



The European Consortium for
Accreditation in Higher Education

**ASSOCIATION
EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM FOR ACCREDITATION IN
HIGHER EDUCATION (ECA)**

Annual Report 2025



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1. Balance sheet at 31 of December 2025

	<u>31st December 2025</u>	<u>31st December 2024</u>	
<i>Current assets</i>			
Accounts receivable	450,00 €	5.550,00 €	
Other current assets			
Cash at bank	211.324,74 €	241.641,70 €	
	211.774,74 €		247.191,70 €
Total assets	<u>211.774,74 €</u>		<u>247.191,70 €</u>
<i>Equity</i>	245.022,99 €	272.073,11 €	
<i>Current liabilities</i>			
Accounts Payable			
Current accounts	580,80 €	9.289,00 €	
Prepaid income	8.000,00 €	4.000,00 €	
	8.580,80 €		13.289,00 €
Total liabilities	<u>211.774,74 €</u>	<u>247.191,70 €</u>	



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2. Statement of Income and expenditure 2025

	Actual 2025	Revised budget 2025	Actual 2024
Fixed income			
Contribution members	62.000,00 €	62.000,00 €	62.000,00 €
Contribution observers	5.000,00 €	5.000,00 €	4.500,00 €
Total income	67.000,00 €	67.000,00 €	66.500,00 €
Services & Projects Income			
CeQuint Fees	4.400,00 €	5.200,00 €	1.800,00 €
Training Fees	9.321,36 €	18.000,00 €	20.250,00 €
CALOHEEx project	0,00 €	0,00 €	1.800,00 €
I-AR project	0,00 €	0,00 €	3.157,01 €
Total Services & Projects Income	13.721,36 €	23.200,00 €	27.007,01 €
Total Revenues	80.721,36 €	90.200,00 €	93.507,01 €



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	<u>Actual 2025</u>	<u>Revised budget 2025</u>	<u>Actual 2024</u>
Fixed Expenses			
Coordination costs	37.000,00 €	37.000,00 €	37.000,00 €
Information and Communication	11.906,70 €	12.000,00 €	10.827,96 €
Contribution to ECA events	12.925,25 €	13.000,00 €	4.545,77 €
Travel expenses	1.856,12 €	2.000,00 €	2.325,71 €
Other expenses	9.157,66 €	9.000,00 €	5.069,26 €
Total fixed expenses	72.845,73 €	73.000,00 €	59.768,70 €
	<u>Actual 2025</u>	<u>Revised budget 2025</u>	<u>Actual 2024</u>
Services & Projects Expenses			
Cequint costs	800,00 €	2.200,00 €	1.000,00 €
Training costs	9.625,75 €	14.000,00 €	17.286,19 €
I-AR project	0,00 €	0,00 €	2.039,00 €
Internal strategic projects	24.500,00 €	32.000,00 €	9.953,60 €
Total Services & Projects Expenses	34.925,75 €	48.200,00 €	30.278,79 €
Total Expenses	107.771,48 €	121.200,00 €	90.047,49 €
Net Result	-27.050,12 €	-31.000,00 €	3.459,52 €



3. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

a. About ECA

The Annual Report 2025 is the twelfth one of the Association. 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 2025 covers the period from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025. 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 for a plenary General Meeting. The General Meeting also decides on the admission of new members. The next Annual Meeting will take place in June 2026.

The association has a Board, appointed by the General Meeting, consisting of three to seven members, including a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer. Board members who are not the Chair or Vice-Chair must represent five different Bologna member countries. At the end of 2025, the Board was composed as follows:

- **Eva Fernandez de Labastida** (Unibasq, Spain), Board member since 28 June 2018 and renewed on 16 June 2020; Vice-Chair since 30 June 2021, Chair since 23 June 2023, renewed on 16 June 2025.



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- **Ronny Heintze** (AQAS, Germany), Board member since 28 June 2018, renewed on 16 June 2020, on 7 June 2022 and on 3 June 2024, Vice-Chair since 16 June 2025.
- **Klemen Subic** (SQAA, Slovenia), Board member since 28 June 2018, renewed on 16 June 2020, on 7 June 2022 and on 3 June 2024.
- **Luit Kroes** (NVAO, The Netherlands), Board Member since 16 June 2020, renewed on 7 June 2022 and on 3 June 2024, and Treasurer since 8 July 2020, renewed as Treasurer on 30 June 2021, on 7 June 2022, on 23 June 2023, on 3 June 2024 and on 16 June 2025.
- **Sebastian Steele** (UKA, Sweden), Board Member since 23 June 2023, renewed on 16 June 2025.
- **Danijela Hrovatek Tomic** (ASHE, Croatia), Board Member since 16 June 2025.
- **Amelie Bensimon** (HCERES, France), Board Member since 16 June 2025.

The Board met virtually **four times** virtually in 2025: on 6 March, 12 May, 24 September, and 4 November.

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. At the General Meeting on 23 June 2021, Sanja Grobovšek was appointed as Coordinator for a one-year term, which was subsequently renewed on 7 June 2022, 23 June 2023, 3 June 2024 and on 16 June 2025.

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.



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To achieve the objectives of ECA the Members agree to undertake activities in Working Groups. In 2025 the following working groups were in place:

- Joint programmes, recognition and innovation Working Group and
- Certification Group, which is responsible for the methodology and due process to award ECA's Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation CeQInt.

In addition, one standing committee of ECA has been operating:

- The Appeals Committee which has the task of handling appeals regarding the ECA Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation, as specified in the Appeals Procedure of CeQInt.

The Working Group on Joint Programmes, Recognition, and Innovation met on 16 June in Cologne, Germany.

The Certification Group met on 16 June in Cologne, Germany.

The strategy of the association is defined in the [ECA strategic management plan](#). On 3 June 2024 the members adopted the ["ECA Strategic Update 2024-2029"](#).

The strategic vision of ECA is to act as an internationally recognised driver of innovation in quality assurance. With its expertise, networking, and services ECA contributes to the implementation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), promotes internationalisation of higher education, and assures "state of the art" activities of its members

ECA contributes to the EHEA implementation and to international QA developments through innovative project work. Projects in which ECA participates are discussed in the working groups and/or the Board.

In 2025 ECA was involved as project partner or expert in:

- The Automatic Recognition in the European Education Area 2025 (AR25, 2023-2025).



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b. Summary of Significant Accounting Principles

Basis of Preparation

These financial statements, express the information for the year 2025.

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

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 at 31 December 2025

a. Current Assets

The current assets comprise other current assets and cash at bank. These items are amounts still received.

b. Equity (reserves)

Statement of movements:

	<u>31th December 2025</u>	<u>31th December 2024</u>
As at January 1	272.073,11 €	268.613,59 €
Net result reporting year	-27.050,12 €	3.459,52 €
As at December 31	<u>245.022,99 €</u>	<u>272.073,11 €</u>

The net result reflects the planned investment in the development of the ECA Expert Exchange Platform, which was launched in February 2026 and organisation of the international conference, which was held on 16 June 2025 in Cologne, Germany.

c. Current Liabilities

One invoice for the 2025 membership fee was prepaid and one invoice related to ECA training was pending.

In January 2026, ECA paid the invoice for the financial counselling.



5. Notes to the statement of income and expenditure 2025

a. Income

	Actual 2025	Revised budget 2025	Actual 2024
Fixed income			
Contribution members	62.000,00 €	62.000,00 €	62.000,00 €
Contribution observers	5.000,00 €	5.000,00 €	4.500,00 €
Total income	67.000,00 €	67.000,00 €	66.500,00 €
Services & Projects Income			
CeQuint Fees	4.400,00 €	5.200,00 €	1.800,00 €
Training Fees	9.321,36 €	18.000,00 €	20.250,00 €
CALOHEEx project	0,00 €	0,00 €	1.800,00 €
I-AR project	0,00 €	0,00 €	3.157,01 €
Total Services & Projects Income	13.721,36 €	23.200,00 €	27.007,01 €
Total Revenues	80.721,36 €	90.200,00 €	93.507,01 €



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Fixed income

In 2025, the **membership contribution was €4,000** and was invoiced to 15 members, while 1 member was charged a reduced fee of €2,000 for hosting ECA Members' Seminars:

1. Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), Croatia.
2. Commission des Titres d'Ingénieurs (CTI), France.
3. Akkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge im Bereich Gesundheit und Soziales (AHPGS), Germany.
4. Agentur für Qualitätssicherung durch Akkreditierung von Studiengängen (AQAS), Germany.
5. Zentrale Evaluations- und Akkreditierungsagentur (ZEVA), Germany.
6. Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO), The Netherlands.
7. Bureau of the Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA), Poland.
8. Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategie Foresight in Higher Education (ACPUA), Spain.
9. Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency (SQAA), Slovenia.
10. Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University (ACSUG), Spain.
11. Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKA), Sweden.
12. Higher Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (Hcerés), France.
13. Agency for the Quality of the Basque University System (Unibasq), Spain.
14. Agencia para la Calidad del Systema Universitario de Castilla y León (ACSUCYL), Spain.
15. Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS), Romania.
16. Evaluationsagentur Baden-Württemberg (Evalag), Germany.

The **observer fee in 2025 has been 2.000 €** and was invoiced to 2 observers. Additionally, one was observer charged a reduced fee of €1,000 for hosting ECA Members' Seminars:

1. International Centre of Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality Education (THE-ICE), Australia.
2. Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA), Malta.
3. Frontex, Poland.



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Services and projects income

- In 2025 ECA received three programme and one institutional application for the Ceqint certificate.
- Fees of 9.321,36 euro in total were collected for organising two trainings (European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, 7-8 May 2025, Darmstadt, Germany and 16-17 September 2025, Bucharest, Romania).



b. Expenses

Cost of Coordination

	<u>Actual 2025</u>	<u>Revised budget 2025</u>	<u>Actual 2024</u>
Fixed Expenses			
Coordination costs	37.000,00 €	37.000,00 €	37.000,00 €

ECA Secretariat coordinator is delegated with a contract to provide and coordinate the Secretariat activities of ECA, including the financial administration. The tasks of the Coordinator and the Secretariat are listed in the Statutes (articles 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17). The contribution for hosting the Secretariat amounts to 37,000 euro per year.

Services and Project Expenses

	<u>Actual 2025</u>	<u>Revised budget 2025</u>	<u>Actual 2024</u>
Services & Projects Expenses			
Cequint costs	800,00 €	2.200,00 €	1.000,00 €
Training costs	9.625,75 €	14.000,00 €	17.286,19 €
Internal strategic projects	24.500,00 €	32.000,00 €	9.953,60 €
Total Services & Projects Expenses	34.925,75 €	48.200,00 €	30.278,79 €

The remaining costs for internal strategic project (development of the ECA Expert Exchange Platform) foreseen in 2025 will be incurred in 2026, when the project will be launched.

Information and Communication Expenses

	<u>Actual 2025</u>	<u>Revised budget 2025</u>	<u>Actual 2024</u>
Fixed Expenses			
Information and Communication	11.906,70 €	12.000,00 €	10.827,96 €
TOTAL	11.906,70 €	12.000,00 €	10.827,96 €

The information and communication costs in 2025 were allocated to the website maintenance and domains, a fee for Zoom, printing of ECA notebooks and pencils and new year gifts for members and observers.



Contribution to ECA Events

	<u>Actual 2025</u>	<u>Revised budget 2025</u>	<u>Actual 2024</u>
Fixed Expenses			
Contribution to ECA events	12.925,25 €	13.000,00 €	4.545,77 €
TOTAL	<u>12.925,25 €</u>	<u>13.000,00 €</u>	<u>4.545,77 €</u>

In 2025, ECA organized Members Seminar and the Decade of the European Approach Conference, held in Cologne, Germany. ECA covered the expenses for venue rental and meals (lunch & dinner).

Travel Expenses

	<u>Actual 2025</u>	<u>Revised budget 2025</u>	<u>Actual 2024</u>
Fixed Expenses			
Travel expenses	1.856,12 €	2.000,00 €	2.325,71 €
TOTAL	<u>1.856,12 €</u>	<u>2.000,00 €</u>	<u>2.325,71 €</u>

ECA covered the travel and accommodation expenses for both the coordinator and keynote speakers during the members' seminars and conference in Cologne, Germany.

Other Expenses

	<u>Actual 2025</u>	<u>Revised budget 2025</u>	<u>Actual 2024</u>
Fixed Expenses			
Other expenses	9.157,66 €	9.000,00 €	5.069,26 €
TOTAL	<u>9.157,66 €</u>	<u>9.000,00 €</u>	<u>5.069,26 €</u>

Other expenses include ENQA affiliate membership fee, Board insurance, bank charges, fee for financial advisors and data protection costs.



6. Report of the Financial Committee

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

The ECA General Meeting will appoint, each year, 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.

The Financial Committee (FC), which currently consists of two members, has audited the ECA Draft budget 2026 and the Financial statements 2025 of the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA), which comprise the balance sheet as at 31 December 2025, the statement of income and expenditure 2025, 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 FC with all the information requested by it for the purpose of its audit, to show it the cash and assets if it so requests, and to make the books, records and other data carriers of the ECA 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 efficacy of accounting policies used and the rationality 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.

The FC wishes to make some general observations regarding the financial performance of ECA in 2025:

- Total revenues decreased significantly in 2025, falling from 93,507.01 € in 2024 to 80,721.36 € in 2025. This decline is primarily attributable to reduced training income and the absence of project payments
- Total expenses increased sharply, rising from 90,047.49 € in 2024 to 107,771.48 € in 2025. This increase was driven mainly by the finalisation of the Expert Exchange Platform and higher event related costs “ECA organised one Members Seminar, combined with an international conference, held in Cologne,” which contributed to higher event expenditures.



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- The net result for 2025 shows a deficit of –27,050.12 €, compared to a surplus of 3,459.52 € in 2024. This deficit is largely due to strategic investments and increased operational costs.
- Fixed incomes remained stable, with membership and observer contributions totalling 67,000 €, consistent with previous years.
- Fixed expenses increased, from 59,768.70 € in 2024 to 72,845.73 € in 2025, driven by higher information and communication costs and increased contributions to ECA events.
- Variable incomes decreased, particularly in training fees (down from 20,250 € in 2024 to 9,321.36 € in 2025) and project income (0 € in 2025). CeQuint income increased slightly due to four applications.
- For 2026, fixed incomes are projected at 62,000 €, while fixed expenses amount to 66,000 €, resulting in a structural shortfall that will require careful financial oversight throughout the year.

ECA's 2025 financial performance reflects a year of strategic investment and operational expansion. While membership income remained stable, project revenues declined sharply, and fixed expenses increased due to event costs and platform development. The resulting deficit of 27,050 € reduced equity but remains within sustainable limits. The 2026 budget focuses on consolidation, maintaining essential services, completing the platform, and managing a projected deficit of –9,400 € through controlled spending and strengthened revenue-generating activities, particularly in the training programme and the acquisition of new members and observers.

Given the above, the FC wishes to make the following observations and recommendations to the ECA Board:

1. The FC congratulates the ECA on the development and successful launch of the platform, on the organisation of last year's event in Cologne (which also served important promotional purposes) and on the exploration of new training delivery methods, including the Stockholm model that combines two training courses delivered consecutively.
2. The FC supports the continuation of investment in training activities. Given the demand and the projected income of 20,000 € for 2026, the FC recommends exploring opportunities to expand the training portfolio.
3. The FC welcomes the continued investment in internal strategic projects. The 2025 expenditure of 24,500 € and the planned 10,000 € for 2026 reflect a sustained commitment to completing and maintaining the Expert Exchange Platform. The platform can also serve as a marketing tool to attract new members and observers.
4. The FC welcomes the corrective measures already planned and partially implemented to ensure a balanced 2026. While the FC is not concerned about the one-off deficit recorded in 2025, it recommends pursuing greater balance and financial sustainability in 2026 to avoid two consecutive years of significant deficits, as the ECA cannot absorb another deficit at the 2025 level.
5. An intermediate financial check is suggested, including the involvement of an external financial expert to support monitoring and ensure timely adjustments.
6. The FC congratulates the Secretariat for preparing clear, accurate, and well-structured financial documentation. The notes provide detailed explanations for each income and expense category, supporting transparency and accountability.



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Approved at the General meeting on the 2 of June 2026.

Signatures of the Board members:

Eva Fernández de Labastida
Chair

Ronny Heintze
Vice-Chair

Luit Kroes
Treasurer

Klemen Šubic
Board member

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Klemen Šubic
Datum: 2026.06.17
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Danijela Hrovatek Tomic
Board member

Sebastian Steele
Board member

Amelie Bensimon
Board member

Signatures of the Financial Committee:

Craig Thompson

Giacomo Annese