

*Una manera de hacer Europa*



# BUENAS PRÁCTICAS

## Actuaciones Cofinanciadas

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# Programa Operativo Plurirregional de España

Año 2022

## Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional



**The action plan entitled “Transformation of the degraded area in Salas Bajas for the development of 617 Ecological Urban Allotments and their associated resources” undertaken in the year 2020 listed as an example of Good Practice.**

The action plan entitled URBAN ALLOTMENTS constitutes one of the Structuring Procedures forming EDUSI TORMES+ as it features the following characteristics:

- Functional interrelationship based on their bond with other procedures relating to natural heritage, simulation of local employment deposits, energy efficiency, hydric management...
- Sustainability over time beyond the material construction of EDUSI TORMES+ with a marked calling for future continuance.
- Spatial projection conceived from a Tormes region local scale; its area of influence attains a city-wide scale.
- Major implication and high citizen participation levels.

This engagement forms part of a series of operations linked to the development and fostering of natural heritage in the urban areas falling within the scope of the EDUSI TORMES+ project. The development of Urban Ecological Allotments has made available for Salamanca residents one of the largest “green lungs” in the city, providing a total of 617 allotments classified into five different usage gradings (leisure, social, research, training and accessible), the output of their 40,000 m<sup>2</sup> of croplands is linked to ecological agriculture.



Alongside the actual construction of the garden space, a premises has been built in line with bioclimatic architectural criteria which serves as a classroom setting for the crop initiation courses and dissemination of the new allotments, as well as space for farming tools. Additionally, walkways and green routes have been created over a total surface area of 30,000 m<sup>2</sup> along with green belts and parks with a surface area of 7,000 m<sup>2</sup>, which are integrated into the allotments in open public spaces and green corridors along the banks of the River Tormes.

The total cost of the operation amounts to 2,319,546.74 € (2,272,031.74 € + 47,515.00 € communication actions), with the invested **eligible costs** standing at **1,410,734.04 €**, with an ERDF grant of 50% (705,367.02 €).



Situation pre and post reforms.

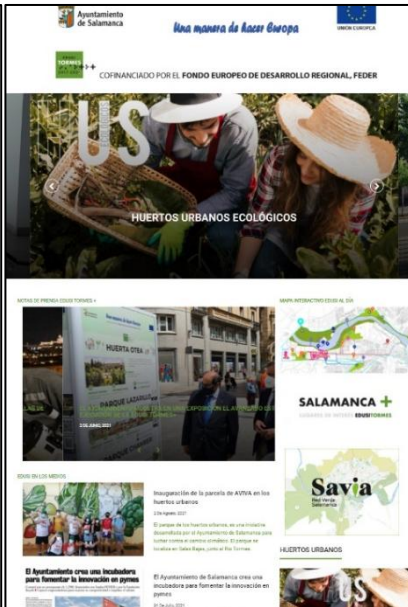
Walkways and picnic areas.

# 1. CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION AS GOOD PRACTICES

## 1.1. DISCLOSURE OF THE ERDF'S INVOLVEMENT:

The role played by the ERDF in the action plan has been properly disclosed amongst the actual and potential beneficiaries, as well as the general public through diverse publicity elements. Thus, compliance with the obligations in terms of disclosure set forth in the Regulations have been met through citizens being informed via billboards, plates and informative videos.

Furthermore, information has been published both on the Council's website ([www.aytosalamanca.es](http://www.aytosalamanca.es)), as well as that of EDUSI ([www.mastormessalamanca.es](http://www.mastormessalamanca.es)), in which a specific section has been set aside, and also on the Salamanca Green Infrastructure Strategy Web ([www.saviasalamanca.com](http://www.saviasalamanca.com)).





With regard to communication, the Urban Allotments have been welcomed enthusiastically by residents thanks to the different communications action plans performed. In this way, the project has been properly announced amongst the actual and potential beneficiaries, as well as the general public through newsletters, interviews, mailings, informative brochures, live and online events, exhibitions, posting of content on social networking sites with a local and regional outreach in both the written and online press

- NEWSLETTERS AND INTERVIEWS posted on digital media and available on the web.



- BROCHURE AND VIDEOS \_ [Micro video](#) posted on social networking sites and mass mailing of the informative brochure. Broadcast of the video subtitled into [Spanish](#) and [English](#) through local and regional means of communication, municipal social networking sites, and institutions such as the University of Salamanca (May 2022). In addition, a [brochure with FAQs](#) was published so that citizens could be made aware of this initiative.



- RADIO\_ Specialist broadcasts lasting an hour of the radio station Cadena Cope de Salamanca (09/11/2022). [Programme 01](#), [Programme 02](#), [Programme 03](#)



- MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES\_ [News Item](#) in the daily ‘EL MUNDO’ ([www.elmundo.es](http://www.elmundo.es); 27/05/2022). Furthermore, additional initiatives have been performed as part of the Communication Plan, namely the publication of a [report](#) in the nationally published magazine *Equipamientos y Servicios Municipales*, among others.



Alongside the foregoing, to publicise the project, explain its scope and EU community participation through the ERDF funds, diverse workshops were held such as the first Urban Allotments Product Competition, with more than one thousand attendees enjoying the scheduled activities taking place on 17 September 2022; the Citizens’ Participation Committee (direct and potential beneficiaries), the EDUSI TORMES+ exhibition (beneficiaries and the general public), informative brochures (beneficiaries and the general public), videos with subtitles in English and Spanish, educational events, conferences, along with reports in the media on a local and regional level in daily newspapers such as *Salamanca al día*, *El Norte de Castilla*...





## 2. INTEGRATION OF GROUNDBREAKING ELEMENTS

The innovative nature of the actions undertaken is framed within the following elements:

1. As this is the largest offer of leisure and social allotments in the urban area of Castile and Leon, it entails **the generation of economic dynamics that benefit the districts both directly and indirectly** and which will be associated with the actual allotments, the management of urban horticulturalists' activity and the provision of supplementary services that may be demanded as a result of the foregoing, or by stakeholders who oversee their operation, from either the public or private sectors.
2. Incorporation of criteria adhering to **Ecological Agriculture**, the allotments will be tended in an organic and natural manner, without the use of pesticides or chemical fertilisers, thus obtaining healthy foodstuffs that are respectful to the environment.
3. The Allotments comprise a **large-scale green infrastructure acting as an urban strategy to adapt to climate change**, given its potential to absorb greenhouse gases, as this is one of the largest "green lungs" of the city offering more than 600 allotments of different typologies (leisure, social, educational and research allotments), 40,000 m<sup>2</sup> of croplands, 30,000 m<sup>2</sup> of walkways and green routes. In turn, this action features standout elements in terms of its design criteria, based on autochthonous solutions, requiring low maintenance levels that place the onus on preserving the environment.
4. The administrative process followed for the assignation of the allotments has been a clear **example of citizen participation**, with widespread posting on social media and preliminary consultation on design with healthcare and disabled users' associations, in such a way that the 900 applications received could be duly handled.
5. In the few weeks that have elapsed since their unveiling, the Urban Allotments have become a **space brimming with encounters, reflection and activation of social fabric featuring exchanges of experiences** knowledge, opinion, science and research that **help to enrich life together and social integration from the viewpoint of respect and fostering equal opportunities**.



### **3. SUITABILITY OF RESULTS WITH THE AIMS SET FORTH**

The main aim of this activity is focused on the fostering and valorisation of the natural heritage corresponding to the banks of the River Tormes in the urban area of the city of Salamanca. In this regard, the development of the Urban Allotments and their regulation entail one of the main activities in this field as part of EDUSI'S scope of action, placing the potential of natural heritage at the service of the districts in the Tormes region as sustainable tools for urban transformation, meaning in turn one of the standout leisure attractions in the municipality.

This activity's development consists not solely of the implantation of new croplands, but also it ensures the permeability of the city towards the river, through green trails and resting areas linking thus the operation of the Allotments with that of the Green Corridors.

### **4. CONTRIBUTION TO SOLVING ISSUES OR WEAKNESSES DETECTED IN THE TERRITORIAL SCOPE OF IMPLEMENTATION**

The activity performed redefines the physical space in which the Urban Allotments are housed, from the principles of urban sustainability (integration with economic agriculture, enhancement of permeability between urban and natural heritage, a symbiosis between the river and the city,...). In this way, we can also take advantage of the latter to act as a tool that services social and economic improvement in the areas adjoining the riverbanks through their use as leisure and recreational spaces which will, in turn, foster new associated social dynamics.

The operation contributes to the promotion of the natural space through its integration into the municipal strategy in the fight against climate change (resource for adaptation) and sustainability (integration of the principles of food sovereignty), forming part of the network that constitutes the city's Green Infrastructure.

The favourable reception and high demand levels for urban allotments has meant the City Council will study the expansion of the allotment areas into plots adjoining those forming this project.

### **5. DEGREE OF COVERAGE**

The coverage of this activity is sizable, given its strategic nature and as it also reaches all residents of the districts close to the river including those in the EDUSI action areas, for both the indirect effects that are pursued through the operation, and, conversely, the citizens of Salamanca (143,269 inhabitants according to the most recent census in 2021) who will be able to enjoy this major green lung as well as the use of the Allotments (the winning applications chosen through a draw) along with the activities undertaken therein.



## **6. CONSIDERATION OF THE HORIZONTAL CRITERIA OF EQUALITY AND OPPORTUNITIES AS WELL AS NON-DISCRIMINATION, ALONG WITH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Horizontal principles have been included among the CRITERIA FOR the SELECTION OF OPERATIONS in all the Strategic Aims set forth in the EDUSI TORMES+ project, the latter being a **mandatory factor** for the selected operations.

In the Allotments' operation, these criteria have been guaranteed, on the one hand, through the possibility of access to the use of the latter regardless of gender or social status (drawing of lots) and, on the other, through the design of the Allotments, which guarantee universal access to them. This guarantees equality and non-discrimination in the use of and access to gardens, on the grounds of gender, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Regarding sustainability, the operation has been developed from the strategic perspective of promoting sustainability not only in the context of EDUSI but in the entire municipality of Salamanca.

## **7. SYNERGIES WITH OTHER POLICIES OR PUBLIC INTERVENTION INSTRUMENTS**

The operation is complementary to the policy lines provided for in the General Urban Planning Plan (PGOU) of Salamanca, as well as with the applicable urban planning regulations. The urban allotments' operation is linked to the Plan for the Protection of Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity (PEPIVB) and the Municipal Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change (EMACCSA); both instruments drafted within the framework of the European INTERREG Project for Cross-Border Cooperation Green Cities CENCYL for the period 2014-2020.

Likewise, the development of organic agriculture in the city of Salamanca is wholly aligned with the ACTION PLAN OF THE SALAMANCA URBAN AGENDA (2030 Horizon), recently approved by the City Council as a pilot project within the PRTR RECOVERY, TRANSFORMATION and RESILIENCE PLAN implementing NEXT GENERATION EU funds.

Finally, it is worthwhile pointing out that the Urban Allotments have also been the basis of focus by the VOLUNTAS SALAMANCA Programme, integrated into environmental volunteering activities through SAVIA's activities. All of the foregoing acts in order to contribute to the encouragement of respect for our environment and make Salamanca an even healthier city boasting higher living standards. These activities of environmental volunteering seek to involve the citizenry as an axis of transmission for social values and solidarity that also serve to raise social awareness on certain issues or situations.

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