



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

FOOD SYSTEMS IN MEDITERRANEAN CITIES

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION



Online event

REGISTER

Thursday, 13 July 2023 | 10:00 – 12:00 (CEST)

Background

In the Mediterranean region, the urban population exceeds 70 percent, and is projected to further increase in the coming decades, significantly impacting the production, processing, marketing, and consumption of food. This urbanization trend contributes to longer food value chains, expanded food options, and shifting consumption patterns, which intensify the strain on limited land, water, and energy resources. At the same time, rapid urbanization poses challenges to urban populations' access healthy diets and social protection mechanisms.

Despite differences in terms socioeconomic development, Mediterranean countries are united by common cultural values that extend to their rich food traditions, notably the Mediterranean diet. Moreover, countries in the region face shared challenges, including the mounting impacts of climate change, water scarcity, conflicts, migration pressures, and socioeconomic inequalities. The growing interconnectedness between food insecurity and malnutrition, rising inequalities and environmental stresses, are motivating local governments across the region to increasingly engage in food systems-related issues.

The recent [UN Food Systems Summit](#) process highlighted the importance of cities in shaping more sustainable food systems and led to the establishment of the [Urban Food Systems Coalition](#), which aims at facilitating coherent and coordinated engagement, action and governance between national and local governments and supporting local governments to engage in global policy debates and establish themselves as key players of the overall agrifood systems transformation.

Strengthening urban food actions and developing local food policies and strategies is challenging and requires a holistic and coordinated approach, which considers and involves all the actors and components of food systems. **City-to-city cooperation can be a valuable instrument in supporting cities in the development of food policies**, by facilitating knowledge sharing, providing technical assistance, fostering networking and collaborative problem-solving, enabling the scaling up of successful initiatives, strengthening capacities, and empowering cities to advocate for policy changes. By learning from one another and working together, cities can create more sustainable, inclusive, efficient, and resilient food systems.

Although cities around the world are gradually bringing food issues in their strategies and are increasingly part of city networks, sharing their public, private or civil society actions underway, there is still **little information on public policies and local initiatives in favor of sustainable food systems in Mediterranean cities**, in particular outside the European Union.

For this reason, FAO, in partnership with the NGO [Let's Food](#), has developed a study with the aim to **identify urban food systems initiatives in the Mediterranean**, to determine their contribution to **cities' shift towards more sustainable and inclusive food systems**, to identify the need for **technical support to scale-up existing successful initiatives**, and to **promote city-to-city exchanges in the Mediterranean region**.

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Under the framework of the [Urban Food Agenda](#) and the [SFS-MED Platform](#), FAO is organizing this webinar to present the **outcomes of the study** and hold a **roundtable discussion** bringing together municipalities, food systems stakeholders from across the Mediterranean, and international city networks.

The webinar will aim to address a key question: **how to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange among Mediterranean cities to advance sustainable food systems in the region?**

Participants will have the opportunity to:

- share their experiences in promoting sustainable food systems in Mediterranean cities;
- identify the added value of facilitating and/or participating in city-to-city cooperation initiatives, as well as needs and expectations for successful peer-to-peer learning;
- discuss ways forward to strengthen the collaboration among Mediterranean cities and key partners.

Agenda

Welcome

The role of cities in transitioning towards sustainable food systems

Corinna Hawkes

Director, Food Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO

Study's main findings

Overview of sustainable urban food systems in the Mediterranean, quick win-actions and exchange proposals

Anna Faucher & Louison Lançon

Co-founders, Let's Food

Roundtable discussion

Sharing of lessons learned and discussion on main needs and expectations for city-to-city cooperation

Genci Kojdheli

General Director of Integration, Strategic Projects and Economic Development, Municipality of Tirana (Albania)

Adel Bettaieb

Director of Roads, Parks, and Green Spaces, Municipality of Tunis (Tunisia)

Luc Lignon

Director of the Food Policy, Municipality of Montpellier (France)

Luigi Ranieri

Director of Programme Implementation, Municipality of Bari (Italy)

Damiano Petruzzella

Scientific Administrator, CIHEAM Bari

Balance Phala

Food Systems Officer, ICLEI

Jalila El Ati

Head of Research and Planning Department, National Institute of Nutrition and Food Technology of Tunisia (INNTA)

Open discussion: interventions from the floor

Moderated by:

Corinna Hawkes

Director, Food Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO

Closing & Way forward

Takeaways from the discussion and possible way forward to improve cooperation among cities

Filippo Gavazzeni

Head of Secretariat, Milan Urban Food Policy Pact

Interpretation will be provided in English, French and Arabic

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