



*Conference*

FOOD, RULES AND  
THE CITY

FOOD MARKET REGULATIONS AND  
THEIR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL  
DYNAMICS (15TH-20TH C.)

*Keynote Speakers:*  
*prof.em. Steven L. Kaplan (Cornell University)*  
*prof. dr. Antonella Campanini (Università di Bologna)*

BRUSSELS  
16-17 NOV 2023

# CALL FOR PAPERS



## ABSTRACT

Urban life has always been intrinsically tied to the city's market for food. With today's ever-increasing urban populations and unseen climatic and agricultural challenges, the significance of studying food markets has come even more to the fore. Understood both in the physical and abstract sense, food markets have been central to the main urban concerns, like ensuring food supply, providing revenues, or preserving social order. Because of this importance, food markets crystallised multiple key stakes for authorities, producers, consumers, and other urban actors, making their regulation a strategic issue. It is therefore not surprising that from the first medieval written texts to modern legislations, a huge body of regulative measures has been produced to supervise them. Although the societal, technological, economic and regulatory context shifted throughout the centuries, the actors' need and desire to retain control over urban food markets remained unchanged.

The historiography on European urban food markets has stressed their structural importance for urban economies and has revealed how they were shaped by the interests of the actors rather than by self-regulating mechanisms. However, research has predominantly been constrained to classical chronological boundaries and has failed to consider the persisting need for regulation on food markets from a diachronic perspective, which would allow a more extensive view of continuity and change in this vital aspect of urban life.

Seeking to adopt such a long-term perspective and to explore more fully than before the social and political dynamics underlying these regulations, this conference will bring together recent research into motivations, reasoning and strategies applied by economic actors in the making of food market regulations in European cities from the 15th to the 20th century. Through its wide chronological and geographical scope, the conference seeks to confront different methodologies to study the ever-present matter of food market regulation as well as different approaches of various historical actors, institutions, and contexts in handling enduring concerns.

This conference welcomes contributions relating to:

- Urban food market regulation;
- The actors involved in (un)successfully shaping policy;
- The motivations and interests of involved actors, as well as their discourse;
- Regulations of urban food markets trades of either local, interregional or international scope;
- Regulation-based approaches of the food supply and food scarcity; quality control and public health policy; consumer protection; relations between the actors present on commodity markets, including conflicts and their management; trade monopoly and competition issues; the influence of liberalisation, deregulation trends on urban food market provisions; etc.;
- ...

# HOW TO APPLY



## PROCEDURE

This joint conference will take place on both the ULB and VUB campuses in Brussels. We particularly encourage early career researchers to apply.

To apply, submit a proposal to **brusselsfoodconference2023@gmail.com** stating your name, academic affiliation, a short bio (approx. 150 words), provisional title, and an abstract (200 words) of the paper you would like to present. Applicants should submit their abstract by **15 April 2023** and will be notified regarding the acceptance of their submission by **15 May 2023**. There will be a €15 registration fee.

For further information or questions please e-mail us at **brusselsfoodconference2023@gmail.com**

Follow us on twitter @FoodRulesCity for updates on program and more.

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