

CITY FOOD POLICIES



Turin, the Italian Detroit for a new culture of food.

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City	Turin
Country	Italy
Population: city area	901.556
City: Surface area	130,34 sq. km
City: Green areas	19,05 sq. km
Population: metropolitan area (former province of Turin including 315 towns)	2,2 millions
Metropolitan area: surface area	6800 sq. km
metropolitan area: agricultural area (mountains 55%, plain: 30%, hills: 15%)	5907 sq. km

The city of Turin can rely on the excellent quality of its surrounding regional agricultural production, worthy of recognition worldwide. Therefore, it has understood the potential to use food for urban marketing and promotion strategy, looking to become a capital of high quality food like other transalpine neighboring cities such as Lyon or Dijon, in France.

At a strategic level, in line with its long-standing industrial tradition, the city still prefers to project itself into the vision of the Smart Cities: "a city that, while respecting the environment, must be able to produce high technology, reduce energy consumption in buildings, promote clean transport and generally improve the quality of life of its inhabitants in the name of the low carbon dioxide emissions." Within such a prospect, food issues are still ongoing due to the numerous projects that are part of the Smart City approach either at local or European level.

Historically, the City of Turin has been long involved to prevent discrimination. Therefore, the city also gives importance to the social and cultural aspects of food with a long-standing commitment to the promotion of a new food culture that integrates the different communities, by making a smart use of food diversity.

An industrial city undergoing transition to a new personality

The City of Turin represents one of modern Europe's most impressive stories of urban transformation. Situated in the Piedmont region in the north-west of the country, Turin is Italy's fourth largest city (33).

After the lowering of the population due to the industrial crisis, in the last ten years, the city of Turin has seen a demographic growth, reaching a peak of 901.556 inhabitants, where 140.138 of foreign nationalities. Among the nationalities mainly residing in Turin there are Romanians (55.333), Moroccans (19.892), Peruvians (9.390), Chinese (7.128), Albanians (6.093), Moldovans (4.860), Egyptians (4.779), Nigerians (4.277), and Filipinos (3.752). If we consider the metropolitan area, the total amount of the population may reach 1.700.000 people.

The history of Turin's recent economic development is as directly as inextricably linked to the automotive sector (in particular the known Fiat Corporation). In 1911, the sector employed about a third of the city's total manufacturing workforce and in the late 1960s, the company Fiat produced almost the 95% of all Italian cars, becoming later such a dominant force in the city that Turin was the model of a "one company town".

A combination of the 1973 global oil shock, overseas competition, inflation, caused the automobile sector to collapse, and with it the rest of the Turin's economy as Turin plunged into crisis. As a result of this new situation, strong mayoral leadership during the 1990s, through the launch of its first Strategic Plan in 2000 and the hosting of the Winter Olympic Games in 2006, tried to transform Turin into a thriving modern metropolis built around science, culture, creativity, design and technology. In particular, the Strategic Plan involved institutions, political representatives, the economic world and society as a whole in a project to redefine the city's identity, pinpointed a shared vision of social and economic development and suggesting a vision for the future.

During the period between 2008 and 2010 Turin hosted the XXIII World Congress of Architecture, the Turin Film Festival, the Euroscience Open Forum, the European Book Fair, the international arts fair "Artissima", as well as the slow food fair "Terra Madre". Such international positioning has been viewed as an important recovery device for Turin, particularly as an answer versus crisis. However, despite delivering a package of creative and practical responses to the acute

negative impacts of the downturn during late 2008 and throughout 2009, Turin's future remains uncertain.

Amongst other factors, the city's dialogue with higher-tiers of government to facilitate the delivery of much needed infrastructural improvements to support the implementation of the city's new economic development strategy have been enhanced.

Former Italy's first capital, Turin is recognised as a capital of taste due to its local gastronomy, characterized by sobriety and refinement. Downtown, numerous elegant restaurants and historical cafés along the streets and squares propose local recipes made of aperitifs based on vermouth and grissini (a speciality of bread sticks), typical dishes such as "bagna càoda", agnolotti, mixed fries, cheeses, zabaglione, gianduiotto (speciality of chocolate) and bicerin (traditional beverage made with coffee). Indeed the industrialised Turin is located in a farming region. Piedmont agriculture can be divided into different sectors: commodities, characterized by poorly differentiated, intensive production, mostly cattle and cereals, localized in the plain; regional productions, produced and consumed locally, (mostly fresh vegetables), specialities, highly territorialized productions, often subject to certifications of quality (wine, meat, truffles, cheese) and finally marginal productions, located in the mountain areas. Indeed, in the last years, Piedmont has been recognized as one of the most "quality oriented" territory of food within the Italian context.

To go further:

Province of Turin:

http://www.provincia.torino.gov.it/speciali/2013/actt/dwd/def/4_C4.pdf .

http://www.provincia.torino.gov.it/europa/europa/progetti_europa/prog_agricoltura/ACTT.

<http://www.provincia.torino.gov.it/speciali/2013/actt/atti.htm>.

<http://www.comune.torino.it/regolamenti/363/363.htm>.

Slow Food:

<http://www.slowfood.com/international/7/history>

Torino Internazionale (n.d.), The Plan The Association Activities Prospects

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMNAREGTOPURBDEV/Resources/>

Starting point and milestones

As described above, by the early 1990s Turin was in crisis as the level of unemployment had risen to nearly 13% (33). Three critical strategic projects were developed in order to transform Turin's economic situation:

- The 1995 Urban Plan, for the re-configuration of the fragmented industrial city which had developed around the Fiat factories;
- The 2000 Strategic Plan, a set of integrated and coherent documents and actions that sets collaboratively-determined objectives relating to the future of a city's economy to be implemented by 2011.
- The 2006 2nd Strategic Plan, to monitor and improve previous actions and to encourage public participation.

While the 1995 Urban Plan was concerned with the railway lines improvement, the re-use of industrial brownfield and the environmental re-qualification, the first and the second Strategic Plans referred to a broad set of differing methods. The good practices promoted by the Plans were mainly represented by the enhancement of Turin as a city of tourism and culture and the promotion of mega-events, such as the Olympic Winter Games, during 2006, through which the City saw \$ 1.02 billion investment into the city's infrastructure platform (34). The strategic plan also underlined the necessity to promote the use of local resources in order to promote sustainability. The local resources have to be acknowledged by the local actors; otherwise, they do not exist and cannot be inserted in the valorisation circuit.

Moreover, the City of Turin is prospecting to become a "smart city" according to the European initiative Smart Cities & Communities. The Turin Smart City project is in continuity with the approval of TAPE – Turin Action Plan for Energy, a program to reduce CO2 emissions by 40% by 2020. The plan is one of the actions required by the participation of the city to the Covenant of Mayors, an initiative of the European Commission, signed by the City in 2009. The Smart city program lead to a series of local, national and European projects all fitting with the definition of [smart cities](#).

After the first and the second strategic plan, a third one is currently being drawn up. In this new plan, food has a specific role, as a focal issue to promote the city in relation with the whole region.

In a territorial branding approach, the city communicates its specificity and local excellence as an embodiment of being the Capital of food.

In the last few years, the development of urban agricultural and urban food planning systems has been increasing (35). In Turin, Urban Agriculture is the object of a widespread set of policies and practices carried on by institutional, non-institutional and research entities, ranging from the urban to the environmental policies.

Through the initiatives of local authorities, research organisations and urban producers, the design of an adequate urban agriculture and new food policies are rising. The Strategic Plans have launched various environmentally-friendly initiative, in order to enhance the quality of life in the city, such as increasing pedestrianisation and cycle lanes, reducing road-level parking, the planning for metro and the urban planning named UPA (Urban and Peri-urban Agricultural areas) for new urban developments. Among them, experiences such as MiraOrti and TOCC (Turin – City to Grow) and the European programmes named Four Cities for Development and Rururbal led, three years ago, to the creation of the first European Agreement for Food and Local Governance. These projects aim to increase the potential of synergy among city, enabling the diffusion of an Agri-Culture within the urban community. Moreover, these initiatives enhanced the food autonomy of citizens, and make and re-make available big green areas, abandoned because of the post-industrialization, whose maintenance is not depending on the public funding, solely.

A unifying frame, representing a coherent institutional context able to define a precise set of integrated actions concerning food sustainability could be implemented, starting from the achievements of the following urban projects:

- "Torino SMILE" (Smart Mobility, Inclusion, Life&Health, Energy), represents an ambitious project concerned with the issue of the Smart City and which is directly linked with the themes of food and sustainability ;
- "Torino Capitale del Cibo" (Turin Capital of Food) organized by the association Torino Strategica, aiming to build the Third Strategic plan named Turin Metropoli 2025. The plan's purpose is concerned with the production of a local responsible environmental development and strongly related with food policies – economic, political, social and cultural.

- The project's ambitious vision is to inspire national and international policies ;
- the project "FOOD START LAB", starting in autumn 2014 aiming to produce a first draft of the "food agenda" for the implementation of a concrete "food strategy" within the metropolitan area of Torino (ex Torino's Province).

Possible leverages for a future Sustainable Food Policy.

The Slow Food Tribe celebrates good, clean and fair food

Even if the issue of the food sustainability cannot be considered as a key-point of the Turin strategic planning, it gained a momentum in Turin's renaissance during and after the crisis period and it is personified by the [Slow Food](#) movement, born in Piedmont in the 1980s. Initiated by the charismatic Carlo Petrini, together with a group of activists, Slow Food has aimed, since the beginning, to defend regional traditions, good food and gastronomic pleasure, first in Italy, then at international level. In over two decades of history, the movement has evolved to embrace a comprehensive approach to food able to recognize the strong connections among planet, people, politics and culture. Today Slow Food represents a global movement involving thousands of projects and millions of people in 160 countries.

In 1996, the city of Turin hosted the first Salone del Gusto organized by Slow food, which has become in a few years one of the main events worldwide to speak about good food and gastronomy. Together with the appointment of Terra Madre, the Salone goes on to become a biennial event and one of the most important international event dedicated to artisanal, sustainable food and the small-scale producers that safeguard local traditions and high quality products.

Closely related to Slow Food message, a new concept of supermarket, entirely dedicated to artisanal and high quality food, was created in Turin. Indeed this food market is also a cooking school and hosts several restaurants. In a few years, it has become a very popular place in the city and has been also introduced in several other Italian cities and also in different countries.

A city surrounded by a territory with a high potential.

In 2002, to promote the local food marketing, the Province of Turin presented the strategic plan called "Paniere dei prodotti tipici" (local and typical food basket). This project aims to identify, certify and promote local and typical food products, according to a technical, scientific and historian analysis, in order to provide a list of artisanal foods produced from locals raw materials, in order to support local communities' development. After a decade, the "Paniere" promotes 32 local products registered labels related to producers associations (one for each selected product). The network involves more than 1.000 local producers; 70 restaurants; 30 shops and participate to more than 50 professional fairs and exhibitions per year, to promote the whole project. It generates about 20 millions € of total income from products selling.

Different experiences of alternative food systems (AFSS) are taking place in the Province of Turin : 80 farmers market, 1.000 farms involved in direct selling and 106 box schemes, largely based in Turin. The Province of Turin is one of the territorial poles of the European project "[Rururbal](#)" (2010-2011), funded by the programme "Territorial Cooperation Objective - MED 2007-2013" to exchange best practices and develop common strategies to support short Food Supply Chains within a comprehensive territorial planning. Among the pilot actions of the project, the organisation of a farmers' market in Porta Palazzo, the largest open air market in Europe welcoming every Saturday around 100.000 visitors and the "charter for territorial and food governance".

In the meantime, the priorities have evolved towards a better enforcement of producers associations, through the building a more structured commercial network and system for technical assistance, a reinforcement of the control of guidelines and standards by all stakeholders, as well as, an observatory of prices, to match offer and demand. The strategic plan has been recently adapted to new challenges such as the possibility to supply public Food Services (with a particular focus on school canteens and environmental footprint); the promotion of consumer networks supporting small and local farming; the enlargement of good, safe, clean and ethical food access for

all the population, including specific policies against soil consumption and farming areas reduction.

From 2011, the city (departments of Commerce, Public Education and Environment) and the province (departement of Rural Development) of Turin both started to work together, for the first time within the ALCOTRA funded project "Farmers Consumers Cross-border Territories", deepening the issue of metropolitan food policies, in order to make synergy between the eating city and the producing territory, with the main goal of promoting right for all to access healthy, sustainable and ethic food. The initiative aims to produce a survey of different case studies – such as Bristol, London, San Francisco and Vancouver – in order to enhance the existing good practice by studying new ones concerning local territory and food policies according to the different but interconnected needs of the whole metropolitan area (agriculture, commerce, environment, logistic, public health).

As a result, Turin's food system is today characterized by:

- **open air food markets:** 49 daily open air food markets for a total amount of 1.572 food sellers; among them, 252 are producers and 317 farmers who directly sell their products. The farmers comes from 102 municipalities of the 62 districts of Turin, 24 districts of Cuneo, 11 districts of Asti and 1 district in Alessandria. The province of Turin counts 390 daily open air food markets;
- **shops, supermarkets, malls:** 2.588 food shops and minimarkets and 1.370 shops selling food among other products; 20 medium only-food supermarkets, 233 mixed shops, 5 mixed big shops and 11 malls and 4.088 cafeterias, restaurants etc;
- **public canteens:** the public school canteens in Turin provide more than 8 million meals per year; the seven university canteens provide up to 1.232 meals each day and more than 10 millions of meals in peri-urban area";
- **alternative food networks :** 70 ethical or common purchasing groups and almost 400 urban vegetable gardens. In the metropolitan area 2.128 farms are active, among which 756 directly selling their products.
- **wholesale food markets:** "Turin has the third wholesale market for fresh fruits and vegetables in Italy (after Milan and Rome), distributing about the 2/3 of fruits of vegetables consumed in the city (506.773 tons in 2013).

31% of fruits and vegetables are produced in Piedmont. The rest is produced in other Italian regions (45%), UE (12%) and extra UE (10%)

- **waste management:** during 2013, the non-recyclable waste production of Turin's citizens was 301 kg per person, among which 60 kg/person were recyclable organic waste (20% of total waste).

The Good Samaritan project: a social concern deeply rooted in the city DNA

This initiative is based on the so-called Good Samaritan Law (italian Law N° 155/03) created to encourage food donation to nonprofits by minimizing liability. It allows non-profit and recognized organizations to increase the sources of supply by introducing a new possibility of food aid: to recover surplus food from the catering (collective and organized catering, canteens, schools, hospitals, hotels, etc.) and the distribution sectors.

Since 2003, 8 Italian cities have initiated a project: Bologna, Como, Firenze, Milano, Pavia, Roma, Torino, Varese. Primary and few secondary schools in Turin donate bread, fruit, which have not been served on the tables. Every day, around 150kg of bread and 50 kg of fruits are redistributed to social centers according to a list established by the Social Policy department of the city. The whole project is managed by the municipal company for waste management, AMIAT.

This thematic of food waste was in the spotlight of the Smart City Days, held in Turin from May 24th to June 9th in 2013, with a free meal prepared for 3.000 people at the occasion of the national day, with edible food (mainly vegetable) cooked by catering companies, which would have been normally discarded by wholesale markets, because unsold.

Eating with religions: a groundbreaking project for the Public Food Service

In such a multi-ethnic city, a great attention is paid to the different menus served in the school canteens. Therefore, in Turin's schools it is possible to ask for special menus, which are available not only for medical reasons and ethical (religious or cultural) ones. Among 55.000 users, 8.000 of them benefit from the option to ask for an alternative menu (without pork, without meat

in general or without meat and fish). Moreover, 1.300 children each year ask for a special menu for medical reasons (36).

The risk of these ethical menus is to further discriminate children, highlighting differences. Therefore the aim of the project is rather to build a “religion friendly menu”, which eliminates (and at least reduces) those foods causing the most difficulty in accommodating religious and cultural dietary needs. By exploring differences in diet and eating habits in the context of school canteen service, and by defining how public institutions could consider the religious and traditional beliefs regarding nutrition in the implementation of public food policies, a research was performed to analyze the cultural and religious variety of the food which is then supposed to be used as an instrument for public food policies to promote inclusion and social cohesion, starting from a different way of considering food education in public schools ([see more](#)). Original data were collected through different methods, gathering information about food selection and religious food beliefs; charting a map of the religious needs of children attending primary schools and analysing nutritional, economic and environmental issues concerning food distribution in school canteen services.

The menu was tested in different school events within canteen services, attracting the attention and the interest of MIUR (Minister of National Education) and local administrations, such as the City of Nichelino (Turin). An innovative approach is needed, when dealing with nutritional habits

and cultural and religious dietary systems as, schools provide a fundamental opportunity for the promotion of healthy lifestyles, because they can encourage the implementation of a coherent set of integrated actions, involving both public and private actors.

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