

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

Inventory report on the state of the art of participatory urban agriculture in pilot
areas of the Danube region

FINAL VERSION

Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts,
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1 Introduction

The present inventory report is one of the first results of the project AgriGo4Cities that is employing participatory Urban and Peri-urban agriculture (UPA) as a tool to improve public institutional capacities in order to tackle socio-economic exclusion of vulnerable/marginalized groups and to stimulate sustainable urban development in the Danube region.

The project AgriGo4Cities is addressing needs and challenges related to governance systems within the Danube region that can be associated with decreasing public institutional capacities to incorporate participatory approach into decision-making processes. The absence of participatory mechanisms is contributing to reduced motivation of people to engage in governance and administration because they feel relegated from political, social and economic agendas and not competent enough to act as an equivalent counterpart and a considerable driver of “change”. The gap between citizens and public authorities at all levels is therefore increasing and leading to intensified mistrust and lack of public participation, especially among the most disadvantaged communities at risk of exclusion, such as the poor, unemployed, homeless, Roma communities, elderly, women and youth. The growing social and economic inequalities are reflected in reduced quality of urban life. To overcome these challenges, the AgriGo4Cities project aims to develop innovative methodology of participatory urban agriculture and integrate it into decision-making processes. The methodology will improve capacities of public administrators to involve relevant stakeholders and civil society into governance and public participation. Intensified cooperation will boost mutual trust and stimulate strengthened socio-economic inclusion of vulnerable/marginalized groups. The reduction of social and economic inequalities will lead to more sustainable development of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. By applying a transnational multi-level approach, the AgriGo4Cities project ambition is to become a flagship of well governed Danube region.

The aim of the Inventory report on the state of the art of relevant public institutions, vulnerable/marginalized groups and UPA in pilot areas (hereinafter: the inventory report) is to assess state of the art of participatory urban agriculture in pilot areas of the Danube region. More specifically, the inventory report aims to thoroughly study and analyse structures, mechanisms and specificities related to:

- characteristics of urban agriculture
- participatory planning and management of urban agriculture
- social inclusion through urban agriculture
- contribution of urban agriculture to sustainable urban development.

The selected pilot areas of the AgriGo4Cities project are:

- Municipal district Prague 9 (Czech Republic),
- Municipality of Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria),
- Municipality of Székesfehérvár (Hungary),
- Municipality of Vaslui (Romania),

- Municipality of Velenje (Slovenia),
- Municipality of Ulcinj (Montenegro).

The inventory report builds on the results of the Inventory questionnaire on the state of the art of relevant public institutions, vulnerable/marginalized groups and UPA in pilot areas (Deliverable 3.1.1) and serves as a direct input for the following AgriGo4Cities project activities:

- Identification of good practices of participatory urban agriculture (Activity 3.1),
- Measuring an evaluation of effectiveness of participatory urban agriculture (Activity 3.2),
- Developing a training tool for participatory urban agriculture (Activity 3.3),
- Establishing a transnational learning environment (Activity 3.4).

The inventory questionnaire was sent to the AgriGo4Cities territorial project partners and representatives of selected pilot areas in March 2017. Altogether, six inventory questionnaires were fulfilled and delivered in May 2017. Results and conclusions were synthesised in a draft version in June 2017 and, after receiving comments and amendments from the partners, in a final version in July 2017.

The structure of the inventory report is as follows. The second and the third chapters try to unveil certain structural demographic, socio-economic, and spatial indicators for the selected pilot areas by investigating EUROSTAT's statistics (chapter 2) and Copernicus CORINE Land Cover dataset (chapter 3). The heart of the inventory report consists of chapters four and five. State of the art is presented in thematic chapters, first, comparatively between the pilot areas (chapter 4), and second, the main findings for each pilot area are extracted to present the partners' profiles (chapter 5). Afterwards, conclusions are being synthesized (chapter 6).

2 Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of pilot areas

The chapter includes analysis of certain structural demographic and socio-economic indicators for the pilot areas included in the project AgriGo4Cities. Most of the data used in the analysis are part of the EUROSTAT database¹. Project field analyses in pilot areas are conducted at the municipal level, groups of municipalities or city neighbourhoods. Statistical data on those spatial levels are rarely available in multinational statistical databases. The only exception is the change of the number of total population between census years. The analysis was elaborated at the regional level of NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 and in some rare cases at the regional level NUTS 1. Thus, the analysis shows the broader context of demographic and socio-economic development of the regions within which the pilot areas are located. On NUTS level 3 the analysis of demographic variables is presented. NUTS level 2 presents the development trends of socio-economic characteristics of the population, poverty, social exclusion and some characteristics of young people.

For Montenegro only demographic data are available. In some NUTS 2 analysis data for Hungarian pilot area (Municipality of Székesfehérvár, NUTS 2 region is Közép-Dunántúl) were not available and level NUTS 1 was used instead (Dunántúl).

Table 1: Overview of pilot areas (municipalities) by NUTS 3 and NUTS 2 regions.

State	Municipality (LAU 2 LEVEL)	NUTS 3	NUTS 2
Bulgaria	Blagoevgrad	Blagoevgrad	Yugozapaden
Czech Republic	Praha 9	Praha	Praha
Hungary	Székesfehérvár	Fejér	Közép-Dunántúl
Montenegro	Ulcinj	Montenegro	Montenegro
Romania	Vaslui	Vaslui	Nord-Est
Slovenia	Velenje	Savinjska	Vzhodna Slovenija

In all analysis (tables and figures) a comparison with the entire European Union is presented. Individual numerical values given in the text come from EUROSTAT database unless quoted otherwise.

The names of the NUTS 3 and NUTS 2 regions are used in the original language of the country and in the form as used in tabular overview of EUROSTAT.

¹ See <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>.

2.1 Demographical development (NUTS 3)

In all regions included in research there are three common demographical trends which they share with the rest of European Union (Table 1, Figure 2):

- dropping values of total birth rates which are not providing simple reproduction of population,
- population ageing,
- negative or dropping values of natural reproduction of population.

Positive values of the natural population change (NUTS 3 regions) are present only in Czech capital Praha and in the state of Montenegro. In Slovenian Savinjska region values of birth and death rates almost match. All other regions have negative values, especially low are in Bulgarian Blagoevgrad and Hungarian Fejér regions. Negative demographic trends are result of low birth rates but also of emigration of younger generations. Comparison of natural growth rates among states in the last decade is showing very similar picture: in Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary values are negative (-2.5 to -5 per 1000 inhabitants), in Slovenia and Czech Republic slightly over 0 and much higher in Montenegro (2.8)

Table 2: Population change – Demographic balance and crude rates in 2015 at regional level (NUTS 3)².

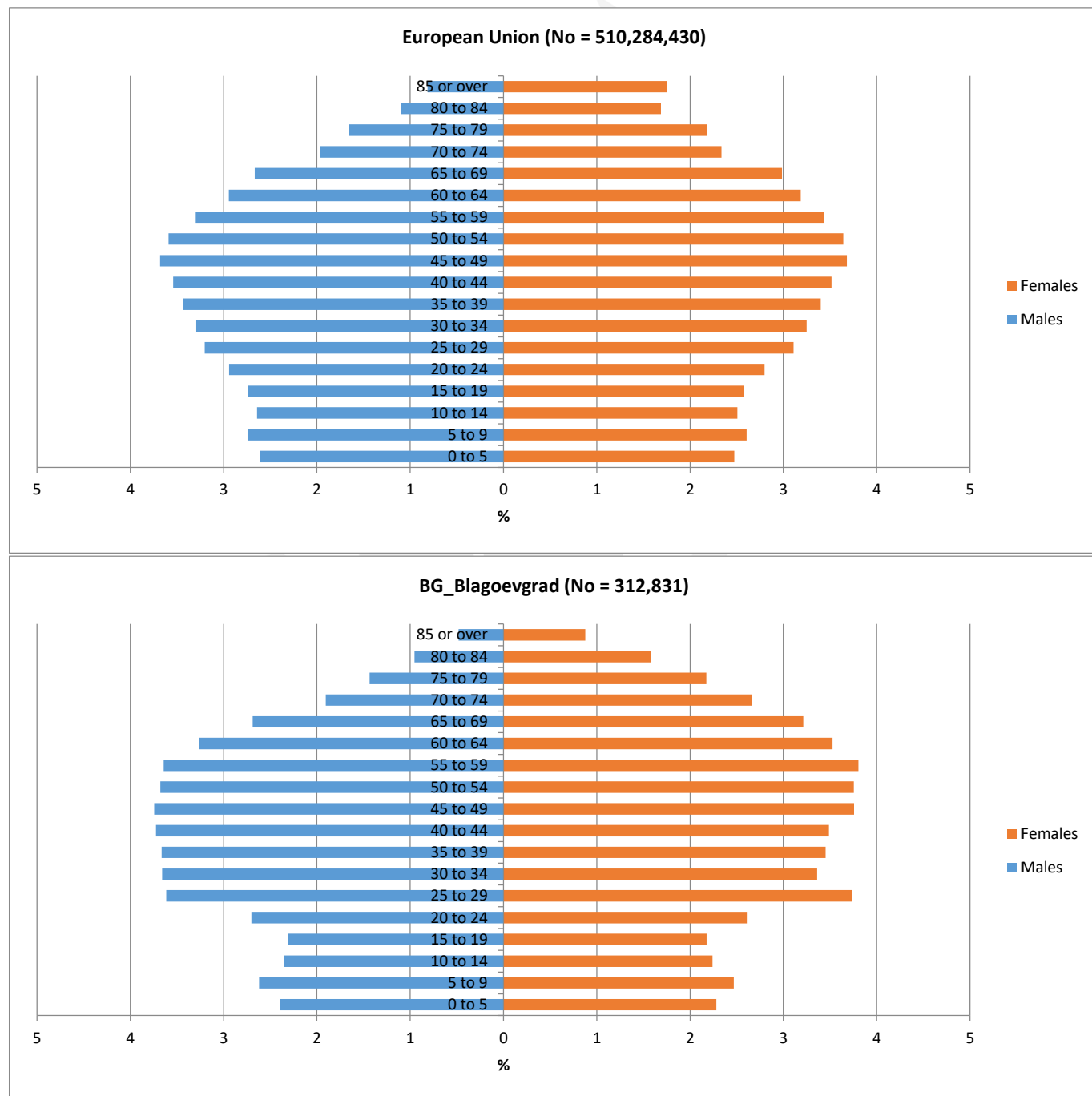
	Crude birth rate	Crude death rate	Crude rate of natural change of population	Crude rate of net migration plus statistical adjustment	Crude rate of total population change
European Union	10.0	10.2	-0.2	3.6	3.4
BG_Blagoevgrad	9.5	13.0	-3.4	-5.3	-8.7
CZ_Praha	11.7	9.8	1.9	4.8	6.6
HU_Fejér	9.1	12.9	-3.9	5.9	2.0
ME_Montenegro	11.9	10.2	1.7	-1.5	0.2
RO_Vaslui	12.4	14.2	-1.8	-3.0	-4.7
SI_Savinjska	10.1	9.9	0.1	1.2	1.3

² Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_r_gind3&lang=en

Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_gind&lang=en

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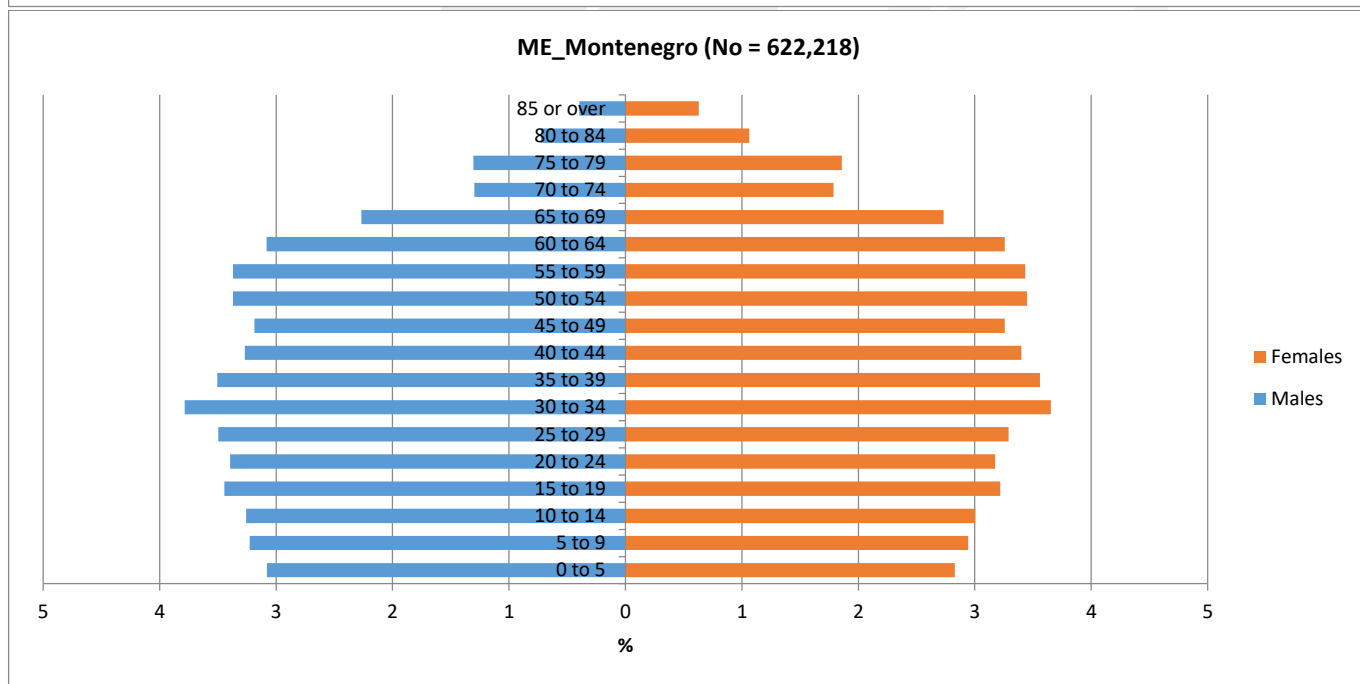
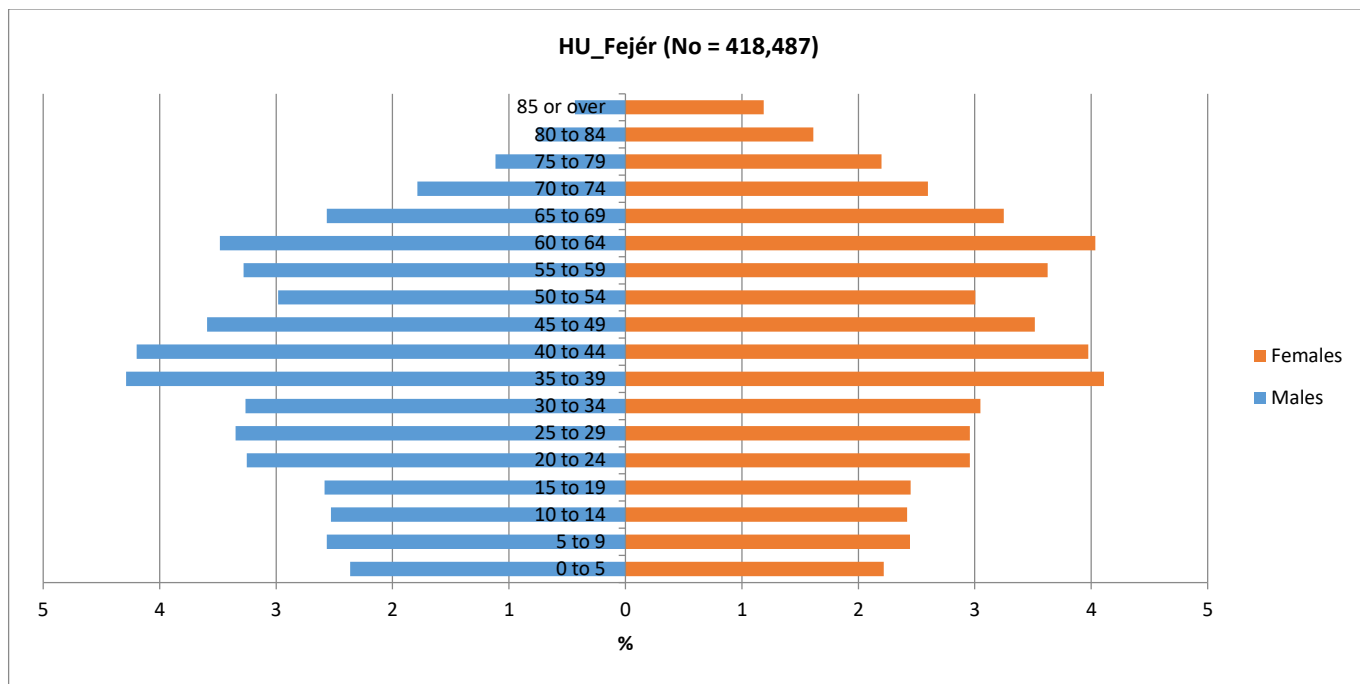
Figure 1: Population pyramids in 2016, NUTS 3 regions.³

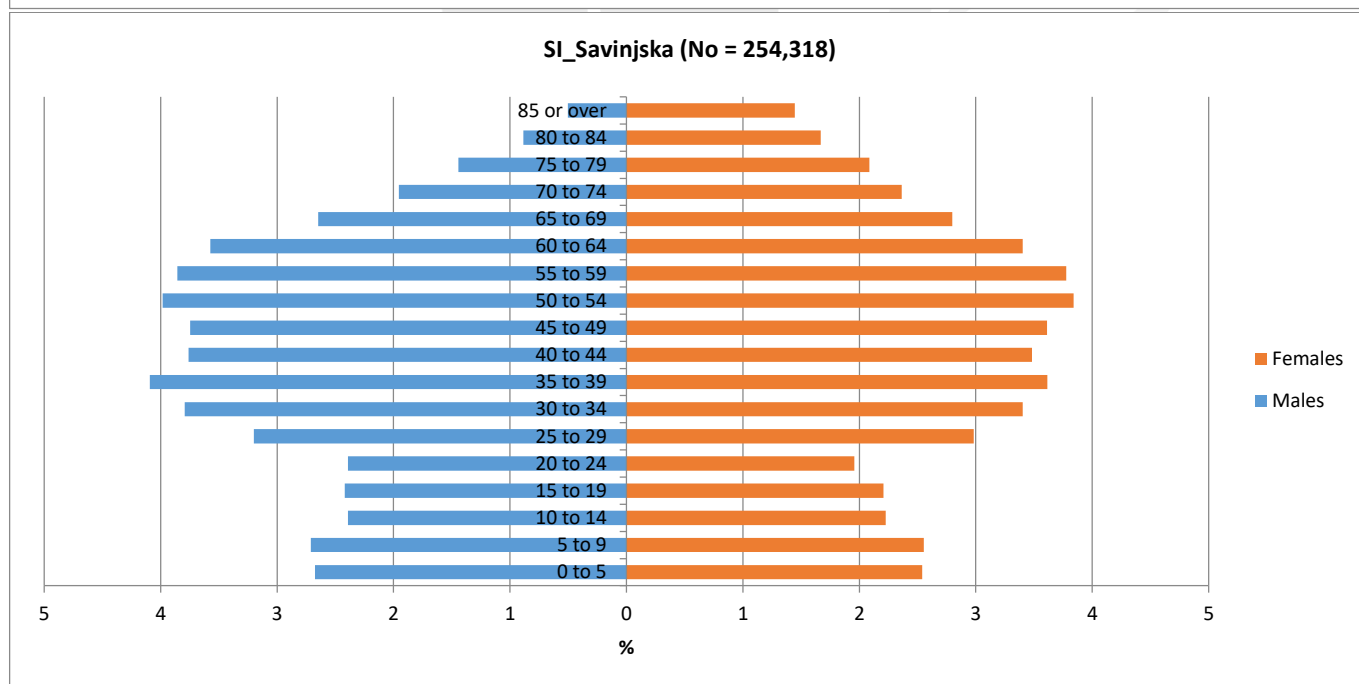
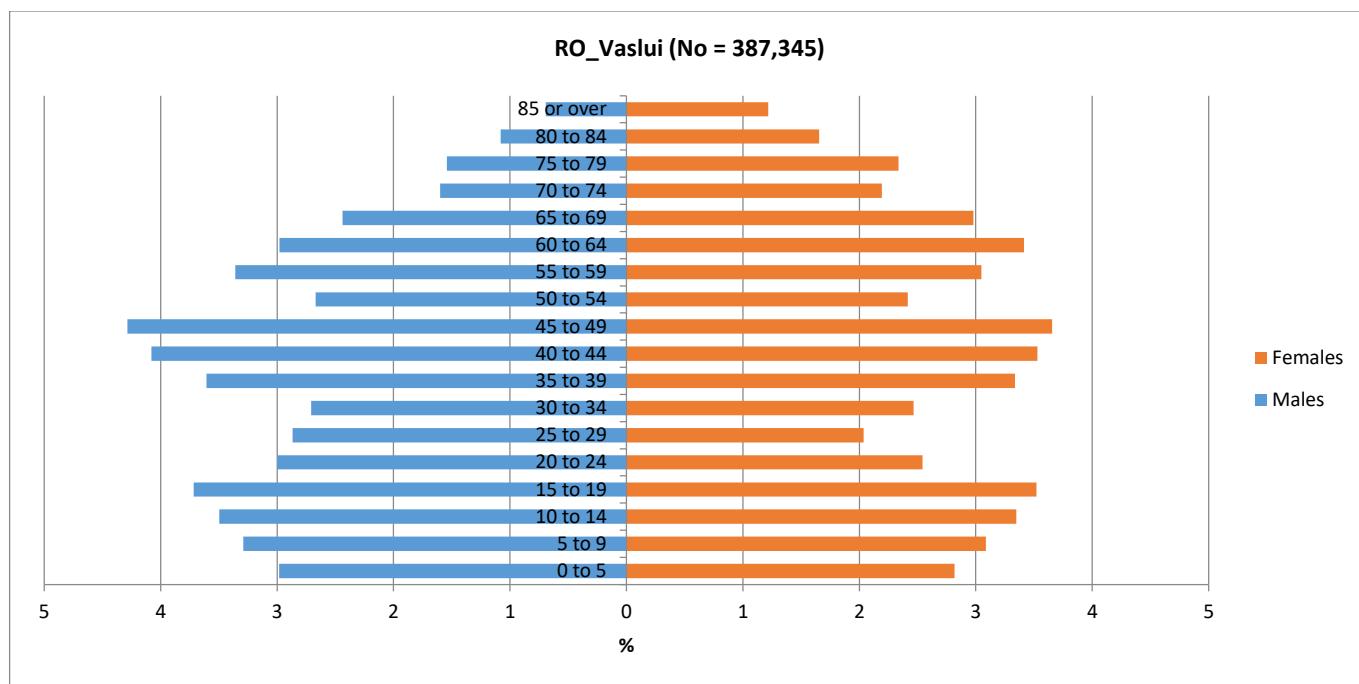


³ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_r_pjangrp3&lang=en

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From population pyramids (Figure 1) it is evident that all regions that became part of European Union in 2004 or later met rapid decline of birth rates 20 to 25 years ago, approximately at the end of socialist era. In almost all Central and Eastern European countries birth rates are lower than in the rest of



European Union. In contrast, from the pyramids can also be seen that birth rates in these areas 30 to 60 years ago were higher than in the western part of the continent.

Figure 2: Components of population growth – crude rates 2010/2015 at regional level (NUTS 3).⁴

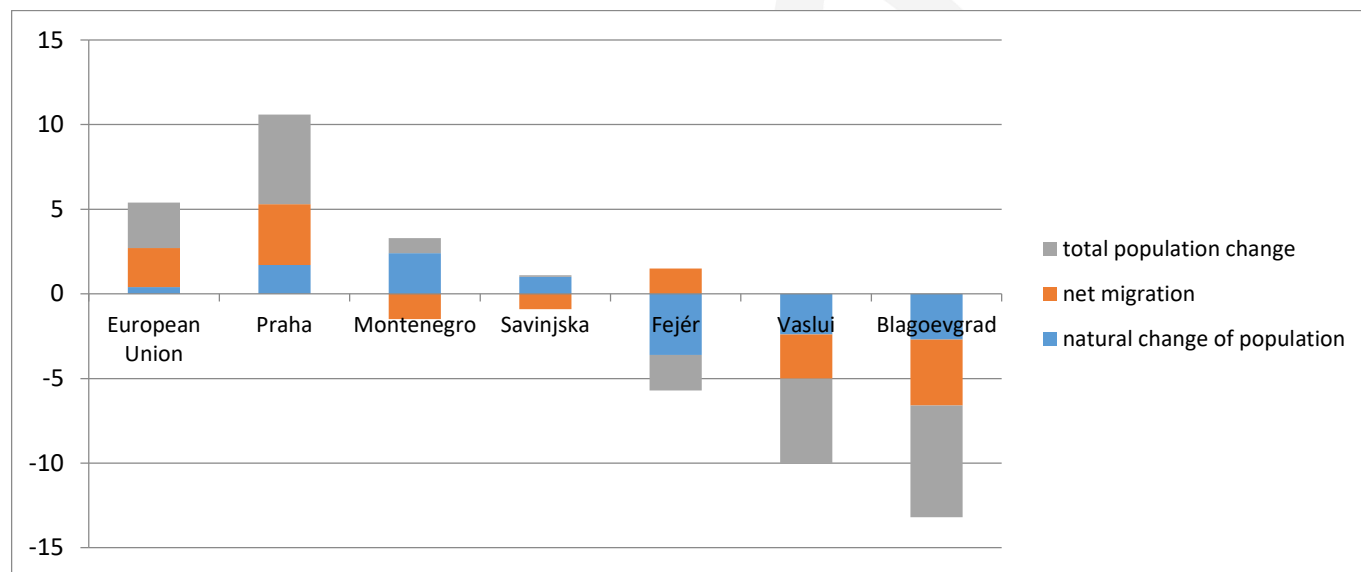
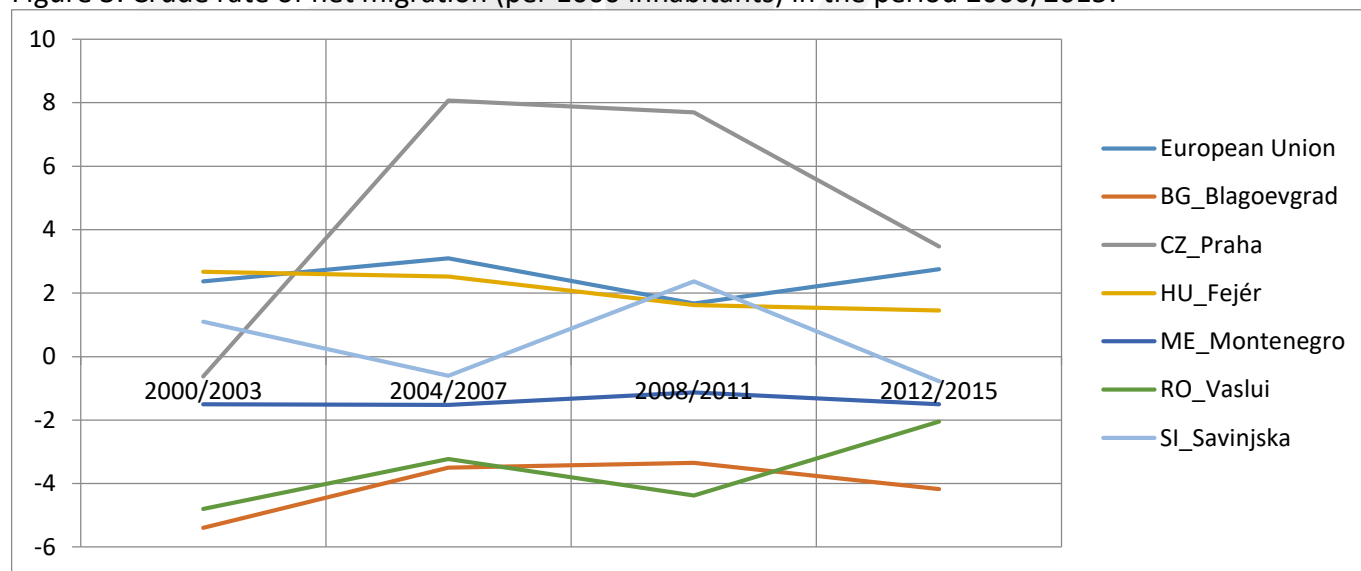


Figure 3: Crude rate of net migration (per 1000 inhabitants) in the period 2000/2015.⁵



⁴ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_r_gind3&lang=en

⁵ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_r_gind3&lang=en

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Crude rate of net migration (per 1000 inhabitants) in last 15 years was negative and very low in Romanian region Vaslui and Bulgarian region Blagoevgrad (Figure 3). In almost entire period immigration to Czech capital Praha was high. Positive values of net migration in Hungarian Fejér and Slovenian Savinjska regions were moderate to slightly above 0. Montenegro (national level) is a region of permanent but relatively low emigration. On the national levels in last 10 to 15 years, Bulgaria, Romania and Montenegro were countries of emigration and Slovenia, Hungary and Czech Republic countries of immigration.

Demographic trends have impact on structural indicators like age structure, potential contingent of labour force and share of dependent population. More complex indicator is age dependency ratio (Table 2). All NUTS 3 regions in our research except Romanian Vaslui have lower total (young + old) dependency ratio than the entire European Union. Young-age dependency ratio is higher than in EU only in regions with higher birth rates – Vaslui and Montenegro. Old-age dependency ratio is in all regions lower than in European Union. The last is a result of relatively high birth rates in Central Europe till 1980. According to the results of EUROSTAT population projections it is possible to predict that old-age dependency rates in some Central European countries would grow in the future, especially in the case of continuing emigrational trends.

Table 2: Age dependency ratio in 2016 by NUTS 3 region.⁶

	Age dependency ratio (population aged 0-14 and 65 and more to pop. aged 15- 64)	Young-age dependency ratio (population aged 0-14 to population 15-64 years)	Old dependency ratio (population 65 and over to population 15 to 64 years)
European Union	53.2%	23.9%	29.3%
BG_Blagoevgrad	47.8%	21.2%	26.5%
CZ_Praha	50.0%	22.3%	27.7%
HU_Fejér	47.2%	21.4%	25.8%
ME_Montenegro	47.9%	27.1%	20.8%
RO_Vaslui	58.1%	30.1%	28.1%
SI_Savinjska	49.0%	22.5%	26.5%

Total population growth on the municipality (LAU 2) level (Table 3) is showing two models of population development. Czech capital Praha has a permanent but slow population growth in almost the entire

⁶ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_r_pjanind3&lang=en

Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_pjanind&lang=en

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period after 1960. The population growth was based mainly on positive net migration. In other municipalities population was growing till 1990 or 2000. Number of population have remained on the same level (Velenje in Slovenia) or have dropped from 2 to 8% in last one or two decades.

Table 3: Population growth by municipalities, Census data from 1961 to 2011.⁷

Census	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	Index 1961/2011
BG_Blagoevgrad	27,889	40,593	59,180	68,437	72,528	70,259	252
CZ_Praha	1,132,931	1,141,142	1,182,696	1,213,650	1,169,821	1,232,514	109
HU_Székesfehérvár	58,879	81,227	104,099	108,495	106,366	100,965	171
RO_Vaslui	18,306	25,402	47,793	74,363	70,977	70,237	384
SI_Velenje	12,796	19,113	28,254	33,428	33,331	32,836	257

⁷ Source: EUROSTAT <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/local-administrative-units>

2.2 Activity status and educational attainment (NUTS 2)

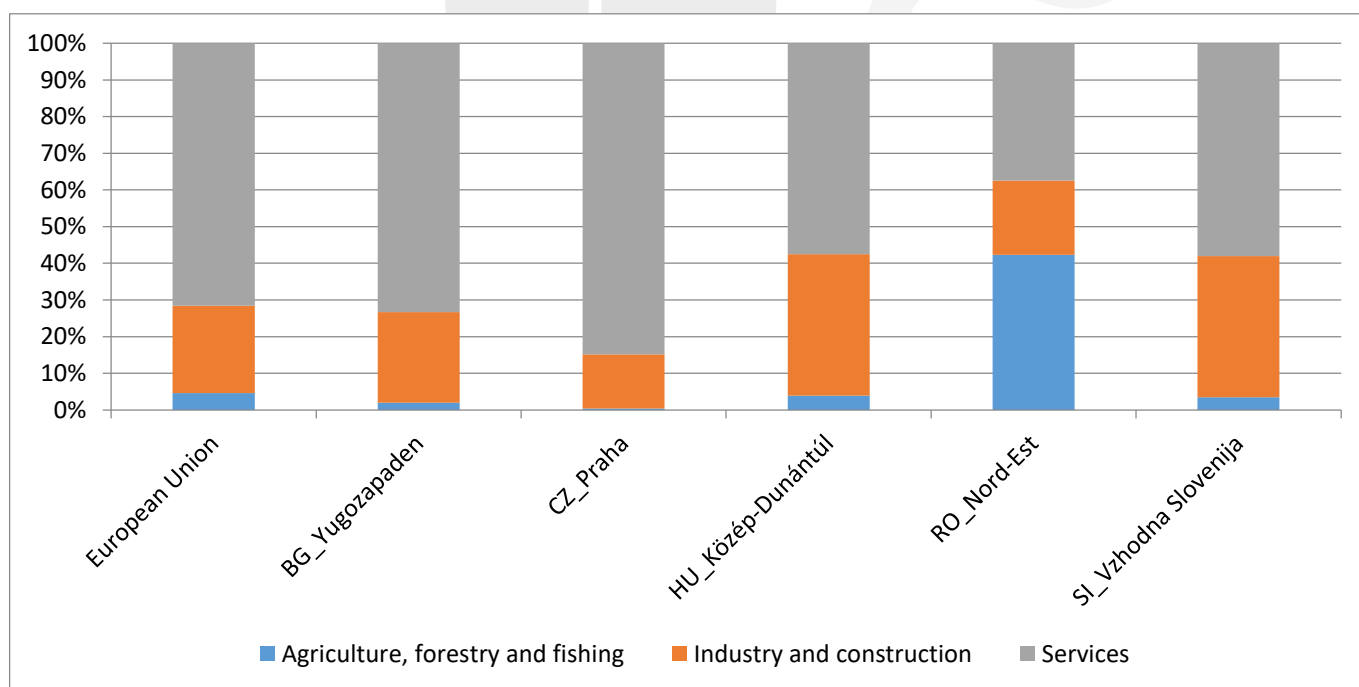
Data about population by current activity status and educational attainment level are presented on the NUTS 2 region level. Regions are rather large with 1 to 3 million of inhabitants. Because all pilot municipality centres are also important administrative, educational and employment settlements in their regions, we believe that data can still be informative and important also for local levels.

Active population by field of economic activity

Majority of active population is employed in service activities. Regions can be roughly divided into three types (Figure 4):

- Bulgarian region Yugozapaden and Czech capital Praha – over 70% of active population is employed in service activities,
- Hungarian region Közép-Dunántúl and Slovenian region Vzhodna Slovenija (Eastern Slovenia) – high importance of industry, over 35% are employed in industry, mining or construction,
- Romanian region Nord-Est – high importance of agriculture with more than 40% employed in agriculture.

Figure 4: Population by current activity status, Population census round 2011, by NUTS 2 region.⁸



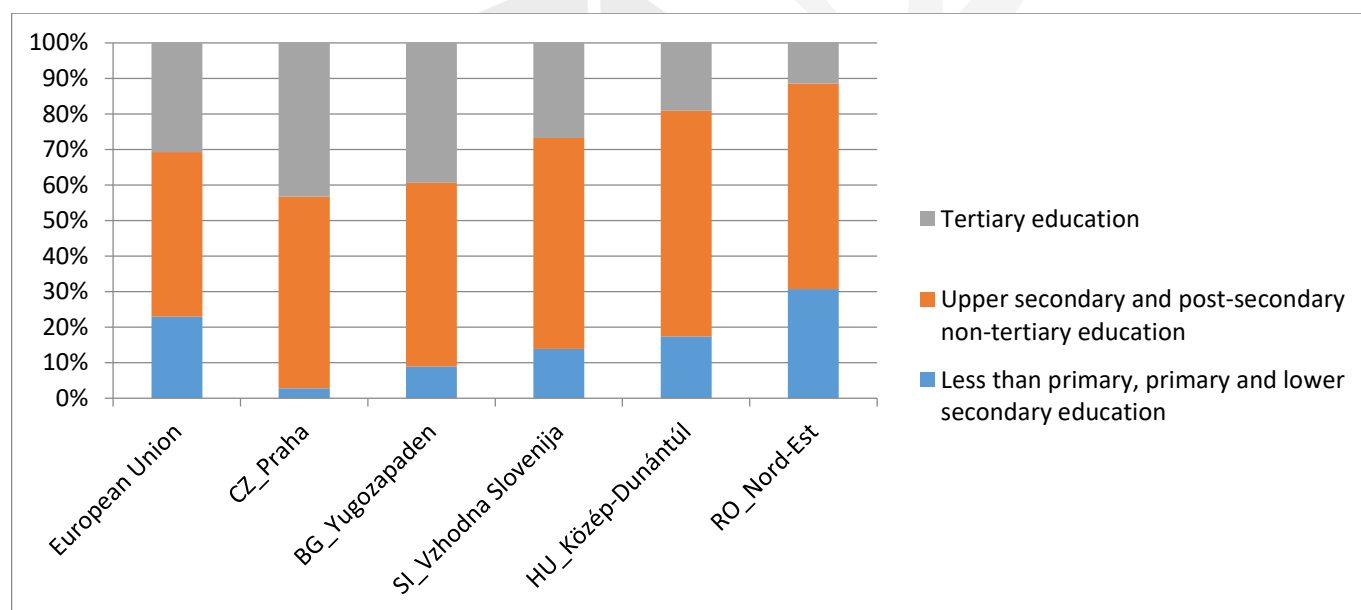
⁸ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=cens_11an_r2&lang=en



Educational attainment of population aged 25 to 64 years (Figure 5). The population of 25 to 64 is including the majority of active and employed population. Regions can be roughly divided into three types:

- Bulgarian region Yugozapaden and Czech capital Praha – over 40% of middle aged population has completed tertiary level of education. Percentage of people with completed education level lower than upper secondary is under 10%.
- Hungarian region Közép-Dunántúl and Slovenian region Vzhodna Slovenija (Eastern Slovenia) – 20 to 30% of middle aged population has completed tertiary level of education. Percentage of people with completed education level lower than upper secondary is 10 to 20.
- Romanian region Nord-Est – less than 20% of middle aged population has completed tertiary level of education. Percentage of people with completed education level lower than upper secondary is more than 30%.

Figure 5: Total population aged 25-64 by educational attainment level in 2016 by NUTS 2 regions (%).⁹



Percentage of people that have completed tertiary level of education is higher than European average in Bulgarian region Yugozapaden and Czech capital Praha and lower in other regions. In European Union differences in educational attainment among female and male populations are small with only slightly larger percentage of females with completed tertiary level (Table 4). In Bulgarian region Yugozapaden overall educational attainment level for female population is much higher than that of males. In Czech capital Praha there are practically no differences in educational attainment among female and male

⁹ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=edat_lfse_04&lang=en



populations. In other three regions female population has higher percentage of completed tertiary level of education and higher percentage of completed education level lower than upper secondary at the same time.

Table 4: Population aged 25-64 by educational attainment level and sex in 2016 by NUTS 2 regions (%).¹⁰

	Males	Males	Males	Females	Females	Females
	Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)	Tertiary education (levels 5-8)	Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)	Tertiary education (levels 5-8)
European Union	23.1	48.0	28.9	23.0	44.5	32.5
BG_Yugozapaden	9.4	58.8	31.8	8.3	44.7	47.0
CZ_Praha	2.6	53.2	44.2	3.0	54.5	42.5
HU_Közép-Dunántúl	14.6	69.3	16.1	20.0	58.0	22.0
RO_Nord-Est	29.6	59.6	10.8	31.9	55.8	12.3
SI_Vzhodna Slovenija	12.4	66.8	20.8	15.4	51.4	33.2

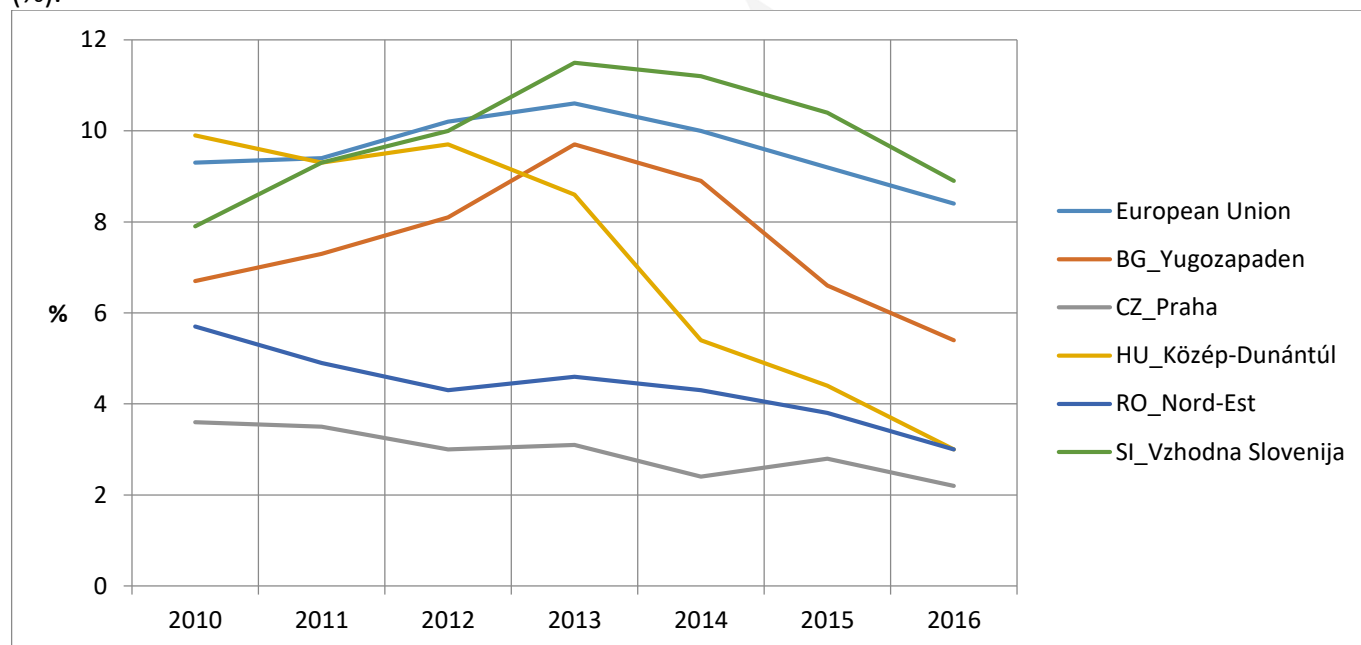
2.3 Unemployment (NUTS 2)

Percentage of unemployed (Figure 6) people in the age category 20 to 64 is in recent years declining in European Union and in all regions included into the project. Except for the Slovenian region Vzhodna Slovenija the percentage of unemployed among active population in other regions is lower than in European Union (8.4%). The lowest is in Praha (2.2%) and the highest in Vzhodna Slovenija (8.9%).

Employment rates of young people (18 to 34 years) not in education and training are in all regions lower (15 to 22%) than in European Union (26%).

¹⁰ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=edat_lfse_04&lang=en

Figure 6: Unemployment rates, population 20 to 64 years old, from 2010 to 2016 by NUTS 2 regions (%).¹¹



2.4 Social exclusion and poverty (NUTS 2)

The figures 7 to 9 show the proportion of the population at risk of poverty or social exclusion. Definitions of terms:¹²

People at risk of poverty or social exclusion

This indicator corresponds to the sum of people who are: at risk of poverty or severely materially deprived or living in households with very low work intensity. At risk-of-poverty are people with an equivalised disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60 % of the national median equivalised disposable income.

Severe material deprivation

Materially deprived people have living conditions severely constrained by a lack of resources, they experience at least 4 out of 9 following deprivations items; cannot afford:

¹¹ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfst_r_lfu3rt&lang=en

¹² Source: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/t2020_50&lang=en

- to pay rent or utility bills,
- keep home adequately warm,
- face unexpected expenses,
- eat meat, fish or a protein equivalent every second day,
- a week holiday away from home,
- a car,
- a washing machine,
- a colour TV, or
- a telephone.

People living in households with very low work intensity

People living in households with very low work intensity are those aged 0-59 living in households where the adults (aged 18-59) work 20% or less of their total work potential during the past year.

In first two indicators (“people at risk of poverty or social exclusion” and “severe material deprivation”, Figures 7 and 8) proportion of the affected population is below the European average in the regions Czech capital Praha and Slovenian region Vzhodna Slovenija. Other regions have higher percentages of affected population. The situation is worst in the Romanian region Nord-Est and in the Bulgarian region Yugozapaden. In the Romanian region Nord-Est 46% of people live at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

The data are in stark contrast with data on low unemployment in Romanian, Bulgarian and Hungarian regions. They are suggesting hypothetical administrative limiting of the unemployment growth and low monthly incomes of otherwise employed population.

Data on indicator “people living in households with very low work intensity” (Figure 9) are closely linked with data on unemployment.

Figure 7: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2015 by NUTS 2 regions (%).¹³

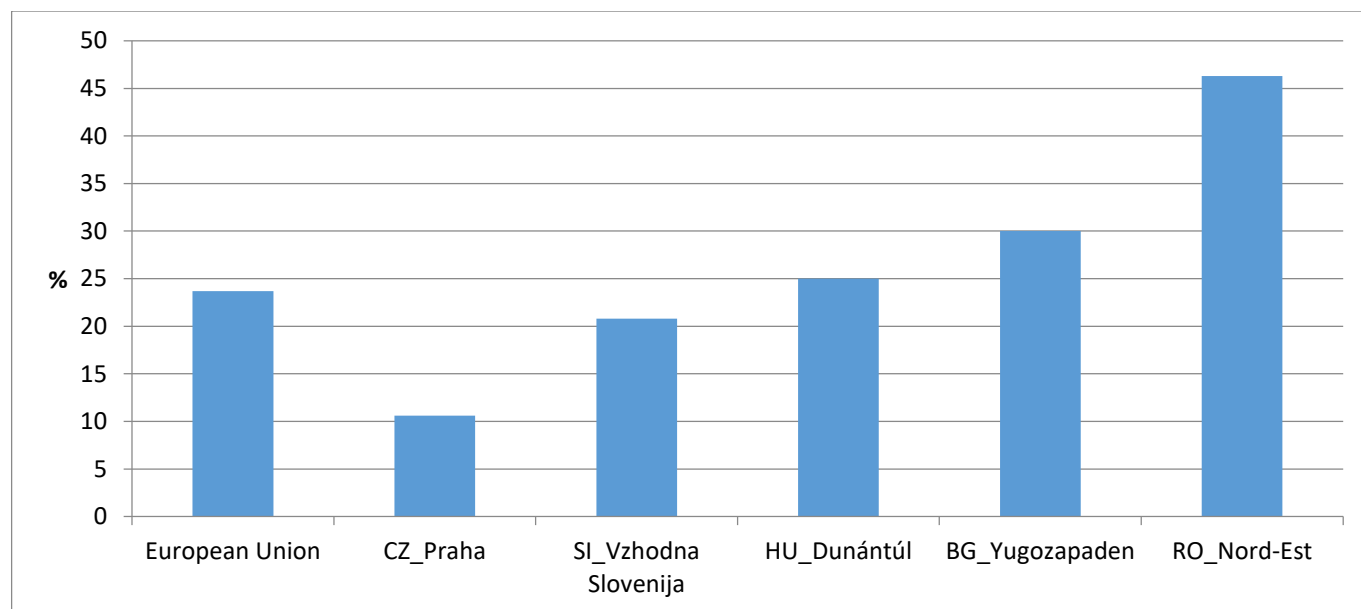
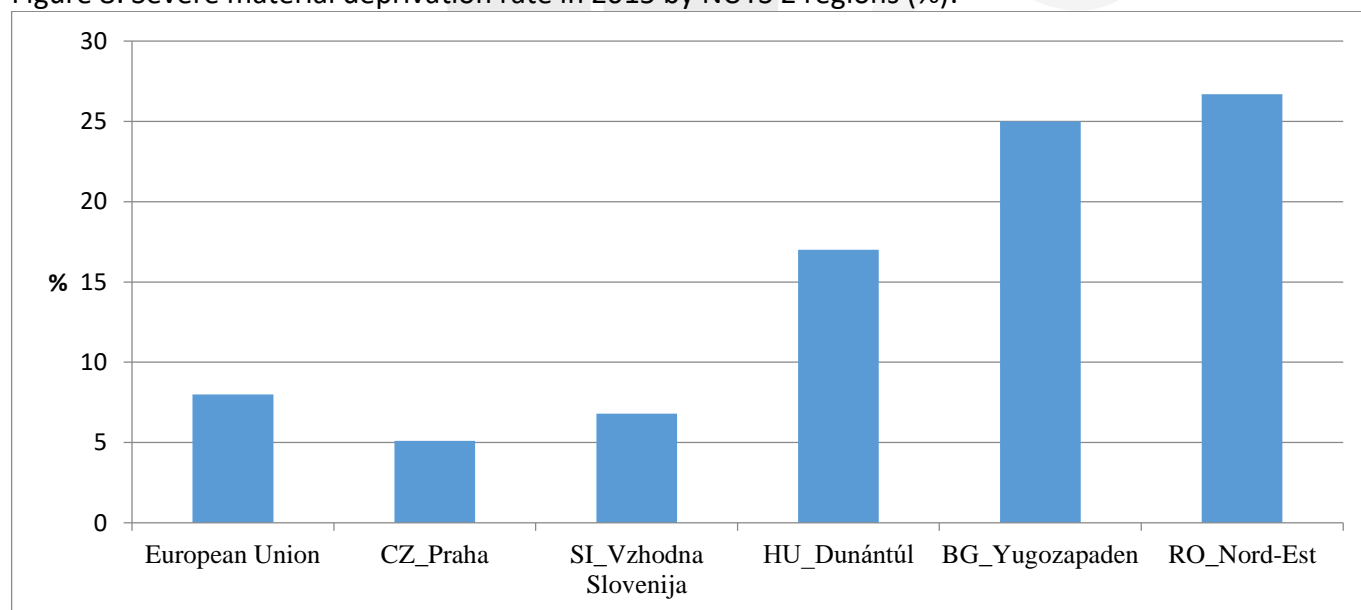


Figure 8: Severe material deprivation rate in 2015 by NUTS 2 regions (%).¹⁴

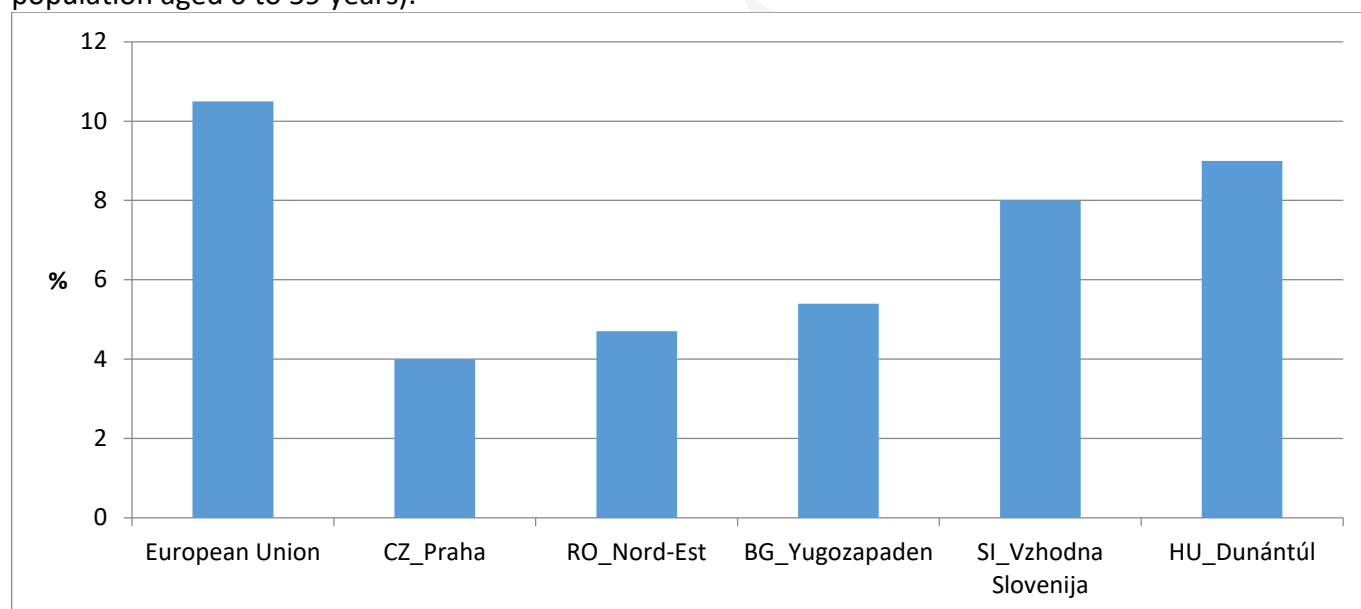


¹³ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_peps11&lang=en

¹⁴ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_mddd21&lang=en



Figure 9: People living in households with very low work intensity in 2015 by NUTS 2 regions (% of population aged 0 to 59 years).¹⁵



The indicator deaths under 65 years (demographically early deaths) displays differences in mortality before age, which is usually associated with retirement. High values are the result of poor living conditions and weaknesses in the organization of the healthcare infrastructure. Values are, except in the regions Czech capital Praha and Slovenian region Vzhodna Slovenija, much higher than European average. The situation is worst in the Romanian region Nord-Est and Hungarian region Közép-Dunántúl, especially in the case of male population.

Table 5: Deaths under 65 years by NUTS 2 regions - standardised death rate per 100 000 inhabitants, 3 years average (2008 to 2010).¹⁶

	Total	Males	Females
European Union	237.4	323.0	154.6
BG_Yugozapaden	395.7	576.1	235.5
CZ_Praha	238.8	319.5	165.5
HU_Közép-Dunántúl	437.9	643.1	250.8
RO_Nord-Est	447.0	640.7	265.5
SI_Vzhodna Slovenija	266.3	377.2	150.8

¹⁵ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_lvhl21&lang=en

¹⁶ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_cd_ysdr1&lang=en

2.5 Young people in education and employment (NUTS 2)

The figures 10 to 12 show conditions among young people regarding their employment and education. Definitions of terms¹⁷:

Young people neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET)

The indicator corresponds to the percentage of the population of a given age group and sex who is not employed (unemployed or inactive) and not involved in further education or training (four weeks preceding the survey).

Early leavers from education and training

Indicator denotes the percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 having attained at most lower secondary education and not being involved in further education or training (four weeks preceding the survey).

Percentages of young people (18 to 24 years) neither in employment or education are in all regions included in the research lower than European average (Figure 10). Values are probably related with above mentioned high employment rates in many Central European countries, including the employment of young population. Same goes for percentage of early leavers from education or training (Figure 11) except for the Romanian region Nord-Est.

On the other hand, participation rates of young people (from 15 to 24 years) in education are lower than European average in all regions except for Bulgarian region Yugozapaden (for Czech capital Praha data are not available).

¹⁷ Source: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/edat1_esms.htm

Figure 10: Young people (18 to 24 years) neither in employment nor in education and training in 2016 by sex and NUTS 2 regions (%).¹⁸

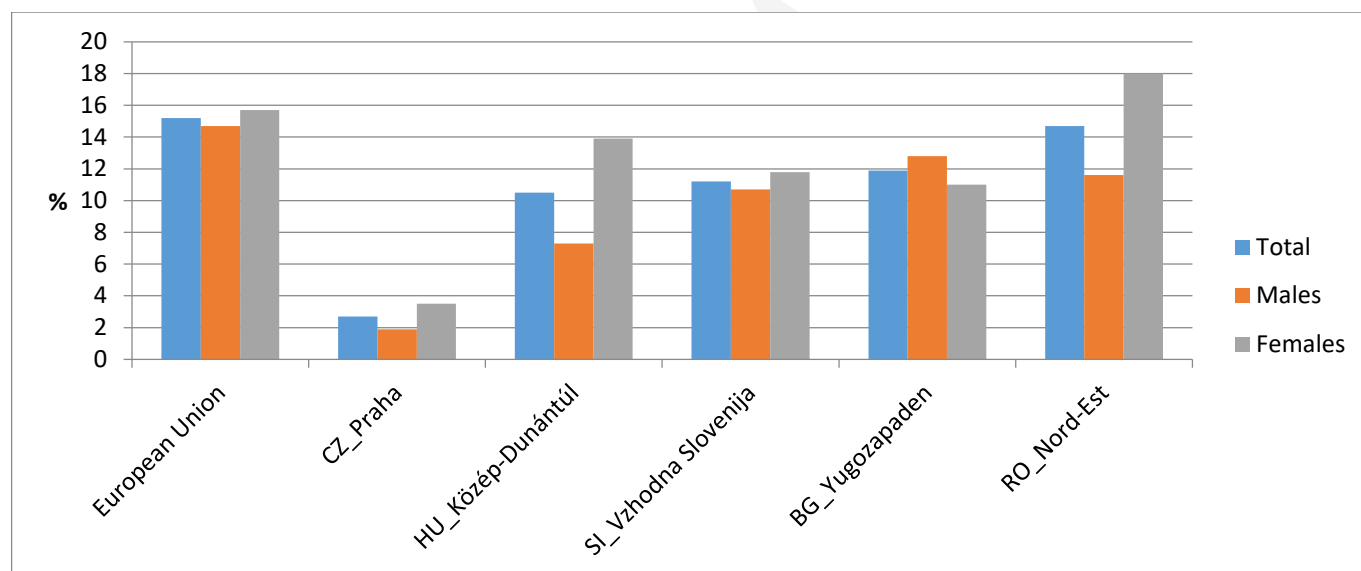
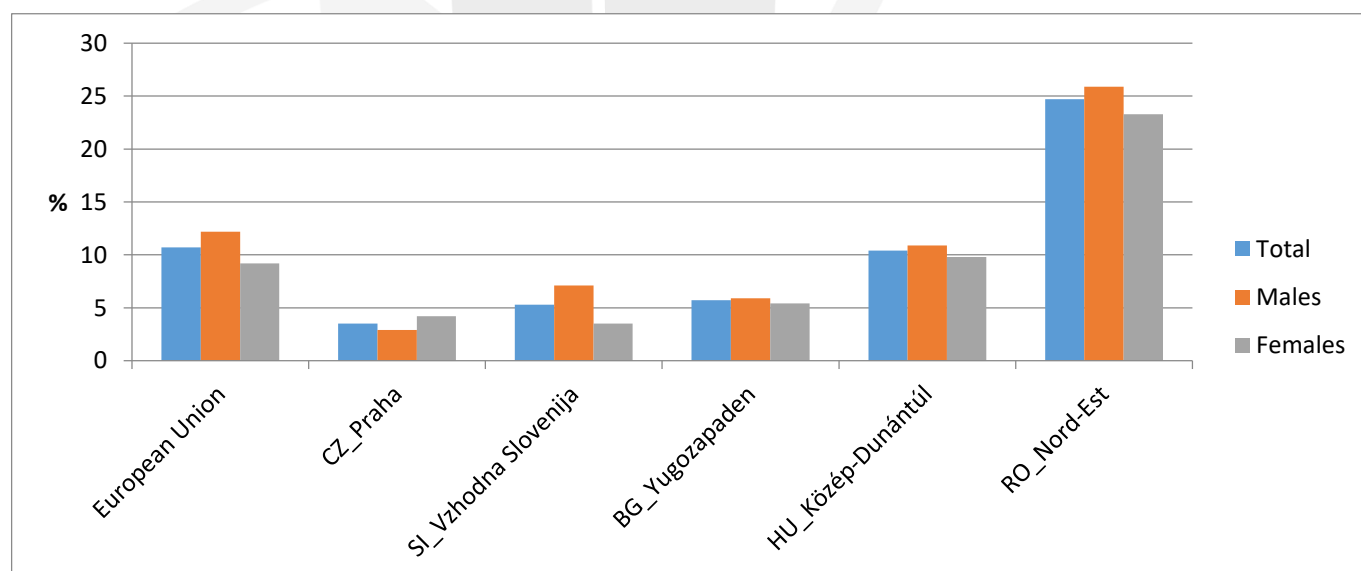


Figure 11: Early leavers (population from 18 to 24 years) from education and training in 2016 by sex and NUTS 2 regions (%).¹⁹

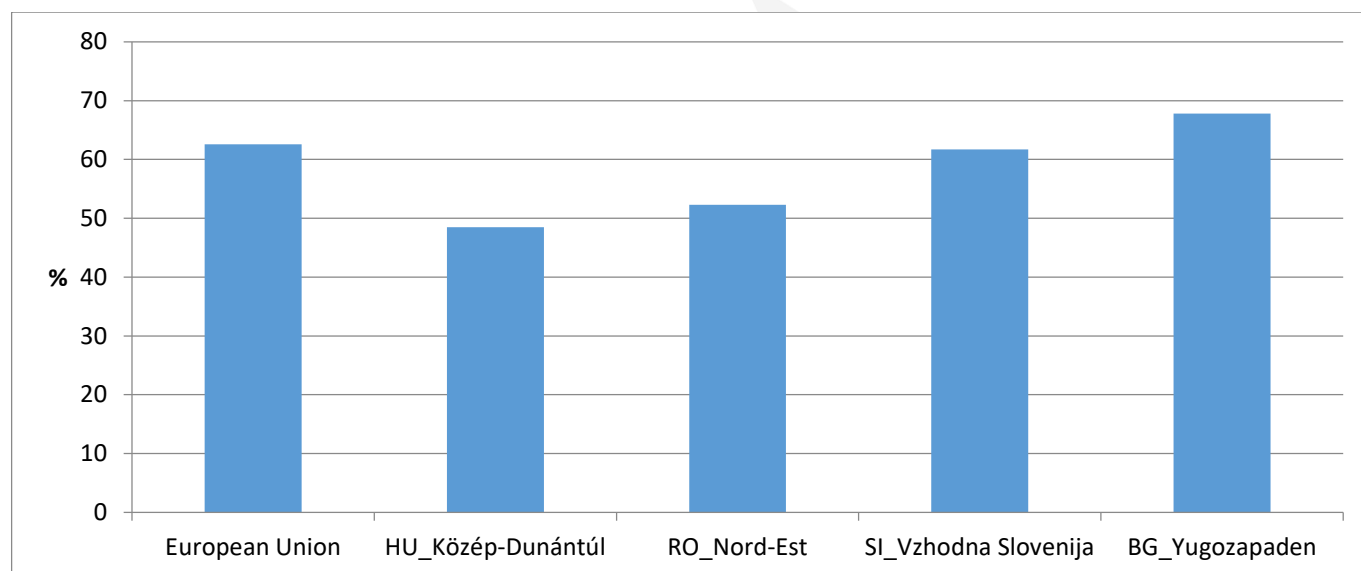


¹⁸ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=edat_lfse_22&lang=en

¹⁹ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=edat_lfse_16&lang=en



Figure 12: Participation rates of young people (from 15 to 24 years) in education in 2014 at regional level NUTS 2 (%).²⁰



²⁰ Source: EUROSTAT http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_uae_enra14&lang=en; Data for Praha not available.

Project co-funded by the European Union.



3 Land cover in pilot areas

In this chapter we focus on the land cover in pilot areas with an aim to gather more detailed insights about the spatial context relevant for urban agriculture. GIS methodology and Copernicus CORINE Land Cover dataset from 2012 were used to analyse the land cover. Additionally, for some municipalities digital boundaries were not accessible, so new graphical files were made by using Google Earth application.

Certain deviations are expected in computational calculations and visual representations due to low resolution of the Copernicus CORINE Land Cover dataset. The thematic accuracy is at least 85 %, the boundary displacement is at minimum up to 100 meters and the geometric accuracy satellite data is greater than 25 meters.

To make the land cover maps more understandable and readable, 7 categories were extracted from more than 35 classes that display the land cover. The classification is explained in table 6.

Table 6: Land cover categories and descriptions (CLC 2012).

GROUP OF LAND COVER	CODE	TYPE OF LAND COVER	DESCRIPTION
CONTINUOUS URBAN FABRIC	111	CONTINUOUS URBAN FABRIC	Assigned when urban structures and transport networks are dominating the surface area. More than 80 % of the land surface is covered by impermeable features like buildings, roads and artificial surfaced areas. Non-linear areas of vegetation and bare soil are exceptional.
DISCONTINUOUS URBAN FABRIC	112	DISCONTINUOUS URBAN FABRIC	Assigned when urban structures and transport networks associated with vegetated areas and bare surfaces are present and occupy significant surfaces in a discontinuous spatial pattern. Buildings, roads and artificially surfaced areas range from 30 to 80 % land coverage.
INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL, TRANSPORT AREAS	121 - 132	INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL, TRANSPORT AREAS	This category includes a variety of different classes that show some similarities with each other. It includes Industrial, commercial and public facilities, bad lands, garages, workshops, farm facilities, road and rail networks, port areas, airports, dump sites, construction sites and other non-agricultural areas.
	121	Agricultural farms	Areas of other than housing buildings, in-door spaces, stables, garages, workshops, lay-by and storing areas, often also bad land with ruderal vegetation, part of farms. The farms are often located in outskirts or close to rural settlements with agricultural function. Concentration of agricultural buildings in areas of various sizes was associated with collectivisation of agriculture. The quoted areas smaller than 25 ha are included in class 112.
	122	Road and rail networks and associated land	Motorways and railways, including associated installations (stations, platforms, embankments, linear greenery narrower than 100 m). Minimum width for inclusion: 100 m.
	123	Port areas	Infrastructure of port areas, including quays, dockyards and marinas.
	124	Airports	Airports installations: runways, buildings and associated land. This class is assigned for any kind of ground facilities that serve airborne transportation.
	131	Mineral extraction sites	Areas of open-pit extraction of construction materials (sandpits, quarries) or other minerals (open-cast mines). Includes flooded mining pits, except river-bed material extraction.

	132	Dump sites	Public, industrial or mine dump sites.
	133	Construction sites	Spaces under construction development, soil or bedrock excavations, earthworks. This class is assigned for areas where landscape is affected by human activities, changed or modified into artificial surfaces, being in a state of anthropogenic transition
GREEN URBAN AREAS	141 - 142	GREEN URBAN AREAS	Areas with vegetation within urban fabric. This class is assigned for urban greenery which is usually accessible for the public. It also includes sport and leisure facilities.
	141	Green urban areas	Areas with vegetation within urban fabric. This class is assigned for urban greenery, which usually has recreational or ornamental character and is usually accessible for the public.
	142	Sport and leisure facilities	This class is assigned for areas used for sport and recreation purposes. Camping grounds, sports grounds, leisure parks, golf courses, racecourses etc., formal parks not surrounded by urban areas.
AGRICULTURAL AREAS	211 - 244	AGRICULTURAL AREAS	Different areas that are connected to agricultural activities. In this class arable land, permanent crops, pastures, and heterogeneous agricultural areas are included.
	211	Fallow land	Areas of arable land not used for 1-3 years. Identification of these areas requires multi-temporal data.
	212	Permanently irrigated arable land	Cultivated land parcels under agricultural use for arable crops that are permanently or periodically irrigated, using a permanent infrastructure (irrigation channels, drainage network and additional irrigation facilities). Most of these crops cannot be cultivated without an artificial water supply. Does not include sporadically irrigated land.
	221	Vineyards	Areas planted with vines.
	222	Fruit tree and berry plantations	Cultivated parcels planted with fruit trees and shrubs, including nuts, intended for fruit production. The planting pattern can be by single or mixed fruit species, both in association with permanently grassy surfaces.
	223	Olive groves	Cultivated areas planted with olive trees, including mixed occurrence of vines on the same parcel.
	231	Pastures, meadows and other permanent grasslands under agricultural use	Dense grass cover, of floral composition dominated by graminacea, not under a rotation system. Used for grazing - pastures, or mechanical harvesting of grass - meadows.
	241	Annual crops associated with permanent crops	Cultivated land parcels with non-permanent crops (arable land) associated with permanent crops on the same parcel.
	242	Complex cultivation patterns	Mosaic of small cultivated land parcels with diverse annual crops, pasture and/or permanent crops, eventually with scattered houses or gardens.
	243	Land principally occupied by agriculture, with significant areas of natural vegetation	Areas principally occupied by agriculture, interspersed with significant natural or semi-natural areas (including wetlands, water bodies, mineral outcrops).
	244	Agro-forestry areas	Annual crops or grazing land under the wooded cover of forestry species.
FOREST AND MARSH AREAS	311 - 333	FOREST AND MARSH AREAS	Areas that are more than 30 % covered with trees higher than 5 meters. In this class different forests, grasslands, moors, transitional woodland-shrubs, beaches, bare rocks, burnt areas glaciers and perpetual snow.
	311	Broad-leaved forest	Vegetation formation composed principally of trees, including shrub and bush understorey, where broad-leaved species predominate.
	312	Coniferous forest	Vegetation formation composed principally of trees, including shrub and bush understorey, where coniferous species predominate.

	313	Mixed forest	Vegetation formation composed principally of trees, including shrub and bush understorey, where neither broad-leaved nor coniferous species predominate.
	321	Natural grassland	Grasslands under no or moderate human influence. Low productivity grasslands. Often situated in areas of rough, uneven ground, frequently include rocky areas, or patches of other (semi-)natural vegetation.
	322	Moors and heathland	Vegetation with low and closed cover, dominated by bushes, shrubs (heather, briars, broom, gorse, laburnum etc. and herbaceous plants, forming a climax stage of development.
	323	Sclerophyllous vegetation	Bushy sclerophyllous vegetation in a climax stage of development, including maquis, matorral and garrigue.
	324	Transitional woodland/shrub	Transitional bushy and herbaceous vegetation with occasional scattered trees. Can represent either woodland degradation or forest regeneration / recolonisation.
	331	Beaches, dunes, and sand plains	Natural unvegetated expanses of sand or pebble/gravel, in coastal or continental locations, like beaches, dunes, gravel pads; including beds of stream channels with torrential regime.
	332	Bare rock	Scree, cliffs, rock outcrops, including areas of active erosion, rocks and reef flats situated above the high-water mark, inland salt planes.
	333	Sparsely vegetated areas	Areas with sparse vegetation, covering 10-50% of surface. Includes steppes, tundra, badlands, karstic areas and scattered high-altitude vegetation.
WATERS	411 - 523	WATERS	includes water courses, water bodies, coastal lagoons, estuaries, sea and the ocean
	411	Inland marshes	Low-lying land usually flooded in winter, and more or less saturated by water all year round.
	412	Peatbogs	Wetlands with accumulation of considerable amount of decomposed moss (mostly Sphagnum) and vegetation matter. Both natural and exploited peat bogs.
	421	Coastal salt marshes	Vegetated low-lying areas in the coastal zone, above the high-tide line, susceptible to flooding by seawater. Often in the process of being filled in by coastal mud and sand sediments, gradually being colonized by halophilic plants.
	422	Salines	Salt-pans for extraction of salt from salt water by evaporation, active or in process of abandonment. Sections of salt marsh exploited for the production of salt, clearly distinguishable from the rest of the marsh by their parcellation and embankment systems.
	423	Intertidal flats	Coastal zone under tidal influence between open sea and land, which is flooded by sea water regularly twice a day in a ca. 12 hours cycle. Area between the average lowest and highest sea water level at low tide and high tide. Generally unvegetated expanses of mud, sand or rock lying between high and low water marks.
	511	Water courses	Natural or artificial water-courses serving as water drainage channels. Includes canals. Minimum width for inclusion: 100 m.
	512	Water bodies	Natural or artificial water surfaces covered by standing water most of the year.
	521	Coastal lagoons	Stretches of salt or brackish water in coastal areas which are separated from the sea by a tongue of land or other similar topography. These water bodies can be connected to the sea at limited points, either permanently or for parts of the year only.
	522	Estuaries	The mouth of a river under tidal influence within which the tide ebbs and flows.
	523	Sea and ocean	Zone seaward of the lowest tide limit.

Land cover was analysed within the municipal boundaries. In order to reduce the zonation effect of modifiable areal unit problem (Wong 2009), the analyses were additionally performed also on the basis of a circle with diameters of 5 km and 10 km, the centre of which was in the city centre of each pilot area. The calculations and visual representation of land cover are presented below.

Using the selected data in the addressed areas there are no continuous urban fabric zones. That means there were is no land surfaces that are covered with more than 80 % by impermeable features like buildings, road and artificial surfaces. With 41.6% the Municipal district Prague 9 has the highest percentage of discontinuous urban fabric zones, mainly because it is located in the core of the city of Prague. The lowest percentage is in the Municipality of Ulcinj and the Municipality of Blagoevgrad with only 2.6% and 1.8%. One of the reasons is that the municipalities are larger and the population is small for such a large area. Industrial, commercial and transport areas and urban green areas have the highest percentage in the Municipal district Prague 9, mainly for the same reasons as stated above.

Table 7: Land cover in pilot areas.

Type of land cover	Ulcinj	Székesfehérvár	Vaslui	Velenje	Blagoevgrad	Prague 9
Continuous urban fabric	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Discontinuous urban fabric	2.6	13.9	10.9	5.9	1.8	41.6
Industrial, commercial, transport areas	0.2	8.9	7.1	2.7	0.7	36.7
Green urban areas	0.7	1.3	1.1	0.4	0	10.6
Agricultural areas	28.3	63.5	71.3	36.1	31.4	8.0
Forest and marsh areas	57.5	9.1	9.3	53.3	65.8	3.0
Waters	10.7	3.3	0.3	1.6	0.3	0.0

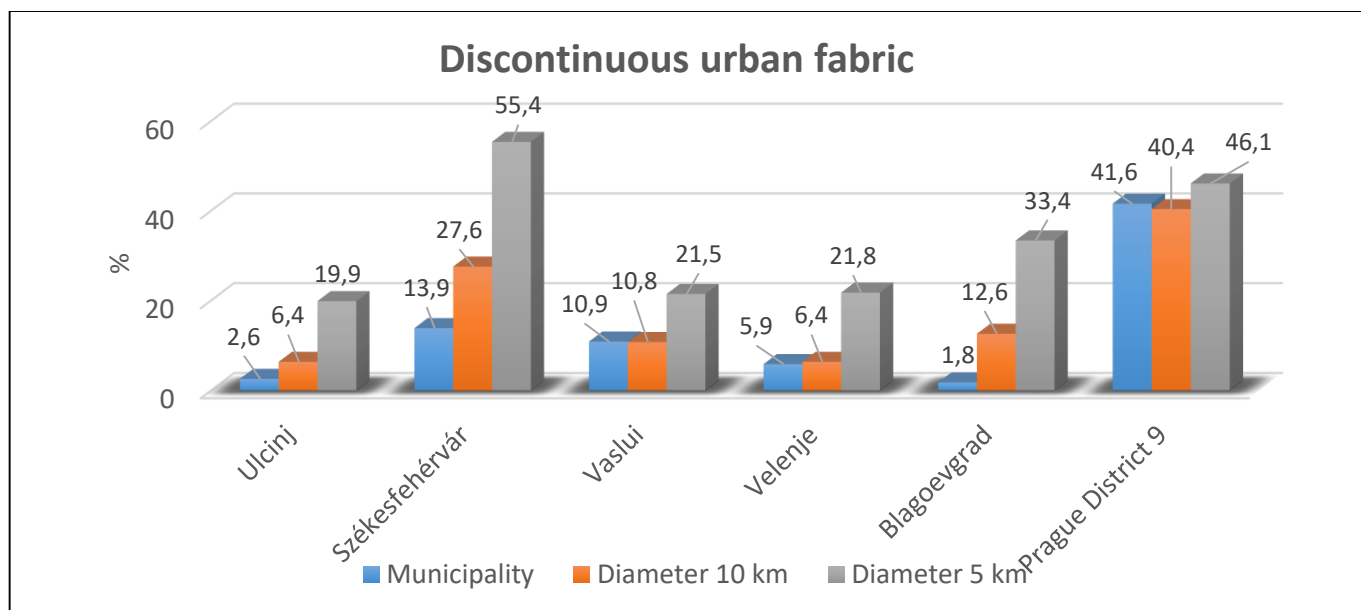


Figure 13: Percentage of discontinuous urban fabric in pilot areas.

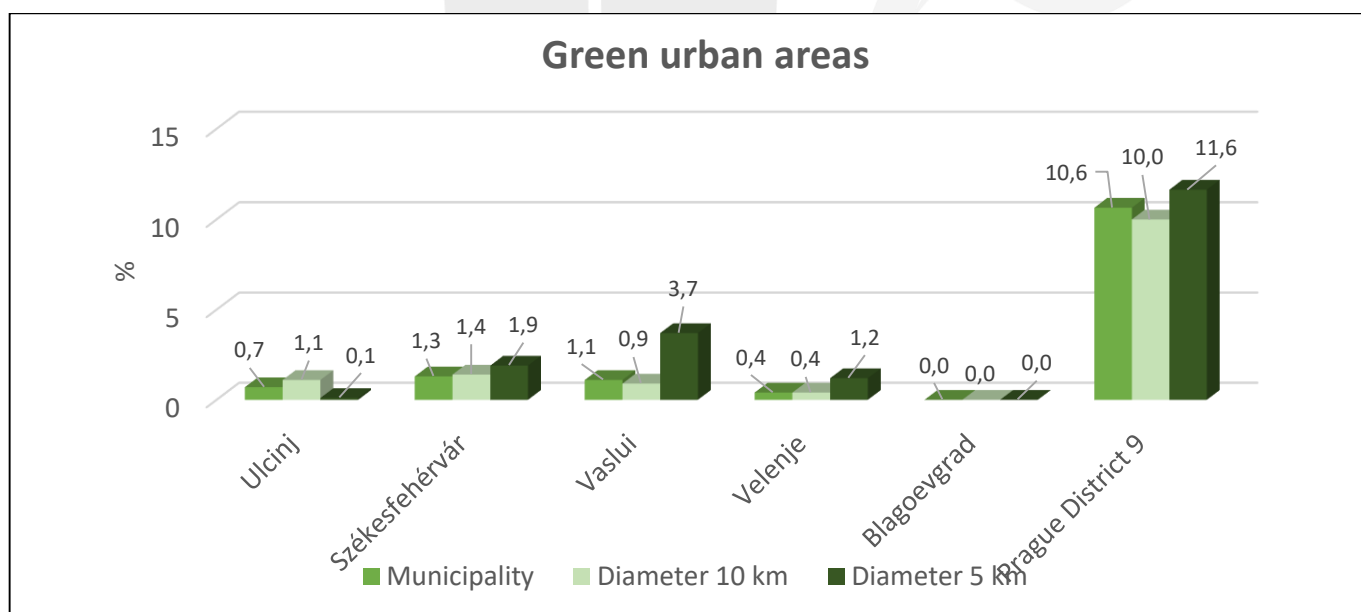


Figure 14: Percentage of green urban areas in pilot areas.



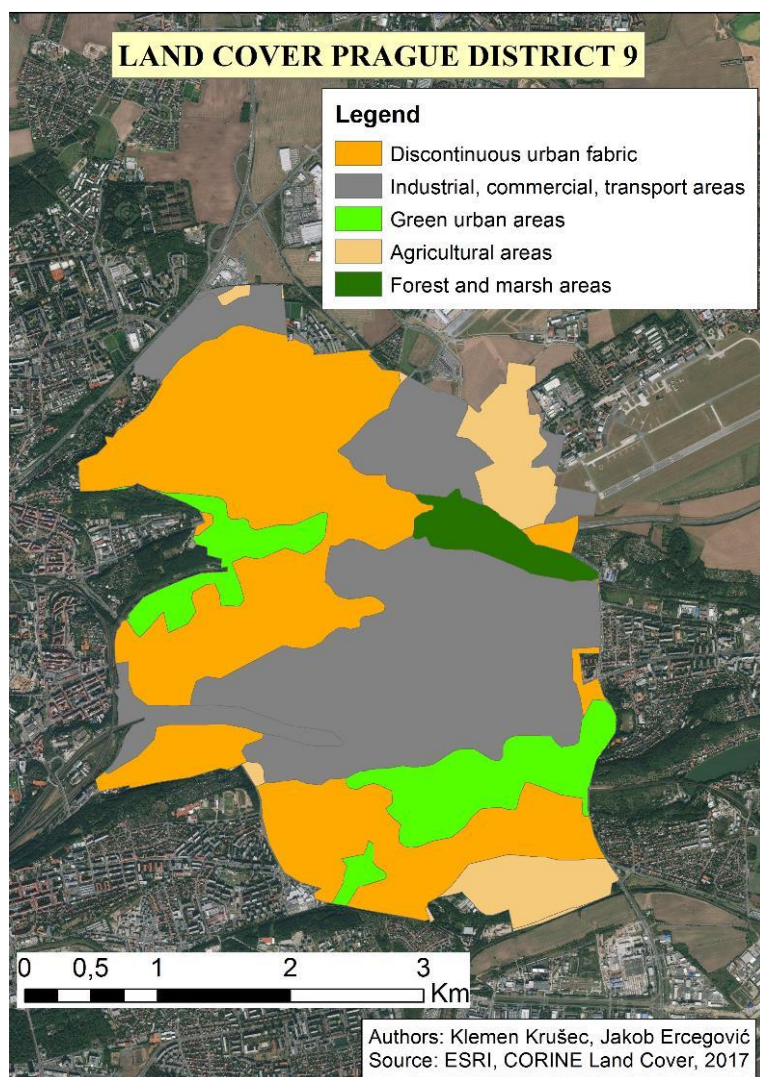


Figure 15: Land cover in the Municipal district Prague 9 in 2012.

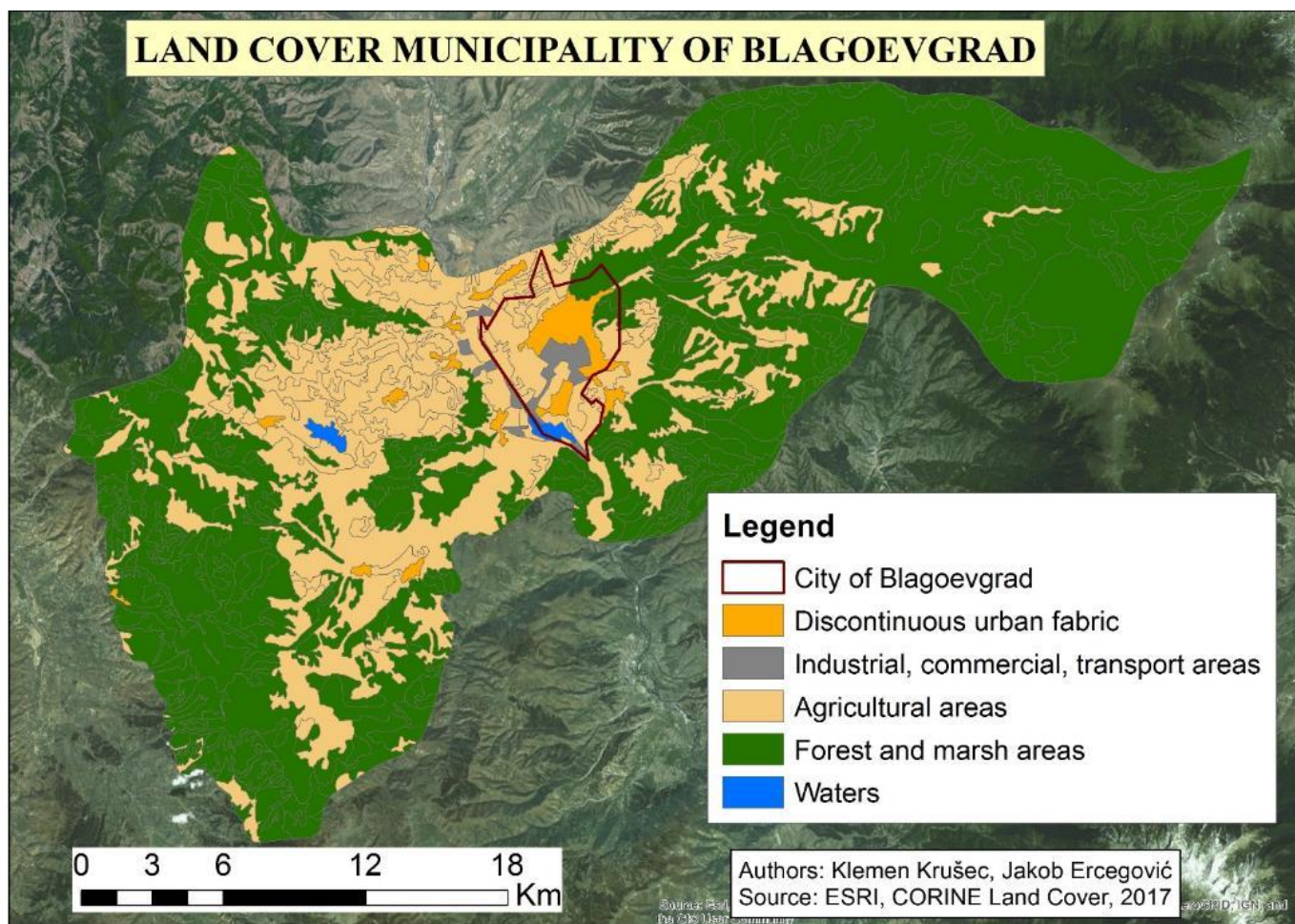


Figure 16: Land cover in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad in 2012.



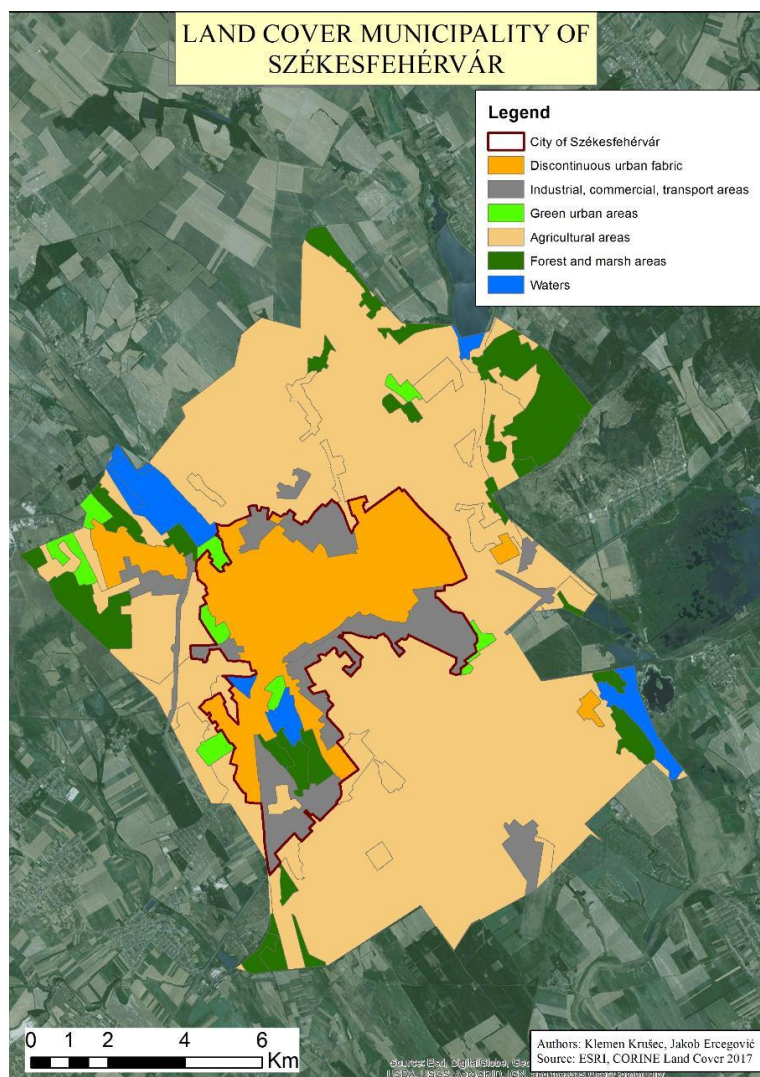


Figure 17: Land cover in the Municipality of Székesfehérvár in 2012.

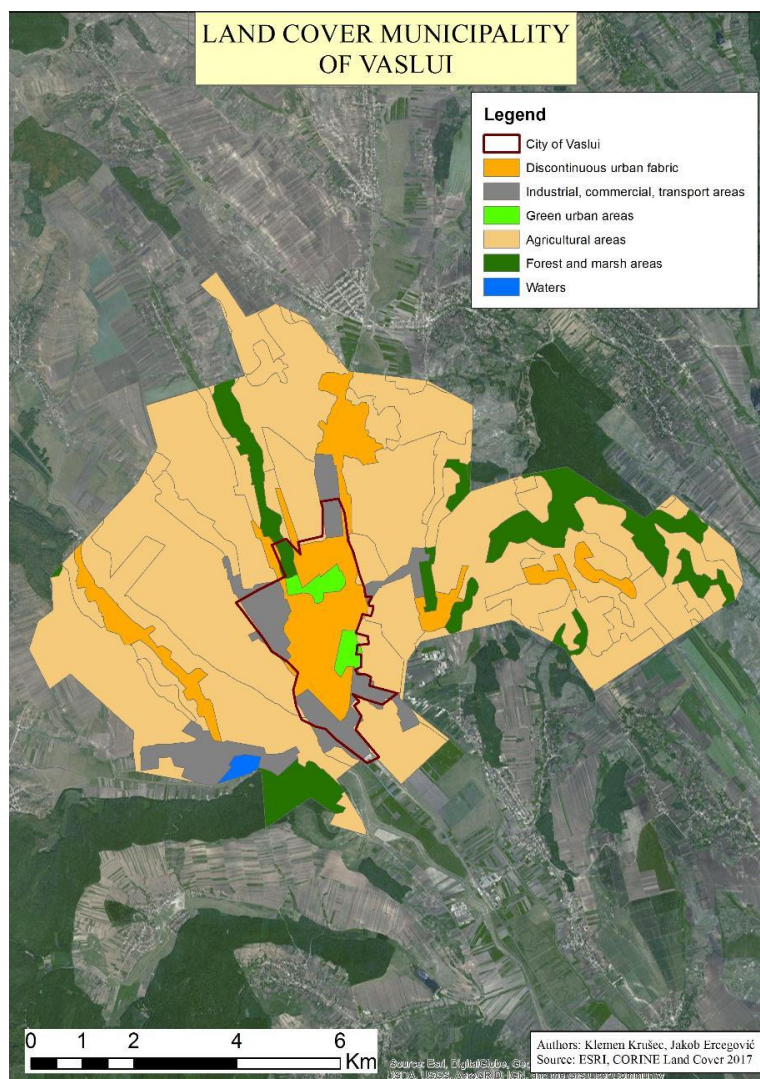


Figure 18: Land cover in the Municipality of Vaslui in 2012.



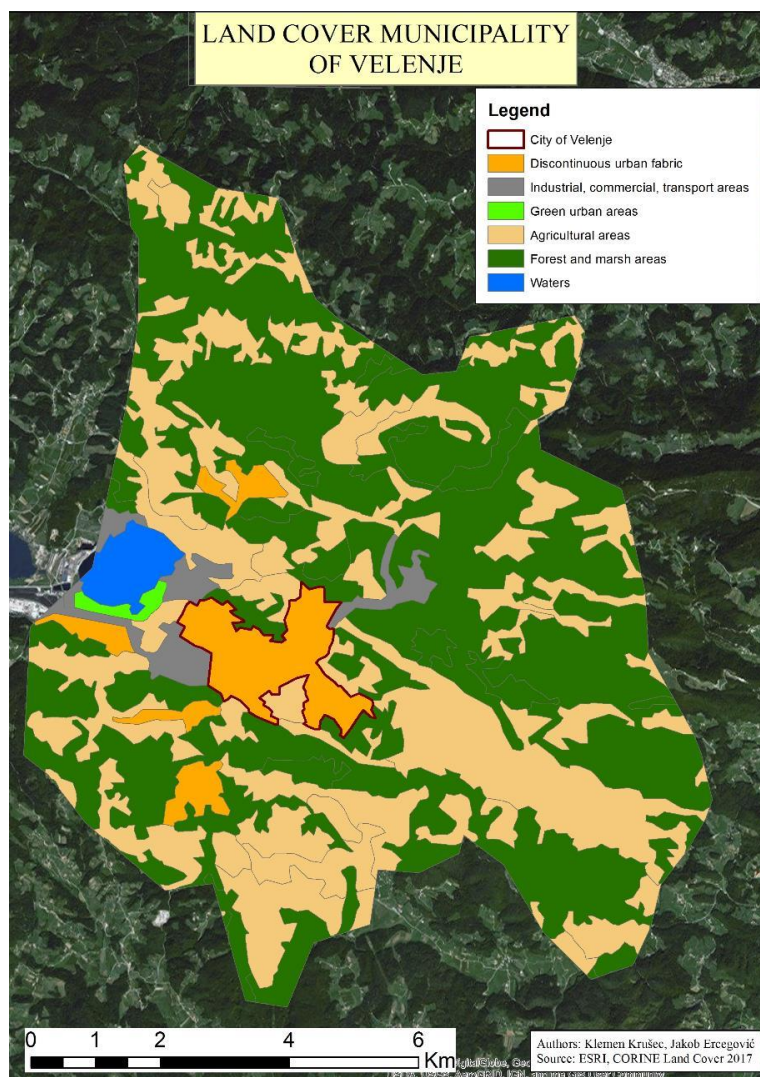


Figure 19: Land cover in the Municipality of Velenje in 2012.



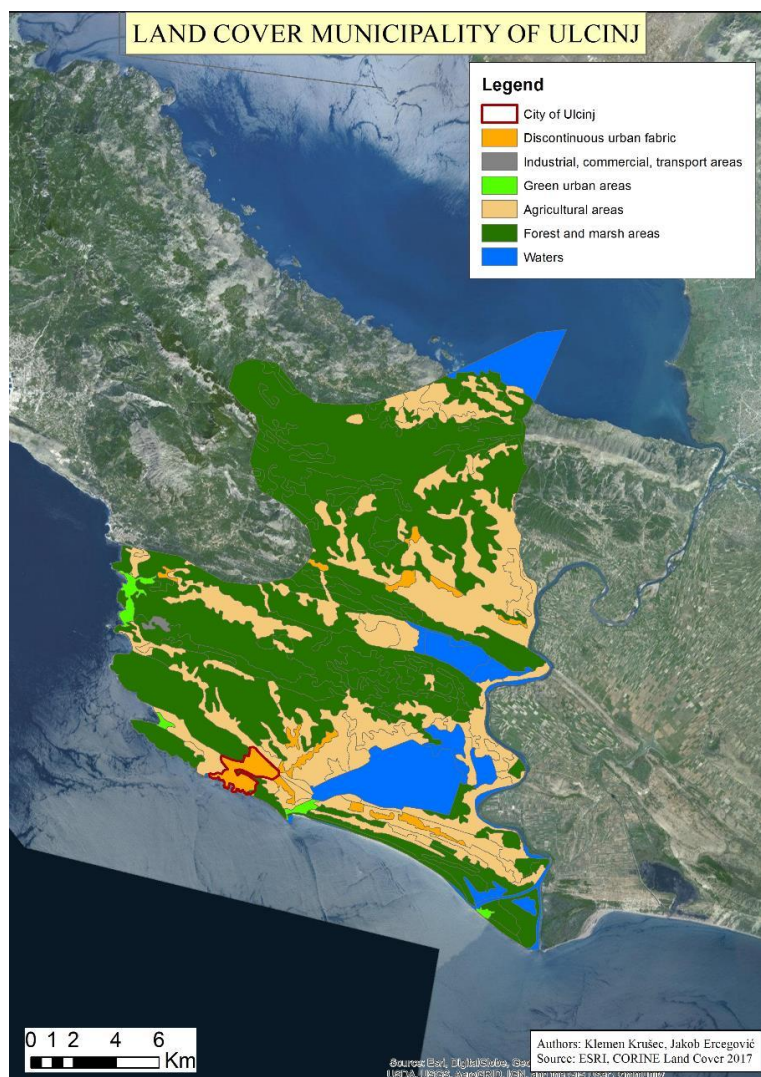


Figure 20: Land cover in the Municipality of Ulcinj in 2012.

4 State of the art of urban agriculture, participatory planning, social inclusion and sustainable urban development in pilot areas

4.1 Characteristics of urban agriculture

Definition of urban agriculture in the AgriGo4Cities is adopted by the recent study of the COST Action on Urban Agriculture Europe (Lohrberg et al. 2016). **Urban agriculture** spans all actors, communities, activities, places, and economies that focus on biological production in a spatial context, which—according to local standards—is categorized as ‘urban’. Urban agriculture takes place in intra- and periurban areas, and one of its main characteristics is that it is more deeply integrated in the urban system compared to other agriculture. Urban agriculture is structurally embedded in the urban fabric; it is integrated into the social and cultural life, the economics, and the metabolism of the city.

To systematize urban agriculture, a distinction is made between the gardening and the farming level (table 1). **‘Urban food gardening’** encompasses agricultural activities with generally low economic dependence on material outputs, while using the production of food for achieving other, mostly social, goals. **‘Urban farming’** refers to intentional business models taking advantage of proximity to the city by offering local or regional agricultural products or services. This concept does not apply to all farming that takes place in larger urban areas. ‘Non-urban oriented farming’ includes all farm enterprises that maintain ‘business as usual’: farmers practice their conventional farming activities on areas that were previously rural and have been converted to intra- or periurban as a result of urban growth. The adjacent city is usually perceived as a threat rather than as an opportunity, except for the improved access to transport infrastructure. The production is mainly oriented towards national or international markets.

At the gardening level, and according to production, urban food gardens can be divided into those based on individual production (family gardens and allotment gardens), and those based on collective schemes (educational gardens, therapeutic gardens, and community gardens). Squatter gardens can fall into both categories.

Multifunctionality in urban areas has been associated with farm diversification strategies, mainly addressing urban demands for recreation and tourism. Over the years, urban farms have expanded the provision of services and goods and now include landscape management, environmental measures, land rental, and direct marketing.

The farms, which have adapted their business strategies to an intra- or periurban location can be subdivided into two main groups. One implies the provision of on-site services, like leisure and educational farms or therapeutic and social ones. The other includes local food farms and environmental farms that provide benefits through material or environmental flows, connected to the urban metabolism and to the urban environment.

For the purpose of this report, family gardens were excluded from the survey because it is hard to systematically analyse them due to their private nature. However, this type of urban agriculture is present in all the pilot areas, especially in residential areas with one-family houses.



Table 1: Typology of urban agriculture (Lohrberg et al. 2016).

Type	Description
Urban food gardening	
Allotment gardens	Subdivided garden whose plots are rented under a tenancy agreement, highly formalized, often managed by an organization or association.
Family gardens	Non-commercial, food producing undertakings for the household provision with produce, no institutions or organisations involved.
Educational gardens	Teaching tool addressing food production, processing and consumption, with high potential for raising public awareness and spreading gardening ideas.
Community gardens	Based on bottom-up initiatives and tended collectively, their purpose is food production as well as providing social functions for the community.
Therapeutic gardens	Located at physical and mental health care institutions, sub-types are contemplative gardens and production-oriented, active gardens.
Squatter gardens	Food production on idle land; due to their informal, extra-legal character, they are not registered nor subject to public policies.
Urban farming	
Leisure farms	Offering recreational opportunities linked to farming activities.
Social farms	Farms intended to address social problems and aimed at promoting disadvantaged people's rehabilitation and integration of people at risk of exclusion.
Educational farms	Pedagogical function is dominant, e.g. in the form of learning programs or short-term stays for schools; recreational component is optional.
Therapeutic farms	Therapeutic use of farming-related activities promotes physical and mental health and well-being, e.g. hippotherapy, occupational therapy.
Local food + farms	Oriented to local markets and direct relationship to consumers (cooperative, CSA), the + indicates non-food production (cosmetics, fibre).
Environmental farms	Farms with high natural and environmental value and/or contribution to biodiversity or agrobiodiversity conservation, as part of flood or fire prevention plans or green infrastructure, networks, green belts, Natura2000 etc.
Cultural heritage farms	Intentionally contribute to preserving the tangible and intangible cultural heritage through maintenance of traditional materials, buildings, crop and breed varieties as well as cultivation techniques.
Experimental farms	Test new agricultural technologies, production methods, varieties and breeds or models of social and economic interactions with their urban environment.

4.1.1 Local strategic and legislative framework regarding urban agriculture

The role of urban agriculture in pilot areas can be first observed by examining local strategic and legislative framework, i.e. documents related to current status and future orientation of investigated field (e.g. spatial plans, regulations, urban development strategies). From this perspective, all partners named at least one local document, related to urban agriculture (table 2). However, most of them do not deal with urban agriculture directly or mention it explicitly. The documents usually touch the subject indirectly by emphasizing and operationalising more general fields, such as agricultural land and/or green areas within land use, food production and sustainable self-sufficiency (e.g. spatial plans and development strategies). When they do talk about agricultural sector, a distinction between urban and rural agriculture is not clearly outlined.

Table 2: Strategic and legislative documents, relevant for urban agriculture in pilot areas.

Pilot area	Documents
Municipal district Prague 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial plan
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial plan of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad • Municipal development plan of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad 2014–2020 • Programme for the management and disposition of municipal property of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad for the year of 2017 • Strategy on the management and disposition of municipal property of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad for the period 2015–2019
Municipality of Székesfehérvár	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated urban development strategy • Environmental condition 2015 • Environmental protection program 2012–2017
Municipality of Vaslui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local development strategy • Area town planning • General urban planning
Municipality of Velenje	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations on gardens lease • Regional development program of Savinjska region from 2014–2020 • Local agenda 21 • Strategic development document of Municipality of Velenje
Municipality of Ulcinj	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial urban planning 2017–2020

Rare cases with concrete reference to urban agriculture can be found in Velenje, Blagoevgrad and Székesfehérvár. The Municipality of Velenje is the only pilot area with a document specifically addressing urban agriculture. A document titled *Regulations on gardens' lease* regulates allocation procedures of municipal gardens as well as the rights and obligations of tenants and the lessor – Municipality of Velenje. It provides general conditions to be met by tenants for award criteria, but also

allocation of the plots, duties of the tenants and the lessor as well as supervision of the rules' implementation. Priority is given to people with low economic status and disabilities.

The Municipality of Blagoevgrad is directly promoting urban agriculture through the *Strategy on the management and disposition of municipal property of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad for the period 2015–2019* and the *Programme for the management and disposition of municipal property of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad for the year of 2017*. Through these two documents, *Municipal land fund* has been created, that allows municipal agricultural land with size up to 10 acres to be rented for 1 or 5 years. Priority is given to indigent and vulnerable people. In addition, *Municipal development plan of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad 2014–2020* mentions indirect support mechanisms, relevant for effective functioning of agriculture, such as improving integration links between producers, processors and traders of agricultural products (measure 1.2.2), stimulating the development of organic farming (measure 1.2.4), and support for the establishment of a local branch organization of local producers as well as raising their awareness and qualification (measure 1.2.5).

The Municipality of Székesfehérvár actively promotes urban agriculture through the *Environmental condition 2015*. The document mentions a call that allowed kindergartens, schools, institutions, owners of family houses and representatives of multi-dwelling houses to apply for plants, seeds and potting soil. Altogether, 469 applications arrived to the local government and the interest has been increased comparing to the previous years. In addition, the *Environmental protection program 2012–2017* implicitly mentions community gardens as a possible tool for increasing sustainability and awareness.

The Municipality of Ulcinj does not have any strategic or legislative documents, (in)directly related to urban agriculture, whereas the Municipal district Prague 9 named the *Spatial plan*, outlined on the national level, as the only relevant document concerning taking care and setting rules for green spaces and built-up lands. Similarly, the Municipality of Vaslui identified three general planning documents that are relevant for targeting infrastructural modernisation and development of utilities (water, gas, electricity, etc.) in the areas, identified as suitable for potential plots for urban agriculture.

4.1.2 Structure of urban agriculture in pilot areas

Representation of urban agricultural sites in selected municipalities of the Danube region is significant in terms of scope and diversity (table 3). Altogether, there are 32 urban agricultural sites in pilot areas. Around two thirds are gathered under a broader category of 'urban food gardening', whereas the other third belongs to 'urban farming' (see Lohrberg et al. 2016).

Most of the pilot areas host multiple examples of urban agriculture (with an exception of the Municipality of Ulcinj), and most of the identified types of urban agriculture are represented in the pilot areas (with an exception of more non-conventional types, such as therapeutic and experimental farms). The most scenic pilot area in terms of scope and diversity of urban agriculture is the Municipality of Velenje, and the most common types of urban agriculture are identified as allotment gardens (7), educational gardens (7), leisure farms (5) and local food + farms (4).

Table 3: Number of urban agricultural sites in pilot areas.

Type of urban agriculture ²¹	Prague 9 (Czech Republic)	Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria)	Székesfehérvár (Hungary)	Velenje (Slovenia)	Vaslui (Romania)	Ulcinj (Montenegro)	Total
Urban food gardening							
Allotment gardens	1	1 ²²	/	5	1	/	7
Educational gardens	/	2	/	5	/	/	7
Community gardens	/	/	2	/	/	/	2
Therapeutic gardens	/	1	/	/	/	/	1
Squatter gardens	/	/	/	/	2 ²³	/	2
Urban farming							
Leisure farms	/	/	3	2	/	/	5
Social farms	1	/	/	/	/	/	1
Educational farms	/	/	/	1	1	/	2
Therapeutic farms	/	/	/	/	/	/	0
Local food + farms	1	2	/	/	1	/	4
Environmental farms	/	1	/	1	/	/	2
Cultural heritage farms	/	/	/	1	/	/	1
Experimental farms	/	/	/	/	/	/	0
Total	3	7	5	13 ²⁴	4 ²⁵	0	32

Urban agriculture is not a recent phenomenon in the Danube region, although a new impetus is recognisable in the last decade (figure 1). Historically, the first urban agricultural site in selected pilot

²¹ For the purpose of this report family gardens were excluded from the typology of urban agriculture (see Lohrberg et al. 2016).

²² Under article 14 (1) and 14 (2) from the Municipal property act, and under the article 82 (1/2), 82 (2) and 83 (2) from Ordinance on the order of procurement, management and disposal of municipal property, 49 contracts with the Municipality of Blagoevgrad define tenancy agreement for the period of 1 year and 34 contracts for period of 10 years. There are no available data about spatial distribution of this type of urban agricultural sites or plots within the Municipality of Blagoevgrad.

²³ There are two bigger areas of squatter gardens and a large number of smaller areas located in front of the apartment buildings which is difficult to record.

²⁴ Gril Homestead – Eco museum is classified as an educational, environmental and cultural heritage farm.

²⁵ Marius Gorcia Farm is classified as an educational and a local food + farm.

areas is *Zahradkářská kolonie* in the Municipal district Prague 9. It was established as the site of allotment gardens and dates back to 1945. Since then, we can distinguish between two distinctive periods in evolution of urban agriculture. The older urban agricultural sites were set up in Vaslui after World War II, Székesfehérvár at the end of 1960s and in Velenje during the 1970s. In all three cities, the establishment can be associated with a socialist context (see more at individual municipalities' profiles in subchapters 5.3.1, 5.4.1, and 5.5.1). After socialism, stagnation in urban agriculture is noted that lasted to the new millennium. Since 2000, a fresh and stronger wave of new urban agricultural projects can be detected in most of the pilot areas, and the trend is still ongoing.

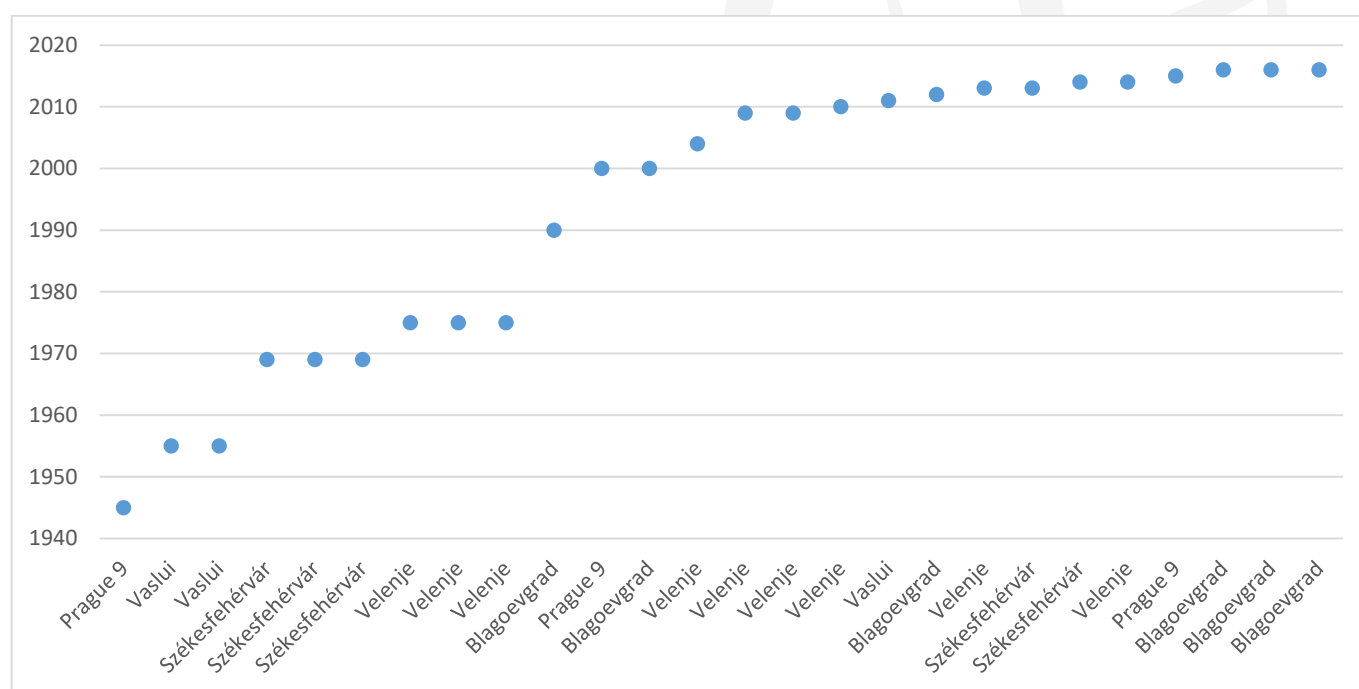


Figure 1: Evolution of urban agricultural sites in pilot areas.

Older urban agricultural sites were mostly initiated directly by the local community/citizens or on their behalf (e.g. by the Coal mine Velenje in the case of *Kunta Kinte*). Newer projects were rarely initiated by using a bottom-up approach. Usually, it was a private initiative (examples can be found in most of the pilot areas) or the gardens initiated by a municipality, an association (e.g. Association of Gardening in Székesfehérvár) or some other public institutions (e.g. University for life-long learning Velenje, NGO Biser 2000 in Blagoevgrad).

For newer urban agricultural projects, a cooperation of multiple actors is more common than for older ones. For instance, a municipality provides a suitable land and initial financial support within a wider revitalisation plan, whereas associations (e.g. Association of Gardening in Székesfehérvár), NGOs (e.g.

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Wine cooperative Sv. Václav in Municipal district Prague 9, Biser 2000 in Blagoevgrad) or companies (e.g. in Székesfehérvár) take care for the implementation phase and maintenance processes. It is also more common that newer urban agricultural projects include a diversification of financial resources. Besides municipal funding, the projects have got a support of national (e.g. co-financing from Slovenian Ministry of Agriculture) and/or European funds (e.g. LEADER programme and Rural Development Programme, Measure 112 – Setting up of young farmers). Thus, we can talk about ‘multi-actor partnerships’, where several actors with different knowledge skills, human capital and financial backgrounds collaborate for developing of urban agriculture and its positive impacts on people, economy and place.

Urban agricultural projects in pilot areas predominantly encompass general population, but there are also some examples of inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups. These are the *Buňky pro bezdomovce* in the Municipal district Prague 9, which is dedicated to homeless people, the *Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa* (therapeutic garden) in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad, and the *First-class cedars for our first-graders in our city* in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad, which is operating as an educational garden for local pupils. The priority is also given to tenants with low economic status and disabilities in cases of the *Allotment garden Krajnca* and the *Allotment garden by the railway* in Velenje, and to indigent and vulnerable people in case of allotment gardens in Blagoevgrad. However, in these cases more detailed systematic and customised solutions are still missing.

The ownership structure is more in favour of the municipalities (Figure 2). However, both predominant types of ownership (municipal and private) are present in all five pilot areas where urban agriculture is developed. There is also one example of public-private partnership, represented by the *Kunta Kinte*. The Municipality of Velenje and the Coal-mine Velenje co-own *Kunta Kinte* gardening area in the ratio of approximately 50:50. As expected, most of the municipal sites belong to an ‘urban food gardening’ subgroup (86 %), whereas a majority of private areas represent ‘urban farming’ subgroup (90 %).

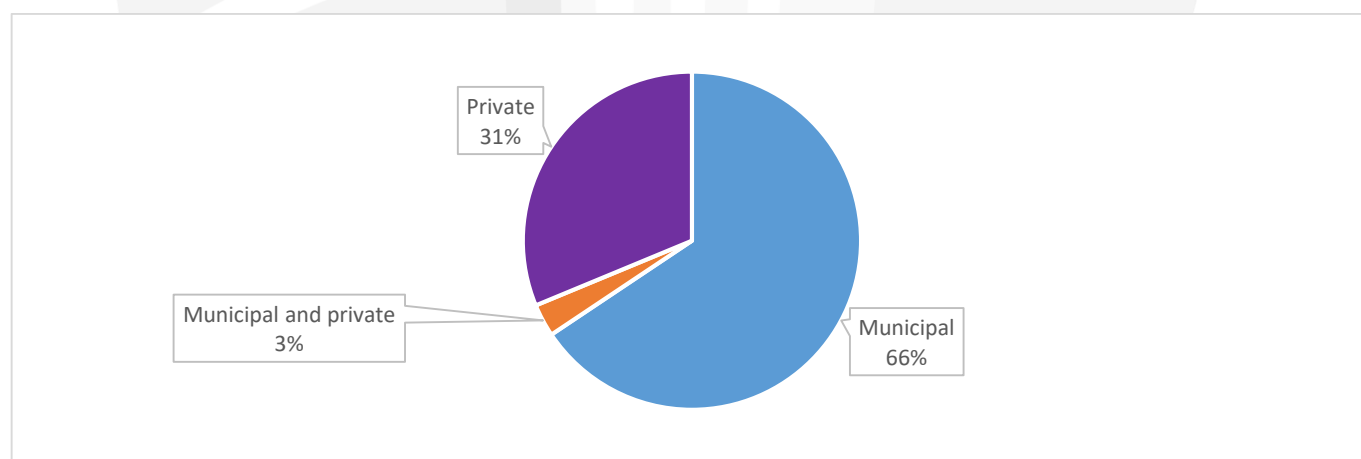


Figure 2: Ownership of urban agricultural sites in pilot areas (N = 32).



Majority of urban agriculture happen on the land in transition and on the greenfield areas (figure 3). Brownfield areas are a bit less attractive from this perspective. All greenfield areas are in permanent use, whereas land in transition (31%) and especially brownfield areas (57 %) are also subject to temporary use. From the ownership perspective, land in transition (100%) and brownfield areas (71%) mostly represent municipal property, whereas greenfield areas (67 %) predominantly belong to the private owners. The majority of recently established sites encompass municipal vacant land (land in transition), which signifies increase of popularity of public intervention in direction of temporary use of space.

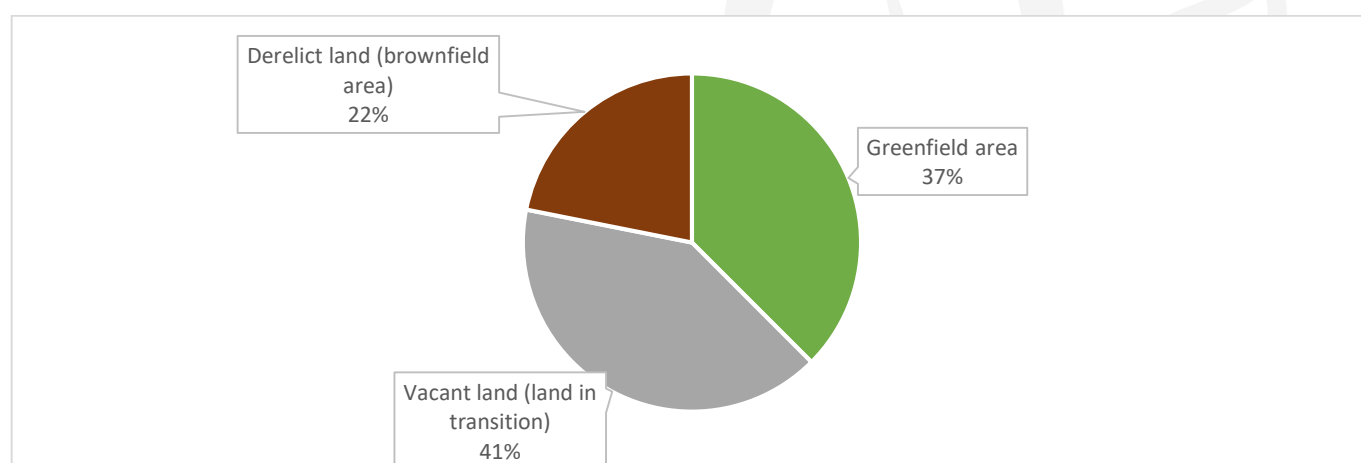


Figure 3: Type of territory of urban agricultural sites in pilot areas (N = 32).

Assessment of accessibility of urban agricultural sites for users (target group/residents) indicates that current locations can best be reached by bicycle and personal car and less by public transport or on foot, which are generally more appropriate modes of transport for vulnerable and marginalized groups, especially for those with physical disabilities. Accessibility by public transport could be treated as the most problematic, as more than half of urban agricultural sites are not well connected to other parts of the city through public transport (figure 4). The accessibility of gardens was assessed as good by the Municipality of Velenje, the Municipality of Vaslui, and the Municipal district Prague 9. However, to get a more objective picture, a proper transport measuring/modelling should be performed (see Kozina 2010a; 2010b; Tiran, Mladenovič and Koblar 2015).



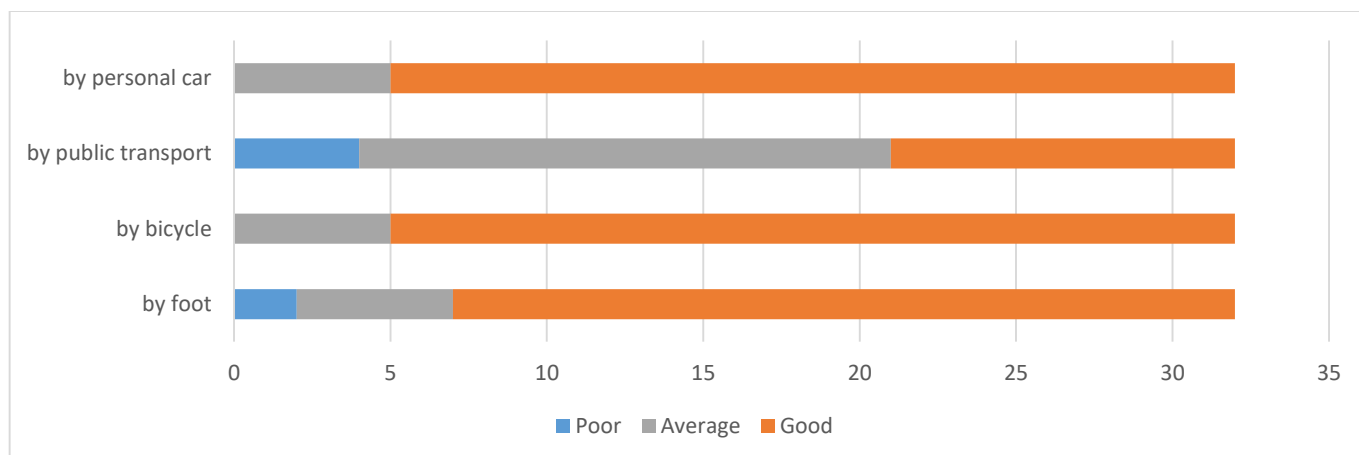


Figure 4: Accessibility of urban agricultural sites by transportation modes in pilot areas.

More than half of urban agricultural sites are openly accessible. Among those with restricted access, 40% are privately owned, but they can be visited upon an agreement with the owners. Municipally-owned areas with restricted access are usually dedicated to a specific target group and are thus registered as special types of gardens, e.g. *Learning school gardens* in Velenje or *Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa* in Blagoevgrad. The only two municipal gardens accessible for general public, but enclosed by a fence, are allotment garden *Kranjca* in Velenje and community garden *Palota-kert* in Székesfehérvár.

Majority of urban agricultural sites are equipped with greater or small-scale facilities on the land itself (Figure 5). Those sites with greater facilities for the storage of tools and occasional overnight stay are mostly privately owned (60%), whereas in other cases the ownership is predominantly municipal (86%).

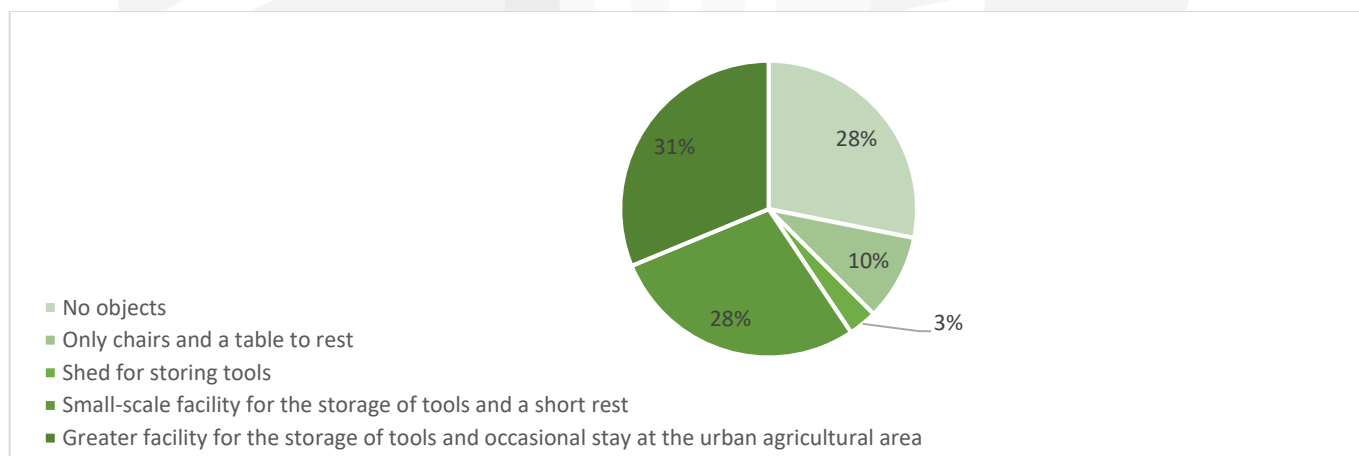


Figure 5: Equipment with facilities on urban agricultural sites in pilot areas (N = 32).

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For more information about urban agricultural sites in selected pilot areas visit websites listed in table 4.

Table 4: List of urban agricultural sites in selected pilot areas with corresponding websites.

Location	Name	Website
Municipal district Prague 9	Buňky pro bezdomovce	http://www.denik.cz/galerie/bunky-pro-bezdomovce-na-klicove-v-praze.html
Municipal district Prague 9	Vinice Máchalka	http://www.machalka.cz/
Municipal district Prague 9	Zahradkářská kolonie	https://www.zahradkari.cz/us/praha/index.php?str=82
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	First-class cedars for our first-graders in our city	http://www.chetvurtoblg.com/
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	BIOFarm Happiness	https://www.facebook.com/BiOfarmaHappy/
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa	http://www.blgmun.com/cat98/205/Zavedeniya_zasocialni_uslugi.html
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	Natural school Tvoriltsi	https://www.facebook.com/Tvorilci.Prirodno.Uchilishte/
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	Family Kitanov farm	N/A
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	Family Mitev farm	N/A
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	Unknown (allotment gardens)	N/A
Municipality of Székesfehérvár	Feketehegy – enclosed gardens	N/A
Municipality of Székesfehérvár	Maroshegy – enclosed gardens 1	N/A
Municipality of Székesfehérvár	Maroshegy – enclosed gardens 2	N/A
Municipality of Székesfehérvár	Palota-kert community garden	http://kertbarik.hu/index.php/kozossegi-kertek/palotavarosi-kozossegi-kertek
Municipality of Székesfehérvár	Szárazrét community garden	http://kertbarik.hu/index.php/kozossegi-kertek/szarazreti-kozossegi-kertek
Municipality of Vaslui	Marius Gorcia farm	N/A
Municipality of Vaslui	Unknown (allotment gardens)	N/A
Municipality of Vaslui	Unknown (squatter gardens)	N/A
Municipality of Velenje	Allotment gardens by the railway	N/A
Municipality of Velenje	Allotment gardens Krajnca	N/A
Municipality of Velenje	Allotment gardens Kunta Kinte	N/A
Municipality of Velenje	Allotment gardens Lipa vzhod	N/A
Municipality of Velenje	Allotment gardens Stara vas	N/A
Municipality of Velenje	Gril Homestead – Eco museum	http://www.muzei-velenje.si/grilovadomacija/
Municipality of Velenje	Learning gardens at schools	http://www.lu-velenje.si/projekti/nacionalni-projekti/zakljuceni-projekti/item/57-projekt-las-ucni-parki-saleske-doline
Municipality of Velenje	Tourist farm Karničnik	http://www.turisticneketije.si/karnicnik
Municipality of Velenje	Tourist farm Tuševo	http://www.turisticneketije.si/tusevo

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4.1.3 Potential new locations for urban agriculture in pilot areas

It is important to stress that partners from Székesfehérvár, Vaslui, and Blagoevgrad already specified potential new locations for urban agriculture. The Municipality of Székesfehérvár referred to the *Integrated urban development strategy*, which identifies rust belts inside the town that are in need of regeneration, planned in the manner of a conversion into green areas in the future. The most important place in this regard is the area around the heating plant, which the city plans to utilize in another way and move outside the urbanized area in the long term (figure 6). The second place with a potential for gardening is an area around former residential buildings of the Soviet army. It is not a typical industrial rust belt, but the buildings were abandoned and are now deteriorating. In the past few years, local government established a university campus and sub-branches of universities from Budapest started to operate there. This is recent and still on-going project. Another abandoned former military place without buildings lies next to the campus, but there a private real estate development recently started to take place.

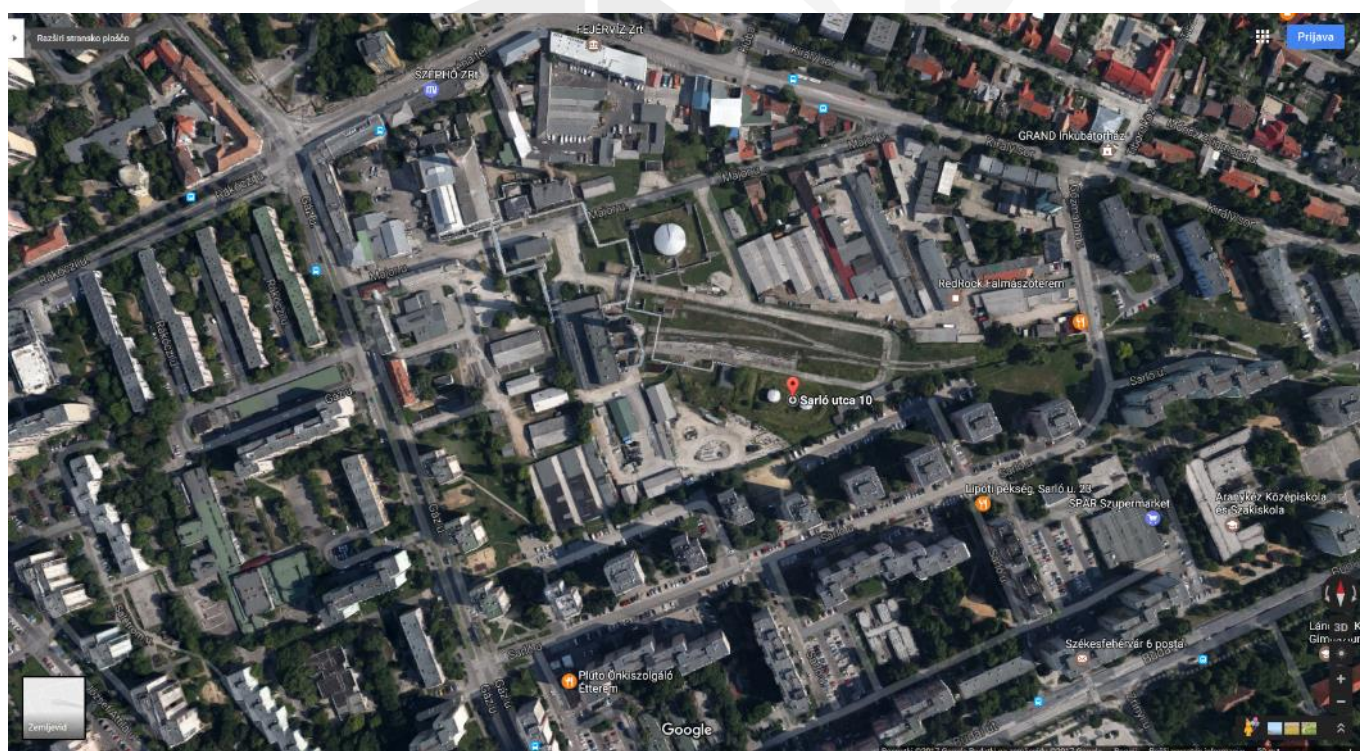


Figure 6: Potential new location for urban agriculture in the area of a heating plant in the Municipality of Székesfehérvár (sky view).



Figure 6: Potential new location for urban agriculture in the area of a heating plant in the Municipality of Székesfehérvár (street view).

The Municipality of Vaslui identified a series of parcels which could be made available to those willing to practice urban agriculture. They mostly target retired people (Figure 7). Public administrators observe that some of the inhabitants, living in apartment buildings, are interested in gardening. In rare cases, they even organised some minor gardening activities right in front of the apartments. However, it is necessary to stress that a lot of inhabitants, living in apartment buildings, still have a strong relation with the rural areas outside the city. Most of those people aged from 50 to 80 years moved to the city by force during the communist period in order to provide workforce for the industry. In many cases, they still have first-degree relatives in the rural areas, where agriculture is the main activity, and they offer to help them working in the fields.



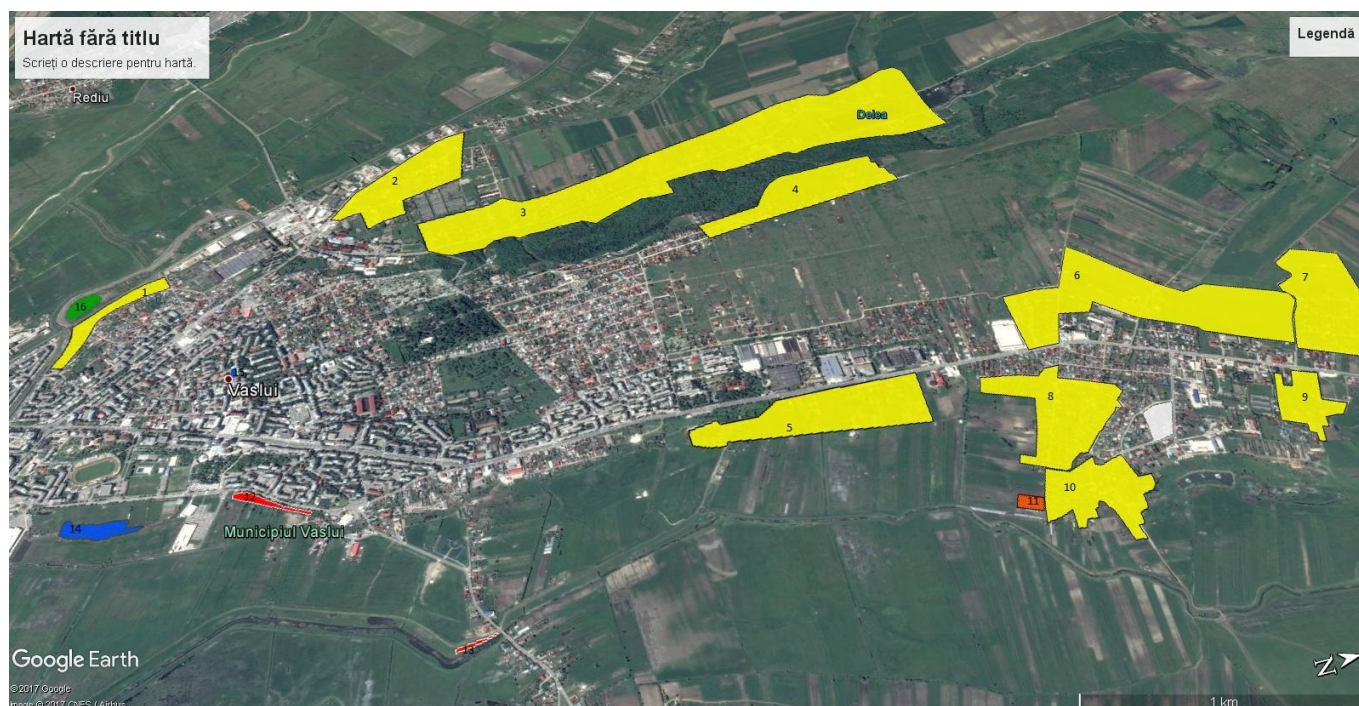


Figure 7: Potential new spatial arrangements of urban agriculture (red colour; areas 12 and 13), residential areas with higher share of family gardens (yellow colour; areas 1–10), location of the Marius Gorcia Farm (orange colour; area 11), allotment gardens (green colour; area 16), and squatter gardens (areas 12, 14 and 15) in the Municipality of Vaslui.

The partners from the Municipality of Blagoevgrad mapped all the possible locations in the city and in the peri-urban area, which can potentially be used for urban agriculture (Figure 8). Land, marked with red colour, is owned by the municipality. Land, marked with blue colour, is governed by the municipality, but it cannot sell it due to uncompleted restitution process.





Figure 8: Potential new locations for urban agriculture in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad.

4.2 Participatory planning & management of urban agriculture

Participatory planning involves the systematic effort to envision a community’s desired future and planning for that future, while involving and harnessing the specific competencies and input of community residents, leaders, and stakeholders in this process (Beya 2009; Lefevre et al. 2000). Staff of the organization that will run it, members of the target population, community officials, interested citizens as well as people from involved agencies, schools, and other institutions should all be invited to the table. Everyone’s participation should be welcomed and respected, and the process should not be dominated by any individual or group, or by a single point of view (Community Tool Box 2016). Participatory planning aims to harmonize views of all the participants as well as prevent conflict between opposing parties. In addition, marginalized groups have an opportunity to participate in the planning process (McTague and Jakubowski 2013).

One of the specific objectives of the AgriGo4Cities project is also to improve public institutional capacities by integrating participatory approach into decision-making processes. New governance models will contribute to the enhanced public services in order to promote active citizenship, development of civil society, reinforced public participation and sustainable urban development. New



instruments and channels will be derived by developing innovative tools, transnational learning interactions and sharing space, strategies and pilot actions.

Successful implementation of participatory approach is not an easy task. Usually it takes a lot of time and effort to ensure that participation becomes an integral part of every planning process. Municipal administrators must be aware of its importance, they need to have appropriate framework, within which participation is possible, have to be properly qualified (or they should hire external experts to facilitate the process), and they need to use the right tools for targeting different groups, etc. To get an overview of the state of integration of participatory approach into decision-making processes in territorial partners' areas, inventory questionnaire also included a set of questions about community involvement in planning.

4.2.1 Community involvement in strategic planning

In all six pilot areas, community is able to participate and is involved in planning of municipal strategic documents (strategies, programs, etc.) and it seems that there are no big differences among municipalities from that point of view. Municipalities differ more in the use of engagement tools for the community involvement. The most varied mix of methods is used in Blagoevgrad, where citizens have several options to be in touch with the municipality: community is involved through 8 different tools, including live labs and awareness raising campaigns, which are not in use elsewhere in the pilot areas. In general, workshops and face to face meetings are the most common tools (used in 4 municipalities), followed by web platforms and consultation exercises (used in 3 municipalities). All municipalities use at least three engagement tools; this is encouraging information because different tools can effectively target different population groups.

Table 5: Engagement tools, used for community involvement in the pilot areas.

Engagement tools	Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria)	Székesfehérvár (Hungary)	Ulcinj (Montenegro)	Velenje (Slovenia)	Vaslui (Romania)	Prague 9 (Czech Republic)	Total
Stakeholder platforms		x				x	2
Workshops	x	x		x		x	4
Live labs	x						1
Face to face meetings	x			x	x	x	4
Web platforms	x	x			x		3
Social media	x			x			2
Consultation exercises including surveys	x				x	x	3
Voting procedures	x				x		2
Awareness raising campaigns	x						1
Total	8	3	0	3	4	4	22

Generally, vulnerable groups are involved in planning to a lesser extent – their inclusion is reported only by Blagoevgrad, Velenje and Vaslui. However, only in Blagoevgrad, vulnerable groups are targeted (and defined) more specifically – for each group a special workshop or live lab is organized. Blagoevgrad also uses the biggest variety of engagement tools for their inclusion in planning (7). The most common tool is a face to face meeting, which is applied in all three mentioned municipalities.

4.2.2 Community involvement in neighbourhood planning

In pilot areas, involvement of community in neighbourhood planning is similar to the one on municipal strategic level. The biggest number of tools is used in Blagoevgrad (7). Among the tools used, workshops are the most common, carried out in 5 municipalities.

Although it was generally stated that vulnerable groups can equally attend and contribute to the planning process, targeted approach for their involvement on the neighbourhood level is not in use in any of the municipalities.

4.2.3 Community involvement in management of urban agricultural land

Community is nowhere concretely involved in management of the municipality-owned urban agricultural land. Citizens in Prague 9 have the greatest number of options: citizens can make

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amendments to the spatial plan, green spaces treatment and management and are able to come to municipality representatives to discuss spatial distribution and usage of the plots. Vulnerable groups as well are not concretely involved in any pilot area.

4.2.4 Initiation of decision-making processes

Municipalities also assessed the nature of the decision-making process from the perspective of the initiator. Despite some examples of bottom-up initiatives – specifically mentioned in Székesfehérvár – the decision-making process is predominantly “top-down” in all municipalities, meaning that an action is initiated by the municipality with the aim to directly involve local communities in the implementation. In both mentioned municipalities, there are examples of grassroots initiatives, which promote and encourage changes, endorsed by the municipality. None of the municipalities uses a co-governance, in which local communities and the municipality would be equal partners. However, in Székesfehérvár two public gardens, run by NGOs, can be understood as examples of co-governance: municipality representatives search for and support grassroots local initiatives, while NGOs can also share their ideas with the same local representatives at the local electorates or with the employees of the municipality administration. In Velenje, the main initiator is the municipality, while NGOs and experts dealing with landscaping can be recognized as significant initiators as well.

4.2.5 Current experience regarding participatory approaches

Four municipalities (except Ulcinj and Székesfehérvár) already implemented a participatory planning process, and in three cases it turned out to be a positive experience. However, qualification trainings for the municipal administration to successfully implement participatory planning are only organized in Blagoevgrad.

In Velenje, citizens are especially pleased to be involved in the process. Participatory approach was also successfully used in the field of urban gardening. In 2014, municipality initiated setting up of urban gardens among the high-rise housing estate in the local community of Šalek. Several workshops with residents were carried out. First impression was highly rated; residents seemed eager to cooperate in the whole process. Municipality even engaged two local landscape architects to assist with their expert knowledge. Unfortunately, the idea has stalled just before implementing the pilot action (setting up new urban gardens) because citizens lost interest in having a garden plot, mostly due to managing issues.

In Vaslui, it was found out that participation in the development of different plans and strategies adds a positive impact on the final proposals, as many inputs were received by the citizens. The participatory process was managed mainly by external experts, while the methodology depended on the legal requirements for each strategy or plan. However, the participatory approach is still at an initial phase of implementation, but an important step – increasing the confidence of the citizens and improving their awareness that their opinion can be an added value to the city’s development – has already been done.

In contrast to already mentioned municipalities, experience in Prague 9 was not so positive. A participatory planning process was run without external experts. In 90 % of occasions it turned out to be only an opportunity for loud and dissatisfied citizens to communicate with the municipal representatives face to face, and the debates escalated quickly into non-topic related mess. Consequently, Municipality of Prague 9 currently avoids using participatory approach.

Partners' municipal administrations have different procedures while responding to a citizen initiative. In Blagoevgrad, municipality responds with personal correspondence and meetings, also with a help of NGOs. In Székesfehérvár, procedure heavily depends on the topic of the initiative; respective municipal administrative unit or municipality-owned company first decides whether there is a need for their involvement or not. In Ulcinj, a communication is ensured via bureau for citizens, established in 2014. It turned out to be very successful and efficient mediator. In Velenje, responses are provided in several ways, e.g. through email address, which involves mayor, deputy mayor, mayor's cabinet employees and all department managers, who then respond to the initiator; through mobile application Urban points ("Urbane točke"), which allows direct filing of an initiative; through communication with representatives of local communities or councillors at the Council Sessions, live-streamed on the municipal website while the conclusions are also distributed via e-mails. In Vaslui, the procedure is highly formalized: the citizen initiative can be brought to the attention of the city administration by a written request. The local authority analyses the request and if it has an objective justification, it is debated at the Local Council public meeting and voted for/against it. More communication tools are used in Prague 9, where responses are provided via public meetings, face to face meetings, open letters, bulletin board/noticeboards, web articles, etc.

4.3 Social inclusion through urban agriculture

Social inclusion and social exclusion, representing two sides of the same coin, are nowadays frequently discussed in different contexts and environments, but 'inclusion' is regarded as seemingly more positive or affirmative term, related to values such as solidarity, cohesion, social capital and integration. In academic circles, the concepts mostly represent explanatory framework of a multi-level social deprivation in changing circumstances of postmodern societies. In policies as well, social exclusion is not related only to monetary aspect, but has encompassed – besides the lack of material sources – the inability to participate in economic, political, cultural and social life as well as exclusion from the "mainstream" orientation of the society (Filipović 2005).

Social work researchers or practitioners of occupational therapy have so far produced the greatest number of studies linking urban gardening and social inclusion. Their and other approaches using nature have been termed 'green care' (see Sempik et al. 2010). One of the first structured approaches using nature – and working within it, e.g. farming and gardening – as therapy was 'horticultural therapy'. This is a specialised form of occupational therapy using plants and horticulture as its main activity, and related to it is a 'therapeutic horticulture', which adopts a more generalised way of using horticulture and gardening for promoting health and well-being. Additionally, small-scale agriculture has been widely

used in Europe as a form of rehabilitative social care, particularly for people with mental health problems and learning difficulties. In some European countries, this marks the continued development of hospital farms, while in others it represents an evolution of agriculture into a 'multifunctional' activity, i.e. not simply producing food but also providing care (Hine 2008). Such farms have been termed 'care farms' (see Hassink & van Dijk 2006).

Gardening can address several dimensions of social exclusion, identified by Burchardt et al. (2002) as an exclusion from production, consumption, social interaction and political engagement. As assessed by Sempik and Aldridge (2002), gardening and farming projects (in the sense of green care) enable **production** through activities that have many of the attributes of paid employment and which are regarded as 'work' by project participants, staff and others. Planting, cultivation and other garden work are seen as both meaningful and 'productive'. Such projects give participants access to a popular leisure activity from which they are often excluded. In some cases, they also provide them with food that contributes to their quality of life. In this way they allow them to participate in the process of **consumption**. The activities also provide opportunities for many forms of **social interaction**; the parallels have been drawn between green care and (forming of therapeutic or/and social) communities (see Hickey 2008, Haigh 2008, Sempik et al 2010). Additionally, such projects can enable participants to deal with the management of a garden or activities and in this way include them in a specific form of **political engagement** (Sempik and Aldridge 2002). The potential of green care is thus considered to reside within the activities, the setting and the social environment (Sempik 2010: 18).

Production of food and its consumption, at least at home, are usually motivational factors for people to engage in gardening, and at least a minimum amount of social interaction is a result of working next to each other and sharing common spaces and/or facilities (e.g. water reservoir). Since AgriGo4Cities project develops gardening as a tool for social inclusion in decision-making processes, pilot actions shall be specifically structured in such a way that people could learn how to participate in decision-making processes, first to take some responsibilities on a micro level – within the garden – and then to be more involved on the macro level, i.e. in the municipal governance.

4.3.1 Identification of vulnerable groups

Most of the strategies for social inclusion identifies the following vulnerable groups: the unemployed, people with low income (recipients of financial social assistance), the homeless, mentally and physically handicapped, elderly (people older than 65 years), NEET (young people who are Not included in Education, Employment, or Training; also young people with family or behavioural problems), Roma community, other ethnic minorities, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Vulnerable group, defined as the most relevant by the majority of project partners (Blagoevgrad, Velenje, Vaslui and Prague 9), are the elderly; only Municipality of Székesfehérvár and Ulcinj did not see it as their priority (but still as relevant). Other groups identified as highly or at least moderately relevant by the majority of project partners are the unemployed (highly relevant in Ulcinj and Velenje; the group is not relevant in Székesfehérvár) and people with low income (highly relevant in Blagoevgrad and

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Velenje; not relevant in Prague 9). Irrelevant vulnerable group in the project area seems to be ethnic minorities (partly relevant only in Velenje), followed by migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (partly relevant only in Ulcinj and Velenje). Mentally and physically handicapped and Roma community are the priority in Székesfehérvár, homeless people in Székesfehérvár and Prague 9, and NEET in Székesfehérvár and Blagoevgrad.

Table 6: Identification and relevance of vulnerable groups in the local contexts (1 = highly relevant, 2 = relevant, 3 = not relevant).

Vulnerable groups	Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria)	Székesfehérvár (Hungary)	Ulcinj (Montenegro)	Velenje (Slovenia)	Vaslui (Romania)	Prague 9 (Czech Republic)
Unemployed	2	3	1	1	2	2
People with low income (recipients of financial social assistance)	1	2	2	1	2	3
Homeless	3	1	3	2	3	1
Mentally and physically handicapped	2	1	2	2	2	3
Elderly (65+)	1	2	2	1	1	1
NEET	1	1	3	2	3	2
Roma community	3	1	2	2	2	3
Other ethnic minorities	3	3	3	2	3	3
Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers	3	3	2	2	3	3
Other:	0	0	0	0	0	Single mothers with children

Some vulnerable groups in surveyed areas are already engaged in gardening, but some of them only cultivate their private gardens and do not rent a garden on a land which would allow more personal contact, require sharing of public space and taking responsibility for functioning of the area, and demand communication with the municipality. In Blagoevgrad, especially NEET and elderly are voluntarily confined to their private gardens, so it remains a challenge to motivate them for community gardening. In Székesfehérvár as well, elderly people are among the vulnerable groups most active in gardening. As the group with the most potential to be involved in community garden, Prague 9 identifies elderly people and single mothers, as they are the most active in public events. And in Velenje, physically disabled people – although there is a negligible number of them active in community gardening – are given the priority in allocation of garden plots with the easiest access to facilities (e.g.

water supply and toilets). In Ulcinj and Vaslui, it seems that no vulnerable group is currently involved in gardening.

Each partner already decided with which vulnerable groups they intend to work with in the AgriGo4Cities project.

Table 7: Number of members of vulnerable groups that municipalities intend to work with in pilot actions.

Vulnerable groups	Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria)	Székesfehérvár (Hungary)	Ulcinj (Montenegro)	Velenje (Slovenia)	Vaslui (Romania)	Prague 9 (Czech Republic)
Unemployed	5	0	3	0	0	0
People with low income (recipients of financial social assistance)	5	0	3	0	0	0
Homeless	0	0	0	0	0	10–15
Mentally and physically handicapped	3	5–10	3	0	0	0
Elderly (65+)	10	15	3	25	10–15	5–10
NEET	5	0	2	0	0	0
Roma community and other ethnic minorities	0	5–10	5	0	0	0
Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers	0	0	3	0	0	0
Other:	0	0	0	25 (children)	10–15 (children)	5–10 (single mothers with their children)

4.3.2 Mechanisms for social inclusion of vulnerable groups in surveyed municipality

Mechanisms for social inclusion are measures, with which the local, national and transnational authorities influence processes of economic, social, and political inclusion of vulnerable groups into the mainstream society. We can roughly categorize them as economic, social and political measures as well as communication and physical adaptations and conditions which ensure vulnerable groups equal access to public services.

Economic aspects

Except in Vaslui, several **forms of businesses exist in the surveyed area, which employ vulnerable groups**. In Blagoevgrad, two cooperatives, operating as a social enterprise, are employing people with

disabilities, and both Bulgarian project partners see a good potential to cooperate with them. In Székesfehérvár, two non-profit organizations employ mentally and physically handicapped people, and one is already cooperating with the project partner CTRIA. In Ulcinj, the number of employed vulnerable people is considerably smaller, however, one NGO employs two people with disabilities and the municipality plans to include it in its pilot activities. In Velenje, four limited liability companies employ disabled people, but since the municipality intends to work with elderly and children, they do not see any possibility to cooperate at this moment. In Prague, Gardening Company Hortus Správa zeleně s.r.o. employs homeless people (cca. 5 of them).

Several **mechanisms can encourage companies to employ people from vulnerable groups**. In Blagoevgrad, such companies rely on national funding programs for subsidized employment of vulnerable groups, especially of NEET, people with low income and the unemployed. To receive subsidy, the companies need to fulfil some requirements, which are defined by the law. However, there are no known mechanisms to ensure equal opportunities of people in employment (e.g. family friendly conditions, women's quotas etc.).

In Székesfehérvár, companies occasionally (on a project basis) receive EU-grants (from operational programmes) to employ vulnerable people – all disadvantaged groups listed in the Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as well as people with changed working abilities (mentally or physically handicapped) – while institutions provide awareness raising programmes about social exclusion. If they receive grants, they need to ensure certain duration of the work contracts, regular salary and special working conditions. EU grants are also used for problem assessment in this regard and awareness raising, and flexible employment is promoted, which presents a good opportunity for women or handicapped people to balance their professional and private life.

In Velenje, companies employing people with disabilities get financial support in the form of wage subsidies and other economic relief. Companies with the status of disability company are also entitled to tax exemptions and contributions on wages from the state. Some businesses already acquired the certificate of female managers friendly company or family friendly company.

Vaslui identified three mechanisms to encourage employment of the members of vulnerable groups. The National as well as the Local Employment Agency support job fairs and organize qualification courses, requalification and professional training for unemployed people. These measures target the unemployed and young people aged between 16 and 25. The unemployed, who are involved in any of listed activities, must then be employed for at least 6 months, and the companies who want to employ young people from such programmes need to be licensed by The National Employment Agency. The second mechanism they identified is a national programme “Start-up Nation Romania”, which targets the unemployed people with special skills for a start-up company. A start-up business, financed by this programme, must employ a minimum of 2 people for 3 years (however, the employees can change). The employment of vulnerable groups – the unemployed (among those especially single parents or people older than 45 years), the disabled and fresh graduates – is also encouraged by specific national laws and measures, which demand that the unemployed keep the job for at least 6 months, the disabled for at

least 18 months, the unemployed over 45 years or single parents for at least 2 years and the graduates for at least 3 years. The Romanian law also provides incentives (such as lower taxes on salaries and incomes) for the social enterprises, hiring persons belonging to vulnerable groups. However, there is currently no such enterprise operating in the municipal area, so Vaslui municipality suggests to include the measures to encourage its establishment as one of the objectives in the action plan, outlined in the AgriGo4Cities project.

In Prague 9, companies can consider special social criteria in the procurement process, which mostly affect the employment of the elderly, Roma, handicapped and single mothers (but basically all vulnerable groups). However, employers are subject to specific requirements for specific procurements and employment relations. Businesses can in theory also use quotas to ensure the equality (e.g. gender) in their enterprises, but there is no known case of the quotas in practice.

In Ulcinj, companies employing people with disabilities get financial support in the form of wage subsidies 50% and other economic relief. For example, if company has 20 to 50 employees they are obligated to employ one person with disabilities.

Social aspects

One of the most important factors influencing social inclusion is education; the lack of education and skills leads to social exclusion, so ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable groups into education system is of high importance. Two forms of education prevail which target vulnerable groups: specialized and integrated. Experts advocate the latter, as it establishes social contacts between the vulnerable and mainstream society and sensitizes society about the needs of vulnerable groups and similarities among each other.

Vulnerable groups, predominantly **included in a specialised form of education**, are moderately or severely mentally handicapped, most often also physically handicapped (predominantly blind and deaf children), although there are possibilities to integrate them into regular forms of education. In Prague, NEET, and in Velenje, children of certain migrants, who refuse to be integrated into society, are also included into specialized forms of education. Members of other vulnerable groups, which are able to follow the lessons, are **integrated into regular forms**.

Outside formal education system, vulnerable groups can attend life-long learning programmes (e.g. study circles) or the programmes of the employment agencies, but also different professional trainings, qualifications (e.g. national vocational qualifications) and other courses (language, computer), provided by various institutions. Usually, these programs target all vulnerable groups except mentally handicapped – although not necessarily simultaneously.

Certain vulnerable groups are also entitled to some **social transfers**. Welfare, extraordinary financial aids and scholarships are offered to the unemployed, people with low income, Roma community and NEET. Disadvantaged families are also entitled to higher child benefits, and at least in Velenje, disadvantaged elderly can get a security allowance. Some costs are also related to the income; people in

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disadvantaged situation, e.g. in Slovenia, can ask for reduced payment of preschool programmes and school meals, they can be exempted from social services, get a contribution to the payment of family assistance, are entitled to subsidized rent, can request from the state to cover the difference up to the full value of health services and have the right to the free-of-charge compulsory health insurance. The municipalities in Slovenia also co-finance numerous organizations and programs to ease the burdens of vulnerable groups (e.g. Red cross and Caritas, public kitchens, shelters for the homeless, holiday programs for poor children, free legal aid etc.). Mentally and physically handicapped, unable to work, are subject to special financial aids.

In Prague 9, the Department of social affairs takes care of the homeless people, Roma and other ethnic minorities as well as the elderly. Several NGOs operate in the field of social inclusion on the city or national level, e.g. Red Cross (Červený kříž) and Proxima Sociale OPS. All other municipalities also identified several **NGOs or associations in their area which are working on social inclusion of vulnerable groups**. The Municipality of Blagoevgrad hosts 11 institutions for social services, 9 of which are designed for adults and 2 for children. Social institutions for adults (e.g. shelters, day care centres etc.) apply social services tailored to the individual characteristics of users. The activities are aimed to develop skills needed in everyday life, to shorten the period of social exclusion, and to acquire work habits (i.e. occupational therapy). The most visible in Székesfehérvár are Civic centre charitable foundation (Civil Centrum Közhasznú Alapítvány), We help at home association (Székesfehérvári Otthon Segítünk Alapítvány) and Association of people with large families (Nagycsaládosok Egyesülete). NGO Rights to live and Day care centre Sirena are active in Ulcinj. There is an admirable number of organizations working with vulnerable groups in Velenje; besides Regional Red cross society, Caritas, Centre for social work, Home for elderly people and hospice also Centres Saša and Sožitje for mentally and physically disabled people, Integra institute, which provides a shelter for the homeless, Novus society and Society of active citizens Dao help children and families in need, VID Velenje assists the elderly, University for lifelong learning offers courses for elderly and other generations, some organizations also offer some programs for drug users, Inter-municipal Association of the deaf and hearing Impaired, Association of disabled Konovo and Intermunicipal association of disabled of Šaleška valley offer support to physically disabled people, while Lions and Rotary club organizes occasional activities to support different vulnerable groups. In Vaslui, two NGOs are particularly active in social inclusion of vulnerable groups; Asociatia Centrala Pentru Integrare Sociala si Politici anti-discriminatorii Vaslui strives for social inclusion of deprived persons while Asociatia Iris is specialized in local/regional development and social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

Political aspects

To be able to effectively integrate vulnerable groups into mainstream society, **legislation and strategies need to properly support their social inclusion**. All municipalities identified legal and strategic documents they can build on. Blagoevgrad underlined the municipal [Action plan for the Roma integration 2017-2019](#), which identifies the steps and gives the guidelines for the implementation of the

municipal socio-economic integration policy for the Roma people. It is following the national and EU Roma integration strategies. The second important document is the municipal [Annual plan for development of social services](#), which describes the scope, activities and annual plan of 25 municipal social services. The most important documents of social inclusion in Székesfehérvár are the Equality Program 2013–2017 and Integrated Urban Development Strategy. The most relevant policy instrument in this regard is [Equality program](#) (number 47: Székesfehérvár Megyei Jogú Város Önkormányzatának Esélyegyenlőségi Programja 2013–2017). It defines legal background and strategic environment and identifies vulnerable groups and problems. The main detected vulnerable groups are people living in extreme poverty and Roma people, the minors, women, elderly people and the handicapped. For each group, the document provides an analysis of current situation and describes relevant mechanisms of inclusion. The program also identifies the role of the civic society and for-profit organizations, local partnerships and of the inhabitants in general. The document concludes with the action plan. The [Integrated Urban Development Strategy](#) is the most important policy document on development goals of the town from 2014 to 2020. Special anti-segregation plan is included, which identifies the most compromised parts of the town, affected by segregation, and designs a plan for their development. Identified need for social inclusion also appears in other parts of the document and is also explicitly stated as a horizontal goal (see pages 78–96 in the above mentioned document). The most important document of social inclusion in the Municipality of Velenje is the [Development strategy of social protection in the Municipality of Velenje for the period from 2014 to 2020](#). The strategy stems from the analysis of social protection in the municipality and lays the foundation for the establishment and maintaining of a socially adequate local environment, as its task is to provide conditions for the development and implementation of social programs as well as to co-develop and coordinate social security programs, which are dedicated to the citizens. In Vaslui, future local development projects are outlined in the [Local development strategy](#) (see also [link](#)). The strategy considers the vulnerable groups as well, as it specially targets peripheral areas, where most of the vulnerable groups live, and foresees projects to develop the existing services (water, gas, electricity, etc.) in these areas to improve the living conditions and consequently the quality of life. One of the most important strategies aimed to vulnerable groups in Prague is the [Conception of solution finding to homeless issue in Prague 2013–2020](#), designed by the city of Prague municipal employees. The document analyses the issue of homeless people and conditions, under which people lose their jobs and/or homes in Prague. It addresses these factors in order to decrease the number of the homeless people and prevent the issue. In Ulcinj, Local action plan for REA population 2016–2020 (web link not available) was adopted, focused in the integration of REA population and for their better live condition and more healthy life. One person from this population was employed with service contract in Ulcinj Municipality.

Physical and communication aspects

The first measures authorities usually undertake to ease the life of vulnerable groups are the adaptations of the physical environment and communication. Blind people can get around the city with the help of traffic lights with sound signals, and embossed lines on sidewalks may prevent traffic

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accidents. People using wheelchairs can use public transport if the vehicles are suitably equipped (low-floor, special spaces). Less people are injured or die due to domestic violence or homelessness if there are proper services near-by (e.g. safe houses, shelters). And people are more likely to communicate with the municipality if the employees speak their language (Roma, minority, sign language).

All municipalities provide basic physical adaptations for physically handicapped people, such as traffic lights with sound signals, embossed lines on sidewalks, ramps for wheelchairs and low-floor buses. Victims of domestic violence and the homeless can find shelter in safe houses or similar accommodation places and get a warm meal as well as an expert help (counselling, support).

Two municipalities' websites – of Blagoevgrad and Székesfehérvár – are adapted for the blind and visually impaired. However, Velenje and Prague provide some signs and/or publications in Braille alphabet to make information accessible to the blind. Two municipalities, Székesfehérvár and Velenje, employ people with the knowledge of the sign language. In Ulcinj, one municipality employee speaks Roma language. In Prague 9, employees at the social municipal department speak Roma dialect. In Blagoevgrad, Roma people are assisted by medical mediators, in Székesfehérvár Roma public authority takes care of the Roma community, in Slovenia the Roma are usually accompanied by an interpreter, and in Vaslui none of the employees speak the Roma dialect or other ethnic language.

4.3.3 Good practices of social inclusion of vulnerable groups in surveyed municipalities

The municipalities themselves as well as several NGOs working in their area already have positive experience with inclusion of various vulnerable groups into the mainstream society (e.g. employing people with disabilities, inclusion of elderly, women and children, programs for the homeless and unemployed, projects with people with low income etc.). The methods are various, but the prevailing are social help (in 5 municipalities; i.e. in all except in Prague), creation and development of social networks (in 4 municipalities; the exceptions are Ulcinj and Vaslui) and formal and informal meetings (in 4 municipalities, except in Székesfehérvár and Ulcinj). Velenje uses most of the methods for social inclusion (7 out of 9 listed), followed by Blagoevgrad (6 methods), Vaslui (5 methods), Székesfehérvár and Prague 9 (3 methods), and Ulcinj (2 methods).

Table 8: Good practices of social inclusion of vulnerable groups in surveyed municipalities.

What is the method of inclusion?	Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria)	Székesfehérvár (Hungary)	Ulcinj (Montenegro)	Velenje (Slovenia)	Vaslui (Romania)	Prague 9 (Czech Republic)
Activization surveys	x			x		
Social help	x	x	x	x	x	
Counselling	x			x	x	
Formal and informal meetings, and discussions among the residents	x			x	x	x
Streetwork				x	x	
Creation and development of social networks	x	x		x		x
Organization of parties, picnics, parades, and other events				x	x	x
Mediation and conflict resolution	x					
Other:		x (jobs for handicapped people)	x			

4.4 Contribution of urban agriculture to sustainable urban development

One of the specific objectives in the AgriGo4Cities project is also to promote sustainable urban development through urban agriculture. It is planned that governance models, developed in the AgriGo4Cities project, will stimulate job creation, income generation, community building and quality living environment in cities. The focus is on disadvantaged neighbourhoods where communities at risk of exclusion live and work. Their active involvement into urban agriculture and pilot actions will contribute to food production and supply, carbon footprint reduction, sustainable waste management, active healthy lifestyle and wellbeing.

Since the Brundtland Report (WCED 1987), which aimed to reconcile economic growth with environmental protection and is “guilty” that the concept has been widely adopted in policy discourse on development, sustainable development has usually been conceptualized as supported by three “pillars”, i.e. the economy (“economic development/growth”), the environment (“environmental protection/balance”) and society (“social equity/inclusion”). They have been predominantly visualised as three overlapping circles with sustainable development at the centre. “How to achieve economic growth that would be fairly distributed and would not jeopardise the ecosystem?” is the question most frequently posed by planners and policy makers, usually putting environment – and/or social questions – in an inferior position in comparison to the economy, although (romantically) admitting that

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sustainable development means balancing all three goals of urban planning (Campbell 1996). Some scholars also argue that the fourth pillar – culture (or the cultural sector) can contribute a great deal to development, both quantitatively (income and employment) as well as qualitatively (equity and well-being) (Nurse 2006; see also Culture 2010).

There is an abundance of evidence in literature that shows that urban agriculture contributes significantly to sustainable urban development. Urban agriculture has many economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits, ranging from employment opportunities, subjective well-being, neighbourhood attachment, reducing urban heat island etc. (Pearson, Pearson and Pearson 2010). However, in the Danube region, especially in its post-socialist part, urban agriculture is far from realizing its potentials for sustainable urban development, despite the fact that percentage of informal food production in those countries is among the highest in Europe (Alber and Kohler 2008).

To get an overview of the state of development of urban agriculture in territorial partners' area, inventory questionnaire also included a question about local strategic and legislative framework on sustainable urban development, and 16 questions about selected economic, social, environmental, and cultural aspects of urban agriculture.

4.4.1 Local strategic and legislative framework

All partners named at least one local document that promotes sustainable development. However, we can assess that the paradigm of sustainable development is being fully adopted only in Velenje and Székesfehérvár, where strategies, spatial plans or other documents are being implemented, with programmes covering a range of aspects (economy, energy, transport, agriculture, welfare, etc.), all to achieve greater sustainability. It is also important to stress that urban agriculture has not been widely recognized as an important element to promote sustainable development, despite many documents, related to current status and future orientation of urban agricultural areas (see chapter 2.1.1). More or less, the only exception is Székesfehérvár: its Environmental protection program 2012–2017 mentions community gardens as a possible tool for increasing sustainability and raising environmental awareness.

Table 9: Documents in pilot areas, representing local strategic and legislative framework for sustainable urban development.

Pilot area	Documents
Municipal district Prague 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spatial plan
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal development plan of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad 2014–2020
Municipality of Székesfehérvár	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated urban development strategy Environmental condition 2015 Environmental protection Program 2012–2017
Municipality of Vaslui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban development strategy Sustainable energy action plan Sustainable urban plan for mobility
Municipality of Velenje	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable urban strategy for smart, entrepreneurial and friendly Velenje 2025 Local agenda 21 Strategic development document of Municipality of Velenje Sustainable energetic action plan of Municipality of Velenje
Municipality of Ulcinj	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Development Plan (in progress)

4.4.2 Economic aspects

Due to the lack of data in pilot areas, it was only possible to give a rough estimation of the number of inhabitants, involved in urban agriculture. In Velenje, only the number of people engaged in agriculture on municipal land was given. Estimated number range from 0 in Ulcinj to 400 in Prague 9, which is, in most cases, less than 1 % of the total population. We can assume that actual number of people dealing with urban agriculture is much higher everywhere, if we also took into account family gardens. In Romania, for example, almost each household owns a garden (Paats and Tiit 2010).

Table 10: Number of inhabitants involved in urban agriculture.

Pilot area	Number of inhabitants involved in urban agriculture
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	100
Municipality of Velenje	380 (only municipal land)
Municipality of Vaslui	150
Municipality of Ulcinj	0
Municipal district Prague 9	400
Municipality of Székesfehérvár	200

A very important aspect of urban agriculture is also its integration into local economy, which reduces the ecological footprint of the municipalities by short-distance transport. In four pilot areas, this is achieved through local outdoor markets, which operate in Blagoevgrad, Velenje, Vaslui and Prague 9, usually once per week. A somewhat different case is Székesfehérvár, which has a large agricultural sector, but without any noticeable local food production. Similar case is Ulcinj, where food production is more or less limited to rural fringe, without significant integration into local economy.

A “formalized” informal exchange of local food products only exists in Velenje and it is part of a bigger national movement for the exchange of seedlings, seeds, and crops (*Zelemenjava*). An informal exchange of fruit and vegetable is also noticeable in Blagoevgrad, where it is becoming trendy, especially for young families, and in Vaslui, in case when hobby farmers produce more than they consume. Similar case is reported in Prague 9 and Székesfehérvár.

Urban agricultural products can have a high added value and low ecological footprint if such food is being sold in local restaurants. We found out that many restaurants in pilot areas operate in such a way, while the food is mainly produced in farms in peri-urban areas. In Ulcinj, this is the case even for the majority of the restaurants. An interesting example is from Blagoevgrad, where a small hotel Kartal even has its own production of vegetables.

Contrary, a biomass from urban gardens and farms as a source of renewable energy is not yet being systematically gathered, although such opportunities are probably huge. Studies show that food waste can contribute even up to 40 % of municipal solid wastes (Lee et al. 2007).

Since arable land is often viewed as a less profitable and with big potentials for construction, we were also interested if there are any conflicts between urban agriculture and investors. No such conflict was reported. The same is true for relation between recreational and urban agricultural use. However, it was assessed that investors generate pressure to build on green areas in Prague 9. We can assume that this is also happening in other pilot areas, but so far without any significant pressure on urban food gardening and farming areas.

4.4.3 Social aspects

Urban agriculture can also be used as a teaching method and/or “natural laboratory”, as it offers many opportunities for developing horticultural and communication skills (see Perez-Vazquez, Anderson and Rogers 2005). There are two very interesting examples of the use of urban agriculture as a teaching method in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad. The first is the *Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa*, which has been operating since 1993 and is attended by children and adolescents with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities. In 2016, the municipality has also developed the therapeutic garden inside the centre to help the disabled children and teach them about the colours and texture of the flowers, herbs and some fruits. The second example is the *Natural school Tvoriltsi*, where children can learn how to seed, grow vegetables, work with clay etc.

A similar example can be found in Velenje: as part of a Local Action Group (LAG) project, University for lifelong learning established 7 arranged teaching parks in primary schools with high beams, where pupils plant vegetables, herbs and fruit trees in order to learn about food production and self-sufficiency. In Prague 9, educational outdoor events, organized by the municipality, are regularly taking place, covering also urban agriculture. At these events, citizens and/or children have the possibility to become familiar with small-scale gardening, waste management, water treatment, neighbouring etc.

There is plenty of evidence that urban agriculture, especially food gardening, contributes to social cohesion through social interactions, community building, etc. (Pearson, Pearson and Pearson 2010). Some municipalities in the AgriGo4Cities project have already realized this potential. In Velenje, one of the most important guidelines for designing urban gardening is to provide the citizens an opportunity for an active leisure time. Educational outdoor events in Prague 9 fall in this category as well, since they provide opportunities to hang out and socialize. Small-scale social events also take place in Székesfehérvár. They are the result of the NGOs' self-imposed activities, not facilitated by the municipality. They include guidance of the gardeners, workshops, trips for the members and small-scale events in two community gardens.

Table 11: Non-governmental organisations, directly involved in urban agriculture in pilot areas.

Pilot area	NGOs, directly involved in UA
Municipal district Prague 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGO Krocan, o.s. • Environmental NGO NaZemi ("OnEarth") • Czech gardener's association
Municipality of Blagoevgrad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Biser 2000": this local association is active with environmental activities and Bulgaria folklore related actions. They have 2 folklore dance clubs and are founder and organizer of several dancing festivals.
Municipality of Székesfehérvár	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Székesfehérvári Kertbarát Egyesület – Association of Gardening in Székesfehérvár • Jancsárkert Egyesület – Jancsárkert Association (trying to establish local food market) • Gaja Környezetvédő Egyesület – Gaja Environmental Association
Municipality of Vaslui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /
Municipality of Velenje	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University for lifelong learning
Municipality of Ulcinj	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day care center „Sirena” • „Right to live” • local Utility Company

Regarding community building, social interactions and knowledge provision, involvement of NGOs in urban agriculture can be of significant importance, as they realize gardening potentials. In Ulcinj, Prague 9 and Székesfehérvár, there are up to three NGOs in pilot areas, at least partly involved in urban

agriculture. One such NGO operates in Blagoevgrad and Velenje, while there is no such NGO in Ulcinj. NGOs' profile ranges from folklore activities, social care, environmental protection to establishment of local food market.

4.4.4 Environmental aspect

We can assess that project partners are generally aware of environmental potential of urban agriculture to contribute to and promote sustainable urban development. They listed a number of environmental benefits of gardening, ranging from lower carbon footprint, greening the city, waste reduction and re-using of waste and waste water, improving biodiversity, and air quality, increasing environmental awareness etc.

Promotion of eco-farming principles (e.g. no pesticides, no chemical fertilisers) in urban agricultural areas was only reported in Velenje and Székesfehérvár. In allotment gardens, owned by Municipality of Velenje, organic gardening is not specifically defined in the contract of leasing the urban gardens. However, tenants are committed to adjust their activities to ecological and soil conditions and to prevent pollution or any other degradation of the land. In Székesfehérvár, eco-farming is required in two community gardens, this being the main principle of the Association of Gardening in Székesfehérvár.

In Blagoevgrad, Velenje and Vaslui, integrated waste management systems are in use, following principles of effectiveness and sustainable development. However, there are no programmes on waste management which would also take into consideration urban agriculture. The only such practice was reported in Velenje, where allotment gardens have organized waste gathering (bio and mixed waste) and use a possibility to set up composters.

4.4.5 Cultural aspect

Urban agriculture can also contribute to cultural dimension of sustainable urban development, although such view has not been used very often. For example, urban agriculture can be understood as intangible cultural heritage and an important part of local customs and habits while it can also strengthen cultural identity. However, understanding urban agriculture as a part of local cultural customs and habits could be prone to subjectivity, when activities are not yet formally recognized as a cultural heritage. As informal food production is very common in former communist countries, it should not surprise us that urban gardening is very popular among people in project's pilot areas. In Vaslui, for example, citizens living in the residential areas use most of the spare land around the house for gardening, which is otherwise a very common practice in Romania. In Blagoevgrad, Vaslui and Prague 9, the popularity of urban gardening can be explained as a special form of "land attachment" and a desire to be in touch with nature. A somewhat different case was reported in Székesfehérvár, where an area called Felsőváros (Upper town) was an important local food supplier for the whole city in the past. However, local varieties and their preservation are not yet recognized as a topic of local urban agriculture, with Gril homestead in Velenje being the only agricultural site protected as cultural heritage.

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5 Partners' profiles

5.1 Municipal district Prague 9 (Czech Republic)

The Municipal district Prague 9 was established by the capital of Prague, being effective since 1990 and confirmed by public ordinance of the capital of Prague in 2001. The district of Prague 9 has a surface of 13.31 km² and consists of original historic sections: greater part of Vysočany (except for the Na Balkáně), smaller part of Libeň (east of the railway line Prague-Turnov), Prosek, a greater part of Střížkov, nearly the whole territory of Hrdlořezy, a smaller part of Hloubětín and a slight part of Malešice (Městská část Praha 9 2017). At the end of December 2016 the district of Prague 9 had the population of around 57,000 inhabitants and population density of 4,286 inhabitants per km² (City Population Prague 2017).

The aforementioned city quarters were originally agricultural settlements. Thanks to favourable location on the main railway lines, industrial production quickly broke through into Vysočany and Libeň in the 19th century. In the beginning of 20th century, other quarters gradually turned into residential areas with houses; in the second half of 20th century, great housing estate, designed for nearly 30,000 people, was built in Prosek. In the 1990s, industry in Libeň and Vysočany disappeared and nowadays, large housing estates are built there mainly while urban greenery is created responsibly.

District Prague 9 is famous thanks to the Černý Most neighbourhood. This neighbourhood contains a collection of dilapidated old buildings alongside new buildings with apartments for families. At the moment, the neighbourhood suffers from lack of shops in the residential areas and lack of convenient access to trams. Many of its residents use the bus services. The metro, which was extended during the past year, reaches the centre of the neighbourhood and a large mall that was recently renovated draws many visitors from the entire area (Conbiz 2017).

The district of Prague 9 is adjacent to the districts of Prague 10, Prague 3, Prague 8, Prague 18 (Letňany), Prague 19 (Kbely) and Prague 14 (Kyje) (Městská část Praha 9 2017).

5.1.1 Characteristics of urban agriculture

Strategic and legislative framework to support urban agriculture in the Municipal district Prague 9 is not very strong. Currently, the only relevant document is the *Spatial plan*, designed on the national level. It sets rules for green spaces and built-up areas, but does not focus on urban agriculture; it does not even mention it. Despite the lack of proper strategic framework, the Municipal district Prague 9 annually spends cca. 110,000 CZK (around 4,000 EUR; 1.35% of municipality's budget) per hectare of urban agricultural land. The funds are mostly covering maintenance and some regeneration costs. The Municipal district Prague 9 has three urban agricultural sites: *Zahrádkářská kolonie* (allotment garden), *Vinice Máchalka* (local food + farm) and *Buňky pro bezdomovce* (social farm).

Zahrádkářská kolonie

The *Zahrádkářská kolonie* was established between 1940s and 1950s as an allotment garden by a group of gardeners and with initial municipal support in the form of the provision of land. Nowadays, the urban agricultural site is owned by Prague City hall which rents the plots to the gardeners. One becomes a member of the *Zahrádkářská kolonie* by getting a membership at the *Český Zahrádkářský svaz* (Czech union of allotment and leisure gardeners),²⁶ which is a national association of owners/renters of the plots. The members take care for the management and maintenance of plots while having their own (i.e. private) order and rules for renting procedure and by taking into consideration the rules of the *Český Zahrádkářský svaz* in a day-to-day maintenance.

The whole area covers 402 m² and is divided into 100 plots (around 40 m² per plot). It is equipped by small-scale facility for the storage of tools and a short rest. Access to the area is restricted only to members of the urban agricultural site. Accessibility for users (target group/residents) is assessed as average by foot, bicycle, and personal car on the one hand, and poor by public transport on the other hand.

Despite a long history and tradition, the *Zahrádkářská kolonie* still operates on a temporary basis, as it lies on the vacant land (land in transition) with uncertain agricultural future. The area is lucrative and therefore tempting for investors and developers. It is expected that the site will be sold and/or changed from green to built-up area. Such a scenario is quite possible also due to inactive municipal role in supporting urban agriculture as a predominant activity at this location. The absence of municipal involvement, unresolved ownership relations and inadequate management has recently led to constant arguments and disagreements about equity, security and possession structure. Consequently, the number of cultivated plots has slightly decreased. For more information about the *Zahrádkářská kolonie* visit: <https://www.zahradkari.cz/us/praha/index.php?str=82>.

Vinice Máchalka

The *Vinice Máchalka* is a vineyard on the Vysočany cadastral area under Prosek in the Municipal district Prague 9 (a type of local food + farm). It was restored and built in 2000 by the Wine cooperative Sv. Václav and with support of the Municipal district Prague 9. The rules of management and maintenance were established by a mutual agreement among members of the Wine cooperative Sv. Václav.

²⁶ For more information visit: <https://www.zahradkari.cz/czs/index.php?str=77>.



Figure 9: View of the *Vinice Máchalka* in the Municipal district Prague 9 (source: <http://www.machalka.cz/>).

The Wine cooperative Sv. Václav was established in 1996 with the main idea of restoring historical vineyards in Prague and its surroundings and also for producing quality wine. It joins winegrowers, mostly in their free time, following the many years' tradition of the area. The Wine cooperative Sv. Václav enables professional enjoyment and relaxation to its members in the field of viticulture and winemaking.

The *Vinice Máchalka* covers 1.9 hectares and is divided into 100 plots (around 190 m² per plot). It is equipped by a bigger facility for the storage of tools and occasional stay at the urban agricultural area. Access to the area is open for all. Accessibility for users (target group/residents) is assessed as good with all modes of transport. Establishment of the *Vinice Máchalka* contributed to improved environment and social life and created a unique element of the city district. For more information about the *Vinice Máchalka* visit: <http://www.machalka.cz/>.

Buňky pro bezdomovce

The *Buňky pro bezdomovce* was established as a social farm, offering small housing possibilities for homeless people in exchange of taking care of a small piece of environment and/or a garden. The Municipal district Prague 9 started up a project to help homeless people in need in 2015. The aim of the project was not to reduce the number of homeless people living in a city, but to help them in their bad situation. The land is owned by the Municipal district Prague 9 that established rules of operation and formed cooperation with the police, NGOs taking care of homeless people and shelters and NGOs for medical assistance. The rules also set up regular communication with the employees of the Municipal district Prague 9.

At the moment, the *Buňky pro bezdomovce* stretches over 250 m², encompasses 22 small houses/caravans and hosts about 70 homeless people. The area is open to all and has a good access by

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all modes of transport. For more information about the *Buňky pro bezdomovce* visit:
<http://www.denik.cz/galerie/bunky-pro-bezdomovce-na-klicove-v-praze.html>.



Figure 10: Example of a caravan for homeless people in the *Buňky pro bezdomovce* in the Municipal district Prague 9 (source: <http://www.denik.cz/galerie/bunky-pro-bezdomovce-na-klicove-v-praze.html>).

5.1.2 Participatory planning & management of urban agriculture

In Prague 9, citizens are involved in the preparation process of municipal strategic documents and neighbourhood planning activities through citizen discussions and open round-tables on spatial planning. They are informed about changes. Municipality is taking into account citizens' own ideas and inventions, discussing their ideas at the municipal council. Vulnerable groups are only involved in the planning activities on the neighbourhood level, but not in the preparation process of municipal strategic documents.

In community and neighbourhood involvement, four different tools are engaged:

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- stakeholder platforms,
- workshops,
- face to face meetings, and
- consultation exercises including surveys.

The decision-making process is predominantly initiated by the municipality and its departments.

Citizens can partly influence management of municipality-owned urban agricultural land – they can discuss spatial distribution and usage of the plots. Vulnerable groups are not specifically targeted. The most important communication tools about urban agriculture in the municipality are [municipal website](#) and bulletin board. Other communication tools include the local newspaper “Devítka”.

Municipality has a negative experience with participatory planning process: in most occasions, it turned out to be an opportunity for loud and dissatisfied citizens to communicate with the municipal representatives face-to-face, and the debates quickly escalated into non-topic related mess. No external expert was engaged during the process. Participation methods are therefore not currently used. The problem seems to have its roots in the lack of knowledge of the citizens and in overbureaucratic system in the Czech Republic. At the moment, municipality does not have any strategy to overcome these barriers.

5.1.3 Social inclusion through urban agriculture

The most critical vulnerable groups in the district Prague 9 are the homeless and elderly people, followed by the unemployed and NEET. Another vulnerable group that the city finds relevant is single mothers, while people with low income, mentally and physically handicapped, the Roma and other ethnic minorities as well as migrants currently seem irrelevant for the authorities. The groups with the most potential to be involved in community gardening are elderly people and single mothers, as they are the most active in public events, so the city decided to work with them as well as with the homeless (with cca. 20–35 people altogether) in the pilot action.

Economic aspects

Several forms of businesses in Europe as well as globally are especially appropriate for employing vulnerable groups (e.g. social enterprises, cooperatives etc.). In Prague 9, Gardening Company Hortus Správa zeleně, s.r.o., employs homeless people (cca. 5). Companies are also encouraged to employ members of vulnerable groups by some mechanisms. For example, companies in the Czech Republic can consider special social criteria in the procurement process, which is the most relevant mechanism for the employment of the elderly, Roma, handicapped and single mothers (but basically for all vulnerable groups). Still, employers are subject to specific requirements for specific procurements and employment relations. Businesses can in theory also use quotas to ensure the equality (e.g. gender) of work environment in their enterprises, but there is no known case of the quotas in practice.

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Social aspects

In Prague 9, the department of social affairs takes care of the homeless people, Roma and other ethnic minorities as well as the elderly. Several NGOs operate in the field of social inclusion on the city or national level, e.g. Red Cross (Červený kříž) and Proxima Sociale OPS. Some vulnerable groups, such as Roma and ethnic minorities and the disabled, are integrated into regular education system, while NEET and mentally handicapped children attend specialized forms of education. Outside formal education system, vulnerable groups can attend lifelong learning programs, which especially target elderly people. Certain vulnerable groups are also entitled to some social transfers, e.g. Roma in ethnic minorities to welfare and mentally and physically handicapped to extraordinary financial aids.

Political aspects

Social inclusion should be also supported by legislation and strategies. One of the most important strategies, aimed to vulnerable groups in Prague, is the [Conception of solution finding to homeless issue in Prague 2013–2020](#), designed by the city of Prague municipal employees. The document analyses the issue of homeless people and conditions, under which people lose their jobs and/or homes in Prague. It addresses these factors in order to decrease the number of the homeless people and prevent the issue.

Physical and communication aspect

The preconditions for social inclusion of vulnerable groups are the adaptations of the physical environment and communication. The district provides basic physical adaptations for physically handicapped people, such as traffic lights with sound signals, embossed lines on sidewalks, ramps for wheelchairs and low-floor buses. Victims of domestic violence can use a safe house and the homeless a shelter. Vulnerable groups are also aided by social service centre and health care system; they can attend programs for elderly people or join the Roma club. The bulletin board at the front desk of the municipality is adjusted to the needs of the blind, and employees at the social municipal department speak Roma dialect.

Good practices of social inclusion of vulnerable groups

The most regular methods of social inclusion used in the municipality are formal and informal meetings as well as discussions among the residents, creation and development of social networks and organization of public events. The municipality as well as the Social services centre Harrachovská already have positive experience with social inclusion, especially of the elderly, homeless people and single mothers.

5.1.4 Contribution of urban agriculture to sustainable urban development

The only important document, which addresses sustainability, is Spatial plan, which also concerns taking care and setting rules for green spaces and built-up lands, but with no specific emphasis on sustainable urban development.

Economic aspects

There are around 400 inhabitants involved in urban agriculture in the Municipal district Prague 9. Local food products are being sold in farming markets in the “Prosek” and “Harfa” parts of the district. There is no formalized informal exchange of local food products between citizens. There is also no information about local restaurants being supplied by the local food products. A biomass from urban gardens or urban farms is not used as a source of renewable energy. Prague 9 is facing potential conflicts between urban agriculture and investors as developers would like to turn green spaces (or most of them) to a built-up area.

Social aspects

There are no examples of urban agriculture as a teaching method and/or ‘natural laboratory’. Urban agriculture is used in bigger extent as a tool for improving social cohesion, for example in municipal events. Their major environmental and educational outdoor event is Mikroklima event, organized in the park, where also urban agricultural activities take place. At these events, citizens and/or children have the possibility to become familiar with a small-scale gardening, waste management, water treatment, neighbouring etc. There are no land use conflicts between recreational and urban agricultural use of public green spaces. Three NGOs and other interested stakeholders are directly involved in urban agriculture in the municipality:

- NGO Krocan, o. s.
- Environmental NGO NaZemi (“OnEarth”)
- Czech gardener’s association

Environmental aspects

Regarding environmental aspect of urban agriculture, no special activities are taking place (e.g. encouraging eco-farming principles or implementing programmes of waste management).

Cultural aspects

The popularity of urban food gardening can be explained as a special mode of “land attachment” and a desire to be in touch with nature, especially among the elderly. Local varieties and their preservation are not an issue, although it is in the common interest to keep local urban agriculture diverse. No urban agricultural area is protected as a cultural heritage site.

5.2 Municipality of Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria)

The Municipality of Blagoevgrad is the largest by population and third by territory in the Blagoevgrad region. It has a surface area of 621 km² and around 77,000 inhabitants. The Municipality of Blagoevgrad is located in the Southwest of Bulgaria, at the western part of the Rila-Rhodope mountain massif, is composed of 26 villages and has population density of around 125 inhabitants per km². Municipal centre, the city of Blagoevgrad (more than 70,000 inhabitants) is located in the valley of the Struma River, at the altitude of 360 m, near the south-western slopes of Rila Mountain, on main road E-79, and 100 km south of Sofia. The town is located 20 km from the border with Macedonia, 100 km from the border with Greece and 250 km from Thessaloniki. Through the city passes the river Blagoevgradska Bistritsa.

The relief is mountainous and valleys, with an average altitude of 959.8 meters. 80% of its territory falls within the transitional continental climatic zone with strong influence of the warm Mediterranean Sea air coming from the river valley. Other 20% located at high altitudes have a typical mountain climate. A significant part of the territory is occupied by forests, many of which need reconstruction. The river network is thick and is formed mainly by small tributaries of the Struma River. Groundwater is common for Blagoevgrad valley and cover parts of neighbour municipalities – Dupnitsa, Boboshevo and Kocherinovo. In Blagoevgrad, the groundwater flow is fed by the river Bistritsa. The municipality has 30 mineral springs with temperature up to 55°C, whose water is used to treat chronic diseases of the peripheral nervous system, gynaecological problems, rheumatism, etc.

There are few big industrial subjects in the municipality and they are concentrated in Blagoevgrad. Trade and services form significant part of the municipal economy. The presence of two universities and a lot of young people is boosting them and also providing qualified labour force. Agriculture and forestry are important parts of the regional economy too.

There are more than 10 hotels in Blagoevgrad. Visitors can see a neighbourhood with old houses "Varosha". The hot mineral water in Blagoevgrad is not widely utilized, but there is communal bath. The mountains in the region offers a lot of places for hiking and picnic. All the cultural institutions are in Blagoevgrad – the theatre, museums, art galleries and cultural centres.

5.2.1 Characteristics of urban agriculture

The Municipality of Blagoevgrad is promoting urban agriculture directly through the *Strategy on the management and disposition of municipal property of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad for the period 2015–2019* and the *Programme for the management and disposition of municipal property of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad for the year of 2017*. Through these documents, *Municipal land fund* has been created that allows municipal agricultural land with size up to 10 acres to be rented for 1 or 5 years. Priority is given to indigent and vulnerable people. In addition, *Municipal development plan of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad 2014–2020* mentions indirect supporting mechanisms, relevant for ensuring effective functioning of agriculture, such as improving integration links between producers,

processors and traders of agricultural products (measure 1.2.2), stimulating the development of organic farming (measure 1.2.4), and support for the establishment of a local branch organization of local producers as well as raising their awareness and qualification (measure 1.2.5).

The Municipality of Blagoevgrad reported seven urban agricultural sites: *Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa* (therapeutic garden), *Natural school Tvoriltsi* (educational garden), *BIOFarm Happiness* (environmental farm), *First-class cedars for our first-graders in our city* (educational garden), *Family Kitanov farm* (local food + farm), *Family Mitev farm* (local food + farm) and several locations of allotment gardens. Project partners from the Municipality of Blagoevgrad also identified and mapped potential new locations for urban agriculture.

BIOFarm Happiness

The *BIOFarm Happiness* is an environmental farm in the village of Zelen Dol in the peri-urban area of Blagoevgrad. It was established in 2012 by Mariya Derizhan and Rosen Angelov and stretches over 240 m². It is open to all and has a good access by all transport modes. The farm is dedicated to reproduction of a red Californian worm, which is good for bio-natural composting and a creation of humus. The farm is often visited by volunteers from Europe and Asia, who are offering help in return for food and shelter.

For more information about the *BIOFarm Happiness* visit:

<https://www.facebook.com/Tvorilci.Prirodno.Uchilishte/>.



Figure 13: The *BIOFarm Happiness* in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad (source:

<https://www.facebook.com/BiOfarmaHappy/>).

Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa

The *Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa* is located in the centre of Blagoevgrad since 1993. It is attended by children and adolescents with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities. The capacity is 36 seats and the children are divided into three groups by age and a degree of disability. The centre has an equipped rehabilitation room and psychomotor, logopedic cabinet for treatment of speech defects and its own transport. Through good cooperation between social services, municipal administration, NGOs and academic circles, an opportunity has been created for children and young people to participate in joint events with children from regular educational system and with educational institutions in Blagoevgrad.



Figure 11: The *Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa* in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad (source: http://www.blgmun.com/cat98/205/Zavedeniya_zasocialni_uslugi.html).

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The Municipality of Blagoevgrad has developed the therapeutic garden in 2016. The reason was to help the disabled children and to teach them about the colour and texture of flowers, herbs and fruits. The production is in full use of the centre. The staff is preparing essential oils from herbs, which are being used for aromatherapy on children, and a small number of strawberry jam jars.

The size of a garden is only 11 m², but it has a table and chairs to rest. Due to the location in the city centre, it has a good access by all modes of transport, although the visit of external visitors is restricted. For more information about the *Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa* visit:
http://www.blgmun.com/cat98/205/Zavedeniya_zasocialni_uslugi.html.

Natural school Tvoriltsi

The *Natural school Tvoriltsi* is an educational garden between the village of Riltsi and Blagoevgrad, 10 minutes from the city centre. The name is a combination of the name of the village and a Bulgarian word for creating something “*tvoria –творя*” – ТвоРилци. The idea of the garden is to teach children different natural methods of work: planting seeds of fruits, herbs, vegetables; working with clay; ways of making a living place, bathroom, refrigerator, toilet; researching different crystals; cleaning the waste from natural places; woodworking lessons; beekeeping; preparing natural food and beverages in combination with herbs etc. The program also offers a chance to sing, physical and breathing exercises, walking in the woods, theatrical activities, and exercises for walking barefoot on different surfaces, such as sand, small pebbles and grass.

The garden was established in 2016 by Ivan Andonov and Kameliya Kostadinova. They rented the land from the municipality for a period of one year. The surface stretches over 35 hectares. The garden has 2 yurts, which were built by the owners. The place is well accessible by bicycle and personal car, but not so much by foot and public transport due to its location at the edge of the city. For more information about the *Natural school Tvoriltsi* visit: <https://www.facebook.com/Tvorilci.Prirodno.Uchilishte/>.



Figure 12: The *Natural school Tvoriltsi* in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad (source: <https://www.facebook.com/Tvorilci.Prirodno.Uchilishte/>).

First-class cedars for our first-graders in our city

The *First-class cedars for our first-graders in our city* is an educational garden in the Dimcho Debelyanov primary school in the urban area of Blagoevgrad. The idea for a garden came from a local NGO Biser 2000 that started the initiative with the school in 2016. Together they planted 400 deodar cedars in 8 rows in March 2017. They managed to include children not only from the Dimcho Debelyanov primary school but also from four other schools. The event was actively supported by representatives from organisations, such as Bulgarian Red Cross, South-West State Enterprise DP (responsible for the state forest areas in South-West Bulgaria) and Biostroi Ltd., which is a municipal enterprise taking care of waste management. The rows are located at the school yard and 664 children are currently involved with the seeds and the baby deodar cedar growing. Their next step will be to find out where they can plant new trees. For more information about the educational garden *First-class cedars for our first-graders in our city* visit: <http://www.chetvurtoblg.com/>.

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Figure 14: The *First-class cedars for our first-graders in our city* in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad (source: <http://www.chetvurtoblg.com/>).

Family Kitanov farm

The vineyard is owned by a family *Kitanov* (a type of local food + farm) and is located in the village of Dubrava, 7 km from Blagoevgrad. The farm is easily accessed by bicycle and personal car, but poorly by foot and public transport due to its location at the edge of the city. The vineyard was established in 1990 and stretches over 10,000 m². The owner is growing different types of grapes, but the predominant type is Saperavi. The wine is produced for the local market.

Family Mitev farm

The *Family Mitev farm* (a type of local food + farm) is located in the village of Dubrava, 7 km from Blagoevgrad. The owner of a small hotel with restaurant in Blagoevgrad is dedicated to an organic type of living and has decided to produce some of the food for his restaurant in his own garden. He has fruit

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trees, vineyard, vegetables and mushrooms. The garden was established in 2000 and stretches over 4,000 m². The site is well accessible by bicycle and personal car, but poorly by foot due to its location at the edge of the city. Public transport connections are average.

Allotment gardens

Under article 14 (1) and 14 (2) from the Municipal property act, and under the article 82 (1/2), 82 (2) and 83 (2) from Ordinance on the order of procurement, management and disposal of municipal property, 49 contracts with the Municipality of Blagoevgrad define tenancy agreement for the period of 1 year and 34 contracts for period of 10 years. There are no available data about spatial distribution of this type of urban agricultural sites or plots within the Municipality of Blagoevgrad.

Potential new locations for urban agriculture in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad

Project partners from the Municipality of Blagoevgrad mapped all the possible locations in the city and its peri-urban area, which can potentially be used for urban agriculture (Figure 15). The land in red is owned by the municipality while the land in blue is governed by the municipality, but cannot be sold due to the uncompleted restitution process.

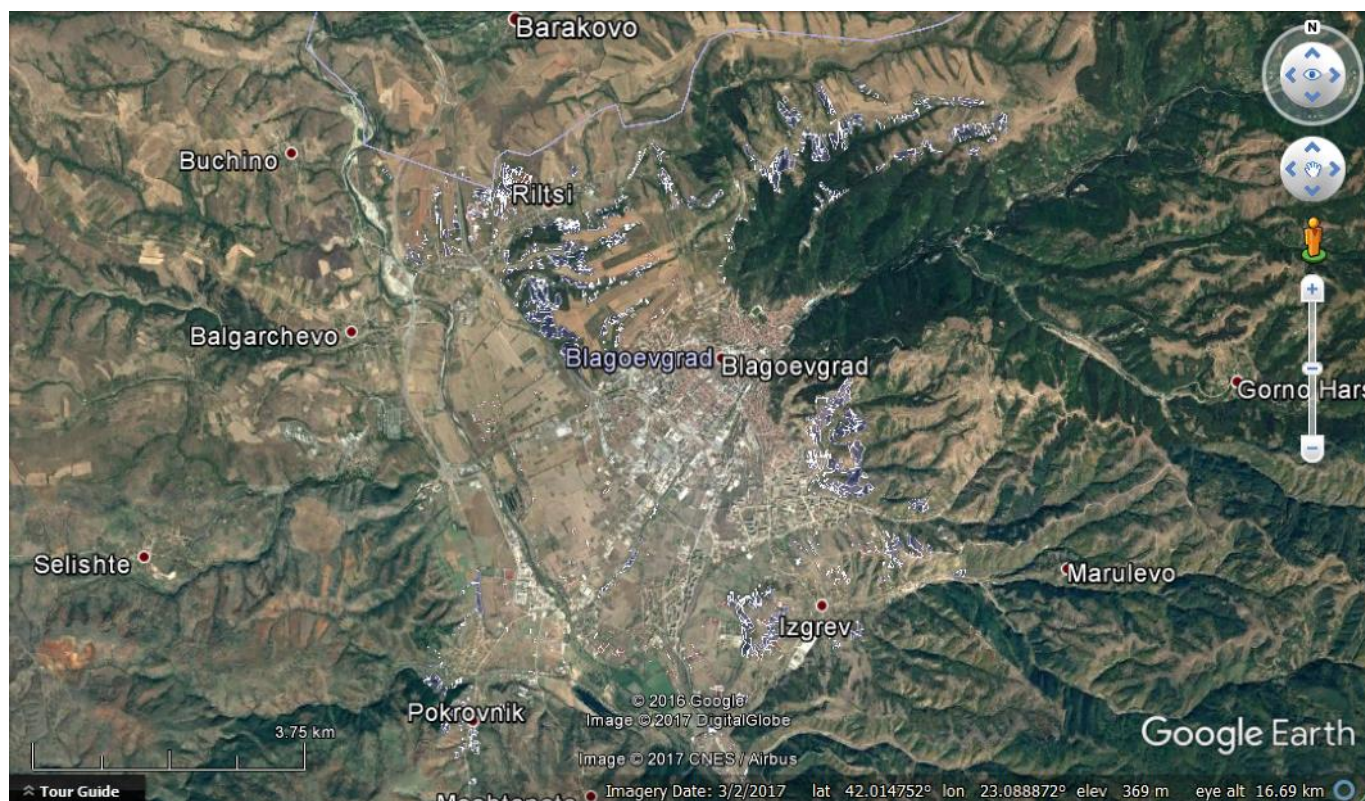


Figure 16: Potential new locations for urban agriculture in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad.

5.2.2 Participatory planning & management of urban agriculture

In Blagoevgrad, all strategic documents defining the vision and priorities of the municipality are widely discussed with the local community before they are adopted by the municipal council. Blagoevgrad is the only pilot area in the AgriGo4Cities project which takes special care of the participation of vulnerable groups – they plan discussions with target focus groups (the unemployed, people with low income, elderly (65+), NEET, mentally and physically handicapped). Citizens have several options to be in touch with the municipality. They are invited to participate through invitations on public places, in buildings and via social media channels. For community and neighbourhood involvement, 8 different engagement tools are used by the municipality:

- workshops,
- live labs,
- face to face meetings,
- web platforms,
- social media,
- consultation exercises, including surveys,

- voting procedures,
- awareness raising campaigns.

The decision-making process is predominantly initiated by the municipality with the aim to directly involve local communities in the implementation of actions. In the field of urban agriculture, the initiators are the private owners of the land and the municipality itself. Citizens and vulnerable groups are not involved in the management of municipality-owned urban agricultural land. The only such communication activity is auctions for the rent of municipal agriculture land, which are open to each citizen and the information about them is published on the municipal web page.

Municipality of Blagoevgrad has already implemented a participatory planning process when envisaging the Municipal Development Plan of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad 2014–2020. The process was run by the municipality, using the method of public forum, and a general experience was positive. Municipality is also trying to educate their administrators on participatory planning by enrolling them to qualification trainings. Currently, a common procedure that the city administration uses to respond to a citizen initiative is personal correspondence and meetings with people, also with the help of the NGOs.

5.2.3 Social inclusion through urban agriculture

The most important vulnerable groups in Blagoevgrad are people with low income, elderly and NEET, followed by the unemployed and mentally and physically handicapped. Homeless people, Roma and other ethnic minorities as well as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers currently do not represent relevant groups for the municipality. Especially NEET and elderly people are strongly involved in gardening, however, they usually tend to private gardens, so it remains a challenge to motivate them for community gardening. In the AgriGo4Cities pilot action, Blagoevgrad intends to work with the unemployed, people with low income, mentally and physically handicapped, elderly and NEET, altogether with 28 people.

Economic aspects

Two cooperatives in Blagoevgrad, operating as a social enterprise, are already employing people with disabilities, what builds a good basis for potential cooperation in the pilot action. Such companies can rely on national funding programs for subsidized employment of vulnerable groups, especially of NEET, people with low income and the unemployed. To receive subsidy, they need to fulfil some requirements, which are defined by the law.

Social aspects

Roma community, NEET and children of other vulnerable groups are involved in regular educational system with the exception of severely handicapped children and youth, who attend specialized forms of

education. Outside formal education system, the unemployed, people with low income, Roma community and NEET can attend professional trainings, free-of-charge qualification courses and lifelong learning programs.

Certain vulnerable groups, in Bulgaria especially the unemployed, people with low income, Roma community and NEET, are also entitled to some social transfers, such as welfare, extraordinary financial aids, scholarships as well as educational courses and programs.

Blagoevgrad hosts 11 institutions for social services, 9 of which are designed for adults and 2 for children. Social institutions for adults (e.g. shelters, day care centres etc.) apply social services tailored to the individual characteristics of users. The activities are aimed to develop skills needed in everyday life, to shorten the period of social exclusion, and to acquire work habits (i.e. occupational therapy).

Political aspects

Concerning social inclusion, Blagoevgrad rely on [Action plan for the Roma integration 2017-2019](#), which identifies the steps and gives the guidelines for the implementation of the municipal socio-economic integration policy for the Roma people. It is following the national and EU Roma integration strategies. The second important document is the municipal [Annual plan for development of social services](#), which describes the scope, activities and annual plan of 25 municipal social services.

Physical and communication aspects

Besides basic adaptations of the physical environment for physically handicapped people – traffic lights with sounds signals, embossed lines on sidewalks, ramps for wheelchairs – the municipality also provides a safe house for children at risk and an orphanage, family-type accommodation centre as well as an informal centre for shelter and support for finding jobs and re-socialization. Additionally, a municipality's website is adapted for the blind and visually impaired, and Roma people are assisted by medical mediators.

Good practices of social inclusion of vulnerable groups

During the “Week of the woods 2017” representatives from the National park Rila presented stories to the children at nursery “Rosa” in Blagoevgrad. The State Forestry sponsored the kindergarten with 80 cypresses which were planted into the yard and around the nursery. The Municipal company “BIOSTROYI” supported the initiative by planting flowers into the yard. For more information about the good practice visit: <http://www.blgmun.com/news3380/s-tyrjestvena-programa-i-detski-smqh-malchuganite-ot-dg-rosa-preobraziha-dvora-na-detskoto-zavedenie.html>.

5.2.4 Contribution of urban agriculture to sustainable urban development

The most important document for achieving urban sustainability is *Municipal development plan of the Municipality of Blagoevgrad 2014–2020*, which also takes into account urban food gardening.

Economic aspects

The number of inhabitants involved in urban agriculture is estimated at around 100. The urban agricultural products are being sold by local producers once per week in an open market for local food in Blagoevgrad (Pazar/pazap), but the actual need for this type of products is much bigger. There is no formalized informal exchange of local food products between citizens. There is an emerging trend that parents who feed their children by organic food, and they try to buy the products from small local producers or to grow their own food. Exchanging the vegetables, fruits and herbs has therefore become very common. Some local restaurants are supplied by local food products; a small hotel Kartal even has its own production of vegetables. A biomass from urban gardens or urban farms is not used as a source of renewable energy. So far, there are no conflicts between urban agriculture and investors.

Social aspects

There are two examples of urban agriculture as a teaching method and/or ‘natural laboratory’ – the *Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa* and *Natural school Tvoriltsi*, which is educational garden for children. So far, urban agriculture has not been used as a tool for improving social cohesion. There are no land use conflicts between recreational and urban agricultural use of public green spaces. One NGO in the municipality is directly involved in urban agriculture – Biser 2000, a local association, active in the field of the environment and folklore. They have two folklore dance clubs and are a founder and an organizer of several dancing festivals.

Environmental aspects

In general, the municipality is following their environmental policy. It adopted Municipal Program for waste management 2015–2020 with specific measures, deadlines and funds for financing with the aim to create and support an optimal environment through effective waste management. In the field of urban agriculture, private farms are keener on following the eco-farming principles; that is why the customers are looking for home-made products.

Cultural aspect

Bulgarians like to be in touch with their land; taking care of even a small plot is a priority for most of the people. Nowadays, a lot of young people are trying to produce some vegetables or herbs for their own use. Local varieties and their preservation is not an issue of local urban agriculture. No urban agricultural area is protected as a cultural heritage site.

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5.3 Municipality of Székesfehérvár (Hungary)

The city of Székesfehérvár, located in central Hungary is the largest city in Central Transdanubia, the centre of Fejér county and Székesfehérvár District. It was the capital of Hungary in the Middle Ages and one of the most important cities of Hungary, situated in a marshy plain. Székesfehérvár is the seat of a Roman Catholic bishopric, one of the oldest in the country, and was formerly a town of great importance, being the coronation and burial place of the Hungarian kings from the 10th to the 16th century. Amongst its principal buildings are the cathedral, the episcopal palace, several convents, of which the most noteworthy is the Jesuit convent, now a Cistercian secondary school with a handsome church, and the county hall. Székesfehérvár is one of the oldest towns of Hungary, in which St Stephen, the first king of Hungary, built a church, which served as the coronation church for the Hungarian kings. In the same church, some fifteen kings were buried (Wikisource 2015). In 1543, it fell into the hands of the Turks, who destroyed Székesfehérvár, an important fortress town back then. It remained under Turkish occupation until 1686 and was rebuilt later in the 18th century. The city was also heavily damaged during World War II (Infoplease 2012).

Fejér county (capital is Székesfehérvár) had around 418.000 inhabitants and a population density of 96 inhabitants per km² in 2015. Besides the Hungarian majority there are two main minorities, Romani people (approx. 7,000) and Germans (5,500). Religious adherence in the county is predominantly Catholic (around 35%) (Wikipedia 2017).

5.3.1 Characteristics of urban agriculture

The Municipality of Székesfehérvár promoted urban agriculture actively through the *Environmental condition 2015*. The document mentions a call that allowed kindergartens, schools, institutions, owners of family houses and representatives of multi-dwelling houses to apply for plants, seeds and potting soil. Altogether, 469 applications arrived to the local government and the interest has been increased in comparison to the previous years. In addition, the *Environmental protection program 2012–2017* of the Municipality of Székesfehérvár directly mentions community gardens as a possible tool for increasing sustainability and awareness.

The Municipality of Székesfehérvár has five urban agricultural sites: *Palota-kert* (community garden), *Százszék* (community garden), *Feketehegy – enclosed gardens* (leisure farms), *Maroshegy – enclosed gardens 1* (leisure farms), and *Maroshegy – enclosed gardens 2* (leisure farms). Project partners from the municipality also identified some potential new locations for urban agriculture.

Palota-kert community garden

The *Palota-kert* is a small community garden in a large residential, multi-dwelling area of Székesfehérvár. The garden was built in 2013 with the financial support of the municipality and the process was managed by the Székesfehérvári Kertbarát Egyesület (Association of gardening in

Székesfehérvár).²⁷ The municipality provided 1,000,000 HUF (= 3200 €) for the establishment of the garden and the association now rents the whole area from the municipality for 12,600 HUF (= 40 €) per year. The companies from the city also materially supported the establishment of the garden. The works were done by local residents. A plot and usage of the tools are free, but the gardeners have to support the association with 2500 HUF (= 8 €) per year. The association organizes community events, maintains the webpage and provides useful information for the gardeners.

The garden covers 1,050 m² and is divided into 15 individual plots and common gardening areas. It is enclosed with a fence and equipped with small-scale facility for the storage of tools and a short rest. The area is easily accessible to users by unmotorised transport modes (on foot and by bicycle) and a bit harder by motorised means (public transport and personal car). For more information about the *Palotakert* community garden visit: <http://kertbarik.hu/index.php/kozossegi-kertek/palotavarosi-kozossegi-kertek>.



²⁷ Székesfehérvári Kertbarát Egyesület (Association of gardening in Székesfehérvár) was established in 2009 as a club and they have been operating as an association since 2012. It was founded by 64 members, but everybody can join if accepting the basic rules of the association. The main goals are to establish well-kept home gardens, environment protection and planting flowers. The members provide professional help, advices and trainings for gardeners (not just the gardeners from the community gardens). They try to improve green areas in the whole city by providing plants to the local people in their neighbourhoods. More information is available at: <http://www.kertbarik.hu/>.



Figure 17: The *Palota-kert* community garden in the Municipality of Székesfehérvár (source: <http://kertbarik.hu/index.php/kozossegi-kertek/palotavarosi-kozossegi-kertek>).

Szárazrét community garden

The *Szárazrét community garden* was established next to a primary school in a socially segregated Feketehegy-Szárazrét neighbourhood in Székesfehérvár in 2014. The establishment was done as a part of social rehabilitation (EU funded project, KDOP-3.1.1/D2-12).²⁸ Given that the construction of the garden was part of a wider project, the municipality was managing the whole process. The main stakeholders and initiators of the garden are the Székesfehérvári Kertbarát Egyesület (Association of gardening in Székesfehérvár), local decision-makers, local residents, and the school. The future gardeners were involved into the construction process, thus the building of the community started even before the gardening itself. The plots and the tools are free to use. The garden is now managed by the Székesfehérvári Kertbarát Egyesület (Association of gardening in Székesfehérvár) under the same conditions and with the same services as in the case of *Palota-kert* community garden (see above).

The garden covers 1600 m² and is divided into 25 plots. The common area is open for all, but the plants are protected with a fence. There is a small-scale facility for the storage of tools and a short rest. The

²⁸ The Feketehegy-Szárazrét neighbourhood was identified as an area affected by segregation in the Integrated urban development strategy (2007–2013). The project was financed from the Central Transdanubian operative programme. The total amount of support was 1,199,178,708 HUF (= 3,87 million €). Target group was the whole local community and soft elements were emphasized besides physical renewal. The cooperation with the civil sector was also important. The main physical novelties were: creating a community centre in the local primary school, renovation of the school, building of parking places, renovation of the kindergarten, building of playgrounds, renovation of churches, renewal of roads and sidewalks, and installing of a surveillance camera system. For more information visit: <http://www.proalbaregia.hu/szocialis-varosrehabilitacio> (pictures), <https://www.szekesfehervar.hu/szocialis-varos-rehabilitacio-szarazreten>, <http://www.feketehegyszarazret.hu/feketehegy-szarazret-jelene>.

area is easily accessible by all means of transport. For more information about the *Szárazrét* community garden visit: <http://kertbarik.hu/index.php/kozossegi-kertek/szarazreti-kozossegi-kertek>.

Feketehegy – enclosed gardens

The *Feketehegy – enclosed gardens*²⁹ (a type of leisure farms) represent an area of 400–500 small private plots at the edge of Székesfehérvár. Small houses at the plots serve as a resting place (in rare cases also for living) and storage for the tools. Originally, these places were just leisure gardens, but they are gradually being transformed. Some plots became residential places without any agricultural activity, others remained leisure farms with a small house, where people can spend more days, but they are not suitable for living, and some gardens only have a small house for the tools.

There is no association of the owners, so the main stakeholders are the municipality, the local representatives and the people having a plot in the area. Many of them want to change the legal land use classification of the plots, which is currently agricultural and thus the land is much harder to sell. They also lobby to change the legal status of the area to become an inner part of the city, since there is a lack of development processes and some problems with the roads and utilities.

Maroshegy – enclosed gardens 1

The *Maroshegy – enclosed gardens 1* (a type of leisure farms) represent an area of 150–200 small private plots at the edge of Székesfehérvár and have the same characteristics as the *Feketehegy – enclosed gardens* (see above). Small houses are set up at the plots which serve as a resting place and for the tools, but mostly not for living. Originally, these places were just leisure gardens, but they are gradually being transformed. Many of the plots became residential places without any agricultural activity, others remained leisure farms with a small house, where people can spend more days, but they are not suitable for living, and some gardens only have a small house for the tools.

There is no association of the owners, so the main stakeholders are the municipality, the local representatives and the people having a plot in the area. Many of them want to change the legal land use classification of the plots, which is currently agricultural and thus the land is much harder to sell. They also lobby to change the legal status of the area to become an inner part of the city, since there is a lack of development processes and some problems with the roads and utilities.

²⁹ The enclosed gardens became individual legal category in Hungary when there was a minor change in the socialist political system at the end of the 1960s. There was a tacit agreement between the power and the people. The socialist party gave more freedom to the people and in return they did not oppose the system. These kinds of plots were established in the peripheries of the cities in the parts without asphalt roads and public utilities, and there was a lack of urban planning during the process. Enclosed gardens are perceived as individual plots, and no special community sense in connection to agriculture developed in the area.

Maroshegy – enclosed gardens 2

The *Maroshegy – enclosed gardens 2* (a type of leisure farms) is an area of 150–200 small private plots at the edge of Székesfehérvár with the same characteristics as the *Feketehegy – enclosed gardens* and the *Maroshegy – enclosed gardens 1* (see above). Small houses are set up at the plots which serve as a resting place and for the tools, but mostly not for living. Originally, these places were just leisure gardens, but they are gradually being transformed. Many of the plots became residential places without any agricultural activity, others remained leisure farms with a small house, where people can spend more days, but they are not suitable for living, and some gardens only have a small house for the tools.

There is no association of the owners, so the main stakeholders are the municipality, the local representatives and the people having a plot in the area. Many of them want to change the legal land use classification of the plots, which is currently agricultural and thus the land is much harder to sell. They also lobby to change the legal status of the area to become an inner part of the city, since there is a lack of development processes and some problems with the roads and utilities.

Potential new locations for urban agriculture in the Municipality of Székesfehérvár

Project partners from Székesfehérvár specified some potential new locations for urban agriculture that can be utilised in a long term. They referred to *Integrated urban development strategy* which identifies rust belts inside the town that are needed to be regenerated by converting them into green areas as a possible solution for the future. The most important place in this term is the area around the heating plant for which there are plans to utilize it another way and move outside the city (figure 18). The second interesting place is an area around former residential buildings of the Soviet army. It is not a typical industrial rust belt but the buildings were abandoned and in bad condition. The local government started to establish a university campus there and sub-branches of universities from Budapest started to operate there in the past few years. It is a recent and still on-going project. There is also another abandoned former military place next to the campus without buildings but the private real estate development just started taking place there recently.

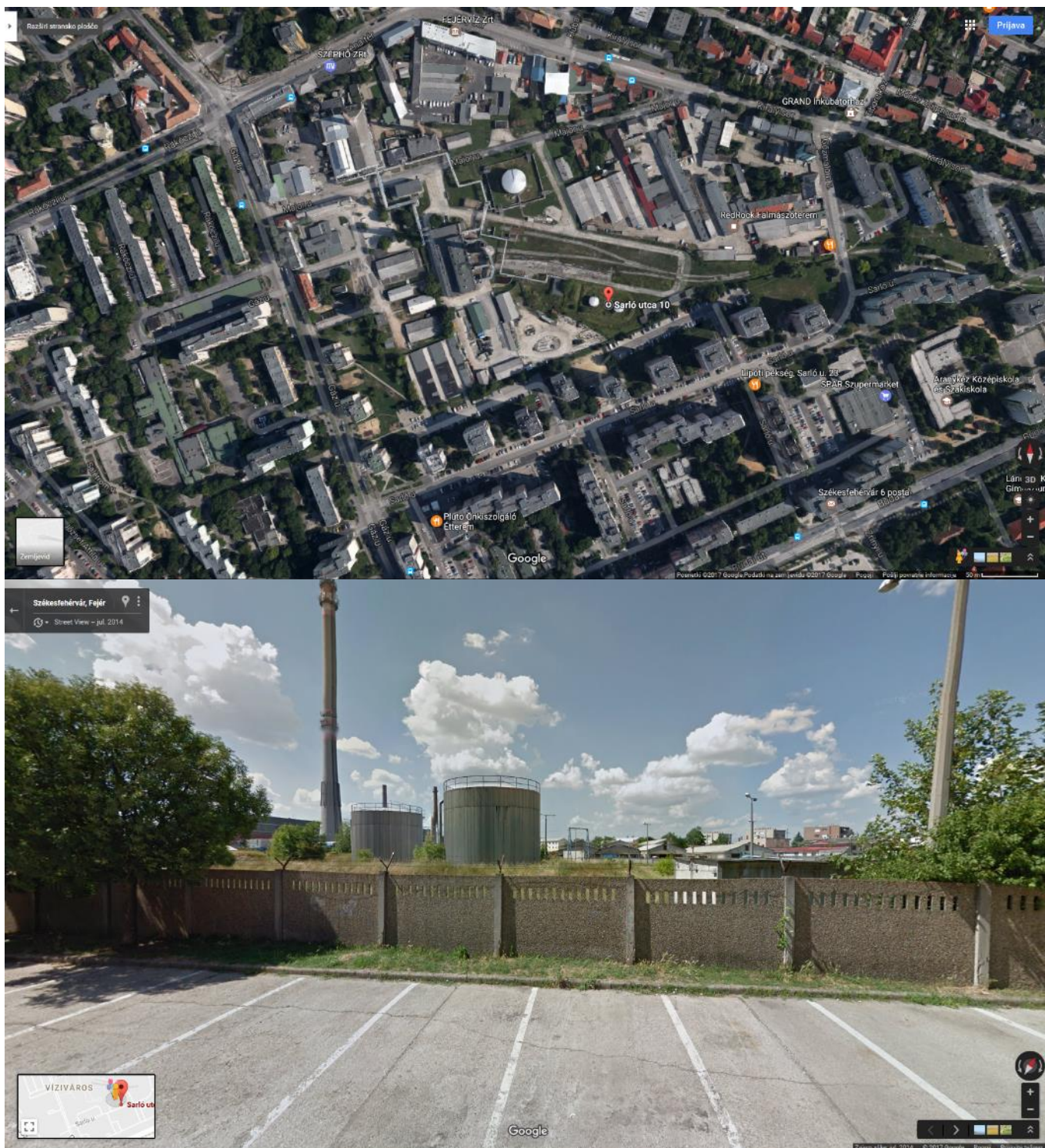


Figure 18: Potential new location for urban agriculture in the area of a heating plant in the Municipality of Székesfehérvár.

Project co-funded by the European Union.

5.3.2 Participatory planning & management of urban agriculture

In the Municipality of Székesfehérvár, citizens are involved in the preparation process of municipal strategic documents, as the municipality uses a broad participatory approach to inform the citizens and to gather their ideas. The situation is similar on the neighbourhood level, where each part of the city has a municipal representative, who gathers ideas and visions of the citizens, mostly at workshops. Vulnerable groups are not specifically targeted. Three different engagement tools are used for community and neighbourhood involvement:

- stakeholder platforms,
- workshops,
- web platforms.

The decision-making process, although predominately top-down, occasionally relies on grassroots initiatives which promote and encourage changes that are endorsed by the municipality. Some processes can also be viewed as a co-governance, as municipality representatives search for and support grassroots local initiatives while NGOs present their ideas to local representatives or municipality administration. For example, the municipality gave two vacant areas to interested NGOs to use them as public gardens and occasionally supports their activities. However, citizens are not involved in the management of municipality-owned urban agricultural land, and the same applies to vulnerable groups. News about urban agriculture is spread through the municipality's website or local newspapers.

The Municipality of Székesfehérvár has never implemented a participatory planning process. This can be explained by the lack of such tradition in Hungary. If a citizen initiative occurs, a procedure for a response of the city administration heavily depends on the topic, which influences the decision whether there is a need for municipal involvement or not.

5.3.3 Social inclusion through urban agriculture

Vulnerable group, defined as the most relevant in Székesfehérvár, are homeless people, mentally and physically handicapped, NEET and Roma community, followed by people with low income and elderly. The unemployed, ethnic minorities (other than Roma) and migrants, refugees or asylum seekers are not municipality's priority, especially because there are not many. Some vulnerable groups are already engaged in gardening, and the most active are elderly people. We plan to work. The municipality plans to work with elderly, Roma community and the disabled (25–35 people altogether) in the pilot action.

Economic aspects

In Székesfehérvár, two non-profit organizations employ mentally and physically handicapped people, and one is already cooperating with the project partner CTRIA. In Hungary, companies can receive EU-grants to employ vulnerable people – all disadvantaged groups, listed in the Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014, as well as people with changed working abilities (mentally or physically handicapped) –

Project co-funded by the European Union.

while institutions provide awareness raising programmes about social exclusion. If they receive grants, they need to ensure certain duration of the work contracts, regular salary and special working conditions. EU grants are also used for problem assessment in this regard and awareness raising. Flexible employment is especially promoted, which presents a good opportunity for women or handicapped people to balance their professional and private life.

Social aspects

Pupils with special educational needs (learning disorders, learning difficulties, dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia), young people with family or behavioural problems, underprivileged and multiple disadvantaged pupils are integrated in regular education system. Specialized educational forms exist for moderately and severely mentally or physically handicapped children. Forms of informal education are predominantly not designed for vulnerable groups, but address the whole society and are mostly project-based. Vulnerable groups are also entitled to numerous social transfers, such as state social allowances (tax benefits, after children, for disabled people), regular social allowance (on municipality level), benefits in kind (on municipality level), allowances for people with special needs (and for carers), and special benefits, such as public transport allowance for disabled people (free or reduced with 90%), caring system for homeless people (food, place to sleep, daytime care), scholarship programmes for Roma people, free food in schools for children coming from families with low income, and services for children with learning difficulties.

The most visible NGOs or associations in Székesfehérvár, which are dealing with social inclusion of vulnerable groups, are Civil Centre Charitable Foundation (Civil Centrum Közhasznú Alapítvány), We Help at home Association (Székesfehérvári Otthon Segítünk Alapítvány) and Association of people with large families (Nagycsaládosok Egyesülete).

Political aspects

The most important documents of social inclusion in Székesfehérvár are the Equality Program 2013–2017 and Integrated Urban Development Strategy. The most relevant policy instrument in this regard is [Equality program](#) (number 47: Székesfehérvár Megyei Jogú Város Önkormányzatának Esélyegyenlőségi Programja 2013–2017). It defines legal background and strategic environment as well as identifies vulnerable groups and problems. The main detected vulnerable groups are the people living in extreme poverty and the Roma people, the minors, women, elderly people and the handicapped. For each group, the document provides an analysis of current situation and describes relevant fields of inclusion. The program also identifies the role of a civic society and for-profit organizations, local partnerships and the inhabitants in general. The document concludes with the action plan. The [Integrated Urban Development Strategy](#) is the most important policy document on development goals of the town from 2014 to 2020. Special anti-segregation plan is included, which identifies the most compromised parts of the town, affected by segregation, and designs a plan for their development. Identified need for social

inclusion also appears in other parts of the document and is explicitly stated as a horizontal goal (see pages 78–96 in the above mentioned document).

Physical and communication aspects

Municipality's infrastructure and transport services are adapted to physically handicapped people. There are embossed sidewalks and traffic lights with sound for the blind people. Low-floor buses enable transport of people with wheelchairs as well as with baby-carriers (although not all buses are adapted). Crisis Management Centre provides shelter for homeless people with diverse services: warm food, daily warm place, night shelter, temporary accommodation; the workers also offer social help on the streets. The same organization also manages home for families in need, mostly for young mothers with their children. Furthermore, municipality's website is adapted for the blind and visually impaired, and one employee speaks sign language. Roma public authority takes care of the Roma community.

Good practices of social inclusion of vulnerable groups

Székesfehérvár set up several mechanisms for social inclusion, which show positive results, among them municipal grant schemes (money, in-kind transfers/benefits on demand), backlog management, case-by-case support of employment services for (re)integration, support of mobility enhancing tools for PRMs (mopeds), case-by-case support for reintegration of (motivated) persons who abused drugs, support of handicapped people for renting an accommodation, owned by municipality, support of homeless people for renting an 'exiting' accommodation to help their reintegration into society, legal assistance for homeless people, organisational cooperation in managing co-existence issues of homeless people living on the street as well as institutional, public and private/NGO partnership in everyday situations. The initiator of such practices depends on the vulnerable groups it targets, and ranges from NGOs, charitable organizations, local social institution and the municipality itself. Three most often used methods of social inclusion in Székesfehérvár are social help, creation and development of social networks and provision of jobs for the handicapped people.

The best example of a NGO dealing with social inclusion is the local Association of gardening, which manages two community gardens in Székesfehérvár. Its many members belong to the group of elderly people and pupils with special needs from a local specialized school occasionally come to the garden to do small gardening work. Next to one of their gardens (Szárzrét) is a community place, where they organize community events and workshops every third Wednesday of the month. The place is used by several citizens living in the vicinity of the garden.

The best practice of social inclusion, identified by the city, is the "Day of a chance". It promotes social integration, raises awareness and demonstrates the services that associations offer to help disabled people. The second "Day of a chance" was held in the middle of June 2017 in the centre of Székesfehérvár. Many associations participated in the interactive programme. People could try how to

walk with a guide dog (with covered eyes) or how to move with a wheelchair. The reportage (with pictures) is available [here](#).

5.3.4 Contribution of urban agriculture to sustainable urban development

A sustainable urban development framework in Székesfehérvár contains three documents: Integrated Urban Development Strategy, which mostly addresses energetic modernization, mobility and green areas, Environmental Condition 2015, which addresses the state of the environment, problems and positive and negative processes in the past, and Environmental Protection Program 2012–2017, which tries to strengthen the environmentally aware way of thinking.

Economic aspects

The number of inhabitants, involved in urban agriculture, is estimated to 200 activists, which are involved in certain actions (tree-planting, gardening etc.). As there is no noticeable local food production within its urban borders, no local food products are included into local food markets, only products from fringe areas up to 25 kilometres from the town. Otherwise, the city itself has a large agricultural/food processing sector. There is no formalized informal exchange of local food products between citizens (although informal ways do exist). There is also no local restaurant, which would be supplied with local food products. A biomass from urban gardens or urban farms is not used as a source of renewable energy. So far, there are no conflicts between urban agriculture and investors.

Social aspects

A secondary school for agricultural studies operates in the city with an educational garden in Agárd, 20 km from Székesfehérvár. The school offers educational programmes in agriculture and food industry and provides vocational trainings (miller, baker, butcher, milk processor). Urban agriculture is also used as a tool for improving social cohesion, mainly on the small-scale social events, organized by the Association of Gardening in Székesfehérvár, which advises the gardeners and organizes workshops, trips for the members and small-scale events at the two community gardens. So far, there have not been any conflicts between recreational and urban agricultural use of public green spaces. Three NGOs are directly involved in urban agriculture in the municipality:

- Székesfehérvári Kertbarát Egyesület – Association of Gardening in Székesfehérvár,
- Jancsárkert Egyesület – Jancsárkert Association (trying to establish local food market),
- Gaja Környezetvédő Egyesület – Gaja Environmental Association.

Environmental aspects

The main environmental contributions of urban agriculture in Székesfehérvár are raising environmental awareness, and promoting healthy and enviro-friendly gardening techniques as well as planting the trees. Eco-farming principles (no pesticides, no chemical fertilisers) are encouraged or required in two community gardens, promoted by the Association of Gardening in Székesfehérvár. There are no special programmes on waste management in urban agricultural areas.

Cultural aspects

So far, urban agriculture in Székesfehérvár has not been recognized as part of local customs and habits. However, an old urban area Felsőváros (Upper town) was an important local food supplier of the whole city, as many farmers lived there in the past. Local varieties and their preservation is not an issue of the local urban agriculture, also no agricultural area is protected as a cultural heritage site.

5.4 Municipality of Vaslui (Romania)

The Municipality of Vaslui is the residence of Vaslui County, belonging to the North-East Region, and it is situated in the centre of Barlad Plateau, in Vaslui depression, at an altitude of 90m (in the industrial area) and 170m (at copou park). The city's population comprises approximately 70,000 inhabitants. The climate there is temperate-continental, with sudden passages from one season to another, and with forest steppe areas. The average annual temperatures are around 9,4-9,5 degrees Celsius, with approximately 120 days of frost and 70 days with temperatures around 30 degrees Celsius. Vaslui Municipality is crossed by the Barlad, Vaslui and Delea rivers, as well as by irregularly spread underground streams, with low discharges. Both the flora and the fauna are typical of the forest steppe. The city has beautiful parks and leisure areas for a most enjoyable spending of one's free time. The parks are oases of verdure with trees and shrubs, meadows and decorative plants: Copou Park and Youth Park.

5.4.1 Characteristics of urban agriculture

The Municipality of Vaslui identified three general planning documents that are indirectly relevant because they target infrastructural modernisation and development of utilities (water, gas, electricity, etc.) in the areas, identified as having a potential for urban agriculture. These are the *Local development strategy*, the *Area town planning*, and the *General urban planning*. None of them explicitly references urban agriculture.

However, urban agriculture is an activity with long tradition in Vaslui, as it can be traced back to the establishment of the city. It is mainly practiced in the form of family gardens. The dwellings in the city consist of apartment buildings and houses with larger or smaller garden areas. Figure 19 shows

residential areas with a higher share of family gardens (yellow colour; areas 1–10), as they occupy larger land surfaces. However, people practice urban agriculture in other neighbourhoods as well. Almost each household with a small plot of land grows vegetables, fruit trees and ornamental plants. The grown products are mostly used for domestic consumption. In some cases, they are also sold at the local markets or directly to consumers. This works as an informal exchange chain between hobby and other producers and consumers.

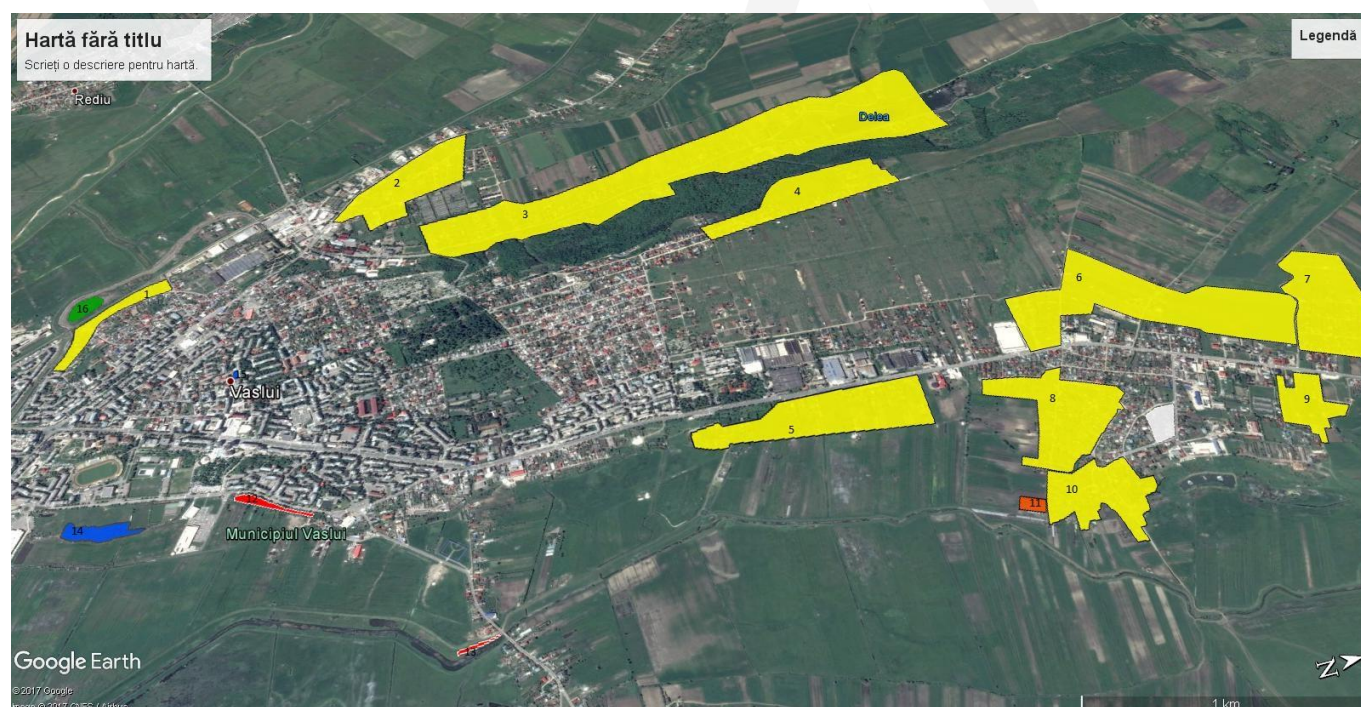


Figure 19: Residential areas with higher share of family gardens (yellow colour; areas 1–10), location of the Marius Gorcia Farm (orange colour; area 11), squatter gardens (areas 12, 14 and 15), allotment gardens (green colour; area 16) and potential new spatial arrangements of urban agriculture (red colour; areas 12 and 13) in the Municipality of Vaslui.

Most of the people from 50 to 80 years of age were moved to Vaslui by force during the communist period in order to provide workforce for the industry. In many cases, they still have close relatives in the rural areas, where agriculture is the main activity, and they offer to help them working in the fields. Consequently, a lot of inhabitants living in apartment buildings maintain strong connections with the rural areas outside the city. However, public administrators of the Municipality of Vaslui noted that some of the inhabitants, living in apartment buildings, are interested in gardening near their homes and in the city. In some rare cases, the residents already organised minor gardening activities right in front of the buildings. To address these initiatives, the Municipality of Vaslui identified a series of potential

new locations for urban agriculture, which mostly target retired people (areas 12 and 13 on figure 19). These locations could also help other disadvantaged groups with lower economic status, who cannot afford to buy or rent urban land for agricultural activities.

Marius Gorcia farm

Marius Gorcia farm represents a mixture of an educational farm and a type of local food + farm in the Municipality of Vaslui. Marius Gorcia with his wife established the farm in 2011. The project was supported by the European Union through the *Rural Development Programme, Measure 112 – Setting up of young farmers* (40,000 EUR). The owners are directly involved in planting, harvesting and selling food on the local market. In addition, they also cooperate with local schools a few times a year, mostly during the program *Different school weeks*, when children and students are brought to the site to learn how to plant and harvest vegetables. The farm consists of three greenhouses that stretch over 3000 m². Access is restricted due to land ownership rights. Transport accessibility for users (target group/residents) is good by foot, bicycle and personal car, and average if a public transport is used.

Squatter gardens

The Municipality of Vaslui encompasses two bigger areas of *squatter gardens* (areas 12 and 14 on figure 19) and a large number of smaller areas located in front of the apartment buildings which is difficult to record. Area 15 on figure 15 is an example of such a small squatter garden. The agricultural activities started in these areas in the communist period when the owners of the apartments moved in from the countryside. The squatter gardens are placed on municipal derelict land (brownfield area) with temporary use of space. The municipality does not have any involvement; it only unofficially permits the agriculture activities until the land will be used for other purposes. Area 12 is also identified as a potential new spatial arrangement of urban agriculture as a pilot area in the AgriGo4Cities project. The squatter gardens are equipped with small-scale facilities for the storage of tools and a short rest. They are well accessible by foot, bicycle, and personal car on the one hand and on average by public transport on the other hand.

Allotment gardens

The *allotment gardens* in this particular case are privately owned (area 16 on figure 16). They were established in 1990s on a derelict land (brownfield area) not suitable for any other purpose than agriculture. The allotment gardens stretch over 1 hectare today. The land owner rents the plots to 20 beneficiaries for a symbolic amount. The area is placed right next to a local river which is the main source of irrigation. It is openly accessible and has a small-scale facility for the storage of tools and a short rest. The transport accessibility by foot, bicycle, and personal car is good and average by public transport.

5.4.2 Participatory planning & management of urban agriculture

The Municipality of Vaslui involves citizens in the preparation process on both, municipal and neighbourhood level. During the elaboration of municipal strategic documents, for example, citizens and stakeholders were invited to participate and their proposals were discussed and integrated into the plans and strategies. Before the final approval, the draft documents were also available for final observations. Neither on the municipal nor on the neighbourhood level a special effort to directly involve vulnerable groups in planning activities was made. Altogether, five engagement tools are used:

- face to face meetings,
- workshops,
- web platforms,
- consultation exercises, including surveys,
- voting procedures.

A decision-making process in the municipality is predominantly “top-down”, initiated by the municipality with the aim to directly involve local communities in the implementation. Neither citizens nor vulnerable groups are directly involved in management of the municipality-owned urban agricultural land. So far, decisions related to urban agriculture have not been communicated with citizens, NGOs and other interested organisations.

The Municipality of Vaslui has already implemented a participatory planning process during the elaboration of municipal strategic documents. The participatory process was mainly managed by relevant external experts, while the methodology depended on the legal requirements for each strategy or plan. It was estimated that participation had a positive impact on final proposals. City administration commonly responds to a citizen initiative, when it gets a written request. The local authority analyses the request and if it has an objective justification, it is debated at the Local Council public meeting and voted for/against it. However, the participatory planning is still at an initial phase. No programs, initiatives or actions for training of the staff or citizens for participatory planning are currently in progress. Future steps are mainly oriented towards increasing the confidence of the citizens that their involvement is really important for the city’s development.

5.4.3 Social inclusion through urban agriculture

The most relevant vulnerable groups in Vaslui are the elderly, followed by the unemployed and people with low income, mentally and physically handicapped people as well as the Roma community. The municipality currently finds homeless people, NEET, ethnic minorities (other than Roma) and migrants, refugees or asylum seekers irrelevant. At the moment, no vulnerable group is involved in gardening. For the pilot action, Vaslui intends to involve the elderly and children, cca. 20–30 people altogether.

Economic aspects

In Vaslui, no business currently employs members of vulnerable groups, although at least three mechanisms encourage such employment. The National as well as the Local Employment Agency support job fairs and organize qualification courses, requalification and professional trainings for unemployed people. These measures target the unemployed and young people aged between 16 and 25. The unemployed, who are involved in any of listed activities, must then be employed for at least 6 months, and the companies who want to employ young people from such programmes need to be licensed by the National Employment Agency. The second mechanism is a national programme “Start-up Nation Romania”, which targets the unemployed people with special skills for a start-up company. A start-up business, financed by this programme, must employ a minimum of 2 people for 3 years (however, the employees can change). The employment of vulnerable groups – the unemployed (among those especially single parents or people older than 45 years), the disabled and fresh graduates – is also encouraged by specific national laws and measures, which demand that the unemployed keep the job for at least 6 months, the disabled for at least 18 months, the unemployed over 45 years or single parents for at least 2 years and the graduates for at least 3 years. The Romanian law also provides incentives (such as lower taxes on salaries and incomes) for the social enterprises, hiring persons belonging to vulnerable groups. However, there is currently no such enterprise operating in the municipal area, so Vaslui municipality suggests to include the measures to encourage its establishment as one of the objectives in the action plan, outlined in the AgriGo4Cities project.

Social aspects

In Romania, vulnerable groups are predominantly integrated in regular formal education. Other educational opportunities are mostly provided by the county employment agency. The agency is certified to perform continuous programmes which target vulnerable groups. Several social policies at the national level ensure social welfare. Social measures are applied at a local level through social service departments. Depending on the vulnerable group and its specific needs, there are several institutions that provide social services. For example, the municipality provides social help for people with no income or low income, contributes to their heating expenses or for renovation of old houses, it provides free meals at the social canteen, encourages activities of social clubs for the elderly (cultural and sports activities as well as health care), and in case of emergency situations, the municipality provides financial funds for poor families. It also reserves some funds from the local budget for social scholarships for poor students, provided by the schools. Young students also receive a snack each school day through a national programme.

In addition, two NGOs in Vaslui are particularly active in social inclusion of vulnerable groups; Asociația “Centrul Pentru Integrare Sociala si Politici anti-discriminatorii Vaslui” strives for social inclusion of deprived persons while Asociația “Iris” is specialized in local/regional development and social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

Political aspects

In Vaslui, future local development projects are outlined the [Local development strategy](#) (see also [link](#)). The strategy considers vulnerable groups as well, as it specially targets peripheral areas, where most of the vulnerable groups live, and foresees projects to develop the existing services (water, gas, electricity, etc.) in these areas to improve the living conditions and consequently the quality of life of a population.

Physical and communication aspects

For physically handicapped, the municipality provides sidewalks and pedestrian crossings with ramps as well as low-floor busses to enable them traveling around the town. For the homeless, night shelters offer services only during winter. However, no communication means are employed to make communication with the blind or hearing impaired as well as the Roma people easier.

Good practices of social inclusion of vulnerable groups

Vaslui Municipality, specifically its social assistance department, has good experience with social inclusion of elderly and young people, people with low income and the unemployed as well as with handicapped people. The municipality most often uses social help, counselling, formal and informal meetings and discussions, streetwork and organization of public events to establish contact with members of vulnerable groups and help with their inclusion into the mainstream society.

By joining the European Union, Romania started a comprehensive process of alignment with the European standards in all areas of activity, including the ones regarding energy and environment. One of the best examples of municipal care for vulnerable groups is connected with deteriorating power plants which used to provide heating for apartment buildings. At the local level, from a total of 27 heating power plants only 6 are still working, and other 21 buildings presented a high risk of danger for health and safety of the citizens. As the number of elders, of people with disabilities, and of children whose parents are working abroad is increasing, the municipality decided to invest into facilities in such a way that it would address the needs of those vulnerable groups. In collaboration with Vaslui Local Council, it started a comprehensive process of rehabilitation and destination change for these locations and consequently set up the following centres for vulnerable groups:

- Day centre for elderly “Buna Vestire” (“Annunciation”),
- Day centre for elderly “Sfântul Nicolae” (“Saint Nicholas”),
- Day centre for schoolchildren “Bucuria” (“Happiness”) (social domain),
- Cultural centre “Alexandra Nechita” (education/cultural domain),
- The Club for retired people (social domain),
- „Friendship” club (social domain).

5.4.4 Contribution of urban agriculture to sustainable urban development

Local strategic and legislative framework in the field of sustainable urban development is defined by the Urban Development Strategy, Sustainable Energy Action Plan and Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. Among those documents, the Urban Development Strategy is of special relevance, as it also considers vulnerable groups, trying to raise their quality of life.

Economic aspects

It is estimated that around 150 inhabitants are involved in urban agriculture. Local food products are also included into local food markets; the municipality is interested in supporting local farmers while local producers use special designated areas to sell their products. An informal exchange of local food products among citizens happens on many occasions, but is not formalized. Local restaurants are supplied with local food products, purchasing them at the local market. A biomass from urban gardens or urban farms is not used as a source of renewable energy. So far, there have been no conflicts between urban agriculture and investors.

Social aspects

In Vaslui, urban agriculture is not used as a teaching method and/or 'natural laboratory'. Urban agriculture is also not seen as a tool for improving social cohesion (e.g. for social events, leisure time), except in individual cases (families). No land use conflicts occurred so far between recreational and urban agricultural use of public green spaces. None of the NGOs or other interested stakeholders is directly involved in urban agriculture.

Environmental aspects

The municipality is aware of a positive environmental contribution of urban agriculture, as it generates goods for domestic consumption, which results in lower transportation needs, fewer boxes for packaging, and fewer consumption of electricity for storage and selling. However, eco-farming principles are not encouraged or required at the urban agricultural areas. No special waste management system is established, as the municipality uses integrated waste management system in its whole area.

Cultural aspects

Urban agriculture is perceived as a local custom, as most of the citizens, living in residential areas, use most of their spare land for agriculture. Local varieties and their preservation is not an issue of local urban agriculture, and no urban agricultural area is protected as a cultural heritage site.

5.5 Municipality of Velenje (Slovenia)

The Municipality of Velenje is one of eleven city municipalities of Slovenia, located in the eastern part of the Šaleška valley and has the surface area of 83.5 km². The central part of the municipality is situated on the plain along the Paka river. The entire V-plain of the Šaleška dolina valley has been urbanised, as over the last 50 years the town – sixth largest in Slovenia in terms of population – has grown and spread to include former settlements and hamlets of Škale, Stara vas, Staro Velenje, Šalek and Šmartno.

The northern part of the municipality reaches into the hills, which stretch from Razborje to Graška Gora and across the Paka gorge at Huda luknja to Paški Kozjak. The eastern boundary of the municipality runs along Dobrnsko podolje across the Pirešica creek and towards the south to the Ponikevska tableau and Ložniško gričevje hills, which separate Šaleška valley from the lower Savinja valley. The western boundary splits Šaleška dolina in half along the north-south line in the area of former village Preloge, where presently under the basin bedrock the most intensive lignite mining is taking place by the Premogovnik Velenje coalmining company. The border continues along the lower Velunja creek to the foothills of Graška Gora.

The heart of the municipality is the town of Velenje, which began to mildly prosper at the end of the 19th and in the beginning of the 20th century, when a coalmine was opened in the vicinity of Velenje. It is a predominantly industrial centre (companies Gorenje, Premogovnik Velenje, Vegrad, Esotech, etc.) which was built in few years during 1950–1960 as a concept for healthy living in new socialistic society. It is becoming the hub of the Savinjsko-Šaleška region with highly developed trade and other administrative, educational and other business sectors (Municipality Velenje 2017). Velenje has the status of a municipality since 1994. It has 32,718 inhabitants and population density of 391.9 inhabitants per km² (SURSTAT 2017).

5.5.1 Characteristics of urban agriculture

The Municipality of Velenje is the only pilot area with a document that specifically addresses urban agriculture. *Regulations on gardens lease* define allocation procedures of municipal gardens. The document regulates rights and obligations of tenants and the lessor – the Municipality of Velenje. It provides general conditions to be met by tenants for award criteria, allocation of a plot, duties of the tenants and the lessor and supervision of the implementation of the rules. Priority is given to people with low economic status and disabilities.

The Municipality of Velenje has 13 urban agricultural sites: *Allotment garden Krajnca*, *Allotment garden by the railway*, *Allotment garden Kunta Kinte*, *Allotment garden Stara vas*, *Allotment garden Lipa vzhod*, *Learning gardens at schools* (educational gardens), *Tourist farm Tuševo* (leisure farm), *Tourist farm Karničnik* (leisure farm) and *Gril Homestead – Eco museum* (educational, environmental and cultural heritage farm).

Allotment gardens Krajnca

The *Allotment gardens Krajnca* was established by the Municipality of Velenje. Since 2009, it is a permanent garden with building permit for two stages. Currently it is in stage 1, stretching over 6200 m². If needed, the garden can be extended. The area is divided into 81 plots. Each plot measures 32 m² (4 m x 8 m). The annual rent per plot amounts to 20 EUR. A contract with the municipality is made for 5 years and may be prolonged if wanted. Each household of Velenje can rent only one plot. Unemployed people or people with low economic status are preferred tenants. The basis for renting a plot is a document *Regulations on gardens lease*, adopted by the City council of the Municipality of Velenje in November 2008. The garden is easily accessible to users (also by free municipal bus). A fence surrounds the whole area (access is only possible for the users with a key). The municipality built a joint facility house with chemical toilets set up during gardening season – since the beginning of 2017, the toilets are available within the facility, and the municipality also provided a rainwater tank, organized separate waste collection, set up a room to deposit private gardening tools and, employed a caretaker looking after the site and caring for the neighbourhood. Gardening methods are not regulated (e.g. no ban on pesticides, chemical fertilisers), although organic gardening is encouraged by the city administration. Users are not organised in an association or similar organization, but have individual contracts with the municipality. Thefts (of crops) are occasionally reported to the municipality.



Figure 20: Panoramic view of the *Allotment garden Krajnca* in the Municipality of Velenje.



Allotment gardens by the railway

The *Allotment gardens by the railway* was established by the Municipality of Velenje in 2013. It is a temporary garden at the urban fringe, west of the Gorenje production plant. The garden is located on the land that is already allocated for the construction of the new express highway, which will happen in the upcoming years (still not known when). The area stretches over 4500 m² and is divided into 98 plots. Each plot measures 32 m² (4 m x 8 m). The annual rent per plot amounts to 20 EUR. A contract with the municipality is made for 5 years and may be prolonged if wanted. Each household of Velenje can rent only one plot. However, the municipality notices that extended families, living in different households, apply for several plots. Unemployed people or people with low economic status are preferred tenants. The basis for renting a plot is the document *Regulations on gardens lease*, adopted by the City council of the Municipality of Velenje in November 2008. The garden is easily accessible to the users (also by free municipal bus). The area is not fenced, there are no shared/collective spaces, and electricity is not available. The municipality only provides water and chemical toilets (from spring to autumn) and organises separate waste collection. Gardening methods are not regulated (e.g. no ban on pesticides, chemical fertilisers), although organic gardening is encouraged by the city administration. The users are not organised in an association or similar organization, but have individual contracts with the municipality. Thefts (of crops) are occasionally reported to the municipality.



Figure 21: The *Allotment gardens by the railway* in the Municipality of Velenje.



Allotment gardens Kunta Kinte

The *Kunta Kinte* is a permanent allotment gardening site with individual huts, established in 1978. The industrial city of Velenje was created after the World War II from scratch on the basis of a new modern urban plan, as an example of a socialist city (Lovšin 2014). The gardening site was created on the initiative and with the funds of the company Premogovnik Velenje (the Velenje Coal Mine) for the families of the Velenje miners. Half of the land is owned by Premogovnik, the other half by the municipality. The site was created gradually and today stretches over 5 hectares. It has 250 plots with huts, measuring 200 m², which allow the gardeners spending their leisure time in comfort. Initially all the huts had the same size and appearance, but today the rules are less strict.



Figure 22: The *Allotment gardens Kunta Kinte* in the Municipality of Velenje.

The garden is easily accessible for the users (also by free municipal bus). Parking space is available next to the upper entrance to the area, but entering by car (directly to the huts) is only possible on Fridays. The allotment site is fenced. Several paths lead to the gardens and public toilets. Water and

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infrastructure for separate waste collection are supplied by the warden (HABIT d. o. o.). There is no electricity installation, but some of the owners installed photovoltaic plants on the roofs of their huts. The tenants pay costs of the warden in the amount of 100 EUR per year. Only the plots are rentable while the huts are privately owned. The gardeners have elected a group, which assists them with the organisation of the gardening site and makes sure that the rules, which have been precisely determined, are followed. Gardening methods are not regulated (e.g. no ban on pesticides, chemical fertiliser) and no minimum share of agricultural use is required on the plots.

Allotment gardens Stara vas

The *Allotment gardens Stara vas* was established in the 1970s. The main initiators were the citizens. The whole establishment was done by the Coal Mine Velenje that owned the place at that time. Although in the beginning, the Municipality of Velenje had no official role, it supported gardening until the time when the ownership became municipal and up to today. The area stretches over 3.7 hectares and is divided into 130 plots of different sizes. It is open for all and easily accessible by all transport modes. The area is not surrounded by a fence, and only some modest equipment is available, such as chairs and a table to rest. The gardening site is of temporary character and located on a vacant land (land in transition), which causes a certain degree of uncertainty about its future development. In the next few years, a business zone is planned to be built in area, and construction work shall start already in 2017. That is the reason why some gardens in this area will be abolished. When this will happen, the municipality will try to replace them with a new area of gardens arrangement.



Figure 23: The *Allotment gardens Stara vas* in the Municipality of Velenje.

Allotment gardens Lipa vzhod

The *Allotment gardens Lipa vzhod* was established in the 1970s. The main initiators were the citizens. The whole establishment was done by the Coal Mine Velenje that owned the place at that time. Although in the beginning, the Municipality of Velenje had no official role, it supported gardening until the time when the ownership became municipal and up to today. However, a temporary gardening site is located on vacant land (land in transition), which causes a certain degree of uncertainty about its future development. The area stretches over 4.6 hectares and is divided into 60 plots of different sizes. It is open for all and easily accessible by all transport modes. The area is not surrounded by a fence, and only a modest equipment is available, such as chairs and a table to rest.



Figure 24: The *Allotment gardens Lipa vzhod* in the Municipality of Velenje.

Learning gardens at schools

The *Learning gardens at schools* were designed by the University for lifelong learning (Ljudska univerza Velenje) in 2014. The project was implemented within the LAG project (Teaching parks of the Šaleška valley), financially supported by the LEADER programme. The university established seven arranged educational gardens with high beams, where children plant vegetables, herbs and fruit trees in order to learn about food production and self-sufficiency. Five of educational gardens are located in the Municipality of Velenje and two of them in the neighbouring municipalities – Šoštanj and Šmartno ob Paki. For more information about the *Learning gardens at schools* visit: <http://www.lu-velenje.si/projekti/nacionalni-projekti/zakljuceni-projekti/item/57-projekt-las-ucni-parki-saleske-doline>.

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Figure 25: The *Learning gardens at schools* in the Municipality of Velenje.

Tourist farm Tuševno

The *Tourist farm Tuševno* is a private initiative that started to operate as a leisure farm in 2004. It lies in the middle of the forest, surrounded by meadows and pastures, with nice views of the valley. The farm is located at an altitude of 618 m and occupies an area of 10 hectares. A young family of five lives on the farm. The farm is an excellent starting point (for hiking, biking) to Mount Kozjak, Wine mountain or Dobrna, which is 10 km away. Thermal spas are 15 minutes away (Thermal spa Dobrna) or 20 minutes away (Thermal spa Topolšica) by car. Tourist farm Tuševno provides all sort of sports activities (tennis, football, basketball, playground for children). For more information about the *Tourist farm Tuševno* visit: <http://www.turisticnekmetje.si/tusevo>.

Tourist farm Karničnik

The *Tourist farm Karničnik* is a private initiative that started to operate as a leisure farm in 2010. It is located just a short distance from Velenje, in the village of Hrastovec. Surrounded by forests and meadows, it is a magnet for all, who appreciate natural beauty. The farm offers a wide selection of dishes for all tastes. Family members arranged a village of pleasures where you can relax after walking across the surrounding hills. The farm is a good starting point to visit Velenje, Castle Velenje, Lake Velenje, House of minerals, horse-riding club Velenje etc. For more information about the *Tourist farm Karničnik* visit: <http://www.turisticnekmetje.si/karnicnik>.

Gril Homestead – Eco museum

The *Gril homestead – Eco museum* is an educational, environmental and cultural heritage farm. It is a redecorated old vineyard cottage in the former wine-growing slope Lipje in Velenje. The farm comprises a house with a black kitchen, vegetable and herb garden, apiary, vineyards and orchards. It is a cultural monument of local importance. The farm includes a homestead house, an outbuilding, a vineyard, an orchard and a meadow. The total area measures 2 hectares. The museum and the surrounding area presents the life of a small farmer from the mid to the late 19th century. It showcases functional arrangement of living space and organizes educational activities (ethnological days, ethnological corners, research activities for pupils and students). Municipality of Velenje is the owner of the Gril homestead and was thus the initiator of the renovation in 2009. Investment was co-financed through two national calls (Ministry of Agriculture, SVRK). For more information about the *Gril homestead – Eco museum* visit: <http://www.muzej-velenje.si/grilovadomacija/>.



Figure 26: The *Gril homestead – Eco museum* in the Municipality of Velenje.

5.5.2 Participatory planning & management of urban agriculture

In the Municipality of Velenje, citizens are regularly invited to comment the issues and suggest improvements. The municipality tries to involve them as much as possible into the preparation process of municipal strategic documents. Calls for cooperation are published on the official municipal website. Situation is similar on the neighborhood level. All representatives of vulnerable groups are also welcomed to the preparation of documents, but they do not receive any special treatment and/or attention. Three engagement tools are used in municipal strategic and neighborhood planning:

- workshops,
- face to face meetings,
- social media.

The decision-making process is predominantly initiated by the municipality, but with the aim to directly involve local communities in the implementation of measures. Citizens and vulnerable groups are not involved in the management of the municipality-owned urban agricultural land. All decisions, including those related to urban agriculture, are communicated to the citizens, NGOs and other interested organisations through press releases, posts on the website and releases in local media houses. Major decisions are discussed at the Council sessions, which are live streamed on the municipal website.

The Municipality of Velenje has implemented a participatory planning process numerous times. For example, it initiated urban gardens in the area of a block settlement in the local community Šalek in 2014. Several workshops with local residents were carried out. Residents seemed eager to cooperate in the whole process. The municipality even engaged two local landscape architects to assist them with their expert knowledge. Unfortunately, the idea has stalled just before implementing the pilot action: citizens lost interest of tending to garden plots, mostly due to managing issues. If a citizen initiative occurs, the municipality has different procedures of responding: through email address, mobile application “Urbane točke” (Urban points), and through the representatives of local communities. Initiatives are often presented by councillors at the Council sessions, and are later taken into consideration by responsible departments.

5.5.3 Social inclusion through urban agriculture

The most relevant vulnerable groups in Velenje are the unemployed and people with low income as well as elderly, followed by all others, i.e. homeless people, mentally and physically handicapped, NEET, Roma community, other ethnic minorities and migrants, refugees or asylum seekers. Some vulnerable groups are already engaged in gardening, and physically disabled people – although there is a negligible number of them active in community gardening – are given the priority in the allocation of garden plots with the easiest access to facilities (e.g. water supply and toilets). In the pilot action, Velenje plans to establish intergenerational exchange between elderly and children and to involve 50 people.

Economic aspects

In Velenje, 4 limited liability companies employ disabled people, but since the municipality intends to work with elderly and children, they do not see any possibility to cooperate at this moment. Companies employing people with disabilities otherwise get financial support in the form of wage subsidies and other economic relief, and companies with the status of disability company are also entitled to tax exemptions and contributions on wages from the state. Some businesses already acquired the certificate of female managers friendly company or family friendly company.

Social aspects

Most of the vulnerable groups, who are mentally capable of attending classes, are integrated into regular education system. Regarding specialized forms of education, Center za vzgojo, izobraževanje in usposabljanje Velenje – CVIU (Center for education and training in Velenje) is a qualified institution which educates and trains children and young people with special needs. It implements two programs – tailored educational program with lower educational standards and special educational program. Beside children with mental disabilities, autists, physically disabled and foreign children are included in the learning process as well. One of the vulnerable groups which attend the Centre's programmes are the Albanians, who do not wish to integrate into Slovenian society, learn Slovenian language and are not suitable for tailored educational program with lower educational standards. Students of tailored educational program with lower educational standards usually receive disability benefits after they turn 18. Other forms of education are offered to all vulnerable groups in the form of individual learning assistance, language courses for foreigners, concrete visualizations etc.

University for lifelong learning (Ljudska univerza Velenje) is the second institution offering educational programmes for vulnerable groups. In addition to the formal educational system (primary school for adults, programs of secondary vocational education, secondary professional education programs, programs of vocational-technical education, vocational courses, undergraduate and postgraduate education), a wide range of different forms of education are available. Among them are different language and computer courses, free thematic workshops in the context of multi-generational centre (Planet of generations), preparation and exams for national vocational qualifications, study circles, Lifelong Learning Program, preparing for the vocational baccalaureate, Initial integration of immigrants etc. Such programs target the disabled, immigrants and unemployed, but also farmers, retirees and homemakers.

Besides financial social welfare, disadvantaged families in Slovenia are entitled to higher child benefits, and disadvantaged elderly can get a security allowance. Some costs are also related to the income; people in disadvantaged situation can ask for reduced payment of preschool programmes and school meals, they can be exempted from social services, they can get a contribution to the payment of family assistance, are entitled to subsidized rent, they can request the state to cover the difference up to the full value of health services, and have the right to free-of-charge compulsory health insurance. Velenje municipality also co-finances numerous organizations and programs to ease the burdens of vulnerable

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groups (Red cross and Caritas, public kitchens, shelters for the homeless, holiday programs for poor children, free legal aid etc.).

There is an admirable number of organizations working with vulnerable groups in Velenje; besides Regional Red cross society, Caritas, Centre for social work, Home for elderly people and hospice also Centres Saša and Sožitje for mentally and physically disabled people, Integra institute, which provides a shelter for the homeless, Novus society and the Society of active citizens Dao help children and families in need, VID Velenje assists the elderly, University for lifelong learning offers courses for elderly and other generations, some organizations also offer some programs for drug users, Inter-municipal Association of deaf and hearing Impaired, Association of disabled Konovo and Intermunicipal association of disabled of Šaleška valley offer support to physically disabled people, while Lions and Rotary club organize occasional activities to support different vulnerable groups.

Political aspects

The most important document of social inclusion in the Municipality of Velenje is the [Development strategy of social protection in the Municipality of Velenje for the period from 2014 to 2020](#). The strategy stems from the analysis of social protection in the municipality and lays the foundation for the establishment and maintaining of a socially adequate local environment, as its task is to provide conditions for the development and implementation of social programs as well as to co-develop and coordinate social security programs, which are dedicated to the citizens.

Physical and communication aspects

The Municipality of Velenje implemented several measures and physical arrangement, which improve everyday life of vulnerable groups. For the blind, they set up traffic lights with sound signals, which also improve safety of hearing impaired people, some parts of the city are equipped with tactile markings, main cultural objects have notifications in Braille, main publications are adjusted to the visually impaired people, and in the Museum in Velenje Castle some collections are equipped with the tactile marks and signs in Braille as well as with the audio-video presentations. Throughout the city, ramps for disabled and baby carriers are set up, and many city objects have elevators. Two of the free-of-charge buses named Lokalci are adjusted for wheelchairs and strollers, and a bus has a special place reserved for them. Handicapped people can rent a tricycle, adjusted to their needs. A safe house is provided for the victims of violence, a shelter (Hiša) and a public kitchen for the homeless. Program “Surplus of food (Viški hrane)” is designed to distribute food to the poor. A number of other programs are dedicated to help specific types of vulnerable groups.

The municipality’s website is not adapted to the blind, but municipality employs people with the knowledge of the sign language while Roma people are usually accompanied by an interpreter.

Good practices of social inclusion of vulnerable groups

Municipalities and NGOs working in the municipal area have established very positive examples of social inclusion of all vulnerable groups, i.e. the unemployed, people with low income, physically and mentally handicapped, homeless people, victims of violence, drug addicts, immigrants, children, youth and elderly. They use various methods to work with them, including activation surveys, social help, counselling, formal and informal meetings, streetwork, creation and development of social networks as well as organization of events.

Probably the best practice in the Municipality of Velenje is "Udarniki MC Velenje", a flexible group of volunteers with a lot of will, knowledge and experience. They offer free of charge help to families or individuals living in Velenje or its surroundings for any work at home, around the house, and in the forest (various movements, cleaning, adaptation of apartments, housework, grass mowing, forest clearing, landscaping, snow shovelling, assistance in natural disasters, various instructions, giving gifts to children and animating them ...). They offer assistance to those who cannot afford additional help due to poor social status, elderly people and those who, because of health restrictions, cannot do it themselves. "Udarniki MC Velenje" also help various organizations, institutions and societies that work for the benefit of the local community. They also expanded their activities to actions in which they visit and animate various groups of socially excluded people (homeless, refugees, elderly, women in safe houses, children in hospitals, people in retraining institutions etc.). Their focus is on the social integration of young people with fewer opportunities.

5.5.4 Contribution of urban agriculture to sustainable urban development

A sustainable urban development framework in Velenje contains four documents. The most important is Sustainable urban strategy for smart, entrepreneurial and friendly Velenje 2025, which defines key development challenges and opportunities of Velenje, namely ensuring a stable and open local and regional economy, improving the environment and infrastructure, ensuring high social standards, and improving public services as well as the overall quality of life. Other important documents include Local agenda 21, Strategic development document of the Municipality of Velenje, and Sustainable energetic action plan of the Municipality of Velenje.

Economic aspects

Estimated number of inhabitants involved in urban agriculture in areas, owned by the Municipality of Velenje, revolves around 380. A total number (including family gardening) is probably much higher, but cannot be estimated, since no such data are being collected. The municipality has already taken advantage of the economic potentials of urban agriculture. Local food products are included into local food markets: producers can sell their local products on a farmer market in the city centre, which operates every Saturday. There is also an informal exchange of local food products among citizens, as the city is included in Slovenia-wide movement *Zelemenjava* (Vegexchange) for the informal exchange

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of seedlings, seeds, crops etc. All the important caterers are offering local products in their restaurants, some schools and kindergartens are also supplied by local food products. However, there is still some unused potential, e.g. biomass from urban gardens or urban farms has not yet been used as a source of renewable energy. There have been no conflicts between urban agriculture and investors so far.

Social aspects

In Velenje, urban agriculture is also used as a teaching method and/or 'natural laboratory': as part of a LAS project, *Ljudska univerza Velenje* (University for lifelong learning) established seven teaching parks with high beams, where children plant vegetables, herbs and fruit trees in order to learn about food production and self-sufficiency. Urban agriculture is also used as a tool for improving social cohesion: one of the most important guidelines for designing urban gardening is to provide the citizens an opportunity for an active leisure time. So far, social events are not commonly used tool to improve social cohesion. There are no land use conflicts between recreational and urban agricultural use of public green spaces. So far, none of the NGOs or other interested stakeholders is directly involved in urban gardening in the municipality.

Environmental aspects

The municipality is well aware of environmental benefits of urban agriculture, as it is greening the city, improves biodiversity, improves air quality, and reduces waste when people are re-using organic waste and waste water for gardening. In the contract for leasing urban gardens, owned by the municipality, organic gardening is not defined as obligatory. However, tenants are committed to adjust their activities to ecological and soil conditions and to prevent pollution or any other degradation of the land. Allotment gardens have organized waste collection (bio and mixed waste). If needed, they can also place composters.

Cultural aspects

As Velenje was established as a garden city, urban agriculture has a long tradition and a great cultural importance, also proved by the Kunta Kinte gardening area. Furthermore, Gril homestead – Eco museum is protected as a cultural heritage of local importance. However, local varieties and their preservation are not an issue of local urban agriculture.

5.6 Municipality of Ulcinj (Montenegro)

Ulcinj is a coastal city founded in the 5th century B.C. Municipality of Ulcinj has an area of 255 km², total population of around 20,000 inhabitants and density of 78 inhabitants per km² (City population 2015). Majority of the population of the Municipality of Ulcinj are Albanians, who are autochthonous in Ulcinj.

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Apart from Albanians, in the town of Ulcinj live Montenegrins, Serbs, Bosnians, Muslims, members of Roma community, Egyptians and other smaller communities. Most of the population belongs to Islamic religion, followed by Orthodox and Catholics. In the Municipality of Ulcinj, Montenegrin and Albanian language are both official languages and are equal under the Statute.

The municipality has a tremendous potential for development of different types of tourism, especially the city of Ulcinj because of the Mediterranean climate conditions and diversity of beaches, including sandy beaches, quarries, the rocky edge of the pine forest, that besides curative effect of the sea salt has also curative sand, curative sulphuric water springs and mineral mud. Ulcinj with its surface has access to the Adriatic Sea, bordered by the river Buna and includes mountains of the Highlands of Rumija and Shas Lake. There are also many archaeological sites from different periods of history of the city, such as more than 2500 years old fortress of Ulcinj, the old town of Shas, and a large number of religious objects which are showing the culture and spiritual life of the city. Thanks to the Mediterranean climate, Ulcinj has developed agriculture and is well known for the production of olives, figs, citruses, pomegranates and many other types of fruit (Opština Ulcinj 2017).

5.6.1 Characteristics of urban agriculture

The only type of urban agriculture in the Municipality of Ulcinj is family gardening. Family gardens are oriented towards cultivating the crops for family needs, but a small percentage of products is produced for the local market. Some farms are active in the rural parts of the municipality, but the intensity of a direct relationship with consumers in urban areas is not known. However, it is acknowledged that at the moment, the producers are not organised in cooperatives and there are no indications of non-food production.

5.6.2 Participatory planning & management of urban agriculture

Participatory planning in the Municipality of Ulcinj is still in the initial stage. Preparation of the strategic development plan is based on a participatory approach; first a consultative group, composed of representatives of various segments of society, is established, then public debates are organized to discuss the issues. Situation is similar in planning activities on the neighbourhood level. Three years ago, the bureau for citizens was established, enabling efficient response to potential citizens' initiatives. Decisions, related to urban agriculture, were so far not communicated to the citizens, NGOs and other interested organisations. Vulnerable groups have also not yet been targeted.

5.6.3 Social inclusion through urban agriculture

The most relevant vulnerable group in Ulcinj is the unemployed, followed by people with low income, mentally and physically handicapped, elderly, Roma community and migrants. Currently, municipality finds homeless people, NEET and ethnic communities (other than Roma) irrelevant. No vulnerable group

is currently involved in urban gardening, so Ulcinj intends to work with a few people from all vulnerable groups except the homeless, i.e. with the unemployed and people with low income, physically and mentally handicapped, NEET and elderly, Roma community and migrants – altogether with cca. 20 people.

Economic aspects

In Ulcinj, the number of employed vulnerable people is negligible, however, one NGO employs two people with disabilities and the municipality plans to include it in its pilot activities. Companies employing people with disabilities get financial support in the form of wage subsidies 50% and other economic relief. For example, if company has 20 to 50 employees they are obligated to employ one person with disabilities.

Social aspects

Vulnerable groups are generally integrated in regular formal education, while mentally and physically handicapped attend specialised forms of education. Social aid is dedicated to majority of REA population, also child allowance for one year. However, an NGO “Rights to live” and Day care centre “Sirena” are actively pursuing social inclusion.

Political aspects

The municipality adopted Local action plan for REA population 2016–2020, focused in the integration of REA population and for their better live condition and healthier life. One person from this population was employed with service contract in Ulcinj Municipality.

Physical and communication aspects

Municipality of Ulcinj provided ramps for wheelchairs for public institutions (schools, hospital, post office etc.). One of the municipality employees speaks Roma dialect.

Good practices of social inclusion of vulnerable groups

Municipality of Ulcinj employs a person with physical disability to work as a deliverer. It also implemented an IPA project that focused on socially excluded women. They established a centre for education and professional qualification of socially excluded women, and around 300 of them attended various courses, from computer and sewing to English and Italian language courses. The Daily Center „Sirena” for handicapped kids was also established. Of the methods to ease social inclusion, the municipality mostly uses social help and some other, unidentified methods.

5.6.4 Contribution of urban agriculture to sustainable urban development

The Municipality of Ulcinj has started to develop a strategic development plan in order to create conditions for faster local sustainable development of the municipality.

Economic aspects

If we do not take into account family gardens and local food+ farms in the rural parts of the municipality, there are no people involved in urban agriculture in Ulcinj. The same applies to the sale of local food products in farming markets. There is no formalized informal exchange of local food products among citizens, although informal exchange probably does exist. Most of the restaurants and hotels in Ulcinj are supplied with local food products, but they are from the rural part of the municipality. A biomass from urban gardens or urban farms is not used as a source of renewable energy. So far, there have been no conflicts between urban agriculture and investors.

Social aspects

In Ulcinj, urban agriculture is not used as a teaching method and/or 'natural laboratory' and it is also not recognized as a tool for improving social cohesion (e.g. social events, leisure time), except in individual cases (families). So far, there have been no land use conflicts between recreational and urban agricultural use of public green spaces. Three NGOs or other interested stakeholders are directly involved in urban agriculture:

- Day care center *Sirena*,
- NGO "Right to live", and
- local utility company.

Environmental aspects

In Ulcinj, environmental aspect of urban gardening is not important or has not been recognized as such. No eco-farming principles are encouraged or required on urban agricultural areas. There are no programmes on waste management.

Cultural aspects

Urban agriculture in Ulcinj is not recognized as a part of local customs and habits. Local varieties and their preservation are not an issue of local urban agriculture; and no urban agricultural area is protected as a cultural heritage site.

6 Conclusions

Urban agriculture does not enjoy a long tradition in pilot areas which is in line with a state in many parts of Central and Eastern Europe. The lack of tradition is reflected in a shortage of political support to recognize urban agriculture as important mechanism in urban planning. However, the analysis of existing urban agricultural sites revealed an increase in popularity of this concept since the turn of the millennium. Newly established urban agricultural practices reflect various forms in terms of structure, origin, functionality, management, and governance. Urban agricultural projects in pilot areas predominantly encompass general population, but there are also some examples of inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups. These are the *Buňky pro bezdomovce* in the Municipal district Prague 9, which is dedicated to homeless people, the *Day care centre for disabled children Zornitsa* (therapeutic garden) in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad, and the *First-class cedars for our first-graders in our city* in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad, which is operating as an educational garden for local pupils. The priority is also given to tenants with low economic status and disabilities in cases of the *Allotment garden Krajnca* and the *Allotment garden by the railway* in Velenje, and to indigent and vulnerable people in case of allotment gardens in Blagoevgrad. However, in all these cases more detailed systematic and customised solutions are still missing.

Participatory decision-making aims to harmonize views of all the participants as well as provide opportunities for fresh ideas and human resources. In all six pilot areas, community is able to participate and is involved in planning of municipal strategic documents. Workshops and face to face meetings are the most common tools to address the citizens (used in 4 municipalities), followed by web platforms and consultation exercises (used in 3 municipalities). Municipalities in general use at least three engagement tools, while the biggest number of participative methods is used in Blagoevgrad (8 altogether). Generally, vulnerable groups are involved in planning to a lesser extent – their inclusion is reported only by Blagoevgrad, Velenje and Vaslui. Involvement of communities in neighbourhood planning is similar to the one on municipal strategic level, but they are nowhere concretely involved in management of the municipality-owned urban agricultural land. Despite some examples of bottom-up initiatives, the decision-making process in all municipalities is still predominantly “top-down”. Four municipalities (except Ulcinj and Székesfehérvár) already implemented a participatory planning process, and in three cases (except in Prague) it turned out to be a positive experience. However, qualification trainings for the municipal administration to successfully implement participatory planning are organized only in Blagoevgrad. On the other hand, municipal administrations developed various procedures for responding to a citizen initiative and thus already paved the way for their active inclusion into decision-making processes.

Besides the lack of material sources, people who are social excluded (and thus in need of social inclusion) are not able to participate in economic, political, cultural and social life and do not belong to the “mainstream” orientation of the society. Gardening in particular can address the inclusion of people into production, consumption, social interaction and political engagement. Vulnerable groups, defined as the most relevant by the majority of project partners, are the elderly, followed by the unemployed

and people with low income. Some vulnerable groups are already engaged in gardening, but predominantly in family gardens. In addition, several forms of businesses exist in the surveyed area, which employ vulnerable groups, and several mechanisms encourage companies to employ people from vulnerable groups. Vulnerable groups are also included into education, specialized (especially moderately or severely mentally handicapped, in some cases also blind and deaf children) or regular forms. They can also attend other educational programmes outside formal education. Certain vulnerable groups are entitled to receive social transfers and also extra help in emergency situations. Besides the municipalities, several local, national or transnational NGOs or associations work with vulnerable groups as well. Social inclusion is also supported by the legislation and local strategies. Furthermore, the municipalities provide basic physical adaptations for physically handicapped people, shelters, safe houses, expert help and make effort to communicate with the blind, deaf and the Roma. They generally have positive experience with social inclusion. The methods are various, but the prevailing are social help (in 5 municipalities; i.e. in all except in Prague), creation and development of social networks (in 4 municipalities; the exceptions are Ulcinj and Vaslui) and formal and informal meetings (in 4 municipalities, except in Székesfehérvár and Ulcinj). Velenje uses most of the methods for social inclusion (7 out of 9 listed), followed by Blagoevgrad (6 methods), Vaslui (5 methods), Székesfehérvár and Prague 9 (3 methods), and Ulcinj (2 methods).

One of the objectives of the AgriGo4Cities project is also to promote sustainable urban development through urban agriculture. All partners named at least one local document that promotes sustainability, while the paradigm of sustainable development is being fully adopted only in Velenje and Székesfehérvár, with urban agriculture as one of the tools to achieve greater sustainability only in the latter. From the economic perspective, development of urban agriculture is more or less at the initial stage. The number of inhabitants, involved in urban agriculture (without family gardens), is estimated from 0 in Ulcinj to 400 in Prague 9, which is, in most cases, less than 1 % of the total population. In Blagoevgrad, Velenje, Vaslui and Prague 9, food production is integrated into local economy through local outdoor markets, which operate once per week, while many restaurants in pilot areas use produced food from farms in peri-urban areas. A more innovative informal exchange of local food products, which could also be treated as social innovation, only exists in Velenje as part of a bigger national movement for the exchange of seedlings, seeds, and crops (*Zelemenjava*). No serious conflicts between investors and urban agricultural areas have been recognized. A biomass from urban gardens and farms as a source of renewable energy is not yet being systematically gathered. Urban agriculture in pilot areas is more developed from the social perspective. There are two very interesting examples of the use of urban agriculture as a teaching method: the Day care centre for disabled children *Zornitsa*, and the Natural school *Tvoriltsi* for all children, both in the Municipality of Blagoevgrad. A similar example can be found in Velenje where 7 arranged teaching parks in primary schools were arranged. Urban agriculture has also been recognized as important from the social interaction and community building perspective, especially in Velenje, Prague 9, and Székesfehérvár. Most of these activities or events are the results of the NGOs' self-imposed activities. We found 11 NGOs in pilot areas, at least partly involved in urban agriculture through folklore activities, social care, environmental protection, and establishment of local food market – three in Ulcinj, Prague 9 and Székesfehérvár. There have been

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very few agricultural activities, which would address the environmental aspect of sustainability, despite the project partners are generally aware of environmental potential of urban agriculture. But in practice, promotion of eco-farming principles was only reported in Velenje and Székesfehérvár. The only good practice from the waste management perspective was reported in Velenje, where allotment gardens have organized waste gathering and use a possibility to set up composters. Despite being important part of local habits, especially through informal food production, urban agriculture has nowhere been formally recognized as intangible cultural heritage. So far, only Gril homestead in Velenje is protected as a cultural heritage.



7 References

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