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**GOVERNANCE PATHWAYS FOR TERRITORIAL FOOD SYSTEMS:
IDENTITY, COORDINATION, AND VALUE CREATION ACROSS NINE LIVING
LABS**

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How governance arrangements shape the emergence, coordination, and institutionalization of territorial food systems remains a central question for food system transformation. Approaching food systems through the lens of territorial markets requires attention to the specific power relations and organizational structures that influence production and consumption patterns, the distribution of value among actors within commercial channels, and the degree of autonomy associated with rural development trajectories, particularly regarding the involvement of family-based actors. This paper examines how these dynamics unfold across diverse governance models and how they affect the creation of value and the recognition of different forms of knowledge within territorial food systems.

Drawing on empirical evidence from nine Living Labs participating in the DIVINFOOD project, the study analyses both established and emerging territorial markets. The analytical framework is informed by Lamine's (2015) conceptualization of identity and place-making, which provides a lens to understand territorial innovation and the processes through which food systems become territorially embedded. To operationalise this framework, five categorical indicators were developed and applied to assess the extent to which the food systems under study foster local identity, strengthen local economies, and sustain cultural practices—collectively understood as the generation of territorial value.

The findings suggest that governance models conducive to territorial food systems are those that actively support cultural embeddedness, emphasize place-based forms of differentiation and branding, encourage community engagement, reinforce locally rooted economic relations, and ensure continuity of territorial identities over time. These elements appear critical for enabling coordination among actors and for embedding food systems within their social, cultural, and economic contexts. The paper concludes that territorial food systems are not merely the result of localised production but are co-produced through governance arrangements that align markets, identities, and collective action at the territorial level.

Palavras-chave: territorial value; place-based identity; governance arrangements; food systems; living labs.