOOD NETWORK (OFN) in Italy

The Open Food Network (OFN) offers a compelling case study for the analysis of best practices in supporting short food supply chains (SFSCs) through innovative measures, policies, and collaborative governance models. Established in Australia around 15 years ago, OFN has since expanded globally, impacting over 20,000 producers across 20 countries and generating approximately €20 million annually. This case highlights several critical elements for the successful promotion and implementation of SFSCs, including regulatory support, community engagement, and the strategic use of open-source digital tools. OFN is a multi-faceted approach in supporting short food supply chains, driven by technology and community engagement.

Problem identified

The agri-food sector, with its extraordinary possibilities, also presents intrinsic limitations: agricultural producers often suffer from a lack of communication services and infrastructure, exacerbated by the long distances separating rural centres.

Often, precarious internet coverage further isolates agricultural producers, sometimes leading to a closure towards technological updates and cooperation with their neighbours. These difficulties, evident in Italy, where the extraordinary landscape diversity can also impose geographical limits on development, add to the challenges inherent in the short food supply chain (SFSC) in every country in the world, as listed in the previous paragraph. The purpose of Open Food Network is precisely to facilitate the connection between producers and consumers worldwide by creating sovereign and independent food hubs.

Solution

Founded in Australia in 2012, OFN currently operates in 20 countries (including Italy), involving around 7,000 producers[102]. OFN acts as a true "digital ally" through which producers can: Sell products online at a price convenient for them. Manage different measurement systems and quantify stock levels. Create an online store (e-commerce) where they can collect payments and sell through other shops on the platform. Create a virtual farmers' market with community support, building a resilient local food economy. In turn, wholesalers can integrate with existing systems, manage purchasing groups, and provide their products through national or regional networks of hubs and food shops. Open Food Network facilitates the management of online farmers' markets and resource sharing. Global action draws strength and inspiration from local communities (public decision-makers, entities/organisations, agricultural producers, consumers). For this reason, Open Food Network offers training and consultancy services and incubation programs.

[102] https://openfoodnetwork.org/find-your-local-open-food-network

Funding the solution

The initiative has been managed by the non-profit organisation Open Food Foundation since 2012. Global revenues come from local entities through grants and funds. Approximately 2,000 people globally, mostly volunteers, contribute to software development and operations. Free for up to €1,000 per month, with a 2% fee for higher revenues which provides the income for the Foundation. Operates in 20 countries, supporting 20,000 producers, generating €20 million annually, but there is a continuous need for funding to support growth and participation in programs like Erasmus.

Actors involved

The Open Food Network (OFN) spans 20 countries and involves over 20,000 producers, mainly small to medium-sized farmers who benefit from community and digital support for direct sales. Governed by the Open Food Foundation, OFN's operations depend largely on a network of volunteers who contribute to the development and maintenance of the platform.

Partnership collaboration and governance

OFN operates on a collaborative governance model where global and local teams manage the platform, ensuring flexibility for region-specific needs. Collaborative efforts are facilitated by an open-source infrastructure, allowing stakeholders to actively contribute to the platform's growth and functionality, which is further supported by grants and donations.

Good practices that bring benefits

OFN promotes practices such as lowering market entry barriers through cost-effective digital solutions, creating food hubs, and offering on-site support for logistics and marketing. These practices empower local producers to increase sales, aggregate resources, and engage in sustainable, community-centred food networks

Main factors of success

Key factors contributing to OFN’s success include collective action, adaptable open-source software, a community-driven governance model, and supportive public policies. The digital platform, with features tailored for small-scale food producers, enhances market access and operational efficiency, making it easier for producers to manage sales and distribution.

Context of the country where the good practice is accomplished

Italian agricultural enterprises that transform and market their products through alternative channels to the traditional long ones are increasing in number. The methods used are diverse and continually evolving. The so-called short supply chain (filiera corta) and all alternative channels represent a significant phenomenon for Italian agriculture today. They are considered fundamental tools for the development of local markets, typical productions, and the rural economy in a broader sense. Key characteristics include transparency of information, connections with the territory, shared values, visibility of the producer, and the enhancement of the farmer's identity.

During the period of activity of the National Rural Network 2014-2020, Ismea conducted a series of investigations on the theme of direct sales and short supply chains to capture the current state and critically analyse this phenomenon. This involved meetings with operators and institutional stakeholders, analysis of successful cases of direct sales and short supply chains, surveys of consumers and intermediaries, mapping of sites and platforms, workshops held in various geographical contexts with the participation of farmers, agri-food companies, local authorities, and professional organisations.

In conclusion, the Open Food Network exemplifies several best practices for the development and support of SFSCs, including regulatory alignment, community-driven governance, and the strategic use of digital tools. The case study highlights the need for interconnected policies that support local food systems and underscores the importance of reducing barriers for small producers. As such, OFN provides valuable insights into how collaborative, technology-enabled models can drive the growth and sustainability of SFSCs, offering lessons that can be applied across diverse European contexts.

Replicability and questions for self-check

1. Does the region have a strong community of small and medium-sized food producers interested in collaborating to form a local food network? Are there stakeholders who are motivated to support and participate in such an initiative?
2. Is there adequate digital and logistical infrastructure in place to support an online platform for local food sales, distribution, and marketing? Will producers have reliable access to the internet, and are they prepared to adapt to an online sales model?
3. Is there sufficient funding available to support the platform's initial setup, ongoing maintenance, and promotional activities? Have potential funding sources, such as grants or local government support, been identified?
4. Are there supportive policies and regulatory frameworks in place, or are local authorities open to facilitating such a model? For example, are there opportunities for integrating short food supply chains into public procurement programs, like school meals or local government catering?
5. Is there a governance model that can manage both global standards and local needs effectively? Can a collaborative governance structure be established that allows for input and adaptation from local producers and community members to tailor the platform to their specific needs?

MyFarm Community – community supported agriculture practice in Hungary[103]

Problem identified

The founder's parents were producing on the family farm but not knowing where to sell, how much and at what price. The idea was to bring chemical-free fruit and vegetables to families' tables through a subscription system. They started selling their products online. After a year, the number of orders reached a point where they had to bring more producers into the system.

Solution

MyFarm Ltd. sells to farmers a validated model, a know-how and educational material. Farmers produce, deliver, and do their own documentation. The farmers sell their product at MyFarm online marketplace. The challenge of finding customers is not the producer's problem. It provides the platform - but otherwise everything is direct between the producer and the consumer. MyFarm farms are sustainable family farms where the farmers transport the product directly from the farm to the customer during the season. They use a subscription model. For full season commitment there are two seasons: summer and winter subscription, weekly, or monthly. The predictability and pre-financing make it easier for the farmer to plan. What started

[103] https://www.myfarmharta.com/

as a small family business soon grew into a much bigger business. Several farmers have joined MyFarm online marketplace, so they were able to serve more and more customers.

What started as a simple idea has now grown into a movement that focuses on respect for nature and conscious eating. MyFarm is not only a farming business, but also a community that promotes healthy, sustainable living. In the MyFarm Community, subscribers, supporters and followers also play an extremely important role, as they contribute directly and indirectly to the mindset and culture change process that is the core mission of MyFarm: to change the stereotypes about "window vegetables" and to show that backyard, chemical-free vegetables produced by Hungarian farmers provide an affordable and sustainable alternative for everyone.

In most cases, running a Myfarm farm is a multigenerational task, as the knowledge of the farmers is complemented with the modern knowledge of the young people in the families, effectively combining traditional knowledge with the opportunities offered by modern technology and digitalisation.

Funding the solution

This initiative is based on the profit generated by sales. The detailed business structure of the Ltd. hasn’t been shared as it may be confidential, but the core of funding is the income and profit ensured by the continuous sale for consumers. The key is the subscription by the consumers for different seasons and their loyalty to the farmers and their products.

Actors involved

- The small-scale ecological farmers (now 5 of them are involved in the initiative but more and more producers would like to join)
- Consumers who are opened to the not so flexible construction but happy to receive healthy and fresh products
- The operation board behind the Ltd.
- For marketing purposes different relevant influencers, chefs are involved in the activities
- Different professional organizations, associations are involved in the development of the initiative to ensure the

Partnership collaboration and governance

In the case of the MyFarm initiative the collaboration is really focusing on the willingness of the producers to join the community supported agriculture model. The farmers meet with the organizer board of MyFarm Ltd. regularly and provide their feedback on the sales and marketing developments. The partnership is really strong in supporting the farmers with strong marketing communication and knowledge transfer year by year. In the collaboration different actors are involved too but yet their involvement in the governance structure is more focusing on the marketing activities and sales development.

Benefits for the stakeholders

The farmers benefit from the organizer activity of the Ltd. as they do not have to cope with finding market for their products and to deal with the orders. They also benefits from the continuous knowledge-transfer which is led by the MyFarm team as for them it is important to develop the knowledge of the farmers to be up to date regarding environment friendly farming practices. The consumers benefit from the easily accessible healthy and reliable products as MyFarm ensures the quality of the products.

Main factors of success

- Recognized need for marketing support for small scale producers
- Recognized demand for high quality, healthy and fresh ecological products
- Open communication among the actors
- Knowledge-sharing in focus and continuous development in adapting to the needs of consumers and producers too
- Reliable and innovative business model

Good practices that bring benefits

- Live webcast: the consumers can watch in live the garden from which they receive their box of products
- Strong and real communication towards the consumers and farmers
- Openness in social media platforms

Context of Hungary

In Hungary, the SFSC sector is gaining attention in the last decade as consumer interest in local and bio products grows, spurred by concerns over food quality, sustainability. Hungarian consumers are increasingly seeking fresh, organic, and locally sourced foods, which has created new opportunities for small-scale farmers and producers. This raised during COVID-19, and since then it has been decreasing but still relevant. Despite this demand, small farmers face challenges due to limited infrastructure, insufficient access to digital tools, and a lack, or difficult financial support, which makes it hard to compete with large-scale industrial producers. However, SFSC initiatives are still operating, and the number of community-supported agriculture businesses are growing. There are regional initiatives and EU-backed programs that aim to improve SFSCs, but what is quite visible the strong number of bottom-up approaches, local initiatives which try to develop SFSCs and local food systems in Hungary. These efforts aim to improve the economic viability of small-scale farming in Hungary while meeting rising demand for locally produced and sustainable food options.

Replicability and questions for self-check

1. Is there a demand for locally-sourced, organic, or chemical-free produce in the target region?
2. Do small-scale farmers in the target region face challenges in accessing markets and finding customers?
3. Are there any logistical or infrastructure barriers that might affect direct-to-consumer deliveries from small farms?
4. Is there a local community or network (including influencers, chefs, or advocates) willing to promote a sustainable, local food initiative?
5. What regulatory or financial considerations might impact a community-supported agriculture model in the new region?

4.4.4 Lack of cooperation between farmers and producers

The lack of cooperation is mostly raised during any kind of discussion about the challenges that the producers, farmers and the whole food system has to face. More practice may be linked to the challenge such as: MyFarm (which is not directly based on the cooperation of the farmers, but without it wouldn't be able to work properly); the Genial Regional – Brilliantly Regional trademark from Germany which is mostly based on the work together of the producers; Dorset and East Devon FLAG in the United Kingdom which also wouldn't be able

to operate without the bottom-up approach of the fishermen. As these practices are introduced in other sections here, they are not presented but each of them can be found in the deeper analysis.

4.4.5 Unfair trade practices and limited bargaining power of producers

This practice may serve as a good example on how to beat the unfair trade practices and limited bargaining power of producers by supporting effective forms of cooperation involving those stakeholders that are the key players of the whole chain.

Van Onze Grond (From Our Land) in the Netherlands[104]

This example from the Netherlands is a special collaboration among farmers and supermarkets. The two worlds have a mission which is putting more local food on the shelves, coming from the land freshly to the supermarkets and to the tables. The cooperative supports the consumers to make a conscious choice by providing locally available products in supermarkets.

Problem identified

The gap between consumers and local food producers in the Veluwe, Salland, and Achterhoek regions limits the availability of locally sourced products in mainstream supermarkets. During a meeting between local entrepreneurs and the municipality of Deventer, the idea emerged to leverage supermarkets as a distribution channel, given their large customer base. However, logistical challenges and pricing competition between stores also posed barriers.

Solution

Van Onze Grond (From Our Land) bridges the above-mentioned gap by creating a cooperative that connects local farmers with supermarkets. Through the initiative, local food products are available in regional supermarkets, offering transparency on product origin through QR codes and supporting sustainable farming practices. The involvement of a logistical partner and applying advisory pricing allows the cooperative to effectively collaborate with different actors overcoming competition and working towards collective value creation.

Funding the solution

The cooperative is financially supported by municipal bodies such as the municipality of Deventer and Cleantech Regio. Farmers receive 60% of the retail price, creating a fair revenue model. Initial investments include logistical setup, packaging, marketing expenses, and potential subsidies for sustainable initiatives. By choosing a name that is not tied to a specific region, the cooperative is planning to facilitate collaborations between supermarkets and local farmers in other regions, making the cooperative scalable and financially stable.

Actors involved

- Farmers: Eighteen farmers from the Veluwe, Salland, and Achterhoek regions produce local foods.
- Supermarkets: Jumbo, Spar, and Plus serve as distribution channels for the products.

[104] https://www.onzegrond.nl/

- Local municipalities: These municipal organisations offer financial support and promotion.
- Consumers: Individuals seeking sustainable and local products.
- Logistic partner: Combigro Helmink Foodservice ensures smooth delivery and assistance for the farms to ensure their products comply with supermarket requirements (food safety).

Partnership collaboration and governance

The cooperative structure fosters strong collaboration between farmers and supermarkets, with equal representation on the board to ensure balanced influence. The cooperative holds a general assembly twice a year with all its members to review and approve the financial plans for the upcoming year. In addition, new board members may be elected during these meetings, and other major decisions have to be democratically voted upon. The farmers are able to set their own prices, receiving 60% of the final retail price. The remaining 40% covers supermarket margins, logistics, VAT, and operational costs. The cooperative also manages the logistics through Combigro Helmink Foodservice utilising an automated ordering system. This partner monitors stock in multiple stores while streamlining the process for supermarkets by reducing the need for multiple delivery vehicles and invoices. The cooperative also uses an advisory pricing system to prevent competition between supermarkets, ensuring consistent pricing and stable margins across the participating stores.

The farmers that are part of the cooperative often focus on biodiversity, nature conservation, or employing people with a distance from the labour market. While many of the producers are organic, this is not a strict requirement, the key is having a compelling story that differentiates them from regular products. Supermarkets involved in the initiative are often independently owned, giving them the flexibility to incorporate local products into their offerings.

Benefits for the stakeholders

- Farmers receive fair prices for their products and can reach more customers.
- Supermarkets can develop their local product assortment, improving community ties and brand loyalty.
- Local municipalities can support its local economy and sustainable practices.
- Consumers gain access to locally produced, sustainable food with clear product origins.

Good practices that bring benefits

- QR-coded packaging offers transparency on product origins, fostering consumer trust.
- Transparent pricing helps maintain fair profit margins for both producers and retailers.
- A controlled growth strategy ensures a consistent supply chain and manageable expansion for all parties involved.

Main factors of success

- Strong collaboration between farmers and supermarkets.
- Transparent pricing system with open communication.
- Consumer interest in sustainable, locally sourced products.
- Support from municipal bodies.
- Effective logistics and distribution management.
- Producers with a differentiating story.

Context of the Netherlands

It has been introduced at the good practice of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area.

Replicability and questions for self-check

1. Are local farmers willing to cooperate with supermarkets?
2. Do these farmers have a compelling story that contributes to the local community?
3. Can the logistics of local food delivery be efficiently managed?
4. Are supermarkets independently owned?
5. Are cooperatives a commonly used and easily set up organisational entity?
6. Do consumers in your area value transparency in food sourcing?
7. Is there financial support from the local government or other organisations for sustainability initiatives?

4.4.6 Lack of affordability and accessibility

The Chios Gum Mastic Growers Association (CGMGA) in Greece[105]

Problem

The Chios Gum Mastic Growers Association (CGMGA) established in 1938, aiming at protecting the local Chios Mastiha by way of the systematisation of its production, gathering, packaging and commercial distribution. Mastiha is a resin that has been recognized since ancient times for its distinctive aroma and its healing properties. The natural resin is collected after falling on the ground in drops from superficial scratches made by the cultivators on the tree's trunk and the main branches.

However, around 2000, the CGMGA, known as "The Union," faced stagnation. The mastiha industry needed to innovate, and farmers were struggling with low productivity, insufficient marketing, and a lack of economic diversity on Chios Island. In addition, the North Aegean region was one of the EU's underdeveloped areas, with a significant part of the rural population dependent on agriculture for income.

Solution

In 2002, The Union created Mediterra S.A., a subsidiary company to promote and market mastiha internationally, including developing a network of stores in Greece and abroad. The Union owned 70% of this company while the other 30% was owned by ENA (Development Company of Chios Municipality). This initiative revitalised the mastiha industry by developing innovative products, improving branding, tapping into new markets and establishing a production plant to expand product offerings.

Funding the solution

The Union funded the creation of Mediterra S.A., with 70% ownership, while 30% was funded by ENA, the Development Company of Chios Municipality. In 2016, Peiraios Bank also played an important role by funding the creation of the Chios Mastiha Museum. This investment was critical in promoting the cultural and historical significance of mastiha, while also enhancing the visibility of mastiha products and boosting tourism on the island.

Actors involved

[105] https://www.gummastic.gr/en/

Primary actor:

- Chios Gum Mastic Growers Association (CGMGA or "The Union") consisting of 4,000 mastiha farmers from 24 villages in South Chios

Supporting actors:

- Mediterra S.A. (subsidiary promoting mastiha)
- ENA (Chios Municipality Development Company)
- Peiraios Bank (support for Chios Mastiha Museum)
- Chios Mastiha Research Centre (to explore medicinal properties)

Partnership collaboration and governance

The partnership surrounding the mastiha industry on Chios is a strong example of collaborative governance between multiple stakeholders working together to protect and promote a unique agricultural product. The Union, representing the 4000 mastiha growers, holds a 70% stake in Mediterra, while ENA owns 30%. This partnership enabled them to pool resources, create new secondary products, and develop a marketing strategy aimed at international markets while ensuring that the farmers have direct control over marketing and production.

This public-private partnership was further strengthened by including external actors such as Peiraios Bank, which helped fund the opening of the Chios Mastiha Museum in 2016, and scientific research organisations studying mastiha's medicinal properties.

Moreover, the partnership took steps to protect the cultural and economic value of mastiha through legal protections such as Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status in the EU, UNESCO recognition of traditional cultivation methods, and an EU Herbal Monograph for mastiha's medicinal use. Together, these actors ensured that mastiha was not only marketed globally as a premium product but also protected from global market pressures and competition.

Through these collaborative efforts, the partnership has strengthened the local economy, preserved cultural heritage, and created an equitable income for mastiha farmers on Chios.

Consumers' lack of information and ability to make an informed choice

Dorset and East Devon FLAG in the United Kingdom

Problem

Dorset and East Devon FLAG territory has one of the largest concentrations of fishing vessels of under 10 metres in length in the UK. A needs assessment by Dorset Coastal Forum identified ageing infrastructure and outdated equipment at ports and harbours, which limited direct sales and the development of short food supply chains. A lack of young people joining the sector, a need to improve health and safety, and poor economic viability were also identified as problems.

Solution

A stakeholder-led strategy was created using a bottom-up approach. Workshops, interviews, and research identified solutions, which included investments in infrastructure and equipment to improve the sustainability of ports and harbours (such as chilled storage facilities), increasing short food supply chain / added value sales. Collaboration between stakeholders, facilitated by the FLAG maximised benefits, increased trust, and ensured a whole supply chain perspective.

Funding the solution

The FLAG was funded by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), national co-financing, and industry co-financing. EMFF funding totalled €695 000. National co-financing amounted to €231 908. FLAG Activities ceased in 2020.

Actors involved

The FLAG was based on a partnership between fisheries actors and other local public and private stakeholders. Public partners included local councils, the UK's Marine Management Organisation, the Dorset Coastal Forum, as well as inshore conservation authorities. Private partners in the FLAG included fishers and aquaculture producers, fishers' associations, and private fisheries companies.

Partnership collaboration and governance

The FLAG was based on a formal public-private partnership. Individuals from the partners met regularly on a voluntary basis. Together, they designed and implemented a local development strategy that addressed the economic, social, and environmental needs of the local area. This community-led approach to development involved selecting projects that were evaluated and funded in line with the FLAG's strategy.

Benefits for the actors

Benefits to the community: Before the FLAG, there was no sense of community or common cause locally amongst fishing stakeholders. The FLAG allowed stakeholders to connect and exchange ideas. It also provided a forum for developing a consensus on the future of the area and its fisheries and aquaculture sectors. The FLAG's strategy, built on a needs assessment, brought together a set of priorities that were put into action through funded projects.

Benefits to producers: The FLAG provided several benefits to fisheries and aquaculture producers. Trust and cooperation among different types of stakeholders was a challenge the FLAG was able to overcome, particularly between capture fisheries and aquaculture producers. The development of port infrastructure and the purchase of port equipment and storage solutions through FLAG projects also significantly helped producers in the territory, improving the infrastructure required for short food supply chains and adding value locally.

Benefits to consumers: The FLAG increased local consumer awareness of local seafood and the area's fisheries and aquaculture sector. Projects from the initiative also resulted in more direct access to local seafood by making it easier for producers to sell directly from their boats or harbourside. The FLAG raised the profile of local seafood and increased consumer awareness related to its value. Projects and campaigns by the FLAG increased awareness among consumers that, while prices may be higher, the quality of local seafood is superior to that bought through longer supply chains.

Good practices that bring benefits

Community-led decision making: All FLAG stakeholders had a voice in deciding the developmental trajectory of their own area. Collectively, they were then involved in the implementation of the strategy and how funding was allocated and spent.

Build meaningful relationships: Developing relationships and trust with fisheries producers can take time. Identifying key local champions and figures is important. Listening to stakeholders on the ground is crucial; they are a fountain of knowledge, and building trust and dialogue with them can save a lot of time and improve progress.

Efficient processes: Having efficient processes in place that reduce waiting times and delays in implementing projects can significantly improve perceptions of the initiative and its ability to deliver the objectives set out in the local development strategy.

Workshops, forums, and events: The regular exchange of ideas, suggestions, and feedback is important for continuity and the exchange of knowledge and information. Events are a great way of engaging consumers in short food supply chains, as well as other FLAG initiatives.

Main factors of success

Outreach and stakeholder engagement: Reaching all relevant stakeholders is key to forming a successful community-led local development initiative. It allows for a better consensus regarding the needs of the local area. Bringing new stakeholder groups into the discussion makes supply chains more resilient and diverse. It can also help overcome distrust between stakeholders.

A balanced approach: Options and views from public and private stakeholders need to be balanced. Representatives from the private sector, particularly individual producers, are crucial to understanding the potential impact of a local development strategy in an area.

Animation and consistency: Regular meetings, forums, and cooperation among stakeholders in the FLAG are essential to progress, as is communication with the wider local community regarding activities and initiatives.

Consumer awareness and education: Educating consumers on the benefits related to shorter supply chains within a local development project portfolio supports and encourages producers wanting to engage in short food supply chains. Setting clear strategic goals helps with the selection and harmonisation of FLAG projects.

Transparency: Networking and collaboration within a public-private partnership requires transparency. Ensuring selection processes are fair and inclusive avoids conflict and fosters collaboration, particularly regarding bringing new and existing users of natural resources together. For example, introducing aquaculture as a strategic objective in a traditionally captured fisheries area.

Context of the country where the good practice is accomplished

EU funding: Local Action Groups and Community-led Local Development are funding initiatives of the EU in countries with an operational programme under specific EU Structural and Investment Funds.

Proximity to food producers: Applying a local action group approach in the context of short food supply chains requires an area or territory with significant food production. This is not limited to fisheries and coastal areas; several local action groups successfully work on short food supply chain initiatives in rural agricultural areas.

Consumer perceptions: There is an apparent disconnect between UK consumers and fisheries and aquaculture products. This poses particular challenges for initiatives focused on short seafood supply chains, which may be different in other countries. Therefore, both producer and consumer perceptions should be considered when replicating the Dorset and East Devon FLAG initiative.

Question for self-check

1. Does the initiative bring together all relevant stakeholders in the food supply chain and territory? This includes both the public and private sectors.
2. Is the initiative based on a needs analysis, so that spending matches priorities?

3. Do relevant stakeholders meet regularly to understand each other, make decisions, and review progress?
4. Does the initiative have a trusted leader, who can work with stakeholders on a regular basis?

Talamh Beo in Ireland

Problem identified

Small and medium-scale farmers working for agroecology, regenerative farming and food sovereignty feel left out of the Irish agricultural system. Although there is a lot of discussion and it is clear what needs to be done to improve our food system, there is no advice out there that actually represents the voice of farmers and their needs.

Solution

Talamh Beo is a farmer-led organization that wants to create a better food system in Ireland, where all people have access to healthy, nutritious and affordable local food. It is a democratically organised, member-led organisation, run by farmers who have direct experience of the issues they campaign on. Talamh Beo has over 300 farmers, citizens and organizations as members who pay an annual membership fee.

Talamh Beo believes that farmers and communities should be at the centre of decision-making for food and agriculture systems and for developing agricultural policies. They stand for a system which puts the power back into the hands of farmers, communities and citizens instead of corporate interests and industrial agriculture and food production. Talamh Beo are Ireland's only members of the European Coordination of La Via Campesina.

Talamh Beo stands for:

- Food, fuel and fibre sovereignty
- Land use which improves social, economic and environmental conditions
- Resilient rural and farming communities
- Direct access to culturally appropriate, nutrient dense, quality and local food
- Every citizen having access to healthy, regionally produced, affordable food from farmers they can trust

Funding the solution

Talamh Beo is run mostly on a voluntary basis. Talamh Beo is a farmers organisation but with citizen membership. Members pay an annual fee of either €30, €50, €100 or €200. External funding has been an important support, particularly from EIP projects and core funding from the Irish Environmental Network.

Talamh Beo are working on soon obtaining enough funding to have a basic income for 1-2 (part-time) staff, and to have enough membership that the organization is independent and not relying on external funding.

Actors involved

Talamh Beo is a farmers' organization but with citizen members, making it different from other farming organizations. They see the food system as an important integration of the community and the farmer themselves, but the main decisions are made by farms and people on the ground growing food. And that's horticulture, it's agroforestry, forestry, fishery - it's anybody making

a living off the land. Citizens or organisations interested in food, agriculture and healthy communities, that believe in a food system that has food justice at the heart of it where access to good local food is fair and equitable, are also members.

Partnership collaboration and governance

Talamh Beo is a democratically organized, member-led organisation, run by farmers who have direct experience of the issues they campaign on. The organisation has adopted aspects of Sociocracy, also known as Dynamic Governance, to structure its governance and decision-making processes. Sociocracy is best suited for initiatives moving away from a top-down command and control structures and who want to self-govern based on the values of equality.

The organisational structure of sociocracy means "governance by peers or colleagues," and is an increasingly popular governance and decision-making method based on the principles of transparency, equivalency, and effectiveness. When a community or social enterprise uses Sociocracy correctly, its governance and decision-making tend to become far more effective.

Sociocracy was developed as the Circle Method in the 1970s by Gerard Endenburg, a Dutch electrical engineer, inventor, and cybernetics expert so that his company, Endenburg Elektrotechniek, could function more harmoniously. It is sometimes called "Dynamic Governance" in the U.S. Sociocracy combines consent decision-making, a decentralised system of authority and intentional processes to improve our decisions and processes over time into a governance system that supports effective and efficient processes while increasing connection, listening and co-creation among members.

Talamh Beo's organisational structure is designed using Sociocracy. The organisation is divided into semi-autonomous circles or working groups, each responsible for specific functions. A steering group, composed of members from different working groups or circles, ensures cohesion between various areas of activity. The Board who maintain legal and financial oversight are also represented on the Steering Group.

Often organisations are unclear on how to make operational decisions. Within Talamh Beo decisions are made by consent rather than majority voting. Consent in Sociocracy means the absence of objections. While similar to consensus in inviting group participation, consent focuses on finding a "good enough" solution rather than achieving unanimous agreement. This means that while every member can voice concerns, the group aims to accept solutions that are workable and satisfactory for the time being, enabling progress without needing perfect unanimity.

The Consent approach ensures that there is a clear process for raising proposals and making a decision. This method ensures that all voices are heard and that decisions are made collaboratively. Decisions are only blocked by reasoned and paramount objections.

Benefits for the actors

Benefits for farmers: Membership of an organization which is centred around agroecology and food sovereignty, allowing like-farmers to connect, mobilize, and learn from one another. Farmers have opportunities to get involved in Talamh Beo's ongoing projects, such as becoming a lighthouse farm or organizing farm walks for citizens. By working in a collaborative manner to address members' needs and concerns, Talamh Beo allows for its farmers' voices to be louder and stronger together.

Benefits for citizens & organizations: By supporting Talamh Beo's work with a recurring yearly supporter membership, citizens add their voice to the movement and bring more power to Talamh Beo's messages. They will help Talamh Beo to continue lobbying and campaigning for issues that matter, and to run more training and events, as well as increasing the skills of

small and medium scale land workers. As a supporter citizens get regular news and updates, exclusive access to Talamh Beo events, farm walks and courses, and an opportunity to participate in lobbying and action days, all while supporting a better future for all.

Good practices that bring benefits

Talamh Beo members have developed a Local Food Policy Framework which as they want everyone in Ireland to have access to locally produced, nutrient dense, chemical-free food. They also want farmers to earn a fair living from providing that food into their communities. They have therefore created pathways for local food production through a positive policy frame work which incorporates: income supports, labour and finance incentives, pilot projects for land access and a focus on short supply chains and infrastructure. This framework is a tangible example of how Talamh Beo is trying to lobby policy development on behalf of its members' needs, and for the people of Ireland.

To facilitate decision-making, Talamh Beo has begun to experiment with the Loomio platform. This online tool supports collaborative decision-making, allowing members to discuss proposals, provide feedback, and reach consent remotely. It enhances transparency and participation, especially for members who may be geographically dispersed. It is an ideal independent decision-making tool that gives independence to each structure of the organization yet still allows traceability through it.

Talamh Beo has a dedicated women's group which is a space where members envision what gender equality looks like in agriculture and how they go about guaranteeing this right for women and all vulnerable farm and rural dwellers. Women's representation is present at all levels in the organisation and their structure is 50/50 gender balanced.

Talamh Beo are part of Feeding Ourselves, an all-Ireland Community of Practice for regenerative, community-led & cooperative local food initiatives, that facilitates capacity building and peer support while strengthening a solidarity food movement on the island of Ireland.

Main factors of success

- Sociocracy & Dynamic Governance: Organisation structure best suited for initiatives moving away from a top-down command and control and who want to self-govern based on the values of equality.
- Consent-based Decision Making: Decisions are made by consent rather than majority voting, in which consent focuses on finding a "good enough" solution rather than achieving unanimous agreement.
- Connection to other organisations and networks: Talamh Beo is not isolated in its efforts; it maintains strong connections with other organisations and networks at both the all-Ireland and international scales.
- Gender Balance: Women's representation is at all levels in the organisation and the structure is 50/50 gender balanced.
- Diverse membership: By having a farmer-led organization which includes citizens and organizations as members, it allows for diverse voices and expertise to strengthen the movement and actions
- International network: Talamh Beo is Ireland's only member of La Via Campesina, the international peasants' rights movement, which gives more strength, knowledge and solidarity to their work

Context of the country where the good practice is accomplished

Although Ireland's AKIS is seen as advanced in comparison to other EU countries, it does not include or support SFSCs or local food systems. Ireland's agri-food policy is primarily export and commodity focused, with most support directed towards food businesses with export potential or the ability to supply large supermarket multiples. The Irish agri-food system is increasingly specialised for dairy and beef production and exportation, rather than diverse small-scale farming for local markets. There is no institutional framework to support local food production, or farms and food businesses that want to primarily supply their own local population. Farmers and small stakeholders feel left out of the AKIS and that they are struggling to maintain their SFSC with such little recognition and support.

Question for self-check

1. Are you working across regions or on a national scale?
2. Are you a farmer passionate about food sovereignty and agroecology?
3. Do you have a group of like-minded farmers to join you and form an organization and pay annual membership?
4. Are you all willing to apply principles of Sociocracy and consent-based decision making?
5. Do you know citizens or organizations interested in food, agriculture and healthy communities that will support you through annual membership?
6. Do you all believe in campaigning for a better food, fuel and fibre system with support for small family farms and workers, and where people are paid a fair price for the food and they produce?
7. Are you all concerned about climate chaos and biodiversity loss and believe we need environmental stewardship?
8. Are you willing to participate in lobbying and action days to improve your food system?

4.5 Lessons learned through the deeper analysis of the collaborative governance cases

The collection is very diverse and not so strict regarding the focus on involving public actors and highlighting the strength of partnerships. The outcome of this collection can support those initiatives which would like to change their collaboration practices, develop their actions and planning of their establishment.

If any initiative would like to self-check if they were ready to implement a collaborative model of governance then the following aspects should be taken into consideration based on the analyses practices and developed self-check questions:

- Context and Alignment:
    - identify the specific regional issues, challenges and needs
    - alignment with local goals and priorities (align with national development goals, policies, priorities)
    - check if the goals and values of potential stakeholder sufficiently align to foster meaningful collaboration
- Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships
    - Diverse representation of stakeholders
    - Clearly defined roles
    - Ensure clear engagement mechanisms
- Adaptability and Flexibility

    - Customize the model to fit to the local policies, regulations and culture circumstances
    - Communicate the changes if necessary
    - Adapt to unexpected challenges
- Financial and Resource Sustainability
    - Find reliable funding sources
    - Clear strategy for resource allocation – human, financial and technological too
    - Support to build the capacities
- Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability
    - Measurable indicators to monitor the progress
    - Collect the stakeholder's feedback
    - Transparent accountability structures
- Cultural and Social Considerations
    - Acceptance from the local community
    - Cultural compatibility
    - Involve and inform the broader community
- Scalability and Replicability
    - Scaling potential
    - Documenting best practices
    - Long-Term Viability

These aspects can be paired with questions and may provide a comprehensive foundation for evaluating whether a collaborative governance model is well-suited to a new context and can help identify areas for adaptation and improvement.

5 Conclusions and recommendations for T4.2

The collection gave us good insights into the situation of SFSC related regulation and into the existence of collaborative governance models related to SFSCs in some EU countries. The process showed that there is a need for gathering those regulations that are aimed at supporting SFSCs, small-scale producers. Such a collection is missing, and the added value of it is that it was built on the identified barriers and needs of SFSCs, coming from the SMARTCHAIN project and from the Living Labs' needs and feedback in the EU4Advice project.

The regulatory collection and the replicability of the identified well-functioning regulations serves the reader and the Living Labs with a wide overview of the existing SFSC related legal framework in the EU. In the case of the regulation's replicability is such an aspect which depends on the intention of the legislative actors, policy-makers and of course on the knowledge and information that they receive from the field and from the relevant stakeholders. If this is missing, then the implementation of good practices from other countries may be challenging. In a lot of cases the background is the EU legal framework, which provides a guide for the relevant regulations, or in other cases regulation fall under national competence like in the case of EU the tax law is the competence of the member states. So the European Union may provide the broader regulatory framework, but the member states can work on the best fitting local level legislation.

It can be stated based on the work of identifying best practices in regulation is that it is crucial to have the local and national policy makers intention to implement and develop such regulation which is in line with the real-life practice and with the needs of the respected stakeholders. Short food supply chains proved that they are crucial for a safe and reliable food system in a country (during COVID-19 the need for local markets was proven) thus supportive and well-

functioning policies, regulations should be implemented. EU-level strategies state the importance of moving towards sustainable food systems, acting at local level and support local food systems (Green Deal, Farm to Fork, CAP strategies). With the collection a basis for a wider overview on short food supply chain related policies regulations is started and may be further developed based on the needs.

By gathering best practices from across Europe, this project illustrates the positive impacts of adaptable, well-structured policies on enhancing SFSC sustainability, fostering local economies, and promoting resilience within regional food systems.

The case studies and guidelines presented demonstrate how collaborative governance and regulatory practices can address the unique challenges faced by SFSCs, such as limited access to markets, logistical and infrastructural barriers, and fragmented policy environments.

Regarding collaborative governance models and their replicability based on the discussions with the Living Lab leaders it can be stated that it is not easy to implement a whole governance model, but some aspects may be replicated from their operation. The identified practices may serve as a good starting point for initiatives which would like to step on the way of strengthening their collaboration practices, and the developed questions for self-check may support them in finding their way.

As for recommendations for T4.2 this collection is a pool for the Living Labs to see a few solutions in the SFSC sector for regulations and governance or operational structure. The aim in Task 4.2 is to pilot activities coming from this best practice collection or from other examples discovered and known by the partners during the project period. The piloting does not require the full implementation of any good practice, even only one aspect, part of the actions, operation of an initiative may be tested in the Living Labs. The roadmap for the piloting and the identification of the methodological best practices or part of the best practices is under continuous development with collaboration of the LL managers and stated in Milestone 7. It is suggested to the Living Labs to read and get familiar with the practices listed, and for further and deeper understanding raise questions and try to identify those key aspects from the practices that may be useful for them. The good practices of the collaborative governance models will be distributed and disseminated on the projects' website and communication channels in a designed format which will support the better understanding and reach to the wider audience, not just for the project partners.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Questionnaire for the Living Lab managers

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR Living Lab managers - WP4

Dear LL managers of the EU4ADVICE!

In the WP4 Task 4.1 our task is to draw best practices of SFSC supporting measures, policies and rules, and of collaborative governance models. The scope will include a wide range of SFSC-related regulatory issues (based inter alia on SMARTCHAIN roadmap), and consider the interconnection between different policies to foster the development of SFSCs and access to markets.

The aim of this questionnaire is trying to identify the gaps in relation with the short food supply chain advisory system and the challenges that each Living Lab has to face.

Please fill this questionnaire in order to let us see what kind of good practices in terms of policy we should collect.

Through this questionnaire we will build a priority list according to which we will focus the research of good practices.

Thank you in advance!

* Kötelező kérdés

1. Name

2. Country

3. Organization

4. Living Lab's mission

5. What do you think how important issue is the lack of legal definition of SFSC in your case?

   In the SMARTCHAIN project more partners pointed out that there were no legal definition, which causes problems for example in terms of defining the intermedieries, using subsidies, etc. Do you feel any obstacles during sale, processing, sell to restaurants, shops etc,?

   Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

6. Please explain your answer

7. Lack of knowledge on SFSC by farmers.

   Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

8. Please explain your answer

9. Lack of knowledge on SFSC by consumers.

   Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

10. Please explain your answer

11. Lack of knowledge on SFSC by policy makers.

Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

12. Please explain your answer

13. Lack of data of SFSC.

A lot of countries don't have sufficient or any databases of farmers, producers, local markets. They also often don't have any statistics concerning small actors in SFSC to provide appropriate policies, and have no information about selling points. There is no reposatory of farmers and their products.

Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

14. Please explain your answer

15. Lack of legal definition and/or regulation on different types of SFSC

Válassza ki az összeset, amely érvényes.

	basket scheme	community supported agriculture	agro tourism	online direct sale	home delivery	farmers' shop	sale in HORECA sector	pick-your-own
1 not relevant at all	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5 very relevant	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

16. Lack of legal definition and/or regulation on different types of SFSC *

Válassza ki az összeset, amely érvényes.

	1 - not relevant at all	2	3	4	5 - very relevant.	I don't know
basket scheme	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
community supported agriculture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
agro tourism	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
online direct sale	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
home delivery	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
farmers' shop	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
sale in HORECA sector	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
pick-your-own	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
collection points	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
vending machine	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
SFSC in public catering	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
farmers' shelves in supermarkets, hypermarkets and dicount shops	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. Please explain your answer

18. Lack of capacities and resources of producers.
Example: administration, marketing, etc.

Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

19. Tell us which of these capacities and resources are the most relevant

20. The following questions attempt to discover support in different types of activities. Support means advise, funding etc.

21. Lack of support in SFSC marketing service or/and infrastructure.

Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

22. Please explain your answer

23. Lack of support in SFSC sale service or/and infrastructure.

Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

24. Please explain your answer

25. Lack of cooperation and networking initiatives.

Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

26. Please explain your answer

27. Lack of access to funds.

Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

28. Please explain your answer

29. Unfair trading practices and limited bargaining power of producers .

Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

30. Please explain your answer

31. Unsuitable food health and safety standards and control procedures.

Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

32. Please explain your answer

33. Limited access to public procurement contracts.

Soronként csak egy oválist jelöljön be.

	1	2	3	4	5	
not	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	very relevant

34. Please explain your answer

35. Please list additonal barriers or needs that you identified in relation to SFSC!

Ezt a tartalmat nem a Google hozta létre, és nem is hagyta azt jóvá.

Google Űrlapok

Annex 2 - Guideline for the collection of good practices (both regulatory and collaborative governance)

WP4 – T4.1
Collection of good practices on regulations related to SFSC

The EU4Advice project (https://www.eu4advice.eu/) objective is to settle the foundations and structures required to ensure effective capacity building of SFSC actors through fluent knowledge transfer. The project will identify and characterise SFSC advisors, create a European network and integrate SCSF advisors into national Akis system.

Within the project the specific objective of WP4 is to provide feedback from the EU network of SFSC advisors to relevant policymakers about SFSC issues, sharing with them their most important needs in terms of regulation and support and involve them in the process of integrating SFSC advisors into AKIS.

Our task in T4.1 is to provide feedback for the WP4 objectives by tackling the most important barriers to the development of SFSC. Therefore, we collect (a) policy and governance models and (b) regulatory frameworks of successful SFSCs. The collection works must cover all the 27 Member States.

Since the number of the project members does not cover all the Member States Task Members have to select or be dedicated one or more twin countries where they shall also make collection of good governance and regulatory framework.

The output, undertaken in the project proposal, is the following:

- Minimum 10 collected and deeply analysed best practices describing good legal practices in special SFSC issues; and
- Minimum 10 identified and analysed best practices on collaborative governance models.

Thus, we need minimum one governance and one regulatory good practice to be collected from each Members State as to have a good inventory to select and analyses deeply 10 per each of them.

We ask Task Members of T4.1 in the collection of good governance and regulatory framework practices to make an in-depth analysis already in the collection phase, to make understand why specific measures and instruments worked, made the policy effective. We are asking you not only to describe the good practice but explain the background specific decisions, the tools and measures supported that illustrate to be a good example.

The working method of this project is that it uses outcomes and result of prior projects as well as using the Task Members' experience or direct research work.

The collection work has to focus on the needs in terms of regulation and support. The needs were already well determined in the prior project of SmartChain as follows:

SFSCs' barriers and needs	
Barriers	**Needs**
1. Lack of definition/differentiation of SFSCs (transversal issue)	Legal criteria and categories to differentiate and protect SFSCs
2. Lack of knowledge and data about SFSCs	Harmonized data collection at EU level
3. Lack of capacities and resources of producers	Improved knowledge and innovation transfer, especially in terms of business models, consumer demands, cooperation modes, etc.
	Support in marketing, sales and communication (services and infrastructures)
	Support for horizontal and vertical cooperation and networking initiatives
	Increased access to funds
4. Unsuitable processing infrastructures	Local processing infrastructures (slaughter houses, mills, processing plants) adapted to handle small and/or seasonal productions
5. Unfair trading practices and limited bargaining power of producers	Increased protection of primary producers in B2B transactions
	Support of most empowering cooperation and association modalities
6. Unsuitable food health and safety standards and control procedures	Increased implementation of flexibility measures (exclusion/adaptation/derogation)
	Proportionate and less invasive quality control procedures
	Support to fulfil health and safety requirements (financial and advice)
7. Limited access to public procurement contracts	Increased access to public procurement contracts
8. Lack of affordability and accessibility	Differentiated tax system
	Sales infrastructures and services
9. Lack of consumer awareness and capacity to make informed choices	Promotion of SFSCs
	Increased transparency

In the summer of 2023 Kislépték team made interview with the EU4Advice Living Labs as to shorten the SmartChain list. Here is the result: the key challenges, i.e., barriers and needs identified. We ask you to focus on these topics while you are collecting good practices.

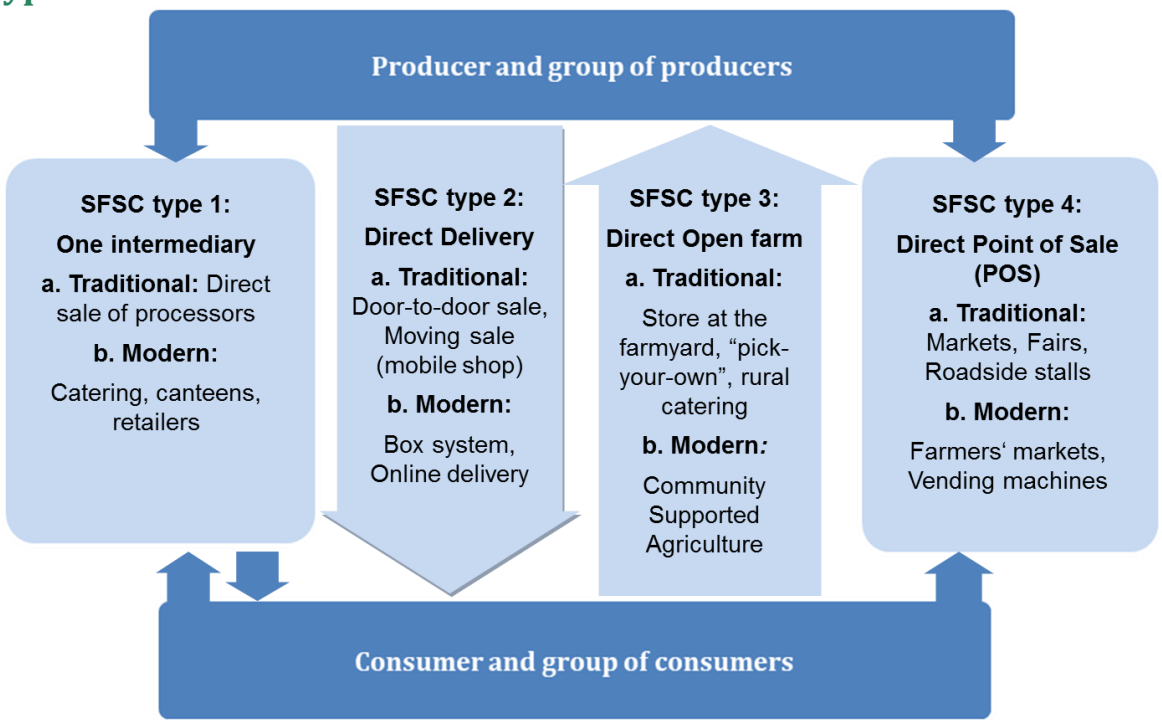


For the purposes of the EU4Advice project a SFSC is defined as:

"SFSCs include very few intermediaries between farmers and consumers, ensuring a social relation, a fair price for the farmers and the development of the rural areas. In many cases, but not always, a) such supply chains involve local producers working together to promote local food markets, and b) produce only travels a short distance, so farmers and consumers can communicate with each other". [elaborated by SmartChain project]

Note:
EU SFSC definition set out in Article 2 m)[106] was repealed by Regulation (EU) 2021/2116 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy.

Typical Forms of SFSC:



A template has been developed that allows governance, policy and regulatory information related SFSCs to be collected in a structured manner to facilitate our work.

Collective Governance Model:

A governing arrangement where one or more public agencies directly engage non-state stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is **formal**, **consensus-oriented**, and **deliberative** and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs or assets.

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[106] "short supply chain": means a supply chain involving a limited number of economic operators, committed to co-operation, local economic development, and close geographical and social relations between producers, processors and consumers;

This definition stresses six important criteria:

1. the forum is established with public agencies or institutions;
2. participants in the forum include nonstate actors;
3. participants engage directly in decision making and are not merely ‘‘consulted’’ by public agencies;
4. the forum is formally organized and meets collectively;
5. the forum aims to make decisions by consensus (even if consensus is not achieved in practice);
6. the focus of collaboration is on public policy or public management.

Here, the term ‘‘stakeholder’’ is used to describe both the participation of citizens as individuals or of organized groups. Forum refers to ‘collective decision-making processes based on more or less institutionalized interactions between two or more actors that aim to establish common ground for joint problem solving and value creation’ (Douglas et al. 2020, 498)

Collaboration involves a mutual exchange of ideas and influence between organizations and those involved, along with occasions for stakeholders to engage in discussions with each other. This necessitates agencies and stakeholders coming together in a participatory and inclusive procedure. In essence, as previously mentioned, the approach must be a joint effort. While methods like stakeholder surveys or focus groups can be valuable management tools, they do not align with the collaborative concept described here since they don't enable two-way communication or inclusive discussions among multiple parties.[107]
(source 1)

Looking at the local food perspective, collaborative governance processes entail a participatory approach to decision-making and policy development. These processes engage a wide spectrum of stakeholders, including local government bodies, the private sector, and grassroots civil society coalitions. Ultimately, these aim at collectively pursuing a shared goal: crafting a more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive food system. This system caters to the local community's needs while also addressing broader concerns like environmental sustainability and food security.[108]

Examples
La Ceinture Aliment-Terre Liégeoise (CATL) is a collaborative initiative that mobilizes various stakeholders in the Liège region (Belgium) to promote the development of a sustainable, short food supply chain that is ecologically responsible and generates quality employment. Established in November 2013 by a coalition of citizens, businesses, and cultural actors in the Liège region, CATL has laid the foundation for a comprehensive plan of action aimed at increasing the local share of food products consumed in the Province of Liège.

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[107] Chris Ansell, Alison Gash, Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, Volume 18, Issue 4, October 2008, Pages 543–571, https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum032

[108] Clark, J. K. (2019). Collaborative governance: The case of local food action planning. In *Civil society and social movements in food system governance* (pp. 164-182). Routledge

CATL's mission involves three main pillars:

1. Development: CATL is dedicated to deepening its understanding of the local realities, needs, challenges, and key actors within its territory. It also seeks to capitalize on the knowledge gained as a pioneering initiative. Through in-depth territorial diagnostics and future-oriented work, CATL ensures that local food supply chains are well-aligned and supported.
2. Awareness: Transforming a local or regional agri-food system necessitates the engagement and mobilization of various stakeholders, from consumers/citizens to policymakers and intermediaries. CATL actively coordinates and organizes events such as the Festival Nourrir Liège to foster this awareness and engagement.
3. Support: CATL offers a range of services and support based on its unique expertise. This includes assistance in establishing sustainable school cafeteria models as part of the Collectif Développement Cantines Durables. It also provides support for the development and implementation of public policies related to sustainable food systems. Moreover, it complements the services offered by general support organizations.

Since its inception in November 2013, the Ceinture Alimentaire Liégeoise has been involved in diverse projects, including the creation of cooperatives, the organization of cultural and intellectual events centered around food, support for food-related initiatives, and participation in research activities. These initiatives cover all aspects of the food supply chain, from production to product commercialization, and involve a wide range of stakeholders.

This organization is a prime example of collaborative governance for local food because it brings together citizens, businesses, and cultural actors to collectively address the challenges of creating a sustainable and local food supply chain. They engage in knowledge-building, awareness-raising, and support services to promote a more sustainable and responsible food system in their region.[109]
(source 3)

Regulatory framework

A legal and regulatory framework may be viewed as a set of constitutional, legislative, regulatory, jurisprudential, and managerial rules.

When you are seeking to find good legal practices, we are advising to broaden the scope from the strict top-down approach of rule-based, i.e. laws and regulations but have a boarder view on political institutions and administrative practices.

Further governments can regulate in many ways and many forms influencing the society. These tools include governmental activities as an economic actor (such as taxing or through quotas), a party (where governments influence behaviour through contractual conditions for minimum wages for example), as a facilitator (through markets or say, licensing), as an information provider (through product labelling or disclosing interest rates for example), or through the more traditional and familiar legislator role (where laws, rules and regulation are made).

[109] https://www.catl.be/

Regulatory Tool	Explanation and Examples
Economic Actor	As an *economic actor* the state can use taxes and charges, bounties, quotas or even permit trading.
Party	The state as a *party* uses the governments party to a contract to influence behaviour so that contract parties may for example pay minimum wages, institute environmental controls or undertake particular industrial relations approaches, report specific information or adhere to various government guidelines. Alternatively governments may use their party to a grant as a mechanism for regulating the behaviour of another party).
Facilitator	As a *facilitator*, governments may choose to use markets as a regulatory mechanisms, or may license, register, certify or accredit other parties and control behaviour through this mechanism. Alternatively, governments may litigate and through rule of law ensure particular behaviours occur. Alternatively, environmental design and physical control can form one mechanism of regulation, an example of which is an overpass built for a road which regulates behaviour of pedestrians crossing.
Information Provider	The state may act as an *information provider*. Under this category, information as a resource is used, and education and training can be adopted as a mechanism for regulation. Product labeling and disclosure laws attempt to encourage the provision of information along with date stamping, disclosing interest rates, fuel consumption and so on.
Legislator	The state as *legislator* is the most well known and familiar regulatory tool. Traditionally it provides law, rules and regulation as a formal responsibility. Primary legislation through parliament is central to this as well as delegated legislation or regulations which are of course a more narrow detailed technical legal form. Quasi legislation in which standards, codes, rulings, instruments, other rules and guidelines also exist. These have been termed 'grey law' and are some what more ambiguous as well as ubiquitous.

Table 1: Regulatory Tools of Government (Source: Freiberg, 2006)

We were trying to create such a template which should answer to

„what works, for whom, in what circumstances and why?"

however when you are making your collection and selection work please consider these questions. These questions are very beneficial to first explore with your interviewee what one considers as an example of good collaborative governance before starting to fill in the questionnaire.

Make sure that you ask your respondent to fill in an informed consent form.

Deadline: November 30, 2023

Thank you for your work!

Collection good practices on collective governance models related to SFSC
T4.1.

Collection was made by (name of your organisation and your name and e-mail)
Please note by filing out this section you consent us to contact you for further clarification on the information you provided.

Indicate the country and describe the context of the good practice

Can you describe the joint problem (barrier/need/challenge) resolved through collaborative governance?

In which role actors (primary and supporting) were engaged in collaborative governance?

What was the time allocation and compensation of public, private and civil actors engaged?

What standards, legal contracts and agreements, confidentiality, conflict resolutions, ICT use guidelines have been arranged? Please ask, if you those documents -anonymized- can be shared for educational purposes?

Can you describe the process of common value creation?

How was the performance assessed or reflexibility build-in? Economic, environmental or social indicators or ratcheting up mechanisms The term 'ratcheting up' is commonly deployed to refer to the fact that a legal instrument provides for periodical reviews enabling the adoption of increasingly stringent requirements upon its parties. Source: https://legalresponse.org/legaladvice/ratcheting-up-mechanism/ https://www.foodunfolded.com/article/short-food-supply-chains-limitations-of-law

Can you describe the primary and supporting activities and the funding for these activities?

Collection good practices on regulatory framework related to SFSC T4.1.

Collection was made by (name of your organisation and your name and e-mail)
Please note by filing out this section you consent us to contact you for further clarification on the information you provided.

Indicate the country the good practice is from

Responding to the following SFSCs' barriers and needs (from SmartChain list)

Describe the barriers and needs in more details

Provide stakeholders participated in the good practice

Who were the beneficiary of this good practice

Describe the solution by explaining the used tools, method, practices, and measures

Please provide the name of the regulation

Please provide any links or online resources, webpages for more details

Any additional information about „what works, for whom, in what circumstances and why?”

Annex 3 - Template for the interviews of collaborative governance models

T4.1. Collection good practices on collective governance models related to SFSC INTERVIEW GUIDELINE, QUESTIONNAIRE

Good practices collection model		Questions (main and others to estimulate discussion & answering)
Data collection	**Organization**	Who are you, what is your organization and what is your role within the initiative/practice?
	Country	In which country the initiative is located?
	Person[110] & email	Could you provide your contact information, including email?
	Interview date	
Initiative/ practice basic data	**Name (original+translation)**	What is the original name of the initiative/practice, and could you provide a translation if applicable?
	Contact	How can the initiative/practice can be contacted?
	Web/social media/any other online platform	Do you have a website? If so, what is the URL? Do you use any other online platforms for communication? Such as Facebook, Instagram, Linkedin, etc.?
	Geographical information (scope & application)	Could you describe the geographical scope and application context of the initiative/practice?
	Date	When did the initiative/practice start?
	Budget (annual) & Funding	What is the annual budget for the initiative, and how is it funded?
Initiative/practice description	**Justification and origin of the initiative**	What was the rationale behind starting the initiative/practice, and what is its origin story? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • What was the driving force or main motivation that led to the establishment of the initiative/practice? In other words, what problem, barried, need or challenge did the initiative/practice aim to address? • Additionally, could you provide some context or backstory regarding how the idea for this initiative/practice originated? This could include any specific events, experiences, or insights that inspired its creation.
	General objectives	What are the overall goals of the initiative/practice? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • What general objectives or outcomes is the initiative/practice striving to achieve? In simpler terms, what are the big-picture aims or aspirations that guide its activities and decisions? • If you're unsure of the specific goals, perhaps you could elaborate on the broader vision or mission that the initiative/practice is working towards.

[110] Please note by filing out this section you consent us to contact you for further clarification on the information you provided.

		This could encompass desired changes, improvements, or impacts that you hope to see in the community or system that the initiative/practice serves.
	Objetives related to SFSC	Are there specific objectives related to Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC)? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • Are there any specific targets, aims, or intentions linked to Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC) within the framework of the initiative/practice? • If you're uncertain about these objectives, could you provide insights into any efforts or initiatives aimed at enhancing local food systems, supporting small-scale producers, or fostering direct relationships between producers and consumers? Essentially, we're exploring any goals or actions geared towards promoting more sustainable, transparent, and resilient food supply chains within the scope of your initiative/practice.
	Actors involved & role	Who are the key stakeholders involved, and what roles do they play? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • Could you identify the various individuals, organizations, or groups that play a significant role in the initiative/practice? These stakeholders could include advisors, collaborators, community members, governmental bodies, or any other entities involved in supporting or contributing to the initiative/practice's objectives. • If you're unsure about specific stakeholders, could you provide insights into the different actors who have a vested interest or influence in the initiative/practice's activities? Furthermore, it would be helpful to understand the roles or responsibilities that these stakeholders undertake within the initiative/practice, including any specific contributions, expertise, or resources they bring to the table
	Beneficiaries	Who are the primary beneficiaries of the initiative/practice? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • Could you identify the primary individuals, groups, or communities that stand to benefit the most from the activities and outcomes of the initiative/practice? In other words, who are the main recipients or end-users of the services, products, or support provided by the initiative/practice? • If you're uncertain about the specific beneficiaries, could you provide insights into the target audience or demographic that the initiative/practice aims to serve? • Additionally, it would be helpful to understand the specific needs, challenges, or opportunities that these beneficiaries may face, and how the

		initiative/practice seeks to address or leverage them for positive impact
	Process related to SFSC	Can you describe the processes implemented to promote Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC)? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • Could you provide insights into the various strategies, activities, or methods that have been put in place to advance the principles of Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC) within the framework of the initiative/practice? • If you're uncertain about specific processes, could you elaborate on any initiatives, projects, or interventions aimed at shortening the distance between food producers and consumers, promoting local food production and distribution, or enhancing transparency and traceability in the food supply chain? • Furthermore, it would be helpful to understand any mechanisms or approaches adopted to empower small-scale producers, strengthen community connections, or foster sustainable agricultural practices within the context of SFSC.
	Results/Impacts	What achievements, impacts, or outcomes have been realized as a result of the initiative/practice? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • Could you provide insights into the tangible accomplishments, effects, or results that have been observed or documented as a direct consequence of the initiative/practice's activities and interventions? • If you're unsure about specific achievements or impacts, could you share any notable changes, improvements, or benefits that have been experienced by the target audience, community, or system affected by the initiative/practice? • Additionally, it would be helpful to understand any quantitative or qualitative data, feedback, or testimonials that demonstrate the effectiveness or significance of these outcomes in contributing to the overall goals or objectives of the initiative/practice.
	Governance and management	How is governance and management structured within the initiative/practice? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • If you're uncertain about the specific details of governance and management structure within the initiative/practice, could you provide insights into how decisions are made, responsibilities are allocated, and leadership is organized? • Alternatively, could you share any information about key individuals or bodies involved in overseeing and guiding the initiative/practice's operations and strategic direction? • Additionally, it would be helpful to understand any processes, mechanisms, or principles that underpin the governance and management approach, as well as any considerations or

		challenges encountered in maintaining effective oversight and coordination
	Barriers	What barriers or challenges have you encountered during implementation? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • If you're unsure about specific barriers or challenges encountered during the implementation of the initiative/practice, could you provide insights into any difficulties, obstacles, or setbacks that have been faced throughout the course of its development and execution? Alternatively, could you share any reflections or lessons learned from navigating these challenges, including any strategies or approaches employed to overcome them? Additionally, it would be helpful to understand the potential impact of these barriers on the progress or effectiveness of the initiative/practice, as well as any measures taken to mitigate or address them moving forward.
	Lessons learnt	What lessons have been learned through the initiative/practice? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • If you're uncertain about specific lessons learned through the initiative/practice, could you provide insights into any valuable insights, discoveries, or realizations that have emerged as a result of its implementation and operation? • Alternatively, could you share any reflections or experiences that have influenced your understanding or approach to addressing the challenges, opportunities, or objectives associated with the initiative/practice? • Additionally, it would be helpful to understand how these lessons have informed decision-making, strategy development, or future planning within the initiative/practice, as well as any implications for broader learning, knowledge sharing, or replication across similar contexts or initiatives.
	Key of success	What are the key aspects of the success of your initative?
	Challenges if any	What are those aspects that you would highlight as challenges, or issues of failure related to your initiative?
	Inspirational ideas, key issues and replicability	Are there any inspirational ideas or key issues addressed that you would like to highlight? How replicable do you think this initiative/practice is? **In case the person has difficulties to answer** • If you're unsure about specific inspirational ideas or key issues addressed by the initiative/practice, could you provide insights into any innovative concepts, approaches, or solutions that have been developed or explored within its framework?

		• Alternatively, could you highlight any pressing issues or challenges that the initiative/practice has sought to address or raise awareness about? • Additionally, regarding the potential replicability of the initiative/practice, could you share any thoughts or considerations on how its model, strategies, or outcomes could be adapted, scaled, or transferred to other contexts or communities? This could include insights into the scalability, adaptability, or transferability of the initiative/practice, as well as any factors that may facilitate or hinder its replication in different settings or circumstances

Annex 4 - Template for the deeper analysis of collaborative governance models

REPLICABILITY ANAYLSIS OF THE COLLECTED

COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE PRACTICES

EU4ADVICE

The aim of this task is to comprehensively provide an overview of the collaborative governance practice. Please try to be as short as possible, but also include the most important information. The basis of this template is the replicability roadmap created in the CoCoreado project, which focuses on fair food supply chains initiatives, good practices.

Focus on the knowledge sharing aim of this good practice collection and try to be short and clear.

Please check the example trough the shared link for each part where you don't know what to wright!

Example: https://cocoreado.eu/roadmap-10-obziva/

Problem identified *Max. 5 lines*
Solution *Max. 5 lines*
Funding the solution *Share the financial needs for the implementation of the project*

Actors involved *Try to put the actors into text as in the shared example.*
How the partnership works? *Highlight this part with focus on the collaboration and governance practice!*
Benefits for the community/consumers/farmers/producers/SFSC advisors/etc. *Here please try to identify who are the main stakeholders that receive the benefits of the initiative*
Good practices that bring benefits *Try to identify a few key actions, practices that brings the benefits for the initiative*
Main factors of success *This should be a list of success factors*

Context of the country where the good practice is accomplished *This part is to support the reader with some additional information on how this*
Question for self-check *This is a list of questions for which the answers could be yes and no only.* *The aim is to let the reader check based on the questions and answers if this good practice can be relevant for them.* *Check the given example for good ideas!*
Please add Pictures in good quality about the initiative, also the logo if they have it! **The best would be to upload these into the repository to ensure the best quality!**