

Country	Poland					
Population	642,700					
Title of policy or practice	Refugees in the food system of a medium-sized city					
Subtitle (optional)	The power of social capital as a key factor of responding to a food security threat in the context of the influx of refugees from Ukraine					
URL video	https://drive.google.com/drive/u/3/folders/12hP4y3Gpn-DoMowEZzdvvPpza9deYPP8					
Category	03 – S&EE		SDGs		2 – 1 – 16	
Year of start	2022		Year of end		Ongoing	
Actors involvement	Municipal departments	Public institutions	NGOs CSOs	Research centers	Private sectors	International bodies
	7	5	20			1
	Other	4				
Budget	€2,162,488.54 Cost of hot meals: €1,430,847 in the largest urban food point, €630,210 delivered to hotels where refugees are accommodated.					
Brief description	<p>On 24th February 2022, the Russian aggression against Ukraine took place and the exodus of the citizens of Ukraine started. The scale of this phenomenon was unprecedented – never, have the Ukrainians had to leave their homes on such mass scale. The citizens of Ukraine settled in large cities of Poland also before the outbreak of the war; no wonder that also this time the main metropolitan centers in the country became destinations for people (mainly mothers with children). Poles did an unbelievable thing in those days: they welcomed all these people with their arms wide open and organized shelter for them. According to the data of the Union of Polish Metropolises, more than 3 million refugees from Ukraine came to Poland, of which more than 187 thousand chose Wroclaw (in this number, over 42 thousand are children). This April, 23% of the city residents are Ukrainians, with the majority still needing care and support.</p> <p>Our practice describes the method in which Wroclaw dealt with the influx of refugees based on strong social capital and cooperation between the residents and municipal institutions. Thanks to this, every adult and every child had access to enough food and water.</p> <p>When describing the practice, we focus on the basic need, namely, food. But the city and its residents from the first days have provided the refugees also with psychological support, language learning, childcare, integration in their communities. The role of self-governments in responding to the crisis has proved invaluable due to the speed of this response. It was here, at the self- government level, where most aid activities were carried out. One of the key conclusions of these events is the need to have own reasonable migration policy, particularly in the context of the absence of such policy at the government level.</p> <p>In the case, the need to have a local food policy, considering the aspects of crisis management, has been clearly expressed.</p>					
Innovation	<p>The refugee crisis has not only accentuated the need to have a local food policy but has also made people aware of the importance of social capital in grassroots activities responding to the crisis.</p> <p>The described practice contributed to the spontaneous creation of a specific and efficient network of connections, inter alia, in the scope of securing access to food for the refugees, which is of our interest here. It was possible thanks to strong social capital, supported and built for many years. In fact, the food system, in which we were not interested until the signing of the Milan Pact, has successfully passed the test of “being sufficient” for everyone.</p> <p>The situation we experienced has contributed to mapping this network, to identifying its strengths and weaknesses, which in the future will result in its efficient and effective extension to include other entities and areas.</p>					

	<p>What is innovative is the stimulation of enormous social capital, which – properly targeted – allowed to control the situation without paralyzing the city, while ensuring food security and protecting the dignity and autonomy of the refugees. We take this experience seriously, thinking about future migrations to Europe caused by famine and drought in Africa.</p>
Impact	<p>At the time of the crisis, Wrocław already had efficiently working social care structures and those supporting social development. These are the effects of the measures taken by Mayor Jacek Sutryk, whose presidency is characterized by particular care for social capital, social care, activation of residents and providing them with the right to make decisions in matters important to them. Thanks to this, it was possible to immediately launch three large food distribution points in the city, run by the city and non-governmental organizations. In three months, more than 1.3 million meals were served in these places only. In addition to employees, nearly 2 thousand volunteers were permanently involved. The food was purchased by the self-government, received from donors, food banks and was prepared by gastronomic schools belonging to the self-government (more than 80 thousand meals). The economic impact means more than €2,000,000 of unplanned expenditure in the city budget, that is why Wrocław is applying for reimbursement of these costs from state budget reserves. The above-mentioned amount did not pose a threat to the liquidity of the city budget; however, it was a significant burden, the more that its collection and disbursement took place in a very short period. The social impact is the coordination of grassroots food transfers with the contribution and measures of the city, which prevented the food exclusion of thousands of refugees, mainly women and children.</p>
Inclusion	<p>As mentioned above, Wrocław does not have its own food policy yet. However, the described practice was characterized by the approach which was as holistic as possible. It was part of 4 out of 6 categories of actions of the Milan Pact: governance, social and economic equity, food supply and distribution and food waste. Its implementation was accompanied by the involvement of a wide group of stakeholders, representing all areas of urban activity (self-government, business, sector 3, health care, uniformed services, ordinary residents, etc.). The scale of intervention covered the whole city, although food collections and many other actions took place at the housing estate level. In terms of scale, important is the information that in the first days of accepting the refugees from Ukraine, 12 thousand hot meals and 11 thousand sandwiches a day were served at one food point only.</p>
Challenges and learning needs	<p>In connection with the described practice, we define the following challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintaining contact with persons/companies/networks of residents willing to act/local social innovators. ● Mapping the centers of the network of connections, created intentionally and automatically, with regard to the channels of food flow to, from and through the city as the origin of the food system diagnosis in the city. <p>Therefore, in the field of education, we are particularly interested in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broadly understood experience of other self-governments in the field of creating a local food policy. ● Methods and techniques of stimulating and maintaining social involvement, building social capital based on the common denominator, namely, food. <p>We are fascinated by Carolyn Steel's sitopia, the theory that food can save the world.</p>