

TRAINING SCHOOL VITORIA-GASTEIZ

URBAN AGRICULTURE INSIDE THE CITY: ALTERNATIVES FOR VACANT LOTS AND PUBLIC SPACE

DATES: 2014 September 24th to 26th

LOCATION: Vitoria-Gasteiz, Álava, Basque Country, Spain

PREMISES: Palacio Europa

WORK AREA: Vitoria-Gasteiz Reference region / Zabalgana Neighbourhood

Local Organizer: *Centro de Estudios Ambientales de Vitoria-Gasteiz-Ayuntamiento de Vitoria-Gasteiz / Center for Environmental Studies_Vitoria-Gasteiz Municipality*

TS Director: *Carlos Verdaguer, gea 21, GIAU+S, COST MC member*

CEA TS Local Organizer: *María de Santiago, COST member*

Application and Grants

The Training School is addressed to Master Students, PhD students and Early Stage researchers (PhD +8) from participating COST Countries.

timeline for application

communication of detailed programme:	23/06/2014
call for applications:	23/06/2014
application deadline:	15/07/2014
applicant selection:	01/08/2014

Applications have to be sent until 15/07/2014 to: cverdaguer@gea21.com

A fix grant sum of 400 Euro for participants from Spain and 750 Euro for participants from other countries will be awarded to cover travel and subsistence costs. All costs exceeding this Grant are at the own expenses of the participants or their institutions. Organisation of travel & accommodation has to be done by the participants themselves.

Applicant selection:

The training school is open to a maximum of 20 trainees.

All persons from COST UAE member countries involved in the Action can apply for participation in the training school. The selection of participants will be effected under the following priorities:

1. Early Stage Researchers (less than PhD + 8 years) already actively involved in COST UAE
2. Early Stage Researchers already registered for the Action
3. Early Stage Researchers new to the Action
4. Participants of COST UAE without Early Stage Researcher status

Case study: Reference Region Vitoria-Gasteiz

Vitoria-Gasteiz is the administrative capital of the Autonomous Community of Basque Country and the capital city of Alava Region. It is a middle-sized city with 235.445 inhabitants. Vitoria-Gasteiz was designated European Green Capital in November 2010. The European Commission acknowledges with this designation both the efforts of the City in solving environmental problems and improving the quality of life, and its challenging plans related with a wide scope of areas, such as the fight against Climate Change, the creation of a network of Gardens and Parks and a Green Belt, the control of water consumption, and the sound municipal policy of Waste Management, Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Urbanism and Mobility

The City is located in a transition zone between Oceanic and Mediterranean Climate, with dominating Atlantic features. Maximal and minimal heights are respectively Palogán Mount (1029 m) in the Southeast border of Vitoria Mountain Range, and Zadorra River Basin in its westernmost downstream point within the limits of the City (495 m).

The municipal area is formed by the City of Vitoria-Gasteiz, an urban core concentrating most of the population, the industry and the services of the so-called Historical Territory of Álava, surrounded by an extensive agricultural area of some 11.000 ha, within which 64 small villages are integrated, with less than 100 inhabitants each, forming the rural domain of the area.

The transition zone between the urban and the rural areas is bordered by a Green Belt, consisting in a series of periurban parks with a high environmental and landscaping value, interconnected through ecological corridors. This is the output of an ambitious project initiated in the beginning of the 1990s with the main goal of restoring and recuperating the periphery of Vitoria-Gasteiz, both in environmental and social terms, creating an extensive leisure green area around the city.

The Green Belt is itself surrounded by a periurban area of farming land, mainly grain crops. Livestock farming, although a declining activity, prevails in the intermediate areas, creating there some complex and diverse silvo-pastoral ecosystems with a high environmental and landscaping value.

Finally there is a third forestry belt in the Southern border of the municipal area, formed mainly by the Mounts of Vitoria, actually in process of being declared a Natural Park. An outstanding feature is the survival and growth of the common lands: public owned lands covering now 9.966 ha, managed and exploited in a communal way.

- Actual mainstream farming is agro-business-oriented. Most of the rainfed crops (85,6% of the total crop) are cereals (70%) against 14,4% of the traditional irrigated

croplands, such as potato and sugarbeet. This means a low diversification of the sector, as a result of the application of the Common Agricultural Policy and the lack of responsible consumption habits by the public. On the other hand, the cropland has been reduced at an average rate of 175 ha per year: 3% for rainfed crops and 2% for irrigated crops.

- The Alavese crop-livestock sector has been suffering a reconversion process leading to the closing of a great number of farms and the concentration of the productive means (croplands) in bigger farms units. Livestock farming is declining severely. There has been a high decrease in the number of farms due mainly to the regulation requirements and to the very demanding conditions of rural way of life.

Content and objectives of the Training School

Vitoria-Gasteiz has experimented an important urban outgrowth in the last decade, mainly through the planning and development of two new neighborhoods, Zabalgana and Salburúa, situated at the eastern and western border of the city, by the Greenbelt. These new developments are well-equipped and designed according to sustainability principles. Nevertheless, among the main problems they present is their over-dimensioned public space, which creates some areas lacking enough density and mix of uses. On the other hand, it is very expensive for the municipality to maintain these public spaces with the high Vitorian urban standards for public space. The proposed solution for this problem is a strategy of "re-densification" through the insertion of new uses. The debate has arisen about which are the most adequate uses to insert in order to get an increasing of urban vitality, specially considering that housing has reached its peak and that Vitoria-Gasteiz is well served with social and sport amenities.

The main goal of the TS is to offer an opportunity for the reflection about how urban agriculture might be an optimal alternative for the re-qualifying of this over-dimensioned public space in the new neighborhoods, especially considering its synergic potential as a tool for production, leisure and landscaping, including the possibility of energy crops within the limits of urban space. Continuity with rural and natural surrounding area through alternatives for urban fringe at the small scale is a relevant issue to be considered as well within the reflection.

Taking Zabalgana neighbourhood as a practical field for experiment, the Training School is conceived as a practical and intensive design charrette to be held during a whole day after two days of local knowledge-deepening through field visits and presentations.

Training School Program September 2014

Wednesday 24th:

An Overview of Urban Agriculture in Vitoria-Gasteiz

This first day is entirely dedicated to visiting a selection among the many Urban Agriculture initiatives in and around Vitoria-Gasteiz, finishing with the new neighbourhood of Zabalzana, where last's day workshop is going to be focused on.

Location: Palacio Europa and Vitoria-Gasteiz city and surroundings

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| 9:30 | Registration at Palacio Europa |
| 10:00 | Presentation of the Training School
<i>Carlos Verdaguer</i> |
| 10:15 | Evolution and Actual UA Projects in Vitoria-Gasteiz
<i>María de Santiago</i>
<i>Mónica Ibarrondo</i> |
| 11.15 | Field Visit: Allotments at Abetxuco
<i>CEA Team</i> |
| 13:00 | <i>Lunch at Abetxuko</i> |
| 14:30 | <i>Basaldea project</i>
<i>CEA Team</i> |
| 15:30 | Field Visit: Vitoria-Gasteiz Greenbelt: Zadorra
<i>CEA Team</i> |
| 17:15 | Opportunities in the new neighbourhoods: visit to Zabalzana (CEA team) |

Thursday 25th:

Expert Presentations: Urban Agriculture inside and around the City

The objective of this second day is offering a state-of-the art of some of the key issues related with UA, focusing on Spain. The idea is to collectively generate a body of visions and ideas capable of producing synergies applicable to urban planning and design.

Location: Palacio Europa

- 09:30 Urban Land-uses and UA
Carlos Verdaguer
- 10:15 Periurban Agrarian ECosystems in Spatial Planning
Verónica Hernández
Nerea Morán
- 11:00 *Coffee break*
- 11:15 UA and resilient city-region food systems
Henk Renting
- 12:00 Productive UA inside the city: energy crops. Life Seed Capital Project
Amaia Ortiz
- 13:00 *Lunch*
- 14:30 Short chains and urban food strategies
Roberto Ruíz
- 15:15 Social Economy and environmental education in UA
Julia del Valle
- 16:15 Debate: including UA issues in urban planning and design

Friday 26 th:

Workshop: Urban Agriculture alternatives for vacant lots and public space

The objective of this final day is to make a practical exercise of urban planning and design, taking the new Neighbourhood of Zabalzana as a stage to apply the local and general knowledge generated along the two precedent days. Trainees will work alternative scenarios in thematic design workshops and then a common discussion around the results will be held.

Location: Palacio Europa

- 09:30 Presentation of the workshop (Carlos Verdaguer)
Formation of working groups:

- 10:00 *Coffee break*
- 10:15 Work in small groups:
- Workshop 1 (6-7 trainees) Social function and leisure
Facilitators: *Nerea Morán Verónica Hernández*
- Workshop 2 (6-7 trainees) Food System
Facilitator: *Henk Renting*
- Workshop 3 (6-7 trainees) Energy Crops
Facilitator: *Ana Zazo*
- Coordination: *Carlos Verdaguer*
- 12:15 *Lunch*
- 13:30 Presentations of alternatives and general discussion
UPM Team
- 14:15 Common Workshop
- Coordination: *Carlos Verdaguer, Henk Renting*
- 15:15 Final Presentation

The conceptual, and practical results of the Training School will be gathered in a document conceived as a working tool aimed at reinforcing the general objectives of UAE Cost Action.

Training School Team

COST TEAM

TS Design and coordination



Carlos Verdaguer is an architect and urban planner, expert on the design, implementation and evaluation of integrated urban sustainability projects. He's senior partner in the consultant agency gea 21 and associate professor in the School of Architecture, Technical University of Madrid. He co-directed the research project The Agricultural Space Between Country and City for the CEA. He is member of the MC of UAE COST Action and he's participating in WG 2

Technical and conceptual assistance



Henk Renting is senior program officer at the RUAF Foundation (International Network of Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security). He has a background in sociology and was involved in several EU research projects on sustainable food systems, urban-rural linkages and public policies. He is member of the UAE COST Action participating in WGs 1 and 5

Local Organizer: CEA Team



María de Santiago is an Agricultural Engineer, member of the UAE Cost Action. She has been working at the Environmental Studies Centre (CEA) of the Vitoria-Gasteiz City Council for the last three years and she has been involved in several European projects. Currently, she is the coordinator of the development of the Food and Agricultural Strategy of Vitoria-Gasteiz.



Mónica Ibarrodo is actually Head of Rural Planning and Managing in the Municipality of Vitoria-Gasteiz. She has a degree in Biological Sciences by the University of Basque Country UPV/EHU. She was Managing Director of the Sustainability Observatory of the Municipality and along the years she has worked in many lines within the Municipality and the CEA: Local Agenda 21, Sustainable Mobility Plan, Public Bike System, Education Program for Sustainable Development, etc



Jesus Mesanza has a degree in Science and is the coordinator of the environmental education area of the Environmental Studies Centre (CEA) of the Vitoria-Gasteiz City Council. He is involved in the development of the initiative about municipal vegetable gardens, vegetable gardens for school children and other projects of urban horticulture in Vitoria-Gasteiz.

NEIKER-Tecnalia Team



Roberto Ruíz is a PhD in Veterinary Sciences & Master in Rural Development and Management of Agro-Food Enterprises. Scientist & Head of the Department of Animal Production in Neiker-Tecnalia. He leads projects regarding livestock farming systems existing in the Basque Country within the frameworks of sustainable development and systemic approaches to the food chain. Areas of research: livestock farming systems; sustainability; holistic approach; food chain; modelling and simulation. He is also a member of Fundacion Zadorra.



Amaia Ortiz PhD, is head of plant production and protection department in NEIKER-Tecnalia and associated professor in the Public University of Navarra, Pamplona University. As a researcher, is involved in several projects related to sustainable agriculture, integrated management and quarantine pest control. Recently, she has been involved in a big project to transmit the integrated management in extensive crops to the farmers from the Basque Country (Spain).

UPM (Technical University of Madrid) Team



Nerea Morán is an architect, member of the association Surcos Urbanos. She's involved in the R&D&I project "Periurban Agrarian Ecosystems in Spatial Planning, PAEc-Sp", led by the School of Architecture, Technical University of Madrid. She is a member of the UAG Cost Action, and a participant of WG1: Policy and Urban Development.



Veronica Hernandez-Jimenez is an Agronomist (Spain, 2002) and Doctor in Participatory Planning (UK, 2007). She is member of the Ecology and Landscape Research Group at the Polytechnic University of Madrid and a founding member of the Observatory for a Culture of the Territory. She is involved in the R+D+i National Project "Periurban Agrarian Ecosystems in Spatial Planning, PAEc-Sp". She is part of of the UAE COST Action.



Ana Zazo is an architect, member of the association Surcos Urbanos. She's involved in the R&D&I project "Periurban Agrarian Ecosystems in Spatial Planning, PAEc-Sp", led by the School of Architecture, Technical University of Madrid. She is a member of the UAE Cost Action, and participant of WG2: UA and governance.

External expert



Julia del Valle has a degree in Biology, and a Master's degree in Agroecology. She is responsible for the areas of *Education* and of *Agroecology and Rural Development* in the cooperative society Germinando. She has previously worked for the agro-ecologic cooperative Bah! in Madrid.