



**URBAN  
ALLOTMENT  
GARDENS**

**COST Action TU1201**

**Urban Allotment Gardens in European Cities  
Future, Challenges and Lessons Learned**

**Poznan Joint MC and WG Meeting  
September 15<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> 2013**

**Adam Mickiewicz University**

**Faculty of Geographical and Geological Sciences**

**Poznan, Poland**

**Event Report**



# URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



**Editors:**  
**Nazila Keshavarz**  
**Runrid Fox-Kämper**  
**Date of Publication: December 2013**

## **Abbreviations:**

AG	Allotment Garden
CG	Core Group
COST	European Cooperation in Science and Technology
MC	Management Committee
WG	Working Group



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



### **Program of Poznan Event September 15-17, 2013**

#### **Sunday September 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Field Trip**

#### **Monday September 16<sup>th</sup> Core**

**Group Meeting**

**Opening Session**

**Working Group 1 to 4 Parallel Meeting**

#### **Tuesday September 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Working Group 1 to 4 Parallel Meeting**

**Closing Session**

**MC Meeting**



# URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



<b><u>Contents</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
Introduction	5
Field Trip	7
Opening Session	9
Keynote Speech	9
National Presentations	10
Four Parallel WG Meeting	11
WG1 Policy and Urban Development Summary Report	12
WG2 Sociology Summary Report	23
WG3 Ecology Summary Report	25
WG4 Urban DesignSummary Report	28
Closing Session	33



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



### Introduction

Since our first event in Dortmund/Germany that was held in March 2013 and our COST Action was experiencing its new venture, our network of scientists from 55 researchers from 23 European countries grew to more than 80 researchers from 29 European and international countries only in less than a year. This is a very promising achievement and good result for a new Action and in Poznan we continued to celebrate, collaborate and brainstorm about the topic of urban allotment gardens in European cities in order to fulfil our promised milestones and goals.

We expected such fast growth in number of researchers and signatory nations as Thierry Goger from COST Office predicted in March 2013 that the Action will grow even more.

New countries that signed our Action's MoU since Dortmund event are the Czech Republic, France, Slovenia and Croatia and in the week before the conference the request of Slovakia was approved by the Management Committee, so by time of this meeting, the Action has increased to 23 participating countries with over 80 scientists and stakeholders that are part of the Action's network as MC and WG members. Request of New Zealand as COST International Partner is confirmed by decision body of COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and Executive Group of the CSO (JAF) in mid-September 2013. We are very pleased to have all new and old partners on board and I am sure we will be able to make the best use of our collaboration and valuable scientific network.

Poznan event gave us a great opportunity to meet not only our enthusiastic members but also representatives of Polish organisations that welcomed us in our opening session, such representative of Adam Mickiewicz University, of the Mayor of Poznań and of the Polish Association of Allotments. Here I would like to thank them once again for their kind attention and reception of our research network.

I also would like to thank the WG Chairs and Vice Chair who have done a great job to arrange and organize their meeting by writing WG agendas, preparing WG meeting materials, submitting posters and promoting the work of their WG members a work that started in Core Group meeting in Stavanger and continued until end of the Poznan event. The Polish team from Adam Mickiewicz University has done a fantastic organization work that need to be thanked and cherished once more for their laborious efforts that should not be underestimated.

And last but not least I would like to remind the readers that most of the participants contributed to the programme of this meeting by sending updated posters of their case studies and advised to take the time to have a careful look at these posters and cases as they are a strong evidence for



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS

the scientific activities that are going on through participating countries. The case studies will help to generate the outputs the Action envisaged having by its end.

Furthermore we need to put more attention on one core element of the Action's networking, the Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs). In 2013 the Action approved seven missions of young academics who liked to support our Action and their personal career as well by a funded stay in one of the Action's member countries. The results of these short missions will contribute to the success of the Action which will benefit from their reports as well as their presentations which were demonstrated during this conference or will be in the next ones. Four of the current STSM grantees (Ilona Feklistova, Nerea Moran, Mikkel Jensen, Kamila Stachura) attended Poznan event and were introduced to the plenum.

As it was mentioned in Poznan opening session, the participants that are part of the Action have a kind of mission as it is mentioned in the objectives of the MoU. It is not only intended to create a research platform on the topic of AGs, but to better understand the relevance of AG for sustainable urban development in Europe, and to study and better comprehend their impacts from political, social, ecological and urban design perspectives.

We need to bear in mind that time is flying and we have to have a close look at our timetable. The Action's first Milestones mentioned in the MoU are a state of the art review and an analysis of the status of the AGs through case studies, something that we are aiming to add to the Lisbon agenda. As the Action had a good start in Dortmund I was sure that in Poznan it will make a good progress in form of tangible results through our initial work that is to pin down the structure of the Action's book.

I am looking forward to meet you all in Lisbon in March 2014, with this hope that we create another interesting and profitable event.

*Runrid Fox-Kämper, Chair of the COST Action TU1201*



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS

### Field Trip



First day of Poznan event started with a walk from Marcinkowskiego Street towards the historical downtown of the City with about 40 participants. A tour guide from Poznan municipality led the group by explaining about the historical and geographical character of the town. Poznan is located in the mid-west of Poland on the Warta river, 180 km from the German border, halfway between Berlin and Warsaw. It is one of the oldest and largest Polish cities, the capital of Wielkopolska Province and the fifth most populated city in Poland with 600,000 population and seventh in terms of area.



During the walkout the following impressive historical spots of Poznan were visited:

- Old Market Square The central square of the city established in 1253 on the left bank of the Warta River.
- Old Town Hall and Historical Museum of the History of the Poznań City Built in 14<sup>th</sup> century, the seat of Poznan's municipal authorities that was rebuilt following the great fire of 1536 and the Second World War.
- The Royal Castle in Poznan (Zamek Królewski w Poznaniu) which dates back to 1249 and was rebuilt over the centuries, largely destroyed during the Second World War but has since been partly rebuilt. During last three years, it has been totally reconstructed.
- Former Jesuit College, built in 18th century in baroque style. The building houses the City Council.



Following the walkabout in historical downtown of Poznan the team went to visit three two sites of allotment gardens: the first one "Bielniki", lying less than two kilometers from the old town and the second one "II Armii Wojska Polskiego" ("Polish 2<sup>nd</sup> Army") on the outskirts of the city. Each allotment compound encompasses varied size plots designed and functioned individually by the plot owners that led to their own specific and distinguished character. The allotment gardens in Poznan are more relaxation and leisure spaces instead of plots to produce foods.



The field trip ended with a short walk around man-made Malta Lake, located in the green wedge of the Cybina River valley. Malta, with a world class regatta course, an ice-rink, ski slope and complex of swimming pools, is the principal recreation area for Poznan dwellers.





# URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS





## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



Professor Andrzej Misgajski

### Opening Session

Welcome addresses were made by:

*Professor Andrzej Misgajski, Adam Mickiewicz University, Faculty of Geographical and Geological Science*

*Mr Mirosław Kruszyński, Deputy Mayor of Poznan City*



Mr Mirosław Kruszyński

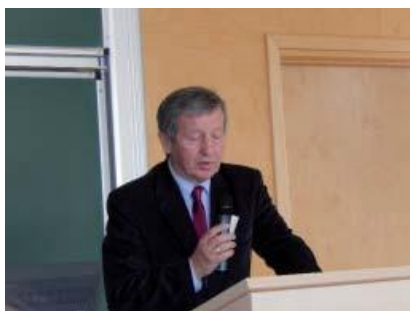
*Mr Zdzisław Śliwa, President of the Regional Association of Allotment Gardeners in Poznan*

*Ms Runrid Fox Kämper Chair of the COST Action TU1201 from ILS - Research Institute for Regional and Urban Development, Aachen&Germany*

### Keynote Speech

*Professor Dr Tadeusz Markowski, President of Polish Town Planning Association*

### **“Problems with urban planning and urban development in transforming country to market driven economy”**



Mr Zdzisław Śliwa

First keynote speaker was Professor Dr Tadeusz Markowski, president of Polish Town Planning Association. His presentation “Problems with urban planning and urban development in transforming country to market driven economy” was mainly about mistakes and social costs of the transformation of Polish economy in respect to the fields of urban planning and urban development. He discussed about negative externalities or negative urban effects that are imposed on Polish space through existing institutional and regulatory planning structures and inefficient planning system. The biggest problem is related with chaotic urban sprawl, land speculation and negligence of public space in cities. He proposed recommendations for necessary changes in regulatory and planning system. Then he explained the activities that Polish Town Planning Association (TUP) together with Association of Polish Cities (APC) in preparing a set of recommendation (in a form of The Charter of Public Space published by TUP) for the State, local governments, NGOs and local societies for betterment of urban public space. His informative presentation introduced also the status of Polish public spaces and the positive experiences and examples of The National Competition for the Best Public Space Development which is organized yearly by TUP with the cooperation of APC.



Professor Dr Tadeusz Markowski



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



### National Presentations:

Presentation of three national case studies started with joint works by Polish team.

*Dr Renata Giedych* - Warsaw University of Life Sciences and *Dr Lidia Ponizy* - Adam Mickiewicz University - **"Allotment gardens as a subject of spatial and ecological research -selected examples of Polish cities"**

Their joint presentation was based on the following headlines:

- General info about Polish allotment gardens
- The silhouette of the Polish allotment gardeners
- Spatial and environmental research carried out at Adam Mickiewicz University and Warsaw University of Life Sciences
- COST Action dissemination activities



*Professor Johan Barstad* - The Norwegian University College of Agriculture and Rural Development - **"From subsistence and welfare to leisure and markets. Allotment gardens in Norway."**

Professor Johan Barstad presented diversity of allotment gardening in Norway and how such practice in Norway is affected by different factors such as the mountainous landscape character of the country and high GDP (48M€/capita) that together makes allotment gardening an outdated practice in Norway which in Total has 52 allotment gardens in the whole country although the practice is growing.



*Ms Sandra Costa* - University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro Vila Real, Portugal - **"From rural memories to new urban spaces - An overview on Portuguese allotment gardens"**

It was an overview of the existing situation of allotment gardens in Portugal by looking at history, policies and landscape character of allotment gardens in few locations such as Braga, Madeira, Lisbon and Porto cities.

There is not a national strategy/policy on UAG

Local policy at a municipal level

In some cities are integrated in the strategy for green infrastructure

Land use category of "zones for production and recreation"

POLICIES IMPACTING ON ALLOTMENT GARDENS

recreation

Specific programmes which incorporate and rule a network of allotments

Objectives

Type of allotment





## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



Type of users and duties

Selection of users

Management institution

Products destination

Scattered allotments with temporary occupation – only its existence is recognized

A comprehensive matrix of National Inventory that was developed as part of case study work of Portugal, showed how different elements of allotment gardens can be recorded and evaluated. Her presentation showcased a range of detailed case studies that were results of on site observations of the physical character of allotment gardens and how they are inserted within the urban fabric.

### **Four Parallel Working Group Meeting**

The event continued its scientific networking through Working Group meeting. Before splitting into four WGs, Professor Simon Bell as the Chair of Editorial Board, contributed through an introductory speech about publication of the Action's book which is not titled yet and how the whole team including MC and WG members are expected to contribute as editors and co-writers. One of the main results of WG meetings through this introduction was to develop initial structure of the book, its chapters, sections and format according to four research areas of the Action. Four WG meeting were continued on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup>.

For confidentiality purposes, details of discussions about book chapters are excluded from WGs Summary Report.



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



### **WG1 Policy and Urban Development Summary Report**

**WG Chairs: Nazila Keshavarz, Matthias Drilling**

**Participants:**

- Simon Bell (EMU, Tartu, Estonia)
- Matthias Drilling (FHNW, Basel, Switzerland)
- Jevgenijs Duboks (University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia)
- Efrat Eizenberg (Technion, Hifa, Israel)
- Renata Giedycht (Warsaw University of Life Science, Poland)
- Byron Ioannou (Frederick University, Nicosia, Cyprus)
- Nazila Keshavarz (ILS, Aachen, Germany)
- Nerea Moran Alonso (Technical University of Madrid, Spain)
- Lidia Ponizy (AM University, Poznan, Poland)
- Martin Sondermann (Leibniz University Hannover, Germany)
- Maria Sousa (University of Tras-os-Montes e Alto Douro, Portugal)
- Simone Tappert (FHNW, Basel, Switzerland)
- Nicola Thomas (FHNW, Basel, Switzerland)
- Andis Zilans (University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia)
- Kamila Stachura (AM University, Poznan, Poland)

**Absent Members**

Marit Rosol (Goethe University of Frankfurt, Germany), Reinhard Martinsen (Regional Union of Allotment Garden Associations Hannover, Germany), Sophia Meeres (University College Dublin, Ireland), Inta Adamsone (Cesis Municipality, Latvia), Laura Arāja (University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia), Lauma Lidaka (Riga City Council, Latvia), Peteris Skinkis (University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia), Dita Trapenciēre (Cesis Municipality, Latvia), Werner Heidemann (Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux, Luxembourg), Malou Weirich (Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux, Luxembourg), Mariana Silva (University of Tras-os-Montes e Alto Douro, Portugal), Maria Sousa (University of Tras-os-Montes e Alto Douro, Portugal), Jelena Djordjevic (Municipality of Vracar, Serbia), Andrej Erjavec (INKABI, Slovenia), Barbara Golick Marusic (Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenia), Ina Suklje Erjavec (Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenia), José M. Durán-Altisent (University Politécnica de Madrid, Spain), Ulrich Schmutz (Garden Organic - National Charity for Organic Growing, Birmingham, UK)



# URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



## Issues Discussed:

Prior to Poznan meeting an agenda for WG1 meeting was drafted and agreed by members covering the following topics:

- o Roundtable question "What is new since Dortmund"
- o Presentations by members
- o Discussions about WG1 theme and national case studies
- o Introducing matrix of policies
- o WG1 contribution in editing Action's book
- o Brainstorming through collection of questions and ideas/comments
- o Setting out next steps for following event in March 2014 in Lisbon/Portugal

All topics were discussed except the matrix of policies due to time limitation and giving priority to writing abstracts for book chapters. Two case study presentations from Germany and Switzerland and one STSM presentation resulted an intensive brain-storming around urban governance and planning and how urban planning and development are affected by different actors and factors such as changes in demographic character of cities and population, changes in density, zoning and re-zoning, urban governance and political character of municipalities.

Roundtable discussions directed to two major questions about urban allotment gardens: "Research" nature and activities and "Practitioners" that both questions spurred detailed discussions and thoughts:

- Research - how to call this phenomenon? Neo-, Re-, Retro- → Forms of cooperation between different modes of AG (guerilla garden, community garden, etc.)
- Practitioners – different understanding of VALUES

Watershed Moments (WM) delivered discussions about:

- Retro-enclosed "new urban commons"
- Neoliberal planning of AG
  - a. Re-zoning, re-naming, new functioning (e.g. food and leisure)
  - b. Embedding in public-space-strategies
- Reallocation of AG
  - a. New relationship city-"umland"
    - i. Transformation of borders: "new alliances"
    - ii. Forms of cooperation between different modes of AG --> pressure group
    - iii. Spatial planning opportunities



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



### b. Urban density strategies

- Democratic provocations
- Initiating bottom-up modes of garden oriented “communities”
  - a. Academic ideas of new society
  - b. NGO engagement
  - c. Key – person’s interests
- External shocks and rediscovering of self-reliance → financial crisis

platform for politics/social capital



Three presentations from Switzerland, Germany and Spain were focal point of discussions in first day of WG1 meeting that are published on Action's website. Germany has submitted a detailed paper that is the base of their presentation and it is included in WG1 summary report.

### **Nicola Thomas - Allotment Gardens in Basel - Greenfield Development between Entrepreneurial City Policies and Community Governance**

Nicola Thomas from the University of Applied Arts Northwestern Switzerland presented the case study of the Allotment Garden Redevelopment Plans in the Swiss City Basel. After years of decreasing inhabitants' number, since the 1990s the city of Basel has been experiencing an increase of in-movers again. City planners and politicians have reacted to this trend with the Logis Bale strategy, that (introduced in 2001) planned to create 5.000 new high-quality dwellings in 10 years. Due to its political separation from surrounding Basel Land, the available building land in Basel is limited, and Allotment Garden areas have therefore been targeted as new building land.

This led to the city plans with permission to build three allotment garden areas in the Northwest, South and Eastern Border of Basel, which would have resulted in the displacement of the gardeners. Gardeners, nature groups and left and right wing political groups however fiercely opposed the plans and started a city wide referendum that resulted in a city wide vote in 2011. The majority of the Basel population voted neither in favour of the referendum (which requests to stop all rezoning plans), nor the original plans, but for a compromise that city actors had presented. The compromise meant that parts of the AG land would be rezoned into building land, but the majority would be kept as gardens and green land; a part would be changed into public park and leisure places. After the vote, a new allotment garden law was developed and is currently being put into action.

The presentation of Nicola Thomas reconstructed the redevelopment process, the actors involved, different interests and conflicts arising from it.





# URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



Figure 2: Allotment Garden "Am Lohrberg" in Göttingen.

Photo: Janna-Edna Bartels



Figure 3: Community Garden „Internationale StadtteilGärten“ in Hannover.

Photo: Caroline Westphal

*Martin Sondermann* - **Urban Gardening in Germany: Forms, Challenges, Strategies**

## 1. Introduction

Urban development in Germany today is following the integrated approach of the "Sustainable European City" (Leipzig Charter 2007). This includes the integration of social, economic, ecological and aesthetical concerns as well as the integration of all stakeholders in terms of a collaborative planning (cf. BMVBS 2012). Urban green spaces and gardens play a crucial role in this context as they contribute to the fields of leisure, recreation and health as well as to the regulation of water and temperature and urban design. They are open spaces for living and diverse appropriations, for cultural expressions. As a soft location factor and a space to produce food they even have an economic value (Bläser et al. 2012: 16–20, Swanwick et al. 2003). Considering all green open spaces as well as green roofs and facades, various forms of urban green areas and gardens can be identified (see Fig. 1.)

## 2. Urban gardens in Germany

The focus of our research is on two forms of green spaces: allotment gardens as public green spaces with private plots and new forms of urban gardening, especially community gardens. These two forms need be considered as part of urban green infrastructures, which can be characterized by their spatial distribution of the various functions they provide for livable, attractive and healthy cities. As such urban gardens provide social, economic, ecological and aesthetical functions (cf. Table 1).

### 2.1 Classical form: „Kleingärten“ (allotment gardens)

Urban gardens have a long tradition in Germany as the classical form of Kleingärten (Urban Allotment Gardens) has been established in the mid of the 19th century. The first gardening association following the ideas of the physician Daniel Gottlieb Schreber was founded in 1861. The original idea was to increase the health of children by providing public play grounds and green spaces for sports (Appel et al. 2011: 24 f.). Today there are appr. 1,2 million of these gardens encompassing a total area of 50.000 ha (BMVBS 2008: 1). In addition to the use of these gardens for leisure and recreation, the classical German allotment garden always includes the production of food (fruits, vegetables, herbs and salads). These gardens (see Fig. 2) are primarily used by people living in apartments without private gardens. Therefore they can be found throughout the cities and mostly close to residential areas with a good access to public transport (BMVBS/BBR 2008: 2ff).

### 2.2 Modern form: "Gemeinschaftsgärten" (community gardens)





# URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS

Fig. 1: Forms of urban green space

Forms of urban green areas and gardens		
public	common	private
public parks and gardens	community gardens	private gardens
play, sport, health and leisure areas	allotment gardens (area)	allotment gardens (plot)
urban forests and meadows (floodplains)	tenant gardens, green courtyards	roof-top gardens and balconies
green „buffer strips“, roadside greenery	urban agriculture (kitchen gardens, food production)	
cemeteries	green areas of social, educational and health establishments	

Source: Own Drawing and Translation (Sondermann / Steffenhagen 2013, based on BLÄSER ET AL. 2012: 17)

Table 1: Functions of urban gardens

<b>Society</b>	Social Exchange and communication
	Community and neighbourhood building
	Intercultural integration
	Leisure and recreation
	Physical and psychological Health
	Environmental Education
	Political participation, empowerment and responsibility
	Appropriation of public spaces and political expression
<b>Economy</b>	Independent and social work
	Subsistence farming / food production
	Land value
<b>Ecology</b>	Local climate and water regulation
	Biodiversity (especially old cultivated species)
	Environments for species of flora and fauna
	Natural resources (such as soils)
<b>Aesthetics</b>	Attractiveness of neighborhoods and open spaces
	Cultural archive of a societys spirit of a certain time (Zeitgeist)
	Diversification of garden design

Own Table (Sources: Appel et al. 2011: 150-155; Rosol 2006: 290-291; BMVBS 2008; Sondermann/Steffenhagen 2013: 43)



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS

Inspired by the community gardening movement in New York City with its bottom-up-idea of using urban brownfields as gardens to meet, relax and grow food (Eizenberg 2013: 17-23), a new form of urban gardening is emerging in Germany since the 1990ies. There are no official statistics, but it can be estimated to be approximately 250 community gardens throughout Germany. They are created and operated by communities, mostly organized as associations (eingetragene Vereine). According to their major idea or use they are often called “Interkulturelle Gärten” (intercultural gardens, Fig. 3), “Kiezzgärten” or “Nachbarschaftsgärten” (neighborhood gardens) and primarily serve social issues in combination with ecological ideas of organic and alternative gardening (Rosol 2006: 7; Appel et al. 2011: 34-39, Müller 2011).

### 2.3 Comparison of the two forms of gardens

Both forms of urban gardens in Germany are very similar concerning their

**Table 2: Major Forms of Urban Gardening in Germany**

	<b>Kleingärten</b> Allotment Gardens	<b>Gemeinschaftsgärten</b> Community Gardens
<b>Form</b>	Classical („small gardens“)	Modern („community gardens“)
<b>Origin</b>	Based on “Kleingartenbewegung” (small-garden-movement) since 1860s	Based on community gardening movement (USA) and other international movements (Transition Town) since 1990s
<b>Objectives</b>	Originally: health and sports Later: subsistence / food production Today: primarily leisure	Social and political (community-building, „right to the city“)  Subsistence / food production (post growth, anti-capitalism)
<b>Legal Framework</b>	Federal law („Bundeskleingartengesetz“); (strict) regulations	No framework; no general regulations
<b>Organisation</b>	Formalised structures (associations)	No general form of organization (often associations)
<b>Statistics</b>	Areas: 15.600  Plots: 1.240.000	Gardens: appr. 250

Own Illustration (sources: BMVBS 2008, Rosol 2006, Appel et al. 2011; Sondermann/Steffenhagen 2013)





## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



origin (as social movements) and their aim to operate gardens in communities (associations) for both recreation and food production (Appel et al. 2011: 24-31).

Interestingly the activists of the modern community gardens do mostly not refer to the classical allotment gardens but to international movements such as the community-garden-movement in New York City (USA), the “Transition Town”-Movement (UK) or to forms of urban agriculture known in Latin American countries such as Cuba (see Table 2). In addition to a simple lack of attention of the German urban gardening tradition, some activists explicitly reject the classical form of allotment gardening as it has a reputation of being too traditional and conservative, over-regulated and sort of “stuffy”. Instead the modern gardening activists see themselves more as political or ecological activists performing “alternative ways” of gardening, living and working (Müller 2011, Appel et al. 2011: 23-39).

Indeed the classical Kleingärten are more regulated as they have legal framework based on a federal law on small gardens (Bundeskleingartengesetz). Due to that they have fewer possibilities to redevelop the gardens as size and forms of uses are fixed in the law. On the other hand they are more established and better protected against other interests in urban development. Therefore most of the traditional allotment gardens have a long tradition as well as a long-term perspective (BMVBS 2008: 133 f.). Modern community gardens on the other side are often established as interim-uses of urban brownfields. Therefore they do have a rather short- to midterm-perspective concerning their existence (Rosol 2006: 291).

### 3. Recent Challenges and strategies

Due to ongoing societal changes both forms of gardens are confronted with several challenges and need to develop strategies addressing these challenges or to adapt to new needs and lifestyles, respectively. The following overview over recent challenges and strategies is based on a review of literature and a small survey carried out by Master-students of environmental planning in July 2013. They conducted 15 qualitative expert interviews with gardening activists in classical allotment gardens (n=6) and modern community gardens (n=9) in the cities of Bremen, Göttingen and Hannover, all situated in the north-west of Germany (Ahmed et al. 2013).

#### 3.1 Challenges and strategies in Kleingärten (allotment gardens)

A major challenge of allotment gardens is their protection from building development. In Germany a re-urbanization of city centers is partly both, a policy and an empirical trend. The more people are moving into city centers the higher the pressure is on allotment garden areas. The gardening associations respond to that challenge by improving their publicity and organizing protests through local and national media as well as building new strategic alliances with other associations who need green open spaces in



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS

city centers such as sports clubs. Additionally they put some pressure on local politicians and try to get seats in local and district councils. In this context another important challenge is the vacancy of lots and a shrinking demand in allotments in some areas. Long-term vacancy is another argument of politicians why these areas can be redeveloped as building sites (BMVBS 2013: 7 f.; Ahmed et al. 2013: 62-65).

The vacancy of allotments is related to a general societal change encompassing a shrinking and ageing population as well as a further internationalization (BMVBS 2013: 24-31). These trends can also be seen in allotment gardens, where a declining demand, an over-ageing of the tenants as well as a growing influx of people of foreign origin can be observed (BMVBS/BBR 2008: 5-7). At the same time an increasing lack of commitment can be seen amongst the honorary members of the associations-board. The gardener's willingness to do voluntary work in the common areas outside their private plots is also declining. The internationalization of gardeners sometimes leads to group formation and conflicts between groups of different origin and between plot-neighbors, respectively (Ahmed et al. 2013: 62-65). To face these social challenges the gardening associations try to find new members, especially young people and families who are willing to commit to the work in the association. In order to achieve this, publicity for the gardens through the press, "open days" for the public and similar events as well as "word of mouth advertising" is performed by some active association-members (ebd.; Appel et al. 2011: 147 ff.; BMVBS 2013: 39 f.). In addition to this the regulation of the spatial distribution of people with a certain background or attitudes sometimes helps to avoid conflicts between neighbors (Ahmed et al. 2013: 62-65).

Minor challenges are some forms of vandalism and conflicts of use. Against vandalism and theft no active strategies in the associations have been found yet besides improving locking the shed on an individual level. The conflicts of the way gardens are used arise from disputes amongst tenants or between tenants and honorary board members over rules and regulations such as the fixed percentages of productive and non-productive land and hedge heights. These conflicts are mostly solved by finding compromises or an open and non-demanding interpretation of the garden rules and regulations (Ahmed et al. 2013: 62-65).

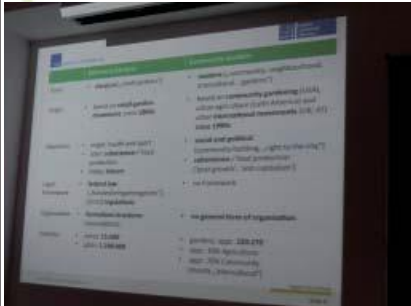
### **3.2 Challenges and strategies in „Gemeinschaftsgärten“ (community gardens)**

The challenges community gardens are confronted with considerably differ from the allotment gardens. Their major challenges are a lack of funding and institutionalization as well as the finding and keeping suitable sites for a long-term. The lack of funding affects the payment of leasing fees and project managers and the acquisition of gardening equipment and materials. The finding of suitable sites is often complicated as it depends on the ownership of





## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



the sites, their availability in respect of their status in binding zoning-plans or the interest of investors to develop the site. In addition to this the geographical situation and the surface condition are criteria for usability (Ahmed et al. 2013: 68-75, Appel et al. 2011: 173-181). Most of the community gardens start as so called interim-uses and have a leasing contract over a rather short period of time. The uncertainty over the long-term perspective is often complicated to deal with and frustrating, respectively (Rosol 2006: 291). One strategy to deal with lack of funding is to professionalize the acquisition of financial support and funding from the public sector, foundations, private people and companies. The problem with the finding and keeping of suitable sites for new gardening projects is addressed by the improvement of public relations and publicity strategies. Additionally, different forms of support from public authorities are given aiming at long-term contracts with the landowner and a legal protection of the sites (Appel et al. 2011: 147; 173-181). Hereby a professional representation on the internet, showcases on the outside of the gardens, the selling of food products and the performance of different kinds of events are seen as appropriate ways to gain more attention from politics and the public (Ahmed et al. 2013: 68-75). In addition to this, some projects started cooperations with professional allotment-gardening associations in order to learn from their experience, to build strategic alliances for urban gardening and sometimes even to use vacant allotments for community gardening (ebd.).

Due to the fact that community gardens are mostly used as common grounds without fences around the single plots and the idea of working closely together often leads to social conflicts amongst the gardeners as they follow different ideas and ways of gardening. Some associations try to solve such problems by talking openly about the conflicts and conducting some forms of mediation. Another strategy is to carry out collaborative activities such as collective planning, composting, producing products (e.g. honey) and cooking (Ahmed et al. 2013: 69; 75; Appel et al. 2011: 146).

The community gardens also have a lack of voluntary commitment, especially in the management of the projects. The major strategy is to improve the professionalization and to acquire financial support in order to pay the project manager (Ahmed et al. 2013: 93f.). A further challenge is vandalism, which leads to fencing and locking of the sites for the public (Ahmed et al. 2013: 71).

#### 4. Conclusion

In Germany two forms of urban gardening can be found: the well-established and traditional form of allotment gardens "Kleingärten" and the modern form of community gardens "Gemeinschaftsgärten". Both forms are confronted with recent challenges such as lack of commitment, conflicts over land use, social conflicts between gardeners and vandalism. The major challenges, however, differ between the two gardening forms: A lot of allotment gardens



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



are confronted with a decreasing demand and vacant plots as well as with the question how to protect the areas from building. The community gardens on the other side often need suitable sites and a long-term perspective in keeping them. Despite a sort of mental rift between the two gardening forms, new forms of cooperation are emerging reaching from information sharing and the building of strategic alliances up to the integration of community gardens into allotment garden areas.

Further research on urban gardening in Germany is necessary, especially on the specific forms and developments of the growing number of community gardens. Further research on possibilities and constraints of cooperation between community and allotment gardens is also needed. Another major issue for research is to analyze the various forms of support from public authorities in terms of spatial planning, legal protection and funding.

### References

- Ahmed, Warda; Bartels, Janna Edna; Bornschein, Katharina; Busse, Kristina; Hennig, Janina; Hirche, Stefanie; Kentschke, Freia; Mills, Andreas; Westphal, Caroline (2013): Städtische Gärten – Entwicklungen, Herausforderungen und Anpassungsstrategien. Eine empirische Untersuchung von Kleingartenanlagen, Gemeinschaftsgärten und Interkulturellen Gärten in Hannover, Bremen und Göttingen. Projektbericht. Hannover: Leibniz Universität Hannover, Institut für Umweltplanung (unpublished report).
- Appel, Ilka; Grebe, Christina; Spitthöver, Maria (2011): Aktuelle Garteninitiativen. Kleingärten und neue Gärten in deutschen Großstädten. Kassel: kassel university press.
- Bläser, Kerstin; Danielzyk, Rainer; Fox-Kämper, Runrid; Funke, Linda; Rawak, Myriam; Sondermann, Martin (2012): Urbanes Grün in der integrierten Stadtentwicklung. Strategien, Projekte, Instrumente. Düsseldorf: Ministerium für Bauen, Wohnen, Stadtentwicklung und Verkehr des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen.
- BMVBS - Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung (Ed.) (2013): Bewältigung der Leerstandsproblematik in Kleingartenanlagen in strukturschwachen Regionen. = Forschungen 158, Berlin: BMVBS.
- BMVBS - Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung (Ed.) (2012): 5 Years after the LEIPZIG CHARTER – Integrated Urban Development as a Prerequisite for a Sustainable City. Berlin: BMVBS.
- BMVBS - Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung / BBR - Bundesamt für Bau, Stadt- und Raumforschung (Ed.) (2008): "Städtebauliche, ökologische und soziale Bedeutung des Kleingartenwesens"; Berlin, Bonn.
- Eizenberg, Efrat (2013): From the Ground Up. Community Gardens in New



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



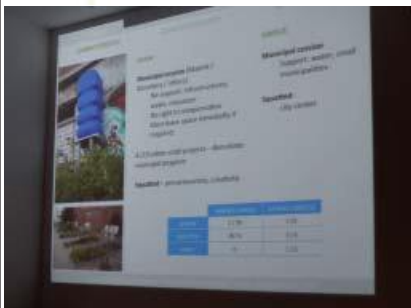
York City and the Politics of Spatial Transformation. Farnham/Burlington: Ashgate.

- Müller, Christa (2011): Urban Gardening. Grüne Signaturen neuer urbaner Zivilisation. In: Müller, Christa (Ed.): Urban Gardening. Über die Rückkehr der Gärten in die Stadt. München: oekom; 22-53.

- Rosol, Marit (2006): Gemeinschaftsgärten in Berlin. Eine qualitative Untersuchung zu Potenzialen und Risiken bürgerschaftlichen Engagements im Grünflächenbereich vor dem Hintergrund des Wandels von Staat und Planung. Dissertation: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

- Sondermann, Martin; Steffenhagen, Pia (2013): Urbane Gärten in der integrierten Stadtentwicklung. In: Gartenkunst. Die Gestaltung der Natur = Unimagazin. Forschungsmagazin der Leibniz Universität Hannover: 40-46.

- Swanwick, Carys; Dunnett, Nigel; Woolley, Helen (2003): Nature, Role and Value of Green Space in Towns and Cities: An overview. Built Environment 29 (2); 94-106.



### **Nerea Moran – New Allotments and Community Gardens in Greece and Spain**

Nerea Morán's presentation showed the results from her recent work under STSM scheme. she compared allotment and community gardens in Greece and Spain, through 10 field visits and interviews in Athens and Thessaloniki, and previous field work in Spain.

Financial crisis is generating an emergency of urban agriculture initiatives in both countries. A double response to crisis is been detected, arising from people and from local governments, which is generating two big garden's typologies:

- Community gardens, developed by community groups, reclaiming vacant public spaces, with a multifunctional aim: ecological, cultural, political, associative... They're working on direct democracy, public land management, urban model and food sovereignty.
- Allotment's municipal programs, designed to prevent or mitigate social exclusion, mainly in medium and small municipalities... In Greece, these programs have a strong food access objective, in Spain they have, by now, recreational or training aims.

WG1 meeting continued by selecting WG1 editorial board and lead authors for three chapters of Action's book. Tasks were assigned to the members by writing abstracts and keywords for proposed chapters relevant to WG1 research theme.



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



### WG2 – Sociology Summary Report

**WG Chairs: Mary Benson, Johan Barstad**

#### **Participants:**

- Mary Benson (National University of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland)
- Johan Barstad (Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Stavanger, Norway)
- Rhys Evans (Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Stavanger, Norway)
- Lina Fernandes (University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro, Portugal)
- Susan Noori (Birmingham City University, UK)
- Anna Adevi (Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland)
- Ilona Feklistova (Estonian University of Life Sciences, Estonia)
- Pia Steffenhagen (Leibniz University Hannover, Germany)
- Kadri Semm (Tallinn University, Estonia)
- Laura Arāja (University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia)

#### **Absent Members**

Nicole Bauer (Swiss Federal Research Institute, Switzerland), Hervé Bonnavaud (Fédération Nationale des Jardins Familiaux et Collectifs, France), Laura Calvet-Mir (University Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain), Tim Delshammar (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden), Vladan Djokic (University of Belgrade, Serbia), Natasa Jancovic (Serbia), Jean Kieffer (Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux, Luxembourg), Kalevi Korpela (University of Tampere, Finland), Barbora Lipovska (Slovak University of Agriculture, Slovakia), Hug March Corbella (Internet Interdisciplinary Institute, Spain), Milica Milojevic (University of Belgrade, Serbia), Anka Misetic (Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Hungary), Helena Nordh (Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway), Stavros Parlalis (Frederick University, Cyprus), Tarmo Pikner (Tallinn University, Estonia), Raul Puente Asuero (University Pablo de Olavide of Sevilla, Spain), Ramon Ribera-Fumaz (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain), Sara Ursic (Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Croatia),

#### **Issues Discussed:**

Discussion surrounding methodological approaches and methods of data gathering: the majority of approaches are qualitative in nature and a variety of methods are being utilised including interviews; questionnaires; on site observation; on site participation; visual methods and representations; content



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



Discussion surrounding methodological framework – document produced on this. It was agreed that while there are a variety of approaches they are complimentary. The document produced is taken from posters/case studies/profiles and is intended to be inclusive of a variety of methods and of questions addressed in case studies. While participants may be interested in a variety of issues the majority are addressed in the document and this can be edited when necessary. In addition there is a lot of overlap in case studies that can be developed when writing the chapters and also when working towards

Discussion surrounding typologies of allotments and what constitutes an allotment – it was agreed that allotments differ across time and context and new understandings are emerging across Europe. While other working groups are discussing typologies of allotments we also need to prepare an overview of typologies in our case studies – this could be taken from our working document 'Stage 1: A visual and Spatial Understanding of Case Studies'.

It is also necessary to develop an overview of typologies of allotment gardeners or plot holders – this is perhaps something we could think about and prepare for the next meeting – we could develop another working document 'Stage 2: Typologies of allotment gardens and allotment gardeners/plot holders'. Any comments/suggestions on this are very welcome.

Following this we moved on to discuss the sociology section in the book. This became the main focus of the rest of the working group meetings in Poznan. We had been given an option on two or three chapters and we decided on three. Our objective for the rest of the meeting and the following day was to compile a title and brief outline of each chapter for presentation to the group at the final combined meeting of working groups. We also needed to decide on lead authors and begin to compile a list of working group members who wish to participate in working on each particular chapter.

We began this discussion with deciding on chapter structure.

Next we brainstormed some themes/words that the group felt was important for our working group and which highlighted the sociological aspects of allotment gardens. We selected these themes/topics using both the 'Memorandum of Understanding' and our own frameworks.

What do we need to move forward?

Finalise working document on visual and spatial understanding of a selection of our case studies

Typologies of allotment gardens

Typologies of allotment gardeners/plot holders Sign into working on particular chapters Gathering of ideas for each chapter

We are probably all at present gathering data and this is ongoing. These can be combined into one working



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



### WG3 Ecology Summary Report

**WG Chairs:** Annette Voigt, Andrzej Mizgajski,

**Participants:**

- Marta Camps Calvet, (UAB, Spain)
- Yvonne Christ, (ZHAW, Zurich, Switzerland)
- Avigail Heller (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Israel)
- Andrew Hursthouse (UWS, Paisley, Scotland, UK)
- Ari Jokinen (University of Tampere, Finland)
- Mart Kulvik (EMU, Tartu, Estonia)
- Monika Latkowska (Warsaw University, Poland)
- Teresa Leitao (LNEC, Lisbon, Portugal)
- Andrzej Mizgajski (AM University, Poznan, Poland)
- Kamila Stachura (AM University, Poznan, Poland)
- Jelena Ristić Trajković, (University of Belgrade, Serbia)
- Annette Voigt (Salzburg University, Austria)

**Absent Members**

Ligita Baležentienė, Evaldas Klimas (ASU Kaunas, Lithuania), Erik Gomez-Baggethun (UAB, Spain), Anna Adevi (ZHAW, Zurich, Switzerland, Srdjan Radanov Radicev (University of Belgrade, Serbia), Jürgen Breuste (Salzburg University, Austria), Laura Arāja, Kristīne Dreija, Mara Urtane (Latvia), Maridea Petrova (Macedonia) Sarka Petrova (Prague, Czech)

**Issues Discussed:**

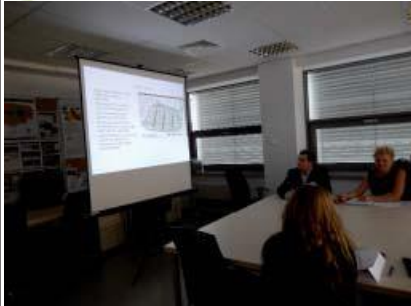
- 1) Welcome
- 2) Agenda and time schedule
- 3) Short overview of core research issues / case studies output of each WG member (up to 10 minutes):

Introduction: different perspectives and topics of WG 3 members, wide Research framework

- “Urban ecological approach” means that the human being is seen in relation to the urban environment.
- AGs are kind of urban ecosystems and part of green infrastructure, which provide benefits for users and dwellers.
- WG Ecology includes the interrelated biological, geographical and social perspectives.



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



Case studies from: Tampere & Helsinki, (FIN) Estonia (EST) Latvia (LV) Scotland (UK) Kaunas (LT) Poznan, (PL) Warszawa & Mazovia (PL) Salzburg (A) Zurich, (CH) Belgrad (SRB) Barcelona (E) Lisbon (P) Tel Aviv, (IL)

Participants represent a very wide range of interests and competences that could be clustered as follows:

- Improvement of the ecological situation in cities by AGs
- Soil and water contamination & soil and ground water protection,
- Vegetation mapping, floristic analysis,
- AGs position in the urban ecological structure
- Ecosystem Services of AGs: effects on urban climate, food provision, cultural services....
- AGs usage, environmental behavior

#### 4) Short report about conclusions from Dortmund

Research framework: "Urban ecological approach" means that the human being is seen in relation to the urban environment. AGs are kind of urban ecosystems and part of green infrastructure, which provide benefits for users and dwellers. WG Ecology have to include the interrelated biological, geographical and social perspectives.

Recommended approaches binding case studies in different countries

- Processes/cascade analyse: Drivers - Pressure - State - Impact - Response
- Ecosystem Services approach: Valuation of services provided by AGs ecosystems for user and dwellers
- Matter fluxes analyse: Input - Output approach (AGs are seen as „black boxes“)

The urban ecological research on AGs should be seen on two level:

- Ecological aspects of AGs (impact on and of AGs) and
- AGs position in urban ecological structure.

Networking activities after the meeting in Dortmund

#### 5) Possible cooperation between group members

(methods, comparisons of results, application of questionnaire...)

- We discussed the possibility of using the same methods, to apply the questionnaire in different case studies and the possibilities of comparing results
- We discussed opportunities for STSM (short-term scientific missions) on the topic of Urban Allotment Gardens in Europe to visit an institution in



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



another COST Country to foster collaboration or to learn a new technique and/or methods not available in their own institution.

### 7) BOOK and the ECOLOGY chapter: structure, content, authors

Here, we were focusing on frame conditions, structure, and the organization of writing. This became the main focus of the second day of the working group meetings in Poznan. (see below)

### 8) Any other business

What we have learned:

- Interest in the subject of soil contamination

We need to have some simple methods assessing / checking the soil

- We have lot of data on human behavior on AGs across Europe
  - There are some linkage to other WGs
    - human behaviour
    - environmental education
    - awareness raising
    - cultural services
  - idea: one case study that concentrate all / some STSM students in one site for interdisciplinary work
- Challenges and tasks for the future
- Better cooperation and communication
  - Very different degree of cooperation /involvement / feedback: how to motivate the silent members?
  - What are our shared aims? Commonalities / the common ground of our ecological research?

Topics for the next meeting in Portugal

- case studies report
- writing of the book/ section/ 3 chapters



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



### **WG 4 Urban Design Summary Report**

**WG Chairs: Silvio Caputo, Sandra Costa**

#### **Participants:**

Runrid Fox-Kämper (ILS, Germany)

Russell Good (Birmingham City University, UK)

Mikkel Jensen (Aalborg University, Denmark)

Merle Karro-Kalberg (Estonian University of Life Sciences, Estonia)

Minttu Kervinen (Tampere University of Technology, Finland)

Andrea Mangiatordi (Associazione Bioarchitettura Onlus, Italy)

Verica Medjo (University of Belgrade, Serbia)

Mariana Silva (University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, Portugal)

Ina Suklje Erjavec (Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenia)

Kostas Tsiambaos (National Technical University of Athens, Greece)

#### **Absent Members**

Corinna Susanne Clewing (Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway); Kristine Abolina (University of Latvia, Latvia); Inta Adamsone (Cesis Municipality, Latvia); Maria Bihunova (Slovak University of Agriculture, Slovakia); Ivana Blagojevic (University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Agriculture, Serbia); Jacqueline Bowring (Lincoln University, New Zealand); Chiara Certoma (Ghent University, Department of Architecture & Urban Planning, Belgium); Kristine Dreija (Latvia University of Agriculture, Latvia); Michael Hardman (University of Salford, UK); Dace Laiva (Cesis Municipality, Latvia); Lauma Lidaka (Riga City Council, Latvia); Gabriela Maksymiuk (Warsaw University of Life Sciences, Poland); Reinhard Martinsen (Regional Union of Allotment Garden Associations Hannover e.V, Germany); Frederico Meireles Rodrigues (University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro, Portugal); Wittfrida Mitterer (Associazione Bioarchitettura Onlus, Italy); Luis Manuel Navas Gracia (University of Valladolid, Spain); Bruno Notteboom (Ghent University, Belgium); Terje Ong (Estonian University of Life Sciences, Estonia); Branko Pavic (University of Belgrade Serbia); Maridea Petrova (Center for Sustainable Values, Macedonia); Ole Verner (Pihl Aalborg University, Denmark); Guntars Ruskuls (Riga Municipality, Latvia); Eva Schwab (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Austria); Anja Seliger (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Austria); Lone Severin (Zurich City Municipality Switzerland); Roberta Stepankova (Slovak University of Agriculture, Slovakia); Sandra Treija (Riga Technical University, Latvia); Andreas Wesener (Lincoln University, New Zealand); Chris Zijdeveld (Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux, Luxemburg).



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



### Issues Discussed

The WG4 meeting started with Chairs presenting the agenda for the two-day work session followed by the welcome to new participants.

The meeting had the following agenda:

- Introduction to the session from Chairs
- Short introduction from new members and their area of interest/study
- Presentation of the case studies developed on the template
- Debate on advantages and disadvantages of the template
- Finalisation of the template
- Next steps and timeline
- Contribution to the book



There were three first time participants in the meeting. The new participants from Portugal, Slovenia and Denmark (STSM) outlined their background and interest in participating in the WG4. Slovenia has just joined the Action and is considering having as case study the city of Ljubljana.

Following the presentation it was introduced the debate on the template and on the strategy for the WG4 framework. Members immediately raised some concerns related to the template and the objectives of the WG4, namely:

1. Similarities and overlaps between the other COST Action – Urban Agriculture. These are several and related to all WGs, included WG4 (e.g. green infrastructure, etc.)
2. How to create links with the other working groups especially WG1 and WG2, which are collecting information relevant for the WG4;
3. What is the main mission of WG4? An issue that has been underestimated is that in pursuing its objectives, WG4 needs also to consider urban planning systems.

The Chair reminded that it is necessary to be clear with regard to the outcome of WG4 and the relevance of a catalogue of urban allotment typologies based on the template. It was mentioned that the template's main purpose is to organise the information from the case studies with the objective to know:

1. What is the potential of each type of allotment?
2. Are the allotments providing the right benefits?
3. In which way urban designers/planners are engaging to the conservation and expansion of the existing allotment stock?



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



4. Which new typologies are being created? Which ones already exist? And what are the possibilities for the future?

Members mentioned that there were some difficulties in approaching the drafted template. It was considered that it is important to have a database that addresses also the following issues:

1. Urban structure, importance and contribute;
2. Impact of allotment in the city and how the impact is defined;
3. What are the problems faced in each nation/context and what the solutions could be. As an example, it was mentioned that the keynote speaker presentation was a good example of the kind of problems Polish allotments are facing with related solutions;
4. Accessibility;
5. Visual impact and visual characteristics of the place;
6. Old and new Allotments
7. Whether they are necessary or not
8. New locations vs destroying the old ones
9. Main differences between countries

Another concern raised was regarding the objective of creating design guidelines. Guidelines as an outcome were questioned as well as its effectiveness. The differences in culture, landscape and climate would make it difficult or impossible to formulate general guidelines.

A different approach to the case studies catalogue was suggested, and this would be looking at the allotment as Past – Present – Future situations and scenarios.

Subsequently, some members presented their case studies following the format of the template, namely: Silvio Caputo, Runrid Fox-Kamper, Kostas Tsiambaos, and Mikkel Jensen.

From the presentations some observations and questions emerged. Most of the sections of the template are relevant, but it was emphasized the overall format of the template needed improvement. What follows is a list of the most important observations:

- Should be easier to fill in and more concise (use bullet points, or consider sub-categories)
- Add new topics



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



- Include a field for “comments”
- Include challenges and disadvantages
- Include the impact in the city: Value to the city? Value to the public space? Value to the community?
- Rethink the topic of genius loci – what does it mean?
- Rethink or explain better the purpose of the “Common in” section
- Rethink the importance of the biodiversity of the plot itself
- Relations Public space and private space

Another aspect discussed was the diversity of economical, political and social situations of each country resulting in different configurations/use of allotment gardens and different policies' approaches to current AGs stocks. In the perspective of such diversity, would the WG4 be able to provide tools (or designing tools?) to adapt or construct new sites in different contextual conditions and climates, and provide arguments to convince policy makers?

Further the discussion, another approach was suggested based on Adaptability. This consists in identifying the adaptable features and policies (sustainable policies), the role of UAG in adaptation strategies, and the spaces with potential to be occupied by allotments. A broad methodology was outlined: case study analysis can focus on how the existing allotment typologies, locations, and configurations are capable of adapting to new users' profiles and new policy and market approaches to the city and its green infrastructure. Starting from a study of the past socio-economic conditions and the way these influenced the planning and design of AGs, a comparison could be made with current socio-economic conditions, the adaptability (or non-adaptability) of the allotment stock inherited, and the identification, if necessary, of strategies for adaptation in the perspective of new emerging trends (i.e. future socio-economic conditions).

On the second day the session started with a summary of the main issues discussed in the previous day. It was agreed the template needs to be reviewed.

The group agreed the “National Reports” presentations were very useful and the new template should refer to the national reports format as well as the regulatory framework and the socio-economic profile of users. Each member will use/produce a national report framing the context, and develop templates showing the predominant typologies of his/her country as well as the new ones emerging (what is changing; what is emerging). It is proposed that each country should set the context presenting the state of the art and the adaptability of allotments to the political social economical situation of today, the challenges and the disadvantages both for city and users.



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



It was also agreed that, by comparing all national reports/templates, some deductive questions could be drawn. These are:

1. What are the challenges in adapting existing UAGs to the changing needs
2. What are the impacts of the existing UAGs on the changing city?
3. How emerging new types of UAGs are transforming the city and make new needs?

In these conclusions ecological, spatial and social aspects should also be addressed.

It was mentioned that some of the STSM applicants could contribute to this new WG4 objectives. For this purpose a WG4 proposal/scope of research could be developed to which STMS applicants could declare interest, with WG4 members providing mentorship.

Finally, during the meeting it was raised the concern that more practitioners are needed in the group so we can have a broader view of the role of practitioners regarding AGs, what are the strategies and the problems they face in the context of urban planning and urban design, what is the position of developers and what is the availability of land... These professionals could also provide major contribution in developing the book chapters.

### **Next Steps**

1. WG4 chairs will review/reformulate the template and circulate it among the WG4 members and MC members, asking for case studies and national reports, with the objective of collecting sufficient material for as many COST countries as possible
2. Members will try to fill in the template identifying the main typologies in the country
3. Chairs will develop a proposal for STSM



## URBAN ALLOTMENT GARDENS



### Closing Session

Poznan event closing session started with WG Chairs' presentation that was a brief of two days discussions in each WG in order to inform and share works that have been done in each research area. The overall explanation of the parallel meetings raised useful debates about research overlaps that are results of case studies with more than one research area that was considered as a bonus and connectivity of WG themes despite their specific research topics. Also, each WG Chair informed their discussed agenda for next event.

Professor Simon Bell Chair of the editorial board had a wrap-up session by presenting results of WGs' charrette works that they had during two days meeting. WG members were able to develop initial framework of the Action's book by deciding about the number of chapters, their titles, abstracts and keywords. Title of the book will be finalised in next event and tasks were given to the whole WG members and editorial board.

Chair of the Action announced date and venue of the next event that was previously decided and agreed by MC members. The next MC, CG and WG meeting will be held in Lisbon/Portugal in March 2014 for three days (19th -21st) and the local host is the Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil – LNEC (National Laboratory for Civil Engineering).



URBAN  
ALLOTMENT  
GARDENS