



COMMUNITY ACTIVISM AND SUSTAINABILITY: A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ASSESSMENT

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ABSTRACT

A growing body of research is exploring the role of community-based initiatives (CBIs) in the promotion of sustainable regional transitions. While existing research and policies acknowledge the relevant contribution of community activism in providing a soft, self-governed and bottom-up path towards sustainability, much of this work has a clear normative intent, it is based on individual case studies and rarely provides a systematic assessment of their actual effects.

This paper is an attempt to fill this gap by providing an extensive review of the literature about the social, economic, political and technological impacts of CBIs, in order to define a set of indicators for the monitoring and evaluation of these initiatives. For each of the above mentioned four dimensions, a set of key variables will be proposed for assessing CBIs in a variety of domains: from food production (e.g. community gardens), to food distribution (e.g. solidarity purchasing groups), from recycling, to cohousing, bike/car-sharing, community energy, etc.

Classification JEL: O17, O35, Q56, L30, C18

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