



PANEL DISCUSSION

NO ONE LEFT HUNGRY: FOOD ACCESS AS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT

HOSTED BY **ASSEDEL** (SARA MARCIS, GIORGIA NOTARNICOLA, HALIT KARAKUS)
IN COLLABORATION WITH **MEP CRISTINA GUARDA (GREENS/EFA)**



DR. CHRISTOPHE GOLAY
Senior Research Fellow at
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MEP CRISTINA GUARDA
(GREENS/EFA)



SPYROS PAPADATOS
Secretary General of
“Rural Youth Europe”



LÉA STARASELSKI & SOMHACK LIMPHAKDY
Project Coordinator & Researcher
on water issues and Co-chair of
“Pour sécurité social de l'alimentation”

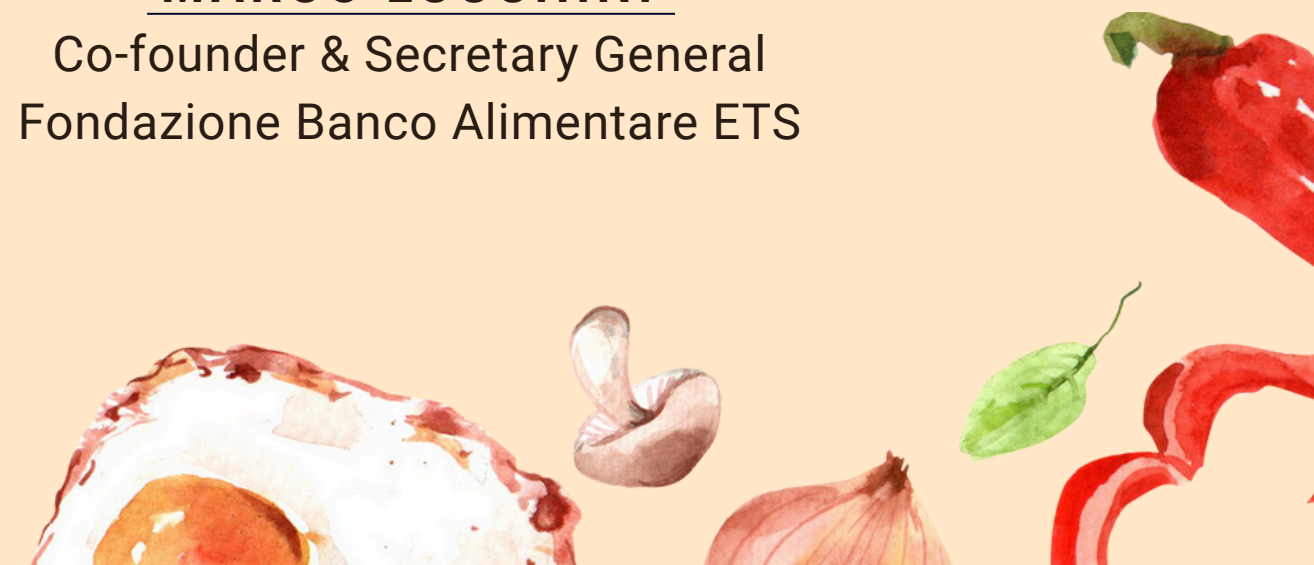


ALMUDENA GARCIA SASTRE
EU Advocacy Officer at
FIAN-Europe



MARCO LUCCHINI
Co-founder & Secretary General
Fondazione Banco Alimentare ETS

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- What is the **current situation of EU policies regarding food security** and how the **right to food can be enhanced** at the European level?
- To what extent do **EU policies and local initiatives on food systems affect each other**? Can you tell us about the Belgian bottom-up initiative that is currently in motion?



No One Left Hungry: Food Access as a Fundamental Human Right

**July 8th 2025
European Parliament, Strasbourg**

**Almudena Garcia Sastre
FIAN Europe**



FIAN
BELGIUM



Context and legal foundations



The right to food: a foundation and an instrument for a just transition towards sustainable food systems

Focus:

- ☐ political questions about the way we produce, distribute and consume food
- ☐ the social and political organisation of food systems
- ☐ the structural causes underlying the current food system crises,





The right to food: recognised and defended by the European institutions

The Right to food is a fundamental human right (**Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right**).

- All EU member states are committed to upholding it.
- Parliament resolutions & Council conclusions reaffirm this.



Legal commitments need to be operationalised

Key Milestone: Resolution OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE 2577 (2024)

- ☐ constitutional recognition of the right to food + legal framework for policy coherence
- ☐ Develop national /regional food strategies (food reserves, support local food production, etc)
- ☐ Moves beyond food safety principles to food adequacy.



Resolution 2577 (2024)¹
Provisional version



The blind EU Vision for the future of Agriculture and food

It lacks policy implementation strategies and a concrete framework for ensuring the right to food in Europe

→ we recommend that the Parliament can take steps to **introduce** the requirements of the “right to food” and the **principles of a human rights-based approach** in European law governing **agricultural and food-related policies**

it references food sovereignty but its interpretation aligns more closely with market liberalization

→ **Reframe food sovereignty in alignment with agroecological principles and food democracy** rather than free trade agreements and strategic autonomy



2. The blind EU Vision for the future of Agriculture and food

Food affordability framed as dependent of consumers' economic capacity only

→ the need for **explicitly recognize the right to food as a fundamental right in Europe** by brining food and social policies together rather than maintaining a market-based approach to food access.

Committment towards bottom-up initiatives and social innovation to enhance food access

→ Requires direction for **policy measures supporting short food supply chains and the expansion of local food policies**

Food Dialogue" vs a **European Food Policy Council**

→ as a **governance framework for participation**, ensuring transparency, accountability, and effective policy implementation.



main challenges in eu food-related policies



1. Legal principles and scope

- Legal provisions addressing food systems encompass a **wide range of diverse areas falling under multiple branches of law** and transcending traditional divisions between national, European and international law
- “European food law,” particularly Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, is insufficient to inform, guide and shape the production, distribution, consumption, and disposal of food
- Little or no harmonisation or even contradictory elements in policies affecting food systems
- Two overriding principles enshrined in European law: the **free movement of foodstuffs and food safety**



2. COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

it needs to evolve to align with sustainability, ecological justice, health, and social equity objectives and promote food sovereignty foundations as core principles

- **Phase out decoupled, unqualified area-based payments**
- Redirect CAP funds to support the provision of public goods and services
- **Prioritise small and mixed farms**, new entrants, gender minorities, and the transition to agroecological and organic farming.
- Integrating **degressivity mechanisms** in the CAP
- Introduce **compulsory capping of all direct payments and expand the redistribution mechanisms**
- Provide a well-funded second pillar of the CAP to revitalise rural areas and foster more resilient regional food systems.
- Use rural development funding to re-establish local food infrastructure



3, Competition law and trade policies

- ❑ Current **competition laws** favour large corporations, leading to market concentration and power imbalances that disadvantage small-scale farmers and agroecological practices.
- ❑ local procurement as an important lever of food system transition which can induce changes in the food system overall when prioritizing small scale, agroecological, and regional production → current hurdles in EU competition law that local governments face in trying to procure locally
- ❑ To create a sustainable food system, **trade policies must be reformed** to avoid unfair practices, promote cooperation, and address negative externalities such as environmental degradation.



C. FIAN RECOMMENDATIONS



1. EU legislative action informed by the normative content of the Right to Food and Nutrition

broad legal and public policy fields affecting food systems should be considered and regulated coherently → the conceptual and strategic framework developed by the HLPE

review of all relevant sectoral legislation affecting the availability, accessibility and adequacy of food

comprehensive and coherent perspective on all policies related to food systems at various territorial levels, with a clearly defined objective.

The sustainability of food systems requires respecting, protecting, and fulfilling human rights



2. mUlti-level strategy to overcome silos and fragmentation

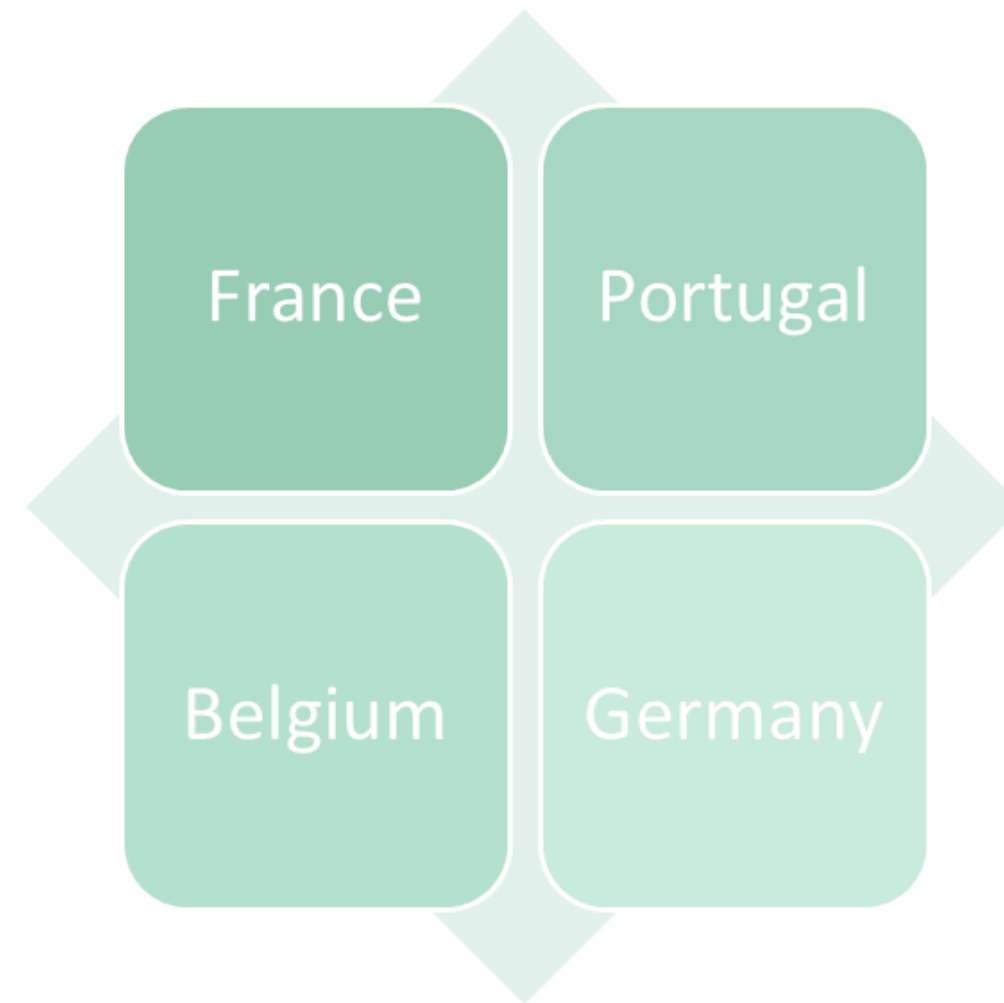
- . A **common food policy as part of the Vision for the future of agriculture and accompanying the Common Agricultural Policy**, that aligns actions at EU, national and local levels accompanied by a multi-level decision-making architecture.

European network of food policy councils, orchestrated by a European Food Policy Council.

Other institutional arrangements required would go in the direction of creating a **Formal Intergroup on Food in the European Parliament**



National & Local Initiatives





Thanks for your attention

almudena@fian-europe.org



DR. CHRISTOPHE GOLAY

Senior Research Fellow at
the Geneva Academy of International
Humanitarian Law and Human Rights



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Senior Research Fellow at
the Geneva Academy of IHL and HR

- How is the **right to food currently recognized in international law?**

<https://geneva-academy.ch/research/our-clusters/sustainable-development/detail/107-the-right-to-food-in-europe>



DR. CHRISTOPHE GOLAY
Senior Research Fellow at
the Geneva Academy of IHL and HR

- As a member of the steering committee for the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) '**Good Food for All**,' could you tell us more about the initiative and its objectives?

<https://www.goodfoodforall.eu/eci>



LÉA STARASELSKI

Project Coordinator of
“Pour sécurité social de l'alimentation”



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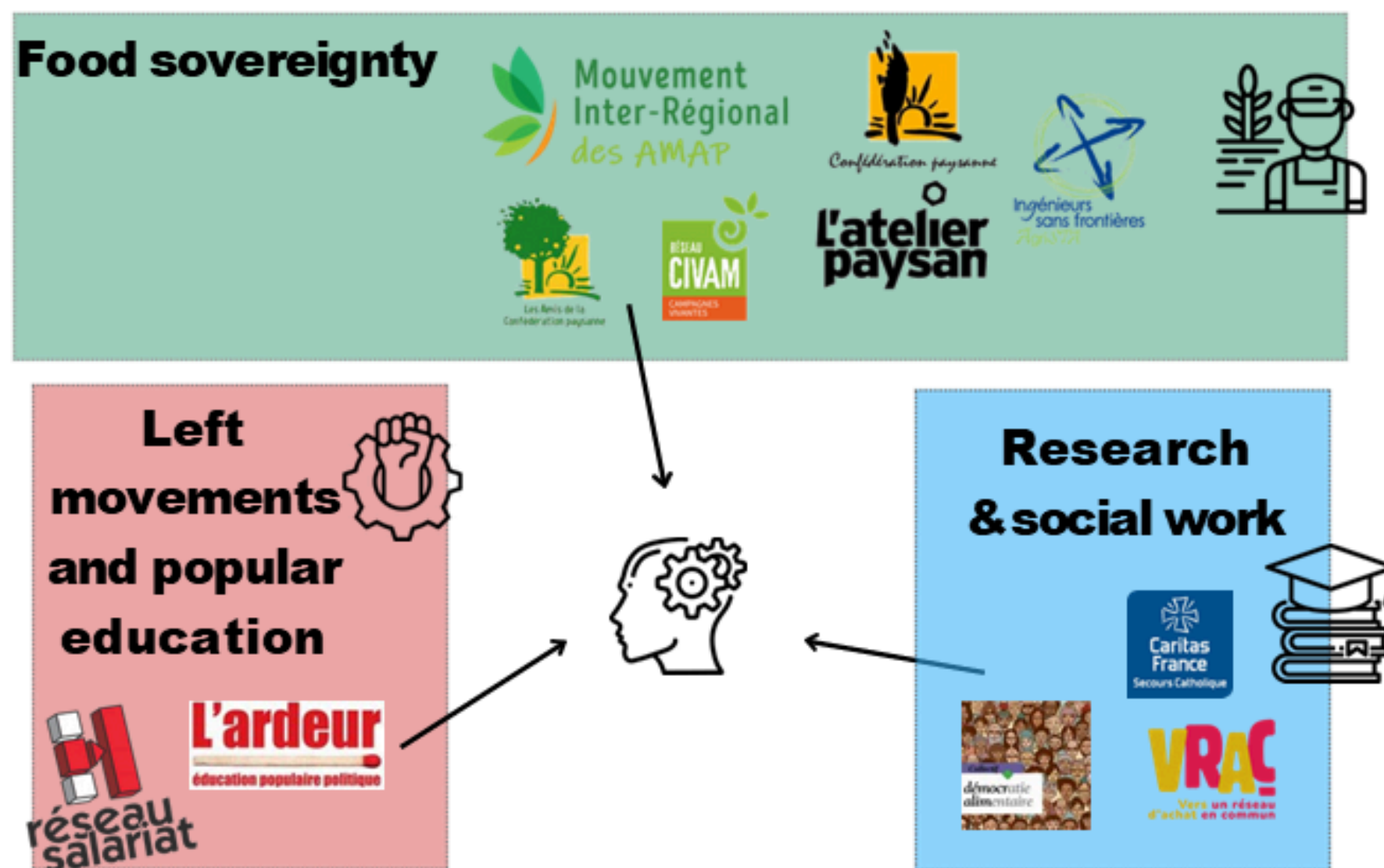
- The collective Pour Sécurité Sociale de l'Alimentation works on the integration of food into the general social security system.
What is the main objective and the core principles behind your project?

Integrating food into the general social security system : the main objective and the core principles behind the project of Social Security for Food



A COALITION OF MULTIPLE CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

2010-2019



Assessment of the current situation in food systems



Capitalist economy causes:

- **Disastrous working conditions** in agriculture and other sectors of food systems (Bricas et al. (dir.) 2021)
- Multiple **environmental damages** (Bricas et al. (dir.) 2021)
- Food **violence** (Bonzi 2023)



Absence of an effective right to sustainable food (NDIAYE et PATUREL (dir.) 2020)





A SOCLE COMMUN (COMMON GROUND) BASED ON THREE PILARS 2019





LÉA STARASELSKI
Project Coordinator of
“Pour sécurité social de l'alimentation”

- Food democracy and popular education are key parts of your approach.
To what extent are they necessary to transform the food system?

Food democracy and popular education : to what extent are they necessary to transform the food system ?



Let's weave, let's block @Marion Fayolle

**"If we're not at the decision-making table,
we're on the menu."**

Souba Manoharane-Brunel, French decolonial ecofeminist



Democracy

"Democracy meant listening to all individuals, and making a decision together as a people. Majority rule was a foreign concept. A minority was not to be crushed by a majority."

Nelson Mandela

Popular education

"No one educates anyone, no one educates themselves alone, individuals educate themselves together through the world".

Paulo Freire, Brazilian pedagogue,
author of "Pedagogy of the oppressed",
1968

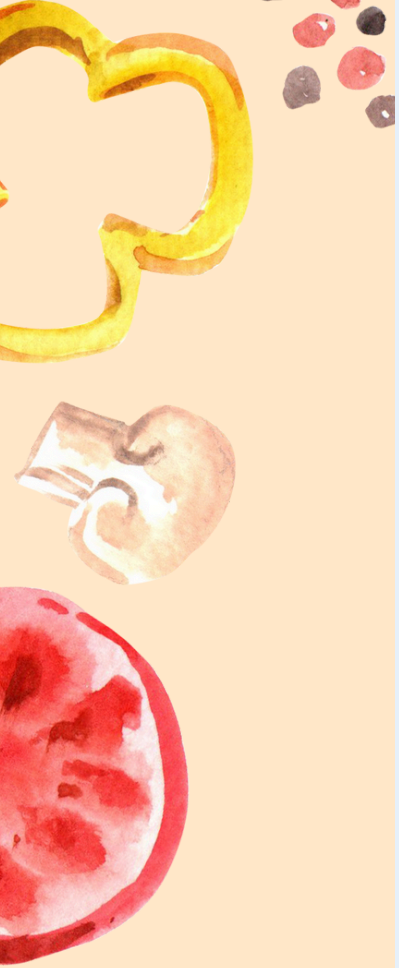
Food democracy

a democratic political process to decide and design together the food system, following core and non-negotiable values of mutual respect, dignity, justice and collective responsibility

Community organizing and syndicalism

"As an organizer, I start from where the world is, as it is, not as I would like it to be. [...] That means working in the system."

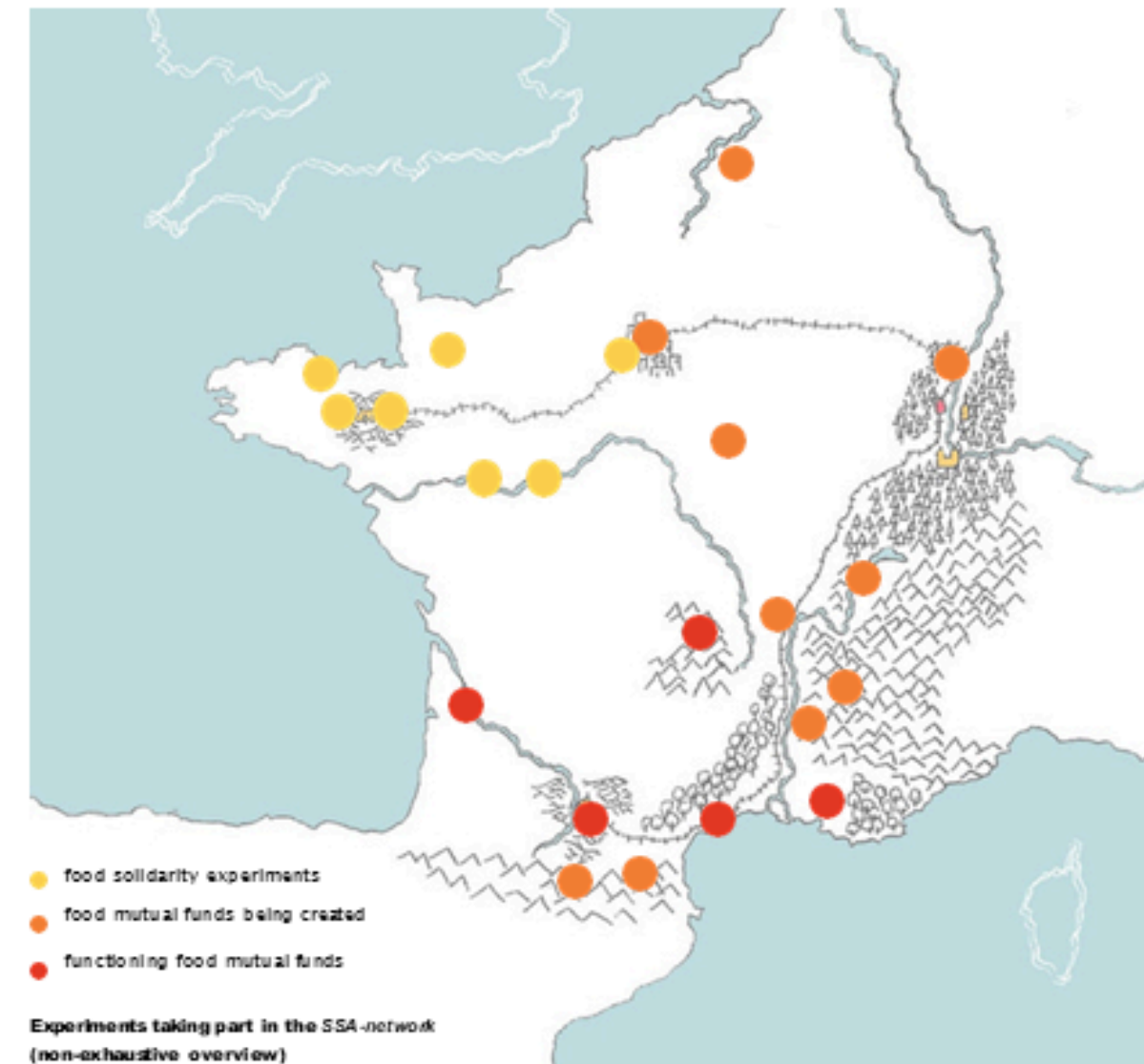
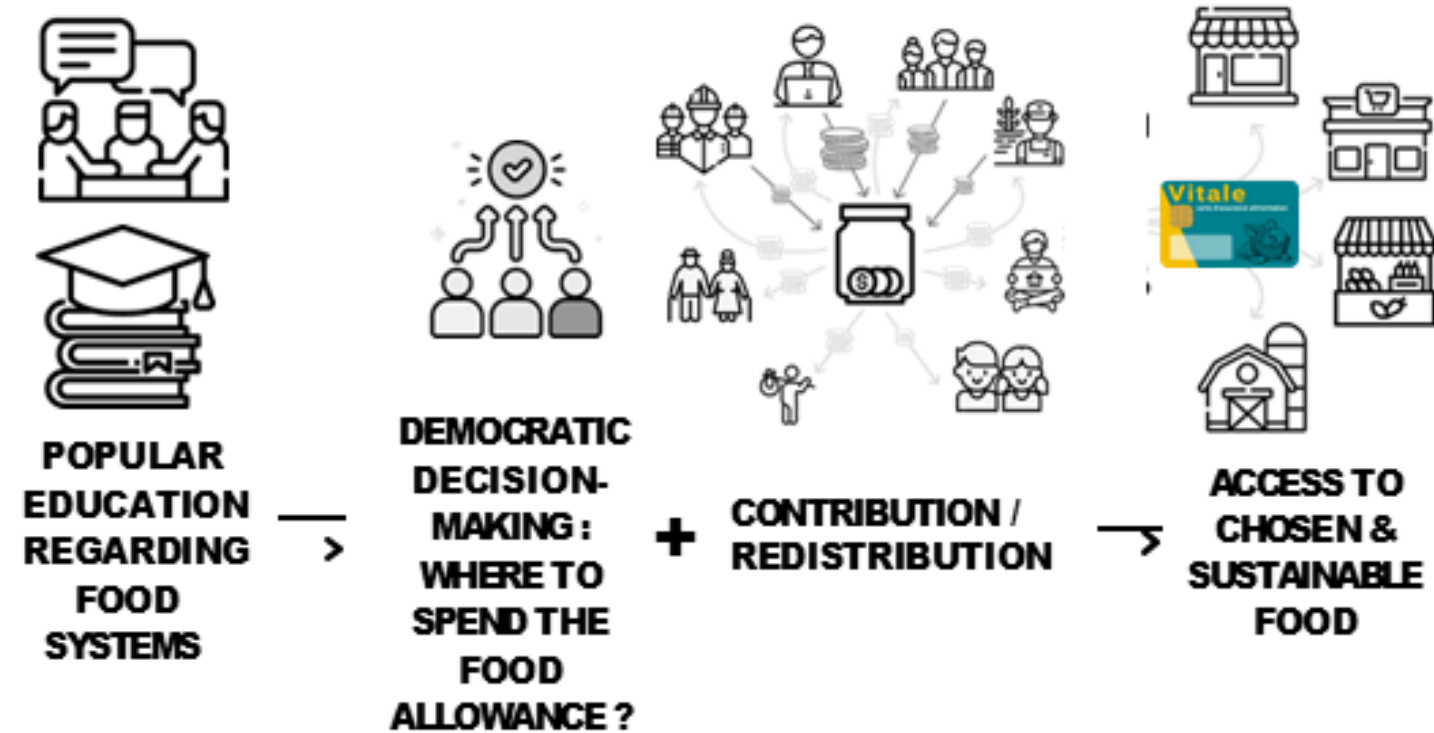
Saul Alinsky, American sociologist,
syndicalist and community organizer





FRENCH AND BELGIUM EXPERIMENTS OF FOOD DEMOCRACY

- Each participant has a **monthly food allowance**
- They decide together **where to spend this food allowance**





MARCO LUCCHINI
Co-founder & Secretary General
Fondazione Banco Alimentare ETS



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- You often highlight that access to food is the first step towards social inclusion. **In what specific ways does ensuring food access act as a catalyst for broader social and community inclusion?**



No One Left Hungry: Food Access as a Fundamental Human Right

EU Parliament – Strasbourg 07/08/2025





No One Left Hungry: Food Access as a Fundamental Human Right

According to Eurostat, in 2024 around 8.5% of the EU population could not afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish, or a vegetarian equivalent every two days.

Food aid is an essential intervention that responds to a daily and vital need, but it is also a subsidiary intervention because it promotes access to protections and services offered by public administrations or civil society.



No One Left Hungry: Food Access as a Fundamental Human Right

A new phenomenon has developed: people who were not previously considered at risk are increasingly seeking food assistance.

Some examples: university students or people who are employed but unable to afford sufficient food with their salary.



No One Left Hungry: Food Access as a Fundamental Human Right

Young people in poverty who receive food aid can enhance their contribution to the common good



No One Left Hungry: Food Access as a Fundamental Human Right

Material deprivation is one of the most visible and tangible manifestations of poverty, but to provide a broader response, it must be addressed.



No One Left Hungry: Food Access as a Fundamental Human Right

This is why, for example, the new EU Anti-Poverty strategy, which will be released by the European Commission in 2026, represents a unique opportunity to strengthen the role of food support



No One Left Hungry: Food Access as a Fundamental Human Right

Food aid also it is also subsidiary to work of local and community civil society organisations. Their action is essential because they have the capacity to reach marginalized groups in a comprehensive manner.



MARCO LUCCHINI
Co-founder & Secretary General
Fondazione Banco Alimentare ETS

- Can you share an **example from the Veneto region** that illustrates how Banco Alimentare applies the principle of subsidiarity by working with local associations to recover and redistribute food to those in need?

<https://youtu.be/sH-ESkJgNoc>



MEP CRISTINA GUARDA
(GREENS/EFA)



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(GREENS/EFA)

- What is the role of the **European Parliament** — and the **AGRI Committee in particular** — in shaping the EU's approach to food **security**? What **direction** is the Committee currently taking to address the complex challenges of ensuring secure, sustainable, and affordable food for all?



MEP CRISTINA GUARDA
(GREENS/EFA)

- In light of what we've heard about community-led responses to food insecurity, such as the work of Banco Alimentare and local associations, what is the **EU's role in supporting these grassroots initiatives while respecting the principle of subsidiarity?**



SPYROS PAPADATOS

Secretary General of
Rural Youth Europe (RYE)



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- Could you tell us more about **Rural Youth Europe** and its work related to **food security, social, and rural issues**?



SPYROS PAPADATOS

Secretary General of
Rural Youth Europe (RYE)

- How do you **promote awareness and a sense of community among European youths?**



Q & A



Two speech bubbles are positioned above the ampersand. The top bubble is pink and contains a white question mark. The bottom bubble is orange and contains three white horizontal lines, representing text.



THANK YOU!

