The new season of urban vegetable gardens in the city of Bologna: intergenerational exchanges and environmental sustainability?

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International workshop#5
AGOR-AGRO

Hybrid Parks Interreg IVC Programme

Ferrara 7th November 2013
Allotment for working classes in 19th and 20th century

French family in a jardin ouvrier
The research on social gardens in Bologna

- participant observation in a municipal allotment area in Bologna
- interviews with contact persons of 4 municipal allotment areas (Barca, Nicholas Green, Maggiore, Ca Bura)
- 18 in deep interviews with “young” gardeners (with Giulia Cecchelin PhD)
- in depth-interviews or conversations with political actors and participation to meetings on vegetable gardens public policies

October 2011-September 2012
Mai 2013-Augus 2013
The institutional framework of gardening practices in Bologna: the evolution of a municipal policy

integration of elderly retired people and promotion of their active leisure and self-organization

recover abandoned and illegally cultivated land
The building of an allotment area in the Eighties
The social evolution of vegetable gardening in Bologna

Today

2677 municipal plots

321 of them (12%) are assigned to “young” gardeners (18-50 years old)

more than 1300 citizens are waiting for a municipal plot
Are gardens spaces of development for a culture of environmental sustainability?
JUST PARTIALLY

Do young gardeners participate in the traditional “generosity of gardeners”?
YES, BUT…
responsible styles of food production and consumption

direct connection with nature
“Gardener’s generosity” and gift culture

Intergenerational exchanges

Elderly recognition
To conclude

Young gardeners introduced a deeper sensibility towards nature and responsible styles of cultivation.

Young gardeners experience connection with elderly generation, contacts that in everyday life are lost.
Thank you for the attention!

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My publications on the topic:

