

SOGESCI-B.V.W.B.
General Assembly meeting on Thursday February 10, 2011
Annual report of activities for 2011

Dear Chairman, Dear Members of the Administration Board, Dear Members of SOGESCI-B.V.W.B.,

As each year there were three main activities and services of our society in 2010:

- The ORBEL 24 conference
- The ORBEL award 2010
- The 4OR publications

The 24th yearly national conference of SOGESCI-B.V.W.B. ORBEL 2010 on Operations Research was held at the University of Liège on 28 & 29 January 2010 in the buildings of HEC –Management School; it was organised by QuantOM (Center for Quantitative Methods and Operations Management), and more particularly by our administrators Yves Crama and Michaël Schyns. 138 researchers participated, mainly from Belgium, but also from Luxemburg, France, Italy, India, Iran, The Netherlands, and also United States and Canada. 82 research papers on many different topics of OR were presented during 3 plenary sessions, and 23 parallel sessions. The conference dinner took place in the nice restaurant Labo 4 – a place full of chemistry instruments, awaking a lot of emotions to those who have studied science in Liège or elsewhere. Two plenary talks were delivered by high-caliber scientists. On the first day Philippe Baptiste researcher from CNRS and associate professor at Ecole Polytechnique in France talked about “Sustainable Development: How can we help”, a very essential issue on today’s agenda to which OR techniques can certainly contribute a lot. Michel Goemans a Belgian professor of Applied Math at the prestigious MIT in Boston was the invited speaker on the second day. His talk was on “The Power of Matroids” a very powerful, but not so well-known technique in combinatorial optimisation.

During the General Assembly, which took place during the ORBEL conference, several members of the executive committee finishing their mandates were warmly thanked for the accomplished work: Hugo Pastijn retired after many years as a dedicated delegate administrator who did a lot of good to our society, the least one not being his guest position at the Royal Military Academy for so many conferences and administrative meetings; Raymond Bisdorff was certainly a most efficient and active president of our society; Frank Plastria, retiring as 4OR editor-in-chief was thanked for his very efficient engagement for our society’s journal 4OR. ORBEL welcomed Thierry Marchant as the new 4OR editor-in-chief representing ORBEL, and Patrick De Causmaecker as the brand-new president. Good luck on the way was wished to both by all participants.

The ORBEL award, sponsored by OM Partners, is bestowed on the author of a scientifically oriented student’s thesis with the exception of PhD theses. It was particularly popular last year as we had 7 excellent submissions from which the master’s thesis of Thijs Dewilde from KUL emerged; his promoter was the ORBEL administrator Frits Spieksma. Thijs presented his work, entitled ‘The Profit-based Latency problem’ during the traditional ORBEL award plenary session, before Wouter Blondeel representing OM-Partners handed over the 1.000 EUR award to the laureate.

Our journal 4OR continues to be very successful. It received for the first time in June 2010 the really good impact factor $IF=0.75$ for 2009. Nevertheless there is a threat that this excellent IF may decrease somewhat in the next years because of the increasing number of PhD abstracts. The PhD abstracts will

therefore have to be adapted in future volumes so as to avoid counting them as papers when establishing the IF. Volume 8 of 4OR was published during 2010. It contains 438 pages, including invited 4 surveys, 14 research papers, 1 industry paper, 1 education paper, and 11 PhD Thesis summaries (1 from Belgium).

Good news also regarding the Borsalino project: it is now in the last phase of implementation before providing on its website a digital archive of SOGESI-B.V.W.B.'s publications in the previous journal JORBEL. Kenneth Sørensen has handed over the project back to its initiator Gerrit Janssens who is going to fix the last inconsistencies in the database. Many thanks to both Kenneth and Gerrit for this fantastic achievement.

In 2010 two interdisciplinary links were established in order to develop two important OR fields within our society:

- The first one on continuous optimisation is taken up by François Glineur starting from the existing link between CORE, French researchers and the EUROPT working group. Contacts will be developed with the Flemish speaking part of our country with the help of our president Patrick De Causmaecker;
- The second one on Artificial Intelligence (AI) is taken up by our president. A first AI workshop will be organised by Patrick and Ann Nowe (VUB) at KUL in March 2011. Our society will be financially supporting this activity.

Some EURO activities are worth reporting in 2010:

- In 2009 Joos van Den Bergh and Lotte Berghman were proposed by ORBEL for participating to ELAVIO 2010, but eventually the sole Lotte Berghman (KUL) was accepted by EURO and attended this conference in Pacoti/CE, Brazil in August 2-6, 2010;
- Nicolas Gillis, a brilliant researcher of UCL, laureate of the ORBEL 2008 award and ELAVIO laureate in 2009, was selected again by EURO as the Belgian participant to the EURO Summer Institute on 'Nonlinear Methods in Combinatorial Optimization' held in Klagenfurt, Austria, August 20 - September 4, 2010;
- The *OR president meeting* attended by the ORBEL president provided useful information on how to work more efficiently within EURO in close interconnection with all member societies.

To conclude this 2010 report I would like to thank François Glineur for maintaining our website www.orbel.be, Sabine Wittevrongel for preparing the ORBEL newsletters, and Bernard Fortz for the dedicated management of our dimes, and for all the works he does at the interface to EURO, and Filip Van Utterbeek replacing the retired Hugo Pastijn for accommodating all our administrative meetings at the Royal military Academy.

Finally SOGESCI-B.V.W.B. also thanks the French Community of Belgium for its financial support.

I wish you all on behalf of our society a very happy year and very many successful achievements in all your OR activities and research.

Pierre Kunsch, Delegate Administrator, January 2011