



Groupe de Bruges

The Groupe de Bruges and its members

Organisation profile

The Groupe de Bruges was founded in 1995 by Mr. Edgard Pisani, former French Minister of Agriculture. From the beginning the Groupe attracted a wide range of people from inside the EU and also from European countries that were or are not (yet) member of the EU..

The GdB always maintains an agenda comprising a wide range of topics, but which at the end always goes back to the European policies on agriculture and rural development. Specifically the concept of multifunctionality and agriculture as not only a provider of food but also of public services was developed and elaborated by the GdB.

The GdB meets once or twice a year and organises in collaboration with local organisations conferences, workshops and public debates. The result of these activities, combined with research is used to publish books, papers and articles to contribute to the general debate.

We view the function of the Groupe de Bruges in the light of global and European developments concerning agriculture and countryside. Its primary objective is to provide an independent, positive and constructive criticism of European policies.

The Groupe de Bruges aims:

- ✓ to contribute to better European policies on agriculture, food systems, rural development and environment in an independent way, not connected to specific sectoral, territorial or political interests. This will remain the core-business of the GdB
- ✓ to raise public awareness. European citizens are not and don't feel sufficiently involved in the debate on European agricultural and rural development policy
- ✓ to serve as a platform for stakeholders in the debate. Because of the Groupe de Bruges' independent position it can serve as a safe haven where conflicting parties could be invited to discuss their views outside of the normal 'battlegrounds' and in this way focus more on what they share in common than what divides them or to offer them new points of view to approach the problem.
- ✓ to serve as a knowledge provider and supporter of local actions .

Membership profile

The GdB's members, currently some 50 from 22 European countries, represent a wide range of cultural, social and professional backgrounds. Each member takes part in the Groupe de Bruges on an individual basis, without any commitment neither to the institution he or she belongs to, nor to his or her country of origin nor to any other political interest organisation. In this sense they are committed to the GdB as true Europeans.

Furthermore Groupe de Bruges members are expected to actively participate in and contribute to the activities of the GdB, either at meetings, the preparation of these meetings as well as in using the different GdB media, website, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter to discuss topics and disseminate relevant information. In this context GdB members are expected to contribute by offering their professional knowledge, experiences and networks. GdB members are also expected to actively promote the activities and the results of these activities within their own geographical area and professional networks.

Financial profile

Income

A part from membership fees, the GdB does not have structural sources of income to cover for its expenses. Over the last years GdB activities and projects have been funded by various ministries, the European Commission and private sponsors.

For its future activities, GdB's income sources are or could be:

- membership fees¹
- grants from governments providing these grants do not compromise the GdB profile and its independent position
- grants and donations from private funds and foundations: idem
- payments for use of services (for example e-learning course)
- admission fees to be paid by non-members to attend GdB events.

Expenses and reimbursement

Regarding expenses for travel and accomodation, the GdB will reimburse to members as a *general rule 50%* of the expenses for travel and accomodation, providing:

- the GdB has the financial means available. Depending on financial means available the Board can decide to change the reimbursement rate to a lower or higher precentage;
- members book their travel as soon as possible after the announcement of the meeting;
- members choose the cheapest way of travel possible within the limits of reason.

Members that do not have the financial means to pay 50% of these expenses, can request the Board to be exempted from this rule and be entitled to an reimbursement of over 50%.

¹ GdB members pay an annual membership fee of 50 euro, which entitles them full access to all information, to participate in all GdB activities, to have voting.rights during GdB internal meetings and to have the right to be candidate as member of the Board.