

2015

ANNUAL REPORT



ACADÉMIE ROYALE DES SCIENCES,
DES LETTRES ET DES BEAUX-ARTS
DE BELGIQUE



KONINKLIJKE VLAAMSE ACADEMIE
VAN BELGIË VOOR WETENSCHAPPEN
EN KUNSTEN

The ROYAL ACADEMIES FOR SCIENCE AND THE ARTS OF BELGIUM

RASAB vzw/asbl

The Royal Academies for Science and the Arts of Belgium - RASAB vzw/asbl

RASAB

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

www.rasab.be

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THE ROYAL ACADEMIES FOR SCIENCE AND THE ARTS OF BELGIUM

1. Introduction

The association 'The Royal Academies for Science and the Arts of Belgium' (vzw/asbl) was founded in 2001 by the Académie royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique (ARB)¹ and the Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten (KVAB)². The association is located in the old royal stables of the Palace of Academies in Brussels.

The Royal Academies of Belgium work to promote science and art in Belgium. In order to meet this demand, the Academies organize scientific and cultural activities, they try to promote inter-university cooperation in Belgium, they provide representation in international and European organizations, they offer a platform for researchers to formulate recommendations to the government, industry, education and research.

RASAB is responsible for the coordination of the activities of the two Academies at a national and international level, as well as for the national scientific committees and the representation of Belgium in the federation of Academies such as EASAC, ALLEA, etc.

The statutes of RASAB were published in the *Moniteur Belge / Belgisch Staatsblad* of 19 April 2001.

In 2015 RASAB faced a strong reduction of its governmental support. Because of this, some strategic decisions were made:

- An analysis was made of the national committees and RASAB's memberships in international unions. The following memberships were discontinued: SCOPE, IGBP, WCRP, SCOSTEP, COSPAR.
- The liaison office has been phased out. From May 2016, this activity will be stopped completely.

2. Governance

The General Assembly is composed by the Chairmen, the Permanent Secretaries and one representative for each of the four classes of the academies, for a total of 12 members.

¹www.academieroyale.be

²www.kvab.be

³www.rasab.be

The annual presidency of RASAB is held alternately by the chairman of the academies. In 2015 RASAB was chaired by Hubert Bocken, President of the Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten.

Board of Directors 2015

ARB	KVAB
Charles Joachain <i>Chair</i>	Hubert Bocken <i>Chair</i>
Hervé Hasquin <i>Permanent Secretary</i>	Freddy Dumortier <i>Permanent Secretary</i>

General Assembly 2015

ARB	KVAB
Charles Joachain <i>Chair</i>	Hubert Bocken <i>Chair</i>
Hervé Hasquin <i>Permanent Secretary</i>	Freddy Dumortier <i>Permanent Secretary</i>
Jean Mawhin <i>Classe des Sciences</i>	Freddy Dumortier <i>Klasse van de Natuurwetenschappen</i>
Monique Boussart <i>Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et politiques</i>	Els Witte <i>Klasse van de Menswetenschappen</i>
Chevalier Philippe Samyn <i>Classe des Arts</i>	André Laporte <i>Klasse van de Kunsten</i>
Jean-Pierre Contzen <i>Classe Technologie et Société</i>	Dirk Frimout <i>Klasse van de Technische Wetenschappen</i>

NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES

1. Introduction

The missions of the Belgian scientific committees are the promotion and coordination of various scientific disciplines in Belgium, mainly seen in an international context.

The conditions for the foundation of a National Committee is the existence of an international scientific union which is a member of ICSU or a member of a scientific institution of ICSU (scientific committees, special committees, etc.) in the same scientific discipline.

The national scientific committees work under the patronage of the Académie royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique and the Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten, gathered in RASAB which is responsible for the financial and logistic support of the National Committees, as well for its daily activities, as for the organisation of scientific events by the National Committees in the Palace of the Academies.

2. Annual Activity Reports

Each year, the Belgian scientific committees publish their annual activity reports with the help of RASAB. For clarity, these reports are not directly integrated into the RASAB annual report. They are available in a separate volume downloadable on our website³.

3. List of the National Scientific Committees

- 1) Antarctic Research
- 2) Astronomy
- 3) Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- 4) Biological Sciences
- 5) Biomedical Engineering
- 6) Biophysics
- 7) Chemistry
- 8) Crystallography
- 9) Geography
- 10) Geodesy and Geophysics
- 11) Geological Sciences

³ www.rasab.be

- 12) Logics, History and Philosophy of Science
- 13) Mathematics
- 14) Mechanics
- 15) Microbiology
- 16) Oceanology
- 17) Psychological Sciences
- 18) Physiology and Pharmacology
- 19) Physics
- 20) Quaternary Research (BELQUA)
- 21) Radio-Electricity
- 22) Soil Science

4. List of the International Scientific Unions

The conditions for the foundation of a National Committee is the existence of an international scientific union which is a member of ICSU or a member of a scientific institution of ICSU (scientific committees, special committees, etc.) in the same scientific discipline. All Belgian national committees are members of one or more international organizations in which they represent Belgium.

- International Astronomical Union (IAU) www.iau.org
- International Geographical Union (IGU) www.igu-net.org
- International Federation for Medical and Biological Engineering (IFMBE) www.ifmbe.org
- International Mathematical Union (IMU) www.mathunion.org
- International Union for Physical and Engineering Sciences in Medicine (IUPESM) www.iupesm.org
- International Union for Quaternary Research (INQUA) www.inqua.org
- International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (IUBMB) www.iubmb.org
- International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS) www.iubs.org
- International Union of Crystallography (IUCr): www.iucr.org
- International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) www.iugg.org
- International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) www.iugs.org
- International Union of History and Philosophy of Science (IUHPS),
 - Division of History of Science and Technology (IUHPS-DHST)
 - Division of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of

Science (IUHPS-DLMPS)

www.dlmps.org

- International Union of Microbiological Societies (IUMS) www.iums.org
- International Union of Pharmacology (IUPHAR) www.iuphar.org
- International Union of Physiological Sciences (IUPS) www.iups.org
- International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS) www.iupsys.net
- International Union of Pure and Applied Biophysics (IUPAB) www.iupab.org
- International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) www.iupac.org
- International Union of Pure and Applied Physics (IUPAP) www.iupap.org
- International Union of Radio Science (URSI) www.ursi.org
- International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) www.iuss.org
- International Union of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics (IUTAM) www.iutam.net

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. ALL European Academies – ALLEA⁴

a. Introduction

ALLEA, the federation of All European Academies, was founded in 1994 and currently brings together 55 Academies in more than 40 countries from the Council of Europe region. Member Academies operate as learned societies, think tanks and research performing organisations. They are self-governing communities of leaders of scholarly enquiry across all fields of the natural sciences, the social sciences and the humanities. ALLEA therefore provides access to an unparalleled human resource of intellectual excellence, experience and expertise.

Independent from political, commercial and ideological interests, ALLEA's policy work seeks to contribute to improving the framework conditions under which science and scholarship can excel. Jointly with its Member Academies, ALLEA is in a position to address the full range of structural and policy issues facing Europe in science, research and innovation. In doing so, it is guided by a common understanding of Europe bound together by historical, social and political factors as well as for scientific and economic reasons.

b. Belgian representation

Working Groups

Prof. Carine Doutrelepont (ARB) is the Belgian representative in the Permanent Working Group *Intellectual Property Rights*, which was founded in 2010. This working group held a meeting in June 2015 in Munich.

Prof. Els Van Damme (KVAB) is the Belgian representative in the Permanent Working Group *Science and Ethics*. This working group held a meeting in March 2015 in Berlin.

ALLEA published 6 reports and statements in 2015:

- *New ALLEA Statement "On the Status of the Patent System of the European Union" issued by PWG IPR;*
- *Supplementary Statement on Open Access released by ALLEA Permanent Working Group on Intellectual Property Rights;*

⁴<http://www.allea.org>

- *ALLEA reiterates its support for Open Access to Scientific Publications in Europe;*
- *Survey and Analysis of Basic Social Science and Humanities Research at the Science Academies and Related Research Organisations of Europe, Camilla Leathem, Dominik Adrian;*
- *The Boundaries of Europe, Ed. Pietro Rossi;*
- *Going Digital: Creating Change in the Humanities.*

2. European Academies Science Advisory Council – EASAC⁵

a. Introduction

EASAC - the European Academies Science Advisory Council - is formed by the national science academies of the EU Member States to enable them to collaborate with each other in providing advice to European policy-makers. It thus provides a means for the collective voice of European science to be heard. Its mission reflects the view of academies that science is central to many aspects of modern life and that an appreciation of the scientific dimension is a pre-requisite to wise policy-making. This view already underpins the work of many academies at national level. With the growing importance of the European Union as an arena for policy, academies recognise that the scope of their advisory functions needs to extend beyond the national to cover also the European level. Here it is often the case that a trans-European grouping can be more effective than a body from a single country.

The academies of Europe have therefore formed EASAC so that they can speak with a common voice with the goal of building science into policy at EU level. Through EASAC, the academies work together to provide independent, expert, evidence-based advice about the scientific aspects of public policy to those who make or influence policy within the European institutions. Drawing on the memberships and networks of the academies, EASAC accesses the best of European science in carrying out its work. Its views are vigorously independent of commercial or political bias, and it is open and transparent in its processes. EASAC aims to deliver advice that is comprehensible, relevant and timely. EASAC covers all scientific and technical disciplines, and its experts are drawn from all the countries of the European Union. It is funded by the member academies and by contracts with interested bodies. The expert members of project groups give their time free of charge. EASAC has no commercial or business sponsors. EASAC's activities include

⁵<http://www.easac.eu>

substantive studies of the scientific aspects of policy issues, reviews and advice about policy documents, workshops aimed at identifying current scientific thinking about major policy issues or at briefing policymakers, and short, timely statements on topical subjects. The EASAC Council has 28 individual members - highly experienced scientists nominated one each by the national science academies of every EU Member State that has one, the Academia Europaea and ALLEA. It is supported by a professional secretariat based at the German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. The Council agrees the initiation of projects, appoints members of project groups, reviews drafts and approves reports for publication.

b. Belgian representation

Council

EASAC's Council meets twice a year in the land, which will hold the European presidency 6 months later. RASAB is represented in the Council by Prof. Freddy Dumortier (KVAB), who attended the Council meeting on May 21-22 in Amsterdam and November 19-20 in Slovakia.

Steering panels

Jan Kretzschmar (KVAB) is the Belgian representative in the EASAC's Energy Steering Panel.

Jan Kretzschmar (KVAB) is also the Belgian representative in the EASAC's Smart Villages Reference Group.

Working groups

Belgian Academies are represented in 2015 in 3 working groups and 1 steering panel:

- **Electricity Storage:** Jan Desmet (UGent) and Prof. Willem D'Haeseleer (KVAB);
- **Sustainable Forests (Forestry):** Prof. Reinhart Ceulemans (KVAB);
- **Circular Economy:** Egbert Lox (KVAB).

EASAC published 6 reports and statements in 2015:

- *Commentary on "Circular Economy";*
- *Facing Critical decisions on climate change in 2015;*
- *"Gain of Function" (in virology);*
- *New Breeding Techniques;*
- *Marine sustainability in an age of changing oceans and seas;*
- *Ecosystem services, agriculture and neonicotinoids*

c. RASAB hosting

RASAB helped in 2015 to organize several meetings of EASAC's steering committees and working groups. Here is an overview of the meetings in Brussels, for which RASAB is partly responsible for the organization:

- On March 3rd, EASAC and the Royal Society organized a breakfast discussion on "reducing the impact of extreme weather".
- On March 19th, EASAC organized the meeting of the working group "gain of function"
- On April 13th, EASAC organized the launch of its Policy Report *Ecosystem services, agriculture and neonicotinoids*.
- On June 17th, EASAC organized the meeting of the Biosciences Steering Panel.
- On October 13th, EASAC organized the meeting of the Energy Steering Panel.
- On October 14th, EASAC organized the meeting of the Working Group on Energy Storage.
- On October 15th, EASAC organized the meeting of the Working Group on Electricity Storage.
- On October 21st, EASAC organized the launch of the EASAC Report *Gain of Function: experimental applications relating to potential pandemic pathogens*, Palace of the Academies.

3. International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies⁶

a. Introduction

The International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies is a worldwide network of about 60 academies that assists scientists, scholars, engineers, and health professionals around the world who are subjected to severe repression solely for having non-violently exercised their rights as promulgated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It also promotes human rights consciousness-raising and institutional commitment to human rights work among national academies and scholarly societies worldwide.

b. Belgian representation

To answer to the demands set by the network, the Royal Academies of Belgium have created a committee: the Committee for the Free Practice of Science and Arts.

⁶http://www7.nationalacademies.org/humanrights/CHR_044113.htm

Composition

ARB	KVAB
Jean-Marie Frère <i>Classe des Sciences</i>	Irina Veretennicoff <i>Klasse van de Natuurwetenschappen</i>
Paul Smets <i>Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et politiques</i>	Marie-Claire Foblets <i>Klasse van de Menswetenschappen</i>
Pierre Bartholomée <i>Classe des Arts</i>	Willem Elias <i>Klasse van de Kunsten</i>
Carine Doutrelepon <i>Classe Technologie et Société</i>	Derrick Gosselin <i>Klasse van de Technische Wetenschappen</i>

4. InterAcademy Partnership – IAP⁷

IAP is a global network of the world's science academies, launched in 1993.

Its primary goal is to help member academies work together to advise citizens and public officials on the scientific aspects of critical global issues.

IAP is particularly interested in assisting young and small academies in achieving these goals and, through the communication links and networks created by IAP activities, all academies will be able to raise both their public profile among citizens and their influence among policy makers.

5. ICSU⁸**a. Introduction**

The International Council for Science is a non-governmental organization with a global membership of national scientific bodies (121 members) and international scientific unions (30 members). All National Committees are member of one of these international scientific unions.

The mission of ICSU is to strengthen international science for the benefit of society. To do this,

⁷<http://www.interacademies.net>

⁸<http://www.icsu.org>

ICSU mobilizes the knowledge and resources of the international science community to:

- Identify and address major issues of importance to science and society.
- Facilitate interaction amongst scientists across all disciplines and from all countries.
- Promote the participation of all scientists—regardless of race, citizenship, language, political stance, or gender—in the international scientific endeavour.
- Provide independent, authoritative advice to stimulate constructive dialogue between the scientific community and governments, civil society, and the private sector.

Activities focus on three areas: International Research Collaboration, Science for Policy, and Universality of Science.

6. Union Académique Internationale - UAI⁹

a. Introduction

The UAI is the global organization of national academies in the fields of the humanities and social sciences. Its aims are to initiate, recognize, foster and fund basic long-term international research projects. Created in 1919 in Paris with a general secretariat established in Brussels, the UAI comprises at the moment more than a hundred academies from 63 countries from all continents.

Recognizing that many substantial projects in humanities and social sciences cannot be realized within a short time span, the UAI prides itself on being willing to support significant long-term projects. The UAI already sponsored more than 3,000 books. Many of them are fundamental reference tools, such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and text editions, some of which are disseminated on the web. The UAI is constantly launching new international projects, most recently the transformation of Mediterranean cities throughout history. Projects adopted by the UAI are expected to be based on cooperation between several national academies. In order to achieve its aims, the UAI relies on funding from private and public sources.

The UAI advocates for the role of the humanities and the social sciences in a changing world.

⁹<http://www.uai-iaa.org>

b. Belgian representation

General Assembly

The 88th General Assembly of the UAI was held Brussel, at the Palace of the Academies, from 24 to 28 May 2015.

Belgian representatives were:

- Prof. Pierre Jodogne (ARB)
- Prof. Carlos Steel (KVAB)
- Prof. Carl van de Velde (KVAB)

During this General Assembly, Prof. Pierre Jodogne was elected as Board member of UAI for a term of 4 years.

Projects

As founder members, the Belgian Academies and their members are involved in many projects patronized by the UAI:

- *Alchimic texts* (Project 2): The project is directed by the Académie royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique (Prof. Anne Tihon, UCL, is the director of the project). The last volume of this project has been published in 2011. Two volumes are in preparation.
- *Aristoteles Latinus, Corpus Philosophorum MediiAevi* (Project 9.2): Prof. Carlos Steel (KVAB) is the International Director of the project. Two volumes have been published in 2011. Several volumes are in preparation. A volume will be published in 2016.
- *Avicenna Latinus, Corpus Philosophorum MediiAevi* (Project 9.3): The project is directed by the Académie royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique. Prof. Hervé Hasquin (ARB), Prof. André Allard (ARB) and Prof. Pierre Jodogne (ARB) are members of the board of this project. One volume is in preparation.
- *Corpus Vitrearum* (Project 16): Prof. Yvette VandenBemden (ARB) and Prof. Anna Bergmans (KVAB) are members of the Belgian Committee. One volume of the Belgian collection has been published in 2013. A other is in preparation.
- *Lexicon Iconographicum MythologiaeClassicae - LIMC - & Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum - ThesCRA* - (Project 28): Prof. Jean-Charles Balty (ARB) is a member of the responsible committee of this project. The last volume (tome VIII) of this thesaurus has been published in 2012.

- *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum – SNG* – (Project 26): Prof. François de Callataÿ (ARB) is the director of the Belgian Committee.
- *Corpus des Astronomes Byzantins* (Project 41): The project is directed by the Académie royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique. One volume has been published in 2015 and a other is in preparation.
- *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae* (Project 70): The project is directed by the Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten.
- *Papyrus-Archives. Edition and Studies* (Project 72): Prof. Willy Clarysse (KVAB) is the Director of the project. One volume has been published in 2015. Two others are in preparation.
- *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard* (Project 73): Prof. Carl Van de Velde (KVAB) is the Director of the project. One volume has been published in 2015. Six others are in preparation.
- *Fontes Inediti Numismatae Antiquae* - FINA (Projet 83): Prof. François de Callataÿ (ARB) is the director of the Belgian Committee.

BELGIAN LIAISON OFFICE

In 2010, the liaison office between the European Academies and the European governmental institutions was founded by RASAB. Its mission is to increase the visibility of the European Academies, more specifically of the federation of Academies EASAC, and to use their high potential to be a source of independent science policy advice. The office also wants to have an intelligence-gathering function, using primary resources (e.g. websites, literature) as well as personal networking to identify relevant developments, assess emerging issues and forecast the points in the institutional policy cycle when intervention of the Academies would be particularly effective.

The liaison office assists EASAC in its interaction with the policy community and in the distribution of its reports and increasing their visibility, by:

- distributing EASAC output to the policy community and other stakeholders;
- improving EASAC's general communication and outreach, which includes press contacts, maintaining LinkedIn and Twitter accounts and assembling a newsletter;
- representing EASAC at various seminars and conferences in Brussels;
- advising EASAC Bureau and Council on the science-policy dialogue and on priorities in the Brussels policy community;
- organising launch events and workshops in Brussels.

In 2015 the liaison office has focused largely on the increasing collaboration between the European academies and DG Research and Innovation of the European Commission. Because of the large emphasis on interdisciplinary advice in this collaboration, this included the creation of a consortium of the 5 main European academy networks: EASAC, ALLEA, FEAM, Euro-CASE and Academia Europaea. The European academies are now officially part of the structure around the new Scientific Advice Mechanism of the European Commission¹⁰.

Due to the cuts in the government funding, RASAB has started in 2015 to phase out the liaison office. This activity will end in May 2016.

¹⁰<https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/index.cfm?pg=about>

UAI GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Since its foundation in 1919 the Union Académique Internationale has its seat in the Palace of Academies in Brussels. The Académie royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique (ARB) is in charge of the secretariat of the UAI. The Permanent Secretary of the Académie royale de Belgique is de facto the General Secretary of the Union.

By its experience at the international level, RASAB is involved in the organization of activities of the UAI and participates in the management of the General Secretariat of the Union (organization of the meetings, contact with the academy members, website, etc.)

1. Organization of the meetings

In 2014, the UAI held two meetings and its General Assembly:

- Board meeting, held in Paris, from 11 to 13 February 2015, at the invitation of the Institut de France.
- Standing Committee meeting, in Copenhagen, from 14 to 16 October 2014, at the invitation of the Danish Academy.
- The 88th General Assembly was held in Brussel, at the Palace of the Academies, from 24 to 28 May 2015. Over seventy guests from nearly 60 countries attended to it.

The UAI decided in 2013 to move from a system of annual general meetings to a general assembly every two years. The next general assembly is scheduled in Brussels in May 2015.

2. Involvement of RASAB

Mr Laurent Hansen, scientific counsellor of RASAB, attended to all UAI meetings as officer of the General Secretariat. He is responsible, among other things, of the contact with the member academies and their representatives, of the organization of the different meetings and conferences and of the communication through new technologies.

APPENDIXES

LIST OF BELGIAN DELEGATES IN FEDERATIONS OF ACADEMIES (2015)

ALLEA

General Assembly	Benoît Macq <i>ARB, Classe Technologie et Société</i>
	Freddy Dumortier <i>KVAB, Vast secretaris</i>
Intellectual Property Rights <i>Permanent Working Group</i>	Carine Doutrelepon <i>ARB, Classe Technologie et Société</i>
Science and Ethics <i>Working Group</i>	Els Van Damme <i>KVAB, Klasse Natuurwetenschappen</i>

EASAC

Council	Freddy Dumortier <i>KVAB, Klasse van de Natuurwetenschappen</i>
Energy <i>Steering Panel</i>	Jan Kretzschmar <i>KVAB, Klasse van de Technische Wetenschappen</i>
Smart Villages <i>Reference Group</i>	Jan Kretzschmar <i>KVAB, Klasse van de Technische Wetenschappen</i>
Electricity Storage <i>Working group</i>	Willem D'Haeseleer <i>KVAB, Klasse Technische Wetenschappen & Jan Desmet (UGent)</i>
Sustainable Forests <i>Working group</i>	Reinhart Ceulemans <i>KVAB, Klasse van de Natuurwetenschappen</i>

Circular Economy <i>Working group</i>	Egbert Lox <i>KVAB, Klasse van de Technische Wetenschappen</i>
ICSU	
General Assembly	Christian Vandermotten <i>ARB, Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et politiques</i>
EU-ICSU	Christian Vandermotten <i>ARB, Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et politiques</i>
UAI	
Board	Pierre Jodogne <i>ARB, Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et politiques</i>
General Assembly	Pierre Jodogne <i>ARB, Classe des Lettres et des Sciences morales et politiques</i>
	Carlos Steel <i>KVAB, Klasse van de Menswetenschappen</i>
	Carl van de Velde <i>KVAB, Klasse van de Kunsten</i>