

# SUMMARY REPORT 1999-2020

(2021/2/14)

## 1. OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE.

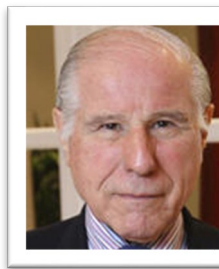
The Foundation for the Urban Environment Pierre Laconte (FFUE) aims at promoting the urban environment through conferences and debates, publications and newsletters, occasional briefings and “think tank” activities (as opposed to commercial consultancy).

**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.



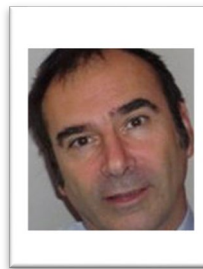
**Pierre Laconte**  
Former Vice-Chair,  
Scientific Council,  
European  
Environment  
Agency – EEA  
Hon. Secr. General,  
Internat.  
Association of  
Public Transport -  
UITP  
Co-designer of the  
Louvain-la-Neuve  
new university town



**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



**Bruno Clerbaux**  
Architecte-  
urbaniste,  
Administrateur ACP  
group CLERBAUX  
& PINON adf/  
Town PLanning  
Architecture,  
Président  
d'Honneur  
Chambre des  
Urbanistes de  
Belgique



**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

*Founding board member Evelyn Gessler unfortunately passed away in April 2020 and was replaced by Bruno Clerbaux, member of the Scientific Committee. Claude van den Hove passed away in February 2021 and is to be replaced.*

Its founding scientific advisors are Nobel Prize Prof. Ilya Prigogine (who passed away in 2003), Prof. Philippe Bourdeau (ULB) and Prof. André 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 Region; A. Michielsen, honorary Chairman of the Board of Solvay SA, later FFUE Board member; C. du Monceau, Council chair, Ottignies – Louvain-la-Neuve, Prof. P. Lombaerde (UA), Prof. M. Hubert (U. St-Louis), A. Camu (asbl Flora); H. Demets ( Computer Software Consultancy Bvba), Jacques de Gerlache (Greenfacts) and Philippe Joye (ACP & Tractebel). This informal advisory group is to be further expanded. Its members have assisted the board in FFUE's publications and other activities.

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 projects in line with its objectives.

## **2. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES 1999-2020.**

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).

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

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

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 (in total some 300 quotations). This activity is to be intensified, e.g. through additional newsletters including information about both FFUE’s activities 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*, elected in 1995, and corresponding member of the German Urban and Regional Planning Academy (DASL), elected in 1999.

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

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/>

He was elected member of the European Environment Agency's Scientific 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, chair of its Industrial and Engineering Heritage Committee (IEHC) and is 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 2019, and 2020 under the umbrella of the Association "For Urban Passion", with international speakers (11).

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 LLN new university town and its architectural coordination.

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9 [http://www.ffue.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/IPHS\\_160718-Book-Historical-perspectives-article-Laconte.pdf](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](https://www.ffue.org/newsletters/newsletterFFUE_UCLouvain-22012020.html) on 11 February 2020.

He did participate with a booth in the international exhibition “*Positions on the sustainable city of the 21st century*” (Akademie der Künste Berlin 4/9 - 22/11/2020) and a chapter in its catalogue, published in English and German by Lars Müller Publishers.

In November 2020 a special issue of the LOCI/UCLouvain Revue *Lieux-dits*, was devoted to the 50th anniversary of Louvain-la-Neuve (12).

It included selected edited presentations to February Colloquium, additional papers and 12 panels about LLN presented in the Akademie der Künste Exhibition.

### 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 (13) about 50 exemplary industrial heritage conservation achievements that received a Europa Nostra award, due to come out in early 2021.

## 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 (14), where he has been occasional lecturer. The results of the

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12 <https://ojs.uclouvain.be/index.php/lieuxdits/index>

13 Ch. Hanus, P. Laconte, R. Sickinger, P. Smith (eds). *Industrial and Engineering Heritage in Europe. 50 Winners of the European Heritage Awards/Europa Nostra Awards*. Donau University Krems, 2021.

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

project have been published in six volumes by the UCL Bartlett School, including FFUE's contributions (15).

The books *Accéder à Bruxelles, and Bereikbaar Brussel* (2015) (16) and *Le rail, clé de la mobilité urbaine à Bruxelles* (2016) have been edited by P. Laconte and C. van den Hove, the latest one with a preface by FFUE scientific committee member E. De Keuleneer (17).

The 15/12/2018 University Foundation lecture on transportation policy and urban development in Belgium by P. Laconte (18) was a contribution to the on-going debate about land-use & transport policies for Belgium. The focus of the FFUE lecture is the governance of mobility in Brussels, and the respective roles of elected officials, public transport operators and representatives of civil society concerned.

An update report of the book *Le rail, clé de la mobilité urbaine à Bruxelles* (2016) was communicated in the FFUE Newsletter (19). It expressed concerns about the escalating cost of the Metro 3 line (Metro-Nord), built in deep underground tunnel notwithstanding the weak passenger demand estimated by experts. A further cost escalation is to be expected, considering the high construction risks involved in tunnelling through the water table, as was confirmed by the Grand Paris Metro floods, abundantly reported in the press. 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 decision by the State Council is still pending.

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. These proposals and their outcome will be communicated in due course through the FFUE Newsletter.

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15 <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/>

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

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

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

19 [https://www.ffue.org/newsletters/newsletterFFUE\\_16122018.html](https://www.ffue.org/newsletters/newsletterFFUE_16122018.html)



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

The 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) (20).
- *Sustainable Cities: Assessing the performance of urban environments*, co-edited by P. Laconte (I.B. Tauris. London and New York, 2016) (21).
- *Demographic growth and energy resources - Briefing FFUE 12/2017*
- *Smart and Sustainable Planning for Cities and Regions*, co-edited by P. Laconte Springer Publishers 2018 (22).

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 (23).
- 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,

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

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

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

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

made the opening contribution (24). An expanded version of it was published in 2019 by Editions Dunod (Paris), with a preface by FFUE's President (25).

On the initiative of FFUE's Vice-President A. Michielsen, the next activity of the FFUE, in line with *Sustainable Cities: Assessing the performance of urban environments*, co-edited by P. Laconte (I.B. Tauris. London and New York, 2016) (26).

It will be an overview report to be entitled *Population, Resources and Quality of Life: Local Initiatives, wider concerns*.

It aims at investigating some 40 cases of interactions between population growth, energy production and consumption, industrial production, food production, resource depletion, loss of biodiversity and pollutions affecting human quality of life.

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

Its primary geographical focus will be on Belgium as an example of urban and regional diversity.

This project will include voluntary 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. It could also be a Belgian publisher in French and/or Dutch.

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24 <https://www.dropbox.com/s/vjywby15rtr1eek/ENERGY-TRANSITION-171108-GERLACHE-ppt-version-FR.pdf?dl=0>

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

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