


Understanding the role of civil society and its effects on municipal public governance: a study from the Social Innovation Observatory of Florianópolis, Brazil

Compreendendo a atuação da sociedade civil e seus efeitos na governança pública municipal: um estudo a partir do Observatório de Inovação Social de Florianópolis

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DOI: 10.22478/ufpb.2525-5584.2025v10n1.69807

Received: April 01, 2024.
Approved: January 20, 2025.

Abstract: This study aims to recognize the role of civil society in municipal public governance, focusing on its contribution to promoting social innovations in the city's public arenas. The research was conducted in two specific arenas: the protection of children's and adolescents' rights and the promotion of urban agriculture in Florianópolis. A theoretical-analytical approach was employed, anchored in a critical and pragmatist perspective, linking discussions in the fields of public governance, civil society, and social innovation. The methodological path involved cartography and ethnography of these two public arenas from 2020 to 2022. The results reveal that civil society in Florianópolis is not only diverse and plural but also dynamic, shaped by multiple interactions that change over time and reveal new governance dynamics. The cartographic analysis of the arenas enabled the identification of multiple spaces, each with its own political ecology and relational configurations, which influence civil society's role and its effects on public governance—manifesting in different ways in the analyzed cases. Moreover, the analysis of these arenas' trajectories highlighted the processual nature of public governance, shaped by socio-state relations that

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change over time and can either foster or hinder social innovation. By examining this governance process and its components—like a kaleidoscope—the study reveals the characteristics, scope, and limitations of civil society’s engagement in socio-state interactions in these two policy fields. Ultimately, it contributes to understanding urban governance challenges in these arenas, focusing on social innovation and its role in fostering more resilient and sustainable cities.

Keywords: civil society; public governance; public policies; social innovation; pragmatism.

Resumo: Este trabalho visa (re)conhecer a atuação da sociedade civil na governança pública municipal, tendo em vista o seu papel na promoção de inovações sociais nas arenas públicas da cidade. A pesquisa foi realizada nas arenas da garantia de direitos das crianças e adolescentes e da promoção da agricultura urbana em Florianópolis. Para tanto, utilizou-se um enfoque teórico-analítico que, ancorado numa abordagem crítica e pragmática, relaciona discussões nos campos da governança pública, da sociedade civil e da inovação social. O caminho metodológico envolveu a cartografia e a etnografia destas duas arenas públicas, de 2020 a 2022. Os resultados revelam que a configuração da sociedade civil em Florianópolis é, além de diversa e plural, dinâmica, e marcada por múltiplas interações que mudam ao longo do tempo e vão evidenciando novas dinâmicas de governança. As cartografias das arenas permitiram identificar múltiplas arenas que têm suas próprias ecologias políticas e configurações relacionais, o que vai exercer influência na atuação da sociedade civil e nos seus efeitos na governança pública, que são diversos nos casos analisados. Ademais, a análise das trajetórias dessas arenas permitiu verificar que a governança pública tem uma dimensão processual, que se forja nas relações socioestatais, as quais mudam ao longo do tempo, podendo ser vetores que impulsionam ou dificultam a promoção da inovação social. Ao mirar nesta processualidade da governança pública e seus componentes, como num caleidoscópio, o estudo permite revelar as características, os alcances e os limites da atuação da sociedade civil nas interações socioestatais nesses dois campos de política pública e contribuir para uma leitura do desafios nas experiências da governança urbana nestas duas arenas, com foco na inovação social e seu papel na promoção de cidades mais resilientes e sustentáveis.

Palavras-chave: sociedade civil; governança pública; políticas públicas; inovação social; pragmatismo.

1. INTRODUÇÃO

In recent decades, public governance studies have consolidated in the academic debate on public administration (Ansell & Torfing, 2016; Denhardt & Catlaw, 2017). The emergence of the notion of “public governance” can be understood as an analytical response from the field to a series of reconfigurations in socio-state interactions that various countries worldwide have undergone (Kissler & Heidemann, 2006; Rhodes, 1996). More recently, research on public governance has gained prominence as a response to increasingly complex public issues with implications that extend from local to global levels. This includes the climate emergency, the post-COVID-19 pandemic, and the democratic backsliding processes currently affecting several countries (Andion, 2020; Ansell, Sørensen & Torfing, 2020). Several authors highlight that tackling challenges typical of the Anthropocene calls for rethinking governance strategies (Mancebo, 2015; Sachs, 2007; 2015) and strengthening more experimental forms (Veiga, 2015). Understanding the different modes of governance – as multi-actor relational systems – how they are co-produced, how they interact and transact, and their effects on the co-creation of public policies has become a crucial topic in the current research agenda (Ansell & Torfing, 2016; 2021; Zittoun, Fischer & Zahariadis, 2021).

One of the main challenges in public governance research is the extensive and diffuse nature of scientific production in the field, largely due to the profusion of meanings and applications that have accompanied the popularization of the term (Rhodes, 1996). At the international level, a growing consensus has emerged that advancing the research agenda in governance requires moving beyond mere conceptualization or the addition of adjectives; instead, it calls for expanded empirical research on real governance situations (Ansell & Torfing, 2016; Andion, 2023). This perspective frames public governance not as a universal solution to the shortcomings of democracy but as a problem, i.e., a research phenomenon.

As highlighted by Manoel, Braun Neto, and Andion (2023) in a recent systematic literature review on Brazilian research in public governance, the

debate in Brazil remains largely confined to an understanding of governance as compliance with predefined public management standards, most of which are set by organizations such as the World Bank. The discourse is predominantly shaped by prescriptive and functionalist studies, leaving little room for exploring real governance situations and often adopting a dualistic perspective on socio-state interactions – either as managerial collaboration and partnerships between civil society and the state or as outright opposition between them.

Andion (2023) identifies three significant gaps in the national research agenda on public governance. First, public governance is often interpreted as a normative “public management model” that, when applied to state reforms, is assumed to be a solution in itself to contemporary challenges of democracy and state effectiveness. Second, public governance is frequently presented as an inherently positive concept, equated with networked organization, co-production of public services, and collaboration between actors, overlooking the reality that governance regimes are not always democratic. Third, research tends to focus only on successful governance cases, qualifying the term with descriptors that emphasize its positive attributes (such as collaborative, networked, and adaptive) rather than engaging with the fundamental task of understanding governance processes and their challenges.

In light of these considerations, this study approaches governance as both an empirical phenomenon to be investigated and an analytical avenue for research. This implies, as discussed by Andion and Magalhães (2021) and Andion (2023), moving beyond governance models that seek optimal solutions and overcoming the dichotomy between rational and argumentative theories commonly used in public policy analysis. Instead, the focus is on public action, learning, and experimentation in response to public problems (Ansell, 2012). The study aims to analyze public governance as a process and as a mode of coordinating collective action that extends beyond its formal aspects, concentrating on the challenges and dilemmas of its practice and its consequences in the realm of public policy experience (Dewey, 1927; 1938; 1958; Ansell & Torfing, 2016; Frega, 2019). Therefore, it is essential to critically

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examine idealized conceptions of opposition or partnership and to challenge the assumption of a strict separation between the state and civil society. The analysis must focus on patterns of socio-state interaction and their effects (Ansell, 2011; Gurza Lavallo & Szwako, 2015), considering not only the factors that drive, reinforce, and promote public governance but also those that obstruct, hinder, and constrain its exercise.

Thus, rather than establishing a priori the form and effects of civil society's actions in public governance, we seek to empirically examine how socio-state interactions unfold in practice and their long-term consequences in the city's public arenas. This approach aligns with and is supported by a body of pragmatist-inspired scholarship in public policy analysis and public administration, which seeks to understand and reinforce more experimental forms of governance. These studies focus not only on enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in public services but also on deepening democracy and revitalizing public administration (Ansell, 2011; Ansell & Torfing, 2021; Andion & Magalhães, 2021; Dorf & Sabel, 1998; Shields, 2003; Zittoun, 2021). Thus, we build from the following guiding question: How does civil society act, and what are the effects of this action on municipal public governance in pursuit of social innovation?

This article contributes to the research agenda on social innovation ecosystems and the role of civil society in public arenas, adopting a pragmatic and critical approach developed in collaboration with the Social Innovation Observatory of Florianópolis (Andion, Ronconi, Moraes, Gonsalves, & Serafim, 2017; Andion, Alperstedt, & Graeff, 2020; Andion, 2020; Magalhães, Andion, & Manoel, 2022; Andion, 2023; Magalhães, Andion, & Alperstedt, 2020; Manoel & Andion, 2023). In particular, we seek to examine the relationships among public governance, civil society, and social innovation without presuming these notions to have intrinsic value or to be inherently positive and normatively determined. Instead, our aim is to understand them through a socio-anthropological lens of "everyday politics," as co-produced by various collectives mobilized around public problems in the city (Cefaï, 2007).

This study aims to understand the effects of civil society's actions on public governance in Florianópolis, Brazil, focusing on the promotion of social innovation in two areas of public policy: the rights of children and adolescents and urban agriculture. Field research was carried out in public arenas related to these policies in the city, using a methodological approach based on the “cartography and ethnography of public arenas,” as outlined in Section 3 (Andion, 2023; Magalhães, Andion & Manoel, 2022; Magalhães, Andion & Alperstedt, 2020).

The selection of these two policy fields is justified for several reasons: (1) their significant influence on the municipality's political ecology; (2) the extensive participation of civil society initiatives in these public arenas; (3) they refer to distinct policy areas – one focused on human rights advocacy and the other on environmental sustainability – allowing for an exploration of both similarities and contrasts in governance dynamics; and (4) the availability of a robust dataset from prior in-depth, long-term research in these two policy fields during the same period, enabling a comprehensive analysis.

This article is structured into four sections, including this introduction. The next section presents the theoretical-analytical framework, which offers a perspective on the cases through the “kaleidoscope of public governance,” developed abductively (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012) through an iterative dialogue between theoretical insights, empirical findings, and fieldwork experience. Following this, we outline the methodological approach adopted in the research, present and discuss the results, and conclude with final considerations.

2. CONNECTING CIVIL SOCIETY, PUBLIC GOVERNANCE, AND SOCIAL INNOVATION BASED ON THE KALEIDOSCOPE OF PUBLIC GOVERNANCE

As outlined in the introduction, this study adopts an interactionist and situated perspective, examining civil society, social innovation, and public governance as elements in relationships rather than as substances. It is

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grounded in the “cartography and ethnography of public arenas” approach, proposed and detailed by Andion (2023), which has been validated through a seven-year research agenda involving multiple empirical studies conducted within the framework of the Florianópolis Social Innovation Observatory (OBISF)⁴.

This approach serves as the foundation for the theoretical-analytical and methodological design of this article and is summarized in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Analytical path of the “cartography and ethnography of the public arenas”

Moments	Focus	Research strategy	Locus of the study
Cartography and analysis of public arena’s network	Understanding the outlines of the public arena, the main public problems, social actors, and interactions (structural analysis)	Mapping, cartography	Social innovation ecosystem, networks that form the public arena
<i>Guiding questions: Who are the support actors that uphold social innovation in the city? What are their roles? Which initiatives aim to respond to the city’s public problems? What are the problematic situations that they aim to address? What are the interactions established? Who are the people affected? What are the proposed solutions? What are the methodologies and technologies presented? What is the incidence in public arenas?</i>			
Identification and observation of the scenes of reciprocal adjustment	Identification and observation of scenes of commitment and/or conflict among different publics engaged in the public arena	Direct, continued, and systematic observation	Spaces of connection and dialogue, such as the forums or councils of public policies; Public scenes and situations

⁴ This project combines teaching, research, and extension. It has been ongoing since 2016 within the framework of the Center for Social Innovations in the Public Sphere (NISP). It is developed through two complementary research strategies: the cartography and ethnography of public arenas. For more details on OBISF and these analytical and methodological approaches, see Andion, Alperstedt, and Graeff (2020) and Andion (2023). OBISF is also a collaborative digital platform designed to map the network that constitutes the social innovation ecosystem of Florianópolis. This includes social innovation initiatives and their supporting actors, aiming to understand their activities, interactions, transactions, and effects in response to the city’s public challenges. Additionally, it seeks to strengthen this ecosystem, enhance collaboration among its actors, and amplify their impact on the city’s public arenas and policies. By 2023, the platform had supported 36 undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral studies in various public arenas of the city. In addition to the fields explored in this article, these studies have addressed arenas related to urban solid waste, women’s rights, urban issues, water and sanitation, homelessness, and animal rights. To learn more about these studies and the platform, visit <https://www.observafloripa.com.br/#toppage>.

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<i>Guiding questions: How are the actors organized to request their demands? What are the legal and institutional mechanisms, objects, and rules that the publics use to respond to public problems? How can representation and legitimacy be built in the public arena? What is the scale of publicity used in the arena? Who are the protagonists, the spectators, the narrators, and the audience? Who is responsible?</i>			
Follow-up with different publics and their life experiences	How does the action occur (if it does), and what are the consequences? Recovery time sequences while they are produced	Direct and systematic observation	Government agencies and civil society organizations that act with the public problem, public action, and public policies
<i>Guiding questions: How do affected people understand the public problem? Do they mobilize and act around this problem? How? How does the attribution of responsibility, the elaboration of a complaint, the unfolding of a violation of right occur? What are the consequences for the affected people? Do they publicize their problems? How?</i>			
Reconstitution and analysis of the public arena's trajectory	Reconstitution of the trajectory of the public arena (and the public problems ballistics) and the problematic situations experienced	Document analysis; Systematic observation; Interviews with actors	Agenda of the media; Governmental agenda; Mechanisms of public action; Public scenes and situations
<i>Guiding questions: Who are the spokespersons? What are the events? What are the themes discussed? What problematic situations have people lived? How are these situations faced? What are the consequences? What is the narrative when facing the problem? What are the arguments? What are the controversies?</i>			
Collaboration, sharing, and validating research results with affected publics	How do the surveyed subjects perceive and (re)signify the research results?	Community service (extension); Workshop; Focus-group; Interviews	Projects and workshops with different publics surveyed (government, civil society, universities, ordinary citizens)
<i>Guiding questions: How do the researched people perceive, (re)signify, and coproduce the research results? What are their impressions, questions, dilemmas, difficulties? What are the feedbacks?</i>			

Fonte: Andion (2023, p. 9).

In addition to this analytical path, we propose examining the cases based on the “kaleidoscope of public governance” as an analytical operator⁵ (Serva, 2023), developed by the authors to conduct empirical research on public governance. This operator highlights the different components and relationships

⁵ According to Serva (2023), the analytical operator serves as a tool that pragmatist researchers can use to interpret and discuss the phenomena under investigation. Unlike a model, this “kaleidoscope” is designed to help capture what emerges from action, requiring the identification and examination of the most relevant aspects of agency, actions, and their effects. A key priority is to analyze what actors actually do, how they act, the effects generated, and the recursive influence of these effects on subsequent actions. Thus, listening to and closely following actors in their contexts of action are the first steps in identifying analytical operators. According to Serva, “the actors know what is effectively important to act and/or correct actions, what allows and/or limits attempts to transform the situations in which they participate, which paths are taken in challenges and tests in the situations they face” (Serva, 2023, p. 15).

within governance, helping to understand the configuration of governance regimes observed in each public arena analyzed. It was designed abductively (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012) over the course of the research, integrating theoretical discussions on public governance with fieldwork findings. During this period, there was intense interaction with actors and the dynamics of the two arenas studied, as detailed in Section 3.

The term “kaleidoscope” denotes an optical instrument that creates shifting patterns and images by reflecting light off small, colored fragments. It consists of a rotating tube at the end of which are loosely held bits of glass, producing changing symmetrical shapes by reflecting in two or more mirrors positioned at angles (Dictionary.com, [n.d.]).

This metaphor was chosen because civil society actions and their effects on co-produced social innovation depend on the varying patterns of interaction among the elements that constitute public governance – on the different governance regimes at play. By “looking through the rotating kaleidoscope” and comparing these regimes, we can identify their configurations, examine how these elements interact, and determine the governance designs they produce. This deepens our understanding of the concrete dynamics of civil society action, its effects on public governance, and its implications for social innovation.

The notion of governance regimes used here is based on a procedural and interactionist perspective that considers socio-state relations, the relational configurations that shape them, and the temporal, spatial, and experiential dimensions of public governance. It also frames governance as the construction of responses to public problems by the various actors in public arenas, operating in a more or less coordinated manner.

We draw inspiration from Abers, Silva, and Tatagiba (2018), who conceptualize regimes as relational configurations involving a plurality of **actors** (both governmental and civil society) engaged in reciprocal **relationships** that have the power to produce real-world effects. These actors assume different **positions** – i.e., location in relational structures, which can be central, marginal,

or intermediary – and have varying access to material and symbolic **resources** that influence their agency and impact on public policy, depending on the political scenario and culture under analysis.

However, by incorporating insights from sociological pragmatism, particularly the sociology of public problems (Cefaï, 2009), we seek to refine and expand the notion of regimes put forward by Abers, Silva, and Tatagiba (2018). We introduce additional variables that we consider key to understanding governance in public arenas, particularly the notions of “experience” as it emerges in “situations,” more particularly, “situations of proof,” as well as in the handling of “controversies” and “devices.”

According to Quéré (1997), action is “embodied” in the **situation**, which serves as the unit of analysis for **experience**. His perspective builds on Dewey (1927, 2007), who viewed experience as a matter of “dynamic organization” or orientation within a continuously evolving system composed of both the organism and its environment – entities not separate but integrated into a unified process. For Dewey (1927, 1938), experience is an ongoing effort to transform given conditions, encompassing inference, thought, and reflection. It is not only about action but also about suffering and sharing, understood as connection rather than alternation (Cefaï, 2009; Ogien & Quéré, 2005).

To explore these experiences, one must closely examine **situations of proof** or **controversies** in which actors engage in politics through lived experience. According to Cefaï (2002, pp. 59-60), by directing the analysis toward “situations of proof, emergency or crisis, litigation or dispute, process or controversy,” we can grasp their dynamics and understand how actors navigate and respond to what they perceive as problematic situations. In such cases, “the actors strive to collectively resolve problematic situations through definition, organization, cooperation, and justification” (Cefaï, 2002, pp. 59-60).

Devices also play a significant role in pragmatist approaches, used by various authors to conceptualize “arrangements of heterogeneous elements that cannot be reduced to the large categories of social beings generally studied in the social sciences” (Dodier, 2016, p. 2). By devices, we refer to the

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arrangement of material and linguistic elements (non-human elements) that activate or transform the relationships between actors and devices, as well as among actors themselves (Dodier & Barbot, 2017). Public action devices (Trom & Laborier, 2003) can normalize, control, discipline, and even subject various actors, while also establishing new rights and delegating new powers.

In short, this study understands **public governance regimes as relational configurations – situated in space and time – formed by a complex web of actors, relationships, positions, resources, and devices that structure different modes of coordination among actors. These configurations are revealed and reshaped through experience, as they bring to light situations of proof and controversy. Over time, they may either expand or constrain the development of public policies in response to public problems, acting as forces that either foster or hinder social innovation.**

From a pragmatist perspective, governance regimes contain elements that may remain relatively stable at a given historical moment. However, our approach goes beyond the notion of a “political context” as proposed by Abers, Silva, and Tatagiba (2018), which conceives it as something objective, external, and uniformly shared. Instead, we argue that public governance regimes are not merely pre-existing spatial and temporal circumstances, defined a priori, nor are they reducible to dominant coalitions or the political ideologies of a given government. **Rather, they emerge as “moments of practice” that must be understood through the “weaving of intrigue” (Quéré, 1997), which intertwines the concepts of time and narrative.** Moreover, the pragmatist perspective challenges the assumption of instrumental, rational action as an inevitable outcome of structural determinisms. Instead, it highlights the complexity of situational architectures, personal agency, and collective dynamics, recognizing the pluralism of action regimes (Cefaï, 2009).

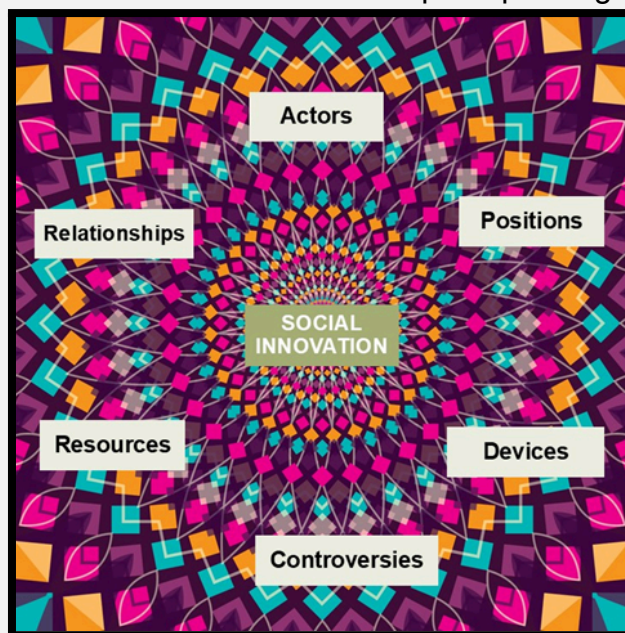
Figure 2 (below) illustrates the proposed analytical operator, the kaleidoscope of public governance. It highlights key components – actors, positions, devices, controversies, resources, and relationships – whose

characteristics and interactions shape different public governance regimes. These regimes, in turn, may either facilitate or obstruct the promotion of social innovation. Having presented the analytical approach and operator, the next section discusses the methodological approach, as well as the data collection and analysis techniques used in the fieldwork.

3. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

This article summarizes the results of doctoral thesis research conducted from 2020 to 2022 (Witt, 2023). A qualitative research approach supported by quantitative evidence was selected, based on an epistemological stance grounded in pragmatism and an abductive perspective (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). This is descriptive and exploratory-interpretative research focused on characterizing the objectives. The study gathered data and information on civil society initiatives operating in the city of Florianópolis through descriptive research to later understand the phenomenon based on the experiences of the actors in an exploratory-interpretative study.

Figure 2: Illustration of the kaleidoscope of public governance



The methodological approach consisted of two main phases: **(1) cartography** and **(2) the reconstruction and analysis of the trajectories of**

public arenas. Both phases were based on the “cartography and ethnography of public arenas” approach, summarized in Figure 1 and detailed in Magalhães, Andion, and Alperstedt (2020) and Andion (2023).

The **cartography of the two public arenas** was conducted through the Social Innovation Observatory of Florianópolis (OBISF) platform. This process provided responses to the complete OBISF forms⁶ for 116 social innovation initiatives in the city, originating from civil society (associations, cooperatives, foundations, social movements, and informal collectives) and observed by the research team – 88 from arenas of rights of children and adolescents and 28 from arenas of urban agriculture. Analyzing these responses made it possible to identify their characteristics, modes of action, interactions with each other and with the government, and the supporting actors in each public arena.

The **ethnographic** component enabled the identification of different elements of the “kaleidoscope of public governance” in each field of experience and facilitated the reconstruction of these arenas’ trajectories. This approach allowed for a deeper characterization of civil society actions, patterns of socio-state interactions, and their effects in terms of social innovation. The research built upon a master’s dissertation and a doctoral thesis previously developed on public arenas advocating for the rights of children and adolescents in the municipality (Magalhães, 2020; Silva, 2020), as well as a master’s dissertation that examined public arenas related to urban agriculture in Florianópolis (Manoel, 2022). These studies were complemented by ethnographic research conducted between October 2020 and June 2022 as part of the doctoral thesis that underpins this study (Witt, 2023). This phase involved systematic and continuous observation of public arenas through field diaries, semi-structured open interviews, and documentary research carried out by one of the authors, as detailed below.

⁶ On the OBISF platform, registered social innovation initiatives can have one of three statuses: (1) mapped, when basic contact and activity information (first section of the form) is completed, either through publicly available sources or by the initiative itself; (2) observed, when all form information is completed and validated by the initiatives themselves; and (3) monitored, when initiatives are currently or have previously been systematically monitored as part of a study related to OBISF. To access the full mapping form for social innovation initiatives, visit <https://observafloripa.com.br/register/ini#toppage>.

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Fieldwork took place from 2020 to 2022, involving participation in plenary sessions of the Public Policy Forum (FPPF), the Municipal Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (CMDCA), the Municipal Council for Social Assistance (CMAS), the Municipal Council for Education (CME), meetings of the Specialized Hearing Committee of Florianópolis (related to public arenas advocating for the rights of children and adolescents), and the SEMEAR Network and the Municipal Council for Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security (COMSEAS) (related to public arenas of urban agriculture in Florianópolis). These participatory instances provided spaces for connection and dialogue, allowing for the observation of reciprocal adjustments and public debates within each arena.

The observation focused on both describing and analyzing actors' practices within the investigated experiences. In the case of CMAS, CME, SEMEAR Network, and COMSEAS, the observation was non-participatory. However, in the case of FPPF, there was occasional participation, including contributions to specific actions. For instance, in the first half of 2022, the research team participated in a working group that conducted a survey on civil society organizations' demands regarding partnership agreements with the local government. This effort culminated in a meeting between the working group and the Municipal Secretariat of Social Assistance (SEMAS) in April 2022. Additionally, there was closer engagement with the working group forming the Specialized Hearing Committee of Florianópolis during the same period.

Figure 3 presents the key observation moments carried out by one of the authors in 2021 and 2022.

Figure 3: Observation moments in the investigated public arenas

Spaces of Direct Observation	Quantity	Description
FPPF	9	Monthly meetings with civil society organizations, social movements, professional groups, representatives of civil society in councils for the protection of rights and for public policies, user associations, educational institutions, and other stakeholders. Meeting with the Municipal Secretariat of Social Assistance (SEMAS) to discuss demands of civil society organizations that have partnership agreements with SEMAS.
CMDCA	6	Plenary meetings, held monthly (regular meetings) and/or as needed (extraordinary meetings), with the participation of council members representing the government and civil society, among other stakeholders, to discuss and deliberate on municipal policies related to childhood and adolescence in Florianópolis.
CMAS	6	Plenary meetings, held monthly (regular meetings) and/or as needed (extraordinary meetings), with the participation of council members representing the government and civil society, among other stakeholders, to discuss and deliberate on municipal policies related to social assistance and welfare policies in Florianópolis.
CME	4	Plenary meetings, held monthly (regular meetings) and/or as needed (extraordinary meetings), with the participation of council members representing the government and civil society, among other stakeholders, to discuss and deliberate on municipal policies related to education in Florianópolis.
Specialized Hearing Committee of Florianópolis	2	Monthly meetings gathering representatives of Florianópolis's General System for Citizens' Rights, including the Health Care Network, Education Network, Social Assistance Network, Child Protective Services, State Bureau of Investigation, State Police Force, General Institute of Forensics, Judiciary, Public Prosecutor's Office, and Public Defender's Office.
COMSEAS	4	Plenary meetings, held monthly (regular meetings) and/or as needed (extraordinary meetings), with the participation of council members representing the government and civil society, among other stakeholders, to discuss and deliberate on municipal policies related to food and nutritional security in Florianópolis.
SEMEAR Network	2	Monthly meetings ^[1] gathering stakeholders involved in urban agriculture in Florianópolis, providing a space for connection and collaborative action among these actors.

Fonte: Witt (2023, p. 142).

All of these moments were recorded in the researcher's **field diary**, which was used to describe the actions and interactions of the actors in the situation for later analysis, but also to record what the researcher heard and experienced, in addition to her feelings and impressions about the scenes in which she participated (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

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The **semi-structured open-ended interviews** (Figure 4) were conducted with actors from the public arenas to complement the information from the cartography and, later, from the trajectory of the arenas, a stage of the research that took place between 2021 and 2022. This type of interview allowed space for subjectivity, points of view, and relevance on the part of the interviewees themselves, constituting an opportunity for each to express themselves and gather information and knowledge that the interviewer might not have considered (Poupart, 2010).

Figure 4: Semi-structured open-ended interviews conducted

Interviewee profile	Quantity
Active in the public arena of institutional shelter care	1
Active in the public arena of early childhood education	1
Active in the public arenas of enhancing family and community bonding services and after-school programs	3
Active in the public arenas of urban agriculture	1
Total	6

Fonte: Witt (2023, p. 143).

Documentary research, in turn, was conducted by analyzing resources such as meeting minutes, projects, and reports. Figure 5 summarizes some of these documents.

Figure 5: Documents used to analyze arenas and trajectories

Type of Document	Quantity
Minutes of the plenary sessions of the Municipal Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (CMDCA)	25
Minutes of Florianópolis Specialized Hearings Committee Meetings	2
Minutes of the plenary sessions of the Municipal Council for Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security (COMSEAS)	14
Transcription of interviews conducted by Manoel (2021)	12
Minutes and memories of SEMEAR Network meetings	8
Political letters of municipal urban agriculture meetings	4
Pedagogical letters of SEMEAR Network culture circles	2
Total	67

Fonte: Witt (2023, p. 143).

It is important to highlight that a much wider variety of documents, besides those mentioned in Figure 5, were consulted, such as reports, publications on news portals, institutional websites, legal instruments,

institutional reports, partnership contracts, and project reports. Also noteworthy is the participation of researchers in the WhatsApp groups of the FPPF and SEMEAR Network, through which it was possible to monitor the information exchanged and the main topics discussed by their members.

Data collection and analysis occurred through continuous back-and-forth processes between the field for theoretical reflection to provide an “overflowing of the phenomenon,” which requires “revisiting” it continually, as suggested by Timmermans and Tavory (2012). Based on the logic of abduction, the contexts of discovery and justification are seen as “a seamless whole.”

Therefore, data collection and analysis occurred in a way that fed back into each other. **The analysis of field notes, interview transcriptions, documents, and the writing of the narrative report** allowed familiarization with the phenomenon. This process also led to new questions, requiring more interactions to minimize the resistance of the phenomenon to the desired interpretations, seeking to achieve a relational and temporal configuration, as recommended by Terzi (2015). **Triangulation** was also used to enhance the quality of the research (Flick, 2009; Zappellini & Feuerschütte, 2015).

This was used to analyze the actions of civil society and its relationship with the configuration of governance regimes in various arenas from the perspective of the kaleidoscope of governance, where we aimed to identify: (1) the actors mobilized; (2) the predominant relationships and their main mediators; (3) the positions occupied by the actors in the governance regimes; (4) the material and/or symbolic resources that circulate in the arenas; (5) the devices that are/were produced and/or mobilized in the arenas; (6) the situations of testing and controversies that concern the actors; (7) the main effects and results, including the promotion or not of (8) social innovation in the public arenas for protecting the children’s and adolescents’ rights and in the public arenas for urban agriculture in Florianópolis. The data collected and analyzed in the second stage of the research enabled a reading of the cartography of the public arenas examined in this article, as well as for

understanding the governance regimes within these arenas and their effects. The results of this analysis are presented and discussed below.

4. PUBLIC ARENAS, GOVERNANCE REGIMES, CONFIGURATIONS, TRAJECTORIES AND EFFECTS

This section seeks to identify and analyze how civil society acts in public arenas and how public governance regimes are configured in two areas of experience in addressing public problems in the city of Florianópolis: protection of children's and adolescents' rights and urban agriculture.

4.1. Public arenas for the rights of children and adolescents

Through OBISF, 88 social innovation initiatives focusing on the rights of children and adolescents were identified. Of these, 85 originate from civil society (97%), two are university programs (2%), and one is a platform/application (1%). Among the civil society initiatives, the majority are structured as private, non-profit associations (94%), followed by private, non-profit foundations (4%), along with one program run by a civil society organization and one social movement.

These initiatives do not operate exclusively within the domain of children's and adolescents' rights. They address a range of causes, including education, social assistance, culture and arts, community development, health, disability inclusion, sports and recreation, and employment and income generation. However, previous studies on children's and adolescents' rights in the city (Mendonça, 2019; Magalhães, 2020) have identified a predominant focus on a triad of areas: education (58%) and social assistance (56%).

Just as the initiatives work on several causes, a more in-depth analysis reveals that within this field, there is not just one but several public arenas. These arenas are structured around a variety of problems experienced by children, adolescents, and families in the city, which civil society organizations mobilize to solve: a) children who have suffered or are at risk of rights violations and require temporary housing (institutional shelter care); b) children under 6

years of age who need a safe place to spend their days while their parents (and/or guardians) work, as well as to experience a space that allows for their integral development (physical, psychological, intellectual and social) and healthy nutrition (early childhood education); c) children, adolescents, and families in situations of social vulnerability who need to strengthen their emotional bonds, in addition to preventing social exclusion and risk situations (enhancing family and community bonding services); d) children and adolescents who need extra and complementary schooling, as an extension of the learning process in schools (after-school programs); and e) children and adolescents with disabilities who need access to habilitation and rehabilitation programs, aiming to (re)discover their potential while also needing to be understood as subjects of rights, aiming at their inclusion in all social contexts (complementary education/specialized care, habilitation and rehabilitation for children and adolescents with disabilities), among others issues.

Despite the diverse challenges these initiatives address, civil society responses tend to be standardized, primarily taking the form of continuous services classified under the National Social Assistance System. In most areas analyzed – except for early childhood education – civil society organizations play a predominant role in service provision through contracts with the government, signaling a transfer of public service responsibilities to the private sector via collaboration agreements. Most civil society initiatives operating in these arenas are financed by the local government of Florianópolis through municipal secretariats. They are also highly institutionalized, long-standing, and pioneering actors in public policy implementation, focusing on rights promotion and social oversight, but playing only a residual role in policy formulation and management.

Civil society organizations with religious and philanthropic origins have a strong presence in the four major arenas observed (institutional shelter care, early childhood education, enhancing family and community bonding services, and after-school programs). These organizations must be registered with municipal councils (CMDCA, CMAS, and CME) to provide services and

establish partnership contracts with the local administration. The prevailing model of governance in these arenas is managerial, in which civil society organizations work as service providers (seem as “entities”) within a framework structured by contractual instruments (collaboration agreements), reinforcing a governance dynamic centered on “principal-agent” relationships.

In the set of 85 civil society initiatives observed that work toward protecting children’s and adolescents’ rights in the city, there is currently no overall majority of initiatives of religious origin. However, within the specific arenas identified and analyzed, there is a clear predominance of organizations with religious affiliation (75% in institutional care, 63% in early childhood education, 62% in services for coexistence and family bonding, 68% in after-school programs, and 67% in hospital humanization) and philanthropic organizations (100% in institutional care, 88% in early childhood education, 81% in services for coexistence and family bonding, 88% in after-school programs, and 67% in hospital humanization).

This finding aligns with prior research by Magalhães (2020), which highlighted that historically established civil society organizations primarily occupy the arenas of children’s and adolescents’ rights in the city. This participation is marked by a concentration of initiatives and a lack of renewal in institutional spaces of participation. Many of the initiatives mapped and observed in these public arenas remain excluded from formal spaces of influence on public policy.

As a result, socio-state relations in these arenas are shaped by strong regulatory frameworks, which, in turn, stem from the institutionalization of public policy itself (Gonsalves & Andion, 2019; Andion, Gonsalves & Magalhães, 2023). This regulatory environment fosters a certain homogeneity in practices and experiences, despite the diversity of organizations, largely due to the standardized classification of services under the National Social Assistance System.

Consequently, service provision is characterized by regularity and a lack of innovation, with a primary focus on maintaining supply to meet demand. This

concern is frequently expressed in complaints and reports from civil society actors. As also noted by Magalhães (2020), the debates and controversies in these arenas tend to be recursive, revolving mainly around bureaucratic issues related to public policy management. Furthermore, the presence, voice, and agency of children, adolescents, and their families within these arenas remain limited.

This dynamic reveals a strong asymmetry in socio-state relations. While civil society organizations play a dominant role in service execution – particularly in institutional shelter care, after-school programs, and enhancing family and community bonding services – the government retains central authority in managing public policies and allocating financial resources. At the same time, the municipal government has gradually distanced itself from the network of service provision for protecting children’s and adolescents’ rights, as evidenced by the closure of its own facilities in the city.

Regarding interactions among actors and their relationships, these arenas do communicate and engage with one another, yet the level of interaction remains below its potential. The analysis reveals limited cohesion, communication, and exchange both among initiatives and between these initiatives and government actors.

When looking through the “kaleidoscope,” the observed governance regime is hierarchical and state-centered. Although civil society actors constitute the numerical majority, they primarily function as “supporting actors,” providing services within a contractual framework defined by collaboration agreements. Political participation occurs through formal institutions such as CMDCA, CMAS, and the FPPF, which have experienced significant demobilization in the post-pandemic period. Socio-state relations are heavily regulated, with public financing being the primary funding source. Key governance mechanisms include participatory institutions, particularly the FPPF, and legal frameworks, notably the Brazilian Statue of Children and Adolescents. The most pressing controversies center on concerns about policy financing, management inefficiencies, and a lack of coordination among actors in the

network organized around the system for the protection of children's and adolescents' rights.

On the other hand, it is crucial to highlight that the actors maintain a critical perspective on this governance regime and convey their concerns regarding the policy's protocol bias and its stronger focus on addressing violations rather than promoting rights. The research also identified important experimental practices emerging from collaborations among diverse network actors. These actors combine their expertise to foster inquiry, reflexivity, and the construction of "new commons" within these arenas. Notable examples include various projects developed through partnerships between dynamic civil society organizations, CMDCA, and the Santa Catarina State University. These initiatives have contributed to institutional development within civil society organizations and strengthened public policy in the municipality, generating widely used tools such as the Vital Signs Reports, the Illustrated Ten-Year Plan, the Diagnosis of the Network of Protection of Children's and Adolescents' Rights, the ECA 30 Years Campaign, and the CMDCA Diagnosis, among others.

Figure 6 summarizes the components and governance regimes analyzed so far.

Thus, what Mendonça (2019) and Magalhães (2020) emphasize is clear: Civil society organizations in the arenas of the rights of children and adolescents fulfill a dual role in socio-state relations. They are responsible for implementing public policies and providing services in partnership with the government, for which they must account for the activities they undertake and the public resources they acquire. Simultaneously, they are tasked with overseeing public policy and its management. In both executing and controlling public policy, a regime of engagement more focused on instrumental action prevails, stemming from structural determinisms (Cefaï, 2009).

Figure 6: Weaving of Public Governance Regimes in Arenas of Rights of Children and Adolescents

Actors	Civil society: Strong presence and action of civil society organizations of religious and philanthropic origin, registered with municipal councils (CMDCA, CMAS, CME).
	State: Local government of Florianópolis, Municipal Secretariat of Social Assistance (SEMAS), and Municipal Secretariat of Education (SME).
Relationships	Strong regulation of socio-state relations.
	Socio-state relations based on service provision and guardianship.
	Contracts (Collaboration Agreement) with SEMAS and SME through registration with CMDCA, CMAS, and/or CME.
	Mediators of relations – CMDCA, CMAS, FPPF, ICOM.
	Low-density network of relations among all initiatives in the arenas; low cohesion, and isolated action.
	Relations occur mainly in spaces of connection and coordination (councils and forums) but do not go much beyond that.
Positions	Asymmetry.
	Protagonism of civil society organizations in the provision of services in some arenas (institutional shelter care and enhancing family and community bonding services).
	Central role of the state in the management of public policies and in the transfer of financial resources.
	The state considers civil society organizations to be service provision “entities.”
	Positions in the arenas are defined mainly by financial resources. On one side, those who hold the resources – the manager, and those who provide the service – the “entities.”
	Position according to the roles that the actors play, particularly in the CMDCA: those who exercise control, advocate for rights, and enforce those rights.
	Distancing of the state from the network that protects children’s and adolescents’ rights by eliminating public facilities in some arenas (institutional shelter care and enhancing family and community bonding services).
	Central actor in the network with several connections and reach: ICOM.
Resources	Public financial resources fund most civil society organizations in the arenas (funds FMDCA and FMAS).
	Partnership contracts (collaboration agreement) with SEMAS and SME.
	Other resource sources are essential for the sustainability of civil society organizations, including donations and various fundraising projects and actions.
Devices	Various legal provisions (see Tables 9, 10, 11 and 12).
	Municipal councils (CMDCA, CMAS, CME) and forums: provisions resulting from the historical construction undertaken by the actors and are also sources of provisions (material and linguistic resources).
Controversies	“Public resources are not sufficient.”
	“Adjustments guaranteed by law are not granted unless there is mobilization.”

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	“Regulation of the Assistance Fund and the Fund for the Rights of Children and Adolescents that prevents the payment of ongoing expenses.”
	“Little dialogue with the local government of Florianópolis and municipal secretariats.”
	“Little dialogue among civil society organizations.”
	“Work overload.”
	“Employees’ mental health is compromised.”
	“Lack of professionals to meet bureaucratic demands.”
	“Difficulty in hiring and retaining employees.”
	“Difficulty in meeting bureaucratic demands of partnerships with municipal secretariats.”
	“Lack of skills to handle the local administration’s systems.”
	“There is no efficient networking in the city.”
	“Spaces for political participation have become spaces for exposing technical and operational issues.”
	“We have exceeded the target set by the local government of Florianópolis, and there is still a waiting list.”
	“Fundamental rights are not being met.”
	“Lack of joint work between municipal secretariats.”
	“The government is unable to cope with population growth and the increasing and severe problems with crime and drugs.”
	“Civil society organizations are situated in low-income communities and lack the resources and conditions necessary to cover their own institutional expenses as SEMAS and the local government believe they should.”
	“The state maintains a position of distancing itself from the network that protects children’s and adolescents’ rights.”
	“Civil society organizations sign partnership contracts to offer services to enhance family and community bonding with SEMAS and for supplementary education with SME to meet demands and cover their expenses, but in practice, they offer practically the same service.”
	“Families have difficulty participating in moments of strengthening bonds involving children and adolescents.”
	- “The situation of vulnerability precedes the weakening of bonds.”
	“Legal provisions are more committed to combating violence and inequality than to the perspective of equal right of access to school.”
	“Bias towards welfare instead of rights protection policies.”
Main effects/results	There is not a single problem but a plurality of public problems in the arenas of children’s and adolescents’ rights in the city of Florianópolis.
	The concern is centered on maintaining public policy services, and not actually on the rights of children and adolescents, and much less on children and adolescents.
	There is a clear bias toward welfare policies rather than public rights policies.
	The discussions focus mainly on public financial resources, which are not sufficient to maintain services and the sustainability of civil society organizations.
	Strong regulation of socio-state relations based on legal provisions at the national and local levels.

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	The need for civil society organizations to become more professional to meet their partners' technical demands.
	- The focus of civil society organizations has shifted to meeting the bureaucratic demands of partnerships with the local government and not on protecting children's and adolescents' rights.
	The state maintains its central role in managing public policies regarding the protection of children's and adolescents' rights in the city, and civil society organizations have increasingly become service providers.
	The lack of cohesion and effective networking makes any change in the city's current situation difficult.
	The asymmetry of positions in the arenas (between the state and civil society) weakens the care provided to children and adolescents in the city.
	The absence of a municipal public budget dedicated to promoting the rights of children and adolescents; resources are allocated through the Fund for the Rights of Children and Adolescents, which should focus on temporary, complementary, or innovative programs and services, but in practice, they are used to support the activities of civil society organizations.
	Civil society organizations have a dual role in the arenas of children's and adolescents' rights, which makes their work quite complex: they implement public policy and must also act in its control.
	A growing process of institutionalization in the arenas of children's and adolescents' rights, reflected in the concentration and specialization of civil society participation.
	Concentration of the same institutions in the main spaces for articulation of the arenas of children's and adolescents' rights in the city, in addition to a certain homogeneity.
	Based on these characteristics, the scope of public governance regimes in the arenas of children's and adolescents' rights in Florianópolis is quite limited in their capacity to promote the universality of public policy.
	The greater concern pertains to the administration rather than the promotion of rights.

Fonte: Witt (2023, pp. 270-272).

There is significant concern about the sustainability of services, as the financial resources received are insufficient to fulfill partnership obligations. Many institutions feel overwhelmed by the need to meet a growing demand that exceeds the scope of these partnerships. The funds allocated are not adjusted in proportion to rising expenses, whether for personnel or materials. Additionally, institutions face challenges in preparing financial compensations in the manner required by the respective agencies (instrumentalization).

On the other hand, social control is exercised through participatory spaces that tend to be rigid, imposing numerous constraints on engagement while failing to encourage meaningful participation from all initiatives. This reflects an increasing institutionalization of public arenas aimed at protecting

children's and adolescents' rights, a process also evident in the trajectory of public policy (Gonsalves & Andion, 2019; Andion, Gonsalves & Magalhães, 2023). As a result, civil society participation and representation have become concentrated and specialized, primarily dominated by the city's most established civil society organizations and their networks. Consequently, only a few key actors occupy spaces for articulation and discussion, and their efforts focus more on the "administration of rights" (Bácares Jara, 2018) rather than its advancement. In other words, the emphasis is placed on the formal aspects of policy, leading to greater consistency in responses and actions but fewer social innovations aimed at promoting rights or preventing their violation (Magalhães, 2020).

When analyzing common elements in the configuration of the studied arenas, it becomes evident that, despite the diversity of public spaces and actors involved, there is a degree of homogeneity and mimicry. This has led to the emergence of a managerial governance regime shaped by institutional norms dictated by contractual and service provision relationships, ultimately constraining the promotion of social innovations.

4.2. Public arenas for urban agriculture

Through OBISF, 28 social innovation initiatives were identified in the arena of urban agriculture in Florianópolis, of which 19 (68%) are civil society initiatives, alongside companies with a social and/or environmental mission (7%), university programs (7%), government programs (7%), individual entrepreneurs (4%), corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs (4%), and platforms or applications (4%).

Among the civil society initiatives – the focus of this study – most are informal collectives (47%), followed by private non-profit associations (32%), programs run by civil society organizations (11%), and networks (11%). The predominance of non-institutionalized initiatives (58%) reflects, among other factors, the relatively recent emergence of this public issue and the mobilization of social actors to address it.

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The data show a clear distinction in the political ecology of the urban agriculture public sphere compared to what was observed in the areas of children's and adolescents' rights, indicating different initiative profiles and civil society ecologies within Florianópolis.

As highlighted by Manoel (2022) and corroborated by the mapping of public arenas of urban agriculture in the city, there is not a single public problem but rather a plurality of issues that mobilize civil society initiatives. Notable arenas include those addressing organic solid waste, the human right to adequate food, and production-consumption cycles. Other relevant but more dispersed concerns include the use of medicinal plants, cultural food heritage, migrant populations, environmental education, and the experiences of traditional and marginalized communities.

In contrast to arenas of children's and adolescents' rights, the urban agriculture public sphere is broader and more heterogeneous, with a greater emphasis on public debate and visibility of diverse social concerns. Environmentalists, researchers, family farmers, immigrants, vulnerable communities, and even homeless individuals actively engage in these discussions.

A strong presence of organizations dedicated to social change and collective mobilization is evident, particularly informal collectives and networks of associative and voluntary origin. These initiatives often receive support from university-linked projects, shaping how they operate within the arenas. Given the lack of strong regulation in socio-state relations, these initiatives focus on rethinking public problems and developing solutions through adaptive, experimental processes (Kunreuther, 2011; Frega, 2019; Andion, 2020; Magalhães, Andion & Alperstedt, 2020).

Socio-state relations in these arenas are structured differently, not mediated by contracts, service provision, or formal participatory spaces. This is evident in the key mediators of these relations, who are predominantly civil society actors actively engaged in the arenas, such as SEMEAR Network, Composting Network, and the Center for Studies and Promotion of Group

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Agriculture (CEPAGRO). The state's participation, when it occurs, is largely driven by the militant engagement of certain public servants who do not necessarily represent the municipal executive. Additionally, the Agroecological Mandate of former Councilor Marquito (local legislative) – now a state deputy for the Socialism and Liberty Party – PSOL) – plays a key mediating role, although its influence is contested by the municipal executive, which aligns with right-wing political agendas (the parties in charge of the executive are the Democrats (DEM) and the Social Democratic Party (PSD), both of which maintain a center-right political position in Brazil). Renewed public policy councils, such as the Municipal Council for Food and Nutrition Security (COMSEAS) and the State Council for Food and Nutrition Security of Santa Catarina (CONSEA/SC), have also been crucial spaces for discussion and action.

Tensions with the municipal executive have emerged, particularly regarding the appropriation of civil society initiatives and projects in organic solid waste management and food security. Despite its initial lack of support, the executive branch has sought to claim ownership of successful initiatives, as seen with the projects “Bucket Revolution” and “Popular Restaurant.” Conversely, it has attempted to mitigate hunger and food insecurity in peripheral communities through welfare-oriented measures rather than structural policies.

Ultimately, socio-state relations in Florianópolis' arenas of urban agriculture remain weak or nearly nonexistent due to the municipal administration's detachment from these issues. This reflects both the absence of public policies in these arenas and ongoing disputes over the “ownership” of public problems (Cefaï, 2017) and the associated social programs and innovations (Figure 7).

Figura 7: Weaving of Public Governance Regimes in Arenas of Urban Agriculture

Actors	Civil society: Strong presence and action of civil society organizations focused on social change and collective mobilizations (informal collectives and networks), originating in civil society, with support from initiatives originating or linked to universities.
	State: Agroecological Mandate of Councilor Marquito, COMCAP, FLORAM, committed public servants.

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Relationships	Conflicting socio-state relations, distant or practically nonexistent in the arenas due to the distance from municipal public management, reflecting the absence of public policies in the arenas or due to the relations of dispute with civil society initiatives for “ownership” of the public problem and programs developed.
	Spaces for mediation/agreement: SEMEAR Network, Composting Network, Agroecological Mandate of Councilor Marquito, COMSEAS, CONSEA/SC, CEPAGRO.
	Network of low-density relations among all initiatives in the arenas.
Positions	- Dispute for positions in the arenas for “ownership” of the public problems and programs developed.
	- Civil society plays a leading role in the arenas, both in terms of pressuring the state and in developing important projects, and in producing and mobilizing tools (material, such as legal, manual, and symbolic tools).
	- The state seeks to take over and centralize the management of public policies in the arenas, but civil society initiatives resist.
	A central player in the network with several connections and reach: “Rede SEMAR Floripa” (SEMAR Network of Florianópolis).
Resources	- Public financial resources support some arenas, particularly funds from the city-owned sanitation company COMCAP and the local environmental agency FLORAM.
	- Challenges in mobilizing public financial resources stem from the municipal government’s ineffective actions in these areas, along with a predominantly welfare-oriented bias in the municipal executive or a tendency to favor the business community.
	Many civil society initiatives lack regular funding and depend on actions developed within the communities they serve to secure necessary resources and inputs.
Devices	- Existing legal mechanisms, some achieved and others mobilized in various arenas, particularly through collaborative efforts with the Agroecological Mandate of Councilor Marquito, who has also faced challenges in implementing the approved programs due to a conflict with the municipal executive (see Tables 15, 16, 17, and 18).
	COMSEAS and CONSEA/SC have renewed themselves in recent years, but they still cannot achieve fine initiatives from the arenas.
Controversies	“Lack of transparency from the local government of Florianópolis.”
	“Attempt to appropriate public problems and ‘erase’ the initiatives of civil society responsible for the idea/projects/programs.”
	“Discourse from the local government of Florianópolis that favors the business community.”
	“Persecution of Councilor Marquito and the non-implementation of his projects, even if approved, due to a dispute over political power.”
	“Issue of public health and sanitation.”
	“Social vulnerability in peripheral communities.”
	“Hunger and food insecurity.”
“Promoting the autonomy of peripheral and vulnerable communities in the city and valuing the solidarity economy.”	

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	“Generating changes in perspective and attitudes in relation to the environment through environmental education practices.”
	“Lack of public policies for food and nutritional security (SAN) in the city.”
	“Resistance of the local government of Florianópolis to dialogue.”
	“Lack of effective actions by the local government of Florianópolis regarding the issue of hunger.”
	“Extinction of rural macrozoning in the city’s Master Plan.”
	“Difficulties in access and/or absence of policies to promote family farming.”
	“There are no policies to support the popular and solidarity economy in the city.”
	“It is necessary to make rural areas viable and revalue the rurality present in Florianópolis.”
	- “It is necessary to build a new economy, with shorter and more responsible production cycles, combining ecology and social justice.”
Mais effects/ results	There is not a single problem but a plurality of public problems in the arenas of children’s and adolescents’ rights in the city of Florianópolis.
	The socio-state relations of disputes and distancing have made it difficult to implement important public policies in the city.
	The political/electoral rivalry between the Agroecological Mandate of Concilor Marquito, an important coordinator and public initiative in the arena, and the municipal executive has caused delays and obstacles in implementing important public policies in the city.
	The state (municipal executive) seeks to make civil society initiatives in the arenas invisible and unfeasible due to political/electoral and economic interests, favoring business groups in the region.
	The state tries to “mitigate” the public problems of hunger and food insecurity through welfare actions that are not effective, but fulfill their “marketing” role.
	The fact that there is no strong regulation of socio-state relations in the arenas is one of the reasons that has allowed initiatives to focus on rethinking public problems and the ways in which they operate to solve them, carrying out their actions in a process that seeks to reinvent the established system.

Fonte: Witt (2023, pp. 309-311)

4.3. *Comparing the two cases analyzed: What can we learn about the role of civil society in municipal public governance?*

The collective action of civil society can be understood as a process – albeit provisional – of connecting a plurality of audiences and forms of engagement (Cefaï, 2009) that participates in and influences public governance regimes. However, despite its plurality and diversity, civil society’s role cannot be conceived as a mere “patchwork” of entirely autonomous institutions (Pereira, 2020). The state and civil society are not separate entities or enclaves. As Gurza Lavallo and Szwako (2015) argue, understanding their relationship

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requires considering the co-determination of state and civil society, focusing on the dynamics and logics that shape these socio-state relations in a reciprocal and evolving manner over time. According to the authors, “[t]he challenge is, in our understanding, to extensively document the various forms of interdependence that occur in different socio-state interfaces [...]; to identify past patterns of interdependence between social actors and the state, to diagnose emerging patterns and to focus on the consequences of these transformations” (Gurza Lavalle & Szwako, 2015, p. 172).

The analysis reveals that public governance regimes manifest in relational configurations – situated both spatially and temporally – within a web of **actors, relationships, positions, resources, and devices** that evolve through the experiences gained through facing **situations of proof and controversies**.

In the public arenas dedicated to protecting children’s and adolescents’ rights, socio-state relations were continuously defined and redefined. These interactions were often marked by asymmetry, clientelism, and conflict. However, at times, civil society’s mobilization advanced, creating spaces for socio-state dialogue and interaction, such as the Public Policy Forum of Florianópolis (FPPF). The intensity of these engagements fluctuated over time. These shifting configurations also influenced relations among civil society initiatives, oscillating between moments of intense mobilization and connection and periods of fragmentation, political disengagement, and the weakening of participatory spaces.

As public governance regimes change in the public arenas of children’s and adolescents’ rights in the city, their effects also shift. The mobilization of civil society has contributed to reshaping perceptions and practices toward children and adolescents, from invisible to rights-bearing subjects. Such mobilization also allowed the materialization of important institutional innovations in the arenas (CMDCA, Childhood and Adolescence Fund – FIA, Municipal Fund for the Rights of Children and Adolescents – FMDCA, System of Protection of Children’s and Adolescents’ Rights – SGDCA, etc.). In addition,

the logic of “administration of rights,” combined with the increasing asymmetries in positions and the precariousness of public policy, restrict the capacity to promote effective responses to demands and even to reach the main audiences of the policy, which are children, adolescents, and their families. Increasingly, actions and programs are focused on addressing violations that have already occurred rather than advancing preventive measures such as the protection of rights, advocacy, and social control, as well as the promotion of public policies for the universalization of rights and transversal policies that integrate education, health, culture, leisure, family and community life and the right to play (Kerstenetzky, 2006).

Public governance regimes in the arenas of urban agriculture have also changed over time, following a trajectory distinct from that observed in the arenas of children’s and adolescents’ rights. Despite their differences, both policy areas were analyzed within the same city and over roughly the same period, allowing for comparative insights.

Socio-state relations within urban agriculture evolved from initial conflicts driven by municipal executive actions that marginalized rural areas to more collaborative and experimental interactions, marked by initiatives such as the SEMEAR Network and the engagement of committed street-level bureaucrats. However, this collaborative phase was recently disrupted.

Civil society initiatives in urban agriculture experienced significant changes. Initially marked by collaboration, connection, and mobilization – especially centered around the “right to the city” – these relationships weakened after a breakdown in socio-state interactions. Key players, such as family farmers, began to distance themselves, while internal disputes arose regarding the consequences of this breakdown. This fragmentation prompted civil society to engage in self-reflection about its role in urban agriculture governance and policymaking.

The trajectories of the arenas of protection of children’s and adolescents’ rights and urban agriculture in Florianópolis reinforce the procedural, non-linear nature of public governance regimes. Public problems and the actions taken to

address them emerge from long-term trajectories that do not necessarily follow a linear, continuous, or progressive course. Instead, they exhibit their own internal dynamics, shaped by the crystallization of situations of proof (Chateauraynaud, 2011) and ongoing social construction (Mendonça, 2019; Magalhães, 2020; Manoel, 2022). From a pragmatist perspective, the very definition of a problem influences how it is addressed and, consequently, its effects.

Florianópolis serves as a laboratory for analyzing these governance processes, making the city a privileged site for observing public action. The combination of observation, dialogue, and the strengthening of local practices and experiments enables the reconstruction of collective actions, their mobilization potential, and their long-term consequences. Territorial dynamics reveal the identities and capacities of actors for coordinated action (Latouche, 2009), which vary depending on the specific public problem being addressed. Moreover, the city itself is a dynamic and contested space of power.

A key feature of public governance in Florianópolis is the municipal executive's tendency toward centralization. This pattern is particularly evident in the arenas of children's and adolescents' rights and has recently emerged in the arenas of urban agriculture. Such centralization limits participation, collective learning, collaboration, and experimentation – elements that should be central to the governance process (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Ansell & Torfing, 2016).

In light of these findings, it is clear that governance is more than mere coordination – it is action. Understanding governance requires continuous monitoring across different arenas and policy domains, with attention to both processes and outcomes. In the cases examined here, decentralized, collaborative, and experimental governance patterns have often been perceived as threats to power, status, and visibility by public managers resistant to political participation. Many of these actors prefer to retain control over “public problems,” rather than embrace more inclusive governance models.

Additionally, governance processes are often characterized by conflicting normative expectations among actors, complicating implementation.

The complexity of socio-state relations and public governance regimes in the arenas studied indicates that civil society's participation in public policies does not arise automatically from official mechanisms, nor does it result from an inherent partnership based on mutual trust or the absence of conflict – contrary to some perspectives in the collaborative governance literature (Ansell & Gash, 2007). Likewise, participation is not simply a product of the government creating “windows of opportunity” for civil society's involvement in policymaking.

Social innovation, in turn, depends on the ability of civil society organizations and engaged publics to institutionalize their practices and disseminate them as drivers of social transformation. These efforts may be either facilitated or hindered by socio-state relations and the prevailing governance regimes. This reinforces the fundamental link between democracy and social innovation (Frega, 2019).

5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The central problem that motivated this study is the need to understand the configuration of civil society and the effects of its actions on public governance in promoting social innovation.

The methodological approach adopted is anchored in a pragmatist stance, particularly in pragmatic or praxeological sociology (Cefaï, 2009) and the cartography of public arenas (Cefaï, 2007; Magalhães, Andion & Alperstedt, 2020). This perspective allows for a more nuanced understanding of civil society, socio-state relations, and public governance, moving beyond the dichotomous and dualistic view that separates the state and civil society. Instead, it adopts an approach grounded in the idea of mutual constitution (Gurza Lavalle & Swako, 2015). At the same time, this study reexamines these relationships, which are not given a priori, and (re)interprets the role of civil society as an intrinsic and constitutive agent of the democratic state and a

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driver of public action (Ansell, 2011; Sabel & Zeitlin, 2012; Frega, 2019; Andion, 2023).

The in-depth analysis of actors, their roles, and their network of relationships revealed that multiple public arenas exist to advocate for the rights of children and adolescents and urban agriculture. This finding aligns with the arguments of Andion and Magalhães (2021) and Zittoun, Fischer, and Zahariadis (2021), who contend that public policy systems are not confined to clearly delineated structures but are instead permeated by multiple arenas. Each of these arenas possesses its own political ecology and distinctive fabric in terms of public governance regimes.

This study also identified multiple patterns of socio-state relations and public governance regimes in these fields, shaped not only by the nature of the actions themselves – one more traditional and the other more emergent – but also by their distinct relational configurations. These configurations, defined by actors, relationships, positions, resources, and devices, are not static or uniform; rather, they are diverse and composed of different, interwoven fabrics.

In the public arenas related to advocating for the rights of children and adolescents, the prevailing tendency was one of reproduction, regularity, and maintenance in response to public problems. However, this was not an absolute pattern, as some initiatives sought to advance more innovative practices. In contrast, the public arenas of urban agriculture have fostered various experiences of social innovation within the territory, resulting in new practices and approaches to addressing public problems in the city (Bittencourt & Ronconi, 2016; Manoel, 2022; Manoel & Andion, 2023; Ronconi, Bittencourt & Lopes, 2021).

By shifting the focus to *ballistics* and the longitudinal dimension of public policymaking, this study reveals that as socio-state relations and public governance regimes evolved over time, the actions of civil society in these arenas – and the effects they produced – also changed, influencing one another.

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These findings reflect the comprehension that public governance has an evident procedural dimension, that must be acknowledged both in the literature and in practice. They also highlight that the promotion of social innovation emerges at the interface of two main forces: creativity and experimentation on one side, and regularity and institutionality on the other. Social innovation cannot be sustained without this balance. This interplay manifests differently in the two fields of public problems analyzed, and it is essential to consider this dynamic both in the analysis and management of public policies.

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Note: The authors are solely responsible for the translation in the Brazilian Journal of Public and International Policies (RPPI) in a foreign language.