

Food democracy and urban food sharing governance

Vivien Franck and Prof Anna Davies

Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

EURAA-UAA City Futures IV Conference: Creating Just and Sustainable Cities

franckv@tcd.ie

www.sharecity.ie

ERC Grant Agreement No: 646883



Horizon 2020
European Union Funding
for Research & Innovation



Introduction

"The greatest deficit in the food economy is the democratic one"— Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food (2014).

- Lack of democracy around food at the urban scale
- Potential of ICT-mediated urban food sharing to democratise the urban food system

Research questions:

- To what extent are food sharing initiatives actually existing exemplars of food democracy in practice?
- To what extent do regulatory arrangements affect the achievement of their food democracy goals?



Food democracy

Dimensions of food democracy	Definitions of food democracy	Key sources
Right to food	“ eat adequately, affordably, safely, humanely, and in ways one considers civil and culturally appropriate.”	Lang, 1999, p.218
Participation & engagement	“ Thus food democratizing efforts create spaces where producers and consumers “can act as citizens” ”	Johnston et al., 2009, pp.514–515
Reorienting control	“ ... ordinary people getting together to establish rules that encourage safeguarding the soil, water and ecosystems that, in the end, we all depend on.”	Levkoe, 2006
Sustainability	“ ... is a concept that describes systems of food production that produce nutritious, safe food in ways that are environmentally sustainable and that provide fair access to land and fair wages to those who labour in the food system.”	Hassanein, 2008



Food sharing initiatives and food democracy

Initiative identifier	Initiative activities	Initiative goals	Relation to dimensions of food democracy
Redistribution 1, Berlin 	A not-for-profit food waste initiative that diverts edible food from disposal.	“ We want to make food unconditionally accessible to all people and thereby promote respect for them. ”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability • Right to food • Participation • Reorienting control
Growing 1, Berlin 	A not-for-profit social enterprise that provides inclusive space for growing together, learning about food growing and eating locally grown food.	“ the good life for all ... access to food and education ... social transformation and value beyond money ”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability • Right to food • Participation • Reorienting control
Cooking & Eating 1, Berlin 	A social enterprise providing opportunities for shared cooking and eating experiences with a particular focus on the integration of refugees.	“ encourage face-to-face encounters between the local community and refugees - we cook, work, reflect and spend time together ”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability • Right to food • Participation • Reorienting control



Case study 1: Burden of food risk policies for shared redistribution initiatives

- foodsharing.de
 - Hygiene Regulation 178/2002 ‘one size fits all’ approach
 - Responsible ‘individual’
 - Individualised risk vs collective responsibility

“It’s collective ownership. And the German law has a real problem with that, because we’re not defined. [...] We don’t have anyone in charge. And this kind of community model where you have eight hundred people who co-own a hairdryer, there’s no legal framework for that...!”

Food saver 1, Berlin



Case study 2: The invisibility of urban food growing in land use planning

- himmelbeet
 - Precarious land tenure – often on ‘vacant’ land which is waiting to be ‘developed’
 - Multiple values of community gardening, but largely invisible to policy makers (falling between regulatory stools)
 - Not recognised as ‘green space’ which is protected in the development plan

*Himmel
beet*



Case study 3: Cooking and eating together and regulatory constraints

- Ueber den Tellerrand
 - cooking classes exempt from EC Food Safety Regulation 852/2004

*"We have a rental kitchen. Cooking classes are closed groups, so that's sort of a grey area.
[...] But yeah, we don't use this commercially. It's not a commercial kitchen."
Cooking & eating 1, Berlin*



Navigating multiscalar food policy frameworks

Key areas of policy affecting food sharing practises in Berlin:

- Food safety
- Food waste
- Land use planning

Policy gaps:

- Right to food
- Well-being
- Holistic food policies

SCOPE	SCALE			
	CITY	REGIONAL	NATIONAL	SUPRA-NATIONAL
FOOD SAFETY			✓	✓✓
LAND USE PLANNING, URBAN DEVELOPMENT	✓			
HEALTH, NUTRITION, WELL BEING	✓		✓✓	
RIGHT TO FOOD			✓	
WASTE	✓✓		✓	✓
HOLISTIC APPROACH TO FOOD				

- ✓ Statutory policy
- ✓ Non-statutory policy



Conclusion

- Food sharing as food democracy in practice
- A lack of holistic statutory food policy
- Regulation designed for commercial food system

→ **Need for policy innovation to reflect the reality and diversity of urban food systems**

- Next steps:
 - Comparative work across cities
 - SHARE IT impact tool
 - International multistakeholder workshop – SHARING FUTURES



Thank you!

Website: www.sharecity.ie

SHARECITY100: www.sharecity.ie/research/sharecity100-database/

Blog: <http://sharecity.ie/blog/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sharecityresearch/>

Twitter: [@ShareCityIre](https://twitter.com/sharecityire)

Vivien Franck
franckv@tcd.ie

