Thanks to the Internet, our life nowadays takes largely place into a virtual world starting from childhood until long after retirement. This is also true for research. Almost all letters and contracts are now e-mailed or directly introduced via some website. We exchange ideas and latex documents with co-authors all over the world, some that we have never met. We rarely go to libraries but get the articles we want to read through online libraries (although this may be hindered by their monopolistic behavior). Backup information is stored in some web-boxes. And personal relations are channeled via social networks and webcasting. This has given to CORE a new dimension, a virtual dimension, the size of which is difficult to measure. As already asserted in the first issue by Jacques Drèze, Jean Gabszewicz and Henry Tulkens, the motive in introducing this newsletter was to acknowledge this new dimension. When creating the association between CORE and ECARES, the choice of the joint acronym ECORE (some would write it eCORE) was not independent of this evolution.

However it has been a permanent concern of CORE to remain a “real” place, with true physical dimensions and face to face personal relations. Along the years this has required many new initiatives and voluntary actions to counter individualistic behavior. Let me list some examples, both to advertise what exists and to stimulate new initiatives.

When CORE moved from Leuven to Louvain-la-Neuve a central element, both locationally and psychologically, has been the design of the CORE lounge as a passage obligé and the place for the most sophisticated coffee machine. This should be well recalled whenever the university will regroup the three entities of IMMAQ into a new building. CORE, traditional and most renowned seminars (in economic theory, econometrics and mathematical programming) have been supplemented by an ECORE lunch seminar (alternating between ECARES and CORE) with a speaker from one and the discussant from the other center, and always followed by a nice walking lunch (in the lounge, of course). Also more recent are the regular internal and thematic workshops regrouping researchers on various topics (welfare economics, game theory, trade and economic geography, environment, readings in OR, time series modelling) and organized in various formats (“more time for discussion” being the common feature).

These are only examples. Friendly relations or scientific collaborations may be triggered by many (organized or unexpected) occasions when living together. I remember once in 1993, during the general equilibrium 40th anniversary conference, being stuck in the elevator for quite a long time with Jean-Jacques Laffont and Robert Lucas. The discussion was very interesting.

The CORE elevator has just been renewed with external doors added (according to a EU directive). Transport time seems longer. May it be that many of us get stuck…
As it was mentioned in a previous newsletter, François Maniquet has been awarded an ERC advanced grant on Poverty, Resource Equality, and Social Policy. To recall, the ERC advanced grants allow established researchers of any nationality and any age to pursue projects that open new directions in their respective research fields (see [http://erc.europa.eu/advanced-grants](http://erc.europa.eu/advanced-grants)). This is a five year project. It allows CORE to hire PhD students and post-doctoral fellows, and to organize scientific events in the field of poverty.

François’ interest in the field of poverty is a natural consequence of his previous work. Indeed, it is one of the conclusions of his last contributions with Marc Fleurbaey and Yves Sprumont that notions of social welfare that are sensitive to inequality should give absolute priority to the people at the bottom of the well-being distribution (see the book of Marc and François, ‘A theory of fairness and social welfare’, published by Cambridge University Press). Well-being does not necessarily mean income, but however well-being is computed, social policies should aim at increasing the well-being indices of the poorest agents according to that index.

The project

The project is composed of two parts. The first part is dedicated to the measurement of poverty. A poverty index, at the early stage of the theory, was a function of the distribution of income only. At a later stage, it has been argued that poverty is multidimensional: dimensions of health, education, and housing, for instance, have to complement income. That, in turn, raised the following question: how do we aggregate the different dimensions, that is, how do we consider an agent that is below the poverty line in one dimension but above it in another dimension. In the research proposal, it is suggested to take agents’ preferences themselves to aggregate the many dimensions. For instance, whether or not an agent who is poor in housing conditions but not in food consumption should be considered as poor depends on her or his relative preferences towards housing and food. Taking preferences into account requires first to revise the theory. It also requires to develop empirical methods to estimate heterogeneous preferences in the population.

The second part of the project is dedicated to the design of social policies aiming at decreasing poverty. We can distinguish between two main directions in this part. The first direction is close to the classical optimal taxation approach. The research consists of studying social preferences that combine the objective of decreasing poverty with other ethical objectives of resource equality. The second direction is closer to new models of household decisions and to behavioral models of choice. The emphasis will be on how poor households react to a wide range of distributive policies (with or without monitoring, in cash or in kind, means-tested or unconditioned, etc.), in order to study which policy is more likely to be effective in reducing poverty.

The people

Besides François, there are currently one fellow, three PhD students and two associate researchers associated to the project. Marion Leturcq arrived at CORE in October. She got her PhD from Paris School of Economics this year. She is an applied family economist interested in questions of poverty. Claudia Hupkau is a second year PhD student. She works on the design of social policy when one takes identity issues into account. Benoît Decerf and Lancelot Henry de Frahan are first year PhD students. They are both interested in optimal taxation questions. The team also directly cooperates with Marc Fleurbaey (Princeton University) and Koen Decancq (Universiteit Antwerpen). Marc is well known to the CORE community. He has been working with François since 1993. Koen is an applied econometrician, specialist in issues of inequality and poverty measurement.

On the web

You can follow the activities of the team on the website of the project: [http://sites.uclouvain.be/poresp/](http://sites.uclouvain.be/poresp/). Also note that there is a blog associated to it: [http://poresp.wordpress.com/](http://poresp.wordpress.com/). The objective of the blog is to make the scientific literature in the economics of poverty available to a general audience. There will be contributions in the languages of all the members of the team.
Efficiency Measurement of Educational Systems
Louvain-la-Neuve, January 9, 2012

The efficiency of the educational system is a central aspect of significant debates between teachers, school managers, parents and policy makers. Lots of databases on school attainment are available for many countries over the world, sometimes with extremely rich information at the student, school or teacher level. Nevertheless, to exploit this plethora of information new modeling strategies are also needed. The goal of this workshop is to join the expertise from econometricians and psychometricians in that matter. Although the two communities traditionally have separate goals (economists being rather focused on the conditions for estimating causal effects in observational designs, and psychologists rather focused on the quality of theoretical constructs’ measurement), they both relate to common statistical concepts (multilevel data, mixed models, value-added, effectiveness, ...) on which this workshop will focus.

Papers will be presented by X. Dumay (UCL-GIRSEF), E. San Martin (Pontifica Universidad Catolica de Chile), J-P. Verhaeghe (Ghent University & KUL-PPW), M. Verschelde (Ghent University), A. Ouazad (INSEAD) and E. Ooghe (KUL-CES).

The Fourth Euro-African Conference in Finance and Economics (CEAFE 2012)
The University of Cairo (Egypt), May 7-9, 2012

The Euro-African Conference in Finance and Economics (CEAFE) aims at offering African and European scholars in finance and economics the opportunity for an open dialogue and an exchange of ideas. It allows them to share their theoretical and empirical knowledge to better understand the economic and financial challenges that both continents face. The CEAFE provides a space for investigation and research of the new issues that have been brought on by the globalization of markets, the development of international trade and financial globalization.

In addition, the CEAFE aims at fostering collaboration between researchers and policy makers between the North and the South of the Mediterranean, consolidating existing cooperation such as the North-South projects, and initiating new productive projects.

The CEAFE offers the chance to consider the new problems of organizing the markets and regulating them with more realistic assumptions. These new assumptions take into consideration the impact of individual rationality on the general equilibria, the existence of increasing yields, the externalities between different economic agents, etc. It is also an opportunity to tackle economic and financial problems that concern Europe and Africa specifically.

The CEAFE has been held every two years since 2006. The first and second meetings took place in the Ecole Polytechnique de Tunisie. In 2010, the conference was hosted by Universite Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne. The American University in Cairo will host the conference at its new campus in May 2012.

The conference consists of parallel sessions where prominent scholars present papers that cover a wide range of topics in the fields of economics and finance. The conference includes plenary sessions given by distinguished speakers: François Bourguignon (Paris School of Economics), Mahmoud El-Gamal (Rice University) and John Muellbauer (Nuffield College, Oxford University).

Past distinguished speakers include Jean Gabszewicz (CORE, Belgium), Bernard Cornet (Paris 1, France), Marc Riedel (Bielefeld, Germany), Christian Gollier (Toulouse, France), Izhak Gilboa (HEC Paris, France) and Jean Marc Robin (Paris 1, France).
Past Scientific Events

Conference in Honor of Etienne Loute
Brussels, September 6, 2011

On the afternoon of Tuesday September 6, 2011, fifty persons gathered in Brussels for a conference in Honor of Etienne Loute. The event took place in Facultés Universitaires Saint-Louis, where Etienne has been teaching Algorithmics and Optimization for a long time. The topic, very dear to Etienne since the seventies, was "Very Large Scale Optimization", although the topics covered were certainly not limited to Linear Programming. We had the honour to hear presentations from Markku Kallio (Aalto University School of Economics, Finland), Robert Fourer (Northwestern University, USA), Erling D. Andersen (Mosek, Danemark) and Yurii Nesterov (CORE).

The afternoon was concluded by a friendly cocktail and dinner, where we could hear various stories by Jean-Philippe Vial and Laurence Wolsey about the heroic days of computer networks at CORE, hillwalking in the Alps and last but not least the immense generosity of Etienne. Good luck to Etienne in his future projects!

ESOBE Meeting
Brussels, November 4-5, 2011

ESOBE stands for European Seminar on Bayesian Econometrics. This series of seminars (two day workshop) was launched in 2010 with the first meeting in Rotterdam. It emulates a series of seminars that were organized as a joint NBER-NSF seminar, at the initiative of the late Arnold Zellner. The second ESOBE meeting was held in Brussels on November 4-5, 2011, co-organized by CORE (Luc Bauwens) and the National Bank of Belgium (Raf Wouters). About forty persons participated to the seminars. Twelve papers were presented, with recent research at the interface of macroeconomics (dynamic stochastic general equilibrium models, Vector autoregressive models), finance (volatility models), and computational methods. Another twenty researchers presented their results during two poster sessions that generated a lot of interactions. The participation was international, with the presence of researchers from the USA and Canada in addition to Europe. The next meeting will be in Vienna, in 2012.

EuroConference Series in Quantitative Economics and Econometrics
Firenze, December 16-17, 2011

The 22nd EC-square conference took place in Florence in the European University Institute on December 16 and 17. The topic was "Econometrics for Policy Analysis", the program chairman Frank Smets and the local organisers Massimiliano Marcellino and Giampiero Gallo. As usual, the programme was of very high quality and consisted of invited and contributed papers (including two poster sessions). Luc Bauwens is the coordinator of this annual conference since 2001. The next conference will be hosted by Maastricht University.
They visited us for a few days or a few weeks between September and December 2011

Jorge Amaya, Universidad de Chile
Michele Conforti, Universita di Padova
Johanna Goertz, University of Guelph
Wen Tai Hsu, National University of Singapore
Marie-Louise Leroux, Université du Québec

Aldo Rustichini, University of Minnesota
Takatoshi Tabuchi, University of Tokyo
Ornella Tarola, Universita degli Studi di Roma La Sapienza
Jean-Philippe Vial, HEC Genève

Our new associate fellows

Constantin Blome (Supply Chain Management Institute of the European Business School (EBS)) as well as Pascal Mossay (University of Reading, UK) join us as Associate Fellow from September 2011 till August 2013.

DOCTOR HONORIS CAUSA
On December 1, 2011, Jacques Thisse received the title of Doctor honoris causa from Université Jean Monet in Saint-Etienne for his work in economic geography and urban economics.

THESES

On September 12, 2011 - Gauthier de Maere d’Aertrycke
Docteur en Sciences de l’Ingénieur, Université catholique de Louvain under the supervision of Yves Smeers.
Current position: Junior Researcher at Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei (FEEM).

On November 7, 2011 - Rafael Augusto de Melo
Mixed Integer Programming Formulations and Heuristics for Joint Production and Transportation Problems
Docteur en Sciences de l’Ingénieur, Université catholique de Louvain under the supervision of Laurence Wolsey.
Current position: Consultant at OM Partners (Belgium).

On November 25, 2011 - Grégory Vandenbulcke-Plaasschaert
Spatial Analysis of Bicycle Use and Accident Risks for Cyclists
Docteur en Sciences, Université catholique de Louvain under the supervision of Isabelle Thomas.
Current position: Strategic analyst at the Federal Police (Brussels, Belgium).

On December 16, 2011 - Efthymios Athanasiou
Essays on Welfare Economics
Docteur en Sciences Economiques et de Gestion, Université catholique de Louvain under the supervision of François Maniquet.
Current position: Research Fellow at the Department of Philosophy at Carnegie Mellon University.
It is no news that the period of PhD is crucial for those engaging in this experience: research aspirations, topic selection, networking contacts, supervisor’s advice, slide presentations and harsh criticisms. Every day the PhD student sits on the office chair, eyes focused on the screen, working without distractions, knowing that this period of life is going to be determinant for the future.

The PhD transition is one’s “intellectual puberty”. Like physical puberty, it is rather confusing and brings about astonishing changes: it transforms childish hopes to change the world through economic research into (more-or-less) mature publishing-oriented researchers. Advanced courses, seminars and conferences, endless bibliographical research and paper readings are the necessary hormones that accelerate the brain training process. Moreover, in clear contrast to the physical one, during intellectual puberty we learn how to avoid reproduction activity… in favor of possibly original contributions. Nevertheless, there are other aspects of PhD life (in particular at CORE) that remain in a sealed corner of long term memory. These relate to stories of social life that quickly become difficult to confess. By the way, if you think that I am wrong, you probably managed to well hide them behind the veil of your academic success. However, what I am allowed to reveal here are only some backgrounds for these stories.

The most relevant location is clearly the CORE lounge. I am sure you are all used to the classical “tea” configuration; maybe also to the “seminar” configuration (with sandwiches, wines and desserts). What you probably did not experience is the “cinema” version: rows of couches, projector, and powerful speakers. Our movie evenings are the perfect occasion to taste food specialties arriving from all over the world: watching “Le Dîner de cons”, tasting red caviar delicately posed on a slightly buttered slice of baguette, and sipping white Italian wine. What can you imagine better to release the tension of PhD life? Luckily, when the movies were over, we could also enjoy a guitar duo accompanying a soprano singer (among many other off-key voices, including mine).

Less often (officially to keep the secret, but mainly due to the rainy weather) we enjoy our “Siberian terrace”: it dominates CORE offices on the opposite side of the main entrance. Apart from walking there to refresh ideas during tiring proof-making marathons, we take advantage of the Tuesday market to have a rooftop lunch with chicken chest and roasted potatoes.

As you all know, Belgium is world famous for chocolate, frites and beer. Of course we take most advantage of the last one when we periodically organize a “doctoral drinkshop” together with our IRES cousins. (I keep frequency as private information… I can just tell you that it started as a one-to-one relation with the doctoral workshop, but was quickly far more successful). This usually starts at Guinness world record bar for the amount of different beers served, the “Delirium” pub in Brussels. The final location is unpredictable, and sometimes random (especially if one forgets the name of the street one lives in).

But whatever happens, the day after we again crush into our office chair, we keep eyes wide open, focused on the screen, mentally fighting against distractions, knowing that this period of our lives is going to be determinant for our future…
“My experience at CORE as a Ph.D. student has been rewarding for several reasons. It is a place that attracts a lot of brilliant professors, either for research stays or to give seminars, creating a stimulating environment to develop our own research. The flow of people attracted to CORE provides students with a lot of opportunities to discuss their work with some of the best economists in their field. It is also a place that attracts students from all over the world. Amongst other things, it creates a wonderful atmosphere where students are friends rather than colleagues. These strong ties among students certainly play a significant role in both the quality of our work during the Ph.D. and in the robustness of our network afterwards.”

Gilles Grandjean (former PhD student from 2004 to 2010)

“Although I’m a Belgian PhD, I would summarize life at CORE as another student exchange experience... After receiving a warm welcome from the administrative staff, you are plunged into an international atmosphere. Throughout several events organized by CORE as well as by other PhD students, you really get the opportunity to meet many great people coming from the different parts of the world. Doing so, you really add a new dimension to your PhD training...”

Grégory Vandenbulcke-Plasschaert (former PhD student from 2007 to 2011)

Economics Reading Group

Starting in January 2012, a reading group for economics Ph.D. students at CORE and IRES will be launched. The idea of the economics reading group is that there will be one faculty member present at each session to lead the group. This faculty member is asked to choose a recent paper in his research field. During the session, he or she will give a brief introduction to the background of the paper, and will start an informal discussion. Students will have read the paper in advance, and are expected to contribute to the discussion.

The goal of the reading group is to get an idea of the latest advances in the research fields of faculty members at UCL. It will allow doctoral students to actively participate in discussions, while at the same time enjoying a less formal environment than is typically provided by the research seminar series at IRES or CORE.

The reading group will take place every two weeks on Wednesdays during lunchtime, alternating locations between CORE and IRES. Around 10 participants are expected for each session, and sandwiches will be provided for registered attendees.

If you have questions regarding the reading group, would like to participate or be updated about our activities, please visit our website at [http://uclreadinggroup.wordpress.com](http://uclreadinggroup.wordpress.com) or send an email to one of the organizers, Matteo Duiella (matteo.duiella@uclouvain.be), Claudia Hupkau (claudia.hupkau@uclouvain.be), or Margherita Negri (margherita.negri@uclouvain.be).
## Job Market Follow-up

### Carlotta Balestra
PhD student at CORE in environmental economics and macroeconomics from 2007 to 2010 (supervisor: Thierry Bréchet); Carlotta is now working at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Statistics Directorate, since January 2011.

### Kwanghun Chung
Post-doctoral fellow at CORE in operations research from October 2010 to August 2011; Kwanghun is now assistant professor of operations management at the College of Business Administration, Hongik University in Seoul, Korea since September 2011.

### Gauthier de Maere d'Aertrycke
Gauthier was a PhD student at CORE in operations research from 2007 to 2011 under the supervision of Yves Smeers. His research is focused on quantitative energy economics. He recently joined the Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei (FEEM) in October 2011.

### Rafael de Melo
PhD student at CORE in operations research from 2007 to 2011 (supervisor: Laurence Wolsey). Rafael is now a consultant at OM Partners (Belgium) since November 2011.

### Emanuele Forlani
PhD student at CORE in international trade from 2006 to 2010 (supervisor: Hylke Vandenbussche); Emanuele is now post-doctoral fellow at Lessius University College (Antwerpen), and external research fellow at Licos (KULeuven).

### Nicolas Gillis
PhD student at CORE in optimization methods and operations research from 2007 to 2011 (supervisor: François Glineur); Nicolas is now post-doctoral fellow at the Department of Combinatorics & Optimization of the University of Waterloo.

### Gilles Grandjean
PhD student at CORE in network theory from 2004 to 2010 (supervisors: Vincent Vannetelbosch and Ana Mauleon); Gilles is now post-doctoral fellow (chargé de recherches FNRS) at Facultés Universitaires Saint-Louis.

### Koen Jochmans
Post-doctoral fellow at CORE in econometrics from October 2009 to August 2011; Koen is now assistant professor at the Department of Economics at Sciences Po in Paris.

### Dimitris Korobilis
Post-doctoral fellow at CORE in econometrics from September 2010 to September 2011; Dimitris has now accepted a post as a Lecturer of Economics at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, starting October 2011.

### Marie-Louise Leroux
Post-doctoral fellow at CORE in public economics and health economics from September 2007 to July 2011 (from May 2009 to May 2011, she benefited from a Marie-Curie IEF grant); Marie-Louise is now assistant professor at the Economic Department of UQAM in Montréal.

### Chantal Marlats
Post-doctoral fellow at CORE in game theory from July 2010 to August 2011; Chantal is now assistant professor at the Department of Economics at Université Panthéon-Assas.

### Grégory Vandenbulcke
PhD student at CORE in transport geography from 2007 to 2011 (supervisor: Isabelle Thomas); Grégory is now strategic analyst at the Federal Police (Brussels, Belgium).

### Adrien Vigier
Post-doctoral fellow at CORE in economic theory from September 2010 to August 2011; Adrien is now Assistant Professor at the University of Oslo in Norway.
**Econometrics**

January 30, 2012  
Geert DHAENE, CES-KULeuven  
Profile-score adjustments for nonlinear fixed-effect models.

February 6, 2012 (joint CORE-ISBA Seminar)  
Jean-Marie DUFOUR, McGill University

February 27, 2012 (joint CORE-ISBA Seminar)  
Abdelaati DAOUIA, UCL-ISBA  
On projection-type estimators of multivariate isotonic functions.

March 5, 2012 (joint with Economic Theory Seminar and Trade & Economic Geography Seminar)  
Margaret SLADE, The University of British Columbia

March 12, 2012 (joint with LSM Finance)  
Bertrand CANDELO, Maastricht University

March 26, 2012 (joint CORE-ISBA Seminar)  
Dennis KRISTENSEN, University College of London

April 16, 2012 (joint CORE-ISBA Seminar)  
Martin WAGNER, Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna

April 23, 2012  
William PARIENTE, UCL-IRES

April 30, 2012  
Gautam TRIPATHI, University of Luxembourg

May 7, 2012 (joint with LSM Finance)  
Marie DUTORDOIR, Manchester Business School

May 14, 2012 (joint with Trade & Economic Geography Seminar)  
Swati DHINGRA, London School of Economics

May 21, 2012 (joint with CORE Seminar)  
Mathieu VANDYVE, UCL-CORE & LSM  
Linear prices for non-convex electricity markets: models and algorithms.

June 18, 2012  
Julie LE GALLO, Université de Franche Comté

**Econometric Theory**

January 30, 2012 (joint with Welfare Economics Seminar)  
Philippe MONGIN, HEC, Paris  
Positive solutions to the judgment aggregation problem.

February 6, 2012  
Martin PEITZ, University of Mannheim

February 13, 2012 (joint with Trade & Economic Geography Seminar)  
Swati DHINGRA, London School of Economics

February 27, 2012 (joint with Mathematical Programming Seminar)  
Mathieu VAN VYVE, UCL-CORE & LSM  
Linear prices for non-convex electricity markets: models and algorithms.

March 12, 2012  
Guillaume HAERINGER, Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona

March 26, 2012 (joint with Mathematical Programming Seminar)  
Rakesh VOHRA, Northwestern University

April 23, 2012  
Patrick WAELBROECK, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Télécornunications, Paris

April 30, 2012 (joint with Trade & Economic Geography Seminar)  
John McLAREN, University of Virginia

May 7, 2012 (joint with Welfare Economics Seminar)  
Christian LIST, London School of Economics

May 14, 2012  
Roland BENABOU, Princeton University

June 18, 2012  
Estela SANCHEZ, University of Vigo

**ECORE**

February 13, 2012  
ECORE seminar  
Sébastien VAN BELLEGEM, UCL-CORE

April 16, 2012  
ECORE seminar  
Antonio ESTACHE, ECARES

May 21, 2012  
ECORE seminar  
Eve RAMAEEKERS, F.R.S.-FNRS and UCL-CORE

**Mathematical Programming**

January 24, 2012  
Thomas STUETZLE, Université Libre de Bruxelles  
Automatic configuration of optimization algorithms.

January 31, 2012  
Danny RALPH, University of Cambridge

February 7, 2012  
Sebastian POKUTTA, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

February 14, 2012 (joint with CESCM & GSK Chair)  
Aadhaar CHATURVEDI, FUNDP

February 28, 2012  
Paschalis TSIAFLAKIS, ESAT-KULeuven

March 20, 2012  
Alexandre D’ASPREMONT, Ecole Polytechnique, Paris

April 17, 2012  
Kenneth SØRENSEN, University of Antwerp

**Trade & Economic Geography**

January 30, 2012 (joint with Econometrics Seminar)  
Michel MOUCHART, UCL-ISBA  
A stochastic independence approach for different measures of concentration and specialization.

April 19, 2012 (joint with IRES Research Seminar)  
Monika SCHNITZER, University of Munich
# Publications

## Econometric theory

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## Reprints

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<td>2359</td>
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<td>Nesterov, Y.</td>
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### Discussion Papers

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<td>French firms at the conquest of Asian markets: The role of export spillovers.</td>
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How Many Languages Do We Need? The Economics of Linguistic Diversity
by Victor Ginsburgh and Shlomo Weber
Princeton University Press, 2011

In the global economy, linguistic diversity influences economic and political development as well as public policies in positive and negative ways. It leads to financial costs, communication barriers, divisions in national unity, and, in some extreme cases, conflicts and war—but it also produces benefits related to group and individual identity. What are the specific advantages and disadvantages of linguistic diversity and how does it influence social and economic progress? This book examines linguistic diversity as a global social phenomenon and considers what degree of linguistic variety might result in the greatest economic good.

The authors look at linguistic proximity between groups and between languages. They describe and use simple economic, linguistic, and statistical tools to measure diversity's impact on growth, development, trade, the quality of institutions, translation issues, voting patterns in multinational competitions, and the likelihood and intensity of civil conflicts. They address the choosing of core languages in a multilingual community, such as the European Union, and argue that although too many official languages might harm cohesiveness, efficiency, and communication, reducing their number brings about alienation and disenfranchisement of groups.

Demonstrating that the value and drawbacks of linguistic diversity are universal, How Many Languages Do We Need? suggests ways for designing appropriate linguistic policies for today's multilingual world.

Atlas de Belgique - Tome 4 Habitat
par Isabelle Thomas, Dominique Vanneste et Xavier Querriau
Academia Press, 2011

The new Atlas of Belgium was financed by the Belgian Science Policy and is made out of 6 volumes. Volume 4 is now published and deals with the «habitat»: housings and dwellings, their location, their state, and their occupants as well as corollary characteristics such as rent or the perception of the residential environment by the occupants. For each volume there are two versions: one in French, the other in Dutch. The objective of Volume 4 is to describe and understand the living conditions and the relationships between the dwelling, the inhabitant(s) and the environment. It is not only a picture of the 2001 situation (last census) but it also illustrates the 1991-2001 changes and the link with spatial theoretical mechanisms and processes.

Many maps are drawn at the scale of Belgium (589 municipalities), but some are also drawn at the scale of the statistical sectors for a selection of large cities and some rural municipalities. All maps reveal strong spatial structures, and illustrate how difficult it is to make out housings conditions from the characteristics of the inhabitants, from the history of urbanisation, from social and economic history, or from priorities in terms of housing, land-use or employment policies. They all interact in producing the present built-up landscape made of urban concentrations, rural areas and industrial zones, including numerous municipalities where peri-urbanisation completely alters the traditional built-up landscape.

The observed spatial structures within Belgium are much more complex than simple Flandres-Wallonia or urban-rural oppositions. Most maps illustrate well-known theoretical processes that only very slowly and very slightly change over time.
http://www.academiapress.be/atlas-de-belgique-tome-4-habitat.html
Some friendly news

The CORE Welcome Lunch took place this year on Monday, October 24. The new Research Director, François Maniquet took this occasion to thank his predecessor, Erik Schokkaert.

He also welcomed the new CORE members (academics, post doctoral fellows and doctoral students) for the academic year 2011-2012 and each of them was requested to present him/herself in a few words.

Claude d’Aspremont, Etienne Loute and Jean-François Mertens retired at the end of last academic year (2010-2011). On that occasion, CORE organized a social dinner in their honour on October 21st, 2011 with the presence of many relatives and friends. The dinner took place in the beautiful setting of the Château-Ferme de Moriensart, a place that Hergé loved before and after his retirement. During the dinner Jacques Thisse, Laurence Wolsey and Jean Gabszewicz gave each one a warm and friendly speech about Claude, Etienne and Jean-François. Claude, Etienne and Jean-François will continue to come regularly to CORE and CORE’s scientific community is very happy to welcome them as Emeritus professor.

The Bing Bang Blog

The recent weekly blog that Victor Ginsburgh and Pierre Pestieau started (and that will last until they retire for good, in 2035) is neither a Big Bang nor a Bling Bling, and, despite Victor’s desperation, Pierre did not want it to become a Bunga Bunga Blog.

Therefore, and after some difficult negotiations between the two bloggers, it became what it is www.thebingbangblog.be, a mixture of detestation of author societies, copyright, BHL, US Republicans, as well as injustice in the Middle-East (Victor) and a defense of pensioners, drug addicts, the old lady and the tramp, and the like (Pierre).

If you want to be added to the list of blog addicts, let them know (vginsbur@ulb.ac.be, or p.pesteau@ulg.ac.be), it will help them living beyond 2035, and collecting their (generous state-paid) old age pension for another 24 years.

www.thebingbangblog.be

I have simple tastes, I’m always satisfied with the best.

J’ai les goûts les plus simples du monde, je me contente du meilleur.

Ho gusti semplicissimi mi accontento sempre del meglio.

Ich habe einen ganz einfachen Geschmack, Ich bin immer mit dem Besten zufrieden.

Oscar Wilde
Meilleurs vœux pour l'an 2012
Beste wensen voor 2012
Alles Gute zum neuen Jahr
Best wishes for 2012
Mejores deseos para el año 2012
谨致 2012 年的美好祝愿!
ברוך לשנה 2012
أطيب التمانيات 2012
CORE Newsletter will be sent every 3 or 4 months.

If you want to be removed from the mailing list, just send an email to Sylvie.mauroy@uclouvain.be