ERASMUS NETWORK FOR MUSIC

polifonia

ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia'

Progress Report   Public Part

Project information

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Executive Summary

This report aims at presenting the ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia' and its activities during the first period of the project (October 2011 to March 2013). 'Polifonia' is the largest European project on higher music education to date, involving 55 institutions in the field of music training and the music profession located in 26 European countries and in 4 countries outside Europe. It is jointly co-ordinated by the Koninklijk Conservatorium in The Hague and the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC). This three-year project (2011 to 2014) builds on the results of two three-year cycles of the 'Polifonia' Network, which run respectively from 2004-2007 and from 2007-2010.

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

- To **contribute to the Modernisation Agenda for Higher Education in Europe** by assisting the higher music education sectors in the field of 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 fields of quality enhancement in the higher music education sector).
- 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 strands:
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 keeping a visible profile in relation to dissemination and exploitation. The structure of 'Polifonia' as an ERASMUS Network and the active involvement of the AEC provides a sector-wide reach unlike any other European project.
3. Continuous evaluation based on internal and external evaluation methods.

Building on a strong network of experts developed throughout the years and the work realised during the two preceding cycles, this 'Polifonia' Network shall have realised 34 working group meetings, 9 review visits, 9 site visits, 5 seminars, 3 workshops and 3 conferences by September 2014. A large number of outcomes (surveys, studies, handbooks, good-practice guides and website information etc.) shall be available and widely disseminated at the end of the project.

'Polifonia' presents an active contribution to policies of the EU and the member states, which is reflected by various developments at European and national level in higher education in general and in higher music education in particular, that have been supported by 'Polifonia'.

Further information on the project is available on the 'Polifonia' website www.polifonia-tn.org.

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1. Project Objectives

General objectives

Since its launch in 2004, the ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia' has proactively 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 the 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, 'Polifonia' has often been cited as a good example of what can be achieved through a subject-specific and European-level approach to the European higher education developments. The first cycle of 'Polifonia' (2004-2007) was even designated by the European Commission as an ERASMUS success story in 2007.

The project objectives, which therefore strongly relate to European policy developments, are the following:

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,
    - ➢ 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,
    - ➢ By addressing research as a new component in study programmes in higher music education through the creation of a new European Platform for Artistic Research, 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.

- 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 sector,
    - ➢ By developing a guide for international institutional benchmarking specifically designed for institutions in the sector as a quality enhancement tool.

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',

> ➢ By identifying continuing professional development needs of professionals in the workplace,
> ➢ By identifying examples of research partnerships between educational institutions and organisations which can serve as models for the further development of expertise in the cultural sector.

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 degrees.

To **enhance the quality and international attractiveness of the European higher music education sector** by involving as participants in the project experts from key institutions in third countries.

Specific objectives per working group

(1) Curriculum Reform: Assessment & Standards WG

This working group promotes competence-based learning. Its work builds on learning outcomes for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycles of higher music education, produced in previous 'Polifonia' project cycles.

- The group is studying existing assessment methods and procedures in European conservatoires, with the aim of highlighting innovative examples of assessment in, or suitable for, competence-based learning. Examples of the involvement of students in these processes will also be studied. The group's findings will feed into a report.

- The working group is also in charge of developing further steps towards a shared understanding of standards in Higher Music Education by defining elements of good assessment practices and by discussing these with experts.

- The results will be incorporated into training seminars for examiners and external examiners, which may eventually lead to a European-level register of external examiners, giving institutions the possibility to invite such experts to their examinations in order to enhance objectivity, encourage the exchange of expertise and thereby facilitate the recognition of degrees.

(2) Curriculum Reform: Artistic Research in Higher Music Education WG

This working group aims to enhance the quality of education through a focus on the role of research – and, in particular artistic research - in higher music education institutions. Its work builds upon studies carried out in earlier project cycles of practice in the 3rd cycle across European higher music education institutions.

- The group is overseeing the establishment of a European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM). It is doing this in cooperation with a dedicated EPARM working group with which there is a valuable overlap of membership. The aim is to create a forum for the exchange of ideas and expertise about the role of artistic research in study programmes and in the continuing professional development of teaching staff. The group will deliver two meetings of this platform during the lifetime of the project and, by doing so, will attempt to build up a viable basis of support among European higher music

education institutions from which EPARM can continue to function after the project's lifetime.

- The working group is also looking closely at existing 2nd Cycle programmes in conservatoires and considering how well they prepare students for a 3rd cycle in which artistic research features. In particular, the group is seeking to find models for a balanced 2nd-Cycle curriculum which simultaneously acts as a 'gateway to the profession and a bridge to the 3rd Cycle. It will publish its findings in the form of a handbook.

- The group is conscious of the need for better information about where expertise in artistic research exists across European higher music education. To help institutions who are looking for peer reviewers and/or external examiners for artistic research work, it is examine how a register of such experts might be created. Its solution to this challenge is to develop a database of Masters and Doctoral projects in which the project titles and supervisors' names are among the information provided. Institutions will be able to use this database to identify individuals who have supervisory experience in subject areas where they are looking for examiners or peer reviewers.

(3) Governance Reform: Quality Enhancement, Accreditation & Benchmarking WG

This working group addresses two aspects in the field of governance reform: quality assurance and accreditation, as well as benchmarking.

- A European-level and music-specific approach to quality assurance has been developed in previous project activities. The working group is in charge of implementing this approach by monitoring peer-review visits to higher music education institutions, as well as improving and formalising the review process. A significant part of its work is dedicated to a feasibility study exploring if a European-level quality assurance agency should and could be set up for the higher music education sector, to ensure that the characteristics and needs of this sector are taken into account in quality assurance and accreditation procedures.
- The working group is also studying examples of benchmarking exercises in which higher music education institutions are engaged: small groups of institutions agree on benchmarks and indicators relevant for them, collect precise data on their performance in these various areas (for example international strategy, mission, research, etc.), compare their performance with the performance of the other partners, and work on improving the fields where weaknesses or needs have been highlighted. The working group shall then develop a guide to international institutional benchmarking specifically designed for institutions in the sector as a quality enhancement tool.

(4) Life Long Learning: Educating for Entrepreneurship WG

Composed of professionals and representatives of conservatoires from all over Europe, this working group aims at promoting innovation in European higher music education by addressing issues related to the employability of music students and professionals through a close cooperation of higher music education institutions and organisations in the music profession.

- The group has carried out a European-wide survey on the involvement of higher music education institutions in schemes supporting music professionals through continuing professional development.
- In addition, models of entrepreneurial approaches and ways in which such training can be re-enforced both within the conservatoire sector and in the profession are being analyzed through a number of site visits and workshops focused on examples of good practice.
- An online portal is being developed in order to assist institutions and students on developing teaching and learning approaches which consciously promote the competence of entrepreneurship.
- The results of the site visits and the workshops will also be presented in a European-wide conference for institutions interested in developing entrepreneurial approaches.

(5) Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring & Joint Degrees WG

This working group focuses on the enhancement of the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of European higher music education by promoting mobility in the higher music education sector at the European level.

- The group is developing a 'Code of Good Practice for Recognition of Student Achievement during Mobility' with the aim to achieve a European-level agreement on how to deal with recognition issues in higher music education institutions.
- The group is looking at the subject of external examining and reciprocal external examining arrangements whilst the aim is here to develop a well-informed methodology and advice on such arrangements, which may eventually lead to a European pool of external examiners.
- As several partners in 'Polifonia' are engaged in joint degree projects, the group is also using their own experience to identify case-studies which can be used to identify mobility and recognition issues germane to joint programmes. Hereby the group members undertake a number of site visits to study examples and collect information to that will feed into their work.

Community of users

The users targeted by this project are primarily individuals active in the higher music education and music profession sectors. More specifically, these are:

- Professors and teachers in professional music training institutions, having to deal with structural reforms the institutions currently have to implement and profiting from the promotion of European collaboration in the sector, which contributes to the quality of their teaching and the overall quality of the institution
- Music professionals, having greater access to the European employment markets through recognised and comparable qualifications.
- Indirectly, students in professional music training institutions, being affected by the structural reforms and profiting 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

The above-mentioned beneficiaries are involved in the 'Polifonia' project in several ways:

- Through the direct participation in 'Polifonia' working groups: the 5 working groups mentioned in the previous section are composed of representatives of higher music education institutions (directors, professors and teachers) as well as of representatives of professional organisations (the 'Polifonia' 'Life Long Learning: Educating for Entrepreneurship' group). This means that an important part of the community of users if directly involved in the project work and activities, in the reflection and research processes, and in developing the project documents.
- Through the participation of the whole sector in the research led by the 'Polifonia' project, as questionnaires are sent out to all partners and member institutions of the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC).
- Through the participation of many users in 'Polifonia' seminars and conferences, giving participants the opportunity to reflect and give feedback on the project results.

The 'Polifonia' project benefits its users in many ways:
- All 'Polifonia' events, be it review visits, seminars, conferences or site visits, are 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 Higher music education institutions can invite 'Polifonia' Counsellors to receive assistance on the implementation of the Bologna process in their institutions;
  o Higher music education institutions can invite a team of 'critical friends' in the framework of the institutional and programme review visits organised by 'Polifonia' to undergo a review or evaluation, which can be helpful to further develop their internal and external quality;
  o 'Polifonia' site visits provide the hosting institutions with opportunities to share their experiences with the development of joint programmes and degrees and are herewith able to contribute to the 'code of good practice' for Recognition of Student Achievement during Mobility;
  o 'Polifonia' seminars offer continuing professional development to teachers and directors, thus directly assisting them in improving their knowledge and skills, improving the governance of and developing expertise in the institutions;
  o 'Polifonia' conferences are designed to inform all participants about 'Polifonia' issues, while providing them the opportunity to discuss these with the authors and with colleagues in an informal but productive way.
- All 'Polifonia' publications are designed to assist users by providing written information on specific issues of importance in the higher music education sector studied in the project. These publications raise the awareness and knowledge of the users, and allow them to reflect on issues important for the sector.
- The promotion of European collaboration in the sector benefits all concerned individuals, as the 'Polifonia' events provide a platform for the exchange of experience and good practices at European level. In addition, music students (although not targeted as direct users) also benefit from all 'Polifonia' findings, being the core beneficiaries of higher music education.

In addition to these 'internal' users, 'Polifonia' is also relevant for professionals in the music profession, as well as ministerial representatives responsible for higher music education and officials in quality assurance and accreditation agencies at national level. More information about the impact on this type of users can be found in Chapter 6.

2. Project Approach

The main directions of the 'Polifonia' project approach

The project approach of 'Polifonia' has 3 main directions:
1. The first direction is one of <u>development</u>: new tools, insights and opinions are being formulated and developed in 'Polifonia', which will have a positive impact on the understanding by the European higher music education sector of the main European developments in higher education and the music profession.
2. The second direction is one of <u>dissemination and capacity building</u>: 'Polifonia' has formulated an active strategy to involve all partners as much as possible and to keep a highly visible profile in relation to dissemination and exploitation.
3. The third direction is one of <u>continuous evaluation</u>: 'Polifonia' is using a robust method towards 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' related to these 3 directions.

The developmental function of 'Polifonia'
In order to support the developmental function of 'Polifonia', five implementational working groups with multinational membership have been established to address the four objectives described in the previous section. The tasks of the groups are to discuss and identify examples of good practice, formulate opinions and positions, develop documents and tools, and to collect information relevant for the topics discussed. The divisions of tasks between groups, as well as the setting up of a steering group, represent an added-value in terms of organisation. All of the 55 partners are involved in the research and development aspects of the project in one or more ways: by sending experts to a 'Polifonia' working group, by hosting working group meetings, seminars and conferences, by assisting in research activities and/or by contributing to the project evaluation. The limited amount of representatives in each working group guarantees the efficiency of the discussions and work production. Furthermore, the Steering group, composed of the chairs of all working groups, ensures through regular meetings a good coordination between all working groups and consistency in their work.

In order to ensure that the range of information considered by the working groups has a truly European-wide reach, the project makes an extensive use of questionnaires that are distributed throughout the partnership, to relevant outside experts and stakeholders and to the wider AEC membership. In addition, site visits to higher music education institutions in various European countries are conducted by the working groups to identify examples of good practice.

The approach of 'Polifonia' towards dissemination and exploitation

The structure of 'Polifonia' as an ERASMUS Network and the active involvement of the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC) provides contacts to higher music education institutions and other target groups all over the world as well as a sector-wide reach unlike any other European project. 'Polifonia' uses this potential with the following dissemination and exploitation strategy:

1) Providing information on the 'Polifonia' project and its results to all target users through the following channels:
   - The 'Polifonia' website (www.polifonia-tn.org), the first source of information for all parties interested in the project.
   - 'Polifonia' online newsletters in English, German and French, explaining in detail the issues the project focuses on and showing the status of work of each working group, as well as the latest project events. The newsletters are sent to all partners, AEC members and external interested parties by email, and available on the 'Polifonia' website.
   - A Polifonia leaflet is produced once a year, which is disseminated at various conferences, seminars and events as well as sent to all partners, AEC members, and external parties.
   - Dissemination tools provided by the AEC to disseminate information about 'Polifonia' products and events:
     o AEC-Connects (online newsletters) produced in English, German and French, sent on a regular basis to a contact database comprising more than 2500 email contacts in higher music education institutions and music organisations all over the world.
     o Space for presentations about 'Polifonia' during events organised by the AEC

2) Providing information to a wider audience by:
   - Attending events organised by external parties such as congresses of other professional organisations in the field, national events organised by the national, European or international organisations on issues linked to education and culture, general meetings of higher education institutions, etc. and promoting the 'Polifonia' project by making 'Polifonia' Newsletters available, undertaking active networking and presenting the project to a wider audience when possible.
   - Inviting the relevant external parties to 'Polifonia' events, sometimes as speakers or more generally as audience.

3) Multiplying the results of 'Polifonia' by explaining the information sent out to the end-users and by involving these in a reflection process, so that the most essential outcomes of the project will be actually implemented by the institutions. Multiplication of the results of 'Polifonia' is ensured through:
   - The Institutional and Programme Review Visits: higher music education institutions applying for this scheme receive the visit of a team of experts offering their assistance as "critical friends" to review the institutions. This way, the project directly reaches out to the end-users by providing them with a tailor-made assistance in their quality enhancement efforts. The institution is screened by the reviewers and receives concrete advice on points for further development. Until now, 5 review visits have taken place in 4 different countries (including Russia and Australia). Additional visits shall be organised by the end of the project upon request.

- 'Polifonia' site visits undertaken during the lifetime of the project: although the first aim of these visits is not to disseminate information, but to assist higher music education institutions and/or to collect information from them, these visits contribute to the dissemination and to the exploitation strategy of the project by making 'Polifonia' well-known and by widening the use of 'Polifonia' documents in these institutions. So far, 4 site visits organised by the working group 'Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring & Joint Degrees' took place in Lyon, Bologna, Amsterdam and The Hague. This group has planned 5 more site visits in the coming months in different European countries. The Life Long Learning: Educating for Entrepreneurship WG has visited 5 models of innovative examples of entrepreneurship in music. They visited the Ensemble Le Siècles in France, Rock City in Namsos, Norway, SIE & The Red Note Ensemble in the UK, an IP 'European Creative Future' in Oslo, Norway as well as the Collegium 1704 in Prague, Czech Republic. 2 more of these visits are scheduled.
- Regular presentation of the 'Polifonia' project and of its latest developments during AEC congresses and meetings: participants are not only informed about the project and its products, but also have the opportunity to give feedback during parallel sessions in groups and to contribute to the final products. Presentations were given at the AEC Congress 2011 in Valencia, the AEC Meeting for International Relation coordinators 2012 in Naples and the AEC Congress 2012 in Saint Petersburg.
- The project has also adopted the policy to meet in institutions that are not represented on the working groups and to hold 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 are able to reach an extended audience with project information, as well as collect relevant information and feedback for their work.

4) Mainstreaming 'Polifonia' results by reaching policy-makers, so that 'Polifonia' most essential outcomes will have an impact on the policy development in the field of higher (music) education at both national and European levels. The project team is currently working on a valorisation strategy in order to prepare for the mainstreaming step when ´Polifonia´ results will be finalised.

The approach of 'Polifonia' towards evaluation
An internal and external evaluation of the project is ensured via the following channels:
- An external evaluator has been appointed for the life of the project: Professor (emeritus) Harald Jørgensen, former rector, Norwegian Academy of Music has been invited to study all published material and visit project events in order to assess the efficiency and the relevance of the project activities.
- The Steering group consisting of a chair person, the project coordination team and the chairs of the main working groups meets twice a year and discusses the progress in the work of each group taking into accounts the results of questionnaires and external feedback.
- The AEC Council is informed during each of its meeting about the status of the work achieved in the framework of the 'Polifonia' project and receives reports of all the last working group meetings and of the latest events that have taken place. The AEC Council is a group of 12 experts in higher music education from 12 different countries with the task to monitor European project activities in the sector. Council members also visit the

project activities when possible. During the Council meetings, which take place twice a year, 'Polifonia' activities and progress are discussed and assessed, and feedback is given on issues of concern.

- During events organised by the AEC, presentations of the 'Polifonia' project are regularly delivered to a large audience composed of representatives from higher music education institutions. The audience is then invited to give feedback on the project in breakout discussion groups or by filling a feedback questionnaire, which is subsequently analysed by the 'Polifonia' working groups.

The approach of 'Polifonia' towards project management

The following **methods** have been put in place to manage the consortium:

1) The beneficiary institution and the coordinating institution have designated a project management team comprising:
   - a project coordinator responsible for monitoring the project progress and finances;
   - a financial administrator responsible for the project accountancy
   - a specially appointed project manager responsible for providing content support to all partners (writing meeting reports, collecting information in Europe, assisting with the formulation of the deliverables etc.) as well as for the dissemination and exploitation of project results.
   - a specially appointed project administrator responsible for all practical and organisational arrangements in 'Polifonia' (organisation of meetings, booking of flights, hotel rooms, venues, etc.)

2) The formation of a Steering group meeting responsible for the general management of the project consisting of a chair person, the project coordination team and the chairs of the main working groups. The meetings take place twice a year and represent the opportunity for the different working groups to share information on their activities and receive feedback from the other groups on their products.

3) The formation of working groups of academic experts and experts from the profession for research and development. As mentioned above, the chair of each working group is member of the Steering group. This ensures the exchange of information between the research and developmental components of the project and the managerial levels. The groups meet between 1 and 3 times a year, sometimes via the Internet communication tool Skype. This division in small groups has proved to be very efficient in the previous cycles of 'Polifonia' and has therefore been continued in this cycle.

Several **tools** have been developed to manage the consortium, such as 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 on the overall timing of activities and possible synergies between WG meetings and other relevant events and activities. Several administrative forms such as reimbursement form, staff hour declaration form and partner agreements, as well as a set of "terms of reference" for WG members, WG chairs and Third Country WG members. An online project working

space on the 'Polifonia' website allowing all working group members to share working documents, find each other's contact details and receive all documents related to the next working group meeting.

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

- A project coordinating team keeping the contact with all the partners during the life of the project and facilitating the cooperation among them.
- Regular meetings enabling cooperation in various ways:
  - o Partner representatives involved in working groups meet all together once a year during the Annual Network meeting. They all receive a reader showing the status of work of each group and containing draft products as well as relevant documents for each group. This reader is a mean to provide each partner representative with information on the other representatives' involvement. It is the basis of a good cooperation among partners.
  - o Partner representatives involved in the same working group are in regular contact with each other and have the opportunity to meet other partners (outside the working group) when their working group meeting is hosted by another project partner.
- Information and communication technologies are also being used, such as regular email communication and the on-line project working space on the 'Polifonia' website.

3.   Project Outcomes & Results

Report on the activities of working group 1 "Assessment & Standards"

The Assessment & Standards working group aims to support curriculum reform based on competence based learning outcomes in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle in higher music education. Comparison and evaluation of established assessment methods and procedures through a European wide survey will be one of the tools to further develop a standardised higher music education sector on European-level.

Five working group meetings have taken place so far (The Hague – February 2012, Vienna – June 2012, Maastricht – September 2012, Zagreb – January 2013 and Barcelona – March 2013).

Following the groups first meeting, the joint WG meeting of all WGs in The Hague, the working group began investigating assessment methods and standards in European conservatoires. During their second meeting in Vienna, group members went into greater depth about this subject and planned to further investigate the use of learning outcomes in assessment. In the subsequent meeting in Maastricht the group embarked on the subject of benchmarking standards by looking at how this subject is handled in the wider context of the arts sector. Their challenge is now to develop further steps towards a shared understanding of standards in Higher Music Education. In Zagreb the group decided to do this by defining elements of good assessment practices and by discussing these with experts. This issue will also be discoursed in their first seminar "Enhancing Standards of Assessment for Higher Music Education through International Dialogue" of which the programme was devised and put together during their last two meetings, in Zagreb and Barcelona.

Report on the activities of working group 2 "Artistic Research in Music"

This working group focuses on the quality enhancement of the role of research in higher music education institutions. It is paying particular attention to the kind of research described as artistic research. In doing so, it is examining 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.. Further extension and the solid establishment of a European Platform for Artistic Research in Music will be one of its means. 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).

Three working group meetings have taken place so far (The Hague – February 2012, Rome – May 2012, Barcelona – December 2012). During these meetings, this working group has worked on the following issues:

- Planning and delivery of two meetings of EPARM. The group is doing this in cooperation with a dedicated EPARM working group with which there is a valuable overlap of membership. As well as the successful delivery of EPARM 2012 in Rome, preparations are now well advanced for the delivery of EPARM 2013 in Lyon.
- Study of the content of 2nd Cycle HME programmes as routes to artistic Doctorates. The group has conducted a survey of existing practice and gathered opinions on how this

practice might be developed. It is preparing a handbook that will look at 2nd Cycle curricula in terms of how they can combine the functions of 'gateway to the profession and bridge to the 3rd Cycle'.

- 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. Its solution has been to propose 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 will allow 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.

Report on the activities of working group 3 "Accreditation & Quality Enhancement"
This working group aims at further developing the implementation of a European-level and subject-specific approach to quality assurance in higher music education and works on developing a guide to benchmarking as a quality enhancement tool for higher music education institutions.

All expected outcomes were discussed during the first working group meeting (The Hague – February 2012), experiences of working group members were shared, and a first division of work and work plan was prepared. The two following meetings (Bucharest – May 2012, St. Petersburg – November 2012) have been dedicated to the project outcomes related to quality enhancement, quality assurance and accreditation:

- The group has monitored five review visits: 2 programme reviews in Moscow (February 2012) in cooperation with the National Centre for Public Accreditation, 2 quality enhancement reviews in Brisbane (April 2012) and Reykjavik (May 2012) and an accreditation review in The Hague (June 2012).
- The group has made some progress on the study exploring the feasibility for a European-level quality assurance agency for the sector
- The group has constructed a workshop to train peer-reviewers active in peer review visits. The programme was prepared in detail and tested, before being delivered to a group of 30 participants (representatives of higher music education institutions in Europe) in St-Petersburg in November 2012
- The group has also started to study some examples of benchmarking exercises developed by higher music education institutions and to discuss the concept of benchmarking in its latest meeting (Barcelona, March 2013). The group will focus on this issue during its coming meetings.

Report on the activities of working group 4 "Educating for Entrepreneurship"
This working group aims at innovating European higher music education by addressing issues concerning the employability of musicians through a close collaboration between higher music education institutions and the professional music field.

Two working group meetings have taken place so far (The Hague – February 2012, Barcelona – February 2013). Moreover, 5 site visits have taken place (Paris – October 2012, Namsos – November 2012, Glasgow/Edinburgh – December 2012, Oslo - December 2012, Prague – February2013. Reports of these site visits have been produced accordingly. During these meetings, this working group has worked on the following issues:

- The concept of entrepreneurship in the field of music has been discussed and defined;
- Five successful models for entrepreneurial approaches from across Europe have been found and analysed through personal interviews with relevant people within the chosen models.
- A Europe-wide survey of how entrepreneurship skills are taught in conservatoires has been conducted, analysed and discussed among the working group members
- A first version of the "Entrepreneurship Online Portal" addressing institutions and students interested in developing entrepreneurial competences has been created.

Report on the activities of working group 5 "Mobility & Joint Degrees"
Promoting the mobility in higher music education is one of the main aims of this working group, which works on the improvement of reciprocal recognition of student achievements gained abroad.

Three working group meetings have taken place so far (The Hague – February 2012, Naples – September 2012, Barcelona – March 2013). Working group members have undertaken site visits as well (Lyon – May 2012, Bologna – June 2012, Amsterdam – November 2012, The Hague – March 2013).

The group is developing a 'Code of Good Practice' for Recognition of Student Achievement during Mobility' with the aim to achieve a European-level agreement on how to deal with recognition issues in higher music education institutions.

Furthermore the group is looking at the subject of external examining, whilst concentrating here on the role of the external examiner as an "external expert" as a member of the assessment panel. The group aims to develop a well-informed methodology and advice on reciprocal external examining arrangements, which may eventually lead to a European pool of external examiners and will also include a number of case studies of already existing approaches of such circles. For this purpose the working group also sent out a questionnaire in order to enquire about institution's existing practices in the use of external examiners and to test institution's interest to partake in such "reciprocal external examining arrangements". Furthermore group members themselves have undertaken site visits during an institution's examination period and acted as external examiners. Experiences will serve as material for the case studies and advice.

As several partners in 'Polifonia' are engaged in joint degree projects, the group is also using their own experience to identify case-studies which can be used to identify mobility and recognition issues germane to joint programmes. Hereby the group members undertake a number of site visits to study examples and collect information to that will feed into their work. The research will be included in a handbook on the development of joint programmes. The group works in close cooperation with the working group for the AEC International Relations Coordinator (IRC) meeting and will develop a workshop for IRCs, which will be held at the

next IRC meeting in September 2013. The group presented their working progress during a session at the last AEC IRC meeting 2012 in Naples in order to in-cooperate the participant's feedback into their work plan.

'Polifonia' organisational visits:

In addition to the working group meetings, several organisational visits took place within the framework of 'Polifonia'. The project team attended the ERASMUS Coordinators' meeting in January 2012, the Erasmus Thematic Cluster meeting in November 2012 and the ERASMUS Coordinators' meeting in December 2012. There have also been several meetings with the Project's contracting institution Koninklijk Conservatorium with which there is a strong connection and regular contact as the project's coordination team is divided over the Koninklijk Conservatorium and the AEC.

'Polifonia' dissemination activities:

For dissemination purposes, 'Polifonia' presentations were made at various events:

During the AEC Annual Congress (bringing together 250 to 300 heads of higher music education institutions), various sessions are dedicated to the 'Polifonia' project: in 2011 and 2012, general presentations of the project were realised, followed in 2011 by several parallel breakout sessions on the specific topics of each of the working group in order to get feedback on the envisioned deliverables by a wider range of experts and stakeholders. As a result, participants are not only well informed about the project and its products, but also have 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 are 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 can be achieved.

4. Partnerships

The ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia', which is the biggest European project on professional music training to date, involves 61 institutions in the field of music training and the music profession in 25 European countries, 2 in Australia, 2 in the United States, 1 in Canada and 1 in Hong Kong. The exact list of partners is available on the Polifonia website www.polifonia-tn.org. This multi-country partnership is certainly essential for a project studying the European scene in terms of higher music education, but the added-value of such a multi-country partnerships goes far beyond this.

Firstly, the 'Polifonia' partners represent the rich diversity of European and non-European higher music education sector. In each country, 1 to 5 higher music education institutions are involved in the 'Polifonia' project and contribute to its outcomes by bringing and sharing up-to-date knowledge and experience of the national higher music education system. As a wide range of countries are represented in the 'Polifonia' working groups, the outcomes produced by these groups 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 an agreement on a specific issue is of great value for the project. The method of having working groups composed of 8 to 12 persons has proved to be very valuable in this regard and very efficient when it comes to exchanging experience.

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

The European added value is even more strengthened through the participation of the following large representative European organisations in the field of music and music education:
- The European Association of Conservatoires (AEC) covering almost 90% of all officially recognised higher music education institutions in Europe with a membership of more than 260 member institutions in all European countries. It is important to point out that the AEC is the only organisation representing this sector at the European level and that this sector is not covered by large European organisations such as EUA or EURASHE.
- The International Federation of Musicians (FIM), an international umbrella organisation representing musicians' unions worldwide, including 34 musicians' unions in Europe.
- The Performing Arts League Europe (PEARLE*), which represents 32 employers' organisations in the performing arts (orchestras, theatres, festivals, etc.) in 18 European countries

- The European Association of String Teachers (ESTA), which represents more than 5.000 individual string teachers in 27 national branches all over Europe.
- 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.
- The European Music School Union (EMU), representing more than 6.000 music schools in 26 European national branches and covering an important sector of future employment for future music graduates.
- The European Music Council (EMC) representing 37 European national music councils.

As will be clear from this list, 'Polifonia' has managed to bring together a unique partnership with 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 higher music education 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 and, through these activities, realise an active contribution to European higher education policy. With the AEC playing a pivotal role in relation to the dissemination of thematic network results throughout the entire higher music education sector in Europe, 'Polifonia' has the function as a 'laboratory' or 'ice-breaker' to study, develop and test innovative issues. This way, 'Polifonia' has clearly a different function than the AEC. The Network truly has the ambition to act both as an 'ice-breaker' and as a 'spider-in-the-web' for the development, testing and implementation of European higher education policy in the higher music education sector.

Working together in a European partnership is both challenging and rewarding. Different languages, terminologies and cultures may initially create misunderstandings. 'Polifonia' is pro-active in not only 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. Thus, 'Polifonia' has used a pro-active approach to translation from the beginning. As a result, English, German and French are used as the main languages; vital documents are being translated into these three languages and into more European languages. This way, the network attempts to avoid that certain regions in Europe feel excluded due to a limited use of languages.

More information on the actual impact of the 'Polifonia' activities and results on external stakeholders can be found in Chapter 6.

5.   Plans for the Future

The activities planned until the end of the project period
In the short-term, a number of project activities have been planned to ensure that the project objectives are achieved. The different working approaches described in section 2 will be further implemented and the work on the project outcomes and results will be continued. As a result, the following meetings and activities have been planned for each working group:

Time Schedule Polifonia March 2013 – 30 September 2014			
UPCOMING ACTIVITIES			
Date		**Place**	**Type of activity**
Assessment & Standards WG			
24-27 April 2013	WG meeting & seminar	Vienna, Austria	Group meeting, seminar
October 2013	*WG meeting*	*TBA*	*Group meeting*
November 2013	*Seminar*	*Palermo (TBC)*	*Seminar*
February 2014	*WG meeting*	*TBA*	*Group meeting*
June 2014	Meeting all WGs	*Location TBA*	*Group meetings, joint group meeting and steering group meeting, external evaluator*
Final products			
• a Europe-wide survey of existing assessment methods and procedures, learning outcomes-based or otherwise, described and analysed in a report, highlighting innovative examples of assessment in, or suitable for, competence-based learning and examples of the involvement of students in these processes • a benchmarking exercise to strengthen shared understanding of standards in European higher music education • training seminars, using these benchmarked standards to expand the number of experts available as external examiners, leading to: • a European-level register of external examiners, giving institutions the possibility to invite such experts to their examinations, which will enhance objectivity and the exchange of expertise, and support international benchmarking at departmental levels.			
Artistic Research in Higher Music Education WG			
18-20 April 2013	EPARM	Lyon, France	Conference
September 2013	*WG meeting*	*Krakow, Poland (TBC)*	*Group meeting*
February 2014	*WG meeting*	*Ljubljana, Slovenia (TBC)*	*Group meeting*
June 2014	*Meeting all WGs*	*Location TBA*	*Group meetings, joint group meeting and steering group meeting, external evaluator*
Final products			
• Preparation and delivery of two editions of EPARM (European Platform of Artistic Research in Music) • Study on the content of 2nd cycle HME programmes as routes to artistic Doctorates (survey first, then guidelines and reference polints, published in the form of a handbook) • European register for peer reviewers for artistic research in music (to be delivered through a database of Masters and Doctoral projects listing the subject areas and the names of supervisors			

overseeing these)			

Quality Assurance, Accreditation & Benchmarking WG			
5-6 June 2013	WG meeting	*Luxemburg*	Group meeting
November 2013	WG meeting	*Italy*	Group meeting
February 2014	WG meeting	*Location TBA*	*Group meeting*
May 2014	WG meeting	*Location TBA*	*Group meeting*
June 2014	*Meeting all WGs*	*Location TBA*	*Group meetings, joint group meeting and steering group meeting, external evaluator*

Final products

- The further development of expertise in this area through the execution of 9 institutional and programme review visits in different European countries to further fine-tune the criteria and procedures, and build up a solid reputation in this area of expertise in both the higher music education and quality assurance sectors.
- The exploration of the feasibility for a European-level quality assurance agency for the sector with a membership to ENQA and/or a listing on the European Register for QA Agencies (EQAR).
- The exchange of expertise with the National Association of School of Music in the US, an organisation with a long-standing experience with specialised accreditation in higher music education, leading to an innovative cross-Atlantic cooperation in the field of quality assurance in higher music education.
- A report describing a methodology for the international benchmarking of higher music education institutions which these institutions can use as part their quality enhancement strategies.

Lifelong learning: Education for Entrepreneurship WG			
June 2013	2 working group members	Amsterdam	Site visit
June 2013	2 working group members	Mannheim	Site visit
September 2013	*all WG members*	Brussels	Working group meeting
November 2013	*all WG members*	Palermo	Workshop – AEC Congress
Spring 2014	3 working group members	Dresden	Workshop – ESTA Conference
Spring 2014	3 working group members	Oslo	Workshop – FIM Conference
June 2014	*Meeting all WGs*	*Location TBA*	*Joint group meeting and steering group meeting, external evaluator*
September 2014	*all WG members*	*The Hague*	*Conference "the working musician"*

Final products

- Carry out an overview of partnerships between higher music education institutions and organisations in the music profession;
- From this overview, select six successful models for entrepreneurial approaches from across Europe;
- Interview and document the six models, whilst also studying the particular economic, legal and socio-cultural national contexts which may favour the development of such models;
- Analyse results and areas of training which could be re-enforced, whilst also conducting a Europe-wide survey of how entrepreneurship skills are taught in conservatoires;
- From these materials, elaborate an "Entrepreneurship Online Portal addressing institutions and

- students interested in developing entrepreneurial competences.
- Organise 3 European-wide workshops presenting the survey result and the models of good practice studied through the site visits;
- Bring all the results together with a large-scale final conference with key European stakeholders from the profession and conservatoires.

Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring and Joint Degrees WG

23 May 2013	WG meeting	Brussels, Belgium	Group meeting
September 2013	*WG meeting/seminar*	*Antwerp, Belgium (TBC)*	*Group meeting, seminar*
January 2014	*WG meeting*	*Prague, Czech Republic (TBC)*	*Group meeting*
June 2014	*Meeting all WGs*	*Location TBA*	*Group meetings, joint group meeting and steering group meeting, external evaluator*

Final products

- The development of a 'Code of Good Practice for Recognition of Student Achievement during Mobility' with the aim to achieve a European-level agreement on how to deal with recognition issues in higher music education institutions.
- The development and trialing of a methodology for establishing 'Impartiality Circles' to facilitate reciprocal external examining arrangements in higher music education. (Case studies, Advice about circle & pools)
- The carrying out of case-studies to identify mobility and recognition issues in European joint degrees and propose solutions. (handbook)
- Development of CPD (Continuous Professional Development) workshop for IRCs during AEC International Relations Coordinators (IRC) meeting 2013

Steering group

October 2013	WG meeting	Brussels, Belgium	Group meeting
January 2014	*WG meeting*	*TBA*	*Group meeting*
June 2014	Meeting all WGs	*Location TBA*	Group meetings, joint group meeting and steering group meeting, external evaluator

Mobility: Recognition, Monitoring and Joint Degrees WG SITE VISITS		
Nr	**Date**	**Place**
	March 2013 – 30 September 2014	
5	August 2013	Reykjavik, Island
6	October 2013	The Hague
7	February 2014	TBC
8	April 2014	TBC
9	June 2014	TBC

SEMINARS				
Date	**Persons/Groups involved**	**Place**	**Time/Comments**	**Subject**
2013				
26 – 26 April 2013	Assessment & Standards WG	Vienna, Austria	Duration: 2 days Participants: 20-30 Languages: EN, DE, FR	Seminar 1

13-14 September	Mobility WG	Antwerp, Belgium	Duration: 1 day Participants: 20-30 Languages: EN, DE, FR	Seminar 1
November 2013	*Assessment & Standards WG*	*Palermo, Italy (TBC)*	*Duration: 1 day Participants: 20-30 Languages: EN, DE, FR*	*Seminar 2*
2014				
	Accreditation WG			
September	Lifelong learning: Education for Entrepreneurship WG	The Hague, The Netherlands	To be confirmed	Final Seminar

The impact of the comments of the external evaluator

The project methods, work, outcomes and activities for the remaining period are being discussed and further developed in the light of the comments made by the project external evaluator Harald Jørgensen.

In general terms, the external evaluator finds no need for major adjustments of the process: the momentum and planning for the next months are reassuring and promising for a successful outcome.

Regarding the coordination and administration of the project, the external evaluator stresses the good performance of the team formed by AEC and the Royal Conservatoire The Hague sending out information to all partners and to AEC members and taking care of practical matters in relation to travel, housing and meeting organization. The running of the project so far is considered to be satisfactory for all concerned.

In his opinion, the scope of work that is being done in the third cycle of 'Polifonia' is impressive. Nonetheless, he also highlights the importance of ensuring freedom and flexibility inside each working group. The external evaluator recommends the working group chairs to encourage all the working group members to participate actively and to be innovative inside the framework of the project.

The project partners and the project team are committed to take these recommendations into account and continue progressing towards the project objectives while ensuring the relevance of the 'Polifonia' work to the everyday conservatoire.

Future sustainability

The role of 'Polifonia' and the sustainability of its outputs must been seen from the broader European higher education perspective. The sector of higher music education, 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, the HME sector is not fully represented by the larger European higher education organisation such as EURASHE and EUA. This makes the role of 'Polifonia' even more pertinent; without 'Polifonia' the sector may be left out from the mainstream of European political developments.

The 'Polifonia' consortium makes a significant impact on the European higher education sector as a whole through its subject-specific focus on the European higher education developments, which serves 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 showcase the support tools by ensuring that these outcomes are mainstreamed into the policies, activities and publications of the main European representative body for higher music education, the European Association of Conservatoires (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. It is planned that the same approach will be 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' will 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.

6. Contribution to EU policies

The relationship between 'Polifonia' and European political developments

The ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia' will enhance 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 current 'Polifonia' project is further enhancing 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' is contributing to the above-mentioned EU 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.

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

  'Polifonia' explicitly aims to enhance 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 will

address a current weakness in the progressional logic of higher music education and therefore improve quality.

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

Contributing to the consolidation of a fully integrated European Higher (Music) Education Area is a principal goal of this project; this is addressed through the Europe-wide surveys and, particularly, through the feasibility studies for European benchmarking systems and proposed database of supervisory expertise to assist the selection of external examiners/peer reviewers for artistic research, both of which are among the project deliverables; 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 is being implemented jointly by higher music education institutions and organisations in the music profession to identify innovative examples of good cooperative practice between these two sectors. The research undertaken has 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 makes 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 higher music education in the terms described above, the outcomes of the project are also 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 is starting to have similar success in achieving this ambition, although fuller effects are likely to be felt by its conclusion:

- 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 is also underpinning the development within 'Polifonia' Working Group I 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 higher music education institutions and their missions.

- Concurrently with the present edition of 'Polifonia', a number of European conservatoires are engaged in the development of European joint master programmes. The work being carried out in Working Groups I and V is providing importance 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 being 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' Working Group III are engaging forcefully in the developing debates at national and European level on sectorally-based quality assurance systems.

- 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. Working Group III is overseeing this activity and a pool of expertise is now emerging that makes it possible to introduce new national agencies quickly and efficiently into this way of working.

- 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 is being taken forward and extended to other organisations through the activities of Working Group IV, 'Educating for Entrepreneurship'. Among the benefits already being felt 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.