



University of Natural Resources
and Life Sciences, Vienna
Department of Sustainable
Agricultural Systems

Civic Initiatives Supporting New Entrants Into Farming In Europe: Drivers Of A New Agro-social Paradigm?

Master's thesis

Katharina Hagenhofer

Supervisor:

Univ. Prof. Dipl.-Agr. Biol. Dr. Ing Bernhard Freyer

Division of Organic Farming

Matriculation number: h0741282
Email: katharina.hagenhofer@posteo.at
Submitted: May 2015

Re-edited and amended version, July 2015

My deep appreciation and gratitude are extended to all those who have contributed to this thesis in a variety of ways:

To Bernhard Freyer, for continuously encouraging me to think, question and learn.
To Valentin Fiala, for invaluable assistance, motivation and feedback.
To everyone at the master's seminar for their support and contributions.

To Wolfgang, for being there, nonetheless.
To Burgi, for putting things in perspective.
To the Hollers, for feeding me – body, mind and soul.
To Judith, for understanding completely,
and for being my editor in shining armour.
To Anna, for asking the right questions.
To Filip, for countless contributions, and
co-captainship in all weathers.

To Sloan, for helping me find my scientific voice.
To Naëmi, for library breaktime bursts of inspiration.
To Lisa, for room, tea and moral support.
To the BOKU girls, for shared struggles, joys and dinners.

Most importantly, to all my interview partners,
for their openness and enthusiasm:

Attila Szocs
Audrius Jokubauskas
Cecilia Guadagni
Christian Hiss
Clemens Gabriel
Helen Woodcock
Jakob Vogler
Jean-Baptiste Cavalier
Johann Gangl
Kaat Segers
Maarten Roels
Maria van Boxtel
Noëmie Pennec
Pere Losantos
Ruth Curtis
Severijn Velmans
Séverine Curiger
Sjoerd Wartena
Titus Bahner
Vanessa Freixa
and
Véronique Rioufol,

as well as the European Network on Access to Land,
for continued support, interest and inspiration.

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	<i>Motivation</i>	1
1.2	<i>Background</i>	1
2	Conceptual framework	3
2.1	<i>Research aims</i>	3
2.2	<i>Research questions</i>	4
2.3	<i>Outline</i>	5
2.4	<i>Limitations</i>	6
3	Literature	7
3.1	<i>Field of research</i>	7
3.2	<i>Theories and methods</i>	9
4	Theoretical framework	10
5	Methods	13
5.1	<i>Case selection</i>	13
5.2	<i>Methods of data gathering</i>	16
5.3	<i>Methods of data analysis</i>	17
6	Results	18
6.1	<i>Basic data</i>	18
6.2	<i>Core activities and strategies</i>	20
6.2.1	Land purchase (foundations)	20
6.2.2	Land purchase (cooperatives and other models)	20
6.2.3	Facilitating farm succession	20
6.2.4	Education for beginning farmers	21
6.2.5	Farm incubators	21
6.2.6	Networks and/or multiple activities	22
6.2.7	Regional shareholder corporation	22
6.3	<i>Visions</i>	23
6.3.1	Replies to the vision question	23
6.3.2	Goals	24
6.3.3	Type of agriculture	27
6.3.4	Working values	28
6.4	<i>Challenges</i>	30
6.4.1	Structural level	30
6.4.2	Organization level: external challenges	31
6.4.3	Organization level: internal challenges	32
6.4.4	Farms/Farmers level	33
6.5	<i>Change</i>	35
6.5.1	Intensification trend in agriculture	36

6.5.2	Alternative trends in agriculture.....	36
6.5.3	Other changes perceived.....	37
6.5.4	Initiatives' impact and role in change.....	38
6.6	<i>Other results</i>	39
7	Discussion	40
7.1	<i>A common vision</i>	40
7.2	<i>Visions in relation to the new agro-social paradigm</i>	42
7.3	<i>Challenges</i>	45
7.4	<i>Change</i>	46
7.5	<i>Connecting the dots: the role of civic initiatives</i>	47
8	Conclusion	49
9	Abstracts	51
10	Literature	53
11	Annex I: Interview Guideline	I
12	Annex II: Case summaries	i
12.1	<i>Case summary: TRU-NL</i>	<i>i</i>
12.2	<i>Case summary: TRU-GB</i>	<i>iii</i>
12.3	<i>Case summary: COO-FR</i>	<i>iv</i>
12.4	<i>Case summary: COO-ES</i>	<i>vii</i>
12.5	<i>Case summary: COO-BE1</i>	<i>ix</i>
12.6	<i>Case summary: COO-BE2</i>	<i>xi</i>
12.7	<i>Case summary: COO-DE</i>	<i>xiii</i>
12.8	<i>Case summary: SUC-NL</i>	<i>xiv</i>
12.9	<i>Case summary: SUC-CH1</i>	<i>xvi</i>
12.10	<i>Case summary: SUC-CH2</i>	<i>xviii</i>
12.11	<i>Case summary: EDU-ES</i>	<i>xx</i>
12.12	<i>Case summary: EDU-NO</i>	<i>xxii</i>
12.13	<i>Case summary: INC-FR</i>	<i>xxiv</i>
12.14	<i>Case summary: INC-GB</i>	<i>xxvi</i>
12.15	<i>Case summary: NET-IT</i>	<i>xxviii</i>
12.16	<i>Case summary: NET-LT</i>	<i>xxx</i>
12.17	<i>Case summary: NET-FR</i>	<i>xxxii</i>
12.18	<i>Case summary: NET-AT</i>	<i>xxxiv</i>
12.19	<i>Case summary: REG-DE</i>	<i>xxxvi</i>

List of tables

Table 1: Outline of this thesis. Source: author’s elaboration. 5

Table 2: List of initiatives by main focus, including country code, position of interviewee and identification code used. Source: author’s elaboration..... 15

Table 3: List of initiatives showing affiliation, legal form, and other basic information. Source: author’s elaboration of information obtained in interviews. 19

Table 4: Statements of interviewees’ visions from replies to the vision question. Source: author’s elaboration..... 24

Table 5: Overview of main criteria initiatives use, as discussed in the interviews. Source: author’s elaboration..... 28

List of figures

Figure 1: Multi-level perspective on transitions (Source: Geels, 2011, adapted from Geels, 2002) 11

Figure 2: Map of initiatives’ locations (Source: author's representation, using Google Maps, Map data © 2015 Basarsoft, Google, INEGI, ORION-ME) 13

Figure 3: Individual visions as discussed in the interviews, arranged by scale of vision and degree of specification of agriculture supported (Source: author’s elaboration)..... 41

1 Introduction

In this chapter, following a brief statement of motivation, the background and context of this research are explained. More information on the relevant theories and literature can be found in chapters 3 and 4.

1.1 Motivation

I chose the initial subject field, extra-familial farm succession, because of my own aspiration to go into farming despite coming from a non-farming background. Being aware of the challenges surrounding this situation from my own experience, and of the growing numbers of fellow aspirant farmers facing the same problems, I wanted to acquire well-founded knowledge on possible models to aid newcomers in starting farms. This led to initial research into such initiatives abroad, and through contacts with the European network on access to land, I was introduced to the broader field of supporting newcomers into farming – not just by providing access to farms as such, but also by enabling access to knowledge and advisory services, promoting various models concerning access to land, and, particularly intriguing to me, establishing test farms or farm incubators. This diversity of approaches encouraged me to take my research to another level and look more closely not just at what these initiatives do, but also why they do so and what they want to achieve. Arriving at the question of how this relates to current trends in agriculture, and how they might contribute to change concerning this, was a logical next step.

My research has confirmed my strong belief that the issue of how to support newcomers in farming is of the utmost importance to the sustainable development of the sector. I hope that my work can be a contribution to our understanding of this.

1.2 Background

Generational renewal in agriculture is a crucial factor in ensuring viable food production in the long term (European Communities, 2012). While the European farming population is trending towards over-aging with elderly farmers comprising 55% of farm holders in the EU-27 (European Communities, 2012), and farm numbers are rapidly declining (European Communities, 2011), the question arises who is going to farm in the next generations (Jöhr, 2012). As a potential answer to this question, recent years have seen increasing numbers of new entrants into farming, coming from non-agricultural backgrounds and facing numerous challenges in entering the sector, including access to land (European Communities, 2012), knowledge and other resources. Although European Rural Development policy has recognized the need to foster young farmers and the challenge of attracting new entrants to a low-income, high-risk sector (European Communities, 2012; Vieth & Thomas, 2013), current measures and their national implementation to support beginning farmers often fail to adequately address the needs and problems of aspiring farmers coming from other backgrounds (Vieth & Thomas, 2013).

These developments are embedded in larger trends in European agriculture. Mainstream agriculture continues to follow a strong trend towards intensification, increasing farm size and decreasing farm numbers (European Communities, 2011). While scientific and technological achievements have significantly

increased agricultural productivity in this industrialized way of farming, it has some negative social and environmental consequences that are increasingly criticized in the public debate (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, 2008).

In opposition to this continuing intensification trend in mainstream agriculture, a second, though much smaller trend is the growth of regionally embedded, agroecological and smaller scale farming; an important common aspect being community connections (see e.g. Lyson, 2004).

This alternative trend in agriculture has been present for several decades, but it has been gaining importance recently following increasing pressures on the mainstream trend, e.g. ecological and economic crises and resulting increases in consumer awareness and public debate on agriculture. Some authors endorse this development, arguing that these pressures indeed demand a shift towards more support for small-scale, locally embedded agriculture (see e.g. International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, 2008). The two concurrent trends can be regarded as representing opposing agricultural paradigms as proposed in the literature, e.g. in Monllor's distinction between the agro-industrial and the agro-social paradigm (Monllor, 2012).

Monllor's study (2012) comparing agricultural newcomers and beginning farmers from agricultural backgrounds found that newcomers are more likely to represent the second of the above-mentioned paradigms – to use Monllor's term, the new agro-social paradigm (Monllor, 2012). Other authors come to similar conclusions concerning the approaches of newcomers and the innovation potential they bring to the farming sector (see e.g. Sutherland, Zagata, & Wilson, 2015). This connection with the above-mentioned issue of opposing paradigms makes the current problem of generational renewal in agriculture especially interesting.

In recent years, the demand for new models of generational renewal has led to the creation of various civic initiatives addressing the issues of access to land and extra-familial farm succession, among others (Rioufol & Volz, 2012). Concerning access to land, an older but increasingly important model is that of land trusts purchasing farmland in order to take it out of the commodity market, making it available for farmers (Bahner, et al., 2012); recently, new models have emerged that work with solidarity investment funds (sometimes in combination with foundations or trusts) to finance land and farms for sustainable farming (see e.g. Rioufol & Wartena, 2011). In addition to ensuring the continuation of established farms, especially smaller or peasant farms that might otherwise face closure, these also support beginning farmers by helping them gain access to land and farms. Addressing beginning farmers' needs more specifically, other initiatives range from educational projects aimed at beginning farmers and platforms linking aspiring farmers to aging farmers without a successor, to farm incubators giving newcomers the opportunity to be a farmer in a lower-risk environment for a given period of time in order to develop their projects and decide whether they want to follow this career. The majority of these initiatives is carried by civic society and claims to aim for a community-connected, sustainable agriculture (Rioufol & Volz, 2012). The question arises whether they are thus potentially contributing to a shift between the abovementioned paradigms.

Looking at this phenomenon from a transition perspective, the community-connected farming trend described above could be regarded as a niche developing in response to tensions in the incumbent regime (see e.g. Geels, 2011; Smith, 2007) and civic initiatives as actors promoting the development of this niche. Niches interacting with the regime are likely confronted with difficulties; as competitors of the established regime, such phenomena can either

stay in the niche or become integrated in the mainstream. The latter can either mean an absorption by the mainstream, thus losing some of the characteristics of the niche phenomenon, or a change in the regime and contribution to a new and different mainstream (Elzen, Geels, & Green, 2004). Therefore, gaining more insights into how community-connected agriculture as a niche is supported in its development is an important subject for research. Examining civic initiatives' role in this, and their relation to mainstream or alternative paradigms could offer valuable contributions to our understanding of their potential in creating change. Because of the recentness of the creation and growth of these civic initiatives, their status as well as their long-term objectives, benefits and limits are not yet sufficiently understood (Rioufol & Volz, 2012), making any research into the above-mentioned themes all the more relevant.

2 Conceptual framework

This research addresses the problems laid out in chapter 1.2 by exploring how civic initiatives supporting new entrants into farming in Europe could play a role as multipliers of a new agro-social paradigm. To answer this question, it is necessary to better understand the initiatives' objectives and visions, and whether these relate to the new agro-social paradigm. In a next step, one can look at how they are or could be successful in reaching these goals. In this chapter, research aims, questions and limitations as well as an outline of this thesis are presented.

2.1 Research aims

The main aim of this research is to understand in which ways initiatives supporting new entrants into farming in Europe could play a potential role in a paradigm shift. This is relevant because as described in chapter 1, agriculture today is facing many problems and challenges that may demand a change towards a more sustainable, localised way of producing food (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, 2008); furthermore, more particularly, European agriculture is facing a lack of generational renewal (European Communities, 2012). While many developments are already underway on different levels that contribute to a transition to a more sustainable agriculture, multipliers can play a vital role in bringing niche phenomena out of their niches and establishing them on a regime level (see e.g. Elzen, van Mierlo, & Leeuwis, 2012). Thus, the main aim of this research is to identify the initiatives' potential as multipliers of a new agro-social paradigm.

To this end, it is necessary to understand what it is that these initiatives strive for, and what they want to achieve with their work. Thus, this research begins with the exploration of initiatives' visions and objectives. The term 'vision' was chosen over the term 'objective' for the interviews as well as further steps because it implies an inspiration that motivates people in their work (Allen & Allen, 1990).

A first specific research aim is to identify visions of individuals active in initiatives supporting new entrants into farming, and determine common aspects and differences of these visions. Through this, a potential shared vision may be identified, which could be an important factor in the possible impact initiatives can achieve on a larger scale (Allen & Allen, 1990).

Secondly, this research aims to find out in which ways these visions correspond to agricultural paradigms, and, in particular, to Monllor's new agro-social paradigm (2012), described in more detail in chapters 3.2 and 4. By doing so, it becomes possible to reach conclusions concerning the degree in which the initiatives represent and strive for the same values and ideals that constitute the new agro-social paradigm.

Once conclusions have been reached on what the initiatives want to achieve and how this relates to the agro-social paradigm, it is necessary to find out whether they are successful, or in which ways they could be successful in reaching their objectives and achieving their vision. While the major part of this question is beyond the scope of this research, I aim to contribute to it by identifying major challenges and hinderances that initiatives face in their work. This is relevant because it may help to identify main leverage points that could increase their impact and establish their role as multipliers in a paradigm shift.

Furthermore, it is important to understand how individuals active in the initiatives perceive recent trends in agriculture, and more particularly, how they perceive their own work in relation to these trends.

As will be outlined in chapter 4, the findings of this research will be regarded from a transitions perspective.

Finally, it is in the nature of qualitative research that unanticipated themes and issues arise; especially given the recentness of the phenomenon and the limited body of research available on it, my last aim is to identify themes of relevance and interest for further research.

2.2 Research questions

Based on the problem description and the research aims as stated in chapter 2.1, this research seeks to answer the following research question:

Could civic initiatives supporting new entrants into farming in Europe play a role as multipliers of a new agro-social paradigm?

To answer this question, several sub-questions corresponding to the specific aims presented in chapter 2.1 are posed:

- a) In which ways are the initiatives sharing a common vision?*
- b) How do their visions relate to the new agro-social paradigm as proposed by Monllor (2012)?*
- c) Which main challenges do they identify in reaching this vision?*
- d) Which changes, if any, do they perceive in agriculture in their countries?*

For clarification, both the research aims and questions, and in particular their relation to theories and methods as presented in chapters 3, 4 and 5 are displayed in Table 1, chapter 2.3.

2.3 Outline

The structure of this thesis, including main themes, aims and questions and relating them to relevant theories and methods applied, is shown in Table 1.

Themes		Research aims See chapter 2.1	Research questions See chapter 2.2	Theories See chapters 3 & 4	Methods See chapter 5	Results & Discussion
MAIN AIM AND QUESTION		To identify the potential role of civic initiatives supporting newcomers in farming in Europe as drivers of an agricultural paradigm shift	Could civic initiatives supporting new entrants into farming in Europe play a role as multipliers of a new agro-social paradigm?	Multi-level perspective (Geels, 2011), institutional embedding and anchoring of niches (Elzen, et al., 2012; Smith, 2007)	Qualitative interviews, structuring qual. content analysis (QCA) (Kuckartz, 2014)	See chapters 6 and 7
SUB-AIMS AND QUESTIONS	VISIONS	a) To understand initiatives' visions and objectives and identify common aspects and differences in their visions	a) In which ways do the interviewees share a common vision?	Importance of a shared vision (Allen & Allen, 1990)	Qualitative interviews, QCA, comparison of case summaries	See chapter 6.3 and 7.1; see also Annex II: Case summaries
	RELATION TO AGRO-SOCIAL PARADIGM	b) To identify possible matches with the new agro-social paradigm, or a lack thereof	b) How do their visions relate to the new agro-social paradigm?	New Agro-Social Paradigm (NAP) (Monllor, 2012)	Comparison of themes from QCA with elements of NAP	See chapter 6.3 and 7.2
	CHALLENGES	c) To gain insights on difficulties they face	c) Which main challenges do they identify in reaching their vision?		QCA, case summaries	See chapter 6.4 and 7.3; see also Annex II: Case summaries
	CHANGES PERCEIVED	d) To gain insights on initiatives' perceptions of change and their contributions to change	d) Which changes, if any, do they perceive in agriculture in their countries?		QCA, case summaries	See chapter 6.5 and 7.4; see also Annex II: Case summaries

Table 1: Outline of this thesis. Source: author's elaboration.

2.4 Limitations

As fits the nature of this research as a master's thesis, many lessons learned in the course of the work have influenced its outcomes. At several points during the process, methodological choices were made that a more experienced researcher may have decided on differently.

In the case selection, the choice to aim for a broad selection with less in-depth study of the individual cases may be criticised. Nevertheless, I chose to continue the analysis with all cases initially selected in order to highlight the diversity of approaches.

Especially regarding the relative lack of scientific literature on the research field (see chapter 3.1), this study can be seen as a broadly based explorative work identifying important themes and questions for further research, rather than an in-depth study.

Concerning the interviews, and therefore the basis for this research, it is important to note that it was impossible to conduct interviews in the native language of each interview partner. In total, 8 of 21 interviews were conducted in the interviewee's native language, of which 6 were conducted in German and 2 in English; of the other 13 interviews, 2 were conducted in German as a foreign language for the interviewee, and 8 in English as a foreign language for both interview partners.

Though this mix of languages and proficiency levels may involve losses of meaning and posed some challenges for analysis, the processes involved in designing questionnaires, analysing the interviews etc. certainly gained from the additional reflection necessitated by this.

In some cases, additional or follow-up interviews would have added considerably to the quality of the analysis; however, this was not possible in the scope of this thesis.

Furthermore, considering the nature of this research as a master's thesis, all coding was done by a single coder; relevant methods literature agrees that this should be avoided (Kuckartz, 2014; Saldaña, 2013; Schreier, 2012). Therefore, several passages were test-coded by and/or with other researchers at different stages of the analysis; valuable feedback, additions and changes were integrated into the code systems following these tests. Nevertheless, further research should rely on the analytic qualities of more than one main coder.

3 Literature

In the following chapters, I will briefly highlight the relevant literature and existing research on the topics of this study. Chapter 3.1 begins with recent literature on the generational renewal problem, and then moves on to the relevant literature concerning beginning farmers and new entrants in particular. Following this, several studies concerning access to land and its relation to the beginning farmers issue are indicated. Next, I point out the available literature on civic initiatives supporting beginning farmers, which is relatively scarce and mostly exploratory. Lastly, studies discussing agricultural paradigms in relation to new entrants will be specified.

The theories and methods used in previous studies in this field of research will be discussed in chapter 3.2.

3.1 Field of research

Several studies address the problem of generational renewal in Europe and elsewhere, mostly from a policy perspective (Jöhr, 2012; Wang, n.d.); one study published just before this research was concluded provides an excellent review of the academic literature on what is termed the '*young farmer problem in Europe*' (Zagata & Sutherland, 2015). It also demonstrates the challenge of quantifying this problem and highlights the conflation of the terms 'young farmers' with 'new entrants' in EU policy, also stressing the relevance of new entrants in the debate on generational renewal (Zagata & Sutherland, 2015).

Concerning the beginning farmers side of the issue more specifically, there is a growing body of literature, especially from the last five to ten years, on the situation in North America (see e.g. Gillespie & Johnson, 2010; Lasley, 2005; Lobley, Baker, & Whitehead, 2010; Niewolny & Lillard, 2010), some relevant literature coming from government or farmers' associations (Ahearn & Newton, 2009; Shute, 2011).

In Europe, the existing literature focuses mostly on the situation in specific countries, e.g. on barriers that new entrants are facing in Scotland (Williams, 2006), on perspectives of beginning female farmers in Switzerland (Rossier, 2009) and assessing the possibilities of farm start-ups in Germany (Schmidt, 2004; Thomas, 2006). With respect to the German literature, it is particularly interesting to note contributions from '*Der kritische Agrarbericht*' (Fink-Kessler, 2005; Schmidt, 2004; Vieth & Thomas, 2013) and a guideline for retiring and aspiring farmers as well as advisory services (Vieth, Roeckl, & Thomas, 2008). Furthermore, some of the European literature focuses on new models and success stories for farm succession (Dieterich, 2013; Fink-Kessler, 2005; Heisting, 2011; Ingram & Kirwan, 2011), with Korzenszky providing a model of extra-familial farm succession as a social innovation (Korzenszky, 2013). A major source for this research was Monllor's comparative study of beginning farmers in Canada and Catalonia, in which she compared to which extent new entrants and family farm successors represent different paradigms (Monllor, 2012).

Moreover, it is interesting to note the role of civic initiatives in producing literature on the issues they address; an example of this is a position paper on access to land by a European project group working on the issue (see also below concerning research on civic initiatives), explaining the connection between land access and the development of local, sustainable agriculture (Rioufol, 2011). Another example is a study on land purchase models in Germany by some of the founders of the cooperative Kulturland eG (Bahner, et al., 2012).

Notably, this review found a scarcity of literature on access to land in a European context. This is also noted by Franklin and Morgan (2014) who emphasize the centrality of access to land to community food and other sustainability initiatives and stress the surprising lack of academic discussion of the significance of land ownership in this context. One question they raise is how the scaling up of existing sustainable community-based food initiatives could relate to a possible substantive transition in current property systems. Furthermore, they assert the key role of a 'trusted intermediary' between landowners and land users in one of their cases, which provides an indirect link to the initiatives examined in this research; and call for a more innovative, flexible and multifunctional approach to debating and supporting meaningful land use (Franklin & Morgan, 2014).

Similarly, literature on the phenomenon itself of civic initiatives supporting beginning farmers is scarce; where present, it mostly comes from within the initiatives and is of an exploratory character. In particular, the role of the French organisation Terre de Liens (Terre de Liens, n.d.) in connecting actors, fostering research efforts and mapping experiences should be noted; another main actor is the German organisation Regionalwert AG (Regionalwert AG, n.d.) in connection with the German research association Die Agronauten (Die Agronauten, n.d.).

In a key work, Rioufol and Volz, both active in the above-mentioned civic initiatives themselves, observe main land access issues for local, sustainable farmers, and point out the diversity of emerging civic initiatives. They also provide more detailed information about their own organisations and name main benefits and challenges concerning civic initiatives (Rioufol & Volz, 2012). This paper is based, among other sources, on a series of case studies on 'access to land for community connected farming', realised in a project by the European NPO Forum Synergies (Forum Synergies, n.d.). Two of these case studies describe the abovementioned authors' own organisations in more detail (Rioufol & Wartena, 2011; Volz, 2011); three relate experiences centred around specific farms (Crouhennec, 2011; Fraticelli, 2011; Ravenscroft & Hanney, 2011); one further case study portrays an association connecting consumers and producers (Jokubauskas, 2011), and a project by a German city municipality investing in several organic farms (Bahner, 2011).

In addition to this series of case studies, some further articles and papers, not all academic, have been published on or by some of the same initiatives (see e.g. Rioufol & Wartena, 2013); concerning Regionalwert AG, a book on the model has been published by its founder that is also partly available in English (Hiss, 2014). Furthermore, Schiller et al. (2015) chose Regionalwert AG as a case in their exploration of the role of collaboration as a socio-technical innovation to illustrate how novel forms of collaboration may challenge regimes and promote transitions (see also chapter 3.2).

Placing these themes of generational renewal and new emerging models in a broader context, this research also involves issues relating to agricultural paradigms. Concerning this connection between the beginning farmer issue and paradigm, Zagata and Sutherland (2015) point to the academic debate around '*multifunctional agriculture*' and draw on Wilson's (2008) construction of locally embedded, environmentally oriented and diversified farm businesses as being more sustainable than others; they find that new entrants to farming are most likely to be addressed in the broader literature on multifunctional farming transitions (Zagata & Sutherland, 2015). For the context of this research, the focus was laid on the sustainable rural development paradigm which, in contrast

to other conceptualisations, points towards a symbiotic inter-connectedness between farms and their local surroundings and reasserts the socio-environmental role of farming (Marsden & Sonnino, 2008). This study addresses changes and developments in the social significance of agriculture and the emergence of a new type of farmers more particularly. It draws on the concepts of 'civic agriculture' (Lyson, 2004) and the 'new peasantry' (Ploeg, 2008). The latter, in combination with the 'new rural paradigm' (OECD, 2006), has furthermore influenced Monllor's conceptualisation of a 'new agro-social paradigm' (Monllor, 2012).

3.2 Theories and methods

With respect to generational renewal, study has focused on analysing statistics on farm structure and farmer age, a main source for Europe being Eurostat's Farm Structure Survey (Eurostat, 2009); as Zagata and Sutherland point out, however, Eurostat figures are insufficient in distinguishing between young continuers and new entrants, and fail to include new entrants above the age of 35 (Zagata & Sutherland, 2015). Apart from statistical data, some authors assess young farmer schemes, e.g. by applying farm optimisation models (Davis, Caskie, & Wallace, 2013).

Concerning the new models of generational renewal and civic initiatives supporting beginning farmers more specifically, most studies are of an exploratory character as mentioned above. Main methods used for the existing studies were qualitative interviews and case studies: Korzenszky developed her model through semi-structured interviews (Korzenszky, 2013); Ingram and Kirwan supplemented semi-structured interviews with focus groups (Ingram & Kirwan, 2011); Thomas combined problem-centred expert interviews with explorative case studies (Thomas, 2006); and Williams (2006) collected quantitative and qualitative information in questionnaire surveys. Bahner et al. (2012) conducted a survey among organic and bio-dynamic farms in Germany for their study on the land market, and created an inventory of alternative land purchase initiatives; similarly, Shute drew on a survey of over 1000 farmers concerning the issues newcomers face upon entering the sector (Shute, 2011). Several authors point out the necessity of using snow-ball sampling due to a lack of databases concerning new entrants (Heisteringer, 2011; Korzenszky, 2013; Williams, 2006).

Monllor (2012) conducted qualitative interviews and created an index to measure young farmers' attitudes and practices and to identify differences in these between young continuers (family successors) and new entrants. This New Agrosocial Paradigm Index was based on a selection of components of the 'new rural paradigm' (OECD, 2006), combined with insights from Ploeg's concept of the 'new peasantries' (2008). To elaborate, Ploeg conceptualised new peasantries reappearing in response to an agro-industrial paradigm in '*a complex battlefield in which different interests, prospects and projects compete*', resulting in parallel processes of repeasantization, industrialization and deactivation (Ploeg, 2008). Monllor integrates this conceptualization of the new peasantries in the new rural paradigm by including in the latter a social component; thus coining the term '*new agro-social paradigm*' (Monllor, 2012).

As stated in chapter 3.1, several civic initiatives have been subject to detailed case studies (see relevant references above) exploring the functioning as well as

the benefits of community connected farming; these rely mainly on authors' experiences and perspectives concerning each respective case.

Schiller et al. conducted an in-depth analysis of several initiatives including the abovementioned Regionalwert AG, using a transition perspective and concluding that the initiatives have introduced new practices and network connections and can thus be identified as 'socio-technical' innovations (Schiller, et al., 2015). This transition management approach is particularly interesting for this study, as will be elaborated in chapter 4.

With regard to the state of the art in transition studies, Grin et al. (2010) should be highlighted as providing a relatively recent review and outlook for research directions. A major concept in transition studies is the multi-level perspective, which is subject to considerable debate; Geels provides an overview and discussion of common criticisms and suggests directions for further research (Geels, 2011). Focusing on transition pathways in agriculture, Sutherland et al. (2015) provide a collection of European case studies on emerging transitions and highlight conceptual insights and challenges of studying transitions in farming (Darnhofer, Sutherland, & Pinto-Correia, 2015).

4 Theoretical framework

This research activates different concepts and theories in addressing the issues of generational renewal and civic initiatives' support of beginning farmers. This chapter endeavours to explain the relevant concepts and outline how they will be used in this research.

Transition theories deal with radical transformation towards a sustainable society in reponse to persistent problems confronting contemporary modern societies (Grin, et al., 2010). An overarching concept in different transition perspectives is the *multi-level perspective* (MLP, see details in Figure 1) which regards a transition as interfering processes at different levels: Firstly, the level of a socio-technical *landscape* as a set of deep structural, slow-changing factors that are very stable and can be seen as an external context for actors in the other levels. Secondly, socio-technical *regimes* that are described as '*semi-coherent sets of rules carried by different social groups*' (Geels, 2004); these may generate incremental innovations but are otherwise relatively stable. Lastly, there is the level of *niches* that generate innovative practices. Pressures on the regime from the landscape level may open up windows of opportunity for existing niches to influence the regime (Geels, 2011).

Increasing structuration
of activities in local practices

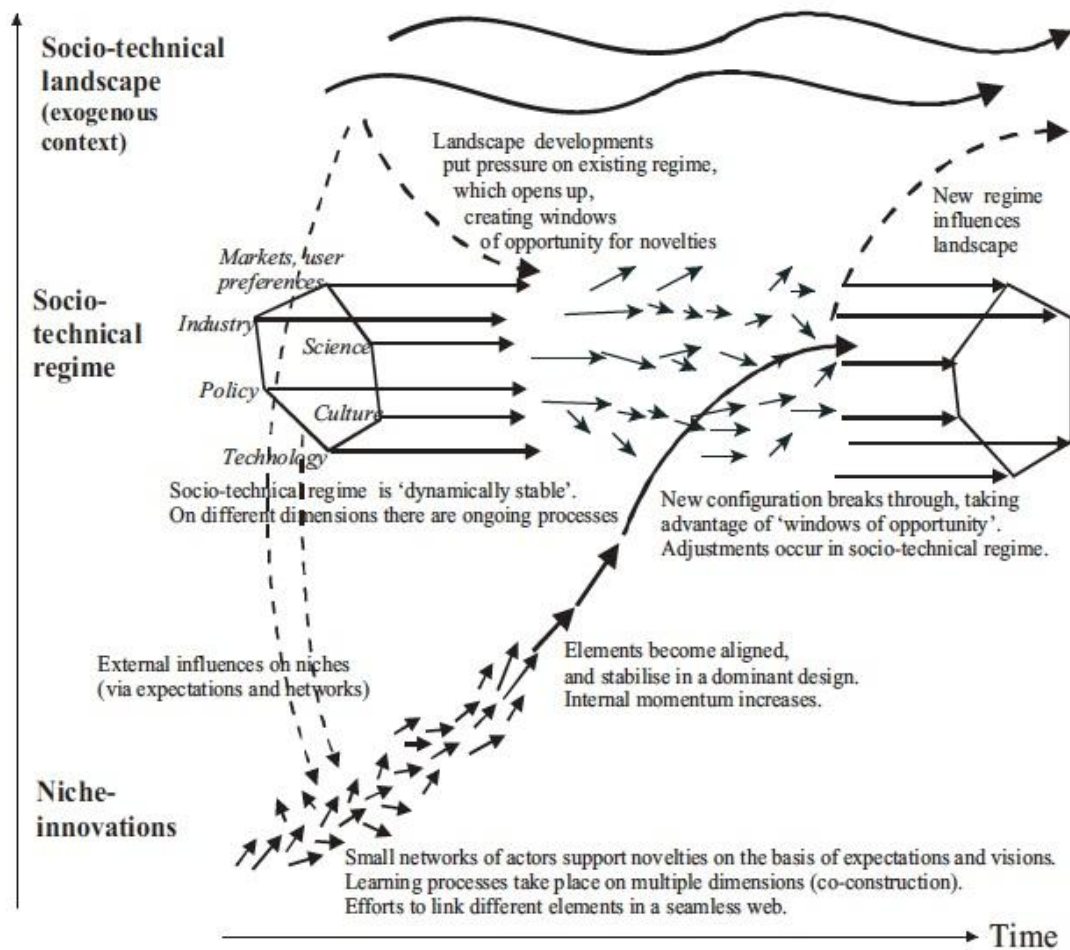


Figure 1: Multi-level perspective on transitions (Source: Geels, 2011, adapted from Geels, 2002)

This research regards community-connected, ecological agriculture as a niche interacting with the regime of mainstream, industrial agriculture, and explores the role of civic initiatives supporting beginning farmers as actors contributing (or not) to the institutional embedding of this niche.

In a first step, it is necessary to identify the initiatives' goals and values and to examine whether they match those of this niche. For this purpose, I draw on Monllor's new agro-social paradigm (2012); this also serves as a way of defining which agriculture is meant by the above terms. Monllor's conceptualisation of a new agro-social paradigm (see also chapter 3.2) encompasses a variety of components that shape farmers' attitudes and practices. The components she defines are: the local scale, diversity, the environment, cooperation, innovation, autonomy, social commitment, and a 'slow' focus.

Defining community-connected, ecological agriculture is no straightforward task and much could be said about the related choices made for the purpose of this study; for the sake of brevity, I will limit this to pointing at Monllor's (2012) components as major defining elements, and especially stressing the importance of local and social embeddedness and agroecology for the definition of community-connected, ecological agriculture in the context of this study.

As Darnhofer et al. (2015) point out, using the MLP in a farming context is not without its challenges. One especially relevant for this study is that farming is a land-based activity but land is also used for many other activities, resulting in an intertwining of the related regimes in any process related with land. This added complexity challenges the simpler MLP that usually focuses on one niche relating to one regime (Darnhofer, et al., 2015). Nevertheless, this study is aimed at providing exploratory insights into the role of civic initiatives and will use the MLP as a useful heuristic to do so, hoping to provide a starting point for further research. This can also be linked to Elzen et al. (2004) who point out the need for research providing an overview of potential novelties in specific fields that might merit further exploration.

While Smith's (2007) concept of '*institutional embedding*' and '*translations*' of sustainability between niche and regime was initially selected for the purpose of this study, an approach proposed by Elzen et al. (2012) was later chosen as a more adequate tool that, partly building on Smith's framework (2007), also represents more recent developments in the field of transition studies.

Elzen et al.'s (2012) identified three types of '*anchoring*' in the context of the interactions between niches and regime. To quote the authors, '*anchoring is the process in which a novelty becomes newly connected, connected in a new way, or connected more firmly to a niche or a regime. The further the process of anchoring progresses, meaning that more new connections supporting the novelty develop, the larger the chances are that anchoring will eventually develop into durable links*' (Elzen, et al., 2012).

Anchoring thus describes the linking processes between a niche and existing structures and institutions, and can be of a technological, network or institutional nature (Elzen, et al., 2012). As will be presented in chapter 7, in the case of civic initiatives, technical anchoring may e.g. involve new means of accessing land or the development of new financial tools; network anchoring represents the development of new partnerships, e.g. involving consumers in the funding of farms; and the establishment of novel rules or norms may be examples of institutional anchoring.

In summary, this study builds on Monllor's finding that newcomers' attitudes and practices represent the new agro-social paradigm more closely than those of continuers, using this insight as a basis for a qualitative assessment of the ways that civic initiatives supporting newcomers relate to or represent the new agro-social paradigm. This will enable explorations of the ways that the initiatives contribute to the development of community-connected, ecological agriculture; for this purpose, this study regards this type of agriculture as a niche and examines how the initiatives contribute to the anchoring and institutional embedding of this niche.

An additional important concept used in the course of this research is that of a shared vision as a key factor in creating change. This was based on the findings of Allen and Allen (1990); their understanding of the term '*vision*' was also influential for the way the term is applied in this study.

5 Methods

In this chapter, following information about the case selection, the methods used both for the gathering and the analysis of data will be outlined.

5.1 Case selection

For this research, 21 interviews with individuals working for initiatives in Europe supporting new entrants into farming were conducted. The initiatives selected are from 11 European countries plus one regional-international initiative covering four Nordic countries; their locations can be seen in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Map of initiatives' locations (Source: author's representation, using Google Maps, Map data © 2015 Basarsoft, Google, INEGI, ORION-ME)

In the course of the case selection, several methodological choices were made. Firstly, in terms of scope, this research focuses on initiatives that are available to a number of farms, thus excluding numerous potentially relevant cases of initiatives centered on one or two individual farms. Secondly, most of the cases selected are independent initiatives or independently working projects of larger organizations, thus excluding smaller projects run by e.g. farmers' associations or similar organizations. Exceptions are SUC-CH1, which is a project run by the Swiss small farmers' association Kleinbauern-Vereinigung, SUC-CH2, which is a project of a Swiss foundation, and INC-GB, which is a project run by the Kindling Trust.

In the case selection, close attention was paid to selecting cases from a variety of European countries in order to be able to identify differences and commonalities in approaches based on country contexts and conditions, e.g. laws and regulations etc. The majority of initiatives selected is located in Western Europe, which represents reality in that the number of initiatives in Eastern Europe is relatively smaller.

Furthermore, the cases selected represent different main activities, such as a focus on land purchase or on farm succession issues. While these activities often overlap, cases were grouped according to their main activity in order to more easily identify commonalities or differences between and within these groups regarding the research questions. For example, different land trusts may face similar challenges but these may differ from the challenges faced by farm succession initiatives.

In Table 2, initiatives are listed arranged by the focus of their work. Furthermore, this table includes interviewees' positions within the initiatives and the identification codes used throughout this research. The codes consist of three letters indicating the type or focus of initiative (TRU = land purchase (trust), COO = land purchase (cooperative or other models), SUC = farm succession, EDU = education, INC = farm incubator and REG = regional shareholder corporation) and two letters indicating the country. This combination was chosen to enable quick identification of the context of each initiative code.

More information on the individual initiatives can be found in Annex II: Case summaries.

Table 2 is meant to provide a quick overview of the cases to readers, and to display the diversity of approaches by assigning categories to the different initiatives, grouping them by similarities of focus. This makes no claim to be complete, nor does the assigning of any group mean that the initiative is not active in other fields; e.g. farm incubators may also offer educational projects or work on purchasing land. The focus was assigned by the author based on information acquired through the literature and through interviews, and may not represent the initiatives' own perception of their main focus.

Following the author's participation in a seminar where several initiatives were represented, some of the contacts established at this seminar provided opportunities for first interviews. In these interviews, participants were asked to name other initiatives working in the field, thus providing contacts for snowball sampling. In addition, several cases were found in the literature (Jokubauskas, 2011; Rioufol & Wartena, 2011; Volz, 2011) or in internet searches. Towards the end of the case selection, an expert was consulted to point out relevant initiatives that had not been contacted. This consultation added 3 initiatives to the list, two of which were interviewed.

Of the 26 initiatives contacted, 21 were finally interviewed. Of the other 5 initiatives, three did not reply; one offered to participate in an e-mail interview and was later excluded because saturation was reached; and one initially expressed a wish to participate but despite appointments ended up not being available for an interview within the set time frame.

Main focus	Initiative name	Country	Interviewee's position	Code
Land purchase (trust or foundation)	Stichting BD Grondbeheer	NL	Staff member	TRU-NL
	Soil Association Land Trust	GB	Staff member	TRU-GB
Land purchase (other models)	Terre de Liens	FR	Co-founder	COO-FR
	Terre en Vue	BE	Co-founder	COO-BE1
	De Landgenoten	BE	Coordinator	COO-BE2
	Terra Franca	ES	Co-founder	COO-ES
	Kulturland eG	DE	Co-founder	COO-DE
Facilitating farm succession	Landgilde	NL	Co-founder	SUC-NL
	Kleinbauernvereinigung	CH	Staff member/Coordinator	SUC-CH1
	Hofnachfolge.ch	CH	Initiator and coordinator	SUC-CH2
Education for beginning farmers	BINGN (Biodynamic Initiative for the Next Generation – Nordic)	NO/DK/ SE/FI	Coordinator	EDU-NO
	Escola de Pastors, Rurbans	ES	Co-founder and coordinator	EDU-ES
Farm incubators	FarmStart Manchester	GB	Co-founder and coordinator	INC-GB
	RENETA (Réseau National des Espaces Tests Agricoles)	FR	Coordinator	INC-FR
Network and/or multiple activities	Campi Aperti/ Accesso alla Terra/ Arvaia	IT	Member	NET-IT
	Viva Sol	LT	Coordinator	NET-LT
	CIVAM Bretagne	FR	Staff member	NET-FR
	NEL (Netzwerk Existenzgründung in der Landwirtschaft)	AT	Co-founder	NET-AT
Regional economy	Regionalwert AG	DE	Founder	REG-DE
European network perspective	Terre de Liens/European network on access to land	FR/ Europe	European project coordinator	EUR-NET
Land grabbing	EcoRuralis	RO	Staff member	GRA-RO

Table 2: List of initiatives by main focus, including country code, position of interviewee and identification code used. Source: author's elaboration.

In contacting potential interview partners, their position within their organization was considered an important factor. In most cases, founders, co-founders or coordinators of the respective initiatives could be recruited for interviews (see Table 2); direct involvement in the main activities of the initiative was also considered. Because of their positions, the interviewees' views and perspectives are considered to sufficiently represent important views and perspectives held by those active in each initiative.

Only one individual from each initiative was interviewed, with the exception of the French organisation Terre de Liens. In this case, one person was interviewed about the initiative, and another person coordinating the cooperation with initiatives abroad was interviewed about the European level and network activities.

5.2 Methods of data gathering

The data gathered was obtained using semi-structured interviews. 17 of the 21 interviews were conducted using the same guideline, which can be found in Annex I: Interview Guideline. In two further cases, the guideline was adapted after the initiatives provided rich material beforehand that rendered several questions unnecessary (COO-FR, REG-DE).

Additionally, the interview with the Romanian initiative EcoRuralis was conducted with an adapted guideline and focused on the issue of land grabbing, representing a common challenge in many European countries inhibiting access to land. Another addition was an interview with Terre de Liens' European project coordinator. The purpose of this interview was to gain more insights into the activities of the initiatives on a European network level.

Several interviewees pointed out the availability of case studies or other relevant literature about their work to be consulted for more details after the interviews. Where possible, these were included, taking care to focus the attention on the interviews nonetheless.

With the exception of one face-to-face interview, all interviews were conducted by Skype or phone call, using a voice recorder to record the interviews. All participants agreed to the interviews being recorded and signed consent forms expressing their consent to the use of the information obtained for this research.

The interviews lasted for 30-60 minutes, mostly depending on the availability of the participants.

13 interviews were conducted in English, and 8 in German depending on the preference of the interviewee. While this poses some challenges for the analysis, the resulting necessity of paying closer attention to linguistic and especially semantic issues in designing the interview guideline as well as in analyzing the interviews can be considered an advantage compared to conducting all interviews in the same language. As Kruse and Schmieder point out, language is not only a challenge in a foreign language context but a basic challenge in qualitative science that warrants special consideration (Kruse & Schmieder, 2012).

5.3 Methods of data analysis

The recorded interviews were transcribed using the software Express Scribe (NCH Software, n.d.). For the qualitative content analysis, after detailed consultation of Schreier's review of methods (2014), a structuring qualitative content analysis according to Kuckartz (2014) was chosen. This method allows for a combination of deductive and inductive categorization that corresponds to the research design in that information given in the semi-structured interviews can be structured according to the questionnaire (deductive themes); following this, the structured material can be inductively analyzed for emerging sub-themes. In addition to this, Kuckartz provided a useful tool for further analysis in the form of case summaries as well as thematic summaries (Kuckartz, 2014).

The structuring qualitative content analysis was conducted using the software TAMSAalyzer (Weinstein, 2002-2012); for valuable additional insights concerning coding, Saldaña (2013) was consulted.

As mentioned in chapter 2.4, all coding was done by a single coder; however, several passages were test-coded by and/or with other researchers at different stages of the analysis; valuable feedback, additions and changes were integrated into the code systems following these tests.

In a first analysis cycle, all interview transcripts were coded according to the main themes, based on the questionnaire, thus using deductive categories. The most important codes include 'basics', 'strategy', 'vision', 'challenge', and 'change'. Furthermore, I differentiated between information given in reply to the relevant question, and information given in a different context (e.g. 'vision>reply>visionquestion' vs 'vision>reply>other'). Information given at the end of the interview, answering the ending question, was coded as 'added' in addition to other applying codes. Information about projects other than the main project that was the focus of the interview, was also marked. During this process, analytical notes and interesting points were documented in analytical memos.

Once this process had been completed for all transcripts, all pieces of data material that had the same code were assembled and searched for sub-themes. These themes were developed from the material, thus producing inductive categories. Using these inductive categories, a part of the material was coded in a test cycle. Following refinements and adjustments, the entire material was then subjected to the second cycle and coded for all sub-themes.

Following this process, based on the coded transcripts, a case summary was written for each interview. These case summaries focused on the three main themes, 'vision', 'challenge' and 'change', and arranged the information given about these themes according to the main sub-themes prevalent in each respective interview, taking care to highlight what was said at which point in the interview (i.e. following a related question etc.).

The case summaries were then coded using the same sub-theme codes as the transcripts.

Using these coded case summary passages, each theme and sub-theme was analyzed; the results of the analysis can be found in chapter 6.

6 Results

In this chapter, basic information on the interviewed initiatives as well as the results of the analysis as outlined in chapter 5.3 are presented; the latter will be used to answer the research questions in chapter 7.

In consideration of the lack of literature on the different approaches and strategies of the various civic initiatives (see chapter 3.1), basic information on these will be provided in chapter 6.1 and 6.2 in addition to the main results relevant for this study, which can be found in chapters 6.3 to 6.5. In chapter 6.6, some further results, being beyond the scope of this research, are briefly highlighted.

6.1 Basic data

Basic data obtained in the interviews concerning the initiatives' founding year, affiliation and legal form, staff (paid/volunteer), scope and size or number of projects is displayed in Table 3. Blank fields indicate that the relevant information was not discussed in the respective interview.

It is interesting to note that the large majority of the interviewed initiatives were established in the last 10 years (16 out of 19), and nearly half in the last 3.5 years (9 out of 19). Furthermore, several of the very recently established initiatives are closely modelled on earlier initiatives, particularly on the French organisation Terre de Liens (COO-FR).

Nine out of 19 interviewees stated that their initiative is affiliated to a different organization. Of these, three are affiliated in some way to a national Biodynamic Association (TRU-NL, SUC-NL, EDU-NO), one to a national organic certifying body (TRU-GB), two to trusts or foundations (SUC-CH2, INC-GB), two to associations (EDU-ES, SUC-CH1) and one to a national grassroots-movement of associations (NET-FR). There were both affiliated and non-affiliated initiatives that stressed the importance of different actors and organisations coming together to establish a new initiative (see e.g. COO-FR, COO-BE1, COO-BE2, EDU-NO, INC-GB).

Concerning the legal form that initiatives take, the majority are organised as an association (9 out of 19); of these, two additionally consist of a cooperative or investment fund and a foundation (COO-FR, COO-BE1). Two more initiatives are legally a trust or foundation (TRU-NL, TRU-GB), while two others are projects of a trust or foundation (SUC-CH2, INC-GB). One initiative, REG-DE, is a citizen shareholder corporation.

The majority (11 or more) of the 19 initiatives have full or part time paid staff, while at least four rely solely on volunteers.

Regarding the scope of the initiatives interviewed, 8 are nation-wide, 6 have a regional scope associated with linguistic or administrative borders (COO-ES, COO-BE1, COO-BE2, SUC-CH1, EDU-ES and NET-FR), three are regionally organised around a city (INC-GB, NET-IT and REG-DE) and one, EDU-NO, spans 4 countries.

Initiative	Year est.	Affiliation	Legal form	Paid staff ?	Scope	Size / Projects
TRU-NL	1978	Biodynamic association	Foundation	Yes	National	14 farms / 190 ha
TRU-GB	2007	Organic certifying body	Trust	Yes	National	4 farms owned, several pledged
COO-FR	2003	None	Association, investment fund, trust	Yes	National	Ca. 100 farms / 2000 ha
COO-ES	2011	Association	Association	None	Regional (Catalonia)	20 applicants
COO-BE1	2011	None	Association, cooperative, foundation	Yes	Regional (Wallonia)	3 farms, several applicants
COO-BE2	2014	None	Cooperative, foundation	Yes	Regional (Flanders)	2 farms, several applicants
COO-DE	2014	None	Cooperative	None	National	1 farm, several applicants
SUC-NL	2013	Cooperation of a biodynamic school, biodynamic association and an organic consultancy firm		-	National	-
SUC-CH1	2014	Small farmers' association	Project of association	Yes	Regional (German-sp. Switzerland)	Numerous requests
SUC-CH2	2014	Private foundation for family farms	Project of foundation	Yes	Regional (German-sp. Switzerland)	Numerous requests
EDU-ES	2003/2009	None	Association	-	Regional (Catalonia)	17 students (2015), 102 total
EDU-NO	2012	Norwegian Biodynamic association	Network	-	International (Nordic region)	10 students (2014)
INC-FR	2012	None	Association	Yes	National	30 active test farms
INC-GB	2013	Trust	Project of trust	Yes	Regional (Greater Manchester)	4 first year test farmers (2015)
NET-IT	2001	None	Association, network	-	Regional (Bologna)	-
NET-LT	2006	None	Association	None	National	-
NET-FR	-	National grass-roots movement	Association	Yes	Regional	-
NET-AT	2013	None	Association	None	National	-
REG-DE	2006	None	Citizen shareholder corporation	Yes	Regional (Freiburg)	19 enterprises

Table 3: List of initiatives showing affiliation, legal form, and other basic information. Source: author's elaboration of information obtained in interviews.

6.2 Core activities and strategies

This chapter highlights the main activities and strategies observed in the research, grouping the interviewed initiatives according to their core activities (see also Table 2 and Table 3). More information can be found in Annex II: Case summaries.

6.2.1 Land purchase (foundations)

Land trusts and similar organisations aim to secure land for the long term by taking up land ownership and renting the land out to farmers, often according to a set of principles or rules laid out in the trust's charter. By doing so, they facilitate access to affordable land for farmers, ensure the long-term agricultural use of the land and are able to foster a specific type of farming. In both cases included in this research, the organisations were formed with the specific aim to keep land that had been under organic/bio-dynamic production under the same quality of production for the future, in order to maintain the soil quality that has been built up, often over the course of many years.

Trusts and foundations usually work by receiving donations in money or land. Land rents for farmers can be, but are not necessarily, cheaper than market prices.

TRU-NL is a Dutch foundation founded in the 1970s in a bio-dynamic context, while TRU-GB is a project of the Soil Association, a UK organic certifying body.

6.2.2 Land purchase (cooperatives and other models)

The model of cooperative land purchases stems from projects centred on individual farms, where citizens came together to invest in the purchase of a farm in order to secure the existence of the farm for the longer term. In France, the organization Terre de Liens (COO-FR; see also Rioufol & Wartena, 2011) established this model on a larger scale, combining an association with a solidarity investment company. Later, an additional endowment trust was established in order to be able to receive donations, both of money and of land and farms. Terre de Liens also purchases farm buildings. Based on the experience of Terre de Liens, similar organizations were established in various countries; however, the differences in national juridical and economic conditions (e.g. land prices) resulted in variations of the model. In Belgium, due to higher land prices, the established organizations do not take on land ownership in all cases, but may also act as an intermediary between landowners and farmers; a similar model is being established by COO-ES in Catalonia. In Belgium, the two similarly functioning organizations COO-BE1 and COO-BE2 have been set up in Wallonia and Flanders respectively.

The German land purchase cooperative COO-DE was also developed drawing on the experiences of farms owned by charitable trusts and of COO-FR, but focuses more exclusively on land than those mentioned above.

6.2.3 Facilitating farm succession

Initiatives focusing on facilitating extra-familial farm succession create a point of contact for farmers searching successors and aspiring farmers searching a farm. The latter may be from a non-agricultural background, or may be siblings of farm

successors or otherwise coming from a farming background. There are different models with different degrees of service provision, main activities being:

- Providing information on extra-familial farm succession
- Facilitating the exchange of contacts
- Identifying possible matches
- Providing contact to advisory services
- Providing advice on legal, financial, and social aspects
- Raising awareness
- Offering seminars on farm succession
- Providing guidance and mentoring during the process of farm succession

Depending on the model, these services may be free of charge or paid. While the three cases interviewed for this research are relatively similar in their activities, another important actor in this field in Germany (hofgründer.de, n.d.), was unfortunately unavailable for participating in this research.

The Dutch case SUC-NL is a project founded in a bio-dynamic farming context and aims to provide comprehensive advice and support to its target groups during the whole farm succession process. The recently established Swiss cases SUC-CH1 and SUC-CH2 differ in their affiliation to the small farmers' association and a private foundation for maintaining family farms, respectively, and in the degree of service provision, SUC-CH1 not claiming any advisory competences but providing contacts to other advisory services, including SUC-CH2.

6.2.4 Education for beginning farmers

Several European initiatives address the issue of lacking practical education for aspiring farmers. While official agricultural schools and universities often focus on education in conventional agriculture, and may be more geared towards students coming from farming backgrounds, these initiatives aim to provide practical and theoretical knowledge and skills in organic or bio-dynamic agriculture, often focusing on the needs of students who come from non-farming backgrounds.

EDU-NO addresses these needs with a special focus on bio-dynamic agriculture in the Scandinavian countries, being the only initiative interviewed basing its main activities on an international level. EDU-ES, based in Catalonia, is a school for shepherds and focuses on organic production.

6.2.5 Farm incubators

Farm incubators are places that enable aspiring farmers to put their interest in farming and their possible business ideas to the test by offering them a space where they can learn and work for a limited time. An important aspect of these models is that they give newcomers a lower-risk environment in which to try out a career that is normally associated with a high initial investment and considerable financial risks. Newcomers thus get an opportunity to make a more informed decision about entering the sector. Furthermore, they can build and develop their own business idea with guidance and lower risks, also reducing the risk of failure later on.

The British organisation INC-GB is a farm incubator based on a North American model (FarmStart, n.d.), and provides aspiring producers with an organic training site and a one-year training course, after which they can take on a plot of land to work more independently, with mentoring and marketing opportunities

provided. This plot of land can be increased in size every year. In total, the program takes five years, after which the producers are supported in finding their own land.

In France, there are different models and organisations running test farms (*'espaces-test agricoles'*) that are united in the national network association INC-FR. They offer aspiring farmers a legal status, access to land and necessary resources, as well as mentoring.

It is interesting to note that several other organisations mentioned that they want to establish farm incubators in their own countries, based on the above-mentioned experiences (e.g. COO-ES, COO-BE1, SUC-NL).

6.2.6 Networks and/or multiple activities

Several organisations have multiple core activities and/or a network function and were thus put in this group despite possible overlaps with others.

The case of NET-IT actually covers two organisations, one of which was founded to address access to land issues but was inactive at the time of the interview. The other is a network of producers and consumers promoting local, small scale, organic agriculture and city-country connections by involving different actors and organizing farmers' markets, encouraging consumers to visit farms etc. The interviewee, being a member of these networks, also co-founded a community farm project on public land that addresses many of the issues promoted by the network.

NET-LT is a Lithuanian association promoting city-country relationships, and fostering connections between producers and consumers. Furthermore, they provide support and information to beginning farmers, education for beginning and established farmers, promote small farming and organise a farmers' market for small farmers.

The French regional organisation NET-FR focuses on promoting and supporting new farmers. This is done by providing information, connecting people and creating networks, organising courses, events and other activities, and facilitating farm succession.

The Austrian association NET-AT serves as a network on the topic of farm start-ups. Current activities include:

- The establishment of a platform for farm succession (see principle above in chapter 6.2.3)
- Exchange of knowledge and experiences with other European organisations
- Providing information for aspiring farmers
- Connecting researchers working on related topics
- Researching farm incubator models with the goal of establishing a model in Austria
- Organising events on the topic, and raising awareness

6.2.7 Regional shareholder corporation

The initiative REG-DE is concerned with some of the main activities outlined in the other groups, but was assigned its own group because it represents a model clearly distinct from the others. It is a citizen shareholder corporation enabling citizens to invest in small and medium-sized agriculture and food related enterprises in the region (Volz, 2011). It can be regarded as extending the logic

of cooperative models of land purchase as described in chapter 6.2.2 to the funding and purchasing of a greater variety of investments and businesses along the food supply chain in a region. This includes farms as well as processors, distributors and advisory service suppliers. Furthermore, there is a focus on supporting beginning farmers in setting up.

6.3 Visions

This chapter displays the information given by the interviewees concerning vision. The information was partly given in reply to being asked about their vision, and partly in other parts of the interview. It is arranged by the most relevant of the themes by which it was coded in the qualitative analysis (see also chapter 5.3). With reference to Allen and Allen's (1990) understanding of 'visions' as objectives capable of inspiring cooperation and a sustained effort towards a common goal, the passages coded as 'goals', 'type of agriculture' and 'working values' were regarded as the most important aspects of interviewees' visions in this context.

More detailed insights into individual visions communicated in the interviews can be found in the respective case summaries in Annex II.

6.3.1 Replies to the vision question

Given the semi-structured nature of the interview, in some cases interviewees already discussed their vision in detail after the opening question, and were subsequently not directly asked about vision again (5 out of 19 interviews: COO-FR, COO-ES, COO-DE, EDU-NO, NET-IT). In other cases, for similar reasons, the vision question had a slightly different focus than the original questionnaire version. This was the case with TRU-GB and EDU-ES, where it focused on the organization's aspirations for the future (see below in chapter 6.3.2 on goals), NET-LT, where it focused on the organization's values (but was answered in terms of vision as well as values), and REG-DE, where it was phrased and understood as the ideal situation that could be reached (for the organization as well as the region).

Among the remaining replies to the vision question, a variety of scales and scopes of vision can be observed. While some interviewees stayed very close to their own organization's future when discussing visions, others had broader visions for agriculture in general or, in one case, even the whole food system.

Because the majority of statements in reply to the vision question focused on topics discussed either in chapter 6.3.2 (goals) or chapter 6.3.3 (type of agriculture) below, they are summarized in Table 4 in terms of main statements or 'catch-phrases' per initiative. It should be noted that these only include statements from those interviewees who were asked directly about their visions.

Interview	Statement
TRU-NL	<i>'Creating healthy farms'</i>
COO-BE1	<i>'Farming that is integrated in the social fabric'</i>
COO-BE2	<i>'Connecting all these people, to connect a new farmer with an old farmer, with the farmland'</i>
SUC-NL	<i>'Keeping organic soil a place where a new person can farm organically again'</i>
SUC-CH1	<i>'Making access to land easy, (...) to ensure that people with abilities and an interest in agriculture can also work in agriculture'</i>
SUC-CH2	<i>'Maintaining viable farms'</i>
INC-FR	<i>'Promoting an agriculture that respects human beings and environment'</i>
INC-GB	<i>'Completely revolutionizing the food system, so that it's a more sustainable and fair food system for everyone' and 'it's about supporting more growers to be able to live, to be able to have a sustainable livelihood from growing food'</i>
NET-LT	<i>'The common vision of the countryside, that it should be lively with many small peasant farms and artisan producers'</i>
NET-FR	<i>'A live countryside, and lots of farmers, and (...) producing food that will be consumed locally'</i>
NET-AT	<i>'A good, fair agriculture that has room for many people'</i>
REG-DE	<i>'Letting extra-familial farm succession become a common practice'</i>

Table 4: Statements of interviewees' visions from replies to the vision question. Source: author's elaboration.

Further information obtained from the replies to the vision question can be found in the following chapters, as well as in Annex II: Case summaries.

6.3.2 Goals

Passages and statements coded as 'goals' include objectives on different levels, ranging from influencing large-scale systemic change, to concrete aims in terms of tasks or activities that an initiative is striving to achieve in the near future. Most interviewees, however, spoke in most detail about the latter part of the spectrum, and about goals that could also be understood as mission statements. These will be treated first, followed by higher scale goals, and finally concrete aspirations or future plans.

Among those initiatives concerned with land purchase, a main goal is taking land out of the market logic (e.g. TRU-NL, COO-FR) and making land available for sustainable farming in perpetuity (TRU-NL). Keeping farmland in agricultural production (TRU-GB), particularly land that is already used for organic production, is also a recurring issue, with some interviewees stressing the importance of maintaining the soil fertility of previously organically farmed land (e.g. TRU-NL, SUC-NL). Apart from securing the land, an important goal concerning this is to establish and secure the connection of farmers with the land, by ensuring long-term tenancy security (COO-FR, COO-ES, COO-BE1), connecting landowners and land users (COO-ES, COO-BE1, COO-BE2) and protecting the interests of both (COO-ES, COO-BE2).

This also connects with the issue of newcomers in that access to farmland often depends on inheritance – thus, enabling easy access to land also outside

inheritance is another recurring goal (see e.g. SUC-CH1). This goal is not restricted to access to land, but also mentioned in the context of access to the farming sector in general that should not be restricted to people born into the sector (COO-DE, SUC-CH1, NET-AT).

Therefore, many of the initiatives actively aim to encourage and support new farmers and help them install (TRU-GB, COO-BE1, INC-FR, INC-GB); giving interested individuals and families the opportunity to work in the field of their interest (SUC-CH1, SUC-CH2) and providing them with places where they can get started (TRU-GB); especially incubator projects also aim to help young aspiring farmers to make a decision about whether they want to continue with this career after testing their projects (INC-FR, INC-GB). Furthermore, many of the initiatives actively aim to help young farmers to take over farms (SUC-NL, SUC-CH1, SUC-CH2), to provide them with market opportunities (INC-GB) and to settle in the countryside (EDU-ES, NET-LT).

One main goal connected with the issue of newcomers is the facilitation and promotion of extra-familial farm succession (SUC-CH2, REG-DE) by connecting old and new farmers (COO-BE2, SUC-NL); in this context, several interviewees emphasized the importance of motivating aging farmers to think about farm succession options and retirement plans early in their career (TRU-NL, SUC-NL, SUC-CH1, SUC-CH2). Furthermore, supporting newcomers is also connected with the aim of fostering innovation in agriculture (COO-DE, REG-DE) and, as one interviewee put it, regenerating the farm sector with new people and new ideas (EDU-ES, see also NET-FR). Also, the advocacy and promotion of farm incubators as a model are mentioned by several speakers (INC-FR, INC-GB, NET-FR).

In connection with this innovation aspect, the support for newcomers is often linked with a more general goal of encouraging people to connect with the land (TRU-GB, NET-LT) and with the way food is produced (e.g. NET-FR, INC-GB). Some interviewees saw this as an issue of connecting farmers and consumers (e.g. NET-IT), while others saw it from the perspective of promoting city-country relationships (e.g. NET-LT) and involving civil society in farming (COO-FR, COO-ES). More generally, several interviewees surmised that the promotion of a countryside that is 'alive' (NET-FR), 'lively', 'colorful' and 'dynamic' (NET-LT) and where many people are active as farmers or otherwise (NET-FR, NET-AT), can be seen as an overarching objective.

This relates also to the promotion of farming as a career (NET-AT, INC-GB, EDU-NO) ensuring farm continuity (EDU-ES) and the active sustaining of 'viable', 'healthy' farms (SUC-CH2, TRU-NL) and especially small and medium farms (SUC-CH1, see also COO-FR). One interviewee also phrased this as '*keeping nice, good working places for people who want to work in organic farming*' (SUC-NL).

Moving on to a higher level of objectives, the promotion of 'a different agriculture' (e.g. COO-FR) is a major issue: more specific aspects of what this envisioned agriculture entails can be found in chapter 6.3.3. Furthermore, the promotion of local food, sustainable food, community-based enterprises are mentioned repeatedly (e.g. NET-LT, TRU-GB, COO-ES).

Among some of the land purchase initiatives, the promotion of land as a common good rather than a commodity, and the establishment of cooperative ways of governing the '*new commons*' are emphasized as goals (COO-FR, COO-DE). Particularly COO-FR and COO-BE1 drew attention to their goal of bringing the issues of access to land and land management on the political agenda.

In relation with policy but also awareness-raising in general, several initiatives aim to serve as examples showing that *'a different way is possible'* (COO-BE2, see also COO-FR, SUC-CH2, INC-GB)

Three of the initiatives especially stressed the goals of influencing change on a higher level: INC-GB pointed out that the goal of the trust running the incubator project is to *'completely revolutionize the food system, so that it's a more sustainable and fair food system for everyone'*. COO-BE2 spoke about *'accelerating the transition toward a more sustainable way of farming'* and *'turning this evolution [of farm numbers declining] so that more people will be engaged in farming again, and that small farms stop disappearing'*; also, she points out that *'we hope that we will strengthen this movement of agroecological farming and farming that's connected to citizens, where people take responsibilities for the land and for the farmers that produce their food'* (COO-BE2). COO-FR focuses repeatedly on bringing together different organizations in one larger movement in order to create change.

Other goals include more generally supporting organic farmers (e.g. COO-BE2) and supporting growers so they have a sustainable livelihood from growing food (INC-GB); strengthening education for future farmers (EDU-NO, REG-DE, EDU-ES); connecting and networking between small initiatives (NET-LT) and raising awareness of the role of potential farm successors within farming families and the pressures they face (REG-DE).

Aspirations

Concrete goals for the near future that were repeatedly mentioned by interviewees include increased networking, closer cooperation and creating synergies with other actors in the field (COO-FR, SUC-CH1, EDU-NO) and with other projects, such as apprenticeship schemes, CSA projects, and nature conservation trusts (TR-GB); and creating closer ties within existing networks and fostering mutual understanding between actors (EDU-NO, INC-FR, REG-DE).

Several initiatives aim to develop new financial models to facilitate access for newcomers (SUC-NL, SUC-CH1) and to secure old farmers in their retirement (SUC-CH1, TRU-GB). Developing farm incubators (COO-BE1, SUC-NL, EDU-ES) and setting up more incubators based on existing examples (INC-FR, INC-GB) is also mentioned repeatedly.

Furthermore, continuing and increasing efforts in awareness raising are specified by a number of interviewees (e.g. TRU-GB, SUC-CH1, EDU-NO) and one specifically mentions the goal of working on the way farmers are valued (INC-GB). Concerning education, one initiative focusing on this as a main activity has plans of extending the duration of the training and improving training quality by having livestock at the training site (EDU-ES); one farm succession initiative also mentioned a plan of offering courses on farm succession (SUC-CH1).

INC-GB pointed out that following further development and improvement of their model, the objective is to use it as an example in supporting other people in creating change.

6.3.3 Type of agriculture

The interviewees' statements concerning the type of agriculture they see as ideal or which they promote varied in terms of how narrow or open their vision is to different models of production. While a couple of initiatives explicitly gear their activities towards bio-dynamic production, for example (TRU-NL, EDU-NO), others support any agriculture that '*respects human beings and respects the environment*' (INC-FR; see also e.g. NET-LT). These values of caring for people and the environment, however, are what connects the large majority of the initiatives and are mentioned in some form by all interview partners.

In the interviews, the theme of the agriculture envisioned and promoted is often very much connected to the criteria that initiatives use to determine whether or not to support a farm, farmer, student or project. An overview of main criteria can be seen in Table 5.

As can be seen in Table 5, organic production is an issue for the large majority of initiatives. Some initiatives use this as a hard criterion (e.g. COO-BE2, REG-DE), while with others it is not obligatory. One interviewee pointed out that organic certification was chosen as a criterion in order to outsource the judgement over whether or not a farm's production standards are sustainable (COO-BE2). Another mentioned that organic standards are applied in order to have a clearer profile towards shareholders and other actors supporting the initiative (COO-DE).

Another main criterion is that farms are connected to their local surroundings. This was explicitly stated by 6 of the 19 interviewees (see Table 5); others mentioned variations, e.g. fostering community connections (TRU-GB), or focusing their activities on a specific region and connecting farmers there with other actors (INC-GB, REG-DE).

The economic viability of farms is also a relevant issue and is used as a criterion by some of the initiatives; for a further discussion of the relevance of this, see chapter 6.4.4 on challenges on the farm level.

What is interesting to note is that small-scale farming is mentioned by several initiatives (e.g. COO-FR, NET-IT, NET-LT, NET-FR), but others point out that the scale is not a main issue. For example, one interviewee professed to support any farm size as long as it correlates to an adequate number of people working there (COO-BE1).

Another interesting point brought up by several interviewees is that the agricultural production should focus on food rather than non-food products (e.g. COO-BE1, COO-BE2, NET-FR).

Apart from these criteria, a repeating aspect of statements about agriculture in the vision context is that it should involve a diversity of farming activities, include many people, also non-farmers, and be an open sector (see e.g. NET-LT, NET-FR, NET-AT).

Initiative	Biodynamic Focus	Organic focus	Locally connected	Economic viability	Other criteria
TRU-NL	X	-	-	X	Mixed farms and closed cycle where possible
TRU-GB	-	X	(X)	(-)	Community connected where possible ('organic and sustainable farming')
COO-FR	-	X	X	X	Peasant farming, small scale, family; organic not obligatory
COO-ES	-	X	(-)	(-)	'Sustainable', 'not intensive'
COO-BE1	-	X	X	X	Scale not important as long as connected to amount of people; food production; professional farmers
COO-BE2	-	X	X	X	Food production, part of income from farming
COO-DE	-	X	X	(-)	7 guidelines for regional embeddedness
SUC-NL	X	X	-	X	-
SUC-CH1	-	-	-	(-)	Beginning farmers need agr. education (juridical reasons); other criteria determined by retiring farmers; willingness to consider extra-fam. succession; size/type of production not an issue
SUC-CH2	-	X	-	X	More than minimum of biodiversity measures, animal welfare standards, production site-adapted
EDU-ES	-	X	-	-	Applicants' vocation
EDU-NO	X	X	-	(-)	Peasant farming, closed cycle farming
INC-FR	-	(X)	-	(X)	Differences between members; 'respect human beings and respect environment'; projects that are thought through; organic not obligatory, but usually the case
INC-GB	-	X	(X)	(-)	Connection with other projects to create 'a sustainable and fair food system', incubator on organic land
NET-IT	-	X	X	(-)	Small-scale farming
NET-LT	-	X	-	(-)	Small peasant farming, responsible farmers
NET-FR	-	X	X	X	Food production, small and medium scale
NET-AT	-	-	-	-	Criteria being discussed
REG-DE	-	X	X	X	Pre-defined region; willingness to cooperate

Table 5: Overview of main criteria initiatives use, as discussed in the interviews. Source: author's elaboration.

6.3.4 Working values

Interviewees' statements expressing working values provide an interesting complement to the previous chapters concerning vision and enable valuable insights relating to paradigm.

One main value articulated directly and indirectly in most interviews is cooperation and networking. COO-FR especially expressed the importance of joining forces and creating synergies with other organizations, and involving different actors in order to achieve something (see also COO-DE, SUC-NL, EDU-NO, INC-FR, NET-AT), also adding the relevance of good humor and willingness to compromise (COO-FR). Several interviewees emphasized that their initiative was founded on a broad coalition of support from others (e.g. COO-BE1, COO-

BE2, INC-GB); COO-DE and INC-FR also asserted the significance of being broadly based and open as an initiative.

Some interviewees also pointed out their wish to connect people in order to foster understanding and trust (e.g. TRU-NL, EDU-NO, NET-IT), and the significance of respect for people (INC-FR, NET-LT).

Concerning dynamics within their respective associations, several initiatives alluded to the process of discussing and reaching consensus on goals and priorities (TRU-GB, COO-BE2, INC-FR, NET-AT).

Furthermore, the abovementioned values of respect and cooperation are also evident in initiatives working closely with farmers (e.g. TRU-GB, EDU-NO, REG-DE) and asserting the autonomy of the people they work with, e.g. by leaving criteria for newcomers up to retiring farmers (SUC-CH1) or the respective incubators (INC-FR), and by basing their educational programs on beginning farmers' own perceived needs and wishes (EDU-ES, INC-GB). Several interviewees pointed out the importance of taking each case's (i.e. each aspiring farmer's) context into account (TRU-GB, SUC-CH2, INC-FR); also, involving farmers as mentors and valuing their expertise is also emphasized by a few speakers active in educating newcomers (EDU-ES, EDU-NO, INC-FR, INC-GB).

Another expression of the value of cooperation, and also of inclusion, is the repeated focus on connecting the public with the farming world (e.g. TRU-GB, NET-IT, NET-LT) and of fostering the public debate about food production and farming, involving different perspectives and stakeholders (e.g. EDU-NO); concerning inclusion, INC-GB pointed out repeatedly how their model aims to involve and benefit people from different backgrounds. Furthermore, initiatives aim to encourage consumers to take responsibility and get involved with rural development issues (e.g. COO-ES, NET-IT, NET-LT) and generally foster responsibility and cooperation; as one interviewee put it when explaining the term 'producer-eater tandem', *'this is a thing that we introduced in the public speaking and people understand that an eater is somebody who is conscious of what he is eating, you know, a consumer with values. And in this context, a producer is somebody who is directly accountable for what he produces and what he sells, and he's in a direct relationship with the eater.'* (NET-LT)

Several interviewees pointed out the importance of professionalizing and formalizing procedures (TRU-NL, COO-ES, COO-BE1, COO-BE2, SUC-CH1, NET-AT). Also, they stressed their wish to be able to offer shareholders a substantial product (TRU-NL, COO-ES), and the significance of establishing a clear and transparent product or profile (TRU-NL, COO-BE2, COO-DE, NET-IT). Furthermore, honesty towards various stakeholders is also mentioned (COO-BE2, INC-GB, NET-IT).

Some initiatives observed that they are continuously working on making certain their model works well (EDU-ES, INC-GB). This is also connected with taking responsibility through the careful selection and support of projects in order to ensure success (COO-ES), thus giving security to stakeholders and helping newcomers develop a mature project (COO-BE1, SUC-CH2, INC-FR, INC-GB).

Several speakers mentioned basing their activities on scientific studies (COO-BE2, COO-DE, EDU-NO, NET-AT), and one pointed out the need for more data on the current situation in order to define goals for the future (REG-DE).

6.4 Challenges

All interview partners were asked to name the main challenges their organizations face. The term '*challenges*' was chosen in order to differentiate between problems in the sense of status quo *issues* that the organization is addressing and offering solutions for, and problems in the sense of *obstacles* that impede, slow down or otherwise challenge the success of the organizations in reaching their objectives. This chapter deals solely with the latter.

The challenges pointed out in the interviewees' replies represent different levels on which the organizations interact; while the majority of challenges named belong to the organizational level and can be grouped into external and internal challenges, several belong to a more structural level; these sometimes overlap with the basic problems the interview partners identified in their field, often as part of their description of the background of their organizations. Furthermore, since most initiatives work closely with farmers, several highlighted challenges on the farm level in addition to the organizational level.

A further interesting point regarding challenges as discussed by the interviewees is that several stated that they see difficulties as interesting tasks to work on, rather than as challenges in the sense of problems (EDU-ES, INC-FR, NET-AT).

6.4.1 Structural level

Many of the challenges mentioned by interviewees on a structural level can actually be seen as problems (see above). This chapter includes those that came up repeatedly in replies to the challenge question.

A major *economic* challenge is that of land prices, affecting different initiatives to a varying extent depending on regional and national land price averages.

In the Belgian organizations, both interview partners pointed out that due to high land prices, focusing on land purchase as an organization will limit the impact, so alternative, less capital-intensive models (for the organization) for access to land need to be developed (COO-BE1, COO-BE2). Similarly, this is an issue for initiatives in the Netherlands (TRU-NL, SUC-NL), as well as in other countries but was not mentioned in terms of challenges (as opposed to problems) by most.

Other main challenges on the structural level include juridical and policy issues. These may include land rights and tax regulations that favor the closure of farms or inner-familial farm succession (SUC-CH1, SUC-CH2); lack of pension models for farmers whose capital is bound in the farm (TRU-NL, TRU-GB, SUC-NL); inadequate farming lease contracts (COO-BE1); preemptive rights on land purchase (COO-DE); and strict money lending regulations impeding the development of new models for purchasing farms through community shares (TRU-NL, SUC-NL). Also, living arrangements in extra-familial farm successions are made more difficult where building houses on agricultural land is restricted (SUC-NL). In the case of farm incubators, juridical issues arise around people working as a farmer without having the juridical status of a farmer, and around property issues concerning land, machinery etc. (INC-FR).

Furthermore, the importance of agriculture in society and the awareness of access to land and farm continuity as important issues were mentioned as main challenges repeatedly. The importance of agriculture in society differs widely

between countries; e.g. EDU-NO pointed out the severe lack of interest in agriculture and the decline of farming in the Nordic countries and the resulting difficulty of arguing on a political level; specifically organic agriculture lacking networks and acceptance. TRU-NL also mentioned the lack of public interest in farming. While agriculture is more of an issue in e.g. Italy, it is difficult for organic agriculture to gain impact: consumers there lack awareness of the longer term benefits of organic agriculture, basing their decision to buy organic mainly on perceived personal health benefits; furthermore, organic farming is not considered by educational institutions and agricultural science (NET-IT). In France, although peasant farming is an issue that many people can still relate with, this is decreasing and COO-FR stresses the relevance of bringing the subject to the schools in order to turn this development around. INC-GB also emphasized that agricultural producers are not valued despite the crucial importance of their work, skills and expertise.

6.4.2 Organization level: external challenges

Several *financial issues* were named as challenges on the organization level, both external and internal. Especially among the more recently founded initiatives, there were problems with acquiring funds and being financially able to employ staff to coordinate previously volunteer-run activities (COO-ES, COO-BE2). Furthermore, several of the organizations receive subsidies but face insecurity concerning future financing, and thus are impeded in their longer term planning and project development (COO-BE1, EDU-ES, NET-FR). Also, several interview partners mentioned the acquisition of funds by recruiting association members, donations and other incomes as challenges in reaching their goal of being independent from subsidies (COO-ES, COO-BE2). In relation with this, some pointed out that there is limited to no public funding for access to land issues (see e.g. COO-ES, NET-FR). One initiative (NET-FR) mentioned competition for subsidies between actors working on similar issues in their region. One network representative mentioned that several members face difficulties around financing their projects (INC-FR).

In relation with this, several challenges regarding *networking and cooperations with other actors* were named. The great majority of interviewees stressed the importance of creating partnerships and gathering support from a broad base of actors (COO-FR, COO-BE1, COO-BE2, INC-GB). This was stressed repeatedly as the most important issue by COO-FR, saying about the abundantly present other organizations active in agricultural and environmental issues that *'like this they don't have an effect, political effect. They cannot develop a political force, because they are all (...) doing little bits everywhere, but not together. If all these organizations that want things differently don't make an effort, together, don't connect together with compromises, then the other politics will go through, will continue and will make sure that after a certain point it is impossible to develop an alternative agriculture'* (COO-FR). This is also stated by EDU-NO about the situation in the Nordic countries, where he says there is a lack of a common voice between actors in the organic scene. Interestingly, SUC-CH1 mentions that being a politically active organization can make it more difficult to build cooperations with others despite common goals (SUC-CH1).

When several actors within a country or region are working on similar issues, some interviewees mentioned that they are not always working together despite having common goals, e.g. saying: *'that's a big challenge because we are, I*

mean we are really such a small world, if we don't work together we will just, we will all stop existing' (NET-FR). In the Netherlands, one interview partner pointed out the challenge of organizing on a national level, which is hindered by juridical issues, instead of having numerous smaller initiatives, as is the case at the moment: *'we see small seeds and seedlings of new initiatives everywhere, and everyone is trying to discover for themselves, and there is not, like in [other countries] one bigger national initiative'* (SUC-NL; compare also founding history of COO-DE). Furthermore, several interviewees emphasized difficulties in cooperating with established agricultural advisory services that may not be sufficiently aware of or interested in issues concerning newcomers in agriculture (SUC-CH1, NET-AT). Also, since most initiatives come from a civic background, some see the challenge of gaining recognition from official agricultural institutions (INC-FR, NET-AT). TRU-NL stated that it is difficult to cooperate with banks because of differing values. INC-FR pointed out a challenge of creating models for involving farmers in incubator projects as mentors.

However, successful cooperation also depends on *other actors' awareness* of the issues around newcomers into agriculture, access to land etc. Apart from the lack of awareness among conventional advisory services (SUC-NL, SUC-CH1, NET-AT), several interviewees stressed the difficulty of convincing citizens to invest or donate their money for this cause, also considering the competition with other causes (COO-ES, COO-BE1). For one recently founded initiative that works as a member association, a crucial challenge is recruiting more members (COO-ES). Even more important, however, is the awareness of the majority of farmers themselves; while more on this is said below (see 'challenges on the farm level'), an important challenge for several initiatives was finding appropriate communication channels to raise awareness among different target groups (COO-ES, SUC-NL, SUC-CH1, NET-FR, NET-AT).

Further external challenges mentioned in addition to these main categories include the continuity of attracting new shareholders in order to be able to repay earlier shareholders (COO-DE); taking position against mainstream agriculture (SUC-CH2); finding marketing opportunities for beginning farmers (INC-GB), and recruiting appropriately able and experienced newcomers for incubator projects (INC-GB, INC-FR).

6.4.3 Organization level: internal challenges

The challenges mentioned by most interviewees on an internal level were related to work capacity and professionalization. This reflects the fact that the majority of organizations participating in this study was founded relatively recently and is based on volunteer-run initiatives.

Concerning *capacity*, several of those initiatives that are run on a volunteer basis named lack of time due to full-time occupations, and resulting pressure on individuals as important challenges (COO-ES, COO-DE, NET-LT). Similarly, some interviewees are the only employed coordinators of their organization and have limited time resources for a large amount of activities, including the day-to-day activities of the initiative as well as the coordination of volunteer staff (COO-BE2, SUC-CH1, SUC-CH2). One particular challenge in this field was not having the time to contribute to the activities being organized on a European network level (COO-ES, COO-BE2, SUC-NL, SUC-CH1, EDU-NO). Also, due to the small size of several initiatives, work capacity, and therefore impact, is limited. Moreover,

some interviewees also named a challenge related to the limited work capacity and the size of their organizations, i.e. having to decline some requests for support (TRU-NL, COO-BE1, COO-BE2); as one interviewee put it, *'the main challenge is to learn to say no, because we get so many demands and we would like to help everyone, but we are just [not enough employees]'* (COO-BE1). One mentioned difficulties related to the establishment of a small cooperative without affiliations to any larger organizations (COO-DE). Another interviewee brought up the possible challenge of keeping up motivation in a group of volunteers (NET-AT). In the case of NET-IT, one project is currently inactive, among other reasons due to capacity issues.

Regarding *professionalization*, several interviewees stressed that they are establishing procedures and guidelines for their activities as a part of ongoing professionalization processes (TRU-NL, COO-BE1, COO-BE2, NET-AT); also, building knowledge and acquiring trust from other actors in order to be recognized as a creditable actor in the field were mentioned by several of the more recent initiatives (COO-BE2, NET-AT).

Another important internal field of challenges concerns *finances*: initiatives working with farmers as tenants or newcomers as students mentioned having to set fair prices for rent or program fees, balancing their own costs and the financial possibilities of the farmers or students (TRU-NL, TRU-GB, COO-BE1, INC-GB). Furthermore, some of those initiatives that act as landowners or landlords say they have considerable financial responsibilities to consider (TRU-GB).

Other internal challenges observed include *decision-making* in groups, particularly overcoming differences of opinion and reaching compromises in groups that may consist of idealism-driven individuals: *'basically we agree on what we want, but then it's sometimes difficult to really agree'* (COO-BE2); and overcoming own barriers in e.g. asking for money as an organization but not being able to offer anything but ideal values in return (TRU-NL, COO-ES). As one interviewee put it, *'You don't get anything if you pay the [membership] fee, so this is kind of a difficult thing to sell. (...) we are just selling the future of the country'* (COO-ES).

Another challenge observed was finding the right starting point for a newly founded initiative: focusing on having a first success case in order to acquire more members, or first finding more members in order to be able to have the capacity to manage a first case (COO-ES).

6.4.4 Farms/Farmers level

Concerning challenges on the supported farms' or farmers' level, the issues brought up most often are viability of farms, and social aspects around farm succession. Though some of these overlap with or can be seen as challenges on the structural level, they were often grouped together by the interviewees who mentioned them, and are therefore also presented together.

Several interviewees mentioned the *viability*, particularly in economic terms, of farms as a challenge (TRU-GB, SUC-NL, SUC-CH1, INC-GB, REG-DE). This is especially referred to in the context of smaller scale farms (see e.g. TRU-GB), and of beginning farmers. A few interview partners also emphasized the

relevance of this for purposes of recruiting more newcomers, by helping to establish farming as a career choice that is also economically attractive; also, the viability of farms is seen as crucial in gaining credibility. As one interviewee points out, *'the credibility of the farmer himself and us as organizations (...) and of the whole organic world is involved in each farm that fails.'* (NET-FR); this adds a burden to beginning farmers already facing numerous challenges, who she points out *'have to prove twice more than any other farmer'* (NET-FR).

Regarding *social aspects*, several interviewees referred to difficulties around farm succession concerning awareness and planning among aging farmers (SUC-NL, SUC-CH1, SUC-CH2, NET-FR). Especially for extra-familial farm succession, it is crucial to think about the future of the farm, and one's own needs, wishes and retirement plans several years before reaching retirement age. This is often very difficult for farmers because it raises questions concerning their own future, the value of their work etc.; in addition, the processes around farm succession itself can take very long, which can be trying for individuals' patience (SUC-NL, SUC-CH1, SUC-CH2, NET-FR). Interviewees also mention a lack of trust towards newcomers, a lack of awareness of one's own needs and wishes (which results in more difficulties when making arrangements with potential successors), and a lack of perspectives for the farmer's role on or off the farm after retirement (SUC-NL, SUC-CH1, SUC-CH2, NET-FR). As one interviewee put it, farmers face many questions such as: *'What do I do after being a farmer? You define yourself through your farm and your own work, what do I do when I don't have that anymore? What do I expect from my successors, what, do I still want to play a role on the farm? If yes, what does that look like?'* (SUC-CH1). One other interviewee pointed out that some farmers refuse to discuss these issues, making it especially difficult to connect them with potential successors, and particularly difficult in more isolated regions (NET-FR).

Furthermore, one interviewee noted the issue of peer pressure from surrounding farmers who may push for selling the farm (in order to buy parts of it themselves) rather than support their neighbor in an extra-familial farm succession (SUC-CH2). Two interviewees mentioned the necessity of discussing farm succession issues with farmers' families, particularly children, in the course of the advisory services (COO-ES, SUC-CH2).

Concerning social difficulties around newcomers and beginning farmers, several interviewees observed that these are often very eager to start their own farm, and may not take enough time to get experience and acquire the knowledge necessary to do so (SUC-NL, SUC-CH2). Moreover, managing newcomers' expectations and helping them to make informed decisions, being aware of risks and disadvantages of being a farmer, is another challenge expressed by one interviewee (INC-GB). In the case of an incubator project, there were some minor difficulties around group dynamics within the program (INC-GB).

Reaching agreements between old and new farmers, particularly around living space arrangements, was also named as a challenge several times (SUC-NL, SUC-CH2, REG-DE). One interviewee saw it as a big difficulty to turn down farmers very active in the scene whose farms are not financially fit to be transferred (SUC-NL).

One interviewee stated that some farmers and other actors in the agricultural scene are unwilling to accept new solutions and participate in changes, even when problems abound (REG-DE).

Apart from these aspects, *finance* is also an issue on the farm level; for older farmers, it is often difficult to secure resources for their older age if they want to transfer their farm rather than sell it, while newcomers need substantial capital in order to acquire a farm (TRU-GB, SUC-NL, SUC-CH1).

A further challenge concerning beginning farmers is that official support for beginning farmers is often targeted towards a specific age group (e.g. under 25) that does not necessarily overlap with the demand, newcomers often coming from several years of experience in other professions (TRU-GB, INC-GB).

Further challenges mentioned in the farm context are access to knowledge and education, access to markets and access to finance, land and other resources (see e.g. NET-LT). These overlap strongly with problems and are discussed in more detail in the problem description.

Other challenges observed by interview partners were the work-intensity of setting up new enterprises (REG-DE), and the necessity of finding individual solutions for supporting farms depending on their respective context (TRU-GB, COO-DE, SUC-CH2). In the case of incubators, the difficulty of having incubator farms for animal husbandry and perennial crops, for reasons of higher investments and risks, was observed (INC-FR).

More detailed insights into challenges as communicated in the interviews can be found in the respective case summaries in Annex II.

6.5 Change

All interviewees were asked what changes they perceive in agriculture in their countries. This question often led interviewees to talk about how they see their own initiative in relation to the changes they described, and to highlight their initiative's impact. In some cases, these latter issues were asked directly, following a more general answer to the change question.

The majority of interview partners observe that there is an ongoing trend of intensification in agriculture; this was seen as a change by some, and as a state that is not changing by others. Simultaneous to this, interviewees perceive a growing trend of more community-connected, smaller scale agriculture, and increasing numbers of newcomers entering the farming sector. As one interview partner pointed out, these are '*two parallel movements, and kind of contradictory*' (NET-FR). Most interviewees describe the latter trend as very small compared to mainstream agriculture but stress that it is making a difference nonetheless.

More detailed insights into perceptions of change in agriculture as communicated in the interviews can be found in the respective case summaries in Annex II.

6.5.1 Intensification trend in agriculture

A main change that is seen as important by most interviewees is the disappearance of farms. This is directly connected with structural change, increases in farm size, and amalgamation of farms (e.g. TRU-GB). Several point out that this means a rapid decline of peasant agriculture (see e.g. COO-FR).

Concerning agricultural production, a change referred to by several speakers is the trend towards bio-energy (COO-FR, COO-DE, COO-BE1), which is also seen as driving up land prices (e.g. COO-FR) and slowing down the growth of organic agriculture by providing a profitable alternative to farmers (COO-DE). Another specific change highlighted is the end of milk quota with January 2015, which will also increase land prices in some countries: *'we expect lots of people to start milking more cows, and then of course they want more land as well'* (SUC-NL). Furthermore, the relevance of high-tech production, also in organic farming, is mentioned (TRU-NL) as well as continuing or increasing export orientation (SUC-NL, NET-FR, NET-IT). Several interviewees point out continuing government support for industrial, export-oriented agriculture (SUC-CH1, EDU-ES).

6.5.2 Alternative trends in agriculture

The interviewees mentioned a multitude of changes happening that can be seen as alternatives to mainstream agriculture.

Firstly, and most importantly to many of the speakers, there are increasing numbers of newcomers entering the farming sector that come from non-agricultural backgrounds. As one speaker put it, *'there's a whole new generation standing up and starting to farm'* (COO-BE1), saying that while this is of course no mass movement, it is a strong trend; others, however, see it more as a marginal change, and as exceptional cases (e.g. COO-FR). It is also highlighted that these newcomers are not necessarily very young people starting a farming career, but also people coming from a diversity of other professions (e.g. INC-GB), often after working in those professions for a number of years and being unsatisfied (COO-BE1). Several interviewees point out the role of these newcomers as innovators who approach farming from different angles than conventional or traditional farmers, e.g. using smaller technology (COO-BE1), introducing products that are not typical for the region (SUC-CH1, NET-FR) and choosing organic over conventional production (EDU-ES, INC-FR). One speaker also points out that *'if these people will prove to be successful, they might create followers'* (COO-BE1); others also assert that newcomers coming to rural areas with their own projects also do so *'to be an important agent of the local development'* (EDU-ES). In some interviews, the importance of newcomers in helping to open the farming sector is stressed, one speaker saying that *'it was a world that was really closed in on itself, somehow'* (NET-FR).

Furthermore, most interviewees talking about newcomers make it clear that these face considerable access problems, but some stress that while it is still not easy, it is becoming more possible for them to start farming (e.g. NET-FR).

As one interviewee points out, this trend of newcomers, though small, is important to show others that a different kind of farming is possible (COO-BE2). Also, COO-DE emphasizes that with the changed generation renewal through newcomers, *'we have to think agriculture in a different way'*.

These, as well as others, also highlight the recent growth of initiatives promoting different perspectives in agriculture, particularly highlighting *'a flourish in*

community enterprises' (TRU-GB) and projects involving more people in farming, including non-farmers (e.g. INC-FR). As INC-FR puts it, *'all those initiatives that can put together farmers and consumers and citizens are probably very symbolic of the way we try to see agriculture now. We want agriculture to involve also people that are not farmers'*. This is also linked to another trend mentioned in several interviews, i.e. the rising awareness of people about where their food comes from and how it is produced, and therefore increasing numbers of *'responsible consumers'* (see e.g. NET-IT, NET-LT). These consumers are critical of industrial agriculture (e.g. COO-DE); connect more directly with farmers, and are also willing to invest their money in funding farms (COO-BE1). The French community supported agriculture system of AMAP is mentioned by several speakers (e.g. INC-FR), and COO-ES mentions food cooperatives in his region; furthermore, NET-LT and NET-IT mention the growth of farmers' markets in their countries and several others refer to institutional or governmental projects around sustainable food in schools and other public institutions (INC-GB, NET-FR). In relation with this, a few interviewees emphasize that not only is there a growing number of initiatives around sustainable agriculture and related issues, but that in general more and more people are coming together to create change (INC-GB, COO-FR). In this context, the food sovereignty movement is mentioned by several speakers as gathering momentum (NET-AT, SUC-CH1).

One interviewee pointed out that there is an abundance of initiatives showing alternatives and people that *'want things differently and do things differently, but they are not together enough'*; thus highlighting the need for more cooperation between initiatives in order to create change (COO-FR).

Concerning agricultural production, several interviewees say that organic production is growing, although most agree that this growth is rather slow (e.g. TRU-NL, COO-FR).

In one interview, different consumer groups were described concerning the current boom of organic consumption, ranging from people who buy organic for health reasons, not minding about where it is produced, to people who buy local, not minding about organic or conventional production, and a group where both issues overlap (COO-ES).

6.5.3 Other changes perceived

Another issue mentioned abundantly is the changing, or lacking, renewal of farming generations: as fewer children of farmers take over their parents' farms, the farming population is over-aging. Several interviewees pointed out that this is a bigger problem in organic agriculture than in conventional agriculture, linking this also to farm size (e.g. SUC-NL).

Furthermore, one speaker said that organic production is more and more accepted by conventional farmers as a valid option (COO-DE); and several pointed out that an increasing number of conventional farmers are recognizing that newcomers are successful, and are doing their jobs well (see e.g. NET-FR, EDU-ES).

While some interviewees observed that agriculture is not an issue in the public debate (EDU-NO, SUC-CH2), others stated that awareness of the importance of agriculture is increasing (SUC-CH1).

Two interviewees mentioned the growing value of the countryside and former farms as beautiful living space for urban people in the context of farmers'

financial options upon retirement and the closure of farms (TRU-GB, SUC-CH1). One interviewee stressed increasing social problems connected with price developments that put pressure on farming families (SUC-CH2).

It is also interesting to note areas where interviewees perceive that nothing is changing: though this is beyond the scope of this chapter, important examples include education for agriculture still being mainly conventional (EDU-NO, EDU-ES) and land ownership still being very unevenly distributed (INC-GB).

6.5.4 Initiatives' impact and role in change

Impact was not an aspect that was discussed in all interviews, and the interviewees' perceptions on their initiatives' impact varied.

The main point concerning initiatives' role in creating change that was mentioned repeatedly was the support of newcomers, and the resulting fostering of new contributions and changes in the sector. Several interviewees referred to possible multiplication effects; as one put it, *'if these people will prove to be successful, they might create followers'* (COO-BE1). Others stated that their initiative's work is causing official agricultural institutions to consider the newcomers issue (see e.g. NET-AT). More generally, raising awareness on different levels of the problems of generational renewal and particularly access to land is one of the main points where interviewees see their initiatives' potential impact, another one linked to this is the promotion of new ideas and new models.

Several interviewees expressed the feeling that their impact is very marginal and limited, but nonetheless important (TRU-NL, COO-BE1, COO-BE2, NET-LT, NET-FR), especially as an example of how things could change (see e.g. COO-BE2).

Two quotes illustrate more pessimistic perceptions of initiatives' influence: *'we sometimes have the feeling that whatever we do is really a small drop of water in a really big ocean'* (NET-FR) and *'sometimes I feel a bit like a Don Quixote fighting against a development that really goes in a completely different direction'* (COO-FR).

When talking about recruiting marketing partners, INC-GB brought up the interesting point that it is only a matter of time before other actors will have to get involved in new models: *'They can either choose to do it now, or in a few years time, they'll have to look at how to buy their food more locally anyway. Because these things are going to change, they are changing, whether we like it or not, it's just (...) whether we as people trying to do it fairly and sustainably can help manage that change in a better direction'* (INC-GB). As she says at a different point in the interview, *'there's big scale changes happening, and we have to try and be part of that change because otherwise all these big changes won't be done in the way they need to be done'* (INC-GB). Furthermore, INC-GB has aspirations of starting a project to encourage people to create change.

Concerning concrete impact, REG-DE pointed out that his initiative had created jobs and educational opportunities in the region. EDU-ES states that the majority of their former students are engaged in farming activities. NET-LT succeeded in improving access to subsidies for very small farmers. COO-FR stressed that his organization has built up a national movement, present in all regions of his country, which enables the organization to play a small role in national politics.

6.6 Other results

In this chapter, I briefly want to highlight a few recurring issues that, while being beyond the scope of this research, constitute important aspects of the interviews and the subject at hand. One of these is the role of education, and more specifically the availability of practical education in organic agriculture (see e.g. NET-LT, NET-IT); increasing the availability of education in this field, as well as increasing access to it for newcomers, could be an important factor in the context of generational renewal as well as the promotion of sustainable agriculture.

Another crucial issue brought up repeatedly is cooperation. Although this is discussed in this study in the context of visions as well as challenges, it could constitute a more central role in future studies.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the issue of access to land, while not being a main subject in this research, is of vital importance and warrants further research especially in the European context. In an expert interview that was conducted in addition to the core interviews for this study, some insights into the European and more particularly the Romanian situation concerning land grabbing could be gained; it is clear that this issue very much influences generational renewal by posing additional challenges to newcomers and small-scale farmers (GRA-RO; see also Franco & Borrás J., 2013).

In the other expert interview, insights into activities on a European network level were gained. Including this aspect in the analysis in detail was beyond the scope of this research; however, this level adds an important dimension to the subject of this study (EUR-NET; see also European Network on Access to Land, 2015) and should be regarded more closely in further research.

7 Discussion

In this chapter, the results presented in chapter 6 are used to answer the research questions as presented in chapter 2.2. The outline of this chapter therefore follows the order of the research questions, starting with the theme of visions and how they relate to the agro-social paradigm, and then moving on to challenges and perceptions of change. Where relevant, I will point out connections with transition theory as indicated in chapter 4. For an integration of the different aspects of the discussion, and the answer to the leading research question, see chapters 7.5 and 8.

7.1 A common vision

This chapter seeks to answer research question a):

In which ways are the initiatives sharing a common vision?

Building on a brief discussion of a visualization of the main statements concerning vision supplied by the interviewees, this chapter will mainly draw on results discussed in chapters 6.3.2 (goals) and 6.3.3 (type of agriculture).

In Figure 3, some of the main characteristics of visions communicated by the interview partners were graphed according to the type of agriculture they involve (along varying degrees of specification) and the scale of the vision (from visions specific to the initiative via agriculture to the system level). Items represent the respective vision of each interviewee and are grouped by type. This figure is based on the author's interpretation of information from the interviews and, making no claim for accuracy or completeness, merely serves to illustrate some points that will be made in this chapter.

Firstly, I will discuss the scale of visions communicated (see y-axis of Figure 3). As can be seen in Figure 3, a few interviewees' visions relate directly to a specific aspect of the farming world; notably, all four of the most specific visions came from individuals involved with facilitating farm succession, and envisioned the establishment of extra-familial models of farm succession as a common practice. On the other end of the scale, a few interviewees' visions related to a higher level, e.g. changes on a food system level. The majority of visions can be found between those two extremes, relating to the farming world and/or a 'countryside' or territorial level.

Secondly, Figure 3 illustrates information from Table 5 concerning the degree of specification of the type of agriculture the initiatives actively support (see x-axis of Figure 3). Here it can clearly be seen that the large majority of initiatives support a specific production type (i.e. organic farming), although the strictness of defining this varies; on the highly specific end of the spectrum, three initiatives have a more or less exclusive focus on bio-dynamic agriculture, while on the other end of the spectrum, three initiatives are open to most types of production if they share a few important values.

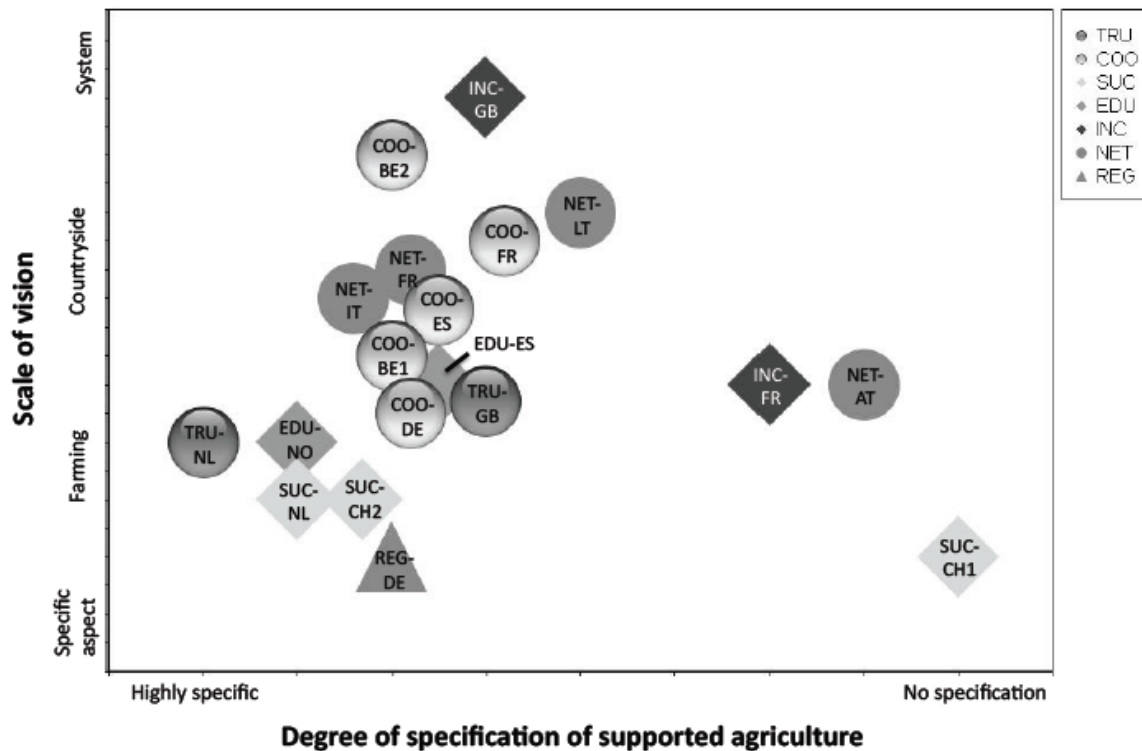


Figure 3: Individual visions as discussed in the interviews, arranged by scale of vision and degree of specification of agriculture supported (Source: author's elaboration)

This shows that the majority of the initiatives interviewed target a specific type of agriculture, although there is a variation in how strictly this is applied. Referring back to interviewees' statements concerning goals, however, we can see that there is an agreement between most interview partners that 'a *different agriculture*' is envisioned and actively promoted. A closer look at the three visions showing most openness reveals that the first, SUC-CH1, as a project offers its services to all types of production while the larger organization does promote small-scale, ecological farming. Of the other two, one (NET-AT) said that criteria were still being discussed but stated that despite clear views on which agriculture should be supported, they would likely be open in order to draw increased support from other actors. The other (INC-FR) stated that any agriculture respecting people and the environment would be supported.

As presented in chapter 6.3.3, apart from the promotion of organic and/or bio-dynamic farming, main criteria were that farms are locally embedded and economically viable; there was some disagreement between interviewees concerning the relevance of the scale of farming, and some brought up peasant or family farming as significant in their work.

Connecting these findings with the goals identified in the interviews (see chapter 6.3.2), it becomes clear that the majority of initiatives strive to promote and facilitate a *lively, open and sustainable farming world*. This includes encouraging and enabling the *continuity of existing farms*; facilitating *access to farming* and encouraging newcomers to consider this career; involving non-farmers in farming and food production and fostering *closer relationships* particularly between consumers and producers in a locality; securing *access to and preservation of farmland*; and developing *new tools and models* to facilitate these activities.

Furthermore, the initiatives aim to promote these tools and models, establish success cases to show their feasibility and potential and *foster public debate* on and raise awareness of these issues.

A main aspect where opinions were more varied was the scale of farming.

While a few individual initiatives may only share a small part of these goals, it can be concluded that the majority of initiatives do indeed share a common vision of a different agriculture as outlined above.

This finding is also relevant because a common vision can be a key enabling factor in creating change (Allen & Allen, 1990).

Regarding this issue from a transition perspective, I would like to point out that there is a strong innovation element and a strong networking element in the common goals described in this chapter. For further discussion of the transition implications, see chapter 7.5.

7.2 Visions in relation to the new agro-social paradigm

This chapter seeks to answer research question b):

How do the interviewees' visions relate to the new agro-social paradigm as proposed by Monllor (2012)?

In addition to chapter 7.1, this chapter will mainly draw on results presented in chapters 6.3.3 (type of agriculture) and 6.3.4 (working values) and relate them to Monllor's key components of the new agro-social paradigm (2012).

In the content analysis of the interviews, a multitude of links to Monllor's new agro-social paradigm components was identified. These links mainly arose in passages coded as 'working values' and 'goals'; for better readability, they will be arranged according to Monllor's components: the local scale, diversity, the environment, cooperation, innovation, autonomy, social commitment, and a 'slow' focus. For more details on these components and what they entail, see Monllor (annex 6, 2011).

The local scale

As pointed out in chapter 6.3.3, regional or local embeddedness of farms was among the main criteria used by a significant amount of initiatives. Furthermore, among those initiatives developing new funding models for farms, the involvement of local communities in the funding of a farm plays a crucial role.

In some cases, the promotion of local food was emphasized as a goal.

In this context it is interesting to note that export orientation was mentioned with a negative connotation by several interviewees (see e.g. NET-FR); notable exceptions being both Dutch interview partners, who also support farms that produce for export (TRU-NL, SUC-NL).

Diversity

While diversity was not often referred to explicitly by the interviewees, it arose as an issue in the context of an open farming sector as well as a lively countryside where a multitude of people are active in different ways. Moreover, several interview partners working with newcomers highlighted the introduction

of novel products and new marketing ideas.

A number of interview partners also pointed out the variety of professional backgrounds that both staff or volunteers in the organisation, but also new farmers come from. In one case, the inclusion and recruitment of aspiring farmers from different social groups was emphasized.

The environment

An environmental awareness, though not often mentioned directly, is evident in most initiatives' promotion of organic farming; notably, those that do not require organic certification do name respect for the environment as a criterion. Several interview partners referred to applying additional environmental standards, such as biodiversity or nature conservation measures, and some identified the preservation of soil quality as a goal.

Cooperation

As presented in chapter 6.3.4, cooperation and networking were among the most important values referred to in the interviews. While most interview partners named an abundance of existing partnerships and collaborations, many also included cooperations when talking about aspirations and plans for the future. A few interviewees pointed out the importance of being founded on a broad coalition of different actors. It is interesting to note that cooperation on different levels was referred to: within the respective field of work, i.e. with other initiatives (also internationally), advisory bodies etc.; with official agricultural institutions; and on the farm level, with farmers as well as consumers and others. In many cases, values concerning cooperation such as trust, honesty, responsibility and learning from each other were highlighted.

Significantly, cooperation was also named as a main external challenge on an organizational level (see chapters 6.4.2 and 7.3).

Innovation

All of the civic initiatives participating in this study represent innovative models and approaches to access to land, farm succession, consumer-producer relationships or related issues (see also chapter 7.1). Existing innovative models that may work well in one country are adapted or used as inspiration for new models in other contexts; also, obsolete or infrequently used tools are creatively adapted or revived for new purposes. This is especially true for legal tools and financial models.

Furthermore, several interviewees mentioned the goal of fostering newcomers also for the purpose of encouraging innovation in farming.

The promotion of and advocacy for new models is another point brought up repeatedly in the interviews.

Autonomy

Although autonomy was not referred to directly in any interviews, it was implied in two contexts. Firstly, when talking about interactions with the farmers or students an initiative supports, several interview partners pointed out responsibilities that are left to the farmers or students rather than taken up or influenced by the initiative (see e.g. SUC-CH1 letting retiring farmers use their own criteria for potential successors). Secondly, a number of interview partners stated the objective of becoming self-sustaining as an organisation, and no longer depending on external funding.

Another possible linkage to this component is the way some interviewees

described farmers as independent actors, entrepreneurs or respectable experts of their field. Furthermore, being civic initiatives and in most cases apolitical can also be seen as relating to autonomy.

Social commitment

Much attention is paid to the social aspects involved in farm succession, especially in the relevant initiatives; a number of interview partners also emphasized their goal to raise awareness of these issues. Moreover, a strong social commitment is also apparent in the initiatives' various strategies to include and involve different kinds of people in farming, to give security to farmers and consumers alike, and to give consumers access to good and sustainable food.

From the interviews, it also became clear that most interviewees are clearly committed to their task and take their responsibility very seriously; several pointed out the importance of honesty, transparency and continuously improving their models to ensure they reach their goals. This was also evident in several statements concerning the importance of regarding each case individually and seeing it in its context in order to be able to provide good solutions.

Moreover, several interviewees referred to global issues in agriculture and the importance of solidarity.

'Slow' focus

The relevance of a slow approach was only mentioned in several interviews, mainly by younger initiatives who pointed out that developing step-by-step was seen as important to ensure the quality of their projects, the acquisition of the relevant competences for each new step and the stable longer-term success. Most interviewees stressed the importance of being critical and learning rather than growing in size. This also connects with long-term thinking in general, a matter that was evident in many of the interviews.

Several interviewees working directly with young farmers and/or ageing farmers emphasized that they encourage these to take enough time to consider their own needs and plans concerning farm succession, and to approach the related processes consciously early enough ahead.

In summary, the majority of components of the new agro-social paradigm, i.e. the local scale, environment, cooperation, innovation and social commitment, can directly be connected with interviewees' visions and values and are evident in the majority of interviews. Autonomy and a slow focus, though stated less explicitly and not in all cases, also play an important role; the issue of diversity was less evident, but is nonetheless relevant in terms of who is active in the farming world, and also what they produce.

Further sets of values that were found relevant but do not directly connect with Monllor's components are professionalization and the importance of knowledge, and the importance of a systemic perspective that was apparent in many interviews. Testing the significance of these issues in other relevant groups and possibly establishing them as additional components of the new agro-social paradigm would constitute an interesting aspect of further research.

In conclusion, this research found that the visions, and in particular the values communicated by the interview partners, showed strong links to Monllor's new agro-social paradigm (2012), and possibly provided valuable additions.

7.3 Challenges

In this chapter, research question c) will be answered:

Which main challenges do the interviewees identify in reaching their vision?

Challenges on different levels were identified. Main challenges on a structural level include high land prices and the economic viability of small farms; juridical and policy issues around land, pension, money-lending and farmers' status; as well as the lacking importance of agriculture and related issues in society.

On an organization level, main external challenges include acquisition of funds, and long-term funding insecurity; lacking cooperation between actors in the field of agriculture and environment and, in some cases, a lack of recognition or interest from established agricultural institutions; and a lack of awareness of the problems of generational renewal and access to land among all relevant groups of actors. Internal challenges on this level concerned work capacity in small or volunteer-run initiatives; professionalization and gaining recognition; balancing costs; and modes of decision-making.

On the farm level, main challenges named were the viability of farms, social aspects around farm succession and financial issues, especially in terms of pension.

Here it is interesting to point out differences between the older and the more recently established initiatives, as some of the challenges, particularly on an internal level, concern mainly those founded very recently. This includes work capacity and professionalization issues in particular.

Moreover, an interesting additional finding is the variety of the extent that interviewees discussed challenges, some focusing on them throughout the interview and others naming a few concrete challenges when asked directly, but pointing out that challenges are seen as interesting tasks rather than real difficulties.

Furthermore, although the challenges on a structural level differ to some extent depending on country contexts, it is evident from the interviews that cooperation between the initiatives on an international level, and learning from experiences in other countries plays an important role in dealing with these challenges.

The challenges named by the interviewees identify some important issues concerning fields of further research. In particular, it would be interesting to gain more insights into strengths and opportunities that may help initiatives deal with the challenges identified. Further recommendations for future research can be found in chapter 8.

7.4 Change

In this chapter, drawing mainly on findings presented in chapter 6.5, research question d) will be answered:

Which changes, if any, do the interviewees perceive in agriculture in their countries?

The perceptions of change which the interviewees related correspond directly to the different trends in agriculture that were described in chapter 1.2.

It is interesting to note that the intensification of agriculture was described as a change by some interview partners, while others saw it as something that is not changing. Apart from this, there was strong agreement concerning the development of mainstream agriculture. Furthermore, interviewees agreed that there is a small but significant trend of new approaches and models in agriculture. Main changes include increasing numbers of newcomers entering the sector and bringing innovation potential; increasing community connections and new relationships between food producers and consumers; rising awareness and increasing numbers of responsible consumers; and, more generally, growing numbers of initiatives around sustainable agriculture and related issues.

Another main change repeatedly discussed was the over-aging of farmers, increasing lack of family successors, and resulting closure of farms, especially concerning smaller scale organic and/or family farms. The growth of the organic farming sector was seen as slow or stagnating.

What is interesting to point out with regard to perceived changes is differing perceptions of the relative amount of the incoming newcomers: while some interview partners talked e.g. about *'a whole new generation standing up and starting to farm'* (COO-BE1), others emphasized that interest in farming among the young generation is very marginal, and newcomers are still exceptional cases. Moreover, although there was general agreement on the growth of new approaches and initiatives in farming, some saw this as more abundant and ubiquitous than others; several stressed a lack of visibility of these initiatives, due to insufficient cooperation (see e.g. COO-FR). Similarly, interviewees' perceptions of their initiatives' impact were varied, but there was agreement concerning the importance of their contributions, if only as symbols of possible future change.

It was beyond the scope of this research to analyze the differences regarding interviewees' perceptions of change in the different countries. Furthermore, since it appeared that perceptions of change also depend, more strongly than other issues discussed in the interviews, on personal views, more interview partners per country should be included to be able to answer this specific question.

It should be noted that many of the interviewees seemed to find it more difficult to talk about changes they perceived than about other subjects that were asked. A few even stated that they did not feel competent to answer such a general question. A possible explanation is that subjects such as visions and challenges are more directly linked to the immediate field of activity of those active in initiatives. This difference is also apparent in the more personal views often expressed in the context of change (e.g. pessimism or optimism) than when talking about other subjects.

7.5 Connecting the dots: the role of civic initiatives

In this chapter, insights from chapters 7.1 to 7.4 are put in relation to relevant theory as outlined in chapter 4 in order to answer the main research question:

Could civic initiatives supporting new entrants into farming in Europe play a role as drivers of a new agro-social paradigm?

In the previous chapters, the visions and values of civic initiatives supporting new entrants into farming were identified and put in relation to components of the new agro-social paradigm (Monllor, 2012). Significant connections to all components were identified. In the framework of this research, this is understood as a confirmation that the civic initiatives share very similar visions and values as those connected with community-connected, ecological agriculture as defined in chapter 4. Based on this finding, I will now discuss in which ways the civic initiatives contribute to the development of this niche, in the context of a multi-level perspective.

The interview partners confirmed the basic assumption that community-connected, ecological agriculture has important characteristics that justify regarding it as a niche: its marginal position in relation to mainstream agriculture (the regime), its development in the context of pressures and tensions on a landscape and regime level, and its generation of highly innovative activities. Despite its marginal status, most interviewees also emphasized the growth of this niche. This could be an indication that the niche may be an emerging transition, though this is difficult to prove and warrants further research (Darnhofer, et al., 2015). The interview partners also confirmed their initiatives' active support of this niche in multiple ways, which will be regarded as forms of anchoring, according to Elzen et al. (2012). In the respective paper, three forms of anchoring are discussed: technological, network and institutional anchoring.

Technological anchoring refers to instances when the technical characteristics of a novelty become defined by the actors involved and thus become more specific to them (Elzen, et al., 2012). Since the subject of this study, however, involves new practices rather than technologies as such, with reference to Darnhofer et al. (2015) this type of anchoring is understood in this case to involve the development of new financial or legal models etc. The civic initiatives participating in this study support this kind of anchoring of community-connected, ecological farming by proposing, developing and spreading new tools for ensuring farm continuity. These include legal and financial tools for new (or rediscovered) forms of land ownership, farm succession beyond traditional inheritance lines, and the active recruitment and training of aspiring farmers. While instances of these practices may have occurred previously, the civic initiatives help establish them as more common practices or take them to a new level of organization (see e.g. the founding history of COO-DE).

Network anchoring is concerned with changes occurring in the network of actors that produce, use or develop a novelty, including closer contact and exchange among network actors as well as network expansion (Elzen, et al., 2012). This is the most evident type of anchoring in the context of civic initiatives. Many of the civic initiatives (particularly those working on land purchase) actively involve non-farmers in farming activities, e.g. in their role as responsible consumers (or, as some initiatives put it, co-producers or 'eaters') and/or funders. Furthermore,

through the direct support of locally embedded, community-connected farms, these networks are strengthened and encouraged. Those initiatives working on farm succession or educational projects facilitate the entrance of new actors into existing networks, and often help establish close contacts between people from very different backgrounds (e.g. retiring farmers and young newcomers) who all have their respective networks that might strengthen broader coalitions. In addition, those initiatives active on a European level help strengthen each others' networks through intensified contact, exchange and European-wide coalitions.

Institutional anchoring refers to developments within a niche being translated into new or adapted rules that play a role in orienting the activities of both niche and regime actors (Elzen, et al., 2012). A major way that civic initiatives facilitate institutional anchoring is by challenging commonly accepted formal and informal rules and views concerning land ownership, farm succession, the role of farmers and farmers' identities as well as the role of consumers, and by institutionalising new ways of approaching all of these.

One notable example of novel rules established by the initiatives is the use and development of specific types of lease contract that allow landowners (e.g. a civic initiative) to regulate how the land should be used (e.g. with organic production methods).

In summary, and in reply to the main research question, there are multiple ways in which civic initiatives contribute to the anchoring of community-connected, ecological agriculture. By doing so, they act as multipliers of the visions and values connected with this niche, thus clearly playing a vital role in promoting and furthering the new agro-social paradigm.

This study has also identified the main challenges that initiatives face in their work. These can be regarded as factors inhibiting the anchoring of the niche; however, more research is needed to establish how these challenges relate to the regime and landscape levels.

In connecting these findings with most of the interviewees' attitudes concerning their initiatives' own role in creating change, it appears that they may underestimate their potential impact. However, as stated in chapter 7.4, this may be due to personal characteristics. More detailed analysis of the direct and indirect ways in which the initiatives can have an impact would be an intriguing field of further study.

Moreover, while individual initiatives' impact may indeed be limited, one should not overlook the potential of their strength in networking and creating synergies. As Darnhofer et al. (2015) state, given the regionality and diversity of farming, *'within a region, there will be a multiplicity of niches, initiatives and projects. None of these may be large enough to muster the transformative energy needed to single-handedly engender a transition. However, (...) they may network with others, creating synergies that, together, fundamentally alter the dynamics within a region'*.

8 Conclusion

As Franklin and Morgan (2014) put it, the extent to which farmers have been able to participate in direct and interactive relationships with community groups has been limited because *'current agri-food, property rights and land-use paradigms have maintained barriers that are inhibiting more intimate and creative relationships from taking root'*. This research has found that civic initiatives supporting beginning farmers are working directly on questioning and removing these barriers, thus fostering new relationships and promoting community-connected, ecological agriculture. Using a transitions perspective, I have shown how these initiatives actively support the rooting or anchoring of the latter (see chapter 7.5). Moreover, I have found that the civic initiatives not only share main characteristics of the new agro-social paradigm as proposed by Monllor (2012), but could play a vital role in its promotion.

This is highly relevant in our times as the context of wider resource governance and ecological crises calls for the building of *'new frameworks and insights about how creative and innovative sustainability solutions and adaptations can be embedded and constructed'* (Marsden, 2014).

More particularly, by proposing and establishing new models to tackle the issue of lacking generational renewal in farming, the civic initiatives may constitute an important contribution to securing the future of farming in Europe. Despite their seemingly marginal status, their role in this and in fostering the development of community-connected and organic farming in particular should not be overlooked.

This study has also found that a main strength of the civic initiatives active in this field lies not only in their innovative proposals as such, but in their way of connecting different actors and creating new networks. As pointed out in chapter 7.5, this creation of synergies may amplify their transformative potential.

In conclusion, this study suggests that civic initiatives supporting new entrants into farming show considerable potential in innovating the way generational renewal happens, thereby fostering the inclusion and establishment of a new generation of farmers that may bring further innovation to the sector. By focusing their support on community-connected, ecological farming in general and organic farming in particular, they are actively contributing to the sustainable development of European agriculture, and show potential for pushing the transition towards a more sustainable food system.

Recommendations for further research

As presented in chapter 3, research on civic initiatives supporting new entrants into farming is still scarce.

While the focus of this study was quite broad, more in-depth study of the specific cases, as well as inclusion of more initiatives is needed. Furthermore, it was beyond the scope of this study to include official or internal documents of the initiatives in the analysis – where possible, this could add valuable insights.

Moreover, the concrete strategies that the initiatives follow to be successful in reaching their goals constitute a crucial field for further research.

Particularly promising frameworks include a more detailed application of the multi-level perspective, possibly regarding the civic initiatives as niches themselves and connecting this with the study of emerging transitions (see e.g. Sutherland, Darnhofer, et al., 2015). Another promising approach would be to more closely examine the relationships which the civic initiatives foster, and how they represent a new rural-urban interface (see e.g. Franklin & Morgan, 2014).

In particular, I would recommend further studies to take a more trans-disciplinary approach, working more closely with the initiatives during the research design, and e.g. contributing to a better understanding of, and possibilities of overcoming the challenges they face.

Concerning possible contributions to theory, this study suggested that there may be relevant components to be added to Monllor's new agro-social paradigm (2012), i.e. concerning the importance of professionalization and expertise, and a systemic perspective. More research is needed to verify the validity of this proposal.

9 Abstracts

Generational renewal in agriculture is crucial in ensuring viable food production. While the European farming population is trending towards over-aging, growing numbers of new entrants into farming are facing many challenges in entering the sector. The proceeding industrialization of European agriculture is aggravating the problem of generation renewal, while the importance of local, sustainable farming is increasing, offering opportunities for a new farming generation. These opposing trends represent an agro-industrial and an agro-social paradigm. The recent demand for new models of generational renewal has led to the creation of various initiatives on the subject, often carried by civic society and aiming for community-connected, sustainable farming. They may thus be contributing to a shift between paradigms. Using tools from transition management, this research explores in which ways such initiatives could play a role as multipliers of a new agro-social paradigm. To answer this question, it aims to identify their aims, visions, and relation to the agro-social paradigm. Next, it explores how they can be successful in reaching these aims, focusing on challenges faced and perceptions of change in agriculture. To this end, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 21 individuals active in different initiatives across Europe. A qualitative structuring content analysis was performed, combining deductive and inductive categorization. The emerging themes were compared with elements of the agro-social paradigm and analyzed from a transitions perspective. In conclusion, this research found that European initiatives supporting new entrants into farming do share common visions, such as a lively countryside and a diverse farming sector, that correspond to the main elements of the agro-social paradigm. Despite facing some considerable challenges, the initiatives can be seen as gaining impact and showing great potential as multipliers of the new agro-social paradigm.

Keywords: generational renewal, agro-social paradigm, agricultural newcomers, beginning farmers, new entrants, farm succession, farm incubators, land trusts, cooperative farming, sustainable farming, civic initiatives, access to land, farm start-ups

Deutsche Kurzzusammenfassung

Der Generationswechsel in der Landwirtschaft ist für die Gewährleistung einer nachhaltigen Lebensmittelproduktion unumgänglich. Während die bäuerliche Bevölkerung in Europa zur Überalterung tendiert, sehen sich immer mehr NeueinsteigerInnen zahlreichen Hindernissen gegenüber. Die fortschreitende Industrialisierung der europäischen Landwirtschaft verschärft das Problem des Generationswechsels, während lokale, nachhaltige Landwirtschaft immer wichtiger wird und der jüngeren Generation neue Möglichkeiten zur Existenzgründung bietet. Diese gegenläufigen Tendenzen stellen ein agroindustrielles bzw. agrosoziales Paradigma dar. Der Bedarf an neuen Modellen zur Erhaltung landwirtschaftlicher Betriebe hat zur Bildung diverser Initiativen geführt, die oft zivilgesellschaftlichen Charakter haben und eine lokal eingebettete, nachhaltige Landwirtschaft anstreben. Dadurch tragen sie möglicherweise zu einem Paradigmenwechsel bei. Diese Arbeit erforscht mittels Werkzeugen aus dem Transition Management, inwiefern diese Initiativen eine Rolle als Multiplikatoren eines agrosozialen Paradigmas spielen. Um diese Frage zu beantworten werden zunächst ihre Ziele und Visionen sowie deren Beziehung zum agrosozialen Paradigma identifiziert. Weiters wird erhoben, welchen Herausforderungen sich die Initiativen gegenübersehen und welche Veränderungen sie in der Landwirtschaft wahrnehmen. Hierfür wurden semi-strukturierte Interviews mit 21 Personen durchgeführt, die in diversen Initiativen in ganz Europa tätig sind. Die Daten wurden einer qualitativen strukturierenden Inhaltsanalyse unterzogen, in der deduktive und induktive Einteilungen vorgenommen wurden.

Zusammenfassend zeigt sich, dass die befragten Initiativen gemeinsame Visionen teilen, die den Merkmalen des agrosozialen Paradigmas entsprechen, z.B. ein dynamischer ländlicher Raum und ein vielfältiger Agrarsektor. Trotz einiger Herausforderungen ist erkennbar, dass die Initiativen an Einfluss gewinnen und eine wichtige Rolle als Multiplikatoren spielen können.

10 Literature

- Ahearn, M., & Newton, D. (2009). *Beginning Farmers and Ranchers. United States Department of Agriculture: Economic Information Bulletin (53)*.
- Allen, J., & Allen, R. F. (1990). A Sense of Community, a Shared Vision, and a Positive Culture: Key Enabling Factors in Successful Culture Change. In R. Bellingham, B. Cohen, M. R. Edwards & J. Allen (Eds.), *The Corporate Culture Sourcebook*. Amherst: Human Resource Development Press.
- Bahner, T. (2011) Hamburg City Estates. *Series on Access to Land for Community Connected Farming: Forum Synergies*. Available at: http://www.forum-synergies.eu/docs/a012_hamburg2.pdf.
- Bahner, T., Diermayr, X., Schmid, T., Schwedeler, A., Zaiser, M., & Zucker, I. (2012). *Land[frei]kauf. Bodenmarkt und neue Eigentumsformen im Ökologischen Landbau*.
- Crouhennec, C. L. (2011) The Jaglea family farm. *Series on Access to Land for Community Connected Farming: Forum Synergies*. Available at: http://www.forum-synergies.eu/docs/a012_jaglea_farm2.pdf.
- Darnhofer, I., Sutherland, L.-A., & Pinto-Correia, T. (2015). Conceptual Insights derived from case studies on 'emerging transitions' in farming. In L.-A. Sutherland, I. Darnhofer, G. A. Wilson & L. Zagata (Eds.), *Transition Pathways towards Sustainability in Agriculture: Case Studies from Europe* (pp. 189-203). London: CAB International.
- Davis, J., Caskie, P., & Wallace, M. (2013). Promoting structural adjustment in agriculture: The economics of New Entrant Schemes for farmers. *Food policy*, 40(2013), 90-96.
- Die Agronauten (n.d.). Die Agronauten Retrieved September 16, 2014, from <http://www.agronauten.net/>
- Dieterich, T. (2013). *How to become an organic farmer without having land. A Case Study for Germany*. Unpublished Project paper, University of Hohenheim, Hohenheim.
- Elzen, B., Geels, F. W., & Green, K. (2004). *System Innovation and the Transition to Sustainability: Theory, Evidence and Policy*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Elzen, B., van Mierlo, B., & Leeuwis, C. (2012). Anchoring of innovations: Assessing Dutch efforts to harvest energy from glasshouses. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 5(2012), 1-18.
- European Communities. (2011) Structural development in EU agriculture. *EU Agricultural Economic Briefs: Brief N° 3 - September 2011*.
- European Communities. (2012) Generational Renewal in EU Agriculture: Statistical Background. *EU Agricultural Economic Briefs: Brief N° 6 - June 2012*.
- European Network on Access to Land (2015). Access to Land, from www.accesstoland.eu [to be launched in summer 2015]
- Eurostat (2009). Farm Structure Survey Retrieved 24.04.2015, from http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Farm_structure
- FarmStart (n.d.). FarmStart: supporting a new generation of farmers, from <http://www.farmstart.ca/>
- Fink-Kessler, A. (2005). Aussteigen - Einsteigen: Über neue Organisationsmodelle und Hofneugründungen [Exit - Enter: About new organisation models and farm start-ups]. *Der kritische Agrarbericht*(2005), 71-75.

- Forum Synergies (n.d.). Access to Land, 2015, from <http://www.forum-synergies.eu/rubrique16.html>
- Franco, J., & Borrás J., S. M. (2013). *Land concentration, land grabbing and people's struggles in Europe*: Transnational Institute (TNI).
- Franklin, A., & Morgan, S. (2014). Exploring the new rural-urban interface: community food practice, land access and farmer entrepreneurialism. In T. Marsden & A. Morley (Eds.), *Sustainable Food Systems: Building a New Paradigm*. London: Routledge.
- Fratlicelli, M. (2011) Agricoltura Nuova: a multifunctional cooperative farm integrated in its territory. *Series on Access to Land for Community Connected Farming*: Forum Synergies. Available at: http://www.forum-synergies.eu/docs/a012_agricoltura_nuova2.pdf.
- Geels, F. W. (2004). Understanding system innovations: a critical literature review and a conceptual synthesis. In B. Elzen, F. W. Geels & K. Green (Eds.), *System innovation and the transition to sustainability: theory, evidence and policy* (pp. 19-47). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Geels, F. W. (2011). The multi-level perspective on sustainability transitions: Responses to seven criticisms. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 1(2011), 24-40.
- Gillespie, G. W., & Johnson, S. E. (2010). Success in Farm Start-Ups in the Northeastern United States. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems and Community Development* 1(1), 31-48.
- Google Maps (2015). [map of locations of European civic initiatives] Retrieved 13.04.2015, from <https://www.google.com/maps/>
- Grin, J., Rotmans, J., & Schot, J. W. (2010). *Transitions to sustainable development: New directions in the study of long term transformative change*. New York: Routledge.
- Heistingner, A. (2011). "Ich habe mir meine Erben selbst gesucht" - Höfe neu beleben: Möglichkeiten eines Einstiegs in die Landwirtschaft ["I looked for my successors myself" - New life on farms: Possibilities for entering agriculture]. Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt, Fakultät für Interdisziplinäre Forschung und Fortbildung Standort Wien.
- Hiss, C. (2014). *Regionalwert AG - Strengthening the regional economy with citizen shareholder support*: Available at: <http://www.agronauten.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/RegionalWert-AG-parts-of-book-english.pdf>.
- hofgründer.de (n.d.). hofgründer.de, from <http://www.hofgruender.de/>
- Ingram, J., & Kirwan, J. (2011). Matching new entrants and retiring farmers through farm joint ventures: Insights from the Fresh Start Initiative in Cornwall, UK. *Land Use Policy*, 28, 917-927.
- International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (2008). *Agriculture at a Crossroads: Synthesis Report*.
- Jöhr, H. (2012). Where are the Future Farmers to Grow Our Food? *International Food and Agribusiness Management Review*, 15(Special Issue A).
- Jokubauskas, A. (2011) Viva Sol: an association of cheese eaters and producers. *Series on Access to Land for Community Connected Farming*: Forum Synergies. Available at: http://www.forum-synergies.eu/docs/a012_vivasol2.pdf.
- Korzenszky, A. (2013). *Extra-familial farm succession and its specifics in contemporary Austrian family-based smallholder farming - Visualised by a qualitative model with relevant sociological parameters*. Paper presented at the XXV ESRS Congress: Rural resilience and vulnerability: The rural as locus of solidarity and conflict in times of crisis, Florence, Italy.

- Kruse, J., & Schmieder, C. (2012). In fremden Gewässern. Ein integratives Basisverfahren als sensibilisierendes Programm für rekonstruktive Analyseprozesse im Kontext fremder Sprachen. In J. Kruse, S. Bethmann, D. Niermann & C. Schmieder (Eds.), *Qualitative Interviewforschung in und mit fremden Sprachen: eine Einführung in Theorie und Praxis* (pp. 248-295). Weinheim: Beltz Juventa.
- Kuckartz, U. (2014). *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse. Methoden, Praxis, Computerunterstützung*. Weinheim/Basel: Beltz Juventa.
- Lasley, P. (2005). *All in the family: The decision to take up farming*. Paper presented at the Agricultural Outlook Forum 2005.
- Lobley, M., Baker, J. R., & Whitehead, I. (2010). Farm succession and retirement: Some international comparisons. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems and Community Development*, 1(1), 49-64.
- Lyson, T. A. (2004). *Civic Agriculture: Reconnecting Farm, Food, and Community*. Medford, Massachusetts: Tufts University Press.
- Marsden, T. (2014). Conclusions: Building the food sustainability paradigm: research needs, complexities, opportunities. In T. Marsden & A. Morley (Eds.), *Sustainable Food Systems: Building a New Paradigm*. London: Routledge.
- Marsden, T., & Sonnino, R. (2008). Rural development and the regional state: Denying multifunctional agriculture in the UK. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 24(2008), 422-431.
- Monllor, N. (2011). *Explorant la Jove Pagesia: Camins, Pràctiques i Actituds en el Marc d'un Nou Paradigma Agrosocial. Estudi Comparatiu Entre el Sud-Oest de la Província d'Ontario i les Comarques Gironines*. Universitat de Girona, Girona: doctoral thesis.
- Monllor, N. (2012). *Farm entry: a comparative analysis of young farmers, their pathways, attitudes and practices in Ontario (Canada) and Catalunya (Spain)*. Final report.
- NCH Software (n.d.). Express Scribe Transcription Software (Version v 5.70 Intel): NCH Software.
- Niewolny, K. L., & Lillard, P. T. (2010). Expanding the boundaries of beginning farmer training and program development: A review of contemporary initiatives to cultivate a new generation of American farmers. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems and Community Development*, 1(1), 65-88.
- OECD (2006). *The New Rural Paradigm: Policies and Governance*: OECD.
- Ploeg, J. D. v. d. (2008). *The New Peasantries - Struggles for autonomy and sustainability in an era of empire and globalization*. Sterling, VA: Earthscan.
- Ravenscroft, N., & Hanney, R. (2011) Tablehurst and Plaw Hatch Community Farms. *Series on Access to Land for Community Connected Farming: Forum Synergies*. Available at: http://www.forum-synergies.eu/docs/a012_tablehurst2.pdf.
- Regionalwert AG (n.d.). Regionalwert AG Retrieved September 10, 2014, from <http://www.regionalwert-ag.de/detail/unsere-ziele/>
- Rioufol, V. (2011). *Lifting the land barrier: The indispensable step towards developing local, sustainable, civic agriculture in Europe*. Provisional paper.
- Rioufol, V., & Volz, P. (2012). *Civic initiatives on Access to Land for Local, Sustainable Farmers in Western Europe*. Paper presented at the IFSA.
- Rioufol, V., & Wartena, S. (2011) Terre de liens: Removing land from the commodity market and enabling organic and peasant farmers to settle in good conditions. *Series on Access to Land for Community Connected*

- Farming*: Forum Synergies. Available at: http://www.forum-synergies.eu/docs/a012_terre_de_liens.pdf.
- Rioufol, V., & Wartena, S. (2013). *The experience of Terre de Liens, France: a "laboratory" for managing farmland as a commons?* Working paper.
- Rossier, R. (2009). Future prospects of young female farm managers in Switzerland. *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Gesellschaft für Agrarökonomie*, 18(2), 55-66.
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Second ed.). London: Sage.
- Schiller, S. R., Gonzalez, C., & Flanigan, S. (2015). More than just a factor in transition processes? The role of collaboration in agriculture. In L.-A. Sutherland, I. Darnhofer, G. A. Wilson & L. Zagata (Eds.), *Transition Pathways towards Sustainability in Agriculture: Case Studies from Europe* (pp. 83-96). London: CAB International.
- Schmidt, G. (2004). Eine Chance für die Neugründung von Höfen! Als "Closed Shop" hat die bäuerliche Landwirtschaft keine Zukunft [A chance for the start-up of farms! As a 'closed shop', peasant farming has no future]. *Der kritische Agrarbericht*(2004), 18-24.
- Schreier, M. (2012). *Qualitative content analysis in practice*. London: Sage.
- Schreier, M. (2014). Varianten qualitativer Inhaltsanalyse: Ein Wegweiser im Dickicht der Begrifflichkeiten. *FQS Forum: Qualitative Sozialforschung*, 15(1).
- Shute, L. L. (2011). Building a future with farmers: Challenges Faced by Young, American Farmers and a National Strategy to Help Them Succeed. NY: National Young Farmers' Coalition.
- Smith, A. (2007). Translating Sustainabilities between Green Niches and Socio-Technical Regimes. *Technology Analysis & Strategic Management*, 19(4), 427-450.
- Sutherland, L.-A., Darnhofer, I., Wilson, G. A., & Zagata, L. (2015). *Transition Pathways towards Sustainability in Agriculture: Case Studies from Europe*. London: CAB International.
- Sutherland, L.-A., Zagata, L., & Wilson, G. A. (2015). Conclusions. In L.-A. Sutherland, I. Darnhofer, G. A. Wilson & L. Zagata (Eds.), *Transition Pathways towards Sustainability in Agriculture: Case Studies from Europe* (pp. 205-220). London: CAB International.
- Terre de Liens (n.d.). Terre de Liens, from <http://www.terredeliens.org/>
- Thomas, F. (2006). *Förderung von Existenzgründungen in der Landwirtschaft [Facilitation of start-ups in agriculture]*. Unpublished Project report, Universität Kassel.
- Vieth, C., Roeckl, C., & Thomas, F. (2008). *Höfe gründen und bewahren [Founding and conserving farms]*. Kassel: kassel university press.
- Vieth, C., & Thomas, F. (2013). Hofnachfolger gesucht - und vorhanden. Vorschläge für eine gezielte Unterstützung von jungen Landwirten [Farm successor wanted - and available. Suggestions for supporting young farmers]. *Der kritische Agrarbericht*(2013), 26-31.
- Volz, P. (2011) The Regionalwert: Creating sustainable regional structures through citizen participation. *Series on Access to Land for Community Connected Farming*: Forum Synergies. Available at: http://www.forum-synergies.eu/docs/a012_rwag.pdf.
- Wang, J.-H. (n.d.). *Recruiting Young Farmers to Join Small-Scale Farming: A Structural Policy Perspective*. Paper presented at the FFTC-RDA

International Seminar on Enhanced Entry of Young Generation into Farming.

Weinstein, M. (2002-2012). TAMS: Text Analysis Markup System: An open source qualitative analysis system (Version 4.47b4ah).

Williams, F. (2006). Barriers Facing New Entrants to Farming – an Emphasis on Policy. *Land Economy Working Paper Series*(17).

Wilson, G. A. (2008). From 'weak' to 'strong' multifunctionality: Conceptualising farm-level multifunctional transitional pathways. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 24(2008), 367-383.

Zagata, L., & Sutherland, L.-A. (2015). Deconstructing the 'young farmer problem in Europe': Towards a research agenda. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 38(2015), 39-51.

11 Annex I: Interview Guideline

Context provided:

I am a master student at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria.

I am writing my master thesis about civic initiatives in Europe that facilitate access to land and support for beginning farmers. My focus will be on the initiatives' own perspective on what they do and how they are contributing to possible changes in society. As a part of this, I am interviewing staff members of such initiatives about their views on these subjects.

Framework questions:

Is it ok for you that I record our conversation?

Is it ok for you if your name and the name of your organization are mentioned in my thesis?

Do you have any questions before we start?

Q1: Could you tell me a bit about your organization?

Added questions:

- What is the background of your organization?
- What's the scope of your organization? (regional/national/etc.)
- Who works for your organization? (own background and colleagues, number of staff)
- Is your organization run by volunteers or by paid staff?
- Do you feel supported by other organizations or institutions?
- Who do you cooperate with?

Q2: What would you say is the vision that your organization is working towards?

Added questions:

- What plans do you have for the future of your organization?
- What would you say is your ideal for agriculture?
- What are your criteria for supporting a farm or a project?
- What else is important in your work?

Q3: What would you say are the challenges in your work (as an organization)?

Added questions:

- Are there any other difficulties that you face?

Q4: Which changes do you perceive in agriculture in your country/region?

Added questions:

- Do you have the feeling there is a change in how people farm?
- Are you aware of any other changes?

Q5: Is there anything else you would like to tell me about (that has not been mentioned)?

12 Annex II: Case summaries

The following case summaries constituted an important analytical step in the research process and represent the author's perceptions of information supplied by individuals. The aim of the case summaries was to reduce the body of text from the interview transcripts to the main themes, including representative quotes where possible, and taking care to remain close to the material. The inclusion of own interpretations was limited as far as possible. These case summaries do not represent an initiative's official communication, vision statement or similar and make no claim to be complete. They were included in this annex in order to give readers the opportunity to get an impression of what was said in the interviews.

For more information about the respective initiatives, as well as other organizations active in the field, in addition to the abovementioned literature, the following website is recommended: www.accesstoland.eu

12.1 Case summary: TRU-NL

Context: TRU-NL is a Dutch land trust for bio-dynamic farms. It is the oldest of the interviewed initiatives. Apart from buying land and renting out to bio-dynamic farmers, new activities are being developed which don't require the direct purchase of land, since land in the Netherlands is so expensive.

Vision: The interviewee mentions several visions, such as creating healthy farms and getting people motivated to think about the subject of farm continuity. With respect to the latter, he deems it important that farmers think about how to organize their retirement early enough to enable transferring the farm. Having an influence in that process is one goal of his organization. Moreover, providing advisory services as well as events and talks is part of the vision of TRU-NL, with a strong focus on action. In the context of visions, the interviewee also states that especially recently, the initiative has '*stopped just dreaming*' and started doing what is possible for them as a small foundation.

Type of agriculture: The initiative has a clear focus on certified bio-dynamic farming, although some new projects being developed also include organic farming; this should be closed cycle farming, so mixed farms are supported where possible. Another criterion is the viability of farms. The initiative targets diverse farms in the sense of pluri-active farms (naming a farm running a restaurant as an example). The interviewee states that his own perspective is wider and despite the ideal of mixed small farms it is also necessary to professionalize and scale up, also e.g. expressing his interest in the combination of high-tech and organic agriculture. He observes that some of the supported farms are locally embedded (box schemes etc.) while others produce for export or supermarkets. Connections between farms and farmers' cooperatives for processing goods etc. are also referred to. He states that since people in the Netherlands have resided in urban areas for a long time, fewer small family farms exist than e.g. in France, and consumption of local goods is less common.

Goals: The main goal of this initiative is to buy farmland using money from donations and making it available for biodynamic farming, thus taking it out of

the commodity market for perpetuity. This model includes decoupling rent from land price and coupling it to quality instead. The overarching goal is to make it feasible to keep farming organically/ bio-dynamically.

Another goal is networking and visiting farms, although the interviewee admits that there is presently no capacity to incorporate this as much as wished. Furthermore, the interviewee states that by freeing farms and making it possible to rent them, farm succession is facilitated. Lastly, an important goal is to keep developing the project and growing, thus gaining more influence.

Working values: An important issue mentioned repeatedly is professionalization. Moreover, transparency is emphasized as crucial; a clear substantial product should be offered to donors and investors, and 100% of the donations go into land purchase. The interviewee also repeatedly stresses the importance of realism, e.g. not taking on projects that the small foundation does not feel ready for, as well as acting as an entrepreneur by meeting people and cooperating.

The initiative's background is rooted in anthroposophy and organic farming. According to the interviewee, in this context it is important to continuously develop rather than clinging to the past. The interviewee relates that he is trying to develop new projects, for which he is putting in more volunteer time.

The interviewee also stresses that there are some cooperations with other foundations in various countries and that this networking is also improving.

Challenge: In response to the question about challenges, the interviewee mentions land price as the main issue. Although donations are good, they are not enough to meet the high prices of land. Linked to this is the dilemma of having rent that is affordable to farmers but also covers costs. Asking for big donations is a difficult task, he admits, and competing with others for donations is challenging as land is a less 'sexy' issue than others.

Other challenges mentioned are professionalizing, limited capacity for projects because of the small size of the foundation and resulting difficulty in gaining impact. Furthermore, he refers to the difficulty of money-lending regulations: in the Netherlands, larger models like Terre de Liens are not possible because a banking permit would be needed. At the same time, existing banks are not able to support them sufficiently because of different values.

Another challenge is that people in the Netherlands are less interested in and connected with the farming world than in other countries. While organic consumption is growing, this is limited to a certain part of the population.

Lastly, helping farmers by developing new pension models is also named as a challenge.

Change: With respect to change, the interviewee says that while seeing a lot of development happening, e.g. concerning the growth of organic markets shares, he thinks one shouldn't have the illusion that things will be very different in ten years' time. While organic agriculture is growing in consumption as well as farm numbers, only a certain class buys organic. He does believe that awareness concerning agriculture is rising, as e.g. talk about the deterioration of soil quality is increasing; in this context, he also mentions the UN Year of the Soil.

On the other hand, though, he observes that conventional agriculture is developing too, on a more high-tech level. He believes that although organic agriculture is becoming more professionalized and high-tech as well, change is happening in small steps only.

12.2 Case summary: TRU-GB

Context: TRU-GB is a land trust run by the Soil Association, an organic certifying body in the UK. It was created in 2007 through the coming together of another land trust and an estate with the Soil Association, and focuses on holding land in trust for organic farming.

Vision: In this interview, the vision question focused on visions for the future of the organisation. The interviewee points out that at the time of the interview, the trust is focusing on re-assessing their strategies and aspirations for the future. Possible aspirations include: cooperating with the Soil Association's apprenticeship scheme; working with CSA projects; raising awareness about the trust's work; supporting and cooperating with projects supporting beginning farmers; and cooperating with other trusts in situations where land is offered that may fit better with another trust's projects.

One main issue is working out mechanisms that secure farmers' financial needs after farming: *'if people have been farming all their lives, they don't necessarily have great sets of money set aside. They're not, some people are in the position to be able to have money set aside to care for themselves into their older age, but for others, everything is tied up in the farm, and that's the only thing that they then have that's a value to sell to enable them to provide for these other things despite having, you know, worked hard at it all their lives. So, there's some (...) issues around that which we're looking at exploring, and (...) that could also help more people be able to think about perhaps leaving their land in trust, if we were able to come up with some suggestions or solutions around that.'*

Type of agriculture: The interviewee states that the TRU-GB *'exists to hold land in trust for organic and sustainable farming'*, and while not all farms pledged to the trust are organic, it is the aim to run them along organic and sustainable principles. It should be noted in this context that TRU-GB is part of the Soil Association, the leading organic organisation in the UK. The interviewee also mentions smallholder farming as relevant.

Goals: Several goals for the future of the trust were already mentioned above. In a different part of the interview, the interviewee points out that holding land in trust, keeping it farming and encouraging new farmers is the main idea of the trust. Secondly, she mentions the aim to *'encourage people to be connected with the land, whether that's through getting out on farms more or connecting particularly with the Land Trust farms, or encouraging community based enterprises.'*

In terms of further goals, the interviewee mentions that *'where we can, we would like to encourage and provide places where young and new... or, first-generation farmers can get started, and get into farming.'*

Also, the trust supports farmers by helping them evaluate successes and challenges and providing advice or referring to other advisors where input is needed.

Working values: The interviewee mentions that the trust is designed to be self-sustaining through the land rents, and they only apply for further funding on a project basis. Furthermore, she stresses several times that looking at the context of a farm is crucial; also, she points out that working closely with the farmers is

important to them. Environmental issues and projects connecting the public to the farms are mentioned several times throughout the interview.

Challenge: When asked about challenges, the interviewee mentions the viability of small farms as a main challenge, especially on marginal lands, as is the case with several farms within the trust. As a trust, she points out, other challenges are financial responsibilities as a landlord and being able to balance costs. She stresses that these economic issues are big challenges, while there are fewer problems with tenancy agreements and other related issues.

As mentioned above, creating solutions for financial challenges that retiring farmers may face in leaving their farms to the trust is also a major issue.

In terms of helping new farmers set up, the interviewee mentions that this is not always possible as farms often come with tenants already in place. She mentions that some challenges may arise from the context of farms that are left to the trust.

Changes in agriculture: Concerning changes in agriculture, the interviewee first mentions that there are more part-time farmers, particularly in smaller farms, and that several of their farmers also do contract work in agriculture in addition to their own farmwork. She goes on to talk about larger scale farming and amalgamation of farms: *'I've had farmers say to me, you know, whereas in the past you could farm and make a living from a hundred acres, now you need 300 and some people say 500'*.

Furthermore, she mentions that people want to live in the countryside, buying nice farmhouses but not wanting to farm the land and often keeping horses instead, renting out the remaining land to farmers.

In contrast to these developments, she says that *'on the other side of the spectrum, we've also seen a real flourish in (...) many more community enterprises, so working on really much smaller scales of land (...) and running very successful community projects, mostly horticulture, some mixed. But, you know, those are starting to pop up all over the place as well, so it's, it's a real mixture of a change, actually.'*

She then goes on to talk about the effects of controversies around large scale industrial agriculture in the media, and the simultaneous development of *'a lot more local, very local enterprises, (...) people making the commitment to just eat locally and eat sustainably'*.

12.3 Case summary: COO-FR

Context: COO-FR was founded in 2003 and can be regarded a major actor in the field of access to land. Starting out as an association and as an investment fund, it now also has an endowment trust, collecting capital in order to buy farms and farmland and maintain them for perpetuity. According to the interviewee, 12 000 French citizens have bought over a hundred farms through this initiative.

Vision: Because of time restrictions and the availability of literature on this initiative, the questionnaire was adapted in this case and did not include a direct

vision question. Nevertheless, the interview was rich in statements and passages concerning vision.

Type of agriculture: In many instances, the interviewee makes it clear that the focus of his organization is on fostering peasant farming, small scale, family farming, and also organic production. He also connects this very strongly with history, saying that *'all this knowledge and skills that we have destroyed in a few generations (...). There was actually an important culture that unfortunately could not or didn't want to adapt to the new time, and (...) I believe that this is what peasant farming and organic production has to do, is heal those chains again. We shouldn't cut off history and do something else, we have to build on it.'*

He also stresses the importance of connecting agriculture with the citizens, and of short food chains.

Goals: One of the first things mentioned in the interview is the way that COO-FR is changing the relationship with the land, and promoting the idea that land is a common good rather than a commodity. This is very much linked to how current land policies make it difficult for *'a different agriculture'* to access the land: *'I always see Terre de Liens as a laboratory for a way of managing land that is different from the market.'*

An interesting goal or vision is mentioned when talking about changes in agriculture: *'It is possible to set up 500 000 small family farms in France that process their own products and sell them in a region, and then they can also have cooperatives together, for distribution platforms etc. This is all possible but only if politics realise that it is important to preserve these things.'*

Putting the issue of land management on the political agenda can be regarded as one of the main goals mentioned in the interview. In order to have political influence, The interviewee points out that the organization needs to be able to show in good examples that this can work, and to cooperate and create synergies with other organizations and initiatives: *'What we do is part of what I call an undercurrent, an undercurrent of an alternative way of organizing society. And this brings me to my most important issue, that this undercurrent is many small currents, but it is not a big stream, no big river with a big voice. (...) But everywhere, this is something that actually surprises me, that everywhere there are far more people than we think that want things differently and do things differently. But this is (...) not visible enough.'* He expresses his wish to organize change not just on a national, but on an international level.

On an activities level, possible goals for the future include aiding new farmers with investments, bringing agriculture as a subject to the schools, and developing a national trust to protect natural and agricultural patrimony.

Working values: A recurring theme in the interview is one of The interviewee's principles: *'I always say: no action without an idea, and no idea without an action.'*, saying also that *'that is the one thing, that we set up good farms and manage them, and the second is the (...) public debate about how to do that.'*

Another important value is the principle of seeing land as a common good, and advocating for a public debate on how this common good can be managed.

After the main part of the interview, when asked which other topics he would like to add, The interviewee starts by expressing the importance of being conscious of living in technological times, and being critical of technology. Secondly, he stresses that we should be connected with history, and building on it, as has

been mentioned above; he also says: *'if we stop observing history, it is a hopeless direction for humanity.'* Thirdly, he repeats the issue of joining forces and creating synergies in order to achieve something, adding that good humour and willingness to compromise is needed for this. Fourthly, he repeats the action-idea, idea-action principle (see above).

With respect to challenges, the interviewee points out the importance of learning, and of reacting to challenges and experiences, because not everything can be planned and foreseen. He also stresses the importance of education for promoting agriculture, and names projects that bring small school children to farms or involves them in school garden projects.

Furthermore, he mentions that the protection and fostering of small-scale farming activities on a global scale also depends on people applying this in Europe: *'if we don't do it ourselves, there's nothing we can say about other countries.'*

Challenge: Concerning challenges, an important subject is the abovementioned issue of connecting existing organizations and creating a bigger movement. The interviewee points out that other organizations active on environmental and/or agricultural issues should use COO-FR's work on access to land and the examples and solutions they provide, in their own work: *'they all work independently or not so well organized, and like this they don't have an effect, political effect. They cannot develop a political force, because they are all (...) doing little bits everywhere, but not together. If all these organizations that want things differently don't make an effort, together, don't connect together with compromises, then the other politics will go through, will continue and will make sure that after a certain point it is impossible to develop an alternative agriculture.'*

Related to politics, he brings up the challenge of achieving substantial change on a political level, saying that *'sometimes I feel a bit like a Don Quixote, fighting against a development that really goes completely in the other direction.'* He also points out that some interesting and useful tools that are in place in France to manage land sales are used by conventional agricultural institutions for their own purposes.

Concerning networking, he also particularly mentions the role of education and schools, and the challenge to promote the issue in this direction.

On a more practical level, the interviewee mentions that there are problems with some farmers that do not work as well as the organization would like because there were fewer criteria in the beginning of the initiative; thus, finding the right people and making sure that the projects one sets up are actually good practice examples is a challenge. Furthermore, while the basic idea was to buy land, COO-FR effectively buys a lot of houses and farm buildings, and faces several unforeseen challenges as the owner of these properties.

The interviewee also says that *'we are only a marginal movement, against big, big politics, but it needs, it has to be done.'*

Change: When asked about changes he perceives in agriculture, the interviewee expresses his pessimism. He stresses the rapid decline of peasant agriculture in France, but also other European countries, and the over-aging of the farming population, fearing that family farming and peasant farming will die out if nothing is done against these developments. While he says that organic farming is

growing a bit, he repeats *'but the most important thing is that there are no peasants anymore'*. He also points out that while there are newcomers interested in agriculture, these are still exceptions and the large majority of people is not interested in this field. He explains that a lot of people in France still have close ties with the farming occupation as such through relatives *'and losing all that is indeed a terrible thought for many people'*; however, in other countries, people are already much less connected with the farming world than in France: *'it's still more alive with people here'* (*'Das lebt noch mehr bei den Leuten'*).

He mentions the proceeding industrialisation of European agriculture, the development towards larger farms, connecting this with agro-fuel policies and rising land prices.

Nevertheless, he repeatedly mentions an abundance of initiatives showing that there are alternatives to these developments: *'But everywhere, this is something that actually surprises me, that everywhere there are far more people than we think that want things differently and do things differently.'*

Concerning impact, the interviewee says that COO-FR is actively changing people's relationship with the land. Also, he says *'the important thing about [our initiative] is, that it's everywhere, we have an office in all regions, we have farms everywhere, we are in contact with politicians in all regions and in that way we are a national movement. And because of this, we can also play a small role in national politics.'*

12.4 Case summary: COO-ES

Context: COO-ES is an association in Catalonia working on access to land by connecting farmers or shepherds with landowners and acting as an intermediary, guaranteeing both sides longer-term contracts than is usually the case. The initiative is volunteer-run and still in the establishment phase.

Vision: in this interview, the vision question was not asked directly.

Type of agriculture: the interviewee stresses the support of local and organic agriculture. He describes different groups of consumers: people who buy local food but do not mind whether or not it is organic; those who care strongly about organic food but don't mind whether or not it is produced locally, and groups in between. He emphasizes that for his organization, both local and organic are important considerations. He also refers to organic being beneficial for business because *'the only way that a farmer or a shepherd can be sustainable is just (...) if he is not in the intensive way'*, 'sustainable' here being used to mean 'viable'. However, he says the main consideration is from a social point of view, because *'we believe that there's another way to do things, and we want to promote it.'*

In this context it is interesting to note that the background of the initiative is connected with the food cooperatives movement in Barcelona.

Goals: as the interviewee puts it, *'what we want to promote, same as Terre de Liens, is another way to do agriculture and, kind of food sustainability.'*

A main objective is guaranteeing to landowners and farmers that land can and will be used for 20 or 30 years by acting as an intermediate. This is considerably longer than contracts usually made in the region, thus making it easier for farmers to get a return on their investments. The interviewee points out that

finding land, finding farmers is not the difficulty, but making long-term agreements is.

Another goal is getting enough members to be able to hire someone half time or full time and to be financially sustainable as an organization. In this context, the interview partner refers to the objective of involving civil society rather than just landowners and farmers.

Furthermore, a future aspiration is recruiting volunteers in rural areas that 'act as the antennas of our association'; being more active on the European network level is also mentioned as a goal.

Working values: The interviewee states that the association prefers developing slowly to *'going too fast and then disappearing'*.

A repeating issue is being society-based, and independent from administration and companies. In connection with this, the interviewee expresses the ideal of being sustained by civil society rather than depending on selling something, and stresses that the organization is not a business.

A few other statements concerning values can be connected with responsibility: the interviewee stressed the importance of choosing farmers and landowners carefully in order to be able to give both sides security; the aspiration to take responsibility on an international level by contributing to the network activities; and encouraging consumers to make responsible decisions: *'if you want to go on eating this organic food, it would be good as well that it is not only organic, but local as well'*. In this context, he also points out that for him, organic means promoting food sovereignty and agricultural products that are *'good for the country, not just for health'*.

Challenge: Concerning challenges, the interviewee first focuses on capacity issues: running an association on a volunteer basis, therefore not being able to do all tasks that are actually necessary, and especially the currently most important task, which is developing a communication strategy and reaching more people. Getting more members and creating a network of more people is mentioned repeatedly throughout the interview.

This is connected to a strategic challenge of deciding what to focus on first: establishing a success case to attract new members, or acquiring enough members to be able to pay a coordinator to manage the association and facilitate a first case.

Regarding financial challenges, the interviewee also points out not being able to give landowners an advance of rent at this stage and the difficulty of getting grants in Spain at the moment.

Another challenge mentioned is guaranteeing landowners that there will be a good project on their land, finding suitable and adequately experienced farmers, and on the other hand guaranteeing farmers a long term deal so they can get a return on investments, and finding large enough pieces of land for shepherds. The interviewee points out that there are sometimes difficulties in coming to an agreement with a landowner if other family members prefer shorter contracts.

Furthermore, the interviewee says he feels uncomfortable with 'selling' something without being able to give people something in return, apart from, as he says *'just the future of the country'*.

Change: In reply to the change question, the interviewee refers to different groups of *'people that are changing their minds'*: firstly, he mentions organic food cooperatives and other initiatives connecting people around the purchase of organic food at a regional price; as the interviewee puts it, this is a boom that is *'exploding in the Barcelona area'*. Secondly, he says there are more and more people who buy organic products for health reasons only, not minding about where the food is produced. As a group between those, he says there are people who care strongly about their food being local, but don't necessarily require it to be organic. Furthermore, he says that large-scale organic production is also growing but mostly for export; nevertheless, *'this triangle makes that the local organic, or at least the consumption of organic food is growing, and [the production] of organic food in Spain because in fact it's the only way to add some value to these crops'*.

Another issue concerning change is that getting subsidies is very difficult in Spain at the moment, but the interviewee expresses his expectation that this might become easier in the future.

12.5 Case summary: COO-BE1

Context: Founded in 2011, COO-BE1 is active in Wallonia, Belgium, and is a model similar to COO-FR. However, because Belgian land prices are much higher than those in France, the initiative has developed different tools that connect farmers to landowners without requiring the initiative to take on ownership of the land.

Vision: in reply to the vision question, the interviewee says that everyone at COO-BE1 has their own vision, but a common denominator is organic farming and *'farming that is integrated in the social fabric'* depending on physical possibilities. This kind of community-embedded farming is seen as having social, environmental and economical benefits. The interviewee names a few details of requirements for farmers that mostly concern protecting the soil; he states that while their ideal is close to permaculture, this term is not used because it is connected to very small scale farming, while the initiative aims to support any kind of scale if it corresponds to an adequate number of people working there (employment is thus a criterion).

Type of agriculture: see above; concerning criteria, the interviewee states that each project should be nourishing the people around the farm (hence excluding bio-energy farms); run by professional (as opposed to hobby) farmers; selling its products locally and being connected to the local economy and the local social fabric. Moreover, projects should be economically viable, and *'mature'*. The interviewee observes that many new entrants focus on small-scale, small technology and also small livestock, *'which is ok but it's only one type of farming'*. He would promote more diverse farming and also states that the state should *'guarantee a certain minimal level of diversity of types of farming because that's at the basis of the resilience of our society'*.

Goals: A main goal mentioned is installing a maximum of farmers; more generally, the initiative aims to support locally embedded farming and employment in farming. This is connected with being able to guarantee a sustained access to land.

In terms of goals, a lot of aspirations and future projects were named, e.g. starting a foundation in order to be able to receive donations; promoting a new tool for connecting landowners with future farmers; developing test farms based on the French model (see INC-FR), and working on how to reach farmers at retirement age.

Furthermore, COO-BE1 is involved in several projects on the European level.

Working values: The interviewee repeatedly mentions the importance of professionalization, setting up and formalising procedures within the initiative, as well as helping young farmers develop their projects to ensure that they are mature. He says this often involves a lot of feedback and further training.

In connection with this, he says the viability of farms is important also in order to show potential new entrants that it is a career worth pursuing.

The interviewee notes that the initiative has strong links with other organizations, having been created by a strong basis of 15 other NGOs and cooperatives.

Concerning subsidies, the interviewee states that the initiative depends on the state for resources, which he sees as reasonable because *'in fact [the initiative] should not exist, basically, if the state did its work correctly.'* Talking about the future foundation, he also says that *'the only thing that comes in actually in the cooperative is the rent of the land. And we do not wish to put it very high, because (...) we want farmers to not feel pressured when they work on our land.'*

Other important points apparent in this interview are long-term thinking (e.g. in developing long-term lease contracts using ephytheitic leases and easements) and innovation and creativity in the development of new tools and models.

Challenge: in reply to the challenge question, the interviewee says 'the main challenge is to learn to say no. Because we get so many demands and we would like to help everyone, but we are just three...'. This challenge of installing a maximum of farmers with limited work capacity, and being only a small structure, is mentioned several times.

Another challenge is convincing people to invest their saving money in the initiative, which is connected with the bigger challenge of running a cooperative while keeping land rents low for farmers. Also, renewing subsidies is seen as a challenge.

As mentioned above, because of high land prices alternatives to land purchase have to be developed in order to increase the possible number of projects supported.

The interviewee also mentions lobbying and especially the reforming of farming lease contracts in the context of challenges.

Change: the main change perceived by the interviewee concerns newcomers: *'it's clear that there is a whole new generation that is standing up and starting to farm'*; later, he says that although it is no big mass of people, it is certainly a new trend. He points out that these new farmers often have a higher education and several years of experience in other professions; being unsatisfied with their previous work, and wanting to do something *'more concrete'*. He highlights the diversity of professions that new entrants come from, and their preference for working with small technology, and easily managed things.

Furthermore, he stresses their role as innovators as well as multipliers: *'I think if these people will prove to be successful, that they might create followers.'*

He sees the role of his initiative in this change as helping the newcomers to find access to land because it is difficult to know the available tools as a new entrant.

12.6 Case summary: COO-BE2

Context: COO-BE2 is active in Flanders, Belgium, and draws inspiration from COO-FR and COO-BE1. Established in the spring of 2014, it is among the youngest initiatives participating in this research. COO-BE2 helps people find land to farm, connects them with landowners and involves citizens in the funding of farms.

Vision: When asked about vision, the interviewee talks mainly about the future of the organization: *'we hope to develop in such a way that we can help people who are needing land to find the land for them, and that we can also help, either owners of land but also.. farmers who want to retire, who want to.. give their farm to a.. new farmer, to connect.. [Mhm] all these people, to connect a new farmer with an old farmer, with the farmland... so that's the... that's what we hope to do'*

However, earlier in the interview, she is quick to point out that their organization supports organic farmers, and also says that *'[we have] the vision or the, the ideal, that agriculture should be connected to the local communities'*.

Type of agriculture: when talking about criteria for farmers, the interviewee points out that the only hard criterion is organic farming: *'we've been discussing about, what should it be, should it be organic farming, should it be sustainable farming, should it be agroecological farming, should it be family farming, (...) And then we decided that we only (...) we use the organic thing, because we wouldn't want, we don't want to judge about whether a way of farming is... good enough or, or too bad or whatever, that's why we leave the certification to those specialised organizations, and we don't have to judge ourselves'*. Further criteria are that farmers produce food, that they derive part of their income from farming and that they are connected to the local communities. In order to ensure the latter, farms have to raise half of the money necessary by themselves. Also, farms should be economically viable.

At a different time, she says that many relevant actors in the field of sustainable agriculture and food consumption came together to found the initiative.

Concerning goals, COO-BE2's main aim is to *'facilitate a the intervieweere access to farmland for organic farmers'*, ideally in the long term (i.e. over generations). This goal is also connected with the goal of maintaining soil fertility in the long run, by keeping land under organic production. Furthermore, it means to protect both landowners and farmers in its role as an intermediary.

With respect to a higher level goal, the interviewee mentions the wish to *'accelerate the transition toward a more sustainable way of farming'* and states that *'we hope we can turn this evolution [of farm numbers declining] so that more people will be engaged in farming again, and that small farms stop disappearing'*.

At a different point in the interview, she says *'We hope that we, that we will strengthen this movement of agroecological farming and farming that's connected to citizens and farming where people take responsibilities for their, for the land and for the farmers that produce their food'*.

The interviewee also mentions the aim to be independent of subsidies in a few years' time.

With regards to working values, the interviewee mentions the importance of being carried and supported by a broad coalition of organizations; another recurring theme is the professionalisation of their work, building clear procedures and having a clear profile to communicate; at the same time, she stressed the need to be honest about their lack of expertise in some issues.

Another interesting issue is mentioned in the history of the organization: in the founding process, one individuals' initiative was necessary to take plans further and actually proceed with establishing the organization. Also, the establishment of the organization took place after first conducting a feasibility study.

She emphasizes that it is very important to show people how things could change, and to *'offer perspective to people of a different future of farming'*.

Challenge: When asked about challenges, the interviewee first points out the challenge of being in the establishment phase and having to professionalise and acquire people's trust. She says the biggest difficulty was finding financial means to be able to employ a coordinator, and expresses her hope to be independent from subsidies after the first five years of running the organization. She then moves on to a more internal issue, i.e. the challenge of coming up with compromises and solutions despite individual differences of opinion: *'basically we agree on what we want, but then it's sometimes difficult to... to really agree.'* Nevertheless, she continues to say *'But that's also, I mean it's good to discuss, especially in the beginning. I mean, that's how things grow and develop, and come together.'*

Several times throughout the interview, she mentions tasks or possible activities that are not yet taking place because of a lack of capacity, her being the only staff at the time of the interview. She especially regrets having to disappoint people simply because the organization is not ready yet to handle all requests; also, she says she has not been able to participate in the European network for this reason. This is also connected with the repeated challenge of having to professionalise and optimise all procedures in the establishment phase.

Change: When asked about change, the interviewee says the biggest change is that people without farming backgrounds are engaging in farming. She stresses that these are only a small percentage: *'but at least there are some people – and the number is growing, that's for sure – that are showing that you can also, that it's possible to do it in another way.'* While she thinks that this development is not significant compared to the whole farming sector, she stresses that *'As a seed of, like... of what it could become or, or that it offers perspective to people of a different future of farming... so in that way it's, I think it's important.'* She also says: *'it doesn't change too much on the whole, but (...) it's meaningful that it, that people start to show how things could change. For instance, if you talk to policymakers (...) they just talk about it as if it's a niche, as if it's a very small, alternative side stream of what is the main stream, and all policies are directed towards this mainstream, conventional, highly industrialised way of farming, and they think it's nice as a (...), a phenomenon somewhere in the margins. So, but (...) there's no power yet, there. That's maybe the most important thing.'*

Prompted to elaborate on the relation between these changes and her work, the interviewee expresses her hope that their contribution to change will not remain symbolic, but actually make a difference; nevertheless, she doubts whether this is possible: *'the good thing about it is, that for every farm that you find a solution, it's good, it's an effect, even if it's only one farm. But to (...) change agriculture in Flanders, you have to do more than saving one farm'*

12.7 Case summary: COO-DE

Context: The German cooperative COO-DE was founded in 2013/14 in order to provide a larger scale structure for buying and securing land for farmers, building on the experience of local level charitable trusts (called 'gemeinnützige Träger') but professionalising and scaling up this model to a national level. COO-DE is thus a nation-wide cooperative of citizens who invest their money in buying land. The model is innovative in that it decouples the land rent from the land price. COO-DE see themselves as a service to all farmers, but do focus their activities on 'regionally embedded' organic farms, partly because of their investors' values. Before founding the cooperative, the founders conducted a study on existing land purchase initiatives in Germany.

Vision: According to the interviewee, the overall vision and principle is that land is seen as a common good, a 'new commons' to be governed in a cooperative way, and maintained and secured for farming in the long term.

The main criteria for supporting a farm are that the farm is organic, and that it is regionally embedded. The latter is not a hard criteria in the sense that it is measured, but rather farms have to take into account seven guidelines in order to be supported. These guidelines include nature conservation, openness of farms, social projects, involving citizens in financial schemes etc. The interviewee also claims that regionally embedded farms are more likely to be able to draw enough citizens from their surroundings for funding the land purchases. Concerning their projects, he stresses the importance of creating connections in the farms' local contexts.

The interviewee states his strong wish to support newcomers in agriculture who are bringing a lot of innovation and new ideas into organic agriculture and rural areas. He calls it 'revolutionary' to help these people to 'do their thing'. He thinks it is a scandal and a 'medieval situation' that traditional inheritance models make it impossible for people to become farmers unless they are born to farmers.

The interviewee expresses the wish to develop and carry this project together with other actors such as organic associations; there are also strong links to other initiatives across Europe. Despite close ties to bio-dynamic associations, The interviewee stresses that this initiative sees itself as broad and open.

Concerning cooperation, it is interesting to note that the interviewee was involved in these issues on a European level and in the foundation of the European network of initiatives through his work at Forum Synergies, an NPO linking sustainable practices throughout Europe.

Challenge: When asked about challenges, the interviewee points to the fact that because the cooperative relies on shareholders, who will eventually want their money back, the cooperative needs to attract new shareholders continuously.

Another challenge is the establishment of a small organization like this without affiliations to any larger organization. As a small network initiative, all the work done so far has been voluntary, unpaid work, which is a challenge for the individuals involved.

The interviewee also mentions the challenge of cooperating well with local networks of the farms they support.

A further challenge is the farmers' privilege on land purchases in Germany, meaning that only active farmers can buy land. Where this rule is applied in a strict sense, it is not actually possible for a cooperative to buy land, making it necessary for the cooperative to find another solution.

Change: Concerning change, The interviewee points out that there is a strong trend towards bioenergy in Germany, also contributing to a slow down of the organic trend by providing an alternative to farmers. Another change mentioned is the growing openness of conventional farmers towards organic farming, and organic having become an accepted form of production.

The interviewee also emphasizes that there are differences in rural development in Western and Eastern Germany, but does not in fact describe these differences further. In both, there are continuing trends towards larger scale industrial agriculture that he sees as problematic; however, he also says that the public is becoming more and more critical of these issues.

Nonetheless, the interviewee claims that he does see positive change in the yearly protests taking place in Berlin to demand a different agriculture, and says they are becoming bigger and more visible every year. He says this mobilisation of people, also on a European level, is something that is bringing people together and motivating them.

While talking about the background of his initiative, the interviewee mentions that the earlier, farm-based model of citizens' cooperatives buying land for farmers started in the 70s and 80s and has since become less common. The study mentioned above was also conducted to identify reasons for this development, and led to the establishment of a new model.

12.8 Case summary: SUC-NL

Context: SUC-NL is a Dutch initiative founded through the cooperation of a bio-dynamic school, the biodynamic association and an organic consultancy firm. It aims to connect young and old farmers in order to facilitate extra-familial farm succession. The model is based on the idea of a guild, making it possible for beginning farmers of different levels of experience and skills to connect with, and find working and learning opportunities with older farmers.

Vision: When asked about the vision, the interviewee says *'we would like to keep organic soil a place where a new person can farm organically again. So we would like to keep the soil and keep nice and good working places for people who want to work in organic farming.'* She further says that to make this available to newcomers, they need to work on new financial models. For this reason, goals are closer cooperation with banks and developing a model where the customers

of a farm fund the farm. She mentions an example from within the biodynamic scene, but also points out that not all biodynamic farmers have a regional customer base, so this would only be a solution for some farms. Coming back to her initial reply, she then repeats that *'if you see it on a longer term that we work on soil fertility, and organic soil fertility, that you want to keep that. That's the thing I think.'*

Type of agriculture: the focus of this initiative is on biodynamic and organic farmers. The interviewee mentions that some farms are 'multifunctional', meaning they have a campsite, green care or other business models. She also states that these farmers are *'more interested in things like crowdfunding or stuff like that, or in different arrangements'* compared to non-organic farmers.

She also mentions that *'if you want to have an organic crop rotation you need to have a wider rotation and there's not so much cash crops in between (...), so it's more difficult to have an organic rotation on very expensive soil if you want to do it right.'*

Goals: The interviewee sums up the idea of her initiative saying *'that's what we do: we match young and old farmers'*. Making it easier for young farmers to take over farms could be described as the main goal. Also, she mentions several times that organic farmers often want different solutions than others, so her initiative aims to provide a variety of solutions.

She mentions that working on developing a land trust is an issue, but it's more difficult than in other countries (see challenges). Another goal for the future may be developing a test farm, based on recent French models (see also INC-FR).

Working values: In several parts of the interview, the interviewee talks about cooperations with other initiatives or individuals, pointing out e.g. in the case of legal advisors the importance of finding people who are interested in the subject and like the challenge of working with new models. She stresses that they also work together a lot with other initiatives on an international scale, expressing her wish to keep participating in exchanges and learning from other projects.

Challenge: With respect to challenges, the interviewee first refers back to issues discussed earlier in the interview: land prices, loaning regulations and living regulations – the latter being a problem because in the Netherlands, it is difficult to build a second house on a farm so farmers and their successors need to make clear arrangements on who will live where at what time in the transition period and beyond.

Concerning loaning regulations, she argues that Dutch regulations on lending money to projects are quite strict: unlike in other European countries, there are no charitable trusts, so money can only be loaned out for commercial purposes, in which case you need a banking permit. The only exception is small charitable trusts, a solution that some individual farms are using. Connected with this, she also mentions that for this reason, there are many small initiatives but no national organization bringing them together: *'we see small seeds and seedlings of new initiatives everywhere, and everyone is trying to discover for themselves, and there is not, like in Belgium or France, one bigger national initiative.'*

Furthermore, she states as a challenge that both young and old farmers often don't take enough time to prepare themselves sufficiently: *'sometimes (...) young people are very eager, and if they're done with school and they're 23, they want their own farm. We find that it is maybe better if for 5 or 10 years you just work somewhere and learn the trade. (...) So we find that maybe it would be better if you're young, you took your time, and also if you're older, you take your time to start giving over your farm.'* She points out that there is still a lack of awareness

that this takes time, and that a farm succession can also be unsuccessful, resulting in a new search; having patience with the processes involved is difficult for many farmers.

Other challenges mentioned include having a strategy how to reach both young and old farmers, and dealing with farmers who, despite big ideals, have farms that will not be able to sustain two families for the transition period: *'it's usually the people with the biggest ideals but the worst financial situation who are the most difficult'*. She points out that not being able to help in these cases is a difficulty.

Change: In this interview, the change question focused on the development of organic farming, where the interviewee points out that *'it's very small still, and it's growing slowly'*. She connects this with the importance of non-organic, export-oriented farming in the Netherlands, the country being the 2nd largest exporter of farm produce in the world. She expresses her doubt about changes in this: *'I'm not sure whether there's much change in the way people farm. Maybe, because the EU is also prohibiting the use of certain pesticides and stuff, so then they have to change. But it's slow.'*

Nevertheless, as mentioned above, she does mention that there are more and more initiatives around farm continuity, and different solutions being tried out.

She also mentions that in non-organic farming, farm succession is still less of a problem than in organic farming: *'in the 70s it was maybe 20% who were not a farmer and started an organic farm, and now, the non-farmers are getting up to half. So organic farming is very rapidly becoming popular with non-farmers, and in non-organic farming it is not, I think maybe there it is 10 or 20%.'*

An important imminent change mentioned in the interview is the end of milk quota in January 2015, which the interviewee states will aggravate the problem of high land prices: *'we expect lots of people to start milking more cows, and then of course they want more land as well.'*

12.9 Case summary: SUC-CH1

Context: SUC-CH1 is a project of the Swiss small farmers' association (Kleinbauern-Vereinigung) that was launched in April 2014. Its main purpose is to provide information and a platform for connecting farmers looking for successors, and people looking for a farm. Furthermore, contacts to advisory services and other relevant institutions are provided. The scope of the initiative is German-speaking Switzerland.

Vision: In reply to the vision question, the interviewee first stays very close to her project and states that ideally, all farmers wanting to transfer their farm would know that besides selling the land or familial farm succession there is also the option of finding extra-familial successors. In addition to this, she says there should be tools to facilitate this and goes on to explain the problem that dissolving a farm is fiscally very attractive in Switzerland (see challenges), so that new attractive models to stimulate farmers to transfer their whole farm are needed. She envisions tools that would ensure retiring farmers' financial security without creating a financial burden for the successors. Furthermore, she expresses her wish *'that the access to land just becomes easy again, or is made*

possible again, not just by inheritance. To ensure that people with abilities and an interest in agriculture can also work in agriculture.' She then goes on to point out that these people bring innovative potential that is much needed in agriculture in a changing society: giving the example that too many Swiss farmers produce dairy milk, which is then exported, while more newcomers focus on other products and direct marketing which is actually in demand.

Concerning overall goals, an additional issue to those above is the sustainment of small and medium farms. Further goals focus on the future of the initiative and include plans for more awareness raising, networking and closer cooperation with other actors, offering courses on farm succession and working on financial models as incentives for farm succession.

The interviewee says little about the type of agriculture her initiative strives for, except stating in talking about support from members that *'we are supported by farmers and consumers who want an ecological, diverse and social agriculture'*. As seen above, she also mentions an agriculture adapted to local needs, and the importance of smaller and medium scale farming. She does point out when asked about criteria that the size or type of production is not a criterion for support.

Concerning working values, the interviewee points out several times how important it is to consider social aspects of farm succession. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the initiative's criteria for young farmers, so that the older farmers can determine their own criteria; also, making contact with the potential farm successors is left to their responsibility.

When asked about the future of the initiative, the interviewee stresses the value of step-by-step growth and professionalization according to need.

Challenge: The first challenge the interviewee names when asked concerns the farms themselves, namely their financing and viability. A further difficulty for them is having the trust to transfer the farm to someone outside their family. The interviewee connects this to a more general difficulty with the processes farmers go through before deciding for the possibility of an extra-familial farm succession: *'what do I do after being a farmer? You define yourself through your farm and your own work; what do I do when I don't have that anymore? What do I expect from my successors, what, do I still want to play a role on the farm? If yes, what does that look like?'* The interviewee states that these questions are not yet considered enough by the farmers themselves but also by advisory services. This lack of awareness of one's own needs and wishes makes it more difficult to make clear arrangements with potential successors: *'There's also no clarity then for the people who want to take over. And the potential to be disappointed is just high when you don't communicate what you want. Or when you're also not so aware about it'*.

The interviewee then moves on to point out that getting connected with advisory bodies in Switzerland is still a challenge, and that these mostly cover juridical and financial issues but seem to neglect social aspects of farm succession.

The importance of the social and personal aspects is also mentioned earlier in the interview, when the interviewee describes the process of talking to farmers in order to find out more about their expectations and whether they are actually ready to look for successors.

Raising farm succession advisors' awareness for extra-familial successions is also mentioned as a challenge.

Later in the interview, when talking about cooperations abroad, the interviewee states that despite the benefits of exchanges with other initiatives abroad, she does not have enough time capacity for this at the moment.

Another interesting challenge mentioned is the fact that as a politically active organization, it can be difficult to build cooperations with other organizations despite having common goals.

On a policy level, the interviewee explains that it is financially very attractive to dissolve farms, taking the farm house out of agricultural land rights to sell for a higher price than otherwise, and renting or selling the land in parcels. She expresses that it is a challenge to create models to counter this and make it equally attractive to maintain a farm as a unit.

Changes in agriculture: In reply to the change question, the interviewee briefly mentions stronger market orientation in agriculture due to subsidies, but then expresses her feeling that it's difficult for her to answer such a general question from her position. She then moves on to point out three popular initiatives currently bringing agriculture into the public debate and thus having an impact in terms of connecting society, and customers, with agriculture. Furthermore, she mentions that there was a broad campaign related to the International Year of Family Farming 2014 and that *'people knew about it'*.

Another change mentioned is the growing willingness of especially new farmers to move away from dairy production, and towards other products and direct marketing. She stresses that agriculture should follow local market needs more.

12.10 Case summary: SUC-CH2

Context: SUC-CH2 is a project launched by a Swiss foundation giving financial support to peasant and family farms. While the foundation was established 30 years ago, this project was launched in summer 2014. It offers advisory services to retiring farmers as well as people wanting to take over a farm, and makes the connection between them. While the name of the foundation implies a strong focus on family farms, the interviewee points out that this is not obligatory.

Vision: In reply to the vision question, the interviewee says *'our aim is to maintain viable farms'*. He specifies that farms that can still sustain a family should be kept under production even when there is no succession in the family, thus giving young families the opportunity to enter the business. He further says the vision is to facilitate this extra-familial farm succession, to show that this different model is possible, and to *'get it talked about'*.

Type of agriculture: the foundation that launched this project supports ecological farming; the interviewee says that while this was not originally defined precisely, now it means organic certification. In addition to this, the foundation expects more than the minimum of biodiversity measures, production adapted to the site, animal welfare, and a viable business plan that is fit for the future and can sustain the family.

Goals: The interviewee points out that in addition to juridical and financial advice, he also focuses on social issues and stresses their importance. Furthermore, the advisory services are focused on retiring farmers, in order to convince more people to consider extra-familial farm succession as an option.

Another goal is to keep the subject in the public debate and give concrete examples for solutions. Talking about the background of the project, the interviewee also points out that *'we saw that there are fewer and fewer farms, farms are dissolved and... that nobody is doing anything about it. And on the other hand there are more and more young people that want to go into farming, but don't come from a farming background, so we thought, we have to... do something, so we started this project.'*

Working values: After the main part of the interview, the interviewee points out another point important to him: *'that we give the families (...) very good support, that they can ask all questions, that they have time in this process to think about it and to find their own way. We don't see it as the only right way, but it has to be... adapted to each situation and personal context, it has to make sense.'* Furthermore, he stresses that there is still a lot to learn, and the importance of learning from one's own experiences as well as others', in order to be able to make a good contribution to the bigger issue.

He also points out that he recommends older farmers to start thinking about these questions early, integrating young people into the business as employees or giving them responsibility over parts of the enterprise, and giving them a chance to prove themselves. Also, he recommends young newcomers to spend enough time getting training and working in agriculture to find out what they really want, and also to be better able to convince a farmer that they are the right people to take over their farm: *'They are entrepreneurs then, and they need to show that they are. If they are just like 'yes, it would be nice, I could be a farmer', that makes it a lot more difficult.'*

Another interesting point is that SUC-CH2 was launched at the same time as two other projects by other organizations. The interviewee states that they decided to go their own way, but that there is an intensive exchange of experiences. Furthermore, he says that there is a lot of awareness raising to be done, but that they want to focus on the concrete work of supporting farming families, appreciating the work of other organizations in this field.

Position: The interviewee states that his project and others like it are not carried by official institutions and by agricultural politics. When asked about cooperations with other organizations, he also points out that these, like his own project, are not having a lot of influence on agricultural policy and agro-industry. He says this makes it even more important to create good practice examples and show alternatives. He fears that it will still be *'a long fight for recognition'*. For more on this, see challenges.

Challenge: When asked about challenges, the interviewee points out that *'it did take courage to launch this project (...). Nobody was waiting for us to do this, because the structural change wants to be fostered by national politics, and... what we are doing, in the eyes of many colleagues, it's slowing down structural change. That means we face a lot of obstacles on different levels.'* Specifically, he names agricultural land rights but also tax laws as factors making extra-familial farm succession more difficult than inner-familial farm succession. These structural issues make it very difficult for young farming families to be able to buy a farm. He also points out that selling the farmland to neighbours and the

house by itself is often the more attractive option for a farmer's heirs, and that it is also part of his work also to discuss options with them.

When asked to name more challenges, the interviewee focuses more on a social issue: some farmers who choose extra-familial farm succession are facing problems with their neighbours who were expecting to take over the land for their own farm's growth. Moreover, he says it is a challenge to convince farmers to think about succession issues earlier in their career. He further points out that social issues are often overlooked: farmers face many fears about their own future, the value of their work; thus, the emotional processes in a farm succession are not to be neglected.

On a policy level, he states that extra-familial succession takes more time and advisory efforts than dissolving a farm, and a lot of work is still necessary to convince advisory bodies to take up this task. In general, he points out that dissolving a farm is much too attractive, and that other models need to be developed to oppose this trend. Furthermore, he explains that in Switzerland, it is nearly impossible for a foundation to buy a farm, although this might be a viable solution in many cases.

Being a small project, the interviewee says that the capacity for activities is limited.

Another interesting point was that the project was launched in summertime, which is not a suitable time for most farmers to be dealing with such issues.

Change: When asked about changes in agriculture, he points out the structural change, increase of farm size and dissolving of farms, farmers finding new careers etc. Also, he points out the price developments in agriculture, making it difficult for farms to remain viable. He stresses that the Swiss population spends a very small share of their incomes on food, and the importance of agriculture has declined significantly. He names several social issues arising from the low prices that farmers get for their produce. When asked about newcomers in agriculture, he confirms that this is a strong trend, that some agricultural schools have 70 % or more of pupils without a farming background. He says the problem is that these motivated people cannot get access to farms (see also challenges).

12.11 Case summary: EDU-ES

Context: The interviewee is active in various organizations, the first one established being an association that was founded in 2003 as a participation project for regional development issues in the Pyrenees. Based on the conclusions of this first project, the focus shifted to rural development and more agricultural issues. Because the association saw a lack of new farmers or shepherds, they started the project Escola de pastors (school of shepherds) in 2009 to work on educating the next generation of shepherds, but also to rethink some of the values of the sector and foster innovation. In total, the school has trained 100-120 people as of January 2015.

Vision: In the first part of the interview, the interviewee talks about the objectives of her initiative, specifically the goal to ensure the continuity of farming, and to regenerate the farming sector *'with new people, with other (...) ways of thinking this work, with other spirit, more positive and more engaged with agroecological processes.'*

When asked more specifically about her vision later in the interview, The interviewee focuses on the initiative's aims and plans for the future: extending the duration of the training, establishing a test farm (based on the French model, see case summary Reneta) as a next step for students after the training, and acquiring livestock for the school itself in order to improve the training on site.

The type of agriculture Rurbans promotes is organic production. The interviewee especially expressed this when talking about the difference between her initiative and official education and trainings for farmers and shepherds, which she describes as 'intensive' as opposed to 'agroecological'. Furthermore, she points out that they have more and more students who choose to produce milk rather than joining the majority of Catalonian shepherds in producing meat. Despite it being more work, she says that *'our students, the people that are in the school of shepherds, they wanted to do this because they appreciate a lot the production, the artisan production, the craft production of the cheese, the work linked to the milk, to take care of these animals'*.

She also describes the newcomers in farming as people who return to the rural areas to establish projects linked to the land, and to be agents of local development.

Concerning criteria for students, the interviewee says the main criterion is their vocation. She emphasizes that the most important thing for her is that each year they have students succeeding with their dream of becoming a shepherd.

Furthermore, cooperation and good relations with farmers, other projects and networks seem to be important issues.

At the end of the interview, the interviewee points out once more that *'this works'* and that having an impact by helping people to reach their goals is satisfying for the initiative.

Challenges: The interviewee names finances as the main challenge, as the school depends on government subsidies. The initiative is searching for other ways of financing its work, because despite their successes, the yearly insecurity of being able to continue the work in the next year is impeding further development and impact. She mentions a possible source of more financial stability and several projects or changes that are already planned in the event that this works out.

She says that apart from this, there are only minor, resolvable challenges, pointing out at the same time that they always have enough applications and enough farmers willing to cooperate.

Change: When asked about what changes she perceives in agriculture in her country, the interviewee speaks about new entrants into farming coming from urban, higher education backgrounds, returning to rural areas to *'develop a project more linked to the land, to the production of food, in an organic manner, and... and also to be an important agent of the local development.'* She stresses the growth of this phenomenon and claims it is a global phenomenon. Furthermore, she states that traditional farmers are beginning to see that these newcomers are doing their job well, and are not failing.

Nevertheless, she says the major part of the agricultural sector is still about intensification, and, in her region, especially about the pork and beef industry, which are also supported by the government.

At a different point in the interview, she speaks about the switch from meat to milk production among the students of the school of shepherds (see 'vision' above).

Another change she mentions is that some official educational institutions for agriculture are closing because of a lack of students, while their own unofficial training is thriving.

With regards to impact, the interviewee stresses repeatedly that the initiative is successful and is having an impact, and that this model works. She points out that 63% of their former students are now engaged in a farming activity or busy developing a project, both in meat and milk production.

12.12 Case summary: EDU-NO

Context: EDU-NO is an initiative based in Norway, but also active in Denmark, Sweden and Finland. It was founded in 2012 with a bio-dynamic background and aims to provide practical education for beginning farmers in the four countries, introducing the dual system and bringing students to the farms. Another aim is to create a stronger network in the bio-dynamic and organic scene in these countries.

Vision: in this interview, the vision question was not asked directly.

Type of agriculture: there is a clear focus on organic and bio-dynamic farming; the interviewee specifies that the ideal is closed cycle organic farming, and also speaks about peasant organic farming. When talking about agriculture that is not supported, one notable phrase is about agriculture in Denmark: *'it's so industrial, there's no room for anyone'*; industrial organic farming is also criticized.

Goals: the main aim is creating an educational program for organic farming that is carried by all four countries; this program should be based on the dual system (education at farms and on courses). Bringing students together with farmers and providing mentoring (especially through farmers themselves) between modules is mentioned repeatedly.

Another objective is stronger networking and building connections within the organic movement, especially for young farmers. One specific aim is creating an association with the project; also, by creating a network of young and old farmers, the initiative aims to enable direct exchange and facilitate *'getting to know each other, and gaining understanding of each other'*.

At the beginning of the interview, the interviewee says the project is about *'finding out where the next generation of farmers comes from'* and recruiting new farmers. Later, he also states the aim of *'bringing education to the farms and putting the responsibility for educating people also on the farmers'*.

Further goals include raising awareness of the issue, e.g. by being present at events and conferences, and possibly joining forces with existing schools.

Working values: the importance of cooperation and networking is stressed repeatedly in this interview; this includes a wish to create understanding, and to make people meet. The initiative also works closely with other organic and bio-dynamic educational programs in Europe.

The interviewee points out that his initiative is '*working on the social question of how to deal with people wanting to go back to the land - who is this?, what kind of education do they need?*', and starting an open debate about who wants to do what with the land and what they need to do it.

Before starting the project, the people active in the initiative conducted a study about the situation of organic and bio-dynamic farmers, and their thoughts about the future, in all four countries.

The interviewee also emphasizes that the project is developing step-by-step, and that those active in it are discussing what is the task of the initiative and what is not (e.g. going political).

Challenge: the challenge question was not asked directly in this interviewee because numerous challenges were mentioned from the beginning.

The main challenge described is the lack of organic networks in Scandinavia (e.g. compared to Germany) and the creation of these networks. This challenge includes the lack of a common voice of different actors in the organic and bio-dynamic scene, and a lack of presence in the public debate. This is directly linked to a lack of interest and awareness about agriculture in the public, and a resulting lack of awareness of the decline of farming. Because agriculture is not an issue that is important in politics and society in these countries, it is difficult to argue on a political level.

The interviewee also points out that those few courses and programs on organic farming in agricultural schools that have been established are accepted but not really supported.

Another challenge named is not having the work capacity to e.g. participate in the international activities concerning access to land.

Although this is not really a direct challenge, it should be noted that in these countries' economic system, food imports are normal and cheaper than domestic products because the currency is so strong.

Change: As the interviewee puts it, '*things are looking bad for agriculture up there*'; he points out that agriculture in Denmark is facing a financial crisis, and Finnish farmers are living from the remaining forest they have, but there are no perspectives for agriculture. He states that in all four countries, agriculture is declining and the forest is taking over; and also observes that historically, agriculture has not played an important role there.

Nevertheless, he says the percentage of organic farming has increased, and that there are people wanting to go back to the land. He poses the question of how this change can be shaped, but also points out that it is not necessarily farming that attracts people, but more generally a connection to land, nature and soil.

When discussing the highly industrialised agriculture in Denmark, the interviewee also notes that despite a lack of peasant farming there is a thriving food culture that increasingly promotes sustainable food.

12.13 Case summary: INC-FR

Context: INC-FR is a nation-wide network in France connecting farm incubator projects. The main activities of the network include experience sharing, developing and evaluating solutions to common problems of the members, facilitating the setting-up of new incubators, and advocacy for the model.

Vision: Asked about the vision, the interviewee points out that this is something the network is currently discussing. He says: *'We promote an agriculture that respects human beings and environment.'* He stresses that while the ideal is organic agriculture and small scale agriculture, this is not mentioned as a vision statement in order not to exclude some of their members who have a wider scope: *'So for that we have to be, maybe a little, maybe too much open, I don't know, but we have to be open to all kind of agriculture. Respecting those ideals of protection of the environment and protection of human beings.'*

Nevertheless, he also sees it in opposition to the mainstream, saying that the agriculture envisioned is not industrial and not the mainstream agriculture, but organic and located in its region.

He repeats these values concerning type of agriculture later in the interview, saying that the French population is becoming more conscious of the benefits of organic agriculture and regionally embedded agriculture, and there is a change towards an agriculture that includes more people, involving non-farmers as well.

Furthermore, he points out that while organic farming is not obligatory on the test farms, most newcomers want to work in organic production.

More specifically, he stresses the importance of vegetable production for the test farms because of the higher risks involved in animal husbandry and perennial crops.

Goals: In the beginning of the interview, the interviewee says *'the aim of the network is to... well, first it's to capitalise and to share experiences between our members. That's the main point (...) The idea was to... yes, to grow together.'* Other aims of the network are working on solutions for common problems of the network members, advocacy and promotion of the incubator model, and accompanying new incubator projects in starting their work.

Concerning the incubators themselves, he says *'the idea is to propose to people who want to become farmers, that are newcomers in agriculture, to propose them a way to test their project (...) before they can continue this.'* And *'the idea of the test is to allow them to be in a situation of being a farmer, but without the... yes, without being really a farmer (...). In order to see that and to decide if they want to become farmers or not.'* He also points out that the incubators are usually just one step on the way to newcomers' installation as farmers, and the goal of the organizations involved is a successful installation of newcomers.

Working values: It is interesting to note that the national network was designed as a very light structure because the aim is to involve the members: *'the work we do, we want it to be realised by our members.'* When talking about criteria for farmers, he points out that each case is different and it's also up to the individual incubator projects to make decisions about this; however, he says that it is unlikely for people to be able to come to the incubator without having a clear project that is thought through to a certain extent.

The interviewee further explains that *'if you get an incubator, an espace-test, it's composed of many partners, many organizations. Sometimes it is an organization in a juridical way, sometimes not, it's just a partnership.'*

Involving different actors and organizations from the field of agricultural and rural development, and especially involving farmers as mentors for newcomers, is also an important issue.

Moreover, the interviewee mentions innovation as an important aspect several times.

Challenge: When asked about challenges, the interviewee first mentions juridical difficulties with the model of someone working as a farmer without having the status of a farmer; next, he says there are *'problems of property, of the land, of the material and how to let the farmers use them'*. Furthermore, he says finance is a difficulty.

At the beginning of the interview, he points out that because it's an innovative model, there are a lot of problems still needing to be solved. This is one of the main motivations why the network was created. In this context, he also mentions the challenge of gaining recognition from agricultural institutions and the public.

On a practical level, concerning the test farms, he mentions the difficulty of having incubators for animal husbandry, because of investments and risks involved.

Change: When asked about changes perceived, the interviewee says *'I think the main change in agriculture (...) is the renewal of the generations. Farmers are leaving agriculture because they retire and new, well, the people that replace them used to be their sons and it's something that is not so important now. (...) The sons of the farmers, they don't want to become farmers. (...) The majority of people that are now, that are becoming farmers, they don't come from agriculture. They are newcomers. So that's the main change I think because we knew how to accompany people, well, sons of farmers, in their projects, we knew how to work with them but we don't know how to work with those newcomers.'*

Stressing the importance of the incubators as a model designed for the purpose of helping newcomers, he goes on to say that *'I think that we are in a very important change. And with that, there's a lot of, of other changes, like we have to think agriculture in a different way.'* He explains that among French consumers, consciousness about the benefits of organic farming is rising, and people are also connecting more with farmers in their region. He says that *'all this goes with a (...) different way to see agriculture. With new people that want, or new farmers that don't have any tradition of agriculture, they can make things totally different, they can innovate. And consumers that are more and more involved in how we produce, and they don't want us to produce in a way that is not good for us, not good for the environment.'* Furthermore, also mentioning initiatives like Terre de Liens (see case COO-FR) and AMAP (the French network of Community Supported Agriculture), he states that *'all those initiatives, or initiatives that can put together farmers and consumers and citizens are probably very symbolic of the way we try to see agriculture now. We want agriculture to involve also people that are not farmers.'*

At a different point in the interview, he mentions that the incubator initiatives are a model that is growing very fast in France.

12.14 Case summary: INC-GB

Context: INC-GB is a farm incubator project embedded in a larger model that aims to create a more sustainable food supply chain in and around Manchester, UK. The model includes better livelihoods for producers, more direct connections with consumers as well as improved access to sustainable food for everyone.

The incubator project was established in 2013 and takes aspiring farmers through a five-year process during which they acquire knowledge and skills necessary while developing their own business project. Through links with the other projects along the supply chain, access to markets is also facilitated.

This interview was longer than most of the others.

Vision: When asked about the vision, the interviewee first talks about the vision of the trust running the project INC-GB: *'our vision (...), it's to completely revolutionise the food system, so that it's a more sustainable and fair food system for everyone, and that's from the producers to the people eating.'* Moving on more specifically to the vision for the project, she talks about installing four farm incubators around the city, and having people going through the program and becoming producers. She points out that *'part of the vision as well is helping people to decide, helping people to know if this is the right thing for them.'*

Furthermore, she says they would like to help the growers coming out of the program to find land. Related with this is the plan for the trust to get a farm in order to have a cooperative of small producers working together on this land and supplying other projects along the food chain. Summing up, she says that *'in a way all of it is about supporting more growers to be able to live, to be able to have a sustainable livelihood from it, from growing food (...), and then sell into the public sector. That means everybody gets access to sustainable food, so that's kind of... that's kind of our aim. It's about making it fair for everyone, really.'*

At the very end of the interview, the interviewee adds another issue: *'I think that as well would be part of the vision, is that farmers felt valued, not just through money, but through people going, actually, you are the people that keep us alive.'*

Type of agriculture: The interviewee does not say much about the type of agriculture her initiative supports, focusing more on the bigger picture of a *'sustainable fair food system'*. She does point out that the farm incubator is on organic land, and sustainable and organic farming is mentioned several times throughout the interview.

Goals: At the very beginning of the interview, the interviewee says that *'our aim is to look at trying to create a more sustainable food system'*. This is done through a variety of projects along the food chain; in order to work on the obstacles that aspiring farmers are facing, they launched the project to *'provide a supportive environment, and a low risk environment, and also tie that into the market that we're already creating.'* The aim of the program is that people learn how to grow food on a commercial scale, can develop their business and their market, and are then able to move off and start a farm, work on an existing farm etc.

One of the most important goals for the future seems to be to set up several other incubators around the same city in order to include a bigger range of

people. Another goal is to help people find land and funding for investments once they are done with the program.

Talking about change, the interviewee also points out that it's not a question of whether things are changing, but whether *'we as people trying to do it fairly and sustainable can help manage that change in a better direction.'*

She also stresses that while originally, their model included more direct work in food access projects, they are now working with the public sector because *'it feels like the quickest way to get good food to everyone (...), the way we can have most impact and be most useful'*.

Concerning longer term goals, the interviewee says the focus is on making their own project work, and *'once we've done it on the small scale, the idea is that we then scale that up'*; and *'we want to be able to make it happen on a wider scale, supporting other people to make that happen. But also, what we believe is that (...) people have really good ideas for the things they want to change.'* The farm project of the trust mentioned above would involve creating a place for people to discuss which changes they want *'and then support them, back in their own lives and communities, to make those changes, to create a sort of more sustainable society. And at the moment we're focused on food because it is something that... you know, it's huge. (...) And it's just sort of working with people and saying, alright, we can try and support you to do the thing that you want to do, to create the change that you want to see around you.'* In this context, the current project of the farm incubator could serve as an example of the fact that change is possible.

Working values: a value evident throughout the whole interview is the interconnectedness of different parts of the food chain and the inclusion of people from different backgrounds.

Also, the interviewee mentions that they feel supported by other actors in the field, and *'we feel very much part of a movement'*; cooperation and network are crucial issues mentioned throughout the interview.

As a training program, a lot of attention is paid to mentoring, as well as providing courses based on what the aspiring farmers want to learn more about. Valuing farmers' skills and paying them for mentoring is connected with this; as the interviewee points out, not enough people realize that *'we have to pay the farmers because they've got all this amazing expertise that we cannot lose, and we are losing (...)* *It just totally changes their status as well.'*

Being financially self-sustained in the future is also mentioned as important.

Moreover, the interviewee also observes that an important part of the program is managing expectations of beginning farmers, being honest about disadvantages of the career and supporting them in making an informed decision.

'Getting the model right' and making sure the program works well is also an issue brought up repeatedly.

Challenge: in reply to being asked about challenges, the interviewee points out that recruiting buyers especially in the public sector is a challenge because their model involves *'a big change in behaviour for absolutely everyone, including the growers as well'*. In addition to the model itself being a longer term change, she also stresses that it takes a long time for new producers to get viable.

Concerning the aspiring farmers, she names the challenges of finding *'the right people'*, balancing finances so that the program fees remain affordable, and acquiring funding for beginning farmers that are above the age limits for young

farmer funding (which she says is the majority). She also mentions minor challenges concerning group dynamics among the trainees. Furthermore, a future challenge is that of helping people find their own land after completing the program.

Another challenge is raising awareness of the importance of valuing farmers, not only by paying them fair prices but also by treating them as experts and paying them for extra activities like training apprentices.

On a higher level, the interviewee names the challenge of pushing their model of a sustainable food supply chain because otherwise the change that is happening will go in a different direction.

Change: in reply to the change question, the interviewee says that she feels part of a movement with many exciting initiatives, but at the same time she is not sure about the significance of this movement: despite many people making important changes in small ways, the food supply chain as well as the land are still in the hands of supermarkets and big landowners.

She states that in order to change these things, a revolution would be needed. Nevertheless, the interviewee points out that more people are talking about sustainable food and agriculture, and coming together to support each other in their work; in this context, she mentions the growth of the Oxford Real Farming Conference as well as the food sovereignty movement.

The interviewee repeatedly emphasizes the role of her own and similar organizations in shaping the current changes. As she points out, sooner or later food will have to be sourced more locally, so her organization is hoping to manage this change in a way that is sustainable and fair for everyone.

The interviewee also refers to future plans of establishing a project to support other people in creating change. This involves the current local model as an example to show that change is possible. The idea of supporting grassroots change and encouraging people to 'create the change they want to see' in order to create a more sustainable society is stressed repeatedly.

12.15 Case summary: NET-IT

Context: This interview was about multiple projects in and around Bologna, Italy. The interviewee is part of a cooperative farm project on municipal land that aims to involve people from the city with farming; furthermore, she is involved in a consumer-producer network promoting small-scale agriculture, and an access to land project that is currently inactive.

Vision: The interviewee repeatedly emphasizes that the main issue her network is working on is the promotion of organic, local and small-scale farming and direct relationships between producers and consumers.

Type of agriculture: the interviewee stresses a clear focus on organic, very local and small-scale farming. Also, the term peasant farming is used repeatedly. The projects discussed were started by urban dwellers and all involve new relationships between farmers and consumers, and agriculture very close to the city.

Goals: As mentioned above, a clear objective is creating new relationships between farmers, and consumers, especially in a city context. The connection of responsible consumers with peasant farmers is stressed as a goal repeatedly.

The network aims to promote and support organic, local and small-scale farming; a main activity of the network is the establishment and promotion of farmers' markets in the city.

The access to land project, which was not active at the time of the interview, was started with the aim of *'setting up something like Terre de Liens'* in Italy.

Working values: The cooperation and direct relationship of producers and consumers who are willing to support organic, local, small-scale farming is a clear focus of the various projects. The interviewee also brings up the importance of trust between farmers and consumers, and the aim of bringing people out to farms to involve them more.

The interviewee observes that the people founding the community supported farming project came from the background of food cooperatives and the producer-consumer network.

Furthermore, the interviewee has a clear focus on sustainability issues; referring to organic consumers, she says that people are choosing organic products for health reasons rather than *'for the health of the earth, for the coming years, for their children'*. She asserts that this consumer choice has an important influence. Being a new entrant into farming herself, she also refers to farming as a conscious choice of a low consumption lifestyle because farming incomes are so low.

The interviewee points out that her network is a bottom up movement formed by urban dwellers and farmers, and stresses this also as a difference compared to the Slow Food movement. The fact that the Slow Food markets in the city are selling other people's products rather than farmers' own products, and that the products are not all organic is mentioned critically.

Other issues communicated are the importance of solidarity, and food sovereignty.

Challenge: A main challenge observed is the lack of presence of organic farming in the scientific debate, agricultural education etc., leading to a lack of experienced new farmers.

Another challenge noted is the lack of long sight on sustainability issues, exemplified by people buying organic for health reasons, but not being aware of other benefits; the interviewee attributes this to individualism. She stresses the need for education on these collective issues and the fact *'that your choices as a consumer now have an influence on the future of the place where you stay, so in the future generation also.'*

Concerning challenges, it is interesting to look at why the access to land project is inactive: as the interviewee observes, an association was founded but before further work was done the group active on this disintegrated because they became busy with other things, such as herself with finding a farm; others had children etc. As she describes it, the project is not ended but *'frozen'*.

With respect to her farm project, she says the big challenges are acquiring enough land to have a good organic rotation while producing market crops; having enough income for several farmers; and the workload connected with being a CSA farm.

Change: Being asked about change in agriculture in Italy, the interviewee questions her competence to answer the question. She then talks about the development of the farmers markets that her network started, which has grown from five or six producers in 2004 to 80 now; she also points out that in that time, many other farmers' markets have been started by other initiatives. She says the '*movement of peasant farming and small scale farms has been spread around*'.

Furthermore, she states that '*both on the side of farmers and also on the side of consumers, this movement that is concerned about food sovereignty and organic agriculture and small scale farms, sustainability and small consumer style of life and this kind of stuff has been growing during this last 10 years, is my feeling.*'

Another important issue mentioned is that old farmers are beginning to realize that organic farming works, and could even be better than conventional farming. Nevertheless, she observes that the mainstream agriculture is still conventional and agro-industrial. She points out that agricultural education, too, is still conventional, and that organic is still not considered 'sustainable' or viable by agricultural schools. She further says that while there is more and more large-scale organic production for export, the small scale is not considered.

Concluding, she says that in the last 15 years and mainly in North Italy, consumer responsibility is an issue that is talked about. However, she repeats that consciousness about long-term thinking and making responsible choices for future generations and not only for our health still has to be built.

12.16 Case summary: NET-LT

Context: NET-LT is a Lithuanian association that was founded in 2006 by people from the city and from the countryside in order to promote small farmers and the food they produce. Activities include the organization of small farmers' markets, educational projects and promoting a positive image of small farming in the media. The association has a countrywide network of activists and is run entirely by volunteers.

Vision: In this interview, the vision question focused on values. The interviewee points out that what unites the European organizations is '*the common vision of the countryside, that it should be lively with many small peasant farms, and artisan producers*'; other terms he uses related to this image of the countryside are 'colorful' and 'dynamic'. Furthermore, he names NET-LT's core values: respecting nature/the environment, respecting people and respecting oneself.

Type of agriculture: In addition to his vision of small peasant farming and artisan producers, the interviewee points out that the association is advocating for '*the reconnaissance of small farming, that (...) it can also be modern farming, a modern way of farming, it can be small, it does not necessarily have to be big factory farming.*' Speaking about newcomers in farming, he mentions new entrants into '*responsible peasant farming*'.

Furthermore, the interviewee points out that in Lithuania, because of a very different history of agriculture compared to other European countries, small farmers are usually people without a farming background who moved back to the

countryside from the city *'to develop a new way of life based on the values they believe in'*. See also the *'producer-eater tandem'* below for more on the role of a farmer.

Concerning goals, he mentions that the initial aim that NET-LT was founded for was *'to promote food coming from small farms in Lithuania'*; at a different point, he adds that they are *'promoting the city-country relationship, sometimes helping young farmers and newcomers to settle in the countryside'*. He also emphasizes that at the moment, the association has no aspirations to become bigger, but to *'rather stay small and (...) a small shelter for little initiatives'*. He stresses this point of being a small organization several times throughout the interview.

Concerning values, apart from the ones stated above, the focus on both consumers and producers and their relationship stands out, as he describes in talking about the *'producer-eater tandem'*: *'It sounds interesting, but this is a thing that we introduced into the public speaking and, and people understand that an eater is somebody (...) who is conscious of what he is eating, you know, a consumer with, with values. And in this context, a producer is somebody who is directly accountable for what he produces and what he sells, and he's in a direct relationship with the eater.'*

By using small farmers' products as a point of connection, the association started getting people interested *'to know a bit the problematic or the situation of rural development'*.

Furthermore, the interviewee mentions the strength of NET-LT as having *'a phenomenal capability to, to be heard'* and in cooperating well with other actors promoting small farms.

Challenge: When asked about major challenges, the first issue the interviewee names is the fact that the members of NET-LT *'cannot contribute as much as we would like to'*. This issue is also mentioned in other parts of the interview, where he points out that all members of the association are working as volunteers and have limited time resources because of their full-time occupations.

On a structural/policy level, he names the following challenges or obstacles for the development of the agriculture they strive for: firstly, access to knowledge, meaning that there is a lack of adequate education: *'There is no formal education. There are some initiatives now that are very nice, cheese-making in ecological farming, it is very nice, but it's, it's not systematic enough.'* Secondly, he names sales: *'in many ways, we have a very poor legislation, and very limited creativity in this context, so we are lagging behind Western European countries.'* Thirdly, access to resources, especially money and land is named as an obstacle, and particularly for starting farmers.

Change: In this interview, the change question focused on the relation between the initiative NET-LT and bigger changes taking place in agriculture.

The interviewee points out that he has no data on the speed and importance of the changes they are perceiving, but has the impression that there are increasing numbers of people coming into farming and sharing the association's values. While this is growing, he stresses that *'it is very marginal, very small and... economically speaking, and sociologically speaking it, it has not a very big*

impact.' However, he later concludes by saying *'it is very marginal and very small, but nevertheless, it is taking place.'*

He also points to various sources confirming that small farms are disappearing and farm size is increasing as is the case in other countries.

Furthermore, he claims that small farms are either disappearing or are *'transforming into... on the value level, into the farms that stand for a more sustainable development of the countryside.'*

Concerning the association's impact, he mentions the influence on the public image of small farming (see e.g. the producer-eater tandem as mentioned above), and the fact that NET-LT succeeded in lowering the Lithuanian entry standard for certain subsidies in the frame of the Common Agricultural Policy, making it possible for even smaller farmers to receive subsidies.

12.17 Case summary: NET-FR

Context: NET-FR is a local branch of a nation-wide network of grassroots organizations in France that promote the capacity of rural citizens to empower themselves and take action on issues relevant to them. This specific association works on supporting new farmers.

Vision: In reply to the vision question, the interviewee states her vision by expressing opposition to the status quo: *'our vision of farming is quite connected to, I mean is quite political in the way that it is not the main vision held by local government and the main farming institutions. So we are clearly a minority, and we are clearly fighting for a model that is not the one that is promoted by the main farming unions, the farming industries, and even by the government and the policies. So our ideal is the one of (...) a live countryside, and lots of farmers, and local, I mean the idea of producing food that will be consumed locally'*.

This ideal can be connected to what she says in the very beginning of the interview when explaining what CIVAM is about: *'the idea for everybody is really the promotion of rural areas as places that are still alive'*.

She also mentions the aim of improving the quality of food people eat, and the necessity therefore to connect people more with the production of the food.

Concerning the type of agriculture, the interviewee has a clear focus on organic/sustainable agriculture with the goal of supplying food for local consumption. An agriculture that includes many farmers, and medium sized rather than large farms, is also mentioned several times. Other relevant issues are the diversity of activities, connections with consumers, a sustainable way of working (meaning having the time for other activities aside from farmwork) and not destroying other markets by exporting products.

The interviewee does not specify what she means by organic/sustainable but points out that agroecology is something of a basis, and some of their farmers go further and apply the principles of permaculture or biodynamic farming.

Another aspect of the vision for agriculture is that the world of farming should be more open than it has hitherto been.

The interviewee claims that *'the bigger ideas are quite important for the people with whom I work'*, highlighting the importance of producing locally, but thinking globally.

Challenge: When asked about main challenges for her organization, The interviewee names money, and more specifically the dependence on various subsidies, as a main difficulty. She points out that the government has less and less money, and her organization is aware of several others that have disappeared because they lost their funding. Apart from this threat itself, the insecurity about future funding also impedes long-term planning.

As a second challenge, she names the conflict against industrial farming, and the continuing trends of industrialisation and export-orientation despite a growing awareness of the benefits of sustainable agriculture, local food chains etc. Connected with this, another challenge is the strong competition for land and the difficulty of having access to land for smaller projects and organic farming. She also mentions this challenge at a different point in the interview, saying that in general, land is increasingly taken out of agriculture, which makes their work even more difficult.

Furthermore, she sees an inner challenge in that there are various organizations working on similar topics in her region, but not always managing to work together on all levels. As she puts it: *'that's a big challenge because we are.. I mean we are really such a small world, if we don't work together we will just.. you know, we will all stop existing.'*

At a different point in the interview, the interviewee brings up another challenge: the importance of the projects that her organization supports being viable and successful, because *'the credibility of the farmer himself and us as organizations (...) and of the whole organic world is involved in each farm that fails'*. Since they are supporting beginning farmers already facing a lot of challenges in the sector, this is a particular burden to them as they *'have to prove twice more than any other farmer'*.

In the last part of the interview, the interviewee brings up the issue of retiring farmers as another big challenge: many farmers are leaving the issue of farm succession until the last moment, when it is often too late to make arrangements, thus leading to the farm being sold to neighbours etc. Farmers are often not aware of the time it takes, or do not want to think about all the issues that need to be sorted out. She points out that many farmers refuse to discuss the issue, reasoning that an extra-familial succession is impossible in their particular case and so on. This makes it difficult for the organization to connect young people looking for land with retiring farmers in order to secure the continuity of the farms. Even so, she states that this issue is still more difficult in other, more isolated regions of France where it is much more difficult to find potential successors.

Change: The interviewee points out when asked about what changes she perceives that there are two *'parallel movements, and kind of contradictory'*: the growth of sustainable farming and of responsible, educated consumers and even institutional projects such as organic food for school kitchens; and on the other hand the continuing intensification and export orientation of farming. The interviewee confesses her pessimism about this, as she does not think that there is a middle way between the two trends.

Following a more detailed question about the increasing numbers of new farmers, The interviewee points out that although it is not easy, it is becoming more and more possible for people without a farming background to start farming. She stresses the diversity of backgrounds these people have, and the importance of initiatives like CIVAM to help them establish their projects. She expresses her hope that these people with all their diversity and innovative ideas will contribute more and more to the sector, helping it to become more open than it has been until now: *'it was a world that was really closed on itself, somehow'*.

Earlier in the interview, she talks about the fact that new farmers often produce a different range of products, such as goat cheese or herbs that are not traditionally produced in the region.

In another part of the interview, the interviewee expresses that *'we sometimes have the feeling that whatever we do is really a small drop of water in a really big ocean'*, despite the impact that the initiative is having already.

Nonetheless, The interviewee also points out the development of test farms in France as a very positive change happening recently.

12.18 Case summary: NET-AT

Context: NET-AT is an Austrian association acting as a network connecting people on the subject of farm start-ups and new entrants into farming. Active since December 2013, the association has organized numerous events at an Austrian university, is part of an international Erasmus plus project on farm succession, and working on developing a platform for matching farms to aspiring farmers. Further and future projects include research on farm incubators, research on land ownership in Austria, and various awareness raising events.

Vision: When asked about the vision, the interviewee starts by differentiating between the vision for his own future with agriculture, and the vision for what agriculture could look like on a society level. He points out that his personal vision is more radical, naming vegan agriculture as something he is involved in but doubting whether that could be translated to a national or international level. Moving on to the higher level, he states that what his initiative is aiming for is *'a good and fair agriculture, that has room for many people; and this works better if it's a small-scale agriculture. When farms aren't too big, too industrialised or mechanised... I don't know to what extent that's utopian or something, to say, well, actually the point would be to bring more people back to the countryside or that... yes, that more people farm.'* Furthermore, he says he would also like it to be *'an agriculture that is not so closed in on itself'*, pointing out that the times when people were born into their occupation is long past, and that we need to create systems to move away from traditional inheritance. Lastly, he states that *'agriculture takes place in the environment, and works on one of our most important foundations, the soil. And we should take care of that. And I believe that smaller scale agriculture, that is done by more people, that has a more direct approach to... the people that eat what the land produces, for example... that (...) they take a bit better care of the land, I believe.'*

In addition to this part of the interview, concerning type of agriculture and goals, little is said.

Working values: The interviewee points out that while money can be useful in order to be able to work, he sees it as a benefit that the people active in his initiative are not paid, but are volunteering out of their idealism. He stresses the importance of making decisions as a group, being unwilling to provide answers to those questions that have not been sufficiently discussed within the organization. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that knowledge plays an important role, the initiative founding itself on a scientific study, and a current challenge being the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the professionalization of the initiative's work. He also points out that he sees the relative lack of experience of the majority of the group as an advantage: *'people who have tried to change certain things, or know how rigid some political institutions can be, they might give up, and we (...) can still act a bit differently.'*

Cooperation and networking is also mentioned as very important; the interviewee says that particularly in the beginning, it was inspiring when making first contacts with some institutions that *'we felt, ok, there's someone who is listening to us and our idea, someone active on a political level who, who could also do something'*.

Challenge: When asked about challenges, the interviewee starts by pointing to the advocacy and persuading that still needs to be done on different levels and with various institutions in order to gather support for some of the initiative's projects. Concerning money, as stated above, he points out that it might become a challenge further along but will not be an insurmountable difficulty. Next, he brings up the challenge of professionalizing and building the knowledge necessary to be a creditable actor in their field. He further says that in addition to these external challenges, he sees an inner challenge that he says he knows from other projects: *'Because we are not earning money with this or anything, there has to be someone who sees to it that we keep up the right level of idealism. So that... so that we're motivated, and can move things along.'* However, he says that he is optimistic about this with the people currently active in the initiative.

Continuing the subject of challenges, he says that things like finding the right channels of communication for promoting projects, etc., might be challenging but also interesting tasks, and that it remains to be seen what challenges the future will bring.

At a different point in the interview, he states that in some cases, cooperations with institutions or other organizations looked promising but then came to nothing. Another possible challenge is the question of which criteria to use for supporting farms, and how this relates to cooperations and support from institutions: The interviewee says when asked about criteria that even though one may personally wish for the supported farmers to be e.g. organic farmers, he doesn't think that limiting the scope of the initiative would be beneficial in the process of finding partners and cooperating with agricultural institutions.

Change: When asked about changes he perceives in agriculture, the interviewee first points out that since the association is working on the subject, and since they have alerted agricultural institutions to the importance of the issue, he has the feeling that it is getting more attention. For example, there is an official study being conducted on the status quo of extra-familial farm succession in Austria that he says may not have been issued had they not brought up and

promoted the subject; he says that this kind of impact, and keeping the subject in the debate, is one of the important tasks of his organization.

Concerning more general changes in agriculture, he expresses that he does not feel involved enough to answer the question, but does refer to the increasing numbers of farms that are closing, to structural change and also to the food sovereignty movement that he feels is gathering momentum.

12.19 Case summary: REG-DE

Context: REG-DE is a citizen shareholder corporation in south-west Germany founded in 2006 in which citizens invest in regional small and medium sized enterprises along the whole food supply chain. Through their network, these enterprises build a sustainable food supply chain for the region, while creating regional added value and boosting the regional economy. Furthermore, the corporation facilitates access to land for new entrants to farming and supports extra-familial farm succession, also lending intensive support to new operations in the first years. All farms within the network are certified organic and within a distance of approx. 120 km around Freiburg.

Vision: When asked about his initiative's vision, the interviewee focuses on the theme of extra-familial farm succession and expresses his aim that extra-familial farm succession becomes a common practice. This includes farmers being more open to this and other solutions. Furthermore, he stresses the importance of giving support to the beginning farmers, and strengthening education for future farmers.

When asked more about his vision for the region, the interviewee seems to find it a difficult question and says they have not devised a vision for the region. He points out that there is not enough knowledge on the state of things to do so, as knowing where one stands is crucial in order to find out where one wants to go.

Another goal is raising awareness of the role of potential farm successors within the family, who are often subject to considerable pressure to take over the family farm; the interviewee argues that these individuals are often overlooked, and that their right to choose their occupation should be self-evident.

Goals for the initiative include improving the cooperation within the network as well as growth of the network.

In general, the model includes a strong focus on the region, as well as a strong focus on cooperation between the different enterprises. According to the interviewee, there is less cooperation outside the own region.

Concerning the type of agriculture supported, not much is said apart from the clear focus on certified organic agriculture, and the viability of farm enterprises.

Challenges: The interviewee sees it as a challenge how much work (in terms of advisory services and other support) goes into the development of a new enterprise, as well as mentoring etc. in the first few years of running the new operation. Another work-intensive task is bringing together quitting farmers and new farm successors and reaching agreements between them on various issues.

Furthermore, the economic viability of farms is seen as a big challenge. While the interviewee already sees first positive effects of the network in this regard, he says it is still a long way to go.

In this interview, another main challenge expressed by the interviewee is the stubbornness of farmers and possibly other actors in the agricultural scene. He states that even when problems abound, it is not easy to get people to participate in and support initiatives creating a new solution.

Change: The interviewee first understands the question to be about the impact of his initiative on the region and states that it is still too small to claim any major changes in the region. Nevertheless, he thinks that REG-DE has raised awareness about the issue of regional economy. Although his initiative has created job opportunities as well as educational opportunities, he doubts that any of these effects are measurable.

When the interviewer focuses the question more on general changes in agriculture, the interviewee expresses his pessimism about current changes, seeing mainly the closure of farms, economic difficulties and succession difficulties. He states that he would like to have more influence, also on policy makers, but also points out that his model is part of the public debate.

In another part of the interview, he mentions a general trend towards more regional economy, more food security etc. but laments a lack of realism and a lack of knowledge about the status quo. He points out that being conscious of the current situation is crucial so that one can develop concepts and shape change.