



# OFFICE INTERNATIONAL

du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux

association sans but lucratif

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Regroupement des fédérations européennes des jardins familiaux  
Statut participatif auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

**XXXVII. International Congress of the Office International du Coin  
de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux held in  
Utrecht from 28th – 31st August 2014**

**Focus on allotments**

## **RESOLUTION**

20 rue de Bragance, L-1255 LUXEMBOURG

## **ALLOTMENT GARDENS – GREEN WITH A HEART**

**Allotment gardens** are an indispensable part of the services of general interest in our cities and municipalities. In these public parks, social interaction can unfold in various ways; they are green, with a heart.

All over Europe, more than three million allotment gardeners are actively involved with associations and their gardens. This involvement goes beyond gardening. The social interaction has a strong positive influence on city life and life in municipalities.

Furthermore, the importance of allotments gardens in urban spaces has increased continually. While self-sufficiency and recreational activities used to be their main purpose, they have turned into indispensable green spaces of particular significance for the climate in populated areas, for the ecology and for soil and species conservation.

These beneficial effects need to be more firmly anchored in the public awareness as well as in the conscience of political and administrative officers and decision makers.

### **There's a good reason why we exist**

At international events in Zurich, Berlin and Utrecht, we have been impressed to find out about how many valuable initiatives are taking place in our allotment garden sites.

**However, we also had to accept** that these achievements are rarely known outside the garden sites or our organisation. At best, public awareness takes place in the immediate surroundings. The media show negligible and short-lived interest.

On the other hand, the media refer to the hype of green living and inform that many young families are looking for opportunities to get an allotment garden.

Allotment sites are the “green lungs” of a city. Therefore, they should be an integral part of town development and should not be pushed to its edges. The increasing need for allotments must be integrated in the urban development plans and put into practice.

The American trend of the “Community Gardens” is often represented as near-revolutionary in the way it opposes the current ways (of life) with alternative practices.

**This is overlooking the fact** that in allotment garden associations the connexion between gardening, food politics, economics, society, art and urban planning has for a long time been an integral part of allotment gardening. Allotment garden associations don't just have a strong internal social structure. Many associations also cultivate distinct and durable relations and organise joint activities with their neighbourhoods. Thus „Community Gardening“ is a reality in many allotment garden sites nowadays.

### **It needs to matter to others that we exist**

Unfortunately the many positive activities taking place in our associations and the beneficial effects of the allotment gardens are little known to the public.

**Allotment garden sites provide** essential support for biodiversity, species diversity, climate and soil conservation in residential areas.



**Allotment gardeners contribute to** the preservation of knowledge about old fruit and vegetable varieties.

**Allotment garden associations fulfil** an important role in the administration and conception of large green areas in cities and municipalities. They contribute to a reinforcement of social cohesion within the association as well as in the residential areas in their immediate surroundings.

**Allotment associations make** an important contribution to a social living together by their projects aiming at educating children about nature and the environment, at integrating elderly people, people with a migration background and disabled people into the allotment movement.

**In order to guarantee our continued existence, we need to actively work towards** anchoring the allotment garden movement and its positive effects in the conscience of society; maintaining the role of allotment garden sites as a natural and integral part of urban development; getting political decision makers, administrations and urban planning bodies to respect the existence of allotment garden sites as a contribution to services of general interest in cities and municipalities.

**Our goal needs to be**  
to make the public's appreciation of allotment gardens one of the pillars supporting our future.

**Together we are stronger**

**The Office International** is an association of allotment gardeners globally representing the interests of allotment gardening both internally and externally.

The Office International can reinforce and support allotment gardeners' interests on an international, national and local level thanks to its visible presence.

Furthermore, a clear and noticeable presence of the Office International as the body representing the interests of all European allotment gardeners can attract the media's attention.

**We all have to make our contribution to creating a long-term positive image of the allotment garden movement.**

We have to become visible to others and be more present in public life.

We have to present allotment gardening in a positive and convincing manner.

We have to give priority to our common goals in the context of our activities and live in awareness of these goals.

We have to exude confidence and self-assurance.

These tasks should be our common goal for the years to come.

Utrecht, 30th August 2014

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