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# Report of the President: 5 years of chairing ICA

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**Guido Van Huylenbroeck**



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# Statement in June 2011 when taken over the presidency

- ICA needs to be re-launched as the leading organization in Europe defending the interests of agricultural and life science universities
- The ICA annual accounts need to show again a positive balance (after continuous losses in previous years)
- ICA needs to focus his actions and operations based on its members interests

These objectives led to the strategic action plan 2011-2015

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# ICA action plan

- The main question: what role has ICA to play, as a European platform, in helping agricultural and life science institutions to fulfill their mission?:
    - ICA as platform for exchange with industry
    - ICA as platform for exchange among universities (Europe and Globally)
    - ICA as platform for exchange among professors/teachers
    - ICA as platform for exchange with students
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# ICA as platform for exchange with industry/external world

- In several Rectors&Deans forums we had participation of industry and viewpoint of people from the outside in order to reflect on the role of universities
- ICA task force on the bio-economy was created (should become more active !)
- We hold our 2015 forum at the world expo in Milan in the EU paviljon
- ICA was invited and contributed to the discussion on the role of agricultural research during the world expo in Milan

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# ICA as platform for exchange among universities

- Representative role of ICA was re-enforced by participation in several networks: EUA, GCHERA
- Organisation of and participation in several global symposia:
  - Growing the Bio-economy conference in Canada in 2012
  - Conference in Mexico in 2014
  - Joint OECD sponsored conference in Zaragoza in June 2015
- Creation of the annual successful rectors & deans forum to support networking between senior managers and to develop main ideas for future actions in ICA (6 for a with each time  $\pm$  50+ participants)
- Support to global initiatives of standing committees or member initiatives (mainly endorsement and publicity via website)
- ICA was positioned as umbrella organisation for the standing committees

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# ICA as platform for exchange among professors and teachers

- ICA developed ICA-Edu for professionalization of educational competences with:
  - First seminars in Bolzano in 2012
  - ICA-Edu colloquium in Vienna in 2015
  - ICA-edu colloquium in Helsinki 2016
  - Further development: see update by Barbara Hinterstoisser

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# ICA as platform for exchange with students

- Student organisation IAAS is ex officio member of ICA board
- Student voice was regularly heard in symposia organised by ICA (also in 2016 forum e.g.)
- Regular contacts between ICA-SG and student representatives
- IROICA is a standing committee of ICA and ex officio member of ICA-board: main role of international relation officers is to stimulate student exchanges among universities

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# Main activities 2016

- ICA-Edu colloquium in Helsinki (June)
  - Participation of ICA SG in the GCHERA general assembly (South Africa 2016)
  - The Rectors and Deans forum in 2016
  - Preparation of an action plan 2016-2020
    - Supporting managerial capacity and leadership (this forum)
    - Developing concrete benefits for membership fee (to be continued)
    - Focusing on education quality and requirements for future professionals in life sciences (ICA trainings and label of programs?)
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# Some challenges for the future

- ICA is depending too much on the individual engagement of individual rectors or deans and is insufficiently embedded in most universities/faculties as a service organization
- ICA should reflect on how to keep on board all (leading) life science universities in Europe: relationship with standing committees should be much stronger: how to bring all universities under the umbrella organization (other fee structure?)
- ICA should therefore rethink its role for the future and professionalize maybe some of its services such as:
  - Teacher trainings
  - Support to international and intercultural competency development of students
  - Benchmarking of universities (ICA-label of course programs?)
- Does ICA wants to become a professional organization based on service delivery?

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# Conclusions

- I hope ICA has made progress in fulfilling its mission as a platform for contacts of its members with industry, universities, teachers and students
- ICA membership remained constant in numbers ( $\pm 60$ ) but was not able to increase the number
- We were able to stabilize the financial situation and are in a relatively good situation leaving some reserves for special actions and maybe some investment possibilities to turn ICA into a more professional organisation
- My task was only possible because of the Secretary-General, the secretariat and all board members. Thanks for their support during the last 5 years
- I wish the new president (Marek Szyndel) , vice-president (Alec Evans) and the new board all success to further develop ICA as a leading representative European organization of agricultural and life science institutes.

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**Thank you for your attention**

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