

INTEGRATED FOOD GOVERNANCE: PROBLEMATIZING URBAN FOOD POLICY ALLIANCES

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Food system vulnerabilities research

- ▶ Studies on vulnerabilities and drivers of change in the food system
 - ▶ tend to focus on specific sectors and dimensions of the food system as well as on outcomes, rather than unpacking processes and root causes of vulnerability
 - ▶ have largely failed to address holistic but also the competing interpretations of “food security”
- ▶ Vulnerability assessments have policy implications, since they inform decisions that entail trade-offs among socio-economic, health and environmental outcomes and, therefore, affect people’s wellbeing
- ▶ Elaborate further the role of governance in addressing food system vulnerabilities: conceptually and practically

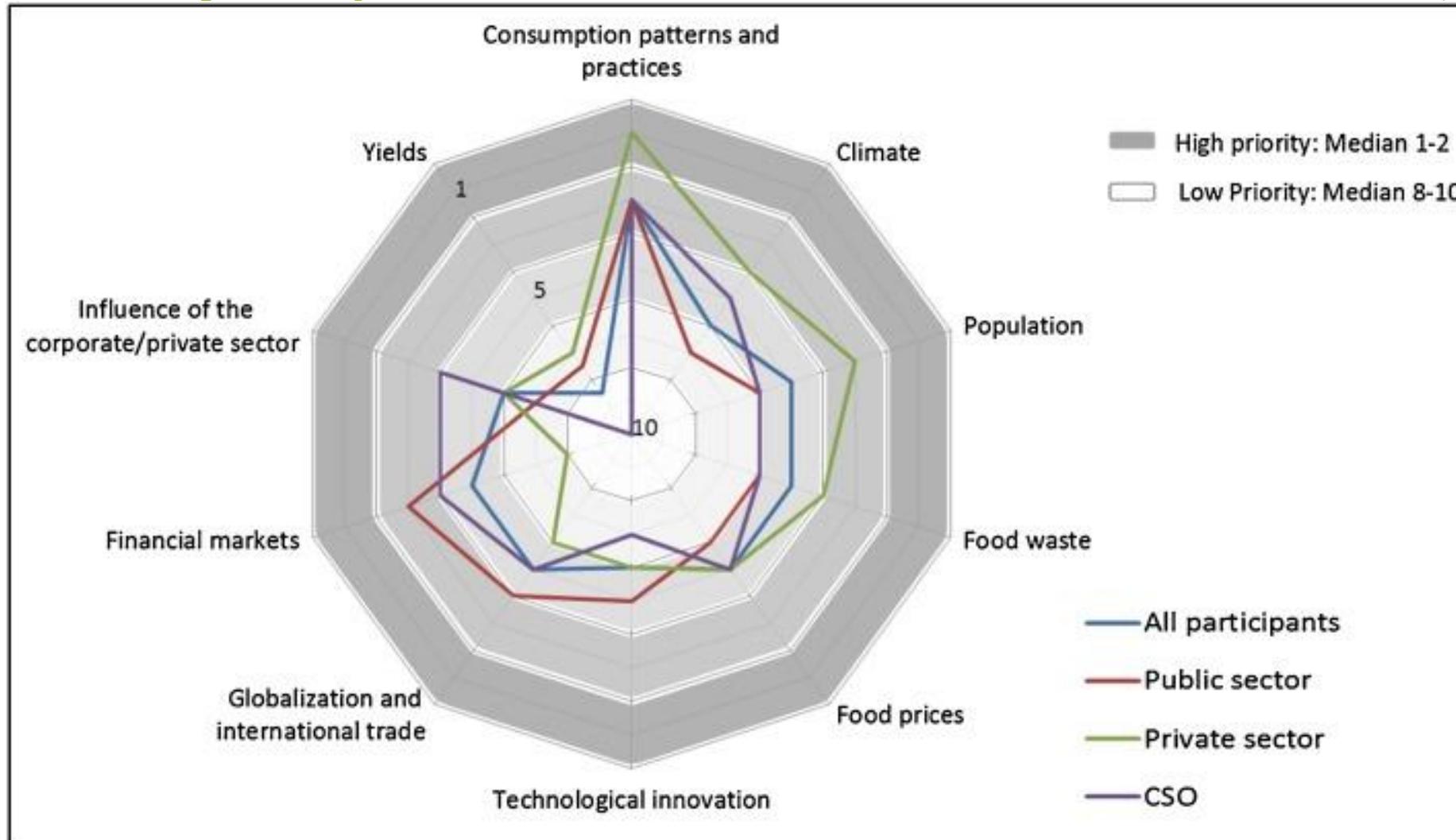
Governance as including all modes of governing encompassing activities carried out by different actors to guide, steer, control or manage the *pursuance of public goods - food security (Moragues-Faus et al., 2017)*

Delphi survey on EU food system vulnerabilities

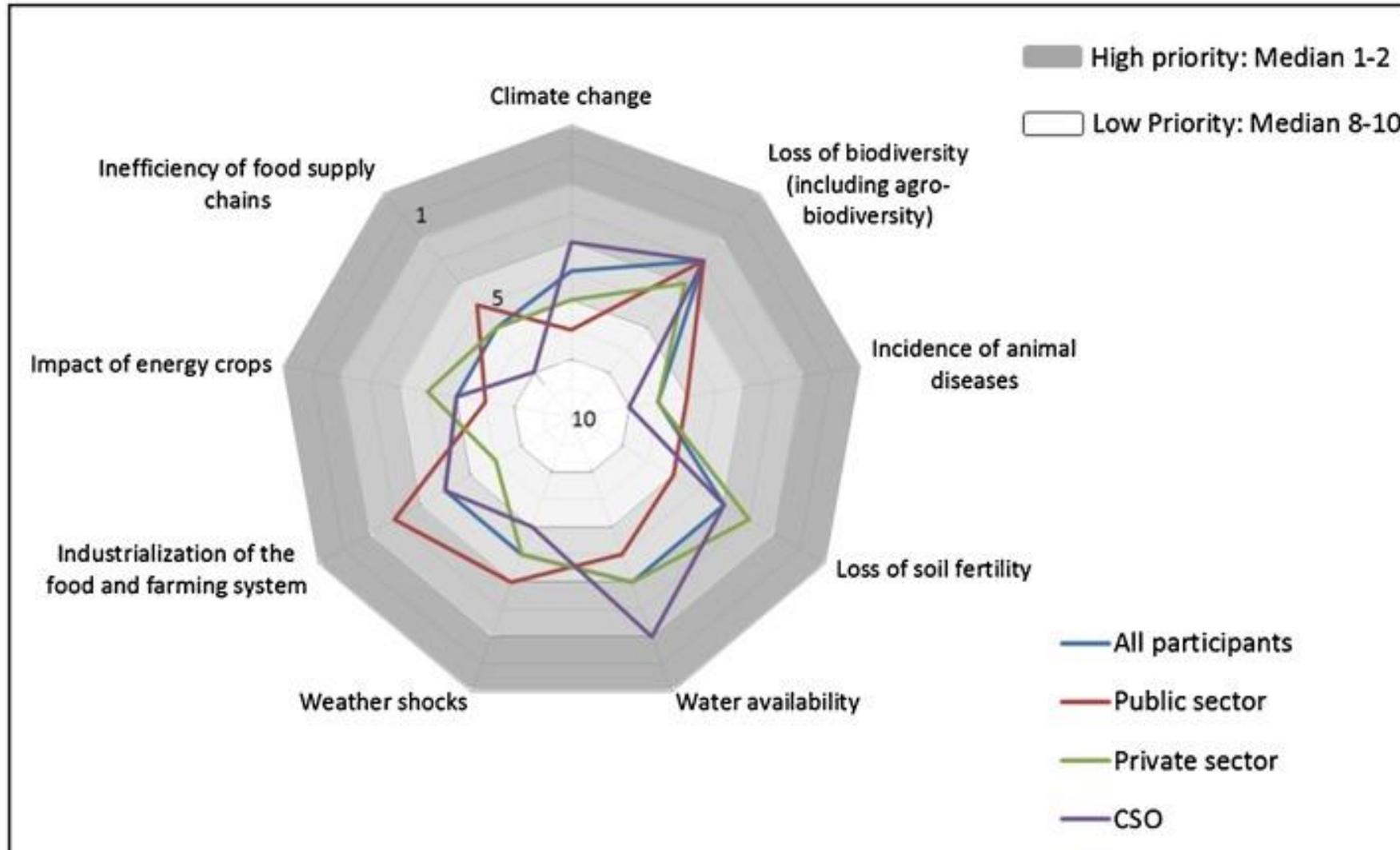
- ▶ Avoid pre-framing: open ended questionnaire
- ▶ Identify points of convergence, disconnections and new levers to unblock a very polarised food security agenda : 3 rounds
- ▶ To enhance understanding of the perceived structural (rather than proximate) causes of food insecurity, we included specific questions on the underlying causes behind the vulnerabilities of the EU food system

Our analysis identifies five main governance dimensions that affect food security in Europe and that, we conclude, need to be addressed in an integrated fashion to begin to build a more democratic, sustainable and secure food system

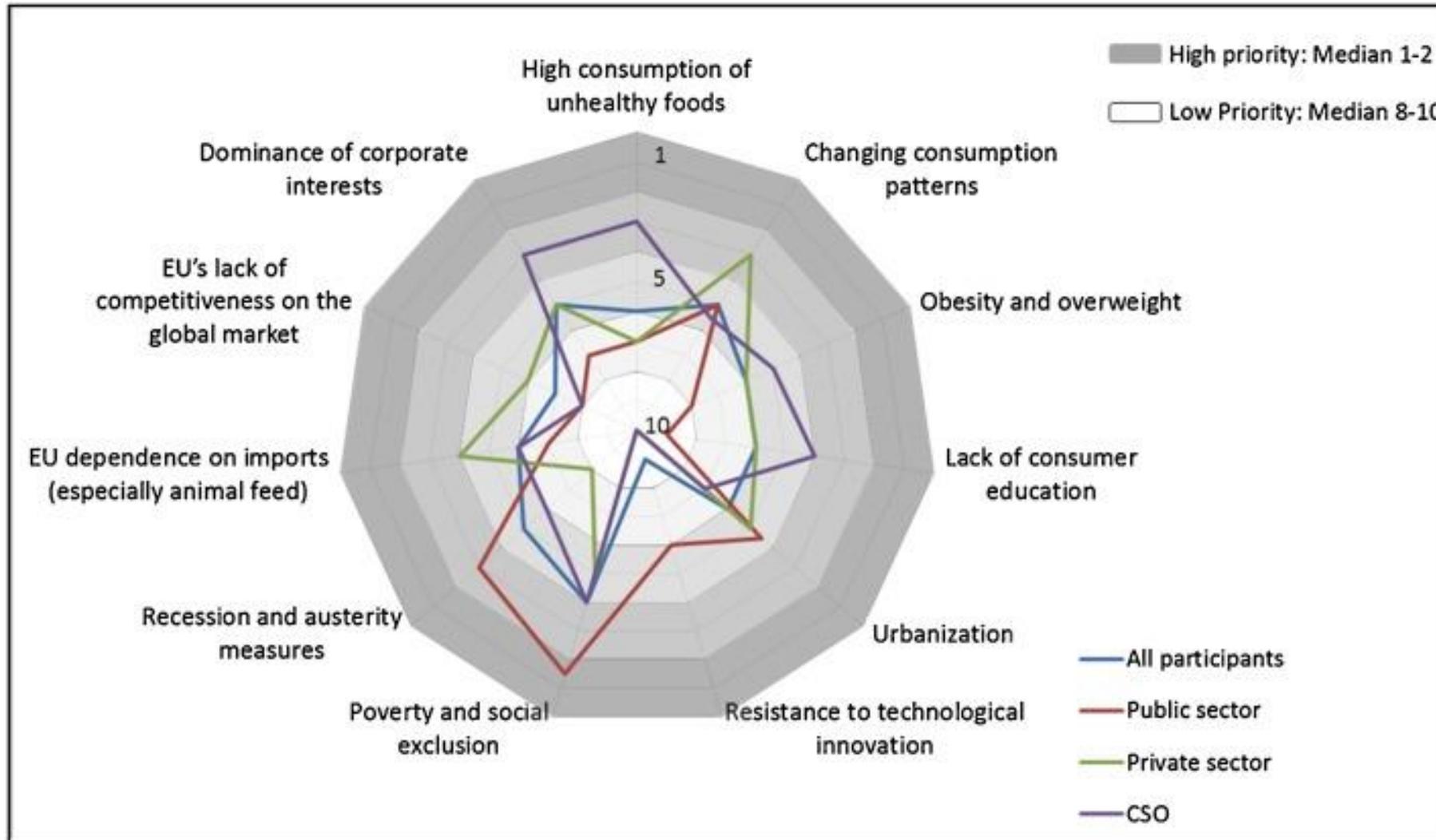
Global drivers of change for food security at present



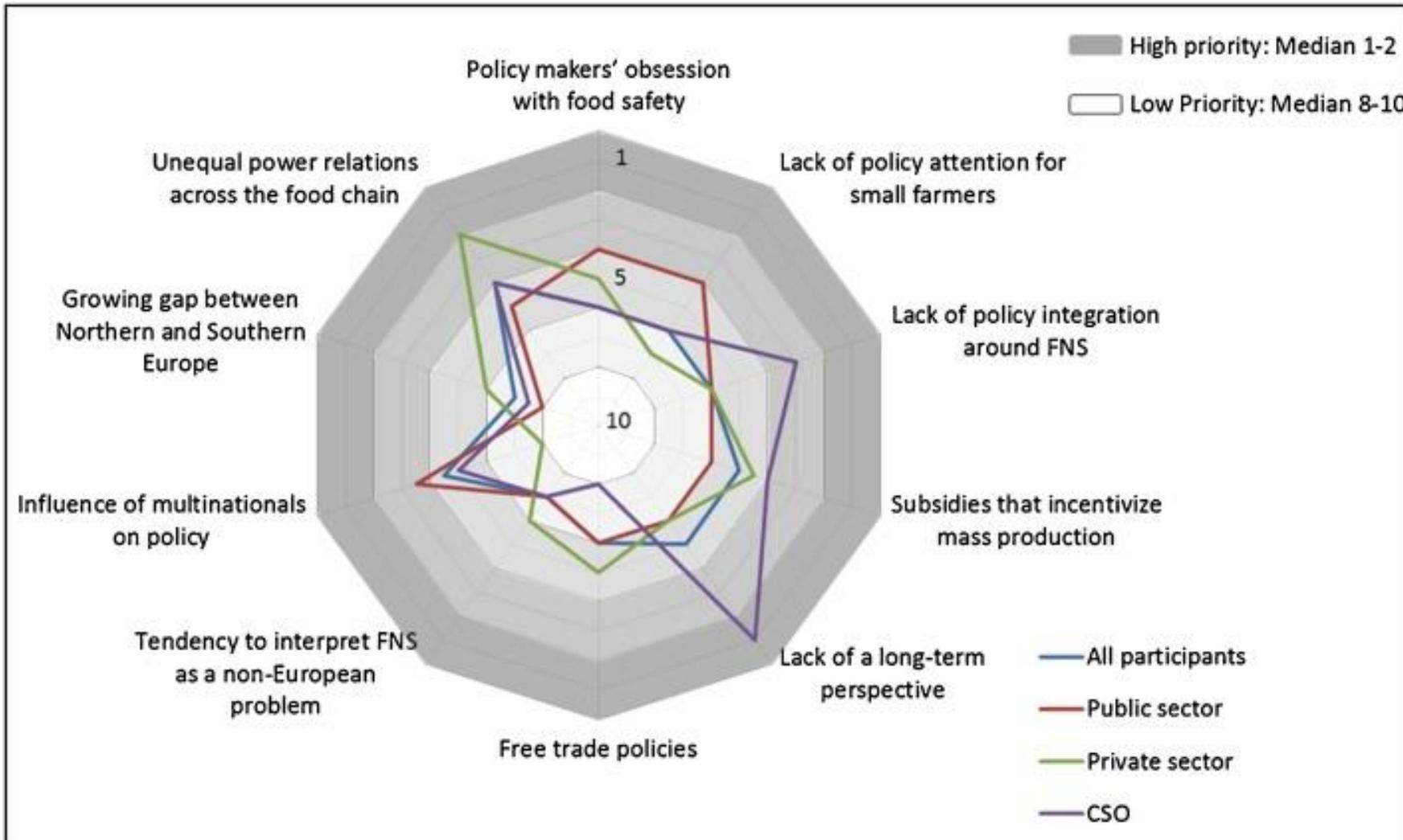
Ranking in environment and agriculture vulnerabilities



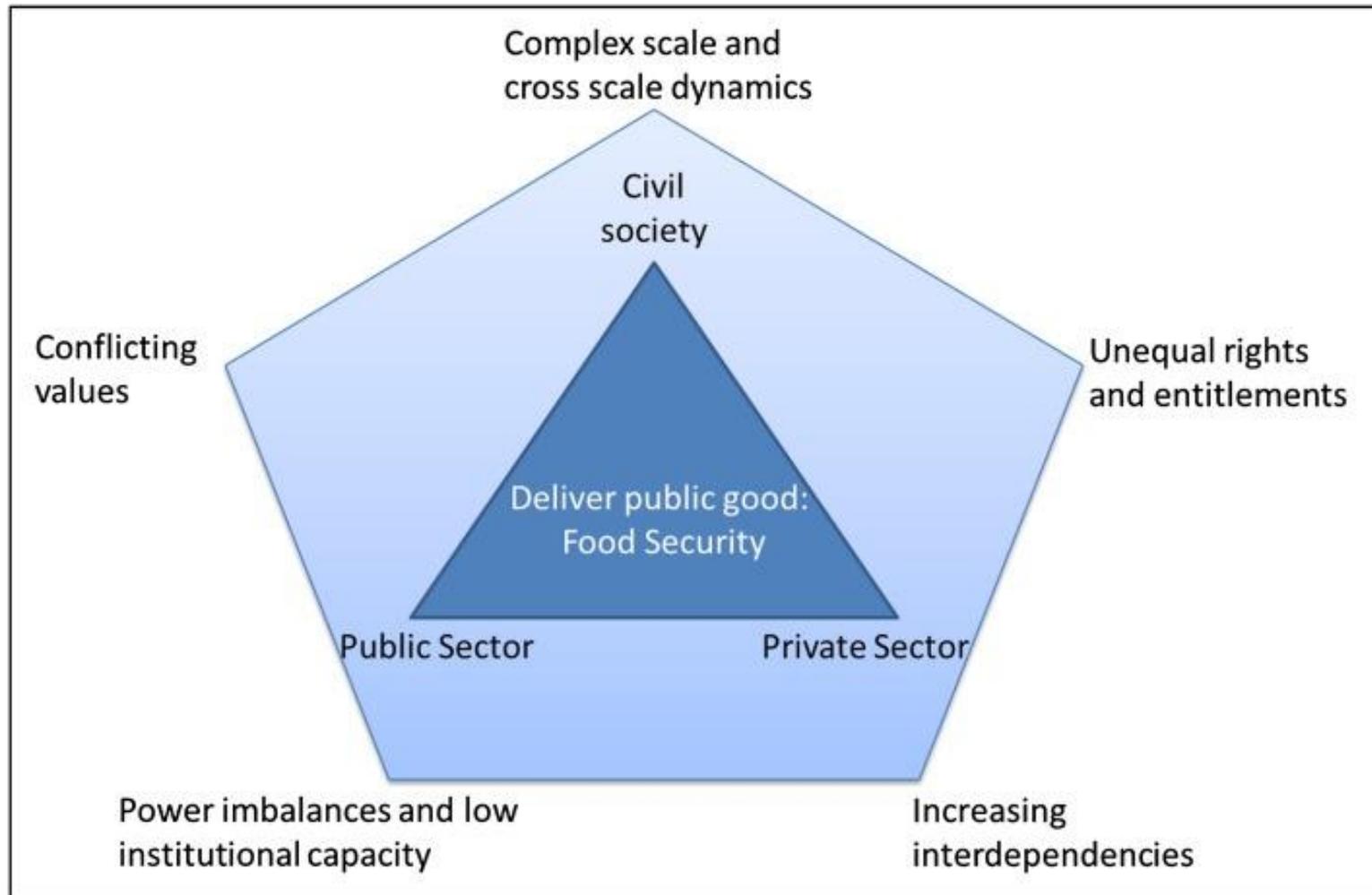
Ranking of socio-economic vulnerabilities



Ranking of policy and governance vulnerabilities



Governance as a generator of vulnerability: food system governance deficiencies

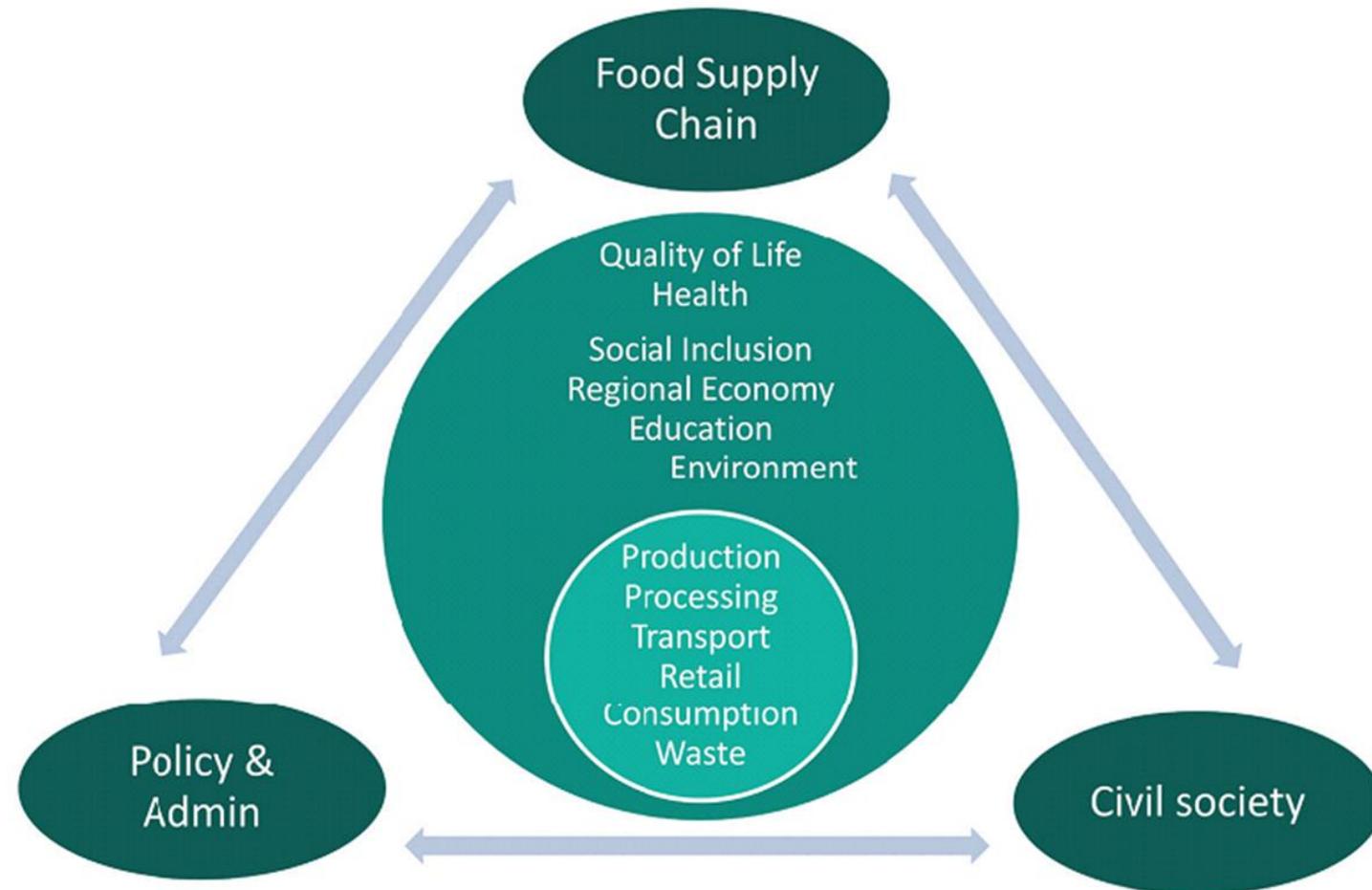


Governance as a generator of vulnerability: food system governance deficiencies

1. Limited capacity to tackle **complex scale and cross-scale dynamics**: weak coordination and integration among different spatial, jurisdictional and institutional scales
2. Increasing **interdependencies**: outside (imports), geopolitical tensions and sectoral (need holistic approaches)
3. **Asymmetrical power relations and low institutional capacity**: different capacities business lobbies, European Commission, NGOs operating in an institutional framework described as non-cooperative, outdated, segmented and incoherent, lacking vision and leadership and unable to address internal diversity.
4. ***Unequal rights and entitlements in the food system***, linked to poverty, inequality, social exclusion and unemployment, which, as many respondents emphasized, constrain access to resources
5. ***Conflicting values and interpretations of food security***
food as a human right for all citizens?
Conflicting values connected with individualistic/common good dichotomies or the capitalist neoliberal system
“Ideological” approaches to trade or science, or the search for objectivity.

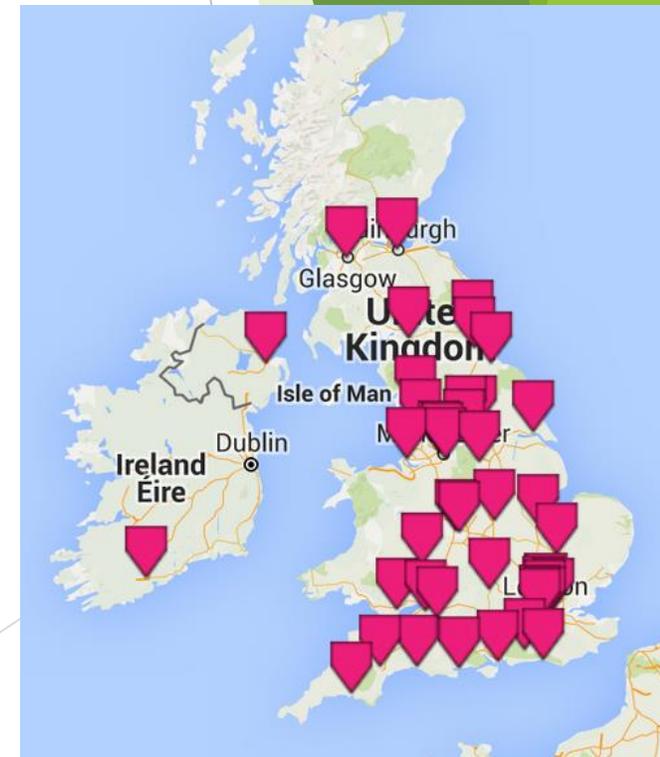
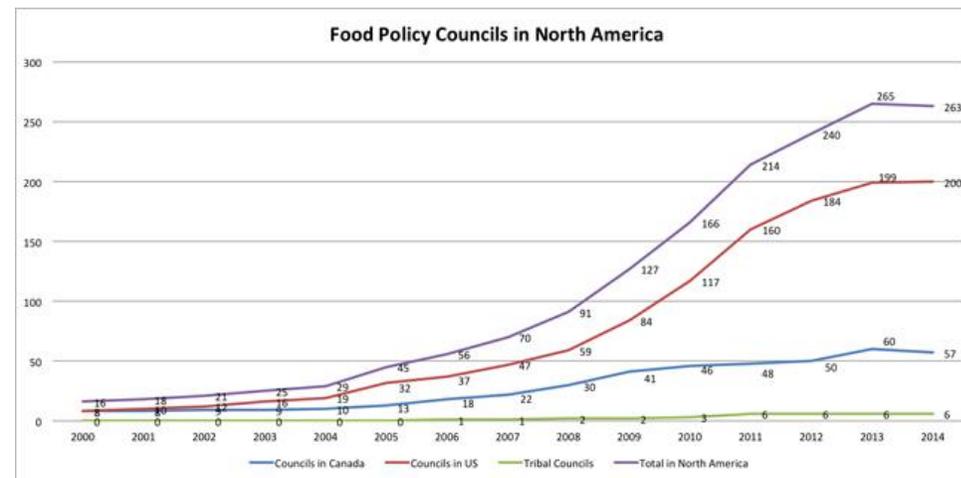
Food governance innovations: food policy councils

- ▶ Food (policy) councils, partnerships, and similar groups: assemble stakeholders from government, civil society, and the private sector to reform food policy as well as to foster new relationships and interconnections between food system initiatives at the municipal and, in some cases, state/provincial and regional levels
- ▶ Holistic approach to the food system



Food governance innovations: food policy councils

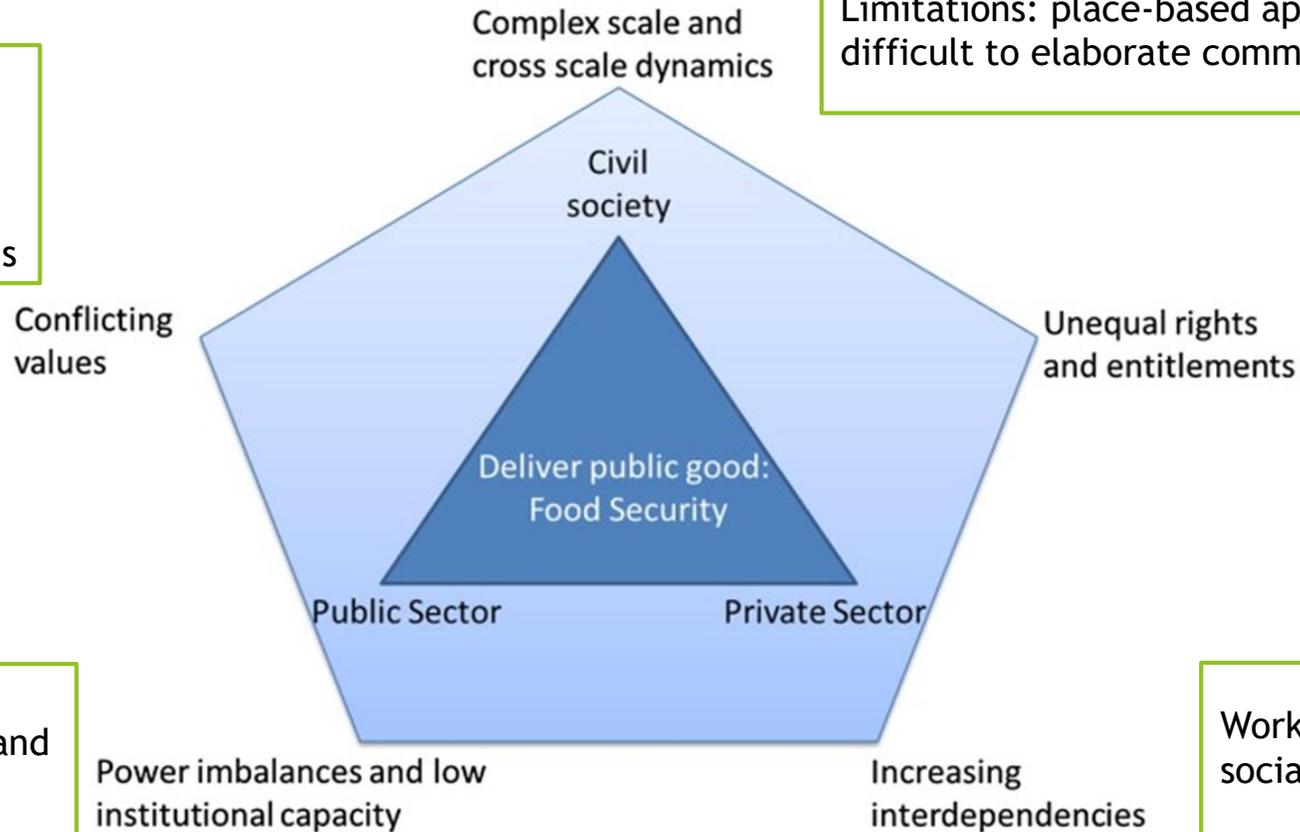
- ▶ Growing number of initiatives:
 - ▶ Milan Urban Food Policy Pact
 - ▶ 263 Food Policy Councils in North America
 - ▶ Sustainable Food Cities Network UK (50)



Food governance innovations: food policy councils

Right to food and space to develop common visions
Limitations: driven by consensus, win-win solutions

Local level, increasingly national and international networks
Limitations: place-based approach, difficult to elaborate common positions



Driven by sustainability and social justice, give voice to vulnerable groups
Limitations: limited capacity to address material redistribution, legal frameworks

Share information, training space, based on cooperation and striving for policy coherence
Limitations: power imbalances might be reproduced (equality vs equity)

Working across sectors: health, economy, social, environment
Limitations: Agriculture and business

Conclusion

- ▶ Governance deficiencies constitute a key component of vulnerability and a significant point of convergence for different stakeholders
- ▶ A platform to overcome more generalised ‘optimist’ or ‘pessimist’ approaches to food security governance: critical food governance
- ▶ Reflexivity needs to be fostered
 - ▶ Across governance scales and territories
 - ▶ Across different sectors and communities of stakeholders
 - ▶ Within institutions: entails explicitly addressing conflicting values and power imbalances (within and outside current institutions), as well as their effects in the food system.



connect the linkages between five key deficiencies in order to embody a more reflexive, democratic and integrated food security governance approach

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