



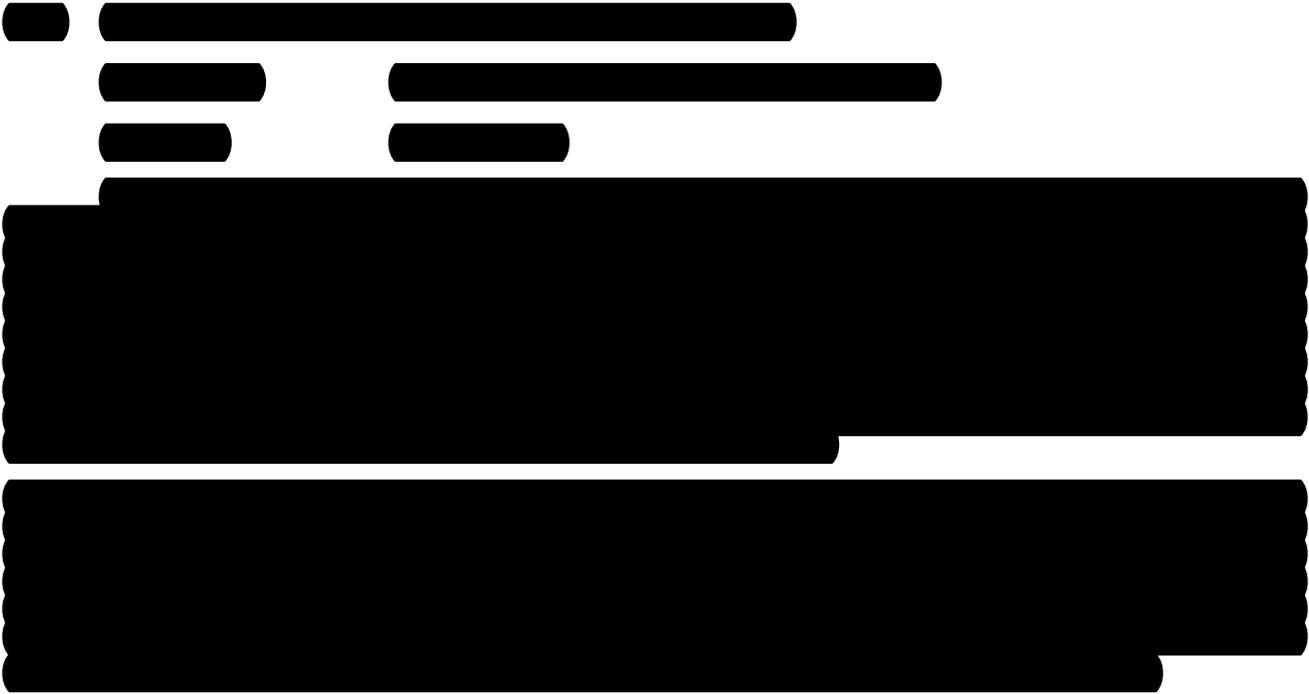
34th International Congress

GEOGRAPHICAL
16-20 AUGUST, 2021 • Istanbul

GEOGRAPHY: Bridging the CONTINENTS



VIRTUAL



SLOT 9 (12:30 - 13:30 (GMT))

18th August 2021

Room Name: Herman Th. Verstappen

Track: C.34.SUSTAINABILITY OF RURAL SYSTEMS => FOOD MARKET: FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL AND VICE VERSA

Chair: Serge Schmitz

Paper presentations:

1940 A FOOD RELOCATION STRATEGY FOR EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE? REFLECTIONS ON WALLOON INITIATIVES (BELGIUM)

Serge Schmitz UNIVERSITY OF LIEGE

Antonia Bousbaine UNIVERSITY OF LIÈGE

A process of food relocation is developing in Wallonia, especially in Liege, where the first “Food Belt” is born. This innovative concept tends to bring consumers closer to producers. Initiated by groups of citizens, regional and local authorities have recently paid attention to this dynamic and want to support this revival of food belts. Based on the PhD research of Antonia Bousbaine who, during five years, followed the emerging of two food belts in Wallonia, the paper analyses the governance and spatial issues of Food Belt creation. In addition to participating in public meetings, she conducted 33 semi-structured interviews with key players, like mayors and local development agencies. She also surveyed 98 farmers and 399 citizens. This information enabled us to list agri-urban projects in both urban areas, to analyse the conditions of emergence, and the economic, political, cultural and geographical constraints of their implementation. If a Walloon food strategy based on the relocation of production and consumption is underway, it was initiated by small groups of citizens concerned not only about the quality of their food but also about the impact of current agricultural systems on both environment and rural societies. The political world was slow to react and many local politicians are still not aware of the issue. Yet, if the idea of food relocation and territorial food governance is based on commendable motivations, implementation addresses, on one side, the path dependency of farms and agricultural lands and, on the other side, a necessary reversal in values. The comparison of the municipalities within the two urban areas points out the places where people are concerned about the local origin of their food and areas that are more suitable, depending to agricultural structure, to supply local communities.