

SUMMARY REPORT 1999 > 2019

(2020/03/27)

1. OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE.

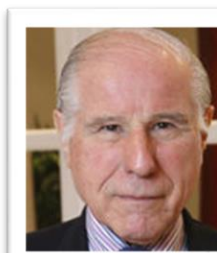
The Foundation for the Urban Environment Pierre Laconte (FFUE) aims at promoting the urban environment through conferences and debates, publications and newsletters, occasional briefings and “think tank” activities (as opposed to commercial consultancy).

It 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 & measures).

The FFUE is a permanent “**Institution of public interest**” authorised by Royal Decree of Aug. 8th, 1999 (Belgian Official Journal 1 Oct. 1999, updated 2013).

Its board is composed of the President P. Laconte and members A. Michielsens, C. van den Hove, E. Gessler, B. Laconte. C. Lasserre is honorary member.



Pierre Laconte
Former Vice-Chair,
Scientific Council,
European
Environment
Agency – EEA
Hon. Secr. General,
Internat.
Association of
Public Transport -
UITP
Co-designer of the
Louvain-la-Neuve
new university town



Aloïs Michielsens
Honorary Chairman
of the Board of Solvay



Claude van den Hove
d'Ertsenryck
Chef du Service de
Recherche et Projets de la
Promotion des Transports
urbains du Ministère des
Communications
Secr. Commission
régionale de la Mobilité



Evelyn Gessler
Managing Director
Decider's/Decitime
s.a.
Conseil stratégique
aux dirigeants
Présidente du Club
L-Benelux



Bernard Laconte
Notaire à Rixensart



Christian Lasserre
Membre d'honneur
Professeur (UCL –
LOCI URBA, ULB –
La Cambre Horta,
ISURU, Institut du
Patrimoine Wallon),
Fondateur
Executive Master
Immobilier
Université Saint-
Louis, Bruxelles

Its founding scientific advisors are Nobel Prize Prof. Ilya Prigogine (who passed away in 2003), Prof. H. Bourdeau (ULB) and Prof. A. Berger (UCL).

From 2016 FFUE has welcomed the following additional scientific advisers: Prof. E. De Keuleneer, Managing Director of the University Foundation, Spatial Planner and Arch/Town-planner B. Clerbaux (ACP, Former SG of the European Council of Spatial Planners), M. van der Stichele, formerly DG, Ministry of Brussels-Capital, A. Michielsens, honorary Chairman of the Board of Solvay, C. du Monceau, 1 st Alderman of Ottignies-LLN, Prof. P. Lombaerde (UA), Prof. M. Hubert (U. St-Louis), A. Camu (Flora) and H. Demets (Computer Software Consultancy Bvba), Jacques de Gerlache (Greenfacts) and Philippe Joye (ACP &Tractebel).This informal advisory group is be further expanded. Its members have proven helpful in FFUE’s publications

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

Neither the President-founder nor the board members get any remuneration. All sums accruing from contracts with public authorities for its publications and from other activities are added to the initial grant.

Development-related expenses are covered by the founder in addition to his initial grant.

The FFUE is eligible to receive outside support for setting up new projects in line with its objectives.

2. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES 1999-2019.

From its inception in 1999, the FFUE has organised conferences and events related to the application of the three themes. These activities are reflected in its ten book publications, its articles in peer-review journals and its conference contributions (1).

From 1999 until 2014 it organised some 150 debates (with 250 guest speakers in total) at the Brussels *Cercle Royal Gaulois artistique et littéraire* (2).

1 <https://www.ffue.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/FFUE-other-publications-2003-2016-20p.pdf>

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

Since 2015 the FFUE has worked in partnership with the Brussels University Foundation and with the Association *Demeures historiques/Woonsteden* to present a programme of lectures and visits related to urban themes” (3).

Partnership started in 2017 with the EURAC Research Centre, Bolzano (4), at the occasion of its conference on Smart and Sustainable Cities (22-24 March 2017), at which P. Laconte was the keynote speaker on the subject “*Smart and Sustainable Cities: what is smart? – what is sustainable?*” and co-editor of the proceedings, published by Springer” (5).

The FFUE circulates regular newsletters (6) (to 2515 subscribers on a Belgian list and 719 on an international list). It uses the social media LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook for messages to its subscribers. Its Academia account (7) includes all its publications and every time they have been quoted in other publications. This communication activity is to be intensified, e.g. through additional newsletters by subject (including information about both FFUE’s activities and publications and activities by outside associations with related interests).

The FFUE President has an on-going teaching assignment on Planning and Transport at the Lille University. He has been the opening keynote speaker of its 2017-2018 academic year on 11 Sept. 2017 (8).

He is a full member of the German Academy of Arts, Berlin, *Sektion Baukunst*, since 1995, and will participate with a booth in the exhibition “*Positions on the sustainable city of the 21st century*” (due to open on 4/9/2020) and a chapter in its catalogue, to be published in English and German by Lars Müller Publishers. He is also a corresponding member of the German Academy of urban and regional planning (DASL) since 1999.

He was elected member of the European Environment Agency’s Scientific

3 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/>

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

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

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

7 <http://www.academia.edu/>

8 <https://www.ffue.org/2017/06/conference-debat-profession-urbaniste-lille-11092017/>

Committee in year 2000 and its vice-chair from 2006 till 2011.

He is a Council member of Europa Nostra, the voice of European Heritage, and chair of its Industrial and Engineering Heritage Committee (IEHC), and expert member of the International Committee on Monuments and Sites – ICOMOS.

3. ACTIVITIES BY OBJECTIVES.

3.1. Land use and planning, including cultural heritage conservation.

3.1.1 Land use and planning.

A contribution to the 17th International Planning History Society Conference (Delft, July 2016) on *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. 213-221 (9).

Regular contacts have been maintained with BOZAR, the main Belgian cultural institution, over developing synergies in the fields of urban planning and society. Following the University Foundation's lecture and debate of December 2015 with Paul Dujardin, chief executive officer of BOZAR, a joint Forum on land use and mobility was held at BOZAR on 10-11 May 2017 (10). This Forum was held again in 2018 and 2019, under the umbrella of the Association "For Urban Passion", with international speakers (11) and will be held again on late 2020.

At the invitation of the Louvain University P. Laconte has been writing, together with J. Remy, a book about the achievements of Groupe urbanisme Architecture founded in 1968 (R. Lemaire, J.P. Blondel, P. Laconte), which was entrusted with the master plan of the new university town and its architectural coordination .

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 Its proceedings and recommendations are available on <https://www.ffue.org/2017/03/new-use-new-move-new-move-new-use-land-use-mobility-11052017-bozar-bruxelles/>

The book came out in January 2020 under the title *Louvain-la-Neuve à la croisée des Chemins* (Editions L'Harmattan-Academia) - <https://www.ffue.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/livre-croisee-des-chemins-prospectus-26012020.pdf> - It has been the theme of an international colloquium hosted by the LOCI Faculty https://www.ffue.org/newsletters/newsletterFFUE_UCLouvain-22012020.html on 11 February 2020. The minutes of the colloquium (in French and English), the speakers edited ppt's and conclusions are to be released in May 2020, pending the easing of the confinement imposed by the government.

3.1.2. Cultural heritage conservation.

As founding chairman of the Europa nostra Industrial & Engineering Heritage Committee – IEHC -, the FFUE president has chaired two yearly sessions of this committee from 2009 onwards. The Committee is to publish in 2021 a book about 50 exemplary industrial heritage conservation achievements that received a Europa Nostra award.

3.2. Transport and mobility.

The FFUE president contributed to the EU “SINTROPHER” project (“mobility and land use”) led by Prof. Sir Peter Hall of University College London– Bartlett School of Planning (12). The results of the project have been published in six volumes by the UCL Bartlett School, including FFUE’s contributions (13)

The books *Accéder à Bruxelles, Bereikbaar Brussel* (2015) (14) and *Le rail, clé de la mobilité urbaine à Bruxelles* (2016), edited by P. Laconte and C. van den Hove, with a preface by FFUE scientific committee member E. De Keuleneer (15) and the 2018 University Foundation lecture on transportation policy and urban development in Belgium by P. Laconte (16) were aimed as a contribution to the on-going debate about land-use and transport policies for Belgium. The main interest of the FFUE was the governance of mobility in Brussels, and the

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

13 <https://www.ffue.org/2014/02/ingenuity-at-the-service-of-sustainable-regional-development-four-cases-in-point-26022014/> and <https://www.ffue.org/2013/06/indirect-effects-of-public-transport-land-use-two-legal-and-innovations-in-belgium/>

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

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

16 <https://www.ffue.org/2018/12/mobility-transportation-policy-and-urban-development-institutional-aspects-keynote-paper-13-12-2018>

respective roles of elected officials, public transport operators and the representatives of civil society concerned.

FFUE's update reports were publicised through the FFUE Newsletter (17). They expressed concerns about the escalating cost of the Metro 3 line in deep underground tunnel notwithstanding the weak passenger demand towards the north estimated by experts. A further cost escalation is to be expected when geologic studies will have been completed, confirming the high construction risks involved in deep tunnelling through the water table, as was shown by the Grand Paris flooding examples.

The Brussels government's decision to enter building commitments to the central trunk just before the 2019 elections has led to a State Council challenge by several associations, including the FFUE, aiming at its cancellation. The cancellation has been recommended by the prosecution in March 2020.

The FFUE has updated its own proposals for metro and light rail priorities for Brussels, in line with the Programme of the Brussels Government for 2020 and the following years. They were presented at the new State Secretary in charge of mobility and may lead to further meetings. These proposals and their follow up will be published (in French) in the spring 2020 through the FFUE Newsletter.

3.3. Environment (energy/resources/urban quality of life).

FFUE sponsored three publications and one briefing specifically covering global/local environmental issues:

- *Climate Change, Energy Shortage, Biodiversity Loss* by P. Laconte (published by the Club of Rome-EU, 2011) (18).

- *Sustainable Cities: Assessing the performance of urban environments*, co-edited by P. Laconte (I.B. Tauris. London and New York, 2016) (19).

- "*Demographic growth and energy resources*" - Briefing FFUE 12/2017

(<https://www.ffue.org/.../FFUE-Briefing-Energy-Positions-2030-dec2017-ENG.pdf>)

17 https://www.ffue.org/newsletters/newsletterFFUE_16122018.html

18 <https://www.ffue.org/2013/06/climate-change-energy-shortage-biodiversity-loss-overview-of-global-european-and-local-policies-and-practices>)

19 <https://www.ffue.org/2015/12/sustainable-urban-environments-in-europe-evaluation-criteria-and-practices>

- *Smart and Sustainable Planning for Cities and Regions*, co-edited by P. Laconte (Springer Publishers 2018 (20)).

Other contributions of the FFUE on the energy, resources and urban quality of life issues in Europe, within the worldwide context, included:

- FFUE's contribution to the 2015 EU "MILESECURE" project (focusing on energy's future availability) recommended focusing research on demand for energy and ways to reduce the use of fossil energy and diversify its sources. As to the adaptation to climate change, the monitoring of fossil energy use was found a more useful indicator for urban area decision makers than greenhouse gas emissions, because of lacking internationally agreed definitions and because of border issues between emissions originating inside or outside the area (21).
- FFUE's debate of 7/11/2017, held at the University Foundation, focused on energy transition. J. de Gerlache, member of FFUE's Scientific committee, made the opening contribution (22).

An expanded version of it was published in 2019 by Editions Dunod (Paris), with a preface by FFUE's President (23).

As a next step the FFUE intends to focus from late 2020 on an overview report to be entitled *Population, Resources and Quality of Life: From Global Concerns to Local Initiatives*.

It aims at investigating the systemic interactions between population growth, energy production and consumption, industrial production, food production, resource depletion, loss of biodiversity and pollutions affecting human health.

20 <https://www.ffue.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/smart-sustainable-for-cities-regions-springer-FLYER.pdf>

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

22 <https://www.dropbox.com/s/vjywb15tr1eek/ENERGY-TRANSITION-171108-GERLACHE-ppt-version-FR.pdf?dl=0>

23 <https://www.dunod.com/sciences-techniques/mettre-en-oeuvre-transitions-energetiques-strategie-integrative-et-gestion>

A special accent will be put on the interaction between global issues and local activities, and on the interaction between public governance and private initiatives (Corporate social responsibility) in selected sectors of activity.

Its primary geographical focus will be on EU and member states' policies, taking Belgium as a case history in urban and regional diversity.

This project was initiated by Alois Michielsens and is to be coordinated by P. Coërs (Solvay SA, retiring in July 2020) and M. Bande (CSR-Europe) and will include voluntary case contributions from different countries and from both the public and the private sector, as did all the previous publications and briefings by FFUE.

The publisher considered is Springer Publishers, which published in 2008 *Smart and Sustainable Planning for Cities and Regions*, co-edited by P. Laconte and has expressed interest in further collaboration.