

The producer/consumer ratio in the territory of the Municipality of Tirana. The construction of an AgroHub, a tool for the development of "localized food systems"?

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Summary: In Albania, the last territorial reform of 2014, moving towards greater decentralisation, has given rise to 61 Municipalities by merging the 374 existing administrative units. These municipalities, with their increased population and expanded powers, now manage territories that present both urban problems and issues related to low-density, predominantly agricultural or natural areas. In this new context of territorial governance, agricultural/food policies and mechanisms could become instruments of territorial cohesion based on a recomposing urban/rural relationship.

This contribution deals with the Municipality of Tirana, as an example of a possible reconfiguration of localized food systems, based on the hypothesis of the creation of an "AgroHub", supported by the Municipality of Tirana. In a context where the food supply of the capital is structured around a wholesale market, in a quasi-monopoly situation and through which a large part of the food products consumed in the capital transit, the Municipality wishes to develop other logistical points for the collection and sale of food, favouring agricultural production in its rural territories (dairy products, meat, fruit and vegetables, cereals and legumes).

This AgroHub project has the ambition to be a complementary wholesale market, but also to develop other services and functions to link the rural territory and the urban metropolis by promoting closer links between consumers and producers (marketing, agricultural advice, food courts, training, etc.). This initiative would support existing traditional channels (public fruit and vegetable retail markets, mobile outdoor markets, retail grocery stores with their own supply network, AMAP, ...). By presenting all the issues related to the design and dimensioning of this tool (scope of activities, dimensioning of the work, governance methods, pricing, etc.), this contribution will show how the specific Albanian context has invested a type of mechanism that is very much in vogue today in the European Union with a view to relocating food systems - with combined issues of rural development, peasant agricultural production, territorial cohesion, product quality and consumer/producer linkage.

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