

# 2013

Annual Report

Promoting Innovation and Internationalisation

**ACA**  
ACADEMIC  
COOPERATION  
ASSOCIATION





The Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) is a dynamic think tank in the area of international cooperation in higher education. Since 1993, ACA has worked to promote innovation and internationalisation of European higher education in collaboration with its pan-European network of member organisations, each responsible in their respective countries for supporting internationalisation in education and training. ACA also maintains a global perspective through its associate members in the United States, Mexico and Australia.

ACA's activities include research and analysis, evaluations, consultancy for private and public bodies, advocacy, publications and events. It is a not-for-profit organisation whose Secretariat is located in Brussels – a privileged position to create and maintain close working relations with the European Union institutions and the world beyond.



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In my capacity as the President of the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), I take pleasure in sharing with you the details of our association's activities and accomplishments in the year 2011. In its almost 20 years of existence, ACA has achieved much. It

is today one of the key actors in European higher education policy, particularly in the area of internationalisation. ACA stands for high quality, for instructive and inspiring international seminars and conferences, for exclusive networking between members, for cutting-edge studies, amongst others.

2011 was another successful year, adding to ACA's reputation. The year saw further growth in ACA's membership base. Three fine national organisations for international cooperation newly joined the association: the French Agence Education-Formation France (2e2f), the Polish Foundation for the Development of the Education System (FRSE) and the Swiss CH Foundation for Federal Cooperation. ACA's international events once again attracted many satisfied participants. Most important of all, ACA produced cutting-edge studies in its key areas of expertise.

Of the many projects underway in 2011, I would like to single out two. They both relate to international student mobility, a subject in which ACA has a strong track record. Two landmark studies have shed further light on the various

forms of student mobility: the two-volume publication *Mapping Mobility in European Higher Education*, published by ACA's German member DAAD, as well as an investigation into national mobility policies across Europe, which will be published in early 2012.

The continuing and growing popularity of ACA's events amongst Europe's policy makers and opinion leaders gave us a further boost in 2011. Bringing together renowned speakers from across Europe and further a field, the 2011 Annual Conference on the 'excellence imperative' in Vienna provided new insights into the many faces of 'quality'. Our seminar series saw four new editions, respectively devoted to internationalisation, the 'social dimension', the BRIC countries and the new EU programmes in the making. Most of them were – once again – oversubscribed. I am also glad to report that our news service, the *ACA Newsletter – Education Europe*, is gaining more and more subscribers – and growing prestige.

Finally, 2011 was the year when I became the new President of ACA. I wish to thank my predecessor, Rolf Tarrach, for his inspiring leadership in the last three years. My key aim for the years ahead is to work towards further strengthening our association, together with new ACA Vice-President Ulrich Grothus and Treasurer Hubert Dürstein.

*Bonne lecture.*

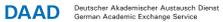
**Sijbolt Noorda**  
ACA President

WHO WE ARE:  
OUR MEMBERS

PROMOTING INNOVATION & INTERNATIONALISATION

ACA's strength as an organisation rests on the extensive network of dynamic national-level bodies that comprise its membership. These organisations are involved in a broad range of activities in their respective countries in support of internationalisation of education, and play various key roles in terms of research, programme administration, and policy formulation and implementation. ACA's role is to promote the interests and needs of its members in EU policy circles, and to influence the European higher education policy and research agenda in ways that support the work of the members. For their part, the members participate actively in the governance, decision making and programmatic activities of the Association.

MEMBERS

 <p>Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research</p>	 <p>Flanders Knowledge Area</p>	 <p>Wallonia-Brussels Campus</p>	 <p>Archimedes Foundation (Estonia)</p>
 <p>Centre for International Mobility (Finland)</p>	 <p>Agence Europe-Education-Formation France</p>	 <p>Campus France</p>	 <p>German Academic Exchange Service</p>
 <p>State Scholarships Foundation (Greece)</p>	 <p>Tempus Public Foundation</p>	 <p>Education Exchanges Support Foundation (Lithuania)</p>	 <p>Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education</p>
 <p>Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education</p>	 <p>Foundation for the Development of the Education System (Poland)</p>	 <p>Perspektywy Education Foundation (Poland)</p>	 <p>Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation</p>
 <p>Slovak Academic Information Agency</p>	 <p>Public Foundation for the International Promotion of Spanish Universities</p>	 <p>Swedish Council for Higher Education</p>	 <p>Swedish Institute</p>
 <p>Foundation for Federal Co-operation (Switzerland)</p>	 <p>Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities</p>	 <p>Turkish Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes</p>	 <p>British Council</p>

“In 2013, ACA was thrilled to welcome four – one returning and three new – members”

Tempus Public Foundation (TPF): rejoined the ACA family in December 2013, after some years of absence. TPF is a not-for-profit organisation according to Hungarian law, was founded in 1996 and has its main seat in Budapest. It acts as the national agency for the European Union’s Lifelong Learning Programme and is designated to continue in this function under the Erasmus+ programme. Further, it hosts the “national information point” for the Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and Europe for Citizens programmes; it coordinates the (central European) CEEPUS scheme; it is the Hungarian Europass Centre and it is responsible for the country’s Bologna and ECVET expert teams. Additionally, the organisation plays a key role in providing information about study opportunities in Hungary, as it is actively encouraging, on various fronts, the internationalisation of Hungarian higher education.

Turkish Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes: founded in 2003, has been operating as the Turkish National Agency for the EU’s education and youth cooperation programmes (e.g. Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci) since Turkey’s official participation in these programmes in 2004. It is currently responsible for the implementation of the Lifelong Learning and Youth in Action programmes in Turkey and will perform the same function in the new programme for 2014-2020. The organisation joined ACA in June 2013.

Wallonia-Brussels Campus (WBC): Part of the Wallonia-Brussels International (the ‘foreign ministry’ of francophone Belgium), WBC has the role to promote the higher education systems of Wallonia and Brussels all over the world. Its motto is ‘to federate, coordinate, promote, communicate and orient’ and the aim behind WBC’s activities is to attract foreign students into the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and to globally link up the region’s universities and colleges. WBC operates the website [Studyinbelgium.be](http://Studyinbelgium.be) and regularly publishes information material about higher education in Brussels and Wallonia for potential foreign students. It also participates in international higher education fairs around the world.

ETS Global: ETS Global joined ACA in June 2013 as Associate Member. ETS Global is a subsidiary of the US-based organisation ETS which was founded in 1947 and is best known for its testing instruments, such as TOEFL, TOEIC and GRE. Beyond the development of testing services, ETS Global has been involved in major international assessment projects on learning outcomes (e.g. OECD’s PISA and AHELO), student mobility, and the performance of universities.

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



IDP Education Australia



Mexican Association for International Education



ETS Global (The Netherlands)



Institute of International Education (United States)

Yearly, ACA pursues—and is sought after to participate in—a broad range of research projects, consultancies and other activities related to our core areas of expertise in the field of internationalisation of higher education. ACA is renowned in the European higher education policy circles for the top quality and relevance of its work, its ability to communicate quite technical information (e.g. related to international student mobility terminology) to non-specialist audiences, as well as its interest and capacity to follow and bring some clarity into the policy discourse at European level.

Our research work is carried out by our own highly qualified and multinational Brussels-based Secretariat staff and in conjunction with a strong network of very qualified and knowledgeable professionals and academics from Europe and beyond.

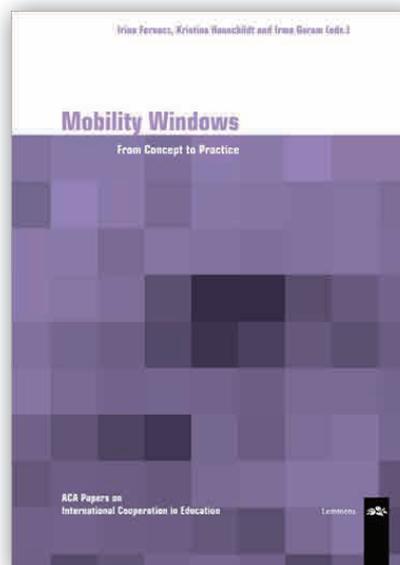
### MOWIN – MAPPING “MOBILITY WINDOWS” IN EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Key conceptual framework for the analysis of “mobility windows” and insights into practice”

In Autumn 2013 ACA completed its work on the MOWIN project, or *Mapping “mobility windows” in European higher education. Examples from selected countries in full*. This was a two-year project co-funded by the EU and implemented by the Brussels-based ACA Secretariat in collaboration with the *Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung (DZHW, formerly HIS-HF)* in Germany and the *Centre for International Mobility (CIMO)* in Finland. The project aimed at exploring the concept of “mobility windows” which, despite being rather vague, was used frequently in various European policy documents. The project team achieved its own goals, which were: to clarify the notion of “mobility windows” by proposing a clear definition of this concept; to elaborate a typology of “mobility windows” reflecting the reality in selected European countries and higher education institutions; and to explore best practices and challenges faced by selected institutions and study programmes in the five target countries – Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Romania – as well as to draw broader lessons about the “DO’s” and “DON’T’s” of “mobility windows”.

The project objectives were reached through a set of qualitative research methods—desk research, online

surveys, face-to-face interviews—as well as through several rounds of validation of the elaborated theoretical framework and consultations with external experts. For this purpose, the project was closely scrutinized by an external Quality Assurance Council, formed of: Fiona Hunter (International Director, Carlo Cattaneo University, Italy), Jonna Korhonen (Project Officer and Data Analyst, European University Association – EUA, Belgium), Rok Primoži (Chairperson, European Student Union – ESU, Belgium), Alf Rasmussen (Director of the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education – SIU, Norway), Marina Steinmann (Head of Section “Bologna Process”, German Academic Exchange Service – DAAD, Germany) and last but not least Ulrich Teichler (Professor emeritus and former Director of the International Centre for Higher Education Research – INCHER-Kassel, Germany).



The findings of the project were published in the form of a paper publication – *Mobility windows from concept to practice* (150 pages) – in the well-established and widely-read series of ACA Papers on International Cooperation in Education (Lemmens Verlag, Bonn), as number 20, in the same year when ACA celebrated its 20th anniversary. Presented officially

in September 2013 at a launch reception in Brussels, paper copies of the publication were distributed across the partners’ broad network of contacts among European higher education and research policy-makers and information multipliers, as well as to the individual higher education institutions and programmes which had supported the MOWIN project. The publication is also accessible on the ACA website.

“ ENPMOB’s final report is due in early 2012 and will provide a substantial contribution to ACA’s body of work focused on international mobility. ”

### STiME – STATE GRANTS AND LOANS AS A MEANS TO INCREASE OUTGOING MOBILITY

A main ongoing activity in the course of 2013 was the StIME (State Grants and Loans as a Means to Increase Outgoing Mobility) project, which came close to completion by the end of the year. This 15-month project was started in October 2012, supported by the EU’s Lifelong Learning Programme (ERASMUS Accompanying Measures) and conducted in cooperation with the Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW). It had three main objectives: to describe the public student grant and loan systems in 31 European countries; to investigate the “portability” of these systems, i.e. the extent to which they could or not be used for study abroad; and assess the quantitative contribution of these schemes to overall outgoing student mobility (credit and degree mobility) in the countries concerned.

The main data collection instrument in this project was a substantial questionnaire addressed at national bodies in charge of student grants and loans, which was originally launched in February 2013. Due to survey fatigue in the targeted countries, the Secretariat complemented the information received by results of its own (mainly internet-based) enquiries, as well as with findings of a parallel study undertaken by the Eurydice network and intelligence gathered by colleagues from the European Commission.

Preliminary results were presented by means of a webinar just before Christmas, which gathered over 40 participants. The study was to be published as number 21 in ACA’s own monograph series – *ACA Papers on International Cooperation in Education* – in January 2014.

### ETPS3 – RETHINKING THE ROLE OF ENGLISH-TAUGHT PROGRAMMES IN EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

“Third round of surveys on English-Taught Programmes (ETPs) in European higher education”

Apart from continuity, 2013 also brought new project work, as the yearly call for proposals of the European Union’s Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) conveyed good news for ACA. The proposal to conduct the third round of Europe-wide surveys on English-Taught Programmes (ETPs) in higher education was positively received by the European Commission and was selected for funding. The one-year project, entitled *Rethinking the role of English-taught Programmes in European Higher Education Area (ETPs-3)*, was to be jointly delivered, as in the past, by ACA and the Gesellschaft für empirische Studien (GES) in Germany.

The start of the project work in 2013 was based on a number of assumptions and expectations. Since the completion of ACA’s previous studies on ETPs in 2002 and 2008, there were signs showing that the number of ETPs has again tripled in the past five years, reaching an estimate of 7 500. It was also believed that more Bachelor’s level ETPs were provided in Europe than in the past. These beliefs were to be clarified via a third round of Europe-wide surveys on ETPs. In general terms, the project aimed to: describe and analyse the status quo of the ETPs landscape in Europe using the data to be gathered via the two large-scale surveys; and to discern possible trends based on the new data and ACA’s two previous ETP studies conducted in 2002 and 2008.

The online survey questionnaires, targeting over 4 000 European higher education institutions and an estimate of 8 000 English-Taught study Programmes (ETPs), were scheduled to be launched in early 2014.

## MPPC – MOBILITY POLICY PRACTICE CONNECT

“Building complementarity between institutional and national level mobility strategies”

In October 2013 ACA also began a new collaboration with the European University Association (EUA) in the framework of a joint project – *Mobility Policy Practice Connect (MPPC)*. This initiative, co-funded under the European Union’s Lifelong Learning Programme, aimed to build capacity at system and institutional level to create and implement comprehensive mobility strategies. The project relied on previous work done by both organisations in this field, namely EUA’s MAUNIMO project and ACA’s Mapping Mobility in European Higher Education publications as well as the ENPMOB project, which resulted in a book on *European and national policies for academic mobility*, in particular.

More specifically, the MPPC project aims to

- support, with the participation of national rectors’ conferences in three target countries – France (CPU), Hungary (MRK) and Lithuania (LURK) – the development and enhancement of national mobility strategies, which was one of the milestones of the *Mobility for Better Learning* strategy of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), adopted by education ministers in April 2012.
- concentrate on the three national case studies where the capacity development activities were to take place and use these countries as examples for how policy makers and institutions can work together to define/improve national and institutional strategies for mobility across Europe.
- conduct an ex-post analysis of the experience of three of the universities that piloted the mobility mapping tool (MMT) developed in the framework of EUA’s MAUNIMO project. The ex-post analysis was to be linked to the other activities organised in the target countries.

The outcomes of these one-year activities were to be published in a policy brief in September 2014.

## HEPCE – THE EU-CHINA HIGHER EDUCATION PLATFORM FOR COOPERATION AND EXCHANGES

This short-term contract over HEPCE started in early February and ended in late April, ACA’s task being originally to organise an EU-China policy dialogue for 25 stakeholders in higher education from both sides. In mid-March, the policy dialogue was expanded to become a four-part programme for 200 participants, including a policy dialogue, a university presidents’ dialogue, an EU-China universities exhibition, and a TUNING workshop, all to be delivered in one day on 25 April. ACA’s core duty remained on the organisation of the policy dialogue for 25 participants, but some coordination work was also ultimately carried out by ACA.

The event was successfully delivered, as planned, on 25 April, receiving much positive feedback from the higher education community as well as the media. ACA mainly worked with the European Commission, the China Scholarship Council, and the Mission of China to the EU in the delivery of this event, while the European University Association (EUA) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) of PR China, the PDSF, the EU Delegation to China, and the two universities in Brussels were also involved to different extents.

The next HEPCE meeting was likely take place in spring 2014 in Beijing.

## EDUCOACH – ONLINE ADVICE FOR STUDY-IN-EUROPE ORIENTATION

ACA continued its work as a partner in the 30-month EduCoach project, funded by the EU’s Erasmus Mundus Programme and coordinated by StudyPortals, an Eindhoven-based start-up company. The project is to develop “personal online advice tools” for European universities aiming to attract Russian-speaking or Arabic-speaking students. The tools include mainly “live chats” and “webinars”, but could also involve video conferences. The project began in November 2012 and is expected to deliver the tools, together with a recruitment guide to universities, by the end of April 2015.

ACA’s role in the project was that of advising the team at the conceptualisation stage of the project and producing a recruitment guide close to the end of the project. In mid-October, ACA represented the EduCoach project at a student fair in Kiev, where the project was promoted and feedback from participating students and institutions was gathered. This information was be used for further development of the live chat tool and the recruitment guide.

Bringing people together for lively discussions, debates and deliberations on the current trends in innovation and internationalisation in higher education is one of ACA's core activities. ACA's brand name events – the European Policy Seminars (EPS) – held four times a year—in Brussels—offer participants the opportunity to interact directly with colleagues and experts around a tightly defined topic, on a relatively small scale and in a highly collegial environment. Our annual conference, normally co-hosted by an ACA member in a different European country each year, brings together a larger yet as engaging set of speakers and delegates to explore a wider theme. ACA staff also regularly speaks at high level events across Europe and in other parts of the world.

### EUROPEAN POLICY SEMINARS



ACA's well-known series of *European Policy Seminars (EPS)* turned 10 in 2013. Each EPS session consists of a substantive one-day event organised around a specific theme of interest. The seminars normally draw to Brussels 80 to 150 participants, all active in higher education leadership, management or policy-making circles, for a stimulating day of presentations, conversations and debates on key issues in international higher education. Contrary to other years, in 2013 ACA held five top-notch EPS events, instead of only four as in regular years:

- EPS1: On 24 January, ACA held the 2013 edition of its popular *What's new in Brussels?* seminar. Despite admitting the record number of 150 participants, the event was oversubscribed. The seminar presented participants with the state of play in the legislative process over the (at the time) *Erasmus for all* Programme (which later in the year became Erasmus+) and its counterpart in the field of research, *Horizon 2020*, amongst others. The news came right from the lion's mouth, i.e. key staff of the European Commission, such as Director Jordi Curell Gotor. One highlight of the seminar was the presentation of the work of NGO *Empower European Universities*, by former Dutch

education minister and World Bank Vice-President Jo Ritzen. ACA held the seminar in a new venue, where all 2013 seminars have subsequently taken place.

- EPS2: The 36th ACA European Policy Seminar was held on March 14 and despite adverse weather conditions (heavy snow) turned out to be another well-attended event attracting some ninety participants to exchange their insights and the latest information about *EU-India higher education cooperation*. The seminar began with a systemic overview of the latest developments in Indian higher education, followed by institutional practices and national and European policy frameworks. One of the many distinguished speakers was Phil Baty, the editor at large of Times Higher Education, who is also in charge of the global league table of Times Higher Education, and who joined the seminar via Skype. The day was concluded with an emphasis on "trust" by Ruth Kattumuri, who flew into Brussels at 4 a.m. the same day as a result of the snow.
- EPS3: In October ACA in cooperation with the European University Association (EUA) held the 3rd European Policy Seminar of the year (and the 37th in the series), under the title *Making Sense of the MOOCs*. The two long-standing partners aimed at having a critical look at the rapidly developing and widely debated phenomenon of MOOCs. Nearly 150 people – policy makers, university leaders and experts in higher education – were curious to learn about the real value and potential of MOOCs. High profile speakers from Europe and the US shared their views on best practices and worst challenges of MOOCs. They also discussed possible business models, links to traditional open and distance learning, impact of MOOCs on quality, image and internationalisation of higher education. The seminar also provided some insights into the background of MOOCs 'customers' and was very positively evaluated by participants and speakers alike.

“ Can the notion of world class be meaningfully expanded to a broader discussion of excellence across a range of dimensions? ”

- EPS4: Gathering some 160 participants, the *Mobility Windows and the Internationalisation of the Curriculum* seminar took place in Brussels on 5 December and addressed the latest developments in the field of structured mobility, internationalisation at home and other ways of enhancing the international dimension of study. The seminar also served as an opportunity to present the main findings of the ACA study *Mobility windows: from concept to practice*, which had been published by ACA together with DZHW (Germany) and CIMO (Finland). The programme was opened by keynote speaker Jeroen Huisman, Professor Higher Education Governance, Ghent University and by Claire Morel, Deputy Head of Unit for international cooperation and programmes, European Commission. Experts from University of Vechta, Oulu University of Applied Sciences, Hogeschool Amsterdam, University of Groningen, University of Antwerp, Saxion University of Applied Sciences and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel also presented their practices with regards to integrating mobility windows into the curriculum.
- EPS5: Held on 13 December by ACA together with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the European University Association (EUA) and the European Association for International Education (EAIE), the seminar on *Euro-African Cooperation in Higher Education* was all about dealing with cooperation matters on an equal par. The seminar gathered 110 participants and offered a useful opportunity to exchange good practices, views and insights on higher education developments between participants from Europa and Africa. It brought together researchers from top universities, development experts from international and European donor organisations, regional specialists from national and European higher education and mobility entities, as well as high profile African experts from a range of organisations, including the Inter University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), East African Community (EAC) and the Association of African Universities (AAU).

As always, ACA is immensely grateful for the contributions of the seminar speakers, and the active participation of the diverse groups of attendees who gathered for these events throughout the year, and many of whom are loyal participants to ACA's events.

## WEBINAR

On 17 December, ACA and the Deutsches Studentenwerk

(DSW) jointly presented a webinar on the preliminary findings of the one-year project State Grants and Loans as a Means to Increase Outgoing Mobility (STiME), marking the first event of this type for ACA. The webinar was made in Berlin and moderated by Ulrich Teichler (INCHER-Kassel), the external advisor of the project. In the 1.5 hour session, two short presentations served as the basis for an interactive discussion on the portability of state grants and loans among the research team and around forty participants who took part in the webinar from different corners of the world. The recording of the webinar has been shared with the 90 registered participants from around 35 different countries.

## ACA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2013

The long-awaited ACA 20th Anniversary Conference was held in The Hague between 9 and 11 June and was co-organised with ACA's Dutch member organisations – the Nuffic – which is also one of the co-founders of the association. As usual one step ahead of current developments in international education, ACA invited some of the most outstanding experts and practitioners to address the theme of the conference *Internationalisation and international mobility. Where do we stand, where are we heading?* At its jubilee conference, ACA revisited those themes which were already at the center of the Association's interest in 1993, the year of ACA's foundation, and which have remained topical two decades later: internationalisation and international mobility. More precisely, the conference addressed issues hotly debated at the time, such as the ethics of internationalisation, transnational education and 'internationalisation at home' on the one hand, and 'mobility windows', 'mobility appetizers' and the relationship between mobility and employability on the other hand.

The conference consisted of a mix of plenary sessions and parallel workshops and gathered over 200 participants from countries as diverse as Japan and South Africa, New Zealand and Russia, the United States and Kazakhstan, China and Saudi Arabia, and obviously many European countries, who seemed to be equally preoccupied with the same questions: Will our graduates become the next intellectuals? Is there any internationalisation without values? What are the drivers of mobility? Who benefits from transnational education and how can we make intercultural education work? How stratified is the world of partnerships and networks? How should academic cooperation be approached in times of crisis in Europe?

Overall, the 20th anniversary conference was certainly a joyful cause for celebration for ACA, its member organisations and friends.

## ACA PRESENTATIONS, MISSIONS AND MEETINGS

ACA Secretariat staff regularly present at international conferences and events, serve as panellists at forums and undertake various advisory roles and other missions abroad. These kinds of commitments took ACA staff to nearly 15 different countries over the course of 2013. Some of the highlights of the year were:

- Member of the Evaluation Team for the German Wissenschaftsrat of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Köln, January – November)
- Speaker on “Welcome to the audit society - internationalisation strategies and audits” at Swiss Core conference (Brussels, March)
- Rapporteur EU-China Higher Education Policy Dialogue (Brussels, April)
- Plenary speaker and workshop moderator on assessing internationalisation at university level, Swedish Council for Higher Education Annual Conference (Stockholm, May)
- Speaker on “Rankings and U-Multirank” (Levi, May)
- Speaker at DAAD Lektorentreffen on Brussels higher education policies (Bonn, July)
- Speaker at Lithuanian Presidency Conference on Higher Education on “promotion strategies for European higher education” (Vilnius, September)
- Various speaker responsibilities at the EAIE 2013 Annual Conference (Istanbul, September)
- Advisory Board member for a new language policy of the University of Groningen (Groningen, September)
- Presenter and participant in Bologna Process Working Group on Mobility and Internationalisation (Madrid, October)
- Participant in EU-South Africa higher education dialogue of the European Commission (Brussels, November)
- Presenter on “undesired mobility” in workshop of French-speaking Belgian economists (Charleroi, November)



### ACA NEWSLETTER – EDUCATION EUROPE

When looking back at 2013, ACA's news coverage in the ACA Newsletter – Education Europe was – as usual – extensive.

From New Zealand to Norway, from Chile to Russia, from China to the US – we tried our best to make sure that the newsletter readers were up-to-date with what was happening in higher education across the globe. With more than 140 articles on national and international developments in higher education and alike, ACA's newsletter team covered once again more than 40 countries and world regions. Carefully monitoring events around the European Union, its institutions, framework programmes and more, ACA dedicated exactly 60 articles to developments at the EU level. In addition, we reviewed around 106 books, publications and reports relevant to our field. Moreover, we kept an eye on funding opportunities and drew our readership's attention to 26 calls for funding.

A very special thanks goes to our ACA members who have contributed to our newsletter and helped us in providing first-hand information on developments in their respective organisations, countries and regions. Another set of special thanks goes to the ACA readership, who stayed loyal to the newsletter throughout the years and who gave useful feedback on the coverage and quality of newsletter articles.



ACA is governed by a supreme body, the General Assembly (GA), where all ACA members are represented. The decisions of the GA are based on proposals put forward by the Administrative Council (AC). The AC consists of up to seven members who are elected for two-year terms by and from the members of the General Assembly. The Brussels based Secretariat handles the day to day affairs of the Association, with a high priority placed on professionalism, cost efficiency, and high quality service delivery. Very importantly, the Association is represented externally by a key figure – the ACA President – who is elected from outside the association for a mandate of 3 years.



#### ACA LEADERSHIP

In 2013, the Association continued to be guided and represented externally by its high-profile president Sijbolt Noorda, elected in this position in 2011.



But the year also culminated with some significant changes for ACA at leadership level. In its December meeting in Brussels, the General Assembly (GA) voted in a new Vice President and a new Treasurer of the Association, in the persons of Antoine Godbert (2e2f) and Rait Toompere (Archimedes Foundation) respectively, while saying goodbye to outgoing Vice President – Ulrich Grothus (DAAD) – and Treasurer – Hubert Dürstein (OeAD).



ACA extends heartfelt thanks to the two outgoing figures, who have been long time ACA supporters and whose contribution was deeply appreciated. At the same time ACA is happy to welcome the new leadership team.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Elections were also held in December 2013 for the ACA Administrative Council. As a result, the two administrators eligible to continue in their roles – Antoine Godbert (2e2f) and Katarina Kostalova (SAIA) – were duly re-elected, and were joined by four new administrators: Kurt Bratteby (Swedish Institute), Christine Juen (OeAD), Anette Pieper (DAAD) and Rait Toompere (Archimedes Foundation). Vidar Pedersen (SIU) whose term as administrator did not expire in 2013, continues his work on the Administrative Council (AC) for another year. Prior to the election of new members in December, the AC met twice during the year (in April and October) to conduct its business, which was primarily focused on developing recommendations for the General Assembly with regard to the ACA budget and other key issues for the Association. The AC also guided the internal discussions on ACA's future activity emphasis and on the review of ACA's membership fee structure.

Meanwhile, as is standard practice, the ACA General Assembly met twice this year. In addition to the December 2013 meeting in Brussels noted above, the GA's first gathering of the year occurred in June immediately after the ACA 2013 Annual Conference, held in The Hague. Both GA meetings of 2013 provided an excellent opportunity for information sharing on all sides, and for taking some important decisions related to ACA's mission and membership activities, as well as its membership fees, setting up a new system. The Secretariat provided an update on its work, financial matters were discussed in-depth and a comprehensive tour de table allowed all members present to share information on programmes, initiatives and other developments of note within their organisations. For the first time the December GA was preceded by a new activity for members – the Structured Dialogue – a guided discussion on a topic of importance for the members.

## ACA SECRETARIAT

Staffing at the level of the Secretariat was quite stable in 2013, with the four core staff members remaining in place for most of the year. Director Bernd Wächter provided overall leadership and guidance for the group, which consisted of Irina Ferencz (Policy Officer), Queenie K.H. Lam (Project Officer) and Lynn Sobrie (Office Manager). The team was reinforced between April and November by former ACA trainee Veronika Kupriyanova-Ashina, who took over the responsibilities of Irina Ferencz for four months, while the latter was on maternity leave.

ACA also benefitted from the work of three excellent stagiaires. Rita Morais of Portugal, Marlène Bartès – a French-German national, and David Pluskota, an Austrian of Polish origin, all dedicated themselves energetically and effectively to the monthly production of the ACA Newsletter – Education Europe, among other projects and tasks.



## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

ACA Accounts 2012 and 2013 (EUR)

	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
<b>Expenditure</b>								
Staff costs	402,327	414,613	452.951	402.923	438.450	402.566	353.572	401.863
Secretariat running costs	115,244	118,134	117.523	146.196	128.467	119.448	124.583	100.550
Project expenditure	228,447	280,288	208.974	234.341	216.521	215.840	328.893	178.342
Travel, meetings	3,352	7,545	8.400	10.807	16.279	25.354	33.334	32.716
Provision	0	0	0	0	0	0	10.548	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>749,370</b>	<b>820,580</b>	<b>787,847</b>	<b>794.267</b>	<b>799.717</b>	<b>763.208</b>	<b>850.930</b>	<b>713.471</b>
<b>Income</b>								
Membership fees	278,597	303,957	274.498	256.427	296.230	271.738	257.033	257.621
ETAPE payment for Secr. Serv.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACA share of ETAPE man. fee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10.425
Project income	466,567	492,408	482.185	451.803	520.543	537.948	534.332	480.200
Other income	16,700	16,893	27.233	26.736	28.209	54.091	44.781	31.875
<b>Total</b>	<b>761,864</b>	<b>813,258</b>	<b>783.917</b>	<b>734.966</b>	<b>844.983</b>	<b>863.777</b>	<b>836.146</b>	<b>780.122</b>
<b>Result</b>	<b>12,494</b>	<b>-7,322</b>	<b>-3.930</b>	<b>-59.301</b>	<b>45.265</b>	<b>110.569</b>	<b>-14.783</b>	<b>66.651</b>



Promoting Innovation and Internationalisation

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