ERASMUS NETWORK FOR MUSIC

polifonia

ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia'

Final Report   Public Part

Project information

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Executive Summary

The ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia' has been jointly co-ordinated by the Koninklijk Conservatorium The Hague and the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC). 'Polifonia' is the largest European project on higher music education to date, with this third edition involving 56 institutions and organisations in the field of music training and the music profession located in 26 European countries and 6 from a total of 4 countries outside Europe.

The overall objective of 'Polifonia' 2011-2014 was to enhance the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of higher music education in Europe through cooperation at European level. More specifically, the project aims were:

- To **contribute to the Modernisation Agenda for Higher Education in Europe** by assisting the higher music education sectors in the field of curriculum and governance reform (for example in relation to the assessment of learning outcomes, the introduction of research as a new component in study programmes in higher music education, as well as in relation to the field of quality enhancement).

- To **promote closer cooperation between higher music education institutions and organisations in the music profession** (by identifying the relevance of the current study programmes for the changing labour market, as well as the needs of professionals in the workplace, and by highlighting examples of partnerships between educational institutions and professional organisations).

- To **promote mobility in the higher music education sector** (by producing tools to overcome obstacles to mobility and recognition)

- To **enhance the quality and international attractiveness of the European higher music education sector** (by involving in the project experts from third countries).

The project's approach is based on 3 principles:

1. **Development of new tools, insights and opinions** by 5 working groups composed of international experts.

2. **Dissemination and capacity-building** via an active strategy, involving all partners and extending to the entire membership of AEC and beyond. The structure of 'Polifonia' as an ERASMUS Network and the active involvement of AEC provides a sector-wide reach unsurpassed by any other European project and enables the project outcomes to play a major role in ensuring that outputs are appropriately exploited across the sector.

3. **Continuous evaluation** based on internal and external evaluation methods.

Building on a strong network of experts, and upon outcomes generated over two previous editions of 'Polifonia', this 'Polifonia' Network has realised more than 45 working group meetings, 12 review visits, 16 site visits, 3 seminars, 7 workshops and 4 conferences within the project timeframe. A large number of outcomes (surveys, studies, handbooks, good-practice guides, audiovisual material, online tools, etc.) have been produced within the course of the project and are now available via the 'Polifonia' website (www.polifonia.eu).

'Polifonia' represents an active contribution to the advancement of the policies of the EU and its member states in relation to higher education in general and to higher music education in particular. Further information on the project is available on the 'Polifonia' website.

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1. Project Objectives

A. General objectives

Since the launch of its first edition in 2004, the ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia' has pro-actively addressed European higher education policy issues from the perspective of higher music education (HME). Through a consistent output of high quality products, it has been able to raise awareness of these issues throughout the sector which, in turn, has supported the concrete implementation of these outputs at national and institutional levels. From a general higher education point of view, the editions of 'Polifonia' have often been cited as a good example of what can be achieved through a subject-specific and European-level approach to higher education developments. Indeed, its first edition (2004-2007) was designated by the European Commission as an ERASMUS success story in 2007.

'Polifonia' 2011-2014 has built upon the results of both of the earlier three-year cycles of the Network. The project objectives for 2011-14, which strongly relate to European policy developments, have been the following, each being primarily located in a specific working group (WG), as indicated:

1) To **contribute to the Modernisation Agenda for Higher Education in Europe** through:

- Curriculum reform
  - ➢ By promoting competence-based learning with the use of learning outcomes for the 3 cycles in higher music education with a specific focus on how such outcomes should be assessed *(WG1 on Assessment & Standards)*,

  - ➢ By deepening the implementation of the 3-cycle structure through a reflection on the content and structure of the 2nd cycle, based on the principles laid down in the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education *(WG2 on Artistic Research in HME)*,

  - ➢ By addressing research as a new component in study programmes in higher music education through the creation of a European Platform for Artistic Research in Music, linking institutions and individuals engaged in the development of Artistic Doctorates and giving music students from all study cycles the possibility to exchange information on research activities, methodologies and progression routes to Artistic Doctoral study *(WG2 on Artistic Research in HME)*.

- Governance reform
  - ➢ By taking the existing European-level and subject-specific approach to quality assurance to the next stage through the further development of expertise in this area and exploration of the feasibility for a European-level quality assurance agency for the music education sector (*WG3 on Quality Enhancement, Accreditation & Benchmarking)*,

  - ➢ By developing a guide for music education institutions promoting the use of benchmarking as a quality enhancement tool (WG3 on Quality Enhancement, Accreditation & Benchmarking).

2) To **promote closer cooperation between higher music education institutions and organisations in the music profession** through activities that benefit from strong involvement of organisations in the music profession:

   ➢ By identifying the relevance of the current study programmes for the changing labour market, in line with the EU debate on 'New Skills for New Jobs' *(WG4 on Education for Entrepreneurship)*,

   ➢ By identifying continuing professional development needs of professionals in the workplace *(WG4 on Education for Entrepreneurship)*,

   ➢ By identifying examples of good practice of collaborations between educational institutions and organisations which can serve as models for the further development of expertise in the cultural sector *(WG4 on Education for Entrepreneurship)*.

3) To **promote mobility in the higher music education sector** through the development of expertise and tools for the full recognition of student achievement gained through exchanges and multi-site learning in joint programmes *(WG5 on Recognition, Monitoring & Joint Degrees)*.

4) To **enhance the quality and international attractiveness of the European higher music education sector** by reaching all the objectives mentioned above and by involving as participants in the project experts from key institutions in third countries *(all WGs)*.

As well as attaching objectives to designated working groups, the structure of the project was designed from the outset to encourage connections between the various groups. The following are examples of this:

   ➢ Consideration of the role of external examiners in unifying assessment standards (WG1) and in strengthening the recognition of achievement on exchange studies or in joint programmes (WG5),
   ➢ Consideration of how educating for the world of work connects with educating for the highest artistic achievement (WGs 2 & 4),
   ➢ Consideration of the how quality enhancement of joint programmes can be ensured (WGs 3 & 5).
   ➢ Consideration of a joint register for peer-reviewers and for external examiners (WGs 1 & 3)

This interconnection has been reinforced during the lifetime of the project by joint meetings, either of pairs of groups or, in each of the three years of the project, of all five implementational groups during the annual network meetings.

B. Users targeted by the project

The project's main focus is upon individuals active in HME and in the professional music sectors. The project also targets policymakers in quality assurance and accreditation, in national ministries for education and culture and in the European Commission itself – especially those responsible for European-level policy development in (higher) education and culture. More information about the impact on these types of user can be found in Chapter 6.

Primary users targeted by 'Polifonia':

> **Professors and teachers in professional music training institutions**, especially those with responsibility for the structural reforms that institutions have to implement, who will profit from the promotion of European collaboration in the sector and from the ways in which it contributes to the quality of their teaching and the overall quality of the institution

> **Students in professional music training institutions**, who are directly affected by the structural reforms and will profit from the promotion of European collaboration in the sector, which provides them with important artistic and cultural experiences and a better preparation for an internationally-oriented employment market

> **Individuals active in the music profession**, represented by the non-academic partner organisations involved in this projects, who deal with the relationship between higher music education institutions and the music profession and who will be provided with structured information on innovative issues in higher music education.

> **Music professionals**, especially future graduates who will have greater access to the European employment markets through recognised and comparable qualifications the project will encourage.

Involvement of the primary users in the project

All four categories of individuals have been involved in the project in a variety of ways:

> Through the **direct participation in 'Polifonia' working groups**: the 5 working groups mentioned in the previous section are composed of representatives of HME institutions (directors, professors and teachers) as well as of representatives of professional organisations *(WG4 on Educating for Entrepreneurship)*. This means that an important part of the community of users is itself directly involved in the project work and activities, in the reflection and research processes and in the development of the project outputs.

> Through the **participation of the whole sector in the research conducted by the 'Polifonia' project**, as questionnaires have been sent out to all members of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC) - over 295 institutions, between them encompassing over 175,000 students and 36,000 teachers in HME.

> Through the **participation of music professionals, as well as students, teachers and institutional leaders, in 'Polifonia' seminars, workshop and conferences,** giving participants the opportunity to reflect and to provide feedback on the project results.

The 'Polifonia' project has benefited its users in many ways:

> All 'Polifonia' events, whether review visits, seminars, conferences or site visits, have been designed to provide **direct and practical assistance to institutions and individuals** active in the higher music education and music profession sectors in their development. For example:
>   o HME institutions and their teachers were able to reflect on their assessment practices and share thoughts and ideas with others through the workshops on assessment;
>   o Teachers and students engaged in artistic research were able to present their work and learn about that of others through participation in the European Platforms for Artistic Research in Music;
>   o HME institutions were able to invite a team of 'critical friends' in the framework of the institutional and programme review visits to undergo an evaluation and received a report with concrete and tailor-made suggestions for improvement;
>   o During these reviews, students enrolled in the reviewed institution or programme were interviewed and able to share their views and suggestions; students were also asked to serve as members of the review teams, which developed their interest for enhancing the quality of higher music education in their institution and beyond;
>   o Institutional leaders, teachers, students and music professionals were brought together at the conference 'The Musician as Creative Entrepreneur', a forum of unprecedented scope for the shared consideration of this important aspect of higher music education; students were invited to participate in the Student Bootcamp and receive guidance on their own professional project.

> These events also provided a **platform for the exchange of experience and good practices at European level**. Participants could therefore benefit from the collaboration at European level in the sector by sharing their practices, concerns and questions, and by learning from each other.

> All project publications provide **information on the various themes addressed by the project, with examples of good practice and concrete tools** for the further development of the HME institutions. These publications foster the awareness and knowledge of the users; providing those with inspiration, food for thought to reflect on their own situation and practice as well as tips to address the diverse challenges they are facing.

> The web-based materials developed provide an altogether more user-friendly and comprehensive level of **information that is easily accessible** not only to the community of users but to any visitor to the website

It is important to highlight that, in addition to the music students who have taken part in the project activities, all music students benefit indirectly from all 'Polifonia' findings, since they are the core beneficiaries of reforms to HME aimed at promoting competence-based learning and an enhanced professional relevance, underpinned by clear recognition of achievement and sound quality assurance principles.

2. Project Approach

The structure of five implementational working groups (WGs), each with its own focus but with important links between them, forms an important element of the project approach. Using WGs to drive forward the project agenda is a tried-and-tested formula that has proved its effectiveness in earlier editions of 'Polifonia'. But underlying this structural approach is a set of three principles which help to shape the nature of the project and the priorities within it. These principles are as follows:

1. The first principle is that of <u>development</u>:
   As a project of finite duration, if 'Polifonia' is to have a lasting effect upon higher music education (HME), it is important that new tools, insights and opinions are formulated and developed within it. The new elements chosen for development within 'Polifonia' have been selected for their likelihood to have a positive impact on the level of understanding on the part of the European (HME) sector of the main trends in both higher education and the music profession across recent years. The project also aims to make connections between this understanding and the practical actions that can then be taken up by institutions and individuals. The 5 WGs mentioned in the previous chapter, composed of international experts, were in charge of the development of new tools, insights and opinions, while all the organisational aspects were dealt with by the project management team, which provided a constant support to each partner and to the WGs.

2. The second principle is that of <u>dissemination and capacity building</u>:
   'Polifonia' has formulated an active strategy to help it involve all partners as much as possible. Partners have provided members for the WGs; many of them have hosted events and contributed in a variety of ways. Wherever events have been hosted (within and outside the project partnership), care has been taken to invite members from across the host institution and, where appropriate, from other institutions in the region so as to make dissemination integral to the project's functioning. In addition to this, the events, website and other dissemination tools of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC) have been put at the disposal of the project, ensuring that it has enjoyed a highly visible profile throughout its three years of operation in relation to dissemination and exploitation.

3. The third principle is that of <u>continuous evaluation</u>:
   'Polifonia' has used a robust method of internal and external evaluation, involving the working and steering group members themselves, as well as various external bodies and experts that ensure that the network is not losing its connection to the relevance in the higher (music) education and music profession sectors.

Below more information is provided on the actual working methods of 'Polifonia' and the ways these relate to the 3 principles set out here.

1. The developmental approach of 'Polifonia'

Five WGs in charge of implementation (research and development)

The developmental approach of 'Polifonia' has been primarily driven by the five implementational WGs already referred to (established to address the four objectives described in the previous section):

- ➢ WG1 on Assessment and Standards
- ➢ WG2 on Artistic Research in HME
- ➢ WG3 on Quality Enhancement, Accreditation and Benchmarking
- ➢ WG4 on Lifelong learning: Educating for Entrepreneurship
- ➢ WG5 on Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring and Joint Degrees

Tasks of the WGs:
- ➢ to collect information relevant for the topics discussed (through research, surveys and site visits, as well as through the exchange of expertise between WG members;
- ➢ to discuss and identify examples of good practice;
- ➢ to formulate opinions and positions;
- ➢ to develop documents and tools (i.e. publications such as guides, handbooks and web-based materials as well as workshops and conferences).

In order to ensure that the range of information considered by the WGs had a truly Europe-wide reach, the project made extensive use of questionnaires that were distributed throughout the partnership, to relevant outside experts and stakeholders and to the wider membership of AEC. In addition, site visits to HME institutions in various European countries were conducted by the WGs to identify examples of good practice.

Role of 'Polifonia' partners and composition of the WGs:
Each of the 56 organisations involved as partners in 'Polifonia' has contributed to the project by asking one of its staff members (and in some cases more than one) to dedicate part of their time to 'Polifonia' work by joining one of the five WGs or by being responsible to evaluating specific 'Polifonia' activities and outcomes (this was the case of 6 partner institutions – see page 17). The amount of time to be dedicated was defined according to each WG. In addition, partners have also hosted project meetings, activities and events.

As a result, each WG was composed of 8-12 academic experts (and experts from the profession for WG4). These individuals were chosen for their expertise (most of the time at national level) and for their interest in the field addressed by that group. Care was also taken to ensure that they came from different countries so as to ensure a wide geographical spread. Each WG also included 1-2 representative(s) from third countries, carefully chosen to bring to the WG the expertise of a specific project or the experience of a certain organisation.

Each WG met between 1 and 3 times a year, sometimes via the Internet communication tool Skype. During each WG meeting, an agenda prepared by the Chair and the management

team was discussed: plans were progressively built to reach the outcomes envisioned, and tasks were allocated to WG members for the following meeting, such as reading through material and reporting to colleagues, conducting some research on specific topics, conducting a site visit, writing text for the publications and online portal, proposing draft programmes for the workshops, delivering and/or facilitating sessions in workshops and conferences, etc.

The designation of experienced WG Chairs, the support provided by the management team and the carefully balanced number of representatives in each WG, as well as their strong commitment to the project, has guaranteed the efficiency of the discussions and aided the reliable production of work, with each member having clear responsibilities.

A Steering Group in charge of ensuring consistency and overall progress

The Steering Group (SG) consisted of a chair person, the Chairs of the five WGs, the project management team (see below), representatives of the beneficiary (Principal and Vice-Principal of the Royal Conservatoire The Hague) and representatives from the coordinating institution (AEC Chief Executive and AEC General Manager). The SG met twice a year.

The tasks of the Steering Group were:

➢ to oversee progress in the project implementation and deal with any difficulty raised by the participants (concerning the developmental work as each WG Chair reported on the progress of its WG, but also concerning the involvement of all partners, the project management, staff, finances, dissemination and exploitation);

➢ to ensure the exchange of information between the research and developmental components of the project and the managerial levels;

➢ to ensure a good coordination between all working groups and consistency across their work.

The SG was therefore key in ensuring that the research and developmental work was conducted as planned and within the allocated timeframe. Any deviation from the plan suggested by a WG Chair on behalf of his/her group was discussed and approved by the SG.

A management team in charge of all other project tasks

In order to enable all WG members to focus entirely on their research and development mission, a high level of support was provided in all other matters related to the project by the project management team, jointly designated by the beneficiary institution and the coordinating organisation.

The Polifonia' management team was composed of:

➢ a specially appointed project manager and a specially appointed project administrator responsible for:

    o all practical and organisational arrangements (organisation of all activities and events, booking of flights, hotel rooms, liaison with venues, etc.)

- content support to all partners (preparing agendas together with WG Chairs, writing all meeting reports, following up on WG members' assigned tasks, managing surveys to collect information in Europe, assisting with the formulation of the deliverables, etc.)
- daily financial management of the project
- coordination of the dissemination and exploitation activities.

The project manager and coordinator were trained, supported and supervised by management staff of the coordinating organisation (AEC). They also attended the ERASMUS Coordinators' meeting in January 2012, the Erasmus Thematic Cluster meeting in November 2012 and the ERASMUS Coordinators' meeting in December 2012.

➢ a project coordinator (from the coordinating organisation) responsible for monitoring the project progress and finances

➢ a financial administrator (from the beneficiary institution) responsible for the project accountancy.

Management tools to ensure cooperation among partners and support the developmental approach

The following tools and methods have been put in place to ensure cooperation among all project partners:

➢ a SG (mentioned above) holding regular meetings, which served as platforms for WG chairs to exchange information on the work of their group and to explore possible areas of cooperation with other groups;

➢ a project management team (mentioned above) keeping the contact with all the partners during the lifetime of the project and facilitating the cooperation among them;

➢ strong contact and regular meetings between the beneficiary institution and the coordinating organisation;

➢ regular meetings between partners enabling cooperation in various ways:
- WG meetings enabled partner representatives involved in the same WG to be in regular contact with each other;
- meetings of 2 WGs to discuss specific areas of joint work enabled the members of those WGs to meet and agree on the scope of the cooperation;
- 3 annual Network meetings enabled partner representatives to meet all together once a year. These meetings always included 2 joint sessions, during which partners were informed about the progress of each WG and could comment on the other WG's work and give feedback. A reader showing the status of work of each group and containing draft products as well as relevant documents for each group was also provided for each joint meeting;

➢ Communication outside meetings, which was mostly undertaken through email contact and skype meetings. All dissemination products were also sent to the partners for their own information.

Several tools have been developed by the 'Polifonia' management team to manage the consortium and enable all WG members to focus on their research and developmental mission while having a clear view of the project objectives, expectations and activities:

> a set of "terms of reference" for WG members, WG chairs and Third Country WG members, indicating the nature and level of commitment and workload expected from each category of member;

> several administrative forms such as reimbursement forms, staff hour declaration forms and partner agreements;

> a general project activity schedule and overview of planned activities, providing all partners with a chronological overview of the project's activities and events;

> a timeline listing completed, scheduled and planned activities over the whole project period in order to keep an overview of the overall timing of activities and possible synergies between WG meetings and other relevant events and activities.

2. The approach of 'Polifonia' towards dissemination and exploitation

The structure of 'Polifonia' as an ERASMUS Network, and the active involvement of AEC as coordinating organisation, provided contacts to HME institutions and other target groups all over the world, as well as a sector-wide reach unsurpassed by any other European project. 'Polifonia' has used this potential as an important pillar of the following dissemination and exploitation strategy.

Channels used to provide information on the project and its results to all target users:

➢ **The 'Polifonia' website** (www.polifonia.eu) is the first source of information for individuals interested in the project. It has been continuously updated throughout the project with relevant information about the progress of each WG and about upcoming events. In March 2013 the website was relocated to a new server and renewed for a more user-friendly and modernised interface. The overall look was enhanced and new tools were added, such as a mobile timeline with all the project events, pictures, videos and dissemination material, all of which added to its attractiveness.

➢ '**Polifonia' Online Newsletter/ 'Polifonia' Newsletter items within the AEC Newsletter:** Either an online 'Polifonia' newsletter or a dedicated 'Polifonia' item in the AEC newsletter in English, German and French has been published at regular points during the project, explaining the issues the project focuses on and showing the status of the work of each working group, as well as the latest project events. Newsletters were widely disseminated throughout the AEC membership and to external stakeholders, by email and on the website.

➢ **Printed Material:** Three printed 'Polifonia' leaflets have been produced in an easy-to-carry foldable postcard format during the course of the project; the first one (2012) in English and the second (2013) and third one (2014) in English, German and French. The leaflets were re-printed several times and widely disseminated throughout the 'Polifonia' partnership, the AEC membership and external stakeholders at different conferences and meetings at European level. The leaflets are also available in pdf format in open access on the 'Polifonia' website.

➢ **Polifonia' Videos:** 13 short dissemination videos have been professionally produced during the course of the project, including session recordings, summary-of-outcomes videos and an official 'Polifonia' dissemination film. This last one was recorded and edited in two different formats: a short version with general information on the project and an extended version with more detailed information of the work developed in each WG. Both versions have been used as dissemination features for the website and for other dissemination purposes. All the short films are available via different media channels (YouTube/Vimeo) and taken together, they have received more than 2,200 views.

➢ '**Polifonia' Soundtrack competition:** A contest for the composition of the soundtrack of the 'Polifonia' dissemination film was launched for students from AEC member institutions. Participants received a version of the film without music for them to work on it and provide a proposal embedded in the video. More than 100 students registered for the contest and 32 submitted a proposal for the contest.

Channels used to provide information to a wider audience:

➢ Attendance of project partners at events organised by external parties, such as congresses and conferences of other professional organisations in the field, events organised by national, European or international organisations on issues linked to education and culture, general meetings of higher education institutions, etc.

➢ Use of a large database of contacts to whom to send the newsletter and invitations to ´Polifonia activities. This database included all AEC contacts, and was constantly updated.

➢ Use of social media tools such as Facebook for the announcement of the project events and main updates

➢ Use of video-sharing websites such as YouTube in order to spread the media material produced within the project.

➢ Active networking and discussion of the project to a wider audience whenever possible.

➢ Invitation of relevant external parties to 'Polifonia' events, whether as speakers or as delegates. Examples of the former include the participation of Mrs Marjan Hammersma (Director General of Culture and Media of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science) in the opening session of the final conference of the WG4 in The Hague in September 2014 and the participation of Mrs Laila Benjnouh (Danish National Agency – Ministry of Higher Education and Science) during the WG5 presentation session of the Step by Step short guide on Erasmus + Mobility Actions at the Annual meeting for International Relations Coordinators in Aalborg in September 2014.

Multiplying and mainstreaming the results of 'Polifonia':

It is crucial for the project and its sustainability to explain the information disseminated to the end-users (as defined above), to involve these end-users in a reflection process, and to ensure that the project outcomes are actually used/implemented by them, during the project period and beyond. It is also crucial to ensure that Polifonia has an impact on policy development in the field of higher (music) education at both national and European levels.

A valorisation strategy has been produced to ensure the exploitation of the project outcomes during the lifetime of the project. In addition, various steps have been taken in order to ensure the sustainability of the project's impact after its end (see chapter 5 – Plans for the Future). Some information in relation to the involvement of the primary users in the project has already been provided on pages 7 and 8 above. In addition, some concrete examples of multiplying and mainstreaming can be given:

➢ The Institutional and Programme Review Visits: HME institutions applying for this scheme received a visit from a team of experts offering their assistance as "critical friends" to review the institutions. This way, the project directly reached out to the end-users by providing them with tailor-made assistance in their quality enhancement efforts. In these visits, the institution is scrutinised by the reviewers and receives concrete advice on points for further development. During the project timeframe, 12 review visits have taken place in 10 different countries.

➢ 'Polifonia' site visits undertaken during the lifetime of the project: although the primary aim of these visits was to assist HME institutions and/or to collect information from them, they also contributed to the dissemination and exploitation strategies of the project by making 'Polifonia' well-known and by widening the use of 'Polifonia' tools, documents, etc. in these institutions. During the course of the project, 9 site visits were organised by the working group 'Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring & Joint Degrees', while the working group on Lifelong Learning: Educating for Entrepreneurship carried out 8 site visits in search of innovative examples of entrepreneurship in music.

➢ 'Polifonia' presentations during AEC events: the 'Polifonia' project and its latest developments were regularly presented during all AEC's annual events. For example, during the AEC Annual Congress (bringing together 250 to 300 heads of higher music education institutions), various sessions were dedicated to the 'Polifonia' project: in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, general presentations of the project were realised, followed, in 2011 and 2014, by several parallel breakout sessions on the specific topics of each of the WGs. As a result, participants were not only well informed about the project and its products, but also had the opportunity to contribute to the final products. The AEC Annual meeting for International Relations Coordinators, the AEC Pop & Jazz Platform and the AEC Early Music Platforms were other platforms used by the project team as dissemination tools to reach out to other stakeholders within the institutions, so that a deeper impact on the institutions could be achieved. Finally, the three editions of EPARM, itself a project outcome of 'Polifonia', were opportunities not just to achieve the specific objectives of WG2 but also to raise awareness about 'Polifonia' more widely.

➢ Selecting meeting venues outside the project institutions: the project also adopted the policy of meeting in institutions not represented on the working groups and holding information sessions about 'Polifonia' in the host institutions for teachers, students and other representatives of institutions based in the country. This way, the working groups were able to reach an extended audience with project information, as well as collect relevant information and feedback for their work.

➢ Lobbying activities: policy-makers were invited during 'Polifonia' conferences as external speakers; a whole range of dissemination activities were aimed at policy-makers; representatives of WG3 attended various events related to quality assurance (examples: annual meetings of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Europe ENQA) in order to speak with various representatives of key stakeholders in the field (quality assurance agencies in Europe, representatives of the European Commission, of the European Register for Quality Assurance, etc.) and to lobby in favour of the need for subject-specific quality assurance agencies. As a result, various accreditation or evaluation procedures took place in cooperation with national quality assurance agencies. For more information on the impact of 'Polifonia' on the European Policies, see chapter 6.

3. The approach of 'Polifonia' towards evaluation

Internal and external evaluation of the project was ensured via the following channels:

➢ WG members were asked to give their feedback on the management, progress and functioning of the project through evaluation questionnaires distributed following two annual networks meeting (2013 and 2014). Some WGs also discussed their own functioning during WG meetings and gave direct feedback to the WG chair.

➢ The SG (mentioned above) conducted 2 meetings per year in order to discuss both the overall project progress and the work developed within each WG, taking into account the feedback from each WG chair, the results of questionnaires and external feedback (see below).

➢ An external evaluator was appointed for the lifetime of the project: Professor (emeritus) Harald Jørgensen, former rector, Norwegian Academy of Music. During the course of the project, Prof. Jørgensen has followed up the overall progress of the project and of each working WG through written material (application, minutes from meetings, working documents, reports from seminars and site visits reports etc.) and through personal contact by observations of ongoing work during two of the 'Polifonia' annual network meetings: Barcelona (March 2013) and Lübeck (June 2014). In addition, Prof. Jørgensen also participated in the AEC Congress in Budapest (November 2014) where all WG outcomes were presented.

➢ AEC Council was asked to evaluate 'Polifonia' activities and outcomes. The AEC Council is a group of 12 experts in HME from 12 different countries elected by the 240 institutions who are active members of the AEC to represent them. AEC Council is in charge of upholding the mission and character of AEC and of determining its strategic direction. The 12 institutions represented on the AEC Council were 'Polifonia' partners: they contributed to the project by asking their representative to dedicate some of their available time to evaluate various project activities and/or outcomes. A 'Polifonia' evaluation plan drafted by the project management team and approved by the Steering Group allocated specific project activities and outcomes to each Council member who was asked to attend the activity/read the publication and then share his/her feedback in written or verbally. This feedback was discussed by the WG members and taken into consideration for the final outcomes. In addition, during AEC Council meetings, which take place twice a year, 'Polifonia' progress were presented by the project management team and discussed by Council members.

➢ Following all 'Polifonia' workshops, seminars and conferences, the audience was systematically invited to give feedback on the project, either during breakout discussion groups or by filling a feedback questionnaire, which was subsequently analysed by the relevant WG.

3. Project Outcomes & Results

Report on the activities of working group (WG) 1 "Assessment & Standards"
This WG has focused on strengthening shared understanding of assessment methods, procedures and standards in European higher music education (HME) and highlighting innovative approaches towards assessment in, or suitable for, competence-based learning. The WG has also promoted competence-based learning and its work has built on learning outcomes for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycles of higher music education, produced in previous editions of the 'Polifonia' project.

WG1 meetings
9 WG meetings have taken place: The Hague – February 2012 (Joint WG meeting), Vienna – June 2012, Maastricht – September 2012, Zagreb – January 2013, Barcelona – March 2013 (Joint WG meeting), Vienna – April 2013, Corfu - October 2013 (including a joint meeting with WG5), Lyon – January 2014, Lübeck – June 2014 (Joint WG meeting).

WG1 outcomes and results
- ➢ **3 Seminars on assessment procedures and standards**. The results of the research conducted by the WG were incorporated into training seminars on "Enhancing Standards of Assessment for Higher Music Education through International Dialogue" organized by the WG members. The seminars aimed to offer senior staff of higher music education institutions and those involved in assessment (both as internal and external examiners) a platform to reflect on specific topics around assessment including quality, standards and institutional policy. The seminars had a dual focus - developing existing assessment policies within institutions and exploring ways of calibrating standards across institutions.

  The analysis of these three seminars led to the development of a model for future seminars on assessment and standards for those institutions interested in developing this kind of event. All the information regarding the organization of these three seminars, including the model for future seminars, is available in open access on the ´Polifonia´ website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section Working Groups – Assessments and Standards, and on the website of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC) (www.aec-music.eu).

- ➢ **Final Report on Assessments and Standards.** The group has studied existing assessment methods and procedures in European conservatoires, as well as examples of the involvement of students in these processes. The sources of evidence that were considered by the WG included a sample survey on important elements of assessment for European higher music education institutions; a literature review; discussions during workshops at the AEC congress and the AEC international relations coordinators' meeting; the analysis of a questionnaire on external examiners; and the outcomes of three international seminars on assessment and standards. The WG's findings have been gathered in a final report on assessment practices in HME in Europe aimed at developing a shared understanding of 'standards', reference points, roles, contexts and challenges for examiners and assessors. This report is available in English, French and German in open access on

the ´Polifonia´ website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section Working Groups – Assessments and Standards, and on the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu).

- ➢ **Reflective Checklist on the Assessment Process.** The WG has also worked further towards a shared understanding of standards in HME by defining a 'check-list' for elements of good assessment practice. The results have been included in a short guide with the aim of fostering reflection on fundamental issues relating to assessment practices in HME institutions, addressing the institution's overall assessment system or assessment within a specific programme or subject. This guide is available in English, French and German in open access on the ´Polifonia´ website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section Working Groups – Assessments and Standards and on the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu).

Contribution of the 3rd country partner:
The WG's work has been greatly supported by the wide experience and extensive contacts of the representative of the 3rd country partner from the University of Melbourne, Australia. In addition to the invaluable contributions made on his own behalf, this expert put the team in contact with another colleague in Australia who has developed the project 'Assessment in Music' (AiM) at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, in co-operation with the University of Newcastle and the University of Tasmania in Australia. Amongst other benefits, this led to a presentation of the AiM project at the first of the seminars on assessment procedures and standards. Overall, the 3rd country partner member has actively contributed to the development of the final outcomes as well as to their dissemination in several events.

Report on the activities of WG 2 "Artistic Research in Music"
This WG has focused on quality enhancement in relation to the role of research in HME institutions. It has paid particular attention to the kind of research described as artistic research. In doing so, it has examined the role of students as participants in this area, especially at Masters and Doctoral level, as well as considering how best to support the on-going professional development of conservatoire teachers as artistic researchers. The solid establishment of a European Platform for Artistic Research in Music has been one of its means of achieving this. After a pilot event in Belgrade in 2010, the first conference of this platform within the lifetime of the project took place in Rome (May, 2012) and was followed by two further events (Lyon, April 2013 and Stockholm, March 2014).

WG2 meetings
8 WG meetings have taken place: The Hague – February 2012 (Joint WG meeting), Rome – May 2012 (EPARM preparation), Barcelona – December 2012, Barcelona – March 2013 (Joint WG meeting), Lyon – April 2013 (EPARM preparation), Ljubljana – December 2013, Stockholm – March 2014 (EPARM preparation) and Lübeck – June 2014 (WG Joint meeting).

WG2 Outcomes and Results
 ➢ **Planning and delivery of three meetings of the European Platform for Artistic Research in Music EPARM**. The group has done this in cooperation with a dedicated EPARM WG, with which there is a valuable overlap of membership. As well as the successful delivery of EPARM 2012 and EPARM 2013 in Lyon, it was decided to hold a discussion forum in 2014 which was hosted by the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. In addition to the intrinsic value of this, it provided an opportunity for a joint platform with the Society for Artistic Research (representatives of which organisation have themselves been members of the WG) promoting discussion of the common and distinctive features of artistic research across the different artistic disciplines. All the information regarding the organization of these three conferences is available in open access on the ´Polifonia´ website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section Working Groups – Artistic Research in HME, and on the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu).

 ➢ **Study of the content of 2nd Cycle HME programmes as routes to artistic Doctorates**. The group conducted a survey of existing practice as to the philosophy and design of 2nd Cycle programmes and gathered opinions on how this practice might be developed. This work has informed its handbook, looking at 2nd Cycle curricula in terms of how they can combine the functions of 'gateway to the profession and bridge to the 3rd Cycle'. The handbook, one of the most substantial yet produced by 'Polifonia', combines a first section jointly produced by the WG with case studies contributed by individuals from across the user community. The inclusion of third country partners in the WG has ensured that the predominantly European perspective of the handbook has been contextualised with an international perspective. The handbook is available in English, French and German in open access on the ´Polifonia´ website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section Working Groups – Artistic Research in HME, on the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu) and in hard-copy format upon request.

 ➢ **European register of peer reviewers for artistic research in music**. The group has given careful consideration as to how best to establish such a register,

recognising, in particular, the dangers of such a resource if it has to operate a system of criteria for inclusion in, or exclusion from, the register. The solution adopted has been to develop a database of student projects at Masters and Doctoral level and to include in the fields of this database not only the project title and a short abstract but also the name(s) of the supervisor(s) working with the student. The effect of this is not only to provide an enhanced view of the range of subjects being studied by students in higher music education but also to make it possible for institutions and individuals to identify supervisors working in a particular topic area (and therefore with expertise in that area). They can then match areas of expertise with those in which they require a peer reviewer and/or external examiner. The database allows initial contact to be made with the expert, after which the decision as to whether he or she will be engaged as peer reviewer/external examiner can be made on an individual basis.

Thanks to the involvement of the Society for Artistic Research (SAR) in the working group, a further refinement of the database concept has been introduced, integrating it with the Research Catalogue (RC) of artistic research expositions whose management is one of SAR's key activities.
A 'Polifonia' portal has been established on the RC as the location for the database:
http://www.researchcatalogue.net/portal/portal

As a result of this step, in addition to the basic information held within the database, the possibility has been created for links to expositions of material produced in the students' projects. This material may take the form of recordings of performances, etc. giving a far richer picture of the nature of the project. Students and supervisors whose details are uploaded to the database are being encouraged to develop their own profile pages within the RC, thereby expanding the range and quantity of musical material available on this resource.

Specialist expertise of one third country partner in the working group has been invaluable in achieving a successful merging of the protocols developed for the database and those of the RC. As well as being accessible directly on the RC, a link to the database has been given a permanent unrestricted position on the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu) within the section Membership services - Artistic Research project database.

Contribution of the 3rd country partner:
The WG's work has been greatly supported by the experience of the two representatives of the 3rd country partners, one from the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (Australia) and the other from McGill University Schullich School of Music (Canada). In developing a distinctive philosophy for 2nd-Cycle programmes in a European context, the WG was helped enormously by both the support and the critical perspectives offered from these international colleagues. In the process, a richer understanding of the current state and future trends of research in HME in three continents was developed during the course of the project. Both partner members have actively contributed to the development of the final outcomes as well as to their dissemination in several events.

Report on the activities of WG 3 "Quality Enhancement, Accreditation & Benchmarking"

This WG focused on further developing the existing European-level and subject-specific approach to quality assurance in higher music education and exploring the use of benchmarking as a quality enhancement tool for higher music education institutions.

WG3 meetings
11 WG meetings have taken place: The Hague – February 2012 (Joint WG meeting), Bucharest – May 2012, St-Petersburg – November 2012 (meeting and workshop), Barcelona – March 2013 (Joint WG meeting and joint meeting with AEC Quality Enhancement - QE - Committee), Luxembourg – June 2013, Palermo – November 2013, Rome – February 2014 (joint meeting with AEC QE Committee), Manchester – April 2014 (Sub-group meeting), Lübeck – June 2014 (WG Joint meeting), Lisbon – July 2014 (joint meeting with AEC QE Committee), The Hague – October 2014 (joint meeting with AEC QE Committee) and Budapest – November 2014 (meeting and workshop).

WG3 Outcomes and Results
➢ **Establishment of an external evaluation body for HME institutions and programmes.** The WG was in charge of exploring the feasibility for a European-level quality assurance agency for the sector. Thanks to a very close cooperation with the Quality Enhancement Committee set up by AEC in 2011, this feasibility study was finalised in September 2013 along with an action plan for 2014 proposing steps towards the actual establishment of this evaluation body.

  MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement was created in October 2014 and offers accreditation, quality enhancement and advisory services to assist higher music education institutions in their own enhancement of quality. Three partner organisations are involved in MusiQuE: the AEC, the European Music Schools Union (EMU) and Pearle*-Live Performance Europe (the Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe), which ensures a structured dialogue with the profession. Preparations are now under way (outside the framework of the 'Polifonia' project) towards the recognition of this body at European level. More information about MusiQuE can be found at www.musique-qe.eu.

➢ **12 Institutional and Programme Review visits organised**. 2 programme reviews in Moscow (February 2012) took place in cooperation with the National Centre for Public Accreditation NCPA, 2 quality enhancement reviews in Brisbane (April 2012) and Reykjavik (May 2012) and an accreditation review in The Hague (June 2012). A review of a joint programme was organised for the first time in Tallinn (September 2013), followed by an accreditation procedure at the Yerevan Conservatoire in cooperation with the Armenian national quality assurance agency ANQA (September 2013) and 3 quality enhancement reviews in Lyon (November 2013), Barcelona (September 2014) and Prague (November 2014).

  Finally, once the new review body MusiQuE was in place (see above), a joint evaluation procedure was organised with the evaluation agency of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (Belgium) AEQES in Brussels (October 2014), Mons (November 2014) and Namur (December 2014).

All Review Teams included students as members of the panel in addition to peers and, in some cases, representatives of the profession.

➢ **Standards for reviews in HME**. Three new sets of standards for the review of HME institutions and programmes (based on the AEC criteria for review developed previously) have been developed: Standards for Institutional Review, Standards for Programme Review and Standards for Joint Programmes Review (developed in cooperation with *WG5 on Recognition, Monitoring and Joint Programmes*). These standards will be used after the project period has ended by the new review body MusiQuE. The standards are available in open access on the ´Polifonia´ website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section Polifonia Working groups - Quality Enhancement, Accreditation and Benchmarking and on the MusiQuE website (www.musique-qe.eu).

➢ **Guide - Learning from each other: Sharing good practice through benchmarking**. After studying various examples of benchmarking exercises developed by higher (music) education institutions and discussing in depth the concept of benchmarking, the WG produced step-by-step guidelines, including examples of case studies, aimed at promoting the use of benchmarking as a quality enhancement tool. The purpose of this guide is to introduce newcomers to the method of benchmarking and to assist those who are planning a benchmarking project within a higher music education setting. The guide is available in English, French and German in open access on the ´Polifonia´ website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section Polifonia Working groups - Quality Enhancement, Accreditation and Benchmarking, in the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu) and in hard-copy format upon request.

➢ **2 Workshops for peer-reviewers.** The group has prepared and delivered two workshops to train peer-reviewers active, or wishing to be so, in review visits. These interactive sessions are aimed at offering elements of training and professional development to potential and confirmed peer-reviewers, through role-playing exercises and presentations about the review procedures and standards developed and about MusiQuE (see above). All the information about these workshops is available in open access on the ´Polifonia´ website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section Polifonia Working groups - Quality Enhancement, Accreditation and Benchmarking.

Contribution of the 3rd country partner:
The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) was chosen as project partner in view of its expertise in accreditation of higher music education programmes in the US. The NASM Chief Executive was designated as WG3 member and contributed to providing a substantial amount of information about how the NASM model functions (in terms of independence, review procedures and standards, support staff, etc.). In addition, three WG members were invited to take part in a NASM Workshop for Evaluators. This provided the WG members concerned with even more material and another model of training sessions for peer-reviewers. Finally, the Chair of WG3 was invited to observe an NASM accreditation visit. These three types of exchange have been inspirational for the WG in drafting its action plan to establish the European-level review body for higher music education institutions and programmes MusiQuE.

Report on the activities of WG 4 "Educating for Entrepreneurship"

This WG has aimed at innovating European HME by addressing issues concerning the employability of musicians through a close collaboration between HME institutions and the professional music field. The WG focused on exploring the concept of entrepreneurship within the field of HME in Europe and on promoting ways in which training for entrepreneurship could be re-enforced, both within the conservatoire sector and in the profession.

WG4 meetings
6 WG meetings have taken place: The Hague – February 2012 (Joint WG meeting), Barcelona – March 2013 (Joint WG meeting), Brussels – September 2014, Brussels –March 2014, Lübeck – June 2014 (Joint WG meeting), The Hague- September 2014 (pre-conference meeting).

WG4 Outcomes and Results
- ➢ **8 site visits to HME institutions and professional organizations within the music sector across Europe.** The aim of these visits was to collect information about innovative initiatives in the field of Entrepreneurship in Music, both from a professional and an educational perspective. During the site visits, WG members interviewed key actors in the following entrepreneurial models: The Ensemble Les Siècles (Paris, October 2012), The Scottish Institute for Enterprise (SIE) in Glasgow (December 2012), The Red Note Ensemble (Edinburg December 2012), Rock City (Oslo, December 2012), the Intensive programme Towards Cultural Entrepreneurship" (Oslo, January 2013), Collegium 1703 (Prague, February 2013), Asko|Schoenberg Ensemble (Amsterdam June 2013) and the Popakademie Baden-Württenberg (Mannheim, June 2013). Reports of all the site visits are available in open access on the ´Polifonia´ website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section 'Polifonia' Working groups – Lifelong learning: Educating for Entrepreneurship and on the WG4 online portal www.musicalentrepreneurship.eu (see below).

- ➢ **Online Portal on Musical Entrepreneurship**. The WG has developed an online resource containing all the information about the research conducted by the group during the course of the project; it includes the WG's definition of the concept of entrepreneurship, results of the European-wide survey of how entrepreneurship skills are taught in conservatoires (research developed in collaboration with students of the university of political sciences of Paris), site visit reports and additional information about models of good practice from HME and the music profession. The portal aims at assisting HME institutions and students with developing teaching and learning approaches promoting the competence of entrepreneurship. The resource is available in English, French and German in open access at www.musicalentrepreneurship.eu.

- ➢ **3 workshops on Entrepreneurship at European level**. The WG members organised three different workshops linked to three events at European level. The first workshop took place in Palermo prior to the AEC Annual Congress 2013, addressing conservatoires interested in fostering the implementation of entrepreneurial approaches in their curricula. The second workshop took place in Vienna after the European Federation of National Orchestras (EFNYO) Annual Assembly, addressing students and trainers interested in reflecting how to develop an entrepreneurial mindset. The last workshop took place prior to the WG4 final conference in The

Hague, addressing students with a business idea interested in receiving guidelines and feedback from professionals to develop their project. All the information regarding the three workshops is available in open access on the ´Polifonia´ website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section ´Polifonia´ working groups – Lifelong learning: Educating for Entrepreneurship.

➢ **Final Conference 'The Musician as Creative Entrepreneur'** – The WG members organized an interactive conference in the Hague providing an opportunity for students, teachers, conservatoire directors and music professionals from across Europe to come together to learn about, reflect upon, and imagine the extensive possibilities offered by the many facets of musical entrepreneurship. The conference attracted more than 130 participants and it received very positive feedback. Video recordings from the main plenary sessions, and a media report summarizing the 2 days conference and Student boot camp, is available in open access on the 'Polifonia' website (www.polifonia.eu) within the 'Polifonia' Working groups - Lifelong learning: Educating for Entrepreneurship and on the WG4 online portal www.musicalentrepreneurship.eu.

Contribution of the 3rd country partner:
At the outside of the project, the WG was delighted to have secured the participation of an HME institution in the US that is an acknowledged world-leader in leadership and entrepreneurship issues. The head of the institution himself was to be the representative on the WG and enthusiastic contact was made in late 2011 with a view to activating his engagement with the WG. Tragically, the individual in question began to have severe health problems very soon afterwards, leading ultimately to his death. Understandably, during this extremely difficult period it was very hard to have effective communication with the institution. As a result, this is the one implementational WG where systematic engagement of a 3rd country partner throughout the project did not take place. However, thanks to good contacts between the WG Chair and many individuals and institutions in the US, the transatlantic perspective (very important from the point of view of entrepreneurial issues) did inform the work of the group. In particular, the participation of the director of New England Conservatory in the final WG conference in The Hague, led to his providing the group with extensive feedback about the event and the WG online portal.

Report on the activities of WG5 on "Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring & Joint Degrees"

This WG has focused on promoting mobility in the HME sector, developing guidelines to facilitate reciprocal external examining arrangements and on identifying mobility and recognition issues in European joint programmes.

WG5 meetings
6 WG meetings have taken place: The Hague – February 2012 (Joint WG meeting), Naples – September 2012, Barcelona – March 2013 (Joint WG meeting), Corfu – October 2014 (including joint meeting with WG1), Prague – March 2014 and Lübeck – June 2014 (Joint WG meeting).

WG5 Outcomes and Results
- ➢ **9 Site visits to HME institutions collect information on mobility aspects and joint programmes**. Throughout the project lifetime, WG members visited two institutions during periods when examinations were being held and acted as external examiners (The Hague – March 2013 and Leeds – June 2014); they conducted three site visits aimed at identifying mobility and recognition issues relevant to joint programmes (Lyon – May 2012, Amsterdam – November 2012, Reykjavik – August 2013); two sites visits were made to identify specific difficulties with mobility encountered by HME institutions (Larnaca April 2014 and Tbilisi – September 2014); a site visit took place to study an online application system for exchanges of students and staff in HME institutions (Bergen – August 2014); and members attended a conference about joint programme requirements (Bologna, June 2012) . The reports corresponding to these activities are available in open access on the 'Polifonia' website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section 'Polifonia' Working groups - Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring and Joint Degrees and on the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu).

- ➢ **Step-by-Step Guidelines for ERASMUS+ mobility actions**. The WG has developed a short online guide with the aim of providing practical instructions for ERASMUS+ and mobility actions, including updated information on how to remove obstacles and enhance quality and quantity in mobility for both teachers and students in the HME sector. This guide is available in English, French and German in open access on the 'Polifonia' website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section 'Polifonia' Working groups - Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring and Joint Degrees and on the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu).

- ➢ **Report International External Examiners in Higher Music Education: Role, Purpose and Case Studies.** The WG has developed a well-informed methodology and advice on (reciprocal) external examining arrangements with the aim of enhancing the use of external examiners (i.e. "external experts" acting as members of the assessment panel). The report provides information on what is meant by the term international external examiners, lists the benefits to institutions of the use of such examiners and presents some case studies. It also outlines a few practical details that institutions have to consider when operating a system that uses International external examiners. The report describes the advantages and challenges of the practice of international external examining and offers practical solutions to institutions interested in using international external examiners. This report is available in English, French

and German in open access on the 'Polifonia' website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section 'Polifonia' Working groups - Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring and Joint Degrees and on the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu).

> **Handbook How to Develop a Joint Study programmes**. The WG has developed a guideline on how to develop a joint programme in HME, including a number of case studies that portray the common challenges and obstacles. This handbook is available in open access on the 'Polifonia' website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section 'Polifonia' Working groups – Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring and Joint Degrees and on the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu).

> **2 workshops on internationalisation**. The WG has delivered two interactive sessions for international relations coordinators (IRCs) addressing the development of the international strategies of HME institutions, as well as how to deal with obstacles and challenges related to staff and teacher mobility. The group worked in close cooperation with the existing WG set up by the AEC to prepare its IRC annual meeting, and both workshops were delivered in combination with these annual meetings, bringing together over 150 IRCs from all around Europe. All the information about these two events is available in open access on the 'Polifonia' website (www.polifonia.eu) within the section 'Polifonia' working groups - Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring and Joint Degrees.

Contribution of the 3rd country partner:
Given the international focus of this group's activities, the presence of a 3rd country partner has been especially relevant. The importance of seeing beyond the issues affecting transnational mobility within the European space was well appreciated by the WG and having an external perspective on issues such as external examining was of considerable benefit. The WG's work has therefore been greatly supported by the experience of two successive representatives from the 3rd country partner, the Honk Kong Academy of Performing Arts, who contributed actively to the development of the final outcomes as well as to their dissemination in several events.

4. Partnerships

The ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia', which is the biggest European project on professional music training to date, involved 61 institutions and organisations in the field of music training and the music profession: 56 of these located in 25 European countries, 2 in Australia, 2 in the United States, 1 in Canada and 1 in Hong Kong. The full list of partners is available on the 'Polifonia' website www.polifonia.eu within the section 'Polifonia' Project partners. This multi-country approach was certainly essential for a project studying the entire European scene in terms of higher music education (HME), but the added-value of such a multi-country partnership goes beyond this.

Firstly, the 'Polifonia' partners represented the rich diversity of the European and non-European HME sector. In each country represented, anything from 1 to 5 HME institutions were involved in the project and contributed to its outcomes by bringing and sharing up-to-date knowledge and experience of their national HME system. As a wide range of countries was also represented in each of the 'Polifonia' working groups, the outcomes produced by these groups correspondingly bring together a wide expertise and range of perspectives.

In addition, the process itself of confronting many different views and cultures in order to reach agreement on a specific issue has been of great value for the project and given great value to the sector. In this way, the project itself has promoted enhanced understanding and consensus-building. This is particularly important in an area such as the search for common ground when considering standards in assessment – a key concern of working group (WG)1. This same area provides an excellent example of the value of including 3rd country partners: thanks to contacts proved by their 3rd country member, the members of WG1 were able to tap into a major project on assessment being conducted in Australia, while the findings of 'Polifonia' were also shared with this antipodean project.

The method of having WGs composed of 8 to 12 persons has proved to be very valuable in this regard and very efficient when it comes to exchanging experience. By careful selection of group members to ensure a balance of national perspectives, with no one view dominating, an 'ecumenical' outcome has been achieved, which should increase the likelihood of the findings being useful in a wide range of national contexts.

Finally, in terms of dissemination and exploitation, the 'Polifonia' multi-country partnership plays a very important role, as each partner has been and is able to promote the project outcomes of all WGs in its country through national channels (networking, discussions or meetings with colleagues in similar institutions, invitation to national conferences, etc.). At the same time, the project partnership has also continuously been informed about developments in HME and the music profession at national levels. This close reciprocal contact has been an essential part of the project's work, as it was crucial that the project (as with any other European project in higher education) stayed well informed about the developments and trends in the Member States.

European added value has been strengthened further through the participation of the following large representative European organisations in the field of music and music education:

- AEC, which covers almost 90% of all officially recognised higher music education institutions in Europe and has a membership of over 295 member institutions in all European countries and further afield. These institutions, between them, encompass over

175,000 students and 36,000 teachers in HME. It is important to point out that the AEC is the only organisation specifically representing the higher education discipline of music at the European level and that, despite close links with organisations such as the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), the European University Association (EUA) and the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), this dedicated focus is essential to securing trust and mutual understanding across the member institutions, for whom the subject they share – music - is the primary criterion for self-definition.

- The International Federation of Musicians (FIM), which is the international organisation for musicians' unions, guilds and professional associations and is now counting about 70 members in 60 countries throughout the world (http://www.fim-musicians.org/).

- The Performing Arts League Europe (PEARLE* - Live Performance Europe), which represents through its members associations more than 4,500 theatres, theatre production companies, orchestras and music ensembles, opera houses, ballet and dance companies, festivals, and other organisations within the performing arts sector across Europe. (http://www.pearle.ws/)

- The European Association of String Teachers (ESTA), which represents more than 5.000 individual string teachers in 27 national branches all over Europe (www.estastrings.org).

- The Society for Artistic Research (SAR), which aims at offering artistic researchers the opportunity to disseminate their research in a variety of ways including a combination of journal publication with research documentation and exposition in a research catalogue http://www.societyforartisticresearch.org).

- The European Music School Union (EMU), representing more than 6,000 music schools in 24 European national branches and covering an important sector of future employment for future music graduates (http://www.musicschoolunion.eu/).

- The European Music Council (EMC) representing 37 European national music councils (http://www.emc-imc.org).

As will be clear from this list, 'Polifonia' has managed to bring together a unique partnership encompassing the main European players in the music profession, including various types of social partners (training institutions, employers' organisations and musicians' unions).

In terms of content, 'Polifonia' is the only initiative in the European HME sector with the capacity, in terms of organisation, funding and geographical representation, to address the latest European developments in higher education by engaging in activities that can make these developments relevant to the sector while, reciprocally, realising an active contribution to European higher education policy. With the AEC playing a pivotal role in relation to the dissemination of results throughout the entire higher music education sector in Europe, 'Polifonia' has the function of a 'laboratory' or 'accelerator' through which to study, develop and test innovative issues. In this way, 'Polifonia' clearly has a different function from AEC; the Network truly has the ambition to act both as a 'catalyst' and as a 'spider-in-the-web' for the development, testing and implementation of European higher education policy in the HME sector.

During the course of the project, the experience of different institutions and organisations working in close partnership has further strengthened links between partners and forged a determination to continue working together after the lifetime of the project. For example, AEC and EMU (a partner in WG4) are now jointly engaged in a project funded under the 'Creative Europe' programme. Meanwhile, many of the 'Polifonia' partners are collaborating

on applications for Strategic Partnerships and Knowledge Alliances, often taking up themes developed within 'Polifonia' and exploring how these can lead on to sustainable and strategically-embedded activity.

Working together in a European partnership is both challenging and rewarding. Different languages, terminologies and cultures may initially create misunderstandings. 'Polifonia' has been pro-active not only in trying to overcome these during the course of the project by being highly sensitive to cultural diversity, but also in creating resources available in different languages. Whilst English has been the principal language of communication, German and French have also been recognised as main languages and key documents have been made available in these three languages.

5. Plans for the Future

The impact of the comments of the external evaluator

The External Evaluator of the project, Prof. Harald Jørgensen has produced two reports reflecting his observations on the project's development and results; one of these was received in March 2013 and a final one in February 2015. In this latter, the project methods, work, outcomes and activities for the second half of the project are discussed and further developed in the light of the feedback provided in his first report. For the final evaluation report, Prof. Jørgensen has focused on the relevance of the outcomes in relation to both the proposed objectives and the expected audiences and, in the case of the written documents, on the readability and clarity of the outcomes content.

The 'Polifonia' project management team and working group (WG) leaders appreciate not only the thoroughness of Prof. Jørgensen's report but also the deep and broad understanding of the sector which informs it. As a 'critical friend', Prof. Jørgensen offers pointers to future activity, sometimes recommending that well-tested procedures be continued and sometimes – for example, in the approach to using data in a statistically quantitative way – suggesting avenues for a yet more professional approach. All of his comments will be borne in mind in the context of future project activity.

One of the characteristics of Prof. Jørgensen's report is its valuable historical contextualisation of the paths which led to the current 'Polifonia' project. Although much of this history is known to some of the partners in the latest project, this is not uniformly the case. For all of those who have given their time and energies across the period from 2011-14, it is heartening to have a mirror held up in which they can see the extent of the 'tectonic shifts' that have taken place in the HME sector across the last two decades. The effect of this will undoubtedly be to encourage institutional engagement in future projects that attempt to keep alive the 'spirit' of 'Polifonia'.

Future sustainability

The role of 'Polifonia' and the sustainability of its outputs must been seen from the broader perspective of European higher education. The sector of higher music education (HME), represented by 'Polifonia', is one that is essential for the preservation and further development of Europe's cultural heritage. At the same time, due to its dual position in both the cultural and educational sectors, HME is not necessarily fully represented by the larger European higher education organisation such as EUA and EURASHE. This makes the role of 'Polifonia' even more pertinent; without 'Polifonia' the sector may marginalised from the mainstream of European developments. This effect works both ways: the voice of music needs to be adequately heard in higher education debates, but the HME sector also needs to feel the relevance of wider developments to its own discipline.

The 'Polifonia' consortium makes a significant impact on the European higher education sector as a whole through its subject-specific, Europe-wide and, indeed, international focus. In this respect, through 'Polifonia', music can serve as an example to other disciplines. One of the lessons learned in the previous cycles of 'Polifonia' is the need to have a long-term perspective when addressing change in higher education and the profession. Reforms in

higher (music) education take a long time and must be underpinned both by awareness-raising and by effective support tools. These aspects are the basis on which 'Polifonia' creates its activities and builds sustainability into them.

The key strategy developed by 'Polifonia' to achieve **long-term sustainability** of its project outcomes has therefore been to maintain the momentum of awareness-building and to showcase the support tools by ensuring that these outcomes are mainstreamed into the policies, activities and publications of the main European representative body for HME, the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Academies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC). In the previous cycles of 'Polifonia', various new tools and activities were developed and tested which are now running on a financially self-sustaining basis under the umbrella of the AEC. The same approach is being used for the activities developed in this cycle.

An additional aim of this cycle is that, as well as embedding the 'Polifonia' outcomes in AEC policy, the principle of mainstreaming should be extended to the other European organisations in the partnership, thus ensuring that the issues addressed in 'Polifonia' become a structural component of their policies and activities, too. In this way, it is intended to achieve sustainability for all, not just some, of the outputs of the project. The new programmes of ERASMUS+ and 'Creative Europe' introduced from January 2014 necessitate different kinds of groupings and partnerships and the mutual trust developed during the course of 'Polifonia' is proving invaluable in laying the basis for these.

Because of the role of AEC in underpinning the sustainability of 'Polifonia' outcomes, an important joint meeting was held in September 2014, bringing together the Council of AEC and the 'Polifonia' steering group. During this meeting, participants from both sides offered opinions on the most strategically important results of 'Polifonia' and suggestions as to how to ensure their continued development. Among other consequences, these perspectives are being used to inform the drawing-up of AEC's Strategic Plan for the period 2016-20.

Certain strands of 'Polifonia' have emerged as having even more importance by the project's conclusion than might perhaps have been anticipated at the outset. For example, the feasibility study of establishing an independent quality enhancement and accreditation agency that was one of the actions of WG3 evolved during the course of the project into the actual creation of such a body in October 2014. The new body, MusiQuE, will certainly greatly contribute to ensuring the sustainability of all the outcomes related to the WG3 on Quality Enhancement, Accreditation and Benchmarking (such as the Standards for Institutional and Programme Review, which will be the main tool of the new review body), but also indirectly of all the other 'Polifonia' outcomes, as reviewers visiting institutions and programmes often tend to refer to the existing 'Polifonia' tools as guidelines towards improvement. For example, the online portal on entrepreneurship may be suggested to an institution or programme willing to improve its educational offer in this field, the final report on assessment may be recommended by reviewers identifying a need for improvement in the way assessment is conducted in the visited institution, etc.

A new project being undertaken by AEC under the 'Creative Europe' programme, which has been given the acronym 'FULL SCORE', aims to expand and enhance the quality enhancement developments that have been such an important feature of 'Polifonia' by taking a holistic approach to quality enhancement in music spanning all levels of musical training, from the earliest years to higher education, and addressing the specific nature and requirements of training in music pedagogy. This work will be carried out in conjunction with

the European Music Schools Union (EMU) and the European Association for Music in Schools (EAS)

Plans for sustaining the actions carried out by WG2 on Artistic Research in Music provide a good example of how the sector is adapting to the move from Thematic Networks to Strategic Partnerships and Knowledge Alliances. Two of the three main outputs of WG2 require continuation strategies: the meetings of the European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM) and the online database of student projects and supervisors, now located on the SAR Research Catalogue. Both of these were included in a Strategic Partnership application, featuring several of the 'Polifonia' WG2 partners, submitted to the UK ERASMUS agency in 2014. Although unsuccessful in receiving funding, this application was highly commended, and a revised application is being submitted in 2015.

Most of the 'Polifonia' outcomes are in electronic format and are accessible on the AEC Website. In this way, the sustainability and the potential updating of the online tools developed throughout the project - such as guidelines or expert registers - can be easily completed, maintaining their utility in the future. This is the case, for example, with the WG5 Step-by-Step Guidelines for ERASMUS+ mobility actions, which will be periodically updated in response to new developments in the field by the AEC International Relations Coordinators (IRCs) WG.

The variety of workshop offered throughout the course of the project has revealed a great demand of this format of activity, especially in view of the fact that it allows participants to be involved in the discussions in a direct and interactive way. The feedback received by the 'Polifonia' workshop participants has proved that the topics addressed are relevant for the audiences attending events where the workshops took place and, consequently, further plans are already in train to keep these 'Polifonia' outcomes, such as the WG3 workshop for peer-reviewers or the WG5 workshop for IRCs, as features of future events. In addition, thanks to the work of WG1, a ready-made seminar model for assessment and standards is now available for institutions interested in organizing such events.

6. Contribution to EU policies

The relationship between 'Polifonia' and European political developments

The ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia' has enhanced the quality and attractiveness of European higher music education (HME) at the European level and internationally. Through its responsiveness to European higher education policy developments (e.g. the 'Bologna' process and the 'Europe 2020' agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems) and to changes taking place in the profession, the HME sector in Europe has developed an increasingly unified approach which has benefited from the activities of earlier phases of 'Polifonia'. The latest 'Polifonia' project has further enhanced the sector by:

➢ Continuing curriculum reform (deepening implementation of the 3-cycle structure, studying assessment in competence-based curricula, strengthening shared understanding of standards and supporting students' research in all study cycles)

➢ Pursuing governance reform (formalizing a European-level subject-specific approach to quality assurance and evaluating the possible development of an international benchmarking system)

➢ Enhancing the employability of graduates (supporting the Knowledge Triangle in the music sector by addressing entrepreneurship and studying partnerships between HME institutions and professional music organizations)

➢ Promoting European mobility in the sector by developing ways in which institutions can ensure that they give full recognition to student achievement gained in exchanges and joint degrees

➢ Strengthening these developments in Europe by drawing in a systematic way upon expertise from third countries

As set out in the original application, 'Polifonia' has been structured so as to contribute to the realisation of EU higher education policies in the following ways:

- *By contributing to the development of quality lifelong learning and promoting high performance, innovation and a European dimension in systems and practices in the field*

  'Polifonia' promotes high performance through enhancing understanding of assessment in music, improving recognition of student achievement and strengthening shared standards; it is innovative in its approach to artistic research in music and in its strengthening of the knowledge triangle between music education, research and the profession; it promotes a European dimension through its close alignment with the tools and philosophy of the European Tuning process but also sets this in the context of a wider, international perspective, thanks to its 3rd country partners.

- *By helping to improve the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of the opportunities for lifelong learning available within Member States*

  'Polifonia' aims explicitly at enhancing the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of higher music education in Europe through cooperation at a European level; its focus upon recognition of student achievement enhances both attractiveness and accessibility; its work to strengthen the foundations in the 2nd Cycle for artistic research in the 3rd address a current weakness in the progressional logic of HME and therefore improve quality. Again, the presence of 3rd country partners enhances the two-way process of

enriching understanding: of Europe's systems by international partners and of external alternatives by European members.

- *By supporting the achievement of a European Area of Higher Education*

    Contributing to the consolidation of a fully integrated European Higher (Music) Education Area has been a principal goal of this project; this is addressed through the Europe-wide surveys and, particularly, through the feasibility study for an independent European subject-specific system for quality enhancement and accreditation and the database of supervisory expertise to assist the selection of external examiners/peer reviewers for artistic research, both of which are among the project outcomes; the work on recognition of student achievement in mobility and joint degrees is also creating powerful tools for further embedding a European Area of Higher Education within which students can move freely and receive integrated recognition for achievement in different locations throughout Europe.

- *By reinforcing the contribution of higher education and advanced vocational education to the process of innovation*

    This objective is addressed throughout the project, but especially by Workpackage IV, in which work has been implemented jointly by HME institutions and organisations in the music profession to identify innovative examples of good cooperative practice between these two sectors. The research undertaken has had as its aim the advancement of expertise, quality and development - in both the music education and the music profession sectors - leading to further innovation in curriculum design and in the orientation towards lifelong learning of the professions.

- *By promoting an awareness of the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity within Europe, as well as of the need to combat racism, prejudice and xenophobia*

    Because of its close connection to culture and its Europe-wide remit, 'Polifonia' is able to contribute significantly to a multicultural awareness and understanding in Europe. Its active policy with regards to translation supports both cultural and linguistic diversity. Both these facts and the institutional policies of the partner institutions involved concerning discrimination ensure that the network has made its own contribution to combatting racism, discrimination, prejudice and xenophobia.

Is any impact noticeable on European and national policy development?

As well as promoting the modernisation of European HME in the terms described above, the outcomes of the project have also been designed with the aim of contributing to national and European policies in the long-term. There is evidence that, following on from its predecessors, the current 'Polifonia' project has had similar success in achieving this ambition:

- The document 'Summary of Tuning findings – Higher Music Education' with the 'Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors' and the Learning Outcomes for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd study cycles in higher music education (finalised in the second edition of 'Polifonia') is increasingly widely used by institutions and national governments as part of their work towards curriculum reform in the higher music education sector. The same document also underpinned the development within 'Polifonia' working group (WG) 1 of statements designed to strengthen the shared understanding of standards in relation to these outcomes. Debates on standards are becoming increasingly widespread across

European higher education and they are sometimes used at national level in ways that seek to justify how funding is distributed amongst institutions. 'Polifonia' is providing important data to ensure that issues surrounding standards are correctly understood, and that they are interpreted in relation to a proper regard for the diversity of HME institutions and their missions.

▪ Concurrently with the period of operation of 'Polifonia', a number of European conservatoires have been engaged in the development of European joint Master programmes and this process shows signs of continuing under the framework of the new Strategic Partnerships. The work carried out by WG1 and WG5 provides important guidance in relations to standards, mobility and recognition – all key issues for such programmes.

▪ One of the issues that arise with joint degrees is the jurisdiction under which these programmes should be accredited. In a joint programme that crosses national boundaries, the use of national accrediting agencies can give rise to the need for multiple approvals; the work carried out within 'Polifonia' to explore the feasibility of a European sectoral accreditation system for music is potential crucial in this respect. Experts from 'Polifonia' WG3 recommended the establishment of such a system and an important additional outcome of the project has been the achievement of this in October 2014. The new agency responsible for European subject specific quality enhancement and accreditation in music, MusiQuE, has the potential to make a major impact upon European and national debates and policy development in this area.

▪ Meanwhile, joint review actions combining the tools developed within 'Polifonia' and the frameworks employed by national agencies have started to become a common mode of operation in the higher music education sector. WG3 has overseen this activity and a pool of expertise has now been established that makes it possible to introduce new national agencies quickly and efficiently into this way of working. An important recent example is the cooperation between the new independent agency for quality enhancement and accreditation in music, MusiQuE, and the quality assurance agency for the French-speaking region of Belgium.

▪ Already, in 'Polifonia' II, a structural dialogue had been achieved with one of the main European employers' organisations in the performing arts, (PEARLE*). This dialogue has being taken forward dramatically, as well as being extended to other organisations through the activities of WG4, 'Lifelong learning: Educating for Entrepreneurship'. Among the benefits arising from this multi-dimensional structural dialogue is a jointly-agreed set of terms of reference for what are seen as constituting the characteristics of entrepreneurship for today's music graduates and the professional musicians of tomorrow. In addition, PEARLE* has joined the new independent European quality enhancement and accreditation agency for music, MusiQuE as a full partner and board member, recognising the shared responsibility of higher education and the professional sector in safeguarding the quality and relevance of programmes in HME.