

Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe

Biannual report 2020 - 2021



Board meeting at Cyprus February 6th, 2020.
Old and new board members with the Rector of the European University Cyprus



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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 2020-2021. AAATE 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 (AT) 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 the 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 significant involvement in organizations such as the Global Alliance of Assistive Technology Organizations (GAATO) and the World Health Organization and its GATE programme.

2. Main activities

2.1. Summary overview of major public events

Table 1. Summary overview of major AAATE activities in 2020 and 2021

Date	Type	Title	Attendants	Note
24/06/2020	Constituent Assembly	Constituent Assembly of the Global Alliance of Assistive Technology Organizations	18	AAATE is among the founding members of GAATO
7/09/2020	International session	Evidence of Assistive Technology Outcomes & Impact - An International Summit	90	Organised at RESNA 2020 by GAATO with the support of AAATE
09/09/2020	Workshop	Developing the Digital Skills of People with Disabilities and Older Adults for a More Inclusive Digital Society	40	Within the framework of the ENTELIS+ project at ICCHP 2020
10/09/2020	Webinar	Communication in Accessible Urban Public Transport. Standardisation activities concerning interfaces and communicated content.	50	Within the framework of the TRIPS project at ICCHP 2020.

14/11/2020	Sandbox workshop	Co-design of inclusive future transport solutions1	23	Pilot workshops for the TRIPS co-design sandbox workshops
21/11/2020	Sandbox workshop	Co-design of inclusive future transport solutions 2	16	Pilot workshops for the TRIPS co-design sandbox workshops
26/11/2020	General Assembly	General Assembly 2020	60	AAATE's 2020 general assembly held online
11/12/2020	Online member meeting	Aperitivo	40	New meeting format to provide opportunity for exchange among AAATE members
25/02/2021	Online member meeting	Aperitivo	30	New meeting format to provide opportunity for exchange among AAATE members
16/04/2021	Online webinar	<u>Emerging AT for Communication</u>	80	Co-organised with WIPO in the series: Technology Trends 2021: Assistive technology
23/04/2021	Online webinar	<u>Emerging AT for Cognition</u>	80	Co-organised with WIPO in the series: Technology Trends 2021: Assistive technology
29/04/2021	Online member meeting	Aperitivo	25	New meeting format to provide opportunity for exchange among AAATE members
30/05/2021	Online webinar	<u>Emerging AT for Self-Care</u>	70	Co-organised with WIPO in the series: Technology Trends 2021: Assistive technology
5/05/2021	Public Online webinar	<u>Future of Transport: Addressing the Barriers through Innovative Solutions. Part I</u>	40	Organised by ENIL as part of the TRIPS project
20/05/2021	Public Online webinar	<u>Future of Transport: Addressing the Barriers through Innovative Solutions. Part II</u>	30	Part of the TRIPS project



24/06/2021	Online member meeting	Aperitivo	15	New meeting format to provide opportunity for exchange among AAATE members
23/09/2021	Online Public consultation	<u>Challenges in AT Outcomes and Impact I</u>	69	In collaboration with GAATO
27/09/2021	Online Public consultation	<u>Challenges in AT Outcomes and Impact II</u>	58	In collaboration with GAATO
12/10/2021	Project meeting	Final event of the ENTELIS+ project	45	In presence in Brussels
13&14/10/2021	EASPD conference participation	Several AAATE members were invited to speak at the 25th anniversary conference of EASPD dedicated to technology and services.	250	In presence in Brussels
15/10/2021	General Assembly	General Assembly AAATE 2021	30	In presence in Brussels and online
25/11/2021	Online member meeting	Aperitivo	15	Opportunity for exchange of information among AAATE members

2.2. Workshops and other Online Seminars/meetings

The following AAATE Workshops and Other Online Seminars took place in 2020-2021:

2.2.1. Workshop on standardisation activities concerning interfaces and communicated content

10 September 2020 14:40~16:00

The Workshop was organized/hosted online by the AAATE's Special Interest Group on Standardisation and the European project TRIPS, and was held in the framework of the ICCHP 2020 conference 9-11 September 2020. The aim of the workshop was to discuss issues of accessible environments and assistive technologies (AT) in its widest meaning, and their importance in allowing and facilitating the use of public transportation by persons with disabilities and older citizens. The workshop included:

Keynote session, Moderator David Banes (AAATE inhouse consultant)

Speakers:

- Laura Alčiauskaitė (TRIPS project coordinator for the European Network of Independent Living): TRIPS project: User involvement in identifying barriers while using the public transportation – primary results
- Steven Barbosa (Senior Manager- Business, HR & International Social Affairs, International Association of Public Transport UITP): Public Transport and standardisation.



- Christian Galinski (Leader of the AAATE Standardisation SIG and project consultant of AAATE for the TRIPS project): Accessible communication and content interoperability in urban public transport

Panel session, Moderator: Sabine Lobnig (AAATE)

Panelists:

- Gregg Vanderheiden (Raising the floor and Global Public Inclusive Infrastructure Project)
- Aya Abdullah Jibreal (Inclusion and Accessibility Consultant at AlQemam Consultants)
- Astrid Stueckelberger (Scientist and international health expert)
- ShadiAbou-Zahra (W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI))
- Christoph Veigl (Technikum Wien)

A summary of the workshop and the presentations of the speakers can be found here:

<https://aaate.net/2021/02/01/taking-a-french-bus-with-an-austrian-smart-wheelchair-guided-by-a-german-app-as-greek-tourist-can-that-work/>

2.2.2. Technology Trends in Assistive Technology. Workshops/online Seminars Series 2021

A series of three workshops on the Impact of emerging technologies on AT

Organised by: AAATE & World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) building on the report “WIPO Technology Trends 2021: Assistive technology”. Nine enabling technologies are identified in this report, which will likely accelerate or even enable the emergence of new assistive products in a combination of artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity, advanced sensors, virtual reality and augmented reality.

21 April 2021: 1st Online Workshop: Innovative solutions for communication

WIPO found a broad range of patents filed around the world that for a large part fall into the category of special software and services but also incorporate technologies that support visual communication, communication including speech input, the use of input devices. Many of these applications and patents are coming from the corporate sector. 65% come from the corporate sector and companies such as IBM, Panasonic, Microsoft and NEC. Individuals are filing a smaller number, around 25%, and a relatively small amount of only about 10% are being filed by academia. Three examples of innovative assistive technologies for communication were selected and presented by their creators in this online seminar: (a) AlterEgo, which can detect a user’s internally articulated speech through weak electrical signals sourced deep within the mouth cavity from the skin’s surface, even when only a fraction of the internal speech muscles is engaged by the brain; (b) the work of Professor Suranga Nanayakkara from Auckland University on smart assistive environments and assistive augmentation; and (c) the OTTAA project (founder Hector Costa), which is an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) platform that uses environmental data, an artificial intelligence algorithm, and a pictogram-based communication code to create sentences and help non-verbal users to communicate effectively.

The report from the 1st workshop can be found here: <https://aaate.net/2021/04/21/online-seminar-on-emerging-at-for-communication/>

23 April 2021: 2nd Online Workshop: Innovative solutions for cognition

As the moderator of the workshop underlined, cognitive disability is an umbrella term used to refer to people presenting a wide variety of health conditions. These can include dementia, disorders in neuro-development or brain injuries, to name but a few. The impact on the person, their family and society overall is huge and evidence shows that people with cognitive disability may require a wide variety of healthcare and social support services. Often these conditions may lead to high rates of unemployment and poverty. Sara Cooper, robotics engineer at PAL Robotics, presented the ARI



Assistive Robot, a high-performance social robot and companion designed to support hospital staff in their caregiving duties and assist older people to promote healthy aging. Youssef Mroueh, research staff member of the IBM T.J Watson Research Center presented his work with IBM on image recognition as assistive technology, which came out of IBM's AI for Social Good programme. Another creator Lorenzo Caggion worked on improving a mainstream application, namely the Google Assistant, to become able to be used in assistance for people with disabilities. These three examples show that the combination of mainstream applications with AI systems trained to support people with disabilities can provide us with powerful and effective tools to support people with different access needs – cognitive and otherwise.

The report from the 2nd workshop can be found here: <https://aaate.net/2021/04/30/online-seminar-on-emerging-at-for-cognition/>

30 April 2021: 3rd Online Workshop: Innovative solutions for self-care

Self-care comprises many of the very mundane, daily activities that decide over the level of our quality of life, and it is surprising that there are not so many innovations in this field. Drinking, eating, dressing, toileting, personal care can all be considered part of self-care and strongly relate to a person's dignity and autonomy. The growth figures are relatively low but have recently been increasing, with the majority of inventions coming from Asia (China, Japan, South Korea). Three of the creators cited in WIPO's report joined the online seminar to explain in detail the development and capabilities of their innovations, namely the wrist-worn wearable EMBRACE 2, the AI powered AT platform ATvisor and a feeding assistant developed in South Korea. Petra Nemet from Empatica presented in detail the capabilities of the EMBRACE 2, a FDA-cleared wrist-worn wearable to monitor epilepsy with the support of artificial intelligence. This wearable can detect possible convulsive seizures and instantly alert caregivers. Moran Ran from ATvisor.ai presented a possible solution to this issue. ATvisor is a digital platform for assistive technology, that supports healthcare professionals and their clients – people with disabilities and the elderly – through artificial intelligence in finding the optimal match for their needs. Won-Kyung Song from the National Rehabilitation Centre in South Korea presented his institute's work on a robotic Feeding Assistant, or rather their work on multi-purpose robotic devices to assist in a variety of daily living activity.

The report from the 3rd workshop can be found here: <https://aaate.net/2021/05/18/online-seminar-on-emerging-at-for-self-care/>

This 3-part workshop series co-organised with WIPO, allowed to reach new audiences and provided a great opportunity to connect with new stakeholders among speakers and attendance alike.

2.2.3. Future of Transport: Addressing the Barriers through Innovative Solutions.

(5 and 20 May 2021)

Two online meetings were organised in the framework of the TRIPS project, during which project partners, end-users and policy makers discussed the next steps in making the future public transport in Europe and beyond, accessible and inclusive for all. In Part I the aim was to address barriers commonly faced by users with and without disabilities in public transport and implement steps for having accessible transport solutions for the future. These solutions can vary from simple – but meaningful – ideas like accessible bus stations, to futuristic innovations like accessible flying taxis. In Part II first results of the TRIPS project were presented, much as the Mobility Divide Index, results from the co-design workshops were reported and lessons learned and policy recommendations were discussed.



2.2. Social events

In response to the COVID pandemic which made it impossible to physically meet in Paris for the 2021 conference, AAATE has introduced a new meeting format for members in the form of Online Aperitivos during which members could talk about their work, exchange information, discuss possible collaborations and reconnect among each other in a cordial setting. These gatherings, organised every 2 months, turned out to be well attended, with some short preordinate presentations of members about their work and spontaneous interventions from others, followed by discussions and social talk.

Impressions from the second Aperitivo can be found here: <https://aaate.net/2021/03/07/2nd-aaate-online-aperitivo-new-vision-new-mission-and-updates-from-aaate-members-in-the-denmark-austria-the-us-lithuania-and-croatia/>

2.3. The conference: ICCHP-AAATE Joint International Conference on Digital Inclusion, Assistive Technology & Accessibility 2022

Due to the response measures and other constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic the AAATE 2021 Conference planned to take place 1-3 September 2021 in Paris, was canceled, and re-scheduled for 2022. Thus, the next AAATE Conference will be organised as a joint event with the ICCHP Conference, on 11-15 July 2022, in Lecco, Italy.

Conference Details:

Conference Title: Joint International Conference on Digital Inclusion, Assistive Technology & Accessibility 2022

Dates: July 11 - 15, 2022

Venue: Politecnico di Milano, Polo Territoriale di Lecco, Via Gaetano Previati, 1/c, 23900 Lecco LC, Italy

Website: <https://icchp-aaate.org/>

Organizing consortium:

- AAATE - Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe, Linz, AT
- Austrian Computer Society, Vienna, AT
- ICCHP - International Conference on Computers Helping People with Special Needs, Linz, AT
- Politecnico di Milano, Polo Territoriale di Lecco, IT
- Teiresias Support Centre, Masaryk University, Brno, CZ
- Johannes Kepler University of Linz, Institute Integriert Studieren, Linz, AT

The call for contributions was released at the beginning of October 2021, while in September 2021 invitations for the recruitment of Thematic Sessions Chairs and Members of the Scientific Committee/Reviewers were sent.

Call for Contributions: <https://aaate.net/2021/10/06/icchp-aaate-2022-call-for-contributions/>

2.4. International collaboration

2.4.1. World Health Organization (GATE programme)

AAATE and AAATE members are actively collaborating with the WHO in supporting the development of the GATE programme and creating access to assistive products for those who



might benefit from it. Since July 2020 this support is majorly channeled through AAATE's involvement in GAATO (see below).

2.4.2. GAATO: The Global Alliance of Assistive Technology Organizations

In 2016 the Alliance of Assistive Technology Professional Organizations was founded. This at the time incorporated AAATE, RESJA, RESKO, RESNA, and ARATA in cooperation working to advance the field of assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering to benefit people with disabilities and functional limitations of all ages, forming IAATO (International Alliance of AT Organizations). In 2020 the GAATO (Global Alliance of Assistive Technology Organizations) was legally established by the following full founding members: AAATE, ARATA, ATIA, BATA, RESNA, RESJA, RESKO, TREATS plus EASTIN (candidate member) and RAISING THE FLOOR INTERNATIONAL (affiliate organisation).

AAATE has played an important role in the development of GAATO. The Board has welcomed the work of the Secretary-General and supported his leadership in the process that has led to the formal establishment of GAATO in July 2020.

Grand Challenges in Assistive Technology Outcomes: European Regional Consultation

In 2021 the GAATO introduced the GAATO Grand Challenges Global initiative, aiming to identify and address the main challenges in AT Outcomes Measuring. To this end, GAATO has organized Regional Consultations in order to identify a set of global grand challenges in assistive technology outcomes.

AAATE organized and facilitated the Europe Regional Consultation, which took place online on 23 and 27 September 2021. Through its National Contact Persons (NCPs), AAATE recruited stakeholders and consultation participants, who were engaged in small group discussions that initially identified several issues on individual, community, national and global level, which were then prioritized and rated, to help the core GAATO group to organise them and come back to participants for further analysis.

2.4.3. EASPD: The European Association of Service Providers to Persons with Disabilities

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 (Person Centered Technology) Membership Forum of EASPD. In 2020 and 2021, AAATE has been represented in this forum by Klaus Miesenberger.

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 2020- 2021 included:

- A series of 6 webinars of technology and disability
- Planning and participation in EASPD's Annual Conference in Brussels, 13-14 October 2021 in Brussels, 25th EASPD Anniversary Conference: The future is now: Person Centred Technology to empower people and disability services. The conference aimed to bring together key stakeholders to explore the most relevant technologies in the area of service provision for persons with disabilities and how to address the digital divide in the context of persons with disabilities. During and around the conference other meetings and events were held, as the Conference provided an opportunity for the European (and not only) world of assistive technology and disability to meet face to face after a long period of time due to the pandemic. These events included: ENTELIS+ final conference and project meeting, AAATE General Assembly and Board Meeting, B-WISE project AB Meeting.



2.4.4. ENTELIS network

An important area of collaboration with different European stakeholders is the ENTELIS network. 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. 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 19 October 2016 in Brussels by which ENTELIS was established as a network of organizations.

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.

Members of the network, including AAATE have been involved in the presentation and leadership of additional EU funded projects, one of which is the ENTELIS+ project (see Section on Projects)

3. Governance and administration of AAATE

3.1. Board composition

During the period 2020-2021 the board of AAATE was composed as follows:

Katerina Mavrou (President), Georgios Kouroupetroglou (President elect), Luc de Witte (Past president), Silvio Marcello Pagliara (Treasurer), Ramon Daniels (Communication officer), Dominique Archambault (Projects Officer), Anne Kanto-Ronkanen (Secretary).

3.2. Board meetings

In 2020 the first AAATE Board Meeting was held face-to-face in Cyprus, 5-6 February 2020. Quite soon after that with the outbreak of the Covid19 pandemic, and the relevant restriction measures and lockdowns, which also affected travelling, the Board decided to hold all following meetings online/remotely for 2020 and 2021. The next face to face board meeting was organised in October 2021 in Brussels, during the EASPD Conference and prior to the 2021 AAATE General Assembly.

Online board meetings were held on:

2020: 03/04, 22/05, 28/07, 06/10, 15/10, 24/11.

2021: 13/01, 17/02, 09/04, 14/05, 06/07, 30/07, 09/09, 14/10, 05/11.

In addition to the main Board Meetings, other smaller group meetings regarding different matters of board actions were also organised remotely during the period of 2020-2021.

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, the involvement of AAATE in GAATO, financial issues, new ways to operate our future conferences and some specific issues for AAATE 2022 and different projects and project proposals.

3.3. General Assemblies and Board elections

General Assemblies were held on 26/11/2020 (online) and 15/10/2021 (hybrid). During the latter assembly a new Board for the period 2022-2023 was elected with the following composition:

President: Georgios Kouroupetroglou (GR), President Elect: Pedro Encarnação (PT), Past President: Katerina Mavrou (CY). Board members: Dominique Archambault, Siobhán Long, Tone Øderud, Silvio Pagliara.



4. Communication and Publications

4.1. Communication plan

In the beginning of 2020, AAATE's communications associate Sabine Lobnig and secretary general Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf developed a strategy and plan for AAATE communications in line with and based on the AAATE's board objectives and the association's strategic development plan.

Main objectives of AAATE's communications activities include

- 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 main channels of communication include:

- the Twitter account for @AAATE_net: https://twitter.com/AAATE_net
- the AAATE LinkedIn Group: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2094327/>
- The AAATE website: www.aaate.net
- and Mailchimp for the newly introduced quarterly AAATE newsletters

In addition, AAATE uses the participation in the several EU projects to disseminate the associations work and key messages through consortium partners and project stakeholder networks.

At the core of AAATE's communications remains our website, where we publish regularly:

- articles on topics of interest
- reports from workshops and events
- announcements with relevance for our members
- calls for collaboration

4.2. The Journal Technology and Disability

In 2020 four issues of the Journal Technology and Disability were published and in 2021 three. In the first 9 months of 2021 the journal received 36 manuscripts for review, 22 of which were accepted and 14 rejected.

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



- Dr Sara Comai
Politecnico di Milano
Italy

4.3. Other communication matters

In July, an interview with AAATE's president Katerina Mavrou was published by great.com, who runs a podcast series interviewing organizations and experts dedicated to doing good in the world: <https://great.com/great-talks-with/aaate/>

5. Involvement in projects

5.1. Strategic importance of involvement in projects

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 AAATE is to avoid direct competition with its members, but, on the contrary, to be of added value for them. Over the last two years AAATE has been active in the TRIPS, the ENTELIS+ and the SEURO projects. AAATE's participation has been factual, effective and of high quality.

5.2. Entelis+

The ENTELIS+ Project started in January 2019 and is expected to end in January 2022, with a consortium of 10 partners, lead by EASPD. The project built on the work of the previous Entelis project that ran from 1st January 2014 to 31st December 2016, as the European Network for Technology Enhanced Learning in an Inclusive Society (ENTELIS). The consortium aimed at empowering older persons and persons with disabilities to participate in the digital society by providing them with digital literacy and making assistive technologies more easily accessible. The ultimate goal of the consortium was to enable persons with disabilities to be more competitive on the job market and to receive high-quality education. After the end of the Entelis project; members of the consortium and additional members formed the Entelis Network.

Building on this priorly established scope, the **ENTELIS+** project aims at developing and implementing innovative methods and practices to foster inclusive education and promote common values, as well as enhance the digital skills and competences of digitally excluded groups, particularly persons with disabilities of all ages, through strategic public and private partnerships. The main deliverables of the project include:

- **Three Fact Sheets** on (a) digital skills for people with disabilities and older adults, (b) the role of ICT Accessibility in Inclusive Education and (c) the impact of accessibility in service provision, with a focus on education & training. Fact sheets are a product of a resources and literature analysis as well as consultation that took place through a detailed online consultation tool open to all interested stakeholders.
- **Development of Success Factors:** (a) to adapt to new policy and regulatory frameworks, (b) on uptake of technology and (c) on building strong partnerships to bridge the digital divide
- **ENTELIS+ Glossary of Terms:** the deliverable updated the first Entelis Glossary, and included new terms on (e)accessibility
- **Training Modules and Content on capacity building for (e)accessibility:** The training package was developed based on the outcomes of the consultation processes (fact sheets), the identified success factors as well as the mapping of identified good practices. The



training package was piloted by four of the partner-members of the consortium of Entelis+. Impact and evaluation of these pilots is expected by the end of the project.

- **A competence framework for digital accessibility:** This deliverable was added as an amendment of the project and due to budget transfers because of the changes in travelling and other activities due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The deliverable was added in WP3, and it is coordinated by AAATE. Based on the outcomes of the pilots the project developed an additional output, which is a competency framework for those supporting digital inclusion of persons with disabilities and older citizens. Where the existing Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp 2.1.) provides some guidance for the development of digital competences of individual learners at different level, the competences of those supporting persons with disabilities in accessing digital environments are not sufficiently described in the literature. The output is based on a review of existing competency frameworks to further define the ambition and synergies with existing work and to identify the most appropriate format, the outcomes of a training needs survey among the staff involved in the piloting and the outcomes of the pilots. The result is a competency framework that can guide the training of professionals and volunteers supporting citizens with disabilities to develop digital competences, independently whether these work in formal or non-formal education, including adult education.

In addition, AAATE is leading WP5 on Evaluation & Quality Assurance for the whole Entelis+ project. This included the conception of the project's Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) which builds on four pillars: Quality assurance, Formative evaluation, Summative evaluation and Impact assessment. The QAP's purpose is to provide an overview of the quality assurance processes that will govern the course of the ENTELIS+ project and to define the procedures, tools and templates for the systematic monitoring, evaluation and assessment of the project's activities and performances. A relevant strategy was planned and implemented throughout the project, and a final evaluation report will be provided for the end of the project in January 2022.

In addition, AAATE actively supports the communication and dissemination activities in and around the project, using the interlinkage with the project consortium on social media to reach more stakeholders, increase our reach and confirm AAATE's position as key player in the European AT and accessibility space.

AAATE is also actively involved in the ENTELIS+ #RightToConnectNow Campaign: <https://aaate.net/2021/04/27/entelis-and-the-righttoconnectnow-campaign/>

5.3. The TRIPS project

Horizon 2020 - Grant Agreement no. 875588

The ambition of the TRIPS project is to make public transport more accessible for persons with disabilities, elderly voyagers and really everyone.

The project wants to address barriers commonly faced by users with and without disabilities in public transport and implement steps to avoid barriers of any sort in urban transport.

By ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the EU and all Member States have committed to respect the rights of people with disabilities, including the right to mobility and independent living. In practice however, these rights have not yet been implemented in large parts of the EU and many of today's transport systems remain inaccessible. As a consequence, people are disabled from accessing job opportunities, education, social and leisure activities and other services. This limits lifestyle choices, reinforces exclusion from local communities, and ultimately blocks people from participating in society as full and independent citizens.



The TRIPS project will:

Propose a co-design approach that allows people, disabled by inaccessible environments, to take the leading role in designing accessible and usable transport systems. By focusing on the experience and needs of disabled people, we aim to directly address a wide variety of barriers in current urban transport systems. This includes also barriers due to for example age, health, or language.

Provide case studies that show how such co-designed mobility solutions can indeed provide inclusive urban transport-for-all in seven European example cities: Bologna, Brussels, Cagliari, Lisbon, Sofia, Stockholm and Zagreb.

During January and February 2021, sandbox workshops were held in different European languages, coordinated and organised by AAATE with the support of local AAATE members and local teams of end users and transport providers. In particular we would like to thank Maurice Grinsberg (Sofia), Pedro Encarnação (Lisbon), David Rushaw (Stockholm), Jan Engelen (Brussels) and Riccardo Magni and Massimiliano Malavasi (Cagliari and Bologna).

The following deliverables written by AAATE consultants were submitted:

- Christian Galinski: Report on Accessibility Standards and Legislation
- David Banes, Riccardo Magni and Alexey Andrushevich. Report on Assistive Technologies Trends Impacts and Related Policies
- Alexey Andrushevich, Riccardo Magni, David Banes, Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf. User evaluations and Design Concepts
- Alexey Andrushevich, Riccardo Magni, David Banes, Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf. A Prioritised List of Potential Inclusive Mobility Solutions and barriers to adoption

In addition, AAATE is leading WP8 on Engagement, Dissemination and Exploitation, which included the conception of the project's Communication & Dissemination strategy. In this vein, AAATE provided the project's Communication Handbook as well as a Communications Toolbox, including in particular tips and guidelines for digital accessibility, accessible documents and accessible online meetings. AAATE also provides regular contributions to the TRIPS blog on topics of interest: <https://trips-project.eu/blog/>

5.4. SEURO

Scaling EUROpean citizen driven transferable and transformative digital integrated health and social care - Horizon 2020. Grant agreement ID: 945449

SEURO targets Europe's 50 million multimorbid patients to proactively self-manage and offset the EU's annual €700 billion cost of chronic disease management. SEURO aims to evaluate key factors to prepare organisations, localities and regions across the EU to scale, sustain and transfer the people-centred, digital integrated care platform ProACT (developed and successfully tested at proof of concept level under Horizon 2020, PHC-25-2015, Grant No. 689996). Research will aim to advance three novel implementation support tools. These consist of a transferability self-assessment tool (ProTransfer) to assess preparedness for solution transfer; a behavioural change framework (ProBCF) to optimise a solution to people's needs; and an artificial intelligence (AI) prediction model (ProInsight) to assess the impact of a solution on health system performance. Effective Implementation Hybrid Trials (720 older adults in total, with associated care/support actors) will be carried out with ProACT within health services (Ireland, Belgium, Sweden to measure platform effectiveness), with embedded process evaluations to understand the process for successful 'real world' implementation. Participants will have at least two of the following: cardiovascular disease (excluding Stroke), a respiratory condition and diabetes.



Commercial potential will be validated during the project supported by an exploratory trial (Italy) to evaluate the impact of SEURO in facilitating a procurement process for healthcare service providers aiming to implement ProACT. SEURO engages a multidisciplinary EU consortium of 4 public and 8 private organisations (including one of the world's leading ICT companies, the largest home care provider and 2 EU service provider and technology networks). Partners have a successful collaborative track record. Together we are in a strong position to consolidate EU research assets into a new comprehensive approach for the scale-up and transfer of digital integrated care solutions.

SEURO will run from 3rd March 2021 to 2nd May 2024.

The role of AAATE is to lead on the development of the transferability tool for person-centred integrated care platforms and dissemination related tasks.

5.5. Other projects

AAATE has an official role in the B-Wise project advisory board, where it is represented by Georgios Kouroupetroglou and in the VisuAAL project, where it is represented by Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf.

6. Organisation and administration

6.1. Members

Table 2 memberships 2021

Membership	11/2020	09/2021	06/2022
Individual	72	70	58
Institutions/Institutional Members	42/131	42/129	38/119
Students, Seniors (+65), ...	9	9	10
Total Institutions/Members	42/212	42/208	38/187

Members and Institutional Members: AAATE has 187 members from 35 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.

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.

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

6.2. Staff & Responsibilities 2020 -2021

Office

Klaus Miesenberger - head of secretariat, scientific counselor
Priska Feichtenschlager - financial administration, human resources, project administration

Secretary - General

Evert Jan Hoogerwerf (2016-to date) Overall management tasks related to administration and projects, secretary-general of GAATO

Other Staff Members

Sabine Lobnig, Communication & projects (2018-to date)
Valentini Papageorgiou, Communication (2020)
Lorenzo Desideri, Support to SG (2020-to date)

Specific assignments on Projects

David Banes (2020-to date) Researcher TRIPS project
Alexey Andrushevich (2020-to date) Researcher TRIPS project
Riccardo Magni (2020-to date) Researcher TRIPS project
Christian Galinski (2020) Researcher TRIPS project
Maite Ferrando (2021-to date) Researcher SEURO project

6.3. Financial report

The account balance on 31/12/2021 was € 215,251.51. Tables 3 and 4 present the financial development of AAATE over the years 2017 - 2021.

Table 3 Financial balance, overview of 5 terms



SUMMARY	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
INCOME					
AAATE Net turnover	16,977	12,917	15,040	10,650	14,023
Projects Net turnover	43,823	245,669	22 552	61,916	33,836
TOTAL INCOME	60,800	258,586	37,592	72,566	47,859
EXPENSES					
Total Production Expenses	7,314	16,618	17,236	18,756	8,154
Projects Expenses	94,578	80,083	36,996	28,437	61,751
Total Administration Expenses	9,099	5,770	11,595	7,141	11,329
TOTAL EXPENSES	110,991	102,471	65,827	54,334	81,258
RESULT OF THE YEAR	-50,191	156,115	-28,235	18,233	-33,399

Table 4 Financial balance of the projects

Summary	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Income	€ 43,438	€ 245,668	€ 22,552	€ 61,916	€ 39,353
TRIPS	-	231,011			
ENTELIS+	9,438	9,438			
ProAct	-	5,179	-	32,375	-
SEURO	34,000				
InLife				29,541	8,980
ENTELIS					2,759
AAATE Conference		40	22,552	-	27,615
Expenses	94,578	€ 74,763	€ 36,996	€ 31,462	€ 61,751
AAATE Conference		1	2,245	1,513	27,615
WS AAATE	-	-	-	264	-
TRIPS	70,925	64,772			
ENTELIS+	23,653	9,990			



Risewise		-	-	-	517
ProACT			32,478	13,604	6,555
ENTELIS					
InLife					16,082
General costs	-	-	2,273	-	500
Surplus	- € 51,1405	€ 170,905	- € 14,444	€ 30,454	- € 22,398

Table 5 Balance Sheet 2020

ASSETS		€	LIABILITIES		€
Amounts Due			Capital		
Debtors membership	1,890		Result 2021	-50,191	
			Opening Balance	265,442	
Total Amounts Due	1,890		Total Capital	215,252	
Liquid Assets			Liabilities		
Bank account	213,362		Liabilities AAATE		
Total Liquid Assets	213,362		Total Liabilities		
TOTAL ASSETS	215,252		TOTAL LIABILITIES	215,252	

7. 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 improved access to high-quality and affordable AT and related services across the world. Similarly, the participation of AAATE in the foundation and operations of GAATO is also essential both for the advancement of the field as well as the support of countries and groups of persons at a Global level. The two years during the covid-19 pandemic were a period that transformed nearly every aspect of our world. All our activities, personal, professional, institutional, changed in critical ways, including the work, activities and impact of AAATE. At the same time, the recent Covid-19 situation made us realize how important it is for the assistive technology community and the society to be alert and active. AAATE tried to stay committed to its members and the world of assistive technology, through alternative virtual small meetings and workshops during 2020-2021.

In the coming years the AAATE intends to intensify efforts, bridge the gaps created by the pandemic in its communication and activities, grow in membership and influence. The ambition is to play an active role in Europe, among other things by participating in relevant EU projects. We also intend to play an active role on a global level, with our contribution to GAATO as core focus and further this collaboration with other players such as UNICEF and WHO.