



**EUROPEAN WEEK OF BEES AND POLLINATION - 6TH EDITION**  
**26-28 JUNE 2017**

# ***Make your city BEE-FRIENDLY***

## **Practical recommendations**

The first workshop on the subject of Bee-friendly cities held during the Bee Week 2017 - co-hosted by MEP Michel DANTIN and the association BeeLife - as well as the field experiences of the participants (among others, the « bee-friendly municipalities » promoted as part of the Mediterranean CooBEEration) contributed to the creation of this document including recommendations for a city or village to become Bee-friendly. The present document has the intention to be a first step toward the achievement of a European network of bee friendly cities.

### **Introduction and background**

Urban areas make up over 40% of the surface of Europe and are home to around three fourth of the population of the European Union. There is a win-win relationship in the establishment of bee-friendly cities both for pollinators, who can find in cities a place of well-being, and for urban citizens who can enjoy a healthier environment. This initiative would be a drive for economic development, as well as a fantastic educational tool on nutrition, sustainability and the services pollinators provide us. It also aims to continue efforts toward an agricultural model in equilibrium with pollinators' life.

### **Possible actions**

#### **Actions linked to plants and flowers in cities**

1. Include and increase the cultivation of a wide range of plant species visited by bees and other pollinators in green public areas planning (parks and gardens);
2. Make sure that by the choice of plants flowers are available all along pollinator season;



3. Include and increase the availability of food production in urban areas (e.g. urban vegetable gardens and similar), favouring the production of foodstuffs of high dietary interest such as fruits and legumes produced in a low-impact/highly-diversified way like organic farming;
4. Include the implementation of certain concrete and symbolic actions in the city itself in order to raise awareness among citizens, such as, for example, the creation of a "bee garden", with nectariferous or aromatic plants, and the possibility of demonstration hives;
5. As for public support, possible campaigns to be put in place could involve, for example, the distribution in the neighbourhoods of trees, bushes or melliferous herbaceous plants interesting for bees and pollinators (the selection of species and varieties should be done so flowering covers the whole bee season);

#### **Actions linked to pest/weed/disease control**

6. Follow the recommendations proposed in the programme Pesticides-free-town, as clear recommendations are provided to gradually reduce until suppression the use of pesticides in towns – [www.http://www.pesticide-free-towns.info/stories-principles](http://www.pesticide-free-towns.info/stories-principles);
7. Pay great attention to treatments done on herbaceous and woody plants within the city, which should be avoided during flowering and in the presence of honeydew;
8. Gradually reduce, until suppression, the use of herbicides in the handling of roadsides and public green spaces. Alternatives like manual/mechanical weeding can be enforced as alternative or, in case it is not problematic, consider to remove weeds after weeds flowering as they may be a nutritional source;
9. Commitment to the prohibition of any treatment with pesticides on woody and herbaceous plants, whether ornamental or spontaneous, which may be harmful to bees. (Phytosanitary treatments on woody plants, ornamental and spontaneous crops outside the period of flowering may be carried out after natural elimination or drying of the possible flora in the underlying flower);
10. Undertake mosquito control by focusing on prevention, mechanical protection (mosquito nets), repellents and, if treatments are absolutely necessary, focusing on interventions targeting larvae based on the use of biological products (eg *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*);

#### **Actions linked to education, culture and awareness raising**

11. Promote reflection and debate both in the Municipal Council and in the local community by involving citizens and key stakeholders in the use of pesticides in urban areas (both private and public) and in agriculture. Reflect with them



- about their impact on the environment and on health, and on potential strategies for enhancement and protection of the territory that go through the recovery and adoption of good agricultural practices focused on sustainability;
12. Promote information and awareness raising initiatives on the value of the common benefits of beekeeping and pollinator protection practices, involving in particular schools of any order and grade in the reference territory;
  13. Inform neighbours about the possibilities they have on the selection of plants for their private gardens;
  14. Improve the training of agents in charge of green spaces and highways on issues such as the promotion of biodiversity, environmentally sustainable practices and the reasoned use of phytosanitary products;
  15. Promote and support initiatives joining art, education and/or awareness raising through the organisation of:
    - a. « nature walks » in the cities highlighting the biodiversity features of the region, and especially bees. Educational tools can be used to guide visitors ;
    - b. didactic informative walks for citizens and schools through monuments, symbols, coat of arms representing bees, present in the streets, squares, gardens, facades of gates and buildings of cities;
    - c. didactic informative activities involving the discovery of paintings, statues and craft-works (including literary) in art galleries, churches, public and private buildings, inspired by the apicultural world;
    - d. “Honey breakfast” in public schools or by public campaigns as a tool to introduce the local community (children or adults) into the concepts of environmental protection, sustainable consumption and healthy diets through beekeeping products (like honey) and the products derived from pollination e.g. fruits, legumes, cacao, etc. preferably produced in a sustainable way and locally;
    - e. didactic informative session using bees and other apoids as didactic tools to explain about the environment;

#### **Actions linked to socio-economic measures**

16. Support in one's own local community the development of beekeeping activities across the territory, as an opportunity for income and social inclusion. Bees and beekeeping may be a tool used for social rehabilitation of prisoners, therapy for people with disabilities, migrant integration, etc.;
17. Promote and support initiatives to support beekeeping - events, exhibitions, awards, etc. - also in collaboration with other municipalities;

#### **Actions linked to environmental quality in urban areas**

18. Support monitoring campaigns using bees as bio-indicators of urban pollutants.



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