

## **Section 7 – Amministrazione e Politiche Pubbliche**

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### **Panel 7.7 Le politiche del cibo: nuove forme di governance e innovazione sociale**

Food Policy – New Governance Modes and Social Innovation

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Food policy covers immense and diverse terrain, because issues in this domain involve rich developed countries as well as poor developing countries; furthermore they include several dimensions – economic, environmental, social, cultural – intertwined across and interlinked with many policy subsystems, mainly agriculture, trade, processing, retailing, safety and quality regulation, sustainable production, climate change.

Recently, health and sustainability concerns related to food production and consumption have come to the fore in public opinion and political agendas at European and national levels. They involve a multiplicity of actors, fields of action and responsibilities, levels of government and entail new modes of interaction, interactive process of knowledge exchange, co-production and social learning between different societal groups.

Furthermore, in the last decades, the global financial crisis and austerity combined with 2007-08 food price inflation made policy makers aware of the potential threats coming both from security issues, such as food consumption reduction and deprivation, and from safety issues within increasingly globalised agri-food systems. Food sustainability and food affordability are no longer solely sector policy issues but become primary an policy interdependence related concern (Ambler-Edwards et al. 2009).

Policy issue like these not only challenge policymakers, but policy process scholars as well because complex problems are not cleanly addressed by the silos of policymaking activity that have solidified around established policy domains or subsystems that have been the major focus of these studying policy process for many years (Henstra et al. 2017).

In these domains the chief problem is how to induce vertical and horizontal coordination among layers of government and across public and private organizations and actors. Is a matter of fact that food public policies depend upon governments but also upon market rules, economic interest of food producers, retailers, consumers behavior, local traditions, cultural and dietary habits.

In the past food policy was seen as the responsibility and terrains of government ... today that view is obsolete. While the role of government remains important, such as in negotiations involving international forum over trade agreements and setting standards, corporations also set food policy, both explicitly and implicitly, and may be more important in shaping food system than governments... civil society organizations too have policies on food (Lang et al. 2012).

As a response to these characteristics, in an increasing number of cases a “new food governance modes” are emerging, and they took the shape of hybrid governance regimes (Havinga and Verbruggen 2017). In many cases they are local experiments and innovative arrangements in which actors, other than public bodies and powerful corporations, have voice and innovative, context-based solutions, are fine-tuned to meet the new societal demands, to implement

sustainable production, food waste reduction, and more in general, food provisioning. These new experimental governance modes can be viewed as viable carrying mechanisms, able to achieve forms of learning that are not locked into an existing trajectory (Sabel and Zeitlin 2011; Considine 2013).

Our particular interest here is in food policy domain and in food modes of governance at the International, European as well as at local and their ability to address complex issues. The attention is both to new governance modes and to social innovations that abound in food systems. They include short food chains and community supported agriculture; new ways of reducing waste; various types of urban agriculture; an inventive use of public procurement schemes; or new forms of sharing food within local communities. Cities and regions are emerging as major actors in these innovations, and new alliances are being formed between public entities, local entrepreneurs, and civil society groups

The aim of the panel proposal is to call for contributions addressing the complexity of food issues and relationships between various dimensions, levels and policy subsystems of the food policy domain. As food policy lacks the definite profile of other policies, the analytical focus should be usefully devoted to intersections between different policy areas and sector-specific governance regimes, some of which characterized by long-standing and consolidated patterns of governance (agricultural and farmers support policies, food processing systems and distribution chains), some more recently emerged (rural development, food safety and quality certification), and others quite innovative (sustainable production, food education, food wastage reduction and food recovery). The call is addressed contributions with different approaches and perspectives, anyway it would give priority to analytical and theoretical approaches focused on new modes of governance and social experimentation projects, local initiatives contributing to better governance of combined policy responses in nutrition and public health, poverty, environment and sustainable production, technology in processing and supply chain, consumer protection and social equity. Empirical and comparative studies that provide an update insights on urban food policy programs, national and local innovative food projects are welcome. Attention will be given to papers concerned with frontier topics, good governance recommendation of EU 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Developments.

Ambler-Edwards, S., & Royal Institute of International Affairs. (2009). *Food futures: rethinking UK strategy*. London: Chatham House

Considine, M. (2013). Governance networks and the question of transformation. *Public Administration*, 91(2), 438–447.

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Lang, T., Barling, D., & Caraher, M. (2012). *Food policy – Integrating health, environment and society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sabel C. and Zeitlin J, 2011, *Experimentalist Governance*, in David Levi-Faur (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*, Oxford University Press.

Verbruggen, P. & Havinga, T. (2017). *Hybridization of food governance. Trends, types and results*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

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