



Independent network
on European Agricultural
and Rural development policies

**Minutes
Internal meetings
Athens, Greece
April 9 2011**

Present:

Arie van den Brand (president), Boris Boincean, Codrin Pavelicu Olariu Zdneke Linhart, Franco Sotte, Giulia Listorti, Edwin Hecker, Martá Stauder, Gilles Allaire, Arvydas Kuodys, Chralambos Kasimis, Silviu Totelecan, Attila Simon, Jane Paunkovic, Fatos Fico, Bart Soldaat.

Part 1, reflection on conference and workshop sessions

There was a good attendance of some 100 participants and over 100 people that have followed (parts of) the conference through the webstreaming.

The presentations were good, but more focus is needed. The debate on the CAP reform is characterised by a lot of involvement, a 'thermodynamics of ideas', as Samuel Feret mentioned, but there seems to be also a lot of confusion, leading to an inability to act. The fact that the budgetary framework for the new programming period is still completely unclear, is also causing inertia in the discussions.

For the Groupe de Bruges the question now is, what role do we want to play over the next period. Last year a lot of time and energy was put into the ARC process. Now it is time to turn back to our core business and discuss more the content of new policy based on the three main themes that have been identified for the workshops: competitiveness vs sustainability, public goods and new challenges and rural development and territorial balance.

Part 2, looking back

□ Presentation of participants

Boris Boincean:

is from Moldova and a researcher on the subject of long term experiments with crop rotation. Also involved in scientific education programmes.

Codrin Paveliuc Olariu:

is from Romania and currently finishing his PhD thesis at the University of Iasi on Rural Development strategies. He also acts as consultant for RD programmes. Since the end of last he has been involved in the Groupe de Bruges as policy officer

Zdenek Linhart:

is assistant professor at the Czech University of Agriculture in Prague. Main subjects are Prognostics and Planning, Food Marketing and Marketing of Agricultural Products.

He represents the Czech Union of Oilseed Producers and Processors on international negotiations. Linhart organises courses for the implementation of open source software for innovations as member of a co-operative of teachers. He runs and publishes research about print advertising with colleague from the Jean Paul Verlain University of Metz, France, where he teaches Marketing of Innovations. Zdenek is also vice-president of the Groupe de Bruges

Franco Sotte:

is from Italy and professor of agricultural economics at the Polytechnic University of the Marche in Ancona. He is also director of Agriregionieuropa, an electronic review on agriculture and rural development with some 100.000 contacts per year.

Giulia Listorti:

is from Italy but currently working in Switzerland as scientific adviser for the Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture, International Trade Policy Unit. Main duties include: quantitative analyses on the impact of bilateral and WTO trade agreements on the agricultural sector, participation in national and international research projects, technical assistance to bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations, negotiations with the EU

Gilles Allaire:

is researcher at INRA, the French national institute for agricultural research. His main topics are food quality standards, EU programme on geographical indications which has resulted in a guide for the FAO. Gilles is currently researching the environmental impact of quality production and is concluding a paper for the European Parliament on small farmers., local markets and European food quality standards. As soon as this is ready, Gilles will send it to the secretariat

Edwin Hecker:

is from the Netherlands and partner of Schuttelaar & Partners, a communication company on sustainable food. The company has some 100 employees and three offices, one of which is in Brussels. Previously he has worked for the Dutch ministry of Agriculture for 20 years and was involved in the Codex Alimentarius.

Martá Stauder:

is an economic researcher from Hungary. Over the last years she has been involved in various research projects, some of which European, among others on the subject of food, trade and supply chains.

Aryda Kuodys:

from Lithuania where he is head of the Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics and responsible for the farm business surveys. He is also a part time farmer, some 17 hectares of fruit and vegetables.

Charalambos Kasimis:

from Greece. Professor of Rural Sociology at the Athens University of Agriculture and director of the MSc programme "Integrated Rural Development & Management of Rural Space". His main research topic is rural migration. Kasimis is also vice president of the European Association of Rural Sociologists, that will have a congress in August in Crete.

Silviu Totelecan:

is from Romania, Senior Researcher (Assoc. Prof.); Head of Sociology/Economics/Juridical Sciences; President of the Committee for Elaboration, Monitoring, Coordination and Methodological guidance of the "Programme for Managerial Development Control System" in Cluj-Napoca Branch of the Romanian Academy.

Attila Simon:

is from Hungary where he has a 110 hectares farm, mostly fruits (walnuts, cherries, apples, pears). He was founder of the Hungarian Young Farmers association and currently member of the Fruit and Vegetables advisory group of DG Agri.

Fatos Fico:

is from Albania and director of the Albanian Foundation for Training and Development (AFTD). The AFTD over the last 12 years has been involved in projects for micro-financing, training and advocacy. AFTD has set up the Rural Forum in the North of Albania and the Albanian Rural network. They also organise a farmers market in Shkodra each year. They are currently preparing a conference on sustainable agriculture and rural development.

Jane Paunkovic:

is from Serbia. She has a professional background in medicine, but nowadays she is involved in teaching sustainability with a special interest in food and health. She also organises sustainable management projects.

Bart Soldaat:

is from the Netherlands. Private consultant since 2002. Secretary of the Groupe de Bruges since 2004. Also manager of two LEADER Local Action Groups in the Netherlands.

Arie van den Brand:

is from the Netherlands. Former member of Dutch Parliament. Has been involved in the Dutch organic movement. Holds various board positions: president of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (Minneapolis, USA) and president of the Groupe de Bruges since 2004.

- Minutes meeting April 17 2010, Ancona
Are agreed
- Minutes of the Board meeting of 22-23 October 2011(
Are agreed
- Minutes of the Board meeting of 15-16 February 2011
Are agreed
- Annual report 2010:
The annual report 2010 and the financial report 2010 are both agreed.
- Secretariat:
since the end of 2010 Codrin Paveliuc Olariu has been engaged as policy officer to reinforce the secretariat. He has among others modified the website and started with the new social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn).

Part 3, looking a head

❑ Election of the Board

For 2011 Zdenek Linhart is stepping down and is candidate for re-election. There are no other candidates. Zdenek Linhart is re-elected for a period of three years. Next year one of the other two Board members will step down.

❑ New members

Over the last year the Groupe de Bruges has gained more than 10 new members. The aim is to continue to expand the number of members:

- to have members in European countries that are not represented until now
- to include a wider diversity in backgrounds
- to include in particular more women and young people

The secretary will make a list of European countries where we do not have members at the moment. We are not aiming for big numbers but for quality. Members should all be able to represent the Groupe de Bruges.

❑ Work programma 2011-2013

- Proposal Zdenek Linhart on mission statement: the Board will look into an update of the current mission statement. This will also be used for the organisation brochure, which will have to be ready in August
- The summary of the draft work programme 2011-2013
 - CAP reform: will remain the main activity. Working groups will be established based on the three main themes.
 - ARC: the Groupe de Bruges has acted as facilitator. In that sense our mission is accomplished. The GdB will reduce therefore its involvement in ARC. Samuel Feret will remain our representative.
 - China Europa Forum: the situation is unclear at the moment. The secretary has received notice that the Chinese contact person has changed and is now someone we don't know. Also the China Euopa Forum Foundation has been dissolved. The secretary and the president will contact the FPH, one of the founders of the Forum on further proceedings
 - Transatlantic dialogue: the secretary and the president will, based on their existing contacts, explore the idea to organise a transatlantic dialogue on CAP and Farm Bill in 2012. This should be based on additional funds.
 - Norht-Africa: Arie van den Brand has discussed with Matthie Calame, director of the FPH, the idea to research the possibility to establish a North African version of the Groupe de Bruges.

❑ Establishment of the 2011 budget

The Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation has again granted a substantial contribution. Nonetheless, if we want to achieve a higher level of output we need additional funds, some 10-15.000 euro this year. Everybody will look around for funding possibilities.

❑ Communication

- Current activities and proposed new activities: we have started experimenting with the new social media. This has led to a higher profile a much more attention for the Groupe de Bruges. On Facebook we have 90 followers and 400 page views per day. On Twitter we have over 160 followers. LinkedIn groups still have to activated.
- Newsletter: the target remains to issue one newsleteer each 3 months
- Website: the use of the new social media has led to an increase of visitors from 20 per day to 100 per day
- flyer/brochure: will be ready in August

□ Other issues

- YPARD: the meeting agrees to give Codrin the opportunity to explore this more
- Forum of Future Agriculture: the 3rd edition took place on March 16 in Brussels. Codrin Paveliuc was there to represent the Groupe de Bruges. See also: http://www2.syngenta.com/en/media/eventsandpresentations_3rdforum2010.html
- on November 16 and 17 the third seminar of the Future of Food programme will be held in Lausanne, Switzerland: <http://www.future-of-food.com/events/lausanne> .
- Arie van den Brand will contact the members that have not paid there annual fee.