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 membership network in and beyond Europe, each member responsible in their respective countries for supporting internationalisation in education and training. ACA further maintains a global perspective through its partners 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

Table of Contents ................................................................. 2
Message from the President .................................................... 3
Who we are: Our members ...................................................... 4
What we do I: Members-only activities .................................. 6
What we do II: Public events .................................................. 7
What we do III: Projects, policy analysis, studies and advisory work .... 9
What we do IV: Networking and knowledge-sharing activities .......... 12
What we do V: International higher education news services .......... 13
How we work: Administration, governance and finances ............... 14
For the internationalisation of higher education, the ‘age of innocence’ is definitely past. Gone are the days with sweet dreams about what study abroad might bring in terms of cultural riches or on the idealism of international cooperation in the interest of spreading science and promoting academic progress. Higher education has become, most often, an international business like all others. Competition for market shares and reputation gains is in many cases a far more important driver than the idealism of bygone days. Nowadays the main engine of internationalization is a mix of political and economic factors, for all to see, no longer hidden in the cloak of culture promotion or academic tourism. At the same time, ‘Internationalisation at Home’ has taken on a new meaning. To the existing agenda of mainstreaming and internationalising the curriculum, another element has been added. How to cope with the international diversity of migrant communities, of ethnic and religious varieties, of diverse success rates in schools and in the labour market because of cultural and linguistic differences? Meanwhile, ‘old’ and trusted tools like the Erasmus programme stay in place. And at least some of the ancient ideals of cultural enrichment and cross-border friendship have survived.

How to position oneself – as a nation, as an individual higher education institution, as a student or an academic – on this new and confusing scene is no easy task. This is where professional analysis and study, services and advice can make a difference, where collegial counselling and peer reviews, seminars and study projects can identify best practices and new options. And this is exactly the setting in which the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) operates. A membership organisation bundling a good number of professional, national-level agencies supporting and servicing internationalisation, and committed to the cause of internationalisation in a truly multi-national perspective. Not linked up with one particular provider’s interest, but working in the interest of good-quality education provision and of responsible policies. ACA creates platforms for sharing and exchanging analyses, contacts, practices and projects. ACA promotes collaborations to support capacity-building and professional development, and executes all sorts of projects and surveys to enable policy-makers and practitioners to better know what to do and where to go.

The changing landscape of internationalisation in higher education is re-shaping ACA itself. As ACA’s President, also in 2016, it has been my pleasure, especially during this past year, to be part of a meaningful process of re-orientation of our association and of re-commitment of our membership. This exercise has clearly added value to the alliance. Once the ‘days of innocence’ are gone, it is much better to be a seasoned professional, knowing what it means to be performing in a theatre of change and transition, than simply taking the ideals and practices of internationalisation for granted.

I would like to thank ACA’s members and above all our Director and the ACA Secretariat staff in the Brussels office for their continuous engagement and the shared pleasure of international collaboration in the heart of Europe.

And to you, the readers of the report, I wish a pleasant dive into the recap of ACA’s 2016 activities.

Bonne lecture!

Sijbolt Noorda
ACA President
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

Agence Erasmus+, France
Archimedes Foundation, Estonia
Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research (OeAD), Austria

Campus France, France
Centre for International Cooperation in Education (DZS), Czech Republic
Centre for International Mobility (CIMO), Finland

Foundation for Federal Co-operation (ch Stiftung), Switzerland
Foundation for the Development of the Education System (FRSE), Poland
German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Germany

Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU), Norway
Perspektywy Education Foundation, Poland
Rectors’ Conference of the Swiss Universities, Switzerland

Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation (SAAIC), Slovakia
State Scholarships Foundation (IKY), Greece
Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR), Sweden

Swedish Institute, Sweden

Tempus Public Foundation [TPF], Hungary
Turkish Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes, Turkey
Wallonia-Brussels Campus, Belgium
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie, (AUF), Canada/France/Belgium

Mexican Association for International Education (AMPEI), Mexico

Institute of International Education (IIE), United States/Hungary

ETS Global, The Netherlands

IDP Education, Australia

Institute of International Education (IIE), United States/Hungary

Mexican Association for International Education (AMPEI), Mexico
With ACA soon to celebrate its 25th anniversary, 2016 was a crucial year for the association, namely one of reflection, forward looking and forward planning, of striving to stay ahead of trends in international higher education. This dynamic re-thinking and re-planning process encompassed a wide array of activities, all grouped under the generic label of the ACA 2.0 Initiative.

Beyond these activities and the internal strategic discussions in the form of members’ Structured Dialogues, the year also featured one ACA members-only seminar, on a topical theme for a large selection of member organisations – the implications of the most recent international refugee crisis for European higher education.

**ACA 2.0 INITIATIVE**

This initiative encompassed a round of internal brainstorming meetings with the ACA members, a SWOT analysis exercise, a self-assessment process, as well as a review by an external expert panel, all meant to lay the ground for a revamped ACA Strategy and a new modus operandi for ACA, from 2017 onwards. At the heart of this initiative was the wish to further transform the association into working even more closely with its members and enhancing members’ ownership, to further strengthen ACA’s relevance in the field of international higher education, to expand its European membership and its global outreach.

**MEMBERS-ONLY SEMINAR – TAKING STOCK OF THE INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE CRISIS IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Many ACA members have and are actively involved in tackling the effects of the most recent international refugee crisis in their respective countries, at least when it comes to higher education matters. Building on the first event of this kind that ACA held on this topic in December 2015 – for the wider international higher education community, and raising the question of the role of this community and of European higher education more generally – the ACA Secretariat organised on 3 November 2016 in Brussels, a follow-up, stock-taking event. The seminar – Taking stock of the international refugee crisis in higher education – was designed to provide a forum for ACA members to exchange experiences and lessons already learned in the integration of refugee students into higher education, in their respective countries.

A wide variety of projects and initiatives were discussed, including the Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians – HOPES project coordinated by DAAD (and involving ACA members Campus France, British Council and EP-Nuffic), the SIMHE project in Finland, the INTEGRA and WELCOME programmes in Germany (DAAD), the Cultural and linguistic support to refugee students programme of AUF, the oead4refugees platform in Austria, or the Platform for Education in Emergencies Response (PEER) of IIE, to name just few examples of initiatives led by ACA members. The programme also featured representatives of DG EAC and DG NEAR, who shared updates on the programmes and initiatives of the European Commission in support of refugee students.

The event also facilitated further brainstorming between ACA members on future joint activities for the integration of refugee students, and laid the ground for a joint project application which was submitted in 2017.
Bringing the expert community 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. On the one hand, ACA’s flagship events – the European Policy Seminars (EPSs) – offer participants the opportunity to interact directly with colleagues and experts around a tightly-defined topic, on a relatively small scale (facilitating effective networking) and in a highly collegial environment. On the other hand, ACA’s Annual Conference, typically 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.

In 2016, ACA organised three EPSs, reaching the landmark of 50 EPSs in April 2016 since the establishment of the series, and the ACA Annual Conference 2016, the latter in close collaboration with the Tempus Public Foundation (TPF) in Hungary.

**ACA EUROPEAN POLICY SEMINARS (EPSs) SERIES**

**EPS 1 – What’s new in Brussels? Recent developments in European policies and programmes**

As every year, ACA’s series of events started with the flagship seminar “What’s new in Brussels? Recent developments in European policies and programmes”. Held on 4 February 2016 in Brussels, the seminar focused on the experiences made with the new Erasmus+ Programme, Horizon 2020, as well as key EU-supported activities, such as HEInnovate, U-Multirank and the Erasmus+ Master loan scheme. As in the previous years, ACA was very glad to be able to provide, via this event, so many European Commission and EACEA speakers – nine in total – with a forum for directly interacting with the higher education community, and for receiving valuable feedback on the EU programmes in higher education and research. Likewise, the event made it possible for HEIs representatives to receive the latest news straight from the horse’s mouth, and to discuss their concrete experiences in working on projects co-funded by different actions of the Erasmus+ programme. The programme was enriched by speakers from ACA member organisations – DAAD and UHR.

**EPS 2 – Master’s level education in Europe – Towards a comprehensive approach from recruitment to graduation**

The second EPS in 2016, and the 50th in ACA’s EPSs series, took place on 17 May 2016, in Amsterdam. Because of the regrettable terrorist attacks that took place in Brussels in March 2016, the event had to be re-located from its usual Brussels venue. The programme of the event was closely linked to the work in the project “Mastermind Europe”. Thanks to this link, in Amsterdam, the EPS was hosted by the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU) – the coordinator of the Mastermind Europe project. The programme featured well-known and inspirational speakers, such as Kees Kouwenaar (VU), Linda Johnson (ISS, Erasmus University Rotterdam), Elspeth Jones (Leeds Beckett), Dora Longoni (Politecnico di Milano), Joshua LaFave and Christopher Connor [State University of New York at Potsdam and Buffalo], to name just part of ‘the cast’ of the day. The speakers and participants discussed different approaches in Master’s level admissions in Europe, in comparison with the US. The innovative case-studies showed the merits of an integrated approach at Master’s level admissions in Europe, in comparison with the US. The innovative case-studies showed the merits of an integrated approach at Master’s level, similar to the Graduate Enrolment Management (GEM) model in the US, whereby admissions are closely linked with marketing, career advice, alumni relations, and other relevant services within the universities. Part of the speakers also made the case for a necessary
Change in admissions practice at Master’s level in Europe, moving away from sole credentials’ evaluation, to more competence-based admissions. The seminar went smoothly and left behind enthusiastic participants about working hard towards this admissions paradigm shift.

EPS 3 – Crisis management in international higher education

The third EPS of the year was devoted to a very topical theme – addressing emergencies that can, and more and more often do, arise in international education and what can be done in such situations. The event took place in Brussels on 13 October 2016, and specifically addressed the impact of the recent terrorist attacks (e.g. in Brussels, but also elsewhere), accidents (e.g. the Erasmus students bus accident in Spain in March 2016), and other crisis situations with a bearing on international student and staff mobility and on cooperation with international partners. This topic was suggested by the ACA members as an essential one to be tackled in 2016. The seminar featured very experienced speakers, like Robert Coelen (Stenden University of Applied Sciences), who had to manage diverse crisis situations on various continents, to speakers that were involved in tackling very recent emergencies in Brussels, Belgium (Université Libre de Bruxelles and Vrije Universiteit Brussel) and in Spain (University of Barcelona). The event highlighted the need to strategically prepare and to design specific crisis management plans, as well as to remain flexible and adjust course during the crisis situation itself, as events rarely unfold exactly as planned. The discussions also showed there was a great need to exchange experiences and even specific crisis management plans and for peer-learning in the field of international higher education. The participants were highly satisfied with the quality and the organisation of the event.

ACA Annual Conference 2016 – Universcites, Higher Education Institutions and their Habitat

ACA’s Annual Conference 2016 took place in Budapest, Hungary, from 20-22 November 2016. Organised in very close and harmonious collaboration with ACA’s Hungarian member the Tempus Public Foundation (TPF), the conference pursued the question: “What is the ideal habitat for higher education institutions?”. About 30 speakers from Europe, the United States and Asia enlightened participants on sub-themes, such as: universities in metropolises; universities in small and medium-sized towns; and in rural areas; the links between universities and municipalities (acting hand in hand?); HEIs, cities and businesses; and virtual habitats. Speakers came from a wide range of organisations, i.e. from higher education institutions, city administrations, enterprises, urban planners and international and supranational organisations, such as the OECD, UNESCO and the European Union. Participants, some of whom came from as far as Tasmania, enjoyed and applauded the multi-angle approach that ACA had opted for and the forward-looking view on the university-city interaction, more than ever in the spotlight of the contemporary higher education eco-systems. Effects of the conference are already being observed, with other organisations borrowing from ACA’s approach to this event and thematic orientation. The event also provided unique insights into Budapest as a remarkable city and its links with its university environment. In addition to TPF colleagues, representatives of ACA members OeAD (Austria), CIMO (Finland) and SAIA (Slovakia) and IIE (United States/Hungary) presented or chaired various sessions.
Every year, ACA pursues — and is sought after to participate in — a broad range of research projects, studies, consultancy work and other activities related to its core areas of expertise in the field of internationalisation of higher education. ACA is renowned in European higher education policy circles for the top quality and relevance of its work, its ability to communicate rather 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 clarity to ongoing policy discourses at European level.

ACA’s research work is carried out by highly qualified and multinational Brussels-based Secretariat staff and in close partnership with a strong network of very qualified and knowledgeable professionals and academics from Europe and beyond, and many of whom come from ACA member organisations.

In 2016, ACA was involved in five projects, with additional advisory roles in other projects and on boards of universities.

**MASTERMIND EUROPE**

Mastermind Europe: Master’s admissions for a diverse international classroom is a three-year EU-funded project coordinated by the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, with nine other partners, amongst which also ACA. The project aims to support Master’s coordinators in Europe in the process of reforming their admissions processes to make them more user-friendly and more accessible for different types of applicants, including international students. The project developed a set of guidelines to support and encourage a paradigm shift in the Master’s admission practice in Europe — from admission based on the “recognition of diplomas and grades” towards more competence-based admissions. In 2016, ACA finalised a report analysing the results of two surveys conducted in 2015, mapping current practice in admissions at Master’s in Europe and sounding out the perceptions of Master’s applicants on the former. The report produced by ACA in collaboration with StudyPortals and Kees Kouwenaar (VU) shows that due to current admissions practices, based almost exclusively on credential evaluation, it is more difficult for foreign applicants to be admitted at Master’s level in Europe, although they constitute the prime target group of most English-Taught Master’s programmes here. The results show there is great potential to improve admissions and ease the burden of Master’s programme directors and admission officers, potentially via more competence-based systems. This project, in which ACA is a core partner, has and continues to receive high visibility in Europe and the United States, due to major dissemination efforts, but also thanks to the high quality of its outputs, the novelty of the approach, and its timeliness in Europe.

**STUDY IN EUROPE**

Study in Europe in short, or Enhancing the attractiveness of European higher education in the world, in full, is a three-year promotional campaign commissioned via a service contract by the European Commission, via its Directorate-General for Education and Culture — DG EAC. The initiative is coordinated by the British Council and involves ACA, as well as Campus France, EP-Nuffic, DAAD and the Archimedes Foundation. All ACA members are involved in supporting roles in this initiative, either by providing information on higher
education opportunities in their respective countries for the Study in Europe portal and the Study in Europe Facebook page, and/or by attending various Study in Europe education fairs in the target countries. ACA's role in the project relates to the set up, training, and guidance of a Network of European Higher Education Experts (EHEEs) in five countries, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (i.e. the BRICS).

In 2016, ACA's work consisted of organising four face-to-face training seminars with the networks of EHEEs in Rio de Janeiro (11-12 January 2016), Beijing (25-26 January 2016), Cape Town (18-19 February 2016) and New Delhi (7-8 March 2016), as well as in follow-up activities: providing EHEEs with promotional materials; supporting the EHEEs in their information and promotion activities and preparing the next round of face-to-face seminars, scheduled for 2017. Running the network of EHEEs also allows ACA to widen its global outreach, and to lay the foundation for further project work and events in these five countries.

IMPALA – INTERNATIONALISATION AND MODERNISATION PROGRAMME FOR ACADEMICS, LEADERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

IMPALA is an Erasmus+ Key Action 2 project aiming to build capacity at South African universities by means of peer-learning activities, particularly in the area of internationalisation. The IMPALA consortium is composed of four South African universities, four European universities, amongst whom the University of Antwerp as coordinator, and ACA. The International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA) is an associate partner. Amongst other activities, the project runs five working groups (WGs). Together with the University of Limpopo and the University of Venda, ACA is in charge of the WG on strategy development and implementation, which is to organise and conduct a 2-3 days training session with senior university leadership in South Africa and organise site visits to a number of European universities for the same target audience.

In 2016, ACA and its WG partners conducted a mapping survey targeting the 26 public universities of South Africa, in order to identify the main opportunities and challenges for internationalisation of higher education in the country. This was the first survey of this type in South Africa, and was warmly welcomed by the South African partners. It was then used as a model by other project partners to map further needs of the South African partners in other areas of international higher education (e.g. student and staff mobility).

POLICY ANALYSIS ON ERASMUS+ FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (EP)

Upon invitation from the European Parliament (EP), ACA also conducted in April-June 2016 a study on the Implementation of the Erasmus+ decentralised actions. The study, which has already been quoted often, analyses the experiences made thus far by Erasmus+ National Agencies (NAs, several of which are also ACA members, although often having a wider mandate) in the implementation of decentralised actions of the programme. To capture these experiences, ACA conducted an online survey addressing the 61 Erasmus+ NAs (getting 36 written responses), and additionally interviewed ten of the NAs. All in all the study shows that, despite some challenges encountered in (and inherent to) programme implementation, the vast majority of NAs were very confident in the future achievement of the Erasmus+ programme objectives, both in the field of Education and Training, and of Youth. Apart from one Youth-related objective, half or more of the NAs expected all the objectives to be reached “to a high or very high extent” by the end of the programme period. Beyond more specific findings, the report also put forward a number of eight recommendations, meant to smoothen implementation in the remaining programme period, if followed. The main findings were also presented to the EP’s CULT Committee in a session on 13 July 2016 in Brussels. The EP is expected to use the results of the study as one element in its contribution to the report for the mid-term evaluation of Erasmus+.
POLICY ANALYSIS FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The study on EU-China researcher mobility, started in 2015 and produced for the EU-China Policy Dialogues Support Facility II, was also finalised in very early 2016 and presented by ACA staff at a meeting of Chinese university representatives and European diplomats in the EU Delegation’s office in Beijing, on 26 January 2016.

OTHER ADVISORY ACTIVITIES

ACA was also involved – in an advisory capacity – in the CALOHEE project (Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe) led by the universities of Groningen and Deusto and involving 18 other consortium partners (including ACA’s member ETS Global). The Advisory Board, of which ACA is a member, provides advice on a case by case basis. Two physical meetings of the Advisory Board were held in Brussels in 2016 and ACA participated in both.

Another project where ACA is involved in an advisory capacity is HousErasmus+, coordinated by Erasmus Student Network (ESN) and involving three other core partners (EUF, UNICA and the Compostela Group of Universities), supported by a seven-member Advisory Board, including ACA. HousErasmus+ looks into the international student accommodation landscape in Europe, aiming to identify the main existing challenges, as well as good practices, in student housing so as to put forward a set of recommendations for relevant stakeholders (housing providers, policy makers, universities’ international offices, and students). In 2016, one Advisory Board meeting was held in Luxembourg and ACA was represented.

ACA was also appointed to be represented on two university boards in Europe: the International Advisory Board of ITMO University in St. Petersburg, Russia and the “Wissenschaftliche Beirat” of the Faculty of Philosophy, Humanities and Social Sciences of the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena, Germany. While the board of the University of Jena will only meet in 2017 for the first time, ITMO’s board met in November 2016 in Brussels. ACA was represented at the meeting.
Apart from project-related missions, staff of the ACA Secretariat regularly present at international events, organised by ACA members and other stakeholders in the higher education community, as panellists, advisors or trainers. 2016 was another busy year for the Secretariat, also in terms of presence at third-party events. These are some of the highlights of the year:

- Rapporteur Général, Colloquium of the Université Franco-allemande on the future of bilateral relations in higher education (Saarbrücken, 18-19 January 2016)
- Speaker and Member of the Advisory Board, Council of Higher Education Advisory Board for an internationalisation strategy for Israel (Jerusalem, 12-14 April 2016)
- Advisor, Flemish Education Council (VLOR), Task Group on English-medium education in Flemish higher education (Brussels, 10 May 2016)
- Member, Bologna Process Advisory Group 1 – Internationalisation (London, 18 May 2016)
- Speaker, CULT Committee Meeting: Implementation report on Erasmus+. Exchange of views and study presentations by Policy Department B and European Parliament Research Service (Brussels, 13 July 2016)
- Speaker, CIMO / Nordic Council of Ministers’ Seminar (Helsinki, 25 July 2016)
- Speakers, EAIE Annual Conference 2016 (Liverpool, 13-16 September 2016)
- Speaker, EUA Webinar on Erasmus+ Mid-term Review (Brussels, 28 September 2016)
- Speaker, “Reforming Erasmus+” stakeholder debate at the Lifelong Learning Week, European Parliament (Brussels, 10 October 2016)
- Keynote speaker, Internationalisation of the ‘hautes ecoles’ sector in Wallonia, Haute Ecole Condorcet, (Charleroi, 14 October 2016)
- Speaker, DAAD Seminar “Hochschulen im internationalen Wettbewerb- eine europäische Perspektive” (Brussels, 28 October 2016)
- Trainer, HERE event: Higher Education Reform Experts in Montenegro, Internationalisation of higher education – national and institutional responsibilities (Podgorica, Montenegro, 7 December 2016)
ACA NEWSLETTER – EDUCATION EUROPE

One of the ACA flagship products, the monthly electronic news service ACA Newsletter – Education Europe, is provided to approx. 25,000 recipients in Europe and beyond with responsibilities for Europeanisation and internationalisation of higher education, working in international and supranational organisations, ministries, national, European and international associations, as well as, importantly, universities and colleges. In 2016, the newsletter featured some 170 articles on national, European and international news, in the area of higher education and research. In addition, each issue contained on average about five articles about activities of ACA and its members, as well as over 10 reviews of new publications, and dozens of listings of upcoming events, and most importantly, calls for proposals and tenders. ACA continues to receive congratulations and applause for this very well received news service.
ACA is governed by its 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 the General Assembly from amongst the senior staff of ACA member organisations. The Brussels-based ACA 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 three years.

**ACA LEADERSHIP**

Five elected Administrators served on the ACA Administrative Council for most of 2016. They were: Anette Pieper (DAAD – Germany), Vidar Pedersen (SIU – Norway), Stefan Zotti (OeAD – Austria and ACA Vice-President), Bianka Siwinska (Perspektywy Education Foundation – Poland) and Piet van Hove (Flanders Knowledge Area – Belgium/Flemish-speaking community). The mandate of Vidar Pedersen came to an end in December 2016, when three additional members of the Council were elected – Ragnhild Solvi Berg (SIU – Norway and ACA Treasurer), Katrin Kiisler (Archimedes Foundation – Estonia) and Peter Tordai (Tempus Public Foundation – Hungary). Sijbolt Noorda continued to serve as ACA President throughout 2016, leading the association in its ACA 2.0 initiative.

**ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The Administrative Council (AC) met twice, as in every year. The Spring meeting was held in The Hague on 22 April 2016. Apart from dealing with the usual agenda items in preparation for the General Assembly (GA), the meeting was also of an enhanced strategic importance, as the AC members decided to recommend to the GA to start the ACA 2.0 Initiative.

The Spring General Assembly (GA) was held in Brussels on 16-17 June 2016. The meeting elaborated the topics addressed in the Spring AC meeting, and included a Structured Dialogue part. In addition, the GA attendees also carried a formal Tour de Table, updating each other with important developments from their own organisations and/or from their countries. The ACA members also voted in favour of carrying out the ACA 2.0 Initiative, agreeing on the process and methodology of this important exercise.

On 8 November 2016, the Autumn AC meeting was held in Brussels. The Administrators dealt with typical agenda items in preparation for the GA, as well as with the ongoing ACA 2.0 activities.

The Autumn GA, held on 13-14 December 2016 in Brussels, was dedicated to discussing the results of the ACA 2.0 Initiative (both the self-assessment and the external review part) and the way forward for a stronger and more dynamic ACA as a membership platform. The attendees also elected the new ACA Administrators and ACA Treasurer, approved the membership fees for 2017, and the 2017 Budget. The agenda also featured a Tour de Table round, allowing for important updates from and about the members, as well as a Structured Dialogue.
ACA SECRETARIAT

The ACA team continues to be formed of Bernd Wächter (Director), Irina Ferencz (Deputy Director), and Marija Mitić (Project Officer). Project Manager Queenie K.H. Lam has been on a sabbatical for two years since June 2016. Several changes occurred to the Office Manager position due to the absence of ACA’s Office Manager, Natalia Tarachiu, on medical grounds. The Secretariat received support from Office Manager Trainee Amalia Nipi, and then recruited Karim El Idrissi as Office Manager in early November 2016.

ACA also benefitted from the work of two excellent stagiaires, who contributed significantly to the quality and relevance of the monthly ACA Newsletter – Education Europe, among other projects and tasks. Ester Magyar, from Slovakia, completed her service in February. She was followed by Indra Weber – originally from Germany, but who had lived, studied and worked in Ghana, New Zealand, The Netherlands and Sweden.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

ACA Accounts 2016 (EUR)

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<td>820,580</td>
<td>787,847</td>
<td>794,267</td>
<td>799,717</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership fees</td>
<td>314,726</td>
<td>315,634</td>
<td>307,090</td>
<td>278,597</td>
<td>303,957</td>
<td>274,498</td>
<td>256,427</td>
<td>296,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project income</td>
<td>392,563</td>
<td>468,658</td>
<td>453,967</td>
<td>466,567</td>
<td>492,408</td>
<td>482,185</td>
<td>451,803</td>
<td>520,543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>7,574</td>
<td>122,346</td>
<td>12,538</td>
<td>16,700</td>
<td>16,893</td>
<td>27,233</td>
<td>26,736</td>
<td>28,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>714,863</td>
<td>906,638</td>
<td>773,596</td>
<td>761,864</td>
<td>813,258</td>
<td>783,917</td>
<td>734,966</td>
<td>844,983</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Net Result                       | -52,296 | 118,270 | 12,333  | 12,494  | -7,322  | -3,930  | -59,301 | 45,265  |

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Promoting Innovation and Internationalisation

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