Summary report

Comparative analysis of european food strategies

The policy cycle methodology

REMARKS

A study for the Walloon Public Service

From November 2023 to August 2024, Let's Food and TERO conducted a study for the Sustainable Development Directorate of the Walloon Public Service. The study involved carrying out a comparative analysis of European food strategies, including the Walloon strategy, in order to identify inspiring case studies for Wallonia. The study followed 5 main stages:
- Overview and analysis of the contexts in which food policies emerge
- Analysis of Walloon food policy using the policy cycle approach
- Benchmarking: comparative analysis of other European food policies using the same analytical framework.
- Characterisation of these strategies in order to identify similarities with the Walloon context.
- Identification of inspirational case studies for Wallonia on specific aspects of food policy
- Formulation of recommendations and points for attention.

This document presents a synthesis of this work. To find out more, the final deliverables of this study will soon be available online.

Food policies in Europe

The profound changes in food systems, particularly since the 1950s, have made it possible to feed a steadily growing world population. They have thus made it possible to meet the fundamental challenges of food security. However, these developments have had major impacts which have long been overlooked, that are now significantly contributing to global change, including greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions driving climate change, biodiversity loss, soil depletion, and exhausting natural resources. These developments are also a source of major human health problems, as well as socio-economic inequalities, food sovereignty and food insecurity.

The responsibilities of food systems have now been widely demonstrated, quantified and, in some cases, assessed in monetary terms. The importance of these impacts is leading us to reconsider the way our food systems operate, and the policies and strategies that shape them.

Producing enough food to feed the population

Food is a fundamental need for human societies, which have long organized themselves around meeting this necessity. As such, it is inherently a political issue. Until recently, food was primarily addressed through the lens of food security, i.e ensuring sufficient agricultural production to feed the population. Only in recent years, and mostly at the local level, have sustainable food policies begun to emerge.

Territories as innovation laboratories

108 European cities sign up to the Milan urban Food Policy Pact

Local authorities (towns, cities, groups of municipalities, etc.) have few legal powers to take action on food. However, over the last 50 years, there have been many innovations and experiments aimed at incorporating food sustainability issues into strategies, and these have been around for much longer than those developed at State and regional levels. The **Milan Urban Food Policy Act,** which brings together 108 cities in Europe, is a case in point. These local initiatives have proliferated in the wake of the COVID health crisis, or following the consequences of major climatic hazards or conflicts. They respond to the following challenges :

- **Supplying towns and cities locally**: developing urban agriculture and building short, sustainable supply chains;
- **Building approaches that promote local know-how and terroir, pay producers** and sometimes create amenities (e.g. SIQO products);
- **Making healthy, sustainable food accessible to all**, through initiatives aimed at the underprivileged, raising awareness of nutrition in canteens and promoting social food security in France;
- **Rebuilding links between citizens and their food**, for example through the emergence of local food councils (such as the Catalan Food Council in Spain or the Agricultural and Food Council in Bordeaux).

This proliferation of initiatives can be explained by the fact that the local level facilitates :

- Coordination and cooperation between the wide range of players involved in food;
- Understanding the complex mechanisms at work in food systems and defining relevant actions;
- Social innovation.

The progress made by these local initiatives may be constrained by national or regional legal frameworks, which are often less advanced in this field. Yet, these more mature local efforts can help drive the development of broader and more ambitious national strategies and policies. The key challenge, therefore, is to **foster synergies between these initiatives and higher levels of governance** (regional, national, and European).

At national and regional level : a still timid emergence

National strategies :
Sweden (2016)
Finland (2017)
Denmark (2018)
Norvway (2019)
Irland (2021)
France (2023)
Germany (2024)

States, and sometimes their regions depending on the level of decentralisation, have many powers to act on sustainable food issues. However, strategies based on sustainable food are only just emerging.

Of the 16 European Union member states studied, only 7 have drawn up national sustainable food strategies that bring together a range of policies. While more regions have developed strategies on these issues, they do not all express a clear vision and are sometimes partial. They do, however, provide a framework within which local authorities can develop their own strategies.

Sustainable food systems :

- **protect the environment and biodiversity** without depleting non-renewable resources and biodiversity and without polluting ;
- **provide access for all to sufficient, safe, nutritious and culturally acceptable food**;
- are based on an **inclusive economic system** that encourages the creation of jobs for all and reduces inequalities of power between companies and within value chains to ensure a fairer distribution of added value;
- **promote social cohesion** and respect for cultural diversity and dynamics;
- **restore confidence in the system** and enable citizens to participate in its development.

in Bricas, 2015.

At European level : a very recent and difficult move toward a food strategy

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is an illustration of the importance given to food security. Established in the post-war context, the objectives of this policy are to increase agricultural productivity; to ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community; to stabilise markets; to guarantee security of supply; and to ensure reasonable prices for consumers.

The 90s were marked by a determination to contain, or even reduce, costs to open up European agricultural markets and to enter into negotiations with third countries within the framework of the GATT. This decade was also marked by a growing awareness of the environmental impact of intensive farming, which led to a number of reforms integrating or revising CAP instruments with the aim of helping to reduce environmental impact, cut greenhouse gas emissions and ultimately move towards "greening" the policy.

However, it was not until 2021 that **the need to move towards a coherent framework for action on food emerged through the Farm to Fork strategy.**

Proposed by the European Commission as part of the European Green Pact, the Farm to Fork strategy was adopted in October 2021. The aim of this strategy was to **move the EU's current food system towards one that is fair, healthy and environmentally friendly**. It defined a roadmap that was to be translated into 27 legislative texts. However, the European Commission and the Council have only adopted 9 texts, some of which are limited to communications rather than binding legislation:

- An action plan on organic farming to reach 25% of the EU's UAA by 2030,
- A plan for food security in times of crisis: creation of a group of experts and a European Food Security Crisis Preparedness and Response Mechanism (EFSCM),
- A new EU regulation (October 2023) on common rules for the labelling of organic pet food,
- A Council call on sustainability in the Codex Alimentarius (international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice),
- Council conclusions (2022) encouraging their development and stressing the importance of financing low-carbon farming practices,
- Council conclusions (2022) for a sustainable, resilient and competitive marine and freshwater aquaculture sector in the EU.

More recently, this roadmap and the associated initiatives started to be undermined by a relatively unfavourable political and social context marked by a backtracking on the ambitions of the strategy (1).

(1) Ledroit, Valentin. ""De la ferme à la table" : la stratégie contrariée de l'Union européenne pour verdir l'agriculture" *Toute l'Europe.eu*. 10 février 2025. https://www.touteleurope.eu/agriculture-et-peche/de-la-ferme-a-la-table-comment-l-ue-veut-verdir-nos-assiettes/

THE POLICY CYCLE ANALYSIS

Methodology

The study carried out by Let's Food and TERO on behalf of the Walloon Public Service (SPW) is part of the analysis of public food policies, defined as **action programmes implemented by public authorities in response to complex and systemic food-related issues** (Charvet 2017 and Loudiyi 2020 (2), (3)).

Given the fragmentation of policies in the past (between agriculture, health, the environment, etc.), an integrated approach is now needed to act on the entire food system, which **involves a diversity of stakeholders, territories and administrative scales**.

To achieve this, the study combined two complementary methodologies:

- the policy cycle, a political science analysis framework theorised by H. Laswell, which follows five stages (identification of the problem, formulation, decision, implementation, evaluation)(4)(5).
- and a more systemic analysis adapted to the specific characteristics of food policies.

The policy cycle method sheds light on the **conditions for the emergence of an effective and coherent political solution to the problems affecting territorial food systems** by studying the ways in which responses are constructed, the choices made by decision-makers, the conditions for implementation on the ground and the lessons learned at the end of the process. While this approach is useful for structuring public action, its limitations (linear vision, focus on decision-makers, little attention paid to implementation) mean that it needs to be improved.

This methodological approach has therefore been supplemented by the **addition of four specific criteria** identified following literature searches and interviews with Salma Loudiyi (PhD researcher at UMR Territoires) and Julie Laillau (PhD researcher at INRAe):

- **Decompartmentalisation**: assesses the cross-sectoral integration of different sectors (health, agriculture, environment, etc.) into the policy.
- **Territorialisation**: examines the implementation of the policy at all levels (from local to supranational) and its adaptation to territorial contexts.
- **Administrative and political governance**: analyses the coordination between institutions and the decision-making and consultation mechanisms put in place.
- **Multi-stakeholder participation**: measures the involvement of citizens and stakeholders in the food system in the development and implementation of food policies.

These criteria make it possible to assess the systemic, sustainable and inclusive nature of the policy analysed. Linking them together strengthens the coherence and overall effectiveness of public action. Specific indicators have been defined for each criterion. They have been applied to the various stages of the policy cycle, while maintaining a qualitative and interpretative approach. The analysis is based mainly on a literature review.

This method was applied to Wallonia's food policy and then to other European contexts as part of a comparative analysis of 6 European food strategies presented on the following page.

This methodology appears to be relevant for any local authority wishing to initiate the process of drawing up a food strategy: it provides **essential methodological benchmarks for building a coherent cross-cutting strategy**. It is also suitable for local authorities wishing to carry out an assessment of their current food strategy, in order to **draw on the strengths and weaknesses identified to adjust the strategy for a new policy cycle**.

(2) Loudiyi, Salma. Construire une géographie des politiques alimentaires intégrées : acteurs, échelles et gouvernance. Mémoire d'habilitation à diriger des recherches, 2020. 251 p. (
(3) Charvet Jean-Paul, "Alimentation, systèmes alimentaires", Dictionnaire Collectivités territoriales et développement durable, Lavoisier, 2017, p.43-45
(4) Lasswell, H.D. (1956). The Decision Process: Seven Categories of Functional Analysis. College Park, MD: University of Maryland Press.
(5) Jacquot, Sophie. « Approche séquentielle (stages approach) », Laurie Boussaguet éd., Dictionnaire des politiques publiques. 4e édition précédée d'un nouvel avant-propos. Presses de Sciences Po, 2014, pp. 82-90.

EUROPEAN STRAGIES ANALYSED

1 national strategy,
4 regional strategies,
1 local strategy.

Based on the results of the analysis of Wallonia's food strategy, the group carried out a benchmarking exercise to identify innovative strategies that could provide solutions to the problems identified in Wallonia.
The 6 strategies selected were then analysed using the same policy cycle analysis tool.



CATALONIA

The Pla Estratègic de l'Alimentació de Catalunya (PEAC), adopted by the Generalitat de Catalunya on 9 February 2021, covers the period 2021-2026. Its aim is to make Catalonia a benchmark for food excellence, recognised and promoted as such by all players in the food value chain, both nationally and internationally".

To find out more

SWEDEN

In 2016, the Swedish government adopted a food strategy aimed at creating "a competitive and sustainable food chain by 2030". The "Livmedelsstrategin" strategy includes a law that has served as a framework for 2 specific action plans on food issues (2017-2020, 2020-2023). The government has just adopted a new version (2.0) of the strategy.

To find out more

SCOTLAND

The Scottish food strategy comprises the Good Food Nation Act, which was adopted in 2022, and the Good Food Nation Plan, which is currently being finalised. It provides a cross-cutting vision of the actions that members of the Scottish Government will be taking over the coming years to improve the regional food system.

To find out more

BORDEAUX MÉTROPOLE

In 2021, the metropolis developed a local food strategy project, following an initial metropolitan agricultural policy introduced in 2018. This new strategy defines the vision and action plan for transforming the food system. In 2023, it was awarded the "Projet Alimentaire Territorial" label by the French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty.

To find out more

OCCITANIE

In 2018, the region adopted the Regional Pact for Sustainable Food, implemented from 2019 to 2023. The strategy integrates economic, societal, environmental and public health issues through the prism of food, and advocates a new food model to meet these challenges. Since 2020, it has been integrated into the Green Pact, the regional version of the Green New Deal.

To find out more

BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

A sustainable nutrition strategy was adopted in 2017 and was reviewed in 2022 to incorporate food sustainability issues. This strategy is aimed towards consumers, retailers and upstream food businesses. It will run until 2030.

To find out more

CRITERION METHOD

Guaranteeing sufficient political weight for a food policy at the local level.

The policy cycle approach offers a structured reading of the public policy development process. Applied to Wallonia's food strategy, it identifies areas of improvement to strengthen its legitimacy and effectiveness. It takes into account the various stages in the cycle, such as carrying out a sustainability analysis of the food system, identifying existing policies linked to agricultural and food issues and setting up a monitoring and evaluation system. In Wallonia, a reference framework has been co-constructed with the stakeholders, identifying strategic and operational objectives. In order to complete this framework, it needs to be anchored more firmly in Walloon policy and made more objective with quantified data in partnership with the territories. The monitoring and evaluation system has been strengthened.

To sum up, analysis of the Walloon strategy through the policy cycle highlights the **need for methodological reinforcement to translate the stated ambitions, measure progress and ensure effective coordination** with other sectoral policies.

★ *Scotland*

In response to the methodological weaknesses identified in Wallonia, we found the Scottish approach particularly inspiring for several reasons.
Firstly, the Scottish food strategy is **governed by a law that requires the development of clear outcomes and monitoring indicators**, which reinforces the rigour and transparency of the process.

Secondly, this strategy explicitly **establishes links with other implemented strategic frameworks** : for each outcome, related programmes and policies are identified, as well as shared indicators, thus promoting coherence in public action.

Finally, a **monitoring and evaluation system is built into the legislative framework itself**, with the compulsory publication of progress reports every two years and a review and, if needed, revision of the national Good Food Nation Plan every five years.

"We started by forming a baseline of what was happening regarding food issues, pulling together all the information. Until we had done that it was difficult to work out what we wanted the plan to set out"
Policy officer of the Good Food Nation Team, Scottish Government

★ *Sweden*

The Swedish strategy also presents an inspiring methodological approach. It is **framed by a law defining long-term objectives to guide the transformation of the food system**. This law is accompanied by action plans (generally five-year plans) which allow this vision to be supplemented by flexible implementation by successive governments who adapt the plans to changes in the context.

A public authority also carries out **annual monitoring of the strategy** and development of the Swedish food system, and the government agencies involved in implementing the action plan carry out a **self-assessment of the work accomplished during the year**. The reports are summarised by the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth and the Swedish Board of Agriculture, which also publish an annual progress report. These reports are sent to the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation. In addition, a **more detailed report is provided every three years**. Sweden was in the process of updating the strategy with a view to adopting version 2.0. A draft was submitted for public consultation in 2023, and the final version was voted on by the government and published recently.

"One of the very positive things with the strategy is that we had a long-term goal set, to unite a lot of different actors and now continuously in the policy conversation we have something we all refer to, we have a common language."
Employee for the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket)

Recommendations

Define objectives that are consistent with and complementary to parallel actions

- In response to the methodological weaknesses identified in Wallonia, one of the recommendations made to the region is to begin by **updating the strategy's objectives and action plan**. This should be based on a **complete inventory of the actions currently being taken in relation to agricultural and food issues**, linking them coherently to each other and to the objectives defined in the reference framework. Actions relating to governance must also be included.

Linking each objective to a specific target with indicators

- These indicators enable progress to be measured. This lays the foundations for future monitoring and evaluation of the food strategy. In Scotland, for example a law requires the food strategy to include outcomes, as well as indicators and other measures to assess progress. It must provide for regular progress reviews involving the political and administrative players concerned, and benefit from dedicated human and financial resources.

Dedicate resources to monitoring and evaluation

- If responsibility for monitoring has been entrusted to the Sustainable Development Department, it is essential to give it **official recognition and the necessary resources to carry out this task**. As for evaluation, it must cover both the achievement of objectives and the governance mechanisms put in place. To guarantee its impartiality, it would benefit from being entrusted to an independent body, similar to the statutory commission appointed in Scotland.

Methodologically, this step-by-step approach is particularly relevant in the Walloon context, as it enables us to capitalise on what already exists while gradually strengthening the coherence, transparency and effectiveness of the strategy.

CRITERION DECOMPARTMENTALISATION

Consistency and clarity on the hierarchy of policies and the scope of the regional food strategy.

The decompartmentalisation criterion assesses the systemic nature of a public policy through its level of sectoral integration, both in terms of the issues addressed and the players and resources mobilised. The aim is to assess the extent to which food issues are dealt with across the board, by mobilising all the fields concerned - health, environment, agriculture, etc. - in order to identify the most appropriate solutions.

An analysis of the Walloon case shows that there is a real desire for collective structuring around a common frame of reference, based on a shared diagnosis of the regional food system. However, at present, this reference framework does not constitute the frame of reference for all plans and programmes relating to food issues.

Analysis of the Walloon strategy has therefore revealed a **need for coherence and clarity regarding the hierarchy of policies and the scope of the Walloon food strategy**.

★ *Scotland*

The Scottish experience offers another interesting example of a response to the challenge of decompartmentalisation. Prior to the formulation of their strategy, the ministers the ministers with responsibility for food policy tasked officials with **carrying out a collaborative inventory of all the policies relating to food issues.** This made them aware of the need to take account of the future policy in their day-to-day work on these sectoral policies.

A draft strategy was then formulated by the officials and submitted for public consultation. It proposes a cross-cutting response to the issues and incorporates the sectoral policies identified. **Work was carried out with policy-makers working on other policies and strategies in order to align their objectives and indicators and identify potential synergies.**

On a more operational level, the decompartmentalisation of the strategy is ensured by the presence of an **interministerial working group dedicated to policy coordination**. This is a forum where ministers can discuss food-related issues and promote cooperation between ministers to take decisions on the coordination of food-related policies. It is supported by a second working group of officials who carry out technical and substantive work to advise ministers. Finally, the Good Food Nation Team, also made up of civil servants, acts as a point of contact for any action relating to the food strategy and ensures that other ministries take the strategy into account.

"Our aim is to make improvements over the years, once people get used to this cross-functional way of working"
Policy officer of the Good Food Nation Team, Scottish Government

★ *Catalonia*

In response to the issues identified in Wallonia, we found the Catalan approach particularly inspiring. From the outset, Catalonia adopted a cross-sectoral approach to building its strategy. **A multidisciplinary group of experts drew up the strategic project** based on consultation with around a hundred stakeholders and citizen workshops. To reinforce this cross-sectoral approach, a **National Pact for Sustainable Food in Catalonia is currently being prepared,** enshrining the primacy of the strategy and ensuring that all policies take it into account.

Catalonia has also involved all the regional administrative departments concerned with agricultural or food issues in order to **identify existing actions and plans in line with the objectives of the strategy**, to check that they are consistent and to build solid synergies.

Finally, a structured governance system ensures ongoing monitoring of the strategy, with **annual reviews to measure progress, strengthen links with related policies and adjust actions** to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

"We coordinate with the people working in other areas and, as the strategy is alive, we adapt, always sharing with other strategies and what is being done, to align with them and adapt to the context"
Employee of the Department of Climate Action, Food and Rural Agenda, Generalitat de Catalunya

Recommendations

In response to the problems identified with Wallonia's food policy in terms of decompartmentalisation, we recommended that the SPW carry out an **exhaustive inventory of policies, programmes and strategies linked to agricultural and food issues,** in close collaboration with the ministerial cabinets and the SPW directorates concerned, as was the case in Catalonia and Scotland.

The aim is to **identify the need for consistency** and **possible synergies with the Manger Demain strategy and the Food Wallonia action plan**. Such work would make it possible to

- anchor sustainable cooperation between players,
- encourage the pooling of resources
- and strengthen complementarity with existing initiatives.

This inventory should lead to political alignment, supported by arbitration within the ministerial cabinets, and to **official recognition of the reference framework as the common base for Walloon food and agriculture policies** (following the example of the Catalan Pact, for example), an essential condition for guaranteeing that it is taken into account by all the players for a cross-cutting approach to agricultural and food issues in Wallonia.

CRITERION TERRITORIALISATION

Strengthening territorial cooperation frameworks to achieve common objectives

The issue of territorialisation deals with the way in which players construct and implement their strategy in coherence with the lower and higher territorial levels. More specifically, the goal is first to **analyse how consistency is established between the regional strategy** under study and the strategies or actions of sub- and supra-territorial levels; secondly, **how stakeholders in the territories are mobilised**; and thirdly, **how the strategy is implemented throughout the territory, integrating the actions of sub- and supra-territorial levels** in a consistent manner.

In the case of Wallonia, there is a first degree of coordination between the different levels, notably through their participation in the CwAD: the **sub-regional authorities can monitor and make proposals** concerning the implementation of the regional strategy through their representatives on this body. However, they do not contribute directly to implementation, and the **actions implemented in their territories are not taken into account as part of the strategy**. Some Walloon territories are heavily involved in the field of sustainable food systems, but the lack of a framework for territorial cooperation or partnerships between the Region and these territories means that they cannot cooperate in implementing their food strategy or achieve common objectives.

★ *Baden Württemberg*

The development of the Baden Württemberg Region's sustainable nutrition strategy has been accompanied by **increasing regional cooperation**. When the strategy was formulated, there was no sustainable food strategy at the federal level in Germany. Although information on the regional contexts and challenges of the region's 4 districts was taken into account and the sub-districts were consulted, they were not formally involved in the formulation of the strategy, the focus was on the participation of the other ministries.

A stronger link was made when the strategy was revised in 2022, taking into account the conclusions of a report by the Federal Scientific Council for Agriculture, which produced recommendations for a future federal sustainable food strategy (which has since been voted on). This revision has helped to **align the regional strategy with the future national strategy and to recognise cooperation with local players and their networking as one of its 3 principles of action**. The strategy thus incorporates the fact that its deployment must be based on local players. This linkage has also enabled the action plan to identify actions to be taken locally, as well as actions to change the legal framework at the federal level.

Baden-Württemberg implements its strategy through sustainable nutrition centres, which are key players in its strategy. They include a centre for nutritional information and education, a centre to support catering and four nutrition centres in its districts. These centres are linked to what can be described as Local Food Councils (LFCs), i.e. forums for local dialogue involving citizens and associations. **Cooperation and the alignment of their actions with the strategy are achieved through training and incentives** (on the one hand, actions to communicate the strategy, inform, raise awareness and train local players, and on the other, funding for local initiatives through calls for projects).

★ *Occitanie*

As soon as it formulated its Regional Sustainable Food Pact (PRAD), Occitanie identified the **need to involve local players throughout the process, and to integrate the territories**, particularly those that already had food strategies in place. It has therefore proposed a process for building its policy by **combining citizen consultation and the participation of local authorities** within the **existing framework** of the Region's Assembly of Territories.

Occitanie has also formulated its strategy in compliance with existing national legislation (notably the Egalim law), which has provided a legal framework for its action. It has also chosen to work in synergy with government initiatives such as the National Programme for Nutrition and Health, and the Programme for the Labelling of Territorial Food Projects, which implement sustainable food strategies on a local scale. The aim of this synergy was to **intensify local results and promote consistency between national, regional and local initiatives**. This has also resulted in the **region joining a steering committee set up by the State** in Occitanie on sustainable food systems, which also involves the regional network of territorial food projects.

In this way, the region is drawing on the French national framework, which finances Territorial Food Projects (TFPs) that bring together a wide range of local food system players, usually led by local authorities (conurbations, metropolitan areas, PETRs, regional nature parks, etc.). The French government **certifies and finances the emergence and implementation** of TFPs, provided they follow a rigorous method of formulation and implementation (shared diagnosis, formal definition of an action plan, governance, monitoring and evaluation, etc.). The region recognises the importance of TFPs for the food transition. It **supports TFPs and the actions of the players involved** (local authorities, associations, producers) through existing funding mechanisms and specific calls for projects. If an area does not have a TFP, the **region can finance actions to initiate the transition of the food system and encourage the emergence of a TFP**.

Recommendations

An analysis of the various European strategies has revealed inspiring examples of how cooperation between different territorial levels can be initiated, developed, or strengthened. Some key lessons include:

- **Recognizing from the outset,** during the formulation of public policy, the importance of **involving local and regional authorities to ensure coherence in interventions**.

- **Establishing mechanisms for dialogue with local authorities and stakeholders throughout the design and implementation of public policy**. This helps ensure that specific territorial characteristics are considered, that intervention frameworks are appropriately adapted, and that relevant information is effectively shared. This can be done through:
  - Regional bodies, as seen in Occitanie and Scotland;
  - Dedicated structures, such as the sustainable nutrition centres in Baden-württemberg, which are linked to the CLAs, or the inter-PAT network in the Occitanie region.
  - Pre-existing dialogue structures such as the CwAD in Wallonia, which can also offer distinct advantages.

- **Ensuring consistency and synergy between strategic and operational levels, particularly during implementation**. This can be approached in two main ways:
  - through a **binding legal framework** that promotes strong consistency across the whole territory, but presupposes a great deal of upstream work to be able to create a common framework while allowing territorial innovation ;
  - through **incentive-based mechanisms** (funding for the emergence of strategies, call for proposals with criteria, earmarking of measures, training, awareness-raising, support for stakeholders): this approach leaves plenty of room for local experimentation, but does not guarantee consistent implementation across the whole territory.

CRITERION GOVERNANCE

Ensuring that systemic issues are taken into account

Sustainable food policies built in a systemic way deal with issues that are linked, but dealt with by different cabinets and administrations. This section looks at **how to set up cross-functional working arrangements between elected representatives and administrative departments**, in order to develop and implement these systemic policies.

As far as Wallonia is concerned, a Food Wallonia steering committee has been set up under the aegis of the Environment Minister's office, bringing together the two other ministries and the SPW. In view of the change of government in July 2024, this body needs to be redefined in order to finalise the implementation of Food Wallonia. **Inter-ministerial cooperation is essential to enable cooperation** between the government departments responsible for implementing the various policies and strategies impacting agricultural and food issues.

★ *Occitanie*

The Occitanie Region is one of the areas that have put in place **cross-functional work between elected representatives and administrative departments right from the strategy formulation phase**. The desire for cross-functional work between these players was strongly supported by the Presidency of the region, and led to the creation of a working group comprising 12 elected representatives and administrative departments.

The process was coordinated by an administrative department, one of whose objectives is to encourage cross-functionality (the Department of Innovation and Cross-Functionality). This department established the **working group by engaging elected officials, departments, and services involved** in **all areas covered by the strategy**. The working group met regularly to make progress on the wording and incorporate the results of the public consultations and vote. The text establishing the strategy was then voted on by the regional plenary assembly.

To ensure that the policy is implemented, the Regional Council has given a **clear and stable coordinating role over time** to the department responsible for the economy. A **specific food service has been set up and gradually provided with human resources** (5 people) **to coordinate and implement** a significant proportion of the actions. It is also mobilised when other policies or departments address food issues. As a result, **working practices between departments have gradually developed**.

One point of vigilance concerns the strategy monitoring committee, which grew out of the initial working group and has proved to be of little use. The proliferation of monitoring bodies, linked to the emergence of the Green Pact and the region's involvement in a government committee, has led to confusion about the roles of the various committees, causing participants to run out of steam and undermining the cross-functional approach adopted at the outset.

★ *Catalonia*

The Catalan Food Strategy is an offshoot of the Catalan Food Council. The latter is a **body made up of elected representatives, regional administrative departments and players in the food system**. Its composition was established by decree and evolved once the strategy had been drawn up to ensure that all the political cabinets concerned were included. This body, which brings together the different types of players (elected representatives, government departments, stakeholders) involved, makes it possible to **establish cross-functional working and the construction of a systemic strategy right from the formulation stage.** The government departments worked together to turn the strategy into action plans.

Coordination of the implementation of the Catalan Food Strategy has been entrusted to a single department (the Department of Climate Action, Food and the Rural Agenda). The **implementation of actions is led by the Catalan Council's thematic commissions, by the administrations concerned or by working groups between administrations** (on an ad hoc or regular basis). Co-operation between administrations may encounter obstacles between ministries, but **gradually habits of working together are being strengthened**.

Monitoring is carried out by the department responsible for coordinating the strategy. It is **shared annually with the Catalan Sustainable Food Council at a plenary session** attended by all members of the Council, including elected representatives.

The nature and institutionalisation of the Catalan Food Council means that it is **stable over time**, even if there is a change of political majority. This stability has made it **possible to formalise cross-functional cooperation** in a body that can monitor and guide policy, **ensure continuity** over time in terms of strategy support and **facilitate institutional memory**.

Recommendations

In order to guarantee and strengthen the dialogue between elected representatives and administrative departments within the Walloon Region, we have retained from this study a number of recommendations arising from the comparative analysis work. The recommendations include :

- **Create working spaces between elected representatives specifically for food strategy** (working groups in Occitanie, Catalan Food Council) or **use existing spaces** (Baden-Württemberg ministerial cabinet) to enable work between political leaders with different mandates;
- **Clearly identifying the responsibilities of the different administrations and creating inter-administrative working areas**, via working groups (whether formalised or not), encourages coordinated implementation, while limiting the need to meet as a large group;
- **Getting elected representatives and government departments to work together in temporary or institutionalised committees** (as has been the case in Occitania and Catalonia) also helps to co-manage the strategy.
- Involving these bodies in monitoring also contributes to **better coordination of policy implementation and consistency with other policies**. This presupposes that resources are allocated to it (e.g. leadership), that the hierarchy between policies is made explicit, and that explicit roles are assigned to each monitoring/coordination body to avoid overburdening elected representatives and administrative staff.

CRITERION MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATION

Establishing the legitimacy of a strategy among local stakeholders and citizens

The multi-stakeholder participation criterion examines the ways in which stakeholders in the food system are involved and represented at the various stages of the policy cycle. This criterion incorporates two different forms of participation: citizen participation and the participation of stakeholders in the food system. These two formats do not involve the same actors, do not use the same tools and do not target the same issues :

- In the case of **stakeholder mobilisation**, the aim is not only to get them involved but also take responsibility for implementing the strategy to ensure that it runs smoothly and that the objectives are achieved.
- **Citizen participation**, by contrast, primarily involves informing the public about actions taken under the strategy and raising awareness of sustainable food issues.

Analysis of the Walloon case has shown that extensive consultations were carried out to draw up the Manger Demain Strategy and the Food Wallonia plan. The adoption of the strategy provides for a role to be given to the Walloon sustainable food college - the CwAD, (see Decree of 2 May 2019). However, the college is not involved in arbitration or decision-making relating to the strategy, but is consulted on a more peripheral basis on request. It therefore has **only a secondary advisory role**.

★ *Baden-Württemberg*

The development of Baden-Württemberg's Sustainable Nutrition Strategy was based on a series of round tables involving scientific experts and stakeholders in the food system. This process led to the formulation of recommendations that were submitted to the Council of Ministers during the process of formulating the decree. The public were not involved.

The Land has citizen democracy processes that are used for strategic policies where this process is deemed useful. This **long and costly process is only used for complex and divisive policies that require citizens to support ambitious decisions**. For example, as part of the "strategic dialogue on agricultural policy" aimed at formulating a cross-cutting policy linked to the sustainable nutrition strategy, a public consultation was set up.

As part of the implementation process, the Land has chosen **not to set up a multi-stakeholder body at regional level** because of the cost and complexity involved in operating such bodies on a large scale. The Land **favours working with local food councils** through sustainable nutrition centres in its districts.

★ *Bordeaux métropole*

Bordeaux Métropole's food strategy was formulated with the **active involvement of stakeholders concerned by food issues, organised within a consultative council.** Following the State's approval of the strategy as a Territorial Food Project (TFP), this council has evolved in terms of participants and internal organisation to better monitor the TFP, and has now become the Agricultural and Food Council (CAA). The CAA is a **consultative body made up of public, private, academic and voluntary players**.

Monitoring the implementation of Bordeaux Métropole's strategy is based on a multi-stakeholder approach, with the CAA as the main consultative body. To make regular consultation operational, the CAA has set up a **partnership technical committee** made up of representatives of the various colleges that make up the CAA. This **technical committee has an advisory role and can make recommendations to the TFP steering committee**. Finally, the CAA plays a direct role in implementation by organising thematic working groups.

The CAA has maintained its dynamism to date thanks to :

- The **strong involvement of the Vice-President** responsible for biodiversity, nature and food resilience
- A system of **empowering members** by organising them into colleges and electing representatives. These representatives make up the CAA's technical partnership committee, a body through which they ensure that the recommendations made by the CAA are taken into account in the implementation of the strategy.
- The **organisation of workshops** when certain issues require it, to reinforce the mobilisation of council members.
- The **signing of a CAA charter committing its signatories** to their duties within the council.
- The **TFP management team**, which ensures that the Board remains dynamic by providing regular monitoring and personalised support for its members.

Recommendations

In order to strengthen its strategy for involving stakeholders in the food system, the Walloon region can draw on the following recommendations:

- **Multi-stakeholder participation is an important issue for the relevance and sustainability of a policy with systemic ambition**s. The choices made and the ways in which they are involved differ from one region to another: stakeholders often contribute to the diagnosis and formulation of the strategy, and are then consulted and informed of implementation decisions. This consultation makes it easier for stakeholders to support and apply the strategy, while incorporating their expertise to adjust implementation. **Formalising their role, or appointing representatives as in Bordeaux, strengthens their participation by validating the usefulness of their contribution and their mobilisation**.

- **The use of citizen participation is simpler at the local level**, such as in municipalities or metropolises, because of the proximity to residents. On a regional or national scale, however, it becomes more complex, encouraging the targeted use of these mechanisms when their usefulness has been demonstrated.

- **Communication is crucial to ensuring that the food strategy is visible and understood**. Occitanie and Baden-Württemberg have used various tools to reinforce their strategy, while Bordeaux Métropole has had difficulty mobilising these tools, limiting the dissemination of information about their TFP. The effectiveness of communication depends not only on the actors responsible for the strategy, but also on the commitment of departments, particularly those dedicated to communication.