



Utrecht University

ADVOCACY E-TRAINING, SALSIFI – MAY 9TH 2023

Foundations of Political Advocacy – an introduction for CSA networks and other food movements

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How can you induce change via political advocacy?



Own image



Logo: © WeAct



Startseite News Aktivitäten Hintergrund Patentfälle Über uns

Petition MinisterInnenkonferenz



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Solidarische Landwirtschaft

"Mir geht's nicht nur ums Gemüse, sondern um die Idee"

9. Dezember 2021, 16:58 Uhr | Lesezeit: 5 min



Image: © Süddeutsche Zeitung



Image: © Netzwerk Solidarische Landwirtschaft



Welche Möglichkeiten gibt es bei Wertschöpfungsketten und Vermarktungsstrukturen, um die Stellung der Landwirtinnen und Landwirte zu stärken?

Auftrag von Stillestand: "Einkaufsminister V. Wertschöpfungsketten und Vermarktungsstrukturen" am Freitag, 7. Dezember 2020, 16:58 Uhr, Plenar

Solidarische Landwirtschaft
sich die Ernte teilen

Image: © Netzwerk Solidarische Landwirtschaft

Koalitionsvertrag
2018 - 2021

Image: © Phoenix

Insider vs. Outsider strategies

Insider strategies

‘working within the system’

Examples:

- Networking with political and administrative elites
- Lobbying, i.e., attempting to influence specific policy makers on a specific issue

Outsider strategies

‘working outside the system’

Examples:

- Protest
- Manifestations
- Direct action
- Campaigns
- Mass media

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FOCUS OF THIS PRESENTATION

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- Protest
- Manifestations
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- Campaigns
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Financial resources

Staff
members

Networks

Moral support

Time

Resources for political advocacy

Skills,
capabilities
and expert
knowledge

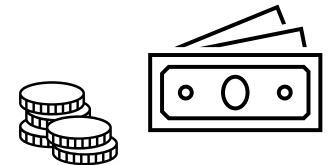
Allies

Volunteers

Mobilising resources for political advocacy (1/2)

- Financial resources

For instance, membership fees, grants, donations,...



- Time

Political advocacy can be conducted by staff members and volunteers. It is highly time consuming and often extends beyond regular work hours, making it challenging to sustain.




- Skills, capabilities and expert knowledge

See slides 10-12

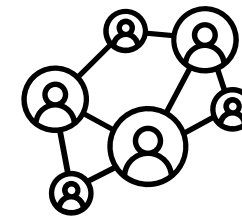


Mobilising resources for political advocacy (2/2)



We a wonderful plant in Germany, many wonderful plants, called community supported agriculture [...] I consider them worthy of institutional support."

- Allies (e.g. other ideologically aligned agri-food, environmental or social movements)
- Moral support by movement sympathisers (e.g. celebrities, researchers, politicians)
- Networks and personal relations to policy makers



Understanding the system (1/2)

- Tailoring discourse to target audience
 - What values, ideas and keywords resonate with your target audience? What is their political background and area of expertise?
 - Example: Framing of the benefits of CSA should be adjusted depending on the political party of the policy maker.
- Assessing the role of politicians
 - Who has decision-making power? Is the politician ideologically close to your struggle?

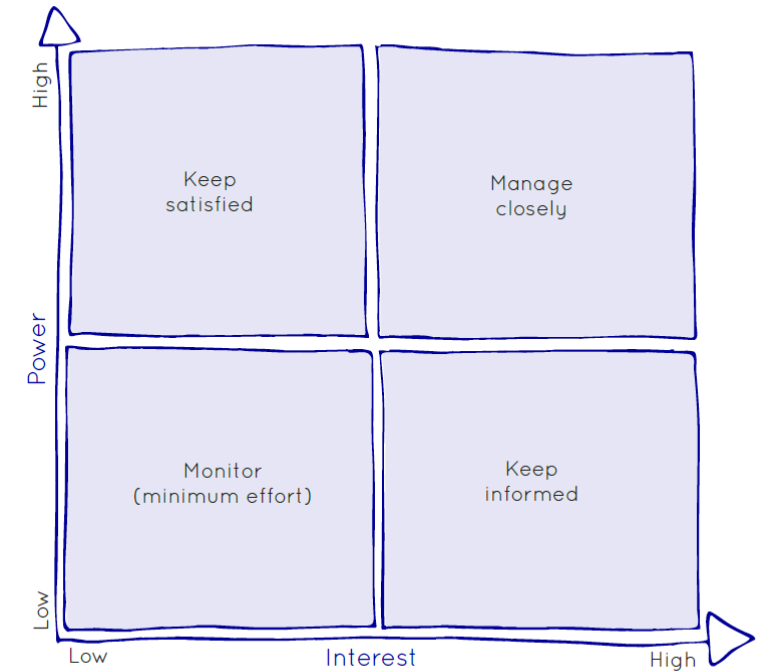
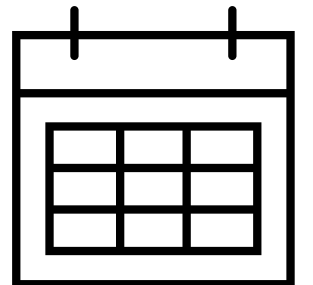


Image: © Urgenci, 'Voices for CSA'

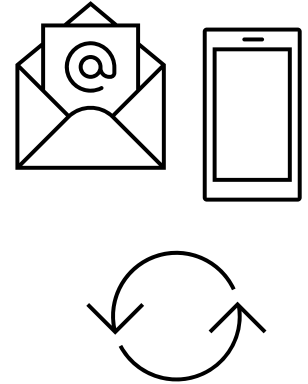
Understanding the system (2/2)

- Using formal and informal channels
 - Formal channels: pre-arranged meetings, formal requests and official, written demands
 - Informal channels: seizing informal moments
- Timing - recognising windows of opportunity
 - Is there a particular moment in the legislative calendar or public discourse when your chances of success are particularly high?
 - Think about: upcoming elections, the negotiation of the government agreement and associated changes in policy, events during which media attention and interest of policy makers on agricultural



Soft skills

- Showing presence and persistence
 - Always follow up emails with calls.
 - Show your face at different events related to agriculture, food systems and regional development.
 - Try again and again. Don't get frustrated if there is no immediate positive response.
- Seeing beyond the formal role
 - Don't focus too much on the official 'label' of the policy maker, i.e., their party or their status. Instead, try to connect on a **personal level**.



Practical knowledge

- Having ‘hands-on’ experience with farming
 - Talk about your practical experience with and technical knowledge on agriculture. Personal narratives convince better than facts.
- Sharing insights from the broader CSA movement
 - Referring to the situation of other CSA/agri-food projects, as well as the development of the movement (nationally and internationally). This signals that ‘we are many’.



Image: Paul Hendrix

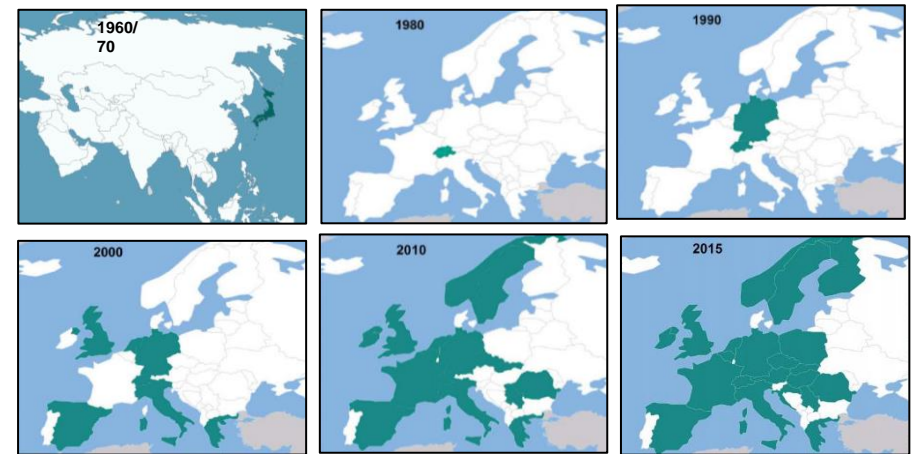


Image: Adapted from © Overview of Community Supported Agriculture in Europe (Volz et al., 2016)

Take-away: what skills, capabilities and knowledge do you, as an advocate, need?

- Political advocacy requires a **range of different skills** from understanding the political system, to practical knowledge on agriculture and the CSA movement more broadly.
- **Assess:** which of these skills do you already have, which ones are lacking?
- Try to **team up** with other advocates who have complementary skills.
- Document of your efforts and make sure to **transmit your knowledge/** contacts to other interested activists to ensure the continuity of political advocacy over time.

Reflections on the legitimacy and position of advocates

When conducting advocacy work ask yourself:

- On behalf of whom can you speak and advocate?
Whose views do you (not) represent?
- On what topics are you legitimate to advocate?
- Do your fellows know that you advocate on their behalf?
- Do you need a mandate by your community or movement?
- How can you keep your fellows in the loop?



Image: © <http://www.freepik.com>
Designed by macrovector

Thank you for your attention!

Questions?

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