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*Project CAP 2013*
*What binds us together: European Identity*

# What Farming Models for European Societies in the 21st Century?

Report on the seminar held on 28th November 2006

**Nadège CHAMBON - Aziliz GOUEZ**

With the Participation of:
David BALDOCK, Clemens DIRSCHERL, Franz FISCHLER, Maria HALAMSKA, Bertrand HERVIEU, Zoltan LÁKNER, Henri NALLET, Jean-Louis RASTOIN, Jean-Pierre VERCRUYSSE

**Nadège CHAMBON** and **Aziliz GOUEZ** are Research Fellows at *Notre Europe*.

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*« History only honours those who see widely and deeply. This is why Europe's «founding fathers» are still with us today, as an inspiration and an example.*

*To see widely is to understand the changes in the world - both geopolitical and economic - and to take on board the progress of ideas, the evolution of people's values(...)*

*To see deeply is to draw on the heritage of history while moving forward. Guessing the future is a part of this; but also needed is an ethical understanding of the individual, of society, and of humanity's quest.»*

Jacques Delors (1)

*(1) « Réconcilier l'idéal et la nécessité » Devant le Collège d'Europe à Bruges, le 17 octobre 1989, Le nouveau concert européen, 1992, p. 318-319*

## Foreword

One might say without overstating the case, that the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is woven into the European construction. Provided for in the Treaty of Rome in 1957, it was set up five years later and has ever since been at the core of EU life. Common policy (for many years the only one) managed by Brussels, it has weathered structural crises and moved with the times, ever remaining a major component of European life but – like Europe herself, grown from six to twenty-seven members – in constant mutation.

In the beginning, everything was clear and simple, at least with regards to its aims, which, in a nutshell, came to European food self-sufficiency, farmers' standard of living, and market stabilisation. But how Europe has changed since then! The return of prosperity; the repeated enlargements and adjustments of the Community; the merging of the two Europes, East and West, into one; globalisation... For the farming community – which, like no other has endlessly had to adjust –, the outlook is, yet again, blurred: the future CAP, post 2013, must be redefined as early as 2008. It is with this scheduled re-evaluation in mind that *Notre Europe* has come up with its CAP 2013 project.

The very hint of agricultural policy reform traditionally turns the Union into an ideological battlefield. Those who want to reduce its budget share – if at all possible drastically – fight it out with those for whom the defence of the CAP is synonymous with a constant budgetary effort. Other and manifold elements call for a reappraisal of the European agricultural policy, to wit: external constraints, that is to say the battle which pitches North against South in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) tough negotiations; the growing influence within the WTO of the emergent countries; the emergence, in rich countries at any rate, of fresh concerns for food safety, protection of the environment, the quest for sustainable development, animal welfare; the unrelenting worldwide trend towards urbanisation which alters consumption needs and patterns – agri-food business and mass distribution have now got the upper hand while the consumer has taken precedent over the producer…All these changes were raised and addressed during the seminar Nadège Chambon and Aziliz Gouez, research fellows at *Notre Europe* ran under the title "*What Farming Models for European Societies in the 21st Century?*"

In a Europe whose farmers now represent but a minority of the working population, the way we conceive farming policies has to be altered in response. The turnaround is probably not complete. But there can be no doubt that it has considerable impact on people's relationship to farming and to food. This new deal therefore calls for a reengineering of the CAP incorporating four major requirements: acknowledging the new world order (or disorder), addressing the changes in lifestyles of now broadly urbanised European societies, keeping alive a farming sector answerable to our environment, preserving the specificities and values of territories which are a component of peoples' identities. Here, we cross paths with another focus of *Notre Europe* – European identity.

Alain Dauvergne, Adviser of *Notre Europe*

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# Thinking the Future of Farming in Relation to the Transformations of European Identity

## 1. Introduction

The term « agriculture » refers to all activities relating to the cultivation of land, and more generally to any transformation of the natural environment which enables the production of crops and animals useful to humans. This activity, necessary for the very survival of society, was a fundamental issue during the first few decades of the European project. It was during this period that the common agricultural policy (CAP) was put in place. The European institutions and the governments of the Member States are about to launch a new reform of the CAP. The negotiations will open in 2008, with a view to implementing a new generation of agricultural policies starting in 2013.

The approach of these negotiations, which promise to prove decisive for the future of European agriculture, spurred *Notre Europe* to organise a major colloquium in November 2006, entitled *"Finding a framework for agricultural policies, tomorrow, in Europe and in developing countries"*. As the first stage of a prospective exercise intended to supply ideas to

the decision makers involved in these negotiations, its aim was to report progress on some of the factors liable to affect the future of European agriculture in the medium term. From the event a preliminary overview of the situation emerged, comprising many factors: an environmental diagnosis; an economic diagnosis (the development of world markets); a scientific and technical diagnosis (GMOs, biofuels); an analysis of legal and institutional developments (world trade negotiations); and a sociological analysis.

This last sociological angle was the specific focus of the seminar "What kind of agriculture for European societies in the 21st century?". In publishing an account of these discussions our aim is to provide an insight into the major transformations European societies have undergone and – consequently - into the new expectations citizens have regarding agriculture.

Our approach stems from a research programme undertaken by *Notre Europe* on **European identity**, which has aimed to further our understanding of how Europeans live and what values motivate them. For *Notre Europe*, one of the EU's most important challenges is to better take into account the aspirations of citizens. This exercise is not at all simple in today's affluent societies, where the need for subsistence has been replaced by complex and diverse political priorities. Yet, the same applies to the common agricultural policy as applies to all policies: it cannot be conceived in a democratic vacuum, where citizens' support for the decision makers' trade-offs does not matter. This is why it seemed to us indispensable that we complement studies by scientists and economists with more all-encompassing analyses of the developments in European lifestyles.



## 2. Theoretical background

The essential function of agriculture is to feed people, though its role in giving a human face to the land is also fundamentally important. Farmers transform untamed nature into zones hospitable to human beings. Starting with an analysis of lifestyles, one of the possible approaches to analysing the future of farming in Europe would thus consist of a study of the evolution of eating habits and of connections to the land – and, thereby (*mutatis mutandis*) of connections to the environment and to "natural heritage".

### 2.1 From rural to urban civilisation

The related questions of food supply and connection to the land cannot be addressed, in modern Europe, without looking closely at urbanisation. Begun in Europe centuries ago, the shift from essentially rural to broadly industrial and urbanised societies is today almost complete. What is now at stake in this shift to an urban way of life is a radical transformation in the relationship between city-dwellers and farmers – a transformation of the very structure of this relationship (mediation of exchanges and monetisation, distribution systems, etc.) but also of its quality (de-personalisation, rationalisation):

> *"The metropolis has always been the seat of the money economy. Here the multiplicity and concentration of economic exchange gives an importance to the means of exchange, which the scantiness of rural commerce would not have allowed. Money economy and the dominance of the intellect are intrinsically connected. They share a* ***matter-of-fact attitude in dealing with men and with things****; and, in this attitude, a formal justice is often coupled with an inconsiderate hardness. (...) Money is concerned only with what is common to all: it asks for the exchange value, it reduces all quality and individuality to*

*the question: How much? (…) In the sphere of the economic psychology of the small group it is of importance that under primitive conditions production serves the customer who orders the good, so that the producer and the consumer are acquainted. The modern metropolis, however, is supplied almost entirely by production for the market, that is, for entirely unknown purchasers who never personally enter the producer's actual field of vision. Through this anonymity the interests of each party acquire an unmerciful matter-of-factness; and the intellectually calculating economic egoisms of both parties need not fear any deflection because of the imponderables of personal relationships The metropolitan way of life is certainly the most fertile soil for this reciprocity* [between monetary economy and rational objectivity], *(…) Throughout the whole course of English history, London has never acted as England's heart but often as England's intellect and always as her moneybag!"*[1]

Taking this phenomenon into account is crucial if we are to understand the relationship Europeans have with farming. When, for the vast majority of consumers, the producer is invisible and the relationship boils down to the simple matter of hard cash, it is hard to see why a consumer would care to choose goods from Europe rather than those produced less expensively in other parts of the world.

1 Georg Simmel, « Die Grossstädte und das Geistesleben », Jahrbuch der Gehestiftung, IX, 1903 ; Edition française de référence : « Les grandes villes et la vie de l'esprit », Philosophie de la modernité, Editions Payot, 2004.
Translation: adapted by D. Weinstein from Kurt Wolff (Trans.) The Sociology of Georg Simmel. New York: Free Press, 1950, pp.409-424. http://condor.depaul.edu/~dweinste/intro/simmel_M&ML.htm.
It is worth noting that where the English language refers to 'matter-of-factness', the French language speaks of 'pure objectivity', implying neutrality/detachment; and that what is 'inconsiderate hardness' in English, in French is called 'harsh ruthlessness' ('dureté impitoyable') (TR)



## 2.2 New determinants of the relationship to farming

The Simmel quote above is dated 1903. European societies have evolved greatly over the subsequent century. The rise in living standards, advances in transport and science, the mixing of populations resulting from increased migrations: these developments affect consumers' choices and, more generally, Europeans' expectations of agriculture. They have further intensified several trends already in progress with the transition to urban market economies - such as the **diversification of food supply**, the erosion of climatic constraints or the reduced importance of seasonal variations. In addition, the effects of increased prosperity have been compounded by the transition to the service economy – where the value of goods depends increasingly on their immaterial qualities.

In 2004 the FAO published a report on factors affecting attitudes towards agriculture. More precisely, it focuses on the role of agriculture in the shaping of national identity and on the impact a country's level of development has on the way farming is treated. On the strength of a comparative analysis of the situation in several countries (Mali, Ghana, China, India, Morocco, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, South Africa, Western Europe), the conclusions of this report show that t**he more affluent a society is, the greater the value it confers on the cultural specificity of its farming**, the more inclined it is to protect what has become rural heritage, and the more its market includes culturally-branded (marketed) farm produce. All these factors need be taken into account within the framework of our research on the future of European farming:

*"In transitional countries, such as China and India (where agriculture no longer accounts for a major share of the GNP, but more than half of the population is still settled in rural areas), rural cultural capital tends to be looked upon as a legacy of the past that impedes progress*

*(…) In neo-industrial societies (South Africa and Mexico), a variety of rural cultural capital based goods are internalized in market segments. Affluent urban populations consider it worthwhile to pay more for typical, authentic, ethnic commodities and food than for their industrial equivalents. This trend blossoms in industrial societies (Western Europe), where access to and exploitation of the cultural and natural assets needed for the production of these commodities are regulated. In these instances, landscape management, quality certification, and geographic indication policies are promoted by governments to protect these assets from misuse or abuse."*[2]

In addition, one effect of European urbanisation is **the individualisation of ways of life** (or indeed life*style* – for such is the impulse of people with cash to aestheticize their everyday life). Influenced by increasingly varied social processes, the modern city-dweller makes greatly diversified choices, weighs up and decides, according to circumstances, between a range of rationalities, finalities, value and reference systems: taste, quality, health, cost, ethics (fair trade), nutrition, etc. These considerations will no doubt divert, possibly "validate" (nay "soften" - always an easier thing to do with a full belly…) the attitudes of rich consumers towards greater concern for producers. The impersonal, matter-of-fact nature of exchanges as described by Simmel must therefore be considered in the light of European nutritional practices as they stand today. It is particularly striking to observe the extent to which subjective elements (factual or symbolic) are being reintroduced in exchanges: British marketing today has its products speaking in the first person ; an increasing quantity of foodstuffs - up to and including those sold in hypermarkets - give a full account of their identity (where they come from, who produced them); the proliferation of small-scale distribution networks, indeed of direct-sale setups, has revived the possibility of direct contact between producer and consumer.

However, these exceptions to what Simmel calls the "inconsiderate hardness" of the consumer's logic do not imply the end of such a logic. This observation is even more valid for the urban dwellers of central and Eastern Europe, who are avid consumers of standardised agro-industrial products, and for whom price remains an essential factor. In these countries only a prosperous minority displays concerns similar to those which now preoccupy wide segments of western European society. It remains to be seen whether the attitudes of these richer consumers indicates a more general trend in European food supply.

2 Extrait du rapport de synthèse 2004 du programme de recherche *RoA* (*Roles of Agriculture*) intitulé «Analyse socioéconomique des rôles de l'agriculture et de leurs conséquences pour la définition de politiques dans les pays en développement » : ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esa/roa/pdf/summary.pdf
Ce programme de recherche est mené par la Division de l'Economie du Développement Agricole (ESA) de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'Alimentation et l'Agriculture (FAO) : http://www.fao.org/es/esa/roa/index_fr.asp

## 3. Clarifications on the speaker's presentation

> *"(**T**he) peasant of the past, died 'old and satiated with life' because he stood in the organic cycle of life (...) Whereas civilized man, placed in the midst of the continuous enrichment of culture by ideas, knowledge, and problems, may become 'tired of life' but not 'satiated with life.' He catches only the most minute part of what the life of the spirit brings forth ever anew, and what he seizes is always something provisional and not definitive."*[3]

### 3.1 Main aims

The changes happening in all these areas of human activity – agriculture, science, industry, trade, transport, recreation and others – are so complex that it is difficult to build a theoretical model which can hold together all the pieces of the puzzle. This dilemma of the researcher echoes a more widely held concern: that it is no longer easy to pinpoint the role of agriculture in society. It is clear that the contributions made in the course of this seminar will not exhaust the richness of the subject: we do not expect all-encompassing theses from the participants. We ask them rather to assemble their contributions with the following considerations in mind:

**3.1.1.** The objective of the seminar is to present a **current reading** of the developments in European lifestyles and the expectations of Europeans vis-à-vis agriculture. The CAP was conceived at the end of the 1950s in specific circumstances: those of post-war reconstruction and the search for self-sufficiency in food provision. Reforms since then, including the transition – in several stages – from price support to aid decoupled from production, have been genuinely revolutionary. It is today indispensable to re-examine the wider context of European agriculture. This seminar will therefore try to **highlight the *new* determining factors in the choices made by European citizens** (the importance of environmental considerations, people's willingness to pay for an agriculture which respects the countryside, etc.). In doing this, we would like to put into perspective the CAP's original aims and its new challenges, and therefore to help decision-makers **assess the current relevance of considerations dating from the policy's creation** (security of food supply, market stabilisation, agricultural modernisation, a fair living standard for farmers, reasonable prices for consumers).

**3.1.2.** There are numerous aspects of life in European societies which can be observed through the prism of eating habits and connections to the land: developments in family life, changes in the relation to one's body, evolution of work practices, etc. We look to the panel contributors to use the results of their research to **identify among these numerous aspects those which they think are likely to *structure* the expectations of Europeans** with regards to farming.

**3.1.3.** *Notre Europe* sets much store by the **exploratory dimension** of the analyses the speakers will share. Designed as a prospective exercise, our seminar would miss its target if we were content with stating the obvious. We hope the speakers, while not bypassing information indispensable for a sound grasp of the subject, will bring their attention to bear on **issues which are not yet clearly identified or taken on board** in the current raft of agricultural and rural development policies. We also suggest they concentrate on those of the changes they have observed which they expect to develop significant ramifications in the mid-term.

3 Max Weber, *Wissenschaft als Beruf*, 1919. English translation: http://www.ne.jp/asahi/moriyuki/abukuma/weber/lecture/science_frame.html (translation not attributed)

**3.1.4.** It is important that the phenomena to be analysed have a **European dimension**. We would ask the speakers to illustrate their addresses with examples drawn from their particular field (necessarily specific, with Europe so defined by the diversity of its ways of life, nutritional habits, or rural histories) whilst **making sure they establish a link with similar phenomena** observable in neighbouring countries. We aim to single out some common trends without masking in the analytical process any element peculiar to the context studied by each contributor.
N.B.: it goes without saying that in the case of the second panel, centred on Eastern and Central-European societies, the expected spectrum of the comparison is slightly different.

**3.1.5.** The symposium in which this seminar is set is the **first stage** of a prospective exercise to be pursued in 2007 with the formulation of proposals intended for the European institutions and Member State governments. The aim of this first phase is to arrive at as accurate a **diagnosis** as possible of the major sociological trends liable to influence the future of European farming. Accordingly we ask speakers to **eschew an over-prescriptive approach in their analyses.**

## 3.2 Specific aims of each panel

The explanations above apply to the three seminar panels. With these general aims clearly stated, let us now briefly recap the specific object of each:

**Panel 1**
**City-dwelling and changes in the relation to food and the environment**
The object of this panel is to give an update on lifestyles in Europe, to elucidate the major evolutions to be taken into account, to identify those aspects of behaviour, novel today, which could prefigure the shape of things to come, and to help detail and qualify the new-found attachment of Europeans to farming, to culinary heritage, to the rural landscape and – more broadly – to the environment.

**Panel 2**
**Mutations in Central and Eastern European societies**
We thought it crucial to dedicate a panel to the specific shifts observed in the new Member States of the EU. The object will be to gauge the distinctive features that typify the rural histories and consumer practices in these post-communist countries: is an "alignment" on the trends observed in the West at work here, with "catching up" a mere question of time? Or will these specificities lead to the development of original models?

**Panel 3**
**What will be the indigenous and cultural drivers of European agriculture in the 21st century?**
This panel is probably the most open to prescriptive thinking. Its object is to evaluate the extent to which proximity effects and the recognition of cultural and territorial diversities are relevant to thinking on the future of farming in Europe: is it conceivable that a different management of the next generation of agricultural policies could take on board the specificity of nutritional habits and production systems peculiar to different European regions (Mediterranean Europe, Northern Europe etc.)? What will be the role of local authorities and local actors in the conception and implementation of the future CAP?

## Digest of the Contributions

**Henri Nallet** former minister for agriculture opened the debate reminding the audience of the original aims of the CAP as stated in the Treaty of Rome. This historic survey over, he could set in context the current situation weighed down as it is by uncertainties and by internal and external constraints. In particular he makes the link between the identity crisis the Union is currently experiencing and European failure in reclaiming the significance, the coherence of their only truly integrated policy. Convinced that it is urgent to conduct a critical analysis of the CAP's results, and of what the citizens expect from farming, he entreats European leaders to reconsider the overall objectives of the CAP before getting bogged down in the practical means to that end.

**Clemens Discherl** considered the new drivers in the relationship between city dwellers and farming. He shows how since the advent of the new environmentalists in the eighties, farming has been at the centre of a lively public debate in Germany. In particular, expectations from farming can be

understood as an expression of the individualisation process characteristic of urban societies: a growing interest in the "local", the "specific", the "familiar" in reaction to globalisation; a tendency to idealise the past in the hope of conquering the feeling of insecurity which is part and parcel of modernity; overemphasis on issues of health and demands concerning traceability and quality; concerns for animal welfare, etc… Going beyond economic considerations, he stresses the ethical, socio-cultural dimensions implied in the "farming question" as set today in Germany.

**Jean-Louis Rastoin** questioned the feasibility of an alternative food pattern in a global context of rampant urbanisation and convergence towards an agro-tertiary set-up. According to him, the intensive agro-business model, specialised, concentrated, financialised and globalised has brought about outstanding achievements in the field of price reduction and product safety. But it also creates negative externalities, which in the long term threaten peoples' nutritional balance and the planet's environmental stability. So he calls on researchers to pursue a few lines of thought drawn from the concept of sustainable development through the setting up of shorter and more diversified production and distribution systems, the discussion of governance models on a regional, national and international scale, the reconfiguration of territories – all prospects that rely on the devising of proactive public policies

**Zoltan Lakner** analysed the specificities of consumption behaviours and food chains in former communist countries. The shift to a market economy has displaced the market structures but also the consumption patterns. Private middlemen have appeared between consumers and producers such as superstores importing foodstuffs. The demise of shortage economy has open the way to consumption societies typified by diversified choice opportunities. With the proviso that models have but an explanatory value – "*the* consumer" does not exist – Zoltan Lakner puts forward a typology of Hungarian consumers. Closely linked to a person's socio-economic status, the explosion of consumer choice testifies to the main evolution of changing economies: the advent of social inequalities. The young Hungarian market economy evinces today trends relatively similar to the characteristics found in West-European societies – notably when it comes to food safety and certifications of regional origin.

**Maria Halamska** focussed on the role of the CAP in the transformations taking place in the Polish countryside. She examinates the specific features of the Polish transition that lead to an "end of the peasant farmer" which was not followed by the rural migration process through which the working population can be redistributed into other economic sectors. As a result, the countryside has retained a significant population of "quasi-peasants" with political leanings towards the agrarian-populist, Euro-sceptic, anti-liberal parties that in turn affect the whole country's development. Maria Halamska goes on to analyse how the CAP is perceived and more specifically how Polish farmers, on the whole very favourable to direct subsidies are conversely rather wary of the CAP's new strategic objectives (rural development, environmental measures).

**Jean-Pierre Vercruysse** approached the question of the future of the European countryside in the light of an original citizens consultation experiment. The project in question, named "European citizens' panel on the future of farming[4]" opens up interesting avenues towards reforms in the governance of the European farming policy. The debates, conducted within panels set up in ten different European regions, highlight the significant contribution local authorities can make when more closely involved in the implementations of this policy. As a result, Jean-Pierre Vercruysse advocates a more systematically "bottom-up" approach to the drafting and implementing of the next generation of European policies.

4 Role of rural areas in tomorrow's Europe

**Bertrand Hervieu** offered three observations liable to inform CAP prospective thinking. The first deals with European farming's polarisation: how can small and medium farmers' aspiration and business farmers (agro business)s' ambitions wholly bereft of the concept of "peasantry", be reconciled within a common theoretical framework? The second addresses issues of mobility and the concentration drive typical of contemporary European production: have we got in place public policies with adequate leverage to manage the problems (environment, transport infrastructure) arising from the uneven distribution of production across the European territory? The third concerns the EU's relation with the countries south of the Mediterranean in the domains of farming and food production and their social implications.

As a conclusion, former Agriculture and Rural Development Commissioner **Franz Fischler** sketches some of the most important new features of European farming. In a context of demand-driven markets and in societies where farmers are but a minority, he stresses in particular the need to take into account food chains in their entirety – from "table to stable". European farming must, in his view, be able to meet the diverse demands of differing types of consumers. Policies must accordingly be devised which allow for differentiation, enabling farmers and agro-businesses to supply the market segment, or niche, which they are best positioned to satisfy. Finally he calls for the continuation of multilateral negotiations in the framework of the WTO, and for a reinforcement of the cooperation with the countries south of the Mediterranean but also with those on Europe's eastern most boundaries.



## Summing up the Debates

Nadège Chambon and Aziliz Gouez

### Introduction

When it comes to farming, it is no longer the stable but the table that drives the markets. This represents a complete reversal of the context in which the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) initially came about. Whereas *supply*, that is to say European producers, was the object of 1957's decision makers' undivided attention, *demand* is what now informs the evolution of farming. As the CAP's "health check" draws near, a close examination of the expectations Europeans – consumers and citizens alike – have of farming and food, is of crucial importance. The scope of such an analysis represents a major challenge: it requires a thorough grasp of the considerable economic and sociological changes undergone in a now 27 Member Europe.

Once a rural civilisation, Europe is now essentially urban. Farmers are no longer the only source for our representations of nature and the countryside, even if the image of the farming family remains a strong identity reference in some countries. The modernization of agriculture, the adoption of new

techniques has, bar in a few countries, changed the complexion of European farming. The CAP's original aims have been achieved: prices are stable and fair, the security of supplies is assured, the gap between farmers' income and that in other activities has been bridged – at least in the long standing Member States. Economic growth has ushered in broadly well off populations, henceforth free from the fear of hunger, and driven by concerns other than mere subsistence.

It is these major shifts in European societies that we aim to account for and bear in mind when thinking up the reform of the post 2013 CAP. Without claiming to be exhaustive, we set out the grounds of convergence in the contributions[5] presented at the seminar organised by Notre Europe under the heading "What farming models for European societies in the 21st century?"

## I – Drivers of change: Endogenous and Exogenous Trends

### A – Societal Phenomena

Three main phenomena have been identified amongst the structural developments liable to weigh on the future of farming in the medium and long term: population ageing, urbanisation and mobility.

**Population ageing is of prime** concern for the farming work force but, more broadly, it affects Europe's population[6] as a whole. More perceptible on the old continent than in other regions of the world, this trend will continue to have worrying social corollaries (marginalisation of some rural areas) but also nutritional implications with profound consequences for tomorrow's farming.

5 These contributions are published in an additional document.
6 Come 2050, projected figures place at 35% the number of 60+ in Europe against 10% in Africa, 25% in Asia, Latin America and Australasia.



**Urbanisation** and its consequences also received a great deal of attention. In our societies of "hyperchoice", consumption trends are determined by increasingly individualised criteria – the "to each according to his own" model looming increasingly large on the horizon. Meanwhile, a growing proportion of young Europeans are no longer directly connected to farming: even where industrialisation is a 20th century phenomenon, you often need to go back 2 or 3 generations to find farmers in a family. Consumption patterns and urban tempos, the shifts in family structures and working women also deeply influence the way meals are taken and food related knowledge is passed on. The result of all these factors is that the relationship of many Europeans to food and farming is no longer a "spontaneous" one.

"Urbanisation's twin sister", globalisation entails an unprecedented diversification of European food patterns. Anxieties increase as the gap between producer and consumer grows ever wider and as a multitude of actors intervene at every stage of production, transport, storage and distribution. The food supply chains, already fractured by urbanisation and industrialisation, are now even further lengthened. The intensification of exchanges of all kinds at world level also accelerates the propagation and the mediatisation of epidemics. **Mobility** was thus identified as a fundamental cultural and economic component underpinning our modernity. This feature of modernity deeply impacts on farming, which accompanies the mobility of capital, goods and labour, the development of tourism and services.

It is against these structural shifts that the emergence of a range of concerns, primarily focussed on **health** and body awareness have been analysed. Health food, dietary food and organic produce all vie with each other for space on the shelves of European shops. The particular care people take of their physical well-being does not only connote a wealthy and ageing society but also a rising perception of the risks inherent to modern life.

Issues of food safety will most certainly remain crucial to Europeans in the next decades.

The contemporary emphasis on the **values of closeness, authenticity and familiarity** is partly to be read as a means to counter these risks. The impact of globalisation on everyday lives is being met with a new attachment to what is local, regional, and a renewed relevance for community values and the bonds of friendship and family. In the absence of a coherent and unifying value system, post-modern people show a tendency to seek reassurance in small unit (family/traditional) farming. Endowed with symbolic assets the more significant for being supposedly untouched by the scourge of progress, small farming is the provider, through its products, of a direct link to a safe (if somewhat mythified) past. Finally, the growing individualisation of consumption modes does not easily accommodate the standardisation and "one size fits all" approach which are the hallmark of food-Fordism: the popularity of specific and non series produce is thus increasingly evident.

**Concerns for the environment**, more pronounced in Europe than in most other world regions, have also been highlighted as a rising trend. A great many European consumers are not only wary of the presence of insecticides and pesticides in their food but also worried by the after-effects of some farming methods (fertilizers, intensive spraying, hedge grubbing, etc.) on soils, water tables or ecological balances. More broadly, the interaction between farming and **landscape** management is a growing concern in Europe. Some farming methods are lauded for their positive externalities in terms of upkeep of the land whilst others are castigated for their destructive effects and the conflicts they cause between competing types of land use (leisure, tourism, etc.).

Lastly, the extension of the food supply chain brought about by the intensification of international trade coincides with a shrinkage of perceived distances. This novel psychological proximity between third country producers and European consumers raises **ethical concerns** which increasingly govern the choices of the most well off consumers. Meanwhile, the population's urbanisation, individualisation and ageing have a bearing on the Europeans' relationship to animals – now perceived as sentient beings and not just simply as goods and edibles. European farmers are henceforward faced with a public opinion which, in its concern for "animal welfare", is more and more hostile to the methods associated with intensive breeding as well as to some transport and slaughter conditions.

**B – Food Supply Chain and Farming in East European Countries**

The transformations in train in new Member States, some of which (Hungary, Poland, Romania) are important agricultural producers, received particular attention. In the 1990s, East European countries were put through an ultra-rapid "transition" to a market economy. In the farming and agri-food sector this resulted in a dual trend of **privatisation** and **differentiation**. The resulting feel is of a wide (and still growing) gap between the transition's "winners" and "losers", both on the producers and the consumers' side.

With regard to the latter, the salient change is, of course, the increase and **diversification of consumption possibilities**, even though the average purchasing power – and with it the range of choices – of Eastern consumers remains inferior to that of their Western counterparts. The **collapse of the controlled consumption system** is another distinctive feature of East-European societies. Whereas one of the ideological pillars of communism aimed at eliminating class differences, the last ten years' socio-economic evolution has turned the relatively homogenous social structures of these countries upside down. Consumption segmentation reflects today's new social order (the "average consumer" is a thing of the past).

The Hungarian case is a good illustration of the changes brought about on the production front. In the 1990s, the country's agri-food sector was transformed in the wake of a fairly radical privatisation policy pushed through by means of Direct Foreign Investment (DFI), mostly flowing from Western Europe. These privatisations originally created havoc (breakdown of the former health inspection mechanisms, food scandals, etc.) The Hungarian agri-food sector of today shares many common features with its West-European counterpart, whilst retaining some specificity peculiar to former communist countries. A **bipolar structure** came into being with, on the one hand, large and very concentrated production units, and on the other hand a proliferation of smaller units. Thus, as state farms and cooperatives were dismantled, the number of small and medium size farms grew considerably while some large estates were being recreated with private capital.

The outstanding performance of the Hungarian farming and agri-food sectors from the early 1960s to the end of the 1980s rested on the production of **mass goods, mediocre in quality and with virtually nil added value**. After the fall of Communism, the relative and absolute value of this agri-food sector declined noticeably, but Hungary, alone amongst Central and Eastern European countries, remains a net exporter of foodstuffs. In the face of stiff international competition, Hungarian producers have acknowledged the urgent need to get out of the low price trap through the valorisation of their products and the improvement of their marketing methods.

The **promotion of regional produce**, the setting up of quality labels or the adoption of a denomination of origin labelling system as proposed by the EU are important tools in these valorisation strategies. In Hungary, like in most South-Eastern European countries, migratory waves and successive invasions have given rise to a multicultural culinary tradition and the emergence of very distinctive regional variations. The inventory – and frequently the reinvention – of these culinary traditions has been in progress over the past ten years or so[7]. But much remains to be built in countries were proletarian internationalist ideology had the better of national, regional or local specificities. On the consumer front, the last five years in Hungary have witnessed a growing interest for differentiated products, most noticeably among the youngest, wealthiest and best educated population segments.

Broadened to Eastern Europe, our prospective analysis on the future of European farming would be incomplete without a scan of its farmers' position. Indeed the "other Europe", with countries like Poland and Romania at the forefront, comes with an **unresolved "peasant farming problem".**

The Polish case, in a country where the unemployment rate is among the highest in Europe, where more than 20% of the working population is involved in farming, where 60% to 70% of farm holdings are less than 5 hectares – is an eye opener. Whereas in West-European countries, industrial growth made it possible for the work force to shift from the village to the factory, in today's Poland, the countryside is not so fully "integrated". The country has moved on to a post-industrial phase but, as its services are still underdeveloped, rural migration is currently at a stand still. Although emigration towards other EU countries eases the situation to a degree, it mostly concerns a young, urban and well educated population.

An other Polish peculiarity lies with the **importance of the "quasi peasants"**, that is of a population segment which remains linked to the farming sector, "sheltering under the wing of a rural identity" without owning anything like a viable farm or drawing from it the means of their subsistence. In a difficult economical context, polyactivity is an important social buffer (driven

7 To wit the creation in Hungary of a catalogue entitled "Traditions – Flavours – Regions" compiled by some one hundred food specialists (historians, ethnographers, etc…) and funded by the Hungarian Ministry for Agriculture and by the European Union.

faster, the reengineering of Polish farming would have disastrous consequences…). But this "quasi-peasantry", unable to abandon the safety of the village community for some other position in Polish society, has a detrimental effect on collective behaviour and, more to the point, on attitudes towards European integration[8].

The impact of Polish farmers' can be viewed as a **brake on change**. It must be added that Poland stands out among Eastern countries with its unique historical heritage. Here, the attempts to de-agrarianise started in the late 1940s had but little effect. Polish farmers' resistance to the regime also meant that the creation of large collective farms and the restructuring aimed at the introduction of more intensive methods were stalled. In an environment where incentives to productivity were few (centrally fixed prices), competition nil and the regime hostile to the accumulation of private capital (equipment, land), the development of farming was held back and the number of farms remained stable over the forty years of communist rule.

Thus many Poles remain tied to the land, motivated as much by socio-psychological impulse as by economic rationality. The "brake" theory has been further illustrated by the **specific political behaviour** observed among farmers. Since 1991, they have on the whole supported agrarian populist parties who make rural issues a major theme of their campaigns. The 1991, 1993, 1997, 2001 and especially the 2005 polls reveal a notable concentration of the farming vote in favour of agrarian populist parties, which rely (to a greater or lesser extent) on an anti-EU, anti-elitist, anti-liberal rhetoric, with such core values as the protective State, national interest and the rejection of what is foreign. These parties also call into question the very principles on which other parties had built the country's development strategy.

8 Specifically, and along with the majority of Polish farmers, this population segment responded negatively to integration into the EU on the occasion of the referendum on Polish membership.



As a result, the numerous and diverse Polish farming community, dominated by "part time" peasant-farmers, presses for a redistributive approach which weakens the internal drive for farming reforms[9]. This is all the more worrying since the EU aid allocation principles depend on such reforms. Another danger lies in the association of procedures set for representing people's interests with the growth of political clientelism; this threatens nascent democratic mechanisms and is liable to set off the vicious circle where the proliferation of demands is met with the impossible task of satisfying them, on which populism thrives. It remains that the CAP is broadly seen as a force for the good by these farmers, even though they show much less interest in the second pillar's agri-environmental measures than in direct payments.

**C – Trends in the Overall Framework[10]**

Beyond its endogenous evolution, the European agricultural framework has been revolutionised by the **integration of agriculture into the international trade agreements** (cf. Marrakesh, 1994). The aforementioned onset of ethical concerns among European consumers is the moral translation of a new world order, characterized by a growing interdependence between most countries' economies and societies. The Europeans are ever more conscious of the impact of the CAP on the agricultural equilibrium in developing countries, or even of the impact of their daily consumption choices

9 The contrast with, say, France is striking. In that country, "agricultural modernisation" was broadly achieved through consensus, in response to positive ideological stimuli under the aegis of charismatic farming personalities

10 This section only summarises the analyses contributors presented during the seminar. In the framework of the CAP 2013 project *Notre Europe* sets forth an overall diagnosis of the key parameters informing the framework for European farming in the mid-term: the evolution of world food supply and demand, the future of organic farming, biofuels, the environment, GMOs, the impact of trade negotiations on the agricultural policy, farming in the new Member States, etc… **http://www.notre-europe.eu/en/axes/competition-cooperation-solidarity/projects/publication/proposals-for-the-eu-agricultural-policy-post-2013/**

on these countries. The emergence of developing countries as influential new actors in world agricultural production and international trade negotiations, urbanisation, the demographic boom in a number of countries in the world, the mutations in consumption patterns, the environmental damage brought about by the productivist model are as many exogenous variables altering contemporary Europe's farming equations.

If, hitherto, the world economy's "two elephants", in Franz Fischler's graphic terms, "did business together excluding the rest", the Doha cycle negotiations have shown that the developing world, and particularly the "emergent" countries, such as Brazil and China, have become major actors in the global game. These countries, or blocs, use the multilateral trade negotiations (WTO) to uphold their agricultural interests and attempt to control the flows which impinge on their internal equilibrium. They have gradually established a **new balance of power forcing the EU and the USA to "clean up" their agricultural policies**. In spite of ongoing progress, the inequalities in the liberalisation of agricultural trade are the target of the NGOs' criticisms for their negative effects on UDCs and LDCs, who have to struggle to remain competitive against the rich countries' subsidised products (e.g. the recent spat over sugar). Meanwhile, the development of export orientated production is taking place even as the countries' subsistence farming does not meet domestic needs. Finally, these countries import goods with a strong added value and commodities – which increases the deficit on their trade balance, as happens to such major cereal importers as the Middle-East countries. Many voices are raised in protest against this economic, commercial and social imbalance and to ensure that the trading rules and agricultural policies of the rich countries take into consideration the negative effects of their agricultural policies on the development of the poorest countries. This seems all the more important since these countries' peoples, including those who are only marginally involved in international trade, rely heavily on farming for their subsistence.



Two dominant phenomena, urbanisation[11] and the UDC's demographic boom anticipated by 2050, give good cause to maintain Europe's participation in the world agricultural supply. The demography of the UDCs is buoyant enough to impact on the framework of European farming. Statistical research forecasts a 50% demographic leap at world level between now and 2050 – when world population should reach a stand still at around the 9 billion mark. Whilst the Old Continent's population should fall by 10%, it should grow by 32% in North America, 40% in Latin America, Asia and Australasia and should double in Africa (114%)!

Finally, globalisation opens a window of opportunity for European based agri-food and distribution businesses. Combined with the effects of urbanisation, the arrival on the scene of European agri-business and food distribution giants is **significantly modifying the staple diets** in the target countries. This phenomenon is particularly noticeable in the South Mediterranean countries where staple foods reputed for their dietary virtues are often abandoned by urban middle classes eager to adopt "western" imports meeting international standards. These countries' farmers, already facing challenging production and productivity conditions, cannot match such grading or marketing standards and end up deprived of their local and national outlets (particularly on large cities' markets).

Such phenomena show the **limits of the agri-industrial model** – should current trends hold. The main trends at work for 50 years now show that the UDCs are getting closer to Western dietary patterns[12] characterised by an over-consumption of animal proteins which, at a rate of seven

11 The equalization, in 2006, of the numbers for urban and rural dwellers is a watershed marking the dominance of town over countryside. Asia and Africa are to remain rural in their majority with the rest of the world containing 80% city dwellers.
12 The UDCs and LDCs have for the most part overseen the development of a dual food system. On one side, they have a sub-system on the lines of the agri-industrial model, aimed at the big cities' middle and upper middle classes keen on imported goods; on the other a traditional sub-system, typical of the rural era and concerning the most part of the countryside.

vegetal calories for one animal calorie, are onerous to produce. Over and above the dire warnings of nutritionists against this consumption model - too rich in lipids and sugars and responsible for serious diseases in rich countries (e.g. the prevalence of obesity) – it is hard to see how, from a purely agronomic point of view, this model could be extended to the whole world population. For it would require water and land resources far beyond what is available on Earth! Such a scheme would lead in very short order to an unprecedented degradation of the landscapes and the exhaustion of natural resources.

## II Pointers for the Future: Market Forces and Societal Project

### A - Bipolarisation and Territorial Dynamics

The **polarisation of the agricultural production models** and of farming itself is seen as a fact of life in both East and Western Europe. In France, in Germany, in Central Europe, small and medium size production units exist alongside bigger players looking towards integration projects engulfing hundreds of hectares over the next ten years or so. Directly connected to world markets, these businesses are characterized by intensive specialisation in search of productivity gains (*via* technical developments and economies of scale) which enable them to compete at world level.

The challenge tomorrow's Europe must address is therefore to find a policy suited to such polarised production models. How is the same policy framework to accommodate both the aspirations of small and medium size holdings and the ambitions of farm businesses (the ethos of which is devoid of any concept of "peasantry" - with its cultural specificity, its geographic roots)? And how is the future CAP to respond to the range of farming situations between these two extremes? If it is to be effective and consistent, the Union's future policy will, in any case, have to take into account this diversity of situations and create differentiated tools designed to manage the full scope of production approaches.

European decision makers could chose to concentrate, over the next twenty years, on the most competitive unit to ensure that Europe remains an agricultural power at world level. They can make a different choice: that of letting these large enterprises cope alone, restricting themselves to a measure of market regulation, while concentrating efforts on what is left of the "peasantry" (in Poland or Romania) and more modern small holdings at ease with their *multifunctionality*. What is for sure is that political choices to come will entail **far reaching identity implications**. Indeed, analyses concur in showing that Europeans have much more affection for small farming (which they fancy a continuation of family farming) than for farm business – which European public opinion is inclined to consider is in no need of public support. It is unanimously accepted that small farming must remain at the heart of the next generation of agricultural policies because it offers the social, territorial and identity buffer still needed in Europe but also because it meets requirements farm business is not designed for (cultural and culinary heritage, landscapes, etc…).

The polarisation of production entails a spatial dynamics which also calls for public attention. It impinges on citizens' daily lives, on societies' social and environmental balance. The polarisation of production results in very contrasted densities with some regions bearing the brunt of highly intensive farming activity. Over the course of a century, Europe has gone from being a land that yielded a bit of everything,[13], to a situation where hyperspecialisation has concentrated production in a few basins.

The stabilisation of a number of these major agricultural production basins is not guaranteed by the 2025 deadline. Is it even desirable? The answer to this question hangs on hard political choices. In particular, they require

13 With the notable exception of countries like the UK, the Netherlands…

public policies designed to relieve the environmental tensions caused by these concentrations. They further depend on the capability of public authorities to develop the great exchange and transport infrastructures crucial to global competitiveness. This double question of major infrastructural development and the sensitive political handling required for its environmental consequences raises once again the question of how to manage Europe's diverse circumstances (Holland is not confronted to the same problems as the Massif Central or indeed the Putza). The EU but also **local governments** will have a major part to play in these issues (general public consultation, implementation of Community directives, funding of infrastructures, etc…).

The reduction of industrial farming's **negative impact on the environment** requires a systematic approach. Recent years' experience shows that the "good behaviour" principle is not adequate in dissuading polluters. No doubt the setting up of publicly enforced reparation mechanisms would meet with more success. But one must keep in mind that the concentration of production in some regions is prerequisite to European farmers' capability to feed their population and to export on the world markets. It is furthermore a necessary condition in the preservation of a quality environment for other regions. European citizens seem to have adapted to contrasting densities. With the combined advance of urbanisation and almost universal mobility, anxieties' evident in the 1970s over the countryside's desertification have lost some of their urgency.

**B – Educate the Consumers, Involve the Citizens**

The CAP has hitherto been run on a taxpayer based funding model. Now, is this model the best suited to consumers' new demands in terms of food quality and diversity, or to the criteria set by the new international configuration? Both the balance between these diverse demands and the price this balance comes at, represent fundamental questions to be addressed by Europe's new agricultural policy. In particular, the way the European politico-economic system funds such parameters as the quality of foodstuffs or the upkeep of the landscape will have to be fixed: Should this be left to the **market** (through labelling, marketing, pricing), leaving consumers to express their personal preferences? Or should public policies shoulder – *via* subsidies, regulations or protections – the cost of the externalities ignored by the market (environment, animal welfare, landscape preservation, development aid)?

There is no easy answer to these questions – made all the more tricky by the discrepancies between the citizens' consumption behaviours and their expectations. In our societies of plenty, consumption choices are wide and the same person may behave in different ways depending on the contexts in which they find themselves (work, leisure, family, etc…). Furthermore, in our affluent societies, the share allocated to food expenditure has become marginal in the greater scheme of household expenses. Access to cheap food enables people to satisfy other "aspirations": health, culture, leisure, etc… Does that dispose them to pay the "fair price" for quality goods, of necessity more expensive than those produced industrially?

The consumers' demands as they evolved at the end of the 20th Century (quality, safety, care for the environment and animals) impose constraints on production which are costly both in time and money. A better grasp of these constraints by the non-rural populations would probably influence noticeably their consumption habits. Only through **consumer education** and **citizen's involvement** in rural and farming related decisions can a true resolution be found to the contradiction inherent in the current system – whereby the same person's attitudes vary (sometimes in stark contradiction) depending on whether they think of themselves as consumer or citizen. Rather than entrusting regulation to the market alone, contributors agreed on the necessity to set up an authentic **"food policy"**. Too many

young Europeans have but a vague knowledge of products' value, method of production, seasonal cycles or nutritional balance. The issue of food education for the younger generations is coming to the surface as public health problems increase along with their costs (associated with cardio-vascular treatment in particular). Nothing short of a pro-active food policy – yet to emerge – has much chance of equipping European people with the right nutritional approach, this through the modification of consumption patterns from the earliest age.

While the development of international trade facilitates the exchange of goods at a lower cost, the globalisation of the agricultural and agri-food markets is associated with a still embryonic process of **re-localisation of the food circuits**. Europe has every interest in enabling, and even encouraging this process – which is well suited to the diversity of its farming practices and crops. The reinstatement of short supply chains, which narrow the distance between place of production and place of consumption, would have the advantage of allowing for the preservation of Europe's diverse diets and consumption patterns (Mediterranean, etc.). It would besides be more likely to provide answers to future territorial and environmental challenges. Here again, the role of local governments is of the essence. The involvement of citizens in local authorities' actions and in the framing of public objectives would undoubtedly ease the implementation of policies by rural actors. The "citizens' panels"[14] initiative, included in the seminar, illustrates the broad range of problems facing Europe's diverse rural make up. It also highlights the virtues of **bottom-up governance**, which makes it possible to modulate public policies according to each territory's specificities. It would therefore appear that consumer education and citizen's involvement in the management of the countryside could help integrate expectations at individual level in a first step towards a new dynamic at the collective level.

14 http://www.citizenspanel.eu/



## Conclusion

The need for the decision makers to create tools (for regulation, support, consultation) which can manage the full range of situations matches the need for farmers to satisfy the full range of European consumers' demands. European farming must continue to produce low cost goods but also niche products with high added value, as well as the "public goods" required for the social, ecological and cultural balance of European societies. The Old Continent's agriculture has, and indeed will continue to have, a fundamental cultural function, which gives agricultural policy decisions significant identity implications and make them particularly sensitive (public support wise).

Neither the unrelenting rhythm of international exchanges nor the current demographic trends in developing countries advocate, as we showed, for a dismantling of Europe's intensive farming productive capacities. But such large scale farming is incapable of taking on the functions fulfilled by small and medium size farms. The latter are indeed much better suited to meeting a number of expectations Europeans have – notably in terms of food quality, landscape preservation, or cultural wealth. Besides, small and medium size farming actors display surprisingly innovative abilities. For this to remain so in decades to come, it behoves to give them the means to train and acquire the new skills needed to answer the challenge of diversification and to conquer new market shares.

The contributors to the seminar pleaded for the preservation of a diversified agriculture embracing non-export farms (those content with regional, national or European markets) alongside those capable of holding their own on the world agricultural markets. They thereby arrived at a sustainable agricultural development model, respectful of three fundamental objectives: social fairness, economic viability and ecology. As a result of the huge diversity of situations observable across Europe, such a model would,

of necessity, assume a hybrid shape, possessed with a fully diversified range of instruments. It would combine, according to geographic situation, mindsets and behavioural patterns, modern configurations – dictated by globalisation – and conservative or post-modern configurations – based on territorial ties. Europeans must now arrive at a vision shared by all 27 members and formulate together a project which provides their agriculture with something better than a more or less rational share of the community budget and a hand to mouth management of the single market.

## Programme

**Moderator**: Pierre Lepetit, Vice-president, Notre Europe
**Introduction**: Henri Nallet, Former French Minister of Agriculture

### 1st Panel - Urbanity and evolution in relation to food, territory and the environment

**New determinants in the relation between urbans and agriculture: Case-study on contemporary Germany**
Clemens Discherl, Sociologist, University of Nürtingen

**Agriculture and agro-food system in a urbanization / tertiarization model**
Jean Louis Rastoin, Professor, Economist and agronomist, Agro. Montpellier, Director UMR Moisa, France

**Floor discussion**

### 2nd Panel - Changes in Central and Eastern European societies

**Consumer behaviour in Central and Eastern Europe**
Zoltan Lakner, Department of Agricultural Economics and Food, University of Corvinus, Budapest

**The role of peasants in contemporary Polish society**
Maria Halamska, Sociologist, University of Warsaw, Polish Academy of Sciences

**Floor discussion**

### 3rd Panel - Which territorial and cultural dynamics for European agriculture in the 21st century?

**Contribution** of Bertrand Hervieu, Secretary General, ICAMAS (International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies), France

**Contribution** of Jean Pierre Vercruysse, European Association for Information on Local Development, Coordinator « European Citizens panels, Belgium

**Floor discussion**

### Conclusion

David Baldock, Director, Institute for European Environmental Policy, UK

Franz Fischler, President Forum Eco-social Europe, Former European Commissioner for agriculture and rural development, Austria

## List of participants

David BALDOCK, Director, Institute for European Environmental Policy, United Kingdom

Nadège CHAMBON, Research Fellow, Notre Europe

Clemens DIRSCHERL, Sociologist, University of Nürtingen, Germany

Franz FISCHLER, President Forum Eco-social Europe, Former European Commissioner for agriculture and rural development, Austria

Aziliz GOUEZ, Research Fellow, Notre Europe

Maria HALAMSKA, Sociologist, University of Varsovie, Academy of sciences, Poland

Bertrand HERVIEU, Secretary General, ICAMAS (International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies), France

Zoltan LAKNER, Department of Agricultural Economics and Food, Professor University of Corvinus Budapest, Hungary

Pierre LEPETIT, Vice-president, Notre Europe

Henri NALLET, Former French Minister of Agriculture

Jean-Louis RASTOIN, Economist and agronomist, Professor Agro. Montpellier, Director UMR Moisa, France

Jean-Pierre VERCRUYSSE, European Association for Information on Local Development, Coordinator « European Citizens panels », Belgium

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