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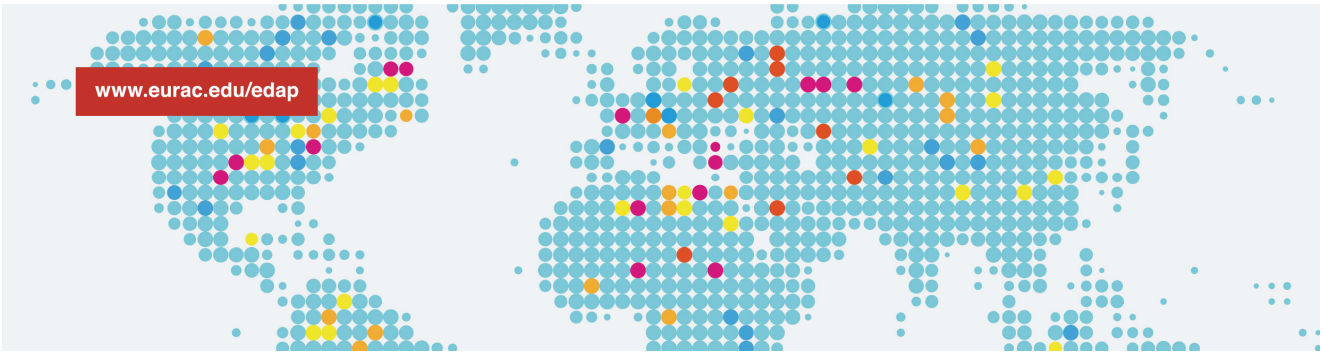
The Application of the Multi-Level Governance Model outside the EU-context - The Case of Food Security

Katarzyna Marzeda-Mlynarska



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Europäische Akademie Bozen
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Tel. +39 0471 055200
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edap@eurac.edu
www.eurac.edu/edap

Accademia Europea Bolzano
Viale Druso, 1
39100 Bolzano – Italia
Tel. +39 0471 055200
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Abstract

The problem of food security governance is systematically gaining in importance but at the same time constitutes one of the less researched areas within the global governance debate. Food security has never been ensured on a global level despite the amazing progress of science and technology. What is more, the changing nature of the threats to food security makes this goal even more distant. Given the multidimensional nature of the food security concept, answers to this challenge have been sought through processes of international negotiations between nation-states. However, it is increasingly clear that nation-states, because of its contradictory interests, are unable to solve this issue and meet their international commitments for addressing this issue without more explicit engagements with sub and supranational actions. Involvement of other actors operating on different levels seems to be crucial to the process of governing of food security. The idea of multilevel governance has acquired unprecedented importance today. It not only suggests ways of dealing with new conditions of globalization, but it is said to be an essential term for understanding the transnational processes and for identifying non-traditional actors involved in governance processes on different levels. The idea of multilevel governance was developed into a theoretical account of the European Union in opposition to state centric or intergovernmental accounts. It refers to a particular subset of contemporary governance arrangements in which decision-making authority is distributed across more then one level of relatively autonomous public-sector institutions. This paper deals with the problem of food security governance and attempts to answer the question whether multilevel governance becomes a gradually institutionalized new international practice or is it only a theoretical model useful in academic debates, without practical meaning to governance of food security?

Author

Katarzyna Marzeda-Mlynarska, political scientist, conducts research for International Relations Department at the Faculty of Political Sciences, Maria Curie-Sklodowska University in Lublin, Poland. Research area: food security, international development, globalization processes and foreign policy. She published two books “Proces globalizacji korporacyjnej” 2006 – on the corporate globalization and - as a author and co-editor - “Poznowestfalski lad miedzynarodowy” (2008) on the late westphalian international order.

The author can be reached at: e-mail marzedak@wp.pl

Key words

Food security - globalization – multi-level governance – global governance – food security governance – new steering mechanisms.

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The Application of the Multi-Level Governance Model outside the EU-context – The Case of Food Security[1]

Katarzyna Marzeda-Mlynarska

1. Introduction

Since Thomas Malthus, food security has become a subject of constant international debate. Apart from the changing diagnoses of the problem and the more or less optimistic prognoses for the future, eradication of world hunger seems to be one of the hardest tasks for humankind. The statistics are alarming. Despite amazing progress of science and technology, the number of undernourished people still grows. According to the FAO 2009 estimates, almost one-sixth of humanity suffers from hunger.[2]

For many years, the food security concept was limited strictly to agricultural sector concerns. The international community tried to figure out how to increase food production to satisfy growing demand. In the 1960's, the Green Revolution occurred. A solution to global starvation seemed to be finally achieved. The following years showed, however, that food security cannot be reduced only to physical availability of food. The problem of world hunger remained unsolved even though food production started exceeding the needs of the growing world population. It became clear that food insecurity is caused not by the lack of food per se but by a lack of access to it. The food security concept needs to be redefined.

While the production and distribution of food worldwide was still high on the international agenda, strong emphasis was put on the human dimension of food insecurity. On the one hand, it is clear that food security is no longer a purely agricultural sector concern but a part of a broader arena of poverty and development problems. On the other hand, the international perspective, which was limited only to the national and the global level, has broadened and has taken into account also the household and the individual dimensions of the problem.

The evolution of the food security concept accompanied by the changing nature of its threats revealed the weakness of the international food system governance. Governance through the processes of international negotiations between nation-states became ineffective not only because of the states'

[1] This paper is an extended and revised version of a paper presented at the GARNET 4th Annual Conference, Rome 11-13 November 2009.

[2] FAO Press Release, "More People Then Ever Are Victims of Hunger" at http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/20568/icode/

contradictory interests or reluctance to engage in multilateral arrangements but by the growing complexity of the food security where, as D. John Shaw states: "food insecurity is seen as the eye of the storm of interlocking national and global concerns to which it contributes and whose solution lies in tackling those concerns holistically".[3]

Institutional incoherence was another problem with food security governance. With many international governmental, non- governmental, public, and private organizations and actors involved, it was impossible to develop common and coherent policies to attain world food security, as well as precisely determine each organization's responsibilities in that area. All these obstacles led to the question about whether there were more effective ways of dealing with growing food insecurity. A new process was needed that would be more responsive to the appearing food crises, but at the same time free from the slowness of existing international bureaucratic mechanisms.

In the debates on the new mechanisms of steering of international environment in conditions of globalization, the idea of multilevel governance is particularly gaining in importance. Many scholars argue that multilevel governance processes are emerging in response to gaps in national governments and in the international community's ability to control global and transnational processes which otherwise are hard to control using traditional mechanisms and instruments.[4] The multilevel governance concept not only suggests ways of dealing with new conditions of globalization, but it is said to be an essential term for understanding the transnational processes and for identifying non-traditional actors involved in governance processes on different levels.

The usefulness of the multilevel governance concept was tested as an "'explanation framework' in many analyses and especially those of global environmental change."[5] By using the main assumptions of the multilevel governance paradigm, the authors were proving that multilevel governance mechanisms become international practice without being named 'multilevel governance'. The objective, which stood behind that process, was the functional control of negative consequences of climate change, which means the main concern of involved actors was rather to solve or mitigate the problem effectively than to create new mechanisms and instruments to do that. In other words, the by-product of striving to achieve the goal was the creation of new governance practices.

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[3] D. John Shaw, *World Food Security. A History since 1945* (Basingstoke,Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 383.

[4] Susan E. Clarke, "Regional and Transnational Regimes: Multi-level Governance Processes in North America and Europe", ECPR Workshop: *Regionalism Revisited. Territorial Politics in the Age o Globalization* 1999, at http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/jointsessions/paperarchive/mannheim/w23/clarke.pdf.

[5] Gerd Winter (ed.), *Multilevel Governance of Global Environmental Change. Perspectives form Science, Sociology and Law* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006); Michele M. Betsill, Harriet Bulkeley, "Cities and the Multilevel Governance of the Global Climate Change" 12 *Global Governance* 2006, 141-159.

The problem of food security governance is systematically gaining in importance but at the same time constitutes one of the less researched areas within the global governance debate. This paper is trying to shed some light on that issue.

The structure of the paper consists of three parts. The first part concentrates on a multilevel governance paradigm and its main arguments. The second part explains the concept of food security. Special attention is put on new threats to food security, which make it necessary to look for the new mechanism and models to control growing food insecurity. The last part presents arguments which help to answer the main question of the analysis: whether multilevel governance is a real international practice or only a theoretical model useful in academic debates, without practical meaning to governance of food security?

2. The Multi-level Governance Model

Research on governance of international relations[6] has intensified after the collapse of the Cold War Order. The attempts to find an alternative model of steering [or managing] the international environment, which replaces the old one based on a domination of two superpowers, resulted in the idea of Global Governance, understood as a 'governing without government'. The creation of the Commission on Global Governance in 1992 and the publication of its famous report *Our Global Neighbourhood* in 1995 have sealed this new vision of governance of international relations.

The Global Governance paradigm, based on the assumptions arising from the changeability of the international environment, does not intend to establish a global government but rather the additional decision- making level between nation-states, international organizations, and civil society actors. It, therefore, undermined the priority of state-centred, hegemonic steering structures of international relations by stressing the importance of multilateralism as a fundamental rule of post-Cold War international governance.

The Global Governance model, however, has its limitations. Being considered as the answer to the changeability of the international environment, it does not take into account the dynamic processes occurring within the nation-states. The logic of the changes of the international system and especially of the nation-states' position in the international decision-making chain is also conditioned by processes which include the dispersion of nation-states competences and decision-making power vertically: up—to the supranational institutions, down—to the sub-national level and, horizontally, to the private actors. In conclusion, the governance of the international environment in the conditions of globalization processes should be both multilateral and multilevel.

[6] Understood as a steering.

The logic of the changes caused by globalization processes undermine the usefulness of the hierarchically organized structures of power. In this situation, the effectiveness of international steering structures are conditioned by the integration of the traditional hierarchical decision-making models and horizontal ones. In his working paper, *Discourse and Order – On the Conditions of Governance in Non-hierarchical Multi-Level Systems,* Jürgen Neyer uses the notion of 'heterarchy' to describe this new form of governance where political authority is neither centralized (hierarchy) nor decentralized (anarchy) but shared, and where the vertical and the horizontal models of decision-making are combined together into an integrated mode of interaction.[7] From this perspective, we can say that the hybridization of the decision-making process is a main characteristic of this new governance model.

The governance of international relations in the conditions of globalization is not about adjusting different decision-making models to the hierarchical structures of nation-states but rather about the creation of functional control systems around the specific issues, based on the ability of different actors to mobilize its competencies and resources to deal effectively with these issues. In this model, the nation-states are important, yet they are only one of the many elements of the decision-making process. There is no hierarchy or decision-making centre, each element of the structure is important because of the resources it possesses, which are needed in the process of solving the particular problem. The equal importance of each element is also based on the assumption that all of them fulfill certain functions within the scope of theirs competencies. However, as J. Meyer points, it does not mean that all levels of this structure always have an equal influence on policy-outcomes. It depends on the issue area, institutional provision, and public awareness.[8]

2.1 Multi-level Governance in the EU

The idea of multilevel governance takes its origins from the EU context. It was developed into a theoretical account of the European Union in opposition to state centric or intergovernmental accounts. The multilevel governance approach entertains the possibility that multiple types of institutional arrangements are possible as citizens and public officials actively seek solutions to political problems. It refers to a particular subset of contemporary governance arrangements in which decision-making authority is distributed across more then one level of relatively autonomous public-sector institutions. What became known as the multileveled governance approach made a number of claims in relation to the dynamic of integration such as: 1/the significance of overlapping competencies across levels of government

[7] Jürgen Neyer, "Discourse and Order – On the Conditions of Governance in Non-hierarchical Multi-Level Systems", 9 *ARENA Working Paper* 2002, 4, at http://ideas.repec.org/s/erp/arenax.html.

[8] *Ibid.*, 5.

and governance rather than a neat delineation of competence; 2/the interactions of actors across levels of government with national executives as important but not dominant actors; 3/the significance of multilevel policy networks rather than two level games in the dynamic of EU policy making; 4/that the national governments were no longer the exclusive link between the national and the European.[9]

The multilevel governance model differs from intergovernmental relationships as B. Guy Peters and Jon Pierre argue in four respects: first, it is focused on systems of governance involving transnational, national, and subnational institutions and actors; second, it highlights negotiations and networks, not constitutions and other legal frameworks as the defining feature of institutional relationships; third, it emphasizes the role of satellite organizations (NGOs); and fourth, it makes no normative pre-judgements about a logical order between different institutional tiers.[10]

According to Susan E. Clarke, the governance capacity in the multilevel governance model is both a product of the ideas that frame different ways of understanding the problem and their solution, and of the networks mobilized for collective action through this new frame.[11] It means that multilevel governance is more the function of task focused structures and mechanism, where "attention is directed to the role of problem-oriented policy communities in generating alternative policy paradigms that set boundaries for political action, create channels for dialogue and decision, and established the grounds for collective action among diverse interests"[12] than creation of legal frameworks. Those functional mechanisms are characterized by the high degree of informality and do not necessarily bring different perceptions of the problem together. In a flexible and pragmatic way, they lead to the positive results and effective solutions of certain problems.

In the EU context, the multilevel governance was developed as a more effective way of solving political problems, as a system 'of functional control', where the resources, access to knowledge, information and flexibility were counted more than official channels of governance. In that paradigm, pragmatism was more important than the nation-state's attachment to its competencies and decision-making power. It did not, however, mean that the emancipation of subnational and supranational levels of governance was at the cost of states. It was rather due to the pursuance of the more effective mechanisms of solving the problems and achieving the goals.

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9 Liesebet Hooghe, *Cohesion Policy and European Integration: Building Multi-Level Governance* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996); Liesebet Hooghe and Gary Marks, *Multilevel Governance and European Integration* (Boulder, Rowman & Littlefield, 2001); Liesebet Hooghe and Gary Marks, "Types of Multilevel Governance", 5 (11) *European Integration on-line Papers* 2001 at http://eiop.or.at/eiop/index.php/eiop.

10 B. Guy Peters, Jon Pierre, "Multi-level Governance and Democracy: The Faustian Bargain?", in: Ian Bache and Matthew Flinders (eds.), *Multi-level Governance* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004), 75-89, 77.

11 Clarke, "Regional and Transnational Regimes...", 3.

12 *Ibid*.

There is no doubt that the multilevel governance concept is influenced by the concept of subsidiarity, which states that if something can be done better on the lower level it should be done there. Translating this into practice, we can say, that if certain goals can be better and more quickly solved at different levels than nation-states, they should be achieved there. The multilevel governance approach to problem solving is holistic in scope but not in scale.

It is not a coincidence that multilevel governance grew as a new decision-making model within the European Union. The unique character of it, which is neither the state nor the international organization, constructed a good ground for the development of the new modes of governance. According to Simona Piattoni, the changes in political mobilization, policy-making arrangements, and the state structures which were due to the European integration had a crucial importance to the development of multilevel governance.[13]

In the first case, the changes were marked by broadening the area where the political mobilization could occur. It was not only within the institutional boundaries and through conventional procedures but also across these boundaries and outside these procedures. A similar process took place in the decision-making field. The number of actors involved in the decision making processes changed significantly as well as the relations between them. The strict division between decision makers and decision receivers went blurred since new actors have entered the decision-making sphere. The state construction was the subject of the biggest changes. The 'old' idea of the state and its institutions as key players in decision-making processes, representing or fulfilling social needs changed due to the distribution of its authority down to the subnational level and up to the EU.

Following these changes, the new form of decision-making model within the EU was identified, in which other than national and supranational levels of governance played an important role. The very first analyses on multilevel governance in the EU distinguished two different types of multilevel governance. Type I, with federalism as its intellectual background, is concerned with power sharing among governments operating at different territorial levels, and type II which captures both the multiple levels at which governance is taking place and the myriad actors and institutions which acts simultaneously across different levels.[14]

This theoretical distinction has profound repercussions for the problem of multilevel governance application outside the EU context. The application of Type 1 is limited to specific 'federalist' conditions within the EU, which do not exist more broadly in international relations. Type II, however, combines the intellectual developments of local studies, European studies, and

[13] Simona Piattoni, "Multi-level Governance in the EU. Does it Work?", Globalization and Politics – A Conference in Honor of Suzane Berger, MIT, 8-9 May 2009, at http://www.princeton.edu/~smeunier/Piattoni.

[14] Gary Marks, Liesebet Hooghe, "Contrasting Visions of Multi-level Governance", in: Ian Bache and Matthew Flinders (eds.) *Multi-level Governance* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004), 15-30.

international relations and can provide the theoretical starting point for a more general theory of multilevel governance. Such theory could be useful for explaining new processes for dealing with global problems including food security. This kind of 'usefulness' of type II is emphasized by Chris Skelcher who states that it tends to flourish specifically in the international arena where the particular functional governance problems occur.[15]

In the EU context, multilevel governance is used to denote the different systems of "coordination and negotiation among formally independent but functionally interdependent entities that stand in complex relations to one another and that, thorough coordination and negotiation keep redefining these relations".[16] Despite the strong criticism of multilevel governance as applied to the European Union,[17] this model is slowly (yet still) gaining political attention translated into political actions. The White Paper on multi-level governance prepared by the Committee of the Regions in December 2009 is a good example of these processes.[18] Academic debates on whether the EU is or is not a multilevel governance decision-making system seem to be artificial in confrontation with concrete actions aiming to legally confirm its application, not to say are losing its touch with reality.

There are three assumptions of multilevel governance in the EU, which make this model interesting from the wider perspective. First, it is an 'actor-centred' theory. It draws attention to the growing number of different types of actors who link different governmental levels by its free movement across traditional levels and spheres of authority.[19] Second, it connects different levels of governance which could be understood as territorial levels (supranational, national, and subnational), and jurisdictional levels, identified with regard to a certain functions, and third, it combines in a one theory, theory of political mobilization, of policy-making, and of polity structuring.[20]

2.2 The Conditions of Multilevel Governance Applicability outside the EU Level

15 Chris Skelcher, "Jurisdictional Integrity, Polycentrism and the Design of Democratic Governance", 1 (18) *Governance* 2005, 89-111.

16 Piattoni, "Multi-level Governance in the EU…", 12.

17 Andrew Jordan identified seven key criticisms of MLG as applied to the European Union: 1/ MLG is nothing new, but amalgam of existing theories; 2/ it provides a description of EU, but not theory; 3/ it overstates the autonomy of subnational actors; 4/ it adopts a 'top-down' view of subnational actors; 5/ it focuses on subnational actors to the exclusion of other subnational actors; 6/ it mistakes evidence of subnational actors mobilization at European level as evidence of its influence; 7/ it ignores the international level of iterations. Andrew Jordan, "The European Union: an evolving system of multi-level governance … or government?", 29 (2) *Policy and Politics* 2001, 193-208.

18 European Union, Committee of the Regions, The White Paper on multi-level governance 2009, at http://www.cor.europa.eu.

19 Piattoni, "Multi-level Governance in the EU…", 12.

20 *Ibid*.

The term *multilevel governance* (like *globalization* a few years ago) seems to be treated as a buzzword in present literature on governance of international relations. Studies on multilevel governance often take the form of case studies. However, as Stephen Welch and Caroline Kennedy-Pipe points out, this research strategy works well in domestic and in the European research context, where distinct policy areas (*e.g.*, environment) allow for a case by case testing.[21] Apart from these contexts, the application of multilevel governance to analyzing specific case studies is more complicated because of the idea of 'policy areas', which implies the question 'whose policy'[22], but it does not mean that there are no studies on multilevel governance of international relations at all. For instance, in his work on global multilevel governance, Cesar de Prado argued that by the process of regionalization, the new level of governance is emerging. Intensification of intra-regional relations within the European Union and the ASEAN, but also the growing importance of their external involvement creates arguments for existence of this new level of governance.[23]

The same line of argumentation can be found in the works on multilevel governance of global climate change, where multilevel governance is identified differently than nation-state level of governance. The different perspective on multilevel governance represents Philip Pattberg in his work on private governance in global forest politics. Without using the term multilevel governance, he indirectly supports the multilevel governance assumption about the distribution of states authority between different levels and actors.[24]

The question, which has not yet been adequately addressed is: why should multilevel governance be transferred to the international relations realm, and especially to the food security area? The most obvious answer is because the existing decision making model is ineffective and there is still huge food insecurity worldwide. However, when we look deeper at the problem of food security we can easily observe that there are immense qualitative changes in the food security problem itself, as well as in the processes aiming to solve it, which are missing in the existing decision making system dominated by states and international organizations.

Three processes identified in the EU as a background of multilevel governance development have crucial meaning to its applicability to food security area. Due to the globalization processes, the changes occurred in political mobilization, in policy-making, and in the states' structures, which are transforming the architecture of food security governance. In the first instance, we can observe the new ways of political mobilization around the

[21] Stephen Welch, Caroline Kennedy-Pipe, "Multi-level Governance and International Relations", in: Ian Bache and Matthew Flinders (eds.) *Multi-level Governance…*, 125-144.

[22] *Ibid.*, 131.

[23] Cesar de Prado, *Global Multi-level governance. European and East Asian Leadership* (Tokyo, New York, Paris, United Nations University Press, 2007).

[24] Philipp Pattberg, "Private governance and the South: lessons form global forest politics", 27 (4) *Third World Quarterly* 2006, 579-593.

problem of food security. The traditional forms like political parties, trade unions, or elections are supplemented by new ones like grass-root movements, food security coalitions, food security networks, peasants' movements, social campaigns, and others.

In the second instance, there could be easily observed qualitative and quantitative changes in actors involved in the food security issue. Beside the states and intergovernmental organizations, there is a growing involvement of private actors, especially transnational corporations from agribusiness as well as civil society organizations, framers organizations, and researchers.

In the third instance, the changes are marked by the emancipation of local and regional representation on a global level. Despite the very first stage of this evolution, it becomes obvious that in the food security case distance between the decision makers and decision receivers should be as short as possible. Patterns of food insecurity vary within the states, which is why the solutions made at this level are often insufficient. It leads to the conclusion that the better responses to the food security problem can be drawn at the lower level and depend on local level involvement in food governance. This philosophy laid down as a background of the Worldwide Action for Food Security, which stressed that local governments and their partners have a vital role to play in assessing food insecurity and in planning concerted responses.[25]

Application of multilevel governance outside the EU context is also conditioned by a growing demand for governance in international relations. As James N. Rosenau points, "people throughout the world are restless and unhappy over the quality of their governments, cynical about, and often alienated from, the effectiveness and integrity of the procedures whereby government frame and implement their policies".[26] In the food security field, this growing demand for governance is conditioned not only by the changing capacities of the states but also by changing character of the food security problem itself. New threats to food security, new actors involved, and contradictory interest over food increase the pursuit of new modes of governance.

3. The Food Security Concept

The food security concept has been developed since the inception of the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations, but the need for some form of multilateral world food security arrangement had already been recognized by the League of Nation before the Second World War.[27] Despite the fact that its content was changing over the six decades of FAO existence, the idea which laid behind its development was still the same. The food security concept was

[25] Worldwide Action for Food Security, at http://www.regionsfoodsummit.org/pub/doct/121_foodsecurity18jan2010_final.pdf.

[26] James N. Rosenau, "Strong Demand, Huge Supply: Governance in an Emerging Epoch", in: Ian Bache and Matthew Flinders (eds.) *Multi-level Governance…*, 31-48.

[27] Shaw, *World Food Security…*, 5.

not about the food per se but it expressed the concern for the fulfillment of the basic human need which was food.

3.1 Definition of Food Security

There are about two hundred definitions of food security nowadays[28]. At first, food security concept was related only to the food supply, production, and trade. The international community's main concern was the stabilization of agricultural commodity prices on the national and the international level. Since the 1980's, the concept has been modified. Its definition was extended to the 'individual dimension' of food security. It was noticed that focusing of international concerns only on food supply was distorting the reality. The physical food availability did not mean automatically that the poorest had access to it. That situation was confirmed by FAO and the World Bank reports on hunger and poverty, in which the need for the redefinition of food security concept has been suggested.

The expression of the new international community attitude to the idea of food security was its new definition adopted at the FAO World Food Summit in 1996. The final documents of the World Food Summit were described as "laying the foundations for diverse paths to a common objective—food security at the individual, household, national, regional, and global levels".[29] According to the new definition " food security, at the individual, household, national, regional, and global levels are achieved when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life".[30]

The food security concept was redefined once again in 2001. Apart from the physical and economic access to food, emphasis was put on the social dimension of food security. The new definition has stated that "food security is a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life".[31]

This new definition divides the food security problem into four dimensions: the physical availability of food, where the production and distribution of food are involved; the economic access to food, where the issues of poverty reduction and food prices play the most important role; the social access to food, which relates to the individuals who are at high risk of temporarily or permanently losing their access to resources needed to consume adequate

[28] FAO, "Trade Reforms and Food Security. Conceptualizing the linkages" 2003, 25, at ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/005/y4671e/y4671e00.pdf.
[29] Shaw, *World Food Security…*, 350.
[30] FAO, "Trade Reforms and Food Security…", 28.
[31] *Ibid*.

food. Additionally, the fourth dimension covers the issues of the proper quality of food and food safety.

3.2 Threats to Food Security

The discussion about the threats to food security has a long tradition. In the 17th century, Thomas Malthus drew attention to the direct connection between demographic growth and hunger. He argued that the population, when unchecked, increases geometrically, but the production of food increases only arithmetically. It inevitably leads to the situation of world starvation. Malthus, however, drew his conclusions in a specific historical context and he could not anticipate the future technological and science progress in food production, which has softened the pessimistic character of his prognosis.

Similarly to the evolution of the food security concept, there has been evolution of its threats. Within the most important threats to the world food security, there can be identified four groups.[32] In the first one, there are threats created by income growth, which include the demand driven by economic growth and population change. High income growth in countries like China and India readily translates into increased consumption of food. The demographic factor in these cases is also relevant. The changes in relations between rural and urban populations also pose challenges to food security. As Joachim von Braun argues in his report on the world food situation, these changes have a strong impact on spending and consumer preferences.[33] The shift from the consumption of grains and other staple crops to vegetables, fruits, meat, dairy, and fish resulted in agricultural diversification toward high value agricultural production. The growing demand for high-value products is satisfied at the cost of the poorest whose access to this kind of food is limited.

The climate change challenges construct the second group of food security threats. There is no doubt that climate change mostly affects agriculture and food production. As Josef Schmidhuber and Francesco N. Tubiello argue, it affects food production directly through changes in agro-ecological conditions and indirectly by affecting growth and distribution of incomes and thus the demand for agriculture produce.[34] Projections show that due to the climate change, the land suitable for wheat production may almost disappear in Africa.[35] As a result, agricultural prices will also be affected by climate

[32] Joachim von Braun, "The World Food Situation. New Driving Forces and Required Actions", International Food Policy Research Institute 2007, 1, at http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/fpr/pr18.pdf.
[33] *Ibid*.
[34] Josef Schimidhuber, Francesco N. Dubiello, "Global Food Security under Climate Change", (2007), at www.pnas.org_cgi_doi_10.1073_pnas.0701976104.
[35] Braun von, "The World Food Situation…", 3.

change. Temperature increases of more than three degrees Celsius may cause prices to increase by up to forty percent.[36]

The third group includes threats driven by high energy prices and especially production of biofuels. Due to the rising prices of fossil fuels (oil, gas) being accompanied by the shift towards more ecological energy sources, the use of agricultural products for industrial purposes increased dramatically. According to the FAO estimation, the use of cereals for biofuel production increased by more than twenty-five percent.[37]

In the fourth group, there are threats posed by globalization processes which dramatically change not only the way of production and distribution of food worldwide but also the structure of global food markets. The industrialization of agriculture, the growing role and importance of food and agriculture transnational corporations, changes in the corporate food system, the monopolization of biotechnological improvements in agriculture due to the application of property rights, and the hypocrisy of liberalization of international trade in agriculture, all of this can be identified as its main manifestations.

3.3 The Food Security Concept and Governance

The food security concept brought a new perspective on the issue of world starvation. The identification of the five levels where food security must be assured and the four dimensions in which it must be achieved make the problem of food security governance extremely difficult. What is more, current international practice shows that because of the broad character of the food security concept, the actions to achieve it are taken in different policy areas *e.g.,* agriculture policy, trade policy, development policy, and food safety policy. However, it should be pointed that sometimes the contradictory character of the goals identified within the food security concept and the outcomes of mentioned policies makes these efforts ineffective.

The analysis of food security governance requires not only the explanation of the food security concept but also the idea of governance. There are lots of different definitions depending on where it has been applied, on the author and on the context. In the broader sense, the term 'governance' is used to designate all regulations intended to organize human societies. When the idea of governance is moved to the international level it is also defined as

[36] Josef Schmidhuber, Francesco N. Tubiello and Others, "Food, fibre and forest products" in: Martin Parry, Osvaldo Canzini, Jean Palutikof, Clair Hanson, P.J. van der Linden (eds.), *Climate change 2007: Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. Contribution of working group II to the fourth assessment report of the intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[37] Braun von, "The World Food Situation…", 3.

regulation but "made in the absence of an overarching political authority".[38] However, can governance be treated the same as regulation? When it is understood as a process of taking under control specific issues by stetting rules and restriction on it, it seems to be better defined as a governance strategy.

There is no doubt that the governance concept is strictly connected with the distribution of authority. The definition developed by Elke Krahmann, which states that governance means the fragmentation of political authority in different dimensions *e.g.*, geography, function, resources, interests, norms, decision-making, and policy implementation,[39] highlights this aspect.

In the first dimension, authority is distributed across different levels. All of these levels can be identified in the food security concept. In the second dimension, authority is distributed across different issue areas, which require different governance strategy. In the food security case, the most relevant strategies are: regulations, dissemination of knowledge, standard setting, and aid. In the third dimension, authority is distributed across the resource holders. From this perspective in the governance of food security, the emphasis should be put on the creation of public-private partnerships.

The analysis of the relations between the food security concept and governance helps to construct the 'food security governance map'. There can be identified main research categories useful in testing the existence of multilevel food security governance. The first category is the level of governance, the second, its strategies, and the third, its structures. Analysis of food security governance by these categories brings also the identification of its main actors and the relations between them.

4. Multilevel Governance of Food Security

The main focus of this paper addresses the question of whether multilevel governance is becoming a gradually institutionalized new international practice or is it only a theoretical model useful in academic debates, without practical meaning to governance of food security? In this part of the paper I will try to answer this question. The analysis will be organized around three categories which constructs the food security governance map: the levels of governance, the strategies, and the structures. However, it is rather the indication of a research problem. The purpose of this part of the paper is more to signal some findings than to present its thorough analysis.

In the current food security governance system there can be identified three levels: the global level represented by the United Nations System, the regional level represented by the regional organizations (European Union), and the nation-states level. The subnational level is missing from this system,

[38] James Rosenau, "Toward Ontology for Global Governance", in: Martin Hewson and Timothy J. Sinclair (eds.), *Approaches to Global Governance Theory* (Albany, State University of New York, 1999), 287-301.

[39] Elke Krahmann, "National, Regional, and Global Governance: One Phenomenon of Many", 9 (3) *Global Governance* 2003, 323-346.

however, there can be observed new processes in this area. The most important is the emancipation of the regions functioning within the states on the international level. Decentralization processes, which took and takes place in a different part of the world (not only in Europe), makes the voice of these sub-state actors more heard. The regions are perceived not only as the level of governance more responsive to the people's needs compared with the state level but also more effective in dealing with global problems touching local communities whether it is climate change or food security. The institutional manifestation of the regions' involvement in global issues is the Forum of Global Associations of Regions created in 2007.[40] The main objectives of the Forum, besides the promotion of initiatives for mutual knowledge and cooperation between regions around the world, are ensuring the regions voice in globalization and organizing a new strategic governance rules.[41]

The growing importance of sub-state actors on the international level can be illustrated by some practical initiatives. One of it is the Art Gold initiative set up by the UNDP as a 'platform for innovative partnerships,' which brought together local authorities, states, and UN agencies in collaboration for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.[42] The other initiative worth mentioning is the first Summit of the World's Regions on Food Security which took place in January 2010 in Dakar, Senegal, and arose from a belief that the regions have the political and technical capacity to lead concrete actions that respond to the actual needs expressed by their fellow citizens.[43]

There is no doubt that the world food security system is dominated by the UN System. As a universal organization, the UNO is responsible not only for addressing the problem of food security but also for seeking the solutions. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the UN System is playing a pivotal role in the food security governance by harnessing the private sector and civil society and by building a collective action through global partnership or alliance in the broadly defined development policy. What is more, the global level of food security governance embraces also the World Trade Organization, the IMF, and the World Bank. That is why the priority areas, which were identified for the global level, include also the establishment of an open international trading system to achieve food security and the strengthening of the international finance and technical cooperation.

In the discussion on food security governance, a strong accent is put on the responsibilities of nation-states in this area. Robert L. Paarlberg, in his discussion paper on governance and food security in the age of globalization, stresses that the greatest governance deficits in the food security area are

40 More about the FOGAR at http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=4,7.

41 Organizational Charter of the FOGAR at http://www.crpm.org/pub/docs/179_charte-fogar-150608-en.pdf.

42 Art Initiative, at http://www.art-initiative.org/index.php?p=mod_about_art.

43 Summit of the World's Regions on Food Security at http://www.regionsfoodsummit.org/en/index.php.

still at the national level not at the global level.[44] He argues that the 'global level' efforts to fill these gaps in national governance have ended in frustration since the traditional norm of state sovereignty continues to stand in the way. What is more, his research shows that to mitigate food insecurity especially in the poorest and the least developed countries the practice of taking over states responsibilities by other actors should be replaced by strengthening states governance capacities. Because the national governments are still playing the dominant role in food production, distribution, and consumption, the problem of food security should be dealt on this level.

The European Union represents the regional level of food security governance. However, despite the money spent and the high involvement, its role in food security governance is very ambiguous. When we look at the actions taking by the EU in the following policy areas: agriculture policy, trade policy, and development policy, we can see that it is characterized by a huge incoherence. The strong involvement in international development policy is not followed by its involvement in the establishing of an open international trading system in agriculture to achieve food security.

The levels of governance include also the new players in civil society and private actors. Their involvement depends, however, on the food security dimension. For example, in the food safety policy, apart from the national level where responsibility lies first, there is strong involvement of the private sector - food producers and food processors and its associations - not only as recipients or observers but also as standard setters. In the development policy, the private actors and civil society organizations and networks plays even a greater role. In these contexts, the multilevel governance idea of 'functional control' over the specific issues seems to materialize.

There can be identified four governance strategies within the food security governance: the regulation, the standard setting, the aid and the knowledge diffusion. We can say that all these strategies can be identified in different policy areas. The question, however is that, is it really multilevel governance strategy or not. In trade regulation, there is no distribution of state power vertically and horizontally. The most important actors are states, and new regulation on trade, including the decision on its further liberalization are made by states. The subnational actors have no access to these regulations. Even the World Trade Organization only facilitates the forum of international negotiations between nation-states, with one exception in a form of new dispute settlement mechanism, which strengthens its role in trade policy but without the power to create new regulations.

One of the issue areas where we can observe some form of multilevel regulatory governance is food safety policy. However, as Grace Skogstad points in her article on that issue despite the developments towards

[44] Robert L. Paarlberg, "Governance and Food Security in an Age of Globalization", 36 *Food, Agriculture, and the Environment Discussion Paper - IFPRI* 2002, at http://www.ifpri.org/publication/governance-and-food-security-age-globalization.

multilevel governance, an effective and coherent system of coordinating and harmonizing food safety regulation remains a work in progress.[45] The same situation can be observed in the governance by aid. There are many actors involved in these policy areas but the actions taken by them do not create a coherent and coordinated system which could lead to problem solving. Especially conditioned aid as a governance tool motivated by the desire to improve the developing states capacities to fight poverty sometimes brought opposite results.

The multilevel governance of food security becomes a real international practice in the knowledge diffusion area. The governance by knowledge diffusion is coordinated by the Consultive Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR). The Group, which was established in 1971, is a strategic partnership, whose sixty four members support fifteen international centres. The Group works in collaboration with national governments, civil society organizations, as well as private business. It creates a multilevel network where "ins" and "outs" are possible for every interested actor. Its effectiveness as a strategy of food security governance lays in a wide availability of the new crop varieties, knowledge, and other products resulting from its collaborative research to individuals and organizations working for sustainable agricultural development throughout the world.

The structures of food security governance take a form of public-private partnerships. These structures are relevant especially to the development and agriculture policy. According to the International Food Policy Research Institute, the public sector organizations in many countries are becoming increasingly reliant on collaboration with the private sector and civil society to strengthen innovative capacity and respond to the needs of the rural poor. New collaborative modalities include knowledge exchange networks, research consortia, technology joint ventures, public-private-non-governmental extension services, hybrid organizations, and other partnership-based approaches. [46]

Does multilevel governance of food security become the new international practice or is it merely the catchword gaining in importance only in academic debates? The answer to this question is very difficult. There are some findings which show that the applicability of multilevel governance to food security is possible and it could become an international practice in the future but without thorough research on the theoretical framework of multilevel governance of international relations, analyses of international actions taken to solve any global problems will be impossible. Why particular practices or actions should be considered as multilevel governance not just governance? It is a key question, which needs further research which makes the building of theoretical framework of multilevel governance of IR so important.

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[45] Grace Skogstad, "Multilevel Regulatory Governance of Food Safety: A Work in Progress", in: G. Bruce Doern and Robert Johnson (eds.), *Rules, Rules, Rules, Rules. Multilevel Regulatory Governance* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2006), 157-179.

[46] International Food Policy Research Institute at http://www.ifpri.org/book-780/ourwork/researcharea/public-private-partnerships.

Following the discussion of the concepts of multilevel governance and food security, this analytical section indicates that multilevel governance is not a common international practice. States are not interested in sharing power in the areas of trade and agriculture. There are, however, some examples where the distribution of states' regulatory authority brings positive results. That is why the conclusion of the paper is moderately optimistic. States are not omnipotent and from this point of view the idea of multilevel governance can be considered as a future international practice.

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