



ASSOCIATION EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM FOR ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION (ECA)

The Hague – The Netherlands

Annual Report 2015

Annual Report 1 January 2015 - 31 December 2015

Annual accounts

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1. Balance sheet as at 31 December 2015

(after appropriation of net result)

	<u>31 December 2015</u>		<u>31 December 2014</u>
	€		€
<i>Current assets</i>			
Accounts receivable	2.000		
Other current assets:	11.117		
Cash at bank	<u>60.546</u>		<u>47.618</u>
	73.663		47.618
Total assets	<u><u>73.663</u></u>		<u><u>47.618</u></u>
<i>Equity</i>	60.341		31.279
<i>Current liabilities</i>			
Accounts Payable	3.699		-
Current accounts	6.061		16.339
Prepaid income	<u>3.562</u>		<u>-</u>
	13.322		16.339
Total liabilities	<u><u>73.663</u></u>		<u><u>47.618</u></u>

2. Statement of income and expenditure 2015

	Actual 2015 €	Budget 2015 €	Actual 2014 €
Fixed Income			
Contribution members	60.000	60.000	36.000
Contribution observers	2.000	2.000	1.000
Total income	<u>62.000</u>	<u>62.000</u>	<u>37.000</u>
Services Income (assumption)			
Internationalisation certificate fees	12.000	1.600	-
Joint Programmes fees	-	-	2.000
Training fees	10.150	8.000	-
EEEEP fees	-	-	-
Other Income	-	-	135
Total Services Income	<u>22.150</u>	<u>9.600</u>	<u>2.135</u>
Total Revenues	<u>84.150</u>	<u>71.600</u>	<u>39.135</u>
Fixed Expenses			
Coordination costs	35.000	35.000	16.000
Information and communication	2.157	7.000	15.256
Meetings Board and Working groups	507	2.000	776
Contributions to ECA Events	5.546	9.000	9.000
Travel expenses	1.582	5.000	2.383
Other expenses	3.866	4.000	3.875
Total Fixed Expenses	<u>48.658</u>	<u>62.000</u>	<u>47.290</u>
Services Expenses			
Training costs	6.430	8.000	-
Coordination of services	-	960	-
Total Services Expenses	<u>6.430</u>	<u>8.960</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenses	<u>55.088</u>	<u>70.960</u>	<u>47.290</u>
Net result	<u>29.062</u>	<u>640</u>	<u>(8.155)</u>

3. ECA Activities and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

a. ECA Activities

The Annual Report 2015 is the second one of the association ECA. The European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA) was incorporated as an association in The Hague, The Netherlands on 15 April 2014. The Annual Report 2015 covers the period from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015. Prior to the incorporation ECA was not a legal entity but a project consortium set up by accreditation agencies in 2003 in Córdoba. The existence of this project consortium ended with the incorporation of ECA as an association.

The membership of the association ECA consists of accreditation and QA agencies. Eligible for Membership shall be an organisation:

- a. which has its registered office in a country which participates in the Bologna Process ("Bologna Countries");
- b. which has been established as a corporate body or is based on national and/or regional regulations and/or agreements;
- c. which has accreditation or accreditation-like practices as one of its principal functions;
- d. which contributes actively to the objectives of the Association; and
- e. which fulfils the ECA Code of Good Practice and/or the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

The member organisations participating in ECA meet at least once a year in a plenary General Meeting. The General Meeting will decide on the admission of a new Member. Two General Meetings were held: the Annual Meeting on 25 June 2015 in Hanover and a General Meeting on 4 December 2015 in The Hague.

The association has a Board appointed by the General Meeting and consisting of three to seven members, including a Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer. The members who are not Chair or Vice-Chair need to represent five different Bologna member countries. The Board had the following composition in 2015:

- Rafael van Grieken (ANECA, Spain), Chair from 1 January until 29 July
- René-Paul Martin-Denavit (CTI, France), Vice-Chair from 1 January until 3 December, Acting Chair from 30 July until 3 December, Chair from 4 December until 31 December
- Ivan Leban (SQAA, Slovenia), Board member from 1 January until 3 December, Vice-Chair from 4 December until 31 December
- Izabela Kwiatkowska-Sujka (PKA, Poland), Treasurer
- Lucien Bollaert (NVAO, Netherlands and Flanders), Board member from 1 January until 4 December
- Madalena Fonseca (A3ES, Portugal), co-opted Board member from 4 November until 3 December, appointed Board member from 4 December until 31 December
- Josep Grifoll (AQU Catalunya, Spain), co-opted Board member from 7 December until 31 December
- Jürgen Petersen (ZEvA, Germany), Board member

The Board met four times in 2015: on 25 February in Paris, on 24 June in Hanover, on 6 October in Paris, and on 4 December in The Hague.

The Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Association, under the supervision of the Board. The Secretariat is led by the Coordinator who is appointed by the General Meeting and operates under the responsibility of the Board. Mark Frederiks (NVAO, Netherlands and Flanders) was Coordinator in 2015.

The Board and the Coordinator were appointed by the members in June 2014 for a two years term, ending in June 2016 and with the possibility of renewal.

The objectives of the association ECA are:

- to achieve mutual recognition of accreditation and quality assurance decisions, to enhance the conditions for such mutual recognition, especially- for joint programmes;
- to provide a platform for mutual learning and disseminating experiences with accreditation and accreditation-like practises;
- to provide transparent information on quality;
- to facilitate the internationalisation of institutions and students;
- and, furthermore, to perform any and all acts relating to the foregoing in the broadest sense.

The Association does not have the objective to make a profit. The Association cooperates with other relevant networks.

To achieve the objectives of ECA the Members agree to undertake activities in Working Groups. In 2015 there were four Working Groups:

1. Mutual recognition and joint programmes
2. Internationalisation of accreditation and quality assurance
3. Crossroads and information strategies
4. Mutual learning and best practices.

In addition, the members have appointed the Certification Group as standing committee of ECA. The Certification Group is responsible for the methodology and due process to award ECA's Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation.

The topics of the activities of the Working Groups and Certification Group are determined in the Annual Work Plan which covers the period from Annual Meeting to Annual Meeting, so from June to June. All working groups (WG) and the Certification Group (CG) met in the reporting period:

- WG 1 met on 9 March in Barcelona, 24 June in Hanover, 14 September in Brussels, and 4 December in The Hague.
- WG 2 met on 27 April in Warsaw, 24 June in Hanover, and 4 December in The Hague.
- WG 3 met on 24 June in Hanover, Skype meeting on 12 November, and 4 December in The Hague
- WG 4 met on 23 April in The Hague, 24 June in Hanover, and 4 December in The Hague.
- CG met on 27 April in Warsaw, 24 June in Hanover, and 4 December in The Hague.

On 4 December 2015 ECA members decided to merge working groups 2 and 4 in one new working group 2 to reduce some overlap and concentrate efforts.

The strategy of the association is defined in the ECA strategic management plan. To implement its strategy, ECA offers a range of direct services (Certificate for quality of internationalisation, Single accreditation procedure for joint programmes, Trainings) and online services (Crossroads, ECApedia, EEEP, webinars and QAZette), events and publications. Services are related to working groups or committees: joint programmes to WG 1; internationalisation Certificate to the Certification Group; trainings to WG 2;

online services to WG 3; proposals and publications on learning outcomes and employability to WG 4. Similarly, projects in which ECA participates are discussed in the working groups. In March 2015 the EU funded CeQuInt project which was coordinated by NVAO came to an end. In 2015 ECA was involved as project partner in:

- Focus on Institutional Automatic Recognition (FAIR; January 2015-March 2017)
- Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe (CALOHEE; November 2015-December 2017).

The FAIR project was discussed in WG 1. Participation in the CALOHEE project starts in 2016.

b. Summary of Significant Accounting Principles

Basis of Preparation

These financial statements, which are expressed in Euros, are prepared in accordance with accounting principles mentioned below.

Invoices received related to the following year and which have not been paid yet in the current year are presented on the balance sheet.

The net result is added to the reserves.

Assets

Assets are stated at nominal value net of a provision for doubtful debts.

Cash at bank

Cash at bank are at the disposal of the consortium and are interest bearing at prevailing market rates.

Current liabilities

Current liabilities are stated at nominal value.

Income and expenses recognition

Income and expenses are accounted for in the period to which they relate.

4. Notes to the balance sheet as at 31 December 2015

a. Current Assets

The current assets comprise cash at bank.

b. Equity (reserves)

Statement of movements

	<u>31 December 2015</u>	<u>31 December 2014</u>
	€	€
As at January 1	31.279	39.434
Net result reporting year	29.062	(8.155)
As at December 31	<u>60.341</u>	<u>31.279</u>

In the budget for 2014 it was stated that: "For reasons of continuity and because of own contributions to EU funded projects it is desirable that the reserves stay at least at 50% of the expenditure in a given year." With almost a duplication of the reserves by the end of 2015 it can be concluded that this goal has not only been met but even significantly exceeded. Higher reserves give e.g. the possibility of participating in EU funded projects where an own contribution is required.

c. Current Liabilities

The current liabilities comprise of accounts payable, prepaid income and an amount due to NVAO.

5. Notes to the statement of income and expenditure 2015

a. Income

In 2015 a membership contribution of € 4.000 was invoiced to:

1. Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), Croatia
2. Commission des Titres d'Ingénieurs (CTI), France
3. Agência de Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior (A3ES), Portugal
4. Akkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge im Bereich Gesundheit und Soziales (AHPGS), Germany
5. Agentur für Qualitätssicherung durch Akkreditierung von Studiengängen (AQAS), Germany
6. Zentrale Evaluations- und Akkreditierungsagentur (ZEvA), Germany
7. Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO), the Netherlands and Flanders
8. Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA), Poland
9. Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación (ANECA), Spain
10. Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU), Catalunya, Spain
11. Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency (SQAA), Slovenia
12. The Accreditation Institution (AI), Denmark
13. Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University (ACSUG), Spain
14. Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ), Sweden
15. Higher Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (HCERES), France

An observer fee of € 2.000 was invoiced to:

1. Council for Higher Education (CHE), Israel

In 2015 15 requests for transferral of the NVAO distinctive quality feature into the ECA Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation were received. All requests were on the programme level and made by Dutch HEIs. The regular administrative ECA fee of 800 euro was applied which amounted to an income of 12,000 euro. This was a transitional measure only applicable to NVAO decisions in 2014 and 2015 and in view of the fact that the ECA framework was modelled after the NVAO framework. Since 1 January 2016 Dutch and Flemish HEIs are required to use the ECA framework in full and the transitional arrangements have come to an end.

In September and November 2015 a training for experts in accreditation of joint programmes and a training for experts that can be asked for CeQulnt procedures were organised in Cologne and The Hague. About 15 participants for each training with trainers from AQAS, NVAO and PKA were involved. Non-ECA members paid a training fee of 400 euro and ECA members a fee of 270 euro. The total income amounted to 10,150 euro.

b. Expenses

Cost of coordination

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
	€	€	€
Coordination: NVAO	35.000	35.000	16.000
Total	35.000	35.000	16.000

The cost of coordination is the fee that NVAO receives for carrying out the tasks of Coordinator and Secretariat. It was agreed with NVAO that from 2015 onwards the fee for providing the Coordinator and Secretariat is significantly increased to reflect the real costs. These costs include staff cost for the Coordinator and secretarial support, financial administration and overhead costs such as housing/rent, ICT, office costs, but excluding the coordination of additional services which requires additional work and also excluding travel expenses of the Coordinator for attending ECA related meetings (the latter are included in the budget under Travel Expenses).

Coordination of services

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
	€	€	€
Coordination of services	-	960	-
Total	-	960	-

No costs were made for the coordination of services as no services were provided for which additional costs were incurred.

Training costs

	Actual	Budget	Actual
	2015	2015	2014
	€	€	€
Training costs	6.430	8.000	-
Total	6.430	8.000	-

The costs for organising the two trainings in September and November amounted to 6,430 euro. These costs included accommodation, dinners, and catering. As these were the first (trial) trainings to be organised as a service no fees for trainers were paid in 2015. This will change from 2016 onwards.

Information and communication

	Actual	Budget	Actual
	2015	2015	2014
	€	€	€
Website ECA/Qcrossroads/EEEP	2.157	6.500	14.896
Logo, letters, envelopes, etc.	-	500	360
Total	2.157	7.000	15.256

The information and communication costs amounted to 2,157 euro which included the hosting and annual registration of the website domains, fixing errors and the organisation of two webinars in August and October 2015. The provider of the website is the company Slik in Rotterdam (www.slik.eu). To save costs in view of the budget deficit in 2014 no development or improvements of the website were undertaken. Naturally continuous postponement of development costs is not desirable in the future.

Meetings Board and Working Groups

	Actual	Budget	Actual
	2015	2015	2014
	€	€	€
Board meetings	310	1.000	650
Working groups meetings	197	1.000	126
Total	507	2.000	776

These expenses include the costs for the meetings of the Board and working groups, including the meeting rooms and catering for the participants. Significant costs were saved by using meeting and catering facilities in hosting agencies.

Contributions to ECA events

	Actual	Budget	Actual
	<u>2015</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
	€	€	€
ECA Events	5.546	9.000	9.000
Total	<u>5.546</u>	<u>9.000</u>	<u>9.000</u>

ECA has contributed to the costs of organising the Workshop in June in Hanover and the Seminar in December in The Hague. Thanks to the efforts of ZEvA and NVAO these costs could be significantly reduced.

Travel expenses

	Actual	Budget	Actual
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	€	€	€
Travel Expenses Board	-	1.000	1.314
Travel Expenses Secretariat	1.535	3.000	1.069
Travel Expenses Others	47	1.000	-
Total	<u>1.582</u>	<u>5.000</u>	<u>2.383</u>

The Board decided not to seek any contribution from ECA for attending Board meetings. Travel Expenses Secretariat include travel of the Coordinator for attending the Board meeting in October, the Workshop in June, and the WG 1 meetings in March and September. Travel Expenses Others include travel costs of the guest speaker at the Workshop in June and of the presenter at the webinar in August.

Other expenses

	Actual	Budget	Actual
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	€	€	€
Affiliated memberships	2.317	2.500	-
Auditor Costs	-	-	-
Bank Charges	124	-	106
Legal entity	1.365	1.000	3.769
Other general expenses	60	500	-
Total	<u>3.866</u>	<u>4.000</u>	<u>3.875</u>

These expenses comprise the affiliated membership of ENQA, bank charges and costs incurred in 2014 but invoiced in 2015 for the establishment of ECA as a legal entity (consultancy fees for legal and financial advice).

Barcelona, Hanover, Lisbon, Ljubljana, Paris, The Hague, and Warsaw, June 2016

Signatures of ECA Board members:



René-Paul Martin-Denavit



Ivan Leban

Izabela Kwiatkowska-Sujka



Madalena Fonseca



Jürgen Petersen



Ann Verreth

Report of the Financial Committee

To: The Annual Meeting of Members of the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA)

Each year, the General Meeting will appoint a Financial Committee consisting of at least two members, who may not be Members of the Board. The Financial Committee will audit the Annual Report and will report to the General Meeting on its findings.

We have audited the accompanying financial statements 2015 of the association European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA), The Hague, which comprise the balance sheet as at 31 December 2015, the profit and loss account for the year from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015 and the notes, comprising a summary of the accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Responsibility of the Board

The Board is required to provide the Financial Committee with all of the information requested by it for the benefit of its audit, to show it the cash and assets if it so wishes, and to make the books, records and other data carriers of the Association available to it for its inspection.

Responsibility of the Financial Committee

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. This requires that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

Our audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. Our audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Board, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

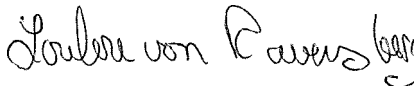
In our opinion, the financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the accounting policies selected and disclosed by the entity, as set out in the notes to the financial statements.

We advise the General Meeting of ECA to discharge the members of the ECA Board from liability for their activities during the year 2015.

Santiago de Compostela, 30 June 2016

Signatures of the members of the Financial Committee:


Mieczysław Socha


Loulou Von Ravensberg