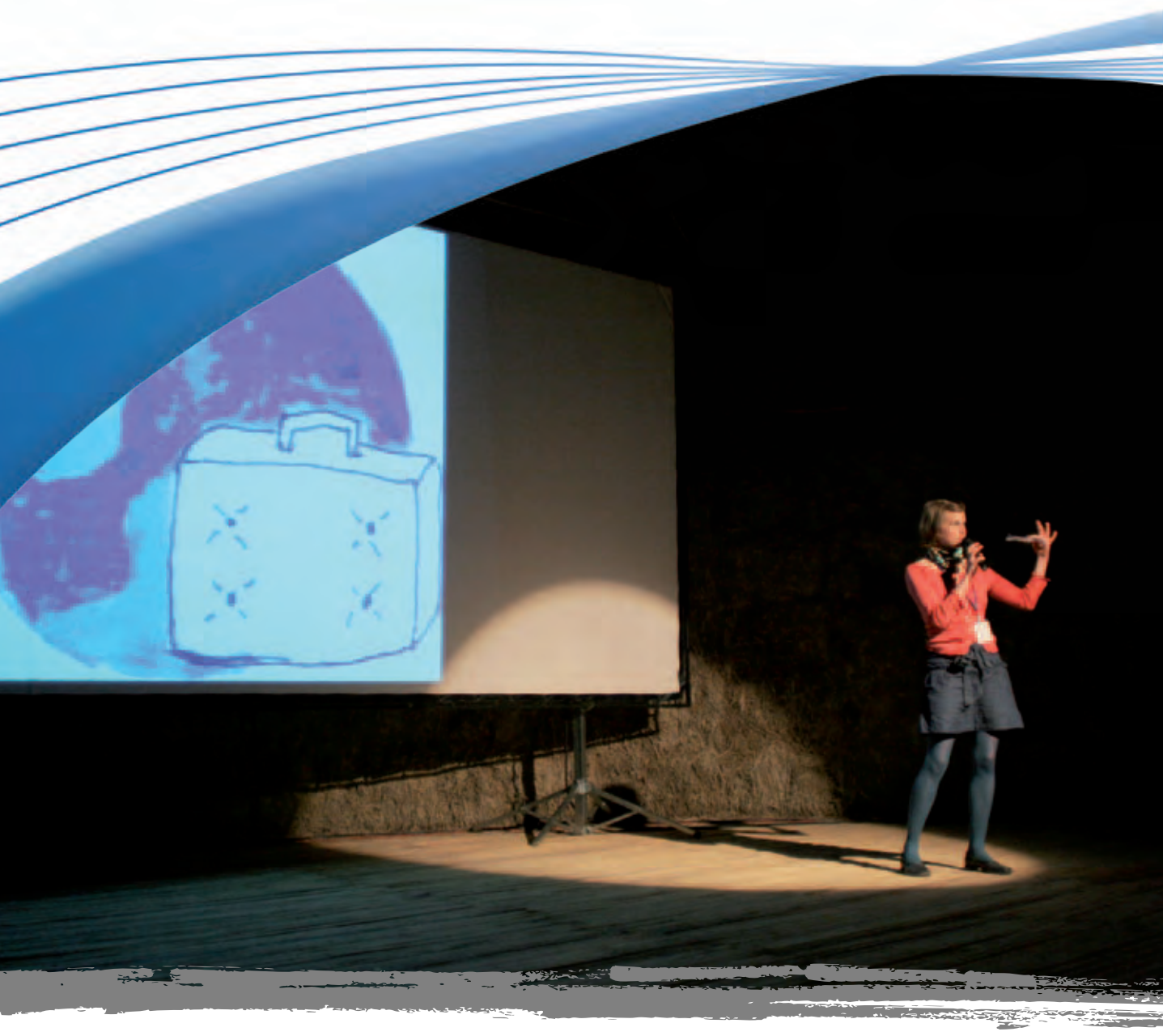
A Mobility Pilot for Cultural Operators by Trans Europe Halles | Research Report
Laakso, Rekola, Tanninen-Komulainen, Vilén, & Wulff (Eds.)

CHANGING ROOM

Mobility of Non-Artistic Cultural Professionals in Europe

SIBELIUS ACADEMY
Kuopio Department



CHANGING ROOM
Creating Mobility for Cultural Operators

TRANS EUROPE HALLES

SIBELIUS ACADEMY

Laakso, Rekola, Tanninen-Komulainen, Vilén, & Wulff (Eds.)
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Elina Laakso, Heini Rekola, Eija Tanninen-Komulainen, Tanja Vilén & Sampsa Wulff

Trans Europe Halles (TEH) is a European Network of Independent Cultural Centres. Founded in 1983, the network now brings together more than fifty multidisciplinary and socially engaged centres throughout Europe. Most centres are located in buildings from industrial heritage and have taken important action in challenging the established cultural policy.

With a great diversity in programming and local context, Trans Europe Halles aims to enrich, empower and enhance independent cultural centres through the exchange of ideas, experiences and people. The pilot project *Changing Room* is a part of the network's current focus on mobility and professional development.

More information and contact: www.teh.net, info@teh.net

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FOREWORDS

The best possible timing

As a member of the executive committee of Trans Europe Halles I was given the task of following the two-year project *Changing Room* closely and reporting to the committee and members. Unfortunately this meant that our centre could not participate in the project but at the same time it forced me to think about the meaning of the project for the network.

Changing Room has been the biggest effort of the then 25 year old network. A network that had expanded to double its size in the space of three years. New members and influences made it very clear that getting to know each other and learning from each other were the main goals of the network. The past exchange projects such as EVS (European Voluntary Service) and YEP (Youth Exchange Project) had laid solid ground for bigger efforts.

The EC's willingness to pilot cultural mobility projects came at the best possible time for the network. The fact that even grassroots level, independent and outside-the-institutions organizations like our members could benefit from this was exceptional.

Early on in the process it became clear that a proper study must be attached to the proposal to the EC. Not so much that it might help the proposal to be approved, but with the idea that if such a project would be done, it must be properly documented and its effects evaluated. History rarely remembers or analyses independent sector operators. In culture or in general.

The coming years will show us the real value of the study. Already the process of making it has helped clear the vision of the whole network. An academic approach and process has suddenly affected the mindset of all the members. It has forced us to think about what we are and what we want, and ensured that our goals of mobility, mutual learning and respect are both accurate and realistic.

The next step of the network's mobility project is the *Engine Room* Europe application. In the spring of 2011 we will know if the good work done during the *Changing Room* project will see this next step. Hopes are high, and the lessons learned during *Changing Room* are valuable assets in whatever the network will do in its future.

Stuba Nikula
Managing Director of KOY Kaapelitalo
Executive committee member of Trans Europe Halles

Changing Room: Introduction, aims and objectives

Changing Room was one of four pilot mobility projects selected by the EC in 2008 following a call for proposals to support, on an experimental basis, the mobility of cultural workers in the cultural sector through networks of existing structures supporting mobility, with a view to exploring ways of improving the overall environment for mobility at EU level and feeding into future policy and programme developments.[1]

Trans Europe Halles (TEH) and its co-organisers, Melkweg, Amsterdam and Sibelius Academy, Helsinki managed *Changing Room*, working together with twenty-five TEH partner members from across Europe.

The target group for *Changing Room* was non-artistic cultural professionals (NACP's), from young volunteers to leaders of cultural organizations. This is the group of cultural workers who facilitate the production of art, support and development of artists and manage arts buildings. Few, if any mobility projects or studies had previously focused on this specific group. NACP's means cultural leaders, managers, producers, programmers, curators, technicians, administrators, and those working in marketing, finance and catering.

At its core, *Changing Room* aimed to test, study and evaluate a staff exchange programme within TEH. As well as the staff exchange, *Changing Room* included a professional development programme, this study by the Sibelius Academy and an on-line mobility toolkit. By combining both theory and practice in *Changing Room*, its results were intended to produce information that could assist in informing the formulation of future mobility policies, projects and schemes.

The primary purpose of *Changing Room* was to identify the current issues and barriers to, and then the opportunities and possible solutions for, enhancing and increasing the mobility of NACP's. Its key objectives were:

1. Stimulating and supporting independent cultural organizations to increase their commitment to the mobility of cultural professionals.

2. Facilitating and developing a cultural professionals mobility exchange programme to provide both workers and cultural employers increased knowledge and experience of the benefits of mobility.

3. Conducting an academic study to examine and identify the key factors which enhance mobility of cultural professionals, what could stimulate mobility, how best to evaluate it, what are its benefits and how best to raise its value.

1 The other three projects selected for the pilot were ***PRACTICS*** led by The Finnish theatre information centre, ***SPACE*** led by ONDA – Office National de Diffusion Artistique (France) and ***E-Mobility*** led by Pépinières européennes pour jeunes artistes (France) and Space.

4. Creating an on-line mobility toolkit for cultural professionals, students and organisations to increase, assist and support mobility.

5. To contribute to a greater understanding of NACP's mobility issues across the EU through the outcomes of training workshops, a cultural leaders retreat and by making mobility a key issue for debate within the Trans Europe Halles network during the two-year period of the project.

6. To create new, and develop existing partnerships, sharing combined knowledge and experience in order to produce innovative and long-lasting proposals for enhancing and increasing the mobility of NACP's.

During the project's Staff Exchange programme TEH members' hosted and send their NACP's on exchanges at each other's centres for periods of one week to one month. This "taste" of mobility was intended to stimulate longer-term exchanges and hopefully lead to an increase in the permanent engagements of workers from abroad by network members. But *Changing Room* also wanted to examine the barriers, differences and similarities in mobility issues between the projects participants. For example, is it easier for technicians compared to marketing staff to cross-borders? How important an issue is language in being mobile? Do NACP's want to temporarily or permanently work in different countries? How different are management and financial systems and processes across Europe? Do cultural organisations seek to recruit staff from outside of their country? This valuable study by the Sibelius Academy is a first step to answering some of these questions.

When it became clear that there was no existing research or data on the mobility of NACP's, it was decided to focus the study around the staff exchange programme, through evaluating the experiences of the workers who were 'exchanged' together with those of the host and sending organisations.

The projects immediate results and conclusions (that can be found at the end of this report) have already informed the development of a three-year capacity building and professional development plan for TEH called *Engine Room Europe*. Planned to commence in 2011, *Engine Room Europe* will build on the knowledge, experience and "lessons learnt" from *Changing Room* with the aim of assisting in the development of a long-term, sustainable future for the European independent cultural sector through investment in its cultural workers and their creative processes.

Paul Bogen
Project Manager
Changing Room

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY AND ITS METHODS

The mobility of artists has been more often under study than the mobility of non-artistic personnel in cultural organizations. Various residency programmes, international projects and co-productions are recognizes as something central to artists' work whereas few exchange programmes for administrative and technical personnel exist. This pilot study on mobility of non-artistic cultural operators in Europe is first of its kind and serves an important function in the future development of mobility practices. The overall aims of the study was firstly to study the current situation of mobility in the cultural workers sector and secondly to study the impacts of the *Changing Room* project on European culture workers mobility through Trans Europe Halles.

In the project proposal there was an aim to include the TEH youth exchange EVS programme into to the *Changing Room* project study. Because of the exchange in the Sibelius Academy's Arts Management personnel in the beginning of the year 2010 there was no time to include this part into the study. Likewise there was an aim to make an internet interview to the cultural workers not members of independent cultural organizations TEH This internet interview was excluded because On-The-Move organization did in the same time, as planed in the *Changing Room* project, exactly to the same target group this internet interview. There was no reason to make the same study in the *Changing Room* project.

In more detail, the aim has been to understand the different enabling and restricting aspects related to mobility of administrative and technical staff of cultural centres in Europe, to investigate the perceptions of mobility and willingness to take part in such activity, as well as to describe the experiences of staff members who have already being on exchange in another cultural centre. Even if applying rigorous academic methods, the main objective has not been to contribute merely to academic discussion, but to provide knowledge on mobility for practitioners working in cultural centres across Europe. In line with this, the report will gather lists of literature and research reports and conclude by stating some key learning points, and give concrete recommendations on how to develop mobility practices for non-artistic staff members in the future.

Overview of the Methods of Study

The two-year study included three main parts, in which different aspects of mobility were examined. The study started with a qualitative part in which focus group interviews were used as the main data collection method. These interviews provided a general overview of mobility as seen by the Trans Europe Halles (TEH) representatives. Outcomes from the first part informed the later studies in which mobility was investigated in more depth. Five students from the Arts Management Master's Degree Programme at the Sibelius Academy, Finland, took part in conducting nine focus group interviews, together with Dr Timo Cantell, at the two TEH meetings in Zilina, Slovakia (May 2009) and Cracow, Poland (October 2009). The outcomes of the first sub-study are presented in chapter 2 of this report.

The second part of the study consisted of a quantitative questionnaire, which gave a broad view of how the TEH representatives perceive mobility, the obstacles to it and possible benefits of it. The survey was distributed in a TEH meeting in Budapest, Hungary (May 2010) and altogether 50 questionnaires were returned with a response rate of 38.4 %. The results of the survey are presented in chapter three of the report.

The third and final part of the study involved a number of qualitative face-to-face and telephone interviews with TEH representatives who have already taken part in mobility practices. Altogether 25 non-artistic staff members in various cultural centres had been involved in mobility by the time of interviews. 13 of these 25 were reached for a telephone interview between June and August 2010. In addition, 5 of them took part in in-depth personal interviews during the Staff Exchange Evaluation & Training Workshop in Amsterdam, the Netherlands (August 2010). A personal interview was also conducted with the project manager of the Staff Exchange. In order to get the hosting centres' point of view, a questionnaire was sent to the centres that had been involved in hosting staff member(s) from other centres. However, only five questionnaires were returned. The following table summarizes the data collected to the study:

Description of the data	Quantity	Time period	Place
Focus group interviews	9	May 2009 October 2009	Zilina, Slovakia Crakow, Poland
Survey	50	May 2010	Budapest, Hungary
Telephone interviews	13	June-August 2010	
Face-to face in-depth interviews	5	August-September 2010	Amsterdam, the Netherlands
Face-to face interview	1	August-September 2010	Amsterdam, the Netherlands

A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF MOBILITY AS SEEN BY THE TRANS EUROPE HALLES REPRESENTATIVES

Timo Cantell

Description of the Data

In all, nine focus group sessions were organised at the Trans Europe Halles (TEH) meeting 67 in the Stanica cultural centre, Zilina, Slovakia in May 2009 and at the TEH meeting 68 in the Laznia Nowa cultural centre, Cracow, Poland in October 2009. This report represents views expressed by the TEH members from a wide range of cultural centres, and the wide range of duties and positions these members hold at these centres.

Each focus group had 6-10 members, apart from one group that had only 3 representatives. The groups were organised according to the work orientations of the participants. Therefore there were separate groups dedicated to directors, board members, technicians, programmers and marketing people. The idea behind this choice was that relatively homogenous groups would operate best. This is a common practise when applying focus group research method.

The aim of the focus groups was to assess the situation as seen by the TEH representatives. By giving an opportunity for the interviewees to discuss at length the problems and opportunities international mobility presents, we were able to draw a picture of where some of the key issues in this field are to be found. These findings were then used to develop a questionnaire that will provide further information from TEH members across the board. This follows a typical strategy in academic research practices.

As this is a study targeted at non-artistic cultural operators our focus was not on artists. However, some interviewees also had an artistic background and they could in part also reflect the opinions of the artistic field.

The themes covered in the interviews dealt with attitudes towards international mobility, the current situation of mobility, hindrances, future options and the role of TEH in enabling mobility between various centres throughout Europe. This part of the report presents the main points discussed in the focus groups.

The text is structured according to several themes. In the beginning, the current situation and attitudes towards mobility are discussed. This is followed by the descriptions of various forms of mobility, linkages to staff developments as well as hosting issues. A number of features discourage these mobility developments and there are explained in the next section. Various options and enabling mechanisms are then introduced, before the report closes with a summary and suggestions.

Ways of Perceiving Mobility

Mobility as a term is understood to be part of a national or international co-operation, exchange or activity that has many features and forms. While the term raises positive connotations as such, mobility is nevertheless rather loosely defined and understood. Mobility is seen as an interesting and even an important element that offers great potential opportunities, but which is as yet not a fully developed activity among TEH members. In part, mobility can also mean a break from mundane everyday activities and represent, for some, just a holiday instead of professionally more challenging opportunities. However, this seems not to feature strongly in conversations. Experiences and expectations vary among the members of TEH. Most members have engaged in one way or another in international exchange activities and cooperation but they might call this something else than mobility.

> *"I tour a lot and have learned a lot of knowledge and seen many methods how different houses work and operate, you learn a lot more than just staying put in your regular spot, that's how I learn mostly in my working life."*

In addition, mobility was seen in different ways such as "sending people to places and exchanging ideas, knowledge, networking" or as an "exchange of knowledge and experts". Interviewees also mentioned the following ideas for an exchange:

> *"It is good to go abroad and get some deeper understanding how other cultural centres operate."*
> *"Mobility is still considered as a holiday. It is unofficial activity, no real structure available."*
> *"Mobility should be about an ability to bring in experts to solve specific problems. This way it is connected to people."*

Many centres or their tenants were already involved in international programmes through available schemes. There are in actual fact, many programmes and opportunities that centres are at least aware of, and some, such as the European Volunteer Service (EVS), were

often referred to in discussions. Many cities have cooperation with their twin cities and cultural centres are often engaged in these activities. Artists have a range of residency programmes available to them. Indeed, many centres have perhaps more activities related to mobility than they themselves think or are aware of. Some saw involvement in mobility activities as part of a long-term plan and investment, where the rewards can be reaped not necessarily immediately but over time, by way of new engagements, projects and contacts.

In the world of continuous flow of information and multiple projects, it seems that representative of the participating cultural centres agree that TEH is well placed to take charge of mobility development between various centres. If TEH takes these initiatives it is most likely going to attract many interested centres and people to join in these projects. Overall, TEH's role was seen as vital if these issues are to be promoted, encouraged and developed.

This is partly explained by the fact that member centres are so immersed in taking care of their everyday practices, that neither do they have time nor resources to dedicate much effort in finding information of the various exchange opportunities, not to mention being active themselves in developing mobility opportunities and schemes. Therefore they are happy to receive suggestions, information packages and encouragement to engage in these activities. In principal, they are interested in these issues, but in practise they might not have enough information and staff to sort out these issues. It is simply a question of division of labour: having a pool of constantly updated knowledge of these issues in one place and under the responsibility of some dedicated staff, in this case at the TEH coordination office in Lund, would be much better than various members trying to collect together pieces of information.

Attitudes towards Mobility

Focus group interviews show that attitudes towards mobility are very positive. TEH members across the board seem to think that mobility is an important area to address. It is believed that mobility can help develop staff members individually and centres collectively. Tenants of the centres – such as individual artists, performing arts groups, media representatives, catering staff members, and various other resident organisations – are seen to benefit from this activity and as a result they are believed to distribute their experiences to other tenants within their centres, and beyond. Therefore not only can mobility be beneficial to the centre and its office staff, but on a much wider basis, within the centre's other key players, such as tenants and their activities. Indeed, in addition to the benefits within the centre, the impact goes much beyond the walls of each individual TEH centres and these experiences can spill over to contribute to the wellbeing of the city the centre is located in – at least if these experiences are shared more widely.

However, mobility needs active participants and encouraging examples. In the end mobility is up to the individual members taking initiatives, being encouraged and allowed to be mobile. This view is represented by quite an obvious and yet important statement by one of the interviewees: "houses cannot travel so people have to."

When discussing mobility, representatives talked more about themselves or their staff going abroad somewhere rather than them being at the receiving end of mobility projects, i.e., acting as hosts to visitors from other centres. To exaggerate a little bit, so far the discussion is a one-way street where people think of going away somewhere, but do not spend as much time and energy in thinking of the opportunities and benefits of receiving visitors from other centres.

While mobility is generally seen in a positive light there seem to be variety of differences between the TEH members and their situations when it comes to the experiences so far. Some have already gained exposure to mobility co-operation, but others are at a very early stage, and might not have considered these issues as much. Overall, there is a great need to know more about the opportunities, requirements, details, financial issues etc. to develop this area. Therefore the *Toolkit*, developed as one of the key components of the *Changing Room* project, if planned and executed well, can ideally meet the various information needs of the TEH members.

Some representatives had also engaged in EU funded projects that enable opportunities to meet colleagues and solve various issues. While these typically rather large projects are appreciated, there is also a sense of frustration particularly with the often complex administration of the projects. Especially if one is in charge of an EU funded project the workload and responsibility can be demanding.

It should be added that despite of the opportunities and new ways of sharing information thanks to social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn, representatives argue that though these social media tools are useful they cannot possibly replace real-life shared experiences and cooperation between colleagues.

Developing international cooperation is nothing new as such and interviewees are aware of schemes in other sectors. Artist in residence programmes are rather well known and the often mentioned and positive example is the Erasmus programme that has served European mobility in the higher education system since 1987. This is a well-established programme and the sort of scheme that Trans Europe Halles could, according to some of the interviewed members, draw from and adapt to its own special purposes.

Various Forms of Mobility

Based on the focus group discussions we can identify five main forms of mobility currently in place: (1) mobility of non-artistic cultural workers within centres, (2) of artists, (3) of non-artistic tenants and (4) of volunteers. In addition, we can also talk about (5) mobility of ideas.

Mobility of Administrative Staff

Typically those in the more senior positions of the centres' staff have plenty of connections and they engage in various activities, both being mobile themselves and receiving visitors to their centres. However, while some are very active others are very passive in terms of mobility activities. The various reasons for this are as discussed below.

One key form of mobility, or at least a form of international exchange and activity, are the two annual TEH meetings that are considered very useful and important events.

> *"You have to talk to people. We have an opportunity to write mail or newsletters about it, but you really have to talk about it, find out if people are interested. The problem is that people do not have time to read all mail or they forget. It is better to talk about it. But sure, send newsletters, as well. Personal contacts are very important."*

Mobility of Artists

It seems that currently individual artists and artistic groups are internationally well connected, in part much more so than non-artistic staff members of TEH centres. Many artists travel and receive guests from abroad regularly. This activity is important and we should study the results closely even if artists' exchange is not at the focus on the current *Changing Room* project.

It would make a great difference if internationally connected artists would share their experiences with other tenants at their centres. However, not all artists are that well connected, and there are major differences between individuals and the various forms of art. Some art forms tend to engage in international cooperation much more than others.

> *"In my opinion the exhibitions provided by visiting resident artists are the most interesting thing happening at our centre. I don't even necessarily need to see people but I need to see their exhibitions."*

Mobility of others than Artistic Tenants within the Centres

There are various kinds of operators and institutions within the centres that possess different experiences and can have wide international networks. These tenants might represent a number of collectives, organisations, media, sports or other such like interest groups that can have valuable connections, but these connections are not necessarily made full use of by the host centres. This is an area where there is room for development.

Mobility of Volunteers

Volunteers represent one group of mobile people. Indeed, for some centres they represent the main area of mobility experiences. Volunteers can come from abroad, from universities nearby or far away, and also local people can be involved. However, volunteers seldom represent other TEH organisations. The European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme seems to be familiar to many centres.

Volunteer management differs greatly from staff exchange programmes and these two activities cannot necessarily be compared to each other. Sometimes volunteers can have a lot of influence on a given centre, and this is partly explained by the fact that their stay extends normally over many months, usually between 6 and 12 months. This is quite different compared to only a few days, or the maximum of two weeks that was often referred to when TEH staff members considered the ideal length of stay. In Stanica volunteers play a big part:

> *"Each volunteer always shapes the organisation. Every volunteer has always pushed us somewhere new. According to our experience with EVS, it does not happen everywhere. It is about the whole organisation. The organisation needs to accept all the different elements arriving. When foreigners arrive, you have to push the walls for them to find the space. When something is not working out, then the volunteer is directly going into it, because they might feel it very strongly. If something goes wrong, and if within the organisation there is no communication, then the volunteer is the first one to feel it. He is dependent on the organisation."*

However, there are many centres where volunteers do not have such an influence, even if their needs have to be accommodated in order to make the experience mutually beneficial. Many interviewees said that volunteers require a lot of management work and the outcomes vary. Some volunteers are greatly appreciated, and wishes are expressed that they could stay and become permanent members of staff, while other volunteers can present plenty of extra work and problems.

Another issue is how the centres would benefit more from volunteers in such a way that their experiences and expertise could be used to then benefit co-operation activities. That is, instead of just receiving the volunteers and sending them back, it would be beneficial if

their experiences would be recorded and shared so that other potential volunteers would be able to continue or to contribute even further as the next volunteers arrive, or when other centres want to develop volunteer programmes. It has to be added that some centres operate mainly on voluntary work and the situation in these places is different from those who have full-time staff in charge of activities.

Mobility of ideas

While mobility typically refers to individuals or groups moving from one place to another, a relatively less explored form of mobility refers to ideas, instead of people, being transported. This, however, can be considered more of a support mechanism or an added on feature to "real" mobility, but nevertheless it is an idea worth exploring when discussing mobility issues.

Reasons for Mobility

Directors seem to be internationally quite well connected but other occupational groups also have their connections. For example, technicians are quite mobile but for somewhat different reasons. As they have work opportunities outside of TEH centres their careers might include periods of work in very different surroundings. This is a valuable side effect of their career patterns. However, technicians might well share experiences between themselves while working for different centres. One explanation was that they share more or less the same technical language, and are willing to learn from each other in new workplaces. Therefore in principal they are potentially very mobile.

There is clearly room for development to serve administrative staff, for instance programmers or event managers, who are not often given opportunities to go abroad or to receive visitors.

> *"Everyone cannot go, after all, like cleaning people or some others, I do not why. Or actually it could be a good thing."*

Mobility and staff development

One of the main reasons for supporting mobility is linked to staff development and motivation. For example, in order to keep key staff interested in continuing to work at a particular centre, international exchange opportunities can serve professional development and a sense of commitment to one's own centre very well. Technical staff members in particular were mentioned in this regard, as they might be tempted to try out other job opportunities

somewhere else. Therefore providing them with a sense of international connections, the chance to go abroad and also receive visitors can in part serve as a very good motivational factor. As good and committed technical staff can sometimes be hard to come by in these centres, their wellbeing is of crucial importance. One such factor can be the opportunities to travel and to host international colleagues.

> *"Centres should offer more than just wages. They have to deal with professional development, to keep key people working for the house. This is about professional people sharing experiences."*

There is a basic need for technicians to move from one centre to another, to see how things are done. You need to make decisions, to communicate, you have to move, see people, to talk to each other, to do research. There has to be a structure for this. There is a need to move, to learn from each other, to do projects together, to search, to study.

Hosting visitors

It seems that the awareness of being a host needs to be enhanced in order to develop successful mobility projects. Experiences at the receiving end can be just as rewarding as going away because visitors can open up the eyes of the local people to see their centre in a new light. Besides, by being a host a centre can engage its own staff in international co-operation much more – at least in terms of meeting visitors from abroad - than by sending individuals away as visitors to the hosting centre are likely to meet many members of the hosting organisation. Some understand the situation well:

> *"When I am looking at who are our staff members they might not want to go abroad but are very willing to receive visitors. They might have their families, their houses, renovating…"*

However, quite often the argument goes that at the receiving end it is difficult to find time and resources to host visitors. Hosting, of course, takes time and effort. Sometimes those who have a somewhat sceptical view of receiving visitors confuse short-term visits and longer training or work experience sessions. While trainers have to be supervised and monitored, short-term collegial visits do not necessarily carry a similar kind of responsibility as over a long period. Nonetheless, visitors do require mutually shared time that some consider as taken away from other duties. This cooperation can, after all, be beneficial for both parties concerned. Usually there are not enough hands to help. You cannot do your own job if you are training somebody.

Features Discouraging Mobility

While discussing reasons that work against participation in mobility issues some key features arise. These are financial questions, time and division of labour, responsibilities back home, lack of information, visas, language and culture shock.

Financial issues

Financial issues play a part when considering opportunities to go out on an exchange. Pure travel expenses such as train or flight tickets in most cases might not be much of an issue as such. However, including accommodation, food and other immediate costs linked with going away, even for a relatively short period, may create a large burden, and they have to be taken into account as they might in effect prevent exchange to take place.

One particular issue linked with financial matters is the fact that the so called Big Mac index is not necessarily very favourable, particularly for those people and organisations from Eastern Europe, who find staying in Western Europe almost prohibitively expensive. If there were means of balancing out this difference by way of funding systems, there might be more evenly based exchange activities in the future between representatives from the various parts of Europe.

> *"Costs are definitely an issue unless there are programmes to help out. Because you need money."*
> *"If you do not have minimum security, when you do not have money for living, how could you go?"*
> *"Money is the main thing."*

Often centres do not have much budget reserved for travel expenses and even less for mobility costs. In the long term this might be an issue that has to be addressed to enable mobility contacts to develop properly.

Time, division of labour and responsibilities

The issue of time management is perhaps the single most important challenge facing those who consider participation in exchange programmes – whether short or long. When talking about non-artistic jobs at TEH member centres there is typically only one person responsible for certain tasks in any given centre. If someone leaves even for a short period there are immediate question as to who is going to be responsible for the duties of the one who goes away, who is going to do the necessary thing, how to get information if something goes wrong, etc.

"People are working so hard, there is only one person working on a certain job and they are hard to replace."
"Who would do my job?"
"The sense of commitment to one's centre is very strong and for many it is just unthinkable to neglect the duties for any length of time. Besides, the longer one is away the higher the pile of duties one faces upon return. Ideally the person going away for a while should not carry the responsibilities of his or her centre back home while learning new things abroad but this is easier said that done."

Nevertheless, there should be a way of making sure that the one going away can concentrate on the exchange opportunity given, and not trying to do work related duties from far away while simultaneously aiming at opening up new inroads at a new place. An unwanted situation would be that the one going away is under constant pressure to take care of issues back home, while simultaneously engaging in exchange activities at the hosting centre. This would be unhelpful for all parties concerned and would not serve the purpose at all.

Losing key staff members

Linked with the previous point above, perhaps the single largest worry of the sending organisations is that they would lose some of the key staff members for a period of time, and there would be nobody to replace them. Indeed, quite often there are no people to provide cover if someone goes away, is sick or otherwise unable to be present. This tells of the rather precarious situation within many cultural centres, but is a fact of life in many understaffed centres.

The situation is such that if a key technical person is not available and something unexpected happens there is no one to cover for him or her. This person can have information – often referred to as tacit knowledge – that is not registered anywhere or shared with anyone else. As TEH centres tend to occupy buildings with a colourful history and in a variety of conditions, so water leakages, electric problems or other such unwanted events can be catastrophic if crucial technical staff is away. They might be the only people to know where pipes and electrical cables are installed, how the building is heated etc.

"The whole system might crash if somebody goes out, it would be just a mess."

While technical staff are crucial, it seems that keeping the centres running properly is also a challenge if its key staff members go away on exchange – even for a week or two. Preparing for this and solving the potential problems beforehand might enable exchange of the non-artistic staff, but it would still be a challenge to overcome at many centres.

Visa and related issues

Visa questions concern only a minority of TEH members but are nevertheless a source of concern. Those coming from outside the EU, such as from Serbia or Russia, find it sometimes difficult to obtain visas, particularly if the planned visit is of a longer duration. On the other hand, those from the EU going to these countries also have a duty to sort out visa issues. This might, in effect, work against mobility. Another related matter to do with red tape is that it is sometimes considered too complicated and frustrating, which is yet again a discouragement from engaging in mobility exchange.

> *"When visa is needed there are limitations, time is limited. Visa might be for 3 months. How to stay for 6 months?"*

Culture shock and status issue

One also has to take into account so-called culture shock particularly when talking about a somewhat longer stay that lasts at least a number of weeks if not months. Intercultural competencies can vary and new conditions can also open up room for rather unexpected experiences, even conflicts. While this is not a major concern we have to be aware of it, as well.

> *"You have to tell him or her about the local reality, cultural history, what the situation is. The more and the better tools we give, the better they understand. At least it is possible to give tools to some extent. Or to give some information to help them understand and to continue to be motivated."*

Another form of culture shock might be the fact that particularly those in more senior positions back home might expect to be treated according to their positions at the centre they are visiting, but this might not always be the case. Even if people are flexible this can cause concern, misunderstanding and frustration if not dealt with smoothly. Status issues and concerns have to be understood and prepared for.

One part of the culture shock can also be experienced on returning home. One might not be quite the same person who left – or others might see this as so. Resettling is not always that smooth. And one's own cultural centre back home might not be quite as welcoming to new ideas and suggestions collected while being mobile as one would hope for. Therefore international exchange can also open up rifts between one's new ideas and those represented by the own organisation. That is, for some, mobility can reveal reluctance to rethink and develop ones own organisation and its practices.

Jealousy can also be a feature here, after all travelling abroad can be seen as an unfair reward for the lucky few. Those who go abroad could be considered as trouble makers, or just having a holiday. If you participate in an international cooperation and the organisation is not

used to this, people back home may think that you are not doing your part back home like the others, you are just on a holiday. This is an attitude that colleagues may hold.

Language

One key problem hindering mobility development is the question of a common language. Even if most TEH members can communicate with today's lingua franca, i.e. English, it is not at all self evident that all members across the board of the organisations could use English. The language issue is clearly something that can prevent exchange activity from taking place as well as acting against successful exchange experiences.

What kinds of questions emerge when talking about language problems? There might be some reluctance in accepting visitors if the organisation has to act differently from its everyday practices. Language is clearly one such area. For example, it is difficult to expect everyone in the receiving institution to start talking in English in meetings or other communications. In addition, even if people might find a common language all documents and communication at the receiving centre might be only available in a language that the visitor cannot understand. It is naturally impossible to translate them into, say, English just for the sake of a visitor.

> *"We still have and will have language barriers in Europe. Another thing is information in other languages."*
> *"When an English speaker goes somewhere, do you have to turn the entire language of the office into English?"*
> *"There were suggestions to support certain language group visits so that for example German speakers would have ways of visiting each other."*
> *"How many German speaking centres there are? Or Scandinavian? We could have regional cooperation based on language."*

Availability of Information

The question of information poses a double-edged sword. On the one hand there is not enough information, or at least available information is hard to come by and this effectively works against mobility. One the other hand there exists an overabundance of information, meaning that even useful information packages go unnoticed. There is a clear need for an internet site that would widely serve mobility purposes. *Toolkit*, a key part of the *Changing Room* project, was received with interest and enthusiasm by the TEH members at the Stanica meeting. However, at the same time there are various leaflets, newsletters, email circulations and other means of communication to such an extent that it all seems to confuse rather than to clarify. Making sense of the available information and presenting

it in an accessible and straightforward way would greatly encourage people considering participation in mobility issues.

"Lack or overabundance of information, when you need specific type of knowledge this is a problem."
"Toolkit would be useful. Web based platform would be great."
"Even if we already have newsletters etc., are they really used? We already have things they should be used."
"Tools are great but we have to find a way of getting people to use them and these methods and info already available."

Some argued that yes mobility is interesting as such but there has to be more than mobility for the sake of mobility. Therefore it would be worth the while thinking why one should engage in international co-operation in this way, what benefits this activity has, what kinds of requirements there are, and indeed, why this should be done in the first place. There is a clear need for some visionary help here and some concrete tools to justify the importance of mobility.

"There is a lack of vision, why do I do, what do I get out of this."

In addition, there has to be something TEH specific to mobility if this is promoted by TEH. Many centres have connections through other networks, and questions are raised as to what is the special added value that TEH can bring into the discussion.

Benefits of Mobility

This section explores various options that engagement in mobility activities can raise in discussions. The consensus is that the most likely forms of mobility consist of rather short but intensive visits. Everyone is busy, there are all sorts of private and working life constraints working against any lengthier stays, short explorations are easier to arrange and possible to fund, commitments back home will not be extensively disturbed etc. Therefore non-artistic cultural workers prefer short stays ranging from a few days (sometimes even hours!) up to two weeks. Longer than that presents many potential problems that people are not willing to take. People, especially in more senior positions, think that they cannot possibly spend longer spells abroad. Or if they do then there should be different mechanisms in play to enable such lengthier spells.

"Ideally short length of stay and small bureaucracy."
"Stepping out of your everyday reality is good as such, even for a short period."

Overall, one perspective is that mobility does not have to be something grand. Being able to leave ones own normal surroundings and follow other people at their normal duties can be rewarding and useful as such. Neither does mobility need any large-scale and bureaucratic organisational arrangements. The easier and smoother the support mechanisms that are in place, the better for all parties concerned. The key is good information and connections.

Shadowing

One key feature is just the simple fact that being away from one's normal surroundings triggers a positive attitude to see and think differently. This brings fresh air, new insights, looking at issues from a new perspective. Learning how problems are solved in other places is rewarding as such, and one even reacts to how people behave – consciously or not.

How would one participate in this kind of activity? A simple process is basically to just shadow someone at another centre, simply to follow everyday routines, tasks, how things are done, problems encountered, organisation run, what kinds of people are met etc. Seemingly small things can mean a lot to the person following these activities.

Organised visits and meetings

Typically visitors expect that the hosts will organise opportunities to work at a centre on certain tasks or projects even for a while to get a sense of how things are done. Simultaneously visitors can potentially – and ideally – feed their knowledge into the hosting centre.

Exchange of ideas

It is not always necessary to travel in order to learn and exchange ideas. The internet, in particular, can serve TEH members very well at least in a situation where contact and a trustful relationship have already been established. Having personal contacts always helps though this is not always needed. One extension and lasting legacy of the *Changing Room* project could be an internet tool, perhaps the *Toolkit* that would pool together mobility related issues and would provide a platform of information and ideas.

> *"Mobility of people is one thing, of knowledge and products. We need to share knowledge more than we do at the moment."*

Exchange of jobs

While not necessarily possible to do, some interviewees also played with the idea that changing individual staff members or even the entire staff between centre might be a good idea.

"I would change the whole staff and replace it with employees of other centres."
"Would be interesting to skip positions, like general manager. Only to see what the problems in our organisation are, the problems that emerge out of the organisations and the problems that emerge from the people. To exchange ideas."

Ways to Encourage Mobility

Information

Information is clearly the key issue to make TEH members more aware of mobility options. *Toolkit* has been greeted with enthusiasm and expectations as opinions were raised that even if there might be a will to do exchange, in fact it might turn out to be too difficult to master due to lack of knowledge, contacts, various kinds of detailed information needed, etc. *Toolkit* would then ideally serve as a body of knowledge that would contain all possible sources of information as well as constantly updated issues of various centres and their specific needs and opportunities related with exchange issues.

Toolkit could be developed in such a way that it could also serve as an interactive tool to make matches between various people and TEH centres, as well as various occupational groups. It should also include information on basic practical needs such as visas, work permits, taxation, and other issues that might or might not play a part when considering engagements in mobility activities.

Even if *Toolkit* needs someone to constantly take care of it technically, an important question is how to encourage TEH member to provide content for it. Contributions such as contacts, wishes, experiences, opportunities and so forth, should be actively shared by members in order to keep *Toolkit* updated and interesting. This is easier said than done, but there are many wishes that *Toolkit* would serve interested members in this way. *Toolkit*, and the information it contains, seems to be a key to the success of this *Changing Room* project and its legacy.

*"**Toolkit** is the core of the whole project."*
"It is time that all the members have to link their info to others."
"Like if someone was interested where there is dance among TEH houses, easy access to info."
"Info has to be easy to use and easy to download."
*"Among other sources of information it would be appreciated if people would report on their experiences in the **Toolkit** so that others would see the relevance of this activity."*
"It is also important that if expectations are raised they are also met. People are entitled to be served well. One way to make sure that things work out is to ensure that people at both ends understand each other and share roughly similar interests."

"Some professionals might be frustrated if there are no results, they are result driven."
"The match has to be good, level qualities have to be good."

In addition to *Toolkit* there are also opportunities to use virtual means of mobility. While there might not as yet be any clearly formulated ideas as to what this would mean, it is evident that new technology might provide means of communication previously unknown. However, technology does not compensate for personal contacts and visits to other centres. But after initial contacts new technology can play an important part in enabling further contacts cooperation.

"Film and media are so much more mobile, so much going on that we could learn from and develop as a result."
"Online camera in all these places would be great."

TEH meetings

TEH meetings already provide a successful mode of mobility. The biannual meetings arranged by TEH international cultural centres are important as such, and they can act as a key way to develop mobility in the future between various members.

Discussions have focused especially on mobility between TEH member organisations. but they did not exclude co-operation with non-TEH organisations. What is important is that there has to be TEH specific things that are being done as there are other programmes available, as well. TEH meetings serve this purpose of developing identity very well.

Many wish that for exchange purposes there would be a platform like *Toolkit* to provide information and smooth operation of issues. Some basic system, an interactive tool to make arrangements so as not to have any hassle, but have a set of contacts in place.

Good leadership

While there is a great deal of interest in mobility issues the role of the directors at the various centres is important. They have to actively push and encourage those groups and individuals who might not be the first ones to consider involvement in mobility activities. On the other hand, directors should design some kind of scheme to ensure an equal and open system for participation, as well as making sure that there is sufficient funding to enable this activity.

"Directors have to be involved, the have to push their staff as well, sometimes staff are not that keen in joining these kinds of things."

As noted above, discussions on mobility issues tend to concentrate on sending people away rather than hosting visitors. However, exchange always involves people at both ends and the receiving partner tends to be overlooked. After all, both parties are going to learn from the experience if the exchange is properly arranged. Sometimes it is not possible to send anyone away, but hosting can be very rewarding.

> *"In general it is harder to send someone that receive one. More difficulties if you loose some. Depends on the skill levels, as well."*
> *"How to ensure that this knowledge and experience is transferred to other members within the centres and to the TEH community at large? If there were schemes supporting this, mobility issues would be greatly appreciated within the TEH family. How to make it accessible?"*
> *"Mobility of people is one things, of knowledge and products. We need to share knowledge more than we do."*
> *"How to make more out of the experiences and knowledge gained? How can we imagine this and take care of it?"*

Key Findings

Mobility issues are considered in a favourable light among Trans Europe Halles representatives. Non-artistic cultural operators are willing to explore the practices of their colleagues by visiting other centres, to see how these centres operate, solve problems and operate in their everyday environment. However, the term mobility is understood quite widely and therefore it contains many connotations. For some it is a question of short or long term visits to other cultural centres, some emphasise staff development or volunteer management, while others talk about an exchange of ideas. The already well-established biannual TEH meetings clearly serve the exchange purpose well.

This loose definition often overlooks a key dimension of mobility, i.e., hosting. It seems that TEH needs to think of ways of encouraging centres at the receiving end to be more active in hosting visitors. Mobility cannot properly take place if there are many interested people wanting to go but not enough centres willing to host. Therefore we should pay attention to the hosting dimension of the exchange.

TEH members argue that exchanges should be relatively short in length. This is due to work and family reasons. Ideally a visit should last from a few days to one week, or maximum of two weeks. Longer visits have a certain appeal, but in practise there is not that much interest in such schemes among the non-artistic cultural operator community. Volunteers or students often find it easier to aim at visits that range from several months up to a year.

Issues that discourage mobility include financial and language problems, sometimes status issues and less often visas and bureaucracy. One central question for all seems to be time management, i.e. how to take care of duties at one's own cultural centre while being away. This is related to the fact that TEH members argue that it is difficult to find anyone to replace key members of staff, even if the question would be of relatively short visits such as one or two days. Losing key members can turn out to be very difficult if something unexpected should happen.

There is room for development to ensure that the knowledge gained during the various exchange opportunities can be transferred to benefit both sending and receiving institutions, as well as the larger TEH community. Therefore collecting information and distributing this to the members is an area worth exploring. Here *Toolkit*, provided as a key component of the *Changing Room* project, can made a big contribution.

The results of this focus group exercise will be used to develop an online survey where the idea is to study the situation among TEH members, and to find areas where mobility can be developed in the future. This survey will be carried out in early 2010.

This study explores the current situation and assesses future opportunities of mobility issues among the non-artistic cultural operators and managers within the Trans Europe Halles (TEH) network. The study serves as one of the components of the EC funded mobility pilot project titled as "*Changing Room*" that is run by the Trans Europe Halles network.

TEH representatives see mobility opportunities as an important but as yet undeveloped area of activity between TEH centres. The general attitude is supportive of mobility activities and there is a consensus that these issues should be developed. However, there is a need to have a vision of how to develop mobility, and a scheme supporting mobility activities.

Those Interviewed were directors, programmers, marketing experts, technicians, etc., i.e. those non-artistic cultural workers who make these centres tick, and who are at the heart of mobility development. By mobility they understand international cooperation to be typically one person going from one cultural centre to another to discover how his or her colleagues work, operate, solve problems and deal with their everyday duties.

Mobility for the interviewed TEH members meant relatively short stays ranging from a few days to a maximum of two weeks. Longer exchanges were considered important and interesting but also not really considered as a realistic opportunity. This was due to professional and private reasons. Centres can rarely afford to send their key staff members away for any length of time, as they are hard to replace. On the other hand, family reasons often discourage longer stays due to the fact that moving with the whole family requires much more complicated arrangements.

The main problems identified with mobility refer to a lack of financial support mechanisms, language issues, time management questions and to the fact that there might be nobody doing one's duties while being away. However, as discussions touched upon relatively short stays, visas, social security questions or taxation were not noted to present any problems in this regard.

The challenge presented to the TEH network as a whole is how the organisation could efficiently provide information and support to its members to enable mobility between various cultural centres and their staff. In addition, sharing knowledge of the exchange experiences and thus proving best practices examples and findings would be greatly appreciated by the TEH members. This focus group study will be followed by a separate online survey to the wider TEH community expected to take place in early 2010.

CREATIVITY
WORKSHOP

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA OBTAINED DURING THE TRANS EUROPE HALLES MEETING IN BUDAPEST, HUNGARY, MAY 2010

Sampsa Wulff

Description of the Data

The quantitative data was collected during a TEH meeting in Budapest, Hungary in May 2010. To collect the data a semi-structured questionnaire was used. The total number of participants in the meeting was 130 and we managed to get 50 usable replies giving us a response rate of 38,4 %. The response rate itself may be considered relatively well, but the lack of data however restrains us to use advanced statistical methods such as logistic regression analysis. Therefore, in the present study, only two statistical methods were utilized, chi square test and One-Way ANOVA (one way analysis of variance).

Should there be more data, we would have been able to analyze the responses even further. Now we can only see, for example, statistical differences in means but we are not able to explain those differences. Therefore more research needs to be done in the future.

Demographic profiles of the respondents

Demographics or *demographic data* are usually defined as characteristics of a human population as used in various occasions, such as in research. The distinction has to be made between *demographics* and *demography*, the latter meaning statistical study of human population, which can be very general science that can be applied to any kind of dynamic human population.

The term *demographics* usually includes factors such as sex, race, age, income, disabilities, mobility (in terms of travel time to work or vehicles owned), education, and so on. In this paper, demographics includes the following factors: sex, age, and education.

Sex and age of the respondents

In the present study, a total of 50 usable responses were gathered when the total population (N) was 130. This gives us a response rate of 38, 4 % which can be considered satisfactory. Out of the 50 respondents, more than half were females, as shown on Table 1, but the difference is not particularly significant.

	Frequency	Percent
Female	29	58 %
Male	21	42 %
Total	50	100 %

Table 1. Gender of respondents.

The age distribution among respondents who gave their year of birth was wide. While the youngest respondent was 22 years old, the oldest had reached the age of 64. The mean age was around 37. The age distribution can be seen on Figure 1.

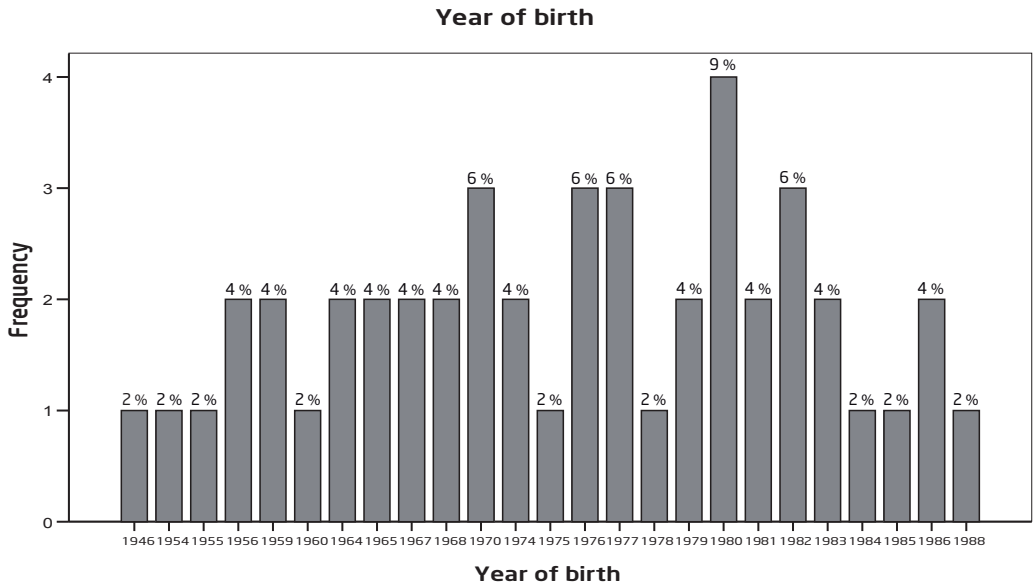


Figure 1. The age distribution of respondents.

In order to make the answers more manageable, we divided the respondents in groups based on their year of birth. Due to this, the cross tabulation that will be apparent further on in this paper will be much easier for the reader to follow. The distribution into different age groups can be found in Table 2.

	Frequency	Percent
Under 24	3	6 %
25 - 35	23	46 %
36 - 45	11	22 %
46 - 55	8	16 %
Over 55	2	4 %
Total	47	94 %
Missing	3	6 %
Total	**50**	**100 %**

Table 2. Respondents in different age groups.

As Table 2 shows, three of the respondents did not provide information on their ages. As seen on Table 2, the vast majority of respondents (23) belong in the age group between ages of 25 to 35 (total of 46 %). The second biggest group was the ages between 36 to 45, with total of 11 respondents (22 %) belonging to this group.

Furthermore, in order to find out how respondents were divided within gender, a cross tabulation between age groups and gender was made. The results of this cross tabulation are shown on Table 3 and Figure 2.

	Agegroup					Total
Gender	**Under 24**	**25 - 35**	**36 - 45**	**46 - 55**	**Over 55**	
Female	3	16	7	2	1	29
Male	0	7	4	6	1	18
Total	**3**	**23**	**11**	**8**	**2**	**47**

Table 3. Cross tabulation between gender and age groups.

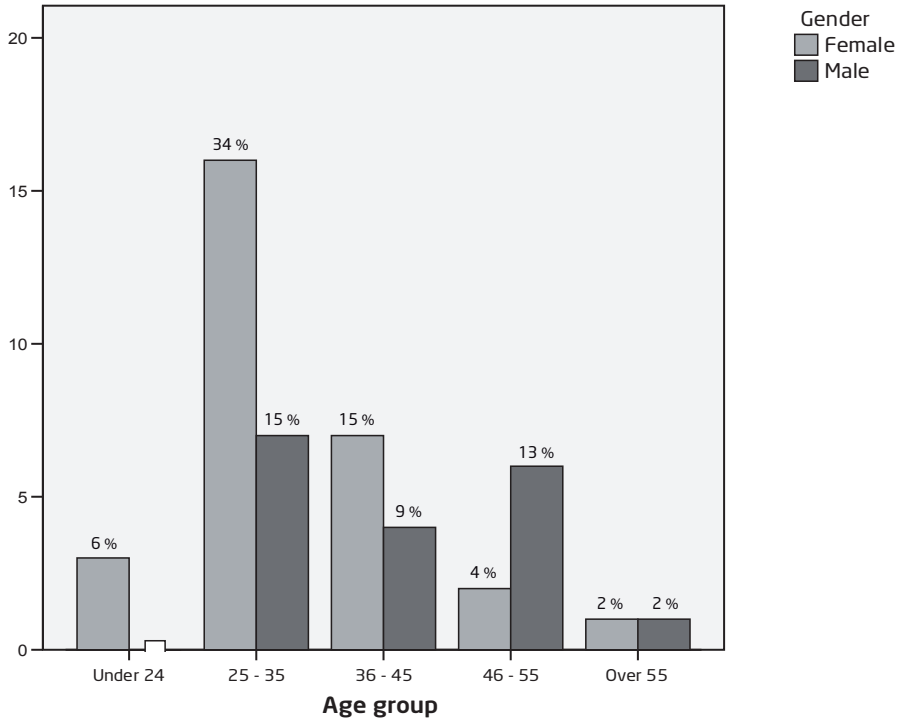


Figure 2. The distribution of males and females between different age groups.

Respondents' education

The respondents were asked about their previous education and the field in which they received their education. Vast majority of the respondents had a Master's Degree on some field of qualification (total 25; 50 %). Second largest group were those with Bachelor's Degree (15; 30 %). The education of all the respondents is shown on Table 4.

	Frequency	Percent
Vocational school	1	2 %
High school graduate	6	12 %
High school graduate + Vocational school	3	6 %
Bachelor's degree	15	30 %
Master's degree	25	50 %
Total	**50**	**100 %**

Table 4. Respondents' education.

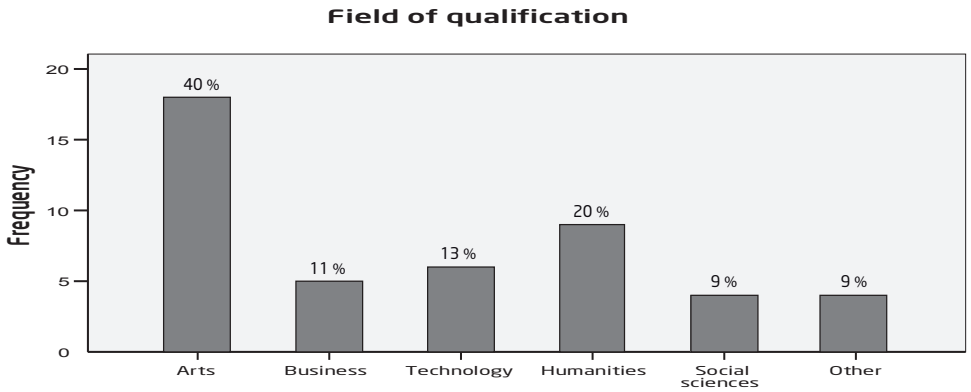


Figure 3. Field of qualification of the respondents.

Respondents' field of qualification is shown on Figure 3 The figure reveals that 18 out of the 50 respondents (39 %) had some kind of degree on Arts. The field of Humanities appeared also frequently, with 19, 5 % of the respondents having a degree on the field.

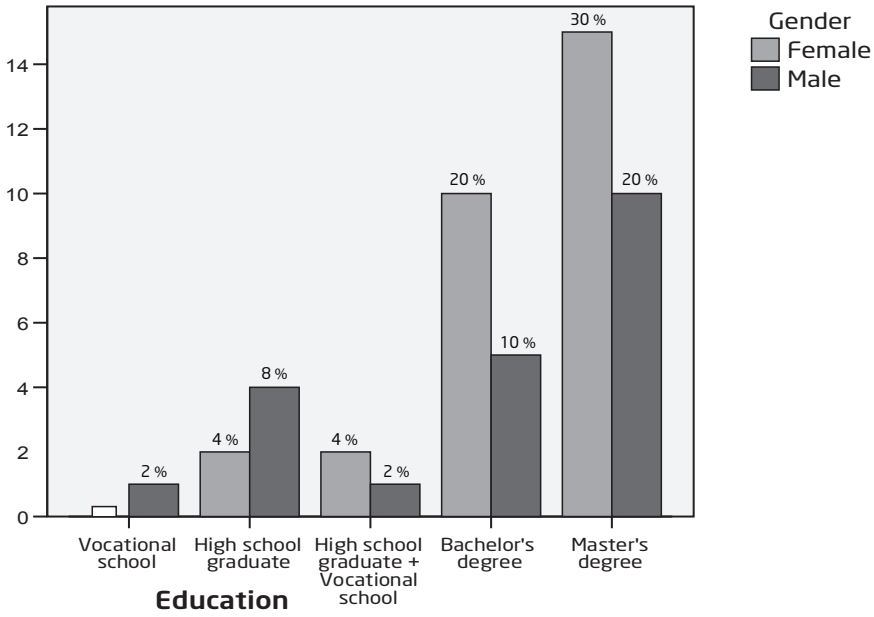


Figure 4. The level of education within genders.

The data also reveals that women seem to be more highly educated than men. While 30 % of the female respondents had a Master's Degree on some field, only 20 % of males had achieved a degree on the same level. The women had also more Bachelor's Degrees, with a count of 20 %, while only 10 % of the men had a Bachelor's Degree as their highest level of education. However, there is no statistical significance to be found between level of edu-

cation and gender. Chi square test gave us a value of p=0.482 (p<0.05), which cannot be considered statistically significant.

	Frequency	Percent
Vocational school	1	2 %
High school graduate	6	12 %
High school graduate + Vocational school	3	6 %
Bachelor's degree	15	30 %
Master's degree	25	50 %
Total	50	100 %

Table 5. Level of education and gender (the significance of chi square test)

Based on the data, women appeared to be more artistically oriented than men (with 24 % of the female respondents having a degree on arts opposed to 15 % of the males). Women also had a business degree more often than their male counterparts (6,5 % vs. 4,3 %). The only field on which men dominated over women was technology (8,7 % of men having a degree on technology vs. 4,3 % of women). Again, no statistical significance could be found (chi square test, p=0.786, p<0.05).

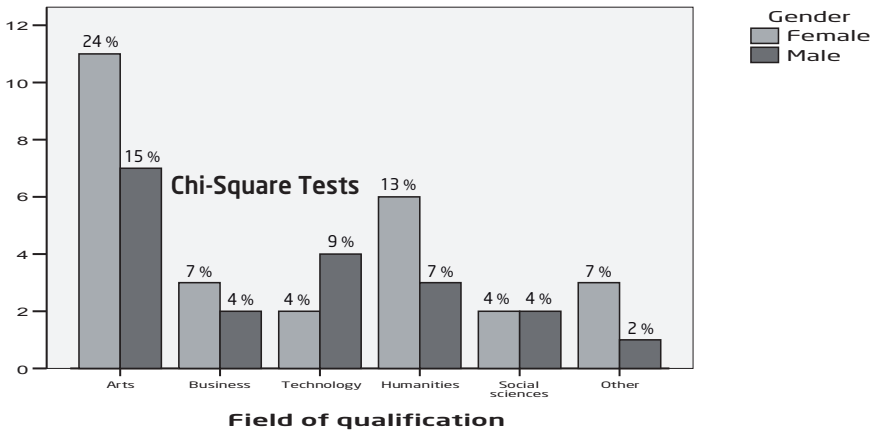


Figure 5. Field of qualification within genders.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.438	5	.786
Likelihood Ratio	2.445	5	.785
Linear-by-Linear Association	.070	1	.791
N of Valid Cases	46		

Table 6. Field of qualification and gender (the significance of chi square test)

Respondents' country of origin and most commonly spoken languages

With the questionnaire we were able to get responses from respondents in 17 countries in Europe. Most of the responses came from Italy (7, 14 %) and Germany and Sweden (6, 12 % respectively). France was represented with 5 (10 %) replies and Estonia 4 (8 %). Three (6 %) respondents came from both the Netherlands and Slovakia. Other countries with more than one reply were Austria, Finland, Hungary, and Latvia with 2 responses (4 %) each. One respondent did not state his or her country of origin. All the countries where the respondents came from can be seen on the following table.

	Frequency	Percent
Austria	2	4 %
Belgium	1	2 %
Belgium (located in France)	1	2 %
Bulgaria	1	2 %
Estonia	4	8 %
Finland	2	4 %
France	5	10 %
Germany	6	12 %
Hungary	2	4 %
Italy	7	14 %
Latvia	2	4 %
Netherlands	3	6 %
Northern Ireland	1	2 %
Portugal	1	2 %
Russia	1	2 %
Slovakia	3	6 %
Slovenia	1	2 %
Sweden	6	12 %
Unknown	1	2 %
Total	**50**	**100 %**

Table 7. Respondents' countries of origin.

Language skills among the respondents varied quite a lot. Only two respondents reported that they spoke no other language besides their mother tongue. Most common language that the respondents spoke at least to some degree was English. A total of 39 respondents reported speaking at least some English (78%). French was also quite common, with 18 respondents (36 %) speaking the language.

Because respondents were asked to *write* down the languages they speak in the questionnaire, we have no numerical data to show here. All of the respondents reported the different languages that they speak, and it is therefore almost impossible to show an extensive table here. Because of this, only the major languages the respondents speak are shown in the form of a table.

Language	Frequency	Percent
English	39	78 %
French	18	36 %
German	15	30 %
Russian	7	14 %
Italian	6	12 %
Swedish	6	12 %

Table 8. Most commonly spoken languages.

Respondents' position within the IR centre

Respondents represented a large variety of positions within their centres. There were only three positions that had more than one representative. These positions were director (with five respondents) (10 %), managing director (4, 8 %), and project manager (also 4, 8 %).

What is noteworthy, however, is that some respondents reported to have more than just one position in their institution. There were, for instance, independent filmmaker/project manager, gallerist/curator, and executive programming and fundraising manager. All the positions that appeared in the data are presented in Table 9.

Position	Frequency	Percent
Artistic director	1	2 %
Board	1	2 %
Board + head of communication	1	2 %
Chief editor	1	2 %
Communications officer	1	2 %
Community art projects manager	1	2 %
Coordinator	1	2 %
Cultural management	1	2 %
Culture manager	1	2 %
Director	5	10 %
Event technician	1	2 %
Executive programming and fundraising manager	1	2 %
Faculty manager	1	2 %
Film programmer, culture producer, event planner	1	2 %
Finance and events organization	1	2 %
Gallerist/curator	1	2 %
Head of a gastronomic area with 2 bars	1	2 %
Independent film maker/ Project manager	1	2 %
International manager	1	2 %
Management	1	2 %
Manager	1	2 %
Manager of international projects	1	2 %
Managing director	4	8 %
Marketing director	1	2 %
Marketing manager	1	2 %
marketing person	1	2 %
Marketing, PR, communication coordinator	1	2 %
MD	1	2 %
Member of board	1	2 %
Member of board, Coordinator of fundraising commission	1	2 %
Musical programmer	1	2 %
Network coordinator	1	2 %
No more involved in c. centre	1	2 %
President of a no profits association	1	2 %
Project manager	4	8 %
Project manager for building housing projects	1	2 %
Secretary general	1	2 %
TEH delegate, volunteer organizer	1	2 %
Vice head of gastronomy	1	2 %
Volunteer	1	2 %
Total	**50**	**100 %**

Table 9. Position of the respondents.

Benefits and obstacles experienced with mobility

In this chapter, we will examine the benefits that the respondents think mobility brings along. What is more, we will look at the obstacles that the respondents said are standing in the way of mobility development. The benefits will be looked at both from the respondents' personal point of view as well as one of his/her cultural centre. We will also take a look at how internationally oriented people working in cultural centres are.

After this general look has been taken, we will examine whether there are any statistical differences on how male and female respondents experience these benefits and obstacles. Furthermore, we will divide the respondents into two different groups based on their country of origin. In this division, we call these groups "Western European countries" and "Eastern European Countries". By this, we aim to find out if any statistically significant differences emerge between the groups.

Benefits gained through mobility activities

The respondents were asked to estimate different benefits that they feel they could gain through mobility activities. The scale ran through 1 to 5, where 1 meant very important and 4 not at all important. 5 meant that the respondent did not know. This value, however, is coded as a missing value on SPSS program.

The results are shown below on Table 10. From the table, we can see means, standard deviations and number of responses.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere	42	1.43	.630
Building networks	42	1.69	.811
Learning administrative issues	43	2.67	.944
Learning marketing issues	42	2.31	.841
Learning problem-solving mechanisms	46	2.15	.868
Learning attitudes of staff and other people in cultural centres	45	1.71	.787
Exchanging ideas	44	1.45	.791

Table 10. Benefits gained through mobility – a personal point of view.

As the table demonstrates, the major benefits the respondents feel they could gain through mobility activities were increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere with a mean of 1.43, exchanging ideas (1.45), building networks (1.69), and learning attitudes of staff and other people in cultural centres (1.71).

Subsequently, the aforementioned factors were inquired by using the same scale, but this time the respondents were asked to evaluate the benefits their *cultural centre* could gain by taking part in mobility activities. The results are shown on Table 11.

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere	1.49	.661
Building networks	1.52	.594
Learning administrative issues	2.64	.908
Learning marketing issues	2.30	.851
Learning problem-solving mechanisms	2.28	.797
Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres	1.81	.764
Exchanging ideas	1.38	.661

Table 11. Benefits the respondents' cultural centre could gain through mobility activities.

As we can see from Table 11, the results are very similar with the ones shown in Table 10. Again, the major benefits respondents felt their centre could gain included factors such as exchanging ideas with a mean of 1.38, increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere (1.49), building networks (1.52), and learning attitudes of staff and other people in cultural centres (1.81).

International orientation of people working in cultural centres

We asked the respondents to evaluate how internationally oriented they think the staff working in their own centres are. By 'staff', we meant the following people: directors, producers, marketing staff, technical staff, other non-artistic administrative staff, artistic administrators, artists, and other.

The scale ran from 1 to 4, where 1 was considered very much internationally oriented and 4 not at all internationally oriented. The results are shown on Table 12. As we can see from the results, the most internationally oriented were artists, with a mean of 1.52. They were followed by directors, with a mean of 1.93. Artistic administrators were somewhat internationally oriented (2.09).

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Directors	42	1.93	1.022
Producers	37	2.16	1.014
Marketing staff	37	2.81	.739
Technical staff	38	2.79	.875
Other non-artistic administrative staff	36	3.14	.833
Artistic administrators	34	2.09	1.055
Artists	29	1.52	.785
Other	3	3.00	1.000

Table 12. The international orientation of the staff in the centres.

Obstacles for developing mobility

The respondents were also asked about the major obstacles their cultural centres face when talking about developing mobility. The scale again ran from 1 to 5, where 1 represented major problem, 4 a problem that is very easy to solve and 5 that the respondent did not know. Again, 5 was coded as a missing value, and therefore the scale used by SPSS ran from 1 to 4.

The issues asked about covered a variety of factors from administrative and financial issues to issues concerning getting visas and work permits. Language skills were also a factor that we asked about, as well as finding people to replace those who go out on exchange. Social security, cultural differences and family issues were also covered. The results can be seen on Table 13.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Administrative	40	3.10	.900
Financial in general	44	1.66	.805
Development budget	38	1.95	.837
Budget for mobility	42	1.88	.968
Getting visas	40	3.68	.764
Getting work permits	40	3.40	.928
Getting residency permits	37	3.57	.899
Getting suitable visitors	37	3.05	.848
Language skills	46	2.83	.851
Finding replacement staff for those who go out on an exchange	44	2.23	1.008
Finding time to host visitors	42	2.57	.859
Having a programme for receiving exchanges	41	3.27	3.421
Finding suitable or interested people to sent out on an exchange	42	2.90	.790
Tax issues (such as double taxation, VAT)	32	3.25	.950
Social security questions	30	3.30	.877
Culture differences or diversity issues	36	3.53	.774
Lack of personal interest	40	3.23	.862
Family issues and commitments	41	2.66	.965
Unequal opportunities among the staff for taking part in exchange projects	36	3.00	.793

Table 13. Obstacles for developing mobility.

As seen on Table 13, the main obstacles for developing mobility emerged from financial issues. The biggest problem was financial in general with a mean of 1.66. This was followed by budget for mobility (1.88) and development budget (1.95).

Comparison of experienced benefits and obstacles between groups

In this chapter, we will take a look at those major benefits and obstacles reported by the respondents and whether there are any statistical differences to be found between female and male respondents and so called "Western European countries" and "Eastern European countries".

Differences between female and male respondents in experienced benefits

Here, the point of concern will be how women and men reported the benefits gained through mobility from their personal point of view as well as their centre's point of view.

We remember from the table 10 that the major benefits reported by the respondents from their personal point of view were increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere (mean 1,43), exchanging ideas (1,45), building networks (1,69) and learning attitudes of staff and other people in cultural centres (1,71).

The differences between female and male respondents on increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere are shown in Table 14.

Gender	Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere			Total
	Very important	Important	Not at all important	
Female	16	8	0	24
	66,7 %	33,3 %	0 %	100 %
Male	10	7	1	18
	55,6 %	38,9 %	5,6 %	100 %
Total	**26**	**15**	**1**	**42**
	61,9 %	**35,7 %**	**2,4 %**	**100 %**

Table 14. Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere as a personal benefit gained through mobility experienced by women and men.

As seen on Table 14, 66,7 % of the female respondents felt that the major benefit they could personally gain through mobility was the increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere, whereas the same number within male respondents was 55,6 %.

Gender	Exchanging ideas				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
Female	20	4	0	2	26
	76,9 %	15,4 %	0 %	7,7 %	100 %
Male	10	6	2	0	18
	55,6 %	33,3 %	11,1 %	0 %	100 %
Total	**30**	**10**	**2**	**2**	**44**
	68,2 %	**22,7 %**	**4,5 %**	**4,5 %**	**100 %**

Table 15. Exchanging ideas as a personal benefit gained through mobility experienced by women and men.

Table 15 tells us that almost 77 % of the female respondents felt that exchanging ideas was the most important benefit they would personally gain from mobility action. What is noteworthy is that two of the female respondents also stated that exchanging ideas is not important at all, while none of the male respondents felt this way.

Gender	Building networks				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
Female	13	9	2	1	25
	52 %	36 %	8 %	4 %	100 %
Male	7	8	1	1	17
	41,2 %	47,1 %	5,9 %	5,9 %	100 %
Total	**20**	**17**	**3**	**2**	**42**
	47,6 %	**40,5 %**	**7,1 %**	**4,8 %**	**100 %**

Table 16. Building networks as a personal benefit gained through mobility experienced by women and men.

Women also felt that one of the major benefits one gains through taking part in mobility activities was building networks more often than men. 52 % of the female respondents felt that this was a very important factor gained through mobility, whereas the same number with men was 41,2 %.

Gender	Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
Female	14	10	2	1	27
	51,9 %	37 %	7,4 %	3,7 %	100 %
Male	7	7	4	0	18
	38,9 %	38,9 %	22,2 %	0 %	100 %
Total	**21**	**17**	**6**	**1**	**45**
	46,7 %	**37,8 %**	**13,3 %**	**2,2 %**	**100 %**

Table 17. Learning attitudes as a personal benefit gained through mobility experienced by women and men.

We also remember from the Table 10 that learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres was considered a benefit respondents could personally gain from mobility activities. Once again, female respondents appeared to think this way more often than men (almost 52 % of women vs. 39 % of men).

Next, let us take a look at the same factors but from the point of view of the respondents' cultural centre. We already indicated that the major benefits the respondents felt their cultural centres could gain from taking part in mobility activities were the same ones as the personal benefits. Now, we want to take a look at how women and men answered.

Gender	Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
Female	15	10	0	1	26
	57,7 %	38,5 %	0 %	3,8 %	100 %
Male	11	7	1	0	19
	57,9 %	36,8 %	5,3 %	0 %	100 %
Total	**26**	**17**	**1**	**1**	**45**
	57,8 %	**37,8 %**	**2,2 %**	**2,2 %**	**100 %**

Table 18. Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere as a benefit for the cultural centre experienced by women and men.

Table 18 demonstrates that almost equal number of female and male respondents perceived that the major benefit for their cultural centre would be increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere (about 58 % both).

When it comes to exchanging ideas as a very important benefit for the cultural centre, 80 % of the women think this way versus 53 % of the men. All of the female respondents said that this is either very important or important, whereas one of the men said that the issue is not important and one reported it not to be important at all.

Gender	Exchanging ideas				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
Female	20	5	0	0	25
	80 %	20 %	0 %	0 %	100 %
Male	9	6	1	1	17
	52,9 %	35,3 %	5,9 %	5,9 %	100 %
Total	**29**	**11**	**1**	**1**	**42**
	69 %	**26,2 %**	**2,4 %**	**2,4 %**	**100 %**

Table 19. Exchanging ideas as a benefit for the cultural centre experienced by women and men.

Gender	Building networks			Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	
Female	14	10	1	25
	56 %	40 %	4 %	100 %
Male	8	8	1	17
	47,1 %	47,1 %	5,9 %	100 %
Total	**22**	**18**	**2**	**42**
	52,4 %	**42,9 %**	**4,8 %**	**100 %**

Table 20. Building networks as a benefit for the cultural centre experienced by women and men.

Building networks was considered a very important benefit for the cultural centre by 56 % of the female respondents and 47 % of the male respondents. None of the respondents, whether female or male, deemed this completely unimportant.

Gender	Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
Female	10	12	2	1	25
	40 %	48 %	8 %	4 %	100 %
Male	6	8	4	0	18
	33,3 %	44,4 %	22,2 %	0 %	100 %
Total	**16**	**20**	**6**	**1**	**43**
	37,2 %	**46,5 %**	**14 %**	**2,3 %**	**100 %**

Table 21. Learning attitudes networks as a benefit for the cultural centre experienced by women and men.

Nearly all of the female respondents considered learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres to be either very important (40 %) or important (48 %) benefits gained through mobility. However, 22 % of the male respondents felt that this was not an important benefit that their cultural centre could gain from taking part in mobility activities.

We also wanted to find out how respondents experienced benefits gained through mobility activities between different groups (female and male respondents) personally and from their cultural centre point of view. With one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA), a test was carried out in order to find out if there is a difference in means in background variables within groups (female and male respondents).

Our results show that when it comes to personal benefits, there are no statistically significant differences in means within female and male respondents (this is shown in Table 22).

Benefit	Sig.
Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere	.263
Building networks	.631
Learning administrative issues	.289
Learning marketing issues	.724
Learning problem-solving mechanisms	.971
Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres	.401
Exchanging ideas	.487

Table 22 Results of the One-Way ANOVA for personal benefits (factor variable: gender).

From the cultural centre point of view, a statistically significant difference in mean was found in exchanging ideas p=0.030, p<0.05).

Benefit	Sig.
Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere	.897
Building networks	.569
Learning administrative issues	.805
Learning marketing issues	.892
Learning problem-solving mechanisms	.439
Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres	.591
Exchanging ideas	.030

Table 23. Results of the One-Way ANOVA for the cultural centre point of view (factor variable: gender).

Differences between female and male respondents in experienced obstacles for developing mobility

As shown in Table 13 the major obstacles for developing mobility had mostly do with financing. Respondents reported that the biggest issue was general financing with a mean of 1,66 (where one was regarded as a major problem). The next biggest obstacles were finding budget for mobility (1,88) and development budget (1,95). Now, we'll take a look at whether there is any difference between female and male respondents.

Based on the data, women seemed to regard general financing as a major obstacle for developing mobility more often than men. Nearly 67 % of the female respondents said that finding financing in general was the biggest issue, whereas only 35 % of the male respondents shared this view. However, half of the male respondents agreed that general financing was a relatively problematic subject.

Gender	Financial in general				Total
	Major problem	Relatively problematic	Relatively easy to solve	Very easy to solve	
Female	16	4	3	1	24
	66,7 %	16,7 %	12,5 %	4,2 %	100 %
Male	7	10	3	0	20
	35 %	50 %	15 %	0 %	100 %
Total	**23**	**14**	**6**	**1**	**44**
	52,3 %	**31,8 %**	**13,6 %**	**2,3 %**	**100 %**

Table 24. General financing as an obstacle experienced by women and men.

Finding budget for mobility was also an issue. Over a half (56 %) of the women reported that this was a major problem. Men's responses were more equally divided. 29,4 % of the male respondents felt that finding a budget for mobility was a major problem, relatively problematic, or – interestingly – relatively easy to solve.

Gender	Budget for mobility				Total
	Major problem	Relatively problematic	Relatively easy to solve	Very easy to solve	
Female	14	7	3	1	25
	56 %	28 %	12 %	4 %	100 %
Male	5	5	5	2	17
	29,4 %	29,4 %	29,4 %	11, 8%	100 %
Total	**19**	**12**	**8**	**3**	**42**
	45,2 %	**28,6 %**	**19 %**	**7,1 %**	**100 %**

Table 25. Budget for mobility as an obstacle experienced by women and men.

When it comes to development budget, once again female respondents (42,9 %) felt that this was a major obstacle for developing mobility more often than men (23,5 %). Men also seemed to find the issue relatively easy to solve, since 35,3 % of the male respondents reported thusly.

Gender	Development budget				Total
	Major problem	Relatively problematic	Relatively easy to solve	Very easy to solve	
Female	9	9	3	0	21
	42,9 %	42,9 %	14,3 %	0 %	100 %
Male	4	6	6	1	17
	23,5 %	35,3 %	35,3 %	5,9%	100 %
Total	**13**	**15**	**9**	**1**	**38**
	34,2 %	**39,5 %**	**23,7 %**	**2,6 %**	**100 %**

Table 26. Development budget as an obstacle experienced by women and men.

In order to define whether there was a difference in means between female and male respondents, One-Way ANOVA was utilized again. The results are shown on Table 27.

Obstacle	Sig.
Administrative	.008
Financial in general	.295
Development budget	.055
Budget for mobility	.049
Getting visas	.242
Getting work permits	.633
Getting residency permits	.139
Getting suitable visitors	.268
Language skills	.084
Finding replacement staff for those who go out on an exchange	.568
Finding time to host visitors	.959
Having a programme for receiving exchanges	.454
Finding suitable or interested people to sent out on an exchange	.836
Tax issues (such as double taxation, VAT)	.357
Social security questions	.368
Culture differences or diversity issues	.296
Lack of personal interest	.949
Family issues and commitments	.055
Unequal opportunities among the staff for taking part in exchange projects	.029

Table 27. Results of the One-Way ANOVA (factor variable: gender).

The results of the One-Way ANOVA for obstacles for developing mobility within female and male respondents are interesting. Statistically significant differences in means are found under the following background variables ($p<0.05$): Administrative ($p=0.08$), budget for mobility ($p=0.049$), and unequal opportunities among the staff for taking part in exchange projects ($p=0.029$). In other words, women and men experienced the issues mentioned above differently.

Differences in experienced benefits between "Western European countries" and "Eastern European countries"

In previously chapters differences in experienced benefits and obstacles between female and male respondents were examined. In this and the following chapter, we will examine the same issues, but this time the grouping factor is an imaginary division between "Western European countries" and the Eastern European countries.

As mentioned, the biggest benefits respondents reported they could gain from taking part in mobility activities, both personally and from their cultural centre point of view, were increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere, exchanging ideas, building networks, and learning attitudes of staff and other people in cultural centres. Now, we shall take a look at how people in "Western European countries" and in "Eastern European countries" feel on the same issues.

	Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere			Total
	Very important	Important	Not at all important	
"Western European countries"	19	10	1	30
	63,3 %	33,3 %	3,3 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	7	5	0	12
	58,3 %	41,7 %	0 %	100 %
Total	**26**	**15**	**1**	**42**
	61,9 %	**35,7 %**	**2,4 %**	**100 %**

Table 28. Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere as a personal benefit gained through mobility.

As Table 28 demonstrates, respondents in the so called "Western European countries" tend to think slightly more often that increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere is a very important personal benefit gained from taking part in mobility activities than

respondents from the other focus group (63,3 % vs. 58,3 %). On the other hand, 41,7 % of the respondents from Eastern European countries think that this is an important personal benefit against 33,3 % of the people from "Western European countries".

	Exchanging ideas				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
"Western European countries"	20	7	1	2	30
	66,7 %	23,3 %	3,3 %	6,7 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	10	3	1	0	14
	71,4 %	21,4 %	7,1 %	,0 %	100 %
Total	**30**	**10**	**2**	**2**	**44**
	68,2 %	**22,7 %**	**4,5 %**	**4,5 %**	**100 %**

Table 29. Exchanging ideas as a personal benefit gained through mobility.

Where people in the "Western European countries" thought more often than people Eastern European countries that increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere was a major personal benefit gained from mobility, respondents in the latter group regarded exchanging ideas to be a very important personal benefit more often than people in "Western European countries" (71,4 % vs. 66,7 %). It is noteworthy that two of the respondents from "Western European countries" (6,7 %) said that exchanging ideas was not important at all.

	Building networks				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
"Western European countries"	11	13	2	2	28
	39,3 %	46,4 %	7,1 %	7,1 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	9	4	1	0	14
	64,3 %	28,6 %	7,1 %	,0 %	100 %
Total	**20**	**17**	**3**	**2**	**42**
	47,6 %	**40,5 %**	**7,1 %**	**4,8 %**	**100 %**

Table 30. Building networks as a personal benefit gained through mobility.

People from Eastern European countries were also more eager to build networks than people from "Western European countries". 64,3 % of the respondents from Eastern European countries reported that building networks was a very important personal benefit, whereas the number among respondents from "Western European countries" was only 39,3 %. Again, two (7,1 %) of the respondents from "Western European countries" said that building networks was completely unimportant.

Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres were considered as a personal benefit gained also through mobility. From the table 31 we can perceive that respondents in "Western European countries" think that this is a very important personal benefit more often than respondents from IC (51,6 % vs. 35,7 %).

	Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
"Western European countries"	16	8	6	1	31
	51,6 %	25,8 %	19,4 %	3,2 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	5	9	0	0	14
	35,7 %	64,3 %	,0 %	,0 %	100 %
Total	**21**	**17**	**6**	**1**	**45**
	46,7 %	**37,8 %**	**13,3 %**	**2,2 %**	**100 %**

Table 31. Learning attitude of staff and people in other cultural centres as a personal benefit gained through mobility.

Personal benefits gained by taking part in mobility activities between respondents from "Western European countries" and respondents from "Eastern European countries" were presented in tables 28-31. Now, in next four tables we shall focus on benefits that respondents think their cultural centres can gain by taking part in such activities.

From the cultural centre point of view, respondents from "Western European countries" and respondents from "Eastern European countries" shared the same view that increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere is a very important benefit for their centres (58,1 % and 57,1 %). Regardless of this, one respondent from the "Western European countries" (3,2 %) felt that this was not important at all.

	Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
"Western European countries"	18	11	1	1	31
	58,1%	35,5 %	3,2 %	3,2 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	8	6	0	0	14
	57,1%	42,9 %	,0 %	,0 %	100 %
Total	**26**	**17**	**1**	**1**	**45**
	57,8 %	**37,8 %**	**2,2 %**	**2,2 %**	**100 %**

Table 32. Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere as a benefit for the cultural centre.

Again, from the cultural centre point of view, the respondents from both groups shared the same view that exchanging ideas is one very important benefit that their centres could gain from mobility (69 % and 69,2 %).

	Exchanging ideas				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
"Western European countries"	20	8	0	1	29
	69 %	27,6 %	,0 %	3,4 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	9	3	1	0	13
	69,2 %	23,1%	7,7 %	,0 %	100 %
Total	**29**	**11**	**1**	**1**	**42**
	69 %	**26,2 %**	**2,4 %**	**2,4 %**	**100 %**

Table 33. Exchanging ideas as a benefit for the cultural centre.

Respondents from countries from "Eastern European countries" seem to put slightly more value on building networks as a benefit for respondents' cultural centres. 57,1 % of these respondents value building networks as a very important benefit their centre could gain from mobility activities, whereas "only" a half (50 %) of the respondents in "Western European countries" share this view.

	Building networks			Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	
"Western European countries"	14	12	2	28
	50 %	42,9 %	7,1%	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	8	6	0	14
	57,1%	42,9 %	,0 %	100 %
Total	**22**	**18**	**2**	**42**
	52,4%	**42,9 %**	**4,8 %**	**100 %**

Table 34. Building networks as a benefit for the cultural centre.

Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres divided the respondents more clearly than other experienced benefits. Where 42,9 % of respondents in Eastern European countries felt that this was a very important benefit, only 34,5 % of respondents from the "Western European countries" agreed. What is more, only 7,1 % of respondents in Eastern European countries felt that this issue was not important, while this number among those from the "Western European countries" was as high as 17,2 %.

	Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres				Total
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	
"Western European countries"	10	13	5	1	29
	34,5 %	44,8 %	17,2 %	3,4 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	6	7	1	0	14
	42,9 %	50 %	7,1 %	,0 %	100 %
Total	**16**	**20**	**6**	**1**	**43**
	37,2 %	**46,5 %**	**14 %**	**2,3 %**	**100 %**

Table 35. Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres as a benefit for the cultural centre.

One-Way ANOVA was again used to find out if there is a difference in means between groups in different background variables. The results are shown on Table 34 and Table 35.

Benefits	Sig.
Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere	.939
Building networks	.141
Learning administrative issues	.015
Learning marketing issues	.133
Learning problem-solving mechanisms	.496
Learning attitudes of staff and other people in cultural centres	.700
Exchanging ideas	.583

Table 36. Results of the One-Way ANOVA for personal benefits (factor variable: "Western European countries vs. "Eastern European countries").

As Table 36 demonstrates, a statistical difference in mean can be found in respondents' attitudes towards learning administrative issues ($p=0.015$, $p<0.05$).

	Sig.
Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere	,686
Building networks	,469
Learning administrative issues	,003
Learning marketing issues	,005
Learning problem-solving mechanisms	,443
Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres	,313
Exchanging ideas	,981

Table 37. Results of the One-Way ANOVA for the cultural centre point of view (factor variable: "Western European countries vs. "Eastern European countries).

When it comes to benefits gained through mobility activities from the cultural centre's point of view, statistically significant differences in means are found in learning administrative issues ($p=0.003$, $p<0.05$) and learning marketing issues ($p=0.005$, $p<0.05$).

Differences in experienced obstacles between "Western European countries" and "Eastern European countries"

As was shown in the previous chapters, the most common obstacles for developing mobility are linked to financing. Therefore, in this section, we will discuss how respondents in "Western European countries" and "Eastern European countries" feel about finance related obstacles. At the end of this part, we will examine all the obstacles given in the questionnaire and look if there are any statistical significances in means to be found between groups. But first we should focus on finance-related obstacles.

As seen on Table 38, respondents in Eastern European countries faced much more obstacles with general financing than respondents in "Western European countries. Over 70 % of the respondents in countries from "Eastern European countries" reported general financing to be a major problem and 21,4 % said it to be relatively problematic. The same figures in "Western European countries" were 43,3 % and 36,7 %.

		Financial in general				Total
		Major problem	Relatively problematic	Relatively easy to solve	Very easy to solve	
Iron Curtain	"Western European countries"	13	11	6	0	30
		43,3 %	36,7 %	20 %	,0 %	100 %
	"Eastern European countries"	10	3	0	1	14
		71,4 %	21,4 %	,0 %	7,1 %	100 %
Total		**23**	**14**	**6**	**1**	**44**
		52,3 %	**31,8 %**	**13,6 %**	**2,3 %**	**100 %**

Table 38. General financing as an obstacle for developing mobility.

The lack of budget for mobility is slightly more evenly experienced problem among the respondents. 43,3 % of the respondents in "Western European countries" said this was a major problem against 50 % of the respondents in Eastern European countries. However, one must note that 23,3 % of the respondents in "Western European countries" said the issue to be relatively easy to solve and 10 % very easy to solve. The same figures among the respondents in Eastern European countries were 8,3 % and 0 %.

	Budget for mobility				Total
	Major problem	Relatively problematic	Relatively easy to solve	Very easy to solve	
"Western European countries"	13	7	7	3	30
	43,3 %	23,3 %	23,3 %	10 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	6	5	1	0	12
	50 %	41,7 %	8,3 %	,0 %	100 %
Total	**19**	**12**	**8**	**3**	**42**
	45,2 %	**28,6 %**	**19 %**	**7,1 %**	**100 %**

Table 39. Budget for mobility as an obstacle for developing mobility.

Only about a third of the respondents from both groups reported the lack of development budget to be a major problem for developing mobility (34,6 % in "Western European countries" and 33,3 % in countries from "Eastern European countries"). But, again, all of the respondents in the "Eastern European countries" reported this to be either a major problem or relatively problematic (66,7 %). In the so called "Western European countries", 34,6 % of the respondents said that the issues concerning development budget are relatively easy to solve and one respondent even reported this to be an issue that is very easy to solve.

	Development budget				Total
	Major problem	Relatively problematic	Relatively easy to solve	Very easy to solve	
"Western European countries"	9	7	9	1	26
	34,6 %	26,9 %	34,6 %	3,8 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	4	8	0	0	12
	33,3 %	66,7 %	,0 %	,0 %	100 %
Total	13	15	9	1	38
	34,2 %	39,5 %	23,7 %	2,6 %	100 %

Table 40. Development budget an obstacle for developing mobility.

Based on the data, the respondents from both groups share the same view of finance related obstacles as well as almost of all the other obstacles. One-Way ANOVA did not reveal any statistical differences in means in finance related variables. However, in two cases, a statistical difference in means was found. The variables were lack of personal interest ($p=0.006$, $p<0.05$) and unequal opportunities among the staff for taking part in exchange projects ($p=0.041$, $p<0.05$). These were the only two issues that the respondents experienced differently.

All the results from the One-Way ANOVA are shown in Table 41.

Obstacle	Sig.
Administrative	,395
Financial in general	,198
Development budget	,163
Budget for mobility	,211
Getting visas	,473
Getting work permits	,661
Getting residency permits	,490
Getting suitable visitors	,559
Language skills	,199
Finding replacement staff for those who go out on an exchange	,324
Finding time to host visitors	,131
Having a programme for receiving exchanges	,923
Finding suitable or interested people to sent out on an exchange	,175
Tax issues (such as double taxation, VAT)	,613
Social security questions	,894
Culture differences or diversity issues	,312
Lack of personal interest	,006
Family issues and commitments	,462
Unequal opportunities among the staff for taking part in exchange projects	,041

Table 41. Results of the One-Way ANOVA (factor variable: "Western European countries vs. "Eastern European countries")

Key Findings

In this chapter, we will not concentrate on anything specific but rather make some general observations that arose from the data. Since the questionnaire that was used was quite long, we managed to get a lot of knowledge on various subjects. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to present some interesting points that we think could be useful for one to know.

Respondents participation in exchange activities

We asked the respondents if they have participated in any kind of staff exchange, mobility activities or similar arrangements. The results show, that a little over a half of the respondents have taken part in exchange programs of some form.

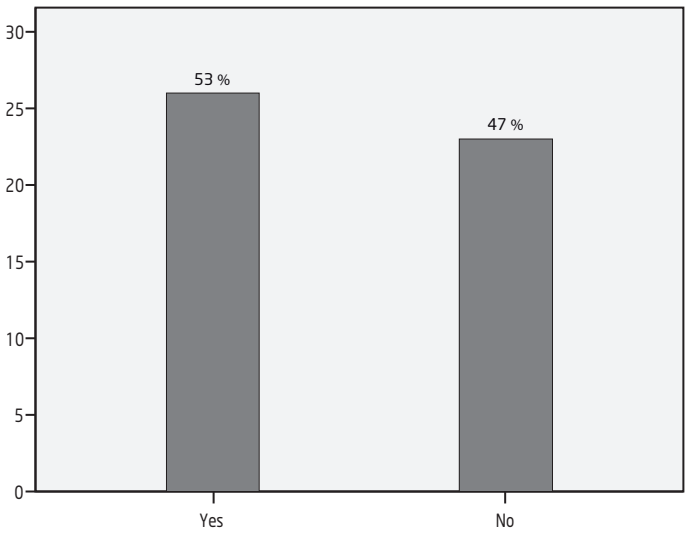


Figure 6. Respondents participation in any form of exchange

Based on the data, the male respondents seemed to have taken part in some sort of mobility activities a little more often than women. About 57 % of the male respondents had taken part in mobility activities in the past, whereas the same number within females was 50 %.

	Has the respondent participated in any exchange or mobility program		Total
	Yes	No	
Female	14	14	28
	50 %	50 %	100 %
Male	12	9	21
	57,1 %	42,9 %	100 %
Total	**26**	**23**	**49**
	53,1 %	**46,9 %**	**100 %**

Table 42. Respondents participation in mobility activities based on their gender.

We also asked the respondents whether they would take part in international exchange without funding provided by their cultural centre. The results are clear, 66 % of the respondents said that they would not take part in international exchange on their own expense.

Out of those few respondents who would be willing to take part in international exchange on their own expense, the amount of money they would be willing to spend varied. The minimum amount was 100 € and maximum 1500 €. The mean was around 540 €. The only problem with this, however, is that at this point the length of the exchange was not asked. So therefore we do not know for how long an exchange the respondents think this money would cover.

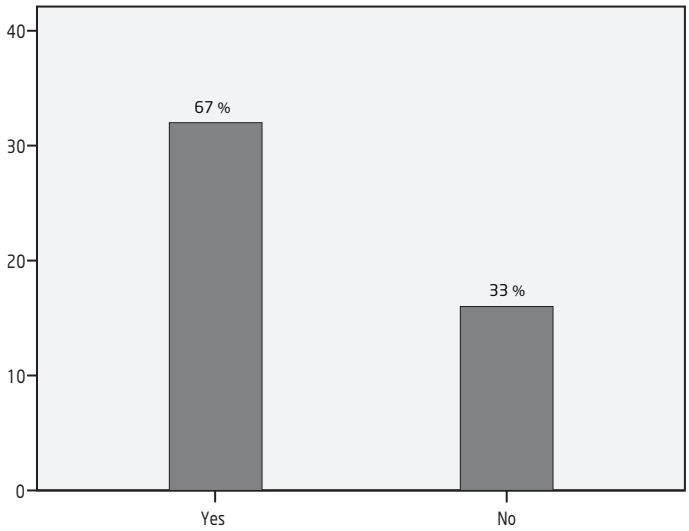


Figure 7. The respondents' willingness to take part in international exchange without funding provided by their cultural centre.

The size of the centres

We asked the respondents how many people their cultural centre employs. The results varied again. The smallest centre had only three employees where the largest one employed 260 people. This gives us a mean of 56 employees per centre. Here, however, mean is not a very good measure and neither is 5 % trimmed mean (the trimmed mean is computed just as an ordinary mean except a pre-specified percentage of extremes is omitted - here, the left-most (lowest) 2,5 % and right-most (highest) of the data are excluded) which gives us a value of 50 employees per centre. The median is the most suitable measure here giving us a value of 22,5 employees per centre. However, we divided the respondents into groups based on the size of their centres. The results are shown below.

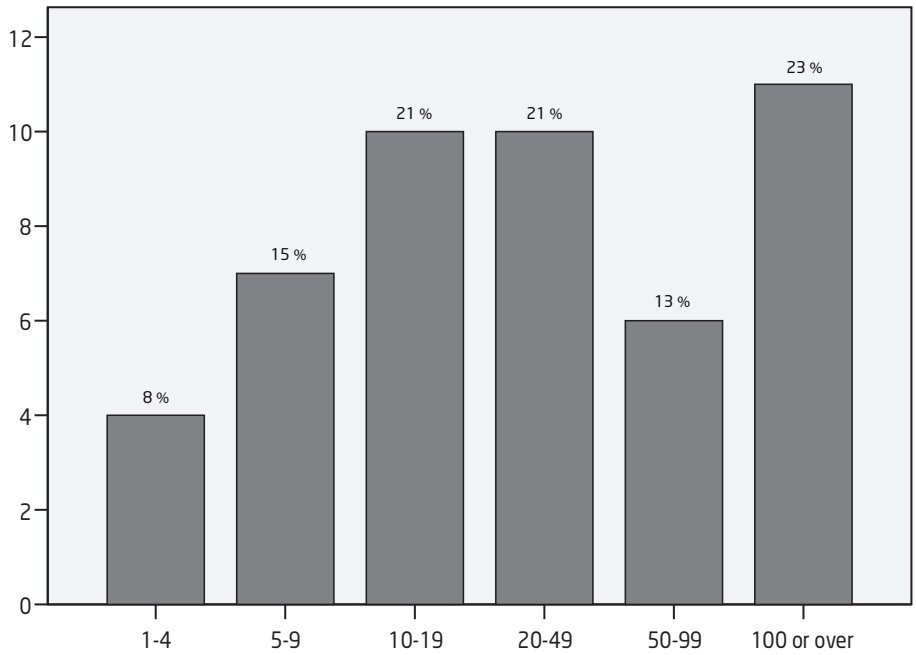


Figure 8. The size of the centres.

For cultural centres, it is quite common that not all the people working receive salary. Therefore, we came to realize that it would be vital to separate fully paid employees from volunteers.

First, let us take a look at those people who work as fully paid employees. Some centres reported that none of the staff enjoy a salary, so therefore the minimum here is zero. On the other end we have a centre where all of the 260 employees are fully paid. The mean here is about 24 and 5 % trimmed mean 16. Median is 12 fully paid employees per centre.

Second, we asked how many volunteers are there working in the centres. Minimum number of volunteers here is zero and maximum 200. The mean is 29 volunteers per centre and 5 % trimmed mean 23. Median is 9 volunteers per centre.

The number of fully paid employees and volunteers divided in groups are shown in next two figures.

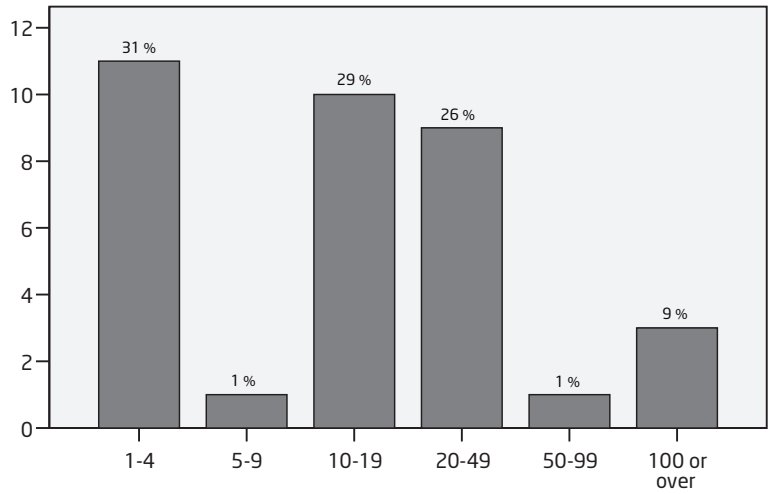


Figure 9. Number of fully paid employees working in the centres.

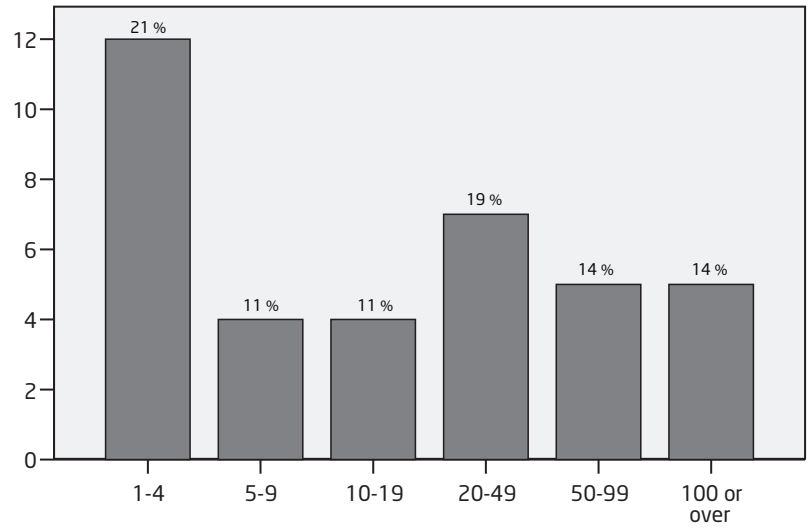


Figure 10. Number of volunteers working in the centres.

Financial support for staff's mobility provided by the centre

The respondents were asked if their cultural centre provided any kind of financial support for the mobility of its staff. Four of the respondents did not answer the question, but out of the answers received, some 67 % of the centres do provide some sort of financial support.

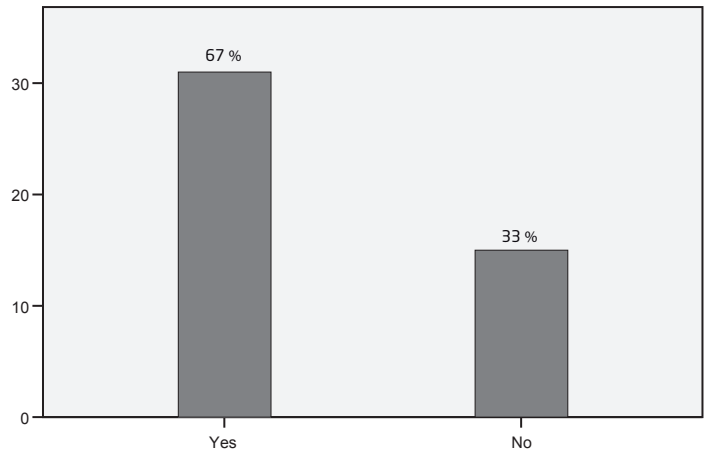


Figure 11. Financial support for mobility provided by the centre.

When we look at the same issue from the point of view whether the respondent comes from a "Western country" or from a country Eastern European countries, we see a difference. 75 % of the centres located in "Western European countries" provide financial support for their staff's mobility, while only half (50 %) of the centres in the Eastern European countries do so.

	Does the cultural centre provide any financial support for the mobility of its staff		Total
	Yes	No	
"Western European countries"	24	8	32
	75 %	25 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	7	7	14
	50 %	50 %	100 %
Total	**31**	**15**	**46**
	67,4 %	**32,6 %**	**100 %**

Table 43. Financial support for mobility provided by the centre in "Western European countries" and "Eastern European countries".

We also asked the respondents if their cultural centre has someone in charge of the mobility activities. The results show that over a half of the centres (53,3 %) do not have a person assigned to take charge of such activities.

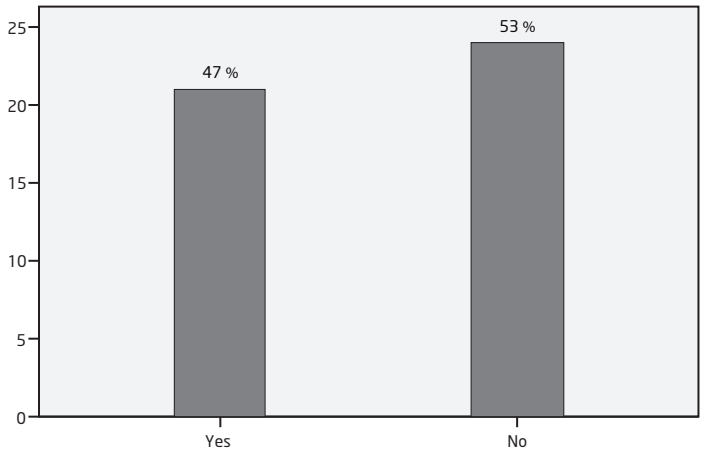


Figure 12. A person in charge of the mobility activities.

It is more common for the centres in the Eastern European countries to have someone in charge of mobility activities than for the centres located in "Western European countries". 61,5 % of the centres from Eastern European countries has a person in charge of such activities while the same number in "Western European countries" is just a little over 40 %.

	Does the cultural centre have someone who's in charge of the mobility activities		Total
	Yes	No	
"Western European countries"	13	19	32
	40,6 %	59,4 %	100 %
"Eastern European countries"	8	5	13
	61,5 %	38,5 %	100 %
Total	**21**	**24**	**45**
	46,7 %	**53,3 %**	**100 %**

Table 44. A person in charge of the mobility activities in "Western European countries" and "Eastern European countries".

One could think that there would be a connection to be found between whether the centre has someone in charge of mobility activities and financial support provided, but there is not. We tested this by using the chi square test and the result reveal that the centres that have someone in charge of mobility activities do not differ from those centres that don't have such a person when examined by the financial support provided for mobility.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.240	1	.072	
Continuity Correction	2.192	1	.139	
Likelihood Ratio	3.344	1	.067	
Fisher's Exact Test				.111
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.167	1	.075	
N of Valid Cases	44			

Table 45. Person in charge of mobility activities and financial support provided (the significance of chi square test).

Ideal length of stay in mobility exchange according to respondents

According to the respondents, an ideal length for exchange would be two weeks – this was supported by 40 % of the respondents. The second most popular length was 3-4 weeks, which gained the support of 20 % of the respondents. One week was also suggested by many, as 17,8 % of the respondents said that this length would be suitable. A few days was clearly considered to be too short of a time for an exchange since only 6,7 % said that it would be the ideal length. 11,1 % of the respondents said that 2-6 months would be the ideal length and only 4,4 % supported even longer period of time for an exchange.

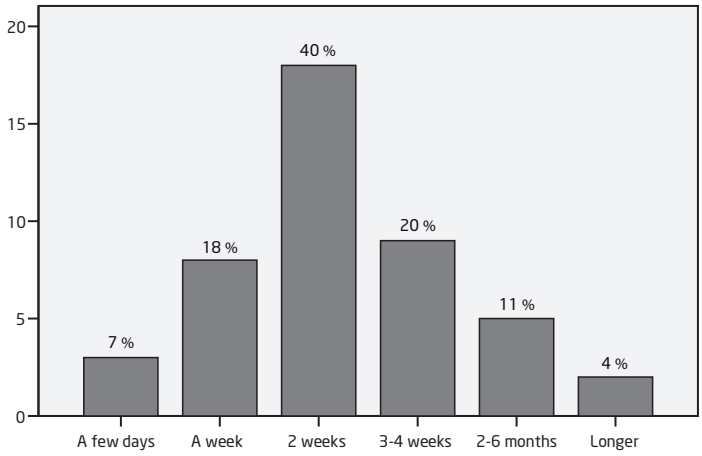


Figure 13. Ideal length for mobility exchange according to respondents.

The use of on-line based *Changing Room Toolkit*

We asked the respondents if they have any experience using the on-line *Changing Room Toolkit* (later referred as CRTK), and if so, what parts of it. Furthermore, we asked if the respondents have found the CRTK helpful and whether they think that it fosters mobility.

A little over a half (52 %) of the respondents had not used the CRTK.

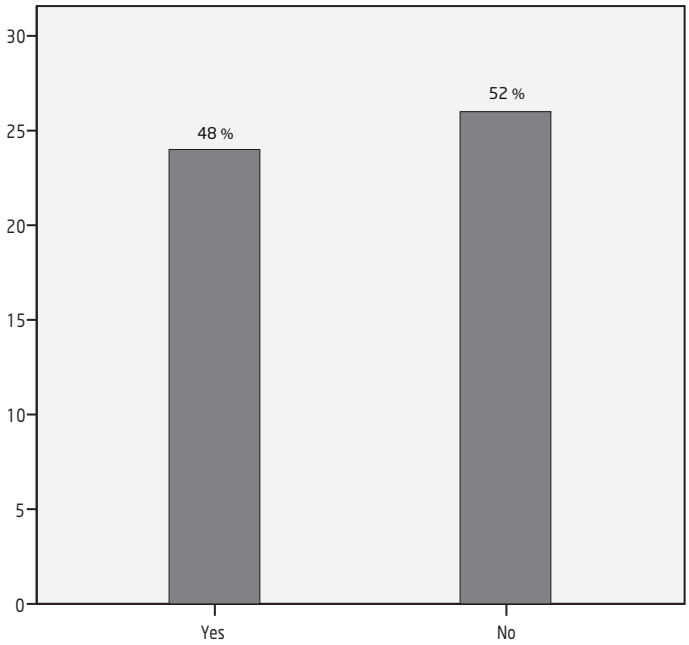


Figure 14. The use of on-line CHANGING ROOM tool kit.

Women used the CRTK clearly more often than men. 62,1 % of the female respondents reported that they had at least tried the CRTK while only 28,6 % of the males had done so.

	Has the respondent used the on-line *Changing Room Toolkit*		Total
	Yes	No	
Female	18	11	29
	62,1%	37,9 %	100 %
Male	6	15	21
	28,6 %	71,4 %	100 %
Total	**24**	**26**	**50**
	48 %	**52 %**	**100 %**

Table 46. The use of the CRTK by women and men.

The most commonly used part of the CRTK was Knowledge Base. 66,7 % of the respondents who had used the CRTK had used Knowledge Base. The Matchmaker followed as the second most commonly used with 54,2 % of the respondents (who had tried the CRTK) having tried it. Culture Jobs International was not as popular as Knowledge Base or The Matchmaker, since only 45,8 % of the respondents who had used the CRTK had tried it. The respondents who had used the CRTK also found it helpful and found that it improves and fosters mobility. 70 % of the respondents who had tried the CRTK said that they found it helpful and 80 % said that they feel that the CRTK fosters mobility.

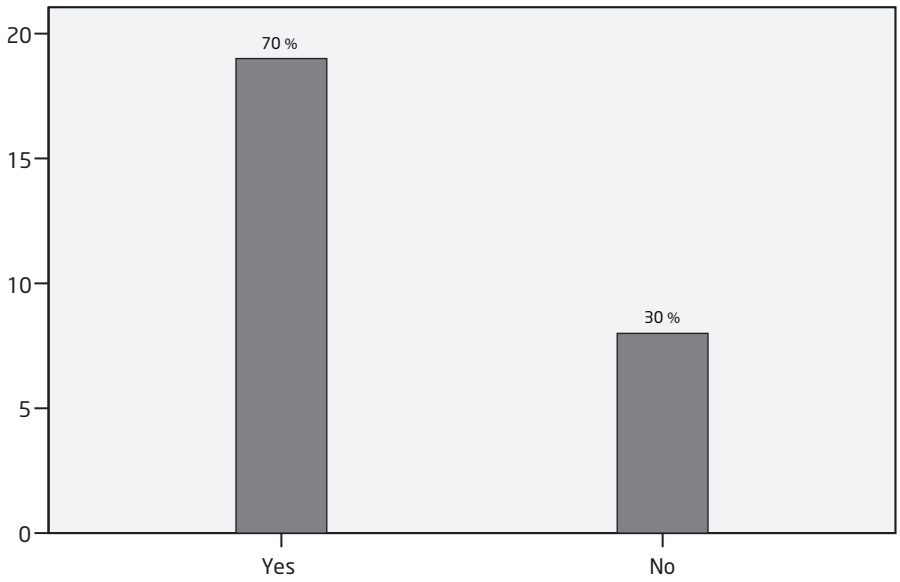


Figure 15. Helpfulness of the CRTK according to users.

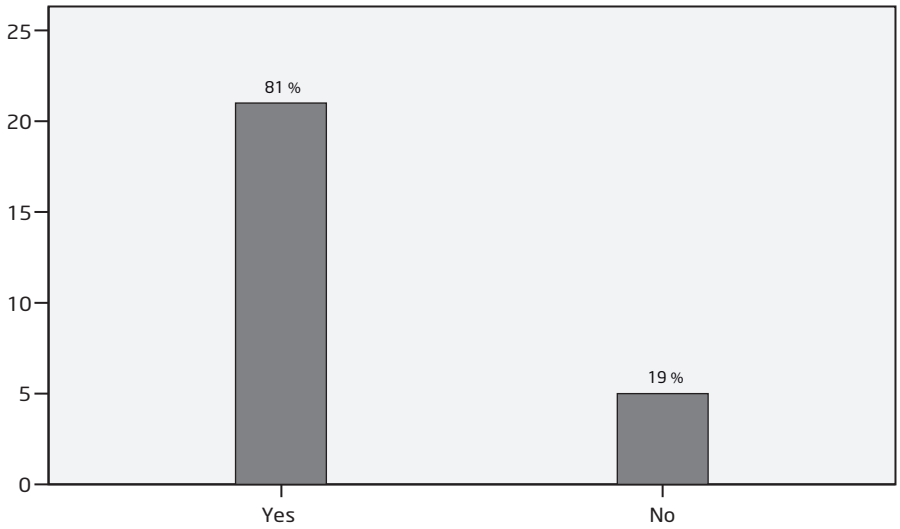


Figure 16. The CRTK as improving and fostering mobility.

EXPERIENCES OF STAFF EXCHANGE AMONG CULTURAL PROFESSIONALS

Heini Rekola

Introduction

This part of the report explores mobility from the exchangees, hosts and the Staff Exchange Project Manager Annette Wolfsberger's point of view. General views on mobility of non-artistic cultural operators were also collected and are summed up in order to understand the views and needs of the non-artistic professionals of the cultural field.

The Staff Exchange project was implemented within the Trans Europe Halles (TEH) network in 2008-2010 as a part of the *Changing Room* project. The Staff Exchange programme was aimed at employed staff who had worked at their centre for a minimum of a year, and who wanted to increase their expertise by working in another centre for a short intense period.

The project management team aimed at a good cross-section of work areas and levels of experience, i.e.: administrators, curators, directors, managers, marketing professionals, programmers, producers and technicians. Altogether 25 exchanges were completed during the project. The Staff Exchange participants were expected to contribute actively to a blog and an online toolkit to share their experiences and knowledge. They were also expected to participate in a final, five-day Staff Exchange Evaluation and Training workshop meeting in Amsterdam, Holland, in August 2010. The Staff Exchange Evaluation and Training workshop took place from 29 August to 3 September 2010 in The Netherlands. It was organised as the end meeting for the participants in the staff exchanges. The programme included reflection, workshops, training, introductions of three cultural centres (Melkweg, P60 and Tolhuistuin) and recreation.

Thirteen exchangees who had been on exchanges by June 2010 took part in telephone interviews, conducted from June to August of 2010. During the staff exchange evaluation & training workshop in Amsterdam, in August 2010, five in-depth interviews were conducted in order to gain a deeper understanding of the exchangees experiences, and the benefits of mobility of cultural operators. A questionnaire was sent to the hosting centres in July 2010 to map out their views as well. Five answers were gathered from 19 participating centres.

The aim of the questionnaire and the telephone interviews was to find out what kind of preparations had been made, how cross border mobility was perceived in the specific case of *Changing Room* Staff Exchanges, what were the benefits and problems of the project, and what the follow up had been. The critical factors for offering a successful experience were also evaluated. Some recommendations are given in conclusion.

Description of the data

The 13 exchangees interviewed came from many different professional backgrounds and ten different countries. They had been working at their home centres from 1.5 to 18 years. These 9 females and 4 males were born between 1956 and 1984. The exchanges lasted for one week to one month. One of the visits was reduced to one day, due to the volcanic ash cloud that occurred in the Spring of 2010.

The questionnaire for the hosts was sent to the TEH delegates at the participating centres as it was unclear who held the main responsibility for hosting. They were asked to forward the questionnaire to the person they considered to be responsible. There were five hosts from four different countries, four of whom were women, and they were all born between 1960 and 1980.

The Staff Exchange Project Manager Annette Wolfsberger was interviewed in order to reach an understanding of what had happened scenes, what factors were emphasized in matchmaking, how the project had gone and what the benefits and problems had been.

It was assumed that preparations made by the exchangee and the hosting centre influenced the experience. The preparations included appointing a buddy to the visitor, finding suitable housing and planning a programme for the stay. Also, the involvement of the home organisation in setting mutually agreed goals was considered worth a closer look. Exchanges can influence not just the exchangee but their home organisation too. One of the aims was to also find out to what extent the TEH member centres were interested in exchanges, sabbaticals spent abroad or moving abroad for work.

It must be noted that the exchanges had happened over a period of one year before the interviews were made. Some had the experience in mind with more clarity, as it had perhaps been only a week since they had returned back home. Some had taken part almost a year previously. This naturally affected the answers.

In order to protect the anonymity of the interviewees, the names of centres mentioned in the quotes have been replaced with XXXX. The names of cities and countries have been removed when referring to the location of exchanges.

	CHANGING ROOM STAFF EXCHANGES		
	Hosting Centre	Sending Centre	length
1	**A38**	Melkweg	1 wk
2	**Alte Feuerwache Köln**	Mains d'Oeuvres	1 wk
3	**Beat Initiative**	Mejeriet	2 wk
4	**Farnham Maltings**	Subtopia	2 wk
5	**Interzona**	Polymer	1 wk
6	**Kulturzentrum Schlachthof**	Moritzbastei	1 wk
7	**L'Avant Rue**	NOASS	2 wk
8	**Mains D'Oeuvres**	Roda Sten	2 wk
9	**Mejeriet**	WUK	2 wk
10	**Melkweg**	Schlachthof	1 wk
11	**Melkweg**	Farnham Maltings	3 wk
12	**Moritzbastei**	WUK	2 wk
13	**Moritzbastei**	Melkweg	1 wk
14	**Moritzbastei**	Stanica	1 wk
15	**NOASS**	PRAC	1 wk
16	**OZU**	L'Avant Rue	
17	**P60**	Stanica	1 mth
18	**P60**	NOASS	1 wk
19	**Röda Sten**	Alte Feuerwache	1 wk
20	**Stanica**	Pekarna	1 mth
21	**UfaFabrik**	OZU	1wk
22	**UfaFabrik**	Subtopia	1wk
23	**Verkatehdas**	Rodasten	1wk
24	**WUK**	A38	1wk
25	**WUK**	Interzona	1wk

The starting point

Description of the exchangees level of mobility

A curiosity towards mobility and an interest in being mobile seem to define the group of people interviewed. A need for cross-border communication among the participants seems evident. Even though the exchangees define "being international" in many different ways, they have all travelled a lot in the past or they are interested in travelling. One of the exchangees is currently working abroad, and had been for some years.

Many stress the difference of being European as opposed to being international, and are actually quite reluctant to say they travel a lot. Many have studied or worked abroad and one is currently working out of their home country. Personal relationships such as friends and the network acquired through Trans Europe Halles were often mentioned as a driving force or as an inspiration to being international. Also tourism and recreation were mentioned.
When asked which languages they spoke, all the participants mentioned more than their native language. English was usually the second language mentioned, and in most cases it was the language used during the exchange. German and French were also used as the main languages in communication. Three participants said that they spoke two languages, four believed that they are able to communicate in three different languages, and five listed four languages. One participant listed seven languages.

Two of the respondents said that they didn't consider themselves to be international at all. However, one had been an active traveller in her youth before having a family and the other's family is international, with both parents originally from different countries. Therefore it seems safe to assume that all of the exchangees have an understanding of what being international means, and are used to communicating with representatives of different cultures. It can also be claimed that the project has attracted people who were to some extent interested in mobility and international communication.

International orientation and work

The Staff Exchange participants represent different levels of involvement in being internationally active in work related issues. While some are very active and often take part in TEH meetings, three interviewees have not taken part in any international activity before, and five stated that their centre is actively involved with TEH only, but they have not personally taken part in the meetings.

In general the respondents do not seem to be very aware of possible cooperation or involvement in mobility activities outside Trans Europe Halles, or even within the network. The majority of respondents stated that their centres are currently cooperating with foreign cultural centres or operators, but they were reluctant or unable to name any activities. Only a few listed meetings, networks etc in which they or their centre are actively involved with. A technician had attended a lighting workshop abroad, and one person mentioned the EVS (The European Voluntary Service).

One of the interviewees has been internationally active since the seventies, and another person stated that personally she does not travel much for work, but that their centre often hosts seminars with international guests.

Despite the exchangees being an internationally orientated group, it seems that they have not been able to part in international activity through their work, or that they have not been aware of such possibilities. Formal and structured communication about such programmes seems to be very limited and is hindering their possibilities. More discussion about this can be found in the "Barriers" section.

The exchangees motivation for applying

The motives for taking part varied to some extent. Some of the respondents had very clear goals and objectives for their visit, where as some just wanted to look outside their home centre in order to see their own work with more clarity. The Project Manager Annette Wolfsberger had formed the questions in the application in a way that made leaving goals and motivations somewhat abstract and open. The participants were not pushed to aim for concrete advantages but were given a chance to learn outside their everyday working environment, as a number of the TEH centres do not have a budget for professional development.

For some the possibility to learn more about the TEH network was the biggest motivational factor. For them it seemed important to be part of something bigger than just the home centre's operations and to see daily issues from a greater perspective.

Two technicians who wanted to use the exchange for taking part in the actual daily work of the centre stated that they were interested in learning about specific technical solutions and practices, so they could take something concrete back to their own work.

A very commonly stated motive was the chance provided to compare one's own activity and programme to the other centre's, and also to learn about people who come from another culture, but who deal with similar issues, as they seemed to interest many.

Some hoped to be able to communicate with locals outside the centre as well as the employees of the hosting centre. These people were involved in work that had more of a social aspect, not just a cultural focus. They believed that in order to develop their own skills, to understand the dialog in their own professional field, they first need to understand what the issues are in the culture in question. The meaning of terminology in relation to culture and language was believed to be an important factor. They believed that without understanding the guidelines set by the culture it would be impossible to filter out the core findings and use them in their own work.

Recreational motives were mentioned as well. Some were interested in travelling and seeing another country. They felt that a short break from the daily routine alone might help acquire a fresh look at their own work. Also, the chance to familiarise one's self with another country and the working culture of the country was believed to help dealing with daily work and an inspiration to discovering solutions "outside-the-box". These applicants seemed to be very open-minded and open to new experiences.

More specific goals included getting to know the specific format of a cultural centre and its management system. The exchangee had observed the activities and structure of a more established centre. The exchangee who was a member of the board of their own centre was interested in learning whether or not the system used at the hosting centre might be applicable to them also.

One of the applicants stated that, despite the personal motivation for applying, they did not have clear expectations for the exchange. This was due to not knowing any of the Changing Room centres, not even the ones they had applied for. Also, the basic structure and programme of the possible centres were considered too different to their own.

All of the respondents felt that they had met the goals that motivated them to apply. It is obviously difficult to estimate to what extent some of the more intangible goals have been met. Some that require learning and adaptation might be clarified at a later stage. Overall the respondents were happy with the experience, the possibility to take a look at their work from outside the daily routine, and to exchange ideas with foreign colleagues.

Choosing the employee to take part in the exchange

The reasons why an exchangee had been chosen for the project was in most cases not clear to them. The question: "why were you chosen", created somewhat confused answers. Only two exchangees were informed by their management about the reasons why they were picked. Reasons included a lengthy career at their centre, their position, and a suitable

match between a particular employee and a centre. In these cases discovering the match had been an outcome of a manager's observations and discussions at a TEH meeting. The manager had a hunch that this would be a great opportunity for their employee. Annette Wolfsberger believes it was probably quite often that managers thought a certain kind of person should be give an opportunity in professional development or that there were certain areas where the centre should improve.

In most cases the participant had been the only one interested or they were the only ones who were able to travel. Reasons for not being able to apply at the time included financial reasons, time management and family matters. Also, job descriptions seem to have been a barrier for applying, as not all job description exist at all centres.

The hosting organisations motives for hosting

The hosting centres motives for hosting were collected as well. It must be noted, however, that it was the hosts who took part in the study, so they do not in all cases represent the management of the centre and can only answer from their own point of view, perhaps as the appointed buddy. Many also noted that hosting was something that came with sending out an exchange, and that there were not other motives in the first place. All hosts believe that even though they are not able to list motives or goals they feel very satisfied with the experience.

Some hosts named providing a chance to gain field experience as their motivation to host. They believe that for young people a chance to gain a wider understanding of what happens in the field in other countries is highly educative, and important for their professional development.

Tightening the bonds between centres was seen as important. Therefore the exchangee was given a chance to introduce their home centre to the staff and to tell more about themselves and their own motives for taking part in the programme. Knowledge sharing is considered interesting and important, and seems to be one of the main motives that can be obtained from the interviews.

Enthusiasm for showing an employee of another TEH member centre how they work, and a curiosity about their professional skills was one motive. At a more personal level, getting to know someone who works for another TEH centre was also mentioned, and meeting new people in general.

The Staff Exchange Project – preparation and matchmaking

Planning for the Staff Exchange Project

The application round for the project was two-fold, in order to find the best matches between the hosting centres and individual exchangees. In the beginning of 2009 the Staff Exchange Project Manager Annette Wolfsberger contacted all the 25 centres that are involved with *Changing Room* and asked them to submit a description of their centre. In a later stage the centres were asked to suggest exchangees. The centres filled out a form in which they outlined the areas they could host an exchangee in, and listed suitable opportunities for an exchangee that would take place throughout the year, such as festivals. They were also asked to list possible difficulties, such as time periods when they could not host. They were asked at this point to appoint a buddy.

Matchmaking

When the application process was opened again after some time, Wolfsberger emailed the *Changing Room* partners and asked them to name up to three exchange candidates per centre. In the cases where there was more than one applicant from a centre, Wolfsberger discussed with the sending centre whom they thought should be sent. The applicants were asked to fill in a form in which they indicated e.g. what they wanted to learn, which centre they wished to visit and when. According to Wolfsberger the fact that the questions were left quite open made matchmaking difficult to some extent.

During the first level of matchmaking the emphasis was on the area of work that the applicants had applied with, and on what the centres were looking for. The second factor was timing; the exchangees should be available during the period indicated by the hosting centre. According to Wolfsberger, with some applicants the match between an applicant and a center was obvious. Some applicants openly stated that they would be very interested in visiting and working in a specific centre.

Some centres turned out to be more popular than others; several people applied for these centres. Some careful consideration of who had the most suitable background in which these centres were most interested in had to be done. Wolfsberger discussed this with the hosting centres, suggested people she thought might be suitable, but then left it up to the centres to make the decision. This kind of guidance was possible because Wolfsberger

knows the centres quite well after being professionally involved with Trans Europe Halles for many years.

As soon as a match was found all the parties were informed about the decision, asked to agree on dates for the exchange and also to set the length for the visit. Agreements for both parties were then sent to be signed. The exchangees state that they were very happy with the matchmaking. They thought it had been carried out professionally and the results generally met their wishes.

Choosing a Centre to Visit – the Exchangees Point of View

The decision for applying was usually one of personal preference, but where there had been guidance, or previous and informal matchmaking it had been successful. The guidance was usually done by a manager of the exchangee's home centre or a Trans Europe Halles delegate. A number of the applicants had not visited other centres before, which made selecting a suitable centre somewhat challenging for them. During the matchmaking procedure Wolfsberger suggested centres to those who, according to her, had chosen unsuitable centres. This guidance proved to be successful. Personal relationships built at TEH meetings were in many cases an important reason for choosing a particular centre; an existing relationship was seen as a recommendation:

> *"I was informed about this centre by one of my managers, who was in the TEH meeting and she met a staff member of XXXX who spoke about the activities, my manager said this is the one for her! And she explained to me, she introduced me to the employee of XXXX and she explained to me what activities they do and I think it was a good idea for me to go"*

> *"Actually, we have this person and he is my friend and he came from XXXX as an EVS to XXXX, and I heard so many things about them. And I met him also in Krakow (TEH meeting 68) and I was really curious about their way of working and I just wanted to see it. I wanted to see how they work. But, first, mostly I had this inner motivation. In the first line, which was to see where my friend works"*

The reasons why exchangees were interested in particular centres varied. Some were interested in gaining more information about their own field and therefore they favored centres they felt had the most to offer to them. A number of the interviewees wanted to go outside their own centre in order to be able to reflect on their own everyday work in a similar centre's daily routine.

The size of a centre was also an important factor. For instance, an interviewee working for one of the biggest TEH centres stated that she chose the centre because it reminded her of what her home centre had been like when it was smaller many years ago. Through the visit she hoped to be able to think more "simply" again and to utilize the required skills in a more efficient way.

Those coming from smaller centres were interested in learning from a bigger organisation, from a centre of a similar size and activities regarding the structure of their operations. Getting to know a particular country and its culture attracted many. Being able to communicate in a shared language turned out to be important, almost all interviewees mentioned this.

> *"because in XXXX I speak German and I could participate in meetings, groups and I could understand, ok not always all, but many things. And I think in English would be not the same, because, well, ok all the people in XXXX spoke English, but yeah it is not the real way to understand a situation."*

Many Trans Europe Halles member centres rent out space for different purposes and have to therefore communicate with their tenants. This was also mentioned as one of the motivational factors, with the exchangee being interested to see how the hosting centre collaborates with the different organisations at their venue.

Very specific characteristics of a centre attracted some. One of the exchangees had become very interested in a centre after looking at their website. The graphic profile was interesting to the exchangee in a professional sense, but she also found it aesthetically so attractive and intriguing to the extent that, even after evaluating what other centres had to offer, she kept the centre as her first choice.

In a few cases the applicant was not accepted to the centre of their preference and therefore the decision was made by the Staff Exchange management. Some exchangees had to settle for a compromise after not being accepted to a more popular centre. In one case an exchangee settled for a compromise due to having a specific profession that did not exists at all centres.

Other reasons to choose a centre included:

- Similar strategy and organisational values
- The hosting organisation's innovative solutions to daily issues at work
- Interest in learning how the other centre organises their activities
- Interest in improving language skills

- To see a similar centre to the home centre but of a different size in order to find a new perspective to work and daily issues.
- The lack of time and possibility of travelling far
- Learning a new skill, based on the existing information about technical solutions used at the hosting centre
- To see the differences and similarities in general

Timing the visit

The Project Manager Wolfsberger thinks timing the visits was a success. Some complaints about sharp deadlines occurred, but since the information was needed, the final dates could not be postponed. Still, Wolfsberger states that collecting all the necessary information took longer than expected. According to hosts and exchangees communication concerning the timing had been efficient. Negotiations between the parties have gone well and a satisfactory solution was found in almost all of the cases.

However all the interviewees, both exchangees and hosts mentioned the challenge of finding a suitable time for the visit. Tight schedules seem to have been a defining factor for a number of TEH centres and their employees.

Some exchanges took place during the hosting centres' busiest time of the year, and the experience did not turn out to be optimal. The hosts were stressed and did not have enough time to commit to the exchangee. Both hosts and sending parties admit that this has been problematic, and feel that this should be taken into consideration in the future if more exchanges are to take place.

Preparing for the visit

The amount of personal preparation done by the exchangees does not seem to correlate with the success of the visit. Out of personal interest many had done research on the Internet about the country and the town they were about to visit.

Many, but not all had taken a look of the webpage of the hosting centre. Some had listed concrete goals beforehand, but many did not have time to do any preparation. Some conversations with colleagues and management have taken place, but the sending organisations have not set any goals for the visitors. They have rather let the exchangee freely explore the possibilities offered by the visit. The interviewees stated that a trust developed

between the home centre and themselves allowing them to follow their own instincts; to learn and ask about things they find the most interesting and important for their own professional development.

In many cases the hosting organisations had not prepared well enough, although they recognized this after the exchange, and agree that in the future better planning must be done. In one case confusion about responsibility for the exchangee ended up with nobody monitoring the exchange.

Some exchangees felt that a handbook about where they really are going to would have been useful. In the handbook they would have wished to find information about what to expect, what to bring, who they would meet at different departments and so on. Especially introducing the staff roster beforehand was considered important. In many cases there had been communication only with the buddy in the planning stage.

The project management stated that they did not automatically recommend any methods of preparation for hosts and exchangees. Hosting and sending centres were both pleased and surprised by the amount of effort the centres put into planning. Very basic information was sent to both parties, for example about the budget and what time an exchangee should be picked up. Annette Wolfsberger stated that from her point of view the hosting centres made contact with their visitor quite well without any additional guidance. Wolfsberger agrees that a handbook of some sort might have been useful. Introduction was done via email this time. Some centres called and asked for more information, but at this point it was expected that the hosts and visitors would be active themselves. The project management stated that it is obvious that in this aspect some responsibility was lacking from both hosts and exchangees.

Introducing and planning the working programme for an exchange

Programmes for some visits were tailor-made and pre-planned in advance. Some participants seemed to be happy with a non-structured and very free schedule where as others were thankful for the possibility of knowing in advance what was going to happen, and to be able to have a say in planning the programme.

Communication about the programme and schedule mainly happened through email conversations. Those exchangees who had clear goals for the visit had already stated this in their application, and were offered the possibility to learn about the relevant issues. However, it is obvious that both parties lacked some responsibility in this aspect of planning.

A number of exchangees stated in their interviews that the programme did not meet their wishes, and they were often left feeling like an outsider in the center, especially when the buddy or other relevant staff did not acknowledge their presence.

Certain details about who the exchangee wanted to meet, which places to visit and what activities they wanted to attend were the main attributes that defined the planning process. Also more personal requests were taken into consideration. It was also important for some participants to know when they had free time outside the centre.

Planning in advance was not however necessary in all cases, therefore general communication beforehand seems to have been important. This allowed or would have allowed both parties to acquire an understanding of the needs and expectations of the other party. Personal chemistry and understanding of the aims of the visit seem to have a key role in successful planning. When the communication was not efficient this was directly reflected in the quality of the time spent on exchange:

> *"I think like I said about the scheduled appointments and things like that, it could have been better organised. Like, having those scheduled ahead of time. And more things to see and do every day"*

Where the communication had not been efficient this affected the whole experience:

> *"I think there was in part a programme before I came. We spoke about different things that I might be able to do while I was there. But it wasn't very strict and it was not very complete. It did not exactly fill the time that I had there. Or not at all, really… I think I would have rather had a stricter schedule of when to meet people of the staff and so on. I felt a little bit like I was imposing whenever I asked for time with any one of them. Especially since they felt really stressed out, most of them."*

Being on an Exchange

Description of the exchanges – Serving the Multiple Interests of Exchangees

In general the exchange experience had been positive for the exchangees and their hosts. During their interviews most of the participants continued to stress how satisfied and grateful they are about the chance to take part in such a programme. The exchangees were pleased about having an opportunity to meet people who deal with similar issues to their own. People seem to be inspired both by similarities and differences that exist between the

home and hosting organisation. In general not many issues or problems were mentioned. As described in the motivation and application parts of the report the exchangees were looking for different kind of experiences to suit their particular needs. The exchangees can be divided into three groups depending on what they did during the time they spent at the hosting center:

1) Those with the aim of observing various work practices
2) Those with the aim of gaining an in-depth view
3) Those with the aim of taking part in daily work

Observing Work Practices

The first group consisted of professionals from different fields and from different backgrounds. They were usually producers, coordinators and house managers. They had been interested in interviewing the staff and artists and cultural operators from the locality. They had been very keen on having informal one-on-one conversations about professionally interesting topics, and about the similarities and differences of the two centres. The representatives of the first group were also interested in familiarising themselves with the artistic programme of the centre and learning about their way of running their activities. "They were making reports; I was invited to make a report to introduce my centre. There was participation, I was invited by a theatre group for one day. I was monitoring everything they did. Then I had the possibility to visit this festival for four days and the time was filled up with going to theatre performance for all days and nights. And then we were exchanging our impressions."

The Observation group had also taken part in work by helping out in simple tasks that did not require any specific know-how or education. This was seen as a fun and easy way to take part in the daily work, to be embedded in the culture and to meet local audiences. These tasks included hanging posters, working at the box office, proof reading texts and setting up a kiosk.

Gaining In-depth Experiences

The second group consisted of managers and members of board. This group had been interested in gaining a broad overview of the strategy, history, artistic scope, structure of activities, funding and so on of the hosting centre. They have mainly spent time with the management of the centre but they had had in-depth conversations with representatives of different professional fields, both cultural operators and artists. The issues they were interested in had been explained to them in much detail. The members of this group had also been interested in getting to know the local cultural life outside the centre, in order to understand the centres activities better. They have watched performances and attended exhibitions both at the hosting centre and outside it at other local venues.

"There was a theatre festival going on in the city. We were taken to several performances. There were different types of independent local cultural organisations or cultural houses. So we were introduced to people who are in charge of or just responsible for running these centres. It was explained from different point of view, from the cultural strategy, through finances and that was really done professionally and we got all the information we need for our work, as well. So I got all the information out of what I wanted during these two weeks of stay. Even more."

Participating in Daily Work

The members of the third group are the only ones who took part in the actual daily work of the centre. This group consisted of technicians, marketers to some extent and those exchangees who work with film and photography, or have the necessary skills to do tasks that involve such aspects. Language had not been a barrier for this group. They seemed more focused on the actual task to be completed, rather than learning about the centre in a wider sense.

"Basically I was taking care of the lights and helping the light technician, helping out in the events. I worked both independently during the day, made some preparations and also under supervision when I was doing the shows. With the technician."

Introducing the hosting organization

In most cases the exchangee was welcomed by the hosting organisation in a satisfactory manner. A tour of the centre was seen as an important way to start off the visit. It offered an overview of the operations and the staff.

Two participants who were given the tour later than on the first day of the exchange felt that it would have been important for them to get the overall look straight away in order to gain a wider idea of the centre, its activities, and audiences.

The strategy and history of the hosting centre were in all cases explained to the visitors. This was done in different ways, during working days, while having a tour of the building, or in informal conversations with a buddy or with other people the exchangees met during the exchange.

"Yes, they did [introduce the strategy and history of the centre]. If I had more questions about specific projects I could talk to whoever was in charge of that. They told me about how the place was built, the history and what everybody did"

The Length of the Visit

The visitor and hosts were able to negotiate a suitable length for the visit quite successfully. Project Manager Wolfsberger believes that the length of the visits had been one of the most flexible aspects in planning and implementing the exchanges.

Most exchangees felt that as time is one of the biggest barriers to mobility, one week is the only possible length for a visit for them. The optimal length for a visit was considered to be longer. Several exchangees suggested that if there were no limits, they would stay for at least two weeks; having the first week just for observation and the second week for working. Many would like to stay for a month or even longer.

The hosts have been very happy with the length of the visit they hosted. Some suggested longer exchanges up to three months.

> *"I like this going somewhere for a longer period to live somewhere for a while. I mean at least for a month. And to work on something. I don't like workshops so much, I'm often disappointed."*

> *"I prefer short visits, if you have only one week to see, it is better for you, for the work in your own center. You can organise it better. Workshops are very good. This could be meetings of professionals in your area, in your work…Depending on the area of work. Subjects, experts, meetings."*

> *"I think short visits, but more than a week. If I look back to the period it would be better to have more days there. And I think workshops are really good, that you come together for one or two days and exchange your knowledge."*

It seems that the length of time spent at the centre was not a defining factor in the success of the visit. However, other factors can help make a shorter visit an experience worthwhile. The role of the hosts is a key factor. In most cases this personal connection was achieved by having a committed buddy

> *"These 3-4 days TEH meetings. They are very useful. They are the best form of networking tool. And I would say also such 3-4 day study trip to another centre, like mine turned out, is very useful. But a long exchange has to do with professional development in a different way. You really go and focus on a matter, maybe budgeting or maybe marketing and you go in that ..this could be useful. Maybe if you are a marketing specialist then you have to go and two weeks is perfect for that. But for a general manager this couple of days overview is fine"*

Accommodation during an Exchange

Accommodation should be planned carefully and be tailor-made according to the wishes of the exchangee. Communication between the hosting and sending organisations and the organising body must be sufficient in order to find a suitable arrangement to all parties.

The hosts were informed beforehand that the budget for accommodation was limited, and it was strongly suggested to them that they organise private accommodation with an employee of the centre. This was also because of the management's own experience of the positive effect private accommodation can have. They believe it is an easy way to embed the visitor in the culture. Some centres looked carefully into choosing the right person to accommodate their exchange, and these people had a very successful over all experience.

In private accommodation the exchangees had the possibility to take part in the everyday life of natives of the country; this made learning about the culture easier. It also offered the possibility to talk about the sending and hosting organisations in more depth, and in a more relaxed and informal manner.

Staying with a host decreased the issue of spare time, the time spent outside the centre. For some, trying to connect with strangers and not being able to make friends during the exchange had been somewhat stressful. The role of the host or a buddy needs to be expanded to outside the working hours, as these were the times the visitors had felt the loneliest.

The professional position of the host with whom the exchangee is staying should be considered when looking for matches. In a case where a member of the board/founder of a centre stayed with a founder of the hosting centre, the exchangee felt that his needs were met and professional curiosity satisfied in an optimal manner. The exchangee was able to discuss the many phases of setting up a centre, as well as the daily issues they face at work.

> *"we were accepted to live in the family's house… it was really comfortable because we ..had our discussions in the morning at breakfast and during the day in the office. And then late at night, just at the dinner. So therefore maybe it was not so easy for XXXX to have one more family member for two weeks. But we were really satisfied. Because we had been (in the city) several times but never have lived like, in a family, like locals."*

A producer who stayed with a member of board but had a buddy from a similar professional background with her was also very satisfied with the arrangements. For her it was useful to hear about the overall aims and structure of the hosting centre, while during the day she had the possibility to observe the activities from a more practical level. In a third

case a technician hosted another technician. This too had been a successful combination. Private accommodation without the tenants' presence lost its value:

> *"I slept at a flat of a girl who is working in XXXX but she was on the holidays and I did not meet anybody. I spent the evenings alone when I was not working, And that was quite hard. "*

The hosts who were interviewed, who had an exchangee staying with them, were picked because they work in the same area as the visitor, or live in near proximity to the centre. Having a common professional background was considered important and in these particular cases it served the purpose.

It was also understood by the exchangees that taking care of a visitor for eg. two weeks is a task that consumes time and energy. Therefore a certain level of independence should be expected from the exchangees. The visitors wanted to give something back if they felt they were treated with extra attention and care. They often ended up inviting the hosts to visit them in turn. This suggests that a close relationship between the host and exchangee supports the creation of a positive experience. Discovering the art of hospitality was also mentioned as one of the main benefits gained through the experience.

Some exchangees were happy to be staying in a hotel. After receiving information all day they felt it was important to be able to close the door behind them, in order to reflect in peace after a long day. The need for this seems to correlate with age, especially for those over 40 years old, who did not mind staying at a hotel and were still able to adjust into the culture and not feel lost or lonely.

Communication

Sharing information – How did the participants learn about the Staff Exchange project and the possibility to apply?

Personal contacts and communication proved to be the most efficient way to share information and to introduce the project to employees of the *Changing Room* centres. The participating centres had agreed not only to send an employee, but also to host a visitor. In most cases the possibility to apply was introduced to an exchangee-to-be by a TEH delegate, a manager, or the *Changing Room* team during informal conversations. This kind of communication happened both at TEH meetings and outside the meetings.

The interviews revealed that personal and informal communication between the staff of centres is highly efficient and important. It is used and recognised to much wider extent than any official organisational communication. The ties in informal networks seem to be strong; people are more engaged in "voluntary" personal communication that involves work related issues than they are to organised and structured activities. In the cases where interviewees were not personally involved with TEH they were acquainted with a TEH delegate who informed them about the Staff Exchange programme. This stresses further the importance of personal connection and reveals that the link does not need to be direct but can involve several people.

More formal routes, such as the introduction of the programme in TEH meetings at the Stanica and Krakow meetings in 2009 also sparked an interest in applying. Also some scattered sources of information appeared; in one case the information was read in a newsletter whereas another person had learned about the possibility through the Online *Toolkit*. Two were invited to write an application by their manager. One person became aware of the possibility only when their centre hosted an exchangee.

Information had not been passed on to a needed extent through the formal channels inside the centres. The project manager felt that there had not been enough transparency; the benefits of the programme and why it could be an interesting opportunity to learn had not been explained within centres to the needed extent. The centres appointed an exchangee for different reasons, but there may have been more applications and more interesting applications with a clear focus, if the information had been passed on more efficiently. Some centres did not send an exchange; their reasons are not known, but a lack of knowledge might be one of them.

Perhaps the reason why a certain person was picked should be explained to other applicants in more depth. This way the exchange might gain more structure, engage the sending organisation in a more holistic manner and therefore help set more concrete and clear goals for the visit which might benefit the whole organisation.

In general there had not been enough communication about the Staff Exchange project inside the sending organisations. This came across in a few statements about the exchangee feeling slightly embarrassed about having the opportunity to travel. These people stated that they fear others may have thought they had simply gone on a holiday. Communicating and setting some mutually agreed goals for the visit might have helped the rest of the sending organisation to commit to the project as well and to learn what it is all about.

Communication with project management

In the early stage of planning, communication with the project management was done via a TEH delegate, or the person who had signed up to be responsible for the *Changing Room* relations. Because online communication can be slow, and in some cases it had been a challenge to get a reply, the management had emailed both the delegate and the *Changing Room* representative. As soon as it was clear who the exchangee would be, communication was done between the sending centre, the exchangee and the hosting centre.

Only a few exchangees had direct communication with the *Changing Room* team, but that did not appear to have been a problem. Those who had turned to them for help were happy with the level of communication and the quality of it. Those, who personally knew the *Changing Room* team members, were especially happy with the level and quality of communication.

The hosts were very happy with how the project had been organised. They felt that they received all the necessary information from the *Changing Room* management. The level of communication had been satisfactory to them. Project Manager Annette Wolfsberger stated that she encouraged the hosts and sending centres to communicate with one another from a very early stage, but was more than happy to help when advice was sought from her.

Reporting after the exchanges

After the exchange both exchangees and hosts were asked to write a report about their experiences and send it to the project management. Reporting was not done by the participants in the way it was planned and expected, and collecting the answers proved to be a challenge. Communication and especially online communication seem to be barrier in administrating and managing a project within the TEH network.

As both the exchangees and the project manager Wolfsberger state, this had been an issue in many cases. After the exchanges have taken place the visitors have immediately gone back to work, in most cases the very next day after returning home, and been overwhelmed by the work not done during the visit. Despite the freshly gained enthusiasm about the experience not many reports had been written. A number of reports had not been submitted or they have been written months after the visit. Wolfsberger believes that there is very little value of a report that has been written perhaps six months after the experience.

Wolfsberger instructed the participants to schedule reporting into the time spent on exchange. This had happened with some and in those cases it worked well. The best approach

was carried out in the centres where a colleague interviewed the exchangee after they had returned home. The interview format seemed to work well and Wolfsberger believes that the interview should have been done between the buddy and the exchangee. That would have served as an immediate feedback and evaluation session for both parties. It would also have forced all the people involved to come together at the end of the exchange and really look into the experience, the difficulties and the benefits of it.

Wolfsberger believes that reporting would have been an easy way to introduce Trans Europe Halles to employees of the member centres. Not many employees at the various centres are aware of the network and the possibilities it offers. One of the most enthusiastic participating centres surprised the project management with its level of involvement. The centre had made sure that information about the project was delivered to all employees both about the ability to apply and, after the exchanges, about the experience. The exchangees also gave a presentation about their experiences upon returning home. This centre had approximately ten people interested in going on exchange whereas some centres had to encourage individual employees to apply.

Wolfsberger now thinks that a professional in marketing or public relations should be hired to help document the project, for example on a blog. As reporting had proved to be a challenge for the participants, this would make the current unsuccessful method of reporting dispensable.

Sharing information about mobility

When asked about how the exchangees would like to receive information about exchange programmes and mobility in general, many concrete suggestions came up. Communication among employees about experiences, word of mouth and especially the active role of TEH delegates in communicating their knowledge to others are seen as useful and important. The respondents also wished they had more time to communicate their own experiences to their co-workers. The Online *Toolkit's* potential as a quick and strong link between groups of individuals and centres was noted. This potential is not utilized, however. Other useful ways of sharing information included

- Email and newsletter
- The TEH/ *Changing Room* website
- Blogging
- Information days and seminars
- The Internet and Facebook

- Newsletters
- The *Toolkit*
- Mailing lists
- Information folders

The Social Aspect

Networking

All except one exchangee had stayed in contact with their buddy. Also the hosts stated that they have or would like to continue the communication. The connection has so far been limited to mainly email and Facebook, but some have had the possibility to meet up again at Trans Europe Halles meetings. A close friendship is however not necessarily a requirement of knowledge exchange and networking. According to Granovetter, 1973 (Kraimer et al, 2001) weak ties are not necessarily worse than strong ties, as these are often ”a bridge between a densely interconnected social cliques and thus provide a source of unique information and resources”… Granovetter found that “weak ties were more likely than strong ties to have been the source of information…”. These ties provide possible channels for communication between the centres.

Depending on the size of the hosting organisation and the role of the exchangee in it, the exchangees were able to observe the daily work of a vast number of employees. The quantity varied from one person to over 30. Some had the possibility to discuss not just with the core team members of the area of their responsibility, but with artists, tenants, informal organisation around the centres and volunteers. The exchangees state that they mainly observed 3-5 people, those with whom they mostly worked with.

The actual network gained through the exchange varies greatly, from one person to over 30. The number does not seem to correlate with the overall quality of the experience or even the size of the centre. The newly gained network was appreciated, especially in the professional sense, but some close personal friendships were created too. The possibilities of even a smaller network were recognised:

> *”I think that at the moment, my network has expended to about three people, for sure, that I still have contact with. But I feel that if I needed something, or if I had a bigger network, I think it is much more closer for me to spread the word, you know. To get access to a bigger network through them”*

The sending organisations views on networking have not been collected to a great extent, as most of the exchangees were not aware of their views and motivations. However, some organisations stated that networking has been the key reason in choosing their participant in the programme:

> *"In the case of XXXX when we chose our people who were going, we always chose people who had not done longer things like this. It was really about expanding the network and opening up opportunities for people who had not been involved heavily in this kind of, at least international networking. "*

Networking at the staff exchange evaluation & training workshop

The in-depth interviews done at the staff exchange evaluation & training workshop revealed that the exchangees had not utilized their previously existing international networks in the past. There has been no discussion between professionals in the same field. The exchangees state that this kind of communication requires close friendship; they would not consult a person unless they felt a trust existed between them.

The exchangees recognise the possibility for this kind of communication now, though, and feel that the staff exchange evaluation & training workshop had brought them closer to one another, which might enable utilization of these communication channels.

According to Annette Wolfsberger, organising a get-together in the style of Summer Camp before the exchanges took place, gathering all the participants together in advance, would aid future knowledge exchange between centres tremendously. Wolfsberger stated that it would probably be challenging to get people together, and within the resources of *Changing Room* that would have been impossible. Also, the application process can take a long time, often more than a year, so one cannot expect to keep people waiting. The staff exchange evaluation & training workshop added value to the experience of the exchangees and therefore to their home centres, by bringing them physically together.

Wolfsberger is certain that arranging something within the centres that participated in the staff exchange evaluation & training workshop would now be much easier as people really know each other and the gained benefits would be greater. During the staff exchange evaluation & training workshop the participants learned about each other's experiences and became more acquainted with Trans Europe Halles. They also learned what international knowledge exchange is about. Wolfsberger would definitely increase social networking and the possibility for people to come together in this way.

The Importance of a 'Buddy'

"Personal contact permits assessments of trustworthiness, eventually leading to information exchange between suitable dyads" (Heimer 1992)

Each participating centre was asked to nominate a buddy for the exchangee. A buddy operates as a kind of liaison, the main contact for the exchangee before and during the exchange. The importance of looking for a suitable match between the exchangee and the buddy from within the organisation was underlined by the project management to quite an extent.

The buddy was expected to be someone else than the centres Tran Europe Halles delegate, despite that fact that they were often the only ones who actively take part in the networks projects. The delegates usually represented an unsuitable age group, they were often among the busiest people at the centre, as the delegate is usually a director or a manager, and they may not have had the exact knowledge the exchangee was looking for. They also usually had the least time to spare. In some cases, however, the delegates had acted as buddies.

The buddy was therefore expected to be someone else from the hosting centre who knows their centre well, is sociable and able to take on the responsibility for being the main contact for the exchangee. This was expected to apply on both a logistical level and a social level.

The logistical level contained such details as helping the exchangee to book flights, to help with accommodation arrangements and to some extent put together a work programme. This was recommended to be completed in collaboration with, for example, the TEH delegate of the centre. The social level was especially important after work, making sure the person knew their way around in a strange city and country, and had some company if needed.

The project manager Annette Wolfsberger stated that quite often the buddy ended up being the original contact person of the *Changing Room* project. Wolfsberger pressed the importance of the buddy because she had had firsthand experience of the importance of such a contact and support. Newcomers to TEH had not been on visits previously, and they needed someone to take care of them during an exchange or visit, as it can be challenging to find your way around.

Having an immediate contact from within the surrounding culture eases social embedding and makes the experience more holistic. Especially in the case of those exchangees that did not have an assigned task, who were merely there for observation or to interview people and to learn something intangible, close guidance was seen as highly important.

The buddies hold a key role in making the experience worthwhile for the exchangee as they can help the exchangee gain a deeper understanding of the hosting centre and the surrounding culture, and therefore to also form a stronger tie and link between them. This enables future contact with the person and can lead to more communication between the centres.

The fact that the role and importance of a buddy had been slightly unclear comes across in the interviews of the hosts. In one particular case the buddy was appointed but the person did not feel responsible. This was partly due to insufficient communication inside the organisation and also to the management not having fully understood the concept of the project.

Particular buddies were chosen for various reasons. In one case language was the main factor, with the buddy being the only one who felt confident enough to communicate in a foreign language. This person was also the most familiar with the Staff Exchange and the whole *Changing Room* project.

One of the buddies was appointed because they shared the same job with the exchangee. This centre had looked closely into the needs of the exchangee and what the hosting centre had to offer. They came to the conclusion that also accommodating the exchangee at the buddy's own home would serve them in an optimal way. Both the hosting centre and the exchangee stated that they were very happy with the exchange.

Another buddy was also chosen because of the shared profession, and it was in the exchangee's interest to know more about actions and strategies in this exact field. In another case more practical reasons, such as knowing the centre well and not being as busy as other employees, were the reasons behind the selection.

The buddy's role stretched from acting as a colleague to being a friend, with each case being unique. Some exchangees mainly worked with the buddy, but for some the buddy was just one of the people they interacted with at the centre. For some the buddy was a friend outside of work activities, perhaps the person who offered accommodation. And for some the role of the buddy was left somewhat unclear.

During the interviews it became obvious that those exchangees who had a committed buddy took part in the hosting centres activities, observed or studied them very actively and in a way that felt comfortable to them. Also having contact with the buddy before the visit was seen as a comforting factor, building trust and getting to know the person.

Choosing the right person for the task seems critical. It is obvious that in some cases there has not been enough planning and preparation for the visit or the buddy has not been

informed well enough about their responsibilities. In one case a buddy was appointed during the planning and application stage of the project, but they did not understand what being a buddy actually meant. Contact with the exchangee was limited to one email where directions to the centre were explained. This experience left the exchangee feeling as if there was no buddy, and they soon felt lost and in some cases unwelcome. The lack of a buddy affected the whole exchange experience:

> *"No buddy. I did not ask this to be so, but I should have had a buddy. We had an exchangee at XXXX too and I was the buddy for him. And I think he had a better time than me."*

This was the only case where the hosts received purely negative feedback; the exchangee felt neglected as nobody seemed to be in charge of the visit. The staff at the hosting centre were not aware of the project, or who she was.

When reflecting on their experiences, many stated that the visit should have been better planned in order to find a suitable schedule for both host and visitor. This boils down to proper planning, as it seems all of these kinds of visits should have been tailor-made. The hosts should have also made sure that the person actually has time to commit:

> *"I think there was one (a buddy). But it did not really work out like that. I am pretty sure it was one of those people who was most stressed at that time. So we did not have time to talk at all. Unfortunately. But there was another person who I was with much more than her".*

Planning and personalising the buddy's role and level of activity must be given pride of place as all exchanges have been different from one another, also the needs of the exchangees vary greatly. Age seems to correlate with these needs; those exchangees that come from a higher age group did not need the social aspect of hosting that much. However, private accommodation served them as well, embedding them to the local culture.

The buddy did not have to be appointed especially for this process to work well. In one case, a technician who was actually able to work at the hosting centre did not have an appointed liaison from within the centre. This person however visited a centre that hosts many EVS volunteers (The European Voluntary Service). These volunteers automatically became a kind of a network of buddies for the exchangee as they all came from the same age group and had an immediate mutual understanding. The exchangee himself had also taken part in an EVS exchange so the connection was created with great ease. The management of the centre understood this, and concentrated on offering interesting and meaningful tasks for the exchangee.

The buddy's position inside the organisation seems to matter to some extent. For one of the exchangees a member of the board, who does not take part in the daily operations, was

chosen to be the buddy for someone who would have needed a more concrete practical look at the centre. While being able to share more about the financial issues, strategy, goals and vision of the centre the lack of everyday knowledge of the work at grass roots level left the experience disconnected. This experience also stressed the importance of commitment to the exchangee.

> *"She was a member of the board. She does not work in the centre. She is making decisions… she was not in the activities of the centre. So it was a good and a bad point. In the fact, when my interview was finished with an employee sometimes my buddy was not in the centre so I could not jump into another activity, I could not react. Because she was not there she could not react"*

For some exchangees two buddies were appointed. It was either planned this way or it happened by chance when active staff members became involved with hosting. In one case a member of the board and an employee who deals with the daily work of the centre acted as the buddies. This proved to suit the exchangee well and served them a very impressive overall experience. Having two buddies from different levels of the organisation might be a suitable approach to hosting, providing the exchangee with the possibility of two perspectives to the operations.

> *"The good point was our talks. I stayed at her place (the buddy, member of the board). We can have conversations from the decision part. She has another point of view of the centre because she was not in the direct activities of the centre. So she can have another point of view."*

Finding the right match between the buddy and the exchangee seems crucial. Those who had someone to act as their guide both outside and inside the centre felt more confident and welcome. This applies especially to those who did not spend the exchange taking part in the daily work of the centre, but were merely there to observe and interview people. All the employees should of course acknowledge the exchangee's presence, not just the buddy. However the guiding role of the buddy gives structure to the experience. The observers stated that sometimes they felt as if they were intruding, disturbing the busy staff of the hosting centre. When there was no one who in a way justified what they were doing, they were left feeling confused. The buddy's guidance would have also helped to tie into a tight daily programme:

> *"A bad point was that she was not at the centre she could not react for me because I did not know the structure. So she could not say 'Ah you could do this thing, meet this person right now'"*

Some of those who mainly worked with their buddy were happy about being able to closely observe the buddy in their natural working environment. In some cases even the language barrier was over come, when after few days of close observation the exchangee finally felt comfortable enough to take part in the highly social work the buddy was doing.

Most exchangees had stayed in touch with their buddy. Usually the contact has been limited to email and Facebook but even a light link between centres can enable the exchange of knowledge in the future. In a couple of cases deeper friendships were born and therefore the connection has been stronger. Some of the interviews took place only a few days or weeks after the exchangees had returned home, and at that time they were not able to answer this question. They however hoped that they will stay in touch in the future with the representatives of the hosting centre.

In some cases the relationship with the buddy was not particularly close, but having a friendly relationship between the two centres compensated for that. In one case where TEH delegates of two particular centres had befriended in previous meetings, the close relationship cast a friendly light on the visit, even if the visitor did not know the TEH delegate from before. This was usually the case with smaller centres.

For most of the buddies, having the extra responsibility on top of their own work did not hinder their ability to concentrate on their own work. One of the interviewed hosts however believed strongly that the visit had caused a delay, but as they had expected that, it did not come as a surprise. None of the hosting centres had hired any additional workforce to cover the buddy's possible absence.

All of the pressure of making the visitor feel comfortable was not solely on the shoulders of the buddy. The way the visitor's presence is acknowledged by all the people they meet seems to be crucial in the way they afterwards see the period of time spent at the other centre.

Benefits and results of the Staff Exchange Project

Benefits of the Staff Exchange for Exchangees

According to the project manager Annette Wolfsberger it was not presumed that the exchangees would gain concrete results out of the experience. She states that providing a professional development opportunity like this is useful and needed within the field. Concrete benefits were not an intrinsic value. The exchangees were able to list issues that they find interesting and skills that they would be interested in developing outside educational institutions and their centres.

Wolfsberger states that this is where the second application proved useful, the applicants decided for themselves when applying what they wanted to learn or what they could learn at a specific centre. Therefore the hosting centre's wishes and capacities outline the possibilities to some extent. However, the questions in the application were quite open. Making questions more specific may have helped the applicants to look for a more specific focus for their exchange.

As most of the exchangees did not work on a specific project, and did not have clear goals for their visit, it is difficult to describe or evaluate the results of the project. The benefits can be intangible and only be realised after some time. Three of the participants stated that there will be no continuation and the exchange has not inspired them to implement a new feature in their work. This is to some extent due to lack of time. They are too busy with their existing tasks. Some stated that in theory there are many ideas, but nothing specific and that nothing has yet been implemented.

For more concrete results and clear goals the "mobility on demand" version of exchanges is more suitable; sending employees to work on a project for which the tasks have been predefined. This kind of mobility is more about actually taking part in the work of a centre or a festival they are arranging, and can include several exchangees at the time, perhaps even a group of exchangees.

Benefit 1: Professional development

It has been noted by Wolfsberger that many of the Trans Europe Halles member centres do not have a budget for professional development for their staff. This also came across when the participating centres were asked to send their contributions, 250 Euro, to the project. Gathering the requested amount was not simple for all. For the employees of these centres there had not been a way to learn outside their own working environment. Wolfsberger believes that this is a problem and a barrier for employee's development, especially when an employee stays in one job for several years. She believes it is important to offer a chance purely to learn for these kind of people.

In the case of international volunteer programmes this was not believed to be a problem. The volunteers were already using the visit as a learning opportunity. However, full time employees should be offered ways to learn, without being tied to their daily responsibilities, and without being too set on gaining something concrete out of the exchange.

The exchangees felt that the exchange had affected their professional development in many very positive ways. An interviewee stated that she understands now with more clarity what her own abilities are and how much she actually knows about the field. The experience has also helped her to understand what she can expect from her colleagues. The exchangee

understood that the approach used at her centre might not be the optimal solution, and she believes this is something she can now have a say in. She understands that in order to do her work (marketing) well she needs to be able to search for inspiration more and to deepen her understanding of the subject.

Another exchangee stated that the experience had enabled development to such extent that she now believes she should be more mobile, and even take time off from work to make this happen. One of the exchangees interviewed believed that because her current job is her first one in this field and because her mind is set on the local community, it is important that she can now see things in another level. She believes that this European perspective and open-mindedness she has gained through the exchange can help with the local issues she deals with in her job

Another exchangee stated that through the experience she has become more self confident on her own work and ways of working. During and after the exchange she realised what she wants to do professionally and what not. She believed this clarification of professional aims and means is highly important for herself as a professional and also for her home center. In her own work it has helped her to look for more simple solutions and practices and to trust her own judgment. Hence she has been able to work in a more relaxed manner and not to get stressed for unnecessary reasons.

Benefit 2: implementation of new ideas

Whether or not specific benefits are wanted from an exchange, the outcome depends on the exchangees themselves and their home organisations. One of the exchangees had from the start stated that she wanted to get ideas for her own organisation's marketing strategy. She had stated this already in her application and the programme of her visit was planned around this need. During the exchange she systematically concentrated on interviewing the right people and learning about the practices and ideas of the hosting centre. She returned home with new ideas that the home organisation has now implemented. A few other exchangees also systematically benchmarked an activity which they have or are currently in the middle of implementing in to their own programme.

Benefit 3: Inspiration through meeting peers

All of the exchangees interviewed felt that the exchange had enriched their personal life. Despite not aiming for something concrete, they feel that simply going to another country, seeing other cultural centres and meeting people who struggle with similar issues as they do enriches their professional lives as well.

One exchangee was delighted with the possibility to visit a cultural centre that is similar to

her home organisation in spirit, programming and aims. The differences are the size and age of the centres; she works for a centre that employs hundreds of people. The hosting centre reminded her of what her home centre was like twenty years ago. She saw the centre dealing with issues similar to those her own centre had dealt with previously.

Benefit 4: International knowledge sharing

Networking and continuation of cooperation and dialogue between employees of the matched organisations was considered a highly important result of the exchange. An example of this came from the staff exchange evaluation & training workshop, where an exchangees and an employee from the hosting centre met once again. The exchange had lasted for two weeks and the week of the staff exchange evaluation & training workshop offered them a chance to meet again. They had already had fruitful conversations during the exchange and were able to deepen their professional relationship and to discuss issues further. This might enable future cooperation or knowledge exchange more easily, as the link between the centres and the individuals is now evident.

Benefit 5: Being introduced to the Trans Europe Halles network

Involvement with the Trans Europe Halles started for some through the exchange. This became a benefit for the whole sending organisation as the experience and the stories told attracted another person to become interested in the network as well. Beforehand, only the delegates of the centre had been involved. Now the centre will gain another point of view in the potential of mobility for the centre and networking issues in general.

One person who was introduced to Trans Europe Halles through the exchange believes that for TEH and the network her local perspective, just as any other employee's, is valuable. Her expertise in the specific area can only now be fully utilised as she has been introduced to the network.

Benefits of the Staff Exchange for the Sending Centre

Benefit 1: Helping colleagues to realise the value of mobility

Many of the exchangees state that even though they have not have a chance to write a formal report or give a presentation about their experience they can instead fully recommend the experience to all of their colleagues. All of the participants would be happy to take part in a mobility programme again, but many state that instead of going themselves they would rather give the opportunity to someone else inside their organisation. This would further expand the benefits of being a part of a network at the grass roots level.

Benefit 2: Assessment of standards of activity

Detecting issues at the home centre and assessing standards of activity were recognised as a result. Eight participants felt that stepping out of the daily routine and their home centre had helped them to see issues and problems at home with more clarity. Four were not able to say this with full certainty, but hoped that this will be the case once enough time has passed, and they can evaluate their experience with more objectivity, clarity and realism. The issues recognised varied greatly, from minor ways of being more organised and efficient in the daily routine, to delegating management operations within the organisation.

Benefit 3: Communication

An exchangee saw innovative solutions being implemented at the host centre and she has since discussed these as an option for her home centre as well. All the new things she learned and saw have helped her discuss and interact more with her own staff, and therefore information and ideas are now floating more easily.

Why were benefits not realised?

The participants felt that their home centre had been open to new ideas and suggestions realised during and after the exchange. Interest and enthusiasm had been recognised after the exchanges, and after informal conversations and formal presentations about the experience and suggestions had taken place. The problem of scarcity of time came up however. Even though the home centre might be interested, there is not necessarily time to really look into the experience and suggestions.

> *"We don't have really time to share together ideas or suggestions."*

Another barrier for the home organisation to take full advantage of the exchange had been a lack of structure.

> *"Partly they are, partly they are very captured in their own things."*

> *"Yes they are open to new ideas, but some suggestions. But we don't do anything with them now"*

The size of the centre seems to correlate with the level of implementation of new ideas. A respondent from a smaller centre stated:

> *"We are quite open, we are doing and planning and making new ideas almost every day"*

Bigger centres with more complicated structure cannot operate in this way:

> *"Yeah, well it is half and half I would say. Like some ideas they thought were good and other ideas, I mean because it is so big it is very hard to change ways."*

In general the interviewees seemed to believe that at some level, the exchange will affect the home centre's activities too:

> *"Although they (the centre) are not very interested in, when you come back, they are not so interested in hearing your stories. But in a way, because you are so filled up with your impressions you cannot hide them. So you are putting in some of the discussions and the informal meetings you always mention how the other centre did it and do it. There is a chain of actions going on"*

Benefits of the Staff Exchange for the Hosts

For the five hosts interviewed it seemed to be slightly more challenging to name the benefits or results of the exchange. This might be due to the fact that they represent different levels of their organisations and have not necessarily been involved with the Staff Exchange or *Changing Room* project in any other ways than being a buddy to the exchangee. When asked about what they learned from the exchangee very few concrete benefits were recognised.

Benefit 1: The art of hospitality

It was mentioned by many that the importance of hosting; acting as a responsible and welcoming host had been one of the most important things they have realised through the experience. This is mentioned by both those who only hosted and those who went on an exchange and were also involved with hosting an exchangee at their home centre. Those who stayed in private accommodation, and were really introduced to the local culture through every day life and interaction with the hosts, feel that only now do they realise what a difference a great host can make.

Benefit 2: Reflection and comparison

The hosts felt that they too have had a possibility to learn about another centre and appreciate the chance offered by the network. They also felt it was refreshing to get an outside view on their centre, and on how the hosting team works together. Conversations about the sending organisation in relation to the host centre had taken place. The hosts had found the other centres interesting, as well as comparing their ways of functioning to their own.

Benefit 3: Enhancement of language skills

A very practical benefit was the chance to speak English. Many of the employees of hosting centres had been shy about having to speaking the language and it was a good opportunity for them to practice. This came across in some of the interviews of the exchangees as well; they were surprised to learn how shy some of the employees were about communicating in a foreign language. Some even brought a dictionary to meetings but then turned out to be almost fluent in the language in question. This kind of interaction might help the hosts realise their own skills, for example language skills, that they have not been able to utilise.
Benefit 4: Introducing Trans Europe Halles

Introducing TEH and *Changing Room* to the employees of the hosting centre was named several times. This was considered important as it may spark interest towards new projects in the future.

Perceived Barriers to Mobility

In the beginning of their interviews the exchangees and hosts were asked to list what they thought are the most crucial barrier to cross border mobility for cultural operators. The most often mentioned barriers were time management and lack of time, language, cultural differences and money. When the discussion went deeper into the exchangees experience, it turned out that all of these were not actual barriers, at least not to the extent and in the specific way they were expected to be. Also, some barriers that the participants did not mention can be recognised in their reflections. The hypothetical barriers are evaluated here and some barriers that have been recognised through the interviews are added.

Barrier 1: Language

The only barrier the existence of which all of the participants agreed upon was language. All other barriers seemed to be secondary, or it was believed that they could easily be solved.
"It (communication) was not (efficient), because I could not speak Italian and there was a little barrier… to get into the core of personal matters and human factors. You cannot do it… with a language barrier."

A host of a marketing manager worried that a lack of a shared language between the marketing manager at the hosting centre and the visitor had crucially affected the specific goals of the exchangee:

"The language. It was important for the exchangee to meet our marketing manager, but she didn't talk so well English, it was not so easy"

However, in some cases where communication was not perfectly fluent, it was not considered an important factor. With the help of a shared interest, enthusiasm and a good team the language barrier did not hindrance the success of the experience.

"I think if you have a good team there are no barriers. I felt really like I could work there, easily. It was very easy to fit in."

During the matchmaking process special attention was paid to the language skills of participants. Through observing the exchanges it became obvious that those exchanges where the visitor spoke the local language proceeded with more ease than those where both parties had to speak a foreign language. Also, as all of the participants can be described as internationally orientated, they were all used to facing these challenges.

Barrier 2: Cultural differences

Attitude towards possible cultural differences divided the respondents into two groups: some seemed to believe that cultural differences are not that great, that a common European culture exists. Some exchangees were more skeptical:

"…you don't know some specific things in the system in general, how things are looking and how local people are dealing with some issues in more institutional way. Of course in Slovakia they are dealing with one problem in a different kind of way than in Holland. You don't know these differences"

Cultural differences were offered as a possible barrier in the early stage of interviews. It did not prove to be an actual barrier. Also the project manager did not recognise this as a barrier. Instead of a culture shock a positive stress was described, the excitement of learning about a new culture. Some believed that there is always a degree of culture shock when entering a new culture, but that is not necessarily a hindrance or a barrier. Five participants felt they were able to start working/observing straight away, and nine stated they had not experienced any kind of culture shock.

For many the possibility to get to know the local cultural scene or to walk outside the center, to sense the atmosphere of the neighborhood and to gain an understanding of the issues of local life were seen as a big part of the overall experience. This helped the exchangees to understand the local system and perhaps ease the process of adjusting to the local culture.

Careful consideration of the length of the visit was offered as a solution to possible problems with a new culture: one week to adapt and one or two weeks to work or observe. Some stated that it is a challenge to adjust to the surrounding environment in a relatively short time. It was noted however, that a new culture needs to be adapted to every time a person starts working in a new environment so this may not be a real issue, but something familiar to all. This is, however, a more hypothetical barrier. Especially where an exchangee had private accommodation this was not an issue to any extent. Also the importance of the buddy system was obvious in embedding the visitor in the local culture.

Barrier 3: Lack of time and personal flexibility

Time management and personal flexibility seem to have had key roles in making the experience as successful as possible for the exchangees:

> *"Of course you are stressed when you are in a foreign land. When you are not working as you have been. If you are an active manager then you have the matters of home pressing you, this might be one thing. The exchange from the role of being responsible to the role of being tutored and being looked after. This is different. And all these matters build up so if you should not have the time to accommodate then they might cause stress. But they don't have to, in a very short duration they don't."*

The possibility to invest time for international activity is an actual barrier and a hindrance for the sharing of knowledge: the participants felt that they don't have enough time to pass on and to also absorb knowledge. Not enough conversation and analysis had happened with colleagues and management. Most of the exchangees would have needed a few days off from work after the exchange in order to reflect and absorb what they had seen and learned. Only one had had the possibility to take a day off. The exchangees felt that a lot of new information had slipped from their mind, because they could not afford to take any more days off and with their work being hectic, they did not have the possibility to process what they had learned.

The lack of time also became obvious when a report should have been written about the visit. The project manager believes that the reports could have served as a useful tool in the future if more exchanges were planned. The reports would have served as a bank of useful knowledge and guidance of what to do and what not.

Getting their own work done was something that all of the exchangees struggled with. More than half of the interviewees stated that the exchange caused delay in their own work despite of trying to get the work done beforehand, or outsourcing or delegating it.
Usually the work was delegated to a colleague. Many of the centres are small in size, therefore there is no one else who can do the exchangees work, and the only possibility has been to work long hours either before or after the exchange. Small size can also be a benefit; in

some cases the staff were used to doing a little bit of everyone's work, with the tasks naturally overlapping. Some respondents tried to continue doing their own work while on the exchange, but that did not turn out to be a success.

Lack of time was considered a barrier in many different ways. Some centres hosted during their busiest time of the year. The exchangee felt slightly embarrassed about wanting to interview them and occupy their scarce time, as they did not want to cause any more stress for the hosts. This had affected the exchangee's experience negatively. Also the hosting centre stated that, if they were to host an exchange again, they would choose a more quiet time.

Time also becomes an issue when there was too much information available, when trying to find the right information and not to get too preoccupied with something less interesting or useful. Human contact, openness and personalisation to some extent could serve as a tool in successfully passing on knowledge:

> *"if there are workshops or seminars, that would be great too. Maybe to have them in each centre, open to the public".*

Barrier 4: Money

Money was also mentioned as a barrier. Many stated that they would not be able to take part in this kind of activity without outside funding. This especially applies to the younger participants of the programme. The exchangees received per diem and the home centres were expected to continue paying salaries during the visits. As some centres operate on a volunteer basis this became an immediate barrier, with the exchangee needing to have access to personal funds and the financial ability to survive a loss of a week's, or longer, pay.

Money can be seen as an obstacle for the home organisation as a whole, as some of them could not afford to hire additional staff, or outsource the daily work of the exchangee. Thus the exchange had caused a delay in the exchangee's work. This is also the reason why some of the participants have travelled during holidays or at the quietest time of the year.

None of the exchangees struggled with any financial, legal or taxation issues once they had arrived in the destination country. Overall the exchangees were happy with the amount received, especially with being able to receive the money in advance. They felt it covered all the necessary costs. No one struggled with any financial issues, but it was noted by many that the sum received should not be any less than what it is now.

Some hosts were surprised by how expensive the visit actually was. Those visitors who stayed at a private home with a family would have wanted to compensate for their stay

with much more than what they got from the *Changing Room*. They felt that hosting had been more expensive than what they would have felt comfortable with. This has lead in some cases to a stronger communication after the visit, with the hosts have being invited to visit the sending organisation.

Some hosts also found the cost of private hosting surprisingly high. The amount of money spent was however up to the hosts themselves. It was stated by many that learning the art of hospitality was one of the most important benefits they had gained during the visit. This was mentioned both by exchangees and hosts.

Barrier 5: Lack of information

A barrier which was not mentioned by any of the exchangees or hosts, but which became obvious during the interviews was the barrier of information. According to the project manager the employees of *Changing Room* centres did not receive information about the programme from their TEH delegate or the *Changing Room* contact person to the needed extent. The advantages of the programme have not been communicated within the organisations.

There has also been a lack of transparency in the application process, as it had not been explained to the exchangees or the unsuccessful applicants the reasons behind the selection. The exchangees personal lives did not require any special arrangements during the visit. Only one person mentioned their family. It could be that this kind of project is only appealing to those who can easily leave home without facing domestic barriers.

Mobility in the future – possibilities and suggestions

How to structure and implement exchanges

The exchangees were asked what they believe are useful ways, for professionals like them, to be mobile. It is obvious that one way does not suit all. Two levels of exchange, or exchange models, were suggested: 1) sharing knowledge and 2) sharing skills.

The first group entails the managerial level and members of board. They are professionals and experts in the field in a wide sense and can consult others and also bring know-how

back to their own centre. The second group consists of professionals in certain skills, such as technicians, marketers, accountants etc. Students can also be included in this group. Sharing skills can be implemented in a way where the exchangee actually takes part in the daily work of the centre, and shares and absorbs good practices. The groups can and do overlap to some extent as, for example, professionals in marketing can be seen as having something to provide and having a possibility to learn in both groups. It was suggested as these two levels or groups have different needs and responsibilities:

> *"Long visits are difficult…I think president or coordinator of programming couldn't be for one month in XXXX because it is too difficult… but one week could be a good time to see and to speak and to understand. Or two weeks, maybe. But not more, it is difficult. If you are a volunteer or if you are a student, could also stay for one month but it's different. To think, it is a different level of exchange because if you try to create a new competence, new skills in young people, okay you are to stay 1-3, months and you can make it work. If you are to share skills, which are of responsibility, which are of the president or the coordinator of the centre it is another way, another kind of exchange."*

> *"I think the best thing would be to have two levels. Maybe one is on-demand for workers, really. You need technical and so you ask "ok I need a technician for one week or two months" and this is for workers or volunteers that want to develop their skills. And then you have the other level, I think it is something about sharing the experience and sharing solutions and sharing a new way of finding solutions. And for me it would be great to travel both the levels, not just one but both levels."*

The importance of the social aspect, being active in having contact with others in the network was recognised as an important way of strengthening the relationships between the staffs of centres:

> *"I think every kind of way is ok to be mobile. Talking together or doing an activity together or have a phone call… But I think, being active in the mobility, like sharing something, a game or cooking, doing a manual activity is also important. As important as mental things, you know, talking, thinking, so on and so on. It is important and this is not so much used in mobility issues."*

> *"I think like a staff trip would be interesting. Where everyone got to go and be able to discuss it later more as well. But, well I guess the problem I see with this is not doing this but being able to do it. Having the time to do it and having the time to do it properly and actually process the information after you get back. "*

MOBILITY ON DEMAND – Working with clear goals

In previous research within the Changing Room project by the Sibelius Academy it had been noted that a number of employees of TEH member centres felt that a very useful way of being mobile was to work with clear goals and projects. It was claimed that in this way mobility projects would also serve the hosting centre better.

A hypothetical situation was introduced to the exchangees and asked about their comments. The exchangees were asked how they really feel about mobility on demand and if they would be interested in taking part.

> *"A centre is setting up a festival and has a need for know-how in a certain area (ie marketing, finance) for a period of time: X. They send out a request/job offer to other Trans Europe Halles centres through the Matchmaker."*

The question stirred up diverse opinions. Some believed that this would be a beneficial and helpful structure for an exchange programme. Having clear goals for the exchange and a way of having a simple way to justify mobility were seen as key factors in the design of a mobility programme. Some respondents were thrilled about the possibility to be able to use their own competence to a wider and deeper extent.

> *"I think it is a quite nice thing. This kind of mobility-on-demand, because also, thanks to this Matchmaker thing, which I think is a quite nice thing, if you go somewhere you get a really clear concept of what you will do and what you have to do. And you have clear expectations and also probably clear view on this organisation. Not going somewhere blank. Yeah, I think it is a quite nice thing and would like to take part in this kind of actions."*

Some exchangees saw very basic problems with this scenario. Especially those who work at a managerial level were sceptical. For example with the nature of marketing; it cannot be done in two weeks: researching target audiences, creating a marketing plan and design and finally implementation. Not knowing the local culture and language were named as issues. Also the amount of time professionals have to spend is limited and getting to know colleagues to the needed extent was believed to be impossible for experts in certain fields.

> *"The problem is that you can not make marketing just in two weeks. For one week in another centre you can not do this. You just use it, if they have problems. If the center wants to have an eye from another centre, to get feedback from outside. then I could think that it is good to be on-demand. Because if you are an expert and you say I go there and give them my feedback to people, personal, not just because you are writing an excerpt and sending it to them. Because you have to meet the people, you have to talk to them to see how they work every day. "*

Those who were in favour of the two-level model of exchange discussed in the previous section (managerial and technical/volunteer-level) suggested that the on-demand model might be a good idea for the technical/volunteer level. One respondent believed that with a clear project more centres might be interested in getting involved.

The ability to adjust to the surrounding working culture was seen as a challenge, the respondents were worried that international employees would end up being more like a visitors than equal co-workers. In the past this has been the case with volunteers. Buddies are needed in this kind of activity just as they are in any kind of exchanges. This again occupies the resources of the hosting centre. As a solution to this volunteer buddies were suggested.

> *"But you are not really a big aid to them, you are a visitor. And you take their resources. And that is a problem. If you get somebody here who wants to be a volunteer and they are hard to take care of, because you have to tell them everything, every day. So, it is hard work. So, for me it is the same, if I go to another centre, you are a kind of visitor and they have to tell you everything. How you buy your butter at the supermarket. And what is the best beer in Sweden. But this is life but this is very, enrichment."*

One of the respondents worried about mobility and foreign staff actually being the best workforce for the centre and its needs. The person also feared the effect it might have on the employment situation of the local cultural operators, as the centre of the interviewee is situated in a medium sized city where employment opportunities in the cultural field are scarce.

The respondents were also asked if they would be interested in investing more time and effort in an international project, as it would probably consume more resources than their regular projects and work at home. Once again the management level seemed to be more sceptical about the possibilities but also a greater number of employees at other levels agreed with them. This kind of project should be included in their own work, not be added on top of it as that was believed to be too much for them. Hiring additional employees was offered as one solution.

The question sparked up some purely enthusiastic answers too:

> *"I would like to do it, I would love to do something like that."*

Some stated that there is never enough time for planning so they might as well do something international with their scarce resources. The nature of the project, international knowledge share and networking, was seen as an important factor as well.

Options for short exchanges – working in another country

When asked about whether or not the exchange has made the respondents more or less likely to consider ever working in another country, greatly varying answers were given. They included moving to another country for work and taking a sabbatical to go abroad. As an idea, working abroad is seen as interesting, but it is also understood that leaving the home country is a greater commitment, and that very concrete barriers exist. The respondents seem to favour pre-planned programmes, careful planning and exchanges for certain lengths of time:

> *"I'm not sure I could say either, really. I think I might not want to directly go to work in another country where I don't know the language very well. Unless it is an international network Or international company or organisation where English is spoken as a main language. But of course I've always been open to moving to different countries and learning another language. So, it is not."*

> *"Yeah. I would love to work in another country, but with my personal life here, that is more a barrier than.. that is a barrier. There is a possibility, I can see that ."*

> *"That , if it is a, somehow if it is pre-planned, to do really important work together. And to on, just on a project so therefore I think yes we are very, if there is a possibility and there you have not to be in stress, going abroad and doing art project together in the future. So yes."*

Recommendations from the Exchangees

Concrete recommendations about how to improve mobility programmes such as the *Changing Room's* Staff Exchange were asked for from the exchangees. The project manager Annette Wolfsberger was also asked to make recommendations based on her experience with this project.

In general the exchangees and hosts all felt that the experience had been useful for their professional development, and that it had also enriched their personal lives. Participants state that it is important to offer the possibility to experience mobility, and become a part of international knowledge exchange processes, to other employees at their own centre.

Some recommendations were however made to improve the programme. The hosts had

realised their own role in making the experience worthwhile for the visitor. In a case where the visitor had felt unwelcome, adequate preparations had not been made by the hosting centre. The hosts realised this only after the exchange was over. They realised the importance of communication and feedback. The coordination and planning of the visit had not been done to the required extent.

The importance of finding a suitable time slot for the visit was emphasised, as a centre that had hosted during a very busy period found that this had hindered the success of the visit, and made it slightly more stressing for the hosts.

The hosts' experience on whether the visit had caused delay in daily work varied. For some, hosting an exchangee did not cause any delay or stress and there had not been a need to hire any additional employees or outsource work. One felt strongly about the delay the visit had caused. Most sending organisations and especially the exchangee struggled with the amount of work to be done before and after the exchange. In some cases the tasks were delegated but almost all exchangees had to return to piles of undone work. This calls for careful planning and delegation of work.

The project manager Wolfsberger stated that she had learned at least two things while working on the project. First, having two application rounds proved to be a success. The second thing she learned is something she would like to see built into the structure of an exchange programme. She hoped that more efficient online tools could be developed, in order to create more of a community out of all the participants in the project

Many of the exchangees and hosts failed to write a report about their experience. Wolfsberger believes that these reports would have been valuable for the management and administration of the project, in order to be able to provide possible future exchangees with better instructions about what kind of actions to avoid, with what they should be careful and what to do in case something did not work out.

The reports could be stored in an online repository for people to learn from each other. In the style of Facebook, people could then be linked as an exchange group. Wolfsberger believes that it could have served her as a professional of the field, and that it would have been useful to others as well. She believes this would advance knowledge sharing even if the people did not physically meet.

Some concrete recommendations given by the exchangees

> *"Having a buddy, who is a member of the board and nothing in the daily life of the centre, maybe I could have two buddies, one in the board and one who can direct me. Who can give me advice and react for me when I am in the centre."*

"They did not have any information package prepared for me and maybe there should have been something."

"An introduction file about the centre. A small description, my buddy told me about XXXX, but not like an official presentation… To have a small document in English, that could be useful for stranger who can understand it in a quick way. Maybe it could be useful to have a larger vision of the centre where we go."

"I think like I said about the scheduled appointments and things like that, it could have been better organised. Like, having those scheduled ahead of time. And more things to see and do every day."

"The time to pick the centre was too short. That is my main negative thing, the time for application was too short that I could have taken a look at all the centres. And to choose a centre in an area where I was not so connected with. If you only have so much time, you always choose a safe way, a safe direction. You say, well I don't take Slovakia because I cannot speak the language at all. Or Romania, and that is perhaps the thing that I would have done better when the centres themselves had had a possibility introduce themselves. To show what they have."

"I misunderstood where I was supposed to live. Where I am staying. That was not the best case. Because I was staying in a woman's (not an employee of the hosting centre) house. I could not get down to the kitchen to make myself a cup of tea or anything without her because she did not approve people using her kitchen. I think it would be nice if I could stay in a hotel or in a motel."

"Yeah I think so, maybe more like a list, a check-off list. From both parts. Like asking us to, just how to prepare for the visit."

"I think maybe this budget part has to be a little bit bigger just to support organisations that are hosting. Because i think they were spending much more money just to be really friendly and to treat us well. It was excellent."

"I would prefer that they had a per diem from the own centre. Not the hosting organisation, I would prefer this. Because you always feel, if you are not working, in a way, you are not a working person and you get paid. It can be a little embarrassing, you don't feel so good if you get paid and you are just watching and monitoring and not really working, like a worker."

"I don't know if there is a possible collaboration between two centres to exchange. Directly. Just between two centres. If there are two centres that have a lot of contacts. If there is a possibility. For example, if you take XXXX and XXXX and they send one technician there and they send one technician here, for example, they would pay each other."

Key Findings

In general the exchanges succeeded well, the exchangees felt that they had met their goals. All the exchangees would like to take part in an exchange programme again. After the first experience they seem to be more aware of what such short cross-border mobility means, what the advantages can be, how they should prepare and what kind of obstacles and challenges are to be expected. The experience has sparked up thoughts about what it is they actually want and need to learn and where this could be achieved in an optimal way. They all seem to be willing to offer this kind of opportunity to other employees of their centre and seem enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge with them.

The hosts state that the most important thing they have learned is the art of hosting. Many realise now that the preparations made have not been sufficient. Those who have actively engaged themselves in a conversation with the exchangee have had a possibility to share professional knowledge and to learn in a more general manner from a representative of another culture.

Through the programme a possibility for professional development was offered to the participants. Some concrete benefits were gained but as this was not the goal of the programme not many can be listed. Some exchangees had ideas for their marketing plans and some activities were benchmarked. The benefits are more about personal and professional development, networking and being able to assess practices at the home centre.

The buddy, the liaison to the exchangee holds a significant role in the success of the experience. The buddy can help the exchangee to gain a deeper understanding of the host centre and the surrounding culture. A buddy enables the exchangees active participation in the host centre's activities. Those that did not have anyone committed to him or her during the exchange soon felt lost and in some cases unwelcome. The buddy's position inside the hosting organization seems to have mattered to some extent. It was suggested that perhaps an exchangee could have two buddies, one from the operational level and the other a member of the board/managerial level. Most exchangees have stayed in touch with their buddy and/or other people they met.

Some of the obstacles that were feared to limit mobility did not exist. The exchangees were asked to list the biggest barriers to mobility, but through their experiences it was learned that these feared obstacles did not apply. Money, the lack of time, a lack of information and language had been the main obstacles to the staff exchanges. The exchangees all seem to fit a certain profile which seems to go hand in hand with an interest in applying, for example having small children could have hindered enthusiasm to participate.

Structured and formal communication inside the organisations should be added, as the project has suffered from a lack of it. There has not been enough information available to employees in the application stage, leaving some centres with no applicants. The exchangees have not been informed of the reasons why they were chosen as the participants. Giving presentations about the home organisation and about the experience after returning home would bring more advantage to the home organisation.

Planning in advance is one of the key issues in making an exchange successful for all parties. Communication has happened to some extent in the planning phase. As all the exchanges differ from each other, no strict guidelines can be given from outside and the exchangees and the hosting centres need to gain an understanding of the other party beforehand. This will help to find the most suitable buddy and the provider of accommodation. Most interviewees admit that there has been a lack of communication from all sides.

After the exchanges there has not been enough time to report or to discuss the exchange experience with colleagues and management or to analyze new ideas. The participants have not submitted to the blog or the online *Toolkit* as asked. It is feared that ideas get wasted because of this. Hosts should report too. Reporting should be easy and consistent or a reporting system/service should be bought from a professional. The exchanges should be documented in a way that serves similar activity in the future.

A handbook of the project and the hosting centre might help to prepare for the exchange in a more suitable manner. It was suggested that this should be put together by the hosts themselves. Also the staff roster should be introduced beforehand.

ONLINE TOOLKIT

Francesco Ronzon

The online toolkit was primarily aimed at non-artistic cultural professionals (NACP's), students of cultural management looking for their first job/placement and cultural organisations looking for professionals and volunteers from outside their own countries. It was intended to have the ability for its subscribers to upload information directly onto the site, incorporating a social-networking element as well as providing them with practical and relevant information. The ongoing results of the mobility study were intended to inform and provide the form and elements of the content for the toolkit.

The Toolkit was created as a web platform and has been operational since the end of 2009. Its main web components and links are:

Main Toolkit page	http://changingroom.teh.net
Knowledge Base	http://changingroom.teh.net/wiki
Exchange blog	http://changingroom.teh.net/blog
MatchMaker	http://apps.facebook.com/changingroom

Knowledge Base

The *Knowledge-Base* (the core of the project) was set up and developed with exactly the same open-source software used to create Wikipedia, so users can directly upload and update their content. Some "social gadgets" were added to enhance users experiences and facilitate the dissemination of knowledge in social networks. Users could rate the content or add short comments, and eventually login with their Facebook account (with no need to sign-in).

The *Knowledge-Base* included the following:

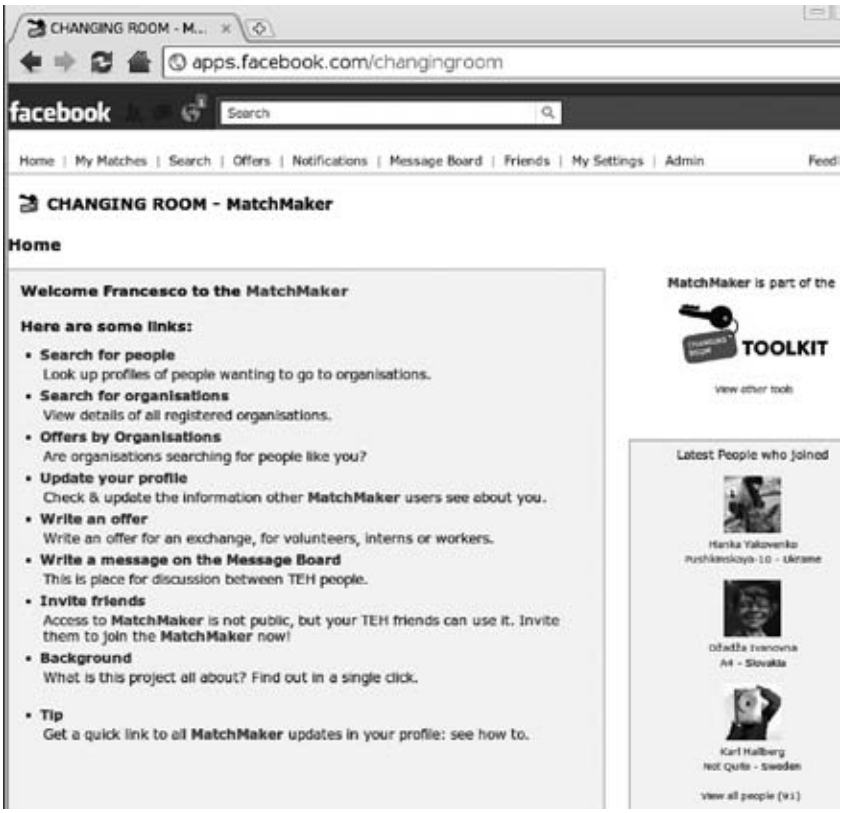
- The 'rough guide' to working in culture in all EU and other European States. Members' of our network wrote initial information (and we also paid some culture professionals to do this) and this was then updated by web surfers under the ex-post supervision of an editor.
- Information on mobility grants and bursaries.
- A listing of cultural management institutions, courses, diplomas, etc.
- Links to other useful and relevant sites.

We were always aware that a "critical mass" is the necessary ingredient for any successful web application, so we started to think of a Toolkit section that could be more suited to the direct needs of our members (our critical mass). This would be some type of "one-stop-shop" with web applications able to attract and involve all of our members who were interested in mobility, hospitality (mobility's counterpart) and wanted to have more involvement with the network. Something that could be, at the same time, a way for TEH to be directly in touch with all those people involved in every TEH member organisation.

The Matchmaker

During the planning stage of the Toolkit we developed the idea of a dedicated private arena, for TEH members only, where users could add their personal profile and post requests and offers of mobility and hospitality they would never expose to a public website. This idea was continually refined with many features added, tested, canceled and modified over a year until a satisfactory result was reached. The outcome is what we called the *MatchMaker*.

The *MatchMaker* is a web application developed within Facebook, where users can, with one click, transfer all of their personal Facebook profile. Users then add some specific personal data, which then becomes easy to explore by other *MatchMaker* users, and is also used by the *MatchMaker* itself to automatically suggest "Matches". The aim is for users to get to know and get in touch with each other, helping them to find colleagues, expertise, and hospitality/exchange opportunities in other countries as well as to make new friends. Put briefly, the *MatchMaker* was a 'private', highly customized Facebook framework, dedicated to enhance mobility inside TEH.



Some of the *Matchmaker* features:

- Members can search other members by location, by country, by job area, profile and searches can be limited to people offering explicit hospitality and general help
- All members and organizations locations can be seen in a Google map
- Organisations and members can post announcements, offers, or just general posts on a private message board, and an automatic notifications system keeps them updated and in touch with the application by notifying them of possible matches, new members, colleagues, offers etc.

In the development of the Toolkit we have used only open-source tools, and TEH decided to make a free release of the open source code of the MatchMaker. A wide range of organisations that wanted to integrate our tools into their web applications has so far showed an interest in them.

The code (called Facebook4org) can be downloaded for free at:
https://github.com/francescor/facebook4org for any organisation that wants to build their own dedicated MatchMaker. The special open source license (GPL) gives also the right to change the code, so it can be adapted to suite customized needs.
A demo (so that anybody can see it in action) is available at http://apps.facebook.com/demo-fforg.

Toolkit Jobs Section

We decided to address this objective of the Toolkit by dividing it into two areas:

- Professional job postings
- Informal job postings

With regard to the professional side we saw it as an opportunity to develop a professional partnership & visibility outside of the network, and made an agreement of cooperation with Culture Jobs International, a UK-based company working in this field. The Toolkit

pulls the latest professional job vacancies in the cultural sector from their database and at the same time, web traffic from their web services comes to the Toolkit.

With regard to the less formal job/placement posts (for students, volunteers, exchanges) we included an 'offers' database directly into the MatchMaker whereby the system is then automatically capable of notifying the offers to potential users (matches).

Exchange Blog – The Toolkit as a platform for dissemination

With regards to the planned use of the Toolkit as a means to disseminate experiences about the exchanges (reports, photos and general posts written by the exchange participants) we soon realized this information was of high value, but dynamic and growing in time, so that the perfect container for it was a dedicated blog: http://changingroom.teh.net/blog. This website is a professional blog platform with a customized extension that is able to connect users contributions to their Facebook profile (for example there is no need for people to sign-in and, at the same time, writers become directly and easily reachable through their Facebook profile).

Participation and General Users' Involvement

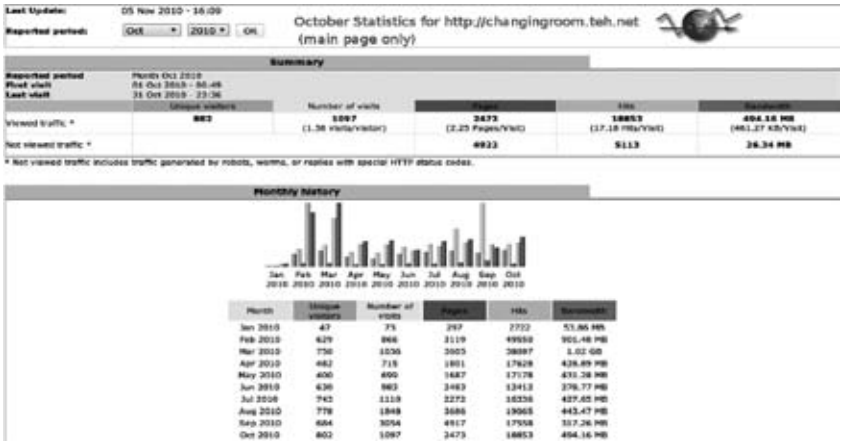
We had expected a higher participation, and a deeper commitment in the production of the *Knowledge Base* content as well as a greater usage of the Toolkit by both internal TEH and external users. This lack of participation is evident in the use of the *MatchMaker* where we found it difficult to involve all of the staff and volunteers from all of our members. Results from the project's study & dedicated workshops did not provide sufficient or clear enough information to understand the necessary ingredients required to attract users. But we do now know that some issues are much more serious than were initially thought. These include:

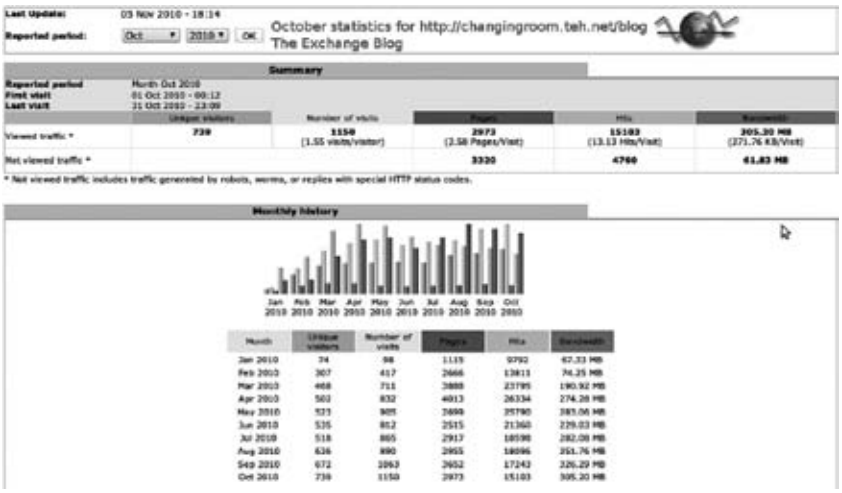
- Communication issues inside each organizations between their leaders (who are directly in touch with TEH) and their workers/staff/volunteers
- The Spoken language (English is not yet the *lingua franca*)
- Potential users not having (or believing they have) the time to utilize such a resource
- Users already being able to connect online with friends and colleagues using social networking tools such as Facebook or Linkedin
- 'Overload' of online information and participation requests (email, messages, Skype, social networking etc) that can result in users 'switching off'.
- General barriers to mobility (as the outcome of the study clearly shows)

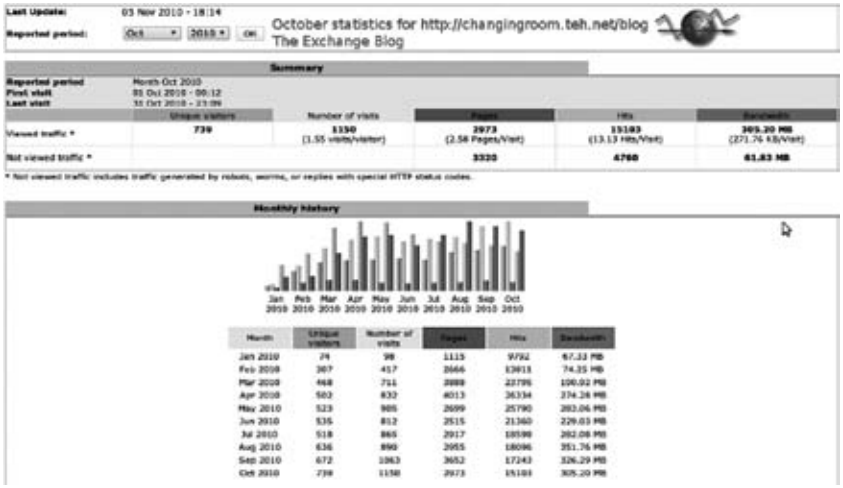
But the main obstacle we encountered was a difficulty in directly reaching every single member of each organisation of our network. Before *Changing Room* we thought we could have been virtually able to be in touch with all of these people. We now know that it is not that easy. These people can all be just 'one-click-away' from being in active direct contact with our network and its members, but our observations shows only a subset of them are 'connected'.

The medium could be one reason for this. The Toolkit was a prototype and an experiment. It highlighted a range of barriers and issues that need to be overcome to effectively 'connect' NACP's. The Toolkit will remain active beyond the official end of *Changing Room.* Over the next year it will be seen if giving people time to 'digest' and become familiar with new tools will increase participation and usage of the Toolkit or if an alternative form of communication is required to 'connect' the networks' members.

Below, the statistics for October 2010 for the Toolkit main page, the Knowledge-Base and the Staff Exchange blog are illustrated. This shows a total number of almost 4,000 unique users for the month for all of the public side of the Toolkit, which is a high figure for a brand new web application.







Nightly updated access statistics for the Toolkit are accessible on line at http://changingroom.teh.net/statistics

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions and recommendations of the Staff Exchange Study

In the *Changing Room* project the exchange between the Trans Europe Halles centres of non-artistic professionals has given good results and has been valuable for the professionals involved in the exchange, and for the sending centres and hosting centres as well. The benefits professionals have gained in the exchanges were increased awareness of how things were done elsewhere, building networks, learned problem-solving mechanism, learning about the attitude of staff and others in cultural centres, and exchanging ideas.

In this study of the *Changing Room* exchange one of the main results was found to be the high level of importance of a person, the ”buddy”, from the hosting organization who took care of the person on exchange. In those cases where there had been a buddy the results of the exchange had been at it’s best. It was hoped by the respondents that in the future exchange there could be always two buddies; one from the operational level and the other from the administrative level of the hosting centre.

The Trans European Halles meetings were seen as a first step to the exchange before the actual exchange to another centre. This result could be taken in to the consideration for the TEH board as a permanent topic in the TEH meetings.

It was found that exchangees who were already internationally orientated were active in the exchanges too. Centres should find ways to encourage those professionals who are not so internationally oriented to make the most of the opportunity for exchange.

As a result it was proposed that every centre should name a person who is in charge of the exchange and its finances. Cultural Centres in Eastern Europe have taken better care of this issue. There were more people named in the centres to take care of the exchange than in the centres of Western European Countries.

The fear of leaving one's own position in the sending centre for the time of exchange was an obstacle for the exchangees.

In the smaller centres it can be a problem if a professional is away. Finding the financial resources, and replacing the person can be difficult.

Two weeks was seen as an optimum time for being on exchange. In a shorter time one could not observe and participate in the hosting centre's everyday life and activities well enough. On the other hand more than two weeks was seen as problematic for the sending centre to organize their activities when one professional is away. Two weeks was seen as a suitable length of time from the point of view of the families of exchangees as well.

Language was not as big an obstacle as thought beforehand. People reported that though the professional on the exchange and the host's buddy did not have a common language, they still could co-operate and learn from each other. It could be that creative people easily find other ways to communicate if there is not a common language.

While there was not an up to date list of the possible hosting centres, people who were chosen by their centres for exchange did choose a centre they knew in some way already. The exchanges would have been even more productive if professionals had been prepared to choose a centre they did not know beforehand.

For the future it would be good to develop in the *Toolkit* a list with a short description of all the centres willing to host exchangees.

Hosting was seen as somewhat problematic. Professionals going on exchange would have needed a proper programme beforehand and more information from the hosting centre than they had. The lack of a programme and information from the hosting centre was seen as one of the biggest problems in the *Changing Room* exchange study. It is highly recommended that hosting centres pay more attention to the preparation of hosting of an exchange.

The sending centre should instead pay more attention to the time when the exchangee returns back. Respondents reported that they did not have time to go through their experiences when they came back to their home centres. As well as this, they would have liked to share the new ideas and what they had learned with their colleagues in the home centre soon after arriving back. The exchange process was left unfinished from the point of view of the exchangee when they could not share and discuss their experiences and new ideas with others in their home centre. Therefore, the sending centres did not get as much benefit out of the exchanges as they could have.

From an administrative point of view, money and financing was seen the biggest problems of exchange in generally.

An important result from the exchangees point of view was that there has been enough money for their exchange. Only some exchangees mentioned that hosting centres should have had a little more money in order to host them better.

Out of the responses of the exchanges, a recommendation can be made as to how to act, so that the exchanges in the future could be as productive and functional as possible between cultural centres.

1. Preparation before the exchange

Sending centre

- to tell the person why she/he was chosen in the exchange
- to tell the other staff why that person was chosen in the exchange
- to prepare a presentation from your own centre for the exchangee to present in the hosting centre
- to make very clear who will do the work of the person who will be on exchange
- to communicate with the hosting centre before the exchange and make sure there will be a programme for the exchangee before he/she goes on exchange

Hosting centre

- to name two buddies for the exchangee: one from the operational level and the other from the board or from the administration of the hosting centre
- to prepare a programme for the exchangee including some real work, not simply observing
- to find suitable accommodation for the exchangee
- to communicate with the sending centre about the programme before the exchange

2. During the exchange

Hosting centre

- to arrange a meeting for the exchangee to present her/his home centre and its activities to your staff
- to go through the programme with the exchangee
- to ask the buddy to present the centre and its activities as a whole

3. After the exchange

Hosting centre

- to go through the experience in your centre with the exchangee before he/she finishes his/her exchange

Sending centre

- to give time and space for the exchangee to explain and discuss the experiences and new ideas with the whole staff when he/she has arrived back
- to ensure that the person on exchange will write, or make in some other way, a report of her/his experience (and download it to the *Toolkit*)

Conclusions and recommendations by the Changing Room Project Team

Paul Bogen, Francesco Ronzon, Anna Weitz, Annette Wolfsberger and Birgitta Persson, Trans Europe Halles Secretary General

The conclusions and recommendations are based both on the results of the study, and from our experience of delivering Changing Room over the past two years. They have been written, primarily for consideration by international culture networks and European policy makers.

Conclusions

How can mobility amongst non-artistic cultural professionals (NACP's) in Europe be facilitated and enhanced? NACP's (non-artistic cultural professionals) is group of cultural workers who facilitates the production of art, support the development of artists and manage cultural buildings and centers.

With Changing Room we aimed to test, study and evaluate a cultural professionals' exchange and training programme; to identify opportunities, issues and barriers regarding the mobility of NACP's, and to subsequently propose new ideas and forms for enhancing and increasing their mobility. What the project and its results have shown is that mobility is as important for NACP's as it is for artists. However, the current possibilities and opportunities for NACP's are few, and the importance of their mobility is less valued both internally and externally. We strongly believe that by enabling this group to both exchange, move, share and learn, it will facilitate and increase the mobility of art and artists, contributing to the strengthening of the European cultural sector as a whole.

Virtual meetings could not and cannot replace face-to-face encounters. Online social networks and resources are useful but do not provide the level of experience, learning and networking opportunities derived from the personal contact of those participating in physical mobility activities.

A two-year pilot project cannot change the attitudes of the whole sector but the majority of the project's different programmes did have an impact. The feedback from participants and organisations was extremely positive, and network members have clearly expressed their wish that Trans European Halles (THE) continues to focus on facilitating mobility and professional development programmes for NACP's in a European setting.

Changing Room aimed to share its learning process and finding beyond its own network and members by building an online toolkit, publishing the evaluation within an academic study, and open-sourcing its structures and software. We believe in the importance of building such collective knowledge, openness and legacy. We also believe that the European culture sector should work together in closer partnership to enhance and increase mobility. Specifically, its key networks should combine and share information, resources and know-how to produce a joined-up and sustainable long-term strategy.

Staff Exchange Programme

One of the objectives of Changing Room was to research how short-term mobility could increase long-term mobility through a staff exchange programme. We suggest that mobility in itself is not an aim, but a necessity and a condition for a rich transnational cultural life. Short-term mobility schemes can be experimental and flexible. While it cannot be stated that short-term opportunities directly resulted in long-term mobility, the short-term exchange of NACP's plants (mobility) seeds into organizations, and has a considerable spin-off effect within the staff of both the sending and hosting organization.

The length of an exchange is not crucial, rather it is the quality of the exchange that has long lasting effects, and a mixture of support for both short-term mobility and long-term mobility is therefore needed. Mobility of NACP's in many cases has a longer-lasting effect on cultural organizations than simply artistic mobility, because both the staff and their organizations often act as intermediaries and knowledge access points.

Involvement in such schemes ensure NACP's gain an understanding of mobility issues, and results in a changed attitude towards mobility among staff and organizations, together with increased knowledge about the possible opportunities and funding schemes. The quality of an exchange (preparation, execution, follow up & sharing) is more important than its length. Short-term mobility is more accessible to NACP's with obligations (social, labour, etc) in their home country that are not in a position to relocate.

In the Staff Exchange programme it was clear that when the first people from each organisation returned from an exchange, they stimulated their colleagues, who then requested participation in an exchange or professional development activity. Moreover, several organizations stated that the provision of these opportunities increased their attractiveness as working places for employees, and this lead to a more professional and motivated staff team.

Professional Development and Capacity Building

The majority of TEH Members do not invest in professional development and training for their staff and we are convinced that this is true for the independent cultural sector in general. The possible explanations for this are:

- Financial resources are limited in the culture sector.
- Most NACP's feel constantly under pressure with little or no spare time and feel guilty if they leave their organization for more than a few days.
- Many culture organizations have only a few members of staff to run their operations and cannot function if any were to leave for an extended period.
- Professional development and training have a low priority, is often seen as a 'luxury', and is often the first area to be cut from budgets when money has to be saved.

An additional explanation is that although investment in organizations and staff is crucial, it is generally not yet part of the organizational culture of the wider independent cultural sector. Furthermore, personal professional development is often less valued than organizational professional development.

Since the opportunities for the training of NACP's are so few, having three days (in a workshop) to work on a relevant issue was considered useful and rewarding. To take part in training on a European level, rather than on a national level, with people from other countries and cultures provided added value for the participants. Furthermore, we embrace the idea of informal education and training possibilities across networks, art forms and disciplines.

Capacity building programmes, which were not incorporated into the networks' existing bi-annual meetings and which were single-purpose activities were considered more successful. These opportunities were clearly branded and identified as professional development opportunities. They provided intense and concentrated learning opportunities within peer groups that had shared objectives and experiences. Because they were open to external participants as well as network members, they resulted in new influences and ideas, increased exchange, and opportunities for the network as well as enabling the participants to build new relationships and investigate new partnerships.

Mobility Information

The pilot's idea of a Wikipedia-style online tool for mobility where cultural operators provide and add the information, did not work. We came to the conclusion that such a resource requires paid staff and contributors to research, edit and input the information. It therefore requires adequate and long-term funding. Moreover, for such a central resource to function properly, it needs to be acknowledged and accepted by the whole sector as

the primary online portal for all European wide information and offers on mobility and professional development. This leads to the question that, if this is possible, if it is what the sector wants and needs and if this is the case, who should be in charge of it and who should fund it?

A generalized, universal toolkit for networks, organizations and individuals concerning mobility issues is probably not feasible, but specific and targeted information and tools provided by and for such projects could be useful. Online toolkits or social networks cannot replace face-to-face exchange and interaction, but support, improve and build on them. Rather than providing general information, these online environments could be related to the objectives of the specific (mobility) project or programme, informing participants about opportunities and activities as a pre and post-programme resource.

Recommendations

Based on our conclusions, we wish to make the following six strategic recommendations:

1. **European Culture Networks should be supported to become the key facilitators and delivers of mobility programmes.**

2. **Programmes should be developed and support provided for short-term and long-term exchanges of NACP's.**

3. **There should be increased opportunities and support for NACP's trans-national Professional Development programmes.**

4. **Trans-national capacity building programmes for NACP's should be delivered in partnership by European culture networks and culture organizations**

5. **Further discussions and a consensus are required on how, where and in what form mobility information should exist on the Internet and who should deliver and manage this resource.**

6. **In order to ensure sustainability, there should be a pre-planned strategy for utilizing the results and continuing to develop the successful programmes of EC future pilot projects.**

1. European Culture Networks should be supported to become the key facilitators and delivers of mobility programmes

The pilot mobility projects are a selected opportunity to test the needs of the cultural sector with regards to mobility. Established European networks are very suitable partners to deliver such projects in Europe as intermediaries towards a wider cultural constituency, and should be enabled to continue to do so within the new EC Culture Programme. Several mobility projects facilitated by different networks should be funded so that sufficient cultural practices and areas would be covered. Regular meetings between these networks should be ensured to safeguard knowledge exchange and 'lessons-learnt'. Larger European networks could also be in charge of a small mobility fund enabling cultural operators from mainly the New EC Countries to attend meetings, professional development schemes etc.

2. Programmes should be developed and support provided for both short-term and long-term exchanges of NACP's

EC, regional and national funding schemes should allow for both short-term as well as long-term mobility amongst NACP's. These schemes could either be developed along the lines of the EC Youth in Action European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme, or managed by an individual, or a partnership of, European culture networks. Long-term mobility should not be a necessary aim of short-term mobility; short-term mobility schemes should aim towards the highest possible standard and intensity to provide unique learning opportunities.

3. There should be increased opportunities and support for NACP's trans-national Professional Development programmes

and

4. Trans-national capacity building programmes for NACP's should be delivered in partnership by European culture networks and culture organizations

Mobility projects such as Changing Room can play an important role in the professionalisation of the independent cultural sector across Europe, and we strongly recommend that there should be funding provided for trans-national professional development and capacity building programmes. Not only do the opportunities in this area need to be increased, but the value and benefit of them for NACP's and culture organizations must be reinforced on all levels. As with an exchange programme, these could be delivered and managed by an individual, or a partnership of, European culture networks and/or organisations. Increased benefits would result if such programmes were open to participants and organizations from outside the culture network (or networks) that deliver them.

5. Further discussions and a consensus are required on how, where and in what form mobility information should exist on the Internet and who should deliver and manage this resource.

Sustainable online archives and/or toolkits should be a prerequisite of all mobility schemes. The quality of information is crucial in our information-intense environment, and special attention should therefore be given to the development and sustainability of such tools, and their content development and management. We therefore recommend that networks and projects build their own online toolkit as an extension, archive and legacy of their project or programme.

But further discussion is required on how and where the information about mobility and professional development for all types of cultural workers and operators should exist on the Internet? For example, could mobility platforms such as On-The-Move have the role of providing a common platform and access point for these different 'toolkits' or archives? If all of the key European cultural networks sat down together, perhaps they could find a practical and sustainable way forward on this issue?

6. In order to ensure sustainability, there should be a pre-planned strategy for utilising the results and continuing to develop the successful programmes of future EC pilot projects.

While we strongly believe in the importance of these pilot schemes, it would have been most welcome if the European Commission had provided for a follow-up programme that would have allowed the successful elements of the mobility pilots to be developed and continue. Structured practice to policy dialogue could have been a useful part of the programme to enable both sides to learn from both the achievements and failures of these experimental pilot projects.

Manual for the Staff Exchange Project

Annette Wolfsberger

Introduction

The Changing Room Staff Exchange Programme facilitated 25 exchanges between 23 partner centres. There were two application rounds spread over a period of two years for staff interested in applying for exchange. Given the size and the amount of interest within sending centres, delegates were asked to limit the number of staff applying to a maximum of three persons.

While the first application round in year one of the project was kept rather open with regards to the opportunities in hosting centres and the wishes of the exchangees, the second application round in year two made note of the fact that it was difficult to match hosting centres and exchangees in such an open process, and provided clearer hosting opportunities as prepared by the hosting centres. In addition to this, and also due to the fact that some exchanges could not be facilitated via this selection process, exchanges were facilitated that responded to specific needs, e.g. a hosting centre looking for support for a specific festival, or an exchangee with a specific professional development interest within a specific centre. We named this Mobility-on-Demand, and believe it is a valuable addition to a more formalized approach.

With regards to the format of the exchanges, the basic premise was to keep them flexible, responsive and experimental. With regards to time, the opportunities included one-week, two-week and one month exchanges. Most of these were single exchanges, that is to say one member of staff from a sending centre who either had a specific or general interest in the hosting centre, or (in many cases) who responded to a specific offer by the hosting centre. They incorporated shadowing, interviewing or consulting with staff members at the hosting centres and/or hands-on work. Yet another exchange included two people from different centres being exchanged at the same time to a specific hosting centre.

Apart from the central communication and the matchmaking role of the staff exchange programme manager, it has to be highlighted that the approach to this was very varied, and that quite a big share of the responsibility for facilitating exchanges lay with the participating centres, especially the hosting ones. Their efforts also influenced the success of an exchange to a considerable extent. The majority of the exchanges lead to very productive and lasting experiences for the staff exchanged, and the contribution of the hosting and sending centres to this was remarkable.

The final Exchange Project Evaluation & Training Workshop (also called the Summer Camp) that took place towards the end of the project in Amsterdam provided for an opportunity for exchanges, as well as staff from hosting centres, to share experiences and gain additional knowledge with regards to mobility – it also meant developing the individual exchange experiences. For many participating in the final workshop, it was a way to understand the bigger picture of Changing Room, and provided a foundation for a new and additional layer of networking within Trans Europe Halles.

Manual & Recommendations

1. Listen to your network and members' needs, wishes and expected challenges and map them, and design the exchange programme accordingly

This might entail investing some time spent on researching needs and requirements before the actual exchange programme starts, but will benefit the smoothness and quality of the exchanges once they have started. It also increases the ownership of participating centres in the programme.

2. Keep it flexible, open and responsive

Application procedures should be flexible and not over-administrated, and should be responsive to its successes and failures during longer time projects. Also the timing, length and format of exchanges should be flexible and respond to the personal and organisational circumstances of exchangee and sending/hosting centre.

3. Appoint a coordinator who knows the network inside out

If the exchange project is not run completely distributed, that is to say centres among themselves agree when to send and host staff, matchmaking and some sort of coordination, especially in bigger networks can play a crucial role. This also ensures that there is a 'driver' of the programme who ensures envisaged actions are being followed up.

4. Communication is crucial

Generally, due to a lack of professional development opportunities within the independent cultural sector, it is necessary to be very clear about the added value of such a programme: Why are exchanges important for individual staff and for the centres? What are the roles of everyone involved? What is the expected outcome? Communication should also be aimed

at staff who might not have previously engaged in international or mobility programmes and have to be convinced about the necessity of such programmes.

Internal communication should adhere to the KISS principle (keep it short and simple) and take into account language barriers if the network operates in different language zones.

5. Matchmaking is the key

Exchange opportunities are limited, and the exchanges that are being facilitated should be the best possible match and utilised to their maximum. Matchmaking therefore is crucial. Keep in mind that the best exchange opportunity might not be the most obvious one. This applies to the choice of the exchangee (Who is being exchanged, at what stage in their career and for what reasons?) as to the hosting opportunity (Why is that centre interesting for the exchangee and the sending centre, what are the learning opportunities, etc)
It might take time to find the right match. Take it if you have it! Consult the sending centre, the hosting centre and the applicant in the process if necessary.

6. Don't forget the social component

An exchange is more than working in an alien or foreign environment for a limited time. Huge amounts of new information, often in a foreign language, need to be processed by the exchangee in a very short time. It should also give an insight into the everyday and social reality of a cultural centre. Appointing a buddy from the hosting centre who takes care of the exchangee beyond purely work-related matters is important in this respect. If accommodation can be found among staff of the hosting centre, this would generally be preferred to accommodation in hotels – and also saves on costs.

7. Share experiences before, during and afterwards

Being part of an exchange programme is a privilege but also entails some responsibilities. The main responsibility is to increase opportunities for learning, and to share the experiences and knowledge acquired. This includes sharing information about the sending centre with members of the hosting centre, sharing experiences following the exchange within the sending centre, and sharing exchange experiences within and outside the programme to ensure that not only the individual exchange, but also future exchanges can profit from the experience. Online environments such as blogs, ping, etc should be used to ensure the sharing and legacy of such programmes.

A FINAL WORD

Elina Laakso

The Sibelius Academy has been involved in the Changing Room Project over the last two years through its many phases and stages. This book is the end result of a long process which has taken place over that time.

The Sibelius Academy is the only music university in Finland and one of the biggest in Europe. In addition to providing the highest education in the field of music, it engages in performance and creative art and research and is committed to the fostering and renewing of Finland's musical culture and cultural heritage. It also seeks active collaboration with Finnish society and participates in the development of culture. Students who have been admitted to the Sibelius Academy start by studying towards the Master of Music (MMus) Degree. The Sibelius Academy also offers postgraduate degrees with artistic and research options. These postgraduate, higher degrees are the Licentiate and Doctor of Music. There are about 1,400 students at the Sibelius Academy; the number of full-time teachers is about 180 and the number of part-time teachers is around 300. Besides Helsinki, the Academy has premises in the towns of Kuopio, Järvenpää and Seinäjoki.

There are two master's programmes in the Degree Programme in Arts Management at the Sibelius Academy. The programme in English, located in Helsinki, focuses on Arts Management and international networking. In this programme, the students obtain versatile skills in Arts Management and leadership of arts and cultural organizations. The programme in Finnish, located in Kuopio, focuses on expertise and entrepreneurship in the cultural industry and cultural production. Both master's degree programmes aim at developing the student's research skills and critical thinking.

It has been an enriching and in many ways valuable experience to have the Changing Room Project initiated in the above described context. Many of the various key themes of the Arts Management education have also been relevant in terms of the Project's study and

evaluation. The research part of the Project was the Sibelius Academy's responsibility, and it had two principal aims: firstly to study the current situation and mobility in the cultural workers sector, and secondly, to study the impacts of the Project.

An especially interesting creation of the Project is the online Toolkit aimed at non-artistic cultural professionals, students of cultural management looking for job and cultural organizations looking for professionals and volunteers from outside their own countries. It is important that further development of the web-based social-networking possibility continues, taking advantage of the research now finished, and of future studies.

As can be seen from this volume the Project has successfully come to its end, and there are many that I would like to thank for this. The success of this Project has been due to many factors, and many people have been involved through the different stages. On behalf of the Sibelius Academy, I would like to thank our European partners and colleagues working for Trans Europe Halles and the Changing Room Project, for their fruitful idealism in the field of cultural exchanges, and for their flexible co-operation.

Special thanks to Heini Rekola and Sampsa Wulff for their involvement in the research process. Their open minded enthusiasm has been most important in the course of the study. Warmest thanks to Tanja Vilén who provided her professional overview and constructive expertise in formulating the study.

I would also like to thank Timo Cantell for his involvement in the early stages of the project, in addition to those mentioned above, who successfully completed the research part of the Project following his departure from the Sibelius Academy.

Last but not least, it has been my great privilege and pleasure to work with Eija Tanninen, who has whole heartedly and with astonishing project management skills taken care of the administrational and organizing duties for the Sibelius Academy. Her efficiency and tactfulness have been invaluable.

For the Arts Management programme the Changing Room Project has been a joint effort based on communication, research knowledge and a lot of cultural management inspiration. Personally I appreciate the chance to learn and reflect on the reality of human interaction in the context of non-artistic cultural exchange issues. I look forward to seeing the work continue. Following on from this project it is clear that much work can be done in the future to create more meaningful opportunities of mobility for both non-artistic and artistic professionals. Building bridges between individuals and especially personal contacts seems to be a critical factor which we have to respect. Let us aim at further education and deeper research, and the search for more real tools for everyday work.

Bibliography of annex 1 have been collected by Jenni Varho and Timo Cantell and the bibliography of annex 2 by information specialists Soili Voutilainen and Tommi Harju from the Sibelius Academy Kuopio Department Library.

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Soili Voutilainen and Tommi Harju

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On-The-Move has identified a number of studies, reports and publications which document and evaluate programmes for artists' mobility, including international artists' residency programmes. These may be useful to policy makers and project managers who are looking to build arguments for support of international mobility. If you know of any more such studies, please let us know:
info@on-the-move.org

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Euro-Mediterranean

'Mobilité artistique en Méditerranée', a paper on artistic mobility in the Mediterranean. It was presented by Ferdinand Richard, Director of AMI (Aide aux Musiques Innovatrices) at a meeting in Fès, Morocco, May 2006, in a workshop entitled "La mobilité des acteurs culturels : formations et réseaux".
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G2CC Project - Readers and Documentation

Culture and Online Information

The Reader for a conference held in Nantes, June 23-24 2005, on the theme of cultural information providers and potential for using new technologies as explored by 'digital pioneers'. Information on workshops, essays and extensive bibliography. IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH.
http://www.on-the-move.org/documents/OTM2.2_W2_Nantes_Reader.doc

Mobility and Cultural Cooperation in the Age of Digital Spaces (2006)

A reader was published by On-The-Move to complement training sessions run in Bucharest and Helsinki in 2006 on the theme of Mobility and Cultural Cooperation. The reader contains articles by the three trainers - Sanna Kangasluoma, Cristina Farinha and Aleksandra Uzelac, along with an introduction to the subject by Training Director Corina Suteu and a full bibliography of additional reference material.
http://www.on-the-move.org/documents/Reader_training_Oct2006.pdf

Mobility, Intercultural Competence, Cultural Cooperation in the Age of Digital Space (2005)

A reader was produced to accompany training sessions in mobility and cultural cooperation run in Bucharest and Helsinki in 2005. It contains many useful articles, documents, statements and an extensive bibliography, produced by Training Director, Corina Suteu.
http://www.on-the-move.org/documents/OTM2.3_Training_Reader_2005.pdf

APPENDIXES

TRANS EUROPE HALLES

CHANGING ROOM

Creating Mobility
for Cultural Operators

Questionnaire

May 2010

This study is one component of the two-year CHANGING ROOM project, which looks for new ways of stimulating mobility between cultural operators. We study different forms of international exchange, such as staff exchange, international workshops and training programmes.

Please check a number or reply in writing. All opinions are important and valuable, so feel free to provide as much information as possible.

Some of the questions deal with the CHANGING ROOM on-line tool kit. If you are not familiar with it already, please spend a few minutes visiting the site: http://changingroom.teh.net

GENERAL INFORMATION

Gender

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

Year of birth: _____

Education

- ☐ Elementary or comprehensive school
- ☐ Vocational school
- ☐ High school graduate
- ☐ High school graduate + Vocational school
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Self-learned /practise based learned
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

Field of qualification

- ☐ Arts
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Humanities
- ☐ Social sciences
- ☐ Natural sciences
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

What is your position in the cultural centre? _____

Which languages do you speak? _____

_____

Which language you would like to learn? _____

EXPERIENCES WITH MOBILITY ACTIVITIES

Have you participated in any staff exchange, mobility activity or similar arrangements?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, please give a short description:

_____

_____

How do you benefit from mobility activities, such as international exchange? Please mark the importance on a scale from 1 to 5.

1 = very important
2 = Important
3 = not important
4 = not at all important
5 = do not know

1 2 3 4 5	Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere
1 2 3 4 5	Building networks
1 2 3 4 5	Learning administrative issues

1 2 3 4 5 Learning marketing issues

1 2 3 4 5 Learning problem-solving mechanisms

1 2 3 4 5 Learning attitudes of staff and other people in other cultural centres

1 2 3 4 5 Exchanging ideas

Please describe any other benefits you find important in mobility activities:

_____

_____

Would you take part in international exchange without funding provided by your cultural centre?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, how much could you spend on your own?_____

_____

Would opportunities such as international exchange make it more likely for you to remain working in your cultural centre for a longer period of time?

☐ Yes

☐ No

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CULTURAL CENTRE

Country: _____

Number of employees:

All_____

Volunteers_____

Fully paid_____

Project mangers_____

How many of the employees are in artistic professions? _____

How many of the employees are in non artistic professions? _____

A short description of the character of your centre: _____

_____

Annual number of all visitors to the centre, for any reason: _____

Approximately how many of the visitors are from abroad? _____

Does your cultural centre have any experience in EU-funded projects?

- ☐ Yes, please specify: _____
- ☐ No

MOBILITY ACTIVITIES OF THE CULTURAL CENTRE

How many foreign non-artistic staff members work in your cultural centre? _____

What do these people do?_____

_____

_____

How many volunteers does your cultural centre involve annually? _____

How many of them are from abroad? _____

How are the volunteers involved with mobility?

_____

How internationally connected are the people working in your cultural centre? Have they worked abroad or do they have international contacts as part of their duties? Please mark on a scale from 1 to 5.

1 = very much internationally oriented
2 = relatively internationally oriented
3 = relatively little internationally oriented
4 = not at all internationally oriented
5 = do not know

1 2 3 4 5 Directors
1 2 3 4 5 Producers
1 2 3 4 5 Marketing staff
1 2 3 4 5 Technical staff

1 2 3 4 5 Other non-artistic administrative staff

1 2 3 4 5 Artistic administrators

1 2 3 4 5 Artists

1 2 3 4 5 Other, please specify: _____

Does your cultural centre have someone who is in charge of the mobility activities?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please specify his or her position and duties regarding mobility.

_____

_____

How does your cultural centre provide information on mobility opportunities to its staff?

☐ No information

☐ Information on line, e.g. via email

☐ Leaflets and other printed material

☐ Posters on notice boards

☐ Information by other means, please specify: _____

Does your cultural centre provide any financial support for the mobility of its staff?

☐ Yes, what kind? _____

☐ No, why not? _____

How does the strategy of your cultural centre pay attention to mobility?

_____

_____

What is the general opinion on mobility within your cultural centre?

_____

What are the major benefits your cultural centre can gain by taking part in mobility activities? Please mark the level of importance on a scale from 1 to 5.

1 = very important
2 = Important
3 = not important
4 = not at all important
5 = do not know

1 2 3 4 5 Increased awareness of how things are done elsewhere
1 2 3 4 5 Building networks
1 2 3 4 5 Learning administrative issues
1 2 3 4 5 Learning marketing issues
1 2 3 4 5 Learning problem-solving mechanisms
1 2 3 4 5 Learning attitudes of staff and people in other cultural centres
1 2 3 4 5 Exchanging ideas

Please describe other benefits your cultural centre could gain through mobility:

_____

_____

What would be the ideal length of stay in mobility exchange?

☐ A few hours
☐ A few days
☐ A week
☐ 2 weeks
☐ 3-4 weeks
☐ 2-6 months
☐ Longer: _____

What are the main obstacles in your cultural centre for developing mobility? Please mark on a scale from 1 to 5.

1 = major problem
2 = relatively problematic
3 = relatively easy to solve
4 = very easy to solve
5 = do not know

1 2 3 4 5 Administrative
1 2 3 4 5 Financial in general
1 2 3 4 5 Development budget

1 2 3 4 5 Budget for mobility

1 2 3 4 5 Getting visas

1 2 3 4 5 Getting work permits

1 2 3 4 5 Getting residency permits

1 2 3 4 5 Getting suitable visitors

1 2 3 4 5 Language skills

1 2 3 4 5 Finding replacement staff for those who go out on an exchange

1 2 3 4 5 Finding time to host visitors

1 2 3 4 5 Having a programme for receiving exchanges

1 2 3 4 5 Finding suitable or interested people to sent out on an exchange

1 2 3 4 5 Tax issues (such as double taxation, VAT)

1 2 3 4 5 Social security questions

1 2 3 4 5 Culture differences or diversity issues

1 2 3 4 5 Lack of personal interest

1 2 3 4 5 Family issues and commitments

1 2 3 4 5 Unequal opportunities among the staff for taking part in exchange projects

Please name any other obstacles you think relevant to fostering mobility:

_____

_____

How important are international exchange opportunities for keeping the staff in the employment of your centre?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Relatively important
- ☐ Not very important
- ☐ Not at all important
- ☐ Do not know

Would your cultural centre like to be host for mobility activities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, why not: _____

THE ROLE OF TEH IN FOSTERING MOBILITY

What role would you like TEH to take in mobility matters to help you and your cultural centre?

- ☐ Providing information
- ☐ Providing networks
- ☐ Setting up mobility projects (such as CHANGING ROOM)
- ☐ Facilitating mobility projects between members
- ☐ Becoming a grant-giving body
- ☐ Lobbying for mobility issues

Please describe any other ways TEH could help you and your cultural centre in mobility-related matters:

_____

_____

Have you used the on-line CHANGING ROOM tool kit?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, what parts of it?

- ☐ Knowledge base
- ☐ The Matchmaker
- ☐ Culture jobs international

Have you found the CHANGING ROOM tool kit helpful?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you think the CHANGING ROOM tool kit improves and fosters mobility?

- ☐ Yes, in what way? _____
- ☐ No, why not? _____

Finally, please describe how to encourage mobility between cultural operators.

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ANSWERS!

TRANS EUROPE HALLES

CHANGING ROOM

CHANGING ROOM
Creating Mobility
for Cultural Operators

SIBELIUS ACADEMY

Questionnaire for the hosts

1) GENERAL INFORMATION

Name?
Year of birth?
Gender?
Education? (in what subject area?)
- Elementary or comprehensive school
- Vocational school
- High school graduate
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Self-learned/practice based learned
- other

Field of qualifications?

What languages do you speak?

Where do you work (Country, name of the centre)

Field of the center?

Position in your own centre centre?

Has your center been involved in other exchange programmes/international activity before?

2) GENERAL ABOUT THE EXCHANGE

Who (from where) did you host?
When?

What were your motives to host?

Did you meet your goals?

How did you prepare for the visit?
- Do you think the preparations you made were sufficient?

Did you prepare a programme for the exchange period?
-Was the programme of the visit introduced to the exchangee in advance?

Did you introduce the exchangee to local cultural life outside your center?

Was there an assigned ”buddy” (someone in charge of the visit) for the exchangee?

Why was this person chosen to be the buddy?

Did the exchange cause any delay in the ”buddy’s” daily work?

Did the visit cause delay in other employees tasks?

Did you hire any additional employees for either of the exchange periods?
- Sending: yes/no
- Recieving: yes/no

Was there something you learned from the exchangee?

Have you stayed in contact with the exchangee?

How do you feel about the length of the visit? Should it be longer or shorter?
(What would the ideal length of a visit be?)

Do you think the exchange was well organised on Changing Room’s behalf?

How long did the process take (from the beginning of the application process until the end of the exchange period?)

3) FINANCIAL ISSUES

What were the overall cost of hosting? (in terms of money, time etc)

Were there any unforeseen costs?

4) COMMUNICATION

Are you happy with the level of communication before/during the exchange with the exchangee?
- What should have been done differently?

Are you happy with the level of communication before/during the exchange with Changing Room?
- What should have been done differently?

Did you find the online Toolkit useful during the process?

How would you develop the online Toolkit to make it more usable?

5) REFLECTION

What was good about the exchange?

Looking back, is there something you could have done differently in order to make the exchange serve you and the exchangee better?

Has the exchange period made detecting problems at your own centre easier?
- What kind of issues have you detected? What kind of actions have you taken/ are you planning to take?

What does this kind of exchange mean for your centre?
- Does the staff profit from exchanges? (If not, how could that be changed?

In the future, would you be interested to host exchangees/ people on sabaticalls/ other?

What would promt you to host again?

Now that you have hosted an exchangee, what do you think the main barriers are to working in another country?

Any comments for improvement, tips or recommendations for future
For example about
- planning and preparation,
- the selection process (who gets to go and where)
- matchmaking (looking for the best match, comments about the selection procedure)
- the project in general
- hosting and sending centres roles
- buddy's role
- exchangee's role during their visit

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ANSWERS!

TRANS EUROPE HALLES

CHANGING ROOM

CHANGING ROOM
Creating Mobility
for Cultural Operators

SIBELIUS ACADEMY

Questionnaire for the exchangees

1) GENERAL INFORMATION

Name?

Year of birth?

Gender?

Education? (in what subject area?)
- -Elementary or comprehensive school
- -Vocational school
- -High school graduate
- -Bachelor's degree
- -Master's degree
- -Self-learned/practice based learned
- -other

Field of qualifications?

What languages do you speak?

Where do you work (Country, name of the centre)

Position in your own centre centre?

For how long have you worked at the centre?

2) GENERAL ABOUT MOBILITY

Do you consider yourself to be international (an active traveller)?

Have you taken part in international seminars/meetings/ workshops relating to your work in the past?

Do you actively co-operate with other (international) cultural centers or operators?

Have you taken part in a TEH meeting in the past?

Are you actively involved with TEH or other network encouraging mobility in some ways?

What would be the best way to share information about exchange programmes and mobility in general?

3) GENERAL ABOUT THE EXCHANGE

Which centre did you visit?

- Why was that center picked?
- Were you happy with the match making process and the outcome?

When? (for how long did you stay?)
-Was that time picked for a particular reason?

What were your personal motives to do the exchange?
-What did you want to learn?
-Did you meet your goals?

How did you find out about the possibility to take part in the programme?

Why were you chosen for the exchange? (out of all of the employees at your home centre)

From your point of view (and after doing the exchange) what factors were emphasized in matchmaking?
Any recommendations for matchmaking?

How quickly did you recover from a possible culture shock? (how quickly were you able to start fully working / observing)

Was a tour at the centre organised?

Was the strategy of the centre explained to you?

Was the programme of your visit introduced to you?

What exactly did you do during the exchange? Did you have an assigned task ?
- Did you work independently? Under supervision? Did you work at all?
- What was your role like at the hosting centre? Listening or participating?
- Did the task require special know-how/education you have

Did you have an assigned "buddy"? (Someone in charge of your visit)
- Does this person hold a similar position to yours at their centre?
→ Did you ask this to be so?

Did you mainly work with the buddy?

How many people's daily work were you able to observe?

4) PREPARATION

How did you prepare for the visit?

Who took care of your daily tasks at your own centre?

Were there any delays in your own work at home centre?

How about your personal life during the exchange? Any challenges?

Do you think the exchange was well organised? Any thoughts or recommendations:

How long did the process take (from the beginning of the application process until the end of the exchange period?)

In general, do you use the Toolkit?
Yes: What is good about it?
No: How would you develop it to make it more appealing and usable

Did you find the Toolkit useful during the preparation process and the actual exchange?
- Did you use the Rough Guide?
- Would you recommend the Toolkit to a colleague?
- Would you help them learn to use it?

Are you happy with the level of communication before/during the exchange with the hosting organisation and the organisatory body?

What kind of information would you have found useful before the visit?
Was this provided?

5) LANGUAGE, CULTURE, HOUSING ETC

What languages were used during the exchange?

Do you think communication was efficient? (despite possible lack of a shared language?)

Where did you stay?

6) FINANCIAL ISSUES

Who covered your living costs?

Where there any unforeseen costs?
- Who paid?
- Were costs an issue (to any extent)?

Did you struggle with any financial, legal or tax related issues?

What kind of funding system would be optimal for this kind of mobility programme?

7) REFLECTION

Tell about the experience
- What did you learn
- What was challenging?
- What kind of problems were there?
- What went well?

Were you able to allow yourself some recovery time after the exchange in order to absorb the differences and demands of working abroad? (Was this needed)

If you worked on a specific project during the exchange, has continuation been planned? Is continuation possible?

Have you already implemented/ started to plan something inspired by your visit?

Has the exchange period made detecting issues/problems at your own centre easier?
No it was good to have a distance to work in other surrounding. Nothing were detected

What kind of issues have you detected? What kind of actions have you taken/ are you planning to take?

Has your own cultural centre been open to new ideas, suggestions and other ways of doing things?
I think so, when i explained. They are very open. I can imagine of some ways of working together

How has the exchange influenced your personal life?
How has the exchange influenced your professional life?

Now that you have been on an exchange, what do you think the main barriers/ issues are to working in another country?

8) NETWORKING, MOBILITY, RECRUITMENT

Have you stayed in touch with your "buddy" or other employees/people you met during the exchange period?

What size would you estimate the network of people gained through the exchange to be?

Has going on the exchange made you more or less likely to consider ever working in another country?

Would you be interested in going on an exchange again in the future/ take part in other type of mobility programme?

What do you think is the most useful way to be mobile? (Exchanges on demand, shorter visits to centres, workshops, other kind of meetings?)

In previous research it has come up that a number of employees of TEH member centers feel that the best way to be mobile is to work with clear goals and projects. This way mobility would serve the hosting centre better. In case a center is setting up a festival and has a need for know-how in a certain area (ie marketing, finance) they could then send out a request to other centres through Matchmaker.

How do you feel about this and would you be interested in such mobility "on-demand"?

Are you prepared to spend more time and energy planning and preparing an international project? (than would be needed for a domestic project)

In the future what kind of role would you like TEH to have in mobility issues? (What would you like the network to provide etc)

Changing Room: Mobility of Non-Artistic Cultural Professionals is a study of Sibelius Academy that examines the mobility of Non-Artistic Cultural Professionals (NACP's) in Europe. This group of cultural workers facilitate the production of art, support the development of artists and manage cultural buildings and centers. The study is the first of its kind and is part of the European Commission funded pilot project "Changing Room" (2008-2010) organized by Trans Europe Halles, a European Network of Independent Cultural Centres. In addition to the academic study, the publication includes conclusions and recommendations from the Changing Room Project Team.

The editors of the publication are specialists in Arts Management. Elina Laakso, Master of Music and Director of the Sibelius Academy Kuopio Department, Heini Rekola, graduate student of the Arts Management Programme at the Sibelius Academy, Eija Tanninen-Komulainen, Master of Arts, specialized in Arts Management, Tanja Vilén, Doctor of Science (Econ.) and lecturer in the Arts Management Programme at the Sibelius Academy, and Sampsa Wulff, Master of Science (Econ.) and doctoral student at the University of Eastern Finland. The publication also includes contributions from the Changing Room Project Team members Paul Bogen, Changing Room Project Manager, Annette Wolfsberger, Changing Room Staff Exchange Project Manager, Francesco Ronzon, Changing Room Toolkit Manager, Anna Weitz Changing Room Marketing and Communication Manager and Birgitta Persson, Secretary General, Trans Europe Halles.

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