

# ECAs activity report 2013 – 2016



## 1. ECA Board Meetings in the last period

2013/10/10	Board meeting, General Assembly with elections
2014/05/16	Board meeting in Newcastle upon Tyne
2014/07/04	Meeting working group in Vienna
2014/11/07	Board meeting in Munich
2015/03/27	Board meeting in Vlezenbeek (Brussels)
2015/05/22	Board meeting in Stockholm
2015/09/23	Meeting working group in Munich
2016/04/01	Board meeting in Budapest
2016/10/21	Meeting working group in Munich

The last period was defined by activities to clarify the status of ECA and to reorganize basic administrative work.

## 2. Finances

Banc account in Munich: Tough negotiations to reduce the additional costs of the account - the result is that no more additional costs per month have to be paid. A new banc account has to be opened in Austria, because the seat of the association is in Austria.

## 3. Website and Facebook

We realized some updates with the help of Jenny Hagmann from Move and Walk. A calendar is now integrated to publish national and international activities.

Each member association has one person in the role of an administrator for the Facebook page.

## 4. Amendment of articles

A main task of the Board given by the General Assembly in October 2013 in Munich was the revision of the articles. In particular, membership was to be expanded and the voting procedure was to be changed. Changes of these items made further adaptations necessary.

After several inquiries, a first suggestion was developed and sent out as a draft version to the Board members in March 2014.

The Board met 4 times and discussed all the amendments in detail:

2014/11/07    Munich  
2015/03/27    Brussels  
2015/05/22    Stockholm  
2016/04/01    Budapest

Between the meetings, the respective results were incorporated and again sent to the Board members. Feedback was collected and incorporated and prepared for the following meeting.

After many discussions, the amendment process of the articles was finalized by the Board in Budapest, 2016/04/01.

The new articles were examined by an Austrian lawyer (as the ECA is registered in Austria) whose comments were translated to English and also incorporated.

In April 2016, the new articles were sent out to all the Board members for discussion in the respective national associations.

The deadline for feedback was June 15th, 2016. There were no further objections, so the articles are ready to be passed. You will find the amendments in detail in the added file.

The President again thanks the following persons for preparing and adapting, translating and clarifying, investigating and evaluating the drafts: Krisztina Desits and Bettina Tautscher. The President would also like to thank all the Board members for their positive and constructive cooperation and contributions, especially Eszter Tóthné, Yves Bawin, Éva Szabó, Mel Brown.

## **5. Information on professional affairs**

The website gives the possibility to get in contact with us. Questions from professionals has been answered by the secretary or the president. Potential new members had questions on CE like representatives from Portugal, from Poland, from Greece, from Jordania.

## **6. European Partnerships 2013 – 2015**

2 Comenius Partnerships were initiated by ECA, granted by the European Commission and successfully performed in the years 2013 – 2015

## 1. EVIBACE – Evidence Based Conductive Practice

### Towards Whole School Improvement

**Facts: 7 partner schools / 6 European countries / 6 meetings**

**Result: Handbook**



#### Partners:

- FIT-Schule der ITA GmbH Vienna, Austria (Coordinator)
- The National Institute of Conductive Education (NICE), Birmingham, UK
- The Percy Hedley Foundation, Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK
- Phoenix GmbH Konduktives Förderzentrum, Munich, Germany
- Pető Institute, Budapest, Hungary
- Inkendaal Hospital School, Vlezenbeek, Belgium
- Jorielskolan - Joriel School, Stockholm, Sweden

#### Introduction (out of EVIBACE handbook)

Conductive Education is a complex educational system designed to meet learning needs in all areas of development. It is mainly for people with a neurological disorder of central nervous system origin. Conductive practice relies upon careful skills of observation in order to develop the appropriate teaching strategies. The focus of Conductive Education has until now been on practical work, with conductive observation as a key tool for planning and recording. Detailed reports are produced, but these have not been based upon standardised measurements. Observation can be subjective, and as such it can be difficult to report upon outcomes objectively to the wider professional world. An objective view would serve to improve the quality of our own professional practice, provide professional recognition and increase funding opportunities.

It should be noted that whilst there is the need for objective measurement of outcomes, this should be in addition to, rather than as a substitute for ongoing conductive observation.

This handbook offers an insight into the experiences of the consortium partners in selecting and using various standardised measurements, and seeks to draw conclusions based on these findings. We hope that this will prove useful to the practice and research of conductive education.

#### The rationale behind EVIBACE (out of EVIBACE handbook)

Evidence Based Practice involves the use of existing evidence; e.g., current research and literature, as well as the systematic collection and interpretation of 'in-house' data, to inform and develop practice.

Schools in general and special needs schools in particular, including CE centers, have varying ways of measuring progress and development in different European countries. Currently there are no standardized assessments that evaluate all areas of child development.

This posed the question: how are we to refer to existing evidence in order to inform and develop our practice if no, or limited, evidence of a standardized nature exists?

This became our starting point and the motivation to begin our partnership.

There were two main challenges:

**1. “Conductive Education is a holistic concept. That means, the goal is to develop all areas of the neurologically impaired person to become as independent and mature as possible”.** (Handbook Leonardo Partnership, 2012).

We asked ourselves: how can we measure progress or development in “all” areas?

We also questioned the amount of time required to be spent on assessment rather than the actual practice of Conductive Education.

## **2. Differing standards**

We realized that:

- There are differing regulations across the European countries regarding the reporting of students’ progress
- Not all staff are able to use all of the available assessment tools.
- Not all assessments are available in the different national languages across Europe.

As such, we asked ourselves: how can we find assessments that are appropriate for everyone to use?

If you now are curious to learn more about: the handbook is available as download on the partnership website <http://evibace.jimdo.com/results/>

## **2. Communicate & Participate**

### **Empowerment of children with disabilities through Augmentative and Alternative Communication**

**Facts: 6 partner schools / 5 European countries / 6 meetings**

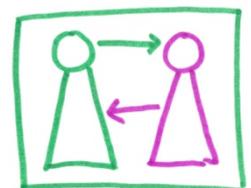
**Result: Different guidelines**

#### **Partners:**

- Therapie Institut Keil GmbH Vienna, Austria (Coordinator)
- La Famille - School and Centre, Brussels, Belgium
- The PACE Centre, Aylesbury, UK
- The Percy Hedley Foundation, Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK
- Phoenix GmbH Konduktives Förderzentrum, Munich, Germany
- Ruskis – Centre for Learning and Training – Ruskeasuo School, Helsinki, Finland

#### **Aim of partnership**

Communication skills are a prior prerequisite for successful inclusion of children with disabilities into the mainstream educational system.



The ability to express thoughts and needs and empowerment are inextricably linked with each other.

The main intention of the partnership is to support teachers in how to choose and to use AAC in the classroom.

At the same time we discussed and compared how parents' involvement and transition into daily living can be organised.

Main activities in the partnership were:

- collect and compare existing and used AAC systems and devices
- collect and compare AAC systems and devices for children with cerebral palsy having severe associated disorders, including visual and hearing impairments
- exchange of experience about AAC in early intervention
- define criteria for choosing a suitable system or device for different children and different syndromes
- discuss and work out best ways of parents' involvement and support - create an AAC forum for persons in touch with AAC.

More information on the partnership website <http://www.conductive-aac.eu/>

## **7. Participation at congresses and public presence of ECA**

The board members represented ECA at different congresses as the annual international EACD congress in Pisa and at Stockholm. In Germany ECA was present at the CP Fokus congress, at the RehaCare mess. In Hungary the annual Andras Petö Day and its conference has been taken as opportunity to present the ECAs work in 2014.

Many other occasions have been taken by the Board members to publish the ECAs aims and goals.

Roll-ups in English and in the national members language have been proposed to the members. Actually there are Rollups in English, French, German and Hungarian.