

# Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS): structures, challenges and benefits of participation

## Insights from Chilean and Italian case studies

Greta Winkler<sup>1</sup>, Nikolaus Hruschka<sup>2</sup>

University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Vienna

1 - gretaawinkler@gmail.com; 2 - hruschka@boku.ac.at

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FWF Project (P-31513) PGS: facts and fiction on the concept of participation

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# State of the art (1)

## Third-party certification (TPC)



- Dominance of TPC for organic quality assurance  
(Hatanaka & Busch, 2005)
  - Accredited certification bodies → objectivity
- TPC as instrument of “conventionalization” of organic farming  
(Fouilleux & Loconto, 2017)
- Accessibility for small-scale farmers
  - yearly application: resource investment
  - economic and cultural capital  
(Cáceres 2005; Montefrio & Johnson 2019; Nelson et al., 2010)

# State of the art (2)

## Participatory approaches to AFN (PGS)



- Reshaping the agri-food value chain
- Growth of AFN establish and increase democratic participation in local food chains (Hinrichs 2003)
- Participatory approaches (i.e. collective seed, CSA, foodcoops, PGS, ...)
- Alternative to standardized certification approaches: PGS (Sacchi, 2019)
  - Re-embedding food systems in the local context
  - Social processes

# State of the art (3)

## Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS)



- Locally focused organic quality assurance systems
- Common values:
  - trust
  - knowledge exchange
  - shared vision
  - participation
- Bottom-up grassroots farmer organizations

(IFOAM 2008)

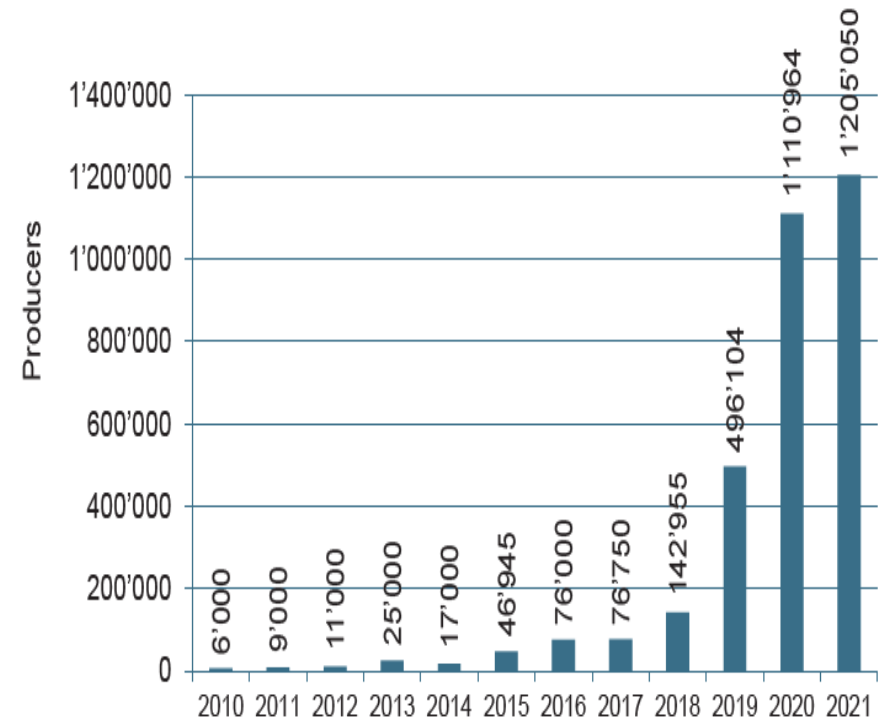


Fig 1. Development of PGS certified producers 2010-2021  
(Katto-Andrighetto et al., 2022)

# State of the art (4)

## PGS - TPC



- Engagement of local stakeholders
- Lower costs of certification
- Non-compliances : knowledge exchange and adjustment time
- Domestic market

(Cuéllar-Padilla & Ganuza-Fernandez, 2018)



Fig 2. PGS Inspection Committee in Chile  
(Hruschka 2019)

# State of the art (5)

## PGS – overarching challenges



- Legal recognition  
(Binder & Vogl, 2018; López Cifuentes et al., 2018)
- Depend on external structures to support their development  
(Home et al., 2017; Montefrio & Johnson, 2019)
- Little / no active participation  
(Bellante, 2017; Bouagnimbeck, 2014)

# Methods (1)

## Research aim



- Explore participation in selected PGS case studies (Chile and Italy)
  - Analytical framework for participation (Kaufmann et al. 2020)
    - *Context* of participation
    - *Who* participates
    - *How* is participation occurring
    - *What kind* of participation takes place (i.e. challenges & benefits)
- *What can insights on participation in PGS teach us about reshaping our agri-food system?*

# Methods (2)

Case study: Chile (CL) - 2019



Fig. 3: Tierra Viva Logo



Fig. 4 OPOC Logo

## Tierra Viva A.G.

- Founded 1993
- HQ Santiago
- 16 members (13 certified / 3 transition)

## Organización de Productores Orgánicos de Curacavi (OPOC)

- Founded 2014
- HQ Curacaví
- 15 members (3 certified, 3 transition)



# Methods (3)

Case study: Italy (IT) -2021



Figure 4: PGS logo  
(campiaperti.org)

## Campi Aperti – per la sovranità alimentare

- Founded 2001 (Bologna)
- Approx. 10 producers and „co-producers“
- Members: 150 producers & 464 co-producers
- 7 weekly community markets

# Methods (2)

## Data collection and Analysis



- **Framework:** Kaufmann et al. 2020
- Mixed-methods approach (Bernard, 2018)
  - Literatur review, participant observation, semi-structured interview, surveys
  - CL – onsite, IT - online

Methods	Sampling strategy	Tierra Viva (CL)	OPOC (CL)	Campi Aperti (IT)
Semi-structured Interviews	Purposive	2	1	8
Surveys	Convenience	10	9	16 producers 45 co-producer

Table 1: Overview of the methodology (source: authors)

- **Analysis:**
  - Quantitative: descriptive statistics
  - Qualitative: deductive and inductive coding

# Results (1)

## Context of Participation



CHILE	ITALY
<b>Legal recognition</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognized in 2007</li> <li>• Access to technical support</li> <li>• Dependence on government priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-conforming with EU regulations</li> <li>• Institutional recognition with regional law on PGS (RL 19/2014)</li> <li>• No access to governmental funding</li> </ul>
<b>Administration</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased administrative and bureaucratic requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-defining PGS procedure</li> <li>• Increasing members and markets lead to higher administrative work</li> </ul>

Table 2: Context of PGS participation (source: authors)

# Results (2)

## Participation/Non-participation



CHILE	ITALY
<b>Participation in activities</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open participation possibilities               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low participation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Employed and engaged members               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of time</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No consumers' participation</li> <li>• Perceived lack of expertise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low co-producers' participation</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge of PGS structures and activities (co-producers)</li> </ul>

Table 3: participation and non-participation in PGS (source: authors)

# Results (3)

## Benefits of participation



CHILE	ITALY
<b>Social processes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of community</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge exchange</li> <li>• Networking possibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political message</li> <li>• Sense of community</li> </ul>
<b>Marketing</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sell organic certified products</li> <li>• Price premiums</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common marketing strategy gives access to markets in Bologna</li> <li>• Locally guarantee organic quality</li> </ul>
<b>Lobbying</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FEDAECH</li> <li>• CNAO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• „Collaboration pact“ for city markets</li> </ul>

Table 4: Perceived benefits of participation in PGS (source: authors)

# Discussion (1)



- *What can insights on participation in AFN teach us about reshaping our agri-food system?*
- 1. Participation benefits (in & outside) of AFN key functions
- 2. Importance knowledge and expertise
- 3. Voluntary vs. paid - organisational burdens

# Concluding Remarks



- Participation in grassroots organisation & social movement
- Raises questions on participation
- Societal and cultural discourses
  
- Importance of participation context & dimensions of stakeholders
- Value of analytical framework

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### Recommended Reading:

**Hruschka, N., Kaufmann, S., & Vogl, C. R.** (2021). The benefits and challenges of participating in Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) initiatives following institutional formalisation in Chile. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14735903.2021.1934364>

**Winkler, G., Kaufmann, S., & Vogl, C. R. & Hruschka, N. (202\*)** Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS): Structure, benefits and reasons for participation – Insights from the Italian case study of Campi Aperti (in progress)

**Kaufmann, S., Hruschka, N., & Vogl, C. R.** (2020). Bridging the Literature Gap: A Framework for Assessing Actor Participation in Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS). *Sustainability*, 12(19), 8100. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12198100>

