REFLECTIONS ON THE 40 YEAR HISTORY OF THE EUROPEAN ACCOUNTING ASSOCIATION
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Preface

Excellence and Diversity

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the European Accounting Association. Since 1978 the EAA has changed. The membership base has grown from 50 to more than 2,600 with more than 40% of EAA scholars now based in non-European institutions. Services offered to EAA members have expanded significantly, resulting in the Association having a material impact on both the academic and non-academic accounting communities. This anniversary is a perfect opportunity to reflect on the EAA’s evolution and the opportunities and challenges it faces in a globalized world.

I have invited 12 distinguished colleagues to discuss the EAA’s history and important milestones. I would like to thank the authors for immediately accepting my invitation and for writing the short articles. Each of the seven reflections focuses on a different aspect of the EAA, namely the building of an international scholarly community, the congress scientific review process, the doctoral colloquium, the two EAA journals, the impact on accounting policy makers and practitioners, the governance and diversity of the association, and the EAA’s digital platform (ARC). This short collection clearly demonstrates that the EAA strives for excellence and fosters diversity. I have no doubt it will continue doing so for the next 40 years.

I hope you enjoy reading it!

Philip Joos
EAA President
May 2018
The Development of the Association over 40 Years:
Building an International Research Community

Stephen A. Zeff
Rice University

In its first 40 years, the European Accounting Association (EAA) has evolved from a body whose life, in the early years, was limited mainly to reuniting members at an annual congress, but has since become a much more proactive organization.¹ Led by Anthony G. Hopwood and sponsored by the European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management (EIASM), the EAA had the initial aim of identifying and assembling a European academic accounting community, in order to come to know each other and to discuss and advance their common interests. Beginning in 1977, the Association published a typescript newsletter, which was succeeded in 1988 by the printed European Accounting News, also containing some research pieces. To promote research, the Association held its first annual doctoral colloquium in 1985 and launched The European Accounting Review (EAR) in 1992. In 2002, the Association began an electronic Members Newswire, which eventually became the quarterly EAA Newsletter.

The attendance at the first five congresses, from 1978 to 1982, never exceeded 180 delegates. In the first several congresses the participants came mainly from a small number of countries (the UK, the Nordics, Benelux, Germany, and France), with noticeable representation as well from North America, Australia, and Japan. It was a struggle at first to attract large delegations from Germany, Italy, France and Spain. The research cultures in Germany and Italy were still quite insular, and a research tradition in France and Spain was still building. But by the 1990s all four of these countries began to be well represented at the congresses, and today they regularly contribute the largest delegations.

The Association’s membership has steadily grown to more than 2,200 today, representing over 60 countries and jurisdictions. Almost 38 percent of the membership is based outside of Europe. The countries with the largest number of members are, in

¹ A 25-year history of the Association plus a number of personal recollections and reflections on the first 25 years were published in volume 11, number 1 (2002) of The European Accounting Review.
order, Germany, the UK, the USA, Spain, Australia, and Italy, all with more than one hundred. In recent years, more and more members have come from Brazil and from Asia: Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and China. The Association’s congress, now with more than 1,000 delegates attending each year, has become the world’s most internationally diverse, large gathering of accounting academics.

A development that paralleled one in the United States has been a gradual narrowing of the research methodologies and subjects reflected in papers presented at the congresses as well as those published in EAR. A major reason behind the establishment of the Association’s second journal, Accounting in Europe, in 2004 was to broaden this range of published research and to forge a closer link with practice. This “balanced pair” of journals has done much to serve the interests of both a wide range of academics and the standard-setting and practitioner communities, publishing work of high quality.

The EAA’s governance has also evolved. During the first 30 years the chairman of the annual congress doubled as the president, and the Association was run by a large executive committee composed of elected national coordinators. As the organization grew, this governance model became unwieldy. Thereupon, in 2006 the executive committee was renamed the board of directors, which includes the Association’s officers, the journal editors and committee chairs, national representatives from European countries with at least ten EAA members, and regional representatives from Continents with at least ten EAA members. The board meets once a year, at the time of the congress. The board, in turn, appoints six members of the management committee who, together with the five officers, manage the EAA’s affairs. The organization is headed by the president, who serves for a two-year term after having been elected by the General Assembly as President-elect.

In 2005, the Association presented its first Award for Academic Leadership to Anthony Hopwood. In 2009, the award was named the Anthony G. Hopwood Award for Academic Leadership and was conferred on Stephen Zeff. In 2016, the award was further bestowed on Sten Jönsson and Michael Shields.
Among the proactive programs launched by the Association in recent years are the following:

- **Financial Reporting Standards Committee** (launched in 2005) – comments on the IASB’s proposed standards and acquaints the IASB and EFRAG with relevant theoretical and empirical research.

- **PhD Forum** (launched in 2013) – a half-day program of speakers held prior to the annual congress for PhD students, enabling them to acquire insights into the world of academic accounting research

- **Talent Workshop** (launched in 2015) – provides a venue for PhD students to present their work and hold interviews with recruiters

- **Accounting Research Center** (launched in 2017) – a program platform aimed at marshaling research resources and networking opportunities of relevance to emerging scholars and others interested in accounting research, which includes a peer mentoring initiative to help PhD students improve their research proposals

The EAA has thus made a major investment in encouraging and stimulating the work of young accounting researchers. In particular, its doctoral colloquium, always held just prior to the annual congress, continues to be a vibrant opportunity for doctoral students to secure advice from highly experienced researchers and to network among their peers.

In addition, the Association’s journals have been collaborating with the IASB Research Forum and the European Financial Reporting Research Group (EUFIN) in order to provide a publication outlet for the papers presented at their annual conferences.

The Association’s founders could not have imagined its present-day scale of operation, the extent of its global reach, and the achievements of its multi-faceted leadership in promoting research.
The Standing Scientific Committee and the Quality of EAA Congress Papers

Willem Buijink
Open Universiteit and Tilburg University

What is the purpose of large academic conferences such as the annual European Accounting Association (EAA) Congress? Given that participating academics are funded by their universities, the likely explanation is that those academics want to learn more about research and teaching topics in their specific field. They engage at a conference in several ways: by presenting research results and receiving comments, by listening to other academics and by networking. Universities that fund conference participation value conferences that offer quality and added value to their faculty members. High quality engagement leads to better and more publications, higher faculty motivation, more connected faculty and increase of reputation. Academic quality is therefore a key objective to have a sustainable conference series, because without it attendance would disappear.

Conference design options

Conference design options are plentiful and cover different conference aspects. Among these aspects is the organization of the paper selection and the composition and format of the conference sessions. These aspects affect the level of success of academic networking and more importantly the quality of presentations and feedback during the sessions. I will discuss the design of the paper selection process and the organizations of the sessions over the past 40 years of EAA annual congress history, with special attention to how design choices affect congress quality.
EAA Congress early setup

Design of paper selection and conference sessions changed several times since 1978. Paper selection design refers to submission format choice (abstract or full paper), paper selection mechanism and acceptance rate. Salvador Carmona (Carmona, EAR, 2002) described the initial design choices and the changes in the first 25 years. During the whole period abstract-only submission was allowed, but with an additional note that full paper submissions would have priority. Until 1983, track chairs made acceptance decisions and presentations were organized in parallel sessions with presentations only. From 1984 onwards selection decisions were the responsibility of a Scientific Committee chaired by the Conference Chair (also the EAA President). In 1994 a Research Forum session format was introduced, a format that was often used at later congresses. From 1997 half of the Scientific Committee members needed to come from outside the organizing country. The composition of the parallel sessions and research fora was done by the Local Organizing Committee.

A radical change in 2003

In 2003, the same year in which Salvador Carmona gave his summary of 25 years of EAA conference design, new paper selection and session organization ideas emerged and were voiced to the newly established EAA Management Committee (MC). Concerns about the quality of the conferences centered on the large role that the Organizing Committee played in paper selection and session design. It was felt that at times the Organizing Committee preferred large attendance to higher quality and therefore focused less on careful selection. It was also felt that the composition of the sessions needed more expertise than present in the Organizing Committee, leading to 'unevenly' composed sessions. In addition, some were convinced that it was time to switch to full paper submission, which had become common in the smaller accountancy workshops in Europe.

Together with others such as Robert Göx and Stefano Zambon, I expressed concerns to the EAA MC about the paper selection process. As a result, the EAA MC appointed a Scientific Committee Chair and 4 Standing Scientific Committee (SSC)
members for a period of 3 years starting with the 2005 Göteborg EAA conference. 'Standing' refers to 3 year overlapping memberships. The independent SCC would choose 10 additional members and the local organizers would chose 10 members as well. The SSC would become responsible for the composition of the sessions. It was also decided that the EAA Congress would move to full paper submissions from the 2008 EAA conference onwards (which turned out to be in Rotterdam). Note that all of this coincided with similar changes in the EAA overall governance structure.

As a consequence of my activism, the EAA MC asked me to become the first SSC Chair. I asked Aasmund Eilifsen, Robert Göx, Bill Rees and Regine Slagmulder to become members of the new SSC team. Because of the need to create overlapping 3 year period, Regine left after two years and Paolo Quattrone joined. I introduced as much as possible diversity in research sub-field and geography. My SSC Chair position and the new SSC arrangement was approved during the EAA General Assembly meeting at the Prague 2004 Congress. There was some opposition during the General Assembly as I was seen as an empirical quantitative economics-based researcher and perhaps not open to other methodological approaches. However, after some debate my appointment was accepted by the General Assembly.

The SSC then started preparing for the Göteborg 2005 EAA Congress and recruited other SSC members. The SSC also formalized the distinction between parallel sessions and research fora. Research fora were kept to allow a stage for papers that were less developed. The SSC designed a simple double blind review process, where all submissions would be scored on a 0 to 5 score, anchored on an average score of 3, which corresponded to 'ready for submission to a good academic accounting journal. Abstract submission was still possible and received a maximum score of ‘3’. Formal acceptance would be based on the average score. There was a cutoff point for rejection, acceptance for presentation in a research forum session and acceptance for presentation in a three paper parallel session. Authors could not indicate a preference for a presentation format. When we applied the decision rules to the submissions for the Göteborg Congress, reviewer scores often agreed. In fact this has turned out to be a consistent result ever since. The SSC convinced the EAA MC and the Göteborg organizers to wait with full paper reviews and introducing discussants, until a later congress. It was also agreed to a setup the Research Forum format as poster sessions as an experiment. In contrast with other
scientific disciplines, it turned out that poster sessions were not much liked in Göteborg. At the Dublin 2006 Congress, poster sessions were replaced by 5 paper presentations at the Research Forum sessions. The SSC would organize the composition of the Parallel Session whereas the local Organizing Committee would organize the Research Forum sessions.

When I stepped back as SSC Chair after 3 year and was replaced by Begoña Giner, my Prague “opponents” gracefully and kindly acknowledged that their concerns were proven wrong. The Rotterdam 2008 EAA Congress SSC introduced a full paper submission requirement and Parallel Sessions with discussants. Written feedback on submitted papers to the authors these days is also common. Today, the SSC consists of 9 members to better cope with the increased review load (almost 1400 papers were submitted to the 2018 Milan Congress). Today, roughly half of the accepted papers are presented in Parallel Sessions (of which 20% have a discussant), down from 4/5th in Göteborg. I interpret this as a consequence of more 'selection' and thus higher quality.

Measuring conference quality

I come back to the initial question of what design elements of an academic conference contribute to its quality. Empirically, one could investigate the journal publication success of the papers presented at the conferences. In addition, for the EAA congress one could conveniently use the creation of the EAA SSC as an event and compare publication success before and after the SSC introduction. Another comparative analysis could look at publication success of papers presented in the parallel sessions and research forum sessions. Reinartz and Urban (Journal of Empirical Finance, 2017) rank finance conferences on the basis of publication outcomes. Obviously, other outcome measures are imaginable, such as individual paper Google Scholar citation rates. A similar exercise could be done to assess the quality of the EAA Congress over time.

More restrictive paper selection needed?

I would like to conclude with a personal reflection. I suspect, unless research results would say otherwise, that the introduction of an independent EAA Scientific
Committee and the related changes regarding selection (full paper submission and session composition) have increased the quality of the EAA annual congresses. At the time of the changes in 2003, I argued for a much more restrictive selection process similar to the European Finance Association (EFA). The EFA acceptance rate is far below the current EAA overall congress acceptance rate of around 80%, and even the 40% acceptance rate for Parallel Sessions presentation. EFA has a comparatively small number of papers and all sessions have discussants, without much apparent loss of conference participants. However, what happened in the Finance area in Europe is that a second more 'welcoming' conference gained attendance, i.e., the European Financial Management Association. In hindsight, I am happy that I could not convince my colleagues in the SSC and the EAA MC to adopt a more restrictive selection process. For the moment I prefer the, more efficient, setup of an inclusive and emancipating EAA annual conference.
The first EAA/EIASM Doctoral Colloquium took place in Brussels in 1985. Its purpose was to foster a European research tradition in accounting. To fully understand the challenge in this, it is necessary to describe the status of the research tradition in Europe at the time. The first EAA conference was held in 1978 and that created a forum for exchange of research ideas and results in Europe. The research was predominantly of the true income ("classical") approach or the decision usefulness approach based upon economics under certainty. The doctoral education was closely connected to the research of the local chaired professor and thus followed the same path of research. At the time, the primary outlets for research were monographs published in the national language of the author(s). There was no tradition to publish research outside the national journals, which in many cases were primarily professional journals with little research emphasis and no peer review. The input to the research was often more international but there was no universal accumulation of research. The audience of the research output was confined to the local community in most cases, as the journals were national. A notable exception was the Journal of Accounting Research which was co-founded by the University of Chicago and the London School of Economics in 1963. This joint era ended in 1975 as the University of Chicago became the only sponsoring organization.

The aim of establishing a doctoral colloquium was to create a European research tradition in accounting, to make the European accounting research international and to open an information channel, which could facilitate entrance of "new" research methodologies borrowed from social sciences into the European research. Anthony Hopwood headed the development of the colloquium. The selection of students for the colloquium was based upon the quality of the student’s research proposal. However, additional criteria such as countries, schools, and research methodology were also employed to ensure that a diverse student population is represented at the colloquium.
The faculty was chosen based upon research merits and balanced in research methodologies and subjects. The format of the colloquium was chosen to have the students do presentations of academic papers. This made the current state of the student research the starting point for discussions bringing in new perspectives and new research ideas. A centerpiece of many discussions has been the formulation of a proper research question and choice of an appropriate research methodology. Both questions create problems for many students and occasionally result in a heated debate. One of the concerns was that the student had to go back to the advisor and report on the problem, which was closely related to the advice the student had been given. In addition to giving valuable feedback to the student’s research, the colloquium planted the seeds for future research and created a network among doctoral students across Europe. Now as the doctoral colloquium has been operating for 30 years approximately 600 students have had the experience and many of those are now prominent members of the academic society and some are serving as faculty at the colloquium.

Early in the life of the colloquium it became clear that it was not a sufficient vehicle for lifting the doctoral research in Europe at large to a high quality. It had to be supplemented by a formalized set of doctoral courses, which gave the students an easy and systematic access to the ideas and research methodologies of current accounting research. Under the EIASM umbrella a set of accounting courses were developed covering accounting (and other areas of business research). Again, Anthony Hopwood was central to the initiative. In accounting, the following courses have been offered: Analytical Accounting Research, Audit Research, Qualitative Research in Accounting, Empirical Financial Accounting Research, Intangibles, Intellectual Capital & Value Creation, Producing and Evaluating Knowledge in Management Accounting, and Quantitative Empirical Research in Management Accounting. Individually these courses have been very successful. Most have been running for 20 years with many participants. As a program it has been less successful as most students only take one or perhaps two of the offered courses. An evaluation of the doctoral education in the Netherlands revealed that the programs performed below average and that the researchers should be given better training as reported by Groot at the EAA Congress in Maastricht 2016. As a consequence, the Dutch academic institutions have joined forces in the Limperg Institute.
to create a comprehensive doctoral program in 2001. There are strong signs of positive effects of this initiative.

Other more comprehensive initiatives such as the HARMONIA project have also had a positive effect on the quality of doctoral education. The HARMONIA project, funded within the Marie Curie training network initiative of the European Union (EU) between 2001 and 2004, was led by Stuart McLeay and represented a pioneering and successful network of both experienced faculty and early stage researchers. Although other European networks and initiatives had preceded HARMONIA, its scale set it apart. Numerous doctoral students from across Europe participated, and thanks to the network, did research visits and received feedback and training at academic events held at the different European Universities that joined the project. HARMONIA had an equally successful successor in the INTACCT project that run from 2007 to 2010 and was also funded by the EU. The INTACCT project, led by Peter Pope, allowed a second generation of doctoral students to enjoy similar opportunities to present their research, attend specialized courses, obtain feedback, network and enjoy research visits at participating institutions. These EU projects are at the root of a generation of closely connected young academics, who did part of their doctoral studies together, fostering a well-connected accounting community. Many of these HARMONIA and INTACCT doctoral students participated in the EAA Doctoral Colloquium during the 2000’s and currently hold faculty positions in leading research Universities across Europe.

These ‘European’ faculty members, brought up in a new tradition, have promoted significant changes to doctoral education across Europe, creating doctoral programs where students are expected to have research visits at other institutions, attend specialized courses offered by international experts, are exposed in their own institutions to research seminars and courses given by outside faculty, and ultimately, are expected to find academic positions in the EAA or AAA Job markets, outside of their local accounting communities. These new faculty and doctoral students are better connected and more aware of international research than any other generation before them. This novel doctoral education, which sets clear expectations on the quality and number of papers students should produce, or events they should attend, poses the question of what will be the role of the EAA Doctoral Colloquium in future years. We see two important roles.
First, the Colloquium still provides an exceptional opportunity to network with outstanding doctoral students and faculty, ensuring exposure to other fields of research. Increasingly, it may be a concern that advisors feel a certain pressure to tailor the doctoral education of their students to ensure specialization and excellence in research output. For many doctoral students, who may have benefited from significant resources in their home institutions, it is a fact that they will finish their education having made research visits and attended courses and seminars but participating in the EAA Doctoral Colloquium may indeed provide their first exposure to research methods and topics outside of their narrow fields of research. Second, the Colloquium, following its principles of excellence and diversity, provides doctoral students from across Europe, even if not previously exposed to international accounting events, the opportunity to receive feedback and network with their peers from across an ever-expanding Europe. Attendance to the Colloquium includes an invitation to the Annual Conference, surely an eye-opening experience for many, as parallel sessions on accounting history, critical perspectives, financial accounting, management accounting, auditing, analytical accounting research, CSR, social media communication, or corporate governance may run simultaneously. The EAA Doctoral Colloquium also invites two students to attend the Doctoral Colloquiums of the American Accounting Association and of the Australian and New Zealand Accounting Association (one student each), further promoting networking cross-borders.

To conclude, we believe that the EAA Doctoral Colloquium has fulfilled its initial objectives, and that it will continue to be a cornerstone in providing quality feedback to doctoral students and to enhance the network among accounting scholars in Europe, bridging the gap between young and established faculty.
The Introduction and Role of the EAA Accounting Journals

Araceli Mora          Hervé Stolowy          Peter Walton
University of Valencia      HEC Paris                ESSEC

The EAA’s approach to its publications has been anything but static. Over 40 years the Association’s publications have changed rapidly from an expanded newsletter in 1977 through various stages to today where we have two quite different journals and an electronic newsletter. Throughout this time the policy has been to promote research, but specifically to support and encourage European accounting research and to sustain a diverse EAA membership with useful information. The publications have always attempted to be inclusive and supportive.

Changing publication context and technology

Amongst the areas where there has been rapid change is the way in which European researchers publish their research findings. Forty years ago, most accounting scholars did not prefer to publish journal articles. Research findings were published as a book, a monograph or a chapter in an edited book. Not that many journals across Europe were in English. Today, the focus for all European researchers is on publishing journal articles in one of the many international journals that are available in English.

Another major change has been the publishing technology. Forty years ago publishers only issued paper publications, and they were very reluctant to start new journals because of the high cost and small audience. Today there are all sorts of combinations of hard copy and electronic publishing, publishing is much cheaper, and commercial publishers vie with each other to own academic journals.

This period has also been a time of significant change in European accounting when there has been much that needed analyzing, assessing and discussing. In 1978 the Fourth and Seventh company law directives were just being disseminated amongst the growing number of EU member states. This wave was followed by the dismantling of the USSR and the rapid transition of Eastern European command economies to capitalism.
and capitalist reporting. This was followed by the birth of the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) and Europe’s adoption of international standards. This has been accompanied by changes in auditing and also advances in management accounting. Therefore, there was much to research.

From newsletter to academic journal

The EAA’s development of its publications should be seen against this context. Loft et al. (2002) analyze the creation and evolution of EAR in detail. The EAA first published a sort of newsletter, which over time became quite a significant publication. Its aims were: ‘to enable information to be passed on to members from the EAA, (and)... for members to communicate with each other’ (p. 3). It became clear as the EAA grew that there was a need for this newsletter to develop into a journal, and finally in 1992 EAR was born.

It was very difficult to attract a publisher at the time, as well as being difficult to encourage researchers to submit papers to EAR rather than to established journals. The team did have the advantage of having the support of Anthony Hopwood, then president of the EAA and for many years chairman of the EAA Publications Committee, to give encouragement and the benefit of his editorial experience. As originally conceived, the journal was intended to meet a range of needs of the EAA membership and to encourage in particular younger researchers. It was far from a typical journal. In its first decade, aside from traditional research articles, it included a section on Accounting in Europe, intended to stimulate analysis and discussion, especially of the evolving state of European financial reporting. It also included book reviews, conference reports and summaries of doctoral theses. It had a traditional editorial board but it also had a so-called management committee of younger researchers who were expected to take an active part in developing the journal.

The evolution of the journal was not without its crises and excitement, but by the end of the decade senior EAA members were asking what its next stage should be. Hopwood (quoted in Loft et al. (2002, p. 66)) defined the question as one of EAR having become a good journal, but needed change if it were to become a major journal. After much debate it was decided to hive off the conference reports and similar information
exchange items into an electronic newsletter, with the journal focusing on research articles but retaining Accounting in Europe. However, it was decided soon thereafter to run off the Accounting in Europe papers in the system and then close that section.

**Broadening the scope of EAR**

As many accounting journals, EAR today provides a forum for the publication of high-quality accounting research manuscripts. From its creation, the journal always acknowledged its European origins and the variety of the European accounting research community. As a consequence, EAR emphasized openness and flexibility, not only regarding the substantive issues of accounting research, but also with respect to paradigms, methodologies, and styles of conducting that research. All editors have done their best to maintain this diversity which is visible when looking at the published issues of the journal.

However, throughout the years, and given the competition with other accounting outlets, EAR has felt the need to add, in its policy statement, the fact that EAR is global in scope and welcomes submissions relating to any country or region as long as their relevance to an international audience is clearly communicated. This sentence is important to signal that, while respecting its European origin (beginning text of the Aims and scope), submissions not related to a European research question and/or submitted by authors outside Europe are welcome.

In 2017, a new milestone has been achieved with the submission of more than 400 papers during the year (410 to be precise). Given the current backlog of accepted papers and the waiting time between acceptance and actual publication (approximately 1.5 years), EAA followed the recommendation of the publisher and the editor to increase the number of issues from 4 to 5 per year. Apart from the increasing popularity as reflected in the number of submissions, the increase of the impact factor remains a strategic challenge.
Establishing a new journal that targets policy impact (AinE)

The decision to abandon the separate Accounting in Europe section at the turn of the century led to the creation of a second journal. A group of financial reporting researchers thought that Europe needed a journal, modelled more on law journals, where material closely linked to practice and to the regulatory framework could be published. Finally, with the help of EAR publisher Routledge, and sponsorship from the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, a second journal was launched in 2004 under the title Accounting in Europe (AinE). The difficult early life of this journal is chronicled in Walton & Evans (2013). A significant number of people was afraid that the existence of a second journal would drag down EAR, while others thought it could become a second tier journal to publish papers that would be rejected in EAR. None of these things seemed to have happened. AinE has established its own identity in terms of research while providing a platform for senior standard-setters to exchange with the academic community, as well as more generally for analysis of European accounting politics and events (e.g., Cairns, 2006; André et al., 2009).

The aim of the journal as set out in its current editorial policy is to contribute to policy debate by providing new insights for research, practice, policy and regulation. This means it is mainly focused on research papers that are policy relevant. Still the main difference with any other accounting academic journal is that this journal seeks to link academic and professional audiences, i.e. an important asset in helping to attract high quality papers.

The role of accounting research in developing high quality accounting or auditing standards or other regulations such as corporate governance codes, has long been a matter of debate. However, in recent years there have been some declarations of interest from standard-setting institutions (e.g., the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group and the IFRS Foundation) in systematically taking account of academic research as a way to engage in evidence-based standard setting. AinE will continue to play an important role in the evidence-based standard setting movement. At the same time the journal’s academic impact - measured through standardized indices – has significantly increased in the last few years. The improvement of the journal’s academic standing is due to the journal’s success in attracting high quality papers from senior
researchers all over the world, the quality of its editorial board, and the increasingly important role the journal plays in demonstrating social impact of academic research. To accommodate the higher number of submissions AinE has increased its frequency from two to three issues a year.

In 40 years the Association has continuously supported the development of European accounting research, not least through establishing two successful and complementary journals which we believe will continue to successfully evolve in the years to come.

References


The EAA’s Engagement with Standard-Setters, Policy Makers and Professional Organizations

Ann Jorissen
University of Antwerp

EAA involved in the accounting revolution in the past 4 decades

In the past 40 years accounting and more specifically financial reporting and auditing underwent a transformation in Europe and the rest of the world. The EAA’s engagement with Standard-setters, Policy Makers and Professional Organizations mirror this transformation. When the EAA was established in 1978, the European Economic Community was pursuing its objective to harmonize financial reporting across the European Economic Community. The 4th Company Law Directive which harmonized the individual accounts was published on July 25, 1978 and the 7th Company Law Directive which focused on the consolidated accounts was published on June 13, 1983. A year later the 8th Company Law Directive harmonized the external auditing of published financial information across all member states. Despite these harmonization intentions of the European Economic Community, financial reporting and auditing remained largely dominated by national regulation and practices. EAA members investigated the differences as well as the extent of comparability between the different national regulations and practices. The EAA invited from its establishment until the beginning of the 21st century the head of Financial Reporting and Company Law at the European Commission as a member of the EAA’s Steering Committee (the predecessor of the EAA’s Board). Karel Van Hulle attended all EAA conferences as long as he was in charge of that unit, he gave speeches at the annual congress, he took part in symposia, he wrote commissioned articles for the European Accounting Review and was open to discuss the EEC’s strategy with respect to financial reporting and auditing with all EAA members.
From the establishment of the EAA until today, professional organizations like Accountancy Europe (formerly FEE), The Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW), The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS), The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA), The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) and The Institute of Management Accountants (IMA) engaged with the EAA and its members by supporting and participating in symposia at the Annual Congress of the EAA and more recently by supporting the EAA’s Accounting Research Center ARC (ICEAW). Members of the large audit firms also participate in the EAA annual Congresses and the EAA’s Doctoral Colloquia benefited in a number of years from the generous support of Touche Ross, DRT, Deloitte & Touche, Ernst & Young, Coopers & Lybrand, KPMG and PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

Establishing the Financial Reporting Standards Committee in 2003

In 1973, five years before the establishment of the EAA, the International Accounting Standards Committee was created. In the first twenty years of its existence, the IASC was a private standard-setting body, with no formal authority and seen as very closely linked to IFAC (International Federation of Accountants). Adoption of International Accounting Standards (IAS) in the 20th century was entirely done on a voluntary basis. This all changed when the EU decided to abandon its harmonization strategy related to the financial reporting of listed firms and to require listed groups in the EU to adopt IFRS (IAS) from 2005 onwards by issuing IAS Regulation 1606/2002. Meanwhile the IASC had been reformed into the IASC Foundation (now the IFRS Foundation) and the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). All these changes did not go unnoticed to EAA members and by the end of 2002, Jens Elling - EAA President 2002 - launched the discussion in the Executive Committee of the EAA (predecessor of the Management Committee) and in the EAA December 2002 Newsletter: “Whether the EAA should play a more active and visible role in financial accounting regulation in the EU in the future, taking the recent EU regulation strategy into consideration?” The idea of the creation of an “EAA International Financial Reporting Standards Committee” was introduced as well as the proposal to present contemporary regulatory issues for debate.
in the newsletter and as a topic at future congresses. At the Executive Committee meeting during the 2003 EAA Annual Congress in Seville, the EAA’s Financial Reporting Standards Committee was officially created. The Committee had the following objectives: (1) to increase the quantity and quality of academic input to the standard-setting process; (2) to stimulate accounting research related to regulatory issues; (3) to enrich teaching in standards and standard-setting; and (4) to profile the Association towards European business and accounting practice. The tasks of the committee were outlined as follows: (1) evaluate and respond to documents issued for comment by the IASB or EFRAG issued for comment; (2) produce publications of selected responses in the EAA’s publication outlets (EAR and AiE); (3) organize a symposium on contemporary regulatory issues at the Annual Congress; and (4) participate in meetings with the standard-setting groups. Gunther Gebhardt became the first chair of the FRSC followed by Peter Walton and Niclas Hellman. Fifteen years later, these objectives and especially the first two have been more than adequately reached. Contemporary regulatory issues are not only discussed at symposia during the EAA’s Annual Congress. Since 2005 the EUFIN conference is organized annually by the EAA journal Accounting in Europe and within its scope research on contemporary regulatory issues is presented and discussed. Accounting in Europe, set up in 2004, includes in addition to research articles and commentary pieces on financial reporting and auditing in Europe, comment letters written by the EAA FRSC in response to IASB or EFRAG requests for comments.

Ten years after the mandatory introduction of IFRS Standards for listed groups within the EU, the European Commission wanted to evaluate IAS regulation 1606/2002. For this purpose the EU directorate General Internal Market and Services launched a call for membership of an expert group to evaluate the IAS regulation. The EAA responded to this call and suggested Peter Walton, chair of the FRSC at that time, to represent the EAA on this expert group. The EU DG Internal Market and Services responded positively to this nomination and Peter Walton became member of this group. The evaluation of the IAS Regulation was conducted based on a literature review and a web-based questionnaire. The EAA communicated relevant research to the expert group and provided comments on the draft of the questionnaire. The Commission’s overall report COM(2015)301 was published in June 2015 together with a separate staff document which includes the literature review. The Commission, in conjunction with the Latvian presidency of the EU,
also organized a conference in Riga to discuss the findings and Peter Walton was invited by the EU as speaker at this conference.

**Supporting evidence-based standard setting**

The relationship with the IASB has evolved over time. From 2004 onwards the EAA FRSC commented on exposure drafts and discussion documents issued by the IASB. Since 2012 Begoña Giner and Ann Jorissen represent the EAA on the IFRS Advisory Council. These closer links led to the co-organization of the yearly IASB Research Forum by the EAA and its journals ‘European Accounting Review’ and ‘Accounting in Europe’ and the IASB on November 28-29, 2017. On the first day research conducted by EAA members was presented to the IASB Board members and staff and on the second day case studies presented by the IASB staff were discussed in break-out sessions in order to provide input to the IASB standard-setting process.

IFRS Standards enter European law by an endorsement process. Many parties are involved in this endorsement process. Apart from political organizations such as the European Commission, the Accounting Regulatory Committee, Ecofin and the European Parliament, a technical private law entity, namely EFRAG is involved in the endorsement process as well. EFRAG, established in 2001, provides advice to the European Commission on all issues relating to the application of IFRS in the EU. For that purpose EFRAG created a Technical Expert Group (TEG) which provides opinions in support of the endorsement process. There are multiple connections between the EAA and EFRAG. Since the establishment of TEG in 2001, three EAA members consecutively have been member of EFRAG TEG, namely Begoña Giner, Araceli Mora and Gunther Gebhardt. The Research Director of EFRAG has always been a member of the EAA FRSC and recently, in 2017, EFRAG set up an academic panel. The EAA has been instrumental in helping EFRAG to organize this academic panel. Many EAA members are member of this Academic Panel and the Chair of the EAA FRSC is ex-officio member of the EFRAG Academic Panel.
Influencing professional accountants education standards

Parallel to EAA’s actions to connect with financial reporting standard setters, Bohimul Kral - EAA President in 2004 – expressed in the June 2004 EAA Newsletter the need to develop closer links with the international standard setter of professional accounting education programs. IFAC recently celebrated the 40th anniversary of the International Accounting Education Standards Board IAESB (formerly the Education Committee), responsible for the International Education Standards (IES). Bohumil Kral asked all EAA members to develop the idea of creating an EAA Education Committee at the Annual Congress in Prague. Immediately after this call, the Chair of the IFAC education committee approached the EAA with an offer to appoint a representative to serve on the newly established Education Committee Consultative Advisory Group to IFAC’s IAESB. Out of 61 EAA candidates the EAA’s Management Committee selected Richard Wilson to represent the EAA on the Consultative Advisory Group. In 2008 Aileen Pierce became the EAA representative on the IAESB-CAG until 2014. During the last three years of her membership she was chair of the CAG. Mara Camaran is the current EAA representative.

Future Opportunities

This short overview indicates that EAA has developed closer relationships with policy-makers, standard-setters and professional organizations over time. The EAA will continue playing a significant role in helping these stakeholders with evidence-based insights. The role of accounting in our society is rapidly changing. For example, the introduction of the 2014/95/EU Directive on “non-financial statements” requires EU companies to complement their IFRS-based financial disclosures with environmental, social and governance information. New standards and professional practices are currently being developed leading to many open questions. The EAA offers a platform for discussion and engagement with all stakeholders through symposia, journal articles, education sessions and advisory councils. The recently launched EAA-ARC provides even more opportunities to communicate research insights and opportunities on a timely basis. EAA is connecting the next generation of accounting scholars to societal challenges that matter.
Gender balance and international mobility are distinctive features of global, modern organizations. The European Accounting Association (EAA) is now celebrating its 40th anniversary; in 2018, it has more than 2,500 members who are established in 74 countries. In this article I reflect on how the EAA is doing in terms of gender balance in its leadership as well as in promoting international mobility.

**Gender balance in the EAA governance**

In 2002, the EAA celebrated its 25th anniversary and gender balance was regarded as one of its main challenges. During the first 25 years of its activity as an association of accounting academics, the presidency of the EAA had always been held by men. The presidential term lasted one year and, as a practical, unwritten rule, the president of the annual congress normally assumed the role of president of the EAA. On one occasion, the presidency of the annual congress was held by a woman, i.e. Hilda Theunisse in 1998. Nevertheless, a male colleague was appointed president of the Association in that year.

In 2003, the EAA undertook actions to change its governance structure. According to its previous bylaws, the EAA Board, which was largely formed by national representatives, constituted the executive body of the EAA. As a consequence of this complex, nationally-driven composition, the Board convened just once a year for a three-hour meeting, which made it difficult to design the strategy of the EAA and to effectively manage of the Association. As part of the new governance structure, the Association established a two-year presidential term to guarantee continuity in its strategic actions. Furthermore, the new governance structure established an executive body, the

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2 I am grateful to Philip Joos for his helpful comments and suggestions.
Management Committee, which was in charge of making strategic proposals to the Board and ensuring the implementation of strategic and operational decisions.

This organizational structure became instrumental in designing and enforcing policies aiming at achieving gender balance in the EAA leadership. As an outcome of such policies, significant changes have taken place in the top management and academic structures of the Association, especially the EAA presidency, the presidency of the EAA Congress, and the Doctoral Colloquium. As far as gender balance is concerned, the EAA presidency has been held by three women since 2003: Aileen Pierce (2009-2011), Begoña Giner (2011-2013), and Ann Jorissen (2013-2015). Also, five women have taken the responsibility of organizing the most important event of the Association, the annual congress: Aileen Pierce (2006), Salme Nasi (2009), Christine Cooper (2015), Ann Vanstraelen (2016), and Begoña Giner (2017). Concerning the Doctoral Colloquium, whose faculty had not included female professors for many years, it has considerably increased its gender diversity and is now co-chaired by Beatriz García-Osma. Currently, when members in all EAA Committees (Management, Board, Publication, Congress, Standing Scientific, Doctoral Colloquium, Financial Reporting Standards, External Relations and ARC) are counted, there are 65 male and 38 female colleagues. These significant improvements in the gender balance of the EAA leadership suggest a cultural change in the way how the EAA is being managed; it is now a more diverse and responsive organization, which aims to provide the best possible service to its members.

**International mobility**

European countries constitute the core jurisdictions of the EAA (e.g., in 2018, 59% of the EAA membership comes from European countries). In such jurisdictions, universities and business schools have traditionally developed inbreeding policies in their PhD programs, and this results in many European institutions of higher education keeping their PhD students as faculty members. However, the inbreeding policy may compromise academic quality and an increasing number of European universities are setting this policy aside. In turn, this brings about an increasing, international mobility of accounting faculty, which adds to the usual, temporary, visiting appointments.
The EAA has taken note of this trend towards international mobility and academic quality. In 2015, the Association launched its Talent Workshop –Job Market for Accounting Academics (https://eaa-jobmarket.ie.edu/). The event is organized around two main activities: presentation of job market papers by candidates and interviews between recruiters and candidates. Participation in the EAA Talent Workshop is free for accepted candidates. In its three editions, the Workshop has hosted 130 candidates from 24 countries. A total of 62 universities and business schools have searched for accounting faculty at the EAA Talent Workshop. The experience from the past three editions suggests that the market for accounting academics features a higher amount of vacancies than candidates attending the job market. Under these circumstances, the EAA Talent Workshop represents an efficient event for both candidates and recruiters.

**Conclusion**

As noted above, the EAA has been working hard to enhance the gender balance in its leadership as well as in promoting the international mobility of accounting academics across countries and regions over the past 15 years. Although the results are promising, these challenges constitute a cultural change in our understanding of the role of the EAA as an academic association. As any cultural change, its consolidation requires a long-term implementation and it is therefore critical to count on the support of the entire EAA member community.
Supporting Accounting Research Online: EAA Accounting Research Center

Mark Clatworthy  Philip Joos  Giovanna Michelon  Thorsten Sellhorn
University of Bristol  Tilburg University  University of Exeter  LMU Munich

Origins and vision

One of the EAA’s key priorities is stimulating the research productivity of doctoral students and junior faculty by providing resources, education, feedback, and networking opportunities. Today, all of us are witnessing major changes in the ways in which the academic literature, data and research resources are retrieved and analyzed. We are now in the midst of a major social change, where academic knowledge creation and diffusion are highly networked processes, and digital interaction is, in some respects, surpassing physical encounters. Against this background, the Accounting Research Center (ARC) emerged as a logical next step to complement the EAA’s physical gatherings with an online community and resources repository. The ARC thus complements the EAA’s other activities to facilitate and encourage diverse forms of interaction. It augments the EAA’s publications – which are distributed and accessed digitally more and more often – as well as the major EAA events that take place throughout the year: the Annual Congress, the Talent Workshop, the Doctoral Colloquium and PhD Forum. The vision for the ARC is to develop into the EAA’s one-stop location for research resources and networking opportunities relevant for emerging scholars and others interested in accounting research.

The idea of stepping up support for junior researchers grew within EAA for several years. Under presidents Salvador Carmona, Ann Jorissen, and Begoña Giner, a Management Committee task force explored EAA members’ views and the potential requirements of an online research platform. Based on surveys and interviews with junior accounting researchers (the intended users), as well as discussions with web design experts, the ARC began to take shape in 2015 and 2016. An ARC Committee headed by Philip Joos and Thorsten Sellhorn devised and launched the platform (arc.eaa-online.org)
at the Valencia EAA Congress in May 2017. Shortly after this, Mark Clatworthy and Giovanna Michelon became, respectively, Chair and Editor-in-Chief of the ARC.

**ARC aims and objectives**

To move towards its vision, the ARC was designed as the EAA’s online research support platform that addresses three needs articulated by the EAA junior researcher community in the earlier surveys: networking, training and feedback. First, complementing the EAA’s on-site events, the ARC Blog and Forum functionalities allow users to interact and exchange ideas and views on a range of issues. This is especially useful where space constraints and/or restricted travel budgets limit people’s opportunity to partake in the EAA’s physical gatherings. These are still important, however, and the ARC’s Events aims to inform junior researchers about relevant events, including doctoral courses, workshops, and conferences. Second, the ARC Repository sets out to provide educational resources to support PhD students and junior faculty in developing their research and teaching skills. Related to this, it offers a convenient space for those wishing to share their own resources with others, such as programming code. Third, the ARC features the highly innovative EAA Peer Mentoring Initiative (PMI), which aims to help European PhD students refine their research proposals and enhance the overall quality of their work by accessing timely advice and feedback from some of Europe’s top accounting researchers.

**Implementation**

Implementing a functional platform takes more than a vision. A great deal of work by people too numerous to name here was necessary to establish the ARC in its current form. A team of Senior Editors, including Beatriz Garcia Osma, Tami Dinh, Ties de Kok, Christoph Sextroh, Ann Jorissen, Aljoša Valentinčič, Martin Walker and Steve Young developed and populated the main sections and areas of the ARC, including the PMI. The web team of Les Caron and Paul Mouland led the programming, design and maintenance
of the platform. Nicole Coopman, omnipresent EAA General Secretary, provides excellent overall support and coordination. The ARC has also received generous sponsorship from the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, and welcome input on the PMI from James Cleaver at Taylor & Francis publishers.

**Development of the ARC**

Since its inception, the ARC has evolved and adapted in a number of ways, partly to improve its visual appeal, partly to accommodate new content and initiatives (most notably the PMI), and partly – and importantly – to make it more responsive and interactive for its users. Usage statistics have grown accordingly. As of April 2018, the number of members is approaching 350, the blogs regularly receive thousands of views, and the Events page is updated on an almost daily basis. There are some excellent resources available to junior researchers – some only to ARC members, such as those in the Repository, but others freely distributed via the Blogs. Despite having been fully functional for only a few of months, the PMI editorial board is receiving and responding to PhD proposals from various countries, covering a range of topics and methodologies. The ARC also includes a Twitter feed, conceived to enhance the interactivity of the platform and the knowledge diffusion endeavor. In the past year, the Twitter account has reached more than 100 followers. In the future, the aim is to increase ARC content that encourages both frequent, regular visits (such as information on funding and job opportunities for accounting PhD students) and more ad-hoc visits, to read blogs, access resources such as data sets or methodological guides, and seek advice in the Forum.

Making the ARC responsive and interactive is a necessary, though not sufficient condition for its long-run success. The vibrancy and usefulness of any online community depends on a critical mass of active users and the resulting network effects. The ARC is no different. It is too early to tell whether the ARC will indeed develop, as intended by its founders, into the EAA’s one-stop location for research resources and networking opportunities relevant for emerging scholars and others interested in accounting research. Nevertheless, the wheels have now been set in motion and the significant
benefits offered by the ARC are becoming visible and more heavily utilized by the EAA community. We are grateful to all contributors and decidedly optimistic for the future.

*How can you help?* Get involved, use the resources on offer at the ARC, share your thoughts and opinions, and spread the word!