

Urban agriculture for changing cities:
Governance models for better institutional capacities and social inclusion

Participatory Urban Agriculture for Inclusive Cities

Transnational conference report

Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency
March, 2019

<http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/agriGo4cities>

A projekt a Duna Transznacionális Programból, az Európai Regionális Fejlesztési Alap támogatásával, az Európai Unió és a Magyar Állam társfinanszírozásával valósul meg.

Project co-funded by European Union funds (ERDF, IPA, ENI).



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Lead partner organisation:	Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Anton Melik Geographical Institute
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Introduction

The transnational conference of the AgriGo4Cities project was organized in Budapest on the 19th of March in the MOM Cultural Centre. The event aimed to promote participatory urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA) in order to tackle socio-economic exclusion of vulnerable groups and stimulate sustainable urban environment

Since the beginning of the project the partnership collected and synthesized relevant knowledge about UPA, developed a concept of participatory UPA and implemented pilot actions in six locations in the Danube Region to test the jointly developed methods.

The transnational conference, coordinated by the Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency, brought together scholars, practitioners, NGOs, activists, policymakers and public institutions' representatives with the aim of discussing the following topics:

- How UPA contributes to the development of vibrant community building spaces, platforms for competitive economic models and clean and sustainable urban environment?
- How to integrate participatory approach into public decision-making?
- How to motivate and empower vulnerable/marginalized groups to become socially and economically more engaged by participating in decision-making processes?

More than 150 participants attended the conference, representing 68 organizations from 9 countries. The conference encompassed five thematic blocks with 13 presentations and with one panel discussion with 5 participants.

Programme

8.30 - 9.00 REGISTRATION

9.10 - 9.30 INTRODUCTION

Ákos Szépvölgyi, Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency
Mimi Urbanc, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
Claudia Singer, EUSDR PA10
Rudolf Schicker, Danube Strategy Point

9.30 – 10.30 THEMATIC INSIGHTS: KEY SPEAKER LECTURES

Benoit Esmanne, DG for Agriculture and Rural Development
Stefano Palmieri, President of Economic and Monetary Union and Economic and Social Cohesion, European Economic and Social Committee
György Alföldi, Budapest University of Technology and Economics

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10.30 – 11.00 BREAK

11.00 – 12.00 AGRIGO4CITIES TREASURES

Project basics: Jani Kozina, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
Methodology of participatory UPA: Kaja Cunk, Association for culture and education, PiNA
Application of participatory UPA: Nela Halilovic, Municipality of Velenje
Policy recommendations: Szalók Máté, Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency

12.00 – 13.00 GOOD SEEDS: BEST PRACTICES FROM DANUBE

Dona Pickard, Bulgarian Academy of sciences
Rudolf Schicker, DSP
Ella von der Haide, University of Kassel

13.00 – 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 15.30 SPECIAL FOCUS: UPA IN HUNGARY

Tracey Wheatley, Transition trainer and Hungarian HUB member, Transition Wekerle founding member
Imre Hégli, Head of the Environmental Department of XIth District Council Újbuda
Mónika Kertész, Head of Contemporary Architecture Center's Community Gardening Project

15.30 – 16.30 FERTILE GROUNDS: UPA FOR THE FUTURE

Moderated by: Kaja Cunk Association for culture and education (PiNA)
Benoit Esmanne, DG for Agriculture and Rural Development
Jani Kozina, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
Monika Kertész Head of Contemporary Architecture Center's Community Gardening Project representative
Claudia Singer, EUSDR PA 10
Stefan Dudau, Vaslui Municipality

Represented institutions (for detailed list of participants please refer to the attendance sheet, Annex 1)

- EU institutions
 - European Economic and Social Committee
 - DG Agriculture and Rural Development
 - Danube Strategy Point
 - Danube Region Strategy, PA 10 Institutional Capacities & Cooperation

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- Decision-makers, public administration
 - Budapest Újbuda local Government (HU)
 - Budapest Hegyvidék local government (HU)
 - Ministry for Innovation and Technology (HU)
 - Prague 9 Municipality (CZ)
- Other public institutions
 - Geodetic Institute of Slovenia (SI)
 - Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BG)
 - University of lifelong learning Velenje (SI)
 - Academy of Sciences Czech Republic (CZ)
 - Foundation for Research and Development (RS)
- Marginalised, vulnerable groups
 - Diversity Foundation (HU)
 - Jövőkerék Foundation (HU)
- NGOs
 - Contemporary Architecture Centre (HU)
 - Transition Wekerle (HU)
 - Foundation for Research and Rural Development (HU)
 - Védegyelet (HU)
 - CESCO (HU)
 - MUT – Hungarian Society for Urban Planning (HU)
 - Iskolakertekért Foundation (HU)
 - Budapest Urban Ideals (HU)
 - Green City Hungary (HU)
 - Kerekliget Táj és Kertépítész Műhely (HU)
 - Association of Hungarian Settlements and Regions Developers (HU)
 - Kertek és Kertbarátok Országos Szövetsége (HU)
 - Trajna (SI)
 - Association of Friends of Youth Velenje (SI)
 - Kokoza, o.p.s. (CZ)
 - Székesfehérvári Kertbarátok Egyesülete (HU)
- Educational institutions
 - Szent István University (HU)
 - Budapest University of Technology and Economics (HU)
 - Pannonia University
 - Budapest Corvinus University (HU)
 - MOME Doctoral School (HU)
 - University of Debrecen, Institutes for Agriculture Research and Educational Farm (HU)
 - University of Szeged, Department of Social and Economic Geography (HU)

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- Varga Máton Kertészeti Szakgimnázium (high school) (HU)
- University of Kassel (DE)
- Centre for Spatial Sociology, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences (SI)
- Elementary School “Marshal Tito”, Ulcinj (MNE)
- Communal Activities, public company, Ulcinj (MNE)
- Private sector
 - Pannon Pro Innovációs Kft. (Hu)
 - EMI Nonprofit Kft. (Hu)
 - Prezi.com (Hu)
 - Kiss és Kiss Kft. (Hu)
 - Gerisoft Kft. (Hu)
 - Sárvíz Nonprofit Kft. (Hu)
 - Főkert Nonprofit Kft. (Hu)
 - Lépték Terv Tájépítész Iroda (Hu)
 - Archipark MMX Kft (Hu)
 - AllmyTea Herbs (Hu)
- Other
 - PBJ local newspaper (Hu)
 - Fúzió Radio (Hu)
 - Fővárosi Állat és Növénykert (Budapest zoo) (Hu)
- Project partners: all partners were present
 - ZRC SAZU (SI)
 - Prague 9 (CZ)
 - European Development Agency (CZ)
 - Municipality of Velenje (SI)
 - Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency (HU)
 - Vaslui Municipality (RO)
 - ENVICORP Slovakia (SVK)
 - PiNA (SI)
 - ASWM (BG)
 - Ifuplan (DE)
 - Municipality of Ulcinj (MNE)
- ASPs
 - EUNI Partners Association (BG)

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Summary of the event

Introduction

The event started with introductory speeches. Altogether four speakers welcomed the participant on the conference: Ákos Szépvölgyi (managing director, Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency), Mimi Urbanc (deputy director, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts), Claudia Singer (coordinator of EUSDR PA10) and Rudolf Schicker (coordinator, Danube Strategy Point). The speakers pointed out the importance of transnational cooperation and interdisciplinarity in addressing needs and challenges that have similar character in the countries of the Danube Region. According to them different actors must act together in order to increase institutional capacities in public administration and in this process, cities have key role as the main drivers of change.



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Thematic Insights: Key Speaker Lecturers

After the introduction the conference continued with the key lectures. The first keynote speaker, Benoit Esmanne (DG for Agriculture and Rural Development) talked about the cohesion policy and key challenges in the EU. He also emphasized that it would be important to overcome the challenges related to the cross-sectoral approach of UPA in order to apply UPA effectively.



The key message of the second speaker, Stefano Palmieri (European Economic and Social Committee) was the importance of the partnership principle in development processes. He said that the partnership must go beyond simple consultation.

Alföldi György (Budapest University of Technology and Economics) showed good examples from Budapest in which they worked together with marginalised groups on urban regeneration processes. He also emphasized the role of green areas, including urban agriculture in sustainable development of cities.

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AgriGo4Cities Treasures

The next section was about the AgriGo4Cities project: project partners provided insights to the participants of the conference. Jani Kozina (project manager, ZRC SAZU) talked about the project idea and the intervention logic, in this scope he introduced the concept of the project which was the basis of the following presentations. At the end of his lecture the AgriGo4Cities project video was shown to the participants.

In the next lecture Kaja Cunk (leader of WP 3 – Common methodology; PiNA) talked about developing the AgriGo4Cities methodology of participatory UPA. In the next lecture Nela Halilović (leader of Act 4.2 - Development of action plans of participatory UPA, Municipality of Velenje) presented how the common methodology was tested during the development and implementation of action plans in six location. The last speaker of this section, Máté Szalók (leader of WP5 – Transnational transferring, CTRIA) summarized the lessons learnt and introduce the developed governance plan.



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Seeds: Best Practices from Danube

In the last section before the lunch break practices from the Danube Region were presented. Dona Pickard (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) focused on social inclusion in relation with UPA. She mentioned the most important challenges related to it and emphasized the importance of the community.



Rudolf Schicker (coordinator, Danube Strategy Point and former vice-mayor of Vienna) presented the traditional and new forms of gardening in Vienna. He provided many different examples on the cooperation between the local government and the community in the field of greening the city.

Ella von der Haide (University of Kassel) talked about the top-down and bottom-up approaches of UPA. She introduced key factors and activities in activation and empowerment of marginalised groups as well as challenges they have faced with.

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Special Focus: UPA in Hungary

This section was organized by the Contemporary Architecture Centre, an NGO in Hungary, which among many other topics focuses on urban agriculture. The lecturers introduced urban agriculture and community engagement in Hungary from various aspects. Tracey Wheatly (Transition Wekerle founding member) talked about community development and local food culture in the Wekerle area, Budapest. Imre Hégli (Head of the Environmental Department, Újbuda local government, Budapest) talked about good practices in relation to the establishment of community gardens in the Újbuda district, Budapest. Monika Kertész (Head of the Community Gardens project, Contemporary Architecture Centre) presented the actions of the Centre in the field of urban agriculture and the four main principles of the organization: urban regeneration, policy and debate, architectural culture and community and sustainability and innovation.



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Fertile Grounds: UPA for the Future

The last item on the agenda was a panel discussion about the possibilities related participatory UPA in urban development. The discussion was moderated by Kaja Cunk (expert associate PiNA) and joined six experts and relevant actors from the field: Benoit Esmanne (DG for Agriculture and Rural Development, Jani Kozina (Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts), Stefan Dudau (Municipality of Vaslui), Monika Kertész (Head of Contemporary Architecture Center's Community Gardening Project) and Claudia Singer (EUSDR PA 10). The participants of the discussion agreed that there is a clear need for improvement of institutional capacities for sustainable ways of developing the cities in the Danube Region. This is not an easy process, to be successful in it, different approaches, needs and methodologies must be taken into consideration. The participants agreed positive change in political, economic and social systems must be a key part of ne urban agendas and more efforts are needed in the Danube Region to facilitate these positive changes.



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AgriGo4Cities Marketplace

As side activity the organizers designed a small marketplace where the Urban Agriculture Canvases prepared by territorial partners in relation to the established pilot urban agricultural practices were showcased. Urban garden prototypes prepared by the students involved in the Hungarian pilot were also displayed and previous project outputs (Preparing for action planning: An account of the training session, Approaching urban agriculture as a social innovation: Guidelines for the development and implementation of an action plan) were also available for project partners. In addition, the market place had a capitalization session where DTP projects with similar focus from the Thematic Pole 11: Participatory and Local Governance (ATTRACTIVE DANUBE, RARE, NewGenerationSkills) were introduced through posters.



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