

IRSA - CONGRESSO MUNDIAL DE SOCIOLOGIA RURAL (01/10/2025 A
20/01/2026) - IRSA 27 - FOOD BIODIVERSITY AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES (IPLCS): INCLUSION IN PUBLIC POLICIES AND
THE VALORIZATION OF SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

**PROMOTING CULTURALLY ADEQUATE FOOD IN THE PUBLIC KITCHEN
AND THE INDIGENOUS EIGHT-SEASON WHEEL: THE CASE OF
MUNICIPAL FOOD PROVISION FOR ELDERLY SAMI**

Ildikó Asztalos Morell (ildiko.asztalos.morell@slu.se)

Lena Maria Nilsson (lena.nilsson@umu.se)

Incorporating indigenous food traditions into the public kitchen can strengthen a transition to sustainable food systems. Traditional food systems connect to the seasonality of supply and reflect ethical use of nature resources. This paper explores experiences gained through a participatory action research to incorporate culturally adequate food within elderly care in municipalities with the special duty to enhance Sami minority culture in Sweden. It sheds light on the potentials and difficulties to introduce traditional food in the food chain of public food provision.

Sami are EU's only indigenous people. Although indigenous food systems provide alternative ontology to sustainable food production and can provide major input into issues proliferated in the discussion on transition to a sustainable food system, national and regional food strategies in Sweden fail to engage with their relevance (Nilsson 2022; Asztalos et al 2023). Indigenous food sovereignty struggles promote retaining indigenous knowledge and use of traditional food sources. Decolonising indigenous food promote community health through healthy eating and sustainable agricultural practices, while contributing to maintain biodiversity of food resources. The literature on food sovereignty struggles (Ray 2019; Sowerwine 2023; Wilson and Shukla 2020), highlight how indigenous ontologies elevate the interconnected nexus between human, animal and environmental health within indigenous food systems. Connecting public food provision to indigenous local food culture could facilitate to bring the interconnectedness of human, animal and environmental health issues in the focus and promote a sustainable transition of the food system.

Our PAR study highlights the complicity of how state institutions, formally responsible to promote minority culture, are engaging with minority demands to incorporate culturally adequate food within the public kitchen, and the adverse impact of public procurement. The latter results in large scale food suppliers delivering food from "anywhere" to the public kitchen, while hinder small scale local producers to be procured.

Palavras-chave: public kitchen; indigenous food; sustainable food production; sami elderly; culturally adequate food english.