UEAA General Assembly Meeting Minutes

Date: 21 September 2026
Time: 15:30 – 16.30
Venue: Hall of Academicians, Academy of Sciences of Albania, Shëtitorja Murat Toptani 32, 1000 Tiranë, Albania
Event Format: Hybrid (In-person and online via Zoom)
Chair: Prof. Ioan Jelev (President of UEAA 2024–2026, Romania), and Prof. Nazim S. Gruda (Academy of Sciences of Albania; Vice-President of UEAA)

Participants & Attendance

Present In-Person:

- **Ioan Jelev** — President of UEAA (2024–2026), Romania
- **Florin Stănică** — President of the Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences "Gheorghe Ionescu-Șișești", Romania
- **Michel Duclos** — Académie d'Agriculture de France, France
- **Simone Orlandini** — Vice-President of Accademia dei Georgofili, Italy
- **Stefan Gandev** — President, Agricultural Academy of Bulgaria
- **Marjeta Nasheva** — Agricultural Academy of Bulgaria
- **Kerstin Niblaeus** — Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry, Sweden;
- **Helena Jonsson** — Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry, Sweden
- **Fejzulla Krasniqi** — Vice-President of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo
- **Enver Hamiti** — Secretary of the Section for Natural Sciences, Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo
- **Nazim S. Gruda** — Academy of Sciences of Albania

Present Online via Zoom:

- **Michel Thibier** — Académie d'Agriculture de France, France;
- **Baiba Rivža** — President, Latvian Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, Latvia;
- **Juan Reca Cardona** — Andalusian Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Spain
- **Vasile Botnari** — Academy of Sciences of Moldova
- **Hojka Kraigher** — Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovenia
- **Evi Arachoviti** — Royal Agricultural Society of England
- **Vidmantas Stanys** — Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Lithuania
- **Edvinas Misiukevičius** — Young Academy of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Lithuania
- **Maria Romeiras** — Lisbon Academy of Sciences, Portugal

1. Registration of Participants and Verification of Quorum

- **Proceedings:** The Co-Chair, Prof. Nazim S. Gruda, welcomed all in-person and online attendees. Registration was completed, and the necessary quorum of member academies was confirmed to conduct the General Assembly and pass valid resolutions.

2. Approval of the Agenda

- **Discussion:** The President, Prof. Ioan Jelev, welcomed all participants—with special recognition of those joining online via Zoom—and presented the official agenda for the General Assembly.
- **Decision:** The agenda was formally approved by the General Assembly.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous UEAA General Assembly

- **Discussion:** The draft minutes of the previous General Assembly (and the interim June Steering Committee meeting) had been disseminated to all member academies one month prior. The floor was opened for comments from both in-person and online participants. No corrections were raised.
- **Decision:** The minutes of the previous UEAA General Assembly were officially approved.

4. Report on UEAA Activities for the Period 2024–2026

- **Rapporteur:** Academician, Prof. Dr. Ioan Jelev, President of UEAA
- **Discussion Summary:** The President presented a comprehensive report on the core activities, scientific publications, policy statements, and digital infrastructure updates carried out by the UEAA leadership and member academies:
    - **EU Regulation on New Genomic Techniques (NGTs):** Following the European Parliament's decision on 17 June 2026, the UEAA drafted and published an official statement welcoming the adoption of the EU regulation on 18 June 2026.
    - **UEAA Best Abstract Scientific Competition 2025–2026:** An abstract e-book compiling all submissions was prepared by the Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences (AAFS) of Romania and published on the website. It was noted that the member academies usually react and finalize their submissions toward the end of the competition cycle.
    - **Symposium Proceedings Volume:** The published volume *"New Research Techniques and the Agricultural Progress"* (Proceedings of the International Scientific Symposium from the Bucharest General Assembly, 10–11 October 2024), edited by Cipriana and Ioan Jelev, was officially presented. The committee distributed physical copies to in-person attendees and will mail copies to online participants who contributed papers.
    - **Website and Heritage Updates:** The historical section of the UEAA website was updated to feature the full names, tenures, and institutional backgrounds of past presidents and vice-presidents alongside a new photo gallery. Prof. Nazim S. Gruda suggested expanding this feature in the future to include short CVs for all active Steering Committee members.
- **Decision:** The General Assembly formally accepted and approved the activity report, commending the leadership for the diverse scientific output and structural progress achieved during the 2024–2026 term.

- For every member and observer member of the steering committee, bios should be added to the website, along with their name and photo.

5. Election of the New UEAA President

- **Presidential Election & Presentation:** Prof. Ioan Jelev presented the official *Laudatio* nominating Academician Prof. Dr. Nazim S. Gruda. Drawing on their close collaboration since 2017, Prof. Jelev commended Prof. Gruda's outstanding academic standing, his exceptional integrity, and his impactful tenure as UEAA Vice-President. His proven dedication to European integration and unique ability to bridge international scientific communities—spanning Albania, Germany, Spain, and various other European nations—were recognized as invaluable assets for leading the UEAA. *(The full Laudatio document is officially accessible on the UEAA platform)*.
- **Decision:** Following the presentation, Academician Prof. Dr. Nazim S. Gruda was officially and unanimously elected as the new **President of the UEAA**.

6. Election of the New UEAA Vice-President

- **Proceedings:** The nomination of Prof. Dr. Simone Orlandini (Italy) was formally put forward to the General Assembly by the newly elected President, Prof. Dr. Nazim S. Gruda. The audience received a comprehensive presentation outlining Prof. Orlandini's extensive expertise in agrometeorology, agricultural sciences, and academic leadership.
- **Decision:** Prof. Dr. Simone Orlandini was officially and unanimously elected as the new **Vice-President of the UEAA**.

7. Charter Amendment (Clause C3) and Election of Steering Committee Members

- **Charter Amendment & Committee Composition:** The General Assembly voted unanimously to remove the restrictive six-year consecutive term limit in Clause C3 of the 2000 Charter to ensure long-term stability and integrate new observers. Prof. Gruda noted that nine of the twelve seats remain available for committee members alongside observer roles.
- **Decision on Committee:** The updated composition of the Steering Committee and observers was approved.

The UEAA 2026–2028 Steering Committee Members & Observers

Core Leadership

1. **Prof. Dr. Nazim S. Gruda** — President of UEAA (Academy of Sciences of Albania, Albania)
2. **Prof. Dr. Simone Orlandini** — Vice-President of UEAA (Accademia dei Georgofili, Italy)
3. **Prof. Dr. Ioan Jelev** — Past President of UEAA (Romanian Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences "Gheorghe Ionescu-Șișești", Romania)

Steering Committee Members

4. **Dr. Michel Duclos** — Académie d'Agriculture de France, France
5. **Prof. Dr. Stefan Gandev** — President, Agricultural Academy, Bulgaria
6. **Acad. Kerstin Niblaeus** — Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry, Sweden

7. **Prof. Dr. Baiba Rivža** — President, Latvian Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, Latvia
8. **Dr. h.c. prof. Dr. Ing. Elena Horská** — Slovak Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Slovakia
9. **Evi Arachoviti** — Head of Policy & Social, Innovation for Agriculture / Royal Agricultural Society of England, United Kingdom
10. **Acad. Prof. Dr. Hojka Kraigher** — Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovenia
11. **Prof. Dr. Vasile Botnari** — Academy of Sciences of Moldova, Moldova
12. **Prof. Ing. Vilém Podrázský, CSc.** — Czech Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Czech Republic

Permanent Consultant to the Presidency

- **Prof. Dr. Dr. Michel Thibier** — Académie d'Agriculture de France, France *(Past President of UEAA 2016–2018)*

Observers

1. **Assoc. Prof. Maria Manuel Salgueiro Romeiras** — Lisbon Academy of Sciences, Portugal
2. **Academician Prof. Dr. Mykola Patyka** — Vice-President, National Academy of Agrarian Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine
3. **Prof. Dr. Revaz Asatiani** — Scientific Secretary, Georgian Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Georgia
4. **Prof. Dr. Vidmantas Stanys** — Chair of the Division of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Lithuania
5. **Prof. Dr. Juan Reca** — Secretary, Andalusian Academy of Agriculture, Spain
6. **Prof. Christos M. Olympios** — President of the Greek Agricultural Academy, Greece
7. **Prof. Dr. Enver Hamiti** — Secretary of the Section for Natural Sciences, Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo, Kosovo

Distinguished Alumnus

Prof. Dr. Zenonas Dabkevičius — General Secretary, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Lithuania

8. Establishment of the Venue for the Next UEAA General Assembly

- **Proceedings:** President Prof. Dr. Nazim S. Gruda reminded the General Assembly of the established UEAA tradition and governance rule: the country of the newly elected Vice-President hosts the General Assembly, meaning the next session will be held where the upcoming presidency is anchored. Following the election of Prof. Dr. Simone Orlandini as Vice-President, the official invitation was extended to host the next session in Italy. Prof. Orlandini warmly accepted the decision on behalf of the Italian delegation. He expressed his enthusiasm for welcoming the member academies to Florence and humorously noted that he would make up for any tight schedules at the current session by expanding the 2028 ceremony and program from two days to probably three. This extension will allow attendees sufficient time to stay longer, fully engage in the academic sessions, and experience the cultural and agricultural site activities.

- **Decision:** The General Assembly enthusiastically and unanimously approved **Florence, Italy**, as the official host venue for the UEAA Steering Committee and General Assembly meetings in **2028**.

9. Proposed UEAA Action Plan for the Period 2026–2028 and Long-Term Strategy Initiation

- **Rapporteurs:** Nazim S. Gruda (President of UEAA), Dr. Edvinas Misiukevičius (Young Academy of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences), and Prof. Dr. Baiba Rivža (President, Latvian Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences)

- **Discussion Summary:**

  - He underlined two overarching priorities: enhancing UEAA's contribution to European policymaking and fostering closer scientific cooperation among academies. To advance these aims, he noted the need to broaden the UEAA network and create meaningful opportunities for young scientists to take an active role. In other words, the collective expertise should be translated into timely, evidence-based recommendations on agriculture, food, and natural resources. To do so, every member and observer should take e concrete responsibility.
  - **Strategic Action Plan & Long-Term Vision:** President Gruda outlined his immediate 2026–2028 action plan and introduced key pillars for a long-term **4-to-5-year UEAA Strategy**. The overarching strategic goal of this initiative is to drive a fundamental transition: **"From a Network of Academies to a Coordinated European Scientific Force."** To lead this transition, the President officially tasked the newly elected Vice-President, **Prof. Dr. Simone Orlandini**, with spearheading the strategic development process.
  - **Initiative for a European Young Academy for Agriculture:** President Gruda gave the floor to **Dr. Edvinas Misiukevičius** to report on the emerging platform for young European agricultural scientists. Dr. Misiukevičius highlighted that a core group is actively moving the initiative forward within national academies. He commended Karl Ljungstedt and Astrid Bornfeldt Persson for gaining valuable institutional backing and structural feedback from the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry.
  - **Next Milestones & European Ownership:** The next major milestone will take place on **26 November** during the *15th International Conference for Young Scientists* in Vilnius, Lithuania. A dedicated panel discussion featuring Edvinas Misiukevičius, Paulina Štremikaitė, Carl Langsten, and Astrid Berntrup Persson will address structural framework options, nomination governance, and next steps. Dr. Misiukevičius emphasized that ownership must be truly European and invited all member academies to identify and nominate motivated young scientists to help co-build the platform.
  - **UEAA Institutional Alignment & Ex-Officio Proposal:** President Gruda strongly supported the initiative, urging all member countries to foster national Young Academies with dedicated representatives for agriculture, food, and the environment. To increase the visibility of next-generation researchers and foster cross-border proposals, President Gruda proposed granting the future President of the emerging European Young Academy **an *ex officio* advisory seat on the UEAA Steering Committee**. In return, a UEAA representative will participate in the Young Academy's activities to ensure a strong bidirectional connection.
  - **Regional Collaboration & Network Expansion: Prof. Dr. Baiba Rivža** highlighted the existing active cross-border scientific exchanges within the Baltic and Nordic regions. She inquired about the possibility of engaging the **Nordic Agricultural Science Association (NJF)**—a highly active regional association with over 100 years of history led by Jarkko Niemi (Finland). President Gruda welcomed this expansion and encouraged outreach to invite them to participate in the upcoming youth platform initiative.

Decision: The General Assembly formally agrees to initiate a structured process to develop the future UEAA Strategy. The approved steps include:

- Continue the strategic discussion across all member academies.
- Task Vice-President Simone Orlandini with **establishing the Strategic Working Group** and developing a concrete roadmap.
- Submit concrete proposals for formal consideration where required at future meetings.
- **Every member and observer of the UEAA is responsible for a concrete task** within the next two consecutive years, ensuring strategic continuity for the following years.
- Formally approve the creation of an *ex officio* Steering Committee membership seat for the future leadership of the officially established European Young Academy for Agriculture, ensuring permanent representation for next-generation scientists within the UEAA governance framework. This seat carries no voting rights.

10. Conclusions and Closure of the General Assembly

- **Proceedings:** The President, Prof. Dr. Nazim S. Gruda, and Vice-President, Prof. Dr. Simone Orlandini, expressed their deep gratitude to the past presidency under Prof. Ioan Jelev for their outstanding service and dedication over the 2024–2026 period. They also thanked the Academy of Sciences of Albania for successfully hosting the 2026 hybrid meeting in Tirana.
- **Adjourned:** With all agenda items successfully addressed and resolved, the 13th UEAA General Assembly was officially adjourned at 16:30.