Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe

Annual report 2016-2017

Helsinki workshop 2016, photo THL

Authors: Board of AAATE, April 2018

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1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of the activities of the Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe (AAATE) during the years 2016-17. Its members come from over 100 European Organisations. The AAATE is an association driven by its members who contribute voluntarily to the realization of its mission: to stimulate the advancement of assistive technology for the benefit of people with disabilities, including elderly people. Advancement should be understood to mean activity that improves availability, access to and quality of both AT and associated services, and hence, benefits AT users. AAATE is fully committed to implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

In order to reach these objectives AAATE works with a wide variety of stakeholders to include their valuable perspectives and approaches. This multi-perspective approach also extends beyond Europe through involvement in collaborations such as the Global Alliance of Assistive Technology organisations and the World Health Organisation GATE initiative.

In this period national financial stringencies have put many AT services and indeed other services for people with disabilities and the elderly under threat. As an example Finland lost its national AT information and guidance service at the Finnish National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). Current reports suggest it is already missed by the regional/local services and certainly by the AT research community where they were proactive. This period has also seen the loss of one of the AAATE's previous presidents, Niels-Erik Mathiassen, who was a very valued and active champion of our field. He will be sadly missed.

ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN EUROPE

2. Activities

2.1. Workshop Helsinki 2016

The AAATE Workshop 2016 - Assistive technologies and other technologies for elderly people supporting independent living at home - was held in Helsinki 8th and 9th of June 2016. The workshop was organized together with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health Finland as part of the activities of the Finnish Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2016, by the National Institute for Health and Welfare, Valli – The Finnish Union for Senior Services, VTKL – The Finnish Association for the Welfare of Older People and Kuopio University Hospital.

The AAATE workshop 2016 gathered about 90 experts from around Europe to discuss and exchange their expertise. Participants gave good feedback of the workshop content and organization. One of the participant stated "This was one of the best meetings I have attended. I have already being telling my colleagues in Ireland about this society." A small exhibition was hosted alongside the workshop.

Participants were asked what themes they would like for a next workshop. The following topics were suggested by 34 participants:

- Communication and assistive technology (AAC);
- Robotics in education of children with disabilities;
- User experiences of AT;
- Robotics, use of technology in care, education and training with elderly people;
- Cost-benefit studies and presentations;
- Ethics and responsibility.

Workshop Helsinki, photo THL

2.2. Conference 2017

The reporting period saw an innovation in the bi-annual conference where the board entered into an agreement with the Centre for Assistive Technology and Connected Healthcare in the UK to run a Congress of events that incorporated new styles of content. The President of AAATE was a member of both. A significant investment was planned to promote the conference and to innovate the programme (e.g. involvement in 8 international committee meetings between June 2016 and August 2017). The board had a strong influence on the scope and the finalising of the programme; there was an intent to learn from this.

The Congress was spread across 4 days. Two single day programmes (one of which was the T4I2017 conference) attracted 150 delegates while the main 2 day conference 265. This was a significant improvement on many previous conferences but below the aimed at target of 350-400 delegates.

Feedback on the conference provided useful insights to the way forward on future AAATE conferences. For instance it confirmed that for most delegates the total cost of the event, accommodation and travel was important; the mix of topics included was liked regardless of how many were specifically of use; the standard length of 15 minute talks with 3 minutes for questions, the novel 7 minute talks and 2 minutes for questions, and the novel platform sessions (where there were just 2 parallel sessions and each contained either a single or two talks filling an hour), were all liked. The main challenges identified were: the Congress website was felt poor on accessibility; three days duration of the main conference was preferable to two (two was chosen to reduce cost and financial risk); and, too many choices in registration, paper submission and events caused some delegates to feel the Congress was confusing.

Due to the innovations in AAATE 2017 and the desire to learn from it, a decision was taken to give time for the board to reflect on the feedback and their experiences of greater involvement - delaying the announcement for AAATE 2019. The following are the main points of these reflections :

- The board should continue on the basis of their greater involvement in the Conference content but operating as efficiently as possible;
- The nett overall investment of time of the board was high and it has been noted that in the future the President of the AAATE should not also be the main person organising the conference;
- Substantial investment of time in arranging a specific new agreement for each conference should be avoided - instead the AAATE should return to offering a standard contract to hosts;
- As much as possible the total cost to attend the conference for delegates should be considered - in an ideal world the price for all three main components should be as low as possible;
- The conference book is expensive to include - especially in human resources to manage reviewing and proofreading - but also to pay for its production. An alternative strategy to seek only extended abstracts and publish papers for example through the Technology & Disability Journal should be planned as an alternative;
- Have a 3 day event with a range of presentation options and style of sessions (i.e. symposia, workshops, debates).

2.3. Governance of AAATE

2.3.1. Board composition

During the period 2016-2017 the board of AAATE was composed as follows:

Peter Cudd (President), Luc de Witte (President elect), Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf (Past president), Helena Hemmingsson (Treasurer), Katerina Mavrou (Communication officer), Dominique Archambault (Projects Officer), Anne Kanto-Ronkanen (Secretary).

2.3.2. Board meetings

In each calendar year in the reporting period the board held the usual two face to face meetings - one in each year at the workshop or the conference. In 2016 there were 2 online conference meetings. In 2017 there were 8 online meetings. Additionally there were 8 various committee meetings associated with the implementation of the 2017 Congress and smaller group meetings regarding different matters of board actions. The Board meetings have been supported by networking and frequent communication via email. The main topics in the board meetings have been the changing scope of the field of assistive technology and changes in service offerings (especially in Europe), the journal, GATE, managing cash flow, new ways to operate our future conferences and some specific issues for AAATE 2017 and different projects and project proposals.

2.4. International collaboration

2.4.1. Alliances and participation in collaborative work

GATE

On request of the WHO the AAATE took on the assignment to develop the Global Priority Research Agenda for improving access to high-quality affordable assistive technology. This process involved the sister organisation RESNA and more than 60 colleagues around the world. The resulting research agenda was published by the WHO in 2017.

EASPD

Based on the cooperation agreement signed between the EASPD (European Association for Service Providers for People with Disabilities) and the AAATE in 2011, the AAATE takes an active role in the PCT group (Person Centered Technology). The PCT Mission Statement outlines that the partnership intends to work on:

- Partnership – Develop existing and new partnerships with a focus on PCT policy issues e.g. AAATE, EDF etc.);
- Networks – Contact and use existing networks to raise the issues of PCT and disability (e.g. BATA, ANED, AAL etc.);

- Information and Support – Devise a programme to provide information and support to EASPD members, in particular for service providers of residential support (pursue through ESF or EU project funding);
- Project Development and Research – There is an increasing interest in PCT in new technology solutions, in service delivery issues including ethics, and in impact on quality of life and resources. EASPD will pursue involvement in these areas;
- Lobby – To continue to work in partnership with EU and national official and policy makers to raise the issues associated with PCT and disability building on the findings of the 'ImPaCT in Europe' project.

The PCT SIG has formed a core group that consists of:

- EASPD (Luk Zelderloo)
- Hft (Steve Barnard)
- AAATE (Klaus Miesenberger, Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf)
- AIAS (Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf)
- 'Open the Windows' (Lidija Krstevska Dojcinovska)
- ASPA (Vesa Salmi)

The group meets regularly in telcos and once or twice a year face to face to set-up and work on an annual agenda following the above mission. Activities in 2017 included:

- Planning, contribution and participation in the Workshop on Assistive technologies for the inclusion of people with disabilities in society, education and jobs, January 31st 2017, Brussels;
- Planning, contribution and participation in EASPD's Annual Conference in Belfast, 14 to 16 June 2017 in Belfast as part of the first World Conference on Supported Employment. The conference focussed on Employment for All – A Global Perspective and aims to challenge everyone to improve access to the employment market by bringing the employers closer to those furthest from the labour market and in doing so recognising the challenges and changes that we as professionals may face. To help through this process the conference themes were: the Right to Work, the Economy and the Employers, Tools and Methodologies, Legal Frameworks and Policy;
- Participation in and contribution to the ENTELIS activities at the EVBB's Annual Conference in Malta (October 4-7-2017) on "Vocational Training in the Context of an Inclusive Society - Experiences, Demands and Perspectives";
- Contribution and participation in the Workshop on Digital Health Conference, Tallinn, Estonia 16-18th October 2017;
- Planning, contribution and participation in EASPD Annual Conference in Podgorica (Montenegro) on 26-27 October 2017, focussing on supportive communities and sustainable development to facilitate changes required in support services to embrace and implement the human rights approach, looking at the connection between the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- Formulating a letter outlining the concerns about draft Horizon Work Programme 2018-2020 no longer including disability, accessibility and assistive technologies;
- Outlining, tendering, supporting and controlling a study on "Barriers to the wider deployment of person centred technology in services for persons with disabilities", to be finished and disseminated in 2018;

- Work on several project proposals and network initiatives including AAATE;
- Contribution to EASPD's newsflash.

Alliance of Assistive Technology Professional Organizations

In 2016 the Alliance of Assistive Technology Professional Organizations was founded. This incorporates AAATE, RESJA, RESKO, RESNA, and TREATS in cooperation working to advance the field of assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering to benefit people with disabilities and functional limitations of all ages. The first year has seen limited activity with a meeting held at the WHO Great summit event in Geneva and the AATPO representatives publishing a response (see https://doi.org/10.1080/17483107.2017.1379102) to Marcia Scherer's important strategic commentary: Scherer, M. J. (2017). Technology adoption, acceptance, satisfaction and benefit: integrating various assistive technology outcomes. *Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology, 12*(1), 1–2. doi:10.1080/17483107.2016.1253939

InLife

The Association, through its participation in the InLife project, was actively involved in the elaboration of "Recommendation 2016" concerning standards on e-Accessibility and e-Inclusion and together with the International Information Centre for Terminology (Infoterm) leads the way by officially endorsing it and inviting other organisations to endorse it as well.. http://aaate.net/2017/04/14/aaate-endorsed-the-recommendation-2016-concerning-standards-on-eaccessibility-and-einclusion/

ENTELIS

An important area of collaboration with different European stakeholders is the ENTELIS network. the AAATE has been a member since its early beginning as a project and is among the founding members of the post-project network. To this extent a collaboration agreement was signed with the European Association for Service Providers to Persons with Disabilities and the European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training. The network aims to reduce the digital divide and its activities are directed by a roadmap for action outlined in a white paper for digital inclusion. The activities of the network in 2017 are reported in an annual report that can be downloaded from the ENTELIS website (www.entelis.net).

2.4.2. Participation in official meetings and conferences on behalf of AAATE

The past-president took part in an Expert Group Meeting on Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation organised by the Regional WHO Office for South-East Asia on 28-30 July 2016 in Jakarta, Indonesia, on which occasion he also represented AAATE. The meeting was organised to exchange good practice and to further the development of regional collaboration regarding AT. The invitation from WHO came after earlier participations of Hoogerwerf in WHO events in the USA, Europe and in Asia.

Several board members participated in the first meeting of the WHO GATE initiative in Geneva, ie the Global Research, Innovation, and Education in Assistive Technology (GREAT) Summit, on 3-4 August 2017. This meeting aimed to bring together 100 top global researchers, innovators and educators who are carrying out research or offering training programmes related to assistive technology policy, products, personnel, provision, and use. The main aims included the advancement of the global priority research agenda on assistive technology and the establishment

of the thematic research collaborations in improving AT effects, impact, policies, systems, human resources, standards, methodologies and funding opportunities. among others the meeting resulted in 5 position papers, in which AAATE members contributed as authors and co-authors.

The president participated in the Science Technology Options Assessment Panel (STOA) of the European Parliament funded foresight project "Assistive technologies for the inclusion of people with disabilities in society, education and jobs" lead by Linda Nierling of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. The project selected to focus on three groups, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, are Blind or have sight loss, and people with autism. As well as being interviewed attendance at a meeting in the European Parliament was involved.

Workshop delegates for "Assistive technologies for the inclusion of people with disabilities in society, education and jobs" STOA project.

Tanja Bratan, ETAG, ISI Fraunhofer; Neha Dave, Med Tech Europe; Leonhard Hennen, KIT, ETAG; Linda Nierling, KIT, ETAG; Johann Čas, ETAG, OeAW; Maria Joao Maia, KIT, ETAG; Chapal Khasnabis, WHO; Antti Raike, Aalto University; Aurélie Baranger, Autism Europe; Peter Cudd, AAATE and CATCH; Philipp Boucher, STOA; Lieve van Woensel, STOA. Photo: Maria João Maia

The findings have been reported online on the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology website and under AT for people with disabilities - on the European Parliament website.

On the 23rd of November 2017 Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf presented on gender, technology and disability during the Genova Smart Week. The title of the presentation was "It won't be smart until it is inclusive: the Risewise project". The session was attended by approximately 100 people. The costs were paid by the City of Genova.

Klaus Miesenberger represented the AAATE in meetings at the Annual Conference Technology and Disability organised by the California State University Northridge (CSUN) in March 2017. The conference includes meetings amongst stakeholders like RESNA and other sister organisations focussing on mutual exchange and cross-marketing of activities as the conference and the workshop.

2.5. Communication and Publications

2.5.1. The Journal Technology and Disability

In 2016 four issues of the Journal Technology and Disability were published and in 2017 three. In total the journal received 37 new manuscripts for review and 45 revised manuscripts. 22 manuscripts were accepted, 8 rejected and other authors were invited to revise their manuscript.

The **Editorial board** consisted of the following persons:

Editor in chief

Prof Luc de Witte (Zuyd University of Applied Sciences (until october 1)/University of Sheffield (since october 1)

Associate Editors:

Dr Steven Ariss, DPhil (University of Sheffield, s.ariss@sheffield.ac.uk

Prof Dominique Archambault (Université Paris 8, dominique.archambault@univ-paris8.fr)

Dr Katerina Mavrou (European University Cyprus, K.Mavrou@euc.ac.cy).

For the first time the AAATE conference has produced an e-Book as its published format. Over 200 articles were received. A significant minority were accepted as is, but many had minor to moderate changes needed. The remainder had potentially challenging feedback from one or both reviewers. The editors chose to offer most of these authors the opportunity to improve their manuscripts rather than turn them down. Nearly all rose to the challenge. In line with the policy to accept contributions that contributed to knowledge but that were not necessarily solely or exclusively academic meant that a good mix of science, practice, development and some policy was achieved.

In another innovation authors could opt to submit a paper to the MDPI - Technologies journal for open publication in an AT special issue; the Congress organisers (i.e. AAATE board and CATCH) with IOSPress agreement allowed this second journal to canvas Congress contributors. Many have taken advantage of this opportunity.

2.5.2. Website

In March 2016, the website engine that we were using was discontinued, and it was decided to change to a new system, based on an open source software: WordPress. The migration of information pages was relatively fast, despite some technical problem during the first week. A new system for management of members was developed (which is shared with 2 other associations). It is developed as a wordpress plugin and will be made available to other associations. It includes automatic generation of invoices,

credit card payment, members account management, emails to members, management of events and other features. It is still under development.

2.5.3. Other communication matters

A strategy document regarding communication and social media was developed by our communication associate Sabine Lobnig. The overall objectives of the AAATE communication strategy in 2016-2017 were:

- to strengthen the AAATE community;
- to sustain a coherent image of AAATE as an active and professional sector organisation;
- to promote the circulation of quality information towards the members;
- to promote the activities that see AAATE involved (conference, workshop, ENTELIS network);
- to broadly disseminate the outcome of the projects that see AAATE involved.

AAATE uses the following channels to communicate:

- A Twitter account @AAATE_net;
- The AAATE LinkedIn Group;
- The AAATE website;
- Mailchimp – emailing.

2.6. Projects

2.6.1. Introduction

For AAATE the collaboration in projects is an important way of realising its mission. Guidelines for project participation have been defined and are published on the website. The aim of AATE is to avoid direct competition with its members, but, on the contrary, to be of added value for them. AAATE is active in InLife, ProACT and Risewise, three Horizon 2020 funded projects as partner for background research and dissemination. AAATE has also created the conditions for the ENTELIS network to be created. In other words, participation is factual, effective and of high quality.

2.6.2. InLife Project

The InLife project (2016-2018) has passed its annual reviews and is about to be concluded. The project has developed a large number of apps targeting older adults with mild cognitive impairment and a unique platform for hosting these apps and wider AAL solutions. AAATE has developed a communication strategy and has organised different workshops in the framework of the project, with and without other European projects, among which a very nice seminar on *Change management as a success factor in the implementation, scaling up and transfer of digital health & social care solutions,* and the *Strategic aspects of standardisation and certification in the field of eAccessibility & eInclusion.* Both workshop reports are available on the AAATE website.

2.6.3. ProAct

The ProAct project is a research project funded under the Horizon 2020 programs. It started in 2016 and it will end in 2019. Its purpose is to develop and test a platform for multimorbidity management and integrated care, supporting the independence and quality of life of older adults living with multimorbidity, e.g. various chronic conditions. The role of AAATE is to contribute to a European wide study on factors that impact on the transferability potential of integrated care platforms. A researcher has been contracted, Maite Ferrando, to implement the research and to contribute to the development of a European transferability model.

2.6.4. The Risewise project

The RISEWISE project is a Marie Sklodowska-Curie Research and Innovation Project (H2020-MSCA-RISE-2015). The aim of the project is to explore questions in relation to gender and disability. The project focuses on women with disabilities as active agents, trying to identify needs and best practices in several EU countries, representing different cultural and socio-economic environments. Within Risewise a special interest group is working on Gender, disability and technology. It involves colleagues from Turkey, Spain, Sweden and Italy. The role of AAATE until this moment has been limited to attending meetings, but the expectation is that in the future we will benefit from work of seconded researchers supporting the conference 2019.

2.6.5. Entelis

The ENTELIS Project ended in December 2016. A key deliverable is the "White paper for digital inclusion" (downloadable from www.entelis.net). AAATE together with EASPD (The European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disability) and EVBB (European Association of Institutes for Vocational Training) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the 19th of October 2016 in Brussels by which ENTELIS is now established as a network or organizations that has a structure similar to that of the European Innovation Partnerships. Interested organizations formalize their membership by committing work such as sharing their best practice, developing innovative policies, strategies and tools to reduce the digital divide. A Call for Commitments was launched through the website and the 2017 work plan was developed. A report of activities is available on the website.

3. Organization

3.1. Members

Table 1: Memberships 2017

Membership	01/17	Cancelled	New	01/18
Individual	84	21	37	100
Institutions/Inst. Members	44/130	5/14	5/16	44/132
Students	6	2	0	4
Total	**44/220**	**5/37**	**5/53**	**44/236**

Members and Institutional Members: AAATE has 236 members from 33 countries. Contact details and Institutions of members are listed on the website: Members list at http://aaate.net/about-aaate/members-list/ and Institutional Members List at http://aaate.net/institutional-members-list/. Members have access to a number of benefits, including the Members area on the website http://aaate.net/wp-login.php and access to the Technology and Disability journal. Institutional Members are highly appreciated by AAATE as established collaborations that offer further opportunities for promoting the vision of AAATE through research, dissemination activities, position papers and other shared activities in order influence to policy and practice on the impact of technology to the rights of people with disabilities in Europe and beyond. The list of Institutional members of 2017 is available in Annex 1.

National Contact Persons: For facilitating Members' and other interested parties contact AAATE, the association has National Contact Persons in 28 European countries. National Contact Persons are ambassadors of AAATE that share the mission and objectives of the association and promote these in their countries. Their role is to create awareness on assistive technology and the role of AAATE in events and other activities in their countries, communicate with members and recruit new members in their countries, and actively collaborate with the association's board in promoting and supporting various activities. The contact details of NCPs are available on the website http://aaate.net/about-aaate/national-contact-persons/. AAATE appreciates existing and new members interest in becoming NCPs in additional countries. The list of NCPs in each country for 2016 is available in Annex 2.

3.2. Secretariat

The secretariat of the AAATE is in John Kepler University in Linz , Austria.

Contact information to the office:

AAATE office Johannes Kepler University
c/o Institute Integriert Studieren
Altenberger Str. 69
4040 Linz,
Austria
office@aaate.net
www.aaate.net

3.2.1. Staff & Responsibilities 2016-2017

Office

Klaus Miesenberger - head of secretariat, scientific counselor

Priska Feichtenschlager - financial administration, human resources, project administration

Silke Haider - secretary

Christian Schult - Technician & ENTELIS project - ends with 03/2016

Project manager

Evert Jan Hoogerwerf - (2016-2018) Overall management tasks related to administration and projects

Specific assignments on Projects

Renzo Andrich - (2015-2016) senior researcher, project ENTELIS

Christian Schult - (2015 - 2016), technician, project ENTELIS

Peter Cudd - (2016-2018) Senior Project Led, project InLife

Maite Ferrando - (2017-2019) Researcher ProACT project

Leo Lewis - (2017-2019) Senior advisor ProACT project

Sabine Lobnig - (2017-2018) Communication expert IN LIFE

3.2.2. Main Tasks 2017

Office main tasks has been:

- Maintenance and development of AAATE website & tool 01-03/2016 - afterward only administration
- Financial management (support of treasurer, accounting, invoicing & reminding)
- Support of AAATE 2017 conference
  - operation review-process

- ○ organizing of program
- ○ operation financial tasks (conference fees, credit card payment, commission business)
- ○ operation online-registration
- ○ structure for standardization workshop and Special Interest Group
- Support and development of ideas for further events (workshops, conferences)
- Administration of projects (ENTELIS, InLife, ProAct, RISEWISE)
- Do-to-day business (mass-mails, newsletter)

3.3. Financial report

The account balance on 31/12/2017 was € 116,450.36. Tables 2 and 3 present the financial development of AAATE over the years 2013 - 2017.

Table 2 Financial balance, overview of 5 terms without projects

Summary	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Income	14,023	13,856	31,748	11,600	34,770
Production	8,154	11,811	8,084	10,580	9,705
Projects		5,497	4,411	3,680	
Administration	11,353	7,159	11,198	6,467	10,874
Surplus	**-5,484**	**-10,610**	**8,055**	**-9,127**	**14,191**

Table 3 Financial balance of the projects

Summary	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Income	**33,836**	**59,578**	**25,929**	**23,484**	**12,000**
ProAct	0	26,594			
InLife	8,980	0	15,229		
ENTELIS	-2,759	19,484	0	19,484	

AAATE 2017	27,615				
GATE meeting		13,500	10,700		
eAccess				1,500	6,500
ETNA				2,500	5,500
Expenses	**61,751**	**20,100**	**34,363**	**9,958**	**758**
AAATE 2017	27,615	707			
Risewise	517				
ProACT	6,555				
ENTELIS		14,654	11.309	9,643	0
InLife	26,564	4,739			
GATE meeting			23,054		
eAccess+					758
General costs	500	0	0	315	0
Surplus	**-27,915**	**39,478**	**-8,434**	**13,526**	**11,242**

Table 5 Balance 2017

ASSETS	€		LIABILTIES	€
Amounts Due			**Capital**	
Debtors membership	1,730		Result 2017	33,399
Debtors AAATE 2017	2,840		Opening Balance	152,728

Total Amounts Due	4,570		Total Capital	119,329
Liquid Assets			Liabilities	
Bank account	116,450		Liabilities AAATE	-1,150
Total Liquid Assests	116,450		Liabilities Sheffield	2,841
			Total Liabilities	1,691
TOTAL ASSETS	121,020		TOTAL LIABILITIES	121,020

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4. Acknowledgements

One AAATE diamond for outstanding work in the advancement of AT in Europe was awarded in 2017 to **Paul Timmers** for accepting the invitation to open our 2017 conference with a Plenary talk covering a historical perspective of AT in Europe and his vision for where AT should head - drawing on his considerable experience in his roles in innovation in the DGs of the European Commission. Paul has been Head of Unit eInclusion (DG Connect) and thereby played a key role in advancing research and application of AT and accessibility, in particular also in the AAL domain.

5. Final considerations

Assistive Technology is more important than ever. Growing numbers of people with disabilities in health and social care systems that are confronted with shortages of staff and money put an increasing pressure on health and social care systems. Making optimal use of the potential of Assistive Technology is one of the obvious solutions. Also for a very different reason AT is becoming more important: the increasing use of digital media creates a major barrier for many people to actively participate and make use of the possibilities the 'digital era' offers. This is a growing field in AT. In order to ensure that people with disabilities, including many older persons, specific solutions are needed. Unfortunately these topics do not get the attention they require in national and international policies. There is work to do for organisations like the AAATE!

The WHO-GATE initiative is a great stimulus to increase our influence and to participate in the challenge to ensure improve access to high-quality and affordable AT and related services across the world.

In the coming years the AAATE intends to grow in membership and influence. The ambition is to play an active role in Europe, among other things by participating in relevant EU project. We also intend to play an active role on a global level, with GATE as core focus.

Annex 1 - List of Institutional Members (IM)

(at 2017-12-31)

Austria

- Johannes Kepler Universität Linz
- Hilfsgemeinschaft der Blinden und Sehschwachen Österreichs

Belgium

- KOC - Kenniscentrum Hulpmiddelen van het VAPH
- University of Antwerp
- VIVES University College

Cyprus

- European University Cyprus

Czech republic

- VŠB - Technical University of Ostrava

Denmark

- The National Board of Social Services

Finland

- Oulu University of Applied Sciences
- Satakunta University of Applied Sciences
- Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disability
- Union for senior services in Finland

France

- THIM/CHArt EA 4004 - Université Paris 8-Vincennces-Saint-Denis
- IFRATH

Germany

- Forschungsinstitut Technologie und Behinderung - Der Evangelischen Stiftung Volmarstein

Great Britain

- Disabled Living Foundation
- Smile Smart Technology LTD
- Rat group - University of Sheffield

Greece

- FORTH ICS

Hungary

- Andrássy University Budapest

Ireland

- National Assistive Technology Training Service Enabled Ireland
- National Disability Authority

Italy

- Emilia Romagna's Centre For Assistive Technology
- National Research Council
- HELPICARE by Didacare srl
- University of Pisa
- Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus
- Instituto Leonarda Vaccari
- Associazione GLIC
- Politecnico Di Milano - Polo Territoriale die Como

Lithuania

- The Center of Technical aid for Disabled people - Ministry of Social security and Labour

Netherlands

- Zuyd University
- Vilans

Norway

- The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service
- Statped

Portugal

- Sociedade Portuguesa de Engenharia de Reabilitação, Tecnologias de Apoio e Acessibilidade

Spain

- Centre de Vida Independent
- Fundacion Vicomtech

Sweden

- Linköpings Universitet

Switzerland

- Raising the Floor - International Association
- iHomeLab - Lucern University of Applied Sciences and Arts
- DAISY Consortium
- ETH Zürich

- Active Communication AG

USA

- The Paciello Group

Annex 2 - List of National Contact Persons (NCP)

(at 2017-12-31)

Austria	Klaus Miesenberger	University of Linz
Belgium	Jan Engelen	Catholic University Leuven
Croatia	Ines Delzotto	Dnevni centar za rehabilitaciju Veruda Pula
Cyprus	Katerina Mavrou	European University Cyprus
Czech Republic	Marek Penhaker	
Denmark	Anne Christensen	Danish National Board of Social Services
Estonia	Hille Maas	
Finland	Outi Töytäri	National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL)
France	Dominique Archambault	University Paris 8
Germany	Christian Bühler	Forschungsinstitut Technologie-Behindertenhilfe
Greece	Constantine Stephanidis	ICS-FORTH
Hungary	Andras Arato	KFKI RMKI
Iceland	Björk Pálsdóttir	Assistive Technology Center – Icelandic Health Insurance
Ireland	Gerald Craddock	Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, National Disability Authority
Israel	Reuven Katz	Technion – Israel Institute for of Technology in Haifa

Italy	Renzo Andrich	Centro di Bioingegneria, Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus
Netherlands	Jeanne Heijkers	Zuyd University
Norway	Terje Sund	NAV
Portugal	Leonor Moniz Pereira	Technical University of Lisboa
Serbia & Montenegro	Veselin Medenica	
Slovakia	Dusan Simsik	Technical University of Kosice
Slovenia	Mojca Debeljak	University Rehabilitation Institute
Spain	Cristina Rodriguez Porrero	CEAPAT
Sweden	David Rusaw	Jönköping University
Switzerland	Bernhard Heinser	Access For All
United Kingdom	EA Draffan	University of Southampton

Annex 3 - Audit reports on the financial statements of AAATE

REPORT

AUDIT ON FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF AAATE - 2016

The following documents were checked during the audit:
- AAATE Financial final report
- bookkeeping files

Statements:

- The sheets and tables are clear, providing a high level of easy understandability and transparency
- I have done some random sample checks, and all the checked numbers and formulas were correct
- There were no outstanding, extreme items on the expenses side
- Trends shown on Summary sheet are slightly positive, represent a stable economical condition of AAATE (considering the conference and non conference year periodical alteration)

Comments:

The financial condition of AAATE is stable, no negative trends are markable that would risk the financial stability in the coming years.

I haven't found any details to question.

Date: 22. Feb. 2017.

Signature: _____

Auditor: Tamás Laki (Hungary)

KU LEUVEN

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DEPT. ELEKTROTECHNIEK-ESAT/STADIUS
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3001 HEVERLEE, BELGIË

To the board of AAATE

ONS KENMERK   **JE/AAATE**

UW KENMERK

HEVERLEE   Febr. 14, 2017

AAATE audit of the financial report covering 2016

To whom it may concern

I have examined the AAATE financial report covering the fiscal year 2016.

In my opinion, the figures of the financial report are correct and represent the true financial position of the Association at the end of the year 2016.

Jan Engelen
KU Leuven

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