

**transformative
social innovation
theory**



WP 4 | CASE STUDY Report: SLOW FOOD MOVEMENT

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1. Introduction

1. Literature review

The slow food movement has contributed in a significant way to discourses that propose new sustainable lifestyles and slow consumption as an alternative to the “hyperconsumption” practices associated with capitalism and globalized economic system (Hall, 2012). An extended scientific work has focused on the emergence of the slow food movement, its evolution, political and social impact in both global and local contexts (Andrews, 2008; Sassatelli & Davolio, 2010; Kjørstad, 2007; Siniscalchi, 2013; Hall, 2012). Founders and leaders of the slow food movement are also related to the academia (*Vandana Shiva or Alice Walters are Slow Food activists that have also contributed with research and literature to the knowledge of the movement*); the organization itself has published relevant documents to disseminate its activity and philosophy (see description of primary source review, pp 13). Carlo Petrini's best-sellers *“Buono, pulito e giusto. Principi di nuova gastronomia”* (2005), *“Slow food revolution: A new culture for dining & living”* (Petrini & Padovani, 2006) or the more recent *“Slow food nation: Why our food should be good, clean, and fair”* (Petrini et al, 2013), have contributed to the general knowledge of the food system complexity and the alternative “eco-gastronomy” paradigm that Slow Food proposes, which involves changing the current relations between consumers and producers in terms of “return to a sense of community” as Petrini explains:

“With its historical, anthropological, agricultural, economic, social and philosophical aspects, the science of gastronomy asks us to open our minds to the complexity of food systems, to think again about our own approach to our daily bread. It asks us to give food back its central role in our lives and the political agendas of those who govern. This also means returning to a respect for the earth, the source of all sustenance. And it means a return to a sense of community that seems almost lost. We are always members of at least three communities at once: local, national and global. As global citizens, yes, we are destroying the planet – its equilibrium, its ecosystems and its biodiversity. As local citizens, though, we can make our own choices, choices that influence everyone's future. By producing, distributing, choosing and eating food of real quality we can save the world” (Petrini in Walters, 2006).

The slow food movement has been defined as a “cultural movement” (Petrini, 2005) based on the intrinsic value of local production or a movement “against Americanization” (Sassatelli & Devolio, 2010) that critiques globalized and delocalized food production systems (Roos et al, 2007). Slow Food has been also described as a countermovement that “represents an act of rebellion against a civilisation based on the sterile concepts of productivity, quantity and mass consumption, destroying habits, traditions and ways of life, and ultimately the environment” (Petrini in Hodgson & Toyka, 2007: 138). However, it has been argued that Slow Food could not be considered an appropriate movement “due to the difficulty of building a movement based on individual lifestyle choices” (Honore, in Schneider, 2008: 396). Adrian Peace describes Slow Food as a “neotribe post-modern community which conforms an unequivocally postmodern movement” (Peace, 2008:31) able to attract large audiences and widespread media coverage. Schneider (2008:398-399) considers Slow Food as one of the “new social movements that have emerged alongside post-industrial capitalism and globalization” based on Buechler's (cited in Schneider, 2008) enumeration of the new social

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movements characteristics. According to these authors, in contrast to the classic social movements -that used to be linked to a societal cause and lead by a social group- the post-modern social movements “can be seen as a response to a totality”, to more diffuse issues. Their social base is more varied and plural and they politicize everyday life. Also, these new movements cultivate and maintain collective forms of identity and use cultural and symbolic forms of resistance in place of conventional political contestation”; finally, Buechler affirms that new social movements make claims for more autonomy and democratization instead of traditional “power”.

Symbolism and persuasive rhetoric are recurrent elements in the Slow Food discourses. As a number of authors highlight (Sassatelli & Davolio, 2010; Schneider, 2008; Peace, 2006), Slow Food is an example of the importance of cultural movements and the increasing attention given to rhetorical action that avoids confrontation in favour of producing new relationships within a broader community united by a collective identity. The anthropologist Adrian Peace (2008) has analysed the political and ritual rhetoric within the first edition of Slow Food's Terra Madre describing in this article how slow food is able to transmit its political message while at the same time displaying a “number of rituals and discursive events out of which a sense of global community arises” (Peace, 2008:36) and building a collective identity able to spread the message worldwide. Slow Food plays with symbolism and emotions as engagement tools (Peace, 2006). Their emotionally-infused language -especially Petrini's rhetoric- connects the audience with the movement's political discourse and contributes to the creation of a sense of common identity “effective in producing not just a feeling of unity but also a sense of purpose to the event as a whole (...) the symbolic force of people being concentrated in a particular place at a particular time continues to be vital to a sense of belonging, a belief in shared ideals, and a notion of heading in the same direction” (Peace, 2008: 38). Slow Food's political discourse also connects with hedonistic motivations, like “the right to pleasure” (Sassatelli & Davolio, 2010) or happiness as persuasive tools.

“Pleasure and happiness in food are a universal right (the good); making it sustainably, so that it does not consume more resources than it produces (the clean); and making it so that it creates no inequities and respects every person involved in its production (the just). By bringing food back to the centre of our lives we commit ourselves to the future of the planet and to our own happiness” (Petrini in Walters, 2006).

At the beginning, Slow Food claimed a “broad cultural change” but introduced in a positive way. Slow food's message is a “kind of pleasure-loving environmentalism that does not reject consumption but the homogenization and high-speed food chain, fast-food life” (Stille, 2001). Slow Food's political dimension has become more prominent in the last years and a number of political positions and documents have emerged since their last international conference (2012) where the movement reached a consensus around their political and social agenda that the document “The Central Role of Food” (Petrini et al, 2012) resumes. In previous years, a few studies undertook an analysis of the transformative discourses that Slow Food proposes and how these connect to other philosophical or social counter movements. The “slow down” discourse is considered a “symbolic and cultural form of resistance that becomes an important rhetoric strategy” (Schneider, 2008:398).

It has also been claimed that Slow Food contributes to a positive change towards sustainability which is evident in measurable environmental, social and economic improvements in local and regional contexts (Kjørstad, 2007), but its potential for diffusion and scaling up seems to be compromised by institutional and market conditions. Slow food's minority condition and their

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educational scope are highlighted as considerable barriers to a large-scale impact able to change the economic power relations. There is also a risk to be captured or coopted by the market (Roos et al, 2007; Hall, 2012) which could result in becoming a market segment oriented to more responsible consumers. Hall (2012) posits that the 'slow food' movement has not yet represented a fundamental change in the market logic of food systems, if we look at their reduced local impact or their marginality in the food system. However, "the extent to which slow food has a broader effect on slow practices remains little explored, despite the fact that a few studies find that slow food members have expanded the concept of slow beyond food, trying to incorporate slow lifestyles to transport, housing or energy consumption" (Hall, 2012: 106).

It was correctly argued that the 'slow' philosophy is based on "the consideration of the consumer as the key element for change" (Sassateli & Davolio, 2010:218) and the belief that a dramatic change in people's consumption behaviour involves altering routinized practices that "will take time, effort, and good arguments to change consumer's food conventions" (Kjørstad, 2007) grounded in knowledge of and education around food: "consumers are conceived as active agents that have rights and responsibilities but "how can people act responsibly and effectively for change if they ignore how the food system works and their role within it?" (Kloppenburger & Lezberg in Roos et al, 2007). Despite the fact that a wide range of responsible consumption grassroots innovations have emerged in diverse local and regional contexts (Roos et al, 2007; Seyfang, 2007; Shiva, 2007), the Slow Food Association has become an international actor that contributes to public debates "on the scope of alternative food networks and on the moral boundaries of the market" (Sassatelli & Davolio, 2010).

2. Overview, case demarcation and structure of the report

Slow Food is a global association that pursues "cultural, environmental and social goals built around the centrality of food". Slow Food's motto, "Good, clean and fair food", represents the three fundamental values that explain Slow Food's philosophy and their social and political strategy. According to its statutes, Slow Food works in the international context aiming to:

- promote everyone's right to food that is good, clean and fair;
- defend the right to food sovereignty for all peoples;
- safeguard biodiversity and the production of traditional foods that is tied to it;

The Slow Food International Association, founded in Italy in 1986, is present in 160 countries in the world, throughout 1.500 "convivial" (local chapters) formed by 100.000 members (who economically sustain the organization) and 1.000.000 supporters. Slow Food also counts with several national associations (Italy, Germany, Switzerland, USA, Japan, Netherlands, Brazil, Kenya and South Korea), two Slow Food International Foundations: The Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity and the Terra Madre Foundation and one University of Gastronomic Sciences (Italy). Slow Food facilitates and promotes the creation of a network of local communities in both the global North and South. These communities -called "convivia"- share the principles of the Association, focusing their local or regional work on the current "unfair" systems of food production and consumption.

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Chapter 3 of this study will focus on the **Slow Food International Association**. The research reviews the origin, evolution and organization of the international network. We also analyse the ambitions, activities and discourses of change developed by the association during its almost 30 years of history. We give special attention to dynamics of transformative social innovation and agency processes that contribute to the movement's social impact, political influence and capacity for societal transformation, according to the operationalization described in the methodological guidelines (Wittmayer et al 2015). The report also presents the results of empirical research carried out on two local case studies **the “Convivium Slow Food Araba-Vitoria” (chapter 4)** and the **“Convivium Freiburg-Südbaden” (chapter 5)**.

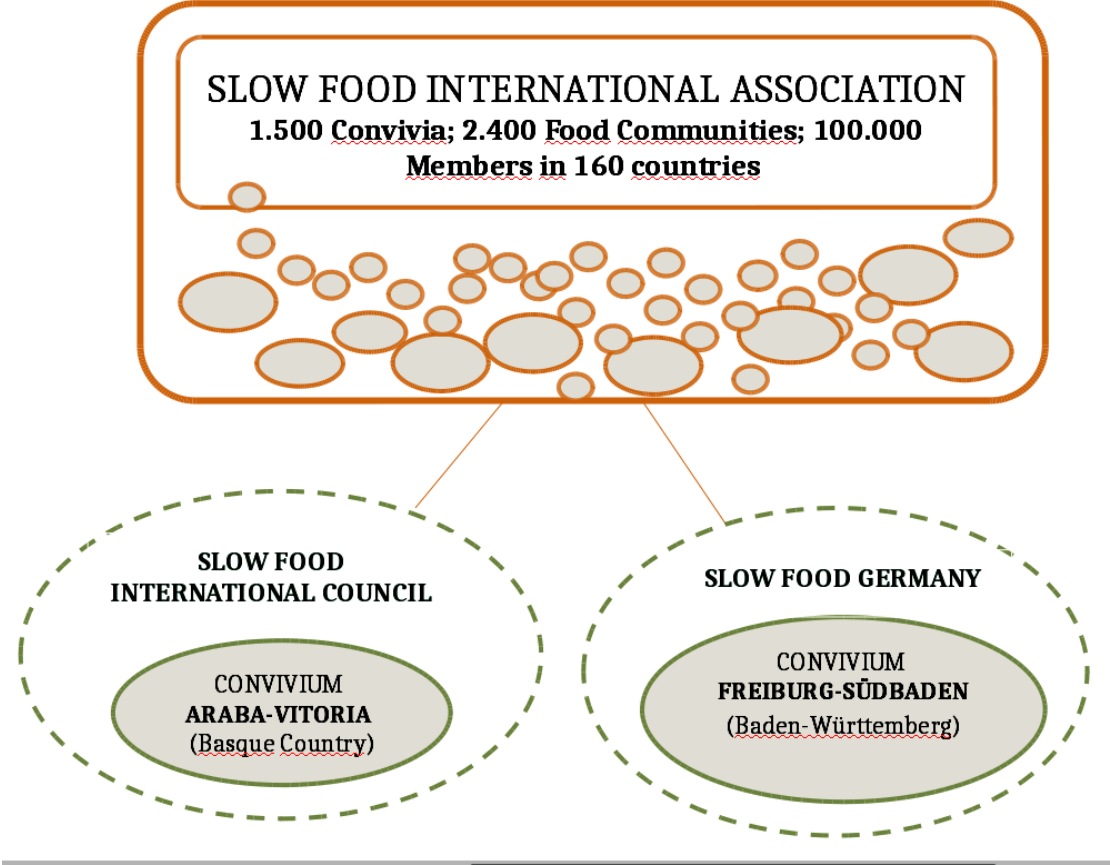
The **“Convivium Slow Food Araba-Vitoria”** (created in 2005) is located in the city of Vitoria-Gasteiz, in the Province of Araba, (Basque Country, Spain). This organization has 300 members who carry out an intense activity in the province of Araba, with more than 70 events per year. The convivium is also very well connected to the international network. They were invited to participate in the first Slow Food “Terra Madre” (2004) and have taken part in numerous Slow Food networking activities. The president of Slow Food Araba-Vitoria, Alberto López, is a member of the Slow Food Association's International Council, in representation of the Spanish convivia, since 2012.

As a second local case study, the ‘Slow Food’ group Freiburg/Südbaden¹ (SFFR) in Germany will be introduced in chapter 5. Founded in 1997, this convivium is one of the first and largest convivia in Germany. The area of the Freiburg convivium covers the far South West of the German federal state of Baden-Württemberg, close to the Swiss and French borders, in the so-called border triangle. Besides the city of Freiburg with its 220.000 inhabitants, it also includes a unique diverse agricultural infrastructure with the vineyards and fruit growing areas of Kaiserstuhl, Markgräfler Land, and Breisgau as well as the Southern Black Forest with traditional livestock farming rising up to 1.500 m above sea level. Furthermore, a high pressure on land use competes with tourism and a very ecologically minded population of the ‘university city’ Freiburg.

¹ http://www.slowfood.de/slow_food_vor_ort/freiburg/ 16.10.2015

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Figure 1: spatial representation of Slow Food Movement: The Slow Food network and the two European case-studies analysed in this report.



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2 Methodology

2.1 Researcher relations to the case

- **Proximity.** The case study researchers had no previous contacts with the international network or with the local case studies in the Basque Country (Spain) and Freiburg (Germany). Researchers had previous interest in the cases and previously followed their development in the media through television/press interviews and conferences given by the president of the international network, Mr. Carlo Petrini, and the Vicepresident Mrs Alice Walters. Iris Kunze has been present in Freiburg during the time of the field work for the SF Freiburg case. Furthermore, she knows the city of Freiburg very well, because she grew up there, and lived there until she finished high school. Having some knowledge on the agricultural, touristic and economic conditions in Freiburg has helped to understand some of the background conditions of the local SF case in Freiburg.
- **Normativity.** Researchers have a positive view of and interest in the case study initiatives given that the general pursuit of social innovation is related to the promotion of sustainable lifestyles in the local and global context, directly connected with the object of study of the People-Environment Research-Group. Researchers proceeded with an open mind given their previous lack of relation with the Slow Food movement and approached them from a “critical friend” stance regarding their potential for systemic transformation.
- **Reciprocity.** The UDC team has participated in one meeting with the case study representatives in order to present the TRANSIT project and discuss the possibilities and benefits of a mutual collaboration in present and future projects. As a result of these discussions, the Slow Food International Association is starting a new Slow Food local project in Galicia (the region where UDC is hosted) and approached the People-Environment Research Group to be involved in the project considering our expertise in sustainable behaviour and participatory processes development. The BOKU researcher, Iris Kunze, has introduced the TRANSIT project in personal interviews and offered to write an article in German for the *‘Slow Food Magazin’* Germany and the regional *Newsletter* of SFFR. This article is planned to be written with an appreciative and reflexive outside perspective.
- **Research subject versus research object.** Researchers in the UDC team approach the case study participants as research subjects rather than a research object. Due to the limitations and object of this case-study, a fully-fledged process of knowledge co-production could not be set in place for this phase of the project. Slow Food members have contributed actively to constructing a discourse on social innovation in food systems, and some of the most prominent members have also acted as academics and researchers in the building of this discourse.

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2.2 Methods

2.2.1 Overall methodology

This section outlines the basic research methods that will allow us to study in-depth the emergence, dynamics and agency of (transformative) social innovation in the Slow Food Movement. The researchers selected complementary methodological tools that facilitate a comprehensive overview of the international network emergence and its global development as well as of the local initiatives. Both international and local initiatives have been extensively documented and researchers combined an extended **document review** of primary sources (documents provided or published by the international network and local case-studies), secondary studies (scientific reports, PhD and MA dissertations and journal articles), media press archives (TV reports, radio and press interviews with relevant spokespersons from the international network and local cases).

Researchers conducted a total of **23 qualitative in-depth interviews** -and 5 additional **short interviews**- following a semi-structured questionnaire designed to the analysis of the slow food movement, based on the empirical research questions outlined in the methodological guidelines (Wittmayer et. al. 2015). Data collection includes interviews with practitioners and slow food activists as well as with other external informants like local regional government, policy-makers, local activists, food companies and food experts that describe the impact of the social innovation.

Researchers attended several meetings and activities organized by the Slow Food International Association and the local initiatives, developing **participatory observation** for a total of six complete days that provided useful information regarding the main activities performed by their members, profile of the members, motivations, objectives and discourses. Participatory observation enabled us to conduct informal interviews and conversations with the General Secretary of the Slow Food network, Mr. Paolo di Croce, and several practitioners, policy-makers, local producers and pro-environmental organizations related to the social initiative. Additionally, it was possible to attend the largest fair for food & enjoyment in Germany, the '*Plaza Culinaria*', where Slow Food Freiburg is the largest exhibitor.

2.2.2 Interviews

Qualitative in-depth interviews were mainly conducted face-to-face (in person or using Skype video-call system) following a "semi-structured questionnaire" adapted to each interviewee. Each interview had a length of 1:30-2 hours that was recorded and transcribed, as literally as possible. Interviews were conducted in English, German or Spanish and selected quotes were translated to English. Interviews inquired into the key issues considered central in the methodological guidelines, in order to answer the main research questions, as reflected in D4.2. (Wittmayer et al, 2015) but they also built on each other, in order to cover interesting aspects that were starting to appear in the document review or even to contrast information given by previous respondents. The content was analysed following the "grounded theory" basic principles, as closely as possible to the original meaning provided by the interviewees. In a second stage, the first emergent categories were

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organized in larger categories of meaning and used to answer the research questions of the project (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Slow Food International Association: Researchers have conducted a total of **nine in-depth interviews with practitioners, spokespersons and experts** related to the Slow Food International Association. The list of interviewees includes members of the Slow Food International Board Committee, project managers who work in the Slow Food headquarters, experienced activist and pioneers as well as relevant spokespersons from European and American national manifestations. The diversity of sources permits us contrast and compare how Slow Food works and deals with different social and political contexts around the world. Several contacts have been established with the European Parliament to obtain the external political perspective of the Slow Food movement. Additionally, two interviews were carried out with representatives of external organizations, like the Italian company *AlceNero*² and the *International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems*³, obtaining a whole vision of the international network. The analysis of the network covers nine interviews with a total length of **561 minutes** of recorded and transcribed material.

Spanish local case study, “Convivium Slow Food Araba-Vitoria”: **Eight in-depth interviews and three short interviews** (also recorded) have been conducted mainly with practitioners (7) but also with government and policy actors (2), local actors like consumption cooperatives (1) and journalists (1). Within the participant observation activities, we could maintain several informal conversations with slow food activists, food producers and market actors related to Slow Food that complement and confirm the information and observations provided by the former interviewees. Researchers analysed a total length of **693 minutes** of recorded material.

German local case study: “Convivium Freiburg”: For the case study of the convivium of Freiburg in Germany, five interviews have been conducted with a total length of **318 minutes** plus numerous conversations. In some interviews, two persons have been participating. The convivium is well organized, and first interviewee (PR manager) supported the researcher in contacting activists for the areas of Junior Slow work, coordination and planning. Furthermore, it was possible to listen and ask some questions during the participation in one of the planning events. We noticed that the activists were sometime more open without being recorded. Therefore, data from a number of non-recorded conversations has been used. The researcher tried to find an interviewee from the city administration in Freiburg to give an interview on SF from an outside perspective. But so far, no one could be found, maybe because SFFR is very ‘silent’ in terms of publicity and therefore rather unknown in the city administration.

The Annex B of this report includes a list of the interviews conducted by the researchers regarding the International network and both local manifestations (according to confidential agreements, we do not include the name of the participants).

² Gruppo Alce Nero: <http://alcenero.com>

³ International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems: <http://www.ipes-food.org/>

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2.2.3 Participant observation

Transnational network:

The People-Environment Research Group was invited to attend one Slow Food event organized by the International Network in the locality of Vimianzo (Galicia, Spain) in June 2015. A reduced number of local activists of “Slow food Galicia” (an ongoing local organization) met with two representatives of the of the Slow Food International Association -the General Secretary, Paolo Di Croce, and one network’s technical assistant, Valentina Bassanese. The reunion gathered also a number of people (not associated) interested in knowing a bit more about the organization (perhaps starting to collaborate with SF). The duration of the meeting was about 2 hours and discussions were recorded -and brief notes were taken- by the researchers and posteriorly transcribed and analysed in similar way than interviews. The event concluded with a lunch and visiting local spaces of interest for slow food activity (total of interaction with SF: 6 hours). Informal conversations with Italian team allowed us to have a deeper knowledge about the initiative, activities, future international projects and ambitions, as well as getting impressions about the evolution of the movement in Spain and in the Basque Country. They consider that Slow Food Araba-Vitoria is a great example of good practices and innovation within the Slow Food organization.

Spanish local case study:

Researchers developed field work related to the “Convivium Araba-Vitoria” that consisted in a personal visit to Vitoria-Gasteiz and Araba province, meeting and interviewing several slow food practitioners and regional policy makers and market actors (23-25, October, 2015). We visited and interviewed two local producers involved in Slow Food “Ark of Taste” and “Presidia” projects (two international projects related to biodiversity protection) and visited one “local market” where local organic slow-food production is sold directly by the producers and where Slow Food does several educative and pleasure activities. We also participated in a “rural market event” promoted in a small municipality close to Vitoria-Gasteiz and where Slow Food conducted an educative activity with children and a demonstration of local products –called “Slow Food Taste Workshop” that offers the opportunity to taste a succession of different examples of local food or drink under the guidance of the people who produce it and the chefs who cook with it. Within the participant observation activities, we were able to conduct several small interviews and informal conversations with more practitioners and members, market actors and local actors related to Slow Food that confirmed the observations and information provided by the former interviewees.

German local case study:

Iris Kunze has been present in Freiburg during the time of field work and could therefore participate in three events. First, she attended a potato menu with information by the farmer on regional potato growing in a potato restaurant which is a supporter of SFFR. Second, it was possible to participate in an internal planning evening, with six active members of SFFR. Thirdly, from November 6 to 8, I spend six hours to experience SFFR at the ‘Plaza Culinaria’ fair with their 900 qm area of SF services and stand of supporters, the presentation of the brand new Slow Junior Mobil and a one-hour cooking show with a parallel radio interview on SFFR. The participant observation was important to get more information, to understand how SFFR works and connects and to get an impression of

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the atmosphere in the convivium. Also talks with single active persons at events were helpful. The participation, especially in at the potato and at the 'Plaza Culinaria' fair helped to discover innovative practices that even the members themselves were not aware of.

The [Annex C](#) of this report includes a list of meeting and events attended by the researchers.

2.2.4 Document reviews

Primary sources and media review:

Slow Food is a social initiative that produces and publishes an important number of documents related to the origin of the initiative and their aims (Slow Food Foundational Manifesto; Slow Food Fundraising Guidelines), vision of the association and governing rules (Slow Food International Statute; Code of use for Slow Food Trademarks; Vademecum: how to start a convivium), social impact reports and conference documents that define the Slow Food's policy strategy (The Central Role of Food). Also, Slow Food has their own editorial that produces several dissemination documents ("Slow Food companion", the German "Slow Food Magazin" for members, which can newly also be purchased at kiosks, and an online and formerly printed newsletter of the convivium Freiburg). The slowfood.org official website updates their public statements and positions regarding social and environmental issues called "Hot Topics" and campaigns promoted or supported by the International initiative. Previously to conduct the in-depth interviews with the practitioners and pioneers, researchers reviewed about fourteen documents and reports in order to gain a deeply and completed vision of the goals and ambitions of slow food movement and the evolution of the international network (SF time-line). Regarding the convivium "Slow Food Araba-Vitoria", researchers also reviewed the meeting minutes that provide information about intern discussions and activities regarding the local context. Concerning the local case of the Slow Food convivium of Freiburg (SFFR) in Germany, the national network of Slow Food Germany was partly looked at, because the legal administration of all the 80 convivia in Germany is strongly determined by the SF's national association. It was of advantage that a member of the convivium Freiburg is one of the five managing board members of SF Germany and he could explain the relations of the local convivia with SF Germany in detail.

Additionally, the researchers have observed audio-visual materials, more specifically, two plenary conferences given by the leader of the initiative, Carlo Petrini; the intervention of Vandana Shiva, the former Vice-president, in Terra Madre 2008; and a conference given by the president of Slow Food Araba-Vitoria, Alberto López de Ipiña, at the University of the Basque Country. Besides, document review included a number of media interviews in well-known Spanish, German, European and North-American newspapers or radio programs. Media review permits us to know how slow food leaders or spokespersons elaborate a coherent "discourse of change" that is replicated by other practitioners in the local context and try to persuade to the public and politicians to support the slow food movement. All documentation consulted is included in [annex A: bibliography](#).

Secondary sources:

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Slow Food seems to be an international social organization with high levels of influence, educational and gastronomic research-activity that –along its 25 years of History- have received the attention of the academia. It is not the aim of this study to review the hundreds of scientific articles, studies or thesis dissertations published on Slow Food movement (especially since the creation of the Slow Food’s University of Gastronomic Sciences -UNISG). We focused our review on social-science articles that helped us to understand the new discourses and rhetoric of the Slow Food movement (Kjørstad, 2007; Schneider, 2008; Peace, 2008; Sassatelli & Davolio, 2010), the proposals of Slow Food regarding sustainability and conscious consumption patterns (Peace, 2006; Hall, 2012; Fernández de Labastida, 2012) as well as the possible conflicts and paradoxes of slow food movement (Hall, 2012; Roos, Terragni & Torjusen (2007).

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3. Transnational network: SLOW FOOD MOVEMENT

3.1. Emergence of Slow Food International Association

The main focus in this part is on the emergence of social innovation as well as the development of SI-initiatives and SI-networks focusing on how Slow Food emerges, relates and develops through space and time.

Slow Food is a global, grassroots organization, founded in Italy with the idea of connecting cultivation of taste to local traditional gastronomy s and regional biodiversity. Formally, Slow Food is an international non-profit organization supported by their affiliates. Informally, it seems to be the instrumental branch of a more diffused movement, “the facilitator of a world network committed to changing the way food is currently produced and distributed” (Irving & Ceriani, 2013). According to the information published on the Slow Food Website (2015), the global network is made up of a series of linked sub-networks, more than 100,000 members and 1.000.000 supporters that work in over 1.500 local initiatives in 160 countries. Slow Food has evolved from a European and North-American perspective to a transnational vision that promotes sustainable development in South America, Africa and Asia. Slow Food endorses today a comprehensive approach that emphasizes the strong connections between food and culture based on the fact that “gastronomy is indissolubly tied to, among other things, politics, agriculture and the environment, and is actively involved in agricultural and ecological issues around the world” (Irving & Ceriani, 2013).

Foundation, philosophy and development of the initiative

The Slow Food movement started in 1986, in the city of Bra (Piedmont district, Italy), under the leadership of the Italian journalist and social activist Carlo Petrini. It is important to underline the mythology of the origin of Slow Food, as countercultural movement that confronted the upcoming concept of fast food, “*following the protests that accompanied the opening of a branch of McDonald's in Piazza di Spagna, in the heart of Rome*” (quote_ SFI_01); In response to that, Carlo Petrini and a group of activists created in Bra the Slow Food movement with the initial aim to defend traditional gastronomy and the right to pleasure:

“Slow Food is the alternative, the avant-garde's riposte. Real culture is here to be found. First of all, we can begin by cultivating taste, rather than impoverishing it, by stimulating progress, by encouraging international exchange programs, by endorsing worthwhile projects, by advocating historical food culture and by defending old-fashioned food traditions. Slow Food assures us of a better quality lifestyle. With a snail purposely chosen, as its patron and symbol, it is an idea and a way of life that needs much sure but steady support” (Slow Food Manifesto, 1989).

In only three years, the Italian pioneers organized an international event at the *Opéra Comique*, in Paris (1989) that gathered people from fifteen different European countries –activists, experts, journalists, chefs- with the aim to constitute the Slow Food International Association. A hundred

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delegates -with different nationalities, origins, professions or backgrounds- endorsed the manifesto -written by founding member Folco Portinari- that claims for a change of lifestyles and for quality of life:

“Born and nurtured under the sign of Industrialization, this century first invented the machine and then modelled its lifestyle after it. Speed became our shackles. We felt prey to the same virus: ‘the fast life’ that fractures our customs and assails us even in our own homes, forcing us to ingest “fast- food”. Homo sapiens must regain wisdom and liberate itself from the ‘velocity’ that is propelling it on the road to extinction. Let us defend ourselves against the universal madness of ‘the fast life’ with tranquil material pleasure. Against those – or, rather, the vast majority - who confuse efficiency with frenzy, we propose the vaccine of an adequate portion of sensual gourmandise pleasures, to be taken with slow and prolonged enjoyment. Appropriately, we will start in the kitchen, with Slow Food. To escape the tediousness of “fast-food”, let us rediscover the rich varieties and aromas of local cuisines. In the name of productivity, the ‘fast life’ has changed our lifestyle and now threatens our environment and our land (and city) scopes (Slow Food Manifesto, 1989).

The Slow Food pioneers shared common preoccupations and values that motivated almost a hundred people to meet in Paris to create the international association. They might not have had a clear strategy about how to spread their innovative ideas but they shared a common vision embodied in the brief “Manifesto”. **Connections and the building of a common identity start before that significant moment**, as one of the activists involved in the first Slow Food meeting (Paris, 1989) explains:

“There were people with strong idealism and militancy. Left-wingers and others leaders ...Of course, Carlo Petrini is an agitator, but behind him were the members of the ArciGola association, which had been working on these issues for a long time. They say that Slow Food was born against McDonalds, that’s not true, maybe it is symbolic, but those people had been working together before, they had a shared vision” (quote: SFI_07).

Slow Food spreads out in Europe and North-America in its first stage, embracing the hedonistic philosophy of pleasure and food quality close to the traditional Latin culture: “conviviality and eating pleasure is easily accessible to Italians, Spaniards, French, Portuguese, so that food has traditionally been part and parcel of socialization down in the south of Europe” (Carlo Petrini in Hubbs, 2006). Slow Food’s discourse gradually attracted transnational attention in Australia, Mexico, USA, Japan and Latin-America. Italian connections seem to be at the basis of the “journey” of Slow Food movement as this interviewee explains: *“Slow food was initiated, in many of these countries, by Italians living there or by local high-income people or people who had restaurants (quote: SFI_04).* Moreover, other leaders had their first contact with Slow Food when travelling to Italy or, later, by participating in *Salone del Gusto* or *Terra Madre* events. Both networking activities have turned into crucial events, where new members are engaged (with a wide variety of profiles) and the initiative has thus expanded around the world.

In the second half of the 1990s, Slow Food leaders were aware that they should actively protect the agrifood heritage threatened by mass production. With this purpose, the international association

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creates the Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity (in 2003) as its operational body for the protection of food biodiversity, and launches the early conservation projects (e.g. “Ark of Taste”, “Presidia”), organizes the first editions of “Salone del Gusto” and “Terra Madre”. (see following sections: pp 20-21). At the same time, a number of national branches started to work in Germany, Switzerland, USA, Mexico, Spain or Australia. At the beginning of 2000, Slow Food had gained terrain in most western countries, but the real turning point was the celebration of Terra Madre in 2004, when the movement proposes the “*Good, clean and fair*” model, that “*gives coherence to the movement and gains external authority and respect*” (Slow Food, 2012). Since this critical event, the international association becomes more popular worldwide. Consequently, the slow food philosophy had to be adapted to a variety of cultural contexts like Asia, Latin America or Africa. Slow Food’s discourse gains in complexity and consistency, encompassing a number of emerging issues such as global warming, GMOs, animal welfare, food waste or indigenous rights among others. The international association create the “Slow Food Youth Network” (2007) and the “Indigenous Terra Madre Network” (2011) to provide more attractive spaces for interacting and engaging for newcomers. It is important to highlight the generational renovation of the social basis of Slow Food Movement. In the last decade, a new generation of young activists joined Slow Food and raised the informal global Youth Network. This influx represented a challenge for the social initiative that had to deal with tensions between two generations of food activists (with different visions in terms of ambitions or the political role of Slow Food). The raising number of associates and their profile brought new ideas and new ways of doing, thinking and organizing. The movement turned into a political actor in global context.

Slow Food’s Time-line

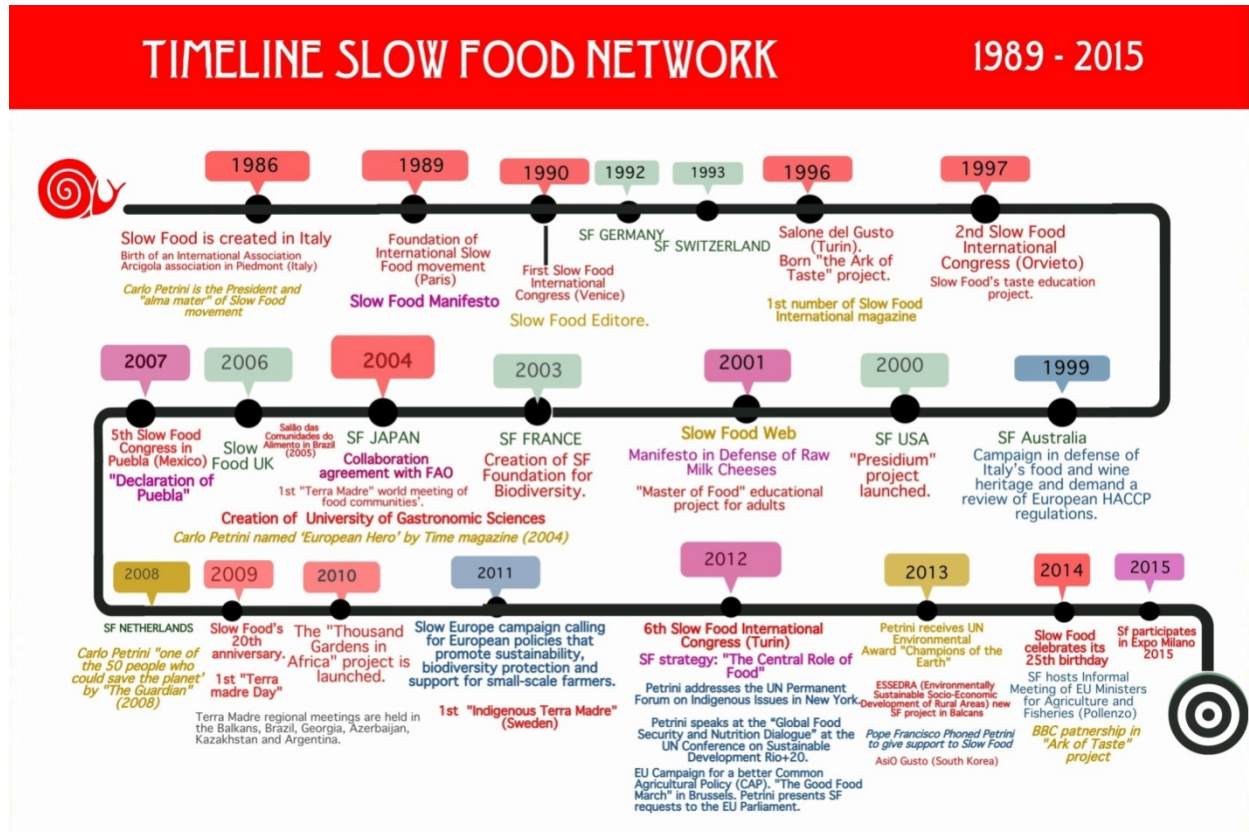
The following timeline tries to cover the events and other information required in the methodological guidelines. At the same time, we consider the characteristics and idiosyncrasy of the international network. Considering the almost 30 years of history of the Slow Food movement, we select the most relevant events, milestones or international projects that the SF Network has achieved and how they have expanded from Italy to Europe, Australia, America or Asia (*Nowadays, they have widely expanded all over the world and it is not possible to indicate here the 160 countries in which they work*). Secondly, we indicate the public documents that Slow Food have produced (indicating elements of the Slow Food “narratives of change”) from the very beginning (Manifesto, 1989) until the most recent (The Central Role of Food, 2012), that coincide with the dates of the Slow Food international conferences. Related to this, we highlight the increase of their political influence and political (lobby) campaigns, providing some examples of institutions and political actors that they work with (interventions in UN, EU Parliament, the support of the Pope).

Mass media impact and activity seem to be very relevant and significant in Slow Food. They invest important resources in communication strategies (SF owns a publishing house where they publish the SF magazine and related books) and we provide examples of how mass media (can) enhance their recognition as a relevant actor (milestones or events with media coverage). Slow Food has an intense activity on the Internet, providing extended information about their projects and campaigns through their International, National and local websites. Social networks (both Facebook and Twitter) are also popular between their members. Besides, they have developed an application

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called “Slow Food Planet” that helps consumers directly to navigate in city level slow food restaurants, places, farmers, events, etc.

Figure 3: *time line of Slow Food Movement.*



Source: time line created by the authors based on Slow Food's primary documents and interviews.

Spatial map

The following map illustrates the global dimension of the Slow Food movement that integrates 1.500 “convivia” (local initiatives) in 160 countries (in dark grey colour). We consider it relevant to clarify that their African presence is related to the development of the “10,000 Gardens in Africa project” funded by more than a hundred institutions and slow food supporters. We also observed the influence of Vandana Shiva in India –the former Vice-president of Slow Food -and Alice Walters in USA – the current Vice-president- in the process of spreading the slow food philosophy in those regions. Recently, Slow Food was negotiating to obtain the “permission” of the Chinese government to open a national office in this country.

Figure 2: *map representation of Slow Food Movement.*

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Source: Map adapted by the authors from the Slow Food Website: <http://www.slowfood.com/international/4/where-we-are>

Philosophy aims and shared values of the slow food movement

Slow Food members envision a world in which all people can access and enjoy food that is “*good for them, good for those who grow it and good for the planet*”, connecting quality of life with traditional and sustainable food production and consumption as well as defending food sovereignty and biodiversity conservation: “*The only type of agriculture that ensures the development of the poorest regions of the world is the one based on the wisdom of local communities in harmony with the ecosystems that surround them*” (Slow Food, 2015). Slow Food pursues social justice, by defending good labour conditions for food producers, and a change in food system, emphasizing the consumers' capability and responsibility to orient the market with their choices. This holistic vision of gastronomy includes political and pragmatic proposals to face the main global social challenges, focusing on the need of new economic system, based on collaborative and solidary relations within producers and consumers. Slow Food defends the “right to food” as the primary right of humanity to ensure, symbolically declaring “a fight against hunger, just like the fight against slavery was declared in the past” (Slow Food, 2012). Slow Food also promotes “ethnically- and socio-economically-diverse leadership and protects the rights of indigenous peoples, increasing the value of local economic models of food production” (adapted from the Slow Food International Statute, 2012).

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Slow Food claims “the right to pleasure”, affirming that they are the only organization that connects pleasure, social activism and political commitment both in local and international spheres. This positive vision of the “good life” has been coined by authors like Kate Soper (2008) as “alternative hedonism”. Slow Food connects pleasure to food, to slow rhythms of living, and to conviviality and human relations, which consequently entails the responsibility to protect the heritage of food, tradition and culture that makes this pleasure possible (Kjørstad, 2007), as their President, Carlo Petrini, explains:

“Our approach to the problems of the world uses pleasure as its starting point; I can’t think of other organizations with such a unique project (...) Slow Food is the intersection of ethics and pleasure, of ecology and gastronomy. On the one hand, it counters the standardization of taste, the power of agro-industrial multinationals and the folly of fast life; on the other, it wishes to restore pleasure to food and the slow rhythms of conviviality to the table. Pleasure is an aesthetic/sensual experience but it is also the result of responsible awareness: in a word, of knowledge” (Carlo Petrini in Hubbs, 2006)

The discourse of Slow Food is further analysed in the [section 2 of this chapter](#) (pp: 24-25).

Activities and projects developed by the Slow Food International Association

In order to build a structured organization able to coordinate all the Slow Food projects and activities, the Slow Food International Association created in 2003 the no-profit Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity (<http://www.fondazione Slow Food.com>). This Foundation (financially supported by several public institutions and a number of private companies) leads the most relevant activities developed by the movement: “*Presidia*” (supporting groups of small-scale producers to sustain quality food productions at risk of extinction), “*The Ark of Taste*” (Online catalogue of endangered traditional foods), “*A Thousand gardens in Africa*” (planned to create 10,000 food gardens in African local communities), the “*Chefs’ Alliance*” and “*Earth Markets*” (international networks of farmers’ markets).

“Even in Africa, where everything is completely different, our projects are carried out in collaboration with the local networks, with local people, there is no Spanish or German or American people that go there to export anything (...) we want to involve people in their territory, focus on local development. In Africa, we have created 2,000 orchards in 27 countries in Africa and 40,000 people involved in these local gardens, working with a very small investment of € 900 per garden, which is nothing. But we only do that investment whether the adequate conditions exist and local actors are involved properly” (quote: Paolo di Croce, General Secretary of Slow Food International Association. Participant observation, Vimianzo, 2015).

Terra Madre and Salone del Gusto.

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Probably, the most well-known activity managed by Slow Food is the “**Terra Madre event**”, organized in Italy every two years with the aim of actively supporting “small-scale, sustainable, local economies”. Terra Madre was born as an inspiring event that gathers “thousands of food producers, food communities, cooks, academics and young people from 160 countries” (Slow food Companion, 2014) and generates synergies and future projects in other areas of the world. For this purpose, Slow Food has developed this idea in smaller context and spaces, organizing national and regional meetings in collaboration with public institutions.

“Terra Madre is Petrini’s creation. In 2000 we started to recognize with a prize the labour that small producers do to recover and protect certain products. A network of journalists and experts from around the world propose the candidates, each of us presented one candidate and finally hundreds of good practices were presented (...). It was Petrini who told me that we need to bring all of them, not only the rewarded. That is how Terra Madre started. And Terra Madre became a huge event. Thousands of people attended to discuss their practices in agriculture, fishing etc. With the second edition, we decided to organise Terra Madre and Salone del Gusto simultaneously. Thousands of independent producers come with their products, bringing food that can be sold. The event is increasing their promotion year by year. Terra Madre became an event that raised international interest, even supported by UNESCO. People come to sell those products included in Presidia, The Ark of Taste, and other products but with control, assuring good quality, and clean and fair production processes” (quote: SFI_07).

Edible schoolyard project.

Slow Food invests great effort in educating population children in food and healthy eating, promoting school gardens and educative projects in Europe and North America. For this purpose, local convivia and national organizations enrol teachers and schools in food education projects that “provide scholars the opportunity to grow their own groceries, cooking them or visiting food producers, like the National School Garden Program displayed by Slow Food USA” (quote: SFI_06), based on “learning-by-doing” education, as the Vice-president of Slow Food, Alice Walters, affirms:

“For 20 years I have been working on the Edible Schoolyard project. We have schools all over the world. Since we started, food has become a major issue in our society (...) I always have imagined food to be the answer. The way to solve the problems is through food. Problems of health, poverty, global warming, wars. Edible education is to teach children the essential values of sustainability, nourishment and communication. I believe that the whole world has to be educated. Every decision we make is a very political decision. If we change the way we eat, we will have tremendous effect. We are now in 156 countries and I think the reason it is so successful is because it is using pleasure to bring people back to their understanding ideas like sustainability and biodiversity by feeding them. I am a Montessori teacher and I believe we learn by doing. There is no real book for this revolution” (quote: Alice Walters, interview in Huffington post, 2015).

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Slow Food contestation and relations to mainstreaming food companies

Despite being a counter movement, slow food pioneers strategically avoid confrontation discourses directed at multinational companies. Instead, they propose a resistance to fast food by building awareness of the wealth of traditional food that is at risk: *“to support and defend good food, gastronomic pleasure and a slow pace of life. It then broadened its sights to embrace quality of life, local and global sustainability development and biodiversity conservation”* (Irving & Ceriani, 2013). Slow Food attempts to reinforce the still existing small scale and alternative local production methods (Kjørstad, 2007), encouraging consumers and food producers to join together in “food communities” outside of *“the usual distribution channels which hide relevant information beyond price and often exploit food producers”* (quote: SFAV_02). Slow Food does not commercialize any product but act as an intermediary by collaborating with local producers, organizing local and regional activities that enhance their acknowledgement and improve market opportunities for their products:

“Whether traditional agriculture disappears, only the large multinationals will be able to explode it. The farmer will be a mere employee of multinationals (...) the current food system is not sustainable, it is a criminal system, we are not the ones who eat, and it’s the food that consumes us. The food system –based on hyper productivity force- is unsustainable” (quote: Carlo Petrini, keynote in Mesoamerica, 2013).

However, the most recent Slow Food political positions strongly criticize the globalized and delocalized food system lead by large corporations that use industrialized, homogenizing and globalized farming. Slow Food leaders (e.g. Carlo Petrini, Vandana Shiva) actively complain that small local agriculture and biodiversity are in serious risk to disappear due to GMOs, mainstream food production practices and seed appropriation practices:

“Only 20% of the world's seeds are in the hands of farmers. If we do not act, species will irreversibly disappear. Agriculture and the food and cultural spectrum dependent on biodiversity will disappear. Small farmers will disappear, healthy food diversity will disappear, seed sovereignty will disappear, and food sovereignty will disappear” (quote: adaptation from Vandana Shiva's intervention in Terra Madre, 2008).

Otherwise, Slow Food is not yet seen as a real competitor or relevant critical voice to the mainstream food sector: *“We are not so big in many places, except in Italy, where we have 30,000 members, so there is no opposition because they do not know us”* (quote: SLI_01). Besides this global vision provided by some practitioners, *“in USA things are starting to change in terms that the Slow Food campaign “Slow Meat” launched in Denver has provoked reactions and contestation from the meat industry”* (quote: SFI_05). If we consider contestation from mainstream actors as an indicator of a movement becoming a relevant contender in the social negotiation of “normal” ways of doing, organizing, knowing and framing, it seems that Slow Food has not reached that level yet. However, the adoption of some of their principles and practices by more mainstream actors can be seen as an indicator of transformative impact.

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In Italy they work with the organic company *AlceNero* - (a company that sells organic and fair trade products) and also with the Italian coffee company Lavazza with whom they are working on the development of “*product narrative labels*”:

“Which is of course a traditional company, but it has started a very good and transparent process, also related to producers in South America and they are doing a good job of managing change in a sustainable direction. Of course, change is very slow, because a company like that does not change overnight, but we continue to support their efforts because they look good (...) we teach them about the narrative labels, which give more information about the production and distribution of food, which attracts people more to food. The European Union alone forces you to place very little information about the characteristics of the products, and we teach them to tell the story of the product” (quote: SFI_01).

Political influence of the slow food movement

There are indicators that Slow Food has become today a relevant political actor or at least a reliable interlocutor to governments and policy-makers, reaching collaboration agreements with FAO and increasing its lobby activity within the European Union. In the next section of this report we will focus on the dynamics of social innovation, describing in what extent Slow Food interacts to relevant institutions and relates with external social actors and mass media.

3.2. TSI dynamics

In this second part the focus is on the interaction of the social innovation with the social context, the dynamics of transformative social innovation: How do social innovations interact with/ contribute to transformative change in a social context.

Discourses and narratives of change

The analysis of the main discourses and political positions of Slow Food along their history permits to observe the influence that the environmental movement, the social and solidarity economy, labour rights and fair trade had in the emergence and evolution of the movement. The network appeals to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights (United Nations) in order to demand the universal “right to food”. Slow Food rhetoric has also adopted emerging social discourses, like the “food sovereignty” -concept conceived by the global peasant movement *Via Campesina*- or a number of principles proposed in critical economy approaches (social and solidarity economy). Slow Food is a new “eco-gastronomy” movement (Andrews, 2008) that claims a “broad cultural change” -in western countries lifestyles- with strong economic and political dimensions. Although the international network is not manifestly averse to market system or globalization, Slow Food leaders refer to “virtuous globalization”, introducing the “Good, Clean and Fair” conditions as “parameters of ethical economy” (Siniscalchi, 2013). The initiative proposes a “radical shift in consumption paradigm” in terms of consumers’ capacity to influence food production systems

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grounded on new ethical relations between consumers and producers that are established in the local context. Besides, the initiative is aware of how current food system endangers the environment and that fundamental changes in social lifestyles are required:

First of all, we should understand that it is essential to restore the centrality of food in our culture, and, to do so, we must focus on agriculture. The current situation of the world is in great part due to the history of Western agriculture that has lost some of the most important objectives of those people who care about the centrality of food. If the exploitation of land and the construction of fertile soil go on, we cannot ensure a future for ourselves and our planet. It is essential then a drastic change of mentality, because we must not forget that we are what we eat. This issue becomes more complicated when it comes to GMOs: on one hand, we must not be contrary to the development of new technologies, but, on the other hand, it is essential to adopt an approach that takes into account the protection of biodiversity and the socio-economic consequences. In short, technology choices in agriculture should not be in conflict with the interest of peoples and with a healthy economic system. In that sense, the transgenic agriculture is not sustainable or economically efficient. Moreover, so far there are no reliable studies on GMOs effects on human health. What we need is a change of mentality in order to cancel the real illness of our society: food waste” (source: interview to Petrini, 2013⁴)

Although some practitioners endorse “degrowth” economical proposals, the official positions avoid being so dramatic and considering education and environmental awareness as key strategies to change the current system. Besides, Slow Food leaders are proud to have contributed, in a certain way, to the generalization of critical discourses regarding the food system: *“The good news are the world is changing, slowly, because large corporations are there, but we observe a global trend in traditional food, small-scale distributed, sustainable; culture is changing more over the past 5 years than in the previous 50 years (...) The Pope every day says something about the environment. Something is changing, something is happening behind, sustainability is already in speech and Slow Food is part of that discourse. (quote: Di Croce, 2015, participant observation).*

Slow Food proposals to guarantee the right to food are connected to empowerment and autonomy: self-sufficient of (local) communities at the small-scale productive level creating short food supply chains. The future of the agricultural systems will be production in the local dimension, mainly for the local community, in terms that local economies are conducive to the dissemination and conservation of knowledge, the forming of identity and the affirmation of individuals and communities, as the political document “The Central Role of Food” (Slow Food, 2012:20) illustrates: We have already seen that, without local economies, there would be no Terra Madre, no producers or “co-producers” and no exchange between them: exchange of knowledge, products, information, innovation and sincere friendship. It also has to be pointed out that the small productive scale is not a “return to the past”, but is as modern as can be—even from an economic point of view. It has been demonstrated, in fact, that many small-scale economies produce at least as much as large-scale or global-scale systems. They are fairer, more sustainable systems for the distribution of wealth and well-being at every level, from the personal to the global”.

Slow Food embraces the “participatory democracy discourse” in terms that local economies fully entitle people to be part of a community, empowered them “to take hold of our lives and those of our

⁴ Source: <http://www.lteconomy.it/en/interviews-en/12-interviste/146-carlo-petrini3>

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friends, instead of letting others decide for us on decisive questions such as our rights and the rights of the Earth” (Slow Food, 2012). The movement claims the right to pleasure connecting gastronomy, conviviality and identity. Local communities are able to be -according the slow food discourse- the appropriate spaces of diversity and identity, of sustainability and pleasure, of conviviality and happiness because “the freedom to choose how to eat is also existential sovereignty” (Slow Food, 2012).

Societal changes in terms of events, societal framework conditions and discourses that enable or inhibit Slow Food impact.

Slow Food leaders have perceived, in the last ten years, a positive change in societal discourses especially related to the increasing awareness in health issues and the access to quality food that even politicians care:

“I think we are seeing a shift in people's attitudes around the food systems...There's a larger demand for organic, there're big pushes against GMO'S, there's you know some increase...some more awareness about the grass fed, you know and that kind of stuff. Is not always being done under the Slow Food name, other groups are also leading these efforts but it can certainly be looked at the Slow Food Movement you know. But not always under Slow Food. You know...we are certainly not the only leaders in this area” (quote: SFI_05).

According to interviewees, their discourse of food quality and pleasure has reached to a minority part of the society, as the expansion of specialized organic food stores demonstrates (even in large companies).

Paolo di Croce, the General Secretary of the international association refers to a global social change, especially in the United States, where the fast food philosophy was born. The relationship between health, food and environment has been recently understood by unless a minority of people, but consistent minorities are able to change the general opinion. Practitioners around the world frequently mentioned that *“having a baby seems to be a “significant moment” to people who had never cared before of healthy and food issues” (quote: SFAV_01)* and they become a critical consumer this societal changes also have influence in marketing strategies as explain the following interviewee:

“We're talking about our planet. The reason for the 6th extinction is the mankind. This cannot continue, at least have to try, there are many very positive, very positive signs. We are a minority, I know that but, for example, all companies are starting to talk about sustainability. The 95% will be marketing strategies, of course, but in all the countries of the world now everything is local or typical. It is not true, but all consumers want to eat locally and typical. The first reason is health. For example, in USA, the second highest health spending is to cure the obesity; they invest 108,000 million dollars a year to treat obesity. With that money you could end the hunger in the world! USA administration is starting to talk about this, because it is too expensive. There is not future, economic or environmental future. The next day a young person has a child, he or her will begin to be concerned about healthy eating. Then many will go to McDonald's, because there is no awareness, no communication, but I am convinced that we are

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talking about something that is changing. There are examples around the world that illustrate that" (Paolo di Croce, 2015, participant observation).

Despite these positive scenarios, Slow Food is also conscious that changes in food system or in agricultural policies might inhibit the activity and social impact of the Slow Food movement; however, other political changes have been identified as potential enablers. For instance, the end of the European Union's agriculture policies (CAP) has been perceived as an opportunity to organic and local producers in terms that the EU does not longer favour quantity over quality so that t of small farmers have the only opportunity to *"focus on high quality products that Europe is more apt to produce and people is able to pay. You can see what is happening with the cost of milk (...) However, young people is returning to the rural areas and investing in organic production and now they are proud of being food producers and believe that they are contributing to a better world"* (quote: SFAV_01).

However, other interviewees are more reluctant to see positive signs in political decisions regarding food production and distribution policies, being aware that private companies have enormous influence in governments. For example, Slow Food has maintained strong positions against certain international food security policies which requirements jeopardized the financial sustainability of small-producers. Also, Slow Food launched several campaigns against GMOs in Europe and currently they are involved in a European platform against the content of the TTIP EU-USA commercial agreement.

Relevant institutions and external actors who Slow Food interacts and relates with.

Slow Food has gained the endorsement of public authorities, foundations, commercial enterprises, NGOs and social movements. For example, the Slow Food Foundation is supported by the Tuscany Regional Authority and *"few private companies support activities like Terra Madre, the gardens in Africa project or the narrative levels, as AlceNero does"* (quote: SFI_01). The network has developed numerous projects in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Chile (financially supported by national governments) or in Africa, Slow Food is financially supported by companies like *AlceNero* or *Lavazza* (see previous section), as well as a number of national governments and public administrations. Slow Food leaders remark the strategic relevance to establish deep and long-lasting links with supporters and external community based organizations aiming to create an enduring partnership relevant to the association's long-term sustainability as well as to gain social impact. With this aim, Slow Food collaborates with Greenpeace, OXFAM, Via Campesina, Seed global movement, the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous People, and hundreds of national and regional civil organizations that enable them to develop projects like "the ark of taste", "Presidia", "markets of the earth" or the School Garden projects.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) officially recognized Slow Food as a non-profit organization in 2004, establishing several agreements to promote equitable, inclusive food systems and improve the livelihoods of small landowners in rural areas. The European Commission considers Slow Food to be the biggest membership-based organisation in the world and therefore most welcome in policy debates (e.g. in the CAP reform post 2013 or the hygiene rules for

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small scale producers). In 2012, Carlo Petrini addressed the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (New York) and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20 (Brazil). Slow Food has received the acknowledgement of the United Nations Environment Programme that in 2013 named Carlo Petrini Co-Winner of the *“Champion of the Earth Award for Inspiration and Action*. Anecdotally, even the Pope Francis has manifested their support to the Slow Food in a personal call to Petrini (Petrini, 2013). This content is deeply developed in the third section of this report related to agency processes.

Potential impact of the Slow Food movement.

Slow Food claims that “feed the planet is possible”. To guarantee *good, clean and fair food* for everyone a change in food system has to occur in terms of localizing food production, as well as personal and community commitment with local producers, which involves responsible consumption behaviour. *“Education, information, dissemination is the basis of change (...) When people give more value to the food, and less value to cars or phones things will change. It makes no sense. Someday something will change. To change the world, you have to have a real impact” (Paolo di Croce, 2015, participant observation)*. Practitioners, policy-makers, agriculture experts and other local activists have offered a number of examples of the potential and actual impact that Slow Food practices have on the international and local context.

Slow food offers a new -holistic- frame to comprehend food system and ecological crisis, and proposes alternatives oriented social transformation.

Slow Food’s political, economic and educative dimension permits them to play an intermediary role to influence the political, normative and economic agendas in the international and regional arenas, arising public discourses regarding “hot topics” like meat consumption (“Slow Meat campaign” launched in USA). The initiative has become *“a prescriber that influences in public opinions and purchasing decisions” (quote: SFAV_08)*. Petrini claims to be *“the moral authority”* (Petrini in Le Monde, 2005) to impulse a more ‘civilized’ economy that, actually, *“has limited persuasive power in comparison to large corporations and food industry lobbies” (quote: SFI_02)*.

“In USA, Slow Food has launched the “Slow Meat campaign” with spillover effect over the country and introducing the meat consumption in the public and policy discussions: we had two great conferences here in Denver and that has a spillover in campaigns in different cities. And this last Conference in Denver there were 12 countries represented from across the world and there are campaigns happening there too so...The meat conversation here in the United States is very intense, you know...the conventional meat system is very, very powerful and the Slow Meat System, all that we call grass fed, sustainable raised, is very small compared to the overall meat program so we have many ways to go... Perhaps one interesting aspect of this with the school is the largest food districts across the country have bear together to put pressure on the companies that produce the meat for the kids and they have, have succeeded in getting the meat companies to take out salt and other additives to the meat, for the meat that is going to the

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school kitchens. So we find that very successful. And that's beginning the spillover into the meat that the general public has to buy too. But it's a very slow process" (quote: SFI_06).

Within this comprehensive approach, Slow Food enhances local and sustainable development of rural communities, which relates to the preservation of culture and biodiversity. Their intervention models are the "Ark of Taste" and the "Presidia" projects accompanied with food education initiatives: *"Presidia projects directly sustain small - scale producers, providing them with technical assistance in production techniques, organisation of producers' consortia, improvement of the supply chain and promotion and marketing of products today more than 450 Slow Food's Presidia involve more than 13,000 producers in 65 countries" (quote: SFI_01).*

Local consumption also involves changes in food demanding, social lifestyles and relations. Eating is a pleasure experience that, in Mediterranean countries, relates to tradition, family and cultural roots. "Our proposals claim the flavours, the cuisine of our grandmothers, patience and a taste for food" (Alberto Lopez, 2006).

"We are missing the pause, time for relaxation, to talk things quietly. It is unusual nowadays, but it is important. We keep it here, in the Basque Country, thanks to the "gastronomic societies". In Alava there are plenty of them (...) I like quiet. Enjoy a little chat. We're talking about things that are ancient but we are gradually returning" (quote: SFAV_03).

Slow Food invest efforts and resources in educating population in food issues, with positive effects on local communities:

"10 years ago we were showing kids to love the vegetables in the garden, the school-canteens staff started saying that fresh vegetables should be served for lunch, not ham, not frozen (...) we started buying for local farmers and we started with scratch cooking and so there has been a big change in Denver with the food that the kids are getting in the cafeteria and I believe a lot that that comes from the back that gardens were very successful. And the kids enjoyed it and people saw that kids were eating that food out of the gardens" (quote: SFI_06).

Slow Food introduces new ways of framing (food system) and relating

Reshaping the relationships between producers and consumers grounded on trust relations and emotional ties. Slow Food impulses short commercial circuits (as an alternative to the current food system) enhancing that strength direct -face-to-face-relationships between consumer and producer ("slow food communities"). Slow Food coined the term "co-producer" to highlight the power and political role of the consumer: people are no longer consumers but co-producers (in a similar meaning that 'prosumers': producer-consumers). Slow Food posits a change in market relations, from competition to collaboration and sharing knowledge between food producers, KM0 chefs, producers and consumers, restaurants and customers. Social Learning and knowledge co-production processes emerge from interaction and networking activities, especially those organized by the international association (like Terra Madre) or their networks (Slow Food Youth Network; Indigenous Terra Madre Network).

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New ways of knowing, framing and doing.

Slow food pursues the sustainable development of rural areas enhancing small-scale organic production and giving acknowledgement to food producers instead of commercial brands or labels. Most of the interviewees have observed a new tendency to young people to become “food producers” (as young farmers or through food self-provisioning) aiming to improve their quality of life living in a natural area in a slower rhythm of life. These new farmers that innovate the agriculture techniques and commit to organic and sustainable production, direct online sale-systems and creating “food communities” and slow food have been able to provide them resources, skills and an international network to support their activity –which can be observed in Terra Madre events.

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Becoming a relevant actor in the international and local context.

They have signed numerous agreements with national governments - Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Chile, China, South Korea- but also to counselling them in the development of public policies, being a key interlocutor to the European Union. This influence has been observed at the local scale in the case of the Basque initiative. Slow Food leaders are called by Vitoria’s council to advising in the development of food, tourism or edible garden local projects. Slow food discourse is also present in the political sphere (see chapter 4: Slow Food Araba Vitoria) even in some countries Slow Food has been tempted to become a political party: *“There is a movement of many people who wants us to take to the arena as a political party, there are people who see us as a party, everywhere, in Italy, in Germany, this is globalized etc., (...) there were positions, and we have a meeting next week to discuss this issue. But at least few of us think that slow food is not a political party, it is something much more important” (quote: SFAV_01).*

Slow Food Philosophy, based on “hedonism and pleasure” that has been criticized in their beginnings for being elitist or low-class excluded and western-oriented. Their members still struggle with this negative vision, *“unsubstantiated prejudice”* (quote_SFI_04) and defend the logic evolution of the project to be more inclusive and oriented to gain social and political impact:

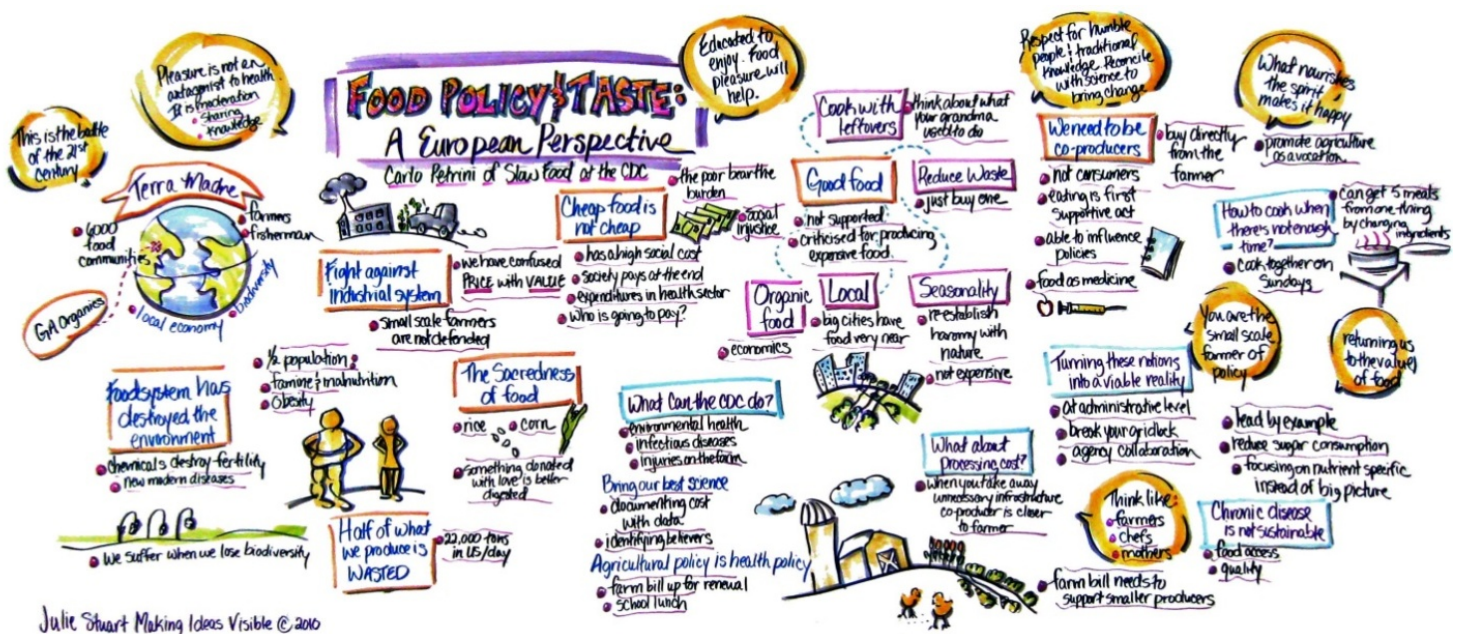
“How and when the movement was born also matters. It has different characteristics in each country or region. Over 25 years, the movement has changed considerably, it is different in countries where Slow Food was born over 10 years or before, and those regions where slow food is more recent. In the first group, Gastronomy and pleasure have still stronger importance.

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Where Slow Food was born later or where the initiatives have adapted better to the recent changes within the movement, the national and local structures are more aware of political issues or food sovereignty. Slow Food has a strong political component. I think those who still criticized us do not accept that the movement have changed. In Mexico it has changed. At the beginning they were more exclusive, they made very interesting things but they didn't engage many people from different sectors of civil society, now Slow Food is more inclusive" (quote: SFL_04).

In the introductory section of this report (pp. 4-6) we included a brief literature review including relevant scientific contributions to the analysis of potential impacts and (positive and critical aspects). These analyses (Roos et al, 2007; Hall, 2012; Kjørstad, 2007) cautions concerning the extent of the social and political impact that Slow Food could achieve, taking into consideration the outstanding systemic conditions and the limited capability to local economies to fulfil food demands. Hall (2012) posits that the slow food movement has not yet represented a fundamental change in the market logic of food systems (if we look at their reduced local impact or their marginality in the food system). Besides, we agree with Kjaernes (in Kjørstad, 2007) that consumption activities should not be studied in isolation though they need to be studied as social activities, routinized practices that need to be broken up and implies a change in behaviour that should deal with barriers and habits, which is a slow process.

Figure 4: "visualizing mapping" of Slow Food's discourse.



Julie Stuart Making Ideas Visible © 2010

Source: Julie Stuart (<http://www.makingideasvisible.com/blog/visual-mapping/visually-mapping-slow-foodlove/>)

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3.3. Agency in (T)SI

This third part focuses on the agency in (transformative) social innovation: How is agency constructed in the Slow Food International network. We will observe the relation between motivations and processes of empowerment and how and to what extent agency is manifested in the international network.

In this section we analyse the agency processes that emerge within the Slow Food movement, the relation between motivations and processes of empowerment and how and in what extent agency is manifested in the international network. In terms of agency processes, and based on the conceptualization presented in the Methodological Guidelines (Wittmayer et al, 2015), agency relies on the capacity for purposive action and the capacity to imagine new ways of being, new relationships and new ways of doing. Going further, the Self-determination theory (SDT, Ryan & Deci, 2000) explains agency phenomena in terms of the meaning of events to individuals, and their significance for people's attempts to satisfy their basic psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Self-determination theory contends that the three basic psychological needs that are universally shared by human beings are: relatedness, competence and autonomy. When these needs are not adequately met by existing systems and contexts, people may actively search for contexts in which better need satisfaction can be achieved. In studying the Slow Food movement, we asked the question of whether participants were actively aiming to shape the initiative in ways that would support such need satisfaction, and if this was the case, through which means they attempted to do so (*see Haxeltine et al, 2015, to a deepen explanation of agency processes in transformative social innovations*).

Conceptualization. Research questions.

The researchers explored:

1. **Individual and collective dimensions of agency** related with personal aims, motivations and needs to be fulfilled by or within the initiative. We will focus on the motivations and individual values that Slow Food's members manifested and how the network is able to fulfil these needs and permit them to develop a "*sense of having the capacity to live according to their values*".
2. Certain **process of autonomy**, when the practitioners act in accord with their authentic interests or integrated values and desires (Deci & Ryan, 2000).
3. Whether practitioners experiment **sense of having a capacity for becoming free** from constraints, being able to overcome personal and contextual constraints.
4. **Empowerment processes** experienced by members (and/or community leaders) when the network is able to change, in a certain way, the social context, the system or the situation that they confront, practitioners may experiment (to change themselves, their lives, their relationships and the social contexts they find themselves in). Related to this, agency processes develop **resilience**, the capacity to resist frustration and overcoming obstacles.

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We will analyse the strategies designed by the networks to fulfil the needs and ambitions of their members and enhance individual and collective empowerment processes:

1. Developing a **common identity**, a collective vision of change, with a mission to develop, that transcends the local context and engage with other like-minded people worldwide.
2. The construction of discourses that connect with human needs and emotional engagement
3. By formulating a **coherent discourse of change**, presenting the network as a consistent minority with transformative capability through their local and global activity.
4. **Discourse of belongingness to a group** that share your values and fulfil people's needs of autonomy, relatedness and competence.
5. **Autonomous governance** structure that permit the experimentation of freedom and autonomy of action.
6. **External governance** and **networking** activity to gain social and political influence.

Results: motivations and shared goals.

Slow Food members shared common preoccupations and values related to food system, environmental preservation and sustainable food local production. Besides, we observed that Slow Food discourse connects with individual needs aims and aims that seem to be fulfilled by or within the initiative (*Decy & Ryan's in the Self-determination theory, explain agency phenomena in terms of the meaning of events to individuals, and their significance for people's attempts to satisfy their basic psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness*). Being asked about the reasons that motivate slow food members to join the initiative, practitioners highlight the plurality of aims that the majority seem to share, from a simple interest for urban gardening and healthy lifestyles to volunteering in a local project or change the food system. The researchers could identify in the interviews (in comparison also with a sample of speeches given by relevant spokespersons) a list of motivations that seem to differ according to the profession or role of each participant (*food producers and chefs align their profession with their values and aim to find like-minded people with similar experiences; educators are more focused on youngest/school population; other food activist are more focused on organic and responsible consumption and local activism...*):

- A desire to get involved in projects and activities that align better with one's values and genuine interests
 - Needing to align one's professional career options with one's own values (making work meaningful)
 - A desire for connectedness to like-minded others.
 - A wish to contribute to one's community in meaningful ways
 - Wanting to preserve local cultural and culinary heritage, thus preserving a sense of local identity.
 - Desire to transform relations in the food production system, from alienation, distance and instrumentalization (e.g. of peasants, farmers and food producers) to direct contact, acknowledgement and valuing of each actor in the food system.
 - Wish to protect the environment and preserve biodiversity.
- Slow Food fulfils a "need for connectedness". Practitioners manifest an intense need for

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connectedness, a need of being accompanied, to belong to a group where they meet other like-minded people, that work and care about the same issues *“people who fight for the same things, the same rights, we share common values” (quote: SFAV_03)*. This engagement is experienced even in a global context, people feel strong emotions when they meet people from other parts of the world and they are interested in their work, products and experiences. Interviewees describe participating in “Terra Madre” event as an emotional and learning experience that reinforces belongingness and identity processes.

- Need for autonomy: Slow Food permits their members the alignment of personal values and concerns with their actions, at least in a part of their lives (especially in urban areas): *“there are people working in a bank or the government in their everyday lives, but they want to do something and care about these issues, and then begin to organize a convivium, not only in slow food” (quote: SFI_01)*.

- Living coherently with personal values and ideologies, a common sensibility connects them to thousands of people around the world. Slow Food gathers people from a diversity of origins, motivations and background, which enables the creation of “communities of interest” inside the network. The “Chef alliance”, the Indigenous network or the Youth network are examples of that. Besides, Slow Food is flexible with legal requirements or membership. Internal organization rules permit autonomy and free decision-making, which makes people feel comfortable within the movement.

- Slow Food permits people to contribute to one’s community in a meaningful way. Slow Food has become a space where their members can contribute to society, to “social transformation”, through the different role that they play within the movement. For example, chefs define themselves as “prescribers”, as “showcases” that influence in people's consumer decisions. Journalists use their media space to inform and educate about the food system and slow food philosophy. Policy-makers and public servant use their capabilities to influence in public policies. Volunteers aim to *“do something for the planet, to leave the world a better place than you come into it” (quote: SFI_01)*.

“I think the major benefit of me being part of Slow Food is that it gives me some structure to do the work that I want to do. You know, as an individual it would be hard for me to do this kind of work and to be taken seriously but having a nonprofit organisation behind me, at least gives me some better work condition and something I can point that I belong to and that this work is coming from” (quote: SFI_06).

We observe the intentionality to work in improving environmental or social conditions and find in Slow Food a space where to fulfil their ambitions adequately to their abilities or possibilities *“without being a strong activist like Greenpeace-people are” (quote: SFAV_02)*. In the case of small producers, they may not compete in the traditional market, but they can reinforce their traditional processes and share their knowledge with other slow food members: *“French and Ethiopian farmers can share difficulties that have experienced and solved, which is something very powerful. Some producers know that they will not make much money and say that it does not matter, because what matters to me is to preserve this breed of cow, for example, of which there are two thousand heads in France, because otherwise it might disappear. Volunteers and producers are very passionate people who believe in these causes” (quote: SFIA_01)*”.

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- Preservation of local identity and connection with the past of one's community: (contributing is both a process of identity building and of becoming a rightful member – giving back; identity, belonging and meaning). The need to preserve traditional techniques concern for clean, good and fair products: *“Preserving the memory of traditional knowledge and communities, transmitted across generations and between the communities, it is essential to guarantee the right to food”* (Alberto López, 2015). Identity and “common vision” are two concepts constantly reflected in the discourses of people involved in the International Association *“because the basis of change is people. We need persons that want to change the world, working from their localities. A feeling of identity or sense of belonging is need”* (Paolo di Croce, 2015: participant observation).

- To act locally (to change the system): Slow Food activist are aware that problems are not only present in the far-away places but also in their own localities. This idea contrast with the *“hyperopia effect”* (Uzzell, 2000) which describes the tendency for people to view broad, distal environmental problems as more severe than proximate ones (as has been found in several studies). However, the following interviewee manifest the aim of *“doing something here, in Europe, to help developed countries, to change the system, because relevant decisions are made in the north, whether we like it or not, and what we do here affects the rest of the world. Then the awareness here about these problems is very important”* (Quote: SFI_01).

- To work in a transformative project related to social development. Some interviewees had previous experience in local organizations, NGOs or social. We find that members are previously concerned with environmental and political issues and already motivated to do something about it, and find an outlet in Slow Food:

“I was very concerned about what we eat, as well as the problems of developing countries. I was worried about production, but not local – more related to helping other countries, and find diversity, because I do not agree that we all have to go in the same direction, eating the same thing, but there is diversity here too. I wondered how the world will be, in 20 years, there will be no producers here (in Europe) and I realized that everyone would eat transgenic food and junk food” (Quote: SFI_01). *Specially in USA we observe “a previous interest in part of the slow food members with self-production and self-gardening or urban gardening activities”* (quote: SFI_05)

- To give back to peasants, farmers and food producers their dignity and acknowledgement. Many interviewees have a personal (in the past, in the childhood) connection with the rural context, their parents or grandparents had been food producers, they have lived in the field, and they feel proud of this relation with this farmer past. The value of consuming natural food is a common goal, the producer is acknowledged and can actively communicate his/her efforts in producing natural food while the consumers (prosumers) feel empowered by being informed about and by actually consuming the food.

“Before the food is the agriculture. It is the cook's duty to support local agriculture and small farmers. The future is in the fields and dignity. Life is not just consuming and producing, is also being solidary, sharing, feeling happiness being with others, and consumption is not that. We

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will not die with money, but with the feeling that you've done something for others (...) the future of gastronomy will be small communities, not multinational corporations. The main mission of a chef is to connect directly with the peasant" (Quote: Carlo Petrini in Mesoamérica Conference, México, 2013).

Construction of discourses that connect with human needs and emotional engagement

Slow Food has developed several strategies to enhance this group identification feeling, basis for agency and empowerment as well as for scaling up processes. Slow Food leaders emphasize the emotional link among food, pleasure and conviviality but also they reinforce the connections with the past of one's community, their culture, their traditions, landscapes and place attachment.

- Symbolic and persuasive rhetoric. Slow food leaders develop an intensive dissemination strategy transmit their discourse in networking events, public interventions and media products. Slow Food plays with symbolism and emotions as engagement tools. Rhetoric connects the audience with the slow food's political discourse – “the right to quality food”- and builds a consistent discourse that also links with hedonistic motivations, like “the right to pleasure” or happiness as persuasive tools to gain adepts.

“The ‘lower’ classes, the peasant farmers who have always been at the bottom of social hierarchies, can also claim a right to pleasure and a legitimate position in the history of gastronomy” (...) Gastronomy has always been part and parcel of eating. It is obvious that survival is man's first need, but human beings have always tried to do this in as pleasurable a way as possible. In any case there is no reason why they should have not wanted to (...) This dichotomy between need and pleasure is an artificial distinction and there are reasons why medieval thinkers were so obsessed about it. They saw the pleasure of eating as a danger for human spirituality and were obsessed by the idea of developing ways of eating just for survival needs. Of course it turned out to be hopeless exercise, it was attempting the impossible. From a historical perspective I think it is now not only correct but an ethical duty to give the right to pleasure back to the ‘lower’ classes” (Carlo Petrini & Massimo Montanari, 2014⁵).

- Hedonism and Conviviality. Slow Food claims the “right to pleasure” in terms that eating is a pleasure experience that -in Latin cultures- relates to tradition, family and cultural roots. As revealed participatory observations and interviews, slow food leaders invest time and resources in providing spaces of meeting between members, partners in local and global contexts and the network usually covers the mobility cost of members that come from developing countries. The local organizations that develop an intense activity and enable spaces for celebration, seem to be more successful and participative.

- Identity: the sense of being a member of a global community. Slow food members reproduce the

5 <http://www.slowfood.com/carlo-petrini-talks-to-massimo-montanari-part-one/>

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messages of their leaders –sometimes in the same words- legitimizing a positive sense of belonging to a group of like-minded people that voluntarily participate in meaningful projects, feeling the sense of being a member of *“something important, what makes the difference”* (process of identity).

“Actually, we are not inventing anything new...because sustainable farming was already there before...biodiversity was already there before...community support to agriculture is not our idea...maybe the different thing that we offer is that we dream together, all the people who are engaged in sustainable food and farming to create an international network of people who shares illusions and collaborates at local vision and international level too, to change the food system, to do something about with the transition” (quote: SFI_02).

Slow Food connects the preservation of local culture, gastronomy traditions and identity. Especially in the Spanish case-study, we found that Slow Food members share a strong identity with their territory and local culture and gastronomy, but also they are proud of being members of an international network that connects people from different part of the world and work for improving sustainable lifestyles and contribute to social empowerment in developing countries. This feeling of attachment is reinforced especially if they participate in the networking activities organized in Italy or –in the last years- in diverse regional or sectorial events (the Slow Food Youth Foundation annual meeting; the Indigenous Terra Madre, etc.). The celebration of the first *“Terra Madre”* event, in 2004 meant to many interviewees a *“turning point within the initiative, a change of the vision and dynamics of Slow Food, that embraces the need to have a global impact”* (quote: SFI_04).

- Slow Food’s “owns terminology”. The development of the Slow Food’s “terminology” seems to be on more strategy to engage and empower their affiliates. The local organization is called “convivium” in most of the world (except in Italy or USA). Slow Food also coined the terms “eco-gastronomy” and “neo-gastronomy”. In Slow Food consumers become “co-producers”, emphasising their strategic role in supporting “good, clean and fair” production worldwide *“because they want to feel part of the network and are aware of and develop responsibility for their consumption choices”* (quote: SFI_01).

- Heteropia. In their activities and meetings, slow Food’s spokespersons also reinforce the idea of utopia that become a reality -in terms that Foucault called “Heteropia” (Foucault,1986)-: *“this can be a Utopia, but it is real, but we need more people to have more impact. Two or three leaders are not enough; because the first step is to reinforce the local. Involving people in small projects. It is happening worldwide”* (Paolo di Croce, Vimianzo, 2015).

- Pragmatism. Slow Food plays with a double message, reinforcing an idealistic future vision but with very pragmatic solutions: “If you read the story of Don Quixote, you will see two characters, the crazy man and the uneducated peasant. Cervantes message is unique: each of us needs to be both Don Quixote and Sancho at the same time, we need to have vision, dreams, courage, but with one foot on the ground, to be pragmatic. Change without pragmatism is not good” (Petrini, 2011). Their identity as a coherent minority is expressed metaphorically in “Don Quixote and Sancho” and we have observed the same identification in previous Transit local case-studies (Dumitru et al, 2015).

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Autonomous governance structures that create spaces for local leadership and social engagement

According to their Statutes, the Slow Food International Association is coordinated by an International Council and steered by an Executive Committee –both committees are elected each four years in the Slow Food Conference and their president is the Italian activist Carlo Petrini (he has been the president since the first congress in 1999). The “International Council” represents 32 geographic areas, that define Slow Food’s political and development strategies. Despite this classical structure, Slow Food define itself as a grassroots organization based on local communities that maintain full autonomy and decision-making capacity, with freedom to have (or not) legal entity. The *convivia* are the smallest manifestations of Slow Food in a territory (a neighbourhood, a city, or a region) and, depending of their relation with the national or international organization, they have a high rate of autonomy in their decision-making processes.

The classical structure is maintained in the Slow Food regional and local manifestations, where slow food chapters have their own statutes but following the common organizational rules and fundraising guidelines (available in the Website). Some countries have national branches governed by national executive committees, that all have decisional autonomy. All members are a part of a *convivium*. The *convivia* are the smallest manifestations of Slow Food in a territory (a neighbourhood, a city, or a region). They seem to be local grassroots with high autonomy in their decision-making processes. That characteristic has been pointed out as one of the strengths of the initiative: *“We don't need a national structure but we need ideas, a shared vision. People willing to work, communication tools, we don't need rigid structure (...) the most important feeling is the sense of belonging. Slow Food is in a process of decentralization, we do not want a huge international structure, but organizations able to reach more people, like the Slow Food Youth Network does”* (quote: Paolo di Croce, Vimianzo, 2015).

Local manifestations have the autonomy and the responsibility to obtain the financial and human resources to develop their activities, mostly obtained in the basis of agreements with public institutions, local agriculture and environmental projects (public calls) while the international organization gives support to local initiatives: *“We develop tools that can be micro-replicated in other countries such as “Presidia”, land markets, the academies of the youth network. Those tools can be applied locally. Each convivium can organize its own local or regional project”* (quote: SFI_03).

The network supports a vision of distributed leadership. Slow Food does not believe in individual leadership but in collective leadership carrying out of the project, which enables community action, enhancing community activists and the International structure *“gives support to local convivium in order to empower collective leadership”* (quote: SFI_03).

“The clue is empowering the networks in their territories, having more presence, be more capillary (...) we constantly checked these dynamics of leadership, of wanting to be the head of something that does not exist, but the more we get to strengthen the representatives of the territories, this will happen less. It is a matter of process and time” (quote: SF_05).

At the same time, the network has detected intents of capture by certain individuals that try to leader the organization in local or regional structures: *“The fact that we don't create convivia from Italy, for*

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example, in Colombia, is our property, it is positive, because it reinforces the local actors, who become empowered. But on the other hand, in the past, being less involved allowed that certain individuals used the Slow Food organization to “empower” them in front of the mayor of their city, for example, using our label. This has been uncontrollable but now we try to control it, but it is difficult” (quote: SFI_04).

Leadership is important but leadership that is enabling of community action, the network enhances community activists. According to several interviewees, their most important role is to empower local leaders, counselling and helping them to implement the Slow Food projects on the ground: *“We identify convivium leaders and communicate with them as much as possible. Enabling them, empowering them, accompanying them to be leaders and dialogue with their local network (...) we try to support the local and regional structures, so that now we communicate with fewer people but they have multiplying effect” (quote: SFI_03).*

As we reflected in chapter 1 (see section “foundation, philosophy and development of the initiative”) Slow Food experimented certain tensions inside the initiative that, despite the strong leadership of their president, motivated that many members abandoned the association. Differences between youngest and more experienced people may produce conflicts but *“approaching Slow Food from a holistic perspective allows that everybody feel comfortable within the structure, we try to be inclusive” (quote: SFI_04).*

Slow Food enhances the participation of members through “friendship” and “connectedness”

The most important resource that has been mentioned by an interviewee is voluntary engagement of active members. The very existence of Slow Food, its projects and supporter network are possible solely based on voluntary work. For these reasons, the slow food leaders are concern about the need of group cohesion learning some strategies to gain engagement and group identity. Flexibility and openness (to discussions, to participation); permanent support and reinforcing camaraderie and friendship ties (through meetings, dinners and slow food activities) are some of the clues (for a further development and examples, consult the case-study: Slow Food Araba-Vitoria). In the international context, networking activities and sectorial activities seem to fulfil the same necessity (as we explained in the previous section of this chapter).

Empowerment processes observed within the slow food movement

Individual empowerment.

Slow Food members develop a sense of personal power (perception of individual capacity) when they contribute to one’s community in meaningful ways, if they feel capable to change, in a certain way, the places where they live or help food producers to live coherently with their values. Local practitioners remark their effort in the development of “organic markets” or boosting “Presidia” and “Ark of Taste” projects that help peasants, fishers and agricultural workers to create economic linkages with consumers through branding and marketing. Personal relation and face-to-face communication between producers and consumers (“co-producers”) reinforce that sense of self-

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efficacy, the perception that one's effort has a direct and immediate positive effect on local community (this will be more developed in the local case-studies sections). Slow Food members feel very proud about their small contribution to social development. They feel satisfied about being useful, to have collaborated in a minimum scale to have achieved the goals, which reinforces their commitment with the organization:

“Whether one feels able to improve the living conditions of local peasants or organic farmer that were are we are getting through the food communities or if when one perceives that one's message is known by the local community because politicians care about your presence in press and you are very well known here” (quote: SFAV_01, participatory observation in Vitoria).

Succeed previous experiences give confidence to keep working and learn about other's positive experiences. Practitioners refer to problems but also to opportunities that they should take advantage of: *“For me, the situation is very similar throughout the world, it is true that there are many barriers but I like to talk about opportunities, not problems. There are many problems, but there are many opportunities. Those who sow utopia harvest reality” (quote: Paolo di Croce, Vimianzo, 2015).*

Terra Madre: empowering, engaging and social learning outcomes. Terra Madre also has an emotional significance, a space where like-minded people meet, people that face the same problems and deal with similar barriers in different places in the world. That experience might help to the development of a capacity to resist frustration and overcome barriers, enhancing practitioners' self-esteem and self-capacity perception. Going further, Slow Food aims to provide them with meaningful learning experiences, knowledge and tools to continue working in the initiative. As we can infer from in the next quote, the glue is the emotional engagement and the network provides the tools for learning and empowering local community leaders:

“Terra Madre empowers people to return to their territories, they all say that they felt lonely but after Terra Madre they did no longer feel alone. Slow Food is an international network that understands what they are facing; people share the same issues and problems that they have to cope with in their countries. This emotion has been the core of Terra Madre in several editions, but I think that we need to address more content. The emotion is still important but we must also provide real tools for people to build things when they return home. We just organized the young Terra Madre and it was very emotional for youth activist. Now, social networks permit observing how the young people who participated in dialogue between them, discuss things. For future activities, we will focus on providing them concrete tools that they can use in their countries. Using the fact that they are together to do it, not just online” (quote: SFI_04).

Knowledge production, social learning and empowerment. SF members exchange their knowledge about healthy food. Also, personal contacts to farmers and large orders make personal contacts of SF members with producers possible. The advantages of direct contacts to producers for SF members include the possibility of taking personal insight into the conditions of production. The second channel of knowledge generation and transfer is SF's events: combining eating, drinking, food educating, enjoyment and knowledge sharing. The Spanish initiative has developed projects which involve special abilities and skills to educate, communicate better their message in press and to the audience, to convince more people and gain more associates. Especially they mention the use

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of TICs to disseminate their activities. Succeed previous experiences give confidence to keep working and learn about other's positive experiences (vicarious social learning). Some practitioners recognize that Slow Food fosters learning processes that permit them *“to bring our skills and talents out”* and *“make a change or have an impact”*, as the following quote illustrates:

“If I could make a change or have an impact I had to do it and I was able to use the Slow Food name as my organisation and so...I think Slow Food gave me the freedom to express myself, to bring my skills and talents out, you know I love the garden, I love to cook and I love to teach. Well, that's what I'm doing right now in the School Garden program. I am teaching kids how to garden, cook and teaching teachers how to teach so it brings all together and I don't have, I am not working on a company that has strict policies. Slow Food lets me do it a lot of different ways. There is less structure I have to represent the organisation, I can't all...start saying- we are going to grow GMO products in school gardens but I have a lot of freedom so it's being an opportunity to me to become a leader” (quote: SFL_06).

Group/collective empowerment (in a local and regional scale)

- Empowerment through the status acquired in the recognition received abroad: Networking experiences give people courage and motivation to continue working in their own localities despite the existing barriers and local and global food system. Food producers are considered “local heroes”- and their being recognized their effort abroad usually has a positive perception in their localities, favouring the commitment of public institutions, mass media and neighbours. Also, their ability and capacity to engage the public, private and third sector in the same transformative project has been highlighted by their members and also by the local policy makers and community actors interviewed.

“We present our territory and we value our products. However, sometimes, it is necessary to be recognized abroad to be appreciated at home what happened when we attend the Salone del Gusto. On the other hand, Terra Madre enhances the self-esteem of the food producers that came with us to Italy, they feel that their effort really cares and has a value and there are important people” (quote: SFAV_01).

- Empowerment processes through external governance and networking activity: Building social platforms and partnerships with local and regional organizations. Slow Food works with a number of ministries and government bodies but also with universities, schools, Fair Trade associations, Non-Government Organizations, etc. The network has been creating global alliances, for example, with the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous People, and they national structures follow a similar strategy for example in USA, South America, Europe, India (all the interviewees remarked it) motivated by the desire to impulse common (pro-environmental or local development) projects - supported by public institutions or private foundations- or with the aim of creating platforms for social and political action:

“Networking is key, helps a lot. Slow Food always collaborates with local organizations, cooperatives, associations of producers. When we promote a project in these countries, rarely we work with individuals. There are many approaches to national and international organizations, while more national than international, such as Greenpeace Mexico. It is

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important to join efforts. When we apply to calls for international projects, we must work together with these organizations; the interesting thing is that we are working permanently with some of them. We try to create Latin American networks, for example, we formed the “platform for the regional biodiversity” in order to work together in these territories. In some cases, we develop projects with the same financier, the Ford Foundation, and the same partner, RIMISP, the Latin American Centre for Rural Development” (quote: SFI_04).

- Impact Assessment and measurement are big challenges for Slow Food organizations. Evaluation involves time and resources so social impact is measured by the International Association. They elaborate annual reports and disseminate information (e.g. “Almanac”) to give feedback to their members and supporters about the main activities and outcomes of the Slow Food movement. Regarding the local initiatives, evaluation is more difficult:

“It takes a lot of time and money. We are, at the chapter level, we are all volunteers with different backgrounds. I have a PHD, I have done evaluation, I've done research, I know what it takes. Right now the extent of our evaluation is what I would call more metrics. We are counting, we are counting how many kids, we are counting how many gardens, we are counting how many hours, how many volunteers...We are not very active in looking at the impact of gardens. What does...How does the school garden impact in child's behaviours? Choices? We don't have the capacity to do that. There are others in this country that are more university based that are doing those kinds of research. I would love to have a partner University, professor, with a bunch of graduates to do the research, I just haven't done this connection yet (quote: SFI_03).

Empowerment processes through external governance and networking activity

Slow Food aims to develop their strategies and projects both in global and local context and encourage their local manifestations to collaborate to local and regional govern, public administrations, philanthropic foundations and commercial enterprises -including food-producing businesses- that respect the “guiding principles” of the association (source: “Slow Food Fundraising Guidelines”). Following, we list a series of empowering strategies that Slow Food develops to gain social and political influence:

1) Obtaining financial support to their local activities or regional projects. For the purpose of self-financing, the development of associative policies, and organization and management of events open to the public and not just to members, Slow Food is served by two (for-profit) companies: the Slow Food Promozione srl (mainly focused on the organization of major events, fundraising and advertising strategies); and the Slow Food Editore srl (which handles all publishing activity). Besides, Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity is financed by memberships and donations. Occasionally, Slow Food attends the call of national governments (Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, South Korea) to start a slow food project (usually in a rural areas): *“The Brazilian government particularly request us support to family farming and rural territorial development (...) under the good, clean and fair philosophy” (quote: SFI_03).* Since 2013 important conversations began within the network regarding financial resources:

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“Discussing the importance of growing and diversifying the types of financing through the development of systematic programs that can generate a large number of “leads” (potential associates or donors), and then later, new members or donors. The traditional system of financing, based heavily on contributions from public institutions, and mainly Italian institutions - based heavily on contributions from public institutions, and mainly Italian institutions - which are in difficulty due to the international economic crisis - must be progressively integrated with other means of financing. Slow Food is already working on increasing the number of international donors, looking particularly at the European Union, the various agencies of the United Nations and American and European foundations that are interested in financing activities that Slow Food is involved with (source: Slow Food, 2014, Mission Report at Closure of Balance Sheet).

2) Developing transformative and innovative projects in special areas of interest. For example, the project “10.000 Gardens in Africa” is funded by more than a hundred of institutions, local convivia, market companies and individual supporters with the aim of “*providing the resources to launch one community garden that will provide a community with a source of healthy food and an example of local sustainable agriculture for farmers to learn from. We always do that in collaboration with local initiatives, never alone*” (quote: Paolo di Croce, 2015, participant observation).

3) Gaining political influence and reputation, giving talks in political global forums like “Rio+20”; developing a “lobby” activity from their “*liaison office*” in Brussels (European Union): “*Slow Food have created a permanent Liaison Office in Brussels, oriented to develop lobby activity, gaining political influence and also we apply to EU calls to fund several projects*” (quote: SFI_02), or firming collaboration agreements with FAO and a number of States to counselling in food programs.

“The way you gain influence has to do with lots of issues and I don't know exactly how to do it but...for one...I can tell you that for instance the European Commission... but it's the social events where we give the input we can give...because one officer told me we are one of the few civil society organizations who work directly with people on the ground and with farmers and producers and who can then collect the experience and communicate it on to the commission so that is happening us like the way we could do at grassroots level is fundamental because this is what gives us credibility essentially, together with the political vision we have so it's the two, the political vision and the fact that we have experience at the grassroots level and can collect input from our grassroots people. And how to increase influence it's happening, you know...by better communication, better interaction with all the civil society... with all the stakeholders, not necessary only civil society organizations but with stakeholders we are working on the same topics” (quote: SFI_02).

4) Building social platforms and partnerships with local and regional organizations. As we mentioned before, Slow Food highlights and reinforces their strategic alliances with public institutions, social organizations and even market companies (like *AlceNero* or *Lavazza*) in order to achieve their goals and gain social impact in a global context (more information in the second chapter of this report). Especially in Europe, Slow Food has created platforms for social and political action, endorsing or launching several campaigns against GMOs in Europe or against the TTIP EU-

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USA commercial agreement like the campaign: “10 reasons to say NO to the TTIP’s Investment Court System”⁶.

5) Becoming a consistent minority and claiming “moral authority”. Slow Food leaders feel part of the existing discourse of change, and claim their “moral authority” because they do “the work that institutions should have done for safeguarding of their heritage and they hadn’t” (Petrini, 2005, Le Monde). As a result of the coherent trajectory of Slow Food, the European Union (DG Agriculture; European Parliament Sustainable Food Systems Intergroup) or a number of national governments (Brasil, Colombia, Mexico, South Korea) have contact to them “for advising and counselling in regards agriculture issues” (quote: SFI_02). Being approached by governments illustrates their political influence and capacity of transformation, becoming an “agent of change”, a counter voice that have demonstrated their capacity of change and need to be taken into account. Slow Food runs campaigns to sustain small-scale fishing (Slow Fish), defend communities' land (Stop Land Grabbing) or eating less meat in USA (Slow meat). Thus, when they are asked about their critical positions confronting, for example, European policies, Slow Food members feel confident that their consistent work on the ground supports their claims: “We do the projects we want to do, and the European Union sees that what we do is not Utopian but it works because we write reports and show how we are able to increase the number of local producers, the economic activity etc., and they see that it works and ask us for more information and projects. This does not conflict with that we claim, it is in line with our discourse and practice” (quote: SFI_01).

6) Stablisning strategic alliances with the mass media. Slow Food Association has become more popular and well-known thanks to the mass media impact which is not unintended. Most of the Slow Food pioneers were related to press or radio; they were journalist or gastronomy experts that used their accessibility to media to disseminate the slow food message. Slow Food founded their own editorial company in 1999 and their president, Carlo Petrini, has an open relation to media that leaded him to be named “the European hero” by “Time magazine” (2004) or proposed as “one of the 50 people who could save the planet” by the British journal “The Guardian” (2008) and Slow Food Vice President Alice Waters has been named one of Time Magazine’s 100 Most Influential People, alongside Pope Francis and Barack Obama (2014). Going further, the British channel BBC broadcasts a food Programme in collaboration with Slow Food:

“We need to reach more people, educate them, to communicate. BBC is helping us. Every week, the BBC in England has a TV program about a product of the “Ark of Taste” that can be watched worldwide, in a weekly program. It Is something. We cannot compete in communication and marketing with Monsanto, we have not enough money, but we can do something” (quote: Paolo di Croce, Vimianzo, 2015).

⁶ <http://www.slowfood.com/sloweurope/en/>

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3.4. Summary, synthesis, conclusion

Emergence

The Slow Food movement started in Italy, in 1986, under the leadership of the Italian journalist and activist Carlo Petrini. as a counter-movement that confronted the upcoming concept of fast food “after a demonstration on the intended site of a McDonald’s at the “Spanish Steps” in Rome, in a traditional restaurant”. The Slow Food movement initially aimed the defence of regional products and food traditions, defending “good food, gastronomic pleasure and a slow pace of life. It then broadened its sights to embrace the quality of life, local and global sustainability development and biodiversity conservation” (Irving & Ceriani, 2013). Three years after, these pioneers funded the Slow Food International Association in Paris and the movement expanded through the European and American territory. According to the Slow Food International Association (2015), the overall network is made up of a series of linked sub-networks, it counts with more than 100,000 members and 1.000.000 of supporters that work in over 1.500 local initiatives in 160 countries.

Dynamics

Despite their foundation as a “food counter movement”, the slow philosophy has transcended the food area to propose sustainable lifestyles and a new food system based on a change of relations between consumers (“prosumers”) and small local food producers. Their aims, values and activities have dramatic evolved over the time, attending new societal needs and demands, defining themselves as an “eco-gastronomy” movement and their motto “good, clean and fair” show that the Slow Food’s discourse has been influenced by traditional social movements like the environmental movement, social and solidarity economy, labour rights and fair trade movement. The international network is nor manifestly adverse to market system or globalization in deed, again, do they change the meaning of words defining their proposals as “virtuous globalization” that guarantee the right to food grounded on a radical change of the food system and the relations between consumers and food producers. Slow Food proposes self-sufficient of (local) communities at the small-scale productive level. Empowering local communities implies necessarily a new consumption model where people are no longer consumers, but co-producers (in a similar meaning that ‘prosumers’: producer-consumers.)

Slow Food remarks the strategic relevance to establish deep and long-lasting links with supporters and external community based organizations aiming to create an enduring partnership for the association’s long-term sustainability and social impact. Slow Food has gain the endorsement of public authorities, foundations, commercial enterprises, NGOs and social movements. Slow Food is a social movement that seeks a strong influence in agricultural policies and whose members are susceptible by political decisions regarding food production and distribution policies. For this reason, Slow Food has maintained strong positions against certain international food security policies which requirements jeopardized the financial sustainability of small-producers. Also, Slow Food launched several campaigns against GMOs in Europe and currently they are involved in a European platform against the content of the TTIP EU-USA commercial agreement. All of these are examples of how changes in agricultural conditions might inhibit the activity and social impact of the Slow Food movement.

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Agency

Agency relies on the capacity for purposive action and the capacity to imagine new ways of being, new relationships and new ways of doing. Relationships and other elements of the contexts in which individuals and collectives act, can either support or hinder the exercise of agency. Recent research on self-determination theory (e.g. Ryan & Deci, 2000) has brought substantial empirical support to the existence of three basic psychological needs and the relationship between their fulfillment and wellbeing, on the one hand, and human growth processes (or self-actualization) on the other. Understanding how agency is constituted in social innovation initiatives requires an account of what motivates the search for societal change and how alternative ways of knowing, doing, framing and organizing are co-produced in movements like Slow Food. It can also explain how they increase or decrease their membership, how successful they are in their replication in different contexts and contribute to explaining the trajectories taken by different social innovation phenomena.

A series of motivations and goals could be identified within the Slow Food movement. The researchers could identify in the interviews (in comparison also with a sample of speeches given by relevant spokespersons) a list of motivations that seem to differ according to the profession or role of each participant (food producers and chefs align their profession with their values and aim to find like-minded people with similar experiences; educators are more focused on youngest/school population; other food activist are more focused on organic and responsible consumption and local activism...):

- A desire to get involved in projects and activities that align better with one's values and genuine interests
- Needing to align one's professional career options with one's own values (making work meaningful)
- A desire for connectedness to like-minded others.
- A wish to contribute to one's community in meaningful ways
- Wanting to preserve local cultural and culinary heritage, thus preserving a sense of local identity.
- Desire to transform relations in the food production system, from alienation, distance and instrumentalization (e.g. of peasants, farmers and food producers) to direct contact, acknowledgement and valuing of each actor in the food system.
- Wish to protect the environment and preserve biodiversity.

In studying the Slow Food movement, we asked the question of whether participants were actively aiming to shape the initiative in ways that would support such need satisfaction, and if this was the case, through which means they attempted to do so. Our findings indicate that a search for higher autonomy, understood as the need for coherence or alignment between one's values and interests and one's actions, is definitely a motivating factor for Slow Food members. The international character of the network and its work in bringing together different local manifestations through events and publications contribute to the realization that a common sensibility connects them to thousands of others around the world. Slow Food gathers people from a diversity of origins, motivations and background, which enables the creation of "communities of interest" inside the network. The analysis of the international and local manifestations of Slow Food reveal through which processes needs are met and both a sense of agency and empowerment emerge:

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- The development of a common identity that relies on a collective vision of change and has both a local and a global dimension (instilling a sense of unity with the local community as a culturally-defined entity, with a common history; and with a global community of like-minded others who share a common vision and a set of objectives). Slow food members reproduce the messages of their leaders –sometimes in the same words- legitimizing a positive sense of belonging to a group of like-minded people that voluntarily participate in meaningful projects, of being a member of “something important” (process of identity). The development of the Slow Food’s “terminology” also seems to play a role in the engagement of members.
- The construction of discourses that emphasize a better way of satisfying basic human needs (e.g. the creation of a context that supports positive relationships through relaxed talking, pleasurable experiences, direct relationships and a positive identity) and are emotionally engaging around an ethos of community and a new wellbeing. As some authors have pointed out (Sassatelli & Davolio, 2010; Schneider, 2008; Peace, 2006), Slow Food is an example of the importance that cultural movements give to rhetoric, avoiding confrontation in favour of producing new relationships within a broader community united by a collective identity. The construction of discourses of change that engage with people’s basic psychological needs also reinforces the desire to be a member of a movement that has become a consistent minority “with moral authority” over politics, private companies and public institutions.
- The recovery of the values of hedonism through the slow pace of enjoying food, finding pleasure in the sharing and the connection established (expressed as the value of conviviality), while also including a moral dimension of responsibility towards food system actors, the wider community and the environment are key elements in this discourse. Eating is emphasized as a pleasurable experience. Local manifestations that develop an intense activity and enable spaces for celebration seem to be more successful and participative.
- Emphasizing the role of the organization as a placeholder for attempts to transform utopia into reality – thus counteracting helplessness and encouraging collective efforts and efficacy, which we include as a dimension of empowerment: By formulating a coherent discourse of change, the network is presented as a consistent minority with transformative capability through their local and global activity.
- Creating and maintaining an autonomous governance structure that allows autonomy of action and the collective shaping of new social relations, as well as new ways of knowing, doing, organizing and framing.
- Developing significant external networking activity to gain social and political influence.

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4. Local Initiative #1: CONVIVIAM SLOW FOOD ARABA-VITORIA

4.1. Emergence of Slow Food Araba-Vitoria

Origin and evolution of the Convivium “Slow Food Araba-Vitoria”

The Convivium “Slow Food Araba-Vitoria” was created in January 2005 by a small group of “food activists” after a first positive contact with some members of Slow Food Donostia (a city close to Vitoria) and the Slow Food International Association, who invited them to attend the first edition of “Terra Madre” (October, 2004), as representatives of the traditional gastronomy of the region of Araba (the Basque Country), as the following interviewee explains: *“Slow Food, from Italy, invited us to go to the Salone del Gusto. It was going to be the first meeting of Terra Madre, in 2004, they wanted us to present an endangered product. We chose the salt of Añana (...) People loved it. We prepared a great presentation, with spectacular pictures, people tasted our salt. We gave a lecture in an auditorium for 200 people, we had to do it in French, and was translated in several languages (...) it had a tremendous impact. They told that our salt of Añana's saline had to be a “Presidia” because it includes an activity of an entire valley, it is an endangered ancient culture”* (quote: SFAV_01).

The leadership of Alberto López plays a key role in the emergence of Slow Food in the city. He was very well-known; he had previous experience in social organizations and personal contact with relevant people -chefs, food experts, policy-makers- in the city. Increasing the number of members it was not a goal from the beginning: *“Actually, it was really easy to bring Slow Food to Araba, thanks to our gastronomic tradition and societies it fits very well”* (quote: SFAV_01). However, the small number of members that initiated Slow Food Araba-Vitoria increased very fast. While in 2005 the convivium had almost 30 people, in 2010 they sum 200 members and currently, almost 300 members participate (according to the minutes of the 2015’s general assembly). Slow Food maintains good relationships with local and regional politicians that permit them *“to involve, since the very beginning, a relevant number of people that supported the initiative and financed the first activities promoted by the convivium”* (quote: SFAV_01). Moreover, thanks to the Basque gastronomic reputation, Slow Food Araba-Vitoria got support from prestigious Basque chefs *“as Alberto Berasategi, Juan Maria Arzak and others, who were involved in the promotion of the first Presidia”* (quote: SFAV_05), chefs who also participated in the Basque edition of “Salone del Gusto” (2009), organized in collaboration with the Basque Government.

The convivium Araba-Vitoria is one of the most active local manifestations in Spain (López, 2007), being considered *“one of the most innovative and exemplar convivium in the world”* (quote: Paolo di Croce, 2015, participant observation). The relationship between the International networks and the local manifestation has been fluent and closed. The president of the convivium, Alberto Lopez, has been a member of the Slow Food International Council since 2012 in representation of the Spanish Slow Food movement. The Slow Food Executive Committee celebrated their bi-monthly strategic

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meeting in the city of Vitoria-Gasteiz, enlightening the activity and relevance of Slow Food in this region.

A diversity of members that pursues the defence of the Basque food heritage, environmental protection and sustainable local developed.

Slow Food members have strong links with gastronomy and food production and consumption, especially due to the mentioned traditional “gastronomic societies”. The majority of the associates are not chefs or food producers, but teachers, doctors, university professors, journalists, public servants or liberal professionals. The interviewees remark the diversity and plurality of the slow food community, which even “*has engaged politicians from local and regional administrations and different parties, trade unions, cultural associations, because Slow Food has the ability to reach people from all the sectors of the Araba's society, we can do that because everybody care food*” (quote: SFAV_01). Slow Food Araba-Vitoria lists “*the defence of the food heritage, the protection of plant and animal biodiversity, taste education and protection of the environment and consumers*” as the main values of the organization (Alberto Lopez, 2006). Basque people are very proud of their gastronomy and culture. A large part of population is member of private food associations called “gastronomic societies”: “*I think that we are lucky here to count with the gastronomic societies, which Carlo Petrini exalted in an interview that I made him. Petrini consider them unique in the world. Gastronomic societies are associations where people gather, cook together, share food around a table with a fine wine, it discloses the gastronomy*” (quote: SFAV_03). Zapardiel's “gastronomic society was the first initiative which founders contact with, pursuing the constitution of the Araba's convivium.

Intense activity grounded on the recovering of autochthonous biodiversity and food education

Slow Food Araba-Vitoria develops an intense activity (over 70 activities in 2015, according to the website) in the city of Vitoria and Araba province. All activities are on a voluntary basis (no hired staff) and require the collaboration of a relevant number of volunteers (15-20 people) which emphasizes their commitment with the movement (that the researchers observed in their *participant observation in October 2015*). These activities are related with: the promotion of local organic products (taste workshops, trips to meet local producers); supporting and counselling local organic producers and food communities as well as the local government in healthy food projects; children -and adult- taste education; cataloguing of foods at risk of disappearing that are a part of the Araba's culture.

Slow Food projects, such as “The Ark of Taste”, “Presidia” or “Food Communities” intends to revitalize local economies related to local and traditional food production in the rural areas. Slow Food has promoted a small number of food communities that increased the quality of life of rural meat producers as well as permit the recovering of autochthonous varieties of horses or caws (de Labastida, 2012). The local convivium have several products included in “The Ark of Taste” catalogue and as launched the Presidia project to safeguard the landscape of the ancient salt valley of Añana. Distinct education activities have been proposed, including edible scholar gardens in collaboration with local schools and no-profit organizations. Slow Food activists highlight the need of changing

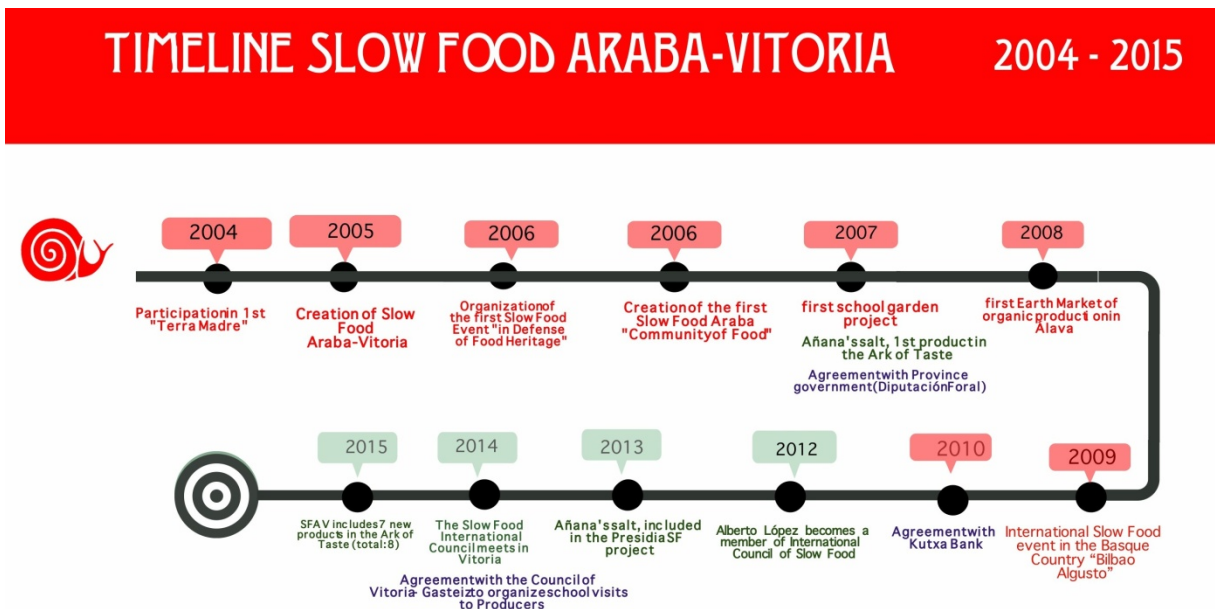
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children's food education. Also, contact with children and food producers creates emotional bonds and satisfaction: *I love our activities with children. Take them to meet the producers. I like the fact of involving kids. Do things in schools is a pleasure. To see the kids gardening, see their illusion when they are preparing the food they have grown, even when their parents tell us that they haven't eaten a lettuce in their life" (quote: SFAV_04).*

Participation in International events organized by the Slow Food movement. This case-study highlights the importance of organizing international events and Slow Food networking activities in order to attract new associates, new members and supporters, who create new convivia worldwide. We have also observed the same process in Galicia, where some local leaders attended one Terra Madre event in Turin and decided to impulse a slow food community in the Northwest of Spain. Our conversations with local practitioners confirm the positive effect that international events have on attendees, even if they are not slow food members. SFAV has been intensity involved in networking and international events that reinforces their structure, social influence and social learning processes through sharing knowledge experiences as well as promotes local and regional products, increasing the benefits of local producers: *"Terra Madre shocks us ... We have to go home and explain what slow food means, because we also believe in the importance of the product, the important of food. Nobody has to come to Euskadi to explain us what we already do. We have to support it even more, because we were Slow Food without the logo" (quote: SFAV_01).*

Timeline of Slow Food Araba-Vitoria

Figure 5: time line of the convivium "Slow Food Araba-Vitoria"



Source: time line created by the authors based on Slow Food's primary documents and interviews.

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Institutions and external actors who Slow Food interacts with and relates to.

Slow Food leaders remarks the strategic alliances with local community, food producers, restaurants and chefs that support and help them to communicate the slow food philosophy to the whole society. Public institutions are considered strategic interlocutors to whom sign several agreements, such as the Agriculture Department of the province (Diputación Foral de Araba), the environmental department of Vitoria's municipality. Besides, SFAV is funded by private entities like Kutxa Foundation (*a regional financial entity*): *"Alberto's work is very good, Slow Food keeps great relationships with all institutions, no matter the political colour of the institution. Slow food has a good reputation. It is fantastic. The convivium received small grants to organize events, trips, etc. Funds come from the local council and the Diputación Foral- the province government-"* (Quote: SFAV_03). Slow Food Araba-Vitoria has also collaborated with local NGOs and foundations to impulse certain changes in local or regional food systems. For example, SFAV joined a citizen platform that demands the improvement in the nutritional standard of food served in the Basque schools canteens, which *"should be fresh, local and sustainable"* (they are currently in negotiations with the local council but their contributions have been positive perceived by the different parties).

"We have managed to combine synergies. Here, there are two environmental organizations that have never collaborated, because they had their suspicions, etc. Now their presidents are both members of Slow Food. We meet them, also with seed networks, farmers' unions, we do things together. We sit around a table, we enjoy and have fun, and get agreements. For example, now, we have a platform with more than 20 local associations to promote a food and sustainable city" (quote: SFAV_01).

Weak connections with other Spanish local manifestations. While a Slow Food national branch does not exist, the movement is not perceived as a transformative discourse in the Spanish context. Slow Food has the acknowledgement of Basque society and institutions but their social impact needs to go further, crossing boundaries and enabling a network of local manifestations able to build a "narrative of change" in Spain, confronting national regulations or lobbies that impede the increase of sustainable practices in food production and consumption chain.

A tense relation with traditional food companies. Big companies such as Eroski, Makro or Carrefour approached to Slow Food Araba Vitoria aiming to come to an agreement with the local initiative. Despite the positive fundraising conditions that those agreements involved, Slow Food never collaborated with these traditional brands, as one interviewee explains: *"It was not consistent. We work with small producers. Our first condition is that the producers should be better paid (...) If we pursue a new system, let's do it (...) Carrefour does not like us, they are not interested in our proposals (...) Makro offered us a stand to sell our products. We don't want to be a tool for "greenwashing" while they continue with their unsustainable practices (...) Heineken made us an offer to give us a lot of money and we didn't accept. How Heineken could be a slow food product?"* (quote: SFAV_01).

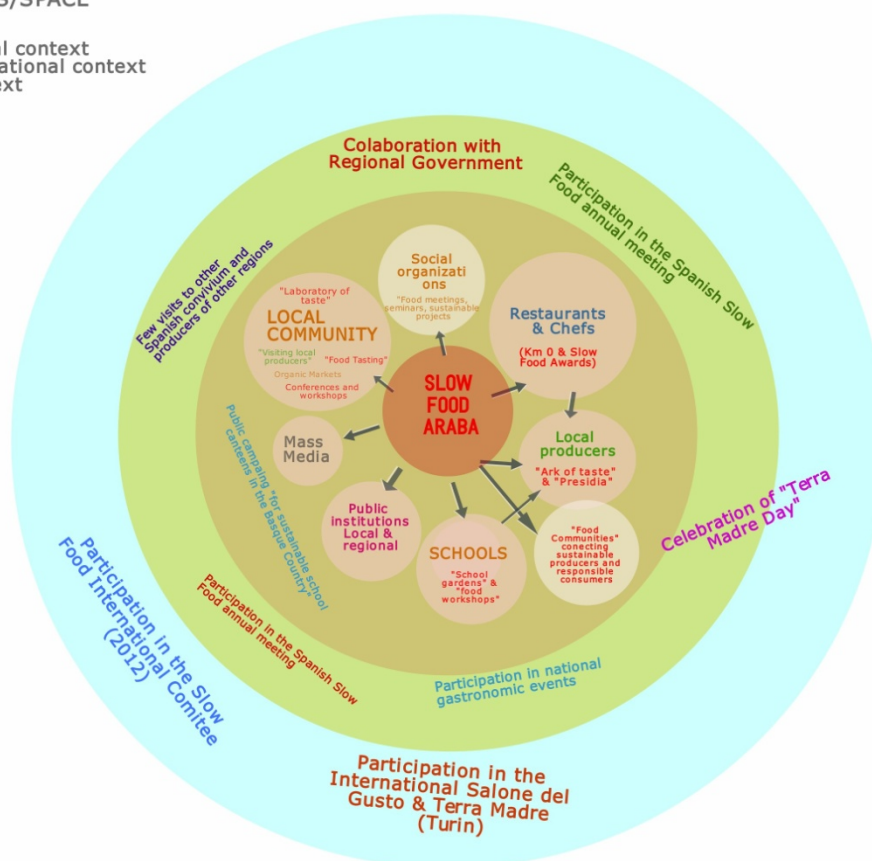
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Map of actors

Figure 6: map of actors and spatial representation of activities developed by/with Slow Food Araba-Vitoria

MAP OF ACTORS/SPACE

Blue: International context
Green: regional/national context
Brown: local context



Source: map of actors created by the authors.

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4.2. TSI dynamics

In this second part the focus is on the interaction of the social innovation with the social context, the dynamics of transformative social innovation: How do social innovations interact with/ contribute to transformative change in a social context.

Discourses of change: transformative social innovation in food system and people's lifestyles.

Slow Food Araba-Vitoria manifests their commitment with the aims and objectives shared by the international network. Also, we observed a local discourse coherent with the principles and narratives of change that the international association reflects in its publications (books, articles, political positions and organization guidelines). Slow Food translates to the Araba's context the "good, clean and fair" philosophy (for an extended description of the Slow Food discourses of change, consult section 1 of this study). Besides, we observe that certain global discourses have penetrated deeply into the Convivium Slow Food Araba-Vitoria in terms of restoring pride and dignity to food producers and consumer's co-responsibility in food system, changing to an active "prosumer" role: *"what is necessary, most of all, is restoring the pride and dignity of farmers. We can become co-producers. Here, in Araba, we are getting it through the food communities. A food community is able to consume the production of a slow food "Art of Taste" producer only with the commitment of 170 families of consumers, which was surprisingly easy" (informal conversation with SFV_01).*

Practitioners also shared a common vision of current economic system and describe the western societies and capitalist system as imperfect, unfair and unequal, and unsustainable. *"Slow Food fights against the "culture of immediacy" that the industrial revolution brought" (quote: SFAV_02).* Slow food is counter movement that provide an alternative discourse:

"Small farms cannot compete with large multinational companies. Beyond the politicians, the capitalist system is the main responsible. I do not say that we have to go back to the stone age, but this system has failed, not now, but since many years. Since millions of people are starving and another part of the population go to clinics to lose weight, it is clear that something is wrong (...) slow food is a counter movement. Despite Slow Food is a no-profit organization, it is a counter movement. Their message in goes against Monsanto, against other multinationals. There are places where people die murdered for defending the land. Every two years Terra Madre gives us a global vision of where we are" (quote: SFAV_03).

Practitioners criticize the consumerist lifestyles of westerns societies, where population ignores the implications of the industrial food system, which implies unequal relations between market and producers, exploitation in developed countries and a "total disconnection between urban and rural areas, between consumers and producers". Slow Food members are aware about natural resource's scarcity, global warming of environmental crisis. Economic degrowth seems to the unique solution to global issues, at least for some of them: *"We were told that we need to grow but it is a lie. We will destroy the planet if we continue doing the same. We cannot grow, on the contrary, we must take a step back. We have to be aware that we have, we need to be more equal, in wealth, not poverty" (quote:*

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SFAV_03). In contrast, a return to the field is proposed, being in contact with nature, producing in an environmentally sustainable way, having a slow and quiet life. Related with that, Slow Food's members pursue an hedonistic life, enjoying the little things, the pleasure of food, enhancing human relations, conviviality with family and friends: *"Slow Food was born when McDonald wanted to open a place in Rome, but also claimed from the very beginning the hedonist side of pleasure of food and enjoy conversation (...) I'll never give up the pleasures of life, food and sex. I enjoy eating. Most of the Slow Food people enjoy eating"* (quote: SFAV_01).

Societal changes in terms of events, framework conditions and discourses that enable or inhibit Slow Food impact.

Interviewees highlight a number of positive and negative societal and political changes observed in the Basque society but also in the European societies. Practitioners coincide in observing positive tendencies in consumption -and healthy- habits, *"people demands healthy products, specially parents with babies"* (quote: SFAV_03), and they care about their health, do exercise, running is a trend here in Vitoria, there is running competition every weekend with thousands of people" (quote: SFAV_02). Araba's society is highly ecological concerned (compared with the rest of Spain). Vitoria has recently been "European Green Capital" and *"organic food became a trend few years ago, despite the higher prices of organic production"* (quote: SFAV_3). In Araba, consumer's cooperatives are very popular, some of them *"have more than 2.000 families associated, members that aim to consume in a healthier and conscious way, and that are searching for local producers to supply our demand"* (quote: SFAV_11).

A return to the land. The social and territorial characteristics of Alava (a very small region with extended rural areas, located very near to the main Basque cities) enables the connectedness and close relations between urban population and food producers. Interviewees -practitioners, journalist and policy-makers- notice a minority trend to "back to the land". An increasing demand from younger generations, *"young families that seek alternatives to the current model in the countryside"* (quote: SFAV_02) that enables the "rejuvenation of the local agricultural sector. They are educated people interested in sustainable farming practices. The organic production grows slowly, helped by an increasing demand of healthy products. Also, the Basque public administrations *"enhance sustainable practices offering public lands to young slow food producers"* (quote: SFAV_08) and favouring *"experimentation in organic production, supporting and counselling small producers, supporting agricultural innovation"* (quote: SAV_07). The previous changes bring also the revival of local food markets and exhibitions of local products, in cities and small towns, where old and young people meet (especially at the weekend).

The effect of European agriculture policies (CAP) in the Basque country has been pointed out *"as one of the main constrictors to local and small-scale organic production"* (quote: SFAV_08). The new EU's reformed Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), that is told to support sustainable food supply and environmental protection, is perceived with reluctance by the slow food members, due to *"the system reaps big rewards for a minority in Europe, the largest exploitations, while undermining the markets and opportunities for rural families, small farmers and agricultural workers"* (quote: SFAV_07). Negative trends also relate to a change in social lifestyles. The *"disconnection between urban population with production systems"* (quote: SFAV_02) implies that *"the traditional link that Araba's*

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and Basque society had with rural communities, where their families belong, is missed” (quote: SFAV_08). In this sense, a change in personal and family relationships is also observed: “we live in a more individualized society, with “very stressful lives” (quote: SFAV_02), where “shopping has become a necessity to invest little time and less money” (quote: SFAV_08).

New ways of knowing, framing, doing and relating: promoting a change in food system grounded on trust relations, collaboration and sharing knowledge.

The local organization believes that a change in social lifestyles is possible if “*public institutions, producers and consumers work together to save the planet and the taste*” (Alberto López, 2007), which involves a change in traditional relations between food producers and consumers “*It means a return to origins, to local production, to the proximity. It is one of the objectives we have*” (quote: SFAV_03). As opposed to the mainstream practices, “*Slow Food puts in value the role of food producers, claiming the acknowledgement of one essential sector of the society which, traditionally, has been the main responsible of the conservation of the biodiversity and the natural and rural areas*” (quote: SFAV_08). Slow Food Araba-Vitoria encourages and promotes direct relationship between producers and conscious consumers, which reinforces the idea of “co-producers” and the individual co-responsibility in food system: “*From the point of view of good, clean and fair, knowing about the living and working conditions of producers, it is important to me. What I eat it has been done under clean and fair conditions. Sometimes, multinationals offer very cheap products because of the low payment to people. Slow Food has opened my eyes in this sense*” (quote: SFAV_03).

“Food communities” and rural and organic markets enable face-to-face contact with producers which build trust and permanent relations between them. This new forms of selling also imply innovation in selling practices, “*inquiring new skills in TICs, using the Internet, email and social media*” (quote: SFAV_10) or transforming the product before selling, providing added value to a fresh product. New models of exploitation are marketing required changes and extra effort for small producers: “*I have always argued that we could live just exploiting this saline, whether we eliminate the intermediaries. We have to decide not to sell salt to companies that paid less than the real cost. It has been a fight*” (quote: SFAV_09). Local consumption also involves changes in food demanding. Purchasing any kind of product in all season is not possible and consumers should be aware of that: “*We offer, temporary products, from the season, which harvest has a beginning and an ending, but it's nice. People ask about the artichoke. It is cool. People have to learn that things have a season if they want to eat something really good*” (quote: SFAV_02).

The quality of food is not only accredited by “official labels” but also by trust and personal verification of production practices. Even in Slow “KM0” restaurants, they pursuit trust building relations with customers: “*In our menus, we write the name of the producer. For example, the meat is provided by Victor, from the mountain of Okina. Everything is marketing. But we don't lie. The industry misleads people. They say that an egg come from farmers, but chickens are stabled there. Say farm is not saying anything. But it seems good, so people buy more confident. We try to explain them that we are different. We publish the origin of the product; we do fieldtrips to see what the animals eat. There is no better label of quality, and I have to tell it to my clients*” (quote: SFAV_02).

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Slow Food claims a change in social lifestyles and relations. Eating is a pleasure experience, that – in the Basque country and in all south Europe- relates to tradition, family and cultural roots. The conviviality and enjoying the life around the kitchen, *"Our proposals claim the flavours, the cuisine of our grandmothers, patience and a taste for food, we advise parents to show their children where the food comes and even teach them to plant a tomato or grab it from the soil"* (López, 2006).

"We are missing the pause, time for relaxation, to talk things quietly. It is unusual nowadays, but it is important. We keep it here, in the Basque Country, thanks to the "gastronomic societies". In Alava there are plenty of them (...) I like quiet. Enjoy a little chat. We're talking about things that are ancient but we are gradually returning" (quote: SFAV_03).

The local convivium posits a change in market relations, from competition to collaboration and sharing knowledge: *"Of course, it is not the same if I buy a product in a supermarket that if I go to Victor's house, have a coffee with him, talk a bit and buy his product paying a fair prize, the second is better for me, the clients of my restaurant and for him. I am helping him to have a better life"* (quote: SFAV_02). *The following interviewee explain it: "Of course we help each other. I have no problem to help someone, to show them how we did. I wish we would be more organize and be able to supply all local demand. I was delighted to explain everybody who asked for help"* (quote: SFAV_10).

Producers become educators who explain the value and the characteristics of their products in markets and fairs and also "teaching" children how animals live in the mountains: *"There are children who do not know how the milk comes from the cows. Here (in the farm) they see it. Kids want to taste the milk it and everything. They love it. Sometimes, a hundred of kids come with their teachers and with grandparents and they enjoy the day with us. With the sheep, cows, the mares, I like it, I also have grandchildren"* (quote: SFAV_05).

Potential impact of the Slow Food local initiative

Slow Food practitioners are firmly confident about their capacity to contribute to social, political and systemic change, regarding food production and consumption but also in regards to local and rural development, environmental protection and environmental education. Despite being a minority they aim to have direct influence in local context and environment; *"We are a minority, but we have the ability to influence, to change things gradually, through food education activities that change individual consumption decisions"* (quote: SFAV_02). Practitioners, policy-makers, agriculture experts and other local activists interviewed in this study have offered a number of examples of the potential and actual impact that Slow Food practices have on the Basque territory, which are summarized in the following points:

- Slow Food is a prescriber, *"that influences in public opinions and purchasing decisions. The change is slow but evident"* (quote: SFAV_08). *"The restaurant is a showcase, a place to show food alternatives to customers. As gastronomic societies do as well. An example is what we did here with the Añana's salt, thanks to restaurants and people know how valuable is and finally they buy it"* (quote: SFAV_02).

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- Slow Food impulses alternative commercial relations to the current food system. Slow Food has impulsed thousands of “food communities” worldwide, some of them in the Basque country: *“breaking the cycle of wholesale, do not compete with the big brands but generate consumer demand of good local products. Creating short marketing circuits that enhance different and direct relationships between consumer and producer. It also involves innovation in product sales” and “stable buy commitments”* (quote: SFAV_07). Slow Food enhances local and sustainable development of rural communities, which relates to the preservation of culture and biodiversity: *“Slow Food recover local products in risk of extinction and provide communication channels and networks that establish direct marketing relationships”* (quote: SFAV_01). The social and economic impact of slow food initiatives could be observed in the local context, when the researchers visited the “salt valley of Añana” (Salinas de Añana) and interviewed the local leaders and workers. People acknowledge the role of Slow Food network in the sustainability of the valley and in the recovering of the traditional salt production. The next quote offers an example of the perception that local producers have regarding the recovering of the Añana's valley:

“Añana has been called one of the most spectacular and best-preserved inland salt works in the world. For centuries, the citizens of Añana exploited this white mine that, however, was abandoned in 70s (...) We (the owners) have invested enormous effort to recover this saline and we decided to create a no-profit foundation to enable the gradual recovery of this hand-produced salt, with the aim of recovering this unique landscape and providing a dignified way of living for local community (...) In this work, the support of Slow Food was significance. It really mattered. Thanks to Slow Food our salt has the acknowledgment of the international community. We attend several Terra Madre events. The quality of Añana’s salt has already been endorsed by some of our best international chefs like Joan Roca and Andoni Luis Aduriz, who use our salt in their restaurants or Martin Berasategui, who I personally met. The endorsement of Slow Food is essential to guarantee the sustainability of our saline” (quote: SFAV_05, adaptation from an extended interview).

- Impact on citizen's food education: Slow Food leaders do not establish a cause-effect relation between slow food activities and sustainable behaviour, but they claim to have contributed in a certain way to a change the general mindset about food and consumption habits. School projects, edible gardens and policy recommendations regarding food served in school’s canteens have been pointed out (by the practitioners and external actors) as examples of their capacity to influence in public policies and families:

“We invest relevant effort and commitment into the education of young people and children; the future, in terms of responsible consumption, depends on children. We organize cooking workshops in different schools, every year. We promote school gardening projects where children grow vegetables and cook and taste it with our help. Children learn where the food comes from, how it is produced and the importance of vegetables in their health. Also, we organize visits to producers in Alava’s province. Our University is assessing the impact of these activities, and we observe that these fieldtrips are very effective, not only for children but for their parents or grandparents, who come with them and empathize with the farmers. All of us have a rural past and these visits remind us our childhood, the life that our parents had” (quote: SFAV_01, informal interview).

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- Impact on public policies. In the previous section we have explained how the local initiative relates and engages with local administrations, social movements and platforms with the aim of creating synergies to transform the local context (*see pp 46-49*). The convivium Slow Food Araba Vitoria can be considered a relevant actor in the local and regional context. Their leaders are involved in several foundations, and local public institutions have called them for advising in the development of food, tourism or edible garden projects. Slow Food maintains good relationships with left-wing, right-wing and nationalist political parties in the Basque context. They have engaged with public administrations to support a number of Slow Food projects. Slow food has impulse a local platform *“for a sustainable food city”*. The mentioned political relevance of SFAV can be observed in the local council positions: *“We will encourage the food industry within the municipality and slow food policies”* (source: council of Vitoria Gasteiz) and political proposals: *“For example, in the last local elections (May, 2015) several parties included in their political programs to attend Slow Food demands and support our projects, which means that we are doing a good work here”* (quote: SFAV_01).

4.3. Agency in (T)SI

This third part focuses on the agency in transformative social innovations: How is agency constructed in the Slow Food International network. We will observe the relation between motivations and processes of empowerment and how and to what extent agency is manifested in local manifestation (for a further explanation of the phenomena studied in this section, consult the description of agency processes in the previous chapter, pp 31-33)

Motivations and shared goals.

Practitioners of Slow Food Araba-Vitoria refer to a number of motivations and aims that majority seem to share, which are related to the conservation of the Basque cultural, environmental and culinary heritage, *“preserving the memory of traditional knowledge and communities, transmitted across generations and between the communities, it is essential to guarantee the right to food”* (López, 2015). Besides, Slow Food members aim to *“recover the positive connotations of feeding, of conviviality, of celebration”* (quote: SFAV_08). Slow Food is directly connected to the Basque tradition of gastronomic societies *“cultural associations with extended tradition in the Basque Country that gather people interested in gastronomy. Associates own a place and cook together. They love eating but they love sharing and have fun all around a table, the food is an excuse to be together* (quote: SLFA_02). Indeed, Slow Food members experience an intense need for connectedness, to be accompanied, to belong to a group where they can meet other like-minded people: *“Slow Food has changed my life. Due to my personal circumstances, I felt very lonely for example, at weekends, when I have free time. Now I am happier, I have something to do and people who stay with. And I enjoy what I do here, I love cooking”* (quote: informal interview with a member of SFAV, participant observation).

Linked to local gastronomy, Slow Food’s activist express commitment to local and traditional products as well as place attachment: *“We are talking about the connection with the territory, with*

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the space where you grow up. Childhood experiences are the best memories that you have in your life. Going back to your childhood motivates you to work to make better that place” (quote: SFAV_05). As most of practitioners have personal (in the past, in the childhood), they reinforce their commitment with peasants and farmers, “giving back to peasants, farmers and food producers their dignity and acknowledgement, putting in value their essential role within the food system” (quote_SFAV_02), improving their social and economic status.

“Farmers and breeders have been so dehumanized. Reviled, I think. It was frowned upon to be livestock. When we go to national competitions, or in the restaurant, we put the name of the farmer in the menu. For them is highly motivating, we give them moral, but many farmers have left the profession. Many parents have told their children not to keep working in the land. For us, they are the fundamental piece in the food system. And we need them to do well, not only by economic interests but by rooting, requires personal commitment, it is more than a job or earning money, it is a very hard work” (quote: SFAV_02).

Slow Food permits their members to contribute to one’s community in a meaningful way. Practitioners aim to improve existing social and environmental conditions (at least in the Arabas’s territory) introducing *“attractive alternatives of consumption that relate to our culture, that are sustainable and local, that permit farmers and food producers to be paid fair prizes for their work, and offer an alternative to young generations to live in rural areas” (quote: SFAV_01. Adaptation of an extended interview).* Through the different role that each member plays within the association, interviewees feel that they are capable, that they have the necessary competences to change the local conditions (perception of self-efficacy). For example, chefs define themselves as “prescribers”, as *“showcases that influence in people’s consumption decisions” (quote: SFAV_02).* Journalists use media *“to inform and educate about the food system and the Slow Food philosophy” (quote: SFAV_03).* Policy-makers and public servant use their capabilities to influence in public policies.

Practitioners recognize that being “food activists” is coherent with personal values and ideologies but, also, *“it is a commitment easy to perform, it is a pleasure. If you are a Greenpeace activist, let’s imagine, you have to tie up a factory, or climb buildings, it is a sacrifice, but eating healthy, eating good? All you have to do, if you collaborate with Slow Food, is being a conscious consumer” (quote: SFAV_02).* Slow Food members share a common sensibility that connects them to thousands of people around the world, people who *“fight for the same things, the same rights, we share common values” (quote: SFAV_03)*”.

“I was interested in the whole issue of producers, products, one comes from a rural area, which motivates a lot (...) Slow Food struggles against the hegemony of certain brands, but has almost become a way of life, to be more coherent with everything you think” (Quote: SFAV_04).

Slow Food gathers people with professional interest in the activities and projects led by the organization (chefs, producers, public servants with responsibilities in agricultural areas), which is a peculiarity of this social innovations. Slow Food chefs seek high quality products. Food producers need conscious customers, agricultural experts approach to Slow Food to know emerging initiatives in their area of interest.

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"In our restaurant, we have always been committed to local production, also is a selfish motivation; when you consume a product bought in a supermarket, usually quality is not good. My father had a garden and he supplied us many vegetables, but when he retired the bargain was over. And we had to start buying. And nothing tastes so well. So we have to find more direct commercial channels, contact with people who have gardens like my father did, but exploited in a more professional way" (quote: SFAV_02).

Attending the gastronomic basis of this movement, in the last years more voices arise to claim the necessity to put in value the role of women in traditional gastronomy: *"Men have always been better well-known, especially in mass media. However, women are essential in the formation of any chef (...) the basis of a chef are their mothers, aunts, sisters ... women were, in fact, which conserved the European culinary history over time and left to us that heritage" (quote: SFAV_04).*

Food producers refer to the need of preserving the natural and cultural heritage, the aim to recover autochthonous breeds, although it does not imply profit. It relates to rural lifestyles, maintaining a tradition, caring the forest and cattle as their ascendant did: *"This urge comes from our grandparents, it's like a worm, like a drug, and I love that my son continues with the exploitation, with everything I've worked for almost fifty years, working so hard (...) here, in this mountain, always have been horses (...) they are important for preventing fires as well" (quote: SFAV_06).*

Internal governance: A convivium which enhances the participation of members through "friendship" and "connectedness"

The organizational structure of the Araba's convivium follows the classical vertical structure regulated by the statutes of the Slow Food Association. The Slow Food assembly elects a board and a president, who has been the same person since the constitution of the convivium. The assembly meets once a year, when the board inform about all the activities developed in the previous year; the agreements signed with public and private institutions; the budget is approved as well as the main activities projected for the current year. Being a member of Slow Food requires the paying of the membership fee (50€/year). However, many of the interviewees manifest that they have persuaded their partners to associate as well and Slow Food has a reduced "*familiar membership fee*" (56€) in order to "*conciliate the family life and the Slow Food highly demanding activity*" (quote_SFAV_04). The board committee is formed by six members (three men and three women) who impulse the regular activity of the convivium. In total, SFAV counts with almost 300 affiliates although, as usual, the level of involved in the activities is not equal. Practitioners have assumed that "*only the 20 or 30% of their members participate in their activities, which used to be the normal rate in social organizations, where everybody volunteers*" (quote: SFAV04). The leaders are aware that some activities are developed in working hours, which make it impossible the participation of many associates, time pressure and personal -and family- responsibilities are usually mentioned as barriers to be more involved. However, all the activities developed seem to be essential in order to engage and enhance the people's sense of belonging and connectedness to a group of like-minded people.

Despite the classical structure adopted by the local convivium, some relevant features can be observed as **essential elements for trust-building, engagement and gaining group identity**:

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- Autonomy: Slow Food structure and governance also permits autonomy and free decision-making. Slow Food principles are flexible enough to make people feel comfortable with the norms or rules. In general, local convivia are autonomous organizations allowed to adopt the decisions and conduct the activities decided by the local organization in collaboration or not with the international network. They are free to get agreements and collaborate with other local or regional institutions, although some rules should be followed if profit organizations are involved, in order to not compromise their reputation or credibility. We have observed that this autonomy may involve conflicts or disagreements with other local convivia that operate in the same region but with different criteria.

- Flexibility and openness, where discussion and disensus are welcome. The convivium does not establish restrictive internal rules that limit the access of new members. On the contrary, the plurality and diversity of their associates are considered a strength *“that represents the plurality of Araba’s society”* (quote: SFAV_04). Some differences and internal debates have emerged in the last years, resulting from decisions or positions adopted by the international organization. Differences are solved *“creating spaces for discussion where everybody is able to contribute and that Alberto, our president, transmits to the International Board”* (quote_SFAV_02).

- Strong leadership: Alberto Lopez, the president of Slow Food Araba Vitoria is a well-known local activist who plays an essential role within the organization. His extended experience leading groups has been recognized by several interviewees. He can be described as a leader who takes care the human relations inside the group, able to ensure a good atmosphere *“where people have a good time, enjoy, creating an atmosphere of satisfaction with what we have done, assuring that the work they do is useful”* (quote: SFAV_01).

- Group cohesion: Slow Food leaders promote camaraderie and friendship ties. The convivium is a space where they feel accompanied. Meeting people, to spent time with friends, to establishes contact with new people and friends are very important reasons to belong to Slow Food, and *“close relations and friendship encourages participation in our activities, because you are sharing time with your friends and having a good time”* (quote: SFAV_04). *“Slow Food is like a big family; it makes me happy”* (quote: SFAV_03). The convivium recognizes annually the effort of their members through the *“Golden snail award”*, a prize given during the annual assembly to one or two members for their dedication and outstanding contribution to the initiative. Of course, all meetings end with a food event that combines the *“hedonistic”* aspect of Slow Food -pleasure- with *“conviviality”* and *“friendship”*.

- Support: Both the local convivium and the international network provide support, knowledge and help to their members thanks to their social influence but also personal relations means a lot for practitioners or food producers that have to deal with problems on their own. Feeling accompanied, and providing a *“escape route”* for the frustrations of every day. Some interviewees posit that Slow Food enable them to experiment, to propose activities, to spent time with children or friends... which makes them happier:

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"This work is very hard... Sometimes you feel tired... But Slow Food is like a sweet in the mouth, it gives support to overcome weakness, lets you do different things, get in touch with farmers, children, colleagues" (quote: SFAV_02).

"I thought to give up many times. But you feel their support, that gives you strength to keep going. Seeing that you are well received, how do they look me, that feeling, that encourages me, it motivates me to keep going" (quote: SFAV_05).

Empowerment processes observed within the local manifestation

Sense of personal power: Practitioners experience satisfaction when they perceive the impact and efficacy of their activities in the local context but also in the international context. They frequently refer their first "food community" promoted by Slow Food in Arava, that involved one farmer and a hundred of consumers (who can be associate or not). Personal relation and face-to-face communication between producers and consumers ("co-producers") reinforce that sense of competence and perceived self-efficacy, which motivates them to keep working and innovating, new ways of relating, doing and framing regarding food system and local economy.

Slow Food members feel very proud about their small contribution to social change. They feel satisfied about being useful, to have collaborated in a minimum scale to have achieved the goals, which reinforces their commitment with the organization. Practitioners talk about the Ark of Taste local products, the Presidia projects, the organic markets that help to increase the quality of life of food producers or the recovering of cultural heritage (like the Añana's valley). Some of them *"feel proud of have been pioneers" (quote: SFAV_10), "to be an example to other people, to other organizations that have learned a lot from us" (quote: SFAV_03).* Other international projects are also example of success: *"The project "a Thousand Gardens in Africa" is transforming African communities and even the Pope has congratulated us" (quote: SFAV_01).*

Living coherently with own values is a challenge that they decide to reach step by step, knowing that *"although being 100% consistent with own values is not possible, because we are imperfect people" (quote: SFAV_03).* The practitioners discuss this necessity in their meetings: *"We need to be more consistent between our discourses and everyday life. To be able to live, work and act according to the principles of Slow Food. "Each of us, in our house, in our social context, we must act, as far as possible, coherently with the philosophy we stand" (source: minutes of SFAV annual assembly, 2015).*

Empowerment through the status acquired in the recognition received abroad. The acknowledgement that several projects boosted by the local convivium have received from the International Network or other international institutions increases their influence, permits them to demand more attention and support for their work in Arava province. When the convivium participates in the International events organized by Slow Food (Terra Madre, Slow Cheese, etc.) local producers receive media attention, are reinforced and their capacity to influence in policy and local sphere increased. Also, their ability and capacity to engage the public, private and third sector in the same transformative project has been highlighted by their members and also by the local policy makers and community actors interviewed (section 4.1).

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Social Learning outcomes.

Slow Food practitioners have acquired relevant theoretical knowledge about the food system and how to introduce changes and propose alternatives in the local context. Slow Food provides a theoretical basis of knowledge that they learn and apply in the local context. The international Slow Food leaders recognize that *“many people who associate to slow food are more interested in enjoying, eating and having fun, but things change when they participate in our activities with children, students, producers. After a while, they are 60% interested in our sustainability projects and 40% in food and playful, they learn a lot and change their mind”* (quote: SAV_01).

Practitioners have developed projects which involve special abilities and skills to educate, communicate better their message in press and to the audience, to convince more people and gain more associates. Especially they mention the use of TICs to disseminate their activities: *“we need to foster the participation of our members in social networks. Facebook and Twitter are the most used social media. We need to strength our presence in social networks, where young people related most”* (source: minutes of SFAV annual assembly, 2015). The participation of the members of the local convivia in the networking activities proposed by Slow Food has been described as an insightful learning experience, a valuable opportunity for knowledge interchange, meeting people from almost 200 different countries and participating in discussion spaces to find better solutions to common issues. Not only global events are important but also other activities conducted at a national and regional scale, interchanges and fieldtrips to other convivia in Spain are also learning experiences.

An example of this learning outcomes are the slow food producers, which had to improve their relations with consumers. The use of Internet, ICTs and social media seem to be very relevant to maintain their activity, to engage more “co-producers” into the food community *“I always communicate to our co-producers, our consumers through email, it is not possible in other way. Everybody is busy, me too, and email works very well. We have a web also”* (quote: SFAV_10). Moreover, Slow Food members are also named “experts”, they share their knowledge with people (neighbours, other food producers, etc.) interested in knowing about how to develop a community, who to change the food-producing system (becoming more sustainable) and food chain (direct-selling strategies). Experienced people feel that their knowledge is important and should be preserved, and they happily share their *know-how* to others. That reinforces their feeling of being doing something valuable and useful, despite the adverse circumstances.

External governance and networking activity

- Gaining political influence through networking (external governance). The convivium suffered an evolution in their activity and political impact. In their beginning, they aimed to develop activities related to consumer's education, change people's consumption lifestyles and put in value the work of food producers. Nowadays, SFAV is interested also in changing certain regulations or policies, participating in social platforms or being consulted by policy-makers. In this way, Slow Food (political) positions have been taken in account by the local and regional government and they manifest a certain capacity of influence in sustainability transitions. For example, the convivium

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started a campaign, in 2012, oriented to improve school menu, in collaboration with over 50 organizations of the Basque Country. They wrote and presented a “*manifesto for a new regulation of school canteens*” to the Basque Parliament claiming that public school canteens should be supplied following the criteria of “responsible consumption and production, consumption of seasonal products, from local and organic production”. As far as we know, this initiative has not been approved by the regional administration, but it is interesting to know the receptivity of political institutions, and how the slow food message has permeated the Basque society. Except this initiative, we find few political positions. Slow Food Araba Vitoria seem to support the guidelines established by the international association, for example, against GMOs or the treaty TTIP.

Slow Food Araba-Vitoria has also established partnerships with other networks and organizations to hold “civic-food encounters”, participation in scientific conferences, the political youth forum, or collaboration with the Basque government to organizing the International Salone del Gusto in Bilbao in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013. Besides, SFAV has reached the collaboration of the University of the Basque Country to evaluate the impact of their sustainable projects. Obtaining scientific support to their activity is a new strategy to gain more influence into the Basque society.

- Public fundraising. Slow Food Araba-Vitoria has established collaboration agreements with public and private entities with the aim of financing their activities. In its 10 years of existence, the activities of SF Alava have been financed by the Provincial Administration (Diputación Foral) the Council of Vitoria-Gasteiz and the regional banking institution “Vital Kutxa bank”. The municipality of has signed a collaboration agreement (25,230 € in 2015) with the object of “*developing a consumer awareness program on local product*” (Council of Vitoria website, 2015). Occasionally, the initiative has received fundraising from the Basque Government. Moreover, Slow Food is also financed by membership fees and their members reinforce the idea that external financing is necessary but not indispensable “*the most important thing is to work in the local context, if we have more fund, we will be able to do more activities, to reach to more people, but we can do a lot of things with less, our force are our volunteers*” (quote: SFAV_01).

Communication Tools. The information published on the web is very descriptive and extended. Slow Food members enthusiastically described the all the activities of the association, with photos and personal contributions. In addition, they are also active on social networks like Facebook and Twitter. Especially, their FB profile has many followers. The web seems the most important communication tool of the initiative, where they also echo press interviews not only to members of SF Araba, but also to Carlo Petrini. The President of the Slow Food International Association is a very important figure within the initiative, the “leader and guru”, who has great communication skills sending messages and building a narrative of change that local leaders reproduce.

Mass media impact. Slow Food members remark the relevance of getting a good relationship with press, especially local and regional media, that helped to the dissemination of their activities and to spread the slow food message to inexperienced audience and politicians. A large number of press articles and interviews are available on the Internet, YouTube and online newspapers. Even, slow food members usually participate in a weekly radio program in the public Basque media “EiTB” named “The Slow Route”. Besides, other slow food member has a daily gastronomic section in a private radio company “radio Vitoria-Cadena Ser” where he recommends slow food products. Press and

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radio are the most mentioned media by the practitioners: “Radio’s ability to influence is very great. Radio gets into your home. It’s marvellous (...) The radio in particular has a lot of credibility, as few TV programs have. For example, Jamie Oliver, he is very good because he is able to reach to normal citizens and transmit very important guidelines” (quote: SFAV_03).

4.4. Summary, synthesis, conclusion

Emergence and evolution of the Convivium “Slow Food Araba-Vitoria”

The Convivium “Slow Food Araba-Vitoria” was created in January 2005, by a small group of “food activists” after a first positive contact with the Slow Food International Association, who invited them to attend the first edition of Terra Madre (October, 2004). Sooner, the local pioneers introduce the Slow Food movement to local food activists and culinary experts and invite them to associate to the local convivium. Sooner, Slow Food starts to gain certain reputation through the food taste events and workshops conducted in Vitoria and the province of Araba under the key leadership of Alberto López, the President of the local convivium. Nowadays the convivium has almost 300 members, considered an optimum number, so that they are not interested in increasing “the big family” that Slow Food Araba-Vitoria claims to be. This case-study highlights the importance of organizing international events and Slow Food networking activities in order to attract new associates, new members and supporters, who create new convivia worldwide.

Slow Food Araba-Vitoria develops an intense activity (over 70 activities in 2015) in the city of Vitoria and Araba province that are mostly related with 1) the promotion of local organic products (taste workshops, trips to meet local producers); 2) supporting and counselling local organic producers and food communities as well as the local government in healthy food projects 3) children -and adult- taste education; 4) catalogue of foods at risk of disappearing that are a part of the Araba’s culture. Slow Food Araba-Vitoria enhances, through their activities, new ways of knowing, framing, doing and relating: promoting a change in food system based on trust relations between food producers and consumers (e.g. promoting “food communities”, rural and organic markets; edible schoolyards; including local products in “Presidia” and “Ark of Taste” projects). Slow Food posits a change in market relations, from competition to collaboration and sharing knowledge which also involves being proud of the local gastronomy and commitment with rural development. For gaining social and political influence, the local initiative relates with external actors, creating strategic alliances with local community, food producers, restaurants and chefs. They have signed financial agreements with public administrations such as the Agriculture Department of the province (Diputación Foral de Araba), the environmental department of Vitoria’s municipality and private entities such as “Kutxa Foundation” (Kutxa is one of the regional financial entities).

Dynamics.

The convivium Slow Food Araba-Vitoria manifests their commitment with the aims and objectives shared by the international network. Practitioners claim “the right to pleasure”, the pleasure of food, enhancing human relations, conviviality with family and friends. Besides, we observe that certain global discourses have penetrated deeply into the Convivium Slow Food Araba-Vitoria in terms of restoring pride and dignity to food producers and consumer’s corresponsibility in food system, changing to an active “prosumer” role. They also shared a common vision of current economic system and describe the western societies and capitalist system as imperfect, unfair and unequal,

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proposing economic degrowth as the solution to global issues. The interviewees highlight a number of positive and negative societal and political changes observed in the Basque society but also in the European societies, especially the effect of European agriculture policies (CAP) described “*as one of the main constrictors to local and small-scale organic production*” (quote_SFAV_08). Negative trends also relate to a change in social lifestyles and the disconnection between urban population and rural life, and societies that live in a more individualized society, with “*very stressful lives*” (quote: SFAV_02), where “*shopping has become a necessity to invest little time and less money*” (quote: SFAV_08).

However, interviewees coincide in observing positive tendencies in consumption – and healthy-habits as well as a desire to “return to the nature” that brings the rejuvenation of agricultural exploitations – more environmental friendly- and the revival of local food markets where slow food and organic products are sold. Observing these positive tendencies, Slow Food practitioners are firmly confident about their capacity to contribute to social, political and systemic change, regarding food production and consumption but also in regards to local and rural development, environmental protection and environmental education. Slow Food is a prescriber, “that influences in public opinions and purchasing decisions” that impulses alternative commercial relations in the regional context, is able to influence local public policies, enhancing the local and sustainable development of rural communities and the preservation of the Basque culture and biodiversity.

Agency

The convivium Slow Food Araba Vitoria has become a relevant actor in the local and regional context. The organization counts with almost 300 members that represent the plurality of the Araba's society, that find in the local association an adequate place to fulfil their personal needs, living coherently with own values. A list of variety of motivations to participate in Slow Food, that most of the practitioners mentioned:

- Protection of the Basque cultural and culinary heritage
- Commitment to local production
- Connection to the land and rural lifestyles
- Environmental and biodiversity protection and preservation
- To dignify the role of food producers (improving their social and economic status)
- Claiming the role of women in the kitchen
- Professional interest (chefs, producers, public servants with responsibilities in agricultural areas)
- Need for connectedness, to belong to a group of like-minded people

Slow Food permits their members to contribute to society, to “social transformation”, to the preservation of local identity and connection with the past of one's community. Through the different role that each member play, they can contribute to their community in a meaningful way, especially “*giving back to peasants, farmers and food producers their dignity and acknowledgement, putting in value their essential role within the food system*” (quote_SFAV_02). It should be highlighted that Slow Food involves emotions and relations “*It recovers the positive connotations of feeding, of conviviality, of celebration*” (quote: SFAV_08), fulfilling an intense need for connectedness, the need to be accompanied, to belong to a group where they can meet other like-minded people.

Slow Food enhances the participation of members through “friendship” and “connectedness”. Despite the classical vertical structure adopted by the local convivium (regulated by the statutes of

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the Slow Food Association) some relevant features can be observed as essential elements for trust-building, engagement and gaining group identity. For instance, the autonomy that any local convivium has, the remarked flexibility and openness to discussion and group cohesion are key elements that explains in part their successful experience. Alberto Lopez, the president of Slow Food Araba Vitoria plays an essential role leading the organization *and giving* support, knowledge and help to their associates, especially to local producers and other professionals connected to the network.

Empowerment processes observed within the local manifestation. Practitioners experiment satisfaction and a sense of personal power: experiment satisfaction when they perceive the impact and efficacy of their activities in the local context. They feel very proud about their small contribution to social development, feeling useful at least in a minimum scale. Hence, the local convivium gains empowerment through the credibility and the recognition received in the international context of thanks to media coverage. Thanks to that, Slow Food has gained certain political influence in the regional context, participating in local projects, being consulted by local administrations and promoting local platforms that aim to introduce sustainable practices in local food production and consumption.

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5. Local Initiative #2: CONVIVIUM SLOW FOOD FREIBURG

By Iris Kunze



Graph 5.1: Impressions of Slow Food Freiburg: Clockwise from lower left: show cooking, Vinothek on stage and Junior Slow Mobile at the Plaza Culinaria fair, Nov. 2015 in Freiburg; SFFR area at the 'Plaza Culinaria' fair; farmer explains its potatoes at potato menu; logo of SFFR and in the middle: colourful potatoes (photos: Iris Kunze).

The 'Slow Food' group Freiburg/Südbaden⁷ (SFFR) is one the first and one of the larger so called 'convivia' in Germany. It was founded in 1997 and has seen consistent growth and development since then. Currently, SF's Freiburg chapter counts about 300 members. In order to better understand the context in which the SF convivium Freiburg is operating, I will firstly take a brief look at the natural environment and the socio-cultural situation in this region.

The catchment area of the Freiburg convivium covers the far South West of the German federal state of Baden-Württemberg, close to the Swiss and French borders, in the so called 'border triangle'.

⁷ http://www.slowfood.de/slow_food_vor_ort/freiburg/ 16.10.2015

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Besides the City of Freiburg with its 220.000 inhabitants, it also includes the areas of Breisgau, Kaiserstuhl, Markgräfler Land, and the Southern Black Forest with its diverse agricultural structure. It covers the warmest area in Germany at the foot of the hills of Kaiserstuhl with its very intense cultures of vine production, the large plain of the river Rhine with fruit gardens where a great variety of grain, corn, potatoes, tobacco and vegetables prosper, as well as the Black Forest which includes the highest mountains in Germany after the Alps rising up to 1.500 m above sea level. Here, livestock farming next to the foresting has a long tradition. Within the farming sector in the Region, diversification towards more renewable energies, direct marketing and tourism activities are popular. Although agriculture is an important regional activity, its economic importance is very restricted. The combination of diverse economic sectors and the beautiful landscape attracting bon vivants and tourism generates critical issues in terms of land use planning and governance.⁸

The region's diverse agricultural structure is directly connected to the socio-cultural situation, as well as the ownership and economic structures in this area (Korff et al. 2013). In contrast to Northern and Eastern Germany, properties are extremely small, because of the so called 'Realerbteilung' where farms and their surrounding land are divided amongst all sons of the farmer in the case of succession instead of giving everything to the oldest son alone. After the land reforms in the sixties of the last century, this situation of scattered farm land has improved by re-organizing the ownerships and creating larger fields and vineyards. Still, the region stays an area with small scale farming where the majority of farmers only work part time in agriculture or even have fulltime jobs in other areas, last but not least in tourism. In the rural areas, tourism is closely connected to the wine production at the Kaiserstuhl and to the concept of 'holidays at the farm', as well as to skiing in the Black Forest in the winter⁹. Another important context factor is the high level of awareness among consumers in view of social and ecological issues related to farming, because Freiburg is a city with a large university, a powerful green party (including the mayor since 2002) and a strong alternative-ecological movement.

The region's tradition of small scale and part time farming in combination with tourism and an ecologically aware population has probably contributed to a well-established structure of direct marketing and to the production of ecological and gourmet products both of which are important preconditions for the activities of Slow Food.

5.1. Emergence of Social innovation in SF Freiburg

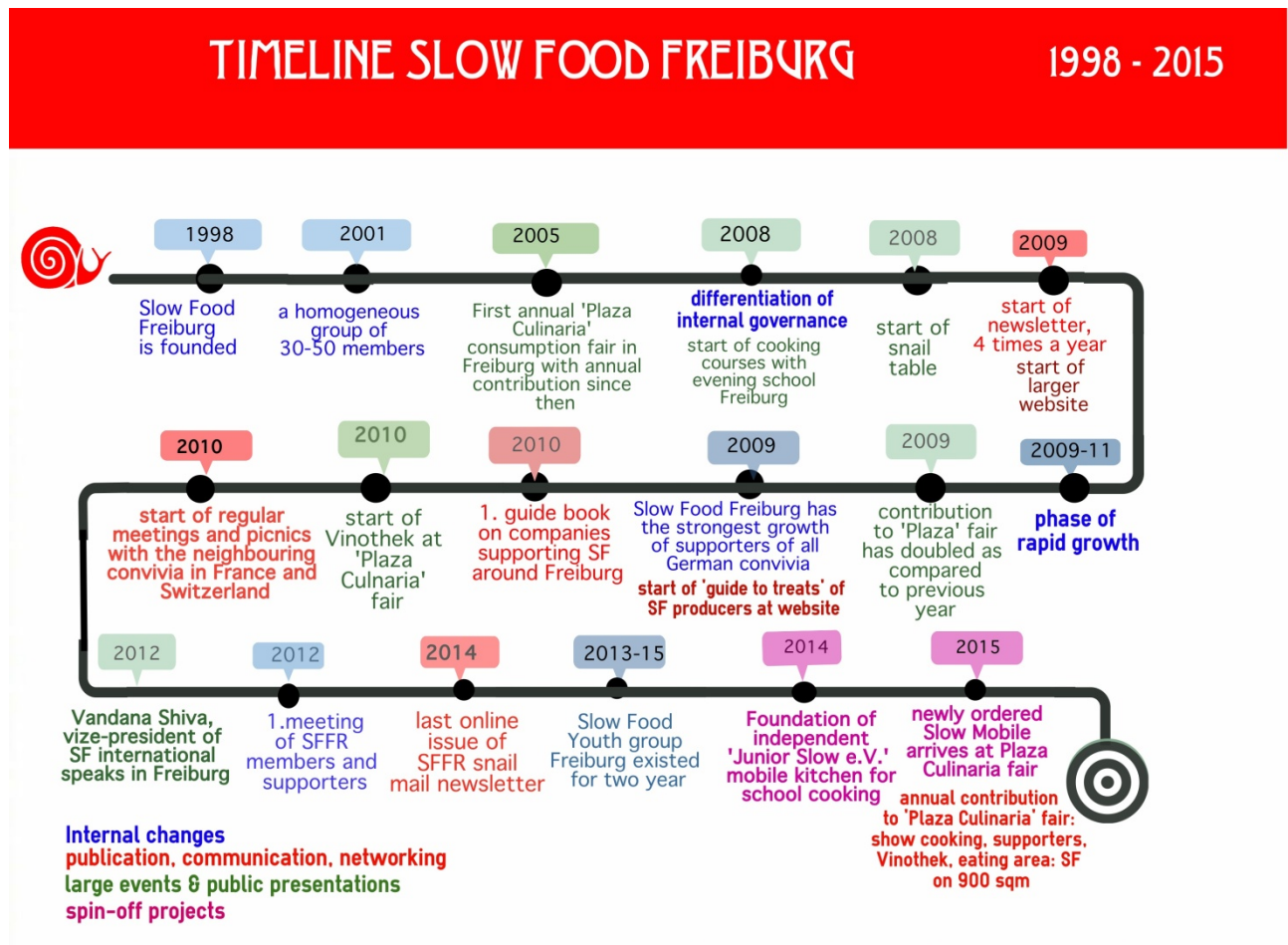
The first chapter introduces the history and development of the initiative. In the second part of this chapter I will introduce the emergence of social innovations including new ways of knowing, framing activities, organizing and doing things in the Slow Food convivium of Freiburg (SFFR).

⁸ <http://www.farmpath.eu/Baden-W%C3%BCrttemberg> 16.10.2015

⁹ The High (not sure if correct) Black Forest next to Freiburg is one of the most popular tourist areas in the state of Baden-Württemberg with 4,6 Million guest-nights in 2012 <http://www.badische-zeitung.de/suedwest-1/rekordjahr-im-tourismus--69401341.html> 16.10.2015

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5.1.1. Chronological development of SF Freiburg



The slow food convivium Freiburg (SFFR) was opened in 1998 as one of the first convivia in Germany. Slow Food Germany has been established in 1992 as the first national SF NGO after Italy where Slow Food had started (see chapter 2). By the end of 2014 the German association had over 13.000 members in about 80 convivia, not including the young activists of the Slow Food Youth Network. The latter gather in more or less casual but constantly growing groups all over Germany. The office of SF Germany is located in Berlin. A member of the convivium Freiburg is one of the five managing board members of SF Germany.¹⁰

After the foundation of SFFR the number of paying members has slowly and continuously grown until today, whereas the number of active members has varied over the years. Today SFFR can contribute almost 300 paying members to SF Germany (see chapter 5.3 on governance). The kind of activities undertaken has changed over the years, depending on the preferences of particular active members. The organizational structures of the convivium were changed in the different phases over the years (see table below and chapter on governance).

¹⁰ https://www.slowfood.de/w/files/presse2013/02_sfd_geschichte_1412.pdf

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The Slow Food Youth Freiburg was founded by young adults as informal subgroup of SFFR and Slow Food Youth Germany in February 2013 and created a colorful face book site. It shows a strong networking aspect amongst the European Slow Food youth movements and a more proactive and extroverted kind of action. For private reasons – the most active woman left Freiburg after finishing her studies for working somewhere else – the group was shut down in Spring 2015.

The most recent large project of SFFR is the „slow mobil“, a mobile kitchen for schools. The planning started already in 2013, the association was founded in February 2014, the precondition to raise funding. Right now in November 2015, the “Slow Mobil” trailer is delivered to the Plaza Culinaria Fair for exhibition and shall start its work in 2016.

Year / period	Important activities/changes/milestones in local case SFFR	Important changes in context
1998	foundation of SFFR	
1998-2008	The founder and central, engaged convivial leader person organized everything. He was the driving force but also hindered the engagement of others	
2001	30-50 members, homogeneous group & personal atmosphere. One person as convivial leader from the beginning till 2006	
2005	Start of annual 'Plaza Culinaria' consumption fair in Freiburg: Slow Food Freiburg is large presenter since then.	Change of financial contribution system from national SF Germany association to the national convivia
Since 2008	Re-organization of internal governance to a board of 10 resorts each lead by a department manager	Start of website of SFFR
Since 2008	Start of collaboration with evening school Freiburg: cooking courses	
Since 2008	Snail table has started – monthly eating event for Slow Food members	
2009-14	Newsletter SFFR appears 4 times a year; first issue online.	
2009-11	Strong phase of growth, gaining lots of active members and events	It is observed by SFFR that different food scandals ¹¹ have caused periodically waves of newcomers.
2009	SFFR contribution to the Plaza Culinaria has doubled its size in comparison to the previous event.	
2009	Newly started ¹² : the “Guide to treats”: restaurants and food producers are tested and presented at the SFFR website. ¹³	
2009	SF Freiburg experiences the strongest growth of supporters amongst all German convivia. Famous, high quality vine producers are amongst the new supporters.	
2010	First guide book on the most recommended 48 Slow Food firms in Freiburg and Südbaden.	
Since 2010	Start of the annual Vinothek, run by Slow Food at the annual 'Plaza Culinaria' fair	
Since 2010.06	Start of regular meetings and picnics with the neighbouring convivia in France and Switzerland.	
2011	Trip to the convivium in Padua/ Italy.	
2012	Vandana Shiva, Vice President of SF international speaks at a large event in Freiburg	
2012.03	First meeting of SFFR members and supporters	

¹¹ <https://www.slowfood.de/w/files/freiburg/slownewsq42009.pdf>

¹² <https://www.slowfood.de/w/files/freiburg/slownewsq42009.pdf>

¹³ https://www.slowfood.de/slow_food_vor_ort/freiburg/genussfuehrer/

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2012.06	First Agricultural Festival Freiburg, with participation of SFFR, annual event since then	
2013.02	First official meeting of the SFFR youth group ¹⁴	
2014	Last online issue of the SFFR "snail mail" newsletter	
2014	Foundation of "Junior Slow Food e.V.", independent association, mobile kitchen for school cooking	
2015.04	End of SFFR Youth group	
2015.11	Newly ordered "slow mobil" trailer arrives to be presented at the 'Plaza Culinaria'	

5.1.2. Innovations of SF Freiburg

In SF we can observe a kind of 'division of work' between the international and national organisations and the local convivia. While the international and national organizations – at least as observed in Germany – work with political campaigns, large events and PR, the local convivia educate and organize practical cooking events. A large portion of the income of these events goes to SF Germany to finance political campaigns. Rather than fighting for certain political changes, the most important intended innovation which is often emphasized by SF is creating a space for enjoyment and pleasurable consumption in the face of a decreasing attention and value given to food in the modern culture (observed at SFFR planning event). The activists of the regional convivium of SFFR aim at providing enjoyment in relation with food, especially by taking more time for cooking and eating, but also for information and education around food, food production, quality and own food growing. From an innovation perspective, SFFR has created diverse new ways of doing, organising, framing and knowing which will be explained in the following sections.

5.1.3. Information and social relations

Knowledge and new information on food is central to the members of SFFR. First, knowledge and (mutual) education come in the form of personal exchange between members. One of the aims is to realize the ideal of consuming natural, high quality food with products grown mainly, but not only in the region itself. SF members exchange their knowledge about healthy food, for instance special oils and recommendations about extraordinary producers, in this case an oil manufacturer in Offenburg, a city north of Freiburg. Also personal contacts to farmers and large orders make personal contacts of SF members with producers possible. The advantages of direct contacts to producers for SF members include the possibility of taking personal insight into the conditions of production. Some SFFR members, for instance, have personal contacts to farmers in Spain where they buy their olive oil during their holidays. In certain cases the producers might offer donations or reduced prices for SF events.

The second channel of knowledge generation and transfer is SF's semi-public events. Combining eating, drinking, entertainment, enjoyment and information, the events are announced at the SFFR website and registration is asked for in advance. A good example is the annual potato menu, hosted and organized by the Kartoffelhaus restaurant in Freiburg. The owner of this restaurant has a special proclivity for and expertise on potatoes. For the potato menu of 2015 (participant observation: event SFFR E1) Kartoffelhaus and SFFR invited their supplier of potatoes, an extraordinary expert in the

¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/Slow-Food-Youth-Freiburg-344032025707117/>

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field. This farmer grows more than 50 different kinds of vegetables, mainly potatoes. While the guests were waiting for the first course, the farmer explained details about potatoes, based on his own farming experience. Also, he made recommendations as to which sorts should preferably be bought in the region, based on knowledge on growing conditions, climate and treatments such as fertilizers and pesticides. He indirectly recommended to buy traditional sorts instead of genetically modified hybrids. In terms of entertainment, he showed blue, pink, thick and thin kinds of potatoes to trigger the aesthetic senses of the audience. In terms of potato farming, he spoke out against the widespread opinion that affordable potato growing needs fertilizers, pesticides and heavy machines. He explained why most of the potato farmers around Freiburg are located in the Rhine plain, north of the Kaiserstuhl. The area provides an especially supportive soil for potato growing with a mixture of fluvial marshland and small amounts of loam, an aero-sediment from the post-glacial age. The farmers actually do not need fertilizers if they use small, light machines.

5.1.4. Socializing with food while connecting different milieus

SFFR intends to create new frames and situations that link different social strata of three kinds: First, private and personal with public contexts, second, elder, more experienced with younger people and third, gourmet high quality events with affordable learning events for 'ordinary people. The potato menu event can serve as an example for this. The advertisement for the annual potato menu attracts participants from two different communities: SFFR and the Kartoffelhaus. I observed about 40 participants in the event which consisted of SF members as well as regular customers of the Kartoffelhaus which are mainly young people with a high portion of university students. The menu price of 36€ per person is comparable high for a student, but low for a four-course-high quality menu. To also serve different demands, the menu can be ordered with meat or as a vegetarian dish. In terms of socializing, the guests can chose to sit more privately at small tables or socialize at large tables for getting to know new people. The profile of the Kartoffelhaus restaurant mirrors this concept of transgressing socio-cultural boundaries. For example, a cheap meal is offered for lunch during the week while in the evening also more high level, culinary meals can be found on the menu.

5.1.5. New ways of organizing

Although to be an innovative organization is not an explicit aim in the approach of Slow Food, my observation of the example of the convivium Freiburg shows that it follows diverse strategies to make a difference. The SFFR team is well aware that they need to organize interesting joyful events mirroring the philosophy of SF to attract members and new people. Therefore, a gourmet meal and vine tasting at a beautiful place – be it in a restaurant or in the nature – is generally combined with an interesting and entertaining presentation about food or food production. The events of SFFR are organized on the level of private cooking, diner events in restaurants, advertisement at the Plaza Culinaria or education for school kids and adults.

Small scale events by SFFR:

The small scale events invite people to socialize, slow down, and enjoy good food and meaningful conversations. The events can be private like the 'cooking regulars' table' – either at private homes of SFFR members or semi-public like the potato menu in a restaurant or at a farm, where registration is required. Food and wine tasting is the central purpose of these events. The locations are of high importance. SF's events either take place in restaurants which are supporters of SFFR, in private

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locations of active members, in the summertime often outside in gardens, vineyards and sometimes include cycling tours. The so called Snail table started in 2008, a half-public eating event in a restaurant, mostly a supporter of SF.

Cooking events are regularly held and announced publicly on the website. Even there, SFFR has created a semi-public atmosphere, where participants have to register in advance by name. These meetings are often attended by 12-15 people (Interview SFFR 3). It is not easy to find a suitable, large enough kitchen place for this in Freiburg which meets the requirements of cosines, enjoyment, beauty and sociability of SF. It either takes place in Freiburg's evening school or in the kitchen of a furniture store in the neighboring city of Emmendingen. Therefore, private invitations by individual members to come over for cooking are highly appreciated. These invitations are sent out via the members' listserv. The respective hosts are the head cooks who plan the meal and provide the ingredients. The costs are divided by all participants. This format thus depends on individual initiative.

Another popular event format, announced publicly on the website, is taking place several times during the summer months since 2012. A day event on the weekend includes a cycling tour around the vineyards of the Kaiserstuhl with vine tasting. Sometimes two vine tastings were included in one day travel event. During the planning meeting (event SFFR E2), there was a discussion to reduce this to only one vine tasting for future day tour events justified by realizing the program of 'slow' and to appreciate the supporters. 'Slow' is a programmatic statement and the bicycle is seen as a better and more ecological means of transport than a bus or car.

Broader publicity at the 'Plaza Culinaria' event

Every year the 'Plaza culinaria', the biggest consumption fair in the region, takes place in Freiburg. The organizers write: "The consumption fair Plaza Culinaria is the most important culinary sales and fair event in Southern Germany. The regional context and the specific climate make Freiburg a perfect location."¹⁵ The Plaza Culinaria in 2015 just took place from November 6-8 (event E3-5). The organizers are satisfied with the 42.000 visitors, because of its growth in comparison to the last year.

Slow food has attended this fair since its beginning ten years ago and is the largest exhibitor with a rented area of 900 sqm. The majority of this large space does SFFR rent out to its supporters for special conditions that cannot be served by the fair like small and cheap stands. The condition is that SF frames the rules. Only natural products without flavor enhancer, and other criteria are allowed. SFFR uses the same criteria like for the annual Slow Food fair in Stuttgart.¹⁶ The criteria, underpinned with a manifesto,¹⁷ for instance encompass, natural and traditional forms of production, no convenience food, no flavor enhancer, no genetically modified ingredients, and it is forbidden to use one-way cutlery. Additionally it is not allowed to present wine and other products from an intensified agriculture, expressed for instance in the number of a maximum of production per ha land. Asking some of the exhibiting producers (event SFFR E3), I noticed that not all of them are SF supporters. One of them responded to be happy with the strict rules of SF because he produces

¹⁵ <http://www.plaza-culinaria.de/>

¹⁶ http://www.messe-stuttgart.de/fileadmin/medien/veranstaltungsseiten/slowfood/PDF/2016/Ausstellungsordnung_SlowFood_2016_d_e_ngl.pdf

¹⁷ http://www.messe-stuttgart.de/fileadmin/medien/veranstaltungsseiten/slowfood/PDF/2016/Manifest_SlowFood_2016_d_engl.pdf

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natural products anyway. When I asked, if this is specially advertised, he was not sure. Again, I noticed, that SF does not conduct proactive advertisements. In the booklet of the Plaza fair, the snail symbol of SF can be found on the hall maps. But there is no advertisement in the booklet. When the regional Newspaper wrote about the Plaza Culinaria, SF was not mentioned.¹⁸

Only about 50 sqm are used by SFFR with the Vinothek, an information stand on Slow Food and a large table for the customers to eat at. SFFR calls the Vinothek a win-win-project for the wine producers, the customers at the Plaza fair and SF. About 25 wine producers donate their products for tasting which is served by SFFR activists at the plaza fair without payed labor. The SFFR active members invest their voluntary time and charge 1€ for a 0,1l glas of wine. The customers can try a large variety of wines. The revenues – at the Plaza Culinaria in 2014 it was 3.500€ - goes since last year to the Junior Slow mobile (Interview SFFR 2, 5).

The new ordered trailer for the Junior Slow Mobil has just arrived in time for 'Plaza Culinaria' 2015 (event SFFR E5). The kitchen is not built into the trailer, yet. SFFR had looked for an ecologically produces trailer, which was difficult to get. At the Plaza three active SF members were hosting the trailer. It was used to invite children to paint 'their' trailer and for a tasting test. Next to financial donations a board was asking for voluntary work of experts (a carpenter, cooking team, fundraiser, and other craft men). On Friday evening, there had been a few people and some children at the Mobile. The stand was donated by the fair management for this charity project.

Furthermore, SFFR had three well-visited show cooking events of an hour each – two on the 'Veggie stage'. The third one was with a radio station. While the convivium leader was cooking, another active person had a leger talk with the radio moderator on the philosophy and activities of SF. They emphasized, people do not need to be members of SFFR to be welcomed at the events. The moderator joked that this year, the cook is almost in time (event SFFR E4). Another activity is the annual vine competition, this year in the field of Spätburgunder. The winners are announced at the Plaza Culinaria.

5.2. TSI dynamics in SF Freiburg

Transformative social innovation in SFFR first comes in the form of interaction between SF members and food producers who are supporters of SF. SF slowly changes the way of production by giving food production its own value and by implementing the values through its social networking system. SF's narratives of change are related to the international SF movement and expressed in its social networking activities on a semi-public level on the one hand. On the other hand, SF also organizes or participates in larger events in order to reach people who are not equally conscious about nutrition and food production yet. Especially the new education project on cooking with elementary school children in less educated areas is a way of outreaching into other social milieus.

¹⁸ <http://www.badische-zeitung.de/freiburg/plaza-culinaria-mit-besucherrekord--113463601.html> 2015-11-09

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5.2.1. Discourses and narratives of change

The convivium SFFR is strongly committed to the aims, goals and values of SF international. When talking to the activists, I could sense their strong commitment to the ideas of SF as a global movement. While they might not travel to the international SF events themselves, they are well informed by reading the information on events, campaigns and knowledge about natural food production, nicely presented in the German 'SF Magazin', which all members in Germany receive.

The interviewee 3 admits that the majority of public people still would have the image of SF as a gourmet eater club while not acknowledging the activities of SF. The luxury impression would also have its reason in taking more time. Time for cooking and eating, this would be the luxury factor, taking more time than putting convenience food into the micro wave.

The approach of SFFR sounds very humble. The common values are most important also in their private cooking and small scale events. Members are open to other and new ways of cooking under the common values of natural food. They live their small-scale events and snail tables, cook privately and make donations to the national and international movements.

Nevertheless, their narrative of change becomes visible in their enthusiastic engagement in education for natural food with practical approaches, mainly their project to cook with school children in elementary schools in less-educated milieus with the Junior Slow Mobile.

5.2.2. Interaction between consumers and producers

SF international follows specific values and standards regarding the quality of food production and processed food products which include regional and natural production and a ban on artificial supplements. SF Germany lends its snail sign to producers and gastronomy for a year if they support SF financially and if they can proof to be seriously active in realizing the aims of SF. There are no hard criteria for insuring a natural quality. Nevertheless, SFFR interviewees reported two cases (Interview SFFR3,4) where supporters had been excluded from SF. A vine producer has sprayed the Monsanto pesticide round-up and a meat producer added a flavor enhancer. SFFR still keeps in contact with the respective farmers and remains open to novel membership in case they change their practices.

SFFR does not solely demand products with organic labels, for instance from *Bioland* or *demeter* agriculture from the supporters,

but any biological hand grown products. That's actually fine for us; small and regional firms, 'handish' production and no agrarian factories. Concerning meat, we look at animal-welfare.

(original: „sondern biologisch und handwerklich angebaut, das reicht uns eigentlich schon. Kleine Betriebe, regionale Betriebe, die ‚händisch‘ produzieren und keine Agrarfabriken. Beim Thema Fleisch, dass die Tiere artgerecht gehalten und aufgezogen werden, da achten wir drauf“) (Interview SFFR3).

SF Germany charges fixed rates for business supporters depending on the size of the business (see chapter internal governance for details). The incentive to pay this support is often based on the expectation that SF events and members will increase sales to a higher level than what supporters

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are paying to SF. Indeed very creative forms of support are realized. For instance, farmers and vine producers can spontaneously ask for help on the SF mailing list and often, a significant number of people follow such calls. Also restaurants host SF planning meetings for free on week days when the normal customer rates are rather low. Because SF members always eat and drink at their meetings, the restaurants have satisfactory sales numbers.

5.2.3. Early learning with mobile trailer for school cooking events

A new project immediately mentioned by the president of SFFR when asking him about a socially innovative project is the “Junior slow mobil”¹⁹ (event2). This project currently is the most active one in SFFR. Its aim is to realize education on slow food already amongst elementary school children in Freiburg and the surroundings. The planning phase started in 2014 and activities are scheduled to start in the beginning of 2016. A trailer equipped with a kitchen shall travel between the elementary schools in Freiburg, staying for one week. There are two very active SFFR members in this project, strongly supported by the other active members of SFFR. The project is completely based on the voluntary work and engagement of two women. Therefore, the intensity of getting things done depends on their availability which is expected to increase further soon, when one of them is getting retired. The slow mobile concept is already realized by three other convivia in Germany, Freiburg is the fourth one and received guidance by the slow mobile group of the convivium Karlsruhe.

Trying to understand the structural dependencies in SFFR, it seems that the organizational setting of ruling all financial issues centrally on the level of SF Germany, i.e. in Berlin hampers the activity and creativity of the local convivia. In the case of the slow mobile of Freiburg, an independent association, “Junior Slow Freiburg e.V.”, was founded in February 2014²⁰, which has no official connection to SFFR. This form was the only legal possibility to be able to raise funding explicitly for this project (see chapt. resources)(Interview SFFR2). It took the active slow mobile activists a year to get enough funding to buy the slow mobile. SFFR donated the income from the last Plaza Culinaria to the slow mobile project. They advertised it at the last Plaza Culinaria in 2014, presented the project at the conference of primary school headmasters, at family events, at the ecostation in Freiburg, and asked various public institutions for funding too, for example the education authority.

“It was a difficult job to convince the relevant bodies to support our project”. (original: „Es war eine mühsame Kleinarbeit, die zuständigen Stellen von unserem Projekt zu überzeugen“ (Interview SFFR2).

Also, it was a difficult task to constantly keep up the motivation and engagement of the activists. “Last year in Spring 2014 we hit rock bottom, but then suddenly the project gained momentum” (Interview SFFR2). The reason for this surprising change was a big private donation at the Slow Food Fair Stuttgart where the Slow Mobile Freiburg had been presented.

The slow mobile project is planned on the basis of experiences of the three other convivia with slow mobiles and shall be implemented in the following way: The slow mobile will be transported to an interested elementary school on a Monday morning. The school only has to pay 250 Euros for transport. Two professional cooks will cook with 5-8 children at a time with regional and biological

¹⁹ <http://slowmobil-freiburg.de/category/allgemein/>

²⁰ <http://www.slowfood.de/w/files/freiburg/schneckenpost-2-2014.pdf> 23.09.15

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food and teach them how to cook. Paying the cooks and the food will be funded by SFFR. SFFR is currently looking for more voluntary supporters for this project.

Building on the experiences of other convivia, SFFR has copied this concept. While in Stuttgart, it is highly successful in term of fundraising – last but not least, because the wife of the mayor is the driving force – Freiburg as a smaller city has difficulties to found it. From this experience an interviewee (Interview SFFR 5) has the idea to fund all SF mobile initiatives in Germany with an amount of 50% by SF Germany. However, SFFR tries to make a difference in children education with the Junior Slow Mobile. The intention aims at reaching poor children in marginalized school, therefore the mobile is planned to be offered for free and therefore depends on donations.

5.3. Agency in SF Freiburg

5.3.1. Governance

Legally, the 13.000 members of the 80 convivia in Germany are part of one cooperative. The membership within Slow Food Germany requires an annual fee of 75 Euros with reduced rates of only 12 Euros offered to students and other disadvantaged groups, as well as 95 Euros for families. Only natural persons are allowed as members, no companies, businesses or associations. Members' rights include an subscription of the slow food Germany magazine published six times a year, and belonging to one of the regional convivia and participation in events for a reduced price. SF Germany encourages members to engage in SF's projects revolving around knowledge about food, nutrition, cooking, and so called 'taste education'.

SF DE invites small and middle scale entrepreneurs to support SF/them financially and, in return, allows them to use their logo. The applicant has to declare that he shares the philosophy of SF and explain how he puts this into practice. SF sends an annual supporter sign that needs to be renewed every year. The supporters receive a logo for the ongoing year which they can put onto their website and entrance area (in the case of restaurants), but not into their advertisements, onto products or menus. The financial support fee is fixed to an amount related to the number of employees the respective organization or business has, starting with 200 Euro for a single entrepreneur and going up to 1500 Euro for a business with more than 1.000 employees. Large corporations are not welcome as supporters of SF.²¹

The convivia in Germany are closely related and guided by SF Germany. The SF Germany office in Berlin is financially supported by the 80 convivia and can pay seven fulltime and three part time people in its management office for taking care of the internal governance of membership issues as well as external governance of, for instance, campaigns on the national level. The local convivia acquire members and supporters for SF DE. A biannual meeting of all the Slow Food convivia in Germany plans actions and is for getting to know each other. The election of the SF Germany board is done at the annual membership assembly, where only about 200-300 of the 13.000 members appear.

²¹ https://www.slowfood.de/w/files/unterstuetzer/sfd_unterstuetzerantrag_2015.pdf

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One of the long-term active members of SFFR is also IT manager and board members of SF Germany. He told about a shift from a system where 20-30% of the membership and the supporters fees stay with the local convivia to a system that just was introduced a few years ago, where the convivia have to document their expenses (Interview SFFR5). The reason was, that the national SF office has generated debts and was accused to inappropriate use of money, which was done in the local convivia. This has led to a system of justification of expenses from the local groups to the national association who is responsible for the charitable use of the donations. They can spend money till their potential budget limit of 5€ per member and 15€ per supporter. Since last year, a new internal data base was introduced, where all members can check the financial documents of all convivia in Germany. This concept of peer-control works the year over and the annual meetings of members is taking a burden away from. This system enables to inform a growing number of members at the base whilst even reducing the work investment.

5.3.2. Internal governance in SF Freiburg

Since we had a change of our early convivium leader, it's simply better, because everyone can contribute ideas. (original: „Seit wir Convivienleiterwechsel hatten, ist das jetzt einfach besser, kann jeder Ideen einbringen“) (Interview SFFR3)

SFFR has about 250 individual members, who are members of SF Germany and the largest amount of supporters of all convivia in Germany – more than 50 business and institutional supporters. There have been shifts in internal governance structures. In the first years one person led and organized everything till his suspension in 2008. Since then, the internal governance is structured by a group of about ten resorts each led by a department manager. The ten resorts are food quality, snail table, enjoyment guide, Youth, wine, PR work, fair and supporter work, internet, member and interest administration as well as a representor of the supporters.

The situation of convivia without an own legal structure was perceived as beneficial as long as the convivia had smaller numbers of members. Since most of them have grown beyond hundred, SFFR says, that they work on figuring out an own legal form to solve juridical problems and new opportunities for tax declaration. SF Germany is no charitable association, because it pays a fee to SF International. The local convivia are not allowed to earn money or declare donation receipts.

We are actually not allowed to make money or to spend money, we are rather a satellite of SF Germany. (original: „Wir dürfen eigentlich kein Geld einnehmen, wir dürfen nichts ausgeben, sondern wir sind im Prinzip nur so ne Art Satellit von SF DE“) (Interview SFFR 3)

5.3.3. External governance in SF Freiburg

SF mainly interacts with small scale business in the area of food and wine production. Companies, businesses and associations are invited to become supporters by an active long-term member in the case of SFFR. As explained before, SFFR has a rather silent and not so proactive political approach and thus does not practice an offensive PR strategy. It rather aims at networking and education, building on personal contacts, which are extended at their small scale events. Political activities as such are not part of the local convivium's profile, but only of that of the National German SF office. Campaigns of SF Germany for example have been addressing food waste, GMO food, the TTIP

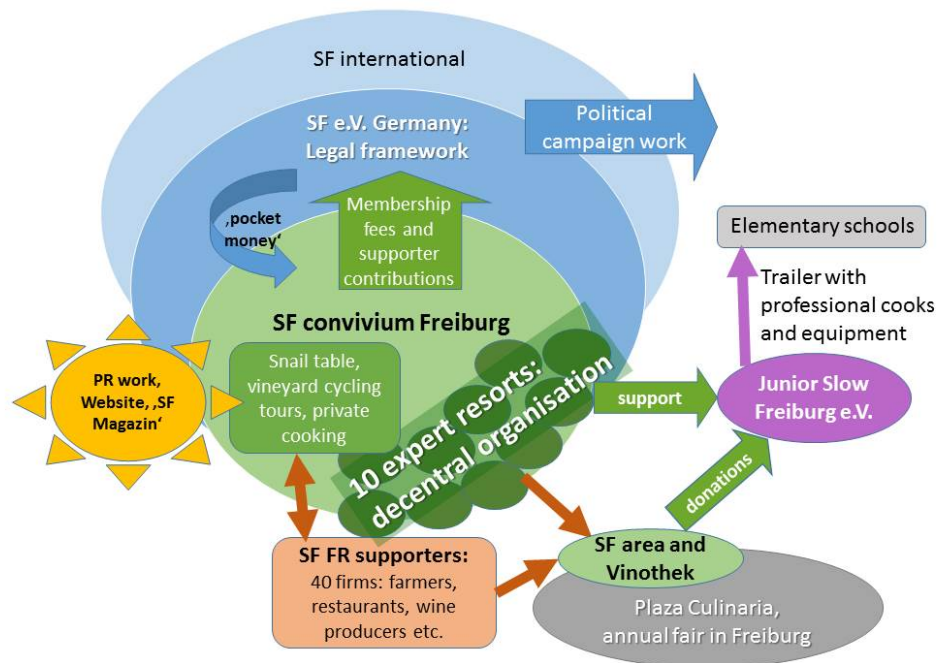
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(Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership). Slow Food Germany is among the organisers of the yearly public gatherings under the label “*We are fed up!*” in Berlin. Furthermore, SF DE runs an annual food event, the “Fair of good taste” in Stuttgart.²²

For the case of the Junior Slow Mobile, the activists have been talking to school ministry, teacher associations and other institutions for gaining collaborators for the project (Interview SFFR2).

5.3.2. Actors map

The following map shows the actors dynamics in and around the SF convivium Freiburg as explained in the previous chapters.



Graph 5.2: Actors map on dynamics in the local case of SF Freiburg: between national association and local activities (by Iris Kunze).

5.3.3. Resources

Financially, SF only relies on donations. The donations come from members and supporters, as well as from guests during exceptional events. As introduced before, the convivia can receive a percentage of their membership contributions from SF DE, when they document their expenses. Exceptional private donations have been made for instance for the “Slow Mobil” project.

The network of supporters is a huge resource in terms of indirect donations, like the wine donations for the Plaza Culinaria fair which SFFR is selling. The supporters are also ‘resources’ in terms of

²² <http://www.messe-stuttgart.de/marktdesgutengeschmacks/>

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socio-economic and social capital. Several of the most renowned wine producers, meat producers and restaurants all over Freiburg and Southern Baden are SF supporters. They can host SFFR events and sometimes also support the event with their products. Nevertheless interviewees also mention some resentment of supporters (event SFFR E2). Especially the wine supporters in Freiburg complain about not receiving the benefit of additional consuming which they had expected by becoming a SF supporter.

The most important resource that has been mentioned by an interviewee is voluntary engagement of active members (SFFR 3). The very existence of SF, its program, newsletter, tasting guide, supporter network, all are made possible solely based on voluntary work. A large number of active SFFR members are retired and therefore have time to engage. In addition, they bring in a lot of knowledge and experience of life. Another kind of resource is the social network of educated, well-established middle class people, who can host the semi-public events at their homes or in their private gardens.

Another resource in terms of social capital are the personal contacts, SF members can get all over the world via the SF network. Three members of SFFR told in the interview that they had contacted the regional convivias, be it in Spain, Italy or Canada to get some personal contact and advise on regional good quality food during holiday trips.

One of the Interviewees and his wife regularly go to Spain for vacation and visit the convivium Costa Brava. He tells, it is a

really engaged SF convivium. They are proud to offer typical regional products. Not just wine, but also certain kinds of vegetables. They feel a little bit like Baden-Württemberger, less as Spanish, but they are all Spanish, no single German. (original: „wirklich engagierte SF Gemeinde und sind auch stolz drauf, Produkte anzubieten, die halt typisch sind. Also net nur die Weine, sondern auch bestimmte Gemüsearten, die fühlen sich so bisschen als Baden-Württemberger, weniger als Spanier, aber es sind alles Spanier, kein einziger Deutscher“) (Interview SFFR3).

5.3.4. Social learning

Educational work is an important pillar of SF's activities. It takes various forms: food and wine tastings, school gardens, visits to farms and agricultural production sites, children's cooking clubs, conferences, workshops and dinners with producers. The cultivation of the sense of taste and the knowledge about food shall help to do shopping in a critical, conscious way, to make intelligent use of left-overs and to protect food from spoiling through correct processing, conservation and storing.²³ Since 2006 SFFR are conducting events on „good taste“ together with Freiburg's evening school.

An important field of change work for SF is educating children. SF DE has developed a training of the senses especially for children. The course „VollGeschmacksschulung“ (a play on words around the terms „people“, „taste“ and „learning“) has been included into the UNESCO list of sustainable education in 2012. Short exercises attract the children's curiosity, and they get to know their senses by seeing, tasting, hearing, smelling and sensing fresh food. The project „plate instead of bin“ against

²³ https://www.slowfood.de/w/files/pressemitteilungen/071_sfd_teller_statt_tonne_kampagne_gegen_lebensmittelverschwendung.pdf

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wasting food combines giving a theoretical basis of knowledge with hands-on experience of collectively harvesting and eating. The project “healthy diet table and culture” has been run since 2010 together with the Christoph-Sonntag-foundation, introducing pupils in Baden-Württemberg to regional products and to healthy nutrition and consumption.²⁴

When I had asking the interviewees what they have learned, they rather focused on food preparation and cooking methods, on aspects of the quality of food, but only when asking specifically about social aspects, they admitted to also had gain some new insights through the group governance processes. An active member had a software firm with employees before. Now he is voluntarily working for SF and says he had to learn how to motivate people, because before, he could just guide people – they were working for him for money. Now he rather has to invite people who work voluntarily. On the other hand, they are more ready to really get engaged and take over responsibility (Interview SFFR 5).

Also through the mentioned case of misconducting with finances of the convivium, one interviewee mentioned to have learned:

“about new aspects of being human... one is wondering again and again, what kind of people exist. They come to engage in an association with idealistic aims, but they follow materialistic interests, behave really unfair and leave others out in the rain. One should better select the people and have a closer look with whom to work with.” (original: „neue Seiten des Menschseins ... man wundert sich immer wieder, was es für Leute gibt, die zu nem Verein antreten, der eigentlich ideelle Ziele hat und dann nur materielle Ziele und Interessen verfolgen und sich wirklich unfair benehmen und andere im Regen stehen lassen. Man sollte sich seine Leute besser aussuchen und genauer hinzugucken, mit wem man zusammenarbeitet“ (Interview SFFR 3).

5.3.5. Monitoring and evaluation

There is no monitoring or evaluation of SFFR’s activities besides an informal reflection of past events in the context of members’ and board meetings.

5.3.6. Agency in (Transformative) Social Innovation

(For an extended explanation of the processes and phenomena covered in this chapter, please read the analysis of SF’s international network first)

5.3.4. Motivations and shared goals

As to the background of the members of SFFR we can mainly observe two different profiles. A small number of members are professionally involved in food production or food marketing such as vine production or gastronomy. Within SFFR they tend to host events, organize products and provide professional information, atmosphere and equipment. The majority of SFFR’s members are getting

²⁴ https://www.slowfood.de/w/files/presse2013/05_sfd_geschmacksbildung_1412.pdf

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involved at retirement age, because then, they have the necessary time, experience and resources. These members tend to care for the overall organization and planning of the convivium and initiate projects like Junior Slow Food e.V. The majority of members have a middle-class, wealthy, and socially established background and they are beyond the age of 50. Socializing is another strong motivation to join SFFR. It is remarkable that most of the active members are attending in couples while at the diner events, friends and foreigners share tables according to their own preferences (as observed in event SFFR E1).

The members of SFFR join mainly because they want to elaborate their practice of natural and local nutrition with improved access to affordable products and direct marketing networks. When the radio moderator asked SFFR members on the cooking stage about the profile of a typical member, they surprisingly answered that most of the active members grew up with natural food. Only a very small percentage of members have consciously changed their nutrition habits in result of joining SFFR (event SFFR E4).

SFFR openly invites anyone to participate in the cooking events by registering on the website. The activists emphasize that one can just participate in the events without the long term commitment of becoming a member. They seem to be cautious about committing people and asking for financial contributions.

Concerning shared goals, SFFR clearly subscribes to the goals and values adopted by SF international as explained before. When asking about which political events SFFR is relating to, the interviewee answered modestly, that he would not be a „Weltverbesserer“ (do-gooder) (Interview SFFR 3). They rather consider themselves as broad movement that connects ‘normal people’ and engaged food producers. Natural and hand grown food is highly appreciated. A number of SFFR activists grow some food in their own gardens and share it with the other SF members in private cooking events. Nevertheless, one of the couples in SFFR thinks that there is too much meat consumption in SFFR and in SF in general (Interview SFFR 3). Vegetarianism or other diets for the sake of ecology and radical animal welfare are discussed in SF and SFFR but still represent a minority.

5.3.5. Empowerment processes observed within the local convivium of SF Freiburg

Concerning its socio-psychological profile the convivium of SFFR consists of well-established people without a need for showing off or causing extroverted political effects. They rather have the financial means, the social and financial capital and the time to create their private version of natural food. This is shared within the network of SF in events, activities with supporters and access to natural products. Therefore, we cannot really say that single members are particularly proud of their personal contribution or of specific activities for gaining political influence. Slow Food members basically have the opportunity to **learn and develop new competences and skills to improve their private life quality and enjoyment around food.**

Consumer and producer empowerment

A stronger focus is on **empowering food producers as supporters of SF**. Being part of this network with access to a specific target group of consumers is highly attractive to many food producers. Especially small firms, restaurants and farmers are motivated to collaborate with SFFR in the context

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of food consumption events. This collaboration seems to generate a mutual empowerment. Both sides can plan and create the events in advance. The value of consuming natural food are the common goal, the producer is acknowledged and can actively communicate his efforts in producing natural food while the consumers feels empowered by being informed about – and by actually consuming the food.

Leadership and personal empowerment

SFFR has gone through a transformation from a one leader governance practice to a decentralized system of sharing power and resources expressed with an organizational frame of ten resorts. In the early phase, SFFR was founded and led by one person till 2006. This central, engaged convivial leader organized everything. He was the driving force but also hindered engagement of others. In this phase the group was small and homogeneous till a maximum of 30-50 people (Interview SFFR5). Slowly the group started to grow; new members came in, and wanted to become active. The interviewed person told how the leader at this time tried to keep the people “under one hut” (Interview SFFR 5). It was difficult and unpleasant for new people; still the group was growing because of idealistic persons. In 2006, the leader was suspended from its leading role – finally because of inappropriate use of finances and wine and **the case even went to court** (interview SFFR 3, 5).

Fortunately, this situation did not cause any substantial loss of members or supporters. In contrast, it triggered a new feeling of community (Interview SFFR3) and a new freedom to engage (Interview SFFR5) amongst members after a change within the management of SFFR has been effected. Some members started to be engaged in administrative tasks and a new board could be elected. Also the structure has been completely changed, from a strong aggregation of activities and responsibility clustered around the founding leader person towards a structure of about ten resorts each lead by a department manager (see chapter internal governance). On the other hand, when the crises had been overcome, the dynamics inside the group lead to a diversification. In result, internal differences became more visible. “The revolution eats its children” was how one of the interviewees commented this process (Interview SFFR4).

Empowerment between the local convivium and the German national SF network

The local convivia in Germany do not maintain their own legal structures. “We are rather a satellite of SF Germany” (Interview SFFR 3). The advantages and disadvantages of this decision have been discussed in previous chapters. However, with regard to empowerment, the local convivium of SFFR experiences some limitations in creativity due to it. The foundation of the independent Junior Slow Mobile Association Freiburg is last but not least a result of the fact that SFFR cannot receive and decide on the donations it receives. Some of the local convivia in Germany and SF international want to see a change in the situation of Germany. SFFR activists – in collaboration with SF Germany – are working towards a transformation of the single convivia into units with legal capacities, preferably associations, because SFFR – and numerous other convivia – already apply a classical structure of the German ‘Verein’ with editorial board, financial manager and members assembly (Interview SFFR3).

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5.3.6. Empowerment processes through external governance and networking activity

„While in the past, one had to struggle to get Slow Food into the media, we have the opposite situation now. For example Radio Lora came to the Munich Convivium offering them broadcasting time in the context of their series “body and mind.”²⁵

As explained before, the local convivia in Germany are less active in gaining political influence, because SF Germany receives a percentage of the membership fees for doing campaigning work on the national level. Therefore, the SF convivium in Freiburg has a relatively modest approach with regard to their activities. Firstly, the activists of SFFR do not follow an aggressive publicity strategy. They rather build on personal networks and contacts, continually extended at their small scale events based on gourmet cooking and eating. This approach of organization creates synergies between socializing, enjoyment of gourmet products, knowledge, as well as affordable prices for the consumers and easy to organize events for hosts. Second, SF is present at large events such as the annual ‘Plaza Culinaria’ fair in Freiburg, in order to reach a broader audience. Thirdly, they intend to reach children with a trailer, travelling to elementary schools.

Another convivium in the capital of one of the German federal states has received great access to private funding because the wife of the major is an active member in this convivium (Interview SFFR 5). This example shows that SF can make a difference through personal influence on a high political level.

SFFR does not explicitly work on its public reputation. Interviewee 3 tells about having a large PR contact list, but the resonance is low. When the Junior Slow Mobile was growing, SFFR PR manager invested a bit more of energy to get an article published and it resulted in a small article in a newspaper of a small town in Breisgau.

5.3.7. Gaining influence through setting frames and rules

SFFR does not explicitly intend to act against established ways of doing things. They rather use public arenas in the field of their expertise like the ‘Plaza Culinaria’ fair and get actively involved in traditional contexts by doing rather than by just proclaiming their values. At the ‘Plaza Culinaria’, they host the largest stand, rent it to their supporters and dictate clear rules on which food and wine is allowed to be presented and served. In a way they set values in a field, introduce their way of doing things, and invite others to follow them.

5.3.8. Gaining influence through social networking

Networking between producers and consumers

SFFR re-frames the borders between the private consuming sector and the food producing sector by making connections between the producers and consumers in the already mentioned ways of small scale cooking events and restaurant diner educational events. Therefore, SFFR acts as an

²⁵ <https://www.slowfood.de/publikationen/radio/>

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advertiser for local producers. Furthermore it is especially attractive for restaurants, because SF books in advance with a larger group of people.

Networking between different milieus

SFFR creates new frames that link different social strata of three kinds: First, private and personal with public contexts, second, elderly, more experienced with younger people and third, gourmet high quality events with affordable learning events for 'ordinary people. Networking between these milieus attracts people because it offers the opportunity to learn new aspects of food production, to improve one's knowledge and the opportunity to participate in an affordable gourmet menu.

Active participation in the large scale event during the annual 'Plaza Culinaria' consumption fair, where SFFR has been present from the very beginning ten years ago is persistently happening. SFFR uses established structures of food consumption and trade to transport its values.

Financing

SFFR can ask SF Germany for a limited amount of financial support per year for specific actions which have to be justified. Furthermore, SFFR can raise donations at the 'Plaza Culinaria' fair with its Vinothek, because the activists serve on a voluntary base, and the vine producers donate their vines, which can thus be sold at a small price. The donations are given to the Junior Slow Mobile project.

5.4. Summary, synthesis, conclusion of SF Freiburg

Slow Food Freiburg (SFFR) is a rather silent initiative in terms of political publicity. It works with a range of private, semi-public and public events to put its aims into action. Snail tables, cycling tours to wine producers, cooking events on a private base or in collaboration with the evening school – SFFR has developed into a diverse convivium with ten resorts each lead by a department manager. The active members have learned how to diversely manage a regional group based on voluntary engagement in combination with professional food producers. Based on a leger attitude and decades of life experience, the well-educated activists – the majority is beyond the fifties – have time since their retirement.

In terms of social innovation and societal transformation, I observed that SF has found creative ways to implement its philosophy. It creates the logo for supporters who share its vision. The supporters ideally benefit in terms of customers. For larger mainstream events – in the case of SFFR the Plaza Culinaria fair – SF is the largest exhibitor setting the rules for its 900sqm because of renting out this space for producers with natural products. Hence, SF has created a space inside the rules of the conventional market system to transport not only its values, but its philosophy with the help of manifested producers and products, which on the other hand are supported by SFFR.

With a somewhat critical and even cynical tone, the regional convivium feels like satellites of almighty slow food Germany. An active member of SFFR notes:

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"I always say we are the fund-raisers of SF DE."

Original: "Ich sage immer wir sind die Geldbeschaffer von SF DE".

Someone else comments:

"It's like in the Catholic Church: there is the Pope and the priests ruling everything, while the ordinary members have no idea what happens in the upper echelons. "

Original: Das ist wie in der Kirche: da ist der Papst und der Pfarrer, die machen was, während die Mitglieder da unten gar nicht wissen, was oben läuft." (Interview SFFR 4)

SFFR members understand and also do want to support the work of the national and international SF organizations. But they would also like to be able to keep a larger share of the financial resources they acquire from their members and supporters for their own work (Interview SFFR4).

Concerning the internal governance, SF is a global organization with a limited democratic participation of the local convivia. The main work of campaigns is done by the international and the national offices, funded by the local convivia and their supporters. The local convivia rather consider themselves as fund-raisers of the national and international SF work, doing the political campaign work of changing laws and protecting the quality of food. This work division seems to be a clever concept for connecting the economy in form of local small scale businesses – food production – as well as the national and international politics like the international trading law concept of TTIP to the values and philosophy of SF.

The activities by SFFR at the Plaza Culinaria fair show the professional presentation at a large event of experts on food. While enjoying the social network SF members are using established and professional structures to transport their values and practices.

In terms of learning, SFFR emphasizes enjoyment and experience as central factors. They try to organize events that combine gourmet meal and wine tasting at a beautiful place with an interesting and entertaining presentation about a related topic on food or food production. Nevertheless, interviewees say, that they hardly re-educate people towards natural food. Most members are already practicing 'Slow Food' since childhood. They emphasize how difficult it is to even re-educate children. Nevertheless, they have invested all their incomes from 2014 and 2015 to the Junior Slow Mobile, earned at the 'Plaza Culinaria' fair while serving wine. According to SFFR, change can only happen slowly and have to start with children and with education. It seems that SFFR remains true to the principles of Slow Food, also in their transition work.

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6. Synthesis

6.3. Emergence of Social innovation (SI).

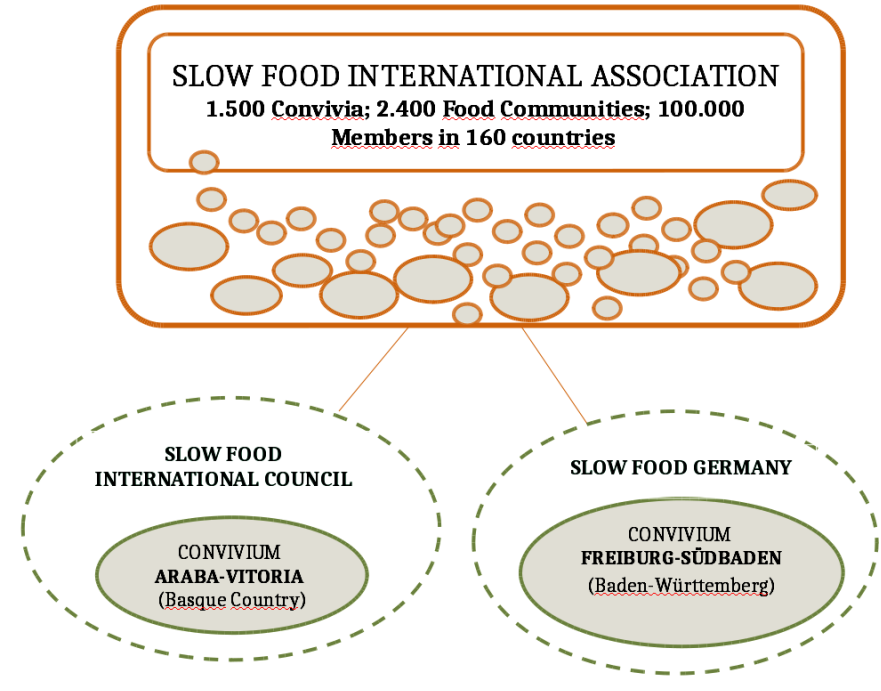
Foundation, philosophy and shared goals of the Slow Food movement

The slow food movement has contributed in a significant way to discourses that propose new sustainable lifestyles and slow consumption as an alternative to the “hyperconsumption” practices associated with capitalism and globalized economic system (Hall, 2012). Slow Food was born in Italy in 1986, under the leadership of the Italian journalist and social activist Carlo Petrini, “after the symbolic protests to the opening of the first McDonald’s in Rome, in the historic Piazza de Spagne”. The Italian organization aimed to “to support and defend good food, gastronomic pleasure and a slow pace of life. It then broadened its sights to embrace the quality of life, local and global sustainability development and biodiversity conservation” (Irving & Ceriani, 2013). In 1989, turn out an international movement since the constitution of the Slow Food International Association in Paris, with a hundred of food activists -experts, journalists, chefs- mainly from European countries, who were called to endorse the “Slow Food Manifesto”, as one of the persons involved in the first Slow Food meeting explains: “There were people with strong idealism and militancy. Left-wing politic oriented and others leaders ...Of course, Carlo Petrini is an agitator, but behind him were the members of the Archivola association, which had been working on these issues for a long time. They say that Slow Food was born against McDonalds, that's not true, maybe it is symbolic, but those people had been working together before, they had a shared vision” (quote: SFI_07). Connections and a common identity start before that significant moment.

The Slow Food movement is headquartered in Bra (Piedmont, Italy) and has presence in 160 countries in the world through their 1.500 convivia (local initiatives) that gather 100.000 members and 1.000.000 supporters. The Slow Food International Association also leads several national associations (Italy, Germany, Switzerland, USA, Japan, Netherlands, Brazil, Kenya and South Korea) and two Slow Food International Foundations: The Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity and the Terra Madre Foundation. Slow Food created in 2004 their own university in Bra (Italy), the University of Gastronomic Sciences (UNISG). Despite the global relevance of the international organization, Slow Food is presented as a grassroots movement grounded on the local organizations (“convivia”) that develop their own work with autonomy and creativity, depending on the preferences of their active members. The extent of their social impact depends on the ability of each convivium to gain social influence in the local or regional context, through networking relations and creating strategic alliances with local actors. After 30 years of history, Slow Food turned into a relevant political actor or, at least, a reliable interlocutor to international organizations, national governments and local administrations.

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Figure 1: *spatial representation of Slow Food Movement: Slow Food International Association and the two European case-studies analysed in this report.*

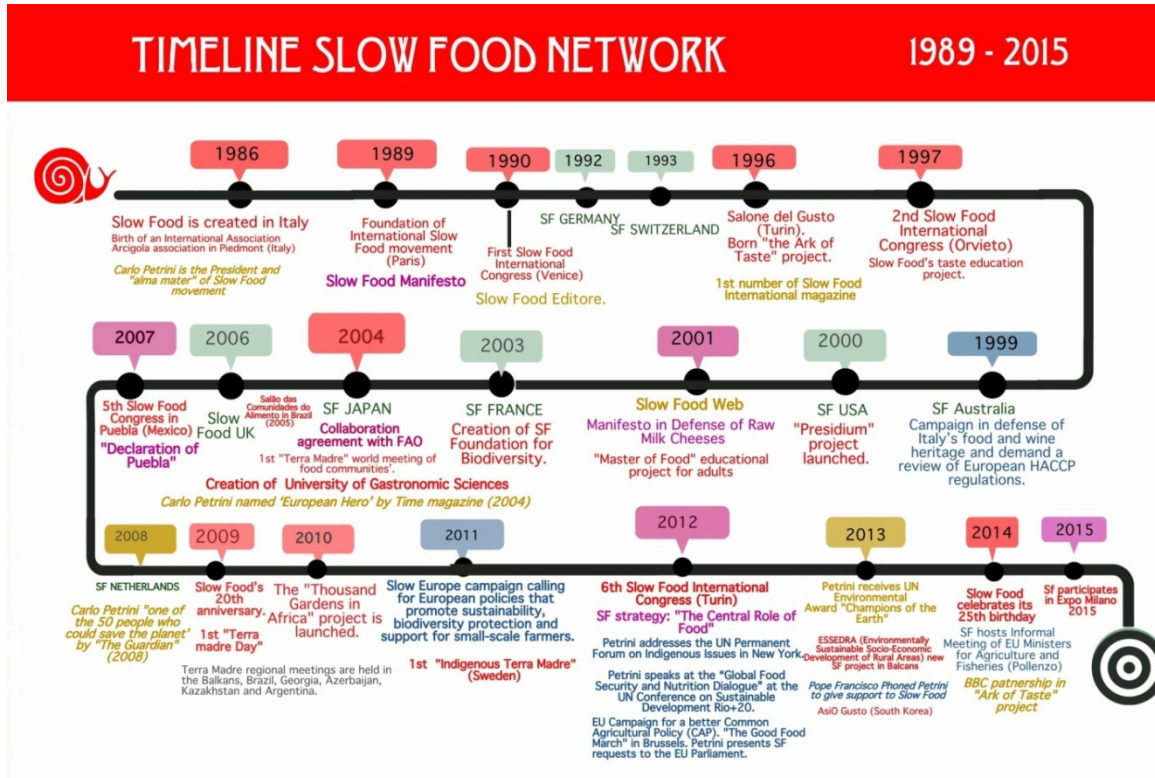


Slow Food's Time-line

The following timeline tries to cover the events and other information required in the methodological guidelines. At the same time, we consider the characteristics and idiosyncrasy of the international network. Considering the almost 30 years of history of the Slow Food movement, we select the most relevant events, milestones or international projects that the SF Network has achieved and how they have expanded from Italy to Europe, Australia, America or Asia (*Nowadays, they have widely expanded all over the world and it is not possible to indicate here the 160 countries in which they work*). Secondly, we indicate the public documents that Slow Food have produced (indicating elements of the Slow Food “narratives of change”) from the very beginning (“Manifesto, 1989) until the most recent (“The Central Role of Food”, 2012), that coincide with the dates of the Slow Food international conferences. Related to this, we highlight the increase of their political influence and political (lobby) campaigns, providing some examples of institutions and political actors that they work with (interventions in UN, EU Parliament, the support of the Pope).

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Figure 2: time line of Slow Food Movement.



Activities and projects developed by the Slow Food International Association

Slow Food pursues the global transformation of the current food system, including production, distribution and consumption dimensions. According to the Slow Food statutes, the organization works in the international context aiming:

- To promote everyone's right to food that is good, clean and fair;
- To defend the right to food sovereignty for all peoples;
- To safeguard biodiversity and the production of traditional foods that is tied to it;
- To contribute to the development of the Terra Madre network;
- To contribute to the development of the international associative network.

In order to build a structured organization able to coordinate all the Slow Food projects and activities, the Slow Food International Association created in 2003 the no-profit Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity (<http://www.fondazioneSlowfood.com>). This Foundation (financially supported by several public institutions and a number of private companies) leads the most relevant activities developed by the movement: "Presidia" (supporting groups of small-scale producers to sustain quality food productions at risk of extinction), "The Ark of Taste" (Online catalogue of endangered traditional foods), "A Thousand gardens in Africa" (planned to create 10,000 food

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gardens in African local communities), the “[Chefs’ Alliance and Earth Markets](#)” (international network of farmers’ markets). Slow Food invests great effort in educating population children in food and healthy eating, promoting school gardens and educative projects in Europe and North America ([Edible schoolyard projects](#)). Probably, the most well-known activity managed by Slow Food is the “**Terra Madre event**”, organized in Italy every two years with the aim of actively supporting “small-scale, sustainable, local economies”. Terra Madre was born as an inspiring event that gathers “thousands of food producers, food communities, cooks, academics and young people from 160 countries” (Slow food Companion, 2014) and generates synergies and future projects in other areas of the world. For this purpose, Slow Food has developed this idea in smaller context and spaces, organizing national and regional meetings in collaboration with public institutions.

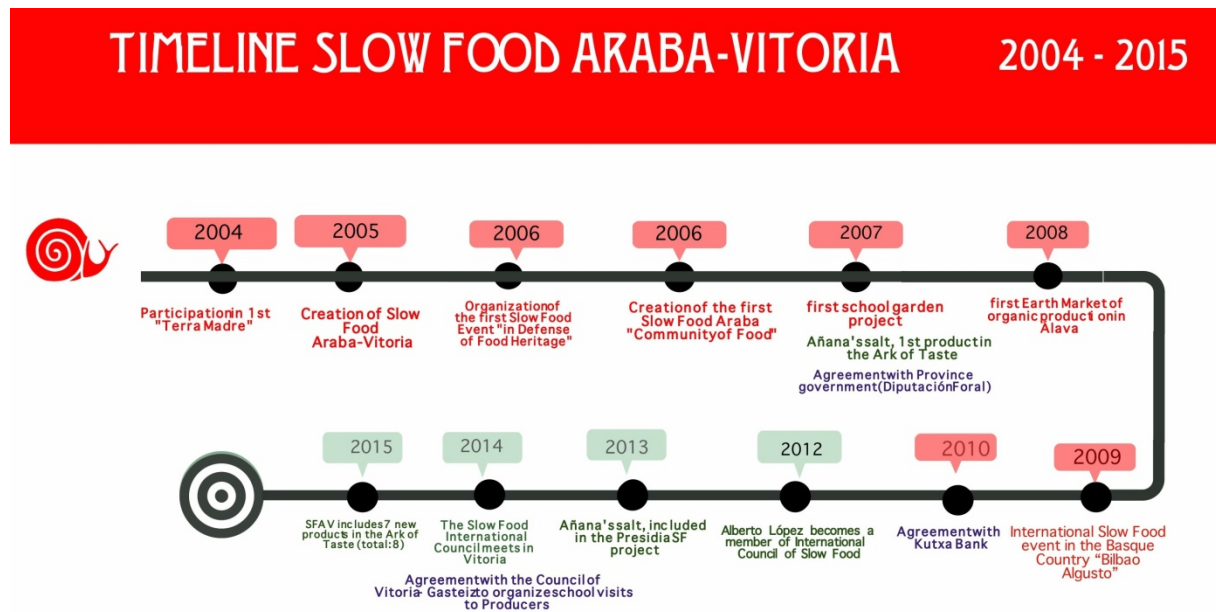
Convivium “Slow Food Araba-Vitoria”

The Spanish case-study, **the Convivium “Slow Food Araba-Vitoria”** was created in January 2005, by a small group of people who attended the first edition of Terra Madre (October, 2004) and, fascinated with the experience, decided to introduce the Slow Food movement in Arabá s province. Under the key leadership of Alberto López, the President of the local convivium, slow food pioneers invited other local food activists and culinary experts to join Slow Food and the local initiative gained certain reputation through food taste events and workshops : *“we even have engaged politicians from local and regional administrations and different parties, trade unions, cultural associations, because Slow Food has the ability to reach people from all the sectors of the Araba’s society, we can do that because everybody care food”* (quote: SFAV_01). In 2016 the convivium has almost 300 members, which is considered an optimum number, so they are not interested in increasing “the big family” that Slow Food Araba-Vitoria claims to be. The convivium leader, Alberto López, has been member of the Slow Food International Board since 2012 (in representation of the *Iberian Peninsula*). This local case-study highlights the importance of organizing international events or the networking activities in order to attract new associates, new members and supporters, who create new convivia worldwide.

“Slow Food Araba-Vitoria”, develops an intense activity (over 70 activities in 2015) in the city of Vitoria and in the Araba province that are mostly related with 1) the promotion of local organic products (taste workshops, trips to meet local producers); 2) supporting and counselling local organic producers and food communities as well as the local government in healthy food projects 3) children -and adult- taste education; 4) catalogue of foods at risk of disappearing that are a part of the Araba’s culture. Slow Food Araba-Vitoria enhances, *through their activities*, new ways of knowing, framing, doing and relating. The convivium promotes a change in food system based on trust relations between food producers and consumers (e.g. promoting “food communities”, rural and organic markets; edible schoolyards; including local products in “Presidia” and “Ark of Taste” projects). Slow Food posits a change in market relations, from competition to collaboration and sharing knowledge which also involves being proud of the local gastronomy and commitment with rural development.

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Figure 3: time line of the convivium Slow Food Araba-Vitoria



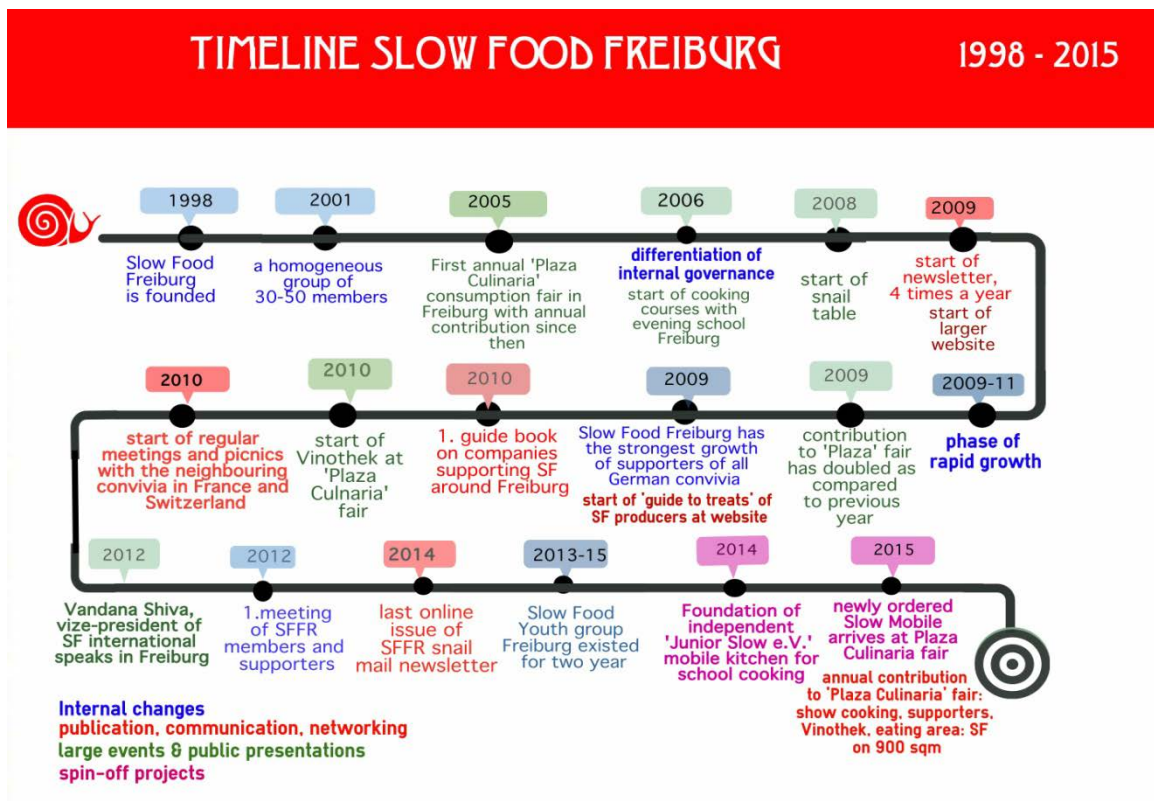
Convivium "Slow Food Freiburg"

The German case, '**Slow Food**' group Freiburg/Südbaden (SFFR) was founded in 1997 in the city of Freiburg and it is one of the first and larger convivia in Germany. The Freiburg convivium covers the far South West of the German federal state of Baden-Württemberg, close to the Swiss and French borders. Besides the city of Freiburg with its 220.000 inhabitants, it also includes a unique diverse agricultural structure with vineyards and fruit growing areas, and traditional livestock farming. The slow food convivium Freiburg (SFFR) was opened in 1998 as one of the first convivia in Germany. After the foundation of SFFR the number of paying members has slowly and continuously grown until today, whereas the number of active members has varied over the years. Today SFFR counts with almost 300 paying members (a similar number that the Spanish local initiative studied in this research). Slow Food Germany has been established in 1992 as the first national SF NGO after Italy where Slow Food had started. By the end of 2014 the German association had over 13.000 members in about 80 convivia, not including the young activists of the Slow Food Youth Network. Freiburg convivium maintains direct relations with the national structure due to the fact that one of their leaders is one of the five managing board members of SF Germany. The kind of activities undertaken has changed over the years, depending on the preferences of particular active members. The organizational structures of the convivium were changed in the different phases over the years. Since 2013 to 2015 some young members formed the informal subgroup of "Slow Food Youth Freiburg" (the group was shut down in Spring 2015 due to their leader left the convivium for private reasons).

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'Slow Food' Freiburg/Südbaden (SFFR) is more focused on organizing interesting joyful events mirroring the philosophy of SF, to be attractive to members and new people. The events of SFFR are organized on the level of private cooking, diner events in restaurants, advertisement at the Plaza Culinaria or education for school kids and adults. Socializing events, like a gourmet meal and wine tasting, is generally combined with an interesting and entertaining presentation about food or food production. The convivium intends to create new frames and situations that link different social strata: First, private and personal with public contexts, second, elder, more experienced with younger people and third, gourmet high quality events with affordable learning events for 'ordinary' people. These small scale events invite people to socialize, slow down, and enjoy good food and meaningful conversations. The events can be private like the 'cooking regulars' table' – either at private homes of SFFR members or semi-public like the potato menu in a restaurant or at a farm, where registration is required. Cooking events are regularly held and announced publicly on the website and Slow Food members pay a reduced rate.

Figure 4: time line of the convivium Slow Food Freiburg



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6.4. TSI dynamics

Discourses and narratives of change

The slow philosophy has transcended the food area to propose sustainable lifestyles and a new food system based on a change of relations between consumers and small local food producers. Their aims, values and activities have dramatically evolved over time, attending new societal needs and demands becoming a modern social movement also called “eco-gastronomy” movement. Slow Food leaders define their model as “a virtuous globalization that guarantee the right to food” grounded on a radical change of the food system as well as the existing relations between consumers (also called “co-producers”) and food producers. Slow Food embraces the “participatory democracy discourse” in terms that local economies fully entitle people to be part of an empowered community because “the freedom to choose how to eat is also means existential sovereignty” (Slow Food, 2012). Slow Food claims “the right to pleasure of food”, enhancing human relations, conviviality with family and friends. Besides, we observe that certain global discourses have penetrated deeply into the Convivium Slow Food Araba-Vitoria in terms of restoring pride and dignity to food producers. Practitioners share a common vision of current economic system and describe the western societies and capitalist system as imperfect, unfair and unequal, proposing economic degrowth as the solution to global issues.

Societal changes in terms of events, societal framework conditions and discourses that enable or inhibit Slow Food impact

Slow Food leaders have perceived, in the last ten years, a positive change in societal discourses especially related to the increasing awareness in health issues and the access to quality food that even politicians care. Paolo di Croce, the General Secretary of the international association refers to a global social change, especially in the United States, where the fast food philosophy was born. The relationship between health, food and environment has been recently understood by unless a minority of people, but consistent minorities are able to change the general opinion. Practitioners around the world frequently mentioned that “having a baby” seems to be a “significant moment” to people who had never cared before of healthy and food issues and they become a critical consumer. Especially in Spain, interviewees coincide in observing positive tendencies in consumption habits as well as a desire to “return to the nature” that brings the rejuvenation of agricultural exploitations – more environmental friendly- and the revival of local food markets where slow food and organic products are sold.

Slow Food is a social movement that seeks a strong influence in agricultural policies and whose members are susceptible by political decisions regarding food production and distribution policies. Changes in agricultural conditions might inhibit the activity and social impact of the Slow Food movement, such as the Agriculture European Union's politics, that has seen by some practitioners “as one of the main constrictors to local and small-scale organic production” (quote: SFAV_08). For this reason, Slow Food has maintained strong positions against certain international food security

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policies which requirements jeopardized the financial sustainability of small-producers. Slow Food launched several campaigns against GMOs in Europe and currently they are involved in a European platform against the content of the TTIP EU-USA commercial agreement.

Potential impact of the Slow Food movement.

Slow Food practitioners are firmly confident about their capacity to contribute to social, political and systemic change, regarding food production and consumption but also in regards to local and rural development, environmental protection and environmental education. Despite being a minority, individual consumption decisions have direct influence in local context and environment: *“we are a minority, but we have the ability to influence, to change things gradually, through food education activities that change individual consumption decisions”* (quote: SFAV_02). Slow Food has been able to influence local and regional public policies, enhancing the local and sustainable development of rural communities and the preservation of the local cultures and biodiversity. The success of the Slow Food intervention models –like the “Ark of Taste”, “Presidia”, “slow food communities” have been endorsed by international actors such as the FAO or leaders like the Pope Francis. Their political, economic and educative dimension places them in an exceptional intermediary role to influence the political, normative and economic agendas in the international and regional arenas, arising public discourses regarding “hot topics” like meat consumption and creating social platforms for political influence. Besides, Carlo Petrini claims that they have “the moral authority” (Petrini in Le Monde, 2005) to impulse a more ‘civilized’ economy that, actually, *“has limited persuasive power in comparison to large corporations and food industry lobbies”* (quote: SFI_02).

Slow Food posits a change in market relations, from competition to collaboration and sharing knowledge: “Of course we help each other. I have no problem to help someone, to show them how we did. I wish we would be more organized and be able to supply all local demand. I was delighted to explain everybody who asked for help” (Quote: SFAV_10). The “food communities”, rural and organic markets enable face-to-face contact with producers which build trust and permanent relations between them.

Slow Food impulses alternative commercial relations to the current food system. Slow Food has become a prescriber “that influences in public opinions and purchasing decisions. *The change is slow but evident”* (quote: SFAV_08). The movement has enhanced thousands of “food communities” worldwide that *“break the cycle of wholesale, do not competing with the big brands but generate consumer demand of good local products. Creating short marketing circuits that enhance different and direct relationships between consumer and producer. It also involves innovation in product sales “and “stable buy commitments”* (quote: SFAV_07).

Slow Food enhances local and sustainable development of rural communities, which relates to the preservation of culture and biodiversity. The social and economic impact of slow food initiatives could be observed in the local context, when the researchers visited the locality of Añana and interviewed local leaders and the Mayor. People acknowledge the role of Slow Food network in the sustainability of the valley and in the recovering of the traditional salt production as we next quote illustrates: *“The Salt Valley of Añana is one of the most spectacular and best-preserved saline in the*

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world. We (the owners) have invested enormous effort to recover this saline and we decided to create a no-profit foundation to enable the gradual recovery of this hand-produced salt. We aim to recover this unique landscape and providing a dignified way of living for local community (...) The support of Slow Food was significance, it really mattered. Thanks to Slow Food our salt has the acknowledgment of the international community. The endorsement of Slow Food is essential to guarantee the sustainability of our saline" (quote: SFAV_05).

Local consumption also involves changes in food demanding, social lifestyles and relations. Eating is a pleasure experience, that -in all south Europe- relates to tradition, family and cultural roots: "Our proposals claim the flavours, the cuisine of our grandmothers, patience and a taste for food" (López, 2006). *"We are missing the pause, time for relaxation, to talk things quietly. It is unusual nowadays, but it is important. We keep it here, in the Basque Country, thanks to the "gastronomic societies". In Alava there are plenty of them (...) I like quiet. Enjoy a little chat. We're talking about things that are ancient but we are gradually returning" (quote: SFAV_03).*

Slow Food has become a relevant actor in the international and local context. The network has developed numerous projects (financially supported by the national governments) in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Chile, South Korea, Africa, Europe, but also to counselling them in the development of public policies. In 2012, Slow Food's President talked at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (New York) and at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20 (Brazil). Slow Food has received also the acknowledgement of the United Nations Environment Programme that in 2013 named Carlo Petrini Co-Winner of the "Champion of the Earth Award for Inspiration and Action". The FAO-Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations- officially recognized Slow Food as a non-profit organization in 2004, establishing several collaboration agreements to promote equitable inclusive food systems. The European Commission, considers Slow Food as being the biggest membership based organisation in the world and therefore most welcome in policy debates (e.g. in the CAP reform). This influence has been observed at the local scale in the case of the Basque initiative. Slow Food leaders are called by Vitoria's council to advising in the development of food, tourism or edible garden local projects. Slow food discourse is present in the political sphere: *"For example, in the last local elections (May, 2015) several parties included in their political programs to attend Slow Food demands and support our projects, which means that we are doing a good work here" (quote: SFAV_01).*

6.5. Agency in (T)SI

In this section we summarize conclusions about how agency is constituted and exercised within the Slow Food local initiatives and international network. We have previously argued that agency relies on the capacity for purposive action and the capacity to imagine new ways of being, new relationships and new ways of doing. Also, we take a perspective of agency as fundamentally relational, both in terms of how it is constituted, as well as in its enactment. Relationships and other elements of the contexts, in which individuals and collectives act, can either support or hinder the exercise of agency. We have also proposed that empowerment is best considered as the instrumental subset of agency, in line with Alkire (2005).

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Recent research on self-determination theory (e.g. Ryan & Deci, 2000) has brought substantial empirical support to the existence of three basic psychological needs and the relationship between their fulfilment and wellbeing, on the one hand, and human growth processes (or self-actualization) on the other. Said differently, in the absence of basic need fulfilment, people will display different levels of distress/ill-being and psychological growth processes will be thwarted.

Understanding how agency is constituted in social innovation initiatives requires an account of what motivates the search for societal change and how alternative ways of knowing, doing, framing and organizing are co-produced in movements like Slow Food. It can also explain how they increase or decrease their membership, how successful they are in their replication in different contexts and contribute to explaining the trajectories taken by different social innovation phenomena.

Motivations and shared goals.

A series of motivations and goals could be identified within the Slow Food movement. The researchers could identify in the interviews (in comparison also with a sample of speeches given by relevant spokespersons). A series of motivations that seem to differ according to the profession or role of each practitioner within the initiative (e.g. food producers and chefs align their profession with their values and aim to find like-minded people with similar experiences; educators are more focused on youngest/school population; other food activists are more focused on organic and responsible consumption and local activism):

- A desire to get involved in projects and activities that align better with one's values and genuine interests
- Needing to align one's professional career options with one's own values (making work meaningful)
- A desire for connectedness to like-minded others.
- A wish to contribute to one's community in meaningful ways
- Wanting to preserve local cultural and culinary heritage, thus preserving a sense of local identity.
- Desire to transform relations in the food production system, from alienation, distance and instrumentalization (e.g. of peasants, farmers and food producers) to direct contact, acknowledgement and valuing of each actor in the food system.
- Wish to protect the environment and preserve biodiversity.

Self-determination theory contends that the three basic psychological needs that are universally shared by human beings are: relatedness, competence and autonomy. When these needs are not adequately met by existing systems and contexts, people may actively search for contexts in which better need satisfaction can be achieved. In studying the Slow Food movement, we asked the question of whether participants were actively aiming to shape the initiative in ways that would support such need satisfaction, and if this was the case, through which means they attempted to do so. Our findings indicate that a search for higher autonomy, understood as the need for coherence or alignment between one's values and interests and one's actions, is definitely a motivating factor for Slow Food members. In the words of one interviewee: *"there are people working in a bank or the*

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government in their everyday lives, but they care about these issues and want to do something, and then begin to organize a convivium, not only as part of Slow Food" (quote: SFI_01). The international character of the network and its work in bringing together different local manifestations through events and publications contribute to the realization that a common sensibility connects them to thousands of others around the world. Inspiration for autonomous living is drawn from such connections, and they also constitute a facilitating context for enacting a greater degree of autonomy. Slow Food gathers people from a diversity of origins, motivations and background, which enables the creation of "communities of interest" inside the network ("Chef's alliance", Indigenous Network, SF Youth network). Activities and events organized by the network also provide the very practical context of autonomous action, by creating an alternative market that sustains the livelihoods of farmers and food producers that endorse values characterizing the Slow Food Movement. German practitioners consider that being part of this network with access to a specific target group of consumers is highly attractive to many food producers.

A desire to connect with like-minded others, "*people who fight for the same things, the same rights, we share common values" (quote: SFAV_03),* as well as the positive effects such connections have on enhancing a sense of purpose, on building resilience for overcoming obstacles and on facilitating some of the tools necessary for transformative change to occur, are mentioned frequently by Slow Food members. The local dimension of connectedness contributes to an enhanced sense of belonging to a local community and sharing of a common identity, and is enacted through efforts to preserve traditional products, habitats and ways of producing food, at the core of Slow Food principles. Beyond creating different relationships between local food system actors (farmers, food distributors, chefs, consumers etc.), the sense of increased local connectedness includes a historical dimension, which allows for a continuity of a narrative of identity to be maintained, in terms of "*preserving the memory of traditional knowledge and communities, transmitted across generations and between communities is essential if we are to guarantee the right to food" (López, 2015).* Such a continuity of the narrative of identity has been considered a condition of agency: "*People continue with traditional ways of production because they believe that is important to keep doing the things like their grandparents did. For example, Idiazabal Cheese, which is one of the best cheeses in Europe, has also homogenised all varieties, missing other typologies. We are now recovering that lost flavours. We aim to recover cheeses that have other flavours, other ways to do it and they are delicious as well" (quote: SFAV_01).*

A strong sense of local identity is considered both an enabler and a consequence of the local initiative's activity and success (the Spanish case study has been recommended to the researchers by the international network as a very successful example of Slow Food principles and activities): "*Araba is a territory that has its own personality and uniqueness. This sense of uniqueness, the fact that people feel part of a common and unique territory promotes more responsible consumption habits; my professional experience has shown me that those that have stronger nationalist feelings consume more local products" (quote: SFAV_08).*

Besides the local dimension of identity, a sense of connectedness is established with people from other parts of the world sharing the same values, interests and goals. A sense of being part of a global community is mentioned as an element of pride by members. Also, meeting other members of the global community in face-to-face events like the "Terra Madre" is highlighted as a highly emotional

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experience, which enhances a sense of belongingness and a common identity: *“Terra Madre empowers people to return to their territories, they all say that they felt lonely, but after Terra Madre they did no longer feel in that way. Slow Food is an international network that understands what they are facing; people share the same issues and problems that they have to cope with in their countries” (quote: SFI_04).*

A desire to contribute to one’s own community in meaningful ways has also been mentioned as an important motivator for getting involved in efforts to change the food system. Pursuing such a goal can be said to fulfil both the need for autonomy and belongingness, as it refers to becoming a valuable member in a community of equals. Members list a series of different contributions they find meaningful, which include positive environmental and social goals: *“To work for the improvement of environmental and social conditions through the introduction of attractive alternatives of consumption that are related to our culture, are sustainable and local, permit farmers and food producers to be paid fair prices for their work, and offer an alternative to young generations to live in rural areas” (quote: SFAV_01).* It also corresponds to an ethos and logic of personal responsibility, which is a dimension of agency (Alkire, 2007). Slow Food places at the core of its goals a return to the pleasures of sharing and community around the consumption of food, but from a perspective of responsible hedonism, an attitude of assuming responsibility for the effects of what and how we consume over the livelihoods of others and the configuration of the community.

Transformation of relationships in the food system require a change in relationships of power that have placed peasants, farmers and food producers in a position of being instrumentalized, abused by unfair prices and rendered invisible and insignificant by the increase of industrialized and depersonalized chains of production and distribution. By *“placing value on their essential role within the food system” (quote_SFAV_02)*, peasants, farmers and food producers can be supported in recovering a sense of dignity. An interesting fact is that many interviewees have had a personal connection with rural contexts, through the past or childhood experience of having lived in a rural context and/or their parents or grandparents having been food producers, and they experience a sense of pride and positive emotional connection with this past. This is another dimension of intra-personal continuity of an identity narrative, and can also be considered an indicator of a process of integration (of past and present identity, of past experience and current values and interests), a key element of autonomy, like the following interviewee explains: *“We are talking about the connection with the territory, with the space where you grow up. Childhood experiences are the best memories that you have in your life. Going back to your childhood motivates you to work to make better that place” (quote: SFAV_05).*

How does the organization provide a better context for basic need satisfaction and acting on such intrinsic motivations?

The analysis of the international and local manifestations of Slow Food reveal through which processes needs are met and both a sense of agency and empowerment emerge:

- The development of a common identity that relies on a collective vision of change and has both a local and a global dimension (instilling a sense of unity with the local community as a

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culturally-defined entity, with a common history; and with a global community of like-minded others who share a common vision and a set of objectives). Slow food members reproduce the messages of their leaders –sometimes in the same words- legitimizing a positive sense of belonging to a group of like-minded people that voluntarily participate in meaningful projects, of being a member of “something important” (process of identity). The development of the Slow Food’s “terminology” also seems to play a role in the engagement of members.

- The construction of discourses that emphasize a better way of satisfying basic human needs (e.g. the creation of a context that supports positive relationships through relaxed talking, pleasurable experiences, direct relationships and a positive identity) and are emotionally engaging around an ethos of community and a new wellbeing. As some authors have pointed out (Sassatelli & Davolio, 2010; Schneider, 2008; Peace, 2006), Slow Food is an example of the importance that cultural movements give to rhetoric, avoiding confrontation in favour of producing new relationships within a broader community united by a collective identity. The construction of discourses of change that engage with people’s basic psychological needs also reinforces the desire to be a member of a movement that has become a consistent minority “with moral authority” over politics, private companies and public institutions.
- The recovery of the values of hedonism through the slow pace of enjoying food, finding pleasure in the sharing and the connection established (expressed as the value of conviviality), while also including a moral dimension of responsibility towards food system actors, the wider community and the environment are key elements in this discourse. Eating is emphasized as a pleasurable experience like the president of Araba’s convivium describes: *“Our proposals reclaim the flavours, the cuisine of our grandmothers, patience and a taste for food”* (López, 2006). Local manifestations that develop an intense activity and enable spaces for celebration seem to be more successful and participative: *“Close relations and friendship encourages people’s participation in our activities, because they are sharing time with friends and having a good time”* (quote: SFAV_04).
- Emphasizing the role of the organization as a placeholder for attempts to transform utopia into reality – thus counteracting helplessness and encouraging collective efforts and efficacy, which we include as a dimension of empowerment: *“This is a Utopia, but it is also real, and we need more people to have more impact. Two or three leaders are not enough; because the first step is to reinforce the local. Involving people in small projects. It is happening worldwide”* (quote: Paolo di Croce, Vimianzo, 2015). By formulating a coherent discourse of change, the network is presented as a consistent minority with transformative capability through their local and global activity.
- Creating and maintaining an autonomous governance structure that allows autonomy of action and the collective shaping of new social relations, as well as new ways of knowing, doing, organizing and framing.
- Developing significant external networking activity to gain social and political influence.

Empowerment, autonomy and social learning

Empowerment is conceptualized in this study as “the ability to act on behalf of goals that matter to us” (Sen, 1985). Empowerment can be considered as an instrumental aspect of agency and a process through which people gain a sense of influence and direction over circumstances that affect them

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(Haxeltine et al, 2015). The creation of a context in which reflexivity contributes to the reshaping of dominant ways of doing, framing, organizing and knowing is both a result and a key part of processes of agency. Related with this, researchers have studied how Slow Food enhances individual and collective power within the network -and especially within local manifestations- through autonomous governance, distributed leadership and membership connectedness and support.

According to their Statutes, the Slow Food International Association is coordinated by an International Council and steered by an Executive Committee –both committees are elected each four years in the Slow Food Conference and their president is the Italian activist Carlo Petrini (he has been the president since the first congress in 1999). The “International Council” represents 32 geographic areas, that define Slow Food’s political and development strategies. Despite this classical structure, Slow Food define itself as a grassroots organization based on local communities that maintain full autonomy and decision-making capacity, with freedom to have (or not) legal entity. The *convivia* are the smallest manifestations of Slow Food in a territory (a neighbourhood, a city, or a region) and, depending of their relation with the national or international organization, they have a high rate of autonomy in their decision-making processes.

Regarding internal governance, some relevant differences emerge from the comparison between the two local case-studies. The organizational structure of the Araba's convivium follows the classical vertical structure regulated by the statutes of the Slow Food Association (the local convivium has legal entity registered as a Basque non-profit association). The Freiburg *convivia* do not have an own legal structure, which was perceived as beneficial as long as the *convivia* had smaller numbers of members, because they participate and receive permanent support from the German organization. Slow Food has not a national branch in Spain, so the local leaders have strong autonomy to adopt the decisions and conduct the activities decided by their members (although some rules should be followed in order to not compromise their reputation or credibility). On the contrary, the German *convivium* are not allowed to earn money or declare donation receipts and they recognize that these limitations can be inconvenient: *“We are actually not allowed to make money or to spend money; we are rather a satellite of SF Germany” (interview SFFR 3)*. Slow Food local activists –in collaboration with SF Germany– are working towards a transformation of the single *convivia* into units with legal capacities, preferably associations, *“because SFFR – and numerous other convivia – already apply a classical structure of the German ‘Verein’ with editorial board, financial manager and member’s assembly” (interview SFFR3)*.

The network supports a vision of distributed leadership.

Slow Food believe in collective carrying out of the project, non in individual protagonism of individual “leaders”. At the same time, the network has detected intents of capture by certain individuals that try to leader the organization in local or regional structures. Leadership is important but leadership that is enabling of community action, enhancing community activists. This can be observed specially in the Freiburg *convivium*, which has gone through a transformation from a one leader governance practice to a decentralized system of sharing power and resources expressed with an organizational frame of ten resorts. In this case, the strong leadership of their founder lead to internal unpleasant conflicts. This situation triggered a new feeling of community and a new freedom to engage. On the contrary, the president of Slow Food Araba Vitoria plays an essential role within the organization. His extended experience leading groups has been recognized by several interviewees, who describe him as a leader who distributes responsibilities, makes people feel important and who cares the human relations inside the group, ensuring a good atmosphere.

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Slow Food enhances the participation of members through “friendship” and “connectedness”.

The most important resource that has been mentioned by an interviewee is voluntary engagement of active members. The very existence of Slow Food, its program, newsletter, tasting guide, supporter network, all are made possible solely based on voluntary work. For these reasons, the slow food leaders are concerned about the need of group cohesion, engagement and gaining group identity. Some strategies have been highlighted by the interviewees, and observed by the researchers:

- **Flexibility and openness.** Slow Food openly invites anyone to participate in their activities. The interviewees of both local initiatives emphasize that one can just participate in their projects without the long term commitment of becoming a member. They seem to be cautious about committing people and asking for financial contributions. Slow Food Freiburg creates new frames that link different social strata of three kinds: First, private and personal with public contexts, second, elderly, more experienced with younger people and third, gourmet high quality events with affordable learning events for ‘ordinary people. Networking between these milieus attracts people because it offers the opportunity to learn new aspects of food production, to improve one’s knowledge and the opportunity to participate in an affordable gourmet menu. Slow Food Araba-Vitoria does not establish restrictive internal rules that limit the access of new members. On the contrary, the plurality and diversity of their associates are considered strength *“that represents the plurality of Araba’s society”* (quote: SFAV_04).
- **Openness to discussion:** Some differences and internal debates have emerged in the last years, resulting from decisions or positions adopted by the international organization. Differences are solved *“creating spaces for discussion where everybody is able to contribute and that Alberto, our president, transmits to the International Board”* (quote_SFAV_02). Open discussions arise from the interviews, for example, *“some practitioners consider that there is too much meat consumption in Slow Food”* (Interview SFFR_3). Vegetarianism or other diets for the sake of ecology and radical animal welfare are discussed within the organization but still represent a minority.
- **Group cohesion:** Slow Food leaders promote camaraderie and friendship ties. The convivium is a space where they feel accompanied. Meeting people, to spend quality time with friends, to establish contact with new people, associates and friends are very important reasons to belong to Slow Food: *“Slow Food is like a big family, it makes me happy”* (quote: SFAV_03).
- **Support:** Both the local convivium and the international network provide support, knowledge and help to their members thanks to their social influence but also personal relations means a lot for practitioners or food producers that have to deal with problems on their own. Feeling accompanied, and providing a “escape route” for the frustrations of every day. Some interviewees posit that Slow Food enable them to experiment, to propose activities, to spend time with children or friends... which makes them happier: *“This work is very hard... Sometimes you feel tired... But Slow Food is like a sweet in the mouth, it gives support to overcome weakness, lets you do different things, get in touch with farmers, children, colleagues”* (quote: SFAV_02).

Slow Food creates spaces for social learning and knowledge coproduction that become empowering tools for local manifestations:

Knowledge and new information on food is central to the members of Slow Food. First, knowledge and (mutual) education come in the form of personal exchange between members. SF members

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exchange their knowledge about healthy food. Also personal contacts to farmers and large orders make personal contacts of SF members with producers possible. The advantages of direct contacts to producers for SF members include the possibility of taking personal insight into the conditions of production. The second channel of knowledge generation and transfer is SF's events, combining eating, drinking, entertainment, enjoyment and information. The Spanish initiative has developed projects which involve special abilities and skills to educate, communicate better their message in press and to the audience, to convince more people and gain more associates. Especially they mention the use of TICs to disseminate their activities: *"we need to foster the participation of our members in social networks. Facebook and Twitter are the most used social media. We need to strengthen our presence in social networks, where young people related most"* (source: minutes of SFAV annual assembly, 2015).

Empowering outcomes of networking activities like "Terra Madre": Slow Food creates new significant spaces for learning and knowledge coproduction, international events where symbolism and emotions arise as engagement tools. Terra Madre also has an emotional significance, a space where like-minded people meet, people that face the same problems and deal with similar barriers in different places in the world:

"This emotion has been the core of Terra Madre in several editions, but I think that we need to address more content. The emotion is still important but we must also provide real tools for people to build things when they return home. We just organized the young Terra Madre and it was very emotional for youth activist. Now, social networks permit observing how the young people who participated in dialogue between them, discuss things. For future activities, we will focus on providing them concrete tools that they can use in their countries. Using the fact that they are together to do it, not just online" (quote: SFI_04).

Empowerment processes through external governance and networking

Building social platforms and partnerships with local and regional organizations. Slow Food works with a number of ministries and government bodies but also with research institutes, schools, Fair Trade associations, Non-Government Organizations, universities. The network has been creating global alliances, for example, with the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous People. National branches and local chapters try to follow similar strategies (all the interviewees remarked it) motivated by the desire to impulse pro-environmental or local development projects. Public institutions and private foundations -especially in America- support Slow Food activities gaining public support in the last years (in China, South Korea, Brasil). Slow Food also pursuits the creation of platforms for social and political action:

"Networking is key, helps a lot. Slow Food always collaborates with local organizations, cooperatives, associations of producers. When we promote a project in these countries, rarely we work with individuals. There are many approaches to national and international organizations, while more national than international, such as Greenpeace Mexico. It is important to join efforts. When we apply to calls for international projects, we must work together with these organizations; the interesting thing is that we are working permanently with some of them. We try to create Latin American networks, for example, we formed the "platform for the regional biodiversity" in order to work together in these territories. In some

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cases, we develop projects with the same financier, the Ford Foundation, and the same partner, RIMISP, the Latin American Centre for Rural Development” (quote: SFI_04).

Slow Food highlights and reinforces their alliances with public institutions, social organizations and few market companies (like *AlceNero* or *Lavazza*) in order to achieve their goals and gain social impact in a global context. Slow Food encourage their local manifestations to collaborate with local and regional public administrations, philanthropic foundations and commercial enterprises - including food-producing businesses- that respect the “guiding principles” of the association (source: “Slow Food Fundraising Guidelines”). Three main aims oriented this strategy: 1) obtaining financial support to their activities; 2) Developing transformative and innovative projects in special areas of interest (like the project “10.000 Gardens in Africa); 3) gaining political influence.

Slow Food develops a “lobby” activity from their liaison office in Brussels or firming collaboration agreements with FAO that enable them to speak in global forums like “Rio+20”: *“Slow Food have created a permanent Liaison Office in Brussels, oriented to develop lobby activity, gaining political influence and also we apply to EU calls to fund several projects” (quote: SFI_02).* However, Slow Food leaders evidence the difficulties to change political decisions and reflect on the necessity to develop new ways of lobbying: *“The officer of the EU Agriculture Commission told us two years ago, before the new agriculture policy (PAC), which is a disaster; he told us that we have to invent a new way of doing Lobby. Do it with grassroots activities, because even the politicians are interested in our work, the word sustainability is always present” (quote: Paolo di Croce, Vimianzo, 2015).*

This political and lobby activity is not so intense in the local context. We have observed that the Spanish initiative has gained an important public reputation in that region, and has certain influence in public policies, as we explained before. On the contrary, the Freiburg convivium has a rather silent and not so proactive political approach and thus does not practice an offensive PR strategy. It rather aims at networking and education, building on personal contacts, which are extended at their small scale events. Campaigns of SF Germany for example have been addressing food waste, GMO food, the TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership). Slow Food Germany is among the organisers of the yearly public gatherings under the label *“We are fed up!”*

Slow Food Freiburg has gained influence through setting frames and rules. SFFR does not explicitly intend to act against established ways of doing things. They rather use public arenas in the field of their expertise like the ‘Plaza Culinaria’ fair and get actively involved in traditional contexts by doing rather than by just proclaiming their values. At the ‘Plaza Culinaria’, they host the largest stand, rent it to their supporters and dictate clear rules on which food and wine is allowed to be presented and served. In a way they set values in a field, introduce their way of doing things, and invite others to follow them.

Strategic alliances with the mass media. Slow Food Association has become more popular and well-known thanks to the mass media impact which is not unintended. Most of the Slow Food pioneers were related to press or radio; they were journalist or gastronomy experts that used their accessibility to media to disseminate the slow food message. Slow Food has created their own publishing company in 1999, investing relevant resources in disseminative printed and audio-visual material. Going further, BBC Channel broadcasts “The Ark of Taste”, a set of documentaries about “the world’s most endangered foods”. In the Basque Country, the regional radio EITB has a 1-hour weekly radio program called “The Slow Route”: *“We need to reach more people, educate them, to communicate. BBC is helping us. Every week, the BBC in England has a TV program about a product of*

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the “Ark of Taste” that can be watched worldwide, in a weekly program. It Is something. We cannot compete in communication and marketing with Monsanto, we have not enough money, but we can do something” (quote: Paolo di Croce, Vimianzo, 2015).

Empowering individuals and communities

Slow Food members experience a sense of personal power when they contribute to one’s community in meaningful ways, if they feel capable to change, in a certain way, the places where they live, helping peasants and food producers to live coherently with their values, especially *“giving back to peasants, farmers and food producers their dignity and acknowledgement, putting in value their essential role within the food system” (quote_SFAV_02)*. They feel satisfied about being useful (*perceived self-efficacy*), to have collaborated in a minimum scale to have achieved the goals, which reinforces their commitment with the organization.

Personal relation and face-to-face communication between producers and consumers (“co-producers”) reinforce that sense of self-efficacy, the perception that one's effort has a direct and immediate positive effect on local community. Local practitioners remark the impact of “organic markets”, “food communities” or large scale events (like the annual ‘*Plaza Culinaria*’ in Freiburg or the “*Feria de Santiago*” in Vitoria) that Slow Food organizes. These activities help peasants, fishers and agricultural workers to create economic linkages with consumers through branding and marketing. Going further, some interviewees claim that Slow Food does small-scale field work that public administrations are not capable to do:

“The Basque government, investing 100 people and millions of euros, has been able to promote only four products with designation of origin. However, small organizations like us have been able to recover endangered species that only few producers conserved, like the Araba’s oil, the txacolí, the araba’s horse. Our colleague, Eduardo Urarte, has reintroduced the Martina’s lettuce, which is also in the Ark of Taste (...). While the Basque Government supports large productions, we aim to recover small productions” (quote: SFAV_01).

Empowerment through the status acquired in the recognition received abroad. Networking experiences give people courage and motivation to continue working in their own localities despite the existing barriers and local and global food system. Food producers are considered “local heroes”- and their being recognized their effort abroad (for example in “*Salone del Gusto*”, “*Slow Cheese*”, “*Slow Fish*”) usually has enormous media impact, which influence in the positive public perception, favouring public institutions support and fundraising. Slow Food’s ability and capacity to engage the public, private and third sector in the collaborative projects has been highlighted by their members and also by the local policy makers and community actors interviewed.

Local food, as part of a regenerative food system, is also about restoring “*a public culture of democracy*” and engaging “in the continual re-creation of identity, memory, and meaning” (Delind, 2011:279). Slow food enhances community empowerment, especially in rural areas (agricultural-based) providing them support and assistance, methodologies that permit them to participate in local projects (the “food communities”, the “Markets of the Earth”), with international acknowledgement (“Ark of Taste”, “Presidia”) as well as global movements (“Terra Madre”). As

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Petrini claims: *“The ‘lower’ classes, the peasant and farmers, who have always been at the bottom of social hierarchies, can also claim a right to pleasure and a legitimate position in the history of gastronomy” (source: Petrini & Montanari, 2014²⁶)*

Finally, these transformative social initiatives can either have the effect of empowering whole communities: giving more control over their own destiny and organization of their food subsistence; giving legitimacy to local identity (which includes history, tradition, language, values) and its traditional products (biodiversity); developing new ways of doing things such as alternative (local) food systems and short market circuits; creating jobs through a market for products; enabling rural slow-life communities and, in the long term, promoting sustainable transitions towards low carbon communities.

²⁶ <http://www.slowfood.com/carlo-petrini-talks-to-massimo-montanari-part-one>

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8. Annex

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B. List of Interviewees

Slow Food International Association

Interviewee	Organisation/Role	Date	Duration of interview	Interviewer
SFI_01	Slow Food I.A. (Bra, Italy), Project Manager	14/10/2015	1:30	Isabel Lema Adina Dumitru
SFI_02	SF UE-Liaison Office (Brussels)	09/10/2015	0:55	Isabel Lema
SFI_03	Slow Food I.A. (Bra, Italy), Project Manager	20/10/2015	1:20	Isabel Lema
SFI_04	Slow Food I.A. (Bra, Italy), Project Manager	20/10/2015	1:20	Isabel Lema
SFI_05	SF USA, member (staff) of SF USA national association	19/10/2015	1:19	Isabel Lema
SFI_06	SF USA, member (staff) of SF USA national association	27/10/2015	1:15	Isabel Lema Adina Dumitru
SFI_07	Pioneer of SFIA	22/10/2015	1:38	Isabel Lema
SF_08	Member of AlceNero	30/11/2015	0:38	Isabel Lema
SF_09	Member of the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems	14/12/2015	0:45	Adina Dumitru Isabel Lema

Slow Food local case study “convivium Araba-Vitoria”

Interviewee	Organisation/Role	Date	Duration	Interviewer
SFAV_01	Pioneer of SF Araba-Vitoria (SFAV)	23/10/2015	2:05	Isabel Lema
SFAV_02	Member of SFAV, Chef, owner of km0 Restaurant	22/10/2015	0:55	Isabel Lema
SFAV_03	Member of SF, journalist and expert in gastronomy	16/10/2015	1:25	Isabel Lema
SFAV_04	Pioneer of SF Araba-Vitoria (SFAV)	23/10/2015	0:30	Isabel Lema
SFAV_05	Member of SFAV involved in one SF Presidia project.	24/10/2015	1:26	Isabel Lema
SFAV_06	Farmer, involved in a “ark of taste” project	24/10/2015	1:37	Isabel Lema
SFAV_07	Member of the Basque Council of organic agriculture and Food	25/10/2015	1:20	Isabel Lema

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SFAV_08	Policy-maker, member of the Agriculture Department of the Diputación Foral de Alava (province government)	23/10/2015	1:13	Isabel Lema
SFAV_09	Mayor (policy-maker) of the town.	24/10/2015	0: 15	Isabel Lema
SFAV_10	Farmer, responsible of a “Slow Food Community”	24/10/2015	0:40	Isabel Lema
SFAV_11	Member of the responsible consumption cooperative “BioAlai”	23/10/2015	1:17	Isabel Lema

Slow Food local case study “convivium Freiburg”

Code [name of the Interviewee]	Function/ Organisation	Date	Duration of interview	Interviewer
SFFR1	board member for "enjoyment"	Oct.7, 2015	40min	IK, telephon call, notes
SFFR2	board member for children, active in SF Junior association: mobil Freiburg	Oct.8, 2015	50min	IK, telephon call, notes
SFFR3	currently press officer, has been financial manager of SFFR, member of SFFR for 12-14years	Oct.12, 2015	63min	IK, rec., transcript
SFFR4	first directorate SFFR, active since 10 years	Oct.19, 2015	35min	IK, after planning meeting, notes
SFFR5	SFFR active member from the beginning, IT manager and managing board of SF Germany	Nov.6, 2015	130 min	IK, rec., transcript
SFFR6	responsible for raising the supporters and organise large events like SFFR at the Plaza Culinaria		1:37	IK, telephon call, notes

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C. List of meetings and events attended

Observant participation conducted by the UDC team: Slow Food International Association (SFI) & Slow Food Araba-Vitoria (SFAV)

No	Event	Date & Time	Location	Reseachers involved
SFI_01	Slow food meeting in Vimianzo. Slow Food activity organized by the International Network in collaboration SF Galicia. The General Secretary of the Slow Food International Association (Paolo di Croce) and one project manager (Valentina Bassanese).	June, 27, 2015, 12 - 18 h	Vimianzo, A Coruña (Galicia)	Isabel Lema-Blanco
SFAV 01	Visit to the Province Administration of Araba (Diputación Foral). Meeting with Eduardo Aguinaco , Head of the Agriculture Department of DF (the regional administration with competences in rural development and agriculture policies).	October, 23, 2015, 12-13:30	Vitoria-Gasteiz, Araba, (Basque Country)	Isabel Lema-Blanco
SFAV 02	Visit to the Slow Food KMO restaurant " La cocina de Plágaro ", meeting with the chef Angel Plágaro and several Slow Food members.	October, 23, 2015, 14:30- 17:00	Vitoria-Gasteiz, Araba, (Basque Country)	Isabel Lema-Blanco
SFAV 03	Visit to the Gastronomic Society "Zapardiel" , where SF was founded. Meeting with some of the pioneers of SFAV, members of the board and some local producers.	October, 23, 2015, 19:00- 23:00	Vitoria-Gasteiz, Araba, (Basque Country)	Isabel Lema-Blanco
SFAV 04	Visit to one traditional exploitation of horses and first food community boosted by SFAV. Meeting with three local producers involved in the SF "Ark of Taste" project.	October, 24, 2015, 9:00- 12:00	Okina, Araba, (Basque Country)	Isabel Lema-Blanco
SFAV 05	Visit to the local market of Vitoria where fresh & organic products are sold by slow food members.	October, 24, 2015, 13:00- 14:30	Vitoria-Gasteiz, Araba, (Basque Country)	Isabel Lema-Blanco
SFAV 06	Visit to the natural space the Salt Valley of Añana meeting with the Major of Añana and the president of the community of owners of the salines.	October, 24, 2015, 13:00- 14:30	Añana, Araba, (Basque Country)	Isabel Lema-Blanco
	Visit to the organic market of Ozaeta, called Lautada Eguna , where Slow Food presented their project, cooked fresh vegetables with children and did a Slow Food Taste Workshop in collaboration with the local producers and the major of Ozaeta.	October, 25, 2015, 09:00- 15:00	Ozaeta, Araba, (Basque Country)	Isabel Lema-Blanco

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Observant participation conducted by BOKU: Slow Food Freiburg

No	Event	Date & Time	Location	researchers involved	Link
local case 2: Slow Food Freiburg (Germany)					
SFFR E1	Potato menu with information on regional potato growing by the farmer	Oct.12, 2015, 18 - 22 h	"Kartoffelhaus" restaurant in Freiburg, SFFR supporter	Iris Kunze	https://www.slowfood.de/slow_food_vor_ort/freiburg/alle_termine/
SFFR E2	Planning evening of SFFR	Oct.19, 2015, 18-22h	"Grüner Baum", restaurant in Freiburg, SFFR supporter	Iris Kunze	https://www.slowfood.de/slow_food_vor_ort/freiburg/alle_termine/
SFFR E3	'Plaza Culinaria' - consumption fair in Freiburg: SF is the largest presenter: Vinothek and slow Food area	Nov.6, 2015, 16 till 22h	Freiburg, Messe location, hall 2	Iris Kunze	http://www.plaza-culinaria.de
SFFRE 4	'Plaza Culinaria' show cooking with Dirk Esser, Mats Johanson and active members of SFFR	Nov. 6, 2015, 16:30 till 17:40	cooking on the cooking stage with Slow Food Freiburg	Iris Kunze	http://www.plaza-culinaria.de
SFFR E5	'Plaza culinaria' - Junior Slow Mobile exhibition	Nov. 6, 2015, 19h	Freiburg, Messe location, hall 4	Iris Kunze	http://www.plaza-culinaria.de