



# REPORT

NYÉLÉNI PAN-EUROPEAN FORUM FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

25-30 OCTOBER 2016

second edition

Cluj Napoca - Romania - Expo Transilvania



# REPORT

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*Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests and inclusion of the next generation. It offers a strategy to resist and dismantle the current corporate trade and food regime, and guides food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems determined by local producers and users. Food sovereignty prioritises local and national economies and markets and empowers peasant and family farmer-driven agriculture, artisanal - fishing, pastoralist-led grazing, and food production, distribution and consumption based on environmental, social and economic sustainability. Food sovereignty promotes transparent trade that guarantees just incomes to all peoples as well as the rights of consumers to control their food and nutrition. It ensures that the rights to use and manage lands, territories, waters, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those of us who produce food. Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social and economic classes and generations.*

*(Nyéléni Declaration of 2007)*



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### The Coordination Committee of the Forum:

European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC)  
Eco Ruralis Association  
World Forum of Fisher People  
The Resource Center for Indigenous People  
Urgenci Community Supported Agriculture Network  
European Shepherds' Network

Transnational Institute (TNI)  
Friends of the Earth Europe  
FIAN European Sections and Coordinations  
ÖBV-Via Campesina Austria  
The Biological Farming Association Elkana  
European Attac Network

### Organizers:



### Donors:



### Partners:



# FOOD SOVEREIGNTY NOW!

## Introduction - Brief background

The Nyéléni Europe Forum for food sovereignty is part of a global movement that has been growing over the last three decades in which hundreds of organisations and movements have been engaged in efforts to defend and promote people's right to food sovereignty around the world. There are four important dates which mark the process of food sovereignty: 1996, 2007, 2011 and 2016.

The principle of food sovereignty was first launched by La Via Campesina in **1996** during the FAO World Food Summit, which took place in Rome, Italy.

11 years later, in **2007** an alliance of social movements took the initiative to organise an international Forum on food sovereignty in Mali. The movement made a deliberate decision to hold this meeting in Africa, where agriculture plays a central role, and where numerous rural and urban families suffer from hunger despite the abundance of natural resources. The forum in Mali brought together more than 500 representatives from more than 80 countries. This Forum was a great opportunity and a great milestone to reaffirm the right to food sovereignty and to clarify its economic, social, ecological and political implications. It also generated an international process with the aim of achieving recognition of the right to food sovereignty.

This forum inspired the European peasants and the civil society organizations. 4 years later, in **2011**, the European Forum for Food Sovereignty was organized in Krems, Austria, bringing

together more than 400 women and men together from 34 European countries. A Nyéléni Europe Declaration was written and adopted at this forum. The European Forum in Austria acted as a catalyst for opening a space in Europe to define the struggles and strategies necessary to create a movement for Food Sovereignty.

The need for continuing the process for the Right to Food Sovereignty expanded to Eastern Europe. And so, 5 years later, in November **2016**, a second Forum for Food Sovereignty was organized, this time for Europe and Central Asia, including in the process countries with young or inconsistent democracies but with a very large peasant population willing to engage and having a lot to say. This latest forum was organized in Cluj Napoca, Romania, in the region of Transylvania where the peasant culture is very much alive. The Right for Food Sovereignty was the heart and soul of our work.

In between these historic events and since then, food sovereignty has played an increasingly important role in debates about the social and environmental impacts of the industrial food systems and alternatives to neoliberal policies. Food sovereignty puts agricultural producers and consumers at the centre of the debate, and supports all peoples in their right to produce their own food, despite international market conditions, and to consume local foods.

**We can say that the Food Sovereignty movement in today's society is stronger than ever.**



## Introduction - The Forum

The 2nd Nyéléni Europe Forum for food sovereignty took place in Cluj-Napoca, Romania between 26 - 30 October 2016. The Forum gathered over 500 delegates from 43 countries, from the Urals and Caucasus, and from the Arctic to the Mediterranean, representing 290 civil society organizations of peasants, fishers, pastoralists, indigenous people, consumers, trade unions, environmental justice, solidarity, human rights organizations, community-based food movements, journalists, and researchers working for food sovereignty in Europe at different levels. Also, representatives from countries outside Europe were present, including Sierra Leone, Cambodia, Jordan, China, Zambia, Mali, Honduras, Zimbabwe, Thailand, Canada, Brazil, Uruguay, Mongolia, Indonesia, and Myanmar.

The aim of the forum [1] was to share experiences, develop a common understanding of food sovereignty, share ideas for powerful joint actions, discuss strategies to relocalize Europe's food systems, and explore how to influence key policies in Europe. The gathering was an important stepping stone for building a strong food sovereignty movement in Europe, especially in Eastern Europe, as well as in several other European countries where no food sovereignty platforms previously existed. The forum was also a first step towards structuring the European movement and giving it visibility through the planning of shared actions. After the closure of the Forum from Romania, at the time of writing this report, many Food Sovereignty platforms are emerging in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.



1. Mobilization call: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B\\_x-9XeYoYkWMdAzeC1LZkx1bms/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_x-9XeYoYkWMdAzeC1LZkx1bms/view)

# Introduction – Four days of debates and sharing

*You cannot kill a lion with one hand, you need many.*

Opening plenary, Elizabeth Mpofu, Secretary General of La Via Campesina [2]

The fair of delegations brought together into one room the rich diversity of people, cultures, foods, ways of thinking and doing, and social movements present at the forum. Distinct cheeses, olives, breads, desserts, seeds, plants and regional delicacies were brought from all over Europe. Discussions among delegates touched on the many challenges facing small-scale producers and urban-based food movements across Europe, such as accessing land, preserving seeds, accessing markets and living wages. A general feeling was shared among many people: mobilizing and influencing public policies remains daunting, despite the encouraging development of community-supported agriculture (CSAs), and the increasing awareness in the population of the importance of growing food.

In the first parallel session, participants gathered to discuss key developments, achievements, challenges and new alternatives and opportunities since the 2011 Nyéléni Europe Forum in Krems. They could choose among four thematic areas:

1. *Models of food production and consumption,*
2. *Food distribution,*
3. *The right to natural resources and the commons,*
4. *Social conditions in food & agricultural systems.*

Asked to reflect on what elements of the Declaration of the 2011 Nyéléni Europe Forum needed to be updated, participants identified the rise of xenophobia and growing democratic deficit in Europe, declining social and economic conditions in all sectors, and of course war and political/economic instability forcing increasing numbers of people to migrate and become refugees. A number of hot topics came out strongly in the thematic groups: agroecology, CSA/short supply chains, GMOs and seeds, land and resource grabbing and how to keep resources in the hands of communities, corporate power and how to build distribution models for food

sovereignty, the rights of migrant and agricultural workers, refugees, and how to address xenophobia and racism. Participants in all four groups also talked about the need to work more on popular education and awareness.

On the following day, in the second parallel session, in an effort to build policy convergence, participants discussed key policies they wanted to target at the local, national, European and Global levels. This implied identifying both institutional processes where the movement could push for public policies for food sovereignty, and policy developments that the movement needs to counter, such as trade agreements, inadequate health and safety regulations, legal restrictions on seed saving, or laws facilitating land grabbing and corporate control. Principles of engagement were also discussed to ensure that the voice of the movement is adequately heard.

Over the next three days, participants focused on devising campaigns and actions that they could work on together in the future. These six campaigns and actions topics were determined based on the discussions that took place over the first day and a half in the first and second parallel sessions:

1. *Land, natural resources and the commons,*
2. *Agroecology and seeds,*
3. *Territorial markets,*
4. *A Common Food Policy,*
5. *Trade and corporate power,*
6. *Migrants, Agricultural workers', Women's and Peasants' Rights.*

Within each of these groups, sub-groups discussed specific opportunities for networking, mapping alternatives, building shared advocacy and campaigns, educating the public and demanding social change. The key outcomes of these rich discussions are presented below.

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2. Nyeleni Europe videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X73r2EwsJYY&list=PLPZO-q2JL8GDyfm7qPKIvTpv05-kVo8o5>

These ideas were also discussed in meetings of the constituencies and of the national delegations.

The four, already established constituencies (1. Food producers, 2. Organized consumers and urban movements, 3. NGOs, 4. Workers, migrants and trade unions) met to discuss their own priorities and how to carry forward the emerging campaigns and actions.

Emerging constituencies of people marginalized by colonialism, coloniality and slavery, researchers, alternative retailers and “peasants-to-be” were given the space to meet and self-organize. The outcomes of these discussions are presented below. National delegations met to share their views on how to organize at the national level to amplify their impact, and assessed their experiences at the forum as individuals and as a group.

Throughout this process, open spaces and movie screenings, as well as field visits gave everyone

a chance to deepen their understanding of food sovereignty experiences in Europe.

A political dialogue was also organized with FAO representatives, which provided participants with the opportunity to share their ideas for strengthening food sovereignty in Europe.

While the FAO insisted on the importance of its partnerships with civil society and the private sector, food sovereignty activists alerted FAO to the important distinction between agroecology and climate-smart agriculture, and to the dangers of public-private partnerships.

The final plenary was a very strong and beautiful moment, as participants made solidarity statements with people engaged in social struggles across the planet, called on the food sovereignty movement to be more inclusive of the voices of women and marginalized groups, and thanked the interpreters, cooks, volunteers, Romanian hosts and the coordination committee for their amazing work.



# Campaigns and actions

What follows is a brief summary of the discussions that took place in the six campaigns and action groups. By no means do these summaries capture the rich discussions that took place. They attempt to synthesize major points and specific actions.

## 1. Land, seeds, natural resources and the commons

In recent years, access to and control over land, seeds, water bodies and other natural resources has considerably decreased for a growing number of peasants, pastoralists, and fishers across Europe. Recent data shows that in the last decade one third of small farms have disappeared within the EU Member States. Land concentration is increasing and cases of land grabbing are also on the rise. Today, 3% of the farms in the EU control 52% of the farmland.[3] Land concentration, land grabbing and the associated loss of small farms are also unfolding just outside the EU, in other parts of Europe and Central Asia. Moreover, coastal resources and forestry are gradually privatised and traditional seeds and breeds are increasingly under corporate control. The Nyéléni Europe Forum took place in a context marked by giant corporate mergers in the seeds branch, which constitute an additional threat to peasants' rights to access, control, use and exchange seeds.

This working group brought together a wide range of peasants, fishers, forest workers, indigenous peoples, etc. from the South-West of Europe up to the North of Siberia, from the British Isles to Turkey. Participants also represented a wide set of already existing networks dealing with access to land and natural resources in Europe. [4] This working group agreed on the need to ensure that all shared actions develop with:

- *the active involvement of peasants, fishers, pastoralists, forest dwellers, landless, indigenous peoples, migrant land workers, etc. to guarantee that everyone's voice is heard;*

- *an active North-South solidarity, allowing for exchange and sharing as well as further contributing to the global convergence of movements towards food sovereignty. struggles*

This working group identified the following actions and campaigns as priorities:

**1.a. Forge a common definition of land grabbing for Europe.** Land grabbing is currently defined in different ways. There is a need to jointly establish a people's definition of land grabbing so that we share a common understanding of what land grabbing is and what it entails. This can be done building on the definition proposed by ECVC [5].

**1.b. Campaign "against" & Campaign "for".** Participants shared the need for campaigns "against" and campaigns "for". The "against" campaign would focus on exposing corporate grabbing of natural resources, land, water and forests, notably through naming and shaming. One proposal was also to provide training on strategies of how to occupy land.

The "for" campaign" would aim at highlighting and disseminating information about practices, all over Europe, that facilitate secure access to and control over land, natural resources, water and forests. This campaign would include support for ECVC's (and others') actions, and work toward the elaboration and implementation of an EU Directive on Land. [6]

3. [https://www.tni.org/en/node/23386?content\\_language=en](https://www.tni.org/en/node/23386?content_language=en)

4. Access to land network, Farm transmission networks, EFSLP, ICCA, Cee-Web for biodiversity, European water movement, Law impact fishing Europe (LIFE), ACTEA - European organisation of women and fisheries, ICSF, Slow food, Slow fish, ECVC, Urgenci, Hands on the Land for Food Sovereignty, etc.

5. ECVC definition of Land Grabbing: <http://www.eurovia.org/how-do-we-define-land-grabbing/>

6. <http://www.eurovia.org/call-for-fair-and-sustainable-use-of-farmland-heard-at-the-ep/>





Field visit to Roșia Montană village, Apuseni Mountains - in support of the peasants' struggle against a gold mine.

Participants highlighted the need for information and lobby for the implementation, in Europe, of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (also called the Tenure Guidelines or TGs) [7] adopted by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and of the FAO Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (also called SSF Guidelines). [8]

In addition, members of this working group highlighted the importance of political campaigns advocating for democratic and participatory governance of land, water, forests and natural resources. An interesting process in this regard is the ongoing negotiation of a UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other People Working in Rural Areas at the UN Human Rights Council. Working to get active support from the EU is a necessary to support this declaration.

#### 1.c. International Day for Natural Resources.

Participants suggested identifying one day a year (e.g. and international or European Day) to put natural resources high on the agenda through direct actions, as well as through advocacy and awareness raising activities. Furthermore, participants wanted to create a network on access to and control over natural resources. Next to this proposal – and also linked to it, was also the suggestion of declaring an international year of occupying land. It was also proposed that training

related to occupying land (and civil disobedience) should be organised so as to share our experiences across Europe.

**1.d. Film / Documentary.** A film that shows how peasants can keep their land and farms and how to support them in this would be a powerful tool for awareness raising. This film and associated campaign should also expose the difference between small-scale and industrial farming.

#### 1.e. Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Participants insisted on the need to change the European policies contributing to land concentration and grabbing. Above all, the future CAP should be based on a commitment to social values and agroecological principles. A concrete link with a Common Food Policy is to be laid. Besides, at the EU level, there is a crucial need to push for an EU Directive on land.

#### 1.f. Indigenous Peoples: respecting and protecting their territories and natural resources.

The presence of indigenous peoples' representatives also opened the space for discussion about the protection of traditional living areas and social realities of indigenous peoples. Therefore, participants proposed to work toward for an International Convention on Conservation Areas, indigenous peoples' and community conserved territories and Areas (ICCAs). [9]

7. Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of national food security. <http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/voluntary-guidelines/en/>

8. Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4487e.pdf>

9. For more information, see ICCA Consortium: <http://www.iccaconsortium.org/>

## 2. Agroecology

*“Agroecology is more than food, it is at the heart of our relationship with one another. It is a way of life and the language of nature that we learn as her children”* (Statement from the Agroecology stream to the forum plenary).

The promotion and scaling-up of agroecology in Europe emerged as a strong topic at the forum. Since the 2011 Nyéléni Europe Forum, agroecological and food transition initiatives have expanded all over Europe, with the development of schools for peasant agroecology and on-farm exchange programmes. Agroecology is gaining momentum, projects are multiplying, and there are more knowledge, trainings, and even institutional support than ever before. The organization by the FAO of regional symposiums on agroecology worldwide contributed to raising awareness on the need to transition to sustainable food systems.

The expansion of agroecological techniques (permaculture, agroforestry, stress free slaughter) and initiatives has brought new challenges: the co-optation of agroecology and the way that the concept is being reduced to a set of agricultural technologies or production practices that ease the sustainability crisis of the industrial food production systems without challenging the structures of power. Food sovereignty activists at the forum reaffirmed their opposition to “climate smart agriculture”, “sustainable” or “ecological intensification”, or industrial organic food production, notably during their political dialogue with the FAO. Agroecology is a key element in the construction of food sovereignty AND it must be embedded in the struggle for food sovereignty.

This means that agroecological models of production must be scaled-up, notably through appropriate public policies, but that we need to ensure that agroecology keeps its holistic ecological-social and solidarity approach. To achieve this, 3 priorities were agreed:

### **2.a. Developing a holistic public policy strategy.**

In order to make concrete policy proposals and to build a European Campaign to promote public policies for agroecology, mapping of existing laws and policies relevant to agroecology (both enabling and destructive/limiting) is needed.

Changes in legislation will be needed to put an end to the destruction of peasant farming and enable farmers to stay on the farm, facilitate access to land for the youth, increase soil fertility, halt the extinction of bees, decriminalize peasant practices that are currently illegal (slaughtering, use of genetic materials), enable the development of local markets and strengthen the links between producers and consumers, notably through alternative trade and competition rules. Campaigns should target EU decision-makers but also local communities.

### **2.b. Sharing knowledge through a European training and learning network for AE.**

The network would support horizontal and intergenerational exchanges of knowledge across different traditions, including about new ideas, and would prioritize women and youth, as well as link to the global level (e.g. LVC). Key tasks include mapping the existing agroecology schools and the needs and questions of producers, setting up a database of appropriate agroecological technologies and techniques, and reinforcing peasant seed systems through seed exchanges and the recognition and protection of their right to seeds. Training should be political as well as technical and the co-production of knowledge by farmers and researchers should be encouraged.

### **2.c. Building a strong internal and external communication strategy, notably to avoid co-option.**

This communication strategy should focus on creating a positive, inclusive discourse about the transformative power of agroecology in order to show the power of the movement as a transformative tool, and to make agroecology widely known as the solution to several crises, including climate change, among different groups of society, including media..

*Several working groups were established: Political training, appropriate technology and techniques, agroecology schools, research, education, seeds and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).*

### 3. Territorial markets

Since the first Nyéléni Europe Forum, alternative food distribution systems have been growing. There are now over 1 million people involved in Community Supported Agriculture in Europe, and local markets, farm shops, vegetable boxes and other schemes of direct sales are gaining importance across Europe. Food provision is increasingly being considered in a territorial system context (for example, recent policy work in the Committee on Food Security (CFS) and the Habitat III New Urban Agenda).

This territorial approach must be reflected in appropriate legal and policy frameworks (including health and safety regulations, labelling, financial measures, bans on GMOs), that respect the rights and needs of producers, agricultural and industrial food workers and consumers, and the environment. To achieve this, this working group agreed on the priorities:

**3.a. Mapping, sharing of experiences and advocacy for public procurement and local/territorial food policies.** This mapping/wiki of experiences, initiatives and strategies to influence and work around limiting public procurement/local food policies would be used to build advocacy and campaign strategies and toolkits. This documentation would represent a useful resource to work with authorities and political bodies. Stories of failures should also be documented; the sharing of experiences through a virtual learning space should be encouraged.

**3.b. Mapping, training and exchange of knowledge about alternatives to supermarkets such as CSAs and Food co-ops.** Local public procurement, local food policy councils, support for accessible farmer's markets, co-op shops and collective food processing units are all part of a fairer, more sustainable local/territorial, solidarity-based food system. Mapping what already exists and creating a network of progressive retailers across Europe would be very useful. There is a need to document and share information about alternative ways of accessing and distributing food. It would be particularly enlightening to collect the following information about the alternative retailers: their



ownership scheme, legal structure, organizational structure, decision-making procedures, profit-benefit distribution, scale, local context, main actions, products, types of producers and relationship to them, and key achievements. It would also be worthwhile to reinforce collaboration with the global network of social solidarity economy ([riposs.org](http://riposs.org)).

**3.c. Campaign against supermarkets and their unfair trade practices.** Supermarkets control the flow of products from farm to shelf and dictate supply conditions and prices. The push for profits in retailing drives down prices, wages and working conditions throughout the industrial food system. Supermarkets are extending their control over Eastern and Central Europe. The unfair practices of supermarkets and the negative public health impacts of processed foods need to be denounced. Consumers must be made aware of the story behind our food. Campaigns would be developed to expose these unfair practices.

**3.d. Build relationships between consumers and producers.** A pan-European public awareness campaign could focus on showing who is doing what throughout the food chain (tell different stories from different perspectives/people involved in the food production value chain: farmers, food co-ops, local partners) to inform people about the production chain and the importance of sustainable diets, and to show how alternative food provision systems could change people's lives and contribute to healing our planet. Mapping and sharing about national campaigns will allow cross-fertilization of messages and actions, and reinforce advocacy efforts. Together we can build relationships between producers and consumers.

## 4. A Common Food Policy

In the European Union, there is no food policy focusing on the right to food and a sustainable food system. Food systems are indeed affected and impacted by a wide set of related policies: agriculture and rural development, public health, consumer protection, climate and energy, social cohesion policies, environmental protection, etc. There is a crucial need for a holistic approach to European food systems, reaching from production to consumption of food in Europe. A common food policy in Europe requires a global, overarching food and farming policy within the framework of food sovereignty, as defined by the 2007 Nyéléni Forum. [10]

The main objectives of a Common Food Policy would be:

- to ensure access to good quality food to all European people, produced in a sustainable way;
- to foster an agricultural and food policy that protects the rights of all those engaged in various forms of small-scale, agroecological and traditional food production (by peasants, fisher folks, pastoralists...);
- a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) that guarantees a fair income and fair prices for small-scale farmers;
- to facilitate access to land and natural resources to young farmers and new entrants;
- to protect peasants' seeds systems, the environment and biodiversity;
- to generate a significant contribution to a "cost recovery effect" in public health expenditure (the fact that quality food fostering health will prevent future expenses due to unhealthy food);
- to help educate and inform consumers about food and food systems and to discourage the consumption of unhealthy food (e.g. through tax);
- to develop and improve local links between producers and consumers, hence contributing to social cohesion;
- to ensure the inclusion of the poorest and most vulnerable people;
- to promote local, organic and good-quality food in public procurements;

- to advance alternative trade policies which would protect local (market) systems;
- to enhance a grassroots and inclusive elaboration of food policies according to local expectations and realities and that takes into account numerous other aspects (cultural, social...).

In order to do so, this working group identified the following activities:

**4.a. Reach out to the broader society.** The broader public needs to be convinced of the need to reform food and agriculture policies. As a first step, we need internal training within our networks. This training aims at establishing a communication strategy for building awareness and capacity in other sectors such as health, consumer protection, tax payers, etc. This training needs to be built on thorough research and informed decision-making process, and should use accessible language as well as graphic design (infographics). Case studies – from each country or constituency – should highlight the inequalities of the CAP.

**4.b. Event and actions on 25th March 2017.** On the 25th March, 2017 the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome will be celebrated. The Treaty of Rome established the European Economic Community (EEC) that later became the European Union. Participants called for organizing actions in Rome on that occasion, to call upon European leaders to re-focus on the original values of the EU, such as human rights, and also on a fairer and more sustainable new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), currently being reviewed. This should also be a moment to put a Common Food Policy based on the principles of food sovereignty on the agenda. Furthermore, an evaluation of how the European Union has done in the past 60 years should be conducted, depicting today's multiple crises (austerity measures, migrant crisis, increasing inequalities, rise of extreme-right and populist forces, Brexit, and also the realities of livelihoods of peasants, fishers, pastoralists, etc.).

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10. See the Declaration of the Forum for Food Sovereignty, Nyéléni 2007 (Mali, 27 February 2007). Declaration accessible at: <https://nyeleni.org/spip.php?article290>.

**4.c. Events and actions on 17th of April.** The 17th of April is the International Day of Peasants' Struggles. The currently negotiated Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other People Working in Rural Areas, and the need for a common food policy based on the principles of food sovereignty – will be at the heart of the actions. The mobilization needs to be visible at regional and national levels. The actions need to be coordinated with the wider Nyéléni movement, broadening the campaigns to other constituency groups.

**4.d. Exchange of expertise.** The different networks, movements and CSOs participating in Nyéléni should use the Agroecology Platform [11] to share and exchange expertise, materials, knowledge and documentation on different topics (such as CAP, food-related issues, etc.).

**4.e. Film(s) on CAP.** One proposal was to film a documentary – or even several short films – on 4 to 5 key issues for the Common Agricultural Policy, highlighting, on one side, in what way the CAP contributed to significant land concentration in Europe (amongst others through its direct payments scheme) and, on the other side, the major issues and challenges that the future CAP should focus on and respond to in order to support peasant farming and food sovereignty.

There is an urgent need to democratize the CAP, the main existing EU policy regarding food and farming. Public awareness should be raised. We need strong slogans that farmers and CSOs could use together to spread the message. Human rights, social justice, transparency and equality need to be put forward in these films on CAP.

## 5. Alternative trade systems & ending global corporate power

This working group discussed the challenges of the increasing corporate power concentration in the food and agricultural system and identified key issues related to trade and markets. Also alternatives, existing international and European actions and ways for the European food sovereignty movement to engage in those. The main challenges focus on the corporate control over the food system by multinational corporations that benefit from the “free” trade regime. Communicating effectively about those issues and changing consumers’ attitude towards industrial food are necessary. Participants agreed on the need to create spaces for alternatives: giving small scale sustainable farmers the opportunity to sell their products at a fair price - supporting and creating more local/territorial markets, building alternative fair co-ops, and creating our own food system. The actions/strategies proposed were:

**5.a. Putting market regulation instruments back on the political agenda** to ensure stable prices, fair incomes for producers and address social and environmental concerns, including

supply management tools, flexible quotas, import taxes, internalize costs/eco taxes.

**5.b. Putting human rights first** by putting an end to the human rights abuses of (European) corporations and strengthening the human rights framework in relation to food sovereignty by supporting the process of negotiation of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas and the elaboration of the UN legally binding Treaty on transnational corporations (TNCs) [12] and other business enterprises with respect to human rights, both at the UN Human Rights Council.

**5.c.** Create spaces to discuss how to use and refine the Alternative trade mandate [13] in the trade negotiations, from a food sovereignty perspective. Join groups mobilizing against free trade agreements like TTIP and CETA. Learn from experiences put forward by the de-growth movement and explore links and work with them. Use the Monsanto-Bayer merger, to highlight power concentration in the food sector, educate consumers about the problems and alternatives.

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11. FAO Agroecology Knowledge Hub: <http://www.fao.org/agroecology/>

12. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RuralAreas/Pages/WGRuralAreasIndex.aspx> and <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/WGTransCorp/Pages/IGWGOntnc.aspx>

13. <http://www.s2bnetwork.org/trade-time-new-vision/>

## 6. Rights for agricultural workers including migrants, peasants and women

*Agricultural labourers continue to work and live under undignified conditions in many parts of Europe. They are either unprotected by the legal system, or faced with a lack of recognition of their rights. Over the last five years there has been an increase in migrants searching for work in the agricultural system, and there has been a general degradation of working conditions, especially for women. Furthermore, the refugee crisis in Europe has catalysed increased racism and xenophobia.*

This working group stressed the importance of recognizing the rights of peasants and land workers as a fundamental part of achieving food sovereignty. Participants envisioned alternative supply chains providing justice to workers through fair wages, respect and legal rights, stronger networks and better support for organisations that defend workers' rights. They identified the need to end exploitation of land workers and discrimination against peasants. Peasants are included in this group because they face many of the same challenges as land workers. Special attention was paid to women in all the categories. The following priorities were agreed:

**6.a. Awareness raising within and outside of the movement.** This group called for more recognition of the importance of issues of migrant and agricultural workers' rights, including women and peasants, within the Nyéléni movement. In self-reflection, the group identified the importance of framing their issues more clearly in terms of food sovereignty.

Another major priority identified by this working group was the need to raise awareness of the public about the conditions under which agricultural workers are often forced to live and work. Some successful and inspiring stories were shared about consumers in the north of Europe boycotting produce cultivated by exploited workers from the south of Europe. The group identified the need to step up their communication efforts, to map out working conditions in different places, and to invest energy in reliable sources of information about their efforts to promote workers' rights around Europe.



Coordinated campaigns beyond national borders are essential to raise awareness, to build solidarity and to increase visibility of workers' needs and struggles, locally & internationally.

**6.b. Direct work with affected people.** A key priority is to continue to work with affected people. They include migrant, seasonal and fixed agricultural workers, peasants and women. They are often not aware of their rights or know what avenues are available to claim and realize their rights.. They would greatly benefit from getting organised among themselves, but because of their precarious job security and their high level of mobility this group faces high difficulties on this front. Migrants also face different contexts than seasonal workers, etc. It is important to work on the whole food chain and all the actors involved to improve the social integrity of our food system through the creation of acceptable social conditions for the land workers at every stage.

**6.c. Policy work on rights.** Policies that better protect migrants and land workers are necessary in Europe. The process of negotiation of a UN on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas is one step towards protecting peasants and rural workers, but continued policy work needs to be done including direct lobbying, linking with existing policy processes and raising public awareness and increasing activism.

**6.d. Unite to join forces.** A major theme that emerged was the need to unify as a working group to join forces. Throughout the discussions and from the examples that were shared, the importance of alliance building with and between seasonal workers, peasants, women, refugees, legal, illegal landworkers, new farmers, consumers, precarious groups, workers from other sectors, consumers, NGOs, labour unions, supermarkets, researchers and others came up again and again. Suggestions emerged, such as building national platforms and meeting regularly.



*The Convergence in Eastern Europe & Central Asia meeting, at Nyéléni Europe Forum*

## Strategic results of the Forum

### 1. Building Convergence in Eastern Europe & Central Asia

One of the main objectives of the Nyéléni Europe Forum was to strengthen the food sovereignty movements in Eastern Europe and Central Asia and reinforce the ability of peasant farmers in those countries to support each other. Many people in the region face common challenges.

The industrialization of agriculture connected with the market economy has led to the withdrawal of government support for agriculture and the destruction of infrastructures for production. These developments have had far-reaching effects, including land grabbing, GMOs, the spread of supermarket chains that monopolize the market, environmental problems, and rural exodus. Particular kinds of investments – industrial tourism, energy projects – also affect the livelihoods of Eastern European and Central Asian peasants. This situation is discouraging the youth from entering agriculture.

A very sensitive and urgent problem is the state of war that affects the region, generating a lot of refugees and environmental pollution. In this sense, a Declaration Against the War, linked to food sovereignty, was embraced by all delegations present at the Forum.

The regional meeting represented a step forward for the region. Participants agreed on the need to exchange, cooperate, and connect to international civil society movements. A major accomplishment of the forum was the convergence of Eastern European and Central Asian organizations, which initiated talks on collective regional strategies and stepped up the coordination of the food sovereignty movement there. The convergence also recognized the Mali Declaration on Agroecology as the basis for the European region to scale up agroecology in order to achieve food sovereignty.

## 2. Women in Food Sovereignty

Around 70 women [14] of different constituencies gathered to share their experiences and reflect on the position of women in the struggle for food sovereignty. Several voices were heard through a participatory body map in which they expressed their perspectives on the current state of women in general as well as in the food sovereignty movement. The perceptions were different, but at the same time many came down to similar challenges. The issue of lacking visibility and recognition of struggles specific to women in rural areas was often mentioned. Although every situation is different, overall women in rural areas are working hard to meet the various and sometimes competing challenges of daily tasks, caring for others, caring for self, caring for fields/land/environment and finding creative solutions to advance food sovereignty. The burning issues identified by participants included unequal repartition of care and productive tasks, which for some represent a step back towards stereotypical gender roles. This calls for raising awareness



about gender violence, notably in Europe. Next to prioritizing political rights and visibility of women, another strong claim was made that a change in the dominant mentality in society is necessary to put an end to violence against women. Even where acts of violence against women are prohibited by law, this does not necessarily lead to a decrease in the number of those crimes. Another point of concern was the fact that women or gender perspectives were hardly included in most talks, presentations or workshops, including during the forum. This led some participants to prepare a *mística* based on the claims by feminist movements to stop violence against women.

## 3. The voices of those marginalised by colonialism and coloniality, enslavement and oppression

The 2007 Nyéléni Food Sovereignty Forum Declaration states: “Food Sovereignty implies new social relations, free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social and economic classes and generations.” This means that, to have real food sovereignty, rights for and over food production, processing and eating, there needs to be justice between women and men, black and white, rich and poor, young and old. Justice for every living being. Justice for the Earth’s ecology. Yet, spaces and processes, including the Nyéléni Europe Forum, continue to exclude whole communities, discourses and critical perspectives, and there are no mechanisms to hold those at the margins to account, to express difference and to stimulate creativity. Participants to the emerging constituency of the marginalized and people of colour called on all of us to examine our collective

conscience and to establish processes and mechanisms in all parts of the food sovereignty movement to include those who are unable to attend: the street sleepers, those with disabilities, the disinherited refugees, the traditional market sellers, sojourners from the Caribbean, Africa or Asia. They also called for a new framing of food sovereignty as expressed in a European context. This is to include access to decision making to those who, because of the weight of colonialism and the severities of enslavement, have been squashed to the edges. Decision making spaces within the European Food Sovereignty movement must be continually developed to reflect the full diversity of European society.

*“We are obliged to act – to be activist- when we recognize the absences and silences in our composition.” [15]*

14. The terminology women includes persons who identify as women.

15. Statement, The voices of those marginalised by colonialism and coloniality, enslavement and oppression: <http://www.nyelenieurope.net/news/marginal-peoples-nyeleni-europe-2016-statement>



## 4. Researchers within Food Sovereignty

People identifying as academics or researchers accounted for 10% of the participants to the Nyéléni Europe Forum. Most of them are involved in concrete alternatives, projects, movements, on top on doing research at the local, national, European and global level, on a wide range of topics including agroecology, seeds, CSAs, land grabbing, access to natural resources, production and consumption, climate change, food policy and governance, and so on. Researchers make various contributions to the food sovereignty movement. They produce data and analysis to support advocacy efforts, they document practices and life stories, they disseminate alternatives, and co-create knowledge with peasant communities and other food producers, using participatory methodologies. At times, they support the movement with facilitation, reporting and assessment of processes, they alert the movement about key institutional discussions and processes, and even take on advocacy roles. They promote multi- and transdisciplinary research to overcome the compartmentalized

nature of food and agriculture research, and try to influence teaching and education programmes towards food sovereignty.

Researchers at the forum agreed on the need to coordinate more, reflect and work on power relationships between researchers and the rest of the movement, and ensure that research outcomes are made available in accessible formats to different audiences. Researchers further discussed how being structured as a formal constituency could help them reinforce their contribution. The recognition of a researcher constituency could provide a space for researchers to position themselves politically within the movement and move forward with the difficult questions they ask themselves about representation, power relations between academics and other constituencies, extraction of knowledge, etc. Researchers also considered drafting guidelines for research in and for the movement to ensure that processes and outcomes advance food sovereignty.

## 5. Solidarity statements

*During the forum, a number of solidarity statements were drafted by national delegations, touching on issues directly and indirectly related to the food sovereignty movement - war, the specific context of peasant farming in Eastern Europe, and the legal status of Italian peasants. These statements received<sup>1</sup> broad support from the delegations present: [16]*

**5.a. From the Turkish delegation: a declaration calling to stop the war in the region, linked to the food sovereignty struggle**

**5.b. From the Romanian delegation: a statement of solidarity with Romanian and Eastern European and Central Asian peasants**

**5.c. From the Italian delegation: a statement calling for legal recognition of peasant agriculture**

**5.d. A solidarity statement with native peoples in North America resisting the pipeline at Standing Rock**



16. Solidarity Statements at Nyéléni Europe Forum:

<http://www.nyelenieurope.net/blog/solidarity-war-and-peasants-rights-solidarity-statements-nyeleni-forum>



## How to take action

**Self-organize** and help build the movement in your country (disseminate information about Food Sovereignty, organize events and any actions you find appropriate).

**Share** with others: send information about any developments, events, challenges or success stories. Let's act together in solidarity using a common calendar.

**Write** for the Nyeleni Europe newsletter, blogs or social media channels.

**Take** good note of the key dates when the movement will organize joint protest or action:



*Possible actions around the launch of a plan for a new EU Common Agricultural Policy.*



*International Day of Peasant Struggles (yearly mobilization).*



PICTURES:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/nyelenieurope>



BLOGS:

<http://nyelenieurope.net/blog>



VIDEOS:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr14\\_En5fXyidk8FNkq5o2Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr14_En5fXyidk8FNkq5o2Q)



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## Mapping Food Sovereignty initiatives

We now have a **map** on which we can add all the organisations and experiences that came together at the Forum. Write us to include your initiative, at: [info@nyelenieurope.net](mailto:info@nyelenieurope.net).

If you want to join the Food Sovereignty Movement in Europe and Central Asia, **contact the focal point** from your country / region.

You can find your focal point here:  
<http://www.nyelenieurope.net/map>



## The Nyeleni Europe movie

Watch and promote the Nyeleni Europe Movie, which can be found at [www.nyelenieurope.net](http://www.nyelenieurope.net), or on our YouTube channel.



## Agricultural Policies Group

After the forum in Cluj we built a working group on policies. The group will mainly deal with the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, but also other policies can be discussed.



## Promote and demand the UN Declaration on Peasants' Rights!

Join the movement for Peasants' Rights and ask the EU and its Member States to actively participate in good faith in the elaboration of a "UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other People Working in Rural Areas". Demand from your Ministry of Foreign Affairs to recognize Peasants' Rights, including the Right to Food Sovereignty and their rights to land, seeds, biodiversity, decent income and livelihood and the means of production. Demand the right of peoples to food sovereignty now by signing this petition.

You will find all the necessary materials to promote the petition on the website of your organization and on social media, here: [www.peasantsrights.eu](http://www.peasantsrights.eu)



# Some of the delegations at the Nyéleáni Europe Forum...



Austria



Azerbaijan



Belgium



Bosnia and Herzegovina



Bulgaria



Croatia



Cyprus



Czech Republic



Denmark



France



Georgia



Germany



Greece



Hungary



Italy



Kosovo



Myanmar



Netherlands



Norway



Poland



Romania



Serbia



Slovenia



Spain and Portugal



Sweden



Switzerland



Turkey



United Kingdom

## Special thanks to...

The **Romanian peasants** who dedicated a whole year for growing food - plowing, sowing, planting, harvesting, preserving, cooking, feeding and taking care of animals - so that participants at the Forum can truly enjoy the Food Sovereignty spirit of the Forum.

The **interpreters** who have provided people from over 40 countries - with the possibility to understand each other - through their exceptional voluntary work.

The **volunteers** who worked tirelessly for the organization of the activities and the space of the Forum.

All the **delegations, organizations, constituencies and individuals**, who committed to this process and made the second edition of the Nyéléni Pan-European Forum for Food Sovereignty happen in Romania.

We can say now, that the **Food Sovereignty Movement** is stronger than ever!



**Contact us:**

info@nyelenieurope.net  
communication@nyelenieurope.net  
[www.nyelenieurope.net](http://www.nyelenieurope.net)

*If you want to join the Food Sovereignty Movement in Europe and Central Asia, contact the focal point from your country / region.  
If you have suggestions, comments or other questions you want answered, please email us.*

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**FOOD SOVEREIGNTY NOW!**