

First-time international project realisers' support network

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE: *International cooperation. How to start it well?*

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**“Key competences and needs for support.
Report II on international projects management
in the civil society sector of adult education”**

Hans Jørgen Vodsgaard
hjv@interfolk.dk
(+45) 51 300 320

Interfolk
Institute for Civil Society





Successes and challenges.

Report I on international project management in the civil society sector of adult education

EDUCULT (ed.)



Key competences and needs for support.

Report II on international project management in the civil society sector of adult education.

Hans Jørgen Vodgaard (ed.)



In general - the initial problem definition, which the project intended to address:

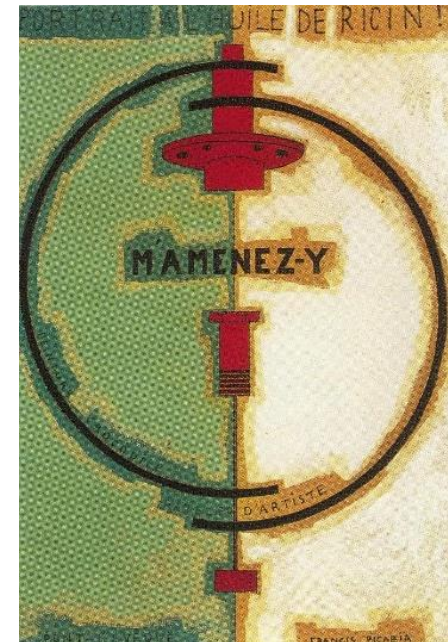
- the relative low degree of international partnership cooperation and networking by the lifelong learning associations in the civil societies of the EU member states..

Many reasons, why the CSOs have a relative low degree of international activities.

- Not due to lack of will, but rather lack of resources.

Difficult conditions for the CSOs compared to other professional public and private organisation that also apply for support from the same programmes..

Full time employed fund-raisers in big public or private organisations
contra voluntary staff in smaller civil society associations..



Picabia, M`Amenes-y, 1919

The objectives of the baseline Report II were:

- to gain knowledge about key competences of successful project leaders engaged in international project work.
- To clarify the beginners' needs for support to beginners in general and especially from a new international network.

The survey used a combination of questionnaire and interviews with project managers and organisational managers in the civil society sectors within all participating countries (Poland, Italy, Austria, Hungary and Denmark)



Miró, The wall of the moon, 1958

The survey had many topics and presented many interesting differences of competence profiles and different needs of support between the

- partner countries,
- priorities of staff (project leaders) and board members (organisational leaders),
- beginners and experienced project leaders.

Don't have time to present all these differences.

Instead I will here focus on 4 topics:

- 1) The competence model
- 2) Important competences to improve
- 3) Needs for support from an international network
- 4) Supplementary ways to begin to work internationally



Delaunay, First disc, 1914

For the survey we elaborated a draft / a preliminary competence model, that helped us to structure the questionnaire and interview guide.

This draft model was inspired by the PMI Triangle, developed by the Project Management Institute with main office in Philadelphia, USA

– see www.pmi.org

It focuses not only on the two typical sides, technical and leadership skills, but includes a third strategic and context conscious side



According to the PMC triangle, the ideal competence set for project managers include three main areas of competences:

- ❖ **Technical project management:** Technical competences to function as manager
- ❖ **Leadership:** Ability to build team spirit, present visions for your team members and inspire them to achieve the goals.
- ❖ **Strategic & business management:** Expertise in the area of activity that enhances the strategic planning and performances.

The third strategic side is important not least for Civil society Organisations (CSOs)

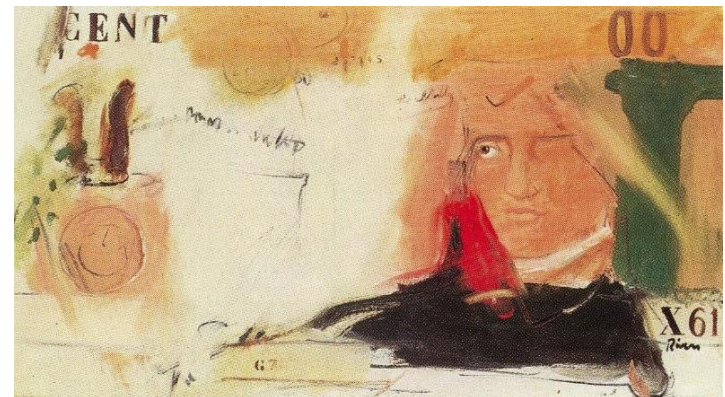
Because the civil society (third sector) is organised by another logic and based on other values, than the public sector (first sector) and the market (second sector).

- It is based mostly on voluntary work by engaged people that are active in their free time. They do it as “amateurs”; it means *con amore* and not for money (salary).
- The activities is not based on whether the products can be sold and give a profit (economic rationale) or based on legal regulated services (bureaucratic rationale)

So the coordination of volunteers' work must be different from coordinating paid public servants or private employees.

All in all it must change the needed competence profile

- not only for the strategic planning,
- but also for parts of the technical skills and leaderships skills.



Rivers, French money, 1962

For our adapted PMC Triangle, we from own experiences listed the most important competences to have for project managers engaged in European collaboration in the area of non-formal and informal adult education,

We constructed the triangle with 10 competences in each leg, in all 30 competences, where the respondents should tick 3 of the 10 competences in each leg, they found most important for themselves to improve to become a better international project manager in this CSO field.

NB1: We discussed, if we should reduce the numbers, for examples to only 6 competences per leg; but we decided to have quite many, so the respondents had more options to choose among.

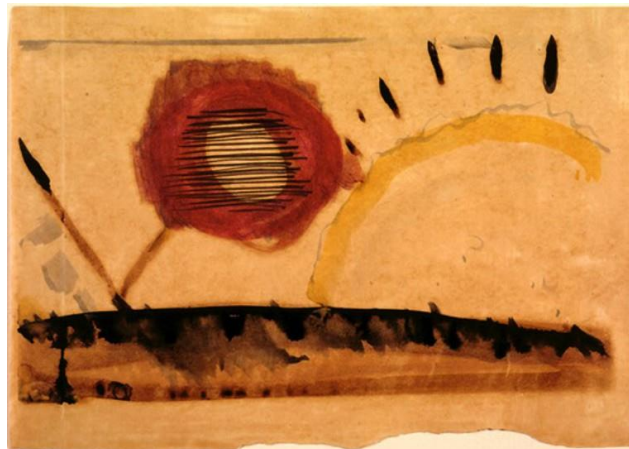
Furthermore, we added an open question, where the respondents could propose an extra competence for each leg, which they missed or also saw as important to have.

NB:2 We did not develop the model to clarify the ideal competence profile, but just to clarify the respondents' possible needs for improvement. Fx English as working language!

The model is preliminary, a draft we still need to develop and refine, so it can stand in its own right (instead of being an analytic mean for a survey)
- maybe in a later project for the new network.

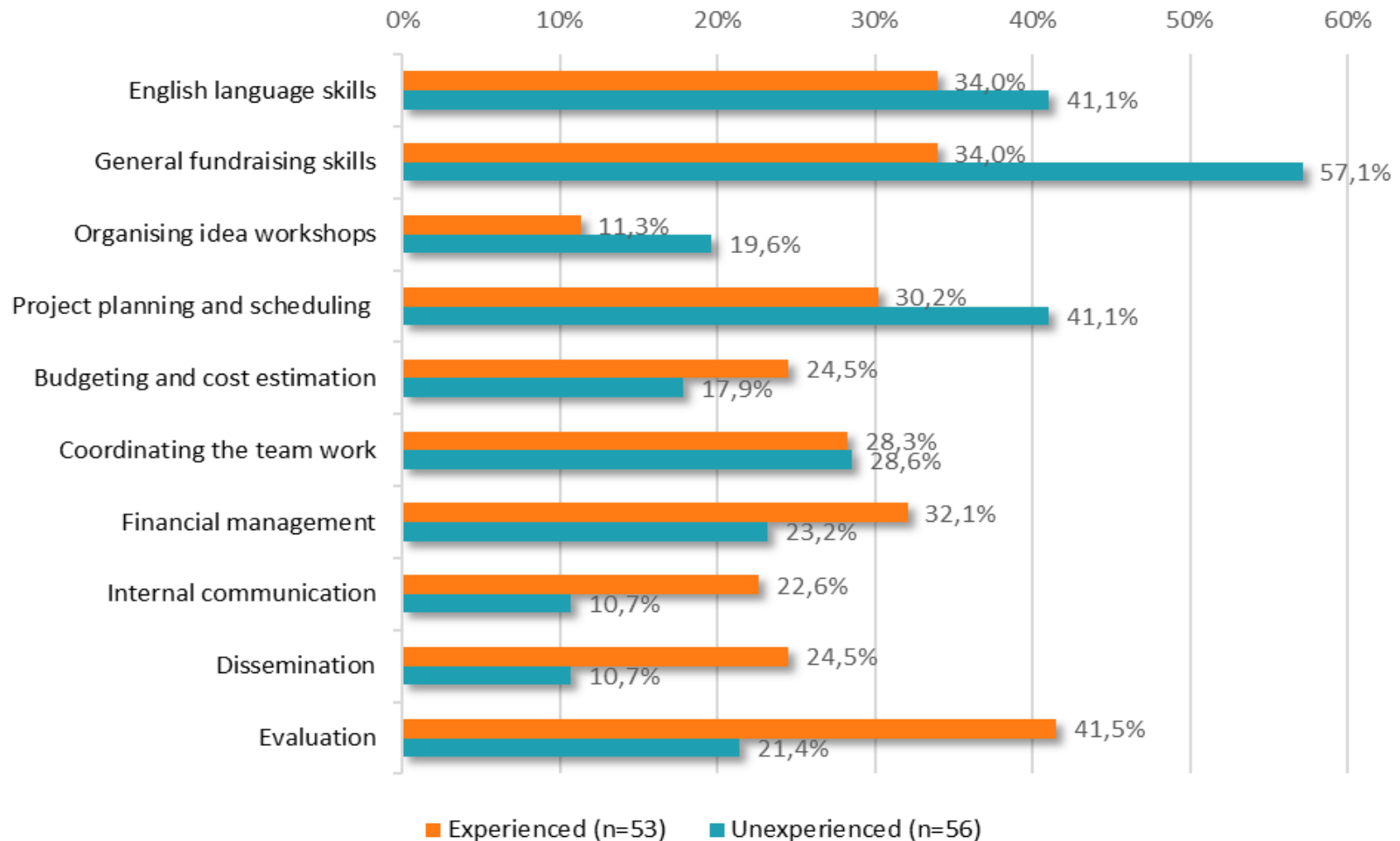
The survey indicated that

- The respondents expressed clear needs for competence improvements to become successful project leaders in the international CSO field.
- But the needs for competence development vary a lot between the groups of respondents, both regarding experience, position, area of activity and country.
- So it seems difficult to provide a common course programme or other support services that suits all groups.
- Instead it seems more appropriate to offer some general topics for all as well as offer specific courses and services to meet special needs of some of the groups.

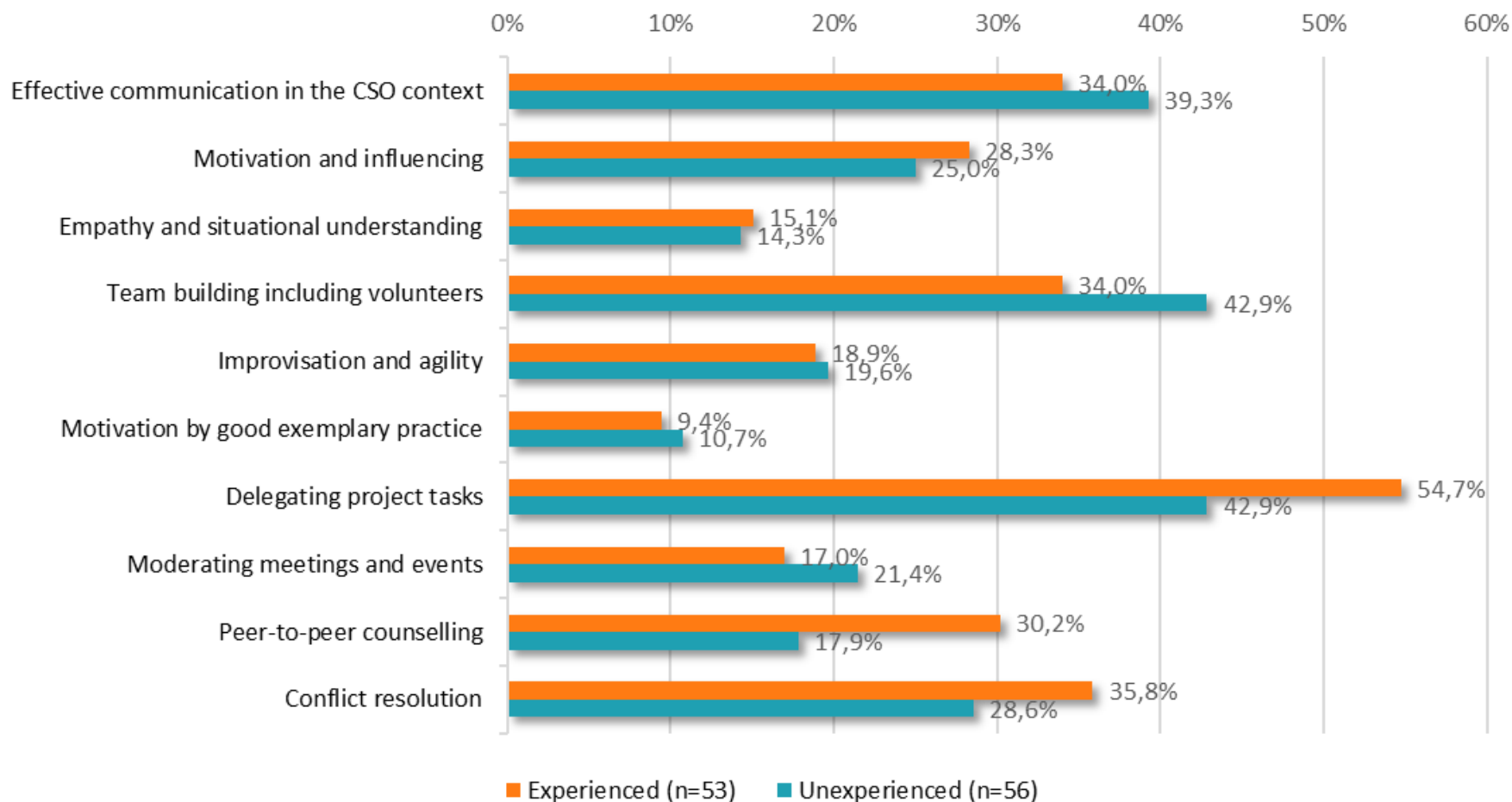


Arthur Dove distraction 1928 - 610

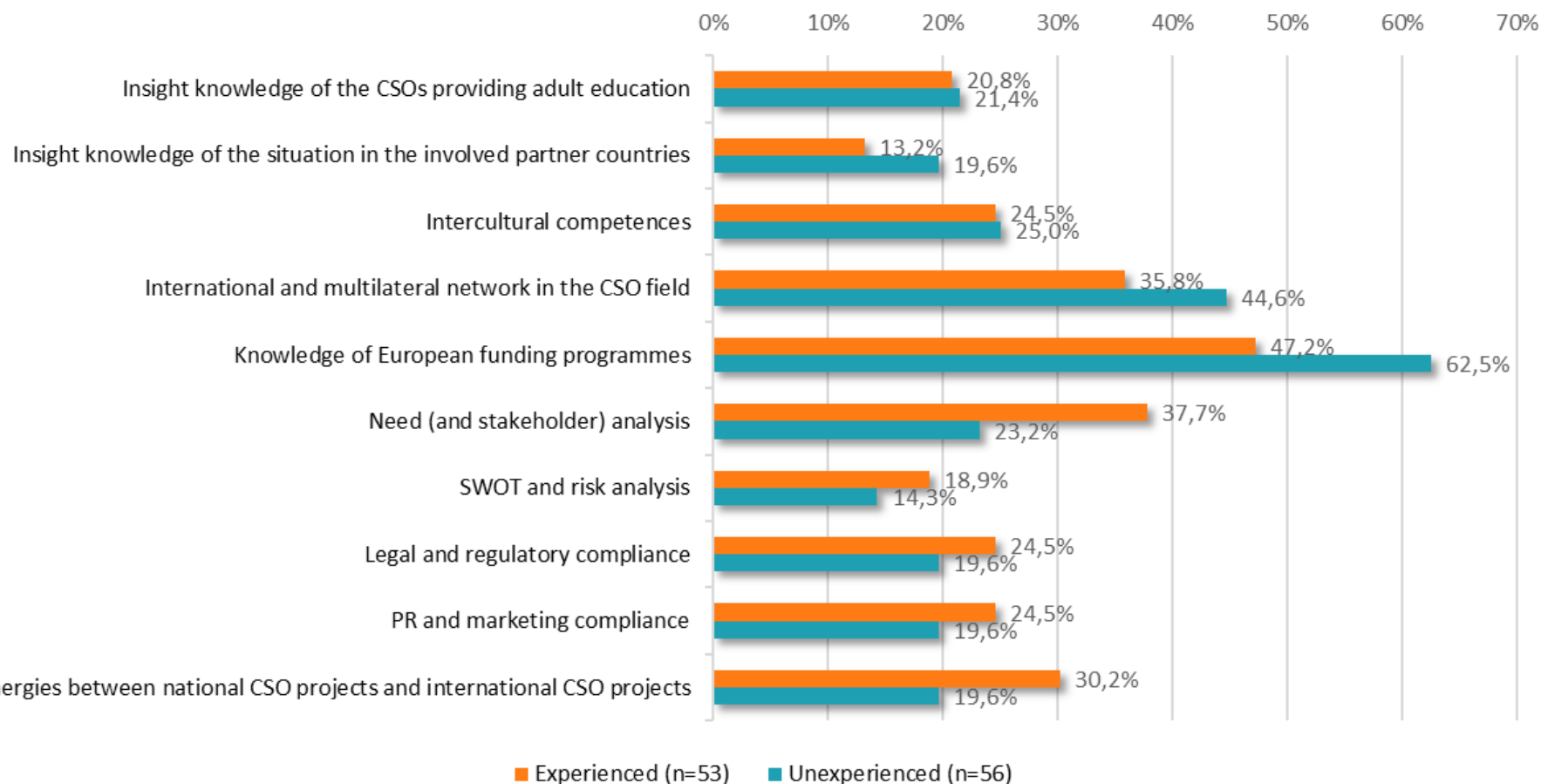
Technical Competences x Experience



Leadership Competences x Experience



Strategic and Business Management Competences x Experience



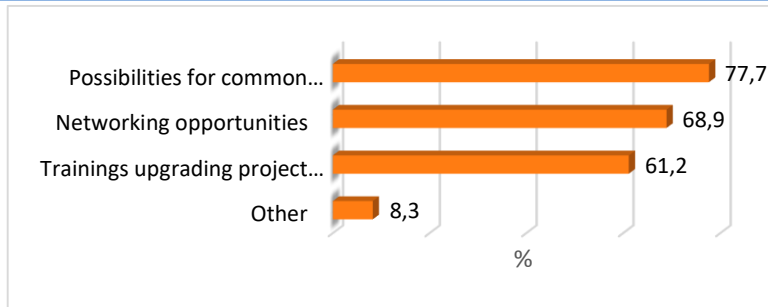
The report also tried to clarify, what kind of support the project leaders and organisational leaders could want from an international network

The main question about need of support presented three types:

- common development of international projects,
- networking opportunities, and
- training services.

All three proposed services got a high value in average for all partner countries :





Overall, the respondents seem interested in all the three mentioned support opportunities. However:

- it is noticeable that the networking and common planning overall got a higher score than the training services,
- and it may indicate that the design of possible training courses should try to integrate the networking and shared project planning in the programmes of the international courses.

Likewise, the interviews confirmed in varied ways this **high priority of getting a forum, where it can be possible on a peer-to-peer level to develop new contacts and to exchange experiences and knowledge with partners from other countries.**

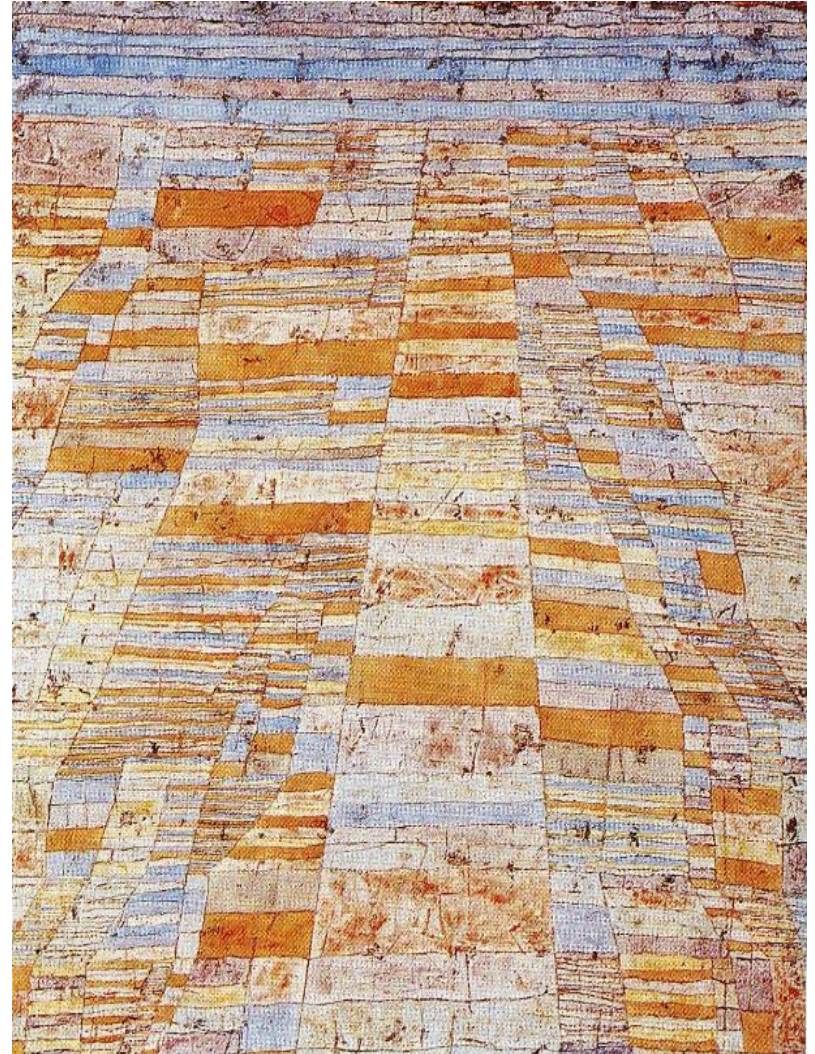
This need was especially expressed by the inexperienced or first-time international project managers that wished to be engaged in international project cooperation.

4th topic: : Other ways to begin to work internationally⁵

Other ways to start international work
than being an successful applicant
and thereby project coordinator,

Other ways or entrances can be:

- a) Local, bilateral, regional funding
- b) Mobility instead of projects
- c) Being a partner instead of coordinator



Klee, Hauptweg und Nebenwege, 1929

1) National funds:

Fx: There are approx. 12,000 private Danish foundations, many supporting cross-border activities, and cultural exchange and study trips abroad, both for individuals and groups

2) Bilateral funds for cross-border cooperation

In the Nordic region, but also with bigger countries, fx Danish - German cooperation: - Kurskultur : <http://www.kulturfokus.dk/kulturregion/kurskultur-tilskud/>

3) Regional funds, fx in the Nordic region

- Nordic Culture Fund / Nordic Culture Point
- NGO cooperation in the Baltic Sea region / NGO cooperation in the Nordic – Russian region
- Nordplus Adult

NB: It is in general

- easier to make applications and report activities in these local, bilateral or regional funds than in the bigger EU programme,
- And the success rates are better.

Mobility funding can be an easier way than project funding to gain new input and exchange of experiences!

- The success rate for Danish Erasmus Mobility applications is approx. 80 pct, while it for Erasmus projects is below 20 pct.
- It is also easier to manage and to report
- The application can be made by a consortium, where more organisation from the same country apply together.

Type of mobilities (from 2 days to 2 months stay in other EU country)

1. **Teaching/training assignments:** Allows staff of adult education organisations to teach or provide training at a partner organisation abroad.
2. **Structured courses*** or training events abroad: support the professional development of adult education staff;.
3. **Job shadowing:** provides an opportunity for adult education staff to spend a period abroad in any relevant organisation active in the adult education field.

*) 2nd option: Structured Courses :

- can include 3-6 days study visits for a group of staff
- to partner associations abroad to experience and learn from what they are doing.

NB: This was also an issue in pilot mentoring with focus on preparing mobility applications

It can be another way to try to be a partner instead of coordinator

- Be aware that 4 out of 5 organisations working internationally do it as partners.
- And it is easier to try to be partner than coordinator

The preparatory work to be a partner

demands that an applicant organisation will be aware of your existence, so you must promote your organisation to potential applicants.

- in partner search databases of the programmes and relevant social media platforms for project managers
- Find names of former applicants in databases of relevant programmes and send direct mail; -more times and in good time before the deadline of relevant programmes.
- Develop contacts and network by being engaged in transnational mobility activities or more simple bilateral or regional projects
- Or join the Erasmus+ transnational info- and contact meetings.



But the choice doesn't need to be an either – or; it can be both – and:

You can promote yourself as partner at the same time as you initiate a new project application with yourself as coordinator.

It is always good to have more baskets with eggs.

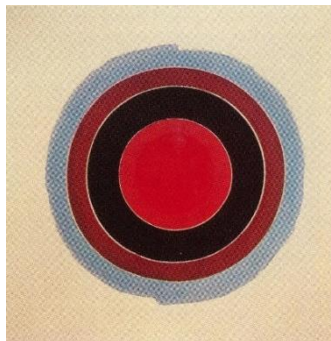


These **other ways** to international cooperation emphasise

- there are **more entrances** to international activities than just being a good project leader, and thereby also thereby there is also a **need for a multifaceted support**
 - Both to coordinators and partners
 - Both to making project and mobility applications
 - Both to be a good coordinator and a good partner in ongoing projects
 - Both to prepare big EU applications and smaller national and regional applications

So a new network should include a multifaceted support , when it seeks to provide and promote:

- Networking opportunities with exchange of experiences, peer-to-peer contact
- Fora for mutual support and cooperation about new activities
- Varied forms of organised support as transnational mentoring, courses and events.



Noland: Ember, 1960

Thank you for your attention!
Time for questions!

