5.1.3.3 Socially Inclusive and Community-Oriented Urban Farm

The Krakow mixed-use urban farm is designed as an inclusive space that fosters community integration, social cohesion, and equal access to green infrastructure.

The project actively involves a wide range of stakeholders, including local residents, schools, universities, and civil society organisations. It prioritises the inclusion of vulnerable groups such as elderly people, youth, individuals with disabilities, migrants, unemployed persons, and families with children.

Participation is supported through preferential access to plots, targeted workshops, and community events that encourage interaction and mutual support. The farm serves as a platform for building social connections, reducing isolation, and strengthening neighbourhood ties.

In addition to food production, the site offers recreational and educational opportunities that contribute to physical and mental well-being. Public events, open days, and co-creation activities further enhance community engagement and acceptance.

5.1.4 Testing public orcharg and bio-waste resue based UF scenario (Zagreb)

The urban orchard in Brestje, the neighborhood in the eastern district of Sesvete in Zagreb, established in the framework of CoFarm4Cities, has been a new addition to the urban gardens project, implemented in the city of Zagreb since 2013, with great success and great interest of the citizens.

To make a step forward and enrich the existing scheme, the city began implementing urban orchards as a crossover between a public park and an edible forest. The Brestje orchard is the second one in Zagreb.

The project provides the local people with the opportunity to spend time in natural surroundings, which has been proven beneficial to both mental and physical health. Although Brestje is a neighborhood with a lot of greenery, there aren't many public green areas for the residents, and most of the greenery is either undeveloped and inaccessible, or on private plots. The orchard provides a space for socializing, food production, relaxation and education, and a community is built with the help of public and inclusive green spaces.

Key elements of the solution

5.1.4.1 A new green/edible community space in the neighbourhood

The urban farm in Zagreb is conceived as a public green space with the orchard containing different varieties of fruit trees (apples, pears, cherries, currants, aronia...), a multifunctional lawn as the main space for standard park activities (play, recreation, rest and relaxation) and biodiversity meadows which attracts pollinating insects and birds and adds to the overall biodiversity of the area.

The equipment in the urban orchard (benches and trash cans) further enhance the leisurely character of this area, making it a green outdoor living room for the community living in a green area with limited public green spaces, as the majority of green surfaces are either inaccessible or private. It’s situated in a residential area, dominated by single-family homes, and next to the elementary school and kindergarten. The community was included through involvement of the school and kindergarten children into the planning of the orchard, and they take major part in maintenance and in use of the fruits for school lunch.

5.1.4.2 Outdoor learning area for the school and kindergarten

The school next to the pilot action has been involved in the implementation since the beginning of the project. The children have participated in the workshops that have provided the city and the landscape architect with the input and ideas about the wishes of the local community for this space that was just an empty field before.

The school has had difficulty in growing plants and trees in the school garden, as that land is prone to flooding and the soil is of low quality. The new area is enabling the school to conduct part of the teaching programme outside.

5.1.4.3 Waste reduction and compost production

Another element of the pilot action was the composting device that runs on electrical power and can turn food remains into high-quality compost in 24 hours. This device is used to manage school and kindergarten food waste into compost for school garden and for the urban gardens in the vicinity.

The composting device has been installed and is in use, as a great help to the school kitchen which has had a surplus of biowaste that was unfit to be turned into compost in the usual way. The composting machine provides an opportunity to transform the food scraps into compost by undergoing a process that includes beneficial microorganisms and moderate heat, so the food is turned into high quality compost within 24 hours.

5.1.5 Testing school program based UF scenario (Ljubljana)

The Ljubljana pilot shows how urban farms can support education for schools and local communities. At the Rakova Jelša allotment area, the city created the Mini Urban Farm Rakova Jelša as part of its strategy to promote urban farming and food self-sufficiency.

The farm provides educational programs mainly for primary school teachers and mentors, helping them gain knowledge to develop school gardens. It also serves as a hands-on learning space for children, where they explore plant life cycles, biodiversity, crop rotation, and sustainable practices like composting. They learn basic gardening skills and understand the connections between food production, nature, and climate.

The Mini Urban Farm is a dynamic learning environment for both students and residents, encouraging healthy eating and strengthening community ties. School gardens play a key role by allowing students to apply what they learn and by spreading awareness about food production and self-sufficiency.

Together, the Mini Urban Farm, school gardens, and six educational modules create a comprehensive system that addresses food production, sustainability, biodiversity, waste reduction, social skills, mobility, and energy. The project is part of Ljubljana's 2021–2027 strategy for rural development and urban farming.