

Dear allotment gardeners!

As I begin to write these lines, I am marvelling at how quickly this year has gone by. It has been a year with a lot of work, both in the garden and professionally, and now that at least the gardening season is slowly coming to an end and a quieter time is beginning, I would like to give you a brief insight into what has been happening in the international allotment family.



There were two meetings of all members of the Fédération Internationale in 2024.

In March, the delegates met for the statutory General Assembly in Luxembourg. In addition to the necessary resolutions, the time was primarily used to share experiences. It is always great to see the enthusiasm and positive spirit with which the participants share their knowledge and take on board the ideas of others.

Finally, in August, the international allotment garden family took part in a congress in Berlin organised by the Federation of German Allotment Garden Associations. The theme "Allotment gardens in Europe: Green for all" captured the spirit of the times and the excellent expert presentations provided the participants with many valuable ideas on how to deal with the many challenges that lie ahead.

But it also turned out again how great our allotment gardens already are:

- ✓ Allotment gardens are places of diversity, as the environmentally friendly, pesticide-free and sustainable cultivation of our gardens provides animals and plants with a healthy habitat, which is becoming increasingly scarce in the cities.
- ✓ Allotment gardens are climate oases that can make an invaluable contribution, especially in times of extreme events such as heat or heavy rainfall. Be it by providing cooling in the cities through their planting or by absorbing water through unsealed soil.
- ✓ Allotment gardens are places of togetherness, where people look after each other, help each other and work together to realise ideas.

All this and so much more characterises our allotment gardens and their associations. We have every right to be proud of this. Nevertheless, we should not rest on our laurels. It is our task to keep reminding those responsible at national and international level of the important contribution allotment gardens make to environment, climate and society.

With a voice that represents more than two million allotment garden families, we must make ourselves heard by the political representatives in the individual countries and of course also at European level. Together we can achieve so much more than alone, together we give the allotment gardeners a loud voice that is difficult to ignore, together we will continue to work to ensure that allotment gardens are perceived positively in the future.

Finally, may I wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and all the best and good health for the New Year 2025.

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