

Summary report – 30 June 2017

1. OBJECTIVE AND STRUCTURE

Its objective is to promote the urban environment through conferences and debates, publications and newsletters, occasional briefings and “think tank” activities (as opposed to commercial consultancy).

The *Foundation for the Urban Environment Pierre Laconte* (FFUE) focuses on the interface and synergy between:

1. Land use and planning, including cultural heritage conservation and improvement.

2. Transport and mobility.

3. Environment, at global and local level (climate/energy/resources/policies).

The initial Foundation’s capital has been a grant by its founder Pierre Laconte, put in a blocked bank account in line with the requirements for the obtaining of permanent “institution of public interest” status.

Neither the President-founder nor the board members get any remuneration. All amounts resulting from contracts with public authorities for its publications and from other activities are added to his initial grant. Development related expenses are exclusively covered by the founder in addition to the initial grant. The FFUE is eligible to receive outside support for setting up new projects in line with its objectives.

The FFUE is a permanent “Institution of public interest” authorized by Royal Decree of August 8th, 1999 (Belgian Official Journal October 1st, 1999, updated in 2013)¹.

Its board is composed of the President P. Laconte and members C. Lasserre, C. van den Hove, E. Gessler and B. Laconte (update 2013).

Its founding scientific advisors have been Nobel Prize Prof. Ilya Prigogine (who passed away in 2003), Prof. H. Bourdeau (ULB) and A. Berger (UCL). In 2016 FFUE has been welcoming the following additional scientific advisers: Prof. E. De Keuleneer, Managing Director of the University Foundation, Spatial Planner and Arch/Town-planner B. Clerbaux (Former SG of the European Council of Spatial Planners), M. van der Stichele, formerly DG, Ministry of Brussels-Capital, and A. Michielsens, honorary Chairman of the Board of Solvay, C. du Monceau, 1st Alderman of Ottignies-LLN, Prof. P. Lombaerde (UA), Prof. M. Hubert (U. St-Louis), A. Camu (Flora) and H. Demets (Computer Software Consultancy Bvba). This informal advisory group could be expanded in line with the FFUE further orientations.

Inviting international personalities as part of an international advisory board is planned to start in 2017. Individuals and institutions potentially interested in specific FFUE objectives and their implementation are being approached to help setting up new projects in line with its objectives.

2. ON-GOING GENERAL ACTIVITIES

From 2003, the FFUE has organised yearly conferences and events related to the application of its objectives to Belgian issues in Urban development, mobility and environment. These activities are reflected in most of its 11 book publications, articles in peer-review journals and conference contributions (see detailed report of 16 Dec. 2016²).

Since 1999 the FFUE sponsors regular lunch debates around its three objectives. From 1999 until 2014 it organised some 150 lunch debates (250 guest speakers in total) at the Brussels Cercle Royal Gaulois artistique et littéraire³.

Since 2015 the FFUE has an agreement with the University Foundation on a programme of lunch debates “World of Cities”⁴.

¹ http://www.ffue.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/FFUE_StatutsComplets-2013.pdf

² http://www.ffue.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/FFUE_170331-OBJECTIVES_ACTIVITIES_PERSPECTIVES-UPDATE_31_March_2017.pdf

³ Minutes are available on <http://www.ffue.org>

⁴ For 2015 on: <http://www.ffue.org/2015/04/a-world-of-cities-brussels-02102015/>

For 2016 on: <http://www.ffue.org/2016/04/a-world-of-cities-2016i-bilan-de-quatre-debats/>

For 2017 on: <http://www.ffue.org/2017/03/fu-usffue-a-world-of-cities-20171-3-dejeuners-debatslunchdebatten/>

Collaboration started with the EURAC Research Centre, Bolzano⁵ at the occasion of the conference on *Smart and Sustainable Cities* (22-24 March 2017), of which P. Laconte was keynote speaker on the subject “Smart and Sustainable Cities: What is Smart? –What is Sustainable?”⁶.

The FFUE circulates regular newsletters⁷ (2515 addresses in the national list and 719 in the international list). It uses social media LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook for messages to its subscribers. Its Academia account⁸ includes all its publications and the ones of its members. This communication activity is to be increased, e.g. through newsletters by subject (information about FFUE activities, recommendation of publications & lectures by others, possibly through reciprocity agreements).

The FFUE President has an-going teaching assignment on Planning and Transport at the Lille I University. He will be the opening keynote speaker of its 2017-2018 academic year on 11 Sept. 2017. He is also Council member of Europa Nostra, the voice of European Heritage, and chair of its Industrial and Engineering Heritage Committee – IEHC. He is an active member of the German Academy of Arts, Berlin, Sektion Baukunst, since 1995 and was member and later vice-chair of the European Environment Agency’s Scientific Committee.

3. ON-GOING ACTIVITIES BY OBJECTIVE

1. Land use and planning, including cultural heritage conservation and improvement

The contribution to the 17th International Planning History Society Conference (Delft, July 2016) “The Founding and Development of Louvain-la-Neuve, the only new town in Belgium” has been published in the peer-reviewed proceedings of the Conference, Vol. 5 pp. 213-221⁹.

Regular contacts have been taking place with BOZAR, the main Brussels cultural institution, in view of developing synergies in the field of urban planning and society. Following the University Foundation lunch debate of December 2015 with Paul Dujardin, CEO of BOZAR a joint Forum on Land use and mobility took place at BOZAR on 10-11 May 2017¹⁰.

FFUE is a participant in the 2017 AESOP (Association of European Schools of Planning) Congress 10-14 July, hosted by the University of Lisbon. This includes co-chairing the stream “Healthy Cities” and a presentation of Airbnb platform’s impact on housing in Brussels¹¹.

2. Transport and mobility

The FFUE president contributed to the EU Sintropher project (“mobility and land use”) led by the University of London College – Bartlett School of Planning¹². The results of the project are being published in six volumes by the UCL Bartlett School (2017)

The books *Accéder à Bruxelles, Bereikbaar Brussel* (2015)¹³ and *Le rail, clé de la mobilité urbaine à Bruxelles* (2016)¹⁴ and their recommendations have been debated within the Brussels government and will contribute to its hearings of autumn 2017.

3. Environment (global climate/energy/resources policies)

Two publications cover global/local environmental issues: *Climate Change, Energy Shortage, Biodiversity Loss* (Vienna: Club of Rome-EU, 2011) and *Sustainable Cities: Assessing the performance and of Urban Environments* (London/New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016). Both stress the need to focus on energy policy to address the global warming issues, energy use being the most realistic indicator of Greenhouse gas emissions. A workshop about the conclusions of the book is to be held in Copenhagen (“EEAcademy Seminar”) at the invitation of the European Environment Agency later in 2017. FFUE intends to further develop the issues of the book with the help of its advisers and outside contacts. The contribution of the FFUE to the EU “Milesecure” Project (on energy, including its future availability) went along the same line¹⁵.

FFUE is presently finalising its 2017 report about energy transition (resources, production, stocking, transport networks and their protection, impacts on global climate and local land use, energy policies on regulations and subsidies, focusing on EU and member policies). The author Jacques de Gerlache will present it at the University Foundation lunch debate of 7 Nov. 2017¹⁶.

⁵ <http://www.eurac.edu/en/Pages/default.aspx>

⁶ <http://www.ffue.org/2016/12/smart-and-sustainable-planning-for-cities-and-regions-sspcr-2017/> (Proceedings published by Springer).

⁷ <http://www.ffue.org/links/archives-des-newsletters-depuis-012015/>

⁸ <http://www.academia.edu/>

⁹ http://www.ffue.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/IPHS_160718-Book-Historical-perspectives-article-Laconte.pdf

¹⁰ <http://www.ffue.org/2017/03/new-use-new-move-new-move-new-use-land-use-mobility-11052017-bozar-bruxelles/>

¹¹ <http://www.ffue.org/2017/06/fostering-the-european-dimension-of-planning-lisbon-11-14-july-2017/>

¹² <http://www.ffue.org/2014/02/supporting-growth-through-regional-connectivity>

¹³ <http://www.ffue.org/2014/04/acceder-a-bruxelles/>

¹⁴ <http://www.ffue.org/2014/11/le-rail-cle-de-la-mobilite-a-bruxelles/>

¹⁵ <http://www.ffue.org/2015/03/the-human-factor-in-energy-transition-security-towards-2050-brussels-15122015/>

¹⁶ <http://www.ffue.org/2017/06/fu-usffue-a-world-of-cities-20172-4-dejeuners-debatslunchdebatten/>