



*La Terenuri area in Cluj-Napoca, Romania*



*Garden of the „La Terenuri: Common Space” initiative*

## URBAN GARDENS IN ROMANIA

In Romania urban gardening has been closely linked to the **history of socialist urbanisation**. After rapid construction of housing block neighbourhoods in the 1960s and 1970s, use of public space for gardening was also a government initiative - for the population to feed itself. Housing block inhabitant associations distributed **8m2 plots next to the houses** – most of those are not cultivated anymore. In some places neighbours appropriated left-over spaces, doing so-called “**waste lot agriculture**”. Because of the wave of rural to urban migration, gardens are often seen as **a legacy or enactment of rurality**. Ambivalent associations - food shortages and backwards ruralism vs oasis of a countryside-like homestead. After 1989 many urban garden areas have shrunk, have been constructed or remained with uncertain status – as the property restitution process is not over, property relations are “fluid”. This often takes place in neighbourhoods that already are in **deficit of public and green spaces**.

There are also **more recent initiatives of urban gardening linked to civic engagement** – e.g. rooftop gardens, vegetable plots in schools, botanical gardens, parts of parks, abandoned areas.

## “LA TERENURI” GARDENS IN CLUJ-NAPOCA

At **Terenuri** area gardens (now ~40 plots) were planted in a territory left over after the construction of the Manastur neighbourhood (120 000 inhabit.). It is now one of the few areas of urban gardening in Cluj, also one of the few green spaces in the neighbourhood. Most gardeners belong to an older generation, a relatively stable neighbour community. The municipality does not regulate the gardens, only tolerates it for the time being.

Around half of the gardens were evicted from the park/public space area in 2010 and **the future of the other half is uncertain** - plans to build a parking lot were announced in late 2014.

A group of activists with „**La Terenuri: Common Space in Manastur**” initiative have involved local children and youth in making of a community garden since 2013.