A CORUÑA
Urban Gardens Network

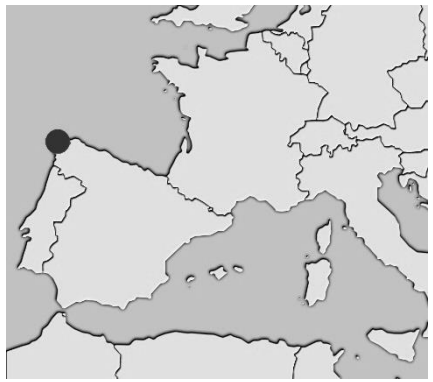
Connecting Nature Project, City of A Coruña

Bringing cities to life, **Bringing life into cities.**

Ayuntamiento de A Coruña
Concello da Coruña

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 730222

A Coruña: local context



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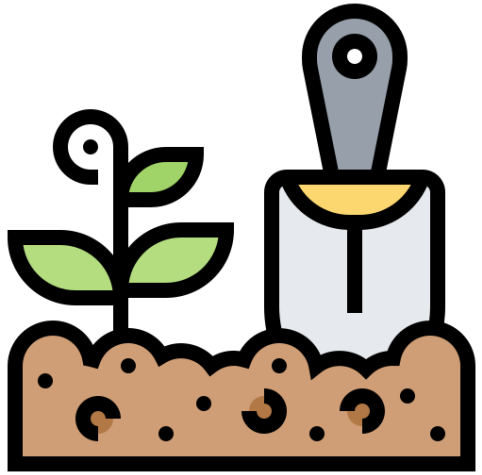
NBS exemplar: Urban Gardens

Why Urban Gardens?

- **Cost-efficient way** to address many of the city's strategic goals
- **Small-scale projects** that can be then **up-scaled** to a city-wide level
- **Alignment** with UN Sustainable Development Goals, EU Urban agenda, Spanish Urban Agenda



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Benefits: multifunctional approach

BENEFITS

Increase **biodiversity** and boost ecology

Improve **resilience** against climate change challenges

Provide a sustainable public space offering **healthy recreational opportunities**

Protect and reinforce **ethnographic and cultural values** of environment

Increase **social cohesion** and **community engagement**

Provide a space for **environmental education**

Promote **new sustainable economic activities / entrepreneurship opportunities**

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First steps of the network

ecoHORTAS Project

Starting 2018

- Open **participatory process** to define the location
- New urban gardens

↓

Eirís, Novo Mesoiro, Agra

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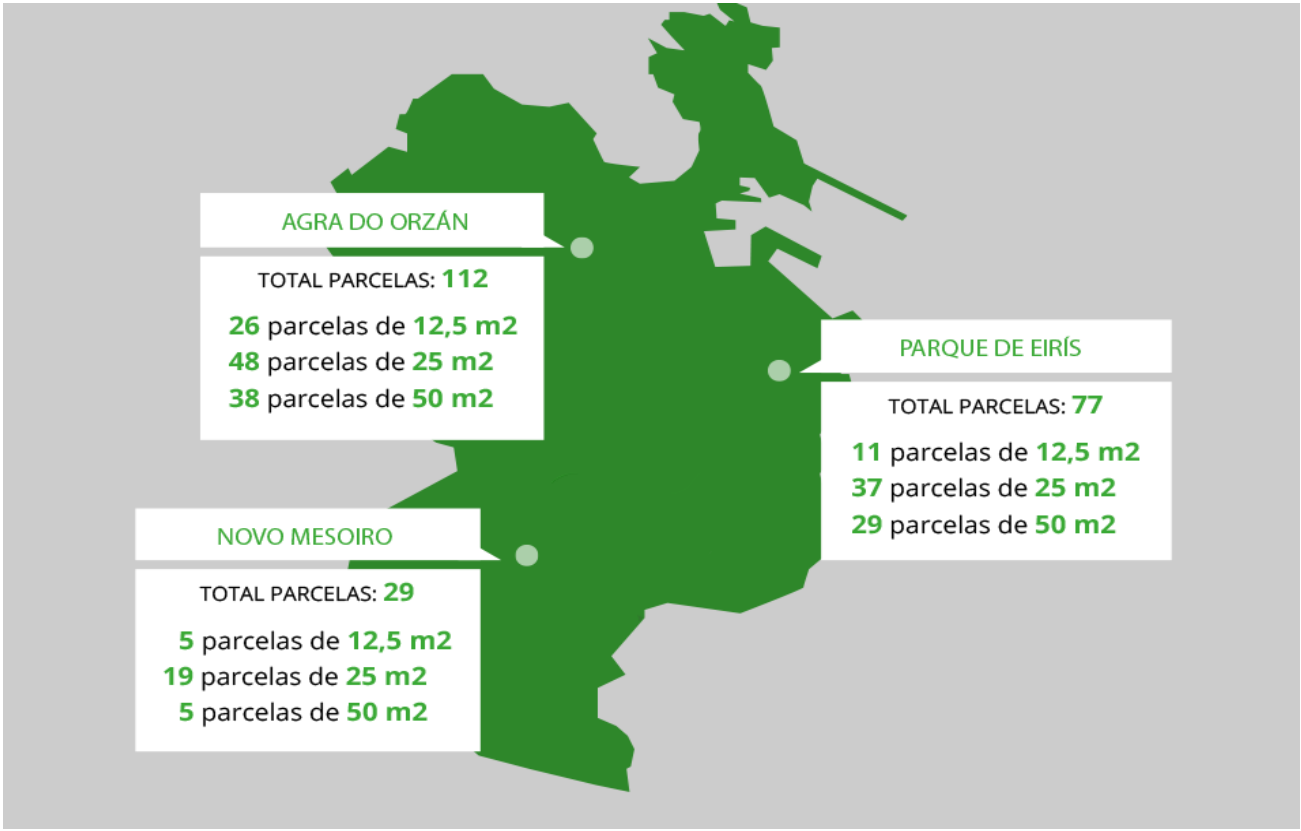
First steps of the network

ecoHORTAS Project

- **218 new individual plots** avaliable for citizens in three locations
- **UG as a social tool**: Priority for vulnerable collectives
- **Workshops:** Group facilitation Organic agriculture



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First steps of the network

Other Urban Gardens:

- **School Urban Gardens**: five primary schools so far have installed an urban garden with support from the municipality
- **Community Gardens:** two municipal community gardens and a third being developed in urban parks, working with NGOs
- **Private Urban Gardens**: private initiatives, some non-profit (Hortas Val de Feáns), some commercial (Portiño)

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A Coruña Exemplar: Urban gardens network

3 Urban Gardens for citizens

3 Community Gardens for NGOs and associations

5 School Gardens in Primary Schools

4 Urban Gardens for citizens

4 Community Gardens for NGOs and associations

11 School Gardens in Primary Schools

218 families in Municipal Gardens

2 NGOs / Associations

2,500 children

305 families in Municipal Gardens

4 NGOs / Associations

4,400 children

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A Coruña Exemplar: Urban gardens network

Community gardens with NGOs

Project for a new Urban Garden

School Gardens

Municipal Urban Gardens

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Other relevant initiatives

- **Ru:rban project (URBACT)**

  Transfer the good practices of Rome on urban agriculture

Three elements:

- Capacity building
- Regulation
- Gardeniser program

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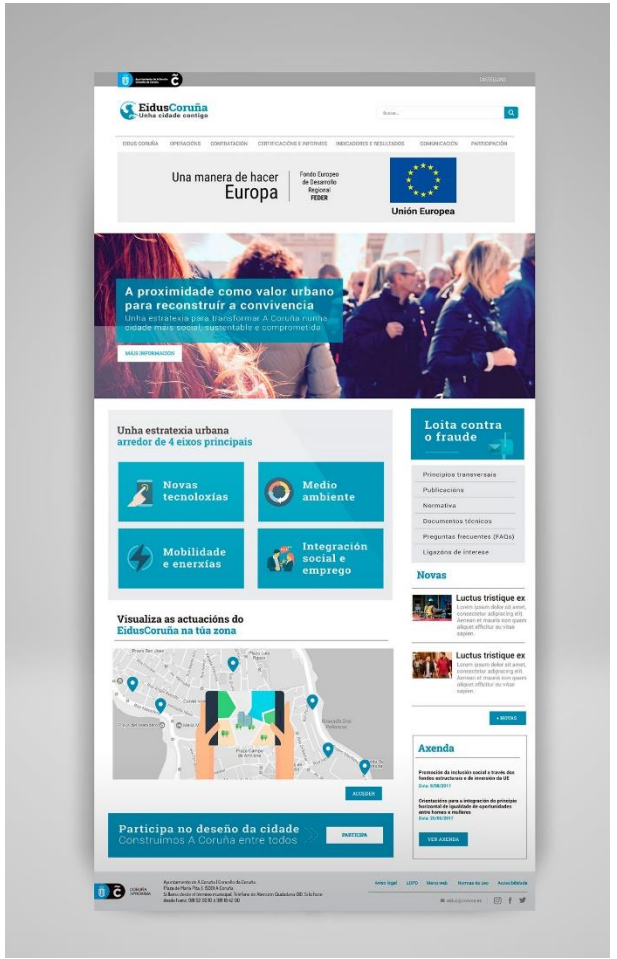
Embedding the project into CITY STRATEGIC GOALS

- **EIDUS Coruña: Sustanaible Urban Development Strategy (2017)**

  ERDF funds

  Includes a specific line to enable the establishment of urban gardens



EidusCoruña
Unha cidade contigo

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Embedding the project into CITY STRATEGIC GOALS

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Connecting Nature

SDGs and Urban Gardens

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SDGs and Urban Gardens

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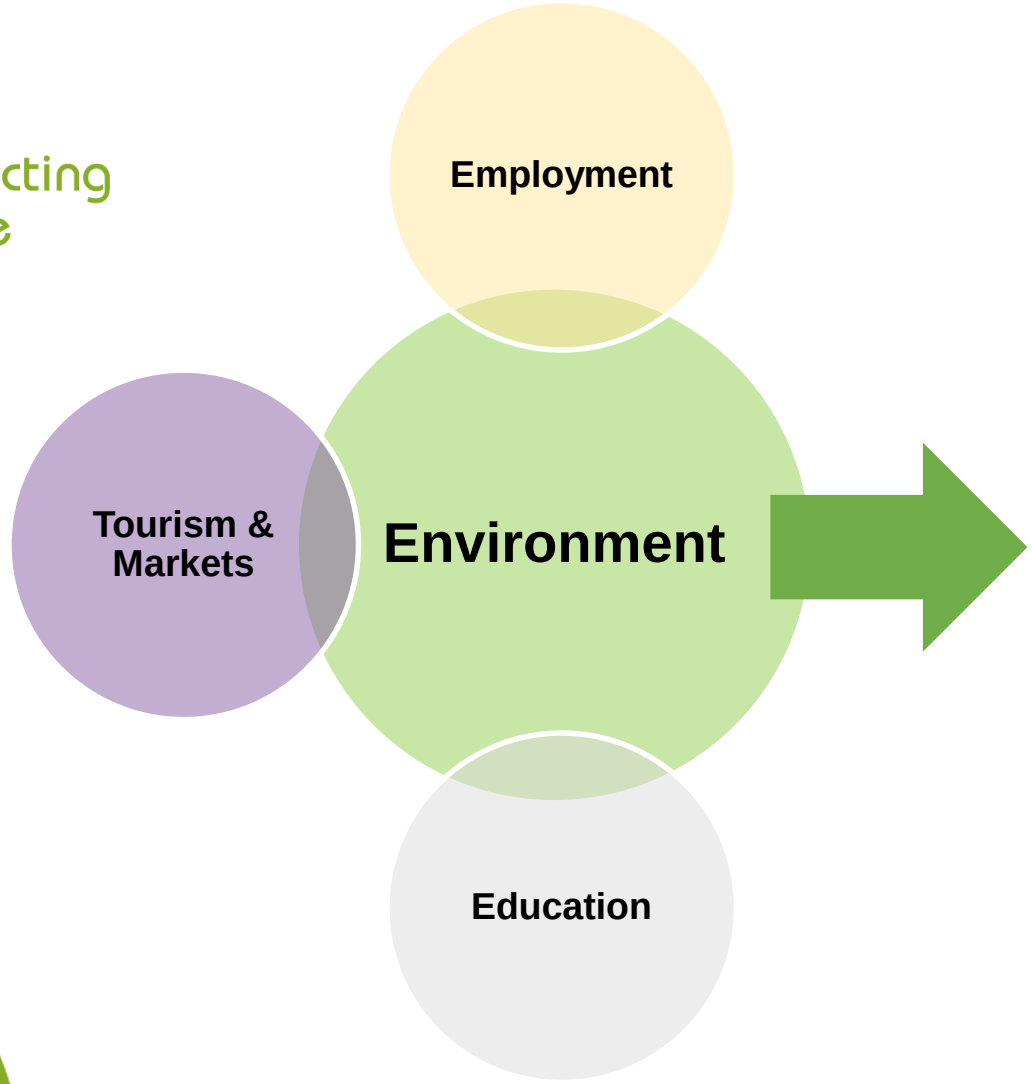
Breaking the silos



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Breaking the silos

Both levels are equally important!

Some barriers:

- Engaging all relevant departments
- Finding the right people to contact

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LOCAL GROUP ON URBAN AGRICULTURE

Presence of relevant groups:
NGOs, urban gardeners associations, neighbourhood associations, teachers and school community, professional gardeners and SMEs, university…

Regular meetings:
Co-designing the urban gardens network and designing the next steps to take

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Workshop on Business Model Canvas in A Coruña

To better understand how to finance our exemplar, not only relying on municipal funds (Nov. 2019)

Annual General Meeting in Malaga

1st presential meeting for our new CN team. It was really important to learn and put in practice new concepts, such as the CN Framework and the Reflexive Monitoring (Oct. 2019)

Selection of exemplar: urban gardens

Urban gardens network had a great potential as a first step for the green infrastructure strategy (Sept. 2019)

Connection with Employment department and URBACT RU:RBAN project

The Employment dpt. was involved in another EU project on urban gardens, working already with a group of stakeholders developing school gardens (Dec. 2019)

High level meeting with the City Councillors for Environment, Education, Employment and Tourism and Markets

This helped us secure political support to develop our exemplar and collaborate with the different departments (March 2020)

CN Exemplar awarded as National Best Practice

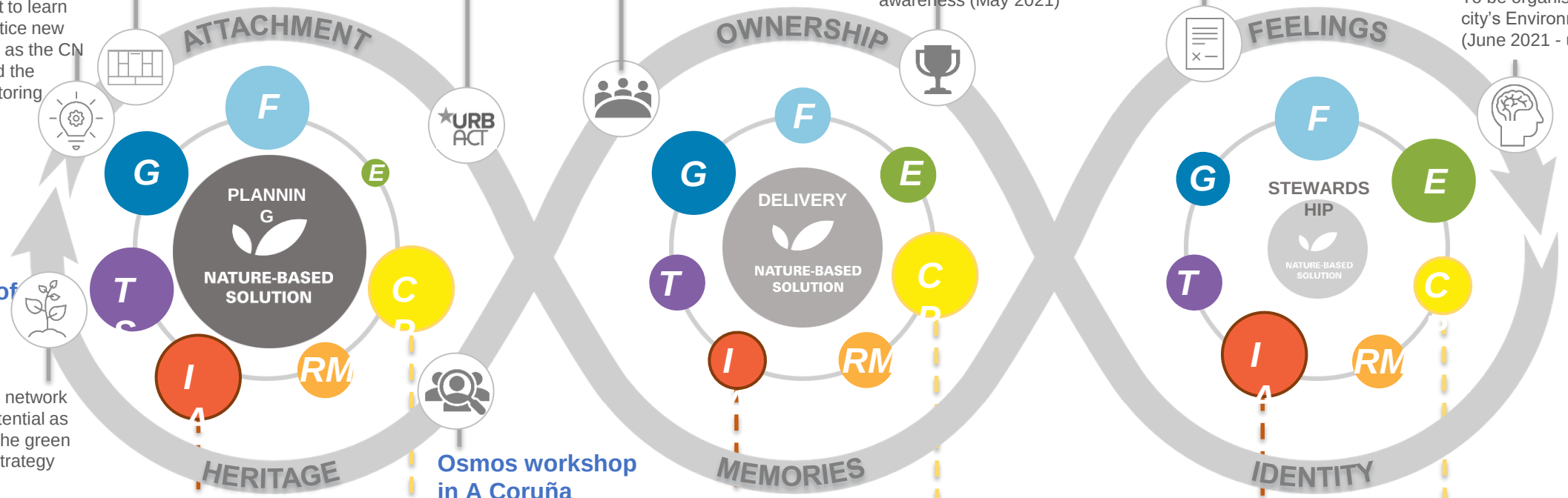
1st prize in the category of NBS, helpful to further secure political support and increase citizen awareness (May 2021)

New maintenance tender for the city's green areas including UG

With our inputs embedded for the green areas of the city, which will have a separated lot for the maintenance of urban gardens, aimed at social integration enterprises (May-April 2021)

Sarajevo process

To be organised as part of the city's Environmental Week (June 2021 - upcoming)



Osmos workshop in A Coruña

Engage stakeholders and select key actor for the exemplar planning, delivery and stewardship phases (Nov. 2019)

Selecting the relevant indicators and designing an assessment plan. Setting up baselines for the indicators

Mapping the relevant stakeholders and involving them into the design of the exemplar

Implement the relevant technologies to measure the data and/or carry out the questionnaires

Engaging stakeholders and users also for the delivery of the exemplar

Compare the collected data with the baseline

Defining the stewardship phase involving users and potential sponsors