

# Case Studies from Year Two

European Platform for Urban Greening



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## FOREWORD

# Forging Our Platform's Sustainability

**Making our cities more liveable and equitable in the 21st century can only be achieved by significantly transforming the way we build and manage our urban spaces. To mitigate the worst impacts of climate change on our urban areas, while adapting to the effects that can't be averted, requires rapidly re-framing our approach through the lens of sustainability.**

For the partners of the European Platform for Urban Greening, sustainability is our ethos – not just a buzz word. It is at the core of everything we value, from the strategies, innovations and curriculum we create to the best practices we undertake day-to-day.

As a world-class reference point for all aspects of Urban Greening, our aim is to increase the knowledge and skills required to address biodiversity, climate adaptation and well-being in urban areas and to create a meaningful long-term impact on the sustainability of our cities, and ultimately, our quality of life.

Though ecological sustainability is a common thread that runs through so many of the Platform's activities, initiatives and goals, over the past year we turned the question of sustainability on ourselves. We talk the talk and walk the walk, but have we considered the matter of sustainability from every angle?

As we build strong regional Centres of Vocational Excellence across Europe, consisting of solid networks and infrastructure, and begin to welcome new partners to this Urban Greening movement, we want to ensure that the larger Platform of Vocational Excellence is itself sustainable over the years and decades to come.

Forging our own sustainability as a Platform for Urban Greening requires a long-term commitment to genuine collaboration from all of our partners, who share the intention of advancing innovation, education, skills-training and the adoption of blue-green solutions across sectors at every level.

With the social and economic benefits of creating sustainable green cities in mind, five key areas of focus were identified this year that will help us continue to build on the momentum of the European Platform for Urban Greening for the future.



## OVERVIEW

# Sustainable Green Cities

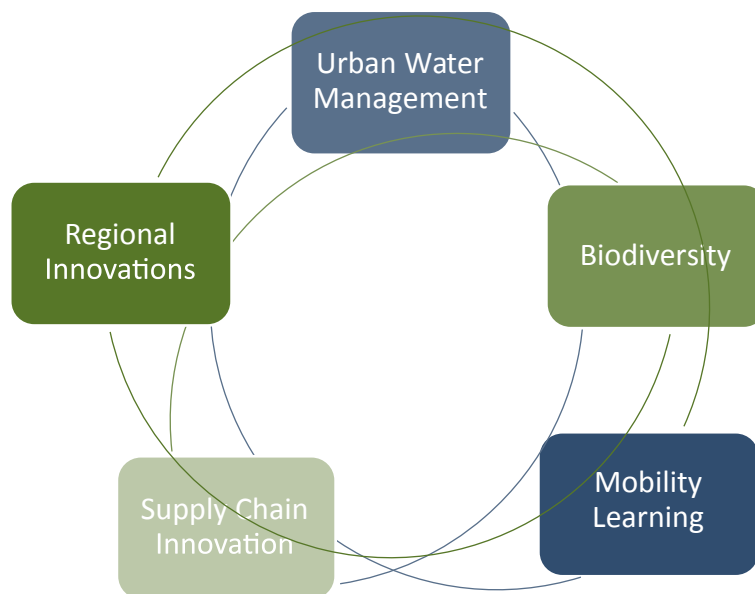
The European Platform for Urban Greening has spent the last two years bringing together top industry leaders and vocational educators in the field, to make advances on the pressing issues, skills training, technologies and infrastructure solutions needed to produce sustainable green urban environments.

While Urban Greening is typically seen as providing 'green' solutions, it is crucial to highlight that without water, nature-based solutions and many of the most effective green innovations that address climate adaptation, biodiversity and human well-being in the urban environment would be for naught.

Urban Greening is therefore best understood to provide integrated blue-green solutions for the challenges we face. There is no green without blue. By understanding the importance of blue for green, we can in turn look to other areas that are interlinked and dependent upon one another to support a faster paradigm shift when it comes to the sustainability of our cities and the field of Urban Greening itself.

Over the past year, five interlinked areas were articulated that largely reflect the activities of the Platform and each region's advances. These key areas of focus, outlined below, will propel the aims of the European Platform forward and help us achieve the greatest possible impact in the years ahead.

### Building Momentum in Urban Greening Across Europe







## Urban Water Management

Water is essential to supporting Urban Greening practices and the way we manage it matters. With its growing scarcity as a resource due to climate change, three shared issues have been flagged by our industry partners: water drainage, water collection and storage, and water re(use). While there are regional innovations in Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) that begin to address these issues, over the next year the Platform intends to use our collective expertise to tackle these three areas directly and elevate approaches Urban Water Management across the blue-green supply chain.

## Biodiversity

Biodiversity and nature-based solutions are two aspects of Urban Greening that are dependent on water management. Our ability to support biodiverse ecosystems and blue-green innovations that supply oxygen and clean air to urban environments, produce thriving wildlife that contribute to the pollination of plants and pest control, and create healthy soil conditions for growing our food, are just a few elements that lead to sustainable urban environments. As in nature, everything is connected and this is how we must re-frame our approach to urban development.

## Supply Chain Innovation

Engaging new stakeholders who often see themselves as outside the field of Urban Greening, for example construction companies, vocational experts and suppliers, or policy makers, can go a long way in boosting the skills ecosystem and supply chain innovations. By drawing together wide-ranging expertise, transferring knowledge and developing new skills training qualifications, professionals involved in the greater supply chain will be better able to see their role in contributing to blue-green solutions.

## Mobility Learning

The best method for transferring knowledge is often through hands-on, in-person experiences. While theory and classroom based learning is important, blended learning models that involved seeing and participating in projects first-hand are often most effective. If we want to create impact and inspire change, the mobility of stakeholders to study best practices and lessons learned from other Platform partners will be fundamental to building momentum for Urban Greening across Europe.

## Regional Innovations

Championing regional innovations and best practices in Urban Greening on a European-wide level is one of the most important ways to accelerate the adoption and implementation of the latest blue-green solutions. The opportunity to change legislation and shift public opinion comes from presenting the proof of concept for sustainable alternatives and sharing our knowledge at scale. In fact, over the past two years policy has been influenced in countries including Romania and Spain by policymakers who have been directly briefed and inspired by the progress of the European Platform for Urban Greening and its partners.





## CASE STUDY

# European Landscape Contractors Association

## Bridging the Gaps Between Blue & Green Industries to Strengthen the Sector

As a primary organising partner for the European Platform for Urban Greening the European Landscape Contractors Association (ELCA) connects industry stakeholders with vocational education institutions and harnesses the momentum generated by their activities to accelerate change and innovation across the Green Sector.

With a vested interest in the sustainability of the Platform, ELCA plays an invaluable role in facilitating cooperation and knowledge transfers across the entire blue-green supply chain on local, regional, national and European-wide levels. By expanding the partnerships of the Platform and bridging the gaps between blue and green industries, ELCA ensures that initiatives and innovations are not siloed, but rather, that common efforts are maximised in establishing sustainable and inclusive green cities.

Demonstrating how the collaborations, training and innovations being achieved by the Platform directly support the goals of the European Commission's Green Deal, Biodiversity Strategy and proposed Nature Restoration Law, ELCA is able to push for greater policy changes in Urban Greening that will ensure a greener Europe for tomorrow.

*"We take care for a green and liveable Europe."*

*- European Landscape Contractors Association*





## Project Highlight

### ELCA Exchange

Over the past year the ELCA Exchange, aimed at establishing a common understanding of the European Qualifications Framework in specialised training, increased in scope and reach with new participants in both vocational education and industry. Creating opportunities for mobility amongst stakeholders, the ELCA Exchange offers international experience, expanded networks for participants, and the resources to develop professional skills at every level across the Green Sector.

Within the European Platform for Urban Greening, Natàlia Guillaumet from partner EFA La Malvesía in Spain participated in a professional exchange with Nico Wissing's Studio in the Netherlands. Facilitated by ELCA, Natàlia spent one month gaining practical experience in nature-inclusive landscape design, which the studio is most known for. Learning about the best practices for restoring landscapes and designing gardens that are climate-proof, biodiverse and that have a positive effect on the health of all users, Natàlia was able to gain valuable professional insights which she can apply in her region as a result of the exchange.



***“Increasing professional and personal knowledge and experience through international exchange.”***

– European Landscape Contractors Association

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### Perspectives on Priorities – Advancing their Mission

#### Development of Education & Industry Networks

Following through on their priority to create stronger industry networks, ELCA spent the past year further developing the global stakeholder group SoGreen. Comprised of organisations including the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA), the European Federation of Green Roofs and Living Walls Association (EFB), the International Organization of Natural Bathing Waters (IOB) and the European Nursery stock Association (ENA), SoGreen is the network that unites the Green world.

#### Industry Feedback & Impact

Developing new curriculum that streamlines the feedback loop between industry and vocational educators remains a top priority. This past year ELCA provided direct industry feedback for a new training programme, initially developed for landscaping companies in Poland and Estonia, titled 'What is the secret of a competitive, developing and sustainable landscaping company?'. This new training programme addresses the specialised knowledge and skills that are needed by the landscaping industry right now and anticipates the needs of the immediate future.

#### Dissemination of Information

ELCA holds firmly to the belief that it is through sharing information on a global scale that climate adaptation and mitigation strategies can have the greatest impact and shift the policy landscape. As such, over the past year, ELCA promoted the work of the European Platform for Urban Greening and disseminated information about its advances and best practices at over a dozen major Green industry events on international platforms across Europe. Events included EU Green Week, GaLaBau and the ELCA Presidium.



## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Initiatives Update

#### Floriade Expo

In June 2022, ELCA and its partners visited Floriade Expo, an international horticultural exhibition held once every 10 years in the Netherlands, that showcases and celebrates Green Living Solutions. Used as an exchange experience to learn about best practices in urban landscaping and forward-looking teaching strategies, participants visited the Expo, the head offices of Royal Ginkel Groep, Yuverta college and Aeres Hogeschool in Almere. This exchange experience was part of a project meeting for the European Platform for Urban Greening, held in Utrecht in the Netherlands.

#### GaLaBau

In September 2022, ELCA took part in GaLaBau in Nuremberg, Germany. As the largest international trade fair in Urban Greening, the latest innovations in urban design, playgrounds, private gardens, construction machinery, recycling solutions and more were on display. Over the course of three days, ELCA promoted its activities along with those of the European Platform for Urban Greening from its stand, meeting new contacts and potential partners from across the continent and beyond. During the fair, ELCA delivered its Trend Award to the Harpling Älderboende project, a forward-looking Swedish retirement home that showcased best practice for this year's theme Health and Learning with Innovative Living Green Initiatives.





### Building Momentum in 2023

#### Platform Sustainability

It is essential that the progress being made by the European Platform for Urban Greening continues long after its initial four-year mandate. To ensure that momentum in the sector's innovations, best practices and education builds towards creating sustainable green cities, ELCA will progress its leadership role in facilitating cooperation between Centres of Vocational Excellence. Accelerating mobility opportunities, knowledge transfers and skills training required to meet industry needs, will remain a key area of focus for the year ahead.



#### ELCA's 60 Year Anniversary

2023 will see the European Landscape Contractors Association celebrate its 60th anniversary. ELCA will mark this major milestone with several events for its members including two excursions for ELCA's Committee of Firms, the first in Mannheim, Germany and the second on the West Coast of Canada later in the year. On-site and pop-up events will take place throughout the year.

#### Impact Policy Makers

Having firmly established a movement for change and innovation in the Urban Greening sector over the past two years, in the year ahead, ELCA will focus its efforts on impacting Green legislation with politicians and decision-makers across Europe. Equally, ELCA will strive to improve public understanding of European environmental policies and translate the content of the Green Deal to the Green labour market at large. The year ahead will see ELCA progress its European policy ambitions.



## CASE STUDY

# Czech Republic

## Incorporating Smart Irrigation & the Internet of Things

### Urban Water Management

As drought and heatwaves progressively increase in duration and impact across Europe, smarter solutions are needed to manage the water resources we have. To more efficiently and effectively use urban water to green our public parks, sports fields or gardens, Platform partner ITTEC based in Czech Republic has been developing some of the most advanced irrigation and turf technologies in Urban Greening.

Using sensors, big data and the Internet of Things (IoT), ITTEC has created automated irrigation systems with a programmed central control unit. Able to connect and process data in real time, these systems process weather predictions and water accordingly using electromagnetic valves to open the water supply. Automated to function at night, when the vapour value is at its lowest, these smart irrigation systems use up to 30% less water.

Optimised for efficiency and conservation, precipitation sensors enable the system to react to weather changes, such as rainfall, to ensure that it does not water excessively or to shut off the entire system as needed.







## Project Highlight

### Water Saving at School

In collaboration with industry partner ITTEC, Agricultural Secondary and Higher Vocational School Benešov have begun the installation of a water retention tank on school property to be used for smart irrigation. Using the technologies of ITTEC, the school will be able to showcase best practices in water management, by collecting rainwater from the roofs and storing it in 4.5-metre-deep retention tanks, automated systems connected to the internet will then irrigate the school grounds efficiently.

The project is set to be completed in spring 2023 and will serve as a practical tool for vocational students and life-long learning courses focussed on Urban Water Management. Students will be able to learn first-hand how to build and operate smart irrigation systems, design and draft the technical aspects of irrigation using AutoCAD and become literate with the Internet of Things to programme and predict weather conditions as they relate to water conservation and management.



## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Perspectives on Priorities – Advancing their Mission

#### **Raise Awareness**

This year the partners in Czech Republic, Agricultural School Benešov and ITTEC, have initiated an Urban Area Maintenance Showcase to raise awareness amongst the wider population about green technologies and the benefits of Urban Greening practices. The showcase, based in Stromovka Royal Park in central Prague, will demonstrate the differences between turf technologies by maintaining half of the park grounds using old technologies and the other half with new ones. The project sets out to visually highlight the tangible results of using electric powered machinery with mulch equipment and promote the wider adoption of this technology, which has substantial energy savings for the maintenance of green spaces. A public relations campaign will accompany this Showcase to communicate the value of these innovations to the general public.

#### **New Curriculum & Life-Long Learning**

Responding to the needs of the blue-green sector, course curriculum in Horticulture at Agricultural School Benešov has been updated to address the skills training required for facilitating the latest advances in water management, green roofs, living façades and regional plant optimisation for adapting to climate change. The new course, called Creation & Maintenance of Greenery, will be offered for educators, vocational professionals and new students alike.

#### **Partnerships & Knowledge Exchanges**

Making the most of their partnership to establish Czech Republic as a Centre of Vocational Excellence, Agricultural School Benešov and ITTEC are creating a space for vertical gardens on the school's edifice. Incorporating new practices learned from other Platform partners in Denmark and the Netherlands, building a living façade is a complementary project that will utilise the school's new smart irrigation and water retention project. By going in-depth with their collaboration, these regional partners have made great progress in advancing practical training and up-skilling opportunities in vertical gardening, a key priority which was outlined in their first year.





## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Initiatives Update

#### Basic Skills Toolkit

A toolkit to identify where expertise is lacking and provide a reference for best practices in Urban Greening is a longer-term undertaking that is being developed alongside new curriculum and Platform-wide partnerships. The aim is to ensure that Czech Republic remains at the forefront of vocational excellence in the field and continuously provides opportunities for the latest professional skills-training and education.

#### Public Lectures & Workshops

Engaging more than 200 primary school students at Agricultural School Benešov, aged 12-14, new Project Days in Biodiversity were held throughout the year. Teaching students about ecology and biodiversity, they studied the relationship between the environment and plant and animal species. Students had the opportunity to examine organisms using microscopes and were able to identify individual species and match them to meadow or water ecosystems. These workshops began to introduce key concepts to young students about the importance of biodiversity management and Urban Greening practices.

#### Study Abroad Trips

Taking advantage of the vocational partnerships made available through the Platform for Urban Greening, in 2022 students from Agricultural School Benešov had the opportunity to travel to Denmark to participate in a 14-day Landscaping course at the Green Academy in Aarhus. Benefiting from mobility learning, these students were taught about different landscaping work methodologies and learned about the innovation process through practical projects, giving them the ability to evaluate new ideas and alternative possibilities for problem solving in the field of Landscaping.



***"Instead of theory, we show our students and the public what smart solutions mean in a practical way."***

*– Ivana Dobešová, Principal, Agricultural Secondary and Higher Vocational School Benešov*

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## THE YEAR AHEAD

### Building Momentum in 2023

#### Establish Infrastructure

With the first two years of the European Platform for Urban Greening completed, 2023 will see Czech Republic set up the infrastructure needed to maintain its standing as a Centre of Vocational Excellence in Urban Greening for the future. Plans are underway to establish an Urban Greening headquarters within Agricultural School Benešov's facilities and next year they will appoint a Director to coordinate the region's activities and elevate its partnerships and initiatives to a national and European-wide level.

#### Secure Future Funding

To ensure the success and sustainability of Czech Republic's leadership in Urban Greening, new sources of funding are needed. In the coming year the region's Platform partners will proactively aim to secure financing for the future from local, national and European level government bodies.

#### Expand Reach

In addition to establishing an infrastructure and securing new sources of funding, to make Czech Republic thrive as a long-term Centre for Vocational Excellence, finding new partners to participate in Urban Greening on a larger scale will be important. Over the coming year the goal will be for Agricultural School Benešov and ITTEC to engage new, relevant partners across a wide-range of sectors and expertise including other Czech based schools and universities, social organisations, municipalities and governing bodies, industry specialists and related vocational practitioners across the blue-green supply chain.

The Czech Platform partners have already expanded with the addition of two new regional partners in 2022, the Town of Benešov and the Town of Votice. Open discussions are also being held with the Secondary School of Horticulture Rajhrad (the largest horticultural school in the South Moravian region) and the Secondary School of Horticulture & Agriculture Libverda from the northern part of the country. These efforts will continue to be a priority in the year ahead.





# Denmark

## Making the Case for Grey Water & Efficient Water Use

### Urban Water Management

Across Europe, legislation still largely does not allow companies to use grey water for secondary purposes, such as irrigating green roofs or living façades. To quell legislative concerns around health issues associated with grey water reuse in urban areas, Platform partner OKNygaard, Denmark's leading landscape design and maintenance company, is conducting pilot projects to test safe filtering techniques.

Grey water can be defined as wastewater generated in households or office buildings, from sources that do not contain faecal contamination, i.e., all sources with exception of wastewater from toilets. Primary sources of grey water include water from: sinks, showers, baths, washing machines or dishwashers.

To make the case for reusing grey water, OKNygaard aim to provide proof of concept by demonstrating the efficacy of pumping grey water into existing pipework, where it is then guided to a filtration system consisting of stone and soil. Through the incorporation of iron into the soil, any existing chemicals or contaminants in the grey water are drawn out resulting in clean water that can be used for a secondary purpose.

Once the filtration system has proven effective, the intention is to use filtered grey water for green innovations such as living façades and green roofs. Future projects will then focus on improving energy efficiency by eliminating the need for a pump altogether.





## Project Highlight

### BARCOVE

#### Technical Innovation in Urban Space and Water Management

Referred to as BARCOVE (Building an Applied Research Facility into Centres of Vocational Excellence), is a newly awarded project that was spearheaded by Platform partners OKNygaard and the Green Academy in Denmark. Over the course of the next two years, running alongside the European Platform for Urban Greening, this project aims to develop a forward-thinking model for school-company collaboration between vocational education and training centres and small to medium-sized enterprises.

Specifically, BARCOVE will focus on applied research as a lever for technical innovation in urban space and water management. Vocational students, professionals and educators will collaborate to develop solutions, in these areas, to complex challenges posed by climate adaptation and green transition demands.

Bringing together over 50 professionals in vocational education and training from eight partner organisations across Denmark, the Netherlands, Romania and Spain, along with over 40 vocational students, the project will strengthen Europe's innovation capacity and create systemic change through fostering innovation at both practice and policy levels.



***“BARCOVE is the most practical new project for combining water management with the greening of our cities. This is another large step forward in the green transition and will result in sustainable global solutions for climate adaptation.”***

– Kristoffer Sindby, Head of Climate Development, OKNygaard





## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Perspectives on Priorities – Advancing their Mission

#### Recruitment

As an ongoing priority in Denmark, another newly awarded Erasmus+ project GREENVEU will aim to address the shortage of trained and qualified employees in the Green Sector. Complementing the goals of BARCOVE, this initiative will help to generate more interest amongst young students to pursue vocational studies in fields such as Urban Greening. Increasing the knowledge base of specific target groups and enhancing the quality, strategies and approaches to recruitment will be central to creating attractive opportunities for practical learning through vocational education and training.

#### Continuous Education

Over the past year five new specialised courses have been developed between the Green Academy and OKNygaard that aim to keep pace with the latest trends in Urban Greening. Enabling professionals to up-skill quickly and flexibly, these in-person, online and blended learning courses include:

- A Mentor Programme
- Biodiversity Training Course
- Climate Adaptive Gardener
- New Trends in Urban Greening
- Urban Greening – Principles & Maintenance

*“At the Green Academy, we always have our doors open to both national and international guests. In order to make the school more accessible to a wide-range of learners we are building the Virtual Green Academy. We hope to inspire and share our knowledge to make the world a greener place.”*

*– Karolina Sikala, Green Academy Aarhus*

#### Virtual Learning & Exchanges

Harnessing the opportunities provided by technology, the Green Academy is currently working on a Virtual Green Academy that will offer a variety of new teaching formats such as online courses, podcasts and digital showcase sessions. Developing an accessible platform and content while providing opportunities for knowledge transfers on an international scale remains a priority for the years ahead.



## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Initiatives Update

#### Youth Engagement Events & Internships

Leveraging the opportunities for collaboration through the Platform, over the past two years Landscaping students from the Green Academy have participated in apprenticeships at OKNygaard. Hands-on learning coupled with communication between different generations has led to valuable knowledge transfers and opened new vantage points for both mentors and mentees alike.

#### Blended & Micro-learning Resources

Incorporating interactive technology into a recent greening project at Domen, a cultural centre focussed on sustainability in Aarhus, offers engaging new blended and micro-learning opportunities for all visitors. Part of the Islands of Excellence concept being developed by the Platform partners in Denmark, this forward-looking project, focusses on community building, co-creation, openness and sustainability. Using QR codes throughout the project allows visitors to access interactive information about the area, plant life, the technical elements of the project and the craftsmanship involved. Because there are so many unseen aspects, providing video content and further information goes a long way in telling the story of Urban Greening and breaking down the classroom walls to make learning both inspiring and accessible.

#### Virtual Courses & Exchanges

In addition to developing the Virtual Green Academy, over the past year exchanges between the Green Academy and students from Romania and Finland took place. With 40 learners participating in the programme, the three-week course Urban Greening – Principles & Maintenance covered topics including landscaping, biodiversity and climate change. Participants included 25 students and three instructors from Romania and seven students from Finland. Professional exchanges also took place throughout the year, with OKNygaard and Green Academy employees travelling to the Netherlands to learn and exchange knowledge at the Green Hotspot Houten on Yuverta's campus.





# THE YEAR AHEAD

## Building Momentum in 2023

### Islands of Excellence

To further establish Denmark as a Centre of Vocational Excellence, the coming year will see the regional partners continue to develop the key concept of Islands of Excellence in Urban Greening across the country. By focussing on more efficient feedback loops between industry, educators and government bodies they intend to limit the skills gap and improve the sector's overall ability to respond faster to changing competency needs in Urban Greening. The goal in following this Islands of Excellence concept is to sustain a highly skilled workforce, ground-breaking research capabilities, innovative thinking and international excellence in education and green industries.



### Mobility Project

Following the success of spearheading the new BARCOVE project, the Green Academy and OKNygaard have their sights set on addressing the need for mobility learning in the Green Sector across Europe. As a key focus of the Platform for Urban Greening and a method of generating momentum for improving blue-green competencies, practices and policies that address the fundamentals of a green transition, the mobility of students, educators and professionals is essential. As such, in 2023 a consortium of partners across Denmark will be identified to help develop and apply for the Erasmus+ Key Action 1: Learning and Mobility of Individuals Programme.



### Expand Capacity for Innovation

To elevate the aims of the Platform and generate more wide-spread involvement in the Urban Greening movement, greater participation from new stakeholders is required. By reaching out to new partners and inviting start-ups to get involved with the projects at Green Academy and OKNygaard, the partners hope to strengthen the sustainability and capacity for innovation of their Centre for Vocational Excellence through collaborations.



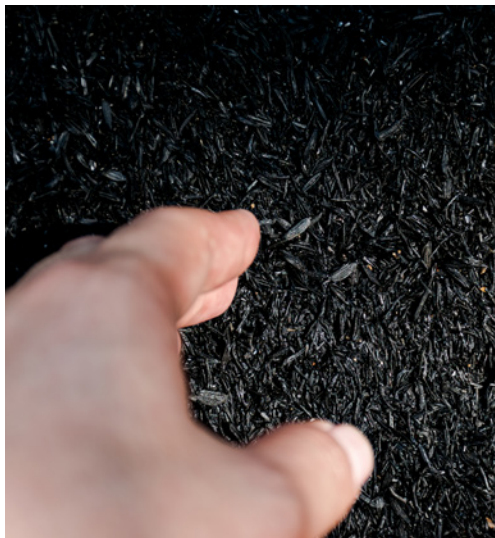
# Finland

## Championing the Use of Biochar & Plant Filtration

### Biochar & Plant Filtration in Finland

When we look to nature for blue-green solutions, often we find that the latest innovations aren't really new at all, such is the case with biochar, also known as charcoal. Biochar is the conversion of biomass produced in a low oxygen environment (pyrolysis), which results in a lightweight porous residue comprised of carbon and ash.

There are countless possibilities for using biochar in filtering. Phosphorous side streams are everywhere: in landfills, produced by manufacturing industries, and inevitably they are found throughout cities. In all of these scenarios it is possible to filter the nutrients with biochar, so they do not end up in nature or burden the municipal waste water treatment.



In Finland, VRJ Group, the country's leading construction enterprise, has been working with biochar in the urban environment for use in retainment and filtration of water, as well as the enhancement of plant filtration to capture carbon and purify water.

By adding biochar to soil, VRJ Group has been able to sequester carbon and improve the soil quality. The projects conducted at VRJ Group are proving that biochar has many applications and can be used, for example, in constructed wetlands and in the treatment of wastewater as a sorbent for contaminants removal.



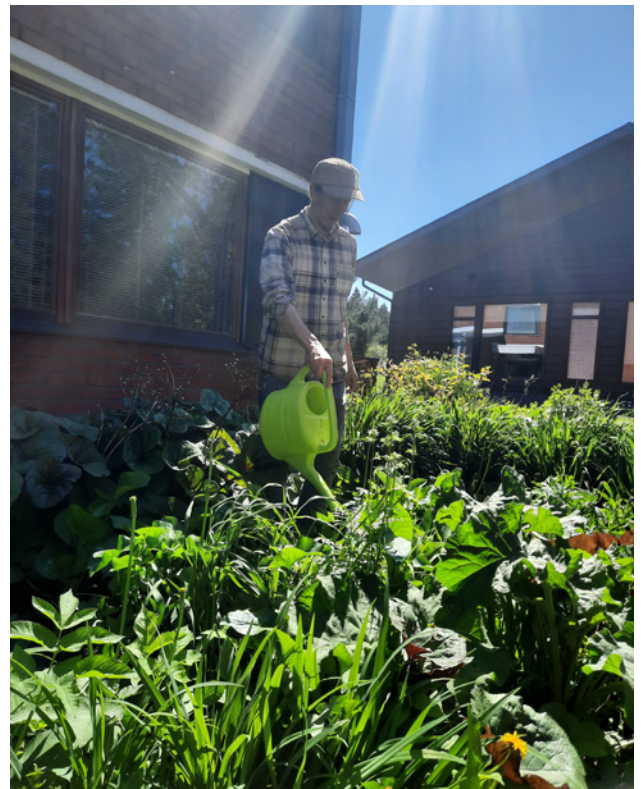




## Project Highlight

### LUMOtarhuri Pro Training

Delving deeper into the different perspectives on natural diversity in the built environment, Platform partner AhlmanEdu offered two new training courses in 2022, one for students and life-long-learners with a part qualification and another short course for professionals both called LUMOtarhuri Pro. Aiming to ensure that efforts to enhance and protect biodiversity are being approached most effectively, these two courses provide an opportunity to investigate the challenges of the management and maintenance of a thriving eco-system. The courses cover topics ranging from interactions between species, understanding the origin of plants, criteria for the selection of wild plants, cycles of natural growth, mitigation hierarchy and the importance of planning and implementation.



*“In a rapidly changing world the value, understanding and demands for Urban Greening are growing. The societal will to change is greater than what the Green Sector is currently able to deliver. We must respond to this movement. Let’s go with the flow, rather than staying on the shore and waiting for change to happen.”*

– Essi Mäkinen, Education Designer, AhlmanEdu

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## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Perspectives on Priorities – Advancing their Mission

#### Communication

Pushing ahead on their priority to communicate more openly with stakeholders in the wider community about best practices and lessons learned in Urban Greening, this year AhlmanEdu held important discussions and introductory training sessions with local landowners and real estate associations in Tampere. Working with the Tampere Tenement Foundation and Real Estate Association, they were able to initiate new strategies for improving green space maintenance and encourage changes to their methods, to better support biodiversity in the area.

#### Specialised Short Courses

Meeting the current needs of industry in Finland, AhlmanEdu created new specialised short courses to keep professionals and life-long-learning students up-to-speed with the latest training in areas such as soil biodiversity and water management. Incorporating the most recent research and practical skills applications, this year Soil Food Web and Edible Forest Garden were piloted and an additional two courses will launch in 2023.

- Soil Food Web
- Edible Forest Garden
- Stream Restoration
- Ecological Compensation Calculation Models

*“Urban green gardeners must understand the three most important cycles, hydrological, nutrients and carbon. The key competency is the knowledge of healthy and living soil.”*

– Kaisa Koskelin, Project Manager, AhlmanEdu

#### Fast & Flexible Training

Keeping pace with new developments in Urban Greening practices, three short courses were conducted over the past year for a range of stakeholders from property managers to gardeners. These one-day courses focussed on biodiversity – what it is and why it’s important – and how to support and enhance it through maintenance work.





## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Initiatives Update

#### Bio-gardening Course

Following the pilot of this course in 2021, over two dozen students completed the first part of the Bio-gardening qualification. Geared towards understanding local issues in biodiversity management, students were trained in plant stratification, healthy and living soil, water management, nutrient cycles and ecological sustainability. Additionally, life-long-learning students participated in PROfessionals Day which included many of the themes of the course. The second round of the qualification will continue in January 2023, with over 30 students and professional life-long-learners studying vocational qualifications.

#### Ambassador Program

A proposal to create designated zones for collecting and selling indigenous seeds and plants has been put forward. In terms of sustaining regional biodiversity and rewilding, plants and seeds must be local to be effective. By elevating local producers as Ambassadors for Biodiversity, greater awareness amongst the general population will begin to take root. Currently this proposal is in an early stage, however a group of students has already worked with the NGO Wild Zone to collect seeds and plant the first meadow on the grounds of AhlmanEdu – an excellent start for the Ambassador Programme.

#### Highlight Events

Two notable events took place in 2022. While refurbishing the grounds of IKEA in Tampere, AhlmanEdu gardening students and LUMOTarih students joined forces with VRJ Group workers to build insect hotels. This project event was part of a BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) certification and resulted in six insect hotels being built, three large and three small, for IKEA Tampere.

The second event was a collaboration between AhlmanEdu and the City of Tampere, whereby the Soil Food Web method was tested with the city's tree nursery. Soil testing was conducted at AhlmanEdu and micro-organisms will be added to the soil of the nursery in the spring of 2023. The Soil Food Web method was applied to perennials and lawns and is expected to show significant results for soil health, as biodiversity and the generation of microorganisms has already multiplied more than expected in one growing season.



## THE YEAR AHEAD

### Building Momentum in 2023

#### Advance Short Courses

In the year ahead the partners in Finland would like to build upon the short courses developed this year and make them available to other Platform partners and vocational institutions. These are forward-thinking courses aimed at ushering in the new era of the climate movement by looking to what the next steps are.



#### Soil Food Web

Designed to teach the importance of soil micro-organisms and how to make the soil food web the most important aspect of soil nutrition and management, this practical course provides ways to move away from conventional land management practices that damage the soil ecosystem. Students will learn how to use a compound biological microscope to identify harmful organisms in the soil food web and be able to distinguish good compost from a low-quality one.

#### Edible Garden Forest

Explaining the principles of how an edible garden forest works, what its benefits are and how to build a garden to mimic a forest ecosystem, this course is designed to explore species-rich gardens that provide food and other benefits, while also improving the environment. Students will learn about the layers of this type of edible forest and how plants can manage and support the overall function of the garden.

#### Launch New Training Courses

Building on the momentum of their recently developed short courses and firmly establishing Finland as a Centre of Vocational Excellence, the goal in the next year will be to launch a new qualification courses around Wild Plant Identification and Seed Collection. These courses will provide complementary study for the Soil Food Web and Edible Forest Garden and create valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange between generations.

#### Further Vocational Qualifications

A large part of the future success of the European Platform for Urban Greening will be the ability to look ahead and anticipate what training qualifications green industries will need in the decade to come. As such, in the year ahead, the partners in Finland will work to co-establish new licensed vocational qualifications with regional government bodies.





# Netherlands

## Shifting the Paradigm Around Water Storage & Retention

### Urban Water Management

With growing concerns across Europe around shortages of drinking water, Platform partner Royal Ginkel Groep, the leading supplier of green roofs and plants in Holland, have been spearheading water retention and storage projects to enhance how we collect and reuse water.

Amongst the innovations they are working on are 'retention roofs', that collect and retain as much rainwater as possible. Sophisticated models for calculating the weight of the water, the speed and flow of the water and how to reinforce roofs to carry the weight, are some of the technical aspects they have been honing.

Through their retention roofs, Royal Ginkel Groep are opening the blue-green conversation within the supply chain and demonstrating the sophistication of green roofs, the power of plant-based solutions and creating a larger paradigm shift around what it means to be a local water supplier.



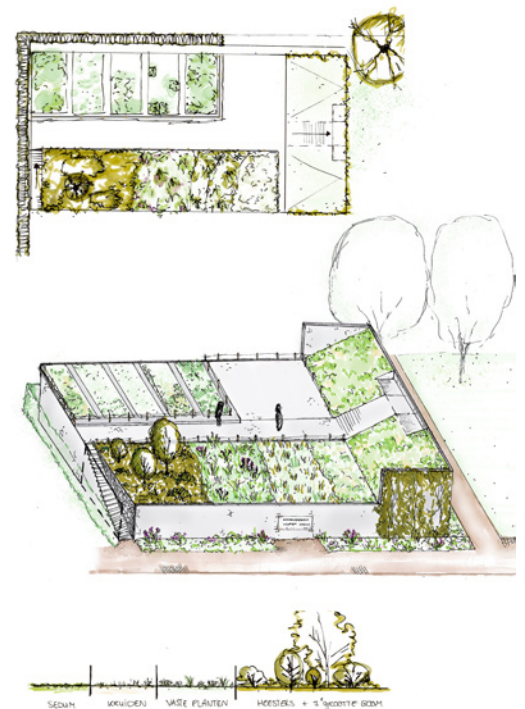


## Project Highlight

### Rooftop Garden Experience

Developed in collaboration between Platform partners Yuverta college and Royal Ginkel Groep, a new pilot project around green roofs and vertical green that connects training, demonstration and research was initiated in 2022. Located on Yuverta property in Houten, the site location was chosen for its visibility from the bicycle route between Houten and Utrecht and will be used to generate public awareness about Urban Greening via a working project.

Students and lifelong learners will have the opportunity to gain practical technical experience building a green roof, monitoring and researching the biodiversity of plant and animal life associated with the installation and collecting water captured in the green roof system. The Rooftop Garden Experience, four metres tall at its highest point, will demonstrate all aspects of the construction, safety, maintenance and management of a green roof while offering a hands-on teaching and examination experience for students.



***"Biodiversity is not just about theory, it's mainly about practice! To truly understand it, students must get out of the classroom to experience it, to touch it, to hear it. This is an important part of the courses we provide. We need to change our perspectives to change our approach to nature."***

– Sijske Ouderkerken, Yuverta





## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Perspectives on Priorities – Advancing their Mission

#### Communication

Over the past year the Platform partners in the Netherlands travelled to speak with delegations in Romania, Turkey, Bulgaria and the United Kingdom about the importance of Urban Greening. Given Holland's well-established position in the field of Urban Greening and as a Centre of Vocational Excellence, they were well placed to share their knowledge of best practices in both education and industry innovations in the sector. By transferring their knowledge to schools and stakeholders in these regions, they aimed to help them scale-up more quickly and, for Turkey and Bulgaria, apply for partnership in the European Platform for Urban Greening.

#### Recruitment

The Green Hotspot in Houten, part of Yuverta's campus, is a dedicated community space for gardeners, green companies and Urban Greeners. Since its start in 2018 the Hotspot has served as a recruitment facilitator by linking students with companies in the Green Sector through internships and learning projects. With the aim of promoting green education and life-long learning, the Green Hotspot plays an important role in connecting knowledge, talent and opportunities, both locally and internationally. This year Green Hotspot hosted courses and exchanges with Platform partners across Europe.

#### Culture Change

Providing visibility and access to Urban Greening projects goes a long way in changing perspectives on our approach to everything from the natural environment and landscaping to water management and urban development plans. The Netherlands is well on its way to a paradigm shift around sustainable green cities and initiatives such as the Rooftop Garden Experience and the Green Hotspot aim to accelerate this movement



## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Initiatives Update

#### The Value of Green

Throughout the past year a new masterclass that emphasised the The Value of Green was offered for the Platform partners in Denmark. Participants from the Green Academy and OKNygaard were invited to the Netherlands for four-day long workshops on Biodiversity and the Importance of Ecological Maintenance. Learning about ecological maintenance, they were shown projects and went on site visits to see first-hand what practices work and which ones have failed. Exploring projects ranging from three to ten years old, gave the Danish participants insights into advanced maintenance techniques and lessons learned from their counterparts in Holland. Masterclasses were conducted in June, which were prepared in-part by specialists in natural vegetation HEEM, who shared their knowledge into some of the projects showcased.

#### Activate Lobbyist Group

As part of a longer-term plan to establish a formal lobbyist group, Yuverta will work alongside over 30 partners from across industries and sectors to make industrial estates greener and more sustainable. With funding from Groeifonds (National Growth Fund), this project aims to ensure long-term economic growth while taking necessary measures to combat climate change.

#### Interior Planting & Landscaping Course

This three-day certificate course, co-created by Yuverta and the Royal Association of Gardeners and Green Providers (VHG) launched last year and saw over 72 industry professionals participate. As planned, Yuverta will develop this course for a wider audience in 2023 and hopes to reach out to the Interior Design and Construction sectors to encourage the course's adoption into their training and curriculum. Courses will be offered in 2023 and will be developed for a wider audience in the coming year.





## THE YEAR AHEAD

### Building Momentum in 2023

#### BARCOVE Hackathon

As an official partner of the newly awarded BARCOVE (Building an Applied Research Facility into Centres of Vocational Excellence) project initiated by the Platform partners in Denmark, over the course of the next two years the partners in the Netherlands will collaborate to develop innovations to complex challenges posed by climate adaptation and green transition demands. In 2023, students from Yuverta will participate in the project's Hackathon, aimed at developing technical solutions for issues around urban space and water management. This project enables mobility learning across key Centres of Vocational Excellence and will strengthen Europe's innovation capacity on both practical and policy levels.



#### Green Roofs Qualification

Responding to industry and training needs, a new qualification around the construction of green roofs will be offered in the year ahead. Addressing technical aspects of green roof installation ranging from health and safety procedures to structural considerations and equipment, this course will initially be offered to a local audience in Dutch, with plans to develop it in English for a wider audience in the future.

#### Extend the Platform

Now halfway through the Platform's four-year mandate and with the goal of ensuring its impact and sustainability, the partners in the Netherlands will work to establish new regional partnerships. Using the resources of Yuverta's Green Hotspot, the supply chain of Royal Ginkel Groep, and the network of Katapult, the partners aim to recruit new collaborators to Urban Greening across the blue-green sector as well as partners who may see themselves as outside the sector, but who can play a role in implementing change on a larger scale.



# Romania

## Communicating the Value of Water

### Urban Water Management

How do we value water? When it comes to Urban Water Management or water management in general, the preliminary questions being asked by landscape architects and new Platform partner RPR in Romania, are around the value of water. As is the case in many countries, water is largely taken for granted and seen to be a given resource; a mindset that needs to be swiftly shifted.

Changing public perception, along with that of government and legislative bodies, is part of the latest communications strategy amongst the Green Sector in Romania. By harking back to traditional rituals, such as Caloian, they believe that communities can be encouraged to develop a deeper respect for the value of water.

Caloian is a Romanian rain-making and fertility rite that pre-dates Christianity, that is now embedded in traditional activities related to Orthodox Easter. The ritual is based around the sculpting of a clay effigy, 'Caloian', followed by a burial procession for the figurine during this spring holiday and by its exhumation, in summer, during periods of drought. The rite aims to send Caloian to the skies to unlock rain so that it can be reborn and bring water for the crops. Historically, the ceremony would involve the entire community and, in some cases, active participation from the Roman Orthodox clergy.

Reviving these traditional lores with the contemporary communities offers an opportunity to open a dialogue about the value of water and how we can integrate old traditions into today's water management practices. Without a basic understanding of how water benefits agriculture, green life, health and well-being, it can be hard to get communities, legislators and government bodies on-board with advancing blue-green innovations in Urban Water Management and Urban Greening.







## Project Highlight

### Landscape Factory

To ensure the sustainability of Romania as a Centre of Vocational Excellence in Urban Greening, the Platform partners WorldSkills Romania, Cezar Nicolau Technological High School and RPR landscape architects, have established a scalable model, referred to as Landscape Factory, for developing the region's capabilities.

The model is based around the development of new qualifications within the field of Urban Greening. Once a new training qualification has been established, opportunities are created for mobility learning to enable teachers to up-skill and be trained in the latest methodologies and best practices from relevant Platform partners in other Centres of Vocational Excellence across Europe.

It is the aim of this model to incorporate designated Outdoor Training Areas for Urban Greening, where practical hands-on training and best practices can be taught to students in the natural environment. The first of these Outdoor Training Areas will be developed in 2023 on the grounds of Cezar Nicolau Technological High School.



## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Perspectives on Priorities – Advancing their Mission

#### Develop a Talent Pipeline

The development of a strong talent pipeline of green industry professionals remains an important priority in Romania. In 2022, the Platform partners facilitated an opportunity for 25 students from various agricultural schools across the country, to travel to Denmark to undertake a three-week training programme at the Green Academy in Aarhus. Students were taught best practices in Urban Greening to complement their studies in agriculture and worked on practical projects, including the construction of rain beds. This training programme also provided an opportunity for the Green Academy to evaluate the skill level of the students in Romania, in turn, informing their training curriculum for educators in Romania who work with the Green Academy to up-skill as part of their Landscape Factory model.

#### Specialised Qualifications

Addressing a key priority in the region to provide new professional qualifications training in the field of Urban Greening, this year the Platform partners developed a programme called Urban Gardener. First ensuring that their trainers were up-to-speed with the latest standards, 15 Romanian teachers travelled to Denmark to participate in a 40 hour blended learning teaching qualification in Urban Greening with the Green Academy. Subsequently, they will be able to teach the new three-year Urban Gardener qualification to students across Romania starting in 2023.

#### Increase Demand for Urban Greening

As part of a longer-term strategy to increase demand for Urban Greening from stakeholders ranging from civic city planners to private developers, this year Romania invited a team of delegates from Dutch Platform partner Yuverta to discuss the importance of Urban Greening. Three meetings were held with the Ministry of Agriculture, Cezar Nicolau Technological HighSchool and the University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest to help Romania scale-up their education, training and best practices in the field and establish itself as a Centre of Vocational Excellence. Next year, city planners and developers will be invited to the new Outdoor Training Area for Urban Greening, to showcase how nature-based solutions can provide both social and economic benefits for their communities.





## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Initiatives Update

#### Community Activities & Media Campaign

Raising awareness around the importance of biodiversity conservation in the urban environment, a new project called Biodiversity Education in Urban Spaces commenced in November 2022. Co-funded by WorldSkills Romania and Raiffeisen Comunitati the project will run for nine months and includes activities that help protect pollinators and generate understanding of their role in a thriving ecosystem. With a general lack of awareness about the impact of agricultural activities in the urban environment and training opportunities that agricultural schools can offer, at scale, the project will aim to educate over 500 young students in secondary and vocational high schools.

#### Atlas of Emerging Trends in Urban Greening

Alongside the development of the Landscape Factory model, WorldSkills Romania will continue their efforts to create an Atlas of Emerging Trends in Urban Greening. This study will start to identify what new occupations and qualifications are needed in the field, as Romania participates in more mobility learning initiatives and knowledge transfers with other Platform partners, who can share their latest industry needs and insights into new blue-green innovations.

#### Short Course Qualifications

Over the past year WorldSkills Romania, Cezar Nicolau Technological High School and the Association of Landscape Architects in Romania (AsoP) developed the first introductory course in Arboriculture. The course aims to help students acquire the basic skills and knowledge to manage and monitor urban trees. Upon completion of this initial training course, students will then participate in a second session that will lead to a professional certification from the Ministry of Education. Following the pilot of this new course in 2022, this training will be further developed in 2023.

*“As a landscape architect I design urban green spaces, but my work can’t come to life without trained professionals who can implement and maintain the projects in the long-term. Within the lifespan of an urban park, the design and implementation are two relatively brief stages, while the maintenance is ongoing over decades. This is why it is so important for Romania to invest in training skilled landscape professionals who are able to manage and maintain our green urban spaces well into the future. Being part of the European Platform is a huge step forward in developing the field of Urban Greening in Romania.”*

– Diana Culescu, Vice-President of the Romanian Landscape Architects Association - Bucharest Branch



## THE YEAR AHEAD

### Building Momentum in 2023

#### Outdoor Training Area for Urban Greening

In establishing Romania as a Centre of Vocational Excellence in the years and decades to come, next year will see the development of an Outdoor Training Area for Urban Greening as part of the Landscape Factory initiative. This outdoor area will provide a physical space for training, research and development in Urban Greening and establish a model for additional Outdoor Training Areas across the country. As well as being used for training, this area will also be open to the public and include a botanical garden where members of the community can learn about biodiversity and its impact on the urban environment.

#### Mobility Training

Building on the momentum established over the past two years as part of the European Platform for Urban Greening, Romania will place an emphasis on mobility learning for their teachers and students. Given the importance of learning from other Platform partners in building the foundations for Urban Greening in the region, teachers will continue to travel to up-skill and retrain in the latest best practices. This training will coincide with the new three-year qualification Urban Gardener, which will commence next year.



#### BARCOVE Hackathon

As an official partner of the newly awarded BARCOVE (Building an Applied Research Facility into Centres of Vocational Excellence) project initiated by the Platform partners in Denmark, over the course of the next two years the partners in Romania will collaborate to develop innovations to complex challenges posed by climate adaptation and green transition demands. In 2023, students from Romania will participate in the project's Hackathon, aimed at developing technical solutions for issues around urban space and water management. This project enables mobility learning across key Centres of Vocational Excellence and will strengthen Europe's innovation capacity on both practical and policy levels.





## CASE STUDY

# Spain

## Building Constructed & Aerated Wetlands

### Urban Water Management

As one of the European regions to suffer most from drought and water shortages in the decades to come, Spain is working quickly to find solutions for the treatment of urban and industrial wastewater. Recent innovations by Platform partner PAIMED, a leader in environmental restoration and bioengineering based in Valencia, include constructed artificial wetlands. These phytodepuration systems borrow their design from nature by recreating aquatic environments by means of rafts with floating plants where residual water is poured. There, the plants develop physical and chemical processes that progressively purify the water.

PAIMED have also been focussed on aerated wetlands, which are an advanced type of treatment wetlands that facilitate more efficient removal of contaminants from wastewater owing to the higher availability of oxygen. The subsurface flow system is aerated mechanically from below, providing the appropriate distribution of air that is ideal for treating wastewater with high levels of organic matter.

The latest systems minimise the land footprint of treatment wetlands and are currently being developed for urban areas. These alternatives to traditional wastewater treatment plants are proving to have a lower maintenance cost, a lower energy cost and a smaller environmental impact – excellent innovations to aid in the sustainability of green cities.



*“ We are very excited to develop, in collaboration with EFA La Malvesía, an innovative green façade system. It is a great opportunity for us to continue being pioneers in the blue-green sector and bring cutting-edge solutions to the environmental marketplace. Moreover, it has been inspiring to see how the well the students get involved in the construction process as well as the follow up.”*

– Juan Manuel Mondéjar, Paimed





## Project Highlight

### Smart Green Indus Park

Taking every opportunity to apply Urban Greening practices and nature-based solutions in and around cities, Platform partner EFA La Malvesía in collaboration with Solivent Landscapes and the Fire Foundation, has created a model for the restoration of agroecosystems in the surroundings of industrial estates. Dedicated to the promotion of agriculture, forestry and rural environments, the school has launched Smart Green Indus Park, a pilot project that will allow students to enrich their practical knowledge of landscaping in the rural environment, while improving the ecosystem and biodiversity through the regeneration of an industrial estate in Catadau.



The project offers students practical workshops training in implementing irrigations systems, planting native species, topographic measurements, agronomic design, plant species georeferencing, sampling, and census of insects and shelter boxes for wildlife. Funded by Caixabank and with the support of FP Empresa, Smart Green Indus Park will be promoted regionally with the aim of regenerating more neglected areas that communities could benefit from.

*“Urban Greening needs to be present in industries, town halls, trade fairs and in the enthusiasm of our students. A strong commitment from wide-ranging stakeholders will ensure that Greening thrives in our urban areas and neglected rural developments.”*

– Ignacio Hernández Visier, Principal EFA La Malvesía





## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Perspectives on Priorities – Advancing their Mission

#### New Sources of Funding

Funding from the Spanish Ministry of Education and the European Commission have allowed for the co-creation of new curriculum in 2022 by La Malvesía and PAIMED for the region's Smart Green City 4.0 project. Generating more sources of funding remains a priority to enable the realisation of new Urban Greening projects that advance educational opportunities, innovations and awareness.

#### Collaborations

Working with The Commonwealth of La Ribera Municipalities, comprised of 40 small towns in the province of Valencia, La Malvesía held workshops throughout 2022 on landscaping at the headquarters of the Mancomunitat de la Ribera Alta. Under the title Dressing the Urban Landscape – Transforming the City, a range of experts shared their knowledge around the best ways to re-think public green areas, with those responsible for decision making. Mayors, public administration officials and technical staff all participated and gained a greater understanding of how Urban Greening can address the social and environmental challenges we face.

#### Knowledge Transfers

Building on their relationship as Platform partners, PAIMED sent employees to La Malvesía for a total of 18 sessions to retrain and up-skill their certifications in key areas such as operating a chainsaw. Likewise, over a dozen students from La Malvesía participated in internships at PAIMED to learn first-hand from experienced practitioners.

Creating opportunities for practical knowledge transfers, this year PAIMED, Projar and La Malvesía started a pilot project to develop a new vertical gardening system called the Urban Tec-Roc. This collaborative project aims to transfer practical knowledge and experience to students, by engaging them in the development process from the beginning, while being guided by professional from PAIMED and Projar who will provide technical and operational support. The pilot aims to construct a vertical gardening system rich in biodiversity, at La Malvesía's campus, that is both resistant and sustainable, with reduced installation and maintenance costs. Currently the first growth of species including Cimbalaria, Plantago, Saponaria and Iberis can be seen and in the coming months, students will monitor progress and observe how the vegetation grows and covers the wall.



## YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

### Initiatives Update

#### Co-Create New Curriculum

Under the umbrella of the Smart Green Cities 4.0 project, La Malvesía and PAIMED co-created three new courses over the past year that will aid in bolstering the talent pipeline for Urban Greening in Spain.

- Naturalisation of Buildings
- Arboriculture, Pruning and Tree Management
- Urban Social Gardens

#### Public Relations & Events

Participating in a skills competition at Iberflora in 2022, the largest professional Gardening Fair held annually in Valencia, students from La Malvesía showcased their talents by designing 2x2 metre gardens. Given a six-hour time limit and a set of designated materials and vegetation, students executed their designs in the first round of competition. Two students from the school were awarded second place at the regional level and will proceed to compete at the national level, designing 5x5 metre gardens in Madrid in March 2023. From there, they will have an additional opportunity to represent La Malvesía in an international competition next year.

#### Seminars & Video Conferences

This year the partners in Spain hosted a four-day project meeting and seminar for the European Platform for Urban Greening in Valencia. With participants joining from across the Platform, the partners showcased best practices in Urban Water Management in Plaza de Brujas and took participants to visit River Turia where they could see how the city had used the deviation of a city river to avoid flooding, while transforming the riverbed into a green park for urban dwellers. A line-up of inspiring guest speakers from Valencia Municipality and City Hall spoke to the region's impressive advances in Urban Greening and to the city's candidacy for European Green Capital in 2024. Overall, the four days elevated the region's standing as a Centre of Vocational Excellence and provided participants with fresh insights into climate adaptation strategies around current Urban Greening project across Europe.





## THE YEAR AHEAD

### Building Momentum in 2023

#### BARCOVE Hackathon

As an official partner of the newly awarded BARCOVE (Building an Applied Research Facility into Centres of Vocational Excellence) project initiated by the Platform partners in Denmark, over the course of the next two years the partners in Spain will collaborate to develop innovations to complex challenges posed by climate adaptation and green transition demands. In 2023, students from La Malvesía will participate in the project's Hackathon, aimed at developing technical solutions for issues around urban space and water management. This project enables Mobility Learning across key Centres of Vocational Excellence and will strengthen Europe's innovation capacity on both practical and policy levels.



#### GREENVEU

In 2023 the Platform partners in Spain will participate in another newly awarded project called GREENVEU. Aimed at addressing the talent pipeline shortage of new trained and qualified employees in the Green Sector, this initiative will help to generate more interest amongst young students to pursue vocational studies in fields such as Urban Greening. Having already conducted many seminars and workshops in Spain for primary and secondary school students, the Platform partners will collaborate with other stakeholders across Europe to enhance the quality, strategies and approaches to the recruitment of individuals to vocational education and training in the Green Sector.

#### Advance Urban Water Management

As an essential element in sustainable Urban Greening practices, water is a key area of focus for the year(s) ahead. Advancing innovations and best practices in Urban Water Management has been set as a goal amongst Platform industry partners and a Deep Dive to address issues around water drainage, water collection and storage and water (re)use will take place in January 2023. As a leader in this field, PAIMED will be taking an active role in leading this initiative.



# Summary of Activity

The European Platform for Urban Greening has made substantial advances and impact in its second year. Partners have increased their cooperation both regionally and Platform-wide and the results of their efforts are evident in the snapshot of activities below. Momentum for Urban Greening across Europe is growing and forward-thinking courses, initiatives and innovations are ushering in a new era of the Green Movement. We are excited to build on our achievements as we continue to lay the foundations for the long-term sustainability of our Platform in the year ahead.

## **New Courses & Qualifications Developed in 2022**

- Creation & Maintenance of Greenery (Horticulture)
- A Mentor Programme
- Biodiversity Training Course
- Climate Adaptive Gardener
- New Trends in Urban Greening
- Urban Greening - Principles & Maintenance
- Soil Food Web
- Edible Forest Garden
- LUMOtarihuri Pro
- Interior Planting & Landscaping Course
- Landscaping Course
- Aboriculture
- Aboriculture, Pruning & Tree Management
- Naturalisation of Buildings
- Urban Social Gardens
- Urban Gardener Qualification
- Biogardening Qualification

## **New Courses & Qualifications Planned for 2023**

- Wild Plant Identification
- Seed Collection
- Stream Restoration
- Ecological Compensation Calculation Models
- Green Roof Qualification
- Urban Water Management





## Projects, Initiatives & Events

- BARCOVE
- GREENVEU
- Landscape Factory
- Islands of Excellence
- Biodiversity Education in Urban Spaces
- Smart Green Indus Park
- Urban Tec-Roc
- PROfessionals Day
- Insect Hotels
- The Rooftop Garden Experience
- The Value of Green
- Green Hotspot
- Urban Area Maintenance Showcase
- Outdoor Training Areas for Urban Greening
- Project Days in Biodiversity
- Urban Water Management Deep Dive
- Trend Awards

## Platform Activities & Advances

- Mobility Learning, Teaching & Knowledge Exchanges
- Up-skilling and Retraining
- Youth Engagement, Recruitment & Internships
- New Partners & Collaborations
- Development of Stakeholder & Lobbyist Groups
- Ambassador Programmes
- Dissemination of Information
- Media Campaigns
- Workshops & Seminars
- Impacting Policy & Policymakers
- Securing New Funding
- Raising Visibility of Urban Greening
- Establishing Infrastructure of Centres of Vocational Excellence
- Increasing Virtual, Blended & Micro-learning Resources
- Working Together on New Innovations

**EuropeanPlatform**  
**UrbanGreening** 

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