

National Allotment Congress and Day of the Garden in Berlin

The fourth allotment congress took place in Berlin from 18-19 May, 2017.



Approximately 300 delegates discussed the future challenges of the allotment movement.

A good number of prominent people attended. Among them State secretary Adler and the secretary general Malou Weirich who represented the International Office du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux.



Part of the delegates



Secretary of State Adler

2017 is an election year and thus a year for making political choices. The German Federation of Allotment Gardeners (BDG), an umbrella organisation under which some one million allotment gardeners are represented, is involved as well. It is campaigning for more greenbelts in urban areas and, obviously, for the preservation of allotments. The small gardens exert a positive influence on social cohesion in cities and communities. They help to perpetuate the gardening heritage and contribute to protecting and improving urban climates. They positively influence biodiversity both of nature in urban areas and cultivated plants. Allotments not only enhance the quality of life in cities and communities, they can also decisively improve the visual appearance of municipalities.

The German Allotment Federation is formulating the following requests to future politicians:

- **Ensure the protection of allotments as greenbelt infrastructure:** Maintain the federal allotment law in its tried and tested form.
- **Promote the appropriate development of allotments by municipalities:** Allotments must be explicitly included in urban development programs and in other future infrastructure development programs as potential targets for specific actions.
- **With regard to future regulations in surface area adjustments and compensation:** recognize allotment sites with an increased ecological value as compensation areas. Corresponding research and pilot projects should be stimulated by national policies.

Scientific prize of the German allotment federation

Peter Paschke was pleased to draw the attention to the scientific prize of the German allotment federation and to give so to speak the starting shot during this congress.

“The aim of this scientific prize is to lead towards a greater interest for scientific research concerning allotments among young scientists in the areas of urban, regional and landscape planning and to sensitize planners to the potential of allotments for green infrastructures.



President Peter Paschke

The federation would like to reward ideas and innovative considerations including allotments in an exemplary way in projects concerning the safeguarding of the environment, the stabilization of social cohesion and consequently the quality of life in towns and communes. A particular concern of the federation is to reward dissertations and projects that are examples for the social and green development and contribute to a modern development of green infrastructures”.

The official opening ceremony of the Day of the Garden was held on 20th May in the “Gardens of the World” of the International Horticulture Exposition (IGA).

The subject of the Day of the Garden was: “Allotments, a living green space for developing towns”. As predecessors of the Urban Gardening movement the allotment gardeners with this day called attention to the necessity of green

spaces in towns. A great number of the more than 14,000 allotment associations in Germany open their doors at the occasion of the Day of the Garden and enable all to discover the pleasure of these green areas. The allotments remain, especially for city dwellers, a refuge of an inestimable value: an allotment is not merely a garden, but it offers relaxation and compensation in a green space embedded in the middle of houses and streets.



After this opening ceremony, the allotment association "am Kienberg" received the Office diploma for an ecological gardening from Office President Peter Paschke and the International Office secretary Malou Weirich.



These allotment gardens have around 400 members and were developed between 1983 and 1985.

The area covers around 10 hectares and includes 260 allotments. The average size of an allotment is between 350 to 450 m².

In recent years, the association's gardeners firmly decided to proceed with a way of gardening that does not use any toxic products.

Over the last three years, the number of fruit trees in the allotment garden were increased by around 300 ancient species of indigenous fruit trees and decorate the allotment garden site's paths and squares, of which a good number attract bees.

In the meantime, three of the allotment garden association's members have become beekeepers.

The allotment garden association and the members of the Marzahn-Hellersdorf community college invite local residents to take part in pruning lessons for the

fruit trees. In this way the association's training activities in nature and the environment are shared with the Berlin population.

Educational nature trails and a number of nesting boxes have also been set up.

These are only a few of the activities organized by these allotment gardeners in the area of nature and environment protection.



Peter Paschke, President
Ingo Hoppe, Moderator
Günter Landgraf, President of the Landesverband Berlin der Kleingärtner



Malou Weirich, secretary general of the International Office



From left to right

Malou Weirich, Peter Paschke, Regine Günther (Senator for environment, transport and climate protection), Günter Landgraf (President of the Landesverband Berlin), Katharina Lohmann (Director of the IGA Berlin 2017 GmbH), Gert Schoppa (treasurer of the Landesverband Berlin), Dagmar Pohle (Mayor of the district Berlin-Marzahn/Hellersdorf)



From left to right

Stefan Tidow (State secretary for environment, transport and climate protection), Peter Paschke, Burkhard Träder (Chairman of the allotment site „Am Kienberg“), Malou Weirich, Günter Landgraf, Gert Schoppa.