Welcome to the third CityZen newsletter,

a new newsletter means another semester of our CityZen project is coming to an end! COVID-19 still leaves us no choice but to share our regional urban farming projects and experiences online.

We are happy that we are still able to have inspiring, lively meetings (like our first Impact Workshop) and to continue with our regional activities in any way possible.

We invite you to have a look at what has been going on - as always, feel free to share your experiences on urban farming and any feedback with us.

Enjoy reading, stay safe and keep in touch via our social media channels!

The CityZen team

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CityZen is implemented by seven partners (see below):

- Applied Research and Communications Fund (Lead Partner) - Bulgaria
- Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia - Greece
- Municipality of Beja - Portugal
- Higher Technical School of Agrarian Engineering & University of Valladolid - Spain
- Institute for Rural Development Research at Goethe University Frankfurt/Main - Germany
- Baixo Alentejo Intermunicipal Community (CIMBAL) - Portugal
- Natural Heritage Foundation of Castilla y León - Spain.
Highlights

Impact Workshop #01
Urban farming policy implications in the current economic system, business models and supply chains

The first CityZen Impact Workshop (online) from January 21st - 22nd dealt with urban farming in relation to business models, economic systems and technology and innovation. Our hosts from ARC Fund, Natural Heritage Foundation of Castilla y Léon, University of Valladolid and the Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia welcomed a variety of external speakers who presented different perspectives on urban farming and concrete case studies of successful projects, as well as 40 participants.

What are the key issues related to urban farming?

In our peer to peer workshops, these 5 topics have crystallised as our key issues in all regions. See what they are and how we are planning to solve them during the
Regional spotlight

Urban farming in Thessaloniki

Shaping Policies

Thessaloniki, the capital of the Region of Central Macedonia in Greece, is an example of a densely populated city in a predominantly urban region.

How can urban farming help making life greener, more sustainable and resilient for its inhabitants? Find out how our partner Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia wants to support innovative urban farming activities & has already shaped regional policies.

Picture: Argo Social Enterprise

Read More

Good Practice in Sofia, Bulgaria

Digital map of city areas suitable for urban agriculture

To scale up urban farming activities, suitable spots in cities are needed - yet, knowledge about and access to them often don't exist.

Find out how a civil society organisation & a municipal enterprise cooperated in Sofia to solve this issue. By developing and maintaining a digital map with potential land plots, they created a win-win situation for citizens & authorities.

Picture credit: sofiaplan.bg/en/portfolio/urban-agriculture-2
Spain: Urban farming improves climate resilience

In the past years, the positive impacts of urban farming on cities’ food security, resource efficiency, sustainability and community building have been recognized more and more. Supporting it became part of many EU strategies & initiatives.

Our partners Patrimonio Natural and the University of Valladolid summed up some of them and present an inspiring pilot action from Valladolid, the Orchard Schools.

Picture credit: Cherry tree in CEIP Cristobal Colón schoolyard, Patrimonio Natural

Germany: Alternative agricultural models in RhineMain

How can we raise appreciation (and support) for urban agricultural production among consumers & politicians in the RhineMain region? Our German partner Institute for Rural Development Research and the Regionalpark RheinMain put that into focus in a meeting on alternative agricultural models.

Experts from regional initiatives like Ernährungsrat Frankfurt or Gemüseheldinnen Frankfurt, farms & authorities identified possible synergies among local initiatives & the
Spain: Community empowerment through urban agriculture

Learn about Vallaecolid, a community workshop and collection center for organic products in Valladolid. The idea is for local organic producers to have a space to store (collection center) and transform the products in an artisanal way (community workshop).

The community workshop is currently being built, the collection and distribution center located in the front of the warehouse has already started recently, with six product distribution lines:

- final consumer
- ecological stores
- consumer groups
- restaurants
- school canteens
- distribution centers

The project shows that only with the help of the union of small and medium-sized local producers, the needs of the community can be satisfied - reaching final consumers, who would not have access otherwise.
Recommended Content

Ecopolis is a holistic food security solution from Pasig City, Philippines. In a city where about 99 % of space is already used, floating farms on the city rivers offer more space to grow edible crops and to compost food waste. A mobile app then connects people to nearby floating urban farms, like-minded farmers and information. What a great way to make fresh food locally available!

Another inspiring project can be found here (in Spanish), a website about the city of Salamanca and its city hall, which has planted 600 new orchards.

The European Commission – Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) offer an online seminar ‘Financial needs in the agriculture and agri-food sectors in Italy’ on 10 February 2021. The focus is on the financial environment in which farmers and processors operate in Italy - you can register here.
CityZen is a four-year long project supported by the INTERREG EUROPE 2014-2020 programme.

If you want to know more about each partner, follow the links below: