



Independent network
on European Agricultural
and Rural development policies

Minutes Internal meeting 15 October 2011

Opening by Arie van den Brand, president.

- Feed back from presentation e-learning course
 - it should be made more clear what in the texts of the modules are presented as facts and what as the personal opinion of the authors
 - it would be appreciated if the course would also become available in other languages. If the new application is approved, this will happen
 - in the next version more GdB members will become involved
 - it would be helpful to put references directly in the slides themselves
 - there should also be general information and data about European agriculture
 - there is a possibility for discussion via the for a on the Moodle platform
 - the course should also be brought to the attention of staff of national and regional departments of ministries of agriculture and rural development and staff of DG Agri and other DG's
 - the use of the course material is free of copy right, providing users mention the creators of the course as source
 - it would be helpful is the course would be accredited. For now it is sufficient to put the stamp of the GdB, Aab and SPERA on the certificates
 - on November 28 the course will presented during a lunch seminar at DG Agri in Brussels

- Minutes internal meeting April 9 2011
Are approved

- New members
Over the last year the Groupe de Bruges gained new members, but has also lost members as a result of the stricter membership rules. 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

- Organisation and membership profile
In the first part of the document under the heading od organisation profile the text mentioning former communist countries should be removed.

The proposals of the board concerning organisation profile, membership profile and financial profile are approved.

□ Work programma 2011-2013

- CAP reform: John Brennan has proposed to have a public debate on the finalisation of the CAP reform proposals at the end of 2012 in Dublin. This proposal is agreed
- Agricultural and Rural Convention (ARC):
in 2010 the GdB was one of the main organisations to support the ARC initiative. ARC has developed successfully in terms of supporting organisations, message, media attention and political network. Over 120 organisations have signed the ARC Communication. ARC is now entering a new phase, in which it will make a transition into a structural European civic society network organisation. Obviously ARC's activities for the next year will be focussed on the Cap reform proposals and the negotiation process between the European institutions. It is agreed that the commitment of the GdB towards ARC will remain, but at a less intensive level. We can provide ARC with information to feed the debate and work on further developing the concepts of 'active farmer', 'greening' etc. that we have discussed in previous sessions in the last two days. Samuel Ferét as member of ARC's core group and Arie van de Brand for strategic session will continue to represent the GdB in ARC.
- China Europa Forum:
it has proven difficult, despite various attempts, to continue communication with our Chinese partner, the Remnin University. The China Europa Forum Foundation has meanwhile been dissolved. It is agreed not to actively try to renew contacts. We remain however ready and willing to participate in further activities if so requested by the FPH. We also could pursue some other possibilities through CAAS and our member, Laurent Javaudin, who is stationed in China on behalf of the European Commission.
- Transatlantic cooperation:
through our contacts in the USA first ideas have been exchanged on establishing a transatlantic dialogue on agricultural policies (CAP – Farm Bill) aimed at NGO's, businesses and politicians. Arie van den Brand will be in the USA at the end of this month and will discuss it with the Institute for Agricultural and Trade Policies (IATP). There are also other members that have contacts in the USA.
- North Africa:
the Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer pur le Progrés de l'Homme has invited us to assess the possibilities of helping to establish a similar network in North Africa. It important as a first step to hand pick a number of key people through existing contacts in South-Europe, such as Bertrand Hervieu, Jorge Hernandez, Eduardo Moyano, Maurizio Mariani and the organisers of the Marciac meetings. Arie van de Brand and Bart Soldaat will discuss this with Matthieu Calame, director of the FPH. They will also ask for a budget to engage in activities in 2012
- YPARD:
through Codrin paveliuc Olariu we established contacts with the Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research and Development (see: <http://ypard.net>), concerning their project. "Promoting youth. Engaging decision-makers". YPARD also is interested in a more long term cooperation. The cooperation is welcomed. Codrin is asked to contact YPARD to come up with a concrete request which can be discussed by the Gdb Board
- E-learning course CAP:
at the end of September a new application has been submitted to DG in the framework of the 2012 CAP information measure. Ultimately in February 2012 we will know whether or not the application will be approved.

❑ Financial matters

For now the main budget is dedicated to the e-learning course. We are in the process of attracting new funders. For 2012 we will have to wait whether or not the new application will be approved and if the FLH is willing to give us a budget for the North Africa activity.

❑ Communication

- Newsletter: number 6 will be issued before the Hungary meeting; number 7 will be issued soon after the meeting. It is proposed to expand the mailing list
- Website and Web 2.0 modalities: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter: it is proposed to have for LinkedIn an open as well as a closed group. The first one is to attract new people in the debate, the latter one is for internal discussions and exchange of information. Although some have reservations concerning the use of Facebook and Twitter, it is clear that we need these new social media platforms to reach a new audience and to better promote our activities and positions. The Dropbox facility has proven for most members a useful addition to the instruments to exchange information. All members are requested to put documents that could be relevant for other members there
- Role of members in communication: members could become more active on spreading the newsletter or giving new names to put on the mailing list. Especially for the promotion of the e-learning course, members are asked to spread information on EL-CAP through their networks. For EL-CAP it is also crucial that members let the secretariat know what activities they have done in this respect and the response has been

❑ Evaluation of the meeting

- it is clear that we have a lot of human capital among us, which could still be used better
- the 'bio diversity' in the composition of the GdB is interesting and has added value
- the fact that we are here without having to represent other interests and be truly independent gives the freedom to be honest
- we have to use the CAP proposals to work together on common projects and new concepts
- we need more young people, but we should also keep on cherishing the expertise we already have and if possible expand the number of experts
- we have to remember that what we do is more than CAP alone. We should keep other issues relating to agriculture and rural development also on the agenda
- the structure of the meeting, starting from clear objectives and aimed at reaching concrete results is a good one

❑ Other issues

- the IATP is holding a webinar on price volatility on October 25. To register go to: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/252265002>.