



Assises de la Coopération Décentralisée
Regions and Cities for Development
Brussels, 10-11 July 2017

WORKSHOP E – Food security and safety

Innovative partnerships for sustainable food systems at local and regional level

Co-leaders

Región de Murcia
Città di Milano

Abstract

The workshop will focus on the modalities of cooperation and partnership developed by Local and Regional Authorities, within the EU and with partner Countries, in order to optimise sustainable food systems and innovation on water management, identifying elements of complementarity between cities and regions.

Background information

In the public agenda, food is no more considered just as a commodity or as a nutritional necessity. A vast literature and a huge amount of practices show that food is an emerging multidimensional policy challenge. It regards ecological concerns (loss of biodiversity and overconsumption of water, related to traditional agricultural activity), social and public health problems (food scarcity, obesity, unhealthy eating habits), economic perspectives (short supply chains, innovation in food production, delivery and consumption), spatial patterns and territorial planning (urban-rural linkages, farmhouses reconversion, agricultural land preservation).

According to the 1996 World Food Summit hold in Rome, Food Security is described in these terms: "*Reaffirm the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger*", but based on FAO figures some 795 million people in the world do not have enough food to lead a healthy active life. That is about one in nine people on earth.

Among the global causes of food shortages, we can name: population growth, in Africa and Asia mainly; population displacement to cities; global warming effects such as extreme droughts and floods; the increase of the number of small family farms unable to achieve a modernization process because of the lack of financial and technological resources; the volatility of food prices and skewing

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on agricultural market; and also internal conflict and political instability are key factors that cause crisis and vulnerability.

Food security represents a priority for the eradication of poverty and socio-economic disparity as well as for the improvement of the quality of life and the sustainable and integrated development of communities. In this way, the Sustainable Development Goal n.2 of the Agenda 2030, adopted in 2015 by the General Assembly of the United Nations, says “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”. In this spirit, in 2015 (European Year of Development, EXPO 2015 «Feed the planet, energy for life») within the Milan-led DEAR project “Food Smart Cities for Development”, the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) was created, as a global pact among Mayors, engaging more than 130 cities in the development of food systems, based on the principles of sustainability and social justice, emphasizing on the necessity to “seek coherence between municipal food-related policies and programs and relevant subnational, national, regional and international policies and processes”. The MUFPP is also a networking tool for signatory cities, creating opportunities of exchange and reflection, as it happened during the Dakar Forum (Sept. 2016), sub-regional meeting where 7 African signatory cities, namely Dakar, Niamey, Brazzaville, N'Djamena, Nouakchott, Douala and Abidjan, gathered to discuss and share ideas, plans, problems and issues arising from the implementation of the Pact.

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