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Original article

## The development process and effects from the management of community gardens in two post-socialist cities: Bratislava and Poznań

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## ABSTRACT

Community gardens are perceived as one of many forms of urban agriculture and gardening practices using high levels of social innovation and environmentally-friendly lifestyles. In contrast to the years of experience in the US and Western European countries, community gardens are rather new in Central and Eastern European countries. Our research strives to contribute to the lively discussion of the development process and effects from the management of community gardens in the urban environment, especially through a comparative analysis of community gardens in two post-socialist countries, Slovakia and Poland, with an emphasis on Bratislava and Poznań. In order to better understand the nuances of community gardening in these areas, we carried out extensive field research involving exploratory walks, participatory observation and semi-structured interviews with community garden representatives in both cities. The results of our analysis revealed both similarities and differences in the city-specific approaches in the ways community gardens are established, managed and developed under purportedly similar historical, geographical and socio-economic conditions of two post-socialist cities. We conclude that a strictly copy-paste approach does not exist. In other words, the proper way of management of community gardens and even the perception and interpretation of what is considered a community garden can vary from one place to another and is usually negotiated in the place-specific local context.

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