

2014

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 outside of Europe.

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.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the President 3

Who we are: Our members 4

What we do I: Projects and activities 6

What we do II: Events 10

What we do III: The monthly ACA news service 13

How we work: Administration, governance and finances 14



2014 was a special year for the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), but also for myself. After an initial 3-year term at the helm of the Association, the ACA General Assembly renewed my mandate as the association's President for another three years.

I am grateful for the trust of the members of ACA and I will do my very best to deserve it.

Once again, the past year was action-packed. ACA held its Annual Conference in the beautiful city of Bordeaux, hosted by our French member Agence Erasmus+. The event, entitled *Europe in the world. Higher education developments across the globe*, attracted close to 250 excited participants from Europe and further afield. Similarly successful was ACA's *European Policy Seminar* series, which, once again, focused on long-standing fields of specialisation of ACA, such as English-medium instruction and international academic mobility, but also explored new territory, like liberal arts education.

The Association was equally productive in the field of research projects and consultancies. The end of the year saw the publication of the results of our survey on English-taught programmes in Europe, the third exercise of its kind since 2002. A second publication, on state grants and loans across Europe, appeared early in 2014. While these two books came out in the Association's own series, the *ACA Papers on International Cooperation in Education*,

a third one, on the results of the ACA-EUA study *Mobility Policy Practice Connect*, appeared *hors série*. ACA was also active in advising universities in Hungary and Romania on their internationalisation strategies and practices and it continued to be a core partner in the *Educoach* project which created online tools for advising students on study-in-Europe opportunities. Newly started projects in 2014 included *Mastermind*, on admission practices of European universities for Master-level programmes, a report for the European Parliament on indicators in higher education rankings and in quality assurance, and a 3-year large-scale exercise for the European Commission promoting European higher education in non-European continents, in which ACA will create and run networks of European higher education experts in Brazil, China, India, Russia and South Africa.

In 2014 the ACA family grew bigger. Two prestigious organisations joined the association's ranks. In June, ACA wholeheartedly welcomed the Czech Centre for International Cooperation, which, amongst other things, acts as the country's national agency for the Erasmus+ Programme. In December, ACA was very happy to admit the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie, an organisation of about 800 universities and research centres mostly in the francophone world.

There's much more to read and to discover in the following pages, so keep on reading!

Bonne lecture!

Sijbolt Noorda
ACA President

WHO WE ARE: OUR MEMBERS

PROMOTING INNOVATION & INTERNATIONALISATION

ACA's strength as an organisation rests on the strong 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 delivery, 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



Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research



Flanders Knowledge Area



Wallonia-Brussels Campus



Centre for International Cooperation in Education (Czech Republic)



Archimedes Foundation (Estonia)



Centre for International Mobility (Finland)



Agence Europe-Education-Formation, later renamed as Agence Erasmus+ (France)



Campus France



German Academic Exchange Service



State Scholarships Foundation (Greece)



Tempus Public Foundation (Hungary)



Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education



Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education



Foundation for the Development of the Education System (Poland)



Perspektywy Education Foundation (Poland)



Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation



Slovak Academic Information Agency



Public Foundation for the International Promotion of Spanish Universities



Swedish Council for Higher Education



Swedish Institute



Foundation for Federal Co-operation (Switzerland)



Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities



Turkish Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes



British Council

In 2014, ACA family grew once again. Two fine organisations, the Czech Centre for International Cooperation in Education and the Canada-based Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (Canada) joined our Association.

After years of close contact, the Czech **Centre for International Cooperation in Education (DZS)** formally joined ACA in June 2014. The main task of the Prague-based organisation is the implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme in the Czech Republic. However, DZS's tasks are not limited to being the Erasmus+ national agency. The organisation also runs a considerable number of bilateral programmes (with Austria and the three EEA countries, for example). It is also in charge of the provision of information on and the marketing of Czech higher education around the globe, and it provides consultancy services and organises a considerable number of national and international seminars and conferences.

The **Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)** joined ACA in December 2014 as an associate member. The AUF is a network of about 800 higher education and research institutions in about 100 countries. It is headquartered in Montréal/Montreal, but the Paris office of AUF delivers many central services, too. Member universities need at least a link to the French-speaking world, for example in the form of a French Department.

The AUF operates 10 regional offices around the world and operates 38 university-based Digital Campuses and Information Access Centres. AUF's current priorities are training member organisations in the developing world, particularly on questions of governance, research on emerging issues, and cooperation with public authorities and stakeholder organisations.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



Agence Universitaire der la Francophonie
(Canada)



Mexican Association for International
Education



ETS Global (The Netherlands)



Institute of International Education
(United States)

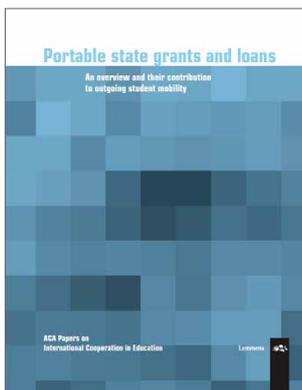


IDP Education (Australia)

Every year, 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.

STIME: STATE GRANTS AND LOANS AS A MEANS TO INCREASE OUTGOING MOBILITY

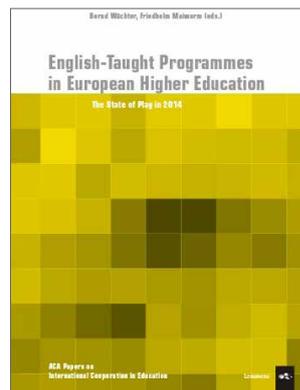


Work on the STIME project (State grants and loans as a means to increase outgoing mobility) had already been completed by the end of 2013. However, the publication only appeared in January 2014. The book was published as number 22 in the series *ACA Papers on International Cooperation in Education*. The publication, produced in cooperation

with colleagues from the *Deutsches Studentenwerk* (DSW) and supported by a grant from the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme, lived up to the three objectives of the study. First, it described the public student grant and loan systems in 31 European countries. Second, it investigated the "portability" of grants and loans, i.e. the extent to which they could or not be used for study abroad. Third, it assessed the quantitative contribution of these schemes to overall outgoing student mobility (credit and degree mobility) in the countries concerned.

How much do state grants and loans contribute to outgoing mobility? Across Europe, much less than we expected. However, the situation differs very much between countries. While the largest numbers of outbound-mobile students were unsurprisingly found in bigger countries like Germany and France (15,134 and 9,118 respectively in 2008/09), the leaders in relative terms were the Nordic countries of Europe. Compared with outgoing Erasmus mobility, outbound mobility supported by state grants and loans was 5 times higher in Norway, 2.7 times higher in Denmark, two times higher in Sweden and 1.6 times higher in Finland.

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



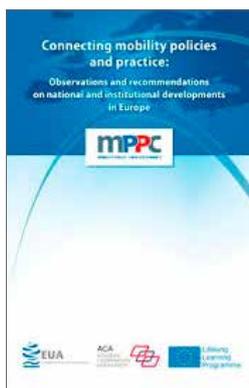
2013 saw the finalisation of ACA's third Europe wide survey of English-taught programmes in countries where English is not one of the native languages. The two first surveys - and publications - in 2002 and 2008 - had created big ripples in the academic community in Europe and beyond and earned ACA the reputation as the number

1 European expert centre on English-medium instruction. The results of the third survey had therefore been eagerly awaited.

English-taught programmes in European higher education. The state of play in 2014 was published as no. 23 in the *ACA Papers* and came about as a co-production of ACA and the *Gesellschaft für Empirische Studien* (GES) in Kassel, Germany. The work was supported by a grant from the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union. The study confirms that English-medium instruction in Europe is still growing fast. The number of identified programmes of this sort (not of those surveyed) stood at over 8,000 in 2014, up from about 2,400 in 2008. In absolute numbers, the leading country was The Netherlands, followed by Sweden, France and Denmark. In relative terms, i.e. measured against the size of the higher education system, The Netherlands also lead. It is noteworthy that among the top 12 - of overall 28 countries - we find all five Nordic and all three Baltic countries of Europe. By and large, (south) eastern and southern European countries still lag considerably behind.

“ Building complementarity between institutional and national level mobility strategies ”

MPPC – MOBILITY POLICY PRACTICE CONNECT



Coming to a close in September 2014, the project – *Mobility Policy Practice Connect (MPPC)* was jointly carried out with the European University Association (EUA). 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 was based 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 the publication *European and national policies for academic mobility*, in particular.

The project supported, with the help of the national rectors' conferences in France, Hungary and Lithuania, the development and enhancement of national mobility strategies, in line with *Mobility for Better Learning* strategy of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). In all three countries a series of events took place, at the centre of which was one university case study per country. The result of the project were published in a jointly produced policy brief entitled *Connecting mobility policies and practice. Observations and recommendations on national and institutional developments in Europe*. This booklet contains 6 recommendations for higher education institutions, 5 for national level policy formulation and 3 for the EU level.

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

In 2014, 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, with the involvement of a number of ACA members. The purpose of 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 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, centrally important, of producing a student recruitment guide. A first version of the recruitment guide was developed in the course of 2014, based on three site visits, desk research and the *EduCoach* experience. It was first presented in September 2014 at the EAIE Conference and at a joint marketing meeting of promotion agencies in Prague. 2015 will see the end of the project, with ACA's main role being the creation of the second and final version of the recruitment guide.

INTERNATIONALISATION AUDIT OF HUNGARIAN UNIVERSITIES

In 2014, ACA continued to be centrally involved as experts and peers in a series of 'audits' assessing the internationalisation activities and strategies of Hungarian universities. This project was lead by ACA's Hungarian member, the *Tempus Public Foundation* (TPF). After a conception phase in 2013, 2014 saw the delivery of 2 'pilot audits' in March, followed by a review of the audit procedures and methodology in May 2014.

In the second half of the year, four 'real' audits were carried out. The institutions in question were MEMO (school of applied arts, Budapest), the University of Miskolc, Semmelweis University (Budapest) and Eszterházy Károly College in Eger. Four final audits are to take place in 2015.

INTERNATIONALISATION EQUITY AND UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT (IEMU) PROJECT

In 2014 ACA staff also participated as international experts in the internationalisation strand of the *Internationalisation Equity and University Management (IEMU)* project - a large-scale national initiative in Romania, funded via the Structural Funds and led by the UEFISCDI agency. The internationalisation strand of the project was implemented by UEFISCDI in partnership with the *International Association of Universities (IAU)* and a panel of international experts, and dealt with the internationalisation of the Romanian higher education

system. The project assisted 21 Romanian universities in developing or enhancing their internationalisation strategies, producing also a blueprint for a national strategy for the internationalisation of the Romanian higher education and for creating a national internationalisation agency. ACA staff was part of an international expert team that carried out four institutional visits, supporting the four universities in the articulation of their internationalisation strategies, which were ultimately adopted by the university senates. The project was an excellent opportunity for following more closely the Romanian higher education realities and for supporting Romanian universities in reaching their international ambitions.

MASTERMIND EUROPE – MASTER'S ADMISSION FOR A DIVERSE INTERNATIONAL CLASSROOM

Mastermind Europe is a three-year project coordinated by the *Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam* involving nine other partners, including ACA, ACUP, HRK (Catalan and German rectors' conferences) and StudyPortals. This project, which is co-funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ Programme, and more specifically its Strategic Partnerships action, aims to help create more transparency and synergy over admission processes at Master's level in Europe. The project was started in September 2014.

ACA's role in this project is limited to the production of four separate reports on a) the degree of restrictiveness of Master's level admissions to 'outsiders' (i.e. applicants with a Bachelor from other institutions); b) the types of admission criteria at Master's level; c) the legal and regulatory obstacles to selective admissions at Master's level; and d) the perceptions of students on Master's admission processes. The four reports or, to be precise, the four online surveys leading to them, will only start in 2015.

EU-CHINA RESEARCHER MOBILITY

Following the successful, despite difficult, cooperation between ACA and the *EU-China Policy Dialogues Support Facility* (PDSF-II) in the organisation of the first meeting of the *EU-China Higher Education Platform for Cooperation and Exchanges* (HEPCE), ACA was asked to produce a *Joint study of EU-China Researchers Bilateral Mobility and*

Policy Recommendations together with China's *Science and Technology Talent Center* (STTC). The overall objective of this project, a mapping exercise, was to examine the current situation of researchers' mobility between EU and China, analyse push-pull factors influencing the mobility choices and patterns, and formulate policy recommendations to improve the mobility and to balance the flow of researchers in both directions.

Work on this project was started in October 2014. It is expected to be finished by April 2015. The joint study is being produced by a team of four experts, two from China and two from ACA. The start of the work was overshadowed by a worse than expected lack of reliable and differentiated mobility data, especially on the Chinese side.

STUDY ON QUALITY INDICATORS FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

In late October 2014, ACA and DAAD received a new request under the framework contract with the European Parliament (EP) over the provision of services (advice) on matters relating to higher education in Europe. This led to an agreement with EP on the production of a research study entitled *University quality indicators: A critical assessment*, in December. The study, to be produced until March 2015, will focus on global ranking schemes and indicators used therein, as well as on quality assurance methodologies and indicators. The study will be produced under the leadership of ACA, together with DAAD and external experts Maria Kelo (former ACA staff and currently Director of ENQA) as well as Ellen Hazelkorn (international ranking expert, Dublin) and Achim Hopbach (external expert on quality assurance, Vienna). Given the tight time frame of this project, preliminary work was already started in November 2014, i.e. before the signing of the agreement with the EP.

The present study is the third and the largest under the framework contract with the EP. The previous two projects conducted by DAAD and ACA under this framework contract were the production of a briefing note on the EU Commission's then "Erasmus for all" proposal, delivered in spring 2012, and a briefing note on "The Bologna Process: Stocktaking and Prospects", delivered in winter 2010.

STUDY ON OPEN EDUCATION

At the beginning of September 2014, and on invitation from the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) of the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), ACA participated in a call for tenders for a survey on open education in five European countries (France, Germany, Poland, Spain and UK). ACA won the competition and a contract with the IPTS was signed in October 2014, to run until May 2015. ACA's task in this project was to identify the exact provision of open education in these countries. It should be added that the IPTS's understanding of open education is very wide, including traditional forms of distance education, but focusing on online teaching offers and including also classroom-based learning with the occasional use of learning technology. The ACA team was supported in this project by two experts - former ACA trainee Rita Morais (Lisbon), as well as Marek Fuchs, a professor specialising on sampling methodology, from Darmstadt/Germany.

2014 still saw the kick-off meeting of the project Sevilla, the seat of the IPTS, as well as first steps to identify those to be sampled. Ironically, the challenge of this project's start was not the relatively new and unknown terrain onto which ACA ventured, but the difficulty of identifying contacts in the five countries.

HEINNOVATE

HEInnovate is an online self-assessment tool designed for higher education institutions (HEIs) as guidance on entrepreneurship and innovation. The framework of *HEInnovate* is based on seven dimensions through which HEI staff can assess the work of their institution/department and identify potential areas of action at the institutional/national/international level. The tool, launched in 2013 and updated in 2014, was developed by the European Commission and the OECD (LEED Programme).

In this small project, which started in October and came to a close by mid-December, ACA developed a policy support document on *HEInnovate*. It focused on the 'dimension' of internationalisation. The paper consists of three parts

- A literature review on internationalisation;
- an analysis of the international dimension of *HEInnovate*; and
- a set of recommendations for the international promotion of the tool.

ENHANCING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE WORLD

In late 2014, the joint bid of a consortium of ACA members led by the British Council and including EP-Nuffic, Campus France, DAAD and the Archimedes Foundation won a big contract over an EU-funded project named *Enhancing the attractiveness of European Higher Education in the world* was successful. The 3-year contract was concluded with the European Commission in December 2014.

While most of the tasks to be carried out in this project are in the area of practical marketing (fairs, websites; other forms of communication, especially via social media), ACA's part is to establish, train and run a network of 'Europe promoters' in five non-European countries (Brazil, China, India, Russia and South Africa). Practical work will start in 2015, with identifying and recruiting possible promoters in the five countries. Promotion work will only commence in 2016.



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) continued in 2014, delivering yet another four events. Each EPS session consists of a substantive one-day event organised around a specific theme of interest. The seminars normally draw up to and sometimes above 100 participants to Brussels, all active in higher education leadership, management or policy-making, for a stimulating day of analyses, conversations and debates on key issues in international higher education.

- EPS1: On 30 January, ACA held the 2014 edition of its popular *What's new in Brussels? Recent developments in European policies and programmes* seminar. This traditionally popular seminar drew a total of 155 participants from all over Europe, being fully-subscribed. The seminar gave the floor to speakers from the European Commission (EC), as well as from several stakeholder groups, who provided comprehensive updates on some of the most current issues on the European higher education agenda. The programme

was built to focus primarily on novelties related to the final design and start of implementation of the new generation of EU programmes in the field of (higher) education and research, namely Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020, including speakers like Adam Tyson, Claire Morel, Bodo Richter and Siegbert Wuttig.

- EPS2: ACA's 2nd European Policy Seminar of 2014 was titled *Funding student mobility – Scholarships, grants and loans*. The event was yet another opportunity to, amongst others, spread the results of the STiME project. The closeness to Easter and the overlap with the school holidays in many countries generated a lower number of participants than at earlier events. However, the smaller size of the audience also gave room for more dynamic and interesting discussions with and amongst participants. The speaker list included Nicolai Netz (DZW), Rait Toompere (Archimedes Foundation), Anne Marie Graham (UK HE International Unit), Anette Pieper (DAAD), Julie Fionda (DG EAC), Bernd Wächter (ACA) and Ulrich Teichler (Professor emeritus and former Director of the International Centre for Higher Education Research – INCHER-Kassel, Germany).
- EPS3: ACA's 3rd European Policy Seminar of 2014 was held on 9 October, as usual in Brussels. Titled *Improving undergraduate education in Europe: liberal arts and science colleges*, this seminar discussed the 're-imported' concept of liberal arts education in Europe and its practice on the ground across Europe, a theme we believed to be popular. The seminar attracted some 80 participants, a number lower than expected. The parallel interactive workshops and the smaller size of the audience, however, resulted in more animated discussions and positive feedback from the participants

on the quality of the event. Speakers of the event included: Rob van der Vaart (Utrecht), Hans Adriaansens (The Hague), Samuel Abraham (Bratislava), Nicholas Eschenbruch (Freiburg), Henk Meijer (Middelburg), Vivian Nyitray (Chongqing and Taigu), Barbara Oomen (Middelburg) and Bernd Wächter (Brussels).

- EPS4: The 4th ACA European Policy Seminar in 2014 was dedicated to *English-medium instruction in Europe* and was held on 4 December. The seminar disseminated the results of the ETPs-3 project, the latest ACA study

on English-taught programmes (ETPs) in Europe. Other presentations focussed on the challenges and on good practice in the delivery of ETPs, including language issues, quality assurance and marketing. The seminar attracted about 110 participants. Speakers at the seminar included Adrian Veale (European Commission, Brussels), Karen M. Lauridsen (Aarhus University), Janina Cünnen (Universität Freiburg), Marjorie Ceustermans (ULB, Brussels) and Ulrich Ammon (University Duisburg-Essen).

ACA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2014

ACA's Annual Conference 2014, jointly organised with one of ACA's French members, the Agence Europe-Education-Formation (later to be renamed into Agence Erasmus+), was held in the beautiful city of Bordeaux from 15 to 17 June. The theme of the conference was *Europe in the world. Higher education developments across the globe*. The conference explored the development of higher education in different world regions and presented successful examples of cooperation with European universities, across a wide range of themes. Some 230 participants attended the conference, a number lower than hoped for.

The event featured any number of high-profile speakers. Next to the ACA President, ACA members and the ACA Secretariat team, these included Professor Cédric Villani, a Fields Medal laureate, Georges Haddad of Sorbonne University, Jordi Curell of the European Commission, Maria Yudkevich and Liqui Meng, vice-rectors of the Higher School of Economics and of Munich Tech respectively, as well as Lesley Wilson, Secretary General of the European University Association and Rolf Hoffmann, Director of the German American Fulbright Commission. The success of the conference was noteworthy, especially given adverse framework conditions, like a rail strike in France and the absence due to illness of the ACA hippo.



ACA PRESENTATIONS, MISSIONS AND MEETINGS

Staff of the ACA Secretariat regularly present at international conferences and seminars and workshops, serve as panelists at forums and undertake various advisory roles and other missions abroad. These kinds of commitments took ACA staff to 15 different countries in the course of 2014. Some of the highlights of the year were:

- Speaker, 'Mobility windows', ECCE Mundus Conference (Almaty, March 2014)
- Speaker, Conference of the Council of Education for the Commonwealth (Glasgow, March 2014)
- Speaker, 'Global and local internationalisation' – Farewell symposium for Hans de Wit (Amsterdam, June 2014)
- Speaker at the Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo Santander Summer School (Santander, September 2014)
- Chair, symposium on the occasion of the 20th birthday of EUA's Institutional Evaluation Programme (Brussels, September, 2014)
- Speaker, 'The Future of Higher Education – Bologna Process Researchers' Conference (Bucharest, November 2014)
- Speaker, 'What can be expected of the new European Commission?', Conference of the International Unit and Universities UK (London, November 2014)
- Speaker, 'Online tools for higher education promotion abroad', SAIA Conference on academic mobility and internationalisation (Bratislava, December 2014)

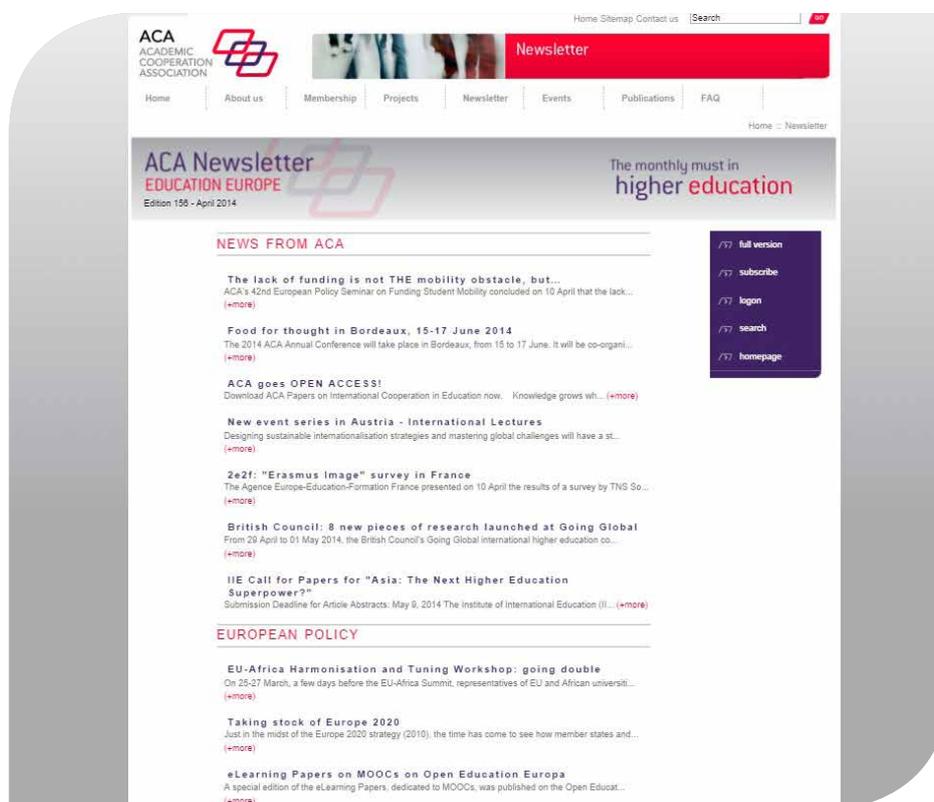


ACA NEWSLETTER – EDUCATION EUROPE

When looking back at 2014, ACA's coverage in the *ACA Newsletter - Education Europe* was, as usual, extensive.

From the Asia Pacific to the north of Northern Europe, from Patagonia to Russia, from China to the US – The ACA newsletter team tried its best to make sure that readers stay up-to-date with developments across the globe. With close to 150 articles on national and international developments in higher education and alike, the newsletter covered once again close to 50 countries and world regions. Carefully monitoring events around the European Union, its institutions, programmes and more, ACA dedicated about a third of all articles to developments at the EU level. In addition, more than 100 books, publications and reports were reviewed. On top of all this, the ACA news service drew the readership's attention to many calls for tender or calls for proposals.

ACA is deeply indebted to its members who have contributed to the newsletter by providing first-hand information on developments in their respective organisations, countries and regions. Thanks are also due 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

2014 saw the re-election of ACA President Sijbolt Noorda, for another term of three years.

Antoine Godbert, of the Agence Erasmus+ remained the ACA Vice-President and Rait Toompere of Archimedes the ACA Treasurer.



No elections were held for the Administrative Council in the year 2014, except for one. Since Vidar Pedersen's mandate came to an end by December 2014, a decision had to be taken over his succession. He was elected his own successor, for another 2-year term. Katarina Kostalova (SAIA), Kurt Bratteby (Swedish Institute), Christine Juen (OeAD) and Anette Pieper (DAAD) remained in office, as did the 'special Administrators' Antoine Godbert and Rait Toompere.



ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Administrative Council met twice, as in every year. The spring meeting was held on 8 April 2014. The autumn meeting took place on 15 October 2014. Both events were held in Brussels.

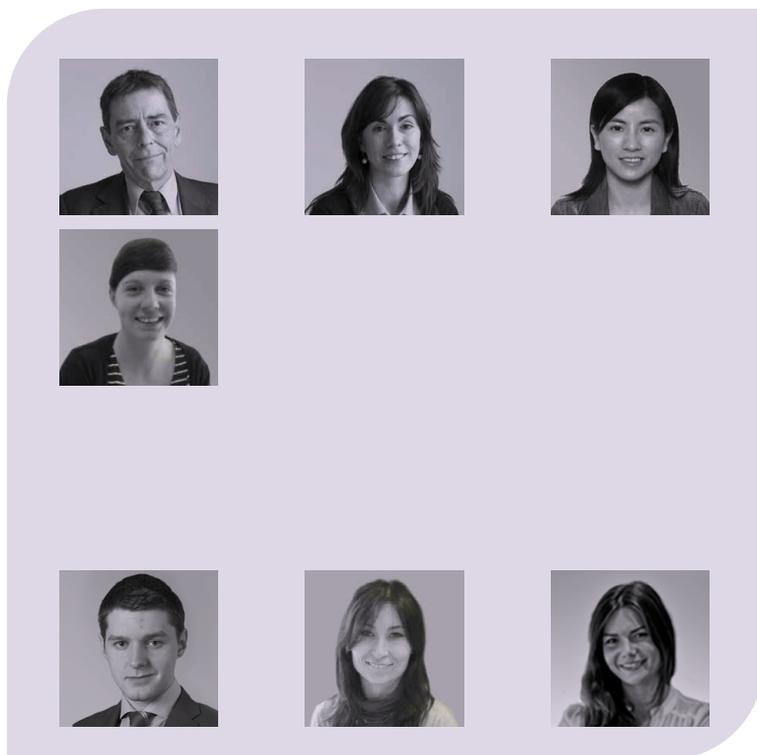
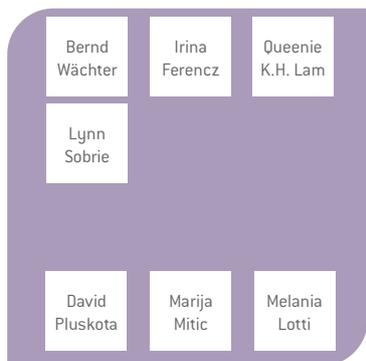
The spring ACA General Assembly took place in Bordeaux, back-to-back with the ACA Annual Conference, on 18 June 2014. Amongst other important decisions, it adopted the ACA accounts for the year 2014 and admitted DZS as a new member.

The autumn meeting of the General Assembly was held in Brussels on 5 December 2014. Important decisions during the meeting were the re-election of the President, the adoption of the ACA budget for 2015 and the admission of a new member, AUF. Both meetings were preceded by an exchange on a set topic, the so-called "structured dialogue".

ACA SECRETARIAT

Staff levels at the ACA Secretariat remained largely stable in 2014, with the four core staff members continuing over the year. Director Bernd Wächter provided overall leadership and guidance for the team, which consisted of Irina Ferencz (Policy Officer, now Deputy Director), Queenie K.H. Lam (Project Officer, now Project Manager) and Lynn Sobrie (Office Manager).

ACA also benefitted from the work of three excellent *stagiaires*. David Pluskota, Marija Mitic, and Melania Lotti dedicated themselves energetically and effectively to the production of the monthly *ACA Newsletter – Education Europe*, among other projects and tasks. Marija Mitic remained in the team after her traineeship period, in the role of an expert for the project on *HEInnovate*.



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

ACA Accounts 2013 and 2014 (EUR)

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Expenditure								
Staff costs	413,821.	402,327	414,613	452.951	402.923	438.450	402.566	353.572
Secretariat running costs/ infrastructure & equipment	117,943	115,244	118,134	117.523	146.196	128.467	119.448	124.583
Project expenditure	243,330	228,447	280,288	208.974	234.341	216.521	215.840	328.893
Travel, meeting & subs.	10,835	3,352	7,545	8.400	10.807	16.279	25.354	33.334
Total Expenditure	785,930	749,370	820,580	787,847	794.267	799.717	763.208	850.930
Income								
Membership fees	307,090	278,597	303,957	274.498	256.427	296.230	271.738	257.033
Project income	453,967	466,567	492,408	482.185	451.803	520.543	537.948	534.332
Other income	12,538	16,700	16,893	27.233	26.736	28.209	54.091	44.781
Total Income	773,596	761,864	813,258	783.917	734.966	844.983	863.777	836.146
Net Result	12,333	12,494	-7,322	-3.930	-59.301	45.265	110.569	-14.783



Promoting Innovation and Internationalisation

Academic Cooperation Association (ACA)

15 Rue d'Egmontstraat

B-1000 Brussels

Belgium

Phone: +32 2 513 22 41

Fax: +32 2 513 17 76

E-mail: info@aca-secretariat.be

Internet: www.aca-secretariat.be

Brussels, 2014

Editing: ACA Secretariat

Design: [Impact Communication](#)

RUE D'EGMONTSTRAAT 15 / B-1000 BRUSSELS (BELGIUM)
TEL + 32 (0) 2 513 22 41 / FAX +32 (0) 2 513 17 76
secretariat@aca-secretariat.be
www.aca-secretariat.be