



SHERPA
Rural Science-Society-Policy
Interfaces

GOVERNANCE IN RURAL AREAS



MAP TUSCANY AND CASENTINO, ITALY

This Fiche was co-designed by the regional MAPs located in the Tuscany region of Italy, containing representatives from regional governments, universities, Local Action Groups, and local citizens.

Within Tuscany, the governance of the local food systems emerged as an important issue of discussion, as there is the need to integrate and coordinate policies across different sectors and policy domains. This includes the need for the valorisation of PATs – Traditional Agri-food Products of Tuscany, that has been an emerging policy focus by numerous regional bodies in recent years.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Future rural policy

- Provide incentives for participation (to forums, platforms, etc.) and ensure a clear and effective communication outreach to potentially interested parties.
- Promote and encourage cross-sectoral cooperation across municipalities, departments, and initiatives.
- Streamline administrative procedures for accessing funding and services in rural areas.
- Provide long-term funding focused on long-term development, rather than short, project-based opportunities.

Future rural research

- Conduct a mapping of PATs and best practices, including the availability, production costs, and supply chain for each product.
- Conduct interdisciplinary research and investigate the nutraceutical and organoleptic characteristics of the PATs and local varieties.
- Engage with and expand the networks that support existing initiatives, and invest to sustain these, without overlapping or wasting resources.
- Increase data collection and availability of data for rural areas.



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KEY STRENGTHS

- Awareness of the importance of involving all actors to legitimise the decision-making processes.
- A variety of initiatives are in place, with the Tuscany having worked for many years on experimenting with new forms of governance in rural areas and the agri-food domain.
- Many forms of governance in the Tuscany region are regulation by regional and national legislation and/or are promoted by regional government.
- Rural tourism is strong with a diverse offer available to visitors.
- In Tuscany, the regional government leads the initiative to create a Centre for Training and Competences on Traditional Agri-food Products.

KEY NEEDS

- Coordination, integration, and support is needed for existing initiatives to prevent fragmentation and the loss/misuse of resources.
- Participatory governance needs to be continuously animated, facilitated, and requires good communication.
- The entire agri-food sector, not limited to agriculture, needs to be more appealing to a young generation of farmers.
- Training and education is needed for producers and supply chain operators involved in the PATs' market segment.
- Communication and initiatives for sharing knowledge on the value of PATs, specifically targeted at civil society and the public.



EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Participatory Process at the Centre for Training and Competences on Traditional Agri-food Products

The initiative, led by regional authorities, was a participatory process to gather stakeholder inputs for Traditional Agri-food Products of Tuscany (PATs). The process involved gathering initial proposals, breaking into working groups, and it will result in guidelines for the valorisation of the PATs and policy recommendations to inform local and regional decision-makers.

