

Appendix 10: Catalan Western Lands (Spain, NE3)

Organising partner:	XCN	Innovation Type
Practice:	Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino (Italy, IT4A)	
Practice context:	Andrano, Lecce Province (NUTS 3) - Predominantly urban	
Confrontation context:	Catalan Western Lands, Lleida Province - Intermediate with strong rural character	
Workshop location:	Online	
Date:	November 24th 2021	

Context

The «Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» is confronted in the context of the Catalan Western Lands (CWL). CWL is a proto-political region with no current effective public administration, but partially matched with the official province of Lleida. It is formed by six counties characterised by a strong rural and agricultural character, especially Garrigues and Noguera, compared to the rest of Catalonia. It presents some heterogeneities in terms of farmland use and economic value, but grains, fresh fruit, poultry and pig farming generally prevail. A few big food business corporations, but also smaller cooperatives, drive and control a majority of these production processes through contract farming, and ecological practices seem to be relatively less extended than in other Catalan regions. Family farms are the most common management setup, and ageing is evident, thus succession and successors are key to understanding the dynamics of the food system in the region.

The CWL has an extension of 5586.0 square kilometres, representing 17.4% of total Catalan area. The CWL has a population of 367,016 inhabitants, representing 4.7 % of the total population of Catalonia. The county of Segrià accounts for more than half of the population of the area, being the population quite fairly distributed among the rest of the counties (between 20,000 and 40,000 inhabitants approximately in each county, divided in between 15 and 30 municipalities each). When matched with the total area, the resulting population density is 65.7 inhabitants per square km., much below than the Catalan

average. Segrià and Pla d'Urgell are the counties with the highest density, but still well below the Catalan average. The density clearly differs from the 205 inhabitants per square km in Apulia (NUTS 2), the regional setting of «Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» case study¹.

The CWL doesn't match exactly with the current official administrative province of Lleida (NUTS 3 region), which qualifies as an **intermediate region** according to the official EU territorial typology (EU, 2018), and which could roughly be applied as well to the CWL. This qualification is very much conditioned by the role of the city of Lleida, the provincial capital. Excluding the city of Lleida, its suburbs and surrounding towns, **the CWL have a rather strong rural character**. Indeed, up to **three Local Action Groups**, in the framework of the EU Rural Development Programmes, act in the area.

Unlike the demographic trends in the context where the promising practice takes place, the CWL have not been losing population during the last two decades but quite the opposite. **Population has grown 23.3%**, with similar figures to the Catalan average (24.2%). While many counties' figures are around the average, the **demographic trends for Noguera and Garrigues are more negative**. In a similar pattern to the findings in the promising practice context, these two counties are characterised by a **depopulation phase in the last decade**. Unlike the high percentage of migrants in the municipality where the promising practice was born, both Garrigues and Noguera counties have a **negative internal migration rate** (residential variations to and from the rest of Catalonia and Spain), much higher than the -0.2 for overall CWL.

Finally, in line with the case study context, there has been an ageing process when looking at the last decade's figures (from a lowest 17.6% in 2010 until current figure close to 20%).

The area is in general made up of plains, since almost 77% of the area has slopes less steep than 20%. The share for the total in Catalonia is almost 45%, hence the Western Lands are relatively flatter than the average, providing in principle a good setup for the practice of agricultural activity. In relation to the Catalan average on land use distribution, CWL have a much higher share of farmland (58.2%) -in strong contrast with the high number of abandoned fields and farms reported in the promising practice context- and approximately half of the share of forest area (33.5%). Unlike the low diversification of crops, with dominance of olives and cereals distinctive of the case study context, there are important heterogeneities in the CWL area, indeed, this explains the characteristics of the agri-food production systems developed. While in Pla d'Urgell (83.3%) and Segrià (49.8%) the irrigated farmland is by far larger than dry farmland, this is not the case in the rest of the counties, in which the latter is more important, especially in Segarra (63.5%) and Urgell (49.5%). Agricultural production in the CWL is oriented to arable crops (70.5%), particularly in Segarra county (98.9%) and to a much lesser extent in Garrigues or Segrià counties (around 60%), where permanent crops prevail. Horticulture production is residual, but it has the strongest share in Noguera county (more than 2%). Figures in terms of agricultural land used by the main crop group are very similar, except for Garrigues county, in which the share of land by permanent crops is much higher than its production share, probably signalling a singular low productivity case.

Barley is the prevalent arable crop in the CWL in terms of land used, with maize and fodder being particularly relevant in those counties which have the most irrigated land. For the same reason, but in terms of permanent crops, fresh fruit trees prevail in these counties, while nut trees and olive trees are predominant in the rest of counties of the CWL, being olive trees singularly relevant in Garrigues county, almond trees in Segarra and vineyards in Urgell.

Regarding livestock, **pig farming is the most common activity** in the CWL, with more than 2 500 holdings involved in the activity, representing a bit less than 50 % of total activity related to livestock. Economically, **farming activity in the six counties of the CWL is relatively much more important than the average in Catalonia**. Garrigues, Segarra and Urgell follow the Catalan pattern in that livestock farming has a higher economic weight than land farming.

Food industry is also economically more relevant in the CWL than in the rest of Catalonia, twofold specifically, with Segarra particularly standing out, with an extraordinary industry share of 71.1%. This is mainly explained because an important food business corporation (“Grup Alimentari Guissona”) is established in this county. The company is an example of the **prevalence and dynamics of the conventional food system** in the CWL, since it has established during the last 50 years a strong regional network of farm suppliers through **contract farming**.

The importance of farming activities and food industry in the CWL context stands in contrast with the high economic value produced by tourism in Apulia, amounting to 13.6% of the total regional value.

From the point of view of employment, more than 7% of the employment in the region is concentrated in the agricultural sector. This figure is much higher than the Catalan average (1%), and **CWL can be qualified as the most agricultural region in Catalonia**.

The CWL has in total a **lower share of natural protected areas** (21.6%) compared to the Catalan average (31.9%). While Noguera, Segarra and Urgell levels are around this average, the share of natural protected area in Segrià and Garrigues is far below (11.4% and 8.8% respectively), and almost non-existent in Pla d’Urgell (1.5%). Obviously, the limited natural protection in an important part of the CWL has favoured the development of an intensive agricultural production system. This may be particularly true in Pla d’Urgell and Segrià, in which irrigated farmland has contributed as well to the intensive development. Pesticide-intensive agriculture is also standing out in the Salento agricultural landscape, which today looks like an expanse of dried olive trees, desiccated by the Xylella bacterium.

While in the promising practice context, the agricultural sector has been characterised by a high fragmentation and very small farms, the CWL **farm holdings are in general larger than the Catalan average** (according to figures from 2009). This is particularly true for Segarra county, with almost 60% of holdings with a size larger than 20 hectares, but also for Noguera county, to a lesser extent, with a 40% share. This is associated with the prevalence of arable crops, as shown above. The majority of farm

holdings are managed by owners themselves (around 60%, with minor differences among territories), being leasing agreements more prevalent than partnerships. Conversely, in the promising practice context, more than 79% of farms in Andrano municipality have minus than 2 Ha, in line also with the Lecce Province data (78%).

Results

Acceptance and interest

Attendees in the Brainstorming Sessions (BSS) indicated their level of interest or acceptance regarding each of the different actions that unfolded in «Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» through an online tool (see Figure 1 as an example).



Figure 1. Chart showing the level of acceptance towards different aspects of the practice (BSS 1)

The participants expressed that most of the actions and initiatives that characterise the case study «Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» could also be applied in the CWL context. Indeed, some of these are **already taking place** in the context and the ones which are not present should be promoted, as many participants noted. However, it was commented that, even if most of the actions presented are already taking place, the general feeling is that they are **not succeeding in terms of promoting rural regeneration processes**. Particularly, long-term consolidation and impacts expected are not finally achieved. In a similar line, a participant also highlighted the fact that indeed all actions are potentially interesting for the CWL context, but that the **complexity** arises when actually implementing those in practical terms.

Interestingly, when assessing the relevance of the practice, attendees wondered about the actual impact in terms of job generation and referred to the economic dependence on public aid. This might indicate that there is a concern regarding the long-term potential of innovative practices.

Critical factors

Therefore, even if the practice confronted was considered interesting, there was a **reluctance towards the actual success it could have** if implemented in the CWL. Being so, the next step in the BSSs was to assess the existence of critical factors in the local context. That is, whether the elements, circumstances

and resources that were very important to make the practice successful are also present or not in the CWL context.

«Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» critical factors were presented as a list¹⁸ and ultimately assessed by each of the attendees through an online tool (see Figure 2 as an example).

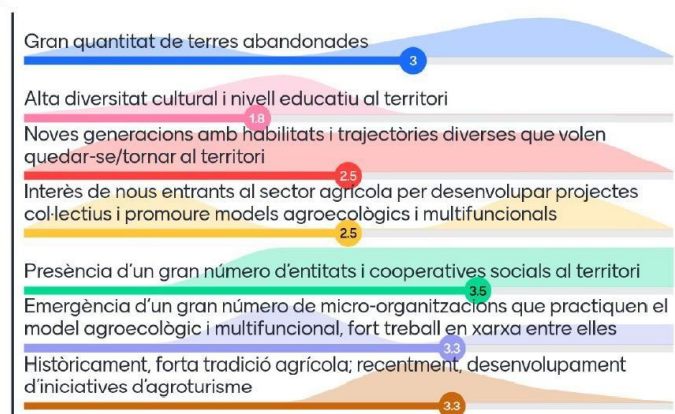


Figure 2. Chart showing the assessment of critical factors made by participants (BSS 1)

Participants in the different BSSs dug into the fundamental differences of the two contexts, which have an impact on the existence of the critical factors in CWL context.

Farmland abandonment is occurring in some counties within CWL, although it is not conceived as a generalised pattern. The plain, irrigated farmland in Segrià County is far from being abandoned. Meanwhile, the farming activity in steep dryland with olive groves or nuts trees has indeed decreased over the last decades while the farmland in the outskirts of the main city is also increasingly abandoned. Anyhow, farmland abandonment is not seen necessarily as a critical factor. In some areas, farmland abandonment may indeed turn out to be an opportunity to access land easily, while in other cases the lack of land management can be seen as a deterrent because it increases the costs of setting up a productive project.

The presence and relevance of high cultural and educational diversity is difficult to assess. In the farming sector, there is indeed a cultural diversity stemming from the presence of seasonal workers during harvest

¹⁸ As presented in the chart: Farmland being abandoned / High cultural and educational diversity / New generations with different skills, knowledge and backgrounds that wish to remain or return to the local context / New entrants are interested in developing collective farming projects and have an agroecological and multifunctional approach to farmland / Many socio cultural organisations are present and active in the local context / Many small agro ecological initiatives are emerging and cooperate amongst them / The traditional farming background is now being complemented with agrotourism initiatives.

campaigns (mostly from Romania and Morocco). Yet, cultural diversity or cultural capital is not ultimately unfolded, because seasonal workers do not remain in the local context and do not fully get integrated in it. An important reason would be the poor employment conditions offered to seasonal farming workers.

As represented in the chart, there are different opinions regarding the new generation's attitude. Some participants consider that new generations with different skills, knowledge and backgrounds do not generally wish to remain or return to the local context. Therefore, the innovation and human capital described in the «Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» case study might not be present in CWL as a whole. Meanwhile, other participants highlighted that this is changing (due to COVID and other factors) and that new generations are increasingly interested in developing their life projects in the local context. Interestingly, those participants who were more optimistic were also significantly younger, showing that indeed there might be a potential for change in this regard.

Disparity is also encountered when assessing other critical factors. For instance, some participants consider that new entrants are really interested in developing collective farming projects and have an agroecological and multifunctional approach to farmland. Meanwhile, other participants had the feeling that this type of renewal is not happening at a significant level in the Catalan Wester Lands context.

By the same token, the perception expressed by one of the participants was that cooperative systems do not operate as well in the Catalan context as they do in other countries: the prevailing individualistic way of working amongst agricultural cooperatives hampers the success of many of these innovative solutions which have a collective breath. Namely, as seen in the «Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» case study, initiatives aimed at the construction of shared infrastructures, such as a community mill to process cereals directly, have not succeeded in the CWL context. Such initiatives have resulted in the abandonment or selling of community mills, particularly those built in small villages, as pointed out by one of the participants.

Finally, even if tourism did not have a positive impact on the local context where «Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» was established, it was a clearly present factor and the source for the development of many agritourism activities. Therefore, the strongly seasonal model and negative tendencies derived could be addressed and countered by some of the case study initiatives, such as the Green Night, an event with international openness which takes place outside the high tourist season and fosters a strong link with the local community, its identity and traditions. In this sense, back to the CWL, participants pointed out that tourism and agritourism activities in the context are not as significant and impactful as in other regions.

Key issues and barriers

Once the presence or absence of critical factors was assessed, BSSs focused on identifying possible barriers for implementing a similar innovative practice in the CWL. Debate dynamics were organised so that two levels of barriers could be differentiated: exogenous and endogenous¹⁹.

So as to trigger the debate, some barriers found in the context analysis of the case study «Cultures Trobades» report (T 5.2 Spain Case Study Report) were presented as a list²⁰ and ultimately assessed by each of the attendees through an online tool (see Figure 3 as an example).

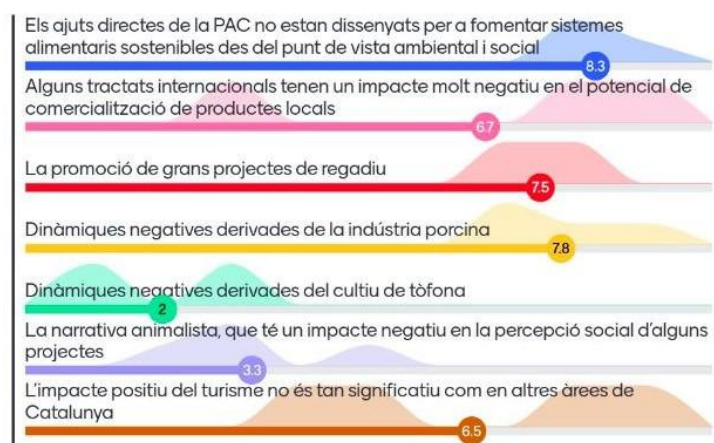


Figure 3. Chart showing the assessment of barriers made by participants (BSS 1)

Important exogenous barriers or obstacles relate to the land system. For instance, there was a general consensus concerning land mobility, since most of the participants agreed on the fact that high quality land is seldom available for agroecological projects. Moreover, the increase of a number of big companies

¹⁹ Exogenous barriers are the local and national contextual features that may hamper the development of the innovation (land structure, geographic, economic, social, legal, policy features...). Meanwhile, endogenous barriers are the possible weaknesses or shortcomings identified in the ecosystem of partners potentially interested in developing the innovation (forces, financial capital, human capital, social capital, etc.) as well as in the local community in general.

²⁰ As presented in the chart: CAP direct payments are not designed to foster sustainable food systems/ Some international treaties have a negative impact on the local products' potential for commercialisation/ the promotion of big irrigation projects/negative dynamics derived from the pig industry/negative dynamics derived from truffles cultivation/the animalist narrative, which has a negative impact on the social perception of some projects/the positive impact of tourism is not as significant as it is in other areas of Catalonia.

investing in the acquisition of large land extensions is leading to **land concentration**. However, this tendency depends on the area and type of farming practised. It was mentioned by a participant that dry farmland areas have attracted big farming companies who have invested in the production of nuts, therefore acquiring big extensions of land. The cultivation of truffles, which may **decrease the chances of accessing high quality land**, is not perceived as predominant in the region as to be a constraint to the further development of the agroecological model. However, another participant pointed out that for the truffle cultivation case, the productive dimension takes hold of all the value, leaving aside the natural heritage or the biodiversity value of the area. As such, for the sake of greater economic interests, huge extensions of ancient olive trees have been destroyed and transformed into truffle cultivation. It was highlighted that there has been an effort to sell this practice using an ecological discourse, stating that the truffle is a noble and indigenous crop which does not need nor use chemical inputs for its growth. Yet, these dynamics do have a **negative impact on local natural, landscape and cultural capital** and thus in the potential of rural regeneration in the context assessed. Access to land is a big constraint for rural regeneration in the CWL context, but some participants pointed out its strong link with the problem of access to housing. The fact that the initial inversion required to start a personal and professional project in the area is extremely high (due to access to the obstacles of accessing housing and land) makes the option of establishing a life project and starting an agricultural activity too risky to be considered by many, especially by newcomers.

Big irrigation projects and pig industry dynamics have a strong impact on the land system. For instance, pig industry dynamics decrease the chances of new agro ecological projects on accessing land, since it uses loads of land for manure dejection and it makes land prices higher. However, the negative impacts go beyond the land system. Being so, the pig industry in CWL also has negative environmental impacts in terms of habitat and landscape diversity and water and soil quality, as pointed out by a participant. Moreover, it severely hinders the wellbeing of the local community and also decreases the potential for agritourism initiatives.

A representative from «Trenca», an environmental organisation, also highlighted that **big irrigation projects** have a negative environmental impact on the CWL context. Particularly, he noted that it has had a direct impact on the decline of autochthonous wildlife and environmental heritage. Endangered species such as the lesser grey shrike (Trenca's work focuses on the conservation and rehabilitation of such species) are now almost non-existent in the region due to the shift from dry farmland to irrigated farmland. Farming practices in the CWL context have historically been based on a dry farmland model. The fact that it has suddenly changed to other models perceived as more productive has severely affected and degraded some habitats that are key for autochthonous fauna and other natural values. Finally, it was pointed out that these practices (big irrigation projects, pig industry) are not only great constraints to the promotion of biodiversity in particular but to diversity in its broader sense; it does not let different people, projects, products and landscapes interact and succeed in this context.

CAP direct payments are seen as a very relevant constraint for the promotion of sustainable food systems both from a social and environmental perspective. In the CWL context, some participants highlighted that

instead of promoting the production, transformation and diversification of certain local varieties, these policies were oriented to encourage farmers to produce certain crops which were being overproduced. Similarly, another participant recalled that on the local level, institutional policies have never sought to promote the local product. Therefore, beyond the broad food policy dynamics, there is a lack of political capital at the local level.

Some other concerns regarding exogenous barriers relate to the Catalan organic certification system. Beyond representing a bureaucratic and economic burden, the criteria that this certification uses could be improved. For instance, a participant stated that this certification should also take into account the origin of the production, and so the impact of the supply chain.

Finally, in terms of social tendencies, animalism or veganism are not reported by the participants as causing a negative impact on the development of certain agroecological initiatives based on extensive livestock farming. However, a participant pointed out that the **misleading ecological discourse is not fostering an agroecological transition but the opposite.**

As for endogenous barriers, participants mentioned some related to **local and broader community values.** For instance, according to the information gathered, consumers are **not aware of the impact of the predominant food consumption model** and there is a **lack of agricultural and food education in the local society.** Certainly, it may be the case that food products regarded as of high-quality are more appreciated in big cities than in the smaller towns, characteristic of the CWL context. This might go along with the fact that the gastronomy **sector has low willingness to and/or finds difficulties in using new food products regularly.**

Also, in terms of values and mind-set, participants reported a **rather conservative attitude of some inner rural local communities**, which echoes with a **skeptical attitude towards innovative projects.** The fact that small landowners also show a skeptical attitude hinders the new entrants' chances to access land. Particularly, on the openness of the local community to newcomers, a participant reported that the focus is very much placed on fostering the remaining young people in rural areas. Yet, newcomers, like him, seeking new opportunities in the CWL context face many obstacles and are neglected by the local community (**lack of hospitality and trust**) as well as **left behind by institutional policies aiming at rural regeneration.**

A **generalised productivist approach** is viewed as a barrier for rural regeneration. Participants debated on whether the **lack of cooperative values and mutual trust** as well as a **strong individualism** were actual barriers for the development of collective regenerative projects. There were very different opinions on this regard. A similar response was encountered when assessing the actual **lack of articulation, coordination and cooperation among independent regenerative actors** in the CWL. Once again, those

participants who were more optimistic were also significantly younger, showing **that indeed there might be a potential for change in this regard**. Yet, participants did agree on the fact that local initiatives are **insufficiently connected with other Catalan regenerative initiatives** (in terms of coordination, knowledge exchange, etc.).

Besides, the lack of familiarity expressed by a social organisation representative with other agroecological initiatives similar to the Italian case in CWL context could be an indicator of the poor knowledge and synergies between different actors working on similar issues in the context. On this matter, it was noted that while there is a wide array of social cooperatives, associations and federations working on social and rural development issues in the local context, networking remains an issue amongst the social and agricultural sector.

Additionally, in terms of governance, endogenous barriers are detected when it comes to conventional farming cooperatives. According to the participants, most **conventional farming cooperatives are very conservative in terms of values and ways of working**, which hinder their capacity to overcome barriers, to innovate and contribute to rural regeneration. For instance, in general their marketing or selling strategy is based on a maximum-volume approach. Moreover, these organisations are aging, in the sense that the average age of their boards is usually above 60. The added value of agroecological products or the impact of local cooperation are not seen as strategic lines by this type of actor. Some participants that are working in regenerative innovative initiatives consider that indeed it is very **difficult to engage with conventional farming cooperatives**. Hence, collaboration with conventional farming cooperatives has been very poor so far.

Along the lines of the obstacles identified in the Salento context that were successfully addressed by the «Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» case study, a **negative narrative around countryside life and farming activities** is widespread amongst the local community. Therefore, remaining in the territory is not valued and choosing to build a professional career as a farmer is not considered as successful as other professional paths by many people from the local community. Likewise, some participants agreed on the fact that the local community has a poor self-esteem and a low surety of the value, identity and potential of their territory. Related to lack of tourism in the region, a participant highlighted that it is not the low attractiveness, limiting possibilities and less favourable location of the area (tourism in inner rural areas tends to be lower in the Catalan context) but the **negative perception about the potential and worthiness of their region** by the local community and institutions, leading to a lack of efforts on tourism policies.

Some of the endogenous barriers directly relate to human capital. For instance, a loss of knowledge on agrobiodiversity or on certain farming practices is reported.

Next steps for practice implementation and rural regeneration

The participants in the Focus Group (FG) identified possible measures and key actors that need to be involved to overcome the obstacles and succeed in the implementation of the practice. The topics range from product distribution and valorisation to governance amongst actors, and some of the ideas are tailored to foster rural regeneration and development in the context in general.

In terms of governance, efforts should be made so that innovative regenerative initiatives effectively engage with **conventional farming cooperatives**. Plus, the latter should change some negative patterns in terms of governance and values. Some attendees recall that **environmental associations** in the area have been particularly hostile against farmers in general, making it difficult to collaborate and establish interesting synergies among actors. Being so, **improving the relationship between environmental associations and farmers with an agroecological sensitivity** might be an interesting measure. **Environmental organisations** can play a key role in terms of raising awareness and providing a deep narrative on natural values and on the ultimate goals of sustainable farming.

According to some participants, Ponent Coopera²¹ has played a key role in **fostering cooperative values** and **enabling the consolidation of emerging regenerative initiatives**. The perception is that their presence in the last years not only has supported the social and economic development of rural regions like the CWL, but it has also helped in changing the mentality associated with this type of region. Thus, **Ponent Coopera is considered a key actor** for the next steps to be taken in CWL, especially in terms of improving governance amongst key actors.

In practical terms, one of the main barriers for the successful implementation of some agroecological projects relate to the commercialisation of added-value products. Specific effort and support should be given to **facilitate the process of defining a business model, a market target and a channel to commercialise**. Some participants suggest the implementation of a **new hall-mark** for those farming projects that go beyond an organic certification and that undertake other impactful measures in environmental and social terms. This could be fostered by local third sector initiatives but should be ultimately fostered by public authorities, in order to make official the overall mechanism. This might open new markets for added-value products and improve its prices.

As mentioned by some participants, there are already some innovative ideas taking place that revolve around local food systems. For instance, in order to improve the distribution process of agroecological products, the **“Rutes Compartides”**²² (shared journeys) platform will be launched soon. This will enable farmers and elaborators to share the means to distribute their products. When effectively implemented,

²¹ Ponent Coopera is the “Cooperative Athenaeum” in CWL. “Cooperative Athenaeum” are the local reference organisation that promotes learning, collective reflection, cooperation and social transformation, towards a sustainable and people-centered socio-economic model. They are the result of a public-private collaboration project, within the framework of the Aracoop program, between the Confederation of Cooperatives of Catalonia and the sub-Department of Social Economy, the Third Sector and Cooperatives. Cooperative Athenaeums usually develop the following lines of action: Observation, research, diagnosis and territorial monitoring in social and solidarian economy (SSE)/ Training for the promotion, creation and consolidation of SSE projects / Support for the creation and consolidation of SSE projects / Dissemination, awareness and knowledge generation / Facilitation of intercooperation, networking and territorial revitalization

²² RutesCompartides.cat

this initiative will reduce both distribution costs and negative environmental impacts. In a similar line, the initiative “**Obradors Compartits**”²³ enables the existence and shared use of food transformation infrastructures. **These new initiatives, which are still at a pilot stage, should be further encouraged and promoted.**

In terms of public role, participants in the FG indicated that local and regional public policies should promote the coexistence between the conservation of biodiversity and farming practices, which is also linked to the question of which type of tourism, landscape and culture the local society aims to build.

Some attendees report that non-productive outcomes of agroecological farming are not recognised and remunerated. For instance, **hedgerows and paths maintenance should be fostered and remunerated** by both the market and the public policies. Of course, public policies should also **halt some of the barriers identified, such as big irrigation projects and pig industry dynamics**, which hamper rural re-generation.

The local authority in the Garrigues county is setting up a land bank, with the ultimate purpose of fostering the entrance of new entrants and minimising the negative impact of land concentration by big companies. Yet, some of the land has a very low agronomic potential and is not a suitable context where new entrants could succeed. Different innovative solutions should be found in order to render those low agronomic value lands more economically viable. For instance, the **payment for the services farmers provide in terms of wildfire prevention** in key strategic areas. Similar concerns and proposals are also mentioned by other participants, who stated that **nature conservation and agroecological farming** in mountainous olive groves should be encouraged through different mechanisms. Otherwise, this farming activity can't be as viable as olive grooves in plain areas, where mechanisation is implemented.

As suggested by some participants in the FG, the public administration should **explore green public procurement**. That is, it would be interesting if the public administration bought the production of new entrants that have an agroecological approach, and channel that food towards public uses such as schools and hospitals. In general, public entities should be more proactive by ensuring that **public spaces consume local and organic food**.

Some measures need to be implemented in order to improve the employment conditions of seasonal farming workers, so that this collective is fairly treated and its cultural capital unravelled and available for rural regeneration processes. Therefore, public authorities should ensure the **regularization and work and residence permits for migrants working in agricultural campaigns**.

Lessons learned and recommendations

Additional aspects should be considered when trying to implement the practice in CWL or reinforce the existing initiatives. For instance, building a **shared identity**, which can unite young people and encourage them to remain in the territory. This shared identity is present in the Andrano context (“restanza”) but

²³ www.obradorscompartits.cat

not quite in CWL. **Transforming the negative narratives** is key to unfold the potential of CWL. Especially, **the narratives around newcomers and people returning** to CWL; both collectives should be able to share a common narrative that responds to different needs and expectations. Just as it is explained in the Italian practice, it is important to expand the view: even in the face of their own individual problem, newcomers, new entrants and other actors need to find an innovative solution that has a **collective breath**, involving and offering support to other realities of the context (greater networking and synergies).

In this regard, «Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» promising practice offers some hints. Initiatives such as the collective sowing (as a means to fostering intergenerational knowledge and know how, allowing children and adolescents to experience work in and with the land), awareness raising initiatives, building on the idea of ‘restanza’ (this idea of staying on the land not with a conservative approach but with a view that binds together past and future, tradition and modernity and builds real alternatives for the young men and women who want to stay).

Similarly, the Italian promising practice includes the organisation of collective events also linked to farming, unhinging the individualisation process that characterises the industrialised agricultural model. The following sentences are paradigmatic: “We have tried to collectivize all the events, all the work done in the countryside, which until now was practically individualistic: everyone looked after his own garden, there was no exchange of ideas” and “These collective moments ... During sowing, at the concerts or the presentation of books make it possible to create a community of reference, which is the one that participates in these initiatives, with which we always have the ability to dialogue and question ourselves on the things that need to be done... on a series of other issues, not only strictly ... agronomic issues, but also on ... political ones”.

Noticeably, when comparing to «Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino» promising practice, it becomes evident that in CWL there is a lack of coordination and acknowledgement amongst social initiatives and agroecological ones. It is also noted that more support should be allocated to emerging initiatives based on the agroecological model, practising multifunctional, natural and organic agriculture, etc. In order to have the expected impact, these should have a collective breath. Before the establishment of relationships with local associations and different collectives there should be a mapping of local actors or a way that they get to know each other.

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