



*Urban gardens have been mainly enjoyed from elder people..*



*But something is changing...  
the gardens can become an open space for everybody!*

## URBAN GARDENS IN ITALY

Urban gardens in Italian cities became more important during the '80s, when some city governments\* started to develop a regulation about, dealing with the strong diffusion of unauthorized gardens. Especially for economical reasons, needing to grow their own food, many inhabitants of bigger cities had been occupying and 'privatizing' abandoned urban areas (f.e. in Milano, Roma, Torino). Many of these gardeners were originally from the South of Italy and brought their own gardening cultures in the cities. City governments started then to regulate these spaces, deciding to dedicate public surface to recognized allotment and social gardens.

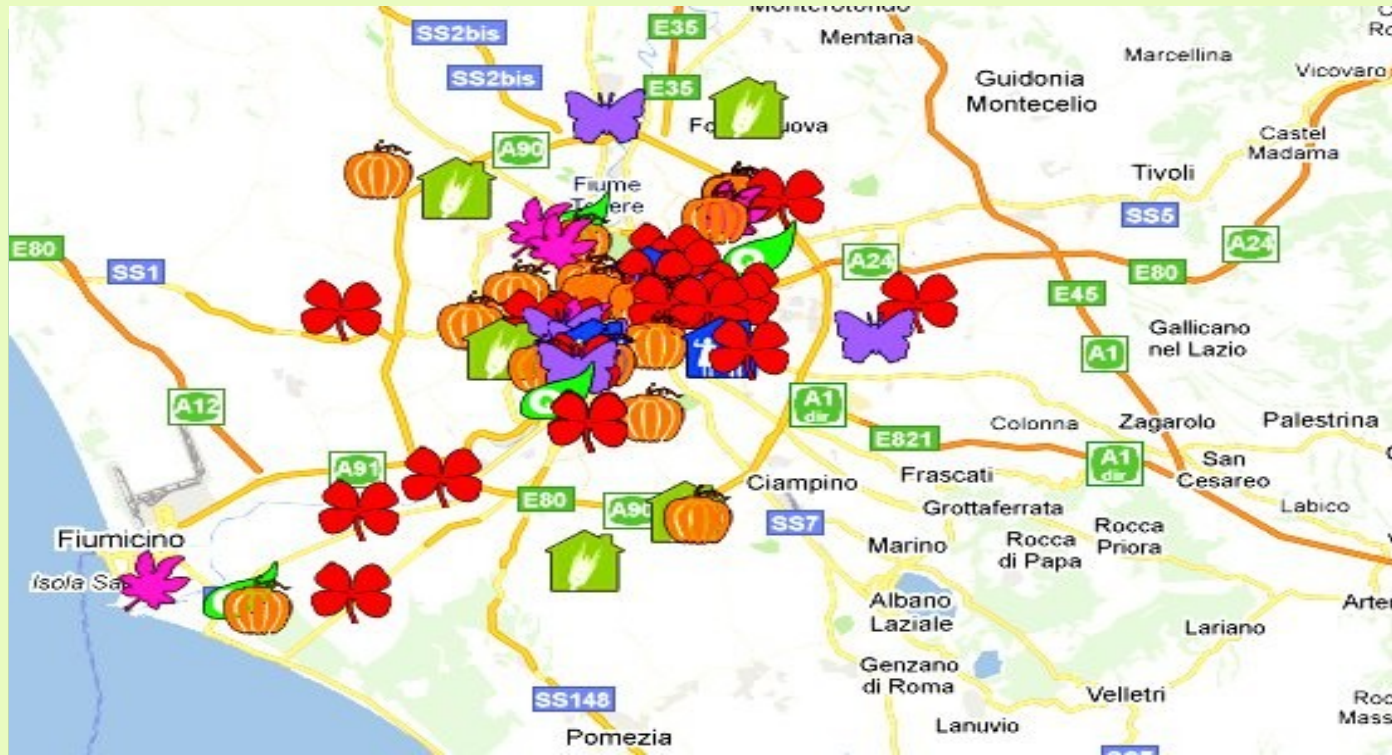
The majority of urban gardens in Italy are allotment gardens, enjoyed mainly from retired people.

### New Perspectives

In the recent years the interest is spreading and the meaning of this practice is changing: food and gardens start to be perceived as 'tools for relationship between people'.

More political spaces are interested in self sufficiency and food sovereignty, the educational and ecological power of urban gardens becomes evident to citizens and administrators. Urban gardens also offer the chance to renovate abandoned areas and stimulate citizen participation. In a few words, the influence of the ecological and social movements can give new perspectives to the classical way of growing urban gardens. Furthermore the individual desire of being close to nature meets the increasing economical need of food self production.

In some cities the allotment gardens, usually run by elder people, are now accesible to all ages: this introduces a social and cultural variety in the gardens, which could be an inspiration for developing these projects in the direction of community gardens.



*Urban gardens map in Rome, by Zappata Romana.*



*Hortus Urbis, Rome, a collective action of gardening.*

## URBAN GARDENS IN ITALY

Some initiatives which show new ways of practicing urban gardening

Milan : The 'Libera Rete delle Rape Metropolitane' is a network project linking community gardens and supporting those groups who want to start a new garden.

<http://rape.noblogs.org/>

Rome: Zappata Romana – a project started from an architects group, researching about shared gardens, which are seen as an ecological mean for shaping the common space, developing economical and social alternatives. They also started a map of self organized green spaces in Rome.

<http://www.zappataromana.net/>

Trento: Richiedenti Terra is a project made of refugees and local people, which decided to focus on the topic of the land rights. They run a community garden and organize events about local food.

<http://richiedentiterra.org/>

These are some examples of how urban gardening can express different needs and perspectives.