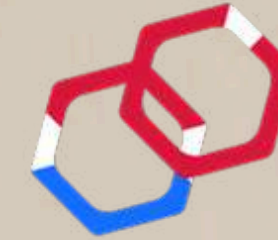


**SWISS–CROATIAN**  
Cooperation Programme



**Education about sustainable  
agriculture  
of children and youth at the  
Community garden Gregovica**

*Dunja Mickov & Nina Brnic, Green Istria  
Basel, 2-day Study Trip (A1)  
02 July 2026*



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
Office for Cooperation with NGOs

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The views expressed in this presentation are the sole responsibility of Association Green Istria and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Swiss Confederation or the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs.



# Green Istria



- Non-profit association dedicated to protection of the environment and natural resources and social justice
- Founded in 1995
- <https://www.zelena-istra.hr/en/about-us/>





# Supporting citizens' initiatives

- Often against harmful projects related to the sea / maritime domain, space, quarrying etc.
- Usually we support citizens to participate in procedures of public discussions (spatial plans, EIA studies, acts of public authorities) and assist with their campaigns
- Watch-dog organization







# Green telephone

- Green telephone service - we support citizens in solving environmental problems, 25+ years
- Here we often find out about citizens' initiatives
- We file cases of environmental problems to the responsible authorities, or assist citizens in doing so themselves







# Education - waste reduction, climate, sustainable development..



We educate children, youth, citizens of all age groups - projects or in cooperation with local utility companies, schools...

We organize annually re-use festival, and numerous workshops in our...







# ReGeppetto Repair Caffè and Workshop

... which won an award for the 2021 campaign within the European Waste Reduction Week (EWWR) - for action Re-Geppetto Repair Caffè and Workshop – circular communities and art”

Lots of workshops for citizens happen here





# Citizens initiative for urban gardening

The COVID-19 pandemic and climate change motivated citizens to self-sufficiency and sustainability

Why wouldn't we produce our local food when we have so much green space? YOU should start an urban garden project!





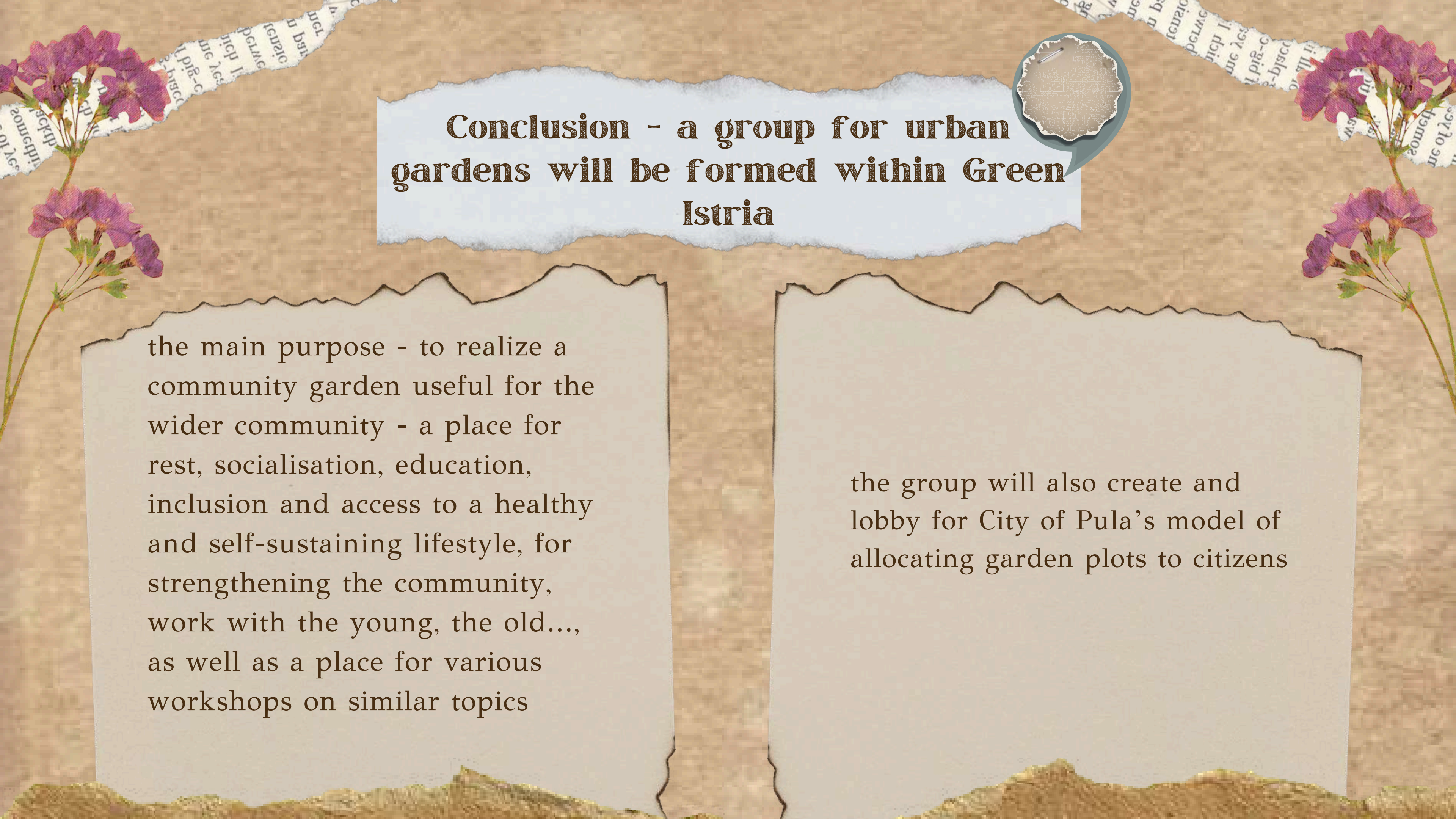


# 1st meeting, May 2020

The initiative involved about 40 citizens of different profiles and ages - from architects, economists, agronomists, lawyers to permaculture practitioners and students, pensioners, artists, etc.





The background is a textured, light brown surface. At the top, there are two purple flowers with green stems and leaves, one on the left and one on the right. A torn piece of white paper with black text is visible at the top left and top right. In the center, there is a light blue rectangular area with a torn edge. To the right of this area, there is a circular inset with a torn edge, containing a small, dark, textured object. The main title is written in a bold, black, serif font within the blue area.

## **Conclusion - a group for urban gardens will be formed within Green Istria**

the main purpose - to realize a community garden useful for the wider community - a place for rest, socialisation, education, inclusion and access to a healthy and self-sustaining lifestyle, for strengthening the community, work with the young, the old..., as well as a place for various workshops on similar topics

the group will also create and lobby for City of Pula's model of allocating garden plots to citizens



# Meeting with City of Pula's representatives, June 2020



1

The idea of a community garden was well accepted in the City

2

The City presented plans for the launch of an urban gardening project with plots intended for individual citizens (local elections in 2021)



# Events organized by the group

01

“In transition 2.0.” film screening



02

“SUPversive sound” benefit party (with support of Student association Pula - SUP)



03

Lecture on urban permaculture by Ivana Keller







# Group policy proposals

01

## General urban plan

- to introduce the concepts of urban gardens and community garden
- to mark appropriately with color and planning sign

02

## Proposals for the 2021 budget

- fencing the whole gardening area with living fences
- arranging plots and paths between plots
- ensuring the availability of water (supply from the public water supply system or ground water)
- installing waste bins
- establishing a community orchard
- ensuring sheds for garden tools, tables and benches and solar panels that would provide electricity for events in the community garden





# Project Garden(ACT)ivism

Advocacy project that sought to empower and involve citizens and local civil society in creating a model and advocacy and campaign for implementation of the project of urban gardens and the first community garden in Pula, at a time when the City of Pula already announced the launch of tender for urban gardens.





# Campaign

**VRATI  
VRT  
U GRAD**

Razvijajmo se pametno.  
**Uključi se i ti!**

- Radio jingles, radio shows (Eko Rojc, GI produces with Community radio Rojc), billboards, press releases
- Panel discussion about good practices in Rijeka and Varaždin
- workshop on models of urban and community gardens





# Working group

Around 15 people: CSOs (Association of persons with physical disabilities of southern Istria, Autism association Istria, Student association Pula, GI, public institutions (School for training and education – Pula, Gymnasium in Pula) and citizens worked together to propose the model of Pula urban gardens and community garden to the City of Pula.

The model was reflected in two corresponding City of Pula's decisions proposals.





# Result



The City's decisions were for the first time ever in Pula designed "from the bottom up"!



The City published the tender for management of the community garden open to civil society organizations, as well as for garden plots for the individual citizens!



# Becoming the garden managers (2021)





- no project funding, i.e. relying on own funds
- gardening with our volunteers

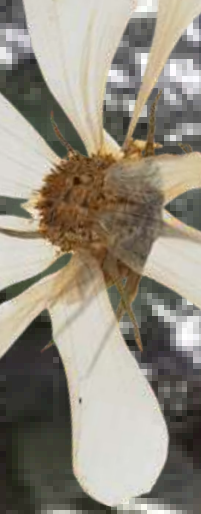
- Volunteer-educators for topics of sustainable agriculture
- Own capacities for topic of composting



# Phase 1



Students of Gymnasium Pula were some of our 1<sup>st</sup> volunteers, due to enthusiasm of 1 dedicated teacher (involvement on ad hoc basis)







# Our response to ad hoc visit/workshop requests



- kindergardens
- schools
- associations

Photos (2022): Kindergarden children planting flowers and picking strawberries and veggies, attending composting workshop, snail hunting



# A typical workshop in the Garden

Since the Community Garden was established, Green Istria has been organising workshops mostly for kindergartens and primary schools in collaboration with teachers and educators.

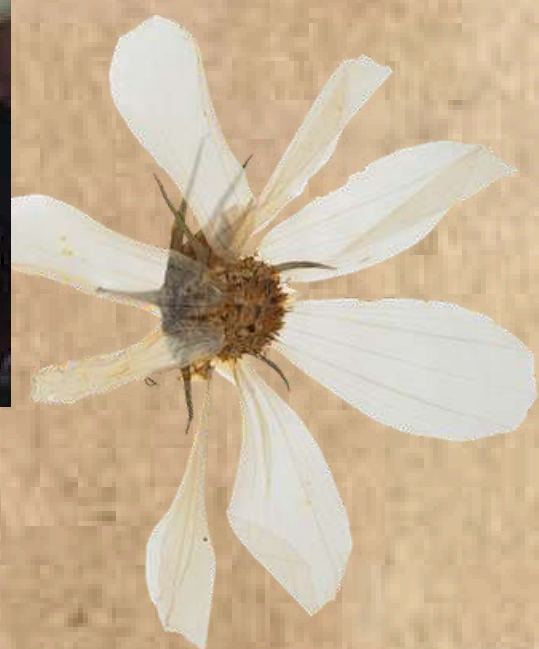
What a workshop looks like:

-  Guided tour of the garden
-  Composting demonstration
-  Planting vegetables and flowers





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## Phase 2 - towards a more systematic approach focused on strenghtening our capacities as educators and fundraising for the activities

“Let’s light the spark for inclusion together!” - Green Istria’s project dealt with the social exclusion of children with disabilities, their parents and persons with disabilities from activities in social gardens and socio-political life in Pula and Vukovar.

Activities in the garden/related to the garden:

- inclusive gardening workshops for children and youth (seed balls, veggies planting in no-dig beds)
- short online permaculture course for inclusive garden planning
- strengthening our capacities for permaculture and sustainable agriculture (planting and maintaining perrenials, no-dig bed, warm compost pile)



## Inclusive workshops





**"Garden in a Tire" Workshop for elementary school G. Martinuzzi students  
from Pula within a small project dedicated to sustainable agriculture (2025)**





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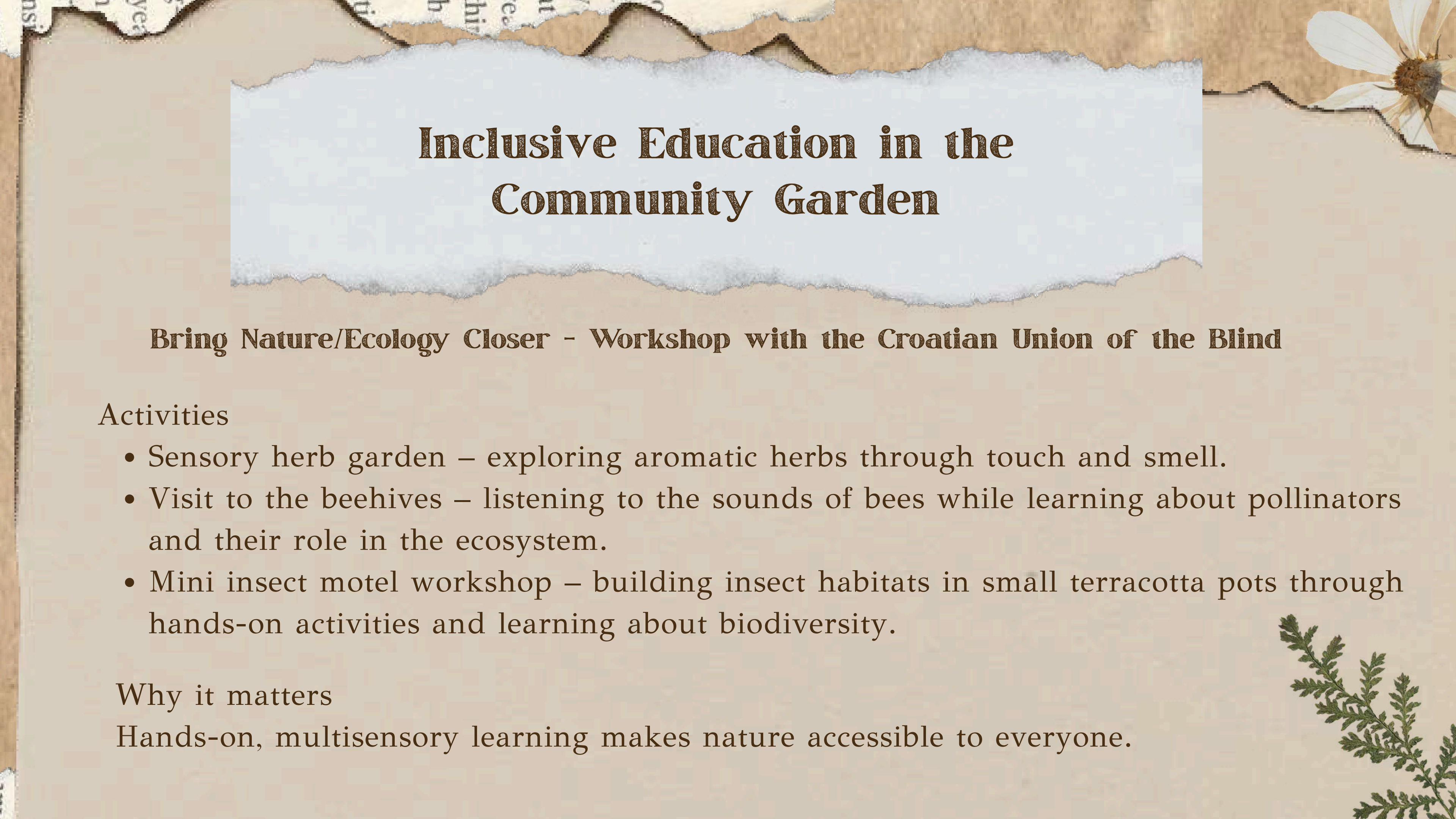
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# 3d visualisation of the permaculture design of the Garden







# Inclusive Education in the Community Garden

**Bring Nature/Ecology Closer - Workshop with the Croatian Union of the Blind**

## Activities

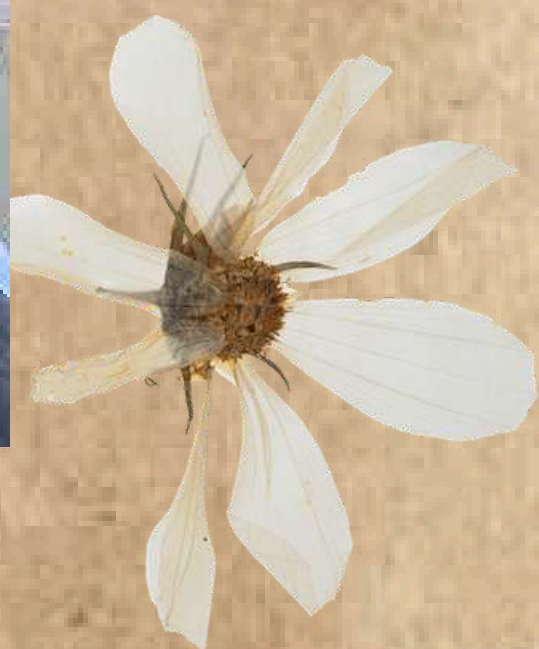
- Sensory herb garden – exploring aromatic herbs through touch and smell.
- Visit to the beehives – listening to the sounds of bees while learning about pollinators and their role in the ecosystem.
- Mini insect motel workshop – building insect habitats in small terracotta pots through hands-on activities and learning about biodiversity.

## Why it matters

Hands-on, multisensory learning makes nature accessible to everyone.



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# Further developing sustainability of the Garden

Main idea from 2024/5:

- to develop and rely on own capacities (not to be constantly in need for external expertise) regarding implementing sustainable agriculture workshops in the Garden
  - to be able to offer a number of good quality workshops for school children, youth and adults, as part of our regular programme in the garden, i.e. to fundraise in the future for e.g. workshop materials, not for external experts
  - to ensure more time of employees garden in the Garden and more successful gardening practice
- 



- 
- 1 employee and 1 volunteer - permaculture design course
  - project “Seeds of Change - ReGeneration” - developing the methodology to educate the educators to work with children on topics of sustainable agriculture and development in gardens + adjusting and piloting the methodology with children
  - programme “Garden of change” - developing methodology to work with young people and citizens (aditionally, starting seeds bank; practicing sustainable horticulture with volunteers every week etc.)



