

LEARNING IN CULTURAL PROJECTS
-Case Study of the Outcomes of EU Culture Programme Projects

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ABSTRACT

Thesis

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>The aim of this study is to describe the outcomes of cultural projects and the learning generated from the projects. The learning is explored through outcomes in EU Culture Programme projects.</p> <p>The theoretical frame applied in this thesis, is based on different perspectives on projects and management theory. Additionally, the theoretical emphasis is put on organisational learning including project-based learning.</p> <p>This thesis is qualitative case study research, using focused interviews as a data collection method. The data is analysed through a content analysis method.</p> <p>The research shows that evaluation of project outcomes needs to be examined from a broad perspective, regarding both project and organisational factors. The study demonstrates interdependence between the project and the organisation.</p> <p>Furthermore, the research shows that projects are conducive to learning in organisations. The research describes a learning process, where the organisations implemented learnt practices in the project or/and outside the project. Additionally, obstacles for learning in form of a mismatch between project practices and main activities in the organisation were found.</p>	
<p>Keywords EU Culture Programme, projects, project management, organisational learning, project-based learning.</p>	
<p>Additional information</p>	

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

While working with a EU Culture Programme project and following a process of learning in the organisation from close, I became interested in following up the similar processes in other cultural organisations taking part in the Culture Programme. I wanted to know how other small-sized organisations were dealing with a EU project, often seen as bureaucratic and challenging to manage. How did the members of the organisation feel about the project realisation? Were they satisfied with the outcomes? What did they learn from the project and what kind of learned skills would they use in a future project?

This case study could have been realised by using other project cases than EU culture Programme projects, however using EU Culture Programme projects enabled comparison between the participating organisations as they were working within a similar frame.

Since the start of the culture programme Culture 2000, one programme period has been completed and the one following, Culture 2007 is to be completed in 2013. The programmes work as financing and programming instruments for cultural cooperation. The aim of the programmes is to support cultural transnational cooperation between cultural operators in European Union, as well as active European cultural organisations and collection and dissemination of information. (http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/culture/index_en.htm)

The aim of the first programme Culture 2000 (2000-2006) was “to develop a common cultural area by promoting cultural dialogue, knowledge of the history, creation and dissemination of culture, the mobility of artists and their works, European cultural heritage, new forms of cultural expression and the socio-economic role of culture.” The budget of the Culture 2000 was 236.5 million euro. (http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/culture/l29006_en.htm).

The aim of the following programme Culture 2007 (2007-2013) is “to support cultural cooperation actions, European organisations active in the field of culture, as well as the collection and dissemination of information in the field of culture.” The general objective is according to the programme summary “to enhance the cultural area

common to Europeans with a view to encouraging the emergence of European citizenship.” The programme budget is 400 million euro. (http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/culture/l29016_en.htm)

The programme includes three different strands, which are 1) Support for Cultural Projects, 2) Support for Organisations Active at European Level in the Field of Culture, 3) Cooperation Projects between Organisations involved in Cultural Policy Analysis. The support for Cultural Projects (strand 1) is divided in seven different categories which are a) Multi-annual Cooperation Projects, b) Cooperation Projects c) Literary Translation Projects d) Cooperation Project with Third Countries e) Support to European Cultural Festivals and d) Framework partnership for European Cultural Festivals. (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/culture/programme/strands1_en.php).

For this study I have chosen to focus on Cultural Projects and Multi-annual Cooperation Projects and Cooperation Projects.

Finnish organizations have actively taken part in the projects of the Culture Programme. In the period of Culture 2000, Finnish organisations were involved in over 150 cooperation projects (CIMO, 12/2006) and in Culture 2007 over 120 cooperation projects (CIMO 6/2010).

In 2014 the Culture Programme and the Media Programme together will form one big programme – The Creative Europe, which also will include the Creative Industry. (http://www.cimo.fi/ohjelmat/kulttuuri_ohjelma/uusi_ohjelmakausi).

In this thesis I have not been using statistics and evaluations made by the European Commission. I am more interested in the organisation’s own evaluation of the project. When I started to research, I was especially interested in single participants in the EU projects and how they reflected on their work and evaluated the project? Did they recognize any other outcomes than the expected and pre-defined project results? Were there other outcomes that the organisation saw as result of the project? Could the projects be evaluated in a different way than through statistics and formal evaluation questionnaires?

After a discussion with the advisors at the Centre for International Mobility CIMO, I decided to conduct the research through a case study of Finnish partner organisations. CIMO functions as a national agency and cultural contact point for the EU Culture Programme in Finland. The advisors working with the Culture programme expressed

their interest in a study, which also could clarify possible additional outcomes of the projects, information that could not be found in the final reports. We also discussed the complexity of realizing a EU project and about the learning process each partner where likely to go through at least during their first project, the so-called 'first round.' As there is not much research on EU projects on the participant-level, there is clearly a need for more research and discussion about the subject.

1.2 The Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the learning process in cultural projects. The study is conducted through a case study of outcomes within EU Culture Programme projects. The cases are five small-sized Finnish cultural organisations taking part in the Culture Programme: Culture 2007.

The learning process has been explored through an evaluation of the project management and the outcomes. Therefore the research is gathered around two central themes of the thesis: **1) evaluation of project realisation and outcomes** and **2) learning from projects.**

The first theme, **evaluation of the project realisation and outcomes**, attempts to examine questions like: What kind of outcomes did the project bring? How did the organisations evaluate the project? What kind of impact did the project have? Did the project result in unintended outcomes? Were there a link between project and organisational results? Was there a temporary project organisation created for the project, and how did it look like? How were the project managers dealing with challenges? How did they describe and reflect on project management?

The second theme, learning from projects, tries to answer or illustrate following questions: What kind of learning did the project bring to the organisation? What kind of a learning process did the organisation go through?

Furthermore, it can be said that the study provides a description of the reality of making a cultural project.

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 2 will demonstrate the theoretical approaches of the study. The theoretical discussion is based on various literatures on project management and learning in projects.

Chapter 3 is illustrating the research methodology used in the thesis. The chapter will illustrate the general methodological approach of the study, the methods of data collection, and finally, describe the process of data collection.

Chapter 4 illustrates and discusses the key findings of the analysis. The chapter is structured along three main themes focusing on the art of making cultural projects, challenges of managing them and learning within these projects.

The last chapter (5) makes connections between the theory and the main the results of the research. Finally, some topics for further studies are presented.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will demonstrate the theoretical approaches of the thesis. Firstly, it will examine projects and project management. This includes different definitions and perspectives on projects, an illustration of the project phases and different approaches on project management as well as a brief description of the characteristics of project-based work within the cultural field. The second theoretical approach is learning in projects, which attempts to describe organisational learning and project-based learning.

2.1 Projects and Project Management

2.1.1 Perspectives on Projects

There are several ideas and definitions of what a project is. In this chapter the main perspectives on projects will be described in brief.

A project is determined by three goal dimensions or supporting pillars; time, costs and quality. Söderlund (2005) means that there is a *timeframe*, often a pre-defined deadline when a project should be finished. Secondly the project involves a *budget*, as well pre-defined, which put some limited means for the project. The third, *quality* stands for the end result what the project is aiming for. All three dimensions are at least some level, defined in advance, but as Söderlund indicates, these pillars can still change during the project. Where the emphasis is put in these three, varies from project to project. (Söderlund 2005, p. 54-56). These supporting pillars, often also visualized as a triangle (the project triangle, see picture 1), are describing a traditional view of a project.

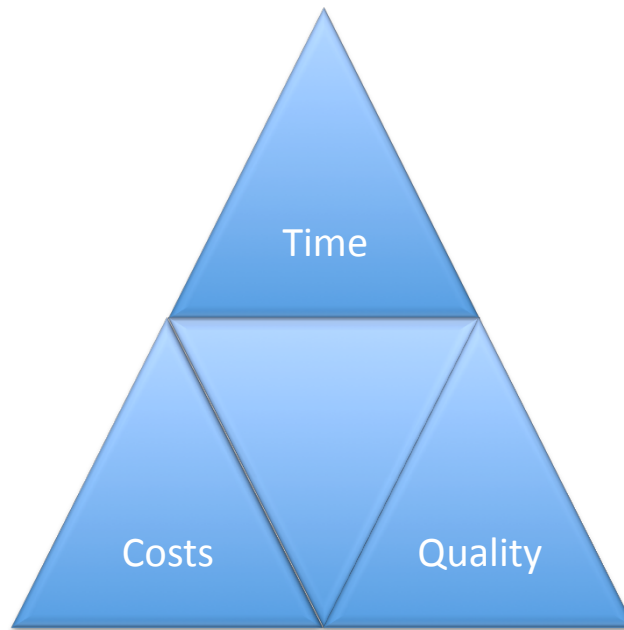


Figure 1: Traditional Project Triangle (adapted from Söderlund 2005, p. 55)

A 'new-style project' would according to Briner, Hastings and Geddes (1996) be depicted as a traditional triangle surrounded by a circle of additional factors as **External or commercial pressures, Organisational Politics and Personal Objectives**. (Briner, Hastings & Geddes 1996, p. 4). This expanded triangle (see appendix 2) will be discussed more in chapter 2.1.3.

Approaches to Projects

The traditional approach to projects is the mechanistic view. Since the 1950s the discourse was ruled by rationalistic thinking including key factors as structure, control and order. In the 1990s the discourse started to focus more on existence, uncertainty and the 'inter-human adventures' (mellanmänskliga äventyr as Blomberg calls it in Swedish). (Blomberg 2003, p. 90-91).

According to the mechanistic approach on projects, the project considered as an **instrument or tool**, which is used for executing specific tasks with a certain goal. Project work is seen as a closed goal-oriented process, which follows a certain pre-made plan. This instrumental approach on projects goes, according to Blomberg (2003), not very well together with creativity and innovation. Therefore change and renewal oriented goals can only affect the planning and work on goal definitions before or outside the project. Human creativity, smart solutions and new ideas which enter during the process of realizing a project, is hence threats for the project, as they are disturbing and affecting central factors of the pre-defined project plan – the time frame

and costs as well qualitative goals of the project. This is why control and elimination of disturbing factors (changes) are seen as central in project management. (Blomberg 2003, p. 77-78).

Andersen (2008) defines the project from an organisational perspective “*A project is a temporary organisation, established by its base organisation to carry out an assignment on its behalf.*” The temporary organisation’s (the project) main task is to provide the base organisation or clients with merchandise or assignments (as services). The base organisation - the owner of the project (the temporary organisation) also often called mother, parent or stationary organisation, is considered to be permanent in this case, even if it is theoretically possible that it stops existing (Andersen 2008, p. 10, Modig 2007, p. 808). Project management involves, according to Andersen an interaction between the base organisation and the temporary organisation. Further he divides the tasks of recurring and preparing character, as assignments for the base organisation and renewal and improvements for a temporary organisation. (Andersen 2008, p. 4, 10-11).

Another approach sees the project as a **social construction**. Stabler (2013) defines the social construction as: “*the process by which people actively and creatively shape their own reality, in interaction with salient others. To the extent that each participant in this process has somewhat different ideas about what reality should be, social construction involves contestation and negotiation.*” As projects can be seen as organisations and organisations as social constructions, this definition describes another view of projects, projects as social constructions. The process, where the members form the organisational reality, is not always a perceptible for its actors as well as there are differences in their behaviour. (Stabler 2013, p. 239, 5).

The control-driven orientation considers the project as form of organisation. The sense-making orientation on other hand, regards the project as a way of organising. (Thomas 2000, p.41).

The project is traditionally seen as a separate organisational unit, which can be delimited ideologically and organisationally from other activities and projects (Söderlund 2005, p. 54-56). Blomberg (2003) however argues that a project is not a unique action separate from other stable activities. He means that projects are linked to each other, other activities and other projects. The links between these are the ideas, the people and the organisations. Between the project and other projects and the

project and other activities there is always a state of dependence, and vice versa. The project is either competing or complementing with other projects or other activities. (Blomberg 2003, p. 35-37). He continues by claiming against the assumption of that projects have a clear beginnings (starting with an unique idea) and endings. Very few ideas are unique and the project activities are very seldom completely separated from other activities. He means that project always has a 'prehistory' when it comes to for example material resources. Projects are either consequences or qualifications of/for something and not as unique as people consider them be. Blomberg refers to his studies of projects, which showed that several of the people working within projects, defined the projects as 'unique and extra-ordinary', even though they actually had previous experience of both similar project settings and were colleges or partners from previous projects. (Blomberg 2003, p. 30-36).

Furthermore Blomberg makes a distinction between these two perspectives on projects by referring to the class struggle. The project is seen as a rationally ordered system by the middle-class, the bourgeois. The cultural elite, upper class, on other hand, sees the project as an inter-human adventure. The distinction between a rational system and the inter-human adventures is built, amongst others, on juxtapositions between mechanic - organic, known - unknown, control – freedom, bureaucracy – entrepreneurship, nature – culture, order- chaos. (Blomberg 2003, p. 94-97).

The different approaches of project management will discussed further in chapter 2.1.3

2.1.2 Project Phases

The traditional view on projects, describes a project with a beginning and an end. Therefore we can talk about a project life cycle, which is divided in four main periods. This chapter will briefly sum up the different phases of a project. Various project management literature provides project managers practical guides of successful project management, and what is particularly important to pay attention to in the different phases of a project life cycle.

According to a practical approach of project management, a project is divided into four different phases: the initiation phase, the planning phase, the execution phase and the closing phase. Westland (2006) describes the first phase as the initiation phase where some certain needs are recognised or a possibility turns up. As an answer to these

findings, a project is being initiated for example in form of a solution to an identified problem. After finding a structure and a definition for the project and a project manager has been selected, a second phase takes place. In this phase the project plan is defined, including desired action, a timeframe, assignments, required resources, financial strategy, risk assessment, quality measurements and communication strategy. The following period is the execution of the project. This phase focuses on the performance following the project plan defined in the planning phase. Monitoring and controlling of the realisation process ensures that the project will meet its objectives. The last and fourth phase starts when the objectives have been achieved and the project is ready for an end. This period involves an evaluation, which is reviewing the success of the project. Westland indicates that the success is defined by how well the performance is matching the pre-defined objectives, following the main emphasis (time, costs and quality) also mentioned in previous chapter. (Westland 2006, p.3-15).

2.1.3 Approaches to Project Management

In this chapter the main orientations in project management theory will be explained. The project management theory has traditionally been linked to engineering and industries. This instrumental view on project management focuses on planning and controlling. The more modern approach to project management recognizes the project as organic and unpredicted.

Thomas (2000) present two different orientations in project management theory; the traditional control-oriented project management and a (new) sense-making orientation. The first one, based on control, presumes that there is a standard and homogenous model for project management, which is valid in any situation. The sense-making perspective, based on the contingency theory, opposes this idea and distinguishes project management as an evolving and sense-making process of organisational action (Thomas 2000, p. 25-26). The contingency approach states that “all project are not alike” (Pinto & Selvin 1989 cited in Thomas 2000), meaning that there is not one single model that could be used for all project management practices (Thomas 2000, p. 32).

The new project management is, according to Briner, Hastings and Geddes, depended on organisational factors. This means that the cost, time and specification (quality) are not anymore the central factors in the project. Therefore the traditional project triangle (see figure 1 in chapter 2.1.1) should be replaced by an expanded model of the project

triangle (see appendix 2). The project should be seen in its organisational context including organisational politics, personal intentions and pressure from external or commercial factors. This makes the projects more complicated. Briner, Hastings and Geddes suggest that the project leader need more than just technical skills for making a successful project, as the wider context requires other skills than just technical as the traditional view on project management emphasizes. 'The people factor' in project – the skills in people management is considered as essential as the technical skills. (Briner, Hastings & Geddes 1996, p. 4-5, 11-12).

The contingency model of project management is not only concentrating on task completing according to a certain plan, it is paying more attention to the environment of the project. The model attempts still to enhance practices within the frame of traditional project management. (Thomas 2000, p. 32-33).

Sense-making can be seen as a process, where people and social groups are trying to find out, process and assemble knowledge in new settings or problems. Another way of using the term sense-making is explained by Weick (1995) as the way individuals are making interpretations. (Weick 1995 cited in Thomas 2000, p. 36). The individual level of sense-making is about the determination of the methods for constructing or employing knowledge structure in order to make sense of circumstances and information (Thomas 2000, p. 38). For a project manager this would mean the way he or she is interpreting project management, on an individual level, so that it makes sense in his or her particular working context.

Project Goal Formation

Engwall (2002) suggests, in his text about project failures and unclear goals, that the function of goals is "*to create project beginnings, not to predict ends*", meaning that goals only can be predictions of the future. The goal definition should generate a start for a project, and not to foresee the results the project will end in. (Engwall 2002, p. 262, 267).

A major number of projects seem to fail because of their goals, as they are unrealistic or unclear. The goal functions, according to Engwall, as a central constituent in all projects, as every project's existence lays in the purpose of realising or accomplishing something. Without the purpose, the project would not have been initiated from the first place. (Engwall 2002, p. 262-263).

The goal can be seen as direction or vision, where the project is aiming at, even if it is unclear. He indicates that the fundamental skill for a project manager is the “*managing the path from goal ambiguity to goal formation*”. (Engwall 2002, p. 267).

While carrying out the project, the anticipation on the project results interacts with the practice executed in the achievements. In this process, where the ambiguous goals will eventually become unambiguous, learning has a its significant role. It is via this tension between this the expectation and the experience occurring during the project, knowledge creation takes place. (Engwall 2002, p. 271-273). So to say, the plan interacts with the project reality and the lessons learnt during the project, and through these two actions the final project goal is formed and understood. The learning process is implementing an understanding of the impact of the conditions of the project, considering for example the impacts of (missing) resources or the lack of knowledge at an earlier stage of the project (Engwall 2002, p. 274).

The mentioned theories suggest, that learning in projects is crucial for goal formation. The understanding of the project goals, which happens through negotiations and decision-making gives the project actors a direction where to take the project. Engwall indicates that as project conditions can change during the project, also the direction of the project can change. In the conventional project management approach, goals are seen as boundaries between the project activities and other activities outside the projects. This view enables management and control over the project. In reality, the goals are not always predictable and realistic, as they are based on unclear assumptions of the future. The project management is therefore about understanding the project reality, and constructing conditions and knowledge, rather than just a linear process of execution. (Engwall 2002, p. 275-277).

Landis’ and Rivkin Larson’s (2010) study on art administrators’ and artists’ views on success, describe findings where the artists and the administration expressed a strong need for analysing, challenging and a modesty for learning from previous experiences. Further on, the interviewees in the study characterise success as ”reaching the next level of understanding” instead of just as an ending of a project. There seems to be a constant desire of improving and learning more. This approach, where questioning and evaluation the action is emphasised, differs from the traditional view on evaluation where success is achieved by reaching the predefined goals (Landis & Rivkin Larson 2010, p. 57-58). It is therefore understood, that it is not only the concrete end product that matters, it is the understanding of the project (the process) that is the goal.

Evaluation of projects, based on the traditional project triangle is aiming at reaching the goal following the three main dimensions; costs, time and quality. As we learnt that the goals often are changing during the project an evaluation based on these criteria seem to be impossible or not realistic. Instead, we should put more focus on understanding the project, and its context and learning within the project.

2.1.4 Project-based Work in the Cultural Field

Following chapter gives a brief overview on the characteristics of project-based work in the cultural field.

Studies (for example Blair 2001) show that the film industry is mainly organised around projects, meaning that the work of the cultural workers has often a project-based character. (Blair 2001, p.155). This phenomenon describes as well the wider cultural field. The activities in the cultural organisations are often project-based, offering a range of short-time job opportunities for cultural workers, employed outside the permanent personnel. People, often freelancers, tend to work, at the same time, in different projects, for different employers or within different working groups.

Informal networks are important for the cultural worker, as it ensures future jobs. Preserving the contacts is essential for getting new job opportunities as seen for example in Jones' study on the film industry. (Jones 1996, p. 65).

Falkner and Anderson (1987) explicit the assignments in projects as non-repetitive and complex, implicating a trial action based on intuition. Secondly, the project settings are characterised as multifaceted, ambiguous and vigorous. (Faulkner & Anderson 1987, p. 880).

Hewison and Holden (2012) means that the globalisation has changed the working features and put the emphasis on creativity as a result of the rise of the cultural industries. Temporary employments and imposed mobility combined with extended possibilities for individualistic realisation and expression characterise the contemporary reality. People tend to move from one job to another with irregular incomes, and are forced to expanded flexibility and creativity in order to survive. As the working teams are changing regularly the social and the communicative skills are becoming more important among the team members. The uncertainty requires

entrepreneurship rather the technical knowledge among the cultural leaders. (Hewison & Holden 2012, p.14).

Art projects are either generated through collaborative creation as for example seen in performing arts or individually for example in literature. Varbanova (2013) distinguishes the interaction and tension between artistic creation and management in cultural organisation as both challenging and appealing. (Varbanova 2013, p.7).

2.2 Learning in Projects

Previous chapters illustrated the complexity of projects and the difficulties to manage projects according one single model as well as the changes in the theoretical perspectives, which distinguishes a transformation from a mechanistic to a more organic project management style. As we learnt, learning can be considered as a central factor in recent project management theory. An example of learning in projects is the goal formation process, which defines the final goal of the project while the project is being executed (Engwall 2002, p 272-273).

We have now learnt that a project could be considered as a temporary organisation. Project management requires an interaction between the temporary organisation and the parent organisation. Therefore it is important to reflect on project from the organisational learning perspective. How and when do organisations learn from and in between projects and what kind of obstacles are there for failure of learning?

In this chapter I will therefore discuss learning aspects in projects. First I will briefly open up the definition of organisational learning after which I will continue with theory on project-based learning.

2.2.1 Organisational Learning

This chapter attempts to define the terms organisational learning, which provides a ground for understanding learning in projects as well.

First of all, the definition of an organisation needs to be explained. An organisation is, according to Argyris and Schön (1978), a group of individuals, which are practicing collective decision-making, acts in the name of the group and recognises limitations

between the collective and others who are not part of the collective. The collective is creating rules for its action, giving deputation and choosing its members, through a political unit in form of organising. The members of the organisations might change, but the permanence of the collective rules is the constituent factor that maintains the existence of the organisation. (Argyris & Schön 1978, p. 13)

Argyris and Schön defines organisational learning in the following way:

“Organizational learning occurs when members of the organization act as learning agents for the organization, responding to changes in the internal and external environments of the organization by detecting and correcting errors in organizational theory-in-use, and embedding the results of their inquiry in private images and shared maps of organization (Argyris & Schön 1978, p. 29).

The ‘theory-in-use’, refers to the theory of action built on the perception of the actual behavior. ‘Theory of action’ refers to the adopted theory. ‘Images’ are the members’ depictions of the theory-in-use of whole, which are always remaining as unfinished. The members are constantly trying to finalise these images, as well as comprehending themselves in the organisational context by illustrating themselves and their action in joint interactions. Argyris and Schön mean that organizational learning happens when the members are operates according to these images and maps and discovers harmony or disparities based on experiences on the theory-in-use (Argyris & Schön 1978, p. 15-16, 19).

Further on, Argyris and Schön indicate that organisational learning requires embeddeness of detections, development and evaluation processes preserved in the organisation. The programming of these into depictions and shared maps of observations of the actual performance is done by the actors in the organisation. Without the encoding, the learning is only transferred to the members and not the organisation itself. Detection of errors and mismatches requires collaborative work by the members of the organisation. In this way the members functions as ‘agents of organisational learning’ (Argyris & Schön 1978, p. 19) Organisational learning demands individual learning, but the learning does not become organisational before it has been encoded in the organisational memory by the individuals collaboration.

The agency is formed when the members of the organisation, are enabling the comprehension of the circumstances and rationale of their performance. It is not solely the action of the members, which makes them agents. (Staber 2013, p. 9).

Argyris and Schön define three types of organisational learning: single-loop learning, double-loop learning and deuterio-learning. In **single-loop learning**, results of an action is identified and corrected by the organisation in order to accomplish its performance. This action does not affect the norms of the organisation. (Argyris & Schön 1978, p. 18-19).

In **double-loop learning**, on other hand, an alteration of the norms and rules, takes place as a results of the error detection and correction process. Argyris and Schön, argues that many organisations are undergoing single-loop learning, but failing in double-loop learning. If underlying decisions and objectives behind the actions are not questioned, double-loop learning cannot take place. If the organisation can manage to confront the original objectives and norms and modify them as a solution for a problem, it is able to conduct double-loop learning. Obstacles for double-loop learning have often to do with the resistance of violating the existing norms of an organisation. (Argyris & Schön 1978, p. 3).

In **deuterio-learning** the actors reflect the framework of learning in earlier actions of the organisation. By this reflection they identifies facilities or obstruction for learning, which based on they are able to set up strategies for adopting new learning. This knowledge is then encoded in the both individual and organisational memory, in form of images and maps and the contemplation of these. (Argyris & Schön 1978, p. 26-27).

2.2.2 Project-based Learning

As the more recent theories suggest, we cannot evaluate the project simply according to the traditional model of the project triangle, which focus on meeting up the pre-defined factors as time, costs and quality of the project. The traditional view is to recognise project failure when these three criteria are not met and vice versa for success.

As the projects have become more complex, according to Robertson and Williams (2006), the organisations have to start learning from their projects. They need to start observing failure and success factors, as well as reflecting how they have been responding to the different events in the projects. (Robertson & Williams 2006, p 57). These observations insist on the importance of learning.

The learning is often challenged by the danger of disappearing after the project, or when the project personnel are being changed. Other obstacles for learning are the so-called organisational amnesia. (Mangematin et al 2011, p.191). The organisational amnesia refers to a state where the knowledge is restrained from being allocated in the organisational memory. Scarbrough's et al (2004) review on theory on project-based learning propose that learning from project is constrained because of the difficulties to accumulate, procure and allocate knowledge from one project to another or to the base organisation (Scarbrough et al 2004, p. 1580).

Scarbrough et al recognise, in their study on project-based learning, three main aspects: the practice-based nature of learning, project autonomy and knowledge integration. In the practice-based nature of learning, the boundaries should be defeated in order to stream and relocate learning evolving from the present assignments groupings. Project practices, which are different from the everyday practices in an organisation, are conducive for learning. Scarbrough et al analyse that project assignments, which overcome the present boundaries of practices for building up new routines, are supporting learning. In this way 'knowledge boundaries' can be seen as essential, even if they usually are causing difficulties for the assimilation of knowledge. The learning degree in projects can be considered as high, and with a combination of defeating knowledge boundaries, it generates new and shared practices. But as these practices also create divisions between project assignments and main assignments in the organisations, they restrain the knowledge from being allocated in the base organisation. (Scarbrough et al 2004, p. 1581-1583). So to say, new practices produced in the project, are difficult to encode in the organisation because of its distinctive nature. These findings explain why learning is not always successfully transferred to the organisational memory. A solution, suggested by Scarbrough et al, is cross-functional teams in organisations, which work within both project and organisational practices (Scarbrough et al 2004, p. 1582-1584).

Further on, Scarbrough et al observe that the learning in projects is created as a result of the assimilation of information through new and unfamiliar temporary assignments. However, this learning is influenced by earlier assignments and the organisational

history of the project members. Factors impacting the learning recognised are project autonomy and assimilation of knowledge in the project. Additionally, Scarbrough et al notice the correlation between a high level of learning in the project and a significant division project and organisational practices. (Scarbrough et al 2004, p. 1584-1585). In other words, the more learning that occurs in the project, the more distinctive the practice boundaries appears, resulting in a failure of transferring learning to the organisation.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methodological Approach

I have chosen to conduct a qualitative research because I am interested in describing organisations through their own stories. A qualitative research method gives me the possibility to describe the themes in more fruitful way than a quantitative research would allow. According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009) a qualitative research is an approach, which aims in describing a certain phenomenon through comprehension and explaining. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, p. 28). For this study I have used a case studies research. Yin (2002) states that a case study research enables answers for central questions like 'how' and 'why' (Yin 2002 p. 7). By studying several case organisations I am able to make comparison on chosen topic.

3.2 Selection of Cases

The selected case organisations are Finnish cultural organisations taking part of the EU Culture Programme "Culture 2007". I have chosen small cultural non-profit organizations before big institutions like universities and museums, because of my interest to find out how small organizations deals with bigger projects.

The primarily selection criteria was participation in at least one project in Culture 2007 programme (project type). The second criterion was a small organisation or department (organisational type).

The selection has not been hard, as there are not many organisations to choose among. I read the selection results on both CIMO's and EACEA's web pages, and made research on Internet to find the Finnish co-organisers/main organisers. The selection consists of 5 cultural organisations. The case organisations represented projects in visual art (fine art and design), multidisciplinary art and performing arts (dance, theatre, circus, and live art/performance) according to the categorisation found on CIMO's webpage (http://www.cimo.fi/ohjelmat/kulttuuri-ohjelma/tuloksia/tuetut_hankkeet). Two of the organisation had been participating in several EU projects and three of them had finished or were about to finish their first

project. The organisations are named A-E in order to secure the anonymity of case organisations.

	Organisation A	Organisation B	Organisation C	Organisation D	Organisation E
Newcomer (one project)	x			x	x
Experienced (two or several projects)		x	x		
Main coordinator role		x			x
Co-organiser role	x	x	x	x	
Multi-annual Projects	x	x	x		
Cooperation projects		x	x	x	x
Nr of employees in the org /department	1 full-time and 1 part-time permanent employee. Several project-/hour- based	1 fulltime and several project-based	3 part-time and 1 subcontracted	2 part-time, occasionally project –based employees	1 part-time and 1 subcontracted
Organisation found in year	1986	Association 1990, department / activities 1996	Activities started in 2002, association 2005	2008	2003

Table 1: Case organisations

To get familiar with the case organizations, I read project interviews the report *Tutustu hankkeeseen!* made by CIMO, if there were such. I was planning to interview 5-6 organisations, and 5 of the requests were accepted. After the fifth interview I felt that I had enough data, so I did not go further on with trying to find a sixth organisation. In other words, this was the saturation point of the data collection. Saturation is, according to by Hirsjärvi and Hurme (2011) as the stage, where the interviews are not bringing any new data to the research (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2011, p. 60).

3.3 Data Collection

The primary source of data consists of unpublished interviews. The secondary source of data will consist of articles and various organisational documents as well as EU policy and Cultural Programme documents and reports.

I have chosen to use focused interviews with semi-structured questions as a method for data collecting. The interview questions were structured in different question areas or themes. The thematic questions were semi-structured and additional questions were added during the interviews. The semi-structured interviews were enabling answers phrased by the respondents themselves. The interviewees were encouraged to answer the questions by telling their own story.

According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009) it is easier to get people to answer by using interviews, compared to questionnaires. The interview as a method was relevant in this case because of the flexibility it provides. According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi the benefits with interviews are more fruitful because it gives the researcher the possibility to have a real discussion with the interviewee and if needed ask for more information about the research theme. Though, interviewing is a time-consuming way of collecting data it an essential method in my research as I am interested the process and not detailed data (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, p. 73-74).

Even if a semi-structured interview can be time-consuming and difficult to analyse, I strongly believe it is the right method, especially compared to questionnaires with ready-made answer options. The freely phrased questions might bring me unexpected material, which are valuable in a research like this. A more completing method would have been observation but since the timeline was limited, I found interviews as a more suitable method.

Sirkka Hirsjärvi and Helena Hurme (2008) explain that the aim of research interviews is to provide a picture of the respondent's thoughts, experiences and feelings. Semi-structured interviews contain the same questions for all respondents, but the order of the questions can be changed during the interview. Characteristic for semi-structured focused interviews is that there is one specific confirmed angle for the interview, but not for the whole interview. (Hirsjärvi and Hurme, 2008, p. 41, 47).

The themes for the focused interview were based loosely on the topics discussed with personnel on CIMO. The first part of the interview aimed to provide background information about the interviewee such as age, educational background, gender and some questions about the organisation and the project. The second part of the interview focused on 12 different themes. The themes were listed as: 1. Background of the project, 2. Roles and tasks in the project, 3. Project organisation, 4. Previous experience / knowledge, 5. Project aim and activities, 6. Success and challenges, 7.

Results and impact, 8. Learning from the project, 9. Funding, 10. Changes, 11. Future collaboration and 12. Evaluation.

I was using semi-structured questions related to the themes. Depending on the situations I was adding questions and changing the order of the questions. I did not either strictly follow the ready-made questions. The first version of the questions can be seen in appendix 1.

I sent the interview requests by email, and got answers quite quickly. I started with a pre-interview with my former colleague. I had been working with a EU funded project and knew that I could get some valuable data from this particular organisation. It was also a good way of testing how the questions and themes would work, as it is easier to start with a familiar person.

The purpose of the pre-interview is according to Hirsjärvi and Hurme to test the structure of the interview, the order of the themes and the form of hypothetical questions. The questions may still be edited after the pre-interview. The purpose of the test is also to estimate the duration of the interview. The pre-interview is an important phase of focused interviews and it is preferable to do several ones. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2011, p. 72-73).

After the test interview I made some small changes to the structure. I found it a little bit difficult to interview a person who thought I already should know the answers, but I got to test the structure of the interview as the research method suggests. Even if the pre-interview was difficult to carry out I found data suitable for this study, and got to practice a bit before the other interviews. After the pre-interview I felt ready for the other interviews. Even if the recommendation is to do several pre-interviews, I was convinced that one was enough for completing the structure of the interview.

I started to interview one person from each case organisation. My plan was to start with one person who is considered to be highly involved in the project – a so-called key person -and continue with a second person from the chosen organizations if there was a need to get more information or other point of views. First I wanted to interview both artistic and administrative personnel, but I observed that most of the organisations had only one key person working with both artistic and administrative matters. It seemed to be characteristic for the small organisations.

In smaller organisations the different management levels are not as visible as in bigger organisations and the personnel has often more than one role in the organisation. In some cases there was only one permanent full-timed or part-time employee. As I realized it in an early stage at the study, it did not affect the plan of collecting the data – in fact it was an interesting first finding, which described the situation of the small cultural organisations very well.

As the cultural field is very small in Finland, I knew almost each person at least by their name from before.

Each interview resulted in 9-16 pages of transcription. The interviews lasted from 40 min up till 2 hours depending on the interviewees. I felt that everybody was very open and willing to share the experiences with me. I told the interviewees a little bit about myself and that I had been working with EU culture projects as well. I had a feeling that it was easier for them to share their thoughts with a person who knew the process from before and very often the interview felt more like an informal dialogue than a traditional formal interview. Often the interviewees started talking about the themes naturally before I was even asking the questions.

All the interviews, except the pre-interview, were made in cafés which worked well even if there was a risk to be disturbed. Only once we were disturbed by the noise of another café visitor. For the recording I was using GarageBand.

The interviewees have different titles and sometimes even multiple roles as project managers, coordinators, producers, senior producers, festival directors or artistic directors. Despite this, they were dealing with similar tasks and roles in their projects. Three of five of the interviewees were artists themselves.

3.4 Approach to Data Collection

I have applied qualitative content analysis as the method of analysis in the study. Miles and Huberman (1994) divides the qualitative content analysis in three phases (flows of activity): the first as a reduction, second as clustering / categorizing and the third and last phase as abstraction (Miles & Huberman 1994, p. 10-12).

Following Miles' and Huberman's model for analysis, I tried to find differences and similarities under each topic. The process included categorising the interview data into

comprehensive units, following by a division into broader theme, which eventually illustrates the key findings of the analysis.

As in other focused interviews the interview data turned out to be rich. This meant a quite time-taking analysis process. I started with coding different key findings into an excel-table after the themes. I listed quotations, which described the phenomena and described them in own words. In this way I was able to create a brief understanding of the content. After this I started to describe the findings and making rough analysis of the themes by explaining the selected quotations and organising similar findings under different topics. During the analysis I was writing a memo with observations and reflections. While making the analysis, I started to visualise the findings into tables according to the topic. An example that can be mentioned is table 2, which is depicting the different results of the project. The tables helped me to see the similarities and differences between the case organisations and to make some conclusions out of the findings. During the analysis phase, I also kept thinking of possible theoretical approaches as while creating the structure of the research.

3.5 Critical Reflections

The result of the study will not be a pure inductive content analysis as I am familiar with some theories from before. This might have affected some parts of the analysis. Additionally, my experience in working with EU projects might have caused some preconceptions, when interviewing other persons working with similar projects and analysing the interview data. Furthermore, the fact that I knew some of the interviewees from before, might have affected my role as a researcher. But in this particular case, I actually felt that the interviewees felt that it was easier to talk about the project practices to a person who was familiar with them, than to a person without hands-on experience in EU Culture programme projects. I had a feeling that the interviews functioned as more dialogical in this way. As a cultural worker I have experienced the reality of the cultural field and have the similar hands-on experience on EU projects as the interviewees have. This can be seen as both as an advantage and disadvantage. In terms of understanding the reality of the case organisations, it has been positive, but disadvantages as preconception has to be considered as well. Moreover, I have been reflecting the possibilities of 'blindness'. Is it possible that my background in arts management causes moments of blindness of findings that are 'too close' to me? Are there items that I am not paying enough attention to because of their obviousness for me?

The reality seen from the project manager's view, how other participants of the project see the reality of the project work and the organization cannot be answered in this research due to these limitations. Since the organizations are small with sometimes only a couple of employed persons, it seemed acceptable to focus on the key persons' (the project managers) views. The project managers are still surrounded by other actors maintaining the organisation, like board members or/and temporary employed personnel (artists, curators, technicians, producers and other administrative personnel). This perspective has to be taken in consideration. The fact that some of findings might represent the individuals and not the organisations has to be taken in consideration.

4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will examine the findings of the data analysis.

Chapter 4.1 is describing the key aspects of making a cultural project and how the interviewees were reflecting on issues related to project management and leadership in the projects.

Chapter 4.2 illustrates different challenges and critical situations the project managers were dealing with during the project. The chapter explores the 'first round' where newcomers are trying to make sense of the complex reality of a supranational European project. It will also demonstrate challenges in the external environment as poor conditions, changes in personnel, uncertainty as well as the difficulties in combining the project with base organisation.

Chapter 4.3 is focusing on different outcomes, the projects as well as organisational results.

4.1 The Art of Making a Cultural Project

The interviewees brought up their views on the EU project and how it should be managed. A common notice among the organisations was the relevance of visioning (the project leader's ability to vision) and as well creating a common project (engagement of the project participants). Another aspect described in this chapter is the project organisation and the roles of the project participants. Next these aspects are presented more in detail.

Roles of Project Participants

The internal project organisation is, in this study, referring to the case organisations' temporary organisations, created for management of the project. As I found while interviewing, this construction was seldom used in the organisations, as the organisations were small and consisted of one or a few employees who were mostly able to manage both project and main administration without additional employees. So to say, the temporary organisation was not separated from the parent organisation.

The wider project organisation can, in this context, be depicted as the whole project's organisation including the main-coordinator (the organisation responsible for the project) as well as the co-organisers (the partners). The base or parent organisation is referring to the organisation itself, in this study the case organisation.

The interviewees were dealing with both project leadership and project management tasks in their project. In the wider project organisation (whole EU project) most of the interviewees functioned as project managers. One of the organisations had the role of as a project leader for the whole EU project. The EU projects are complex as they might consist of both common project activities, which all the project partners take part of, and project activities, which are more or less carried out by one partner. This meant that interviewees (except org E) were dealing with different roles: as project managers in a larger project and as project leaders in their own base organisation. These roles were not always very clear.

One of the artistic directors described the roles of the different key persons in the main-coordinator organisation in their first project. The key persons were; one person responsible for the financial issues and another person responsible for the communication, reporting and timetables. The other organisations had similar key persons, with similar division of tasks, in their projects. The key roles were described with small variations in the following way:

"I was the project leader and then the producer [of their organisation] was the coordinator, the coordinator for all the partners and sort a guardian of the budget and in that way a financial manager (...) "I have more been taking care of the collaboration or communication with the foreign partners."

One of the interviewees described the relationship between main coordinators and co-organisers as equal. The communication was working and everybody was involved in different production phases, as describe below:

"Well it works in that way, you know that all partners are equal despite if they are main-coordinators or just a partners [co-organisers], everybody has the same suffrage and it is a very open way of communication and a very discussing and it works very well. So we are very closely involved both in planning and production".

One project manager explained that he understood clearly that it was not an easy task to lead all the newcomers that did not have any clue about the project practices. But as the partners still made mistakes on the basic level (in the reporting) he is wondering if the coordinator still could have been explaining and helping the partners more.

The role of the main-coordinator seems to be very important for newcomers. The interviewees have experienced a lack of information about some important details they should have been told.

The project leader (main-coordinator) found herself doing part of the co-organiser work as well, already at the application stage. She describes the application process like this:

“It was extremely troublesome when we had to explain thoroughly and already then I felt that “goddammit don’t put this there”. These Greeks don’t understand diddlysquat about management of finances so I knew already then that this is going to be a difficult partner. (...) when the application had to be in and but we did the practical work and all that dunning what had to be done – in fact we practically wrote or I wrote the annual reports for the previous years for the Greek partner, all these kind of things you see to get the application done. (...) We have had to be much more flexible and understanding and to sort of taking the big sister’s responsibility.”

She knew already in that state, that the collaboration would not be easy.

One of the interviewees explained the main-coordinators communication to be even worse than Finnish people’s communication referring to the ‘Finnish silence’, meaning no communication (at least verbal). Co-organisers felt that the main-coordinators were not very responsive when it came to decision-making, and they were left without an opinion from the main-coordinators side. They were also missing advice on how the reporting should be done and how they could prepare for the reporting. This resulted in a lot of extra work in the end of the project when all the receipts had to be collected and re-organised for the financial report.

There were also other cases where the communication between the co-organisers and main-coordinators did not work. The main-coordinator is describing an incident in Greece as follows:

“I would gladly continue also with Greece, I mean as country, but I’m a little bit sceptical if this is the right working group there.. from there.. this partner there.. because when I went there, I found out that.. I went there to the Ministry of Culture in Greece and I found out that the level of this group.. so how they take care of things for example this that they have decided to not to apply for funding for their main activities.”

It seemed that that the communication had been straggling already since the beginning as it at the end of the project when it came out that the co-organiser was not receiving or even applying for funding at all for their activities. When it was time to find additional funding (the self-contribution part) for the EU project, it was too late to start from the scratch.

The experienced organisations had learnt to put quite much time on planning the project before the application was done and some were spending even years of planning. They also used their project time and resources to plan the following project. In one project network there was a separate group created for planning, who met regularly and worked on the project plan for the next application. The rest of the partners were asked to comment their suggestion for a project plan. The planning required physical meetings and time, which were challenges by the lack of funding. An example of planning process is describe as follows:

“For quite long, would it be a couple of years? Or I don’t know if it was that long, but the negotiations took several years and the maybe two years for going planning. And the second year for more intensive, like how the budget should be built up and with what sum each is participating with and what are the quantitative aims, who is doing what and that kind of things, all this paper work. It took maybe 8-9 months (...)”

Not all of the case organisations were democratic considering the planning process. Some of the organisation told that they were only communicating with the coordinator about the project plan and the application. It was shown that there were different systems of planning the projects. Some of them were more collaborative and communicative, other less. Both ways seemed still to work.

Engaging Participants to a Common Project

One of the organisations is wondering how to make the project as one common project and not as different projects produced by the partners separately. The artistic director admits that the project has been more a project of their organisation, as they are in the role of main coordinators than as a common project. The project leader and big part of the working group comes from their organisation. From what she heard about other EU projects, there seemed to be project where the partners are having own separate own under- projects, which they then try to link to each other and make a to a larger project.

This illustrates a reality where partners are not really working together for a common project, but for smaller sub projects in their own communities, under a larger project.

One artistic director explains that it for sure is impossible for every single actor in the project to know “*everything about everything*”. The project was most concrete for her and the producer (in her organisation) and that the others were just making small pieces in a large project. She explains that “*A theatre project can be made into a common thing, but it really is sort of Gibberish for the others..*” meaning that the task is not impossible but difficult realize. Still she evaluates the project as true entirety, which could not be realized without the others. As a main coordinator, she was dealing with questions like how to envision and how to involve everyone in the process. It should not be just ‘some bureaucratic EU project’ but something from the grass root level. The art of making a project is to envision and engage people in a common project.

One of the other project managers also noticed difficulties in engaging people, but in this case inside the manager’s own organisation. He felt that part of the personnel in the organisation saw the project as separate activity outside the main activities in the organisation. There were difficulties to engage and include the members of the organisation in the project in the way it was planned. The travelling seemed to motivate students and other participants taking part of the project but this was not supporting the purpose of the project. The plan and the action did not meet in the way it was expected. This had also been seen in another international project the organisation was involved with. The lack of time and money made it difficult to motivate personnel. At some point the projects even started to feel useless.

Finding a common vision and right partners seemed not like an easy task. After a three-year project, one of the project managers finally thought that the actors of the project

(partners) had created a common ground for making a project together. From that ground it would be possible to create something more concrete and functional. He reflect on the results of the collaboration like this:

“I was maybe expecting some more collaboration during these years but then when these actors were so different from each other that this created maybe just a ground for it.. that you start to understand how you could create networks from which we could build something more constructive and functional.”

The project actors being ‘different’ are referring to the cultural differences and the different personalities in the project, which made the communication more problematic. He describes the communications problems between the project partners, as typical for ‘European collaboration’ in following way:

“Yes, I understand that it’s not easy, but I surely understood that this is what a European collaboration is. There are different people. (...) So, some people are very active and some again their cultural ethos is that that they work like that. Can be, that there are many different persons in a group. We surely understood during these discussions, that it was some meaningless nitpicking. It was endless sometimes, but this is what I experienced in many other European connections, you are not heading anywhere, just jabber and jabber.”

The cultural differences and different personalities among the partners caused some never-ending discussions, which did not lead anywhere. Additionally the problems got worse because of a weak project leader who, according the project manager, not had a vision - an idea of ‘how things should be done’. Another comment on a weak leadership was seen in another organisation where the organisation was forced to make decisions, which should have required common decision-making, on their own.

4.2 Challenges of Project Management

Each organisation was facing different challenges during the projects. The newcomers, the organisations taking part of their first EU project, were dealing with learning a new system and the practices related to that.

A common challenge seemed to be the financial uncertainty including precarious basic funding, financial risks, limited resource to have planning meetings face-to-face with potential partners in order make grant applications for new project. Another challenge related to the financial uncertainty, was financial crisis in Europe, which almost every case organisation had experienced to some extent. Even if it was not always directly affecting the case organisations, many of the partners were in trouble, which naturally affected the projects as whole. In most of the organisations there were only one or two persons working for the project (often even working with both artistic and administrative tasks). Combined with short temporary employments and changing personnel, the project realisation was not always easy.

These challenges are describing the environment the project are located in as well as the external factors, which the projects are exposed to or depended on. The challenges are not only in the external environment – they occur, as well, in the internal organisation for example in form of mismatched resources between the main activities and the project activities.

4.2.1 Newcomers of EU Cultural Projects

According to CIMO it often takes one project before the organisations learn how to manage a EU culture project. (CIMO, interview 2010).

This so-called first round can be seen as challenging but educational period. The newcomers are during the first project dealing with the challenges of understanding a new bureaucratic system with a specific financial reports and rules, building up a project budget with the self-financing part and EU funding, perceiving the wider project organisation and recognising roles and task of the participants, ways of communicating and asking for support from the coordinating organisation/giving support for co-organisers. One of the coordinators describes their excitement as a young organisation taking part of their first EU project in following way:

“(...) when you start with a young new organisation all this kind of possibilities open up for you. Like people ask: “do you wanna do this with us, do you wanna do this with us?” And then in the beginning one is very excited and it’s like this: “yah people are interested - yah let’s collaborate here, let’s collaborate there!” And then after a while you also find out that you don’t need to go every party you are invited to.”

One of the organisations went into the project with zero euro from EU because of lack of knowledge about how EU funding works. The EU grant is always 50% of the whole project budget and the partners contribute with the other 50% as their self-contribution part. By contributing own funding, you would be able to raise the same amount from EU. This is of course depending of how you make the project budget and how you divide they amount among the partners. This meant that the organisation only contributed with their self-financing part in the whole project budget, and some of the partners received a bigger part of the EU grant thanks their thanks to input to the whole budget. Despite this mistake, the organisation considered the project as a good possibility to learn the EU funding system in order to make better projects in future. At time of the interview they had just been granted with a new EU culture project and the coordinator felt that they were now ready to both receive EU funding and contribute with own funding. The coordinator evaluates the process like this:

“Well I think the reason.. back then nobody knew how we will develop and when you are new and un-experienced and then several thousand Euros is a lot of money and we don’t know, we did not know CIMO back then and everything and now we learnt a lot from this one (the first project) so we went to the next one with experience and we are convinced that we are able to meet the 50%.”

Another organisation describes how difficult it was in the beginning to incorporate a big project into the organisation where there was no previous experience. He describe the problems in following way:

“When such a big thing is coordinated to such a small organisation and the person there is not used to that, that something - and not many of the others are either used to - how these things are tied to each other, how they work in an administrative way together with the budget, budgetary – it’s not an easy thing at all. Well, of course during these years, different experiences are built up.”

The main-coordinators role for the newcomers seemed to be important. One of interview saw big differences between the coordination organisations in their past project and the new project they just started with. In the past project the coordinating organisation (main-coordinator) was not very experienced, which was seen in their way of managing the project. This resulted in management problems and lack of

enough knowledge of how to for example prepare for the final report. He felt that they were now “*in good hands*” in the new project, thanks to the main-coordinator organisation, which had several years of experience in EU projects.

The first project is often a period to learn how it all works. This was also seen when one of the interviewees noticed that the reporting phase functioned as a learning tool for making a new project application. As he had not been working with the project from the beginning including the application phase, he was now able to see the link between the application and the project report.

In all of the three newcomers stories there has been moments of uncertainty and lack of knowledge on how to either manage this kind of project or on specific project practices as reporting or financing issues. When asking about previous experience of EU projects, the newcomers mention their experience of other international projects or international situations (for example studies abroad) as well as ‘experience about life’ which had given them knowledge about projects general and international situations. They have all experienced international projects, though it had not been a EU culture programme project. This shows that they are able to interpret previous experience of similar situations into the current projects.

4.2.2 Dealing with Financial Uncertainty

The lack of basic funding was a common problem among the organisations, which also affected the international projects. The interviewees mention that they do not have enough of resources for proper premises, full-time personnel as well as financial resources and the time needed for planning the EU applications. One of them is also facing a situation that there would be ideas for several projects but not enough administrative resources. In EU culture projects you are only able to put a certain percentages to administrative costs, which limits the amount of projects and also the size of the project.

On other hand the poor conditions and the lack of funding on national and local level were driving the organisations to look for additional funding, in this case EU funding. This can for example be seen in one of the more experienced organisations, which before the first EU project was facing a critical point considering the lack of funding. Without the financial changes the EU funding provided, the producer could not have continuing the work in the organisation, explained below:

“Because in a way we had some years with the festival that were really difficult and we did quite madly, you know, unpaid work. Like me and the artists or maybe not.. not all of the artists did unpaid work but with a very small salary. So it was not comparable to the amount of work of anyone, because it was based on people’s goodwill and charity that the festival did still exist. So it was sort of a critical point – if there would not have been any change there would or at least I would not have been able to continue. It was really that burdensome. So this kind of opportunity, which of course took many years before it was realised but still that we as the only Nordic country were invited, was significant considering the funding.”

A similar argument for applying for EU funding was found in another organisation. As their activities were international, the EU funding was seen as a natural solution for funding the activities of the organisation. The artistic director explains the decision of choosing EU funding in following way:

(...) it seems like.. Because the independent field, the funding of the independent theatre field is compared to subsidies of all culture and especially the subsidisation of theatre, is such a small part that this is actually the only reasonable alternative in my opinion and then we are that kind of a partner. Even if everybody is now touring internationally and internationality seems to be a key word nowadays, which is good. But anyway, for me it feels very natural, it has always felt and in this way it is nothing extra like “let’s come up with something like this here” but it feels like a very organic way to work and if the funding structure of this activity is this kind of EU then there is nothing else, we just have to learn it. “

A third organisation points out that with EU funding it is possible to achieve bigger results than with the basic funding. The sums are completely different than in Finland, which makes it more feasible to realise project on entirely different level, which was also seen as factor for a successful project.

The managers were commenting the poor conditions where there are no financial resources for planning meetings, which are needed in order to apply for a EU project. Another problem mentioned where how to find a producer and recourses for a full-time employment of the producer. The director illustrating the situation:

“There should be a better basic structure so that we would not do EU stuff from home, from the dining room table as I have been doing. ”

An unsecure basic funding made it risky to participate in multi-annual projects. One of the producers gives an example of the situation:

“(...) because our funding is decided on a yearly base, can we think that our organisation is still existing after 5 years? Do we dare to go into it? But on one hand you cannot really know in this world, you just have to trust that.. and also that the Finnish funding is not going to change during that period..”

The European financial situation affected partners of the interviewees. Not necessary their own budget but many of the partners self-financing part has been endangered because of the cuts in respective countries culture budget. One organisation told that the European financial crisis affected the aims of the project, which was to strengthen the smaller partner-organisations' position. Some of the partners could not reach this goal because of the budget cuts. The director describes the consequences of the crisis as follows:

“Of course it wasn't the main objective, but it has been a small part it, but of course during this project the European financial situation has changed completely, so that for example our Spanish partner was in really big trouble and naturally our funding has been cut as well, during this period. Our Slovenian partner, their whole Ministry of Culture was abolished. So it has sort of been.. the atmosphere in Europe has changed as well (...) Because one of the aims of this project was that, there are smaller partners involved, so it has been to strengthen them during this period. What it comes to us, it has been succeeded. We have been able to increase the national and local basic funding, not as much as we wanted, but to some extent at least. But not everyone has achieved this.”

The participants came in close touch with the European financial while working in a European project. One of the interviewee saw similarities in the European political situation and the co-organisers' way of managing the project budget. She explains the situation like this:

“Problems that are not mentioned yet, are maybe these countries, in other words Greece is really in a big financial crisis, and so is Portugal. About the Greeks I have to say or that Europe is becoming a very concrete home sort of.. in that sense that the Greeks .. it came out that they could not even read the budget. (...) So now they participate with hundred euro, which is paid from the directors’ own purse. “

The financial situation combined with the lack of knowledge in financial administration led to a situation where the main-coordinator had to increase their own self-contribution part and cut the partners’ self-contribution part to be able to complete the project. In the end the main-coordinator ended up financing a significant part of the self-contribution part of the whole budget. As the problem was not found until at end of the project, there was not much to do to solve the problem and it was a fact that there was actually no funding to get in Greece because of the financial crisis.

To be able achieve the artistic aims in the project, the same organisation decided to ask the EACEA (The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Agency Executive Agency in charge for the management of most parts of Culture Programme) for an extra year for realising the project, after noticing that the pre-defined time period for the project was not long enough. Changes were made in the project plan, which additionally had positive effects on the budget, as they were able to use two years’ subsidies for the self-contribution part. With this amendment, the whole project was rescued. The assumption might be that a postponement of the project deadline would have a negative effect on the budget. This example, however, illustrates the opposite.

Concluding, the organisations are dealing with financial uncertainty, including poor conditions, which partly had been a reason for applying for EU funding in first case, and partly obstructing the organisation from taking part in bigger projects as EU projects. The European financial crisis was challenging for the organisations that already struggling with poor financial uncertainty.

4.2.3 Managing Changes in Personnel

The personnel in all case organisations had been changing during the projects. People were coming and going because of different reasons as for example: mother’s leave, lack of time because of involvement in other projects or personal reasons. Partly the reason might be the unsecure financing and project-based activities, which is

characteristic from small art organisations. In some of the organisations there were not even a full-time employee - only one or several part-time employees. The interviewees did not clearly expressed this as a problem even if there obviously were some critical moments and overload of work because of this. The reason for not considering this as problem might be that the changes in the personnel are such common in the organisations, that they do not see this as something deviant. The activities in small organisations are project-based and the financing is unsecure which means that people are often hired for a temporary period. Especially when the organisations consist of only one or a couple of permanent employees, swaps in the personnel naturally affect both the project and the basic activities/administration.

The projects were lasting from one year up to five years. The changes in personnel happened during different phases in the projects, which the new/substituting workers felt as difficult. Even changes in the personnel who were with other tasks than the project, seemed to affect the project work. Additionally also the tasks and the roles changed during the project life cycle. Sometime the roles were even a bit unclear for one of the project managers, as they had been changing several times along the way. This caused some problems, especially when the role changes were not desired.

In one organisation the constantly changing producers led to a situation where the artistic director started to take care of some of the producer's tasks as it became difficult and also time-consuming to continuously teach the new employees. She did not directly consider this a problem, but she was aware that the frequently changing producers were a reason for this. In another organisation the project leader in the coordinating organisation was changed during the project. This was seen as reason for some of the problems in the project even if the person from the beginning was not really "*able to lead,*" according the interviewed project manager.

Even the auditors from the EACEA were changing which caused some moments of confusion among the partners in one project. The auditor was new and not familiar with the complicated 'EU system' with its all rules, which led to that wrong information was given to the project participants.

When the organisations are exposed for changes in personnel, in both the interviewee's own organisation (among permanent employees and as well in the project team) and in the wider project organisation (project leader for the whole project), and additionally among the EU project auditors, it certainly starts to get complicated. This finding describes the current project-based labour market in cultural field.

4.2.4 Combining the Organisation and Project

Some of the project managers noticed difficulties in combining the project activities and the main activities in the organisation.

One of the interviewees emphasised the importance of learning how to combine the own organisation's financial administration with the project administration. There were difficulties to get the accounting to work according to the EU reports. The project manager explained the problems as a consequence of unskilled bookkeepers. The everyday work at the organisation was taking much of the energy, which sometimes made it difficult to focus on the project. It was not always easy to balance between the project work and the main activities in the organisation.

Another organisation also noticed some problems in the beginning with getting the balance sheet to run smoothly for the project among the smaller partner-organisations in one of their projects.

A third organisation said the main activities were sometimes limiting the project activities, as not all possible resources (for example the theatre stage) could be used for the project. The director explains the situation like this:

“Because the theatre is making its own performances, we cannot, they cannot give us.. the stage. So this is how it is at our place, so if we would get a new production.. It would mean that what can only a partner that is inviting a guest play of those new productions. So there are producer partners and touring partners, and we are of course only touring partners and we cannot use our suffrage in the same way.”

Running activities in the organisations not always lap with the project activities, which occasionally causes difficulties.

4.3 Between Project Results and Organisational Results

As a result of the evaluating part of the interview, the managers brought up different outcomes of the project. The results could be divided in 2 categories:

- 1. Project results**, which were directly linked to the aims of the project, results/goals achieved as for example artistic content).
- 2. Organisational results**, which were not directly linked to the aims of the project, for example organisational development.

This chapter is also illustrating unexpected results, meaning results that were not defined in the project plan or expected in any way.

4.3.1 Project Results

This chapter is describing different results, which were seen as part of the project objectives. The most common outcomes for the organisation were artistic content, professional networks and European awareness. Additionally they recognised new possibilities for either the members of the organisation or other actors taking part in the project.

The artistic content is naturally an important part in the project. It should not just be “*a performance like any other performances*”, one of the managers points out about the quality. The future of the performance should be assured as well, suggesting that the final product should have a life after the project.

During on of the projects, which goal was to set up the play La Divina Commedia, the director was dealing with many different crises – from artistic and personal crisis to financial crisis. Even if there were many critical moments, she saw these as part of the process – to be able to understand the play she would, as in Dante’s La Divina Commedia, have to follow the path through hell and purgatory to enter the paradise. By facing the problems and different crisis occurring in the project and solving them (making sense of them) she would be able to reach the goal. The director evaluates the process like this:

“Well there were some big dramaturgical problems but my aim was still to confront the challenges and somehow make the same as Dante is doing with poems but with the language of theatre and well I will not say anything because it is not ready yet, but I somehow completely lost myself as a director in the Finnish project. For me it was the most difficult play I ever directed and now I feel that I am on a really good ground again – in other words all this has really been a mental journey. In Dante there is this journey from crisis to clarity and I feel that this whole project has at some level been – there have been these countries in crisis all the time along and this working group has been somehow in really deep crisis and I as well.. I have gone through a personal crisis and this has been, especially in a mental mind, like really challenging but because of that I am now happy that it is somehow part of this – that you cannot deal with the Divina Commedia which is dealing with hell and purgatory if you don’t go through it yourself but of course you can only blame yourself why did I have to do this kind of project but I am really glad that Portugal is happening and that we have somehow new concepts and an international group there and a fantastic place that marble cave now finally and this all that I ... really exciting to see what it will be!”

The project outcomes (artistic) seemed to be successful but the project itself was difficult to realize. Timetables were changed, the budget did not last, people involved were changed – still it all made sense in the end or was worth it, according to the project leader. The story also illustrates how unpredictable an artistic process can be.

Another project manager was putting the project outcomes in relation to the context and evaluating the process from that perspective. He evaluates the event (the project result) as successful, even if it was not done “*by the book*”. He brings up the successful and less successful parts of in a project activity in relation to the context and the other project activities and the organisations’ previous experience of similar projects. This shows that he tries to apply some traditional project management theory, but is aware that the reality looks different. He is reflective and evaluates the process from different angles, not simply according to how it should have been done according to the project plan and to project management theory (the book).

The professional network, the project created, was a common result for most of the organisations. The network with all its valuable contacts will, according to the

interviewees, remain in the future. The members of the network will support each other by accessing knowledge and by supplying shared practices.

The diversity among the partners (diverse on an organisational level as well as artistically different) has given partners different views to the discussions. It has opened up Europe as '*an area with many geographical as well as conceptual differences*' according to one of the artistic directors. Also similarities on a European level, was identified by another manager who also claimed he experienced European awareness in the project and wished that there would have been content-based learning in the project.

4.3.2 Organisational Results

The organisations were evaluating the project and reflecting their development as an organisation. Some of the results were unexpected and additional for the project.

By following how others work they learnt new practises as well as they learnt about their own organisation. "*You learn how others do the same work as you do here*", as one of the producers expressed it.

One of the interviewees reflects on the organizational results in following way:

"Well, I think that successful projects in small organisations, within small organisations can have, can have very different organisational results. It could be that organisation cannot completely.. how to say explode? Because people are not happy how to work together, especially when you work with a lot of volunteers and things like that - this kind of artist-driven organisations. But I think for us it made our organisation and the people, which are actively involved, stronger. So it because it also can be how would you say - bonding experience?" "I think and I can see that very much in our organisation. I think that these activities, which we do together, helps us really also to grow and to kind of strengthen also, strengthen us. I think this also a good result."

The project activities had a positive effect on the group dynamics and involvement in the organisation even if this kind of project can be overloading for a small artist-driven organisation. The interviewee makes a distinction between successful project results

and organisational results. Even if the project itself was considered as successful it does not necessary mean that it had positive organisational results, what it comes to for example the organisational capacity. The project coordinator explains that the organisation can “explode” meaning that the organisation is maybe not capable of managing a bigger project. Instead of ‘exploding’ the organisation became, in this case, stronger and the people were involved more actively, which was seen as a positive as well as an unexpected result of the project.

A member of a young organisation felt that the organisation, which at that time of the project start only had been active for two years, was still forming itself. Two years after the start he reflects on the project by saying:

“I don’t know from our perspective now, if we would participate again with this project, because it might not be directly what now, after all, our organisation and this perspective formed itself a little bit better, if we would do it again? Maybe it’s not what we would do nowadays? But still I think it was a very good project for us because it also - first of all it was successful, so it’s good on our track record and it has also to do with what we want to do but I think that we learnt, we got a lot of experience out of it, so I think it is good from this perspective. I see it positively.”

The project coordinator thinks that, despite the successful project results and the good experience the project gave them, it is not directly something the organisation would participate in today. After some years of activities, the organisation developed its identity and ways of working, as well as explored the different opportunities a EU project can provide.

The EU collaboration gave the participants an opportunity to experience how others are working and how things are organised, which have given them new insight on how things can be organised and how they would like to work. It has also given them a better professional confidence on their work. A director describes the learning in following way:

“(…) of course it is also great that you get to see how other work, what kind of program they have, what kind of venues, what kind of audiences, in what way all things are organised – in a way you learn very much of how you would like to organise things yourself and how should do it. So everything like this, there

is so much what I learnt from that! But as well and how should I say this, I feel that I got a lot of self-confidence too - especially on how things are done in a good way and correctly and that it is internationally interesting too - the programme we are making. In that way I have become more self-confident about my own work maybe.”

The project made it possible for the partners to experience professional situations together, which was seen as important aspect considering possible future collaborations. Through this experience they were also able to evaluate if a collaboration, would work in the future. An example is cited below:

“Then of course I think one of the also important aspects is actually the networking aspect with the other organisations. (...) now we are also aware of each other and we know that there are possibilities to kind of do other things together. Especially, it’s always important to experience another organisation in a professional situation like in a common project because then you can easily also judge if it is any good if you continue working with them or doing something with them because you have a picture of them.”

The more experienced organisations were implementing learnt models in their work also outside the EU project. One of the directors tells how the EU project taught her a process of making a common budget together with the partners and how it later even became a model for other collaborations. As they were many partners in the project, a specific practice was needed in order to include everyone smoothly in the process. She explains the process as follows:

“Maybe that how these EU budgets are created – there is a certain way of doing that. So for example how [partner x] is doing the budget and.. how it.. There are so many partners and how the budget is created so that everyone is participating in the planning, you know. So a first version is created and then everyone is making their suggestions into that and from that another [version] is built and then again.. It’s a complicated project.. sort of an process that I learnt and now I use the same model when we collaborate with other organisations.”

The situation in one of the case organisations (as mentioned in chapter 4.2.2) before the EU project was at a critical stage. There was simply not enough money to pay the personnel enough salaries, most of the work was done on a voluntary base and it was getting too burdensome. With the EU funding it was possible to finance content-based projects, which made it possible to locate the national or local basic funding on the basic structure and the EU funding on the content. This shows that the project had an impact on the organisational level as well - even it can be seen as a temporary solution. One of the other case organisations was originally 'born through' from a EU project. Its activities have been continuing for several years with the help of different EU project funding. This shows that the EU project can be a start of a long-term activity, which continues its life even after the formal project has ended. The director in this organisation assures that one project leads to another project: *"always resulting in some kind of network, new projects"*. The EU funding was implemented as part of the association's financial strategy as well ingrained in the organisational activities.

Also a third organisation found the EU project funding as a solution for financial problems. In this case was not though a conscious/strategic decision as the financial problems occurred after the project had been started. With the help of the grant they had on their bank account, they were able to pay back their debt at once and avoid the growing interest on their unpaid invoices. The Project Manager is describing the results like this:

"Well you know that we got thrown the our whole terrible debt situation what we had, if it will be accepted, but we this was a stroke of luck for this that we got our education in there [included as part of the project activities] and that we could renovate the premises (...)"

This solution was completely unexpected, as also the problem had not been detected before the project. In addition, they were also able to integrate the organisation's main activities into the project and finance them with the help of the project funding.

The interviewees considered that the EU funding could have a positive impact on the national, regional and local funding bodies. Once being granted with EU funding, it makes it easier to get other funding as well. One the interviewees describes it like this *"when you got EU funding you also did not only get money - you get a credibility boost (...) the funding bodies - they know that when the European Union trust you, I*

[the funding bodies] can trust you as well". In this case the EU funding was also encouraging them for applying other funding. The coordinator tells that they started to look for other funding opportunities and were applying for funding from research and science side.

To be part of a bigger network has enhanced one of the organisations credibility among the politicians and as well in the community. The organisation and its activities become more accepted and were seen as a valuable event in the city and in the region because of the project. The attitudes had been changing during the years and the event was no longer seen just as some ‘nonsense’ happening in the public space. The communication between the organisation and the politicians was improved. All this was part of the project objectives, to strengthen the live art field. As a result the organisation could increase their basic funding to some extent, which did not happen to all of project partners. The director describes the results like this:

“Because one of the aims of project has been in that sense, that there are these smaller actors included and to sort of strengthening them during this period. For us it has been successful but in a way it has been because of the project that we have been able to raise the national and local basic funding, not as much as we were wishing but still to some extent. But it has not happened to all of us.”

The director evaluates that the results of taking part of a big project with renowned European partners has given them a better international reputation, which was completely unexpected and has given them now a precedence in the European performing art field.

“So you like get to know people and yes that we are at some kind of list, you know where there are like big European organisations who have a big reputation and everything when they have been there involved and of course this is supporting our reputation well because compared to some Tanzquartier Wien which is.. their yearly budget is about several million euros you know? And it is one of the biggest contemporary dance producers in the world you know and this is supporting our reputation and we can, that we don’t have to kind of start from the beginning anymore.. And it is supporting us that we are totally on a completely or let’s say that maybe as a result of the EU projects our international reputation is much bigger that it really is.. “

One director compared the different EU funding they had been receiving - in this case the European Social Fund and the Culture Programme. The Culture Programme felt as the right option as it was clearly for funding of content, and compared to the European Social Fund project where the funding went to development and personnel related to this, and only a small part for the content. The advantages with the Culture Programme were, according to the director, that the money was not only allocated only basic activities. This illustrates a reflection on the organisational strategy where the project manager asked if they focus on financing the content or the organisational structure.

Also others were reflecting on the most adequate funding for their activities. They noticed difficulties to find the right form - funding which would fit their basic activities (content-based). At the same time they were wondering if how their activities would fulfill the criteria, as for example the quantitative criteria.

These findings confirm that the projects are in dependent on the organisations and vice versa, as mentioned in chapter 2.1.1 Perspectives on Projects.

5 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to describe the outcomes of a cultural project and the learning generated from the projects. The learning was explored through outcomes in EU Culture Programme projects.

This chapter will conclude the findings in this study, based on the evaluation of the project, including both the project realisation as well as the outcomes of the projects. Finally, the chapter describes the learning process in the projects, observed through the case study.

5.1 Evaluating the Project

Engwall claims that projects often fail because of unclear goals or the expectations of the pre-defined goals. The traditional project evaluation methods, which are based on achieving the goals, emphasise a linear process of execution of the project activities according to the plan. This approach will evidently cause findings of project failure. The goal formation takes place as a result of interaction of the project plan and the learning absorbed during the project. As the goal of the project can be considered as a direction or guidance of where the project is aiming at, this process is important in project realisation. Goals are often ambiguous until the end of the project, where the final goal is being formed, as a result of a learning process where the project reality and the environment are reflected. For this goal formation process, learning is required.

The findings in the study show that the case organisations were evaluating the project from different perspectives. They did not solely focus on the concrete project results, achieved by controlling and monitoring the execution according to the pre-defined plan. Instead they were putting much reflection on the learning and the impact the project had on their organisations and the environment. They were placing the project in its expanded environment, outside the traditional goal dimensions such as time, cost and quality, rather by identifying the contexts and the conditions. Further it was discovered that successfulness of the project was not equal with a successful project execution. One of the project managers made a clear distinction between these two. He was aware of situations where the organisational capacity was not strong enough for executing a project. Even if the project results were successful (as the artistic results), there were problems in realisation of the project. The difficulties were characterised by

different challenges; as financial uncertainty, changes in personnel, mismatch between project and organisational practice and as well the newcomers difficulties in learning the new system. All these are results of external factors, which was rarely in control of the project managers. Financial uncertainty can for example be seen the European financial crisis. Also other difficulties were identified as people factors and cultural differences. Despite these challenges, they mostly evaluated the project results as successful. The results can therefore be seen as ambiguous, as they for example can be seen as positive for the project but negative for the organisation itself. This phenomenon is illustrated in figure 2.



Figure 2: Between Project and Organisational Results

Similarly, one project manager evaluated the project results partly as failures, but was clearly satisfied with some of the organisational impact. The definition of success / failure seemed also as ambiguous to some extent. It is clear that the managers are not evaluating the project solely from an instrumental approach. They are looking beyond the 'isolated' project and 'the pre-defined project plan' and identifying different outcomes in its organisational context. Following table is concluding the different project and organisational results described in chapter 4.3.

	Organisation A	Organisation B	Organisation C	Organisation D	Organisation E
Project Results	-Professional Network - European Awareness - New perspectives to the work	-Professional Network - International possibilities for local artists	-Professional network (contacts) -Shared practices - The organization was recognized by the local funders - Artistic content - European awareness	- Professional Network - Artistic content	- Artistic Production -Artistic development
Organisational Results	-New possibilities to profile itself in the local community -New equipment - Motivating the personnel -Solution for the financial problems in the organisation (unexpected)	-New practices - The main activities / department in the org started as a EU project -New projects -Better international reputation (unexpected)	-Professional self-confidence - Organization structure built up with the EU funding (solution for financial problems)	- New possibilities, new collaborations -Strengthening the organization -Organisational identity development - New practices	-Organisational development - becoming more aware of needs (basic structure needed)

Table 2: Concluding table of the results

As noticed, the recent project management emphasise learning, reflection and questioning in projects. The project managers need to make sense of the project as the sense-making perspective on project management suggests. This was also seen in the one of the case organisations, where the project leader described the project as a difficult journey from hell, through purgatory to paradise. She experience difficulties along the path but managed to make sense of the situation, in other word she created an understanding of the project. She was reflecting on skills of a project leader and how to engage people. As also some other interviewed project managers she emphasised the skills of visioning. This can be seen as the ability of understanding the project and as the goal formation process as Engwall also mentioned.

5.2 Learning from the Project

In the theoretical framework we explored different kind of learning in organisations as well as in projects. We learnt that reflection on the project reality and implementation is enabling the organisations to detect errors in their performance. This activates them to modify the underlying norms in the organisation, which stimulates double-loop

learning. If the organisations are additionally able to identify ways of learning or not learning, they are enabling deutero-learning. This chapter will conclude the findings of learning among the case organisations.

For some of the organisations the project situation itself, seen as 'disturbance' in the everyday work, can be seen as a 'reason' for learning. As mentioned, Scarbrough et al claims that project practice, which overcomes of the existing practices generates learning and new practices in the organisation. This theory suggest that the project as form of achieving different assignments, supports learning.

The case study showed that projects stimulated learning in the organisations. They were exposed to new practices, which forced them to reflect their capacity as an organisation and the division of practices. Especially the newcomers were pondering of their strategy and identity as an organisation, which eventually made their future direction more clear. The more experience organisations, the ones that had participated in several EU projects, were creating routines and models for practices. In other words, a learning process is recognised. The process is illustrated in figure 3. The learning chain, starts with identifying new practices as a result of a new environment. Second phase include reflection and evaluation on the own organisations capacity and resources. Third phase is where the organisations are implementing the new practices in the organisation. Fourth phase would contain a further implementation of practices in form of routines and models. Last phase would include a re-evaluation of learnt practices and the organisational resources. According to Argyris' and Schön's theory, this would include single-loop learning in phase 1-2, double-loop learning in phase 3-4 and additionally deutero-learning in phase 5.

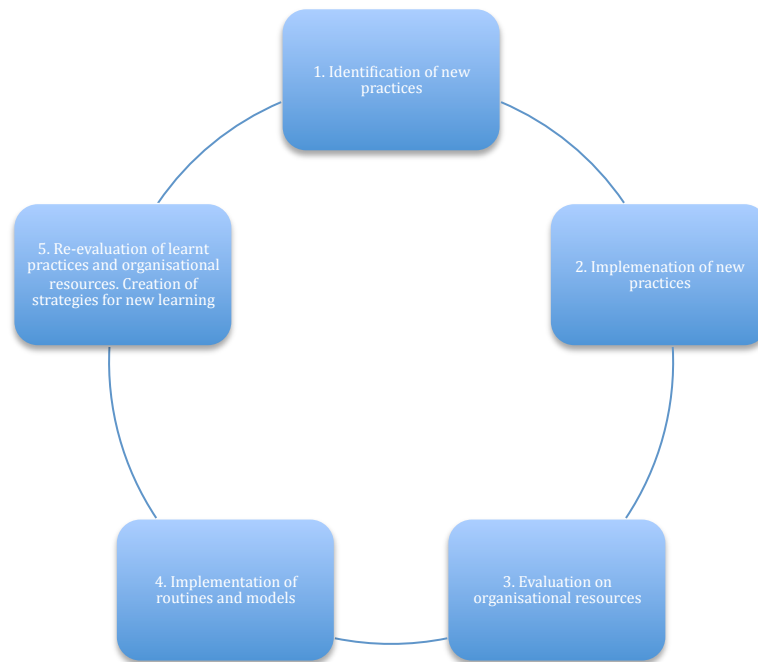


Figure 3: Learning process

Findings in this study, shows that the newcomers identified new practices and implemented practices, in order to accomplish the project. They also evaluated their organisational capacity and identity. Because of the scope of this study, we cannot tell if they proceeded further in the learning chain. The experienced organisations, however showed that further development, in form of implementation of routines also outside learning environment, meaning that they applied learnt practices also in other than EU projects. Concluding examples of both single-loop learning and double-loop learning was found in the study. Deutero-learning remains as a question mark because of the limited frame of the study.

Obstacles for learning were seen in one organisation, which expressed difficulties in ‘combining the project and the organisation’, meaning that they were recognising a mismatch between organisational and project-based activities. Further I also observed the difference between this particular organisation and the others. The main activities of case organisations were project-based, when this organisation’s activities were not. The reason for not learning seems to be in the nature of the organisational activities, the difficulties of implementing project activities in an organisation, which is not based on project-based activities.

As the case organisations are small, they are strongly depended on key persons working in the organisation. The challenges of changing personnel, is evidently resulting in a

knowledge loss occurring when a key person leaves the organisation, which is undeniably happening in the organisations. Further question is, how well the knowledge is (or can be) embedded in the organisations because of the constantly changing factors, as changing personnel. On other hand, we could instead explore whether and how this mobility between different employments brings new learning to the organisations.

5.2 Future Research

This study has provided an overview of a little studied area of learning in cultural projects and in the further studies different project phases could be studied in more detail to provide in-depth knowledge of these various phases.

An in-dept research on project management of today, which as noticed emphasise learning tools, would require a longitudinal study of organisations conducted through several case projects during the whole project life cycle. In this kind of study, participative data collection methods could be utilised, in order to the get in-dept knowledge about challenges of project management in cultural organisations.

Additionally an interesting question to be explored would be how the current (forced) employment mobility, is affecting the learning in organisations.

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APPENDIXES

- 1. Interview Questions**
- 2. Expanded Project Triangle**

APPENDIX 1: Interview Questions

Background information:

Year of birth:

Gender:

Education:

Position in the organisation:

Organisation:

Type of organisation (association, cooperative..):

Main activities of the organisation:

Number of people employed (full-time / part-time, permanent / temporary):

Title of the Project:

Action (multi-annual cooperation projects, cooperation measures or cooperation projects with third countries):

Length of the project:

Role in the project (coordinator or co-organiser):

Number of project partners in the project including coordinator:

1. Background of the project:

Tell me how the project was started?

2. Roles in the project / Tasks

What was/is your role in the project? Role of the partners?

3. Project organisation (temporary -permanent organisation)

What did the project organisation look like? Did you employ people outside of your organisation?

4. Previous experience / knowledge

Did your organisation have previous experience of EU projects?

If you had, how did you use the knowledge?

If not, did how did you receive knowledge?

5. Aims and activities

Describe briefly the project aims and activities

-Did you have any personal aims, what were these?

6. Success / challenges

How did the project turn out?

-Considering the project aims?

-Considering the organisational aims?

-Considering your personal aims?

7. Results and unexpected results

What were the results of the project? Were these results defined in the project description or did you end up with other, unexpected, results?

8. Learning from the project

What do you think your organisation learned from the project?
What did you personally learn?

9. Funding

Why did you choose to apply funding from the European Culture Programme?
Were there any other options? Was it the right decision for this project?
Did you find any problems with the funding or do you think it covered everything that was needed for realising the project?

10. Changes during the project (organisational, other)

Did you go through any changes in the organisation during the project? What and why? Did the project lead to any other changes?

11. Future collaboration

Do you think you will continue the collaboration with your project partners in the future? In what way?

12. Evaluation

If you start up a new European Culture programme project, how would you evaluate your organisations capability of managing a new project compared to your previous project(s)?

APPENDIX 2: Expanded Project Triangle (adapted from Briner, Hastings and Geddes (1996, p. 5)

