UNIVERSITY OF DEUSTO
INSTITUTE OF LEISURE STUDIES
PhD in Leisure and Human Development

Value and evaluation in international cultural cooperation: focus on the EuroArab region

Research presented by Stamatina Magkou
Directed by Cristina Ortega Nuere
Co-directed by Jaime Cuenca Amigo

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The thesis director: The thesis co-director: The researcher:

Bilbao, 5th of May 2017

To Zacharias

Abstract

International cultural cooperation is a multi-layer and multi-stakeholders and actors arena, which requires insightful understanding of governance systems, the geopolitical environment and the concerns and needs of artists and cultural operators in each setting. In the contemporary *zeitgeist* of evaluation and the growing arena of international cultural cooperation, the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes has been not sufficiently explored by academics and practitioners.

The first hypothesis of the research is that the nature and particularities of international cultural cooperation requires appropriate and culture-responsive evaluation approaches, although so far no best practice can be reported. The second hypothesis is that evaluation is primarily a value-making exercise and thus contributes to creating both knowledge and meaning. The third hypothesis is that the practitioners' point of view on the evaluation practice has been overlooked compared to its relation to policy and research, however those commissioning evaluations, conducting evaluations and being evaluated can offer insightful discourses in regards to the attribution of value and the evaluation practice.

To shed light into the research subject, the EuroArab region has been selected as a focus area since it is a geography of intense cultural exchange activity, of growing interest from funding bodies and institutions and a strategic target of EU external relations. In this research, the state of affairs, the key stakeholders, actors and the programmes in international cultural cooperation in the EuroArab region are traced, especially in the framework of the environment that has been marked by the Arab Spring and the explicit inclusion of culture in the EU's external relations. Following the analysis of the context, the research searches to understand how international cultural cooperation programmes are evaluated and how value/ impact is perceived and produced by investigating deeper into four selected case studies and voicing the concerns and opinions of people involved in the evaluation practice and of experts.

Key words: international cultural cooperation, programme evaluation, value, EuroArab region

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Abbreviations

AHRC: Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK)
ALF: Anna Lindh Foundation
ANT: Actor-Network Theory
AFAC: Arab Fund for Arts and Culture
AFET: Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament
ASEF: Asia Europe Foundation
BA: Biblioteca Alexandrina
BJCEM: Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean
CAE: Culture Action Europe
CDIS: Culture for Development Indicators framework (UNESCO)
CCI: Culture and Creative Industries
CIN: Cultural Innovators Network
CKU: Danish Centre for Culture and Development
CECOM: Common Cultural Observation Methodology
CULT: Culture and Education Committee of the European Parliament
CV: Curriculum Vitae
DAPP: Danish Arab Partnership Programme
DBM: Dance Bassin Méditerranée
DCMS: Department for Culture, Media and Sport (UK)
DDD: Drama, Diversity and Development
DDD: Data Driven Decisions
DFI: Doha Film Institute
DG: Directorate General
DG EAC: Directorate General Education and Culture
DG NEAR: Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
DG DEVCO: Directorate-General for International cooperation and Development
EACEA: The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
EAEA: European Arts and Entertainment Alliance
ECF: European Cultural Foundation
ECoC: European Capital of Culture
EEAS: European External Action Service
EENC: European Experts Network on Culture
EFAH: European Forum for the Arts and Heritage
EIDHR: European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EMYAN: EuroMed Young Artists Network
EMP: EuroMediterrean Partnership
ENCATC: European Network of Cultural
ENP: European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI: European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EUNIC: European Union National Institutes of Culture
EU: European Union
FEMEC: EuroMediterranean Forum of Cultures
GCC: Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP: Gross Domestic Product
GVA: Gross Value Added
HRE: Human Rights Education
ICC: International Cultural Cooperation
ICD: Intercultural Dialogue
ICT: Information and Communication Technologies
IETM: International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts

IFACCA: International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies
IFCCD: International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity
FIA: International Federation of Actors
FIM: International Federation of Musicians
FM: Fondazione Mediterraneo
MDGs: Millenium Development Goals
MENA: Middle East and North Africa
MSC: Most Significant Change
MENA: Middle East and North Africa
M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation
NAWA: North Africa- West Asia
NFL: Non formal learning
NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OTM: On-the-move
PEARLE*: Live Performance Europe
RCF: Roberto Cimetta Fund
R&D: Research and Development
ROM: Results Oriented Monitoring
SDG: Sustainable Development Goals
n.p: no page
UAE: United Arab Emirates
UfM: Union for the Mediterranean
UK: United Kingdom
UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNIDO: United National International Development Organisation
UNI-MEI: International Arts and Entertainment Alliance
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund
YAFT: Young Arab Theater Fund
WANT: West Asia and North Africa
WG: Working Group

Foreword and acknowledgements

On the homestretch

When back in 2011 I started studying towards a PhD in Leisure Studies and Human Development at the University of Deusto (Bilbao, Spain) my interest was to focus on artistic mobility. The reason why at that time I chose to study at this University was the work undertaken within the European-wide and EU funded research project *Artists Moving and Learning* (ENCATC, 2010), coordinated by the Institute of Leisure Studies. Having been a 'mobile' person myself in different circumstances and working for the last decade in cultural management across different regions, I was intrigued to study the subject in more detail and through the *leisure paradigm lenses* proposed by the Institute that fitted my personal understanding of mobility. Meeting Dr Cristina Ortega in Brussels in autumn 2010 during the presentation of the final results of the *Artists Moving and Learning* research project within the framework of an ENCATC event was a further determining factor for this decision.

Since then many things have happened. And today, while I am writing these lines, I am already on the homestretch- just before submitting my PhD, where I've put together thoughts, notes from literature reviews, observations and from field trips and interviews from a long race that started almost 6 years ago. *On the homestretch*, at the last part of this long and demanding activity, here I stand more mature, stronger and perhaps with even a greater number of questions than the ones occurred at the beginning of this research that give promising routes for future research projects.

Finalising a PhD research is a moment of reflection. Where did I start from and where did I go? As I explained at the first paragraph, my initial intention when starting to think about a PhD research was to focus on mobility. Realising though that mobility had been a buzzword in European circles for a number of years and vastly researched inside European borders made me want to go beyond these findings. Having been exposed to different mobility processes in the EuroArab and Mediterranean region, made me soon wish to concentrate my scope of study in this particular region. The personal motivation behind this choice derived from two reasons. From one hand, from the conviction that through the experience of collaborating, meeting people from other backgrounds and being mobile, it is easier to achieve a greater understanding of the 'Other'. As Mark Twain has said, "broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime". From the other hand, this motivation derived from a personal fascination for the EuroArab and Mediterranean area

as a geographical territory and a socio-cultural concept. It was the period when mobility was a buzzword among European circles and since I have always been - and still am- a mobile cultural operator myself, I was attracted by it and wanted to explore it beyond the European geography but in an area of proximity and of enhanced opportunities of cultural interaction, such as the Arab region. While my research evolved, I passed from considering mobility as a single (research) phenomenon to linking it to the overall concept of international cultural cooperation and thus to be interested in examining the different dynamics within a specific setting, namely the EuroArab region. In the same time, I got involved in evaluation practices of different institutions with a focus on programmes in the EuroArab region and this stimulated further my interest in finding accurate approaches in international cultural programmes' evaluation.

From that moment, my research topic evolved into the direction of evaluation of (international) cultural cooperation projects with a focus in the EuroArab region. Mobility still remained an integral part of the research, however it was not the only topic of interest. Introducing the aspect of evaluation in my research was a very natural evolution that was fine-tuned with the research priorities of the Institute of Leisure studies, which were also reflected in the following:

- The partnership between the Institute and ENCATC for the organisation of the *Advanced Seminar Rethinking Cultural Evaluation: Going Beyond GDP* that was organised in Paris on the 22nd of October 2014[1];
- The theme of *OcioGune 2015* that was organised under the title *Cultural and creative industries' social effects: measuring the unexpected*;
- The participation of the Institute of Leisure Studies in the *evaluation of the CORNERS project* through a partnership with the San Sebastian 2016- European Capital of Culture.

I am extremely grateful to the Institute of Leisure Studies, University of Deusto and its staff for providing me with such an intellectually challenging environment. Sincere gratitude is also extended to the DEIKER office that gave me the chance to participate at the Research Training Grants programme from 2014 to 2017, allowing me to pursue my research in a more concentrated way and to collaborate closely with the Institute of Leisure Studies team, especially Dr. Cristina Ortega Nuere, Dr. Jaime Cuenca Amigo and

[1] A reflection on the results of this seminar can be found in Ortega and Bayón (2014).

Dr. Fernando Bayón Martín. Special thanks go to Izaskun Urien Gerrikaetxebarria for all the administrative support and advice with the grant contract.

My deepest gratitude must be extended to Dr. Cristina Ortega Nuere, who with considerable foresight opened the door for me to the challenging research life while appreciating my professional and practical experience in the field of cultural policy and management. She has been my supervisor throughout these years, providing me boundless encouragement, confidence-building support and international insights. She has offered guidance though questions of every conceivable level of difficulty in my research while always displaying understanding and intellectual stimulation.

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In addition, I would like to thank Angie Cotte and Ferdinand Richard from the Cimetta Fund (RCF) that in 2012 accepted to have me as a research intern in the organisation

during their first attempt to measure the impact of their mobility grants programme and for allowing me to interview many of the recipients of their grants. This experience was an enormous stimulation for wishing to investigate further on EuroArab cultural cooperation and on the topic of impact and evaluation. Christine Merkel from the German Commission for UNESCO and her staff also nurtured this stimulation by trusting me and my colleague Maram Anbar for the evaluation of the CONNEXXIONS 2012- 2013 programme. This opportunity gave me an enormous insight into international cultural cooperation, EuroArab cultural relations, the challenges in the Arab societies and the evaluation practice.

I would also like to graciously express my gratitude to the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) for giving me a STEP beyond travel grant for my field trip in Beirut, Lebanon (2012) and to the European Cultural Foundation and MitOst for supporting my travel and participation at the final meeting of the Tandem Shaml III round in Marseilles, France (2016) and facilitating the contacts for the interviews. Special thanks should be extended to Philipp Dietchmair from ECF who openly shared material and contacts for my research, to Andreeva Tsveta from ECF for her availability to discuss my research questions and to Jotham Sietma and Hatem Hassan Salama from MitOst for all the insights. They are all inspiring people that I am grateful to have meet during this research.

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I am the last one in the Magkos family to bring to an end a rigorous research project. The completion of my father's MPhil in the '80s, my mother's PhD in the '90s and my brother's Phd in the '00s have always showed me that such demanding endeavours require a lot of hard work and commitment but bring a lot of satisfaction, especially when conducted in a supporting family environment. I am grateful to have received all the support in the world from them to become who I am today. I know they are proud of me completing four decades of academic achievement in our family. It should be recognised though that this thesis would not have been possible without them.

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I. Introduction: framing the study

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The research topic

International cultural cooperation is a complex arena of activity. Understanding it as a notion requires recurring to related concepts, such as intercultural dialogue, mobility, cultural diversity and culture and development in order to sketch the conceptual setting in which it stands. It also requires recognising that culture has acquired an interpretation beyond 'arts' to encompass a wider set of values and beliefs that motivate and guide people's behaviours (Castells, 2009). Globalisation has contributed to a quantitative and qualitative change in cultural crossovers (Smiers, 2003) to an extent that one can even say that, today collaborating internationally is somewhere between a choice and a obligation. In this setting, a multi-layer system of governance of international cultural cooperation (Steinkamp, 2013) has emerged, where various non-state actors have become significant players. Therefore, international cultural cooperation should be understood far beyond its initial conception of a state activity in the framework of public diplomacy (Cummings, 2003; Mitchell, 1986) and seen more through a people-to-people/ cultural relations approach, where the individual and the community acquire a special role (Mark, 2009; Rivera, 2015).

The EU has contributed enormously in providing a different, non-state driven narrative to international cultural cooperation and encouraging cooperation with wider geographical regions. Following the dynamics of creating an internal (inside EU borders) arena of cultural cooperation through various programmes and policies and driven by the 'unity in diversity' paradigm proposing a common (parallel) European citizenship, the last few years an additional dimension in European cultural policy is highlighted: the will to convey a message of a politically unifying Europe as a cultural project in progress based on unique European values of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue to the wider world. The Commission's Communication on a *European Agenda for culture in a globalised world* (European Commission, 2007) established as one of the main objectives the inclusion of culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations and one of the measures foreseen was to ensure that all its cooperation programmes and projects take into full account the 'people-to-people' contacts. *Culture in External Relation* became a priority area in the Work Plan for Culture 2011- 2014 of the European Council and member states were asked to develop a strategic approach to culture in external relations and enhancing cooperation in the field. Following various consultations and a Preparatory action for culture in EU external relations (Isar et al, 2014), the European Commission published in June 2016 a Joint Communication to the European Parliament

and the Council *Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations* (European Commission, 2016a) and the European Council (2016) adopted the EU Global Strategy which sketches the direction for EU foreign policy and where culture is mentioned extensively proving the coordinated efforts that are currently in place and enables by the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS).

The question of value in arts and culture has gained a lot of attention in the last decades (Matarasso, 2009; Belfiore & Benett, 2008, 2010; Birnkaut, 2011). Evaluation has become a central issue in cultural policy management and has been linked to the fact that policymakers and funders are concerned that public money is spent effectively. A lot has been written about the social impact of arts and culture (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008; Carnwath & Brown, 2014; Holden & Baltà, 2012; Landry et al, 1993; Matarasso, 1997;) or its economic impact (Holden, 2006; Hutter & Throsby, 2011; Klamer, 2004; O'Brien, 2010) and various toolkits and manuals have been designed to assist practitioners in their evaluation practice. In the same time, opposing to an instrumentalised approach to evaluating the impact of arts and culture activities, many organisations and practitioners have strived to advocate for the value of culture and are in search of ways to document it. Introducing the aspect of value and evaluation in such a complex sphere of activity as the field of international cultural cooperation can be even more challenging.

Although the discourse around the value of arts and culture has grown increasingly from the '90s, there is little, not to say inexistent knowledge and evidence around the value of international cultural cooperation and evaluation in this field. While evaluation has grown into a discipline in itself (Patton, 1990, 1997; Scriven, 1976, 1991), various academic institutions, policy makers and practitioners are still experimenting and seeking answers of how it can be better applied in the arts and culture field. There is still, however, a lack of systematic presentation of how evaluation of international cultural cooperation is conducted and its relation and relevance frameworks as well as any implications for methodological and practical choices. Moreover, although interpretations of value are part of complex ecologies of cultural life, creation and understanding (Oancea, 2015), discourses of value from the practitioner's point of view have been overlooked (Matarasso, 2009; Newsinger & Green, 2016), although they can provide significant insights into the topic.

To shed light into the subject matter, the EuroArab region has been selected as a focus area since it is a geography of intense cultural exchange activity, of growing interest from

funding bodies and institutions and a strategic target of EU external cultural relations. The research investigates the state of affairs, the key stakeholders, actors and the trends in international cultural cooperation in the EuroArab region and searches to understand how projects are evaluated and how value and impact are perceived. It traces the past and present of EuroArab cultural cooperation, especially in the framework of a deliberate effort to include culture in EU External Relations since the *Communication for Agenda for Culture in a globalised world* (European Commission, 2007) and the *Strategy for culture in EU external relations and development policies* (European Commission, 2016) and the environment that has been marked by the Arab Spring and the creation of the European External Action Service.

Studying international cultural cooperation keeping in mind the Leisure studies framework means placing human development at the heart of the process, a vital space where people realise themselves (Cuenca, 2000; 2004; 2010) in seek of optimum or 'flow' experiences (Csikszentimihaly, 1996). The positive leisure (Cuenca et al, 2011) empowers personal and community values far beyond one self. At the same time, leisure is a field where numerous opportunities exist for the praxis and the creation of a new citizen as leisure and culture increase peoples' capacity to connect with the world, which surrounds them, to understand it and to navigate in it.

Justifying the selection of the region of focus

Artists and cultural operators in the EuroArab and Mediterranean region have been moving, collaborating and exchanging with their peers almost since ever. The EuroArab and Mediterranean region have been deeply interconnected due to historical connections, the geographical proximity and the intercultural challenges implied. This geographical context is of course not the only relevant geographical scope of cultural encounters in international cultural cooperation but it is possibly the most obvious and one of the most difficult as a result of the ambivalence of the relations between the region and the crystalisation of stereotyping and prejudice often linked to the clash of civilisations (Huntington, 1996).

Despite this existing interconnection, three paradigm shifts are currently underlying the importance of the above. The first paradigm shift is the political priority on an international level to promote dialogue among cultures as a means for peaceful coexistence. Several documents and initiatives reflect this shift such as the Council of

Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (2008), the UNESCO's documents, especially the *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* (UNESCO, 2001) and the Convention on the *Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (UNESCO, 2005), the Barcelona Process and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership that established the Anna-Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures and the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue celebrated by the EU in 2008. The second paradigm shift has been the coordinated effort at the EU level to bring to the forefront culture in its external relations. In this framework, the first step made with the *Agenda for Culture in* a *globalising world* (European Commission, 2007) that was complimented with a number of activities and initiatives that together with the establishment of the European External Action Service have contributed to the design of a new strategy (European Commission, 2016) to place culture at the heart of EU international relations, proposing a framework for enhanced cultural relations as well as a new model for cooperation with Member states, national cultural institutes, private and public operations from the EU and its partner countries, recognising the role that arts and culture can play in achieving it. The second paradigm shift has been the 2011 uprisings in the Arab world that created a feeling of belonging and interconnection between the European and the Arab regions and a historic opportunity to establish ties with an active and capable civil society in the region. The above paradigm shift has contributed to the Arab region receiving considerable attention by European actors and institutions and the interconnections within the cultural sector itself have multiplied.

Besides these evolutions, however, international cultural cooperation in the EuroArab region has not been sufficiently explored and there is a lack of exchange of data that would allow understanding in depth the processes and drawing conclusions on this multi-level topic. Here lies the importance and contribution of this thesis, which seeks to contribute to the knowledge production around the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes.

Hypotheses, aim and objectives

Three hypotheses guide the work of this research:

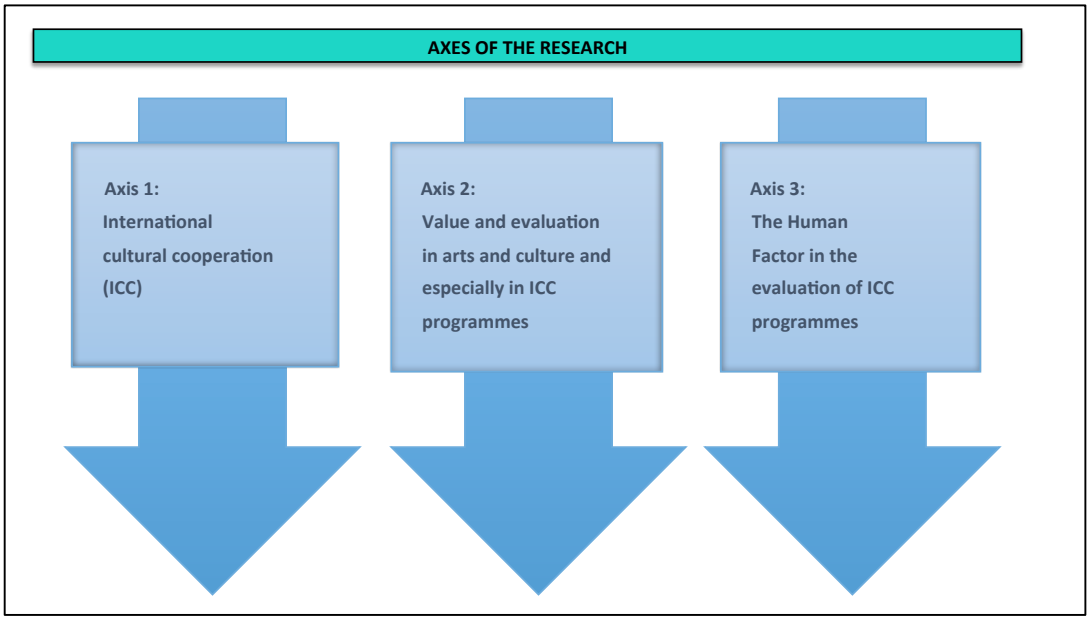
Hypothesis 1: International cultural cooperation is a complex multi-level and multi-actor practice, which requires appropriate understanding of the context and policy environment in which it involves and the specific communities which it encompasses.

Hypothesis 2: Evaluation is primarily a value-making exercise and thus, beyond serving accountability purposes, contributes to creating knowledge, meaning and organisational learning. In the framework of cultural cooperation programmes, this implies a need for culture-responsive evaluation approaches.

Hypothesis 3: The practitioner's point of view on the evaluation practice and especially on international cultural cooperation programmes has been overlooked, however those commissioning evaluations, conducting evaluations and being evaluated can offer insightful discourses in regards to the attribution of value and the evaluation practice in this field.

The three hypotheses inform the three axes of the research and are captured in Figure I.1.

Figure I.1 Axes of the research



Source: Developed by researcher.

Guided by these three hypotheses this study seeks to explore, identify and analyse, at theoretical and practical levels, issues regarding the value and evaluation of international cultural cooperation. The overall aim of the study can be summarised in the following sentence:

To contribute to the knowledge around the value of international cultural cooperation programmes and their evaluation practices.

The key research questions deriving from this aim and underlying this analysis may be formulated as follows:

1. How can international cultural cooperation be described and how is it informed and exercised? In what frameworks does it develop? What are its main characteristics? Who are the main actors and stakeholders? What forms does it take?
2. What can the discourse around the value of arts and culture and elements of the evaluation practice tell us about the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes? What is known and what is still unresolved?
3. How do those engaged in and with international cultural cooperation programmes and their evaluation generate, interpret and demonstrate the value of the programmes? What are their opinions around the evaluation practice?
4. Finally, what overarching, case and region independent results and recommendations can be drawn?

To complete the range of necessary knowledge sets, the overall aim and the research questions may be more precisely broken down into the following constitutive objectives:

Objective 1: To understand how is international cultural cooperation practiced and what are its distinguishing elements.
This involves:

a) Identifying and interpreting the conceptual framework and the distinguishing elements and challenges of international cultural cooperation;
b) Reviewing the policy frameworks in which it develops, especially in the EU context;
c) Investigating into how international cultural cooperation is practiced on the ground, through which actors and in what forms.

Objective 2: To interrogate the concept of value and evaluation in arts and culture and more precisely when it comes to international cultural cooperation programmes.
This involves:

a) Understanding the current discourse around the value of arts and culture in general as well as the main elements of the evaluation as a discipline and as praxis;

b) Investigating into examples of international cultural cooperation programmes' evaluations;
c) Carrying out a meta- analysis of a number of international cultural cooperation programmes' evaluation.

Objective 3: To find out the opinions of stakeholders, evaluators and beneficiaries regarding the evaluation practice of international cultural cooperation programmes.
This involves:

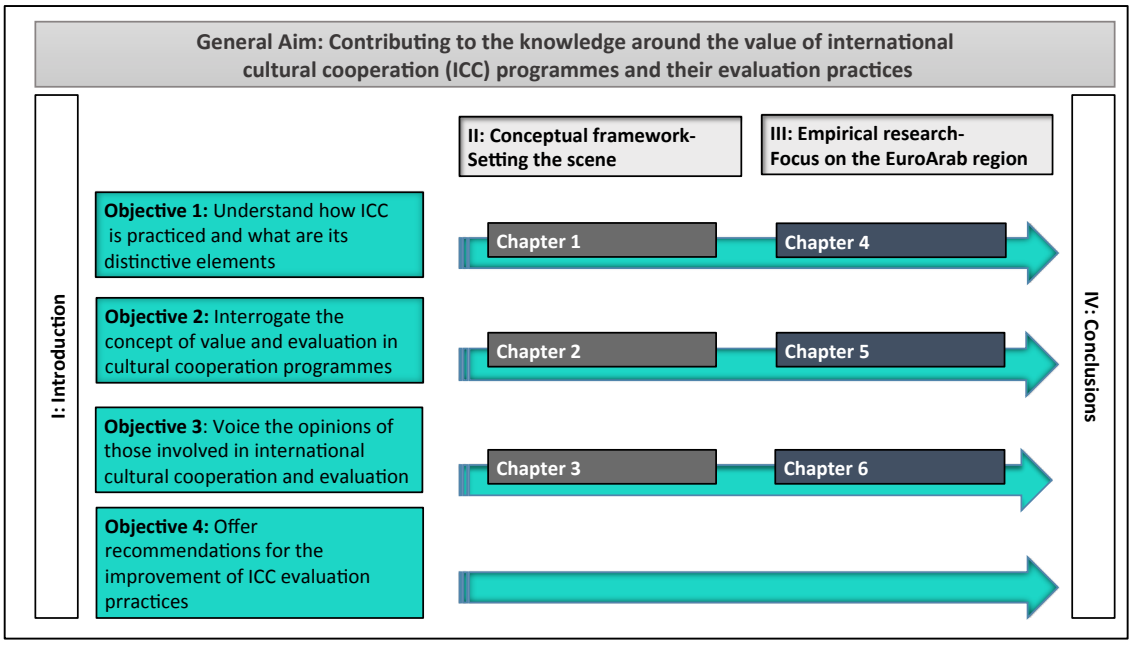
a) Understanding what are the overall concerns of those involved in the 'evaluation triangle' concerning the evaluation practice;
b) Learning from the experiences of people from the field.

Objective 4: To offer recommendations for the improvement of the international cultural cooperation programmes' evaluation practice.
This involves:

a) Understanding the role that culture plays in international cultural cooperation programmes and their evaluation;
b) Understanding the role of the evaluator and the skills necessary for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes;
c) Extracting recommendations and future lines of action at the policy, research and practice levels.

In order to achieve this, the scope of the empirical study has been limited into a specific region, namely the EuroArab region. Thus, the core of the thesis has two parts where chapters in the first part (section II), which is providing an analysis on the conceptual level, have their 'mirror' in the empirical part of the research (section III). Each one of the three first objectives is approached in the first part from a more theoretical point of view trying to set the scene related to the questions raised, while the respective chapter in the other section touches upon the issues raised in the theoretical part of the research with a practical focus on the specific region chosen. The fourth objective is an overarching one that is tackled transversally throughout the whole thesis and that it is specifically tackled at the Conclusions of the thesis. Figure I.2 explains this 'dialogue' between the objectives and the chapters, which will be further discussed below.

Figure I.2 Relation between objectives and chapters



Source: Developed by researcher.

Methodology and sources

In order to get a deeper understanding of the multi- faced and complex topic of how value is created and articulated in international cultural cooperation schemes, a mixed qualitative methods approach was opted. The different qualitative approaches and the overall methodological approach allowed all identified concepts and categories to merge into a larger, consolidated picture that guided the outlining of the main thesis and the conclusions of this research. This methodological work was complemented by the research trajectory that is reflected in Annex 1 and describes the events, discussions and networks in which I was involved throughout the PhD research period, the publications, the awards and scholarships and the participation in the research activities of the Institute of Leisure Studies and abroad.

The methodology used to inform each chapter of the empirical part of this research (section III) is explained more thoroughly in the respective note on methodology section. There, the process undertaken to gather data and material, the challenges encountered and the limitations of each method used are explained. However, in the Introduction of the thesis, it is considered necessary to present a short overview of the methodology followed to go deeper into the subject of the research and to introduce the reader to the empirical part of the thesis, while explaining how each chapter that

follows is informed by each methodology applied. More precisely, the following qualitative methods have been used:

Literature review

The literature review encompasses expertise from the fields of arts and cultural policy and management, international relations, political sociology, leisure studies and evaluation theory. Academic journals, especially the *International Journal for Cultural Policy*, the *ENCATC Journal for Cultural Management and Policy*, *Culture Trends,* as well as *Evaluation*, the *American Journal of Evaluation*, *Evaluation Review*, were sources of knowledge around the research topics. Furthermore, a great number of policy documents was consulted, among which the ones produced by European institutions, especially around the role of culture in EU external relations, by UNESCO and by the Council of Europe. Given that evaluation is, in reality, applied research, many of the publications consulted were not merely academic, but commissioned literature reviews or reports and evidence material commissioned by funding bodes.

Although not exhaustive, the literature review has informed widely the conceptual part of the thesis (section II) which comprises chapters (1), (2) and (3). In regards to the empirical part of this research (section III), the sources that inform chapter (4) but also chapter (5) on the case studies are both academic publications, as well as reports and policy papers from various institutions and organisations involved in EuroArab cultural cooperation.

Exploratory interviews, field trips and observation

The first stage of this research consisted in exploring the cultural realities of the Arab region through a number of exploratory interviews and field trips in order to develop an understanding of how the cultural and artistic life is formed in the Arab countries and especially what are the challenges and needs on which intermediary international cultural cooperation actors and programmes are driven to intervene and address them. Given that the geographical area covered was very broad, it would have been impossible to visit and interact with all potential people involved in EuroArab cultural cooperation.

In summer 2012, four exploratory interviews via skype with young artists and operators on their experiences regarding intercultural dialogue and cooperation between Europe and the Mediterranean countries were conducted. Parts of those interviews were included in a publication on the role of young people in the promotion

of intercultural and interfaith dialogue commissioned by the EuroMed Youth platform (Magkou, 2012a).

The people interviewed at that time were:

- Rana Yajazi, at that moment a young cultural researcher and activist leading the Syrian based organization Ettijahat- Independent Culture that I met at the IV International Conference on Cultural Policy Research held in Barcelona in July 2012;
- Reem Kaseem, a cultural manager and activist from Alexandria (Egypt) working for the Biblioteca Alexandrina and managing the cultural NGO Agora who was presented to me through an Egyptian friend;
- Mohamed Aredjal, an artist from Casablanca (Morocco) who was recommended to me through the BJCEM network and
- Laura Ghaninejad, an ex-grantee of the Cimetta Fund and a cultural operator from Marseilles working on a project with Beirut.

Following this, three field trips were intentionally organised in 2012 and 2014 to do some observation and preliminary interviews with cultural operators and artists in the Arab region and participate in meetings of interest to this research. These field trips constitute the fieldwork. Wolcott (1995) explains that fieldwork is both an artistic and a scientific endeavor. He explains that "it should neglect neither art nor science but transcend both" since both science and art have much to contribute and fieldwork "draws on both to make a contribution uniquely its own" (Wolcott, 1995: 252). He also underlines that:

> The art of fieldwork is achieved to the extent a fieldworker is able to render from research-oriented personal experience an account that offers to a discerning audience a level of insight and understanding into human social life that exceeds whatever might be achieved through attention solely to gathering and reporting data (Wolcott, 1995: 251).

With this in mind, the first field trip took place in Lebanon in November 2012[2]. There I had the opportunity to participate in two events related to the topic of the research:

- The *Madarat Platform of exchange* organised by the Cimetta Fund and the Arab Education Forum from the 20th to the 22nd of November 2012 in Beirut. This meeting gathered artists, operators, institutional representatives to discuss on issues related to mobility and artistic development in the EuroMediterranean region.

[2] This trip was supported by the *Step Beyond Fund* of the European Cultural Foundation.

- The *IETM Satellite Meeting* organised by IETM from the 29th of November to the 2nd of December 2012 in Beirut and that was offering an opportunity to members and non-members of the network to meet with cultural operators in Beirut in their own professional settings.

Both meetings were an eye-opening experience. Besides the rich content and understanding of the context, I also interacted with a handful of interesting persons that introduced me to the cultural life in Beirut and shared with me their concerns, fears and aspirations. Furthermore, I conducted a number of preliminary interviews with artists and cultural operators. The contacts were facilitated to me by Maha Kobeissy, cultural manager at the Al Bustan International Festival (Beirut, Lebanon) with whom I had participated at the Atelier for Young Festival Managers in Izmir in October 2011.

The second field trip was in Tunisia in December 2012, where I visited a number of cultural spaces in Hammamet and Tunis and conducted 4 interviews, mainly with people that had a relation to the Roberto Cimetta Fund (RCF), where I had just concluded a research internship. More precisely I interviewed:

- Delel Tangour El Bouslama, photographer (Hammamet, 15/12/2016);
- Mourad Hamdi, visual artist (Hammamet, 16/12/2016);
- Fathi Heddaoui, actor and President and Director of Centre Culturel International de Hammamet (Hammamet, 17/12/2012).

A third trip was organised in Tunisia in September 2014, where I interviewed:

- Nawel Skandrani, choreographer and cultural activist, member of the RCF board (Carthage, 07/09/2014) who facilitated me the contacts;
- Ramzi Jebabli, lawyer and initiator of 'Café Théatre du Nord' in a small town at the Algerian border (Carthage, 07/09/2014);
- Karim R'madi, music manager (Tunis, 09/09/2014);
- Rim Temimi, photographer and manager of the website TunisiArt Galleries (Tunis, 09/09/2014)

A detailed list of interviewees from the exploratory and field trip interviews can be found in Annex 4.

Moreover, the understanding of the subject matter was informed by the following opportunities to observe, participate and interact with cultural operators in the Arab region:

- A professional trip to Jerrash and Amman (Jordan) in October 2014 to attend the U40 Arabesque meeting in the framework of the CONNEXXIONS programme with the participation of young Arab artists, researchers and cultural operators. This took place in the framework of an evaluation assignment commissioned to me and my colleague Maram Anbar for the evaluation of the CONNEXXIONS 2012- 2013 programme[3];

- Furthermore, living for a couple of months in Doha (Qatar) in 2014 and visiting again the country in 2015 as well as the UAE in 2014, I saw and experienced another part of the Arab world - the Gulf countries- and how cultural life is shaped there. My collaboration with the Doha Film Institute (DFI) gave me the opportunity to gain an inside understanding of it. In this setting I also conducted 2 interviews with two Italian consultants, Manlio Castagna and Toni Guarino from the Italy based Giffoni film festival, who cooperate with DFI for the Doha Giffoni Film Experience. This is another form of EuroArab cultural cooperation that goes beyond funding lines and although this aspect is not much touched upon in this research, it did give me a broader understanding of the dynamics of EuroArab cultural cooperation from a different point of view;

- Participation at the ENCATC WG on the evaluation of European transnational cultural projects and cultural networks that was organised by ENCATC on the 25th of October 2016 in Brussels with the participation of representatives from the policy, research and practice field[4];

- Finally, through the research process for one of the case studies I was given the opportunity to observe one of the final meetings of the Tandem Shaml programme organised in Marseilles in December 2016, from which I took field notes and held informal conversations with a number of participants that informed my understanding of the internal evaluation process of the programme. This research trip was supported by the Tandem programme partners, namely the European Cultural Foundation and MitOst e.V.

[3] A meta-reflection of this experience informs section (5.3).
[4] The programme of the meeting and the list of participants can be found in Annexes 2 and 3. This meeting informs widely chapter (3) of this research.

The field work and observation and the preliminary interviews constitute an inquiry process that grew from curiosity and lead to understanding and knowledge- building that informs mainly chapter *(4) The state of affairs in EuroArab cultural cooperation* and especially (4.3) *Cultural realities and challenges in the Arab world* and as said before, chapter (3) was informed mainly by the participation in the ENCATC WG in October 2016 mentioned above.

Mapping of intermediary actors and programmes

In addition to the field trips, the exploratory interviews and the observation opportunities and in order to get a picture of the actors and programmes/ schemes that support the web of EuroArab cultural relations, a preliminary mapping of actors and programmes has been undertaken. From one hand, the mapping attempts to draw the current institutional panorama in relation to intermediary organisations at supra-national and national level, and on a second hand, to reveal the form that this support takes.

This mapping was based on desk-research and information available mainly online and is by no means exhaustive. Moreover, funding schemes and programmes are regularly subject to change therefore the mapping does not capture only the ones that are 'open' while these lines are being written, but in general programmes and schemes that have contributed to supporting EuroArab cultural cooperation in the recent years, especially since 2011.

The results of a selected 20 programmes mapping are included in Annex 7 and are reflected in (4.4) *Intermediary organisations and programmes in EuroArab cultural cooperation: actors and programmes*.

Case Studies

A case studies approach was chosen to shed some light on how different organisations deal with the issue of evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes/ schemes in the EuroArab region. In this research, evaluation is approached as a social construct, as a process of meaning making of 'value', therefore how different organisations create this meaning and knowledge through their evaluation practice was considered a necessary step to approach the subject matter. Chapter (5) is the result of this inquiry.

Firstly, a personal experience as an evaluator of an international cultural cooperation programme in the region is included as a meta-reflection at the beginning of the chapter since it informs the research questions in regards to the case studies selected and has been the motivation for wanting to investigate further into the topic of evaluation in international cultural cooperation programmes. Following this, four case studies of different programmes put in place by organisations that operate within the arena of EuroArab cultural cooperation have been chosen to shed light into the subject matter. The case studies examine how the selected organisations/ projects perceive evaluation and how they incorporate it in their practice. The challenges and everyday struggles are also brought to the surface.

Choosing to study the subject matter using a case-study approach has its benefits and its drawbacks. From one side, looking deeper into various case studies allows for a wider picture of the forms that cultural cooperation in the EuroArab region takes and the different challenges, change theories and stories that arise. Case studies provide evidence and knowledge in a rigorous way. The challenge comes when trying to scale them up or to produce a general understanding from various examples. Even if the scope is similar, sometimes it seems like a comparison of apples and oranges.

The case studies approach generated another substantial number of interviews organised under the following guiding principle: for each case study I wanted to interview at least one representative of each part of what I call, the 'evaluation triangle', meaning a person who has been involved in commissioning the evaluation, the person that undertook the evaluation (if applicable) and a beneficiary/ participant. In this way I wanted to approach the research topic from the three points of view and get a holistic picture of the evaluation process and also on the impacts on the participants a bit on a longer-term compared to the moment that the evaluation was conducted. This approach has been inspired by the work of Matarasso (2009) *The Human Factor* in which he questions how people professionally involved in arts evaluation feel about their experience of it and how does their experience influence the process. With his work he has aimed to explore the impact of evaluation on those involved and particularly the gap between theoretical and policy discourses around the issue in relation to what happens in everyday practice (Matarasso, 2009:2).

The criteria for the selection of the case studies as well as further notes on methodological questions are analysed in the note on methodology of the chapter (5.2). A

detailed presentation of the people interviewed is included in the beginning of each case study and Annex 5 summarises the interviews for all case studies.

For each of the case studies a number of materials were consulted that the people contacted and interviewed in relation to each case study made available. This material served as secondary data analysis. Since evaluation is most of the times an internal process, such material is not publicly available. Gaining the trust of these people and organisations to review this material is of great importance and I consider this to be one of the assets of this research. In one case I also had the opportunity to conduct field research and observation by attending one of the final meetings of the programme under question (Tandem Shaml).

Each case study starts with a brief overview, which includes some background information about the specific programme, the context in which it has developed and then presents the main sources of information and data collection that have nurtured the final case study report. Following this, the criteria that have been applied in the selected evaluations and the methods of their application are presented and discussed and general observations are made.

Although each case study should be considered as "a study of the singular, the particular, the unique" (Simons, 2009: 3) and the primary purpose for undertaking a case study is to explore its particularity and its uniqueness, in (5.8) a synthesis of the findings is made.

Expert interviews

Interviews with experts in international cultural cooperation are analysed as an empirical complement to the case studies and inform chapter (6). The potential uses of interviews can be summarised in two main groups: from one side fulfilling exploratory-preparatory aims and on the other side used for contrasting, illustrating or going deeper. For the purpose of this study, the expert interviews serve the second category. Rubin and Rubin (2005: 14) have defined in depth interviews as "a window on a time and on a social world that is experienced by one person at a time". The interview is a kind of social transaction in which each party has a direct effect upon the other. Tonkin (1994: 2) says that "verbal representations are chains of words, either spoken or written, ordered in patterns of discourse that represents events".

An additional qualitative study was undertaken because it was considered that the case studies approach only gives a small picture of what actually happens on the ground and what are the opinions of actors, operators and evaluators in the EuroArab region regarding the value of international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes as well as the ways evaluation is conducted. Articles included in Bogner et al (2009) on *Interviewing experts* guided me in the process of understanding the expert interviews as a separate method in qualitative interviewing and Weiss's (1994) *Learning from strangers* in structuring the analysis of my findings.

The most important step in conducting interviews with experts was actually defining who the experts are. The selection of people interviewed was made through suggestions from institutions active in the field and from the network of personal contacts that directed me accordingly. Finally, a sample of 10 experts was interviewed and the analysis of these interviews constitutes chapter (6). In the note on methodology of the chapter (6.2), their profile and experience in relation to Euro Arab cultural cooperation are explained and the criteria based on which they were 'chosen'. I consider that besides offering a different angle to the research, the expert interviews bring an added value to this research thanks to the profile and relevance of the people selected. The aim was to develop "a wide-ranging *panel of knowledgeable informants*" (Weiss, 1994: 16, emphasis of the author) to provide additional and more critical insight to the topics raised throughout the empirical part of the research as well as to gather suggestions and opinions for formulating a set of recommendations that are captured in the final chapter of this research.

Relation of empirical research methods to the research objectives

Table I.1 translates the overall objectives of the research to the region-specific empirical study that focuses on the EuroArab region and presents the methods applied to reach them as well as the connection to the individual chapters. As explained above, the fourth objective is a transversal one and requires the analysis of the findings produced through the research methods explained here. This is the reason, why it is not included in the table below. It is mainly dealt with in the Conclusions part of the thesis.

Table I.1 Key areas of the empirical study: linkages between region-specific objectives and data collection methods

Objectives	Data collection procedures	Chapter
Objective 1: Understanding how IIC is practiced and what are its distinctive elements		
a) Identifying and interpreting the general setting and state of affairs in EuroArab cultural cooperation	Literature review Exploratory interviews Field trips	Chapter (4) and especially (4.2) and (4.3)
b) Mapping the actors and the nature of the programmes put in place in the EuroArab region	Literature review Desk research Mapping of programmes	Chapter (4) and especially (4.4)
Objective 2: Interrogating the concept of value and evaluation in ICC programmes		
a) Examine how organisations deal with evaluation	Case studies Secondary material review	Chapter (5) and especially (5.4) to (5.8)
b) Examine how people involved with evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes feel about it	Qualitative interviews with case study representatives	Chapter (5) and especially (5.4) to (5.7)
Objective 3: Voicing the opinions of those involved in ICC and evaluation		
a) Contrasting the main findings of the research with a group of experts not involved in the case studies	Expert interviews	Chapter (6)

Source: Developed by researcher.

As seen from the above, qualitative interviews have been at the core of this research. Either during the field trips, or the exploration of the case studies and finally when conducting the expert interviews, the interaction with all these people that openly offered to be my informants for this research, led me to consider this inquiry as an "exchange of views"- as InterViews, using Kvale's (2008) way to describe this. Kvale (2008) even offers two interesting metaphors to approach the understanding of interviewing, with which I identify myself as an interviewer/ researcher. The first one is that of the interviewer as a miner, going deeper into essential meaning. The second one is that of the interviewer as a traveller who engages with the interviewee while learning

from something new and creating a novel experience for both. Therefore, starting from the recognition that "in-depth interviewing helps portray ongoing social processes" (Rubin, 1985: 4), this method has led me to a deeper understanding and appreciation of people's experiences and opinions in regards to the research questions.

Interviews were in all cases recorded, and the necessary trust was build that I would not make public something that could be embarrassing or harmful to the interviewee. For establishing an open and trusting relationship, towards forming what Rubin and Rubin (2005) term 'conversational partnership' with the interviewee, I built on the idea that each interviewee is an individual with distinct experience, knowledge and perspective and that both the interviewee and me as an interviewer have a role in shaping the discussion.

Finally, using Seidman's words (1998: 130):

> Interviewing has provided me with a deeper understanding of the issues, structures, processes, and policies that imbue participants' stories. It has also given me a fuller appreciation of the complexities and difficulties of change. Most important and almost always, interviewing has led me to respect the participants, to relish the understanding that I gain from them, and to take pleasure in sharing their stories.

Structure of research

Alasuutari (1995: 179) writes that "figuring out the macrostructure of a study is probably the most difficult part of writing". This section outlines the background of this research, sketches its structure and touches upon the content of each chapter making reference to the methodology undertaken for its development.

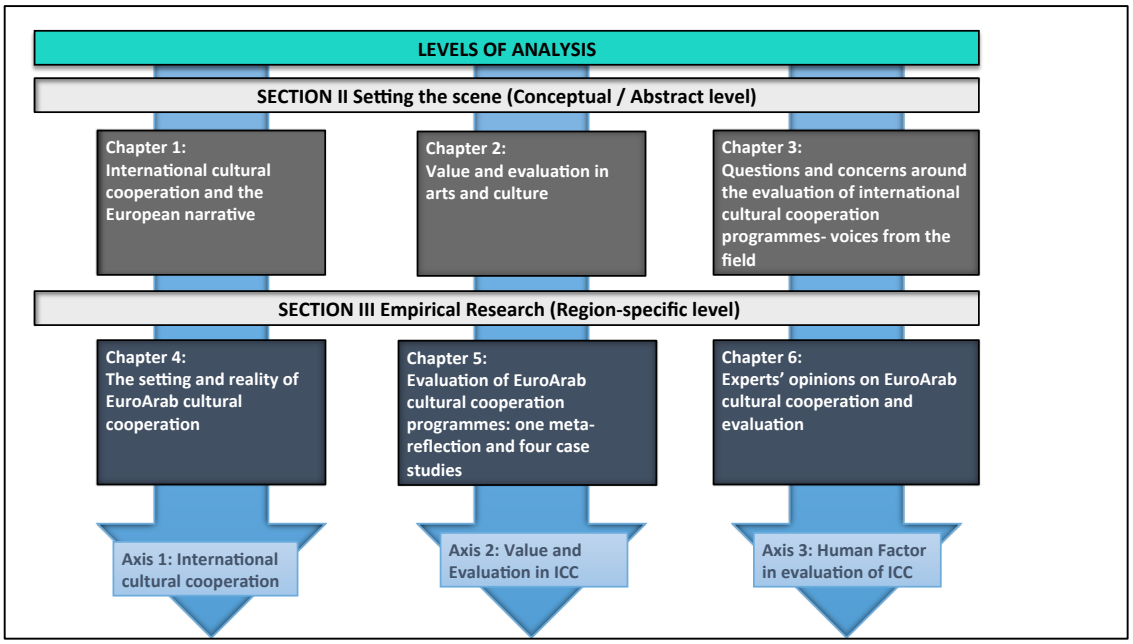
The overall research is divided in four sections, namely:

Section I. Introduction: framing the study
Section II: Conceptual framework: setting the scene
Section III: Empirical research: focus on the EuroArab region
Section IV: Conclusions and ways forward

We can see that besides the Introduction (section I) and the Conclusions (section IV), the core of this research is divided in two parts. One part offers a more conceptual and abstract analysis of the topic (section II) and covers chapters (1), (2) and (3), while the other part offers an empirical analysis focused on a specific geography (section III) and

covers chapters (4), (5) and (6). Figure I.2, presented above already, captured the relation of the objectives with the development of the research and revealed its structure. It was made clear there that there is a sort of 'dialogue' between the chapters of each core section that corresponds in the same time to a specific objective. This means that each chapter from sections (II) and (III) has its 'interlocutor' in the other section. What differs is the level of analysis. In section II the scope is more conceptual and abstract, while in section III, the research questions and research objectives are examined in a region-specific setting, namely the EuroArab geography. The relation between the chapters of each core section of the research (II and III) are captured in Figure I. 3.

Figure I.3 Levels of analysis and relation between chapters



Source: Developed by researcher.

More precisely the structure of the research and the content of the chapters is described below.

The *Introduction* (section I) sets the framework of this thesis, describes the hypothesis and the research questions and defines the research aim and objectives. Moreover, it provides an overview of the methodological tools used for the research and its structure.

Section II. *Conceptual framework: setting the scene* covers chapters (1), (2) and (3) and explores the research axes and objectives from a more conceptual/ abstract level.

Chapter (1) *International cultural cooperation and the European narrative* looks into understanding what exactly is international cultural cooperation and how the concepts of intercultural dialogue, cultural development, cultural diplomacy, mobility and cultural diversity relate to it. The second part of this chapter examines how international cultural cooperation has appeared in the EU discourse and how it has influenced policies and practices both within European geographies as well as in Europe's relations with the wider world.

Chapter (2) *Value and evaluation in arts and culture* discusses the discourse of value in arts and culture in the evaluation society and reflects the efforts and approaches of the academic, policy and practice levels to find answers to its measurement. It also provides an overview of the available studies and toolkits on the topic, in an effort to identify material that would be useful for approaching the subject of evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes.

Chapter (3) *Questions and concerns around the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes: voices from the field* raises the concerns and challenges regarding the evaluation of international cultural cooperation projects through the voices of the people concerned, more precisely in this case the participants from the first ENCATC Working Group meeting on the *Evaluation of European and transnational cultural projects and cultural networks* that took place in October 2016 in Brussels.

Section III. *Empirical research* covers chapters (4), (5) and (6) and explores the research axes and objectives from a region-specific prism.

Chapter (4) is the first chapter of the empirical part of this research under the title *The state of affairs in EuroArab cultural cooperation* that aims to understand the arena of EuroArab cultural cooperation through observations on the setting and environment for artists and cultural civil society organisations in the Arab countries and through examining the web of actors and programmes that demonstrate how international cultural cooperation is exercised. This section gives an overview of programmes and is the first step before identifying the case studies to be analysed in the following chapter.

Chapter (5) *Evaluation of EuroArab cultural cooperation schemes: one meta-reflection and four case studies*, includes a meta-reflection from own experience with a EuroArab cultural cooperation programme and looks into the evaluation process of four schemes

which differ in scope, duration, focus, approach and actors involved, but which are all programmes of cultural cooperation in the EuroArab region. More precisely, the following case studies are analysed:

- Case Study 1: EUNIC/ MENA training discusses the external evaluation process of this training on cultural management that was organised in 2014-2015 by EUNIC in cooperation with the Fondation Marcel Hicter;
- Case Study 2: the Cultural Innovators Network reviews the evaluation of this programme undertaken by an external consultancy in between July 2014 and March 2015. The evaluation was commissioned by the promoter of the programme, the Goethe Institut and examines the overall evaluation strategy of the Goethe Institut in this respect;
- Case Study 3: examines two efforts of the Cimetta Fund to evaluate its mobility grants programme in the EuroMed/ EuroArab region in 2012 and 2013;
- Case Study 4: TANDEM Shaml examines the evaluation of this programme in the context of the overall evaluation strategy of the Tandem programme organised by MitOst and the European Cultural Foundation in cooperation with other partners, including Al Mawred Al Thaqafy/ Culture Resource. The evaluation was undertaken by an external consultant and took place in 2016. In the same time, the internal methods of programme evaluation are reviewed.

Finally, at the end of the chapter, the main topics arising from the examination of the case studies are captured and connected with the initial question raised in relation to how international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes are evaluated.

Chapter (6) *Expert opinions on EuroArab cultural cooperation and evaluation* constitutes an additional qualitative analysis which highlights the experiences and opinions from people working in the EuroArab context through interviews conducted with 10 selected experts.

Finally, in the Conclusions section, the main findings of the overall empirical research are reviewed and connected to the initial objectives raised, while recommendations and future lines of action for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes are proposed for the policy, practice and research level, contributing thus to fulfilling the fourth objective of this research.

The Annexes include information around the research trajectory (Annex 1), the programme and list of participants from the ENCAT Working Group (Annexes 2 and 3), the list of interviewees from the exploratory interviews and the field trips, the case studies and the expert interviews (Annexes 4, 5 and 6), the results from the EuroArab programmes mapping (Annex 7), the data gathering matrix for the case studies (Annexes 8, 9, 10 and 11) as well as the questionnaires used for the evaluation of the CONNEXXIONS 2012-13 programme and the Cimetta Fund grant programmes in 2012 (Annexes 12 and 13). Finally, the last Annex (14) includes the interview script that was developed for conducting the case studies interviews.

As already announced at the beginning of this Introduction, each research design has its strong points and its weaker points. The limitations of the study are also explored in the Conclusions. The evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes is a complex topic and it is hoped that the new knowledge yielded by this study will be of benefit both to the research community, as well as to policy makers and cultural practitioners.

II. Conceptual framework: Setting the scene

Chapter 1: International cultural cooperation and the European narrative

Chapter 2: Value and evaluation in arts and culture

Chapter 3: Questions and concerns around the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes- voices from the field

II. Conceptual framework: Setting the scene

Section II- Conceptual framework: setting the scene deals with the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that undergird this research. The first theoretical backbone is related to international cultural cooperation, the different concepts related to it and the forms it is taking today in a rapidly changing world. Special attention is drawn to the way that the European Union has encouraged international cultural cooperation within its geography and beyond it that has offered a new narrative and understanding of international cultural cooperation. Moreover, the recent policy developments in regards to the role of culture in the EU external relations influence how cultural cooperation is exercised. These aspects are explored in the first chapter of this section, (1) *International cultural cooperation and the European narrative.*

The second theoretical backbone is related to the notion of value and the practice of evaluation. Chapter (2) *Value and evaluation in arts and culture* explores the contemporary *zeitgeist* of evaluation and how it has influenced the debate around the value of arts and culture. It also explores how the policy, research and practice field have tried to approach the subject. Furthermore, a review of studies and toolkits on the topic of value and evaluation in arts and culture is made in an effort to identify material relevant to the topic of evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes. Finally, the gaps in the literature are identified.

In chapter (3) *Questions and concerns around the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes- voices from the field*, the two previously tackled topics are joint together and concerns and questions around the practice of evaluation in the specific field of international cultural cooperation are yielded. This is achieved through the voices and concerns raised from policy makers, academics and practitioners during the first meeting of the ENCATC Working Group on the evaluation of European and transnational cultural cooperation projects and cultural networks organised in Brussels in October 2016.

Section II constitutes the first level of analysis of the research and comes to shed light to the research objectives through a conceptual/ abstract point of view that creates a framework for exploring the research objectives in the empirical part of the research that follows in Section III.

II. Conceptual framework: Setting the scene

Chapter 1:
International Cultural Cooperation and the European narrative

1.1 Presentation of the chapter

1.2 Understanding international cultural cooperation

1.3 Actors of international cultural cooperation

1.4 Forms of international cultural cooperation

1.5 A European narrative of international cultural cooperation

1.6 A European discourse for culture in a globalising world

1.7 European actors in international cultural cooperation

1.8 Collaborating internationally: between choice and obligation

1.9 Closing Reflections

> We can go further back in history to many earlier cultural crossovers and artistic fusions. The difference may be that the multiplicity of influences nowadays results in a qualitative change (Smiers, 2003: 125)

1.1 Presentation of the chapter

This chapter contains one of the backbones of the theoretical background of the research. It focuses, on one hand, in analysing and interpreting the notion of international cultural cooperation and the actors involved in it and, on the second hand, in describing how European policies and actions have provided an alternative narrative to international cultural cooperation, detached from its traditional concept of cooperation between nation-states.

In the first part of the chapter (1.2) an attempt to approach the concept of international cultural cooperation is made. To do this, firstly the concept of international cultural cooperation is 'deconstructed' by trying to understand its three components: 'cooperation', 'culture' and 'international' (1.2.1). Secondly, concepts that are closely linked to international cultural cooperation are examined in an attempt to establish interconnections and get a deeper understanding of the frameworks and the dynamics in which international cultural cooperation occurs (1.2.2). Finally, in (1.3) the actors involved in international cultural cooperation are identified and in (1.4) the different forms that it might take are explored.

The rest of the chapter focuses on how international cultural cooperation has been approached from a European perspective, in an effort to demarcate the sphere of activity and the principles of international cultural cooperation both within European geographies (1.5) and in a globalising world (1.6). This second aspect is mostly important in this research because it describes the framework in which culture has entered in EU external relations and is useful to keep in mind for the second part of this research, which focuses on the cultural relations between Europe and the Arab region. Therefore, here the focus is placed on European policies and approaches in international cultural cooperation that dictate the environment of cultural cooperation beyond the EU, while in the empirical part of the study the focus is particularly on the EuroArab cultural cooperation which is influenced by these dynamics. I claim that this parallel activity of placing culture at the heart of internal EU policies and in external relations are contributing factors to the formation of a European cultural citizenship that is still

internally in the making, however the encounter with the 'Other' from other regions of the world contributes in its demarcation.

Therefore, the questions that this chapter seeks to shed light upon are the following:

- What is actually international cultural cooperation?
- Which related concepts contribute to its better understanding?
- Within which dynamics does it occur and who are the main players?
- Which are the European understandings and recent developments regarding international cultural cooperation?
- How is international cultural cooperation influencing European cultural citizenship and Europe's relations with the wider world?

1.2 Understanding international cultural cooperation

In order to understand the subject under research, the first step is to clarify the concept of international cultural cooperation. This is done in two ways: from one side focusing on the meaning of the individual words that compose the term and on the second hand through investigating into the related concepts that were identified following the literature review on the topic.

1.2.1 'Deconstructing' the concept

What is international cultural cooperation?

Below, each of the words that constitute this concept is analysed separately to arrive to an 'integrated' interpretation of the term. They are analysed in a reverse way, starting from the last word to the first one because this way replies are given to the following logic of questions: What? (Cooperation). On what or through what? (Culture). And finally, where? (Internationally).

The first word is 'cooperation'. Cooperation is heavily the result of human capacities that are unique to our species. It has always been part of human life and has occurred in every setting of social and human life. Cooperation has been the subject of research for scholars from different disciplines[5]. What lies within cooperation is the condition of working together on an equal footing. This last aspect is of primarily importance since the term

[5] For a thorough review, consult Candau (2012).

itself implies no power position and the focus is on working together towards a shared objective within a given timeframe.

Keeping in mind the context of our analysis, which is international cultural cooperation, it should be acknowledged that cooperation has happened between people from different cultures since ever. In most cases, this collaboration has been the result of the human desire to connect and to progress. Such interaction was intensified during the age of discovery when the Western world inaugurated contact with other worlds on a massive scale and often imposed its presence in an imperialistic way. Even then though, as Gonçalves (2016: 6) notes, "cooperation also happened, and it generated ideas, reciprocal learning, scientific and commercial cooperation leading to discoveries, innovation and inventions"[6].

A prerequisite for collaboration is to be aware that there are always personal costs when engaging in a joint activity "that confers benefits exceeding these costs to the other member of one's group" (Bowles & Gintis, 2003: 430). This aspect becomes particularly relevant in international cultural cooperation, since such cooperation requires exceeding one owns' presumptions and investing energy, time and resources in achieving something that often may be quite intangible.

Although the use of the word 'cooperation' is not being contested here since it is widely accepted as a term when describing working together internationally *on* and *with* culture, it is interesting to make reference to Terkessidis' (2015: 14) viewpoint regarding the distinction between 'cooperation' and 'collaboration'. For him, 'cooperation' is the condition in which actors meet to work together but dissolve afterwards into their own units, while 'collaboration' involves "working together in such a way that those involved accept they will change during the process, and even welcome this change". The term 'cooperation' is widely used in this research but does not necessarily have the connotation attributed here. As it will be shown throughout the research, and especially in section III, international cultural cooperation takes so many forms and might involve so many different stakeholders and actors that the level of resilience of each cooperation cannot be identical nor guaranteed. Therefore, in its ideal form, cooperation should lead to collaboration- in Terkessidis' interpretation-, however this does not mean that many

[6] This historical period left a significant trace on how international cultural cooperation is exercised even today and the power dynamics, which will be further developed in the empirical part of the research.

cooperations are not from the very beginning initiated with an openness to bring about change and even become a part of it.

Having recognised cooperation as a basic characteristic of the human species brings in our minds the conceptualisation of culture as ecology proposed by Holden (2015), since this metaphor deploys many useful concepts that are transferable into the field of culture, such as cooperation and collaboration. But what is actually culture? 'Culture' is the second word of the term under study. Culture has been a contested term and subject of many analysis. The concept has been often used in a polysemic and often contradictory way so that even van den Binsbergen (2003: 478) suggested to use the term 'cultural orientations' instead of culture(s) "to fit better its situationality, multiplicity and performativity". This is also reflected in Williams (1983: 87) that notes:

> Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English languages. This is so partly because of its intricate historical development, in several European languages, but mainly because it has come to be used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought.

Examining the different notions and concepts that the term 'culture' has attained throughout the years would require a separate thesis. For the purpose of this research culture is understood as per Anheir and Isar's definition (2010: 5):

> Culture is a social construction, articulation and reception of meaning. It is the lived and creative experience for individuals and a body of artefacts, symbols, texts and objects. Culture involves enactment and representation. It embraces art and art discourse, the symbolic world of meanings, the commodified output of the cultural industries as well as the spontaneous or enacted, organized or unorganized cultural expressions of everyday life, including social relations. It is constitutive of both collective and individual identity.

Boyle (2010: 13) in his book, *2014: how to survive the next world crisis,* claims that current challenges imposed by globalisation, lead us "towards an ideal of ever-closer cooperation" (Boyle, 2010: 151). Does this ever-closer cooperation include culture? And if it does, what does it actually mean to cooperate *through* or *for* culture?

Traditionally, international cultural cooperation has perceived 'culture' as 'arts'. Today though, we observe that 'culture' in international cultural cooperation is gradually being understood in its broader sense: "as a set of values and beliefs that inform, guide, and motivate people's behaviours" (Castells, 1996: 36). This shift transfers to culture a semantically different weight and opens new understandings of how culture contributes

to international cultural cooperation that transcend its purely artistic interpretation and which will become further evident in the next parts of this research.

Finally, trying to conceptualise 'international cultural cooperation' would not be possible without considering the framework in which it is being developed and practiced. This leads us to the observation that considering as a field of action of cultural cooperation the international arena goes beyond considering it in strictly geographical terms. What is mostly important here is to reflect on which has been the influence of globalisation in the notion and practice of international cultural cooperation.

The Flandres Arts Institute initiated in 2016 a research and development trajectory about working internationally in the arts. Joris Janssens (Head of Research and Development at Kunstenpunt at the Flandres Ars Institute) observed that although the question of internationalisation of arts has been in the reflection of support organisations for a number of years, during the last six years several things have changed. In the website of the programme [7], Jannsens summarised the current urge to think about internationalisation of the arts as follows:

> It is not the first time that support organisations have been organising moments of reflection about the internationalisation of the artist. But compared to six years ago, a lot of things have happened. Working internationally has certainly become quite self-evident, but at the same time, there is this uncanny feeling that the pressure is increasing. Society is going through some political, cultural and ecological changes, which may well radically change the way we work. Stakes are higher than ever, it seems.

What Janssens observes, is that the global system has affected how the debate about the international character of arts and culture has evolved, together with the practice of working internationally. Although the focus here is placed on the artistic side of culture, this observation can also be transferred to the more holistic interpretation described above. Today, even more than before, working and cooperating internationally oscillates between choice and need and often is even dictated by social and political developments. Undeniably, globalisation has played an important role in this, since it has radically changed the relations between time and space within the network society (Castells, 1996) and "has given metapower to actors hitherto not present in our living rooms"

[7] The article under the title "Reframing the international: introduction The meaning and context of working internationally in the arts" is available at https://blog.kunsten.be/reframing-the-international-the-meaning-and-context-of-working-internationally-in-the-arts-3cd63c58b946 (date retrieved 10/04/2017)

(Singh, 2011: 2). Globalisation has indeed become, despite Robertson's warning (1999: 398), an 'intellectual play zone' and the world has become an "interacting system" that involves "interactions of a new order and intensity" (Appadurai, 1996: 27), due mainly to the wide technological expansion in transportation and information, which has enabled a new era of 'neighborliness' even with people living far away from us.

This liminal space of international cultural cooperation has implied "a state of movement and the continuous updating of social relations and structures, with reference to their social construction and thus their changeability" (Zobl & Huber, 2016: 7). In such a framework, artists and cultural operators are expected to use their "network-specific repertoires" (Faulkner & Becker, 2009) and "grasp the opportunity to be at the forefront as mediators of global realities" (DeVereaux & Vartiainen, 2007: 118). Collaborating internationally has become an everyday reality for almost everyone working in arts and culture. While the term, when used in the international cooperation context has implied moving across borders, today, in our ever-growing multicultural societies, international cultural cooperation might occur even in our own neighborhood as our societies become more and more intercultural. Although this research does not discuss in depth this parameter and focuses mostly on international cultural cooperation that occurs across borders, it is crucial to have in mind this changing environment because it will definitely influence the way international cultural cooperation is conceived and exercised in the near future.

Even if in this section the term 'international cultural cooperation' has been 'deconstructed', it might still remain unclear what exactly is meant when we use it. The UNESCO (1966) *Declaration of principles of international cultural cooperation* document defined the aims of international cultural cooperation in the following way:

> The aims of international cultural cooperation in its various forms, bilateral or multilateral, regional or universal, shall be:
> 1. To spread knowledge, to stimulate talent and to enrich cultures;
> 2. To develop peaceful relations and friendship among the peoples and bring about a better understanding of each other's way of life;
> 3. To contribute to the application of the principles set out in the United Nations Declarations that are recalled in the Preamble to this Declaration;
> 4. To enable everyone to have access to knowledge, to enjoy the arts and literature of all peoples, to share any advances made in science in all parts of the world and in the resulting benefits, and to contribute to the enrichment of cultural life;
> 5. To raise the level of the spiritual and material life of man in all parts of the world.

Fifty years have passed since the formulation of these aims of international cultural cooperation. One could question whether they are valid today, mainly because of the following two observations:

- Firstly, although the above excerpt underlines that international cultural cooperation occurs in various forms and at various levels and involves various actors, today this multi-layered set of actors involved in international cultural cooperation is wider and more varied than before;
- Secondly, in the 1966 UNESCO definition a slight focus on the artistic and human creation part of the concept of culture can be observed. Today, as explained above, the concept of culture has evolved in a way that encompasses rights, democracy, development and goes beyond artistic merit.

Although the influence of globalisation on international cultural cooperation has been of great importance, the intensification of international cultural cooperation practices should not be merely considered as if imposed primarily by globalisation. Undeniably globalisation has offered a multiple number of opportunities to connect, however, as explained above, international cultural cooperation has been widely connected with human nature since ever and when it has not been imposed by economic, or social related reasons, it was merely the result of the human "will to connection" (Simmel, 2001). Nonetheless, even though the processes of globalisation have contributed to a shift from a solid, fixed modernity to a more fluid and "liquid" (Bauman, 2000) one, people-to-people contacts still provide potential links between the "globalised space of flows" and the "localised space of places" (Castells, 1996). Even if technologies have facilitated and multiplied the ways in which people can be in touch, work together or love each other, even if they are in different time zones and moving along "in-between spaces" (Beck & Beck, 2011), there is always a need for physical proximity and "in significant ways this proximity is felt to be obligatory, appropriate or desirable" (Urry, 2001: 5-6).

The basic traits of international cultural cooperation have been described above, however the concept is still unresolved. In the next section of this chapter (1.2.2), concepts that are closely associated with 'international cultural cooperation' are tackled in an attempt to demarcate its nature, field of action and forms.

1.2.2 A short vocabulary of international cultural cooperation

Raymond Williams (1983) first published in 1976 the book *Keywords- a vocabulary of culture and society* in an attempt to shed light to a "shared body of words and meanings in our most general discussions, in English, of the practices and institutions which we group as *culture* and *society*". He described it as "an active vocabulary- a way of recording, investigating and presenting problems of meaning in the area in which the meanings of *culture* and *society* have formed" (Williams, 1983: 15, emphasis of the author).

Producing a vocabulary for international cultural cooperation is not the intention here. It is however considered relevant for this research to discuss a number of 'keywords' that inform the subject and to understand what are the notions around them and their relation to international cultural cooperation. This exercise is undertaken keeping in mind however, that these terms might entail complex meanings and interpretations and that there is always a certain level of 'translation' needed so as to be understood in each context they are applied. As Henze (2006: 19) observes:

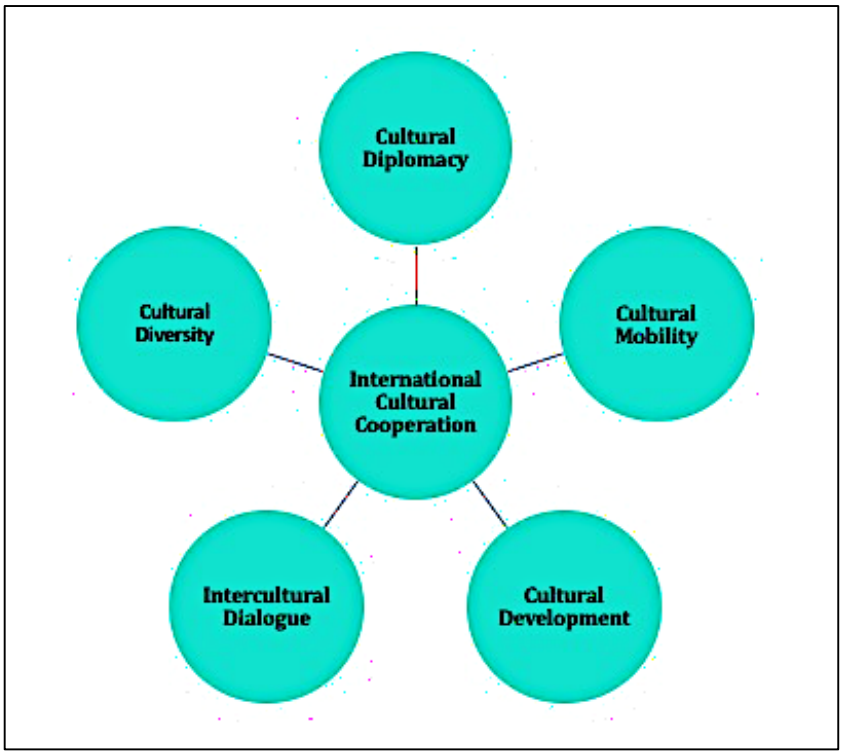
> Many of the terms frequently used in the context of globalisation such as 'cultural identity', 'nationality' and 'diversity'- to name only a few- have complex meanings and are subject to differing interpretations. There is hardly any discussion in the cultural sector these days without frequent use of these buzzwords. And matters become even more complex when trying to translate these terms into different languages.

Therefore, this section establishes certain conceptual and theoretical links with terms associated to international cultural cooperation and touches upon meanings and ideas of related topics to the subject under study. Figure 1.1 provides an illustration of the concepts related to international cultural cooperation that are identified and touched upon in this part.

1.2.2.1 Cultural diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy has until recently been widely explored mainly through the discipline of international relations and associated with the concepts of soft power and public diplomacy (Cull, 2009; Cummings, 2003; Mark, 2009; Melissen, 2005; Mitchell, 1986; Nye, 1990). Although, as observed by Ang et al (2015) cultural diplomacy has not received the necessary attention as a key component of the contemporary cultural policy landscape, there have been some attempts to give to the concept a cultural studies perspective (Clarke, 2016) and some authors even view it as "an explicitly cultural-policy instrument" (Singh, 2010: 12).

Figure 1.1 International cultural cooperation and related concepts



Source: Developed by researcher.

Most of the times, cultural diplomacy has been associated to a state activity through the understanding that 'public diplomacy' is everything a country does to explain itself to the world and cultural diplomacy implies using culture to achieve this (Cummings, 2003: 1). Mark (2009: 7) defines it as "the deployment of a state's culture in support of its foreign policy goals or diplomacy". Often associated with colonialism and imperialism, cultural diplomacy has acquired a negative connotation and therefore, various authors have tried to distinguish it from propaganda, such as Mulcahy (1999) or Mitchell (1986: 28) that places cultural propaganda "at one end of a scale that passes through cultural diplomacy to cultural relations at the other".

When it comes to the way that cultural diplomacy is exercised, in its initial concept, it was about strengthening a country's cultural influence by funding artists to go internationally or by promoting the study of a country's language and culture abroad (Mitchell, 1986). A key strength of arts and culture within the context of diplomacy and international relations is actually "their ability to tap into emotions, to communicate on more than a relational level, and to precipitate alternative ways of seeing the world" (Schneider, 2010: 106). According to Milton (2003: 1), the guiding principle for any kind of cultural diplomacy lies in an effort to encourage "the exchange of ideas, information, values,

systems, traditions, beliefs, and other aspects of culture, with the intention of fostering mutual understanding between nations"[8]. But as we will see below in (1.3), the environment of international cultural cooperation is changing and the nation-state is not any more considered as the main entity responsible for international cultural cooperation. Berger et al (2008) explain this by saying that while public diplomacy is unilateral with an emphasis on explaining one's policies to the others, cultural diplomacy takes a bi- or multilateral approach with an emphasis on mutual recognition. Understood this way, "cultural diplomacy is therefore explicitly not meant to be the promotion of a national culture" (Berger et al, 2008: 3).

At this point, a distinction should be made between having a cultural component in many external policies, and what actually counts as cultural diplomacy (Goff, 2013: 420). Using "cultural ventures and investments as a means or instrument to attain goals in other areas" (Vestheim, 1994: 65) reveals the instrumental side of culture in cultural diplomacy, which has been heavily criticised by authors such as Gray (2008). Others however, have tried to prove that cultural diplomacy may represent a different kind of instrumental policy that enables cultural actors to continue and enhance their international work "without the detrimental outcomes assumed by anti-instrumental arguments" (Nisbett, 2012: 570).

A recent study commissioned by the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC, 2016) to the University of Siena has revealed that currently there are three basic approaches to cultural diplomacy, which are reflected in Table 1.1.

These three approaches are not self-denying. But they do confirm in a way what Ang et al (2015) say when they observe that there is a lack of clarity when using the term 'cultural diplomacy' because there exists a confusion between 'interest-driven governmental practice' and 'cultural relations', "which tends to be driven by ideals rather than interests and is practiced largely by non-state actors" (Ang et al, 2015: 365). A second observation is that in recent political discourse, especially in the context of the EU, which will be further touched upon in (1.5), the focus is shifting from cultural diplomacy to people-to-people and cultural relations. The individual and the community acquire a different role in this reading of cultural diplomacy. Rivera (2015: 11) explains the difference between cultural diplomacy and cultural relations as follows:

[8] In this statement, the nation-state approach to cultural diplomacy prevails, however we will see below that this is changing.

Cultural diplomacy utilises cultural content in its programming, but takes an 'advocacy' approach to support policy objectives and advance national interests. Cultural relations differ from cultural diplomacy in each of these ways-its methodology, objectives and outcomes.

Table 1.1 Approaches to cultural diplomacy

Approaches to cultural diplomacy	Characteristics
Public diplomacy	Emphasis on state actors; Diplomatic goals through cultural tools
Strategic communications approach	International and strategic communication; Linked to nation branding practices and national image cultivation; States are only one of the players in the field as a consequence of the growing democratization of global communication.
Cultural relations approach	Nation branding is an out-dated practice; Culture should come first and diplomacy second; Any actor can practice cultural diplomacy.

Source: Developed by researcher based on University of Siena's research for EUNIC (EUNIC, 2016: 10-13).

Two elements are particularly of interest here according to Rivera's reflection. From one side that "the absence of government is just as important for cultural relations as its presence is for cultural diplomacy" (Rivera, 2015: 11). This means that when talking about cultural relations, these relations develop organically and without necessary any governmental support. And on the second level, that the involvement of non-governmental actors in international cultural cooperation "lends more credibility and honestly to cultural relations than the voice of government" (Rivera, 2015: 12) that has been so far linked merely with propaganda and nation-branding. Here, the notion of trust acquires a lot of importance together with the notion of engaging with audiences in a foreign setting rather than promoting one country's culture.

While people exchanges have always been considered as "one of the most enduring means of increasing understanding" (Mitchell, 1986: 19), such an emphasis on people-to-people cultural relations emphasises even more the role that mobility plays in this, which will explored in the next paragraph.

1.2.2.2 Cultural mobility

Traditionally, culture and society have been informed by the boundaries of defined territories and therefore travel and mobility have been understood as a supplement to collective life and culture. However, in an environment of intense mobility dynamics imposed and encouraged by the network society (Castells, 1996) and in the framework of the more and more globalised world in which we live in, displacement itself has become "a unique sphere of production of meaning" and therefore "practices of displacement themselves might emerge as constitutive of cultural meanings and not as only mere extension of them" (Clifford, 1997: 3). The intensification of peoples' mobilities has created a landscape of people that through their mobility practices, they contribute to a shift or a change in values, ideas and attitudes- sometimes even in policies. This landscape of people, what Appadurai (1996) calls *ethnoscapes,* has contributed to the recognition of the importance of mobility both on individuals and on society and provides one of the foundations for understanding how the current global flows occur and the way they can contribute to alter or change the cultural values and heritage of people in the global sphere and within an increasing globalisation- process. This reality and realisation have led to talk about a mobility paradigm (Urry, 2001, 2007), where mobilities lie "at the centre of constellations of power, the creation of identities and the microgeographies of everyday life" (Cresswell, 2010: 551).

Artists and cultural operators have always been linked to mobility. In the course of history, they have been obliged or have wished to travel, to leave their native land to explore other realities in order to learn their profession or get inspiration. In some periods, a study trip to Italy was a *sine qua non* for an artist that respected himself and had the ambition to form part of a global artistic scene. In other periods it was Holland, Spain, Germany, France or even North Africa and America that attracted artists from other regions. The fascination of Otherness, of indigenous life, of imagined communities and spaces, the quest of inspiration, the sense of curiosity have always driven artists and cultural operators to go beyond their territorial boundaries and see mobility as an intrinsic part of their work, an opening to the world, an accompaniment to their creative process, an opportunity to showcase and disseminate their work to a larger public, an opportunity to learn. And even if globalisation has imposed new patterns of enhanced mobility, artists and cultural operators are one of the groups that were already prepared for this because it has been familiar to them and to their practices since ever.

Mobility can be understood itself as a source of cultural production (Clifford, 1997). This understanding goes against the view that culture is constituted in localised populations or communities and attributes to artists and cultural operators, as mobile subjects, the role of carriers of cultural creation and meaning. Although often artists and cultural operators are neglected in societal processes, their role is fundamental to community life, to the creation of a shared culture and to the construction of cultural citizenship. And this is because they carry in themselves and in their work, their own cultural world that is influenced from where they come from and from the *repertoire* of their experiences. Therefore, their mobility is symbolic not only to their own needs and aspirations, but has a societal meaning as they connect cultures and bring together people through their work.

Artists' and cultural professionals' mobility practices can be translated as showcasing of their work in exhibitions, fairs, galleries, theatres, cultural venues, festivals or public spaces. It can also be translated as participation in networking activities, in education and training opportunities, or as participation in residencies that allow them to be hosted by a cultural establishment for a certain period of time and develop a project, often in collaboration with other (local or international) artists. Each person carries its own cultural *repertoire*, which he deploys in different settings, and mobility, meaning encounter, provides spaces for expression of these different *repertoires*. Mobility is therefore understood as "a distinctive social capital and a resource that can lead to new behaviours and opportunities, but also reflects and reproduces former social and spatial positions" (Farinha, 2011b: 144). Mobility gives a unique platform for the construction of transnational identities, as artists and cultural operators experience the difference, the diversity, they integrate it in their creative process and share it with their audiences, both in the hosting as well as in their departing community.

The mobility of artists and cultural professionals is increasingly seen as a prerequisite for a dynamic cultural climate and therefore it has been encouraged and supported by a variety of cultural policy instruments and resources. Different actors, from public authorities at all levels, as well as international bodies, private foundations and cultural operators have supported artistic mobility "under the assumption that is benefits direct participants as well as local cultural operators and their audiences" (Klaic, 2007: 35- 36). In the IFACCA report on *Artists International Mobility Programmes* (Staines, 2004: 4), we read that "international artists' mobility can be, and is, viewed as an integral component of international programs of cultural cooperation, cultural diversity, intercultural

competence" and it is "used as a strategic tool in international relations, cultural diplomacy and development programs".

Cultural mobility, however, is often not only the result of support of national governments, national cultural and foreign policies or of transnational or regional foundations and institutions. It is also a proactive attitude of the 'real' actors- artists, cultural managers, producers and intermediaries as an intrinsic part of their life without necessarily any formal form of support.

1.2.2.3 Culture and development

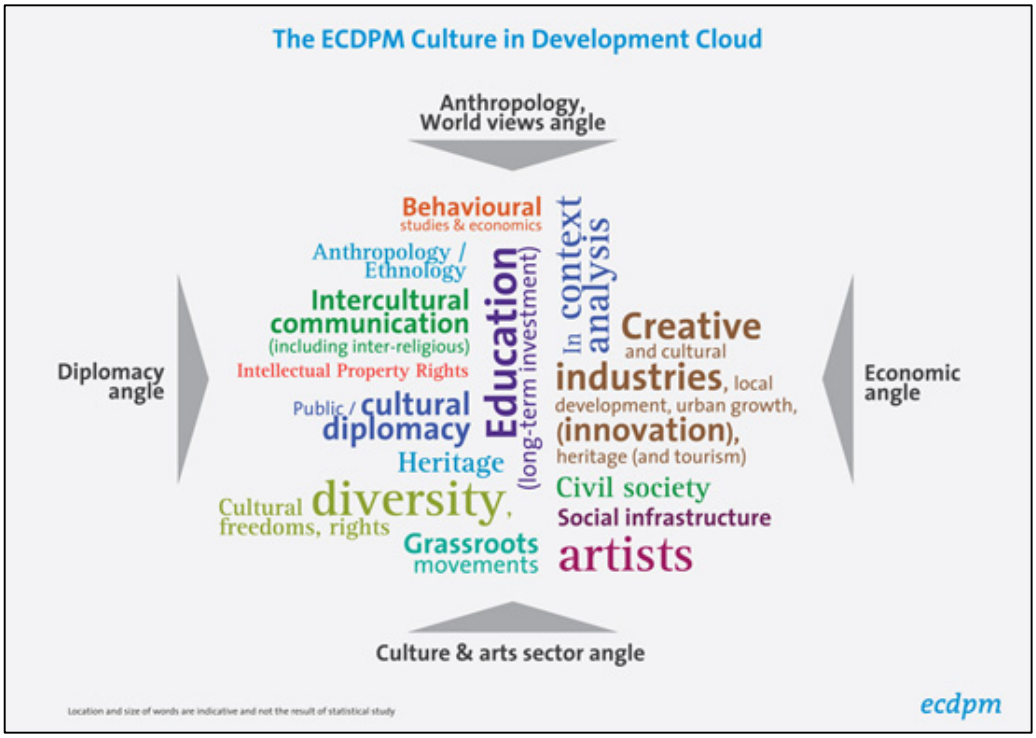
The debate around culture and development acquired a lot of importance on a policy level during the last thirty years (De Beukelaeur, 2015). For example, the *World Decade for Cultural Development* (1988-1997) and the report of the World Commission on Culture and Development *Our Creative Diversity* (UNESCO, 1997) were among the first efforts to acknowledge the cultural dimension of sustainable development. Similarly, the UNESCO *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* (2001) and the UNESCO *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (2005) made reference to culture's importance to sustainable development, while the UN Resolutions N.65/166 (2010) and N.66/208 (2012) on *Culture and Development* called for the mainstreaming of culture into development policies.

Helly and Galeazzi (2016: 5) in an attempt to clarify the 'culture-development nexus' have produced a word cloud (Figure 1.2) to illustrate the multiplicity of meanings contained in it seen through four different angles: anthropological, diplomacy, economic and culture and arts.

The reason why this image is reproduced here intact is because the result seems very intriguing: many of the words used here, as well as the structure through which the concept of culture in development is represented, has a lot to do with the concepts/ vocabulary touched upon in this section. What is missing though, is an explicit mention to international cultural cooperation. This is perhaps because if it would have been used, it should have replaced the *Culture in Development* wording. Although the authors explain that the words, their intensity or size are not a result of discourse analysis or of extensive research, they highlight that the added value of this cloud is mainly that it raises awareness of the multiple perspectives on the subject matter, identifies key words that are to be used when speaking about culture and development and, finally, stimulates

exchanges on culture and development in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the EU strategies on external relations and culture.

Figure 1.2 Culture in development cloud



Source: Taken from Helly, D. and Galeazzi, F. (2016: 5).

International cultural cooperation is closely linked to the concept of development for several reasons, which are depicted below:

- First of all, culture is viewed as a source for the development of society (Schneider & Gad, 2014: 5). The notion of cultural development has evolved in a direction that encompasses the notions of cultural freedom, human rights, respect for diversity and positioning arts and culture as a means for social and cultural development. This approach is evident in many policies and programmes related to international cultural cooperation that justify the work of funders in several regions where often they are connected to the role that culture can contribute "to development of democratic habits, sensibilities, institutions within a cultural environment of respect, interdependence, human rights and public discourse"

(Zuidervaart & Lurrkhuizen, 2000: 25-26). Another observation in this line is that often culture has been used as a tool in development aid policies[9].

- Helly and Galeazzi (2016) observe that despite the lack of an explicit SDG on culture, the relation between culture and development is implicitly suggested in several post Millennium targets and in an increasing developed body of research. Moreover, in the recent years and in light of the negotiation of the SDGs, different organisations were mobilised and framed reflections on culture and development against the prevailing discourses of sustainability from an environmental or economic perspective, which lead to a number of strategic policy documents. For example, the UNESCO Conference organized in 2013 under the title *Culture: key to sustainable development* lead to the Hangzhou Declaration *Placing culture at the heart of sustainable development policies* and the Final Report of the post-2015 Dialogues on Culture and Development was published after a public consultation lead by UNESCO, UNFPA and UNDP on the topic. The connection of culture with sustainable development is clearly described in Kangas et al (2017) that explain that cultural sustainability can refer to the sustainability of cultural and artistic practices and patterns, but also to the role of culture to guarantee pathways for sustainable societies. For the authors:

> These narratives, values, and actions contribute to the emergence of a more culturally sensitive understanding of sustainable development and to clarifying the roles of art, culture, and cultural policy in this endeavour (Kangas et al, 2017: 130).

- Finally, the strong connection between culture and development is also found in the publication of the *UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators framework* (CDIS). As stated in the foreword of the Methodology Manual (UNESCO, 2014) the indicators "represent both a research and advocacy initiative". This is true because from one hand they offer a methodology that approaches culture in its multidimensional role in national development processes using facts and figures, and on the other hand it can be used as a compass for policy impact through culture's integration into development strategies and a major contribution to the implementation of the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity*

[9] Jeretic's (2014) study for the European Commission is significant in these terms since it reveals that although the European Commission's communication *Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change* (2011d) did not explicitly include culture, the EU legal cooperation framework and its operational instruments offer an opportunity to include culture in different forms to promote development and to achieve EU external cooperation objectives.

> *of Cultural Expressions* (UNESCO, 2005) and the post-2015 development agenda. The indicators tool encourages an inclusive vision of culture's interactions with development extending beyond economic benefits to explore more intangible benefits such as social cohesion, tolerance and inclusion. Seven key dimensions are tackled: Economy, Education, Governance, Social Participation, Gender Equality, Communication and Heritage. The framework recognises the dual role of culture both as enabler and driver of development, and acknowledges the multiple roles of culture in development- as a source of economic and social progress, and also as an object of development in its own right (UNESCO, 2014: 11).

1.2.2.4 Intercultural dialogue

Another concept that is closely linked to international cultural cooperation and appears in policy documents and in several programme descriptions is intercultural dialogue (ICD). For a number of years, intercultural dialogue has been advanced as a narrative in the political arena and as an instrument to promote cultural diversity or to foster social cohesion, both on local, national or international level and has been used as a buzzword in international cultural cooperation. UNESCO, the UN through the Alliance of Civilisations and the Council of Europe, among others, have developed major initiatives regarding ICD. 2008 was even declared *European Year of Intercultural dialogue* and was the moment when the Council of Europe published the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*, which identifies policy approaches on the promotion of intercultural dialogue within Europe, and between Europe and its neighbouring regions. Furthermore, the promotion of ICD has been identified in the European Commission's *Agenda for Culture in a Globalising World* (2007) as a tool contributing to the governance of cultural diversity within European societies, trans-nationally across European countries and internationally with other world regions.

But how is intercultural dialogue defined? In a European- wide study addressing the topic, the following definition was used:

> Intercultural dialogue is a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange or interaction between individuals, groups and organisations with different cultural backgrounds or worldviews. Among its aims are: to develop a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and practices; to increase participation and the freedom and ability to make choices; to foster equality; and to enhance creative processes (ERICarts, 2008a: 11).

In close relation with what has been noted above, it can be observed that intercultural dialogue occurs at different levels: in the context of local realities and in the context of international realities. What is meant by this? Societies have become increasingly more multicultural/ intercultural and this is reflected first of all on the local level, in our neighbourhood. The 'Other' sometimes lives just next to us, not in another region or country and international traveling might not be necessary.

At this point it is important to reflect on the concept of ‘casual’ and ‘organised’ intercultural dialogue. By 'casual' or 'informal' intercultural dialogue we refer to every human contact, given that culture is an intrinsic part of human life itself. Therefore, each person carries a very unique and personal 'cultural world' inside him that is present in our daily life contact. As Banús (2007: 105) notes, “because we are carrying our 'cultural world' with us, all the messages are cultural messages, and all the dialogues are intercultural dialogues”. Seeing culture under this prism, we consider it as a kind of repertoire, where one person accumulates a number of cultural elements, ranging from attitudes and styles to rituals and beliefs, and based on them he constructs diverse strategies of action in concrete life contexts. But is then every encounter a dialogue? How can the necessary parameters be ensured for turning these 'casual' encounters into genuine and enriching intercultural dialogues that can also be accounted as intercultural learning and understanding.

The concept of 'organised' intercultural dialogue refers mainly to activities and actions taking place in the framework of what we call 'civil society' in order to promote the understanding between cultures. Civil society initiatives provide a framework of opportunities for bringing together people that are wiling to listen and share, which turns them into essential tools for participation, mutual knowledge and promotion of intercultural and interfaith dialogue. Such activities are often addressed by international cultural cooperation.

An associated term to intercultural dialogue has to do with intercultural competence (Adler, 1991; Glaser & Laser, 2008; Kohls, 1994 among others) or cultural intelligence (Peterson, 2004), meaning the ability to engage in a set of behaviours that use skills (e.g. language or interpersonal skills) and qualities (e.g., tolerance for ambiguity, flexibility) that are tuned appropriately to the culture- based values and attitudes of the people with whom one interacts. Who is though this ‘interlocutor’ and how has the notion of the ‘Other’ contributed to the formulation of the concepts discussed in this section?

When we talk about the 'Other', we mean other cultures, other continents, other realities. However, this secret fascination of "Otherness" (Hall, 1997: 225) has an ambivalent character. From one hand it is necessary for the production of meaning and the formation of culture, but in the same time it can be a threat and a source of hostility or aggression towards the 'Other'. This "divided legacy" (Hall, 1997: 238) is what makes difference so important. According to Hall (1997: 234- 238) difference is essential to meaning because meaning depends on the difference between opposites. Also the 'Other' is essential to meaning because the dialogue with the 'Other' allows space for interaction and thus becomes fundamental to the construction of the self. According to the cosmopolitan vision of the world however, differences are neither ranged in a hierarchy nor dissolved into universality, but are accepted and "contrary to their own usual understanding of themselves, the different strategies for the social handling of otherness do not exclude but presuppose one another, they are mutually correcting, limiting and protecting" (Beck, 2008: 67).

For Abbinet (2003), the 'I' is not the 'existential' being who is permanently embroiled in questions of authenticity, but the self that emerges through the conflicts and negotiations, which define the realms of human culture. So the construction of the Self is a process of negotiation between the self (conceived as a reflexive agent), the Other (who comes as a demand for care and responsibility) and the established structures of social, cultural and economic recognition. Bhabba (1990) explains that the 'Other' is never outside or beyond us; "it emerges forcefully, within cultural discourse, when we think we speak most intimately and indigenously 'between ourselves'" (Bhabba, 1990: 4). Furthermore, Neuman (1998: 37) observes that analyses of the 'Self/Other nexuses' allow to better understanding who are the actors and how they are constructed in an interaction, as well as how they maintain themselves and under which preconditions they might thrive[10].

Given that the focus of the empirical research is on the EuroArab region, it makes sense to mention at this point that the concept of intercultural dialogue was formally introduced into EU foreign policy in the Barcelona Declaration (EuroMediterranean conference, 1995) adopted at the fist EuroMediterannean Conference, as part of the third basket in the multi-dimensional framework of cooperation that was established. De Perini (2015)

[10] As it is shown here below, the concept of the 'Other' is fundamental in identity formation. In (1.5) the process of identity formation of a European cultural citizenship is tackled, while in the empirical part of the research this is discussed from the point of view of the Arab identity (4.2).

makes a thorough analysis of the origin of the practice of intercultural dialogue as a tool for European Union external action towards the Mediterranean though content analysis of policy documents and claims that the EU had envisaged strategic use of ICD before 1995 in the hope of tackling key issues such as mounting xenophobia in Europe and escalating Islamic fundamentalism in the Maghreb. However, it was not until after September 11th that the EU begun a more intense and visible phase in the promotion of ICD, also beyond Mediterranean policy.

1.2.2.5 Cultural Diversity

In the document *A new cultural policy agenda for development and mutual understanding.* (UNESCO, 2011: 4) it is mentioned that "cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are 'intimately' linked: neither of these two notions can flourish without the other". Although the terms are closely linked, specific reference to cultural diversity as a concept is made here because of its appearance in several policy documents related to culture on the international level, with the most important of them being the *Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the diversity of cultural expression* (UNESCO, 2005), which defines it as follows:

> 'Cultural diversity' refers to the manifold ways in which the cultures of groups and societies find expression. These expressions are passed on within and among groups and societies. Cultural diversity is made manifest not only through the varied ways in which the cultural heritage of humanity is expressed, augmented and transmitted through the variety of cultural expressions, but also through diverse modes of artistic creation, production, dissemination, distribution and enjoyment, whatever the means and technologies used (UNESCO, 2015: 13).

Cultural diversity is being expressed in the co-existence and exchange of culturally different practices and in the provision and consumption of cultural different services and products (Council of Europe, 2000). Again this term has been used as a buzzword in international cultural policy documents and has acquired an important position in the debate around international cultural cooperation since it is closely linked to the contact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Why does diversity and difference actually matter? Hall (1997: 234-238) explains that it matters because difference and diversity are essential to meaning and form binary oppositions that have the great value of capturing the diversity of the world within their extremes. They also establish meaning through dialogue, which is modified by interaction and interplay. Finally, because the making of difference is the basis of the symbolic order we call culture within a classificatory system.

Cultural diversity stands also for overcoming stereotypes promoting an attitude of respect where even if generalisations may be accurate about certain groups, they're never going to be wholly true of individuals (Storti, 1994: 7-8). This brings to the surface the issue of cultural identity. Mathews (2000) notes that the choices each of us make in relation to our cultural identity are made not for ourselves but for performance and in negotiation with others: we more or less "chose ourselves within the cultural supermarket with an eye to our social world" (Mathews, 2000: 22). Holland et al (1998: 51) even talk about "figured worlds" that define the choice of identity one makes "in the flow of activity within specific social situations- from the cultural resources at hand" and give shape to the coproduction of activities, discourses, performances and artefacts" (Holland et al, 1998: 4-5). The issue of identity therefore comes again into the picture.

The coexistence in peace and in an atmosphere that respects and praises cultural diversity has been a priority in policy-making during the last decades in Europe. In the name of cultural diversity, policies promoting the concept of multiculturalism were promoted- which have been also heavily questioned. Kymlicka (2007) gave an insight to the 'European experiment' in an attempt to question the success of the multicultural paradigm. He explained that European institutions have engaged approaches to help reshape state- minority relations but these efforts have had "confusing, almost schizophrenic results" (2007: 246). He goes on explaining that international organisations have gone under the same path, adopting many of the basic strategies applied by European organisations, with similar instabilities in framing their discourses and norms which resulted in inhibiting their effective diffusion and implementation (2007: 295). This goes in line with the provoking statement that Lentin and Titley (2011:11) make in their book, *The crisis of multiculturalism*, where they argue that:

> Multiculturalism, whatever it was, has failed. Multiculturalism, wherever it was, has imploded. Multiculturalism, whenever it was, has gifted us with the pathologies that gird our new certainties.

Despite this observation, we should acknowledge that cultural diversity has been brought to the forefront even more recently in the context of the current large displacement of migration populations that has affected the entire Europe. This fact has resulted in accentuating the challenge that modern societies face: "not how to eliminate strangers, but how to live in their constant company- that is, under the condition of cognitive paucity, indetermination and uncertainty" (Bauman, 1993: 159). This changing environment of enhanced experiences of *strangehood* has undoubtedly effects in various

spheres of social life and can lead, in Dessewffy's words (1998: 360), "to either exceptional creativity or apathetic passivity". The arts and culture sphere usually go for the first choice. Henze (2016: 20) for example, observes that in Germany this means that from one side there is currently a huge momentum for arts and cultural institutions to gain more diverse audiences which leads them to engage in more "participatory projects" and from the other side it brings "the creative potential of a hybrid society to the forefront".

1.3 Actors of international cultural cooperation

In the previous section, concepts related to international cultural cooperation have been discussed in an effort to understand the characteristics of international cultural cooperation. In this section, the governance system of international cultural cooperation will be touched upon. As already mentioned, today international cultural cooperation forms a complex system of governance, which involves actors on the international, national, regional, and local levels as well as non-governmental civil society actors and independent artists and cultural operators and may occur at bilateral or multilateral levels. The conceptual stretching of culture to encompass values, beliefs, norms besides a purely artistic interpretation that has been explained above (1.2.1), together with the intensified ways of communicating and interacting enforced by globalisation, have given the possibility to various actors to engage in international cultural cooperation. As Pehn, 1999: 8) notes, "the field of cultural co-operation has become multi-dimensional to such an extent that the old structures no longer reflect the needs of the new players".

Traditionally, as already explained in (1.2.2.1), nation-states have been the primary players in international cultural cooperation. Nations are understood as a kind of cultural metanarrative or ideological framework within which a group of people experiences a sense of unit (Anderson, 2003). Although they have gradually evolved to "just a node (however important)" of the network society (Castells, 2009: 19), national governments and states are still considered as the first actor in international cultural cooperation (Hansen et al, 2004). Most countries traditionally have provided an infrastructure for international cultural cooperation through their embassies and consulates abroad, or through their Foreign Ministries and foreign cultural institutes with the aim to extend their cultural influence where foreign cultural products were difficult to access (Paschalidis, 2009). Although societies today are becoming less homogeneous and more hybrid and diverse and contemporary citizens are constantly surrounded by mixed

identities that can be both national and international (Miller & Yúdice, 2002), national policies for international cultural cooperation still heavily depend on the promotion abroad of the image of a nation's "imagined community" (Anderson, 2003). This work, as also explained in (1.2.2.1) is closely related to the notion of cultural diplomacy, as "a governmental practice that operates in the name of a clearly defined ethos of national or local representation, in a space where nationalism and internationalism merge" (Ang et al, 2015: 367).

Beyond its political and highly institutionalised nature on the national level, actors in international cultural cooperation include international and intergovernmental agencies who set frameworks of cooperation that are ratified by treaties, agreements, declarations or conventions (Steinkamp, 2013: 20). International organisations such as the UN, especially through UNESCO, as well as the European Union and the Council of Europe have been among the primary institutions setting the framework for international cultural cooperation through a number of policy documents endorsed by their member states.

In the same time, more and more non-state actors are gaining ground in international cultural cooperation. For example, cultural networks are evolving into decisive actors in international cultural cooperation on a transnational level. Being an "infrastructure that has supported the cultural sector in international cultural cooperation in the last three decades" (Laaksonen, 2016: 5), cultural networks offer the possibility for long-term cooperation, share a number of common goals and also provide opportunities for physical interaction and contact among their members, contributing to the creation of international communities of practice. Especially in the European arena, cultural networks, with their "non-hierarchical, dynamic, unpredictable, somehow anarchic and democratic nature", have contributed to an exceptional space of bottom-up cultural cooperation (De Vlieg, 2016). Moreover, through enforced dynamics of international cultural cooperation, especially within European grounds, cultural networks have been realising and assuming their role understanding its unique value and their strong advocacy potential. As van Paaschen (2011: 160) notes, international cultural networks "undertake actions that have a (potential) impact in society by bringing people into an action-oriented framework. These actions could be directed to governments, the private sector or to the public at large". A statement signed by a number of European cultural networks in March 2016 (Culture networks, 2016) under the title *The value of*

international cultural networks emphasises the importance, relevance and strength of cultural networks to empower people through the arts and cultural heritage:

> As networks we build trust and nurture relationships across national borders that support people to overcome local as well as global difficulties and to exchange their ideas, knowledge and expertise. Our 'raison d'être' is to inspire, to be inclusive, to test new ideas and to pilot new projects, to help the culture sector to take risks and meet new challenges.

Summing up, in the multi-level governance of international cultural cooperation, we have identified that nations, international organisations and cultural networks have been and still are the main actors in this field of play. Furthermore, territorial diplomacy and the increasing role that cities play in the international arena have without doubt given a platform to local governments as well to become players of international cultural cooperation (see more on the territorial diplomacy of cities in Cimetta Fund, 2012c). Having said this, it should not be neglected that international cultural cooperation is also informed by the informal cultural communities of practice of artists and cultural managers, as well as of cultural organisations and institutions that without any 'official' support engage in international cultural cooperation. Mandel (2016b: 8) describes this as follows:

> The arts world is getting more and more international as people in general have become much more mobile: cultural workers study abroad, do internships in cultural institutions in other countries, take part in international projects, travel easily. In addition, many cultural workers are forced to leave their home countries and live abroad.

This observation brings a dimension to the discussion around international cultural cooperation that has not been touched upon so far: the challenge of managing it. Mandel claims that inter-cultural change management is becoming one of the new emerging roles for cultural managers, translated as a capacity to "find new ways of communicating and programming, and to involve new players with different cultural backgrounds in the institutions, bringing together different cultural perspectives and interests" (Mandel, 2016b: 9). Bridging the gap between 'spaces- in- between' has evolved into an everyday practice- between need and obligation- of artists and cultural operators both internationally, as well as in their own local or national contexts.

In this multi-layered network of actors, a "variety of representational practices" (Singh, 2011: 3) are being deployed by the different actors in their attempt "to dominate or, at times, to profit their constituencies". Wiesand et al (2005: 15), however, state that if we try to compare goals and objectives from the point of view of the various actors involved

in cultural co-operation, we find that the term has different meanings for each and hence there is no common approach to 'international cultural co-operation'. They also give three examples to clarify this statement. More precisely they state that for the Council of Europe cultural co-operation has encompassed the intergovernmental exchange of information and experience and the sharing of good policy practice and it has always been guided by the principles of creativity, participation, diversity and cultural democracy. On the other hand, national governments, as well as the EU and related agencies have developed multilateral and bilateral strategies under this title to serve mainly national or European policy objectives or economic interests. Finally, they identify as a unique category the ambitions and practices of trans-national networks of individuals, cities and regions or institutions which "in their respective spheres and dedicated mostly to their constituencies, engage in more action-oriented projects or information tools" (Wiesand et al, 2005: 15).

Before closing this section, where an attempt to sketch the actors involved in international cultural cooperation has been sought, another line of analysis needs to be introduced that has some relevance here - especially because the focus of the empirical research that follows in Part III is focused on the EuroArab geography of cultural cooperation. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1999) and Wallerstein (2000) point out to an imbalance in international cultural cooperation and to the existence of domination effects. This imbalance contradicts the main characteristic of cooperation as defined at the beginning of the chapter: 'equality'. This observation goes in line with Said's (1995) claims that the Western paradigm "of attitude and referencing" has been widely used to produce knowledge, without accepting non-western actors as equal partners in cultural production and cooperation. This is the reason why in certain cases this power imbalance produces suspicion around the real motivations and impacts of international cultural cooperation. As we will see in the empirical part of the research that focuses on the EuroArab binary, often when international cultural cooperation comes in the form of funding, traditional balance constellations prevail and create an unequal environment for genuine cultural relations to flourish. This aspect is to be kept in mind when exploring the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and how power dynamics influence the process.

This imbalance has another reading as well. Smiers (2003: 107) for example, observes that "while artists from Westerns countries who seek inspiration elsewhere have the choice of whether or not do so, have the relative luxury of being able to travel when and

where they like and can return whenever they want to their own country", this is beyond dreams for those who come from less 'privileged' backgrounds. Another consequence of this imbalance is well described by Hannerz (1990: 242):

> The unequal relations between rich and poor countries expresses itself also in the fact that many artists from the Third World spend most of their time in Western countries, and consequently contribute little to the development of artistic life in their country or region of origin. Their work also becomes more influenced by what they experience in the West rather than by the social and cultural atmosphere of their home surroundings. For the evolution of artistic creativity in the local context, this produces deficiency. Admittedly, there have always been and still are always cultural influences going in many directions, but in this case, these artists are more or less forced to leave their country, due to unfavourable circumstances.

This is even more relevant today in the context of forced migration. As it will be shown in the chapter (4) many efforts from the international community try to respond to this situation by providing more capacity building and more opportunities to the arts and cultural sector in the Arab region to develop and become more resilient and sustainable. And in their aims and objectives it is always underlined that the local community should benefit from this support. However, in many cases international cultural cooperation remains a privileged field of action for entities that are capable- in financial and political terms- to engage in it and to initiate at. As we will see in the empirical research, the level of maturity of the cultural sector in each reality- in terms of policies, funding possibilities and social roles- is determinant in guaranteeing a balanced international cultural cooperation, which is not always the case where power relations prevail.

1.4 Forms of international cultural cooperation

So far we have tried to understand what are the characteristics of international cultural cooperation, and who are the main actors involved in it. In this section, the reflection focuses on examining the forms that international cultural cooperation takes.

By taking inspiration of Staines' (2004) four categories of international artistic mobility programmes, Table 1.2 reflects four different approaches to international cultural cooperation and actors/ actions that enable them. This categorisation reflects how different concepts discussed in (1.2) are taken into consideration in each approach.

In his book *Mobility of imagination – a companion guide to international cultural cooperation*, Klaic (2007) describes different forms that international cultural cooperation takes. Already then he had observed that some of them "were introduced a long time ago and have become quite anachronistic today in a much altered political and

cultural circumstances in Europe" and he explained that "they have been superseded by more advanced, sophisticated models that rely on the mutual interest of involved parties rather than any kind of outside prompting and matchmaking" (Klaic, 2007: 51).

Table 1.2 Approaches to international cultural cooperation

Arts development	Programmes whose primary objective is the artistic development of an artist and their work. Might involve grants for travel and residencies, international studio programs, etc
Cultural diplomacy	Refers to the funding of national cultural institutes, which promote a country, its language and culture abroad. Includes bilateral and multilateral agreements. Extensive work by embassies and diplomatic missions targeted to specific countries motivated by political or historical reasons.
Export development	Concerned with the sale of products. Informed by the growth of the economic value of cultural industries supported by foreign trade development.
Culture and development	Aiming to assist sustainable development through creative practices. Draws on international aid and development funding for activities.

Source: Developed by researcher based on Staines (2004).

The different forms of international cultural cooperation as identified by Klaic (2007) are reflected in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Forms of international cultural cooperation

Type	Characteristics	Examples
Exchanges	- Initially (especially since WWII) government orchestrated in the framework of bilateral agreements; - Since the 70s cultural organisations initiate them on their own; - Primary goal to make a political gesture and enhance national prestige abroad. - Simplicity of arrangement, symmetry and built-in reciprocity.	- A museum lends an exhibition to another museum; - A theater company performs in a foreign city and receives the host company at a later stage.
	- Government takes role of financier rather than initiator or arranger;	- Communication strategies,

Stimulation of international curiosity	- International communication strategies of artists, artistic collectives, cultural organisations; - Sometimes carried out by specialised cultural organizations that play a role in the information, documentation and professional development of an artistic discipline and its international profiling, usually with some government support or by commercially operating agents; - Cultural attachés in national cultural centres abroad have the same role.	multilingual websites and newsletters; - Active participation in networks; - Invitations extended to foreign critics, curators programmers to attend events; - Show-cases for professional visitors.
Presenters/ programmers	- Strong and competent presenter committed to present foreign work and with good knowledge of local circumstances; - In commercial culture there is split cost between visiting and host party.	- Exhibiting foreign work in venues, concert halls, galleries or a museum.
Tours	- Guest appearances or exhibitions abroad extended to tours encompassing several stops in one or more foreign countries.	- Traveling exhibition. - A theater company touring in different countries.
Festivals	- Traditionally the way to present foreign work; - Have acquired a developmental rather than just a programing role; - Implicate international participants into local issues and disputes; - Gain political support for they contribute to place making, international prestige, tourism, etc.	- Festivals lasting from a weekend to whole seasons all over the world in cities of different sizes; - Multiplication of various festival formulae.
Programs with national labels	- National promotion by initiating, organizing and financing programs of their own culture abroad; - National labelling succumbed to the effects of globalisation.	- Highlighting a specific country in an International Book Fair; - Days of national music; - Festivals of specific nation's films, exhibitions of artists.
Professional reflection, debate, training and research	- Intensive interaction between or among international professional partners; - Not immediate public benefit; - Broadening of referential frameworks and confrontational opinions; - Know-how transfer; - Lead to joint initiatives and deeper cooperative engagements; - Trainings that compensate or add to academic studies in cultural management.	- Trainings, master classes and seminars in festivals, biennales and conferences; - Trainings such as the European Diploma in Cultural Project Management.

Residencies	- A protracted form of training; - More emphasis on research and development than on direct know-how transfer; - Often cities–run to nourish their own artistic climate.	- Artistic residencies for research and production.
Creating together	- Advanced forms of residence offering opportunities to develop new work; - International in the composition of participants; - Often hosted by an artistic organisation for a long period of time and offering workshops and educational programmes; - R&D with more public engagement.	- Invitations from host organisations to companies and artists to stay in-house for a certain period of time and produce work. - Artistic residencies accommodating international teams of artists and creatives.
Co-productions	- Most complex form of international cultural cooperation. - Two or more organisations or groups engage in cooperation and create new work. - Legal, linguistic, cultural, institutional and other difference may come into play.	- Festivals that invest on arrangement with other festivals and venues to make a rare cooperation of individual artists and team possible, despite mutual geographic and cultural distance or to offer extraordinary production opportunities at their disposal.

Source: Developed by researcher based on Klaic (2007).

Although the categories identified are not exhaustive, Klaic's work contributes to demarcating the field of action of international cultural cooperation. What I consider missing from the categories identified by Klaic are the two following elements:

- From one side, international cultural networks besides being an actor in international cultural cooperation they are also genuine forms of international cultural cooperation. As explained by Steinkamp (2013: 19), for a network, working internationally means "working simultaneously in different languages, time zones as well as establishing working relationships with people they might never have met in person". Furthermore, as mentioned above, networks have acquired a certain level of influence on the international level and a strong advocacy component.

- Secondly, what is missing from this categorisation is the market-oriented aspect of international cultural cooperation related mostly to export and cultural industries. Globalisation has enhanced the environment for interconnected markets and creative

activities that although at first they appear to be local in dimension, they are becoming more and more part of trans-local and transcultural chains of production. International cultural cooperation thus occurs in the field of commerce, where the intrusion of cultural policies remains largely "implicit"- in Ahearne's (2009) interpretation of the word, meaning "seldom unfolded and discussed *qua* cultural policies within the public sphere" (2009: 144, emphasis of the author).

What needs to be underlined at this point is that the term 'international cultural cooperation' mainly refers to the political dimension of cooperation, leaving outside the market-driven international cooperation that occurs for the promotion of cultural goods and products and has explicit and primarily monetary benefits. This is important to highlight here since the focus of the research is mainly on this 'political' aspect, although often reference to the world of cultural industries and arts markets is made as well. The ever-growing opportunities for international expansion of cultural industries can be considered as international cultural cooperation, however they are more closely associated to the concept of international entrepreneurship in the arts (Varbanova, 2016) that has acquired an increasing attention in the arena of international cultural management. This research does not touch upon this aspect of international cultural cooperation, however this does not mean though that it should not acknowledge its existence.

1.5 A European narrative of cultural cooperation[11]

In the previous sections of this chapter an attempt to understand the concept of international cultural cooperation and how it is formed and exercised has been sought. The focus of this section is on interpreting the concept of international cultural cooperation through the EU lenses. Why is it necessary to focus on the European approach to international cultural cooperation? Mainly because the European Union has provided a new paradigm of cooperation that has been summarised in the wording 'unity in diversity' among its member states. This (political) statement reflects that Europeans are culturally diverse, but in the same time they work together towards a unity. In the same time, it is the moment when the EU is putting an explicit focus on culture in its EU external policy. Concepts and terms touched upon in the previous section will be unfolded here through their European 'reading'.

[11] Parts of section 1.5 have been published in chapter in the Access to Culture Platform on cultural citizenship (Magkou, 2012b).

1.5.1 Towards an EU international cultural cooperation approach

The 'unity in diversity' paradigm of the EU has proposed that although the cultural identity and diversity of member states is recognised, respected and highlighted, there are at the same time some common European values that are to be reinforced and encompassed by European citizens. Diversity has been encouraged within the European framework since it "promotes an approach where no single content can try to impose itself as hegemonic" (Sassatelli, 2009: 198). Within the framework of this diversity, identities become more and more blurred and a sense of belonging to (multiple) citizenships, has been spelled out that allows us to talk about a 'parallel' European citizenship. Although there are many differences among EU citizens, there are some unifying elements as well. Europeans can share ideas, norms and values that all together feed into a culture in which they can identify themselves and see each other as complementary partners. Therefore, European citizenship, conceived as an identity in itself, cannot be only a concrete identity rooted in cultural traditions but becomes rather an expression of a multi- identification. As Delanty (2000: 116) puts it, "one can simultaneously be a European and member of a community or nation".

Enhanced cultural cooperation between member states, especially put in place through support for the mobility of artists and cultural operators and funding mechanisms for cross-border projects, has been at the heart of EU cultural policies. It has been motivated from one side by the added European value of such cooperation and the economic, artistic and social impact that it implies, but in parallel by a will to enhance the formation of a European cultural citizenship. The *Report of Cultural Cooperation in Europe* (Interarts/ EFAH, 2003) shed for the first time some light in the field and dealt with the 'official' cultural cooperation activities of governments and their agencies in Europe (EU and European Economic Area), dealing with issues that have a specific relevance when confronting the needs of European integration, the fostering of sensitive and responsible citizenship and the put in place of human and cultural rights. Since then, a number of studies and reports have been published touching on topics related to international cultural cooperation, especially on mobility (ECOTEC, 2009; ENCATC, 2010; ERICarts, 2008b) or intercultural dialogue (ERICarts, 2008a; OMC Working Group, 2014) among others.

Cultural cooperation across EU borders from a European level has always looked for an 'added European value', and this value can be translated as the understanding and the

experience of a common cultural identity that would bring a common cultural citizenship. To what extent though, Europeans actually identify with this concept? The package of rights that derive from EU citizenship - that are supplementary to the citizenship of a member state and contribute to the development of a multi-level citizenship that will determine the progress of the EU as a political project- are considered as not enough to transmit to European citizens the sense of belonging and mutual recognition that forms part of their European citizenship. While "identities are overlapping, negotiable and contested" (Delanty, 2000: 59), it is to the affective part of the citizenship that the focus is being shifted in order to understand what really holds together the European Union in a more encompassing and comprehensive way. Therefore, "making sense of the broad and growing debate on European cultural identity has [...] become increasingly central" (van Hamersveld, 2009: 20). The concept of mobility became soon an important pillar of this discussion.

1.5.2 A European space of cultural mobility and cooperation

Mobility -understood in the EU context as free movement of people- is one of the principal rights of European citizens. Free movement of people was introduced already in the Foundation of the European Economic Community in 1957, however at that moment it was regarded as a right linked to a person's status as a worker. This was actually part of a broader project of realising a common market with free movement of capital, goods and services. By introducing the concept of European citizenship in the Treaty of Maastricht of 1992, the understanding of free movement of people was detached from an economic activity: mobility became a fundamental and personal right of every Union citizen to move and reside freely within the EU borders. The Treaty of Amsterdam, which came into force in 1999 and the Lisbon Treaty, which came into force in 2009, have reaffirmed the freedom of movement as a right of every EU citizen to live and work in another EU country.

In EU terms, mobility, both as a paradigm as well as a practice, nurtures the concept of a European emerging transnational citizenship, which cannot be based on the conventional nation- state model. Today, as we are living in a more and more globalised world, the understanding of citizenship (understood as belonging) with territorial definitions of community does not necessarily reflect the complex geographies of actual social, political and cultural relations and the mobilities that accompany these processes. Inside the EU, the freedom of mobility implies a 'multi-level citizenship' reflecting individuals' simultaneous membership in different communities at a variety of spatial levels, ranging

from local to regional and from national to European (and even global), as well as to non-territorial social groups that are defined by religious beliefs, sexual orientation, ethnic background, etc.

As mentioned in the European report of the research project *Artists moving and learning* (ENCATC, 2010) "although the profile of artists' mobilities may very much resemble that of other mobile people, what they do with mobilities differs". The impact of their mobility has been identified as being strong not only for them but also with the communities they interact with. This explains why artists and cultural operators have been identified as having a crucial role to play in the construction of a European cultural citizenship, as they operate as a representational system and can be one of the mediums "through which thoughts, ideas and feelings are represented in a culture" (Hall, 1997: 4). Their social value in the process of a European cultural citizenship under construction has unarguably been linked to their possibilities to move, to cooperate with colleagues from other European countries and to expose their work to different European audiences. This has a double meaning and a double value: from one hand mobility allows artists to create their own understanding of a European cultural citizenship, to actually feel it and experience it and to relate it to their artistic practice and from the other hand, and as a natural consequence, it allows them to express it, to share it, to offer it to other European citizens as an opportunity that stimulates reflection and debate and feeds into the construction of a wider European cultural citizenship.

As explained above, in the European context, we understand artists and cultural operators as creators and carriers of narratives of European cultural identity and by consequence, citizenship. Mobility within the EU has helped artists and cultural professionals to understand and formulate a translational way of being and belonging and to experience and understand a European cultural citizenship constructed upon common values and expressions, while contributing to its formation. Now, if indeed a European cultural identity and citizenship has been formed, it should be shared with the rest of the world. In this understanding, artists and cultural operators, as European active citizens and as mobile subjects, are called though international cultural cooperation with third regions to share their European cultural citizenship with other cultures. And here it makes sense to refer to the notion of a cosmopolitan cultural citizenship, for which the recognition of difference is where the "egoism of cosmopolitan interest" (Beck & Grande, 2007: 28) lies, since there is a unique opportunity to explore one's own identity through the (peaceful) confrontation with the other. Therefore, even if we consider that the

formation of a European cultural citizenship is still under process, the encounter with the 'Other', with what is not European, can contribute to the delimitation, to the confirmation of what actually is European cultural citizenship. International cultural cooperation with other regions of the world can be a first step towards speaking out loud of a cultural component of European citizenship and sharing its richness and variety with a range of different artists, cultural operators and audiences around the world.

The above confirms that part of the 'homework' has been accomplished. Policies have been adopted and research has been undertaken to understand the different realities, obstacles and challenges, while support mechanisms have been put into place in order to enhance the mobility and cultural cooperation inside the EU. Is there though a place for culture in EU external relations?

1.6 A European discourse for culture in a globalising world

Before answering the above raised question, a reference will be made to the notion of cosmopolitanism and how it is related to European citizenship formation. Key contemporary thinkers Beck and Grande (2007) have introduced the idea of a "cosmopolitan Europe" arguing that it is "an ambiguous concept". "If the emphasis is on Europe, then the title refers to *internally oriented* cosmopolitanism, to the Europe of difference", they explain. This relates to the 'unity in diversity' concept and to cosmopolitan attitudes of Europeans to see, treat and live with each other in the internal geographies of the European Union. "If one emphasizes the adjective 'cosmopolitan', by contrast, then the concept points simultaneously *outwards*" and it forces us to engage in a self- reflection about "what global contribution the project of cosmopolitan Europe could make to the realization of a regime of multiple cosmopolitanisms" (Beck & Grande, 2007: 26, emphasis of the authors).

Cosmopolitanism essentially means recognition of the Otherness, both internally as well as externally. The transnational aspect that a European cultural citizenship implies goes in hand with what Levitt (2010: 40) calls "a gaze that begins with a world without borders, empirically examines the boundaries that emerge and explores their relationship to unbounded arenas and processes". Levitt continues by saying that "if individuals engage in social relations and practices that cross borders as a regular feature of everyday life, then they exhibit a transnational way of being; when people explicitly recognise this and act upon the transnational element of who they are, then they also express a transnational way of belonging" (Levitt, 2010: 41- 42). Although these two

options do not necessarily always go hand in hand, they demonstrate that cultural cooperation is central in the process of Europeanization. And that it is through the reinforcing dynamics of internal (inside the EU) and external (outside the EU) geographies of cultural cooperation that meaning, belonging and constructing a European cultural citizenship lie.

Therefore, cosmopolitanism as a concept gives a possibility to explore the processes of 'formation' and 'confirmation' of a European cultural citizenship in a globalising world. Delanty (1997: 297) has argued that "Europeaness is constructed in opposition with the non- European", which means that we always need the 'Other' to contrast and to confirm our own identity. Various authors have identified the East as Europe's "Other". Neuman (1988) for example, claims that the various identities subsumed under the category of the East have been crucial for European identity formation since Europe began to gain political significance. He further explains that the East has been cut loose from its geographical point of reference and has become a generalised social marker in European identity formation:

> The East: is indeed Europe's other, and it is continuously being recycled in order to present European identities [...]. The use of 'the East' as the other is a general practice in European identity formation (Neumann, 1998: 207).

Under this understanding, the difference between European and non- European traditions, perspectives and systems does not have to be viewed in a negative light, but rather as an opportunity to instigate exchange and better understanding of the 'Self' and of the 'Other' as complementary and not as opposite elements. This way, the concept of cosmopolitanism provides a framework for the construction of European cultural citizenship because it recognises the continuous flows and encounters of people as pivotal to the construction of meaning and belonging. Mobility in the internal geographies of the EU allows European citizens to come closer together and realize their common ownership of a European cultural citizenship and in the same time, mobility beyond EU borders allows an encounter with the world from a viewpoint of openness and interaction that feeds back to the question of European identity and citizenship while contrasting it with what is not European. As Giddens (1991: 5) says, "cosmopolitans welcome and embrace cultural complexity". And this applies both in internal geographies as well as in external geographies.

How is the above reflected in the policy level and what is its relation to this research? The exploration of the European citizenship formation through the concept of cosmopolitanism and the exploration of the Other serves as a basis for understanding how culture has been introduced in the EU external relations.

While EU cultural policy until recently has been focusing mainly on cultural cooperation among member- states, during the last few years, European cultural policy has embraced another component: the role that culture can play in EU external relations. Culture therefore is understood not only as a bridging tool inside the EU, but also as a way of sharing values with the global community. Although, in EU terms, culture remains primarily a responsibility of member- states and action at EU level is to be undertaken in full respect of the principle of subsidiarity, the discussion of including a cultural component to EU external relations has opened a window for action on a European level. Until recently, the main point of reflection in the discussion around a policy- led cultural dimension to EU external policies had been on how much political will there was among the EU member states to see such a policy in place, in what ways would it enhance the EU's role in the world and if the preconditions exist for the introduction of a coherent cultural component to the external policies of the EU (Dodd et al, 2006; Fischer, 2007). Several initiatives, however, during the last years indicate that there is a clear shift in this.

The above realisation found its translation in various policy documents. It is important as a first step to refer to the *Communication on a European agenda for culture in a globalising world* (2007), in which the European Commission highlighted the important links between creativity and culture and the need to promote cross- fertilisation between industrial sectors beyond EU borders. The Agenda placed a special focus on cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue and the removal of obstacles, while the promotion of the transnational mobility of artists and cultural professionals and artworks were defined as a policy aim within the larger objective of increasing cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. Therefore, the inclusion of culture in EU external affairs was included as one of the three axes of work in the above-mentioned Communication and established culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations. This document reflects the political will to convey internationally a message of a unifying Europe as 'a cultural project in progress' and highlights that this project is based on two unique European values: intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity, two concepts that were tackled in (1.2.2.4) and (1.2.2.5) respectively.

A positive framework created since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and the establishment of the External Action Service allowed margins for more coordinated work in the field of external relations in general and in the field of culture in particular. The institutional obstacles in setting up the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the priority given to the financial and economic crisis during the last few years (Wagner, 2011) made this a relatively slow process. However already the *Work Plan of the European Council (2011-2014)* reflected the intention to place culture in EU external relations by identifying *Culture and External Relations* as a priority area and by committing member states into developing a strategic approach to culture in external relations and seek enhancing cooperation in the field. The fact that the EU articulated common foreign policy objectives was a step towards a more effective 'international actorness' (Smith, 2008: 3). However, the process of choosing foreign policy objectives and then devising policies to achieve them is, as might be expected in such a complex system, has not been a straightforward road (Smith, 2008: 9).

It should be acknowledged at this point that the inclusion of culture in external relations is not something totally new. It has been 'hidden' in EU external policies related to foreign affairs, security, development support and other relations with countries outside the Union. This has been an evolving context, to which the Barcelona Process (1995) and the later EuroMediterranean Partnership (2008) or the Cotonou Agreement for EU- ACP countries (2000) had provided the framework for establishing cultural relations from a European level with other parts of the world. Moreover, the adoption of the 2008 as the *European Year of Intercultural Dialogue* placed the theme of the dialogue between civilizations once again at the surface, both as a topic to be handled inside EU geographies, as well as beyond them. In the same direction, the *Council conclusions on the promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue* (2008) called for strengthening the framework of mobility of European artists and cultural professionals outside the Union and the Culture Programme incorporated a line for cooperation with other countries outside the EU. Furthermore, the EU Neighborhood Policy (ENP) has given instruments for the establishment of relationships between artists and cultural operators, especially in the Mediterranean, the East Europe and future accession countries. Finally, we should not forget that the Anna Lindh Foundation for Intercultural Dialogue in the Mediterranean (ALF) and the Asia- Europe Foundation (ASEF) have placed people- to- people exchanges, including that of artists and cultural professionals, at the heart of their action plans and work program.

The firm intention though to actually place a cultural component in EU external relations was reflected in the fact that in May 2011, the European Parliament adopted a *Resolution on the cultural dimensions in EU's external actions*. Following this, the European Commission published a tender for a *Preparatory Action on Culture in external relations* asking for support in order to formulate recommendations for a strategy on culture in EU external relations, aiming to support the on- going policy reflection and development on strengthening the role of culture in external relations and nurture future work in this area. This highlighted the commitment for policy development and supporting actions in a field that until that time was mainly reflected as a 'wishful thought' in policy documents. The results of the Preparatory Action informed the report *Engaging the world: towards global cultural citizenship* (Isar et al, 2014), where eight key messages for Culture in EU External Relations were identified which are reflected in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4: Eight Key messages of the Preparatory Action for Culture in EU External Relations

(1) Cultural relations have a huge potential for enhancing European influence and attraction – 'soft power'- in the rest of the world as well as for enhancing awareness of other cultures and the capacity to learn from them in Europe.
(2) There is great demand, in Europe as well as elsewhere, for more and better European cultural relations with the rest of the world that can also deliver greater prosperity and human development for all.
(3) But the EU has no cultural relations strategy. Any future strategy, however, must recognize that people in the rest of the world are not entirely happy with the way Europe currently does the job. They want us to engage in a new way, sharing and listening together, rather than simply projecting our individual national cultures.
(4) Any future strategy also has to respond better to the cultural interests and practices of young people.
(5) EU institutions, national cultural relations agencies and cultural civil society need to work together to build a 'joined up' international cultural relations strategy based on the values of reciprocity, mutuality and shared responsibility in a spirit of global cultural citizenship.
(6) Such a strategy requires political will and commitment. It also has to be adequately funded under the EU's budget and implemented mainly by cultural professionals.
(7) A series of prototypes and pilot-projects should be launched forthwith in order to inform and kick-start the strategy. The projects selected should also trigger a process of transformative change in the way Europe's international cultural relations are conceived and carried out.
(8) The programme should establish clear goals, priorities and realistic outcomes and be conceived and designed for the long term.

Source: Developed by researcher based on Isar et al (2014).

The Council's *Work Plan for Culture 2015- 2018* (European Council, 2014) took into consideration these developments and confirmed the Council's commitment to work closely with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission for culture in EU external relations. Interestingly, in March 2015, the Foreign Affairs

(AFET) and the Culture and Education (CULT) Committees of the European Parliament organized a joint hearing on *Cultural Diplomacy*[12]. The Council of Ministers adopted in November 2015 a conclusion on *Culture in EU external relations* with a focus on culture in development cooperation.

Finally, in June 2016 the European Commission published a Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council *Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations* (European Commission, 2016a), where the concern was on how to mainstream culture in EU external relations, which, as Figueroa (2017: 81) notes variously is referred to as "'international cultural relations', 'cultural relations' and 'cultural diplomacy'- none of which are defined". Nonetheless, the strategy introduced a new policy agenda and demonstrates new leadership from the EU and political commitment towards this direction. Table 1.5 summarises the guiding principles for EU action identified:

Table 1.5: Guiding principles for EU action in international cultural relations

(a) Promote cultural diversity and respect for human rights;
(b) Foster mutual respect and inter-cultural dialogue;
(c) Ensure respect for complementarity and subsidiarity;
(d) Encourage a cross- cutting approach to culture;
(e) Promote culture through existing frameworks for cooperation.

Source: Developed by researcher based on European Commission (2016a)

Further to this, in June 2016, the European Council adopted the *EU Global Strategy* (2016) which sketches the direction for EU foreign policy, while culture is mentioned extensively which proves that the priority that is given in this topic.

Finally, several civil society movements around Europe have advocated for more culture in the EU external relations. Among them, *More Europe* is a cultural civic initiative aiming to shape external cultural relations from a bottom- up approach and for this it calls on Member States, civil society and EU institutions to work together in order to join up their vision, pool resources, and coordinate their activities. A yearlong campaign was put into place in 2012 to support this aim and since then *More Europe* has followed the developments for placing culture at the heart of EU relations and has brought the voice of

[12] This demonstrates that the same 'ambiguity' and complementarity that is observed on the national level as well regarding under which body international cultural cooperation depend from (either under the competencies of Culture or of Foreign Affairs) is also reflected on the European level.

the practitioners in the field to it. Seen as a response to the above-mentioned documents, the *More Europe* platform published in February 2017 an advocacy paper (More Europe, 2017) as an attempt to clarify the notions of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations, defining cultural relations as an element that underpins international relations[13].

1.7 European actors in international cultural cooperation

Having made reference to foreign national institutes as a means of international cultural cooperation, a reference should be made to an actor that in the European arena of international cultural cooperation is increasingly acquiring and interesting and significant role in international cultural cooperation: EUNIC. Although its existence still "remains almost unknown to the notion of Europe as a 'civilian power' (Wagner, 2013: 191), EUNIC brings together national institutes of culture and national bodies engaged in cultural and related activities beyond their national borders. By pooling together the resources and expertise of its members and carrying out joint work through the clusters in different cities around the world, EUNIC aims to is evolve into a partner per excellence of the EU and its stakeholders in defining and implementing European policy on culture inside and outside the EU.

To this we should add that different actors, foundations and institutions across Europe have since many years realised the importance of people-to-people cooperation both in the framework of the EU and beyond its borders, even before the policy framework being so encouraging in this direction. A special mention should be made to the European Cultural Foundation which through a number of programmes has been engaged in supporting international cultural cooperation beyond the European Union, for example through the STEP beyond grant programme that gives opportunities to artists and cultural operators from the wider Europe and the Mediterranean to meet, enhance their skills and engage in creative collaborations, as well through the Tandem programme that brings together operators from the EU and from Neighbourhood countries. Furthermore, the Cimetta Foundation through its mobility grants since the 90s gives opportunities for mobility and collaboration in the EuroMed/ EuroArab regions and beyond. These are only two examples of organisations and foundations working within the EU level that

[13] The paper foresees that More Europe will publish in the following months a paper looking at how meaningful cultural relations supported by the EU, based on equal-footed partnerships and stakeholders multiplicity, could combat stereotypes, extremism, populism and enhance intercultural dialogue.

have however supported artists and cultural operators in going global already and cooperating with their peers in different zones.

At the EU level, working on placing culture in external relations is confronted with a problem related to the EU's foreign policy-making system, which relies on the member states delivering the incentives and tailoring their national policies towards the region with ENP and EU diplomacy. Therefore, as long as the member states continue pursuing national objectives, often at the expense of EU positions, collective policies will remain unable to produce the intended results. An example of this is regarding the geographical region that will be of our interest in the empirical research. We observe that North Africa and the Middle East have always been areas of great divisions between the member states, not just in relation to the Israel-Palestine conflict, but also in the perceptions of the priorities to be pursued, from contrasting irregular migration to fighting terrorism. This logic of diversity has continued to be evident since the start of the Arab Spring, when "the split over intervention in Libya and in the vote for the recognition of Palestine as a member of UNESCO were manifest episodes" (Balfour, 2012b).

It should be acknowledge though that member states will always deploy, develop and use their own cultural diplomacy/ relations in specific regions according to their priorities, to their interests or to their historical connections with different parts of the world. Therefore, any EU intervention to include a cultural component in EU external relations has to be an intervention that supports and complements any other national, regional, local or private initiatives in the field, given that EU action in the field of culture should respect the principle of subsidiarity.

1.8 Collaborating internationally: between choice and obligation

As explained already, artists and cultural professionals engage in international cultural cooperation for different reasons, for different periods of time and in different forms. From one hand, in the framework of the global networking society (Castells, 1996), artists and cultural operators are increasingly seeking to construct relationships and collaborative partnerships with operators outside Europe "to respond to cultural pressures of economic globalisation and draw the contours of a global citizenship" (Klaic, 2007: 28). Of course EU artists and cultural professionals have already searched for international cultural cooperation opportunities beyond the EU and there are different motives why they would do that: some might be seeking an input to their creative

process and development, others the enhancement of their social abilities of civic competences, or social networking and expansion of their horizons, or even potential markets for their works. Or all of the above in the same time.

The EU has supported already international cultural cooperation beyond EU borders to a certain extent. Either in order to increase its profile in the world and gain in soft power, either to accompany other policies or in order to support creativity and the cultural industries to go global for what this implies to the European economy. We should not neglect that including a cultural component in EU external relations is an answer to where does the EU want to go in the future and how it wants to position itself on the global arena. It is a kind of cultural diplomacy that could accompany Europe in developing its potential as a 'soft power' that promotes a culture of understanding and would help enhance the role of the Union as a 'partner' for third countries and open the avenues for multilateral diplomacy instead of unilateral actions, while voicing authentic unique European values on a global scale. For example, the *Green Paper Unlocking the Potential of Cultural Industries* (European Commission, 2010) underlines that the promotion of the mobility of artists and cultural practitioners "is a way to help our Creative and Cultural Industries make the leap from local to global, and ensure a European presence worldwide" and the *Commissions' Agenda on Culture in a Globalized World* (European Commission, 2007) states that "Europe's cultural richness and diversity is closely linked to its role and influence in the world". This implies that often when culture is used for diplomatic ends, there are political and economic ambitions hidden behind, while artistic creativity and cultural development are seen as collateral benefits.

Recently, an international research and knowledge sharing network entitled *Brokering Intercultural Exchange: Interrogating the role of arts and cultural management* has been initiated following a Conference in Heilbronn in January 2015 aiming "to generate knowledge and case studies in the fields of arts and cultural management that can serve both academics and researchers who explore and engage in relationships and working practices across and between cultures and nations" (Durrer et al, 2016: 28) This is just a small demonstration that the artistic and cultural field is interrogating its role in light of the recent political and financial developments and is putting in question how cultural operators and artists can create more meaningful connections with the (intercultural) communities and artistic scenes in which they (co)operate.

The enhanced but still liminal space of international cultural cooperation that has been approached in this section requires cultural managers and operators to slow down and reflect. De Vereaux and Vertiainenen (2007: 116) have summarised the challenges that the "global cultural manager" faces in the following words:

> The global cultural manager has many challenges that can be divided into three categories: focus, time and money. He or she has to make decisions for artists and people who are sometimes properly seen as consumers and at other times as citizens of communities whose needs are categorically different than those to be satisfied through the consumption of cultural goods. In the production and dissemination of cultural goods, they operate as cultural workers and must supervise the cultural work of others. Managers occupy a position of leadership and authority, which carries with it the power of choice and decision-making. Cultural managers often decide, in effect, what is meaningful and what is deserving of support. While the role carries a great deal of responsibility in any context, in the global context, the effects of these decisions have the potential for wider effect. A simple decision between commercial profits and supporting cultural values (if it ever so simple) has ramifications beyond just the local community.

In this enhanced environment of international cultural cooperation, the role of cultural managers that can mediate across cultures becomes every day fundamental.

1.9 Closing reflections

In the quotation that opens this chapter, Smiers (2003) claims that the quantitative change in the crossovers facilitated by globalisation and the overall political and institutional environment has brought about a qualitative change in the way cultural interactions and -per consequence- international cultural cooperation are performed and experienced nowadays. As we see from what has been exposed above, today we can say that the term 'international cultural cooperation' refers to both public and private and both local, national and international efforts to promote the transmission of knowledge, skills, arts, products and information across geographical borders. We also saw that, as in most areas of cultural policies, international cultural cooperation worldwide has evolved into adapting a broader meaning of culture than its narrow focus on arts. As arts and culture are more and more recognised not only as a means for economic development and political positioning, but also as tools for stability, peace, reconciliation, intercultural dialogue, governance, democratic values, civil society development and societal changes, international cultural cooperation is offering great avenues of intercultural exchange, formation and confirmation, as well as understanding and promotion of a global cultural citizenship. This has influenced the way actors engage in the arena of international cultural cooperation and what aims they seek to achieve and potentially the (qualitative) results that come out of this cooperation.

Within this chapter the interplay of international cultural cooperation with a number of related concepts in an attempt to demarcate the field of play has been examined. As a second step the actors involved and the forms that international cultural cooperation might take were identified. In the second part of this chapter, questions of how international cultural cooperation has developed within the EU discourse have been explored and how it has on one hand contributed to the construction of a European cultural citizenship and on the other hand to the position that Europe wants to play in the world. The choice to focus on the European arena was deliberate for two reasons. From one hand the EU, constitutes a unique model of international governance and puts in question the traditional reading of international cultural cooperation. On the other hand, many European countries' national foreign cultural institutes, foundations, institutions are strongly engaged in international cultural cooperation and with their programmes and activities determine the overall framework of international cultural cooperation. This will be further touched upon in the first part of the empirical research where the focus is on EuroArab cultural cooperation and especially on the European cultural presence in the region.

Focusing on the European narrative of international cultural cooperation, internal EU dynamics have been explored as well as the role of culture in EU external relations. The second aspect reflects that there is a new role for culture both in the EU context and in the EU relations with the world. Europe as a cultural project "must be translated into cultural policies and respective programmatic activities that can cope with the challenges" (Wagner, 2011: 144) that the world faces today. As seen from the recent policy documents (European Commission, 2007, 2016a) and reports (Isar, 2014), today one of EU's challenges is also its position in the world. As affirmed above, international cultural cooperation gives a unique opportunity for accompanying the EU policy in adding a cultural component to EU external relations and for reinforcing the confirmation of a European cultural citizenship: both in the process of the formation of artists' and cultural operators' own cultural identity and citizenship, as well as in speaking out of unique European values to the different audiences and collaborations in which they engage around the globe.

More importantly though, in this chapter one of the pillars of the research's framework of analysis has been sketched. The initial question of this research though still remains: how are international cultural cooperation practices valued and evaluated? Claiming that there is one answer to that would be too daring: it depends on the actors involved, the

geography in question, the particular space and time. Trying to give an answer to this question is also complicated because different answers would work in different settings. As we are experiencing a more and more gloabalised world, a new argumentation for the value of international cultural cooperation might emerge. What is true however, is that any attempt to verbalise the value of international cultural cooperation requires "a certain degree of faith" (Cummings, 2003) which has been constructed upon the following two claims:

- International and transcultural interaction triggers both expected and surprising forms of creative production (explicit outcome);
- International cultural cooperation facilitates intercultural dialogue, international understanding and respect to cultural diversity, opens new avenues of communication and contributes to the development of a peaceful world community (implicit outcome).

The concepts raised in this chapter will be the window through which the arena of EuroArab cultural cooperation in the empirical part (section III) of the research will be examined. But before doing this, it is necessary to examine how the concept of value has been approached in arts and culture and what does the practice of evaluation bring into the discussion. This will be the focus of chapter (2).

Chapter 2:

Value and evaluation in arts and culture

2.1 Presentation of the chapter

2.2 The contemporary *zeitgeist* of evaluation

2.3 Arts and culture in the evaluation society

2.4 In search of value: responses from the policy, research and practice

2.5 Studies and toolkits on the evaluation of arts and culture

2.6 Gaps in the literature and challenges to measuring the value of arts and culture

2.7 Learning from the literature

2.8 Closing Reflections

Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count;
everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted
Albert Einstein

2.1 Presentation of the chapter

One of the hypotheses of this research is that conceptualising, implementing and producing evaluation always involves and produces value. In this second chapter of the research, topics related to the value of arts and culture and cultural evaluation will be explored. The starting point will be a brief review of how evaluation has become an imperative in society and how this has affected the cultural sector. Following this, examples of how policy makers, the academia and practitioners have approached the topic of value of the arts and culture will be presented. Furthermore, the relevant bibliography in the field will be reviewed and gaps and challenges related to it will be identified. Finally, the issue of methods and focus in relation to the evaluation of arts and culture arising from the debates in the topic will be tackled.

This chapter constitutes the second pillar of theoretical analysis of this research. The purposes of this chapter are:

- To set the research subject, which is the evaluation of international cultural cooperation projects, into the wider discussion about value of arts and culture;
- To understand how policy, academia and the cultural sector have responded to these questions;
- To review the literature relating to debates, topics and methodologies in relation to value and evaluation in arts and culture;
- To identify the emerging themes and debates resulting from the existing literature and debates in the field that are useful for the analysis of the research.

2.2 The contemporary *zeitgeist* of evaluation

Dahler-Larsen, author of the book *The Evaluation Society*, claims that we are living in a society that has "what amounts to be an obsession with evaluation" (Dahler- Larsen, 2011: 16). In this *contemporary zeitgeist of evaluation*, the practice of evaluation has gained a sociological role "as a special modern undertaking: pursuing a form of assisted sense-making" (Dahler- Larsen, 2011: 13). In the same line, Pawson et al (1997: xi) note that "nowadays, the task of improvement through understanding has become a

profession" and this should not be considered as a mystery at all as "we live in a knowledge- centred, value adding, information- processing, management-fixated world which has an obsession with decision- making" (Pawson et al, 1997: xi- xii).

Evaluation as a discipline has evolved rapidly in the last four decades. Felbinger and Langbein (2006: 35) explain that evaluation began in the United States in the 1960s and coincided with the war on poverty. Statistical methods and social science research methods were used then to find solutions where government programmes did not work (especially in the field of education and antipoverty) and make suggestions on how they could be improved. Over the years, evaluation has been gaining more and more importance. The increasing political imperative of ascertaining which programmes work before continuing or increasing their funding, has made evaluation critical to funding decisions. As a consequence, throughout the years, a number of evaluation organisations have emerged[14], specialised journals have been created[15] and different organisations have developed evaluation standards[16]. As Scriven (2003: 28) explains:

> In its most complex form, evaluation elevated the simple process of instant or near-instant appraisal to the complex and systematic- and more reliable- investigation of elaborate systems, in this process becoming, of necessity, a complex discipline itself.

The importance that evaluation has gained throughout the years has given room to different models and paradigms to be developed. In the same time, different philosophical and ideological perspectives have influenced the evaluation practice, while different tools and methods have been developed and have resulted in coherent robust approaches of evaluation (Davidson, 2005; Donaldson & Scriven, 2003; Patton, 1990, 1997; Pawson & Tilley, 1997; Scriven, 1991). As noted by Herman et al (1987: 9) "each of these models can be seen as arising from the evaluation requirements and interests of its time and from the application of various research paradigms to the evaluation enterprise".

This setting has led to a reality where any organisation that 'lives in public' has to evaluate its activities, be evaluated by others, or evaluate others. The arts and culture sector could not be an exception. And since conceptualising, implementing and producing

[14] For example The American Evaluation Association, The European Evaluation Association and the more recently established African Evaluation Association.
[15] For example the *Evaluation Review*, the *American Journal of Evaluation* and the *New Directions in Program evaluation*.
[16] The most commonly referred evaluation standards are the ones developed by OECD (1991).

evaluation always involves value, it is considered necessary at this point to explore how the evaluation society has affected the arts and cultural sector and what approaches around the articulation of its value have emerged.

2.3 Arts and culture in the evaluation society

Even only a couple of years ago, evaluation in the arts and culture would not be such a debated topic. The transformative power of culture was undeniable and it seemed no one needed proof of it. In the last decades, however, the situation has changed. The arts and culture sector is constantly requested to prove measurable outcomes to demonstrate its wider, sustainable and long-term effects on economy and/ or society and to provide a clear account of value and worth to those who fund and support arts and culture. What has changed? What has contributed to this increasing pressure to cultural organisations and the arts sector? A number of factors have influenced this shift, among which:

(i) Cuts on public expenditure in the arts and culture and the question of accountability

Since 2008, the international economic crisis has put a pressure on public and private cultural budgets. In this setting, governments and donors have intensified the efforts to gather evidence and information on the 'value' of the projects, organisations, and activities they devise or fund and greater emphasis is put on fiscal transparency for legitimacy reasons. At the same time, the vulnerability of public investment and the significant shrinking of private investment (Warwick Commission, 2015) has forced private and public stakeholders to emphasise the potential of the arts and culture for servicing broad social and economic goals in order to keep attracting funds. This has led to "competition models developed elsewhere (in the health, the social services and education sector) being applied to arts and culture, with an emphasis on cost control rather than outcome quality" (Anheir, 2009).

How exactly has this situation affected the arts and cultural sector? In an ongoing competitive environment, being in a position to articulate and demonstrate one's own value to funding bodies has become of primary importance. Additionally, given that many of the funding agencies focus mainly on budgeting and financial reporting, it is obvious that there is a tendency to focus on these aspects to justify the value produced by investing in the sector. In the same time, funding agencies, both private and public, have been acquiring a more and more influential role in the processes of measuring

performance and value in cultural and arts organisations (Turbide & Laurin, 2009). In reality what has been the result of this situation is that it has added more challenges to what was already a complex environment of financial instability and it has produced additional pressure to cultural practitioners and policy makers to provide proof of the added value that the arts and culture can bring.

(ii) Advocating for the value of arts and culture beyond GDP

Culture has been associated with its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and its economic attribute. During the recent years, however, the dissatisfaction with GDP as a sole indicator of development (as also further explained in 1.2.2.3), has resulted in a coordinated effort by various organisations to develop "more inclusive indicators that provide a more reliable knowledge base for better public debate and policy-making" (European Commission, 2009: 2). Already in 2007, the European Commission together with the European Parliament, the Club of Rome, WWF and the OECD organised the *Beyond GDP conference* for developing indicators that complement GDP, aiming to provide a more comprehensive information to support policy decisions. In general, the last two decades indicators have addressed issues of well-being and happiness, as for example OECD's (2011) *Better Life Index and Compendium of well-being indicators*, far beyond the traditional economic measure of GDP. Although there have been critics to establishing measures of happiness as a dominant measure of country progress (Stewart, 2014), this shift paved the role for the recognition of culture as a pillar to development and a central element of sustainability[17]. In addition to this, the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (UNESCO, 2005) was the first international legally binding document to place culture and sustainable development at its core. Furthermore, more recently, the UNESCO Hangzhou Declaration *Placing culture at the heart of sustainable development policies* (UNESCO, 2013) proclaimed that culture is both a driver and enabler to sustainable development.

Besides these developments, the cultural dimension was totally ignored at the OECD's 2009 World Forum in Korea under the title *Statistics, Knowledge and Policy* where the development of paradigms to measure progress considering economic, social and environmental perspectives was discussed. Furthermore, the Millennium Declaration had ignored the role that culture plays in sustainable development. However, although

[17] The culture and development nexus has been further explored in (1.2.2.3).

culture was not explicitly mentioned in these documents, the policy developments at the international level mentioned in the previous paragraphs were the first steps in an effort to understand social phenomena, among which culture, beyond their economic contribution.

At the beginning of 2015, a group of international organisations (Agenda21, 2015)[18], working in the field of culture published a position paper under the title *Culture as a goal in the post 2015 Development Agenda*, where they stated that "during the last decade, the international community has collected substantial evidence on the role of culture in development" and that "the best way to include these considerations in the post-2015 Development Agenda is through the inclusion of a goal explicitly focused on culture". Their claim was driven by the conviction that "only the explicit inclusion of culture in the Post-2015 Development Agenda will enable transformative change" (Agenda21, 2015). The document explained the justification for such a goal and set several targets and indicators to be considered.

This new dominant paradigm on the role of culture in development has implied that debates about how culture is actually influencing society and what benefits it brings have been brought to the surface. Zurita (2012: 36) argues that exactly this recognition of culture as a pillar for development and a central element for sustainable societies, has brought a different role to culture, a more institutionalised one, imposing to the sector a higher level of responsibility and an obligation to demonstrate its value.

(iii) The effort to design and implement evidence-based policies

In close relation to the two above factors, the debate around the value of the arts and culture has been at the forefront of policy discussions due to the on-going need for evidence-based policy-making and practice. Within this concept, looking for the value of the arts and culture is seen as a way of investigating what works, with the purpose of basing future policy and practice decisions on the results of such investigation.

In order for evidence- based policies to be formulated and for their impacts to be measured and evaluated, reliable information is needed. More and more stakeholders and policy-makers are in a need of specific cultural benchmarks, both objective (often

[18] The organisations that signed this position paper were IFACCA, Agenda 21 for culture, IFCCSD, CAE.

regarded as numerical) and conceptual (often regarded as qualitative), to design programmes and interventions. Although there is some questioning around how evidence-based research is actually taken into consideration in the design of public policies and programmes in general (Cairney, 2016) and especially in the field of cultural policy (IETM, 2016; Belfiore, 2016)[19], literature reviews and evidence-based research have been widely commissioned by public bodies to research institutes and consultancies. In the same time cultural observation, cultural statistics and the development of cultural indicator frameworks have been at the heart of the debates around cultural policies.

In a constantly changing world, however, producing timely and responsive knowledge and evidence that can successfully be applied in public or organisational decisions responding to real world situations still remains a challenge. This becomes even more complicated when it comes to the arts and culture sector since, as Belfiore and Bennett (2008: 3) have identified:

> Arts occupy a particularly fragile position in public policy, account of the fact that the claims made for them, especially relating to their transformative power, are extremely hard to substantiate.

This difficulty in *articulating the obvious* should be considered as the main reason why debates around the impacts of the arts and culture and the development of methodologies for their measurement and evaluation have played a prominent role in the cultural policy discourse over the past 20 years (Belfiore & Bennett, 2010).

2.4 In search of value: responses from policy, academia and practice

In the bibliography (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008; Voluntary arts, 2009) we read that the former UK Culture Minister, Estelle Morris said back in 2003:

> "I know that arts and culture make a contribution to health, education, crime reduction, to strong communities, the economy and the nation's wellbeing, but I don't always know how to evaluate it or describe it. We have to find a way of describing its worth".

[19] This 'missing link' has also been the main point of Pascal Gielen's key-note speech during the IETM Satellite meeting (IETM, 2016) where he made the statement that "there is no evidence for evidence-based research and we need to study culture as a sense-making process".

This statement is said to have resulted into numerous research and debate activities on the value of arts and culture in the UK, which has become central to the cultural policy debate after the '00s (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008; Matarasso, 2009). This effort to describe, measure and articulate arts and culture's value has been especially reflected in the work of the Arts Council England and the Arts and Humanities Research Council since the 2000s and has resulted in a number of commissioned researches, papers and publications on the topic that have been a reference in the field (Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2013; Arts Council England, 2008, 2009, 2011; BOP Consulting, 2014; Carnwath & Brown, 2014; Crossick & Kasznyska, 2016).

This 'obsession with evaluation' is definitely not only a UK phenomenon. It is however true, that there is a lot of documentation coming from the UK that has contributed to the discussions. In the same time, several programmes, researches and initiatives coming either from the policy, research or practice spheres reflect this quest for answers on the value and evaluation of arts and culture. In the following paragraphs reference is made to a number of them, without this being an exhaustive review. The overall intention here is to shed some light to the fact that the topic of evaluation has raised particular interest among the different spheres of the cultural field and to understand how different actors actually contribute to the debate.

2.4.1 Policy: in search of the evidence base

The debate around the value of culture has raised discussions at various policy levels. The 2013 Culture Forum organised by the European Commission set three 'thematic pillars', one of which was measuring the true value of culture and the functioning of the cultural eco-system[20], which demonstrates the wish to discuss with practitioners ways in which the benefits and impacts of arts and culture can become evident and prooved. With the aim of producing evidence-base policies, policy institutions have been primarily the ones requesting knowledge around the value of culture and ways to document it. Here, a short

[20] The other two 'thematic pillars' were:
- Funding culture in the digital era, looking at new funding models based on developing loyalty and building communities of followers, as well as institution centred models, such as corporate sponsorship, co-production and artistic interventions in business or public services;
- Audience development and making cultural participation a reality, looking at holistic, 360° strategies, reaching non-audiences, participatory art, and partnerships and synergies with other sectors.

mention will be made to three approaches: cultural observatories, cultural statistics and cultural indicators.

Cultural observatories have been crucial in the production of knowledge around which the value of culture can be articulated. Observatories are mainly data-producing bodies that can serve as support to public, private and third sector cultural policies (Ortega, 2010: 54). They can have a local, regional, national, international or continental focus depending on their scope of work. Cultural observation, "the action of producing and capitalising information and analysis on a scale of the territory under study, and making it available to the decision-makers and local stakeholders on the cultural offer" (Martin, 2011: 80), has attributed to the cultural observatories an important role in evidence provision around the value of arts and culture. Although data gathered are most of the times numerical, they have allowed policy makers at different levels to demonstrate the effectiveness of policies or to better understand a situation before intervening through policy.

In the same time, discussions at the international level for a solution towards the need for reliable data on the national as well as the international level for understanding both the economic as well as the social dimensions of culture have been tackled through cultural statistics schemes. In a globalised world, having "access to reliable data that can be compared across borders in order to determine the status of the cultural sector, its weaknesses and its strengths" has become of primary importance (Usero & Del Brío, 2011: 197). Efforts to define a framework for cultural statistics on the international level demonstrate policy priorities and the need to have comparable data across countries and entities (UNESCO, 2009).

In a similar line, cultural indicators have been proposed as frameworks for the monitoring and evaluation of cultural projects, organisations and initiatives. In some countries, indicators developed on the national level have been used as an intention to develop data about culture that allow consideration of change over time or comparative change (Kushner & Cohen, 2016: iii; NCCRS, 2014: 7). In the European scene, we can distinguish three important initiatives in regards to the development of cultural indicators: the work of ERICarts and the Council of Europe around the Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe, which constitutes a systematic effort to gather data on transnational levels; the Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy (IFCD) (Council of Europe, 2016) and the Council of Europe Intercultural Cities Index. Perhaps

the most relevant indicators' initiative in relation to the main research question of this thesis is the UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators framework (CDIS). As stated in the foreword of the Methodology Manual (UNESCO, 2014) the indicators "represent both a research and advocacy initiative" since from one hand they offer a methodology that approaches culture in its multidimensional role in national development processes using facts and figures, and on the other hand it can be used as a compass for policy impact through culture's integration into development strategies and constitutes a major contribution to the implementation of the UNESCO's 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the post-2015 development agenda.

2.4.2 Research: articulating the obvious?

On the research level, it is worthwhile mentioning a couple of large-scale initiatives that have taken place during the last three years looking into the issue of understanding and communicating the value of arts and culture. These initiatives are separated from the standard literature review that follows in section (2.4) because they are recent examples (from the last three years) representing coordinated efforts on a wider level to contribute to the discussion around the value of arts and culture. While some are already finalised research projects and others are still in progress while these lines are being written, they all demonstrate the interest and quest of the academic community to contribute to the challenge of finding answers regarding the impacts and the value of arts and culture and how to measure and document them. They also reflect the collaboration with the policy level, since some of the research projects are commissioned by policy institutions.

The first example is *The Cultural Value Project- exploring how we think about the value of arts and culture to individuals and society* initiated by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council in autumn 2012. Its objectives were to identify the various components of cultural value across a variety of contexts and within a unified approach, and to identify and develop methodologies that might be used to assess those dimensions of cultural value (Crossick & Kasznyska, 2016: 12). The project supported 70 academically led projects (some of them were new research, while others critical literature reviews or specialist workshops) seeking to establish a framework that will advance the ways in which the value of cultural engagement is defined and to "articulate a set of evaluative approaches and methodologies suitable to assessing the different ways in which cultural value is manifested" (Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2013). Although the *Cultural Value Project* did not provide a way out from the "interminable epistemological

obsession (that seeks to prove and evidence the value of culture)" (Walmsley, 2016: 1), it has been one of the most extensive and wide-ranging efforts to approach the topic of value of arts and culture on the individual, on society and on the economy.

In the same time, The *Warwick Commission on the future of cultural value* drove a 12-month inquiry on "how Britain can secure greater value from its cultural and creative assets" (Warwick Commission, 2015: 6) and articulated its inquiry around the question *"How is culture valued and undervalued?"*. This question was understood as follows:

- The evidence challenge: seeking the most effective and rigorous ways to articulate and measure the value of culture;
- Dimensions of value: cultural value beyond economic proxies;
- Valuing culture: potential cultural metrics;
- The values of an ecosystem approach.

In this case, we see that the academic world is engaging into an exercise that has brought together artists, creative and cultural professionals, economists, business leaders and other stakeholders and has commissioned new research, evidence and practical recommendations that would feed into new policy thinking.

The *Culture metrics* research launched by the Manchester University presents another effort to "test the value of a co-produced metric set and system of opinion- based data collection, including triangulation of large-scale data on how cultural organisations, their peers and the public access the quality of work, which will allow DDD decisions to positively shape their cultural and commercial practices". The pilot project itself was born out of the problems the arts and cultural sector face when trying to present the overall quality of its work in a way that both has credibility with funders and other stakeholders, and has the support of the arts sector. The project aimed to create high volume, high velocity data on the impact of the work that will result in high credibility and relevance to the arts sector, publics, funders, and the policy and academic community. Although a core set of framework dimensions was developed, the project encountered some issues and challenges (Bunting & Knell, 2014) related to the nature of the sector itself and to the experience of culture.

All three examples presented are from UK institutions. It is worthwhile mentioning a research project at the European level, the *Research Partnership on cultural and creative*

spillovers[21] that was launched in 2014 with the aim to understand what evidence exists on a European-wide level on spillover effects of public investment in arts and culture and to better understand interdisciplinary methodologies that could be used to better measure spillover effects and to promote consistent and credible research methods to enable the sector and public authorities to improve effective policy making and resource allocation. An analysis was undertaken (Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy, 2015) aiming to galvanise the debate about how to find a better way to comprehend subsequent impacts and effects of the arts, culture and the creative industries. After gathering an evidence library of 98 documents from 17 European countries, the report analysed the evidence gathered into three broad and overlapping types of spillover, namely:

- *Knowledge spillovers*, that refer to the new ideas, innovations and processes developed within arts organisations and by artists and creative businesses which spill over into the wider economy and society without directly rewarding those who created them (for example, 'stimulating creativity and encouraging potential', 'increase in employability and skills development in society', 'facilitating knowledge exchange and culture-led innovation' are identified among others;
- *Industry spillovers*, that refer to the vertical value chain and horizontal cross-sector benefits to the economy and society in terms of productivity and innovation that stem from the influence of a dynamic creative industry, businesses, artists, arts organisations or artistic events (for example, 'improved business culture and boosting entrepreneurship', 'impacts on residential and commercial property markets' are identified among others); and
- *Network spillovers*, that relate to the impacts and outcomes to the economy and society that spill over from the presence of a high density of arts and/or creative industries in a specific location (such as a cluster or cultural quarter). The effects seen in these are those associated with clustering (such as the spread of tacit knowledge) and agglomeration, and the benefits are particularly wide, including economic growth and regional attractiveness and identity (for example, 'improving health and wellbeing', 'building social cohesion', 'creating an attractive ecosystem and creative milieu, city branding and place making', among others).

[21] The Research Partnership is funded by the Arts Council England & Creative England, the Arts Council of Ireland, European centre for creative economy (Germany), the European Cultural Foundation (Netherlands) and the European Creative Business Network and brings together a network of research partners, among which the University of Deusto.

This *Research Partnership* has a policy-oriented and policy-nurtured approach and aims to advocate at European policy level the mainstreaming of "a new holistic approach for evaluating cultural and creative spillovers" (Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy, 2015: 4) and "to devise a new language and perhaps a new sense of mission cultural agents" to "actively generate 'spillover' within broader innovation and sustainability frameworks" (Vickery, 2015: 5). The Research Partnership calls for a holistic research agenda to enable to unleash and capture the wider values of the arts, culture and the creative industries to the wider economy and society. It also calls for governments and policy makers at all levels to realise that they are key change-makers for the creation and evidencing of cultural and creative spillovers. As a second stage of the project, there was an open call in Spring 2016 to collect a number of case studies for testing hypothesis around the innovative evaluation method(s) of cultural and creative spillover. Four research teams from Finland, Italy, Poland and the Netherlands have been commissioned to undertake four case studies that focus on testing evaluation methods of cultural and creative spillovers in the arts, culture and creative industries in Europe[22].

The above examples reflect how the topic of value and evaluation has attracted the research community[23]. We should, however, be cautious that there is a limitation here. Most information we have accesses to, is in English language and represents either UK-led discussions or discussions at European level. There is no doubt that in a way or another these discussions are influential and bring about a significant contribution to the topic. What is, however, missing is a discourse from other paradigms - non-UK ones and non-EU level led ones- that could perhaps offer an alternative contribution to the topic.

2.4.3 Practitioners: from resistance to evaluation to searching for own answers

Matarasso (1996) observed that, besides serving the request of reporting to funding bodies, the arts and culture field itself had demonstrated low interest in developing and adopting evaluative approaches through which to prove its value- internally or externally. He explained that this 'resistance to evaluation' could be understood as the result of different factors, among which the lack of motivation or inclination, limited time, unavailable resources or skills, lack of understanding about the value of evaluation, and

[22] The report was expected in March 2017 but while these lines are being written it has not been published yet.
[23] Adding to this, a reference should be made to the newly established Working Group of ENCATC which due to its nature will be touched upon in (2.3.3) and tackled further in chapter (3). However it should be noted here that the academic community is widely represented in it.

hesitations regarding the methodologies used so far. Current debates among European networks and their membership demonstrate that this is no more the case. Cultural organisations themselves are more and more concerned about the topic of evaluation and how they can demonstrate the impact and value of their work. Reference is made below to the recent work of three European cultural networks during the last three years and of a joint network imitative in search of answers around the impact of arts and culture and its articulation.

The first example is IETM, a network of over 500 performing arts organisations and individual members working in the contemporary performing arts[24] worldwide. The reflection on why the arts matter has been since 2014 at the heart of IETM's activities. In Spring 2015, a *General Mapping of Types of Impact Research in the performing arts sector (2005- 2015)* was published as a first step in IETM's 2014- 2017 plan that has an explicit focus on the measurement of the impacts of the arts. The primary goal of this mapping was to "identify what recent research on the social impact of the performing arts is available, how many countries have done this type of research, if there are common traits or patterns or any preferred evaluation methods. The idea was to explore what efforts arts organisations are making in order to contribute to the latest justifications undertaken to counteract budget cuts in the arts and culture sector" (Shishkova, 2015: 4).

Furthermore, in the last couple of years IETM has also organised a number of multifaceted debates around the topic of value of the arts and culture, among which:

- A Working Group under the title *Beyond the numbers* that took place at the IETM Autumn Meeting (Bulgaria, 16-19 October 2014) that questioned the tendency to measuring the impact of arts and culture and convincing policy-makers, funders and society by presenting figures and statistics;
- A Panel discussion in Brussels in February 2015 under the title *The Art of Valuing: between evident and evidence-based* that focused on the analysis of different models for measuring and demonstrating the value of culture and its impacts on societies, as well as the role such measurements play in informing national cultural policies (IETM, 2015);
- An IETM Satellite meeting in Paris in March 2016 where arts sector representatives, researchers, policy makers and intermediary organisations gathered together to

[24] Contemporary performing arts according to IETM's understanding comprise theatre, dance, circus, interdisciplinary live art forms, new media.

develop a collective view on why and how to advocate for the arts in local, national and European policy-making processes (IETM, 2016a);

- A session at the IETM Plenary Meeting in Amsterdam in April 2016 that was devoted to the topic *Advocating for the Arts* and aimed to exchange ideas on "how to convince policy-makers- on local, national and European levels- of the essential role culture and the arts play in the development of European societies" (IETM, 2016b).

A second example is ENCATC, the European network on cultural management and policy **that** has been widely concerned with the topic of cultural observation and measurement and has since December 2007 organised its discussions around the Thematic area/ Working Group *Cultural Observatories and Cultural Information and Knowledge* chaired by the Institute of Leisure Studies of the University of Deusto. Members of this group comprise old, recent and emerging observatories as well as European institutions and cultural organisations from different countries. Moreover, supported by the Policy Grouping strand of the EU's Culture programme (2007- 2013) the Thematic Area/ Working Group evolved into a platform of academics, researchers and cultural observatories aiming to debate on the process of collecting, managing and disseminating information and knowledge in the arts and culture field. Among the aims of the group was the elaboration of a report with recommendations on the conditions needed for setting up a common cultural observation methodology for cultural observatories in order to assist the design and evaluation of cultural policies at regional level in Europe.

ENCATC's Advanced Seminar *Rethinking Cultural Evaluation: Going beyond GDP* was held on the 22nd of October 2014 in Paris France[25]. The seminar was an activity following two previous seminars organised in 2013 in Antwerp (*Rethinking Cultural Evaluation: Going Beyond GDP*) and in New York (*Place of culture in sustainable development: going beyond the GDP indicators*). The Seminar, which was an outcome of the ENCATC Thematic Area *Monitors of Culture,* offered a platform for people involved in this topic to share their research and results from their respective policies and projects in evaluation in the arts and culture field.

In 2015, a new ENCATC Working Group on *Monitoring and Evaluation of International and European transnational cultural projects and European networks* emerged as a response to the need of having a discussion platform to exchange ideas and best practices

[25] The Seminar was organised by ENCATC in partnership with the University of Deusto, BizkaiLab and the Diputación Foral de Bizkaia and hosted by Vivendi Universal.

in the field. As stated in the description of the Working Group (ENCATC, 2016) more and more ENCATC members are liaising with arts and cultural organisations and other institutions that are involved in managing and/ or participating in European programmes, especially those subsided by the Creative Europe programme, as well as Erasmus+, Horizon 2020 and other EU funded transnational projects and the issue of evaluation becomes a necessity for their work.

A third example is related to the work of Culture Action Europe (CAE), an advocacy and lobby organisation promoting arts and culture as a building block of the European project[26]. Since 2013 it has been publishing a number of reflection papers and studies on how to measure the impact of culture (CAE, 2013) or on methodology and challenges on culture in relation to well-being (CAE, 2016). Moreover, from 2013, Culture Action Europe has been developing a common tool with which to measure the impact of culture, specifically the social impact of culture on well-being. The aim of the project under the title *Measuring the impact of the arts in society* is, as stated on the organisation's website, "to provide to practitioners evidences on the impact of cultural practices and participation on the well-bring of citizens and resilience to change and to create and share tools for cultural operators to structure and assess their impact on audiences".

Finally, reference should be made to two position papers published by arts and cultural organisations around the value of arts and culture. The first one refers to an appeal published in 2016 by several cultural organisations- members of the European Alliance for Culture and the Arts[27], aiming to bring to the forefront the value of arts and culture in the European project (European Alliance for Culture and the Arts, 2016). The statement was influenced by a critical look at the evolution of the Culture Programme and its development to the Creative Europe Programme and the influence of neoliberal priorities set in the Agenda 2020 in it, as well as the neglecting of culture in other EU programmes and policies. The Appeal underlined the close relation between the culture and arts and the EU priorities in the fields of European values and human rights, economic benefits and growth, education, social cohesion, migration and citizenship, innovation, health and

[26] Culture Action Europe has currently over 90 members, representing in turn over 8000 organisations spread across the EU countries and beyond at the local, regional, national or European dimensions in more than 14 artistic disciplines, from all domains of cultural activity. Its' aim is to influence European policies for more and better access to culture across the continent and beyond, to provide customised information and analysis on the European Union, to offer cultural actors a space to exchange and elaborate common positions and to develop advocacy actions towards European policymakers.

[27] The European Alliance for culture gathered together 35 European networks urging policy makers to re-think the European approach and include culture and the arts in the long-term strategic goals of the European project.

wellbeing, regional and urban development, external relations and neighborhood policy and international cooperation and development. Among other requests, the Appeal asked from the EU to take "culture and the arts into account in an integrated way in all areas of policy making, ensuring a sustainable environment for cultural activities today and in the future" and specifically asks from the Commission to "check the cultural impact of its policy and regulatory proposals, alongside the economic and social impact" as "this way culture could be taken into account horizontally". The second one was a joint statement published by the European social partners in the live performance sector[28] in 2016 under the title *The prime role of culture and the arts in society* asking that this prime role is demonstrated at all policy areas.

2.5 Studies and toolkits on the value and evaluation of arts and culture

In the previous sections of this chapter, an attempt has been made to describe how the value and evaluation of arts and culture has acquired an important role in the debates around arts and culture and how the question of measuring culture and articulating its value has been the subject of quests from the academia, research and practice. However, the above-mentioned initiatives and activities are only a limited number among the overall efforts that are being made to describe and articulate the value of arts and culture and finding ways to demonstrate it better. Evaluation in arts and culture has been a topic that has acquired a lot of attention in the past decades (Birnkraut, 2010; Gattenhof, 2017). There is an increasing body of research, documented case studies and anecdotal evidence that illustrate the different approaches and the questioning in relation to the methodologies applied and the results produced. This section aims to provide a summary of this knowledge and to identify gaps and challenges that can be useful for the research topic. This section is grouped around four main categories that are reflected in Table 2.1.

Since a lot has been written around the topic of the value and impacts of the arts and culture and each of the literature review headings could constitute a research project on its own, this section is not exhaustive. It constitutes however a helpful exercise in order to create an understanding of how the subject of value in the arts and culture has been approached so far.

[28] The European sectoral social partners in the Live Performance sector are represented by Pearle*- Live Performance Europe and EAEA- the European Arts and Entertainment Alliance which represents workers through the trade unions of performers, musicians and technicians affiliated to FIA, FIM and UNI-MEI.

Table 2.1 The value and evaluation of arts and culture in the literature

Literature reviews	Most of them commissioned by funding bodies or research institutes. Beyond their academic relevance, they shed some light to policy and funding intentions and priorities and demonstrate that policy-related organisation have been requesting evidence and suggestions on how to tackle the topic.
Studies on the economic impacts of the arts and culture	Knowledge base for the arguments related to the instrumental value of arts and culture and why the arts and culture should be supported for their economic contribution to society.
Studies on the social impacts of the arts and culture	Fields where social impacts of the arts and culture have been identified and what debates have been developing around them when it comes to the validity of methods and the articulation of the results.
Material and literature on toolkits and manuals on the evaluation of cultural programmes, organisations or activities	Guidelines developed for organisations and cultural practitioners. Critiques around the use and added value of such approaches.

Source: Developed by researcher.

2.5.1 Literature reviews

One of the first literature reviews identified was the one on arts impact studies prepared by Guetzkow (2002) for the *Taking the Measure of Culture* meeting at Princeton University[29]. Guetzkow examined the existing body of research on arts impact by organising them by three types of claims that according to him "capture all of the more specific assertions about the impact of the arts" (Guetzkow, 2002: 5):

- The arts build social capital and community cohesion;

- The arts are good for individuals (improve health, psychological well-being, skills, cultural capital and creativity);

[29] The purpose of the meeting was "to explore new ways of learning how, if at all, arts activities make communities better places, whether by building social capital, enhancing the lives of individuals in ways that strengthen the community as a whole, or enhancing economic development. A secondary focus was on understanding what makes communities artistically and culturally strong, which respect to quality, diversity and support for creativity and innovation" (Guetzkow, 2002).

- The arts have a beneficial impact on the economy, explained through the claims that (i) arts attract visitors, (ii) arts attract residents and businesses and (iii) arts attract investments.

In the European continent, literature reviews commissioned by UK organisations and research institutes form a great part of the work published since 2004 on the topic of value and impacts of the arts and culture. As Galloway (2008) puts it, this trend "highlights the extent to which cultural research is dominated by government political agendas, but also demonstrates the extent to which funding bodies have been investing resources in addressing the identified weakness and gaps in the evidence base" (Galloway, 2008: ii).

Studies commissioned by the Arts Council England or the UK government prevail in the literature reviews in the topic already from the '00s. Jermyn's (2001) work on the arts and social exclusion made a contribution to the discussion on the contexts in which the arts may contribute to other processes, namely educational achievement, rehabilitation of offenders, health and wellbeing, the construction of social capital, community development and urban regeneration. In the same line, Reeves (2002) provided an overview of arts impacts research based on the literature available and focusing on the economic and social aspects. One of the objectives of the study was to develop a practical resource to assist practitioners with effective evaluation. O'Brien's (2010) report *Measuring the Value of Culture: a report to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport* provides a review of debates and methods in measuring cultural value in the UK with a specific focus on econometric methods. Moreover, Carnwath and Brown (2014) examined two related branches of literature based around ways in which cultural activities add value to the lives of individuals and to society as a whole. From one side, the authors examined how individuals benefit from attending and participating in cultural programmes and activities, and from the other side the creative capacities of arts and culture organisations to bring forward impacting programmes. Among recent studies on literature reviews we also find Taylor et al (2015) who produced a study in the framework of the CASE (Culture and Sport Evidence) project led by the UK Department for Culture Media and Sport in collaboration with Arts Council England, English Heritage and Sport England and aiming to collect cross-cutting social and economic evidence to directly influence culture and sport policy. The authors reviewed the current evidence base on the social impacts of sport and culture primarily on four main types of social impact: (i) improved health, (ii) reduced crime, (iii) increased social capital and (iv)

improved education outcomes. A significant initiative, which includes an extensive literature review, is the Cultural Value research project (Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016) mentioned already in section (2.3.2) and supported by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council. In its final report, literature and knowledge on different components of cultural value are examined, among which cultural engagement, civic agency and civic engagement, communities' regeneration and space, economy, health, ageing and wellbeing, and finally arts in education. A review of different methodologies is also part of the final report of the project.

Moreover, reviews commissioned by the Scottish Arts Council to add to the Scottish Government's Impact Database constitute a contribution to the knowledge base on the impacts of arts and culture seen from a regional level perspective. More precisely, Ruiz (2004) looks for evidence of social impacts of culture and the arts in relation to social inclusion, ethnic minorities, reduction of youth crime, disability, regeneration /community impact, health, education/ employment, economic impacts and cultural tourism (among which major cultural events), and Galloway (2008) scans the key research evidence about the contribution of culture to the Scottish Government's strategic objectives.

The European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) has also recently entered the arena of bodies commissioning research and literature reviews that produce evidence base. For example, Holden and Baltà (2012) conducted a literature review on the public value of the arts on behalf of EENC to assist the preparations of the Cyprus Presidency of the EU (July – December 2012), which had cultural governance as one of its key priorities in the cultural field. Similarly, Dümcke and Gnedovsky (2013) were commissioned to produce a European-wide literature research on the social and economic value of cultural heritage.

The European-wide initiative deriving from the Research Partnership on Cultural and Creative spillovers in Europe already mentioned in (2.3.2), has published a report (Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy, 2015) that gathers a preliminary evidence review on the topic from a variety of countries. Moreover, a literature review especially on the economic benefits of collaborative cultural activity (Karpusheff, 2013) has been published from the Institute of Cultural Capital at Liverpool University that explores the strengths and weaknesses of the models that have been used so far to make arguments in relation to the value or impact of culture in the context of cross-sectoral initiatives.

Moreover, a literature review (Gilmore et al, 2015) as part of the evaluation of an arts and culture evaluation initiative was identified, produced for the ArtWorks project supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. Examples beyond the UK or EU level driven initiatives are the report commissioned by the Government of Catalonia's Ministry of Culture and the Media written by Subirats and Fina (2008) aiming to analyse recent trends and literature addressing the social impact of culture in a number of countries in Europe, North America and Australasia. The value of culture is also examined in the literature review commissioned by the Australian Arts Council (2009) through the lenses of performance measurement[30].

Studies on the economic and social impacts of arts and culture cover big part of the literature reviews. In the following sections, these two aspects are tackled.

2.5.2 Studies on the economic impacts of arts and culture

Economic impact studies in the arts and culture sphere have been the forerunners designed to argue the case for investment in arts and culture. As Isar (2004) explains, "when they were introduced in Western Europe in the 1980s their purpose was defensive: to head off the reduction in public subsidies as central government spending began to decline under the influence of neo-liberal thinking, particularly in Thatcherite Britain" and "as arguments based on the intrinsic merits and educational value of the arts and culture began to lose their potency, the economic payoff could, it was thought, provide the needed justification for public spending on the arts" (Isar, 2004: 12).

Since the arts and culture were associated with the experience economy (Pine and Gilmore, 1999) they emerged as an area with strong possibilities for sales and profit. The recognition that the arts and culture contribute to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross Value Added (GVA) contributed to the shift paradigm and the introduction of the term 'cultural and creative industries'[31]. The economic rhetoric has reverberated throughout cultural policies since the Myerscough's study (1988) on the economic importance of the arts that identified the sector to be a major contributor to productive employment and prosperity in Britain. Already at that time, the aim was to convince state

[30] The Australian case uses the term 'artistic vibrancy' which includes artistic excellence, audience engagement and stimulation, innovation in the preservation or development of the art form, artist development and community relevance.

[31] Although the term had been used by Adorno and Horkheimer in their book *Dialectic of Englightment* (1933), it became more of a standardised term when associated with the economic impacts of the sector by the end of the 90s and more recently was converted to the term 'creative industries' by policy makers (Mikić, 2012).

policy to support the arts and culture given their potential to rebuild the economy and the workforce. Moreover, the contribution of Thorsby (2003; 2005) has been an influential in the field of economics and culture, while Bakhsi et at (2009) have reintroduced economics to the sector in seek of justifying its value. Moreover, research into the 'creative class'[32] as part of the labor force has also contributed to understanding the impact on culture in economic terms and influence decisions for the attraction of this creative capital as a new factor to economic growth. Finally, the economic development of cities and attractiveness of urban spaces thanks to arts and culture have been long studied.

Recently published work provides a good body of evidence about the contribution to employment and the economic value of the creative sectors. A major research publication published by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture, *The economy of culture in Europe* (KEA, 2006) studied the direct and indirect socio-economic impact of the culture and creative sector in Europe to assess the contribution of the sector to the Lisbon Agenda's goal (European Commission, 2009) to make the EU by 2010 "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion"[33]. The study showed how culture drives economic and social development, as well as innovation and cohesion and that the cultural and creative sector "is a growing sector, developing a higher pace than the rest of the economy" (KEA, 2006: 1). A similar research on the UK level was commissioned by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), *Staying Ahead: the economic performance of the UK's creative industries* and published statistics for the 13 creative industry sectors (NESTA, 2007). More recently, the Arts Council England (2013) produced the report *The contribution of the arts and culture to the national economy,* which was an analysis of the macroeconomic contribution of the arts and culture and of their indirect contributions through spillover effects felt in the wider economy. Another example that is more focused on a specific sector is the *Evidence review of the economic contribution of libraries* (BOP, 2014) commissioned again by the Arts Council England. Finally, in order to allow cultural organisations themselves to investigate into their economic impacts, the Arts Council England commissioned the report *Measuring the economic benefits of arts and culture* (BOP Consulting, 2012) that provides guidance to arts and cultural organisations about

[32] The concept of the 'creative class' was first introduced and elaborated by Florida (2002, 2004, 2005) and contributes to the 'knowledge-based economy' paradigm.

undertaking or commissioning studies related to the economic benefits of their work by discussing four methods[34] of measuring the value of a cultural organisation's activities and exploring a series of case studies.

As mentioned before, this review is by no means exhaustive. Mikić (2012) provides a more comprehensive analysis of core methodological approaches for measuring the economic contribution of cultural industries and for an overview of the economic contribution of the creative industries to the EU's GDP and employment and the document produced by Forum D'Avignon and Tera Consultants (2014) is informative and tracks developments over time. Yet, there is a growing critical discussion around the limitations of conventional economic measures to capture the true value of culture (Holden, 2006; Hutter & Throsby, 2011; Klamer, 2004) while O'Brien (2010: 9) underlines the "needs for economic analysis to be placed within robust and detailed narrative accounts of cultural value" or "as part of multi-criteria analysis".

2.5.3 Studies on the social impacts of the arts and culture

Among the first ones to tackle the issue of the social impacts of the arts and culture has been Commedia, an independent research organisation that was commissioned in 1993 to produce a discussion document on the social impact of the arts for the Arts Council of Great Britain (Laundry et al., 1993). Since then, Comedia has been a reference in the field of evaluation in the arts and culture. In *Use or Ornament?* (Matarasso, 1997) published by Comedia, the evaluation of the social impact of arts participation within personal development, social cohesion, community empowerment, self-determination, identity and health and wellbeing was researched upon. Although his work has been criticised for being "flawed in its design, execution and conceptual basis" (Merli, 2002: 108) it has been influential since it has focused on the impact of participation in arts programmes claiming that social impacts are complex, but understandable and they can be assessed and planned for.

Among the authors that have contributed to the narrative around the social impacts of the arts and culture we find Belfiore and Bennett (2008, 2010). In their intellectual history of claims about the impacts of the arts they examine the history, discourse, rhetoric and traditions relating to the thinking about instrumental and extrinsic

[34] More precisely, the publication discusses two measures of spending (economic impact assessment EIA and economic footprint analysis) and two valuation techniques (contingent valuation and social return on investment).

outcomes of the arts, from the Classical Greek civilisation to the present day. They claim that there has been a strong tendency to assume a relationship (both negative and positive) between the arts and social impacts, which underlies all arts, cultural and social policy. Finally, they offer (2010: 39) a 'taxonomy' of eight 'possible impacts', both negative and positive.

In general terms, different studies have tried to provide evidence that arts and culture have social impacts in a number of areas. Engagement with the arts and culture and artistic interventions has been claimed that contribute to social cohesion (Council of Europe, 1998; Jermyn, 2001; Matarasso, 1997), conflict transformation (Lederach, 2005), regeneration programmes (Landry et al, 1996), intergenerational dialogue (Cutler, 2009), in organisations (Berthoin Antal & Strauß, 2013), identity building (Sassateli, 2009), creativity, innovation, talent and excellence (Thorsby, 2001), regional development (Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services, 2010), and that has intrinsic benefits (Radbourne et al., 2010) among others. Evidence is also available for impacts of specific fields of arts and culture, like for example of visual arts in three social policy areas such as regeneration, health, education and learning (Arts Council England, 2009), museums, archives and libraries (Wavell et al, 2002) and heritage (Labadia, 2011) among others.

The impact of cultural and artistic events has gained a lot of attention and forms a major part of the literature around impacts in arts and culture. Although most studies focus on models to determine economic impact of festivals (for example Devesa, 2006, 2012), there are few focusing on the social, cultural and/ or political impacts of festival and events. Arcodia and Whitford (2006) investigated into the relationship between festival attendance and social capital to underline that festivals- beyond their economic benefits- are primarily social phenomena with the potential to provide a variety of predominantly positive social benefits" (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006: 15). In the same line, Robertson et al (2009) tried to identify the core socio-cultural impacts of festivals and their significance. A lot of knowledge on event impacts has been produced by the evaluation of the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) scheme and since own evaluation has been introduced as one obligation of the hosting cities, a set of Guidelines of the cities' own evaluations of the results of each ECoC (2014) has been produced. Furthermore, a recent initiative by the Cultural Institute at King's college bases its learning from the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad and investigates into the role that "arts and culture might play in adding value to major sporting and national events in the future, and how that value might be maximized" (2013: 2). Impact of cultural events and flagship cultural venues on

city image, urban regeneration, social inclusion, economic impact as well has been widely researched (for example Langen & Garcia, 2008; Ortega & Bayón, 2015; Richards & Palmer, 2010).

Holden (2004, 2007, 2008) proposed a multi-disciplinary framework to account for cultural value that embraces intrinsic, instrumental and institutional value. His conclusion is that cultural organisations must maximise their value to the public and because the public has become more interested in cultural participation, organisations need to forge a new dialogic relationship with their communities, rather than seeing themselves as 'delivering' culture to audiences.

2.5.4 Toolkits and manuals on evaluation

A number of funding and support organisations have put efforts into developing toolkits to help cultural practitioners to reflect in a better capacity on the role and value of evaluation in their work and sometimes with a secondary aim in mind (especially when it comes to funding institutions), meaning to produce more 'homogeneous' reporting systems.

For example, the *Scottish Arts Council Evaluation Toolkit* (2003) was an interactive, online resource (e-tool), which developed on the approach to evaluation introduced in *Partnerships for Learning* (Woolf, 2004). The e-tool offered ideas and information about conducting the five stages of evaluation, including planning and collecting, interpreting and reporting on information. The toolkit also reflected the theory being put into practice by following a case-study project through each stage of the evaluation. The toolkit was addressed to organisations to evaluate Scottish Arts Council funded arts projects by using the toolkit as a condition for grants.

Toolkits have been developed by different organisations aiming to serve different purposes. For example, the Arts Council England's (2008) *Artspulse. Evaluation toolkit. A user-friendly guide to evaluating arts and well-being projects.* included a set of simple resources for the evaluation of arts and activity specifically in health projects. *Evaluating Community Arts and Community Well Being* (Keating, 2002 for Arts Victoria) was an evaluation guide for community arts practitioners that aims to help them plan, conduct and present an evaluation. It includes sample tools, such as sample evaluation indicators, a focus group outline, a sample participant questionnaire and project journal guidelines. Another example that demonstrates a different focus in the approach is the *Capturing the*

audience experience: a handbook for the theatre (NEF, 2008) that aims to assist theatre organisations to understand how audiences experience their work through the development of an audience experience framework, introducing an evaluation concept based on audience experience rather than on statistics. Handbooks have been also prepared in order to provide guidance about how to undertake or commission studies related to the economic benefits of a cultural organisation's work, like for example the publication *Measuring the economic benefits of arts and culture: Practical guidance on research methodologies for arts and cultural organisations* (BOP Consulting, 2012) that was commissioned by the Arts Council England and is addressed to arts and cultural organisations.

Although the literature is dominated again by UK documents, there are a few written in other languages as well. Among them, a guide in French *L'évaluation de projets en médiation culturelle* (Pronovost & Harrison- Boisvert, 2015) and a guide written in French and German for Pro Helvetia (De Perrot & Wodiunig, 2008), the organisation that supports and disseminates Swiss arts and culture. The aim of this second guide is "to contribute to the development of an evaluation culture in the field of culture, to demonstrate through practical examples what counts and how to go about in order to evaluate a project, to cultivate courage and thirst to organisations to try on their own and show that evaluation is not a wizard if we manage to respect a number of principles" (De Perrot & Wodiunig, 2008: 9). Finally, currently, IETM, in the line of the work on the evaluation of arts (presented also in 2.3.3) together with On-the-move are preparing a Toolkit for self-evaluation.

In many aspects, toolkits can be considered as a contribution to organisational learning. If we take for example the guide *Partnerships for Learning: a guide to evaluating arts education projects* written by Felicity Woolf (2004) for the Arts Council England and firstly published in 1999, the aim of the publication was "to help everyone involved in arts education projects to understand evaluation clearly and to evaluate effectively, according to their particular needs". The guide opens by underlying that evaluating arts-based projects is not easy and that there is not only a golden proposal on how to approach evaluation. The author states that the publication "aims to provide a flexible framework, which can be applied in many different situations and used to evaluate short or more extended projects". The emphasis is "on flexibility and fitness for purpose" (Woolf, 2004: 4-5).

Besides the wide production of toolkits, their significance has been criticised for homogenising evaluation practices in the arts and culture sector, serving merely funding reporting purposes and contributing to the instrumentalisation of the arts and culture. The "toolkit mentality" has been criticised by Belfiore and Bennett (2010) in their article *Beyond the toolkit approach* that has been influential in the debates around the value of culture. Also Bailey and Richardson (2010: 304) have warned that "universal templates, if not created in genuine consultation with the sector, could result in 'box ticking', which can obstruct meaningful artistic assessment". Those that are against the toolkit approach advocate for a more flexible and creative approach in evaluation and claim that a toolkit approach is harming the potential of bringing to the surface the true value of arts and culture.

The counter argument for this is that, even if toolkits and manuals are cultivating standardised procedures or frameworks for evaluation that mainly serves funding or policy interests, they allow evaluation results to be compared more readily and contribute to the development of an 'evaluation culture'. As noted by (Wilkinson & Weitkamp, 2016: 221):

> The creation of such frameworks or benchmarks often reflects the need for those working at strategic organisational levels to have better ways to extrapolate findings beyond individual projects or to justify wider resources and support for particular initiatives or disciplinary communities, for example through synthesis exercises or some kind of meta-evaluation; but they also reflect drivers to increase the standards and quality of evaluation across research communications.

It is however true that, while toolkits may provide a structured way to approach evaluation, there is no evidence in the bibliography that they are actually used by practitioners when evaluating their projects and how.

2.6 Gaps in the literature and challenges to measuring the value of arts and culture

A first observation, following the literature review, is that while a lot of discussion and evidence around the value of arts and culture includes literature reviews, manuals and evidence on economic or social impacts and the evaluation of specific arts and cultural projects or initiatives and outcomes, there is also a remarkable number of critical cultural policy studies literature that challenge and problematize the claims of social and economic impacts of the arts and culture, critique the efficacies of instrumental cultural policy and raise methodological issues around the evaluation of arts and culture.

A second observation is that much of the literature available is the result of commissioning by public funding bodies to research institutions or consultancies. This demonstrates that, either by commissioning literature reviews, evaluating specific programmes or creating toolkits or other orientation material for arts and cultural organisations, funding bodies are playing an influential role in the knowledge production around the topic. On the other hand, there is no shortage of research-informed resources, which are concerned with improving the understanding of arts and culture and its value. Finally, the literature around the practice of evaluation in the arts and culture provides some preliminary insights into the methods used, but it is very scare.

However, despite the steadily growing interest around the value of culture and the adequate methods to approach it, there are still several gaps in the literature and more research and evidence on the following aspects is needed:

- *Contested terms.* Different terms are used to describe different concepts. 'Impact', 'social and economic capital', 'spillover effects', 'value', 'evaluation', 'outcomes' are words that are constantly being used, without necessarily meaning the same thing in each setting and by the different authors that use them. This "conceptual confusion" - that as Jermyn (2001: 10) notes can also be found in other areas of social research inquiry- makes that the terms are used "inconsistently" and that the concepts are "operationalised in different ways".

- *Little evidence on how evaluation is performed by cultural actors and organisations*. While literature on how value should be measured is quite extensive, how cultural actors and organisations themselves actually use methods, performance or indicators is limited. The policy or funder-driven nature of the available evidence justifies why the focus is mostly on measurement, communication and evidencing of instrumental outcomes and there is less significantly content which takes into consideration the practice of evaluation from a practitioners ' perspective[35].

[35] An exception to this can be found in Baily and Richardson (2010) who report on research measuring the performance of arts organisations in relation to "artistic vibrancy" which examined 29 Australian and UK performing arts organisatiions on their processes of "artistic self-assessment". They identify a range of different practices and models for reviewing, measuring and assessing performance and find that not one size fits all. Another example is Turbide and Laurin (2009) that addressed the issue of performance measurement in non-for-profit organisations within the performing arts sectors by organizing a survey among 300 performing arts

- *Little communication of evaluation evidence.* As Shishkova notes, "apparently, evaluation research, whether with good or bad results, is considered sensitive and not published online" (Shishkova, 2015: 4). There is little amount of documentation on evaluation of concrete projects and cultural organisations. This can be explained if we consider that reporting evaluation findings is mainly done for accountability reasons and is considered internal information. However, if we attribute a learning element to the act of evaluation, it would be very interesting to extract conclusions from lessons learnt.

- *No literature on negative impacts.* As Guetzkow (2002: 19) notes, "arts impact studies typically ignore the potentially negative impacts of the arts". The dynamics around the communication of 'negative' or 'sensitive' evaluation evidence is quite special. Guetzkow adds that "to the extent that studies do examine failed programs, they tend to focus on the cause of failure rather that its consequences".

- *No evaluation, no cry?* If evaluation was so important, what happens to the organisations, institutions, projects that are not evaluating? There is no information about what benefits does the evaluation bring in comparison to cases where it does not take place.

- *Lack of over-time evidence.* Most evaluations and researches focus on the short-term, while in many cases outcomes take time to develop. This makes it difficult to assess how long impacts of the arts and culture last. The sustainability of impacts and how to capture them is a long-standing debate and there is almost no literature available that tracks impacts over-time. An exception to this is *Impacts '18, Liverpool 2018- legacies of the European Capital of Culture 10 Years On*, a longitudinal research programme dedicated to capturing the long-term effects of hosting the title in the city of Liverpool.

- *Multiple layers of impact.* From the literature review we realise that a great challenge when considering the value and impacts of the arts and culture is to define whether the impacts are on the individual or on organisations, on communities and society or to the

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organisation in the Canadian province of Quebec on how they assess their own performance. The survey results showed that even through performing arts organisations acknowledge that their most important success factor is artistic excellence, their performance measurement systems place as much emphasis on financial as on non-financial indicators. Finally, Wiliams and Bowdin (2007) explored festival evaluation practices by presenting the findings of an exploratory study into the approach taken for evaluation in seven arts festivals in the United Kingdom.

economy, whether they are direct or indirect, immediate or long – term, and whether the impact is social, cultural, psychological, economic etc. What is especially still missing is that there is little empirical evidence showing how the individual level effects translate at the organisational or community level and the opposite. Another challenge is that that some processes are less direct and more complex and are dependent on achieving intermediary outcomes.

2.7 Learning from the literature

From the documentation reviewed for this section, we observe that the main question around the appropriate approach to investigate into and articulate the value of culture is a matter of *method* and of *focus*.

When it comes to the *method*s, we observe that the ones applied so far to evaluate and to bring to the surface the value of arts and culture have been subjected to extensive criticism by cultural professionals (for example Matarasso, 2009; Shiskhkova, 2015) and academics (Belfiore, 2010). Some authors explain that this might be the case because "…evaluation is something that has largely been introduced to the arts rather than being sought and developed by the profession…" (Matarasso, 2009: 14). Especially when the obsession with numbers and the quantification of the impacts prevails in the approaches, there are even more concerns regarding the validity and value of the results. As (Goldbard, 2008: 3) notes:

> The trouble is, the very quest for metrics is contaminated with ideas and assumptions borrowed from worlds that have nothing to do with community and creativity. The notion that everything of value can be weighed and measured, which is one of the most grotesque artifacts of post- Enlightment thinking, is antithetical to the deep values of community cultural development. Indeed, in this domain, the search for metrics actually harms what it seeks to help.

On the other hand, questioning methods and their validity, can in return harm the arts and culture sector, which enters in this way into a "self-defensive ideological spiral" (Matarasso, 2009). Advocating for the value of arts and culture without being in a position to question and prove it weakens the argument that culture is of any value. It might be true that methodologies have been borrowed from other spheres of social life, namely social sciences, however, as Matarasso (2009: 12) puts it, "it is in this claim to be different that underlies both the view that the arts cannot be evaluated at all and, more moderately, that doing so requires the development of new methods and tools uniquely calibrated to the task." The methods question is an ongoing debate in the field. As

explained in section (2.3) of this chapter, both on the policy, practice and academic level people are still looking into the best way to articulate the value of culture.

Although humanities-based approaches to the arts impact debate have received a lot of attention and have provoked a number of discussions (Belfiore, 2010) and there is consensus that there might be advantages to a humanities- based approach to this area of enquiry (Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016; Galloway, 2009), they still play a minimal role in shaping the impact of arts and culture debate. Scholars have tried to argue about the "seemingly intractable debate on cultural value" (Walmsley, 2016) and argue for a shift from "an interminable epistemological obsession (that seeks to prove and evidence the value of culture) into a more complex phenomenological question, which asks how people experience the arts and culture and why people want to understand its value".

But as mentioned above, the question of value of the arts and culture is predominately an issue of *focus*, which determines the method in return. Until recently, the introduction of metrics for value in the arts has had predominantly economical and political reasoning behind. As funders are trying to save money and arts budgets are shrinking, it has become even more important to create transparent frameworks that allow judging the success of cultural projects and organisations. Madden (2001) has warned against using 'economic' impacts for advocacy and observes that "the 'economic' impacts obsession has largely been confined to the political arena or to projects funded by public money" (2001: 164). This 'need for justification' and the 'idolatry' of data has resulted in quantitative research to be accused of promoting a market-driven economy and has resulted in a fear that 'numbers' will become the only valid argument to advocate for public funding for the arts (Sishkova, 20015: 3). What is definitely true, is that "it seems vital to move beyond approaches that rely on numerical indicators if they are not accompanied and interpreted by more detailed analysis" (Martin, 2011: 85).

When it comes to the question of *focus*, we observe that for years the attention has been on the extrinsic values and the economic impact of arts and culture. However, Belfiore and Bennett (2010) remark that there has been a strong tendency to assume a relationship (both negative and positive) between the arts and social impacts, which underlies all arts, cultural and social policy. Many of the public benefits of the arts and culture are 'instrumental' in nature and the arts are advocated for non-arts benefits such as 'economic' impacts, educational attainment, improved health and a variety of other social outcomes. This brings Belfiore (2012: 107) to argue that the arts and culture have

ended up without an ideological defence when the case is made for a purely economic rational that refers not on the nature of the arts and culture but to their specific impacts. O'Brien on the other hand, (2010: 48) claims that the division between intrinsic and instrumental uses of culture "is potentially unhelpful and misleading".

The debates highlighted above bring to the surface the "definitional and boundary difficulties [...that] have bedevilled debate about what constitutes the value of culture and in what ways it may be evaluated and captured" (Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016: 6). As seen in the literature review, there are limitations to this evidence base, mainly because there is a need for longer-term approach to evaluating cultural and social impacts. More recently, we observe a shift to the quality of experience in relation to the transformative value of arts and how can this be measured. As Walmsley (2016: 15) puts it, reframing the notion of cultural value would have significant implications for all the stakeholders involved in the cultural ecology.

> These implications herald nothing less than a powerful cultural shift. For artists, arts organisations, arts educationalists and academics, this shift might involve renegotiating traditional relationships with audiences and participants, from capturing their data to actively thinking-with them (by hanging out more alongside them and getting to know them as people). It might involve a renewed focus on seeking out and capturing the everyday life of arts and cultural organisations; a shift in methods from marketing and metrics to anthropology and discovery, with academics and arts workers acting as facilitators and possibly even conduits of cultural value and meaning.

Taking into consideration the methodological approach and the focus chosen as central elements to the reflection around the value of arts and culture, in the next chapters these questions will be explored in relation to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes. Since there is no specialised literature documentation available that could serve as starting point to approaching the focus of this research[36], going through this general literature has revealed a number of issues and challenges that are related to the value and evaluation of arts and culture. Moreover, this lack of available documentation justifies the choice of the research subject and the decision to focus on a number of case studies to reveal how organisations deal with evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes that will be explored in chapter (5) in an effort to

[36] An exception to this can be considered the *Kultur wirkt/ Culture works* publication of the Goethe Institut (2016) that is the only coordinated effort to approach the issue of value and evaluation in international cultural cooperation. It will be further explored in the case study on the Cultural Innovators Network included in (5.5). Another exception is a recent book written by Gattenhof (2017) on models of evaluation in the Australian arts and culture landscape which includes information on three commissioned evaluations.

provide real life examples on how evaluation is approached by organisations on the ground. Finally, the framework explored in this section is taken into consideration when conducting the interviews in the empirical part of this research.

2.8 Closing Reflections

In the second chapter of this research the existing literature around the value and evaluation of arts and culture has been reviewed and the main debates around the question of value and evaluation of the arts and culture have been captured.

We have seen that the discussion around cultural value influences the decisions regarding frameworks of cultural valorisation and methodologies for evaluation, in their nature, application and validity. In this quest, the central question between the intrinsic and instrumental contribution of culture still dominates the debates. And this debate has been a spiral since its' beginning. As Behr et al (2016) put it though, "the problem with looking for intrinsic value is that it can become like splitting the cultural atom – every move away from a perceived instrumental value, reveals another subatomic particle of value of some sort". Despite efforts to reduce this divide, many conversations around cultural measurement and the value of culture go back to this distinction. One thing is however true: the choice of methods and focus is far beyond a random decision taken by academics, policy makers or practitioners. It has a political and social connotation on how we see culture and arts influencing individuals, organisations and the society as a whole.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, conceptualising, implementing and producing evaluation is always a value-production process. Dahler- Larsen (2011) explains that if we want to understand many of the norms, values, and expectations that we bring to evaluation, we should explore how evaluation is demanded, formatted, and shaped by two great principles of social order: organisation and society. In the first two chapters of this research, an effort to understand the society and the context in which international cultural cooperation programmes exist and function has been attempted. In the next chapter, the focus will be on organisations, on their experiences and their concerns related to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes. The following chapter (3) will serve as a bridge to the empirical research, where the principles of organisation and society will be examined in the context of EuroArab cultural cooperation.

Chapter 3: Questions and concerns around the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes- voices from the field

3.1 Presentation of the chapter

3.2 Background of the ENCATC Working Group on Monitoring and Evaluation of international and European transnational projects and European networks

3.3 Experiences and concerns from policy, research and practice

3.4 A European view on evaluation

3.5 Closing Remarks

3.1 Presentation of the chapter

In chapter (1) it became evident that international cultural cooperation can take different forms and can serve different goals. In chapter (2) we have seen that that the literature around the value and evaluation of arts and culture has focused more on a theoretical discussion regarding the intrinsic and instrumental role of culture while there is little evidence on how cultural activities and programmes are evaluated in practice. Even less is the evidence when it comes to international cultural cooperation schemes and programmes.

The questions that chapter (3) seeks to answer are the following: What are the experiences, opinions and concerns of practitioners, policy makers and academics regarding the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes? How do they best evidence the impact of their projects and programmes? And how are the on-going conversations about the value of culture reflected in their work?

The opportunity to deal with these questions in a more structured way and grasp the experiences and concerns of those involved in international cultural cooperation programmes was given in October 2016 at the first meeting of the ENCATC Working Group on *Monitoring and Evaluation of International and European transnational cultural projects and European networks*. The participation at this Working Group meeting was a unique occasion to assist in the discussions of a group of academics, practitioners and policy makers in the field and extract concepts, ideas and concerns related to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation. Although the focus was mostly on European programmes and projects, and specifically on European Commission-funded schemes, this experts' meeting contributed to this research by shedding light into the experiences, opinions and concerns regarding the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes.

This chapter brings together the concepts discussed in chapters (1) and (2) into the discussion about evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes. In the same time, it responds to the third objective of this research as identified in the Introduction, which is to voice the experiences, opinions and concerns of the people involved in evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes. The topic is approached here still in a more conceptual/ abstract level and a more generic overview is sought. Links to elements of the evaluation theory are also included in this chapter where necessary to shed light into different concepts. Finally, chapter 3 also serves as a

transition between the two theoretical chapters around international cultural cooperation (chapter 1) and the value of arts and culture (chapter 2) and the empirical study (section III) that will examine the application of the concepts and approaches into the EuroArab region.

The purposes of this chapter are:

- To voice the experiences and concerns of those involved in international cultural cooperation programmes and their evaluation and find out more about the approaches used;
- To identify the challenges related to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes;
- To introduce elements of programme evaluation theory and see how they are connected to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes;
- To examine how the on-going conversations around the value of culture are reflected in the opinions of those involved in international cultural cooperation programmes and their evaluation.

3.2 Background of the ENCATC Working Group on Monitoring and Evaluation of international and European transnational projects and European networks

The *ENCATC Working Group on Monitoring and Evaluation of International and European transnational cultural projects and European networks* emerged as a response to the need of having a discussion platform to exchange ideas and best practices in the field. As stated in the description of the Working Group (ENCATC, 2016), more and more ENCATC members are liaising with arts and cultural organisations and other institutions that are involved in managing and/ or participating in European programmes, especially those subsided by the Creative Europe programme, as well as Erasmus+, Horizon 2020 and other EU funded transnational projects. In the same time, in the past few years, the debates around the topic of evaluation have been intensified, in search of answers on

how to bring to the surface the value of the work of cultural networks and that of their membership as well as the outcomes and impacts of programmes and projects[37].

Two specific moments have been influential in the establishment of the Working Group:

- The discussions that took place during a workshop organised in the framework of the ENCATC General Assembly held in Lecce in October 2015 under the title *Monitoring and evaluation of international and European projects and on indicators for the evaluation of the impact of European networks;* and
- The discussions that took place during the Kick-off meeting for networks supported by the Creative Europe programme organised by the European Commission in October 2015, where cultural networks reconfirmed their desire to look for best practices in evaluation and monitoring. This lead the European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Agency (EACEA) to propose a working group on *Monitoring and Evaluation* where ENCATC was asked to lead the conversations on that specific topic.

Following the establishment of the Working Group, ENCATC launched an open call for participants. A total of 40 applications were received, what confirms that training institutions and cultural organisations across Europe are indeed eager to discuss the topic of evaluation and share practices. The Working Group kicked off with a face-to-face meeting in Brussels held on the 25th of October 2016. The attendees included representatives from the European Commission, universities, European networks, cultural institutions and consultancies[38]. As mentioned above, the opportunity to have in the same room a number of experts and people involved in and/ or interested around the topic of evaluation of international cultural programmes and projects was unique for this research. Although it cannot be considered as a focus group in itself because I was not the one inviting the participants nor was I the one moderating the conversation, it could be said that, methodology-wise, my participation in this meeting is very close to the observation method, where a researcher has the opportunity to observe subjects in their own environment- in this case in a working meeting of experts- and extract information from their affirmations and knowledge-sharing.

[37] See (2.3.3) for examples on how the discussion around the value of the arts has been dealt in different organisations.
[38] A detailled programme and the participants' list are available in Annex III and Annex IV respectively.

Opening the meeting, the President of ENCATC, Annick Schramme reaffirmed that the signal that ENCACT membership made about the need to discuss methods of evaluating arts and cultural cooperation projects and networks in Lecce in October 2015 was taken very seriously by ENCATC and thus the WG was established to organise this conversation. The work of ENCATC has been discussed in (2.3.3) as well where it has been shown that the issue of value and evaluation in arts and culture has attracted the interest of its membership. Pascale Bonniel Chalier, Chair of the WG, referred to the discussions that nurtured the establishment of the WG. More precisely she made reference to the on-going shrinking of public funding for the arts and culture and the increasing demands on cultural operators and artists to produce more valuable arguments in their search for public and private financial support and to the fact that competition among cultural and creative industries has intensified in the context of cultural globalisation[39]. She also underlined that the new cultural policy of the EU places even more pressure on the DG Education and Culture to prove the economic weight and growth in the cultural sector in order to maintain the assigned budget and that the EACEA has already set evaluation criteria according to each programme's objectives. Besides these observations, she also noted that very often evaluation in arts and culture is reduced to producing quantitative results or being used for purely promotional reasons and that there are very few indicators set up and defended by professional sector itself, especially when it comes to the field of international cultural cooperation. She finally mentioned that all the people that replied to the WG questionnaire mentioned that their expectation from the WG was linked to sharing evaluation methodologies.

The objectives of the WG in the long run were identified as follows:

- To better understand the priorities of the European programmes in relation to the evaluation of both transnational cultural projects and European networks;
- To share evaluation experiences of transnational cultural projects (mostly subsidised by the EU);
- To improve current evaluation methodologies for international/ European cultural projects and networks;
- To identify rigorous indicators for successful cooperation and share them with the EU and international institutions.

[39] In (2.2) and (2.3) I describe further the environment that has nurtured the so called 'evaluation society'.

As a first step to reach those objectives, the WG through its first meeting offered a platform where evaluation experiences were shared and the strategic framework for the WG was set. In the same time, the motivation and role of the participants in the long term as well as the establishment of a working plan for 2017 were discussed.

3.3 Experiences and concerns

Following the observations and notes from the WG, the discussions have been summarised for the purpose of this research in the form of topics raised reflecting the experiences and concerns of the participants and were connected to the overall questions addressed in this research.

3.3.1 Why should this question matter to us?

Alejandro Ramilo from the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) raised this question focusing mainly on the perspective of European Commission funded cultural projects. Ramilo introduced the concept of project evaluation and its importance for the overall EU funded projects based on previous EU evaluation practices in other domains (mainly humanitarian aid) questioning whether these practices could also be applied to the cultural sector. Furthermore, he explained that convincing organisations that they need monitoring and evaluation practices to track better their results and improve their work is their biggest challenge. Finally, he presented the Creative Europe cultural sub-programmes explaining that each strand has been conceptualised in order to give a response to a specific challenge identified. More precisely he said:

> "*The* [Creative Europe] *programme relates to specific issues identified beforehand. We expect the projects to do the same. And when they identify an issue, to ask where are the organisations and people in Europe that deal with that* [issue] *well. First identifying a problem and then seeking expertise from abroad".*

He also added that:

> *"Considering the weight of grants in the programme, the EU is relying on our grantees-partners believing they can deliver our priorities."*

This comment is very relevant to the subject of this research. It actually explains that when funding organisations conceptualise a programme, especially one supporting international projects, the latent aim is that these projects will transfer on the ground, in the realities of people and organisations, the funding institution's priorities, aims and objectives. Furthermore, this observation allows for a clear distinction between 'programme' and 'project'. In this case, for example, the Creative Europe is a *programme*

initiated and managed by the European Commission that supports *projects.* This means that although there could be similarities on how evaluation is undertaken for single (international) projects and on the other hand, for overarching programmes that support international cooperation, the approaches, evaluation questions, methods, aims and objectives might not be identical. A programme evaluation involves an analysis of more overarching aims and does not necessarily go deep into each single project. It relies however on the achievements of individual projects for its success. One could say that the evaluation of a programme is actually an evaluation synthesis of the single projects that constitute it.

This observation is also closely linked to what Shadish et al (1991:8) had observed: "evaluating programs is closely related to policy analysis, for programs are a primary mechanism for policy implementation". The added value of programme evaluation is that it can take a holistic approach that enables programme managers in making prudent decisions. When executed well, programme evaluation offers a solid guide for improvement and allows programme managers to give an accurate account of all aspects of the programme to its stakeholders. And in the same time, through programme evaluation, managers and policy makers can judge the effectiveness of public policies, programmes, or projects, as well as their management and implementation, for decision-making purposes (Felbinger & Langbein, 2006: 3).

As reflected in Ramilo's statement, the challenges that programme managers and policy makers face is how to engage those who implement projects to provide evidence on their outcomes. We have seen in (2.5.4) that 'the toolkit approach' has been widely criticised, however it is true that each funding organisation establishes its own criteria for reporting that can more or less account to an effort to document the impact of each single project. What Ramilo though is asking here is a dialogue: an engagement with the practitioners and academics to decide commonly on aims and objectives and on methods and approaches to document the work done.

Why should therefore this question matter to institutions? No one answer can be given since it depends on each institution and each programme. However, developing the capacity to evaluate better single projects and providing the conditions for practitioners to do it themselves in a productive way can only benefit the funding institutions and programme managers to document the impact of their programmes and assess the success of their policies and supporting mechanisms.

3.3.2 Experiences in evaluating international cultural cooperation

Since one of the aims of this Working Group was to share practices of evaluation, the participants explained how they deal with evaluation in their own respective environments[40]. Some examples of different approaches shared during the WG are mentioned below.

Kornelia Kiss from Culture Action Europe (CAE) explained how the organisation, which is actually a network of organisations, deals with evaluation and the efforts they make to visualise the impact of the network and to monitor connections[41]. More precisely she presented two initiatives of the organisation and underlined the on-going efforts of CAE to disseminate knowledge by sharing its findings with a broader base of stakeholders and members. The first one was an online tool that has helped the organisation map the connections of its' network with the headquarters and among themselves. This was achieved through a website analysis looking on mentions of connections on members' websites. By applying this approach, CAE aimed to check its outreach, but it also proved to be useful for its own members since it helped them realise their reach[42]. The approach was perceived from the WG as a potentially powerful tool to be used for the evaluation of partnerships of a network since it allows different colouring for different dimensions of cultural activity. However, a suggestion for the improvement of the tool focused on the need to organise a more qualitative questionnaire among CAE members or to think on how more real-life connections, in addition to website analysis, can be reflected in the tool. The second initiative was related to the on-going project *Measuring the impact of arts in society* that has allowed the creation of an online space where stories of social impact of the arts can be shared and easily accessible. The stories were collected and analysed based on a standard questionnaire and commonalities were sought. The next phase of the project includes a more qualitative in-depth analysis of four selected projects[43].

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[40] It should be noted that preliminary results from the case studies explored in this research were presented during the WG meeting but there are not referenced here because they are developed in detail in chapter (5).

[41] The work of CAE in relation to the value of arts and culture is also touched upon in (2.3.3).

[42] For example, their member organisation, Europa Cantanta, realised through this software that they reach out to 8 million people across Europe.

[43] The projects selected are:

- Archeological training for prison inmates;
- Jazz brass band of youngsters at risk;
- Young cultural mediators;
- Fighting old people's digital divide

While selecting the four projects, the project team involved was looking for diverse, representative projects from different sectors and addressing different target groups.

The ENCATC representatives introduced another perspective to this debate. Giannalia Cogliandro, ENCATC's Secretary General and Elizabeth Darley, ENCATC's Communications Manager presented the ways in which ENCATC analyses how its communication tools and strategy impact the network internally and externally. To estimate its multiplier effect, ENCATC follows a number of strategies, including:

- Internal evaluation of events where data is collected through questionnaires;
- Clipping evidence, including screenshots, e-newsletters, social media accounts-publications and events.[44]

The question of how organisations can better respond to the demands of policy makers for impact numbers and target audiences reached was raised by Julie Maricq, ENCATC's Community manager and website coordinator that explained the tools that the organisation uses to measure its outreach online[45] and their power to give tangible and numerical results on impact and outreach.

A relevant question was formulated in relation to the validity of quantitative versus qualitative approaches. In the ENCATC example we see that numbers are the primary form of evidence provided. In the case of CAE, we observe that although numbers of connections, or of people reached are the first step in the evaluation practice, the network is trying to document its impact applying more qualitative methods and using a story-telling approach. It should be reminded here that in evaluation, the practice is, especially when using qualitative techniques, to use multiple methods on the basis of 'triangulation'. This suggests that different sources should be used, with different sources of data and from different perspectives and it is done to mitigate methodological limitations.

The examples shared at this point provide information on how actually evidence is collected and communicated. In both examples, digital communication tools and online presence play an important role and are being explored at their most. Although there are

[44] For example, in 2015 they were able to estimate their audience numbers by contacting organisations that had mentioned them or by finding information available online. Following this, an impact assessment table was created in an excel format where data from the evidence collection is. Data were gathered from more than 243 example websites, social media and e-newsletters from 131 institutions.

[45] Among which she mentioned Google analytics, Moz, Facebook insights, Agora Pulse barometer, twitter analytics, followerwonk, BuzzSumo, Nuzzel, Bluenode.

certain limitations to this, communicating the results and the impact of each international organisations work raises the profile of the organisation and serves as an advocacy tool (as also seen in (2.3) and (2.4)).

3.3.3 The indicators' debate

Participants in the Working Group were very much interested in discussing the value of indicators in the evaluation practice. Alejandro Ramilo from EACEA underlined that the importance of indicators is that they give *"clear information, figures or stories"*, and can assist organisations to advocate for the added value of their work and provide valuable information on short-term, mid-term and long-term impacts. However, he underlined that even if pure management-related indicators are set to measure the success of a project, what is more interesting, and in the same time more challenging, is to identify project-related indicators that describe specific processes and outcomes. Moreover, he observed that when it comes to programmes' evaluation it is very difficult to establish a set of "u*niversal indicators you can use for all the projects"* and explained this as follows:

> *"The challenge is to create a framework. For networks, it might be easier because the vision is pretty much common. The big issue though is our cooperation projects, where you find everything and anything."*

One of the participants of the Working Group, Olga Kolokytha from the University of Vienna, raised an important point in this respect:

> *"*[The challenge is] *to identify the process to develop indicators and measurement for things that are difficult to measure. If you see throughout the years, the focus is shifting to money, growth. If you go to this direction, it is easier to develop indicators. The key point however is to have a balance- between what is easily assessed and more human factors. If this balance is maintained, then we can see the real usefulness of the projects."*

This last quotation reminds us the points raised around the value of culture in chapter (2) in regards to the intrinsic and instrumental value of culture. Other WG participants seemed perplexed around the issue of indicators as well. What is claimed to be the added value of indicators to such discussion is that they "can improve the quality of the public dialogue about the arts and culture by providing understandable quantitative components to what is often a visceral discussion" (Kushner & College, 2016: i). However, negotiating those indicators between programme managers, funders, policy makers and practitioners can be challenging- even more in a setting where different countries, realities, partners, ambitions and aims exist. Another concern among the WG participants was regarding the utility of indicators developed for a particular project and their

transferability, meaning whether if developed for a specific project they can be useful to future ones.

In (2.3.1) we have seen that policy institutions, especially on the international level, have put forward indicator frameworks in their effort to define measurable (quantitative and qualitative speaking) outcomes of policy interventions. It should be reminded here that cultural indicators frameworks have been criticised by different scholars that have highlighted the dangers they entail and have called for a deeper analysis of the theoretical background, the political and social issues and ethical questions that are involved in their development and application (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008; Duxbury, 2006). Difficulties with existing frameworks have also been identified by Madden (2005) who argues that there is confusion about what indicators are which often results in lack of quality data, unwieldy frameworks and vague policy objectives questions about the relevance to policymaking and programme delivery, differences in approach and lack of contact between agencies developing them. Madden (2005) also warns that cultural indicators can be meaningless if there is no clear context in which they are framed and that make the gathering of data meaningful.

On the other hand, there are also benefits to using indicator frameworks. Kushner and College (2016: i) remind us of the following:

- They can inform evaluation efforts as they enable to assess progress towards explicitly stated values and goals;
- They can be used as communication tools, by transforming complex information using language that can be easily understood by a wider public;
- They can give input to policy development since they collect data that can be used for evidence- based decisions;
- They can contribute to planning and forecasting, especially when they allow access to consecutive years of data;
- They can help set the foundations for decision making:
- They can enhance community dialogue by providing a common currency of language among funders, policy makers and professionals;
- They can help building partnerships by developing indicators collectively and reflecting on how to incorporate the arts into the value system.

It was clear though that one of the intentions of the WG and the desire of the European Commission was to build on the knowledge produced from the WG and provide a framework of indicators for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation projects. Although the endeavour might seem ambitious and Alejandro Ramilo from EACEA said in this respect that *"indicators should not be an obsession",* the constellation of the ENATC WG which brings together academics, practitioners and policy makers on the European level might prove being an enabling factor in producing something relevant and commonly accepted.

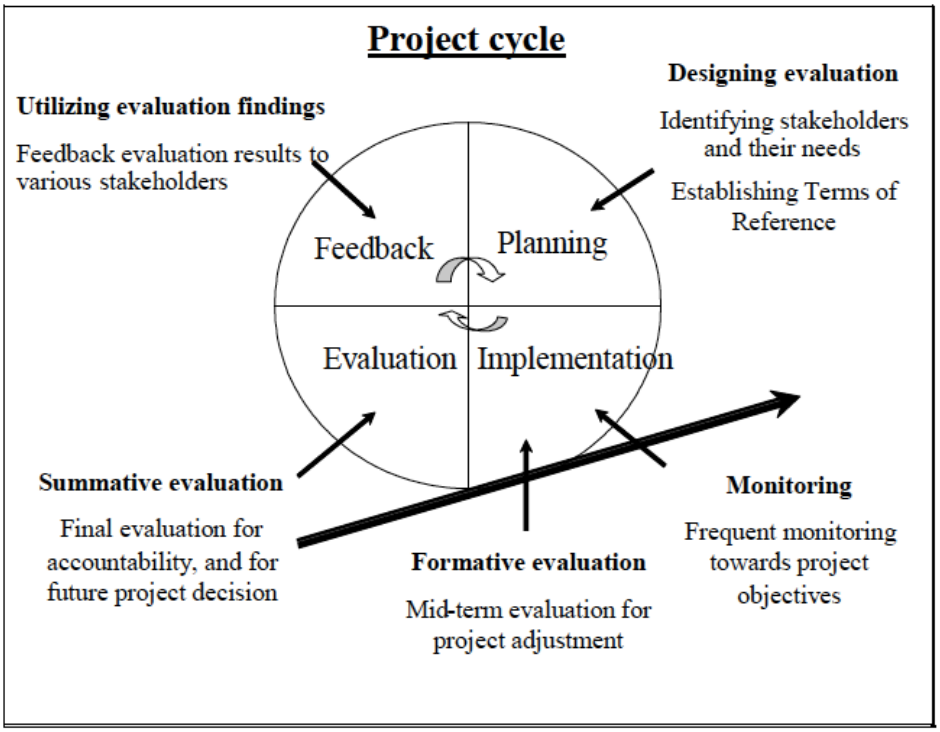
3.3.4 Formative or summative? Internal or external?

Participants in the WG also shared their reflection around when is the best moment to conduct an evaluation and whether it should be an internal responsibility or if an external evaluator needs to be brought on board. At this point a short reference to these concepts needs to be made.

Evaluation can be either *formative*, or *summative,* meaning that it can occur during the course of the programme or at its end. Formative and summative are terms that are used to describe the purpose to which evaluation is being realised. Formative is focused on contributing to the on-going development and improvement of the programme, whereas summative attempts to be an ex-post, independent, objective assessment of outcomes that assesses whether the extent to which the programme was responsible for the outcomes and potentially undertaking a cost-benefit or return on investment calculations. For these reasons, summative evaluation "tends to require empirical indicators, while formative evaluation tends to be qualitative" (Vanclay, 2012: 23). Scriven (1967) has linked formative evaluation with *internal evaluation* and summative evaluation with *external evaluation*. He saw formative evaluation as conducted during the operation of a programme where the feedback look remains inside the organisation to provide information for improving the programme or product. He saw summative evaluation as conducted at the end of a programme to provide potential audiences external to the programme or organisation, with judgments about the programme's worth or merit. Another division is made between *process evaluation* and *outcome evaluation*. From one side, process evaluation provides the necessary evidence for improving a programme and looks mainly into the effects on the participants, while outcome evaluation looks to demonstrate the effectiveness and impact of a programme.

Figure 3.1 locates evaluation as an integral part of a dynamic project cycle, which has the following stages: planning, implementation, evaluation and feedback. What is made clear from the figure is that evaluation is should not be regarded as one of the stages of the project cycle but it is rather a parallel process to all its stages. And this seems to be something that all participants present at the WG would agree on. However, putting it in practice is still a parameter to be further developed.

Figure 3.1 Evaluation as an integral part of the project cycle



Source: Cars (2006: 47).

The experiences of the people participating in the WG reflected different scenarios on how evaluation is incorporated in the cycle of their programmes and projects. Some have been evaluated internally, others externally, others during the project and others only at the end. There was absolutely no consensus around the validity or hierarchy of one approach in comparison to the other. The overall questioning though was summarised by Alejandro Ramilo as follows:

> *"It is good to combine internal and external evaluation. Internal evaluation builds on the institutional memory and self-assessment of organisations. External evaluation can be based on this to provide a critical – maybe not so positive- advice. [However], the definition of internal mechanisms for evaluation can become challenging. Can you develop indicators of satisfaction that you can compare? Can organisations go beyond the 'activity-related indicator' and ask which is my mandate, my objective? Then it becomes easier* [to define] *which are the* [relevant] *indicators".*

What Ramilo underlined comes at the heart of the question around the evaluation of arts and culture and reminds us of the previous question raised in (3.3.3) in relation to indicators. The challenge he identifies is relevant here because it requires to think less about the effectiveness of a project in terms of numbers (of activities, or people addressed, etc) but to bring the focus on the question of mandate, of aims and objectives. This becomes even more complicated in international cultural cooperation programmes and projects where meanings, concepts, aims and objectives need to be negotiated among different partners and stakeholders.

3.3.5 Reporting versus grasping the long-term impact

It became clear during the discussions within the WG that although evaluation could be approached and interpreted in different ways from different organisations, the overarching concern is related to financial and time resources for executing an evaluation. Evaluation requires rigorous evidence collection and in-depth analysis of the data collected. It was evident from the WG discussions that exactly for these reasons, purely reporting arguments have motivated evaluation so far and it has been very difficult to track a programme or projects' impact over time. Therefore, a shared concern among WG participants was that the practice so far is that evaluation is part of a reporting obligation to the funding organisation and this does not allow grasping the long-term impact of projects. Ramilo, representing the programme funder/ policy side, explained:

> *"The reporting requirements are linked to budget execution. The problem is that in principle the report should be sent to us in two months, which might not be the adequate timing. I am trying to push for an alternative system that gives info on the long term".*

This reality was identified as a major challenge when it comes to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation projects: that when it has to be done for reporting reasons, only the short-term outcomes can be reflected. Angela Dominguez, from the Association Européenne des Conservatoires explained her concern in relation to this as follows:

> *"For us the most challenging part is timing. Only after two years of our big project, we can see its results, what happened afterwards. It is very challenging to prove on the spot and to find the right indicators and describe them in the application and the process".*

One aspect of possible long-term impacts was mentioned by Alejandro Ramilo, who raised a question around the possibility of defining indicators for measuring partnerships, and especially how they unfold beyond a project's life cycle. More precisely he said:

> *"Can we define indicators for partnerships? For example, one indicator can be if the cooperation continues with or without EU funding and how many further partnerships we can support with our projects. It would be interesting to see if, for example, we have 5.000 projects, how many different partnerships do we have, how many survived and how many were generated because you have put people together."*

In relation to this, based on her own experience with managing an international cultural cooperation project, Emilie Wacker, Director of Public Relations and International Development of Théâtre National-Bruxelles mentioned that sometimes a project gains its own life and viability and this can be a bigger achievement than what was foreseen initially from the project. Therefore she raised the question of how can organisations plan to evaluate the unforeseen:

> *"If you are surprised by something, probably you did not foresee it and there is the challenge: how can we be enabled to evaluate all the impact that we did not plan ahead?"*

These concerns are especially relevant in international cultural cooperation projects and programmes since investigating into the long-term impacts requires a lot of commitment from programme organisers and project partners on the long-term and often in different countries and realities.

3.3.6 Engaging partners and stakeholders in evaluation

Emilie Wacker, presented the challenges of the *Cities on stage* project (one of the last programmes supported by the Culture programme) to 'translate' to the rest of the international project partners the need of shifting from evaluating for simply technical/ reporting-driven reasons, to having a tool to better evaluate the impact of the individual partners' and the overall project's activities. She explained that what they developed:

> *"*[…] *was more a self-evaluation because at that time it was not requested by the programme and we didn't have money for external evaluation. However, we struggled to explain to the partners that we need to do evaluation not only because it is necessary, but because it is interesting".*

This example shows that evidence- collection can be challenging when evaluating an international project where multiple partners are involved. Wacker explained that being

a programming theater and engaging with other theater organisations, they did not have the 'mandate' to ask the partners questions on economic data or evidence data. She also explained that a reason why perhaps organisations are not so engaged with the evaluation practice is because they are very often stuck into *"doing"* and not so much in *"reflecting". "We are very good in doing theater, but not necessarily about talking about it",* she said and she added that usually not all partners have the same capacity and level to produce valuable content when it comes to demonstrating the impact of their work and the cooperation. However, her feeling is that since they have run an international cultural cooperation already, they have gained the experience of management and of knowing what they should expect. This experience feeds into the work that they are doing right now by creating a new collaboration platform (submitted as a Creative Europe proposal for funding).

Although Wacker focused mostly on the aspect of engagement and collaboration among partners in the evaluation practice of international cultural cooperation programmes and projects, a certain level of collaboration is also needed among funders, programme manager, project managers and other stakeholders- including the evaluator in the case he/ she is an external one. Although not explicitly touched upon, the need of collaboration among different stakeholders involved in the evaluation practice was raised during the WG. This reminds us of the value of collaboration in evaluation summarised in Torres et al (1996: 11) as follows:

> Collaboration in evaluation is powerful: it enhances use by different audiences; it values individual's experience and opinions; it contributes to the sense of ownership; it produces better understanding and depiction of the context; it leads to more useful recommendations; it educates clients/ audiences about the program and evaluation; it helps identify and resolve conflicts before the end of an evaluation. In essence, it embraces different perspectives and lets many voices be heard.

Still the most optimum ways to encourage such collaborations are to be defined. The WG participants did not report any good practice, but they did agree that involving all partners and stakeholders is a prerequisite for a meaningful evaluation.

3.3.7 Contribution of universities and research

Emile Wacker mentioned that there could be benefits from collaborating with universities on the evaluation of international cultural cooperation projects. She explained that in the project *Cities on stage* they did not put in place such collaboration so far mainly because they were not convinced with how evaluation is being approached

from the economics academic field, which, as she said, does not represent the values of the sector. Finally, she stated that they would have preferred to work with arts and cultural management research institutions instead, but did not invest the necessary resources for establishing these connections.

From her side, Pascale Bonniel presented one more example of monitoring and evaluation of an EU funded project, EEEMERGING- Emerging European Ensembles, a large-scale European cooperation project promoting the emergence of new talent in ensembles music. The evaluation of this project has been assigned to the University of Lyon2 in partnership with the University of Arts in Belgrade. Bonniel explained that the first step when they started being engaged in the evaluation was to understand the partners, their ecosystem and network and their capacities to help young ensembles. The focus of the evaluation in this case, as she said, is being placed on the relevance of the system and on the European added value. She underlined the need to understand that evaluation is a training process that takes place throughout the process of the project and that well-defined monitoring elements can change the way a project is implemented. She summarised the advantages of researchers and research institutes to conduct evaluations of international cultural cooperation projects as follows:

> *"As researchers, we have a set of qualitative methods, we know how to identify process, how to analyse the evolution of a professional career for example. For me, culture is a process. So if you cannot measure process it is difficult to measure the impact of cultural projects and we do not have a lot of studies on the evaluation of processes".*

One thing that needs to be clarified at this point is that often evaluation is confused with research[46]. There is, however, a substantial difference. Although the methods for research and evaluation might be the same, evaluation "is a form of applied research, not performed for the benefit of science as such, but pursued in order to inform the thinking of policy makers, practitioners, program participants and public" (Pawson & Tilley, 1997: xiii). In this way, evaluation should be understood as "an important, practical exercise that is theory-based and linked to substantive issues in the other social sciences" (Shadish et al, 1991: 7).

[46] This is also an observation deriving from the empirical research where many people interviewed were using both words interchangeably.

3.3.8 Evaluation of international cultural networks

One more point that should be clarified here is that examples shared in this chapter in some cases refer to cultural networks. Although the WG includes international cultural networks in its scope of work and the European Commission is interested in this aspect of international cultural cooperation as well, for the purpose of this research it will not be further explored since the focus of this research is on international cultural cooperation programmes. It should be admitted though that there are quite some similarities and the reflection for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes could serve the cultural networks debate and the other way round. First of all, the efficiency of networks depends on the results of their membership, in the same way as the efficiency of a programme depends on the results of individual funded projects. Another reason why mutual learning can be achieved is related to the nature of networks and programmes of international cultural cooperation. As Pehn (1999: 44) had observed, "the difficulty of assessing the results of the work of networks is an enormous handicap to their development" because there are no concrete results in the short-term. "The main thing, therefore, is knowing how to quantify the network's activity to a certain extent and to show clearly that its activity has a certain value in terms of cultural development" (Pehn, 1999: 50). In this respect, Staines (1996: 10) had proposed that:

> It is vital to set flexible and appropriate evaluation criteria in order to assess the work of the cultural networks. […] Classical quantitative methods are inadequate. It is necessary to assess the area, which separates absolute control from a total absence of control.

These reflections bring a valuable contribution to the discussion around the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes since they could be valid for them as well. Assessing the results of programmes and projects on the long-term has been identified by the WG participants as one of the main challenges in their evaluation as well as how to quantify these results.

3.3.9 Skills for evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes and projects

Another challenge identified among WG participants was related to the lack of knowledge and capacity. The participants actually questioned the level of knowledge and capacity of the sector's professionals to use monitoring and evaluation tools. More particularly when it comes to the skills of professionals in the arts and culture sector in regards to evaluation, Pascale Bonniel said:

> *"*[Those who do evaluations] *are trained in a different way, in the field and they have intuitions. They will use quantitative results, the numbers of visitors, of spectators, the size of the audience, the structure of the audience, but they are not focused on process. And at the same time they ask for money for projects that are more focused on process. They really do not know how to make the evaluation. When they use evaluation, it is just to tell a story, to say they are the best in the world as a communication tool, they do not have an objective".*

This concern brings to the discussion the need of curriculum development in evaluation practice for cultural managers and operators, which to a certain extent was acknowledged by the participant universities' representatives in the WG. Since the skills regarding evaluators of international cultural cooperation projects and programmes is one of the questions that this research aims to tackle, it was considered interesting at this point to make reference to a set of general skills and attitudes for evaluators identified by Torres et al (1996: 236-237) and which are reflected in Table 3.1

Table 3.1: Skills for evaluators

Social interaction skills	Skills needed to negotiate an evaluation plan and to report findings effectively.
I**mpartiality**	Unbiased approach. Integrity, honesty and no conflict of interest.
Methodological innovation	Ability to reshape themselves to deal with complex questions.
Cultural responsiveness	The responsibility to recognize one's own cultural preferences and make a conscious effort to restrict any undue influence they might have on the work. Understanding how different cultures learn and process information for communicating effectively.
Soft skills	In listening, facilitation, negotiation and group dynamics.
Ethics and values	Ethical approach to data and organisations. Value-based approaches.
Organisational change, consultation and facilitation.	Comfort with maintaining on-going, collaborative relationships and the ability to relinquish control.

Source: Developed by researcher based on Torres et al (1996: 236-237).

These skills mainly refer to external evaluators, and not so much on internal evaluation capacity. However, they give some insight on the aspects that should be kept in mind when assigning the evaluation task to someone. We can observe that in these identified skills, the evaluator acquires a role of helping organisations learn through inquiry,

reflection, dialogue and action planning and of facilitating stakeholder ownership of evaluative information and findings. What is particularly interesting in the setting of international cultural cooperation is the aspect of cultural responsiveness, especially because this kind of programmes and projects are addressed to different cultural realities. This aspect will be taken into consideration in the empirical part of the research, where it will be explored if the skills identified are applicable to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and projects.

3.4 A European view on evaluation?

Before closing this chapter, an acknowledgement should be made in regards to the contribution that the European Union has had on the evaluation practice. As mentioned above, the focus of this WG meeting was on European Commission funded projects, although other examples were shared as well. Undoubtedly, this aspect marked a certain framework to the WG discussions and the observations made. This is mainly because the European Commission is one of the main funders of many activities and projects of the organisations that the people participating at the WG work for or are engaged with. This means that there is a common concern on how to deal with evaluation in a very specific setting. In the same time, as mentioned above, this WG was created within a very specific circumstance, which is related to the overall effort of the European Commission to evaluate the impact and achievements of the Creative Europe programme. The European Commission's representative in the meeting, Alejandro Ramilo from EACEA, explained that a mid-term review of the Creative Europe programme is currently under way by an external consultancy and will be finalised by the end of 2017. This exercise might well introduce changes to the structure of the programme. He also explained that the external evaluators have already contacted different project leaders, sent questionnaires and revised the reports submitted so far by funded organisations and now the challenge is to aggregate this information and work on specific indicators for defining the impact of the programme. The overall question that the Commission has posed for the evaluation is how supported organisations have contributed to the objectives of the programme[47].

[47] A few months after the ENCATC Working Group meeting, the European Commission launched a public consultation to gather comments and perspectives on the relevance of the Creative Europe programme's objectives, the effectiveness of the measures taken to achieve them and the efficiency of their implementation. The consultation aimed to establish the added value of the programme in relation to the challenges and opportunities of cultural and audiovisual sectors, compared to what could be achieved by Member States only. Its results will be available at the end of 2017.

Moreover, as seen in chapter (1) and especially in (1.5) and (1.6), the European Union has conceptualised and put in place a number of policies and programmes in support of culture, both within European grounds and with other priority regions. EU's policy objectives are largely reflected in the funding programmes conceived. It should be acknowledged that in the cultural field, the European Union policies have been a main trends-setter and have also been influential in the cultural relations with other regions. The wide variety of programmes funded by the European Institutions in different sectors have introduced an evaluation practice, which although not clearly defined (and even more for the cultural field), it has been the subject of several guidelines, standards and concept papers (Stame, 2013). And although one can claim that "there is no such thing as 'European' evaluation", Stame (2006a, 2006b) observes that since the 90's, evaluation became widespread as a result of the EU structural funds and other programme requests, which were also transferred to national programmes and policy instruments. Therefore, one of the main drivers of European evaluation has been the request to evaluate EU funded programmes, which was seen as an opportunity to spread "good evaluation practices on a continental scale" (Stame, 2013: 366). This context has influenced to a great extent the diffusion and institutionalisation of evaluation throughout Europe, however it has not been thoroughly or specifically explored for the cultural field.

3.5 Closing Reflections

In chapter (3) it has been shown through the experiences and opinions of people participating in the ENCATC WG, that the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and projects presents particular challenges because of the typically large number of stakeholders involved and the multiplicity of possible outcomes.

This chapter instead of looking for answers to the research questions, it actually confirmed them. Through the participation in this WG it became obvious that the research questions are pertinent and meaningful to people involved in international cultural cooperation regardless their capacity. They also reflect their concerns and desire to find answers. It was also shown that the academic community, policy makers and practitioners are more and more concerned and engaged with this topic.

At the closing of the meeting, Pascale Bonniel said: *"It is important to have proposals to improve evaluation methodologies"*, reconfirming the *raison d'être* of the WG. The topics

that arose as important to follow up and to investigate further have a clear link with the research questions of this thesis:

- How can we create a framework of commonality across the different areas where people are operating in international cultural cooperation and to create a set of indicators that can give comparative data?
- How people, especially practitioners and evaluators, do better evaluation?
- What are the profiles of people that evaluate international cultural cooperation projects? What are their skills? And how can training in cultural management contribute to their needs?

This chapter drew together concepts explored in the first two chapters of this thesis that constitute the theoretical backbones of the research into a more practical perspective by voicing the experiences and corners of people involved in international cultural cooperation programmes and projects. As it was explained in the presentation (3.1), this chapter serves as a bridge to the empirical research. The questions raised here will be accompanying the unfolding of the findings from the empirical research focusing on the EuroArab cultural cooperation, especially in chapters (5) and (6) that capture voices and opinions from people from the field of international cultural cooperation and evaluation.

III. Empirical Research:
Focus on the EuroArab region

Chapter 4: The state of affairs in EuroArab cultural cooperation

Chapter 5: Evaluation of EuroArab cultural cooperation schemes :
one meta-reflection and four case studies

Chapter 6: Experts' opinions on EuroArab cultural cooperation and evaluation

III. Empirical Research: Focus on the EuroArab region

In section II, the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that undergird this research have been presented. The first theoretical backbone of this research was related to international cultural cooperation, the different concepts related to it and the forms it is taking today in a rapidly changing world. In the same chapter special attention was paid on how the European Union has encouraged international cultural cooperation within its geography and beyond it. The second theoretical backbone explored the contemporary *zeitgeist* of evaluation and how it has influenced the debate around the value of arts and culture. The two main theoretical backbones were connected in chapter (3) where the topic of evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and projects was introduced through the voices and concerns raised from policy makers, academics and practitioners at the first meeting of the ENCATC Working Group on the evaluation of international cultural cooperation projects and cultural networks.

Section III constitutes the empirical part of research and comes to shed light to the research questions by taking stock of what has been explored in Part A' and focusing specifically on the EuroArab region to examine the dynamics of value-making and evaluation of international cultural cooperation schemes.

More precisely, chapter (4) *The setting and reality of EuroArab cultural cooperation* focuses on sketching the scene and understanding the EuroArab region, geographically and conceptually as well as how international cultural cooperation is exercised within this geography, looking especially into actors and programmes active in the region. Chapter (5) *Evaluation of EuroArab cultural cooperation schemes: one meta-reflection and four case studies* responds to the call for more robust evidence of the evaluation of international cultural cooperation schemes by exploring how evaluation is conceived and implemented in four EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes. A special attention is given to the human factor in the evaluation process. The chapter opens with a personal meta-reflection as an evaluator of a EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes and a note on the methodology of case studies research. Finally, chapter (6) *Experts' opinions on EuroArab cultural cooperation and evaluation* brings to the surface the opinions and concerns of ten experts around the research questions and the preliminary findings of the empirical research.

Chapter 4:
The state of affairs in EuroArab cultural cooperation

4.1 Presentation of the chapter

4.2 EuroArab identities, geographies and a short (recent) history of EuroArab cultural relations

4.3 Observations on cultural realities and challenges in the Arab world

4.4 The panorama of EuroArab cultural cooperation: actors and programmes

4.5 Closing Reflections

4.1 Presentation of the chapter

Chapter (4) examines the nature and scope of cultural interactions between Europe and the Arab world. The aim is not to be encyclopaedic or to present a comprehensive historical perspective, nor an in-depth analysis. This chapter's aim is primarily to justify the selection of the focus of the empirical research and to understand the motives of international cultural cooperation in the region and secondly, to set the scene for understanding and analysing in which environment the cultural cooperation schemes selected as case studies and analysed in chapter (5) are conceived, developed and implemented. Going deeper into understanding the overall context in which EuroArab cultural cooperation has evolved allows to establish better connections between what the aims and objectives of different schemes are, through which mechanisms they are being implemented, their relation to the actual needs in the region and what is their added value. This reflection is needed also in order to understand the evaluation processes of the selected programmes that are analysed in the next chapter. Finally, this chapter answers the first one of the research objectives related to how international cultural cooperation is exercised and conceived.

At the initial stages of this research and given that my background and the field of main operations and professional activities has for years been primarily European, it was not taken for granted that I had enough knowledge of the Arab region. As explained in the Introduction of this research, since 2009 I have had the chance to collaborate with the Council of Europe on a number of training courses on intercultural dialogue and capacity building for young people in the EuroArab region and this sparked my interest in this geography and the cooperation practices.

Recognising this 'partial' ignorance, it was considered necessary already at the initial stages of this research, to approach, listen, discuss and interpret what is the cultural reality in the Arab region. That was the reason why as a first step of this research in 2012 a number of exploratory interviews with artists and cultural operators from Arab countries were undertaken and three field trips (Lebanon and Tunisia in autumn 2012 and Tunisia again in September 2014) were organised in order to observe the cultural sphere and discuss with people on the challenges they face in their environment but also on the advancements of the sector in the Arab countries. Without this commitment to meet, to interact and to understand, the research would have been purely theoretical and abstract. The interviews and the visits to different cultural venues during the fieldtrips, together with the interviews undertaken for the case studies (chapter 5) and the ten

expert interviews undertaken at the last stage of this research (chapter 6), have informed the knowledge and have contributed to the understanding developed in the field of EuroArab cultural cooperation and are in a way or another reflected in this section. Annexes 4 and 5 provide more information on the interviewees.

Therefore, in this chapter the interpretations are backed on conversations and insights deriving through these interactions. This chapter is also informed by desk research, information available online on websites of different organisations and information and data coming from the available literature and reports from various institutions involved in EuroArab cultural cooperation.

Starting from trying to understand what is European and what is Arab from a geographical perspective, in (4.2) the two 'geographies' are explored from a conceptual point of view with a focus on the Arab side, since the European side has already been analysed in chapter (1). The EuroArab binary is then approached through a short reference to the history of EuroArab encounters and to the environment that has been created after the Arab Spring. Following this analysis, three periods in the recent cultural relations history of the EuroArab region are identified and a reference is made to the main socio-political developments that have influenced each period and the main stakeholders that have influenced the course of things.

The next part of this chapter (4.3) is devoted to sharing some findings and reflections from the empirical research related to the current situation of arts and culture in the Arab region that give a window to understanding trends and challenges in contemporary EuroArab cultural relations.

By conducting this research the contemporary web of EuroArab cultural relations was revealed. It can be said that it is dominated by an unprecedented number of structures for funding, training, exchanges, mobility, co-productions and touring that are available to both Arab and European cultural organisations and individuals from the creative and cultural sectors. The last part of this chapter (4.4) tries to make a preliminary mapping of this panorama. This 'mapping' is approached in two different ways. On a first level, the institutions and stakeholders involved in supporting EuroArab cultural cooperation are examined according to their function and their programmes are mentioned. On a second level, the different support initiatives are grouped in six categories depending on the nature of the support they offer. This exercise allows an understanding of the panorama

of actors involved in the EuroArab relations but also of the nature of their programmes, the aims and expected outcomes they seek to reach. This final part serves also as a bridge to chapter (5), which focuses on analysing selected case studies of cultural cooperation programmes/ schemes and how they are evaluated.

Finally, whenever possible, reflections included in this chapter are also connected to issues discussed in Section I of this research and applied specifically in the EuroArab region. The rich material gathered and exposed justifies why the region has been the focus of this research. Without being an exhaustive analysis of the EuroArab cultural relations panorama, this chapter sets the scene for the analysis to come.

In general, the first chapter of the empirical research aims to tackle the following questions:

- How is international cultural cooperation reflected in the EuroArab region? What is the state of affairs of EuroArab cultural relations? How has it been influenced by historical events and geographical conditions as well as by sociopolitical realities?

- What are the characteristics of cultural life and challenges in the Arab region that attract international interest and define the scope of international cultural cooperation?

- Which are the main stakeholders and structures supporting EuroArab cultural relations? In which ways? What has been the role of the EU in this process?

4.2 EuroArab identities, geographies and a short (recent) history of EuroArab cultural relations

> Anyone who is fascinated, attracted, disturbed, horrified or intrigued by the Arab world is bound from time to time to ask himself certain questions. Why those veils, those chadors, those dread beards, those calls for assassination? Why so many manifestations of conservatism and violence? Are all these things inherent in such societies, in their culture and religion? Is Islam incompatible with liberty, democracy the rights of man and of woman, with modernity itself? (Maalouf, 2003: 47).

In chapter (1), especially in (1.5) and (1.6), answers were sought on what is European and on what metaphors and mechanisms the European culture and the European external cultural relations narrative have been constructed, while tackling issues related

to the question of cultural diversity, cultural development, mobility, intercultural dialogue and the relation with the 'Other'. Here, instead, a short effort to approach what is understood by the term 'Arab' is made.

This is achieved through reviewing issues related to identity and geography and drilling into the EuroArab geography- especially in the Mediterranean cosmos- to understand how this 'imagined geography' has been constructed and how the recent history of EuroArab cultural relations in parallel to sociocultural events have influenced the current state of affairs in international cultural cooperation among the two regions.

4.2.1 One hand cannot clap: introducing the EuroArab

During my field trip in Tunis in September 2014, I bought a little book under the title '*The son of a duck is a floater' and other Arab sayings with English equivalents* (Arnander & Skipwith, 2007). Going through it and its illustrations when writing this thesis was an amusing way to see similarities in the two languages and observe how inferences are made. There I found that in the Arab language people use the proverb that I considered interesting as a title to this sub-chapter: "One hand cannot clap". You need two hands to applaud, to cheer, to draw attention, to approve. You need cooperation to achieve something. In the English language the equivalent would be "It takes two to tango". Two to make the moves, two to follow the choreography, two to succeed. In our research the one hand is the 'European' and the other one is the 'Arab' (or the other way round, there is no particular order). These same two are the ones that form the 'tango pair' in this research.

The 'European' part has already been explored in the previous part of this thesis, especially in (1.5) and (1.6), therefore, the focus here is mostly on the second part of the equation.

4.2.1.1 Questions of geography and identity

So what is 'Arab' anyway?

Obviously, there is no single answer to this question. 'Arab' is an imperfect label aiming to denote the broad geography and identity that encompasses Arab-speaking populations. Although it is impossible to provide a scientific clarification on this much-debated topic and this is not the aim this research, there is at least a need for delimitating what is understood as 'Arab' in the scope of this study.

First of all, there is a confusion regarding geography. The region is variously referred to as the Middle East, MENA, the Arab world, the Mediterranean basin, Southern Mediterranean… Acronyms and definitions of this part of the world might be confusing while very often they are used interchangeably. Although there are different historical, geographical and especially political connotations to each denomination, I myself fall in the trap of using these terms interchangeably in this research as well. Am I sure which countries fall under the label 'Middle East and North Africa'? Or which ones fall under the label 'Southern Mediterranean'? Which term includes the Gulf countries?

The most common terms used in international organisations, academic and political entities are MENA and the Arab World. In general terms, MENA covers an extensive region, extending from Morocco to Iran including all Middle Eastern Mashreq and Maghreb countries. Due to the geographic ambiguity and Eurocentric nature of the term 'Middle East' some people prefer to use the terms 'Arab world' and WANT (West Asia and North Africa) or NAWA (North Africa- West Asia). The term 'Southern Mediterranean' is used primarily by European organisations, given the proximity and the historical and political connotation it entails[48]. The question whether Israel- given its geographical location- is included or not in each term depends on the entity that uses it. The same applies to Turkey. The term 'Arab world' escapes from this ambiguity since it refers to all the 22 Arabic-speaking countries of the Arab League and it is understood here as encompassing the Arab people in general, regardless of where they actually live.

Another confusion derives from a more conceptual basis. First of all, there is often confusion between the terms 'Arab' and 'Islamic'. The second term denominates a wider area of the Muslim world. The confusion derives from the fact that the Arabic region is identified as the cradle of Islamic culture and civilisation. However, the religious aspect that is often attributed to the term 'Arab' is confusing since it creates a prism of looking at the EuroArab relations through the lenses of religion, through the binary Christianity-Islam, which is definitely not the approach to be taken in this study. Another issue related to that is that not all Arab communities are necessarily Islamic. Following the emergence of Arabic nationalism, there are people that refer to themselves as Arabs but are not of the Muslim faith. "Their identity is not derived from a shared religion but is a function of a shared language, culture, past, and, more important, future" (Shabout, 2007: 3).

[48] In the following section a short analysis is made on what the Mediterranean means as a metaphor in EuroArab cultural relations.

Undeniably, religion has acquired a heavy emotional charge throughout the centuries in the region. If we go back in history, we could observe that the first encounter between the European and the Arab worlds has actually been an encounter between Christianity and Islam, these "two conquering monotheisms" (Maalouf, 2003: 52). During the last years, religion has also been used as a generalist concept and has been attributed negative meanings when connected with episodes of violence or fundamentalism. Maalouf (2003: 68) even notes that "some people are always ready to blame Islam for all the dramatic episodes, past or present, that have occurred in Muslim societies" but he adds that "not only is this attitude unfair; it also makes world events completely unintelligible".

Without entering deep in this topic, it has to be made clear that the 'Arab world' is not a single entity. The Arab world hosts various cultures and subcultures - even within each country- that share a number of common unifying elements, the strongest and most important being the Arabic language. Moreover, as Anishchenkova warns (2014: 12), "it is important to recognize that Western formulations of individual identity might not be always applicable to Arab contexts" and it should not be seen as monolithic concept, although "it is also possible to trace some overarching tendencies in configurations of cultural identity throughout the area".

Arab authors have engaged deeply with the question of the Arab (cultural) identity. Kassir's (2005) *Being Arab: the Arab malaise*, Suleiman's (2011) *Arabic, self and identity: a study in conflict and displacement* or Sheehi's (2004) *Foundations of modern Arab identity* are only examples that demonstrate the quest for further elucidation and articulation of the concept. What becomes obvious is that in regards to identity formation, in the Arab case the relation with the West has also played its role. This dynamic was explained in sections (1.5) and (1.6) for Europe as well, especially in regards to the relation to concepts regarding the identity formation in relation to the 'Other'. Moreover, with Said (2003), Orientalism gained further meaning to the Arab world as well and came to be understood as an ideological concern about Western hegemony over and vision of the Orient. This awareness led Said (2003: 325) to claim that even "the modern Orient participates in its own Orientalising". In the same line, Sheehi (2004: 34-35) observes that:

> Arab identity came into itself through the negative image of the West as Other… the Arab intellectual of the nineteenth century began to conceptualize his selfhood in terms of his own otherness to Europe.

The modern conception of an Arab identity was formulated in the mid-twentieth century as the idea of pan-Arabism that dominated in the 1950s and '60s as a reaction to the European colonial power. Zubaida (2002: 34) notes that the "'European impact' (a euphemism for conquest and military- economic dominance)" brought about responses that "varied from the wish for a wholesale incorporation of European models to the assertion of the superiority of some original pure Islam, corrupted and subverted by tyranny and superstition, but whose restoration to original purity would bring about reforms and transformations to rival Europe". Principally, this could be translated as an ideological form of resistance against colonialism and as a source of unity in constructing an Arab bloc following the demise of the Islamic power. Shabout (2007) explains that this encounter and the confrontation with the colonial powers of Europe marked a change in the Arab conception of the world in modern history.

> The colonial presence in the Arab world marked the final stage in the long, complex, and controversial relationship between the Middle East and the West, a relationship that for centuries fluctuated between cooperation- a willingness to share based on a common heritage- and increasingly violent conflicts (Shabout, 2007: 5).

At the same time, another element in understanding what is Arab is that Arab identities are continuously contested and negotiated in relation to diaspora and transmigration. Said (2011: 109-110) uses Mona Hatoum's art to give a vivid example of this, describing her work "as an art that travesties the idea of a single homeland", as does she in her own life as Palestinian abroad. Maalouf in his book *In the Name of Identity* (2003) reflecting on his own identity as a Christian who grew in Lebanon and later moved to France, explores how violence can erupt between different groups of people when they limit the definition of their identity to only one facet of their being. Furthermore, Goudal (2011: 79), using the examples of Algerian artists that live in the diaspora, claims that, often, geographical classifications fail to give answers to the question of where the origin of an artist is. Therefore, it didn't come as a surprise to hear from one of the people that I interviewed for the section with the experts interviews (chapter 6), Krystel Khoury, that comes from Lebanon but has lived for more than 12 years in France, "*My head is a bit EuroArab in itself*" when I told her about the scope of my study.

"It's not pleasant being Arab these days". Those are the words with which Kassir (2005: xi) opens his book *Being Arab: the Arab malaise*. Stereotypical representations of Arab people are often presented in media and other creative expressions and have been

historically and predominantly negative. Acts of terrorism and vandalisms have also influenced those stereotypes, making being Arab hard sometimes.

4.2.1.2 The microcosmos of EuroArab relations: the Mediterranean

> It is in fact the major feature of the sea's destiny that it should be locked inside the largest group of landmasses on the globe, the 'gigantic linker continent' of Europe-Asia- Africa, a sort of planet in itself, where goods and people circulated from earliest times. Human beings found a theater for their historical drama in these three conjoined continents. This was where the crucial exchanges took place" (Braudel, 2001: 15-16).

It is considered important at this point to make a reference to the Mediterranean as a geography and as a metaphor since it is the geographical and conceptual space per excellence where EuroArab cultural relations have evolved and where "for centuries two zones of civilization have rubbed shoulders with and confronted each other" (Maalouf, 2003: 52). Also, as mentioned in the previous section, Europe has introduced a whole new meaning to the Mediterranean through its political discourse and programmes implemented in the region.

Geographically speaking, the Mediterranean is a sea covering an approximate area of 2.5 million km^2 and almost completely enclosed by land: on the north by Europe and Anatolia, on the south by North Africa and on the east by the Levant. Geography has played an important role in the creation of the Mediterranean 'region'. Despite the fact of being a sea, Trump (1980: 3) even defines the Mediterranean as "a peninsula in reverse". As the meeting place of three continents- Africa, Asia and Europe-, the Mediterranean has many of the qualities of a frontier where peoples and cultures meet and mix. But, "the Mediterranean is not merely geography" (Matvejevic, 1999: 7).

Historically speaking, it was around the Mediterranean Sea that the Phoenician, Egyptian, Greek, Latin, Arab and Persian cultures originated and developed- and we should not forget that all these civilisations have always been crucial to understanding the development of modern civilisations up to the present day. Braudel (2009: 157) even argues that "the history of the Mediterranean constitutes a mass of knowledge that defies all reasonable synthesis". But "the Mediterranean is not merely history" (Matvejevic, 1999: 10).

Geography and history might bring to the Mediterranean a unique character. However, exactly because the Mediterranean has been "the meeting place of three continents and the melting pot of even more civilizations, it has never enjoyed a lasting power balance" (Gasteyger, 2006: 3). Being a geographical frontier and a meeting point of the history of many important civilisations, the Mediterranean has been a space where the quest for power and the effort to impose over the 'Other' through conflict, have predominated.

Geography, history and conflict have united and separated the Mediterranean in the same time. Even today, the Mediterranean basin, which counts as the 'cradle of civilisations' is still from one hand characterised by pronounced political, cultural and socio-economic heterogeneity and in the same time by conflicts between and within states for political, historical or cultural reasons. Moreover, the concept of Mediterraneanism (Herzfeld, 2005) is a construct that acts as Orientalism in the sense of reinforcing stereotypes that refer to nostalgia of the colonial Mediterranean.

In a way, the Mediterranean is the 'microcosmos' of EuroArab relations. It is also metaphorically a geography where the major issues of our globalised world can be summarised: the divide between the North and the South, environmental changes, religious fundamentalisms, long-lasting power struggles, wars and hostilities, migration, political turbulences, questions of cultural identity. Matvejevic notes (1999: 10) "nations and races have conjoined and disjoined here over the centuries; more people have lived with one another and clashed with one another here than perhaps anywhere on the planet", while Oriol (2011: 102) states that "to focus on issues pertaining to the Mediterranean region is to analyse the power struggles of the globe in a condensed scale".

The Mediterranean is the result of the mix of human beings and the cross fertilisation of ideas and images. It is a geographical space but also a space nurtured by (collective) memories and nostalgia. It is a historical 'matrix' where "antagonism and conflict, unity and diversity, complementarities and antagonism, dialogue and fanaticism, unity and diversity, fundamentalism and tolerance" (Morin 1998-1999) have coexisted throughout history and have survived to the present life. This highlights the role of the Mediterranean as "a mediator and boundary, as zone of transition and agent of comparison and differentiation" (Horden & Purcell, 2000: 460). And as a unique space for intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

The Mediterranean has been a region of boundaries. Horden and Purcell (2000: 22) argue that "the most sharply defined boundaries are the ones that have customarily been taken to fracture any concept of the wholeness of the Mediterranean basin, are in every sense political" and continue by explaining that this emphasis on politics is the result of:

- The creation of the nation- states and their determination to establish 'national frontiers' based on the criteria of ethnic exclusiveness;
- The use of war for the settlement of disputes;
- The long history of profound religions, mainly the division between Christendom and Islam, which has further enhanced the division between North and South.

Often the Mediterranean as a term, as a geography and as a cultural and political formation has dominated EuroArab cultural cooperation discourse. For many years we have been talking about 'EuroMediterranean cooperation' and still a lot of funding lines and cooperation structures use the terms 'Mediterranean' or 'Southern Mediterranean' to denominate their countries of activity. However, during the last years we observe a shift towards using the more generic term 'Arab countries', covering countries beyond the Mediterranean and reaching as far as the Gulf and sub-Saharan Africa. Already in a publication dated in 2007, the Cimetta Fund was mentioning that "it is essential to think of opening up geographically and not to limit the region to the Mediterranean basin" (Neisse, 2007a: 31). It is, however, necessary to recognise that the 'Mediterranean' still plays a role in the EuroArab cultural relations as a metaphor and as a socio-political construct.

4.2.1.3 'Imagined geographies': so what is EuroArab?

Said (2003) uses the term 'imagined geographies' to denote the perception of a space based on images, texts and discourses and refers to colonisers that created them to make sense of the 'other' lands, like the Arab world. The term 'imagined' is used here to define a region that in fact goes beyond geography in strictly space- related terms and requires a 'conceptual stretching' in our understanding of cultural identities in line with the contemporary socio-political setting[49].

[49] For example, going though the TANDEM Shaml programme participants for example, it is not striking to see that Astrid originally from Germany represents an organisation based in Cairo, while Farah Makki originally from Lebanon represents a European network.

This all being said, it is important to warn the reader that the terms MENA, Southern Mediterranean and Arab world or region as well as EuroArab, EuroMed, Mediterranean are often used interchangeably. Kisic (2016: 36) makes a similar observation for the terms South East Europe, Balkans and Western Balkans. She explains that all denominations are reflecting political interpretations and therefore all those references have become "immensely dynamic" and "relatively fluid". The same applies to the Arab world, where different bodies have used different terms to referring to the region but also draw different geographical boundaries depending on their political frameworks. She also claims that "this diversity of geopolitical frameworks used by international actors, as well as the feelings they produce within the labeled countries, has had an effect on the programmes, funds and opportunities available within the region" (Kisic, 2016: 36). One can say that the same applies to the Arab region.

Therefore, for the scope of this study the term 'EuroArab cultural cooperation' denominates a region that not only covers the EU or the Southern Mediterranean countries (besides Israel) but all the geography that can be understood as European and Arab in their broader meaning, attributed to people that have a European or Arab background but live irrespectively in the different regions or even beyond it.

4.2.2 Making a long story of EuroArab cultural relations short

Often the most challenging part when conducting a research is to put one's thoughts and findings into order. Sometimes the readings get too dense, the information gathered becomes too vast and the possible interpretations of things can generate multiple choices of combining and framing knowledge. For this section, an interviewee - unconsciously- gave a way out to this dilemma and helped in framing the three different periods of recent EuroArab cultural relations. I met Khadija El Bennaoui in person for the first time when I was in Jordan in 2014. She was participating at a CONNEXXIONS meeting and the launch of the Arabesque 40 network. El Bennaoui was chosen as one of the experts with whom some of the research findings were discussed for the purposes of chapter (6) and with whom I had a more in depth conversation around EuroArab cultural relations[50]. The three periods she identified were: the period during which, in a post-colonial setting, the foreign cultural institutions in the Arab countries played the primary role in EuroArab cultural relations, then the period following September 11th and finally the period following the Arab Spring.

[50] Khadija El Bennaoui's profile is presented in more detail in chapter (6).

It is important to point out that this section does not constitute an exhaustive historical review of cultural relations between Europe and the Arab world that would require going centuries back to be comprehensive. What is discussed here are the main elements related to the contemporary era of EuroArab cultural relations. The focus is on particular 'social' and 'historical' events in relation to 'political' developments that frame the context of EuroArab cultural relations. The role of institutions and foundations in this respect is touched upon as well. This framing allows reflecting on how EuroArab cultural relations have developed throughout time but as well in relation to socio-political circumstances.

4.2.2.1 When to cooperate there is a price to pay

El Bennaoui explained that she started working in the cultural field in Morocco in a period when where *"cultural diplomacy was colonial"* and when *"to cooperate there was a price to pay"*. She explained this by giving an example that at that time if you wanted to get support from a foreign cultural institute, there were in a position to say *"we will support you only if you do it in our language, if you take our choreographer, etc"*. Those were the times when, in her own words *"arts got trapped in a very official network of states"*.

Traditionally, cultural foreign presence in the Arab countries marked the framework of EuroArab cultural cooperation. At this period it was mostly on a nation-to-nation basis and a result in most cases of the "colonial enterprise" (Fabre, 2004: 8). Xuereb (2013) observes that during the last decades the involvement and domination of various European states in the political, social and cultural life of the territories to the South has changed drastically from the colonial period but is still related to that long and determining chapter of colonialism in the development of relations in the Mediterranean.

At the end of the 90's, the *EuroMediterranean Process* was initiated and marked the framework in which bilateral and regional relations between the then 15 EU members and the 14 Mediterranean partners would operate. The *Barcelona Declaration* (EuroMediterranean Conference, 1995), that was adopted in 1995 at the Euro Mediterranean Conference, identified three fields of action that remain until today the broad working areas of the partnership:

- Political and security partnership, establishing a common area of peace and stability;
- Economic and financial partnership, creating an area of shared prosperity;

- Partnership in social, cultural and human affairs, developing human resources, promoting understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies, and particularly between women and young people.

The importance of the *Barcelona Process* was that, apart from establishing a greater cooperation in the region as a priority of a political nature, it emphasized the social and cultural aspects of this cooperation and brought them to the same level of attention as the political and economic cooperation. The cultural sector was recognised as its 3rd pillar. In the *Barcelona Declaration* it was underlined that "dialogue and respect among cultures and religions are a necessary pre- condition for bringing the peoples closer". Special attention was also given to the promotion of 'dialogue between cultures and civilisations', where it was stated that:

> Given the importance of improving mutual understanding by promoting cultural exchanges and knowledge of languages, officials and experts will meet in order to make concrete proposals for action, inter alia, in the following fields: cultural and creative heritage, cultural and artistic events, co-productions (theatre and cinema), translations and other means of cultural dissemination, training.

Moreover, the Declaration underlined that "greater understanding among the major religions present in the EuroMediterranean region will facilitate greater mutual tolerance and cooperation" and that "support will be given to periodic meetings of representatives of religions and religious institutions, as well as theologians, academics and others concerned, with the aim of breaking down prejudice, ignorance and fanaticism and fostering cooperation at grassroots level". The Euromed Heritage and Euromed Audiovisual programmes where then put into place and continued until recently.

As El Husseiny (2008: 34) observes, after the Barcelona process "large well funded programmes were rushed on both sides of the Mediterranean, with non-governmental organisations here and there seizing the opportunity and designing activities that link directly to the working of the official documents that came out of this Process". This was the time as well when in the Arab countries the cultural field became increasingly more emancipated and independent initiatives and cultural institutions started being created.

4.2.2.2 Post September 11th

The 11th September 2001 attacks and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq marked a new era in Western-Arab relations and subsequently in EuroArab relations. To some extent, the

Arab world became "the subject of a certain fixation" (Akrimi, 2008: 35). Media content regarding Arab people was promoting predominantly negative stereotypes while in the same time a new wave of interest arose into getting to know the Arab nations in the echoes of Huntington's influential book on the clash of civilisations (Huntington, 1996).

This interest has spilled over into the realm of culture and has resulted into a number of art exhibitions on the contemporary Arab artistic scene (Bashiron Mendolichio, 2012; Shabout, 2007). Arts and culture were identified as having the potential to engage positively in strategies of re-constructing stereotypes and promoting intercultural dialogue. During this period, several funding programmes were initiated and several cultural projects were supported through EU instruments in the Mediterranean area. However, as Bouquerel and El Husseini observe (2009: 7) there was not up to that point "any coordination or strategy to foster synergies between these actions or to ensure that the cultural field was covered in an articulated way".

On the European side, the 2004 EU Enlargement introduced a new dimension to the relations of EU with its neighbors. With the *European Neighborhood Policy* (ENP) introduced in 2004, the Barcelona Process became the multilateral forum of dialogue and cooperation between the EU and its Mediterranean partners while complementary bilateral relations were managed mainly under the ENP and through Association Agreements signed with each partner-country[51]. In 2005, the Barcelona Summit agreed on a five- year work program (EUROMED, 2005a) and a *EuroMediterranean Code of Conduct for Countering Terrorism and migration* (EUROMED, 2005b) was added as a fourth key pillar of the Partnership. In parallel and on the initiative of the French government, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) was launched in 2008. The cooperation agreements were re-launched in 2008 under the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and this re-launch was an opportunity to render relations both more concrete and more visible with the initiation of new regional and sub-regional projects.

The year 2005 was also marked by the establishment of the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) for the Dialogue between Cultures in the Mediterranean, which created a new

[51] In 2004, the Commission launched the European Neighbourhood Policy to address all the countries beyond the EU's borders, and not just Eastern Europe as initially intended. For the countries in North Africa and the Middle East, the ENP would complement rather than substitute the regional EuroMediterranean Partnership (EMP), strengthening the bilateral relations between the EU and individual countries.

momentum in the EuroMediterranean cultural relationships and raised a lot of expectations from the cultural and civil society fields about the huge potential of this opportunity. Moreover, in their meeting in Athens in May 2008, the Ministers of Culture of the EuroMediterranean Partnership decided to launch a process leading to a *EuroMediterranean Strategy on Culture*. This is also the period when the European Commission published the *Agenda on Culture in a globalised world* (European Commission, 2007) that re-affirmed the EU interest in engaging in cultural dialogue and exchange with different regions of the world, a commitment also reflected in establishing 2008 as the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

For the period from 2007 to 2013, the EU's development action in the field of culture was mainly financed through two types of instruments:

- The implementation of policy at national and regional level was supported by geographical instruments such as the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI);
- Within the thematic entitled *Investing in people*, 50 million euro were allocated to culture under the heading *Access to local culture, protection and promotion of cultural diversity an*d there was a programme that focused on the development of policies that allow better access to and presentation of local culture while offering opportunities for cultural exchange, improvement of mutual understanding and the presentation of local and indigenous values.

In this framework, two tendencies could be observed. From one hand, a growing interest among many European cultural practitioners to explore and establish cooperation with partners from the Arab side. And in the same time a huge gap in knowledge and insight of the context of cultural practice in the Arab region (European Cultural Foundation, 2008: 74). Therefore, until this period cultural cooperation still remained sporadic and rather fragmented (European Cultural Foundation, 2004: 11). Based on this reality, a number of studies were undertaken during this period in an attempt to explore and better understand cultural production mechanisms, cultural structures, processes and challenges in the countries of the Southern Mediterranean (Bouquerel & El Husseini, 2009; European Cultural Foundation, 2004, 2008; Neisse, 2007b; 2008[52]).

[52] The last mentioned study was even commissioned by the European Commission to a team composed by a 'European' (Fanny Bouquerel) and an 'Arab' (Basma El Husseini) expert with the task to provide an analysis into the needs of the cultural sector in the Southern Mediterranean and

What was happening at that time in the Arab region though? El Bennaoui mentioned that this was the period where a strong awareness among the cultural micro-cosmos and the civil society in the Arab countries was raised. This awareness was dictated by an urge for independence from foreign funding support. Basma El Husseiny, one of the founding members of Al Mawred, the organisation that has become a reference in EuroArab cultural cooperation, in her interview at the ECF publication *Another Europe* (Dietchmair & Ilic, 2015: 370) recalls that at the time that September 11th happened, she was working for the Ford Foundation and noted that their work had became more conservative. She then realised that if she wanted to continue working for trying to help people to do things, something else was needed from the Arab side that would improve the situation in the region. In another occasion, El Husseini (2008: 36) has written the following:

> Why do we sit still waiting to be invited to a dialogue we did not initiate, or take an active part in conceiving? My feeling is that there is only one reason: the absence of true mutuality. While we know exactly what we want from Europe, we don't have a clue as to what Europe wants from us. This might sound like a generalization, but Europe seems to be too eager to give us all that we want and more and we sometimes struggle to cope with all that is offered; and hastily rush to change our working modes and our legal and political systems in order to be able to 'receive'. More importantly, we don't know what we can offer Europe.

That was the period – in El Bennaouis's words- of "*let's not depend on foreign support, let's create our own funding mechanisms"*. As Mermier notes (2016: n.p) "in the field of artistic creation, one of the key events of the 2000s was the launch of multiple association-type initiatives for the promotion of Arab artists, in particular those of the new generation". Mermier further observes that most of these initiatives had national roots, even though their actions and networks had a regional and transnational dimension (for example Askal Alwan in Lebanon, the Qattan Foundation in Palestine and the Kamel Lazaar Foundation in Tunisia). At the same time, other foundations from the very beginning adopted a more regional perspective, as stated also in their names (for example the Arab Image Foundation, or the Young Arab Theatre Forum) that imply "the existence of a common culture shared beyond national differences" (Mermier, 2016: n.p). That was the period when Al Mawred Al Thaqafy was created.

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suggesting orientations for the elaboration of this strategy on behalf of the European Commission to be taken into consideration for the elaboration of such a strategy.

Since that first moment the role of Al Mawred Al Thaqafy was on three levels: a) to support individual artists through a grant programme and travel grants, b) to change the cultural environment by raising cultural management standards through training and publications and c) to improve the funding by advocacy and by establishing new funding models. In the same time, further service providers for the arts and culture emerged during this period in or from the Arab region. The most prominent ones are the Young Arab Theater Fund (currently Mophradat) and the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC), incubated by Al Mawred[53].

Finally, during this period as well, there was a clear investment through the facilitation of the European Cultural Foundation to support the development of cultural policies and cultural capacity in the region in close cooperation with Al Mawred Al Thaqafy, planting a significant seed for what was to become the current field of EuroArab cultural relations, to which more detailed reference is made in (4.4).

4.2.2.3 Post 2011

A significant moment that marked the course of EuroArab relations was the Arab Spring that gave an opportunity to revise the EU's diplomatic narrative towards the region. The Southern Mediterranean countries were brought to the spotlight of attention and several instruments were created since then in the name of democratic transformation processes in the region.

A lot has been discussed and written on the 2011 Arab uprisings. For many, the Arab Spring actually started from an episode that had as protagonist a young man: on the 17th of December 2010, Mohamed Bouazizi, a 26-year-old vendor from Sidi Bouzid in Tunisia set himself on fire in protest against the confiscation of his produce cart. From that moment, the revolutions evolved in a domino process. People ran to the squares and to the streets, they got together, they claimed their rights, they initiated and gave 'rhythm' to the protests. The Arab Spring is often mentioned to have been the source of a contagious revolutionary mood for European societies as well: thousands of people run to the streets from Spain to Greece and from there to the UK and other countries, expressing their indignation to the current political, social and economic situation and requesting better conditions. These revolutions brought hope and confirmed the interconnectedness of the EuroMediterranean/ EuroArab region.

[53] Their role is further discussed in (4.4).

Hamid Dabashi in his book *The Arab Spring* (2012) argues that the 2011 revolutionary uprisings that have engulfed multiple countries and political climes in the Southern Mediterranean, were driven by a "delayed defiance" - a point of rebellion against domestic tyranny and globalised disempowerment alike- that signifies no less than the end of post-colonialism. He also argues that what the Arab Spring brought to the surface was "a retrieval of a cosmopolitan worldliness that was always there but repressed under the duress of a dialectic sustained between domestic tyranny and globalized imperialism" (Dabashi, 2012: 11). This sense of 'cosmopolitan worldliness' is also what brought people from both sides together during the revolutions and what at that moment gave the aspiration that avenues of dialogue and cooperation among civil society and people themselves could open. The revolutions that took place during the Arab Spring, as Olga Rodriguez (2012: 14) says in her book *Yo muero hoy*[54], "have been a state of mind, an attitude dominated by an optimism adopted not from naivety or ignorance, but from the awareness of the risk that choices incur" because "only from the belief that change is possible, one can manifest, fight and even put his life into danger"[55].

In this context, the Cimetta Fund, the organisation that per-excellence works on EuroArab cultural cooperation, responded by releasing an *Action Plan on Mobility and Artistic Development in Europe and in the Arab world*. The opening words of the Action Plan are significant to understanding the context created after the Arab Spring (Cimetta Fund, 2011)[56]:

> The Arab Spring has brought about a paradigm shift culturally, socially and politically. In this sense, defining a new action plan for actors of cultural cooperation between Europe and the Arab world is timely. While the founding values on which the European Union was built are put into question as borders are reinforced, the cultural component is recognised as a key element of the making of conceptual processes that allowed Arab civil society to liberate itself from dictatorship and open up the path to democracy. If we continue to support artists in the long term then we favour the rebalancing of artistic production flows and we develop innovation in the societies along the Mediterranean coast and beyond.

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54 "Yo muero hoy" means "I die today" and was one of the phrases that young people during the revolution used to express their determination of fighting for their cause.

55 Translated from Spanish by researcher. Original text: "Las revoluciones árabes han sido un estado de ánimo, una actitud dominada por un optimismo adoptado no desde la ingenuidad o la ignorancia, sino desde la elección consciente de sus riesgos. Solo desde la certeza de que el cambio es posible se puede protestar, luchar e incluso arriesgar la vida".

56 It is interesting to note that the action plan is backed by the French Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs, the French Ministry of Culture and Communication and the French embassies in Madrid and Rome.

The EU's strategic response to the Arab Spring came as early as March 2011 with the joint communication of the EU High Representative and the European Commission proposing *A partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean* (European Commission, 2011a). This communication proposes the 'more for more' principle, under which increased support is to be offered on the basis of mutual accountability to those partner countries that advance the most in the consolidation of the reforms. Another joint communication was released on the 25th of May 2011, which initiated the launch of *A new response to a changing Neighbourhood* (European Commission, 2011b). This new approach underlined the commitment of the EU to support partners engaged in building deep democracy, support inclusive economic development and provide the mechanisms and instruments to deliver these objectives. It clearly states, "the partnership will develop with each neighbor on the basis of its needs, capacities and reform objectives" (European Commission, 2011b: 2). During 2011, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission also developed a number of initiatives and proposals, such as the *Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity* (European Commission, 2011a), the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) review and made some decisions about financial allocations towards the region. Moreover, the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), which existed as an instrument even before the Arab Spring, doubled its investment was doubled aftertwards, while its added value was claimed to be "its independence from governments, its reactivity and its complementarity" (Europeaid, 2012: 8).

How does this setting translate to the arts and culture sector? Referring particularly to the Arab region, Winkler and Faltin (2014: 24) mention that before the revolution "the cultural field was marked by conflicts between the hardened state sector, independent institutions and initiatives (often financed with foreign funds) as well as an increased religious- conservative trend". My observation is that almost all the people interviewed during this research made a reference in a way or another to the Arab Spring. The people interviewed in 2012 were more positive about the promises of the Arab Spring although there was certain a scepticism about the real meaning of the Arab Spring and the revolutions in Europe and about the way it has been used to serve political goals. Fathi Heddaoui, a renown Tunisian actor and Director of the Hammamet Cultural Centre whom I interviewed during my field visit in Tunisia in December 2012, said in this respect:

> *"Now it is a moment of transition, with all the problems that this implies. But what is positive is the freedom of expression. There is no more a Censorship commission for theater and cinema. There was one before but in disguise and was giving the written approval so that a theater work could be distributed or not. The 'acquis' is freedom of expression. Now the institutions need to follow".*

Where are we today when it comes to EuroArab cultural cooperation? El Bennaoui said in this respect, *"I am digesting",* meaning that we need to wait and see. The environment in which cultural encounters and collaboration between Europe and the Arab world take place today differs significantly from last century's traditional cultural diplomacy paradigm. Since the Barcelona Declaration, many programmes and initiatives have been set in motion in the belief that dialogue and cooperation among societies could play a decisive role in promoting mutual understanding, reconciliation and tolerance, and in creating a vital, stable and prosperous EuroMediterranean/ EuroArab area. In the 15 years that followed the Barcelona Conference, the socio-political environment has changed remarkably. Additional financing instruments and programmes have been created to face up to the new set of circumstances and to foster greater dialogue between peoples. A variety of initiatives in the sector have now been approved and implemented. Even more, following the Arab Spring, European and international programmes and schemes supporting cultural activities, collaborative projects and training, in the EuroArab region have multiplied[57].

Currently though, a gradual shift from the investment in the Arab region can be observed and is related to a change of narrative: now we are not only talking anymore about the Arab world outside the European geography, but also and gradually more and more, within European geographies. The reality of migration, of war and displaced populations is dictating this gradual shift in the political agendas and actions. The ways in which it will define the future of EuroArab cultural cooperation are yet to be unfolded.

4.3 Observations on cultural realities and challenges in the Arab world

In this section, observations from the field trips, interviews and review of the literature are put together, as well as desk research regarding the current cultural life in the Arab countries and some challenges identified (4.3.1). Moreover, the ever-growing interest that artistic creation from the Arab world is gaining explored, as it is affecting the cultural scenario in the Arab countries (4.3.2).

[57] An analysis of some of these initiatives is undertaken in (4.4).

4.3.1 The thematic universes of an epoch

As Freire (1970) notes, "people can tri-dimensionalize time into the past, the present, and the future". According to him, each epoch is "characterized by a complex of ideas, concepts, hopes, doubts, values, and challenges in dialectical interaction with their opposites, striving towards plenitude" and "historical themes are never isolated, undefended disconnected, or static; they are always interacting dialectically with their opposites. Nowhere can these themes be found anywhere except in the human-world relationship. The complex of interacting themes of an epoch constitutes its 'thematic universe'" (Freire, 1970: 101).

In the following paragraphs I am going to try to sketch some of the 'thematic universes' identified in terms of contemporary challenges and realities in the Arab world in relation to cultural life, cultural policies and artistic production. The choice to make reference to these thematic universes is because they are considered to have influenced the role and form of intervention of institutional and non-institutional actors that are active in the web of EuroArab cultural relations and that are further analysed in section (4.4).

4.3.1.1 Civil society, freedom of expression and the public sphere

Reem Kassem was one of the first people interviewed for the purposes of this research back in 2012. At that time Reem was working at the Arts Department of the Library of Alexandria where in 2010 she became the Head of Performing Arts Programming. She has been programming and coordinating the monthly performing arts programme and the performing arts festivals of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA), trying already from that capacity to establish international cultural cooperations and spaces for intercultural dialogue.

In February 2011 she established her own organisation: AGORA for Arts and Culture. AGORA is an organisation with the endeavor of reviving the concept of the real ancient Greek agora as a gathering place and a venue for 'self- expression' through arts practice and provide an outlet for creative involvement through productions, education and dissemination of arts and culture. Reem explained that *"people need places for encounter"* and she added that *"from the 'Agora' in the Greek cities, throughout the 'space' in the Islamic cities and finally to the 'square' in modern cities, we can easily monitor the important role of public spaces which give the opportunity to people to express themselves and verify the concepts of democracy that tightens the sense of belonging and efficiently creates links between the members of the community".*

One of the projects she worked on through AGORA was *Artistic cooperation through intercultural learning* in cooperation with the organisation Une Terre Culturelle (Marseille- France) and the Deutsch-französisches Forum Junger Kunst (Bayrouth-Germany) and funded by L'Office Franco-Allemand pour la Jeunesse. The project aimed at bringing together young artists and arts managers from three different countries (France, Germany and Egypt) in a series of three workshops in order to discover the cultural realities of the three cities and to produce a joint project that was presented in the Public Space Festival in Alexandria in April 2012. Moreover, Reem was one of the candidates of the 2012 Euro-Mediterranean Award for Dialogue Between Cultures by the Anna Lindh EuroMediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures (ALF) and Fondazione Mediterraneo (FM).

Why did I choose to share Reem's story here? Actually for a number of reasons. First of all, in order to highlight her desire to work outside formal structures to bring about change. The Biblioteca Alexandrina is a well-established institution and Reem had a lot of possibilities to pursue interesting projects there. But she also wanted to work on the ground, pursue her own projects and establish dialogues with other parts of the world in the way that she and the people that worked with her in AGORA wished. This is a demonstration of the rising importance of civil society and independent organisations. Secondly, because Reem talks about the importance of public space, that although it has always existed in the Arab countries where there is a lot of 'street culture', it has during the last years, and especially after the Arab Spring, acquired a different meaning, a more emancipated one. Again here, the role that civil society has played to 'occupy' and 'domesticate' that space has been pivotal in the last decades. Even if procedures and legal frameworks are not enabling such initiatives, working in the public space has become a new form of conversation allowing artists and cultural operators to address different topics, raising environmental, urban, social and legal concerns among others (Geagea, 2016)[58]. Finally, because her nomination for the award came as recognition for her engagement in relation to civil society and culture, showing the ever growing importance that these two are gaining in Arab societies- and not only. A free, voluntary and not manipulated civil society is an essential part for the functioning of the society and a clear indicator of its democratic heart. In the Arab region however, civil society has been said to be a 'delayed' concept. In this respect, Dragićević Šešić (2010: 243) notes that:

[58] The Temporary Art Platform is a Lebanon-based organisation that produced the publication *A few things you need to know when creating an art project in a public space in Lebanon* tackling and providing a tool guide on the legal and administrative challenges and opportunities (Geagea, 2016).

> In a majority of the Arab countries 'civil society' is a new and seldom used term in political debates. However, this does not imply that civil society does not exist. The way cultural life was traditionally organized in neighborhoods, associations, clubs and cafés as spaces for cultural circles and debates, and the way in which the young generation of artists is entering the international art market and cultural cooperation, both endorse independent, civil cultural production and dissemination.

Additionally, freedom of expression remains a crucial issue in Arab countries. Lestarić (2014) in *12 impossibles- stories by rebellious Arab writers* collects forbidden or censored stories by contemporary Arab writers. Saghieh et al (2010: n.p) observes that even in Lebanon, "this oasis of freedom in the Arab world that enjoys a climate of relative openness, free thought and creativity, guaranteed by the Constitution", there are "cracks in the basic laws and practices meant to protect these freedoms". While in Egypt, another study (Ezzat et al, 2014), highlights the failure of legislation to address freedom of artistic expression. Culture thus becomes a "critical space for reflection and doubts, developing cultural and artistic systems from a resistance culture in a colonial period to a contemporary culture of dissent in authoritarian states" (Dragićević Šešić, 2010)[59].

4.3.1.2 Who's intercultural dialogue is it anyway?

In 2011, Laura Ghaninejad and her partner David Yon set up *Cine(m)assalia: Débats et cinemas autour de la Mediterranée,* in Marseille. The idea of setting up Cine(m)assalia came a few years before when the second issue of a cultural publication which she manages *Les Dérives* was dedicated to two film makers based in Lebanon and Algeria. Laura realized then that there was a need to showcase the work of independent filmakers in the Mediterranean and question the production and circulation of images in the region. Cine(m)assalia aimed at tracing the changing history of the places and of the people that live in the Mediterranean, using cinema as the medium to achieve this.

Cine(m)assalia organised film screenings of Mediterranean artists in Marseille and in other French cities, followed by a debate. *"Images allow to touch contemporary social issues; today everyone has the possibility to make images -and this has a value of a testimony; but cinema, especially documentary cinema, can be our eyes in other parts of the world",* explained Ghaninejad during our interview, although underlined that *"art can*

[59] The role of the independent artistic and cultural scene has been at the heart of the Young Arab Theatre Fund's work (today Mophradat) in the 2000s when they organised a series of informal meetings of independent cultural spaces in the Arab world based upon the realisation that in Arab countries a number of independent artists started working outside the mainstream, the governmental, where official culture is promoted, and the commercial, which is dictated by a monopoly of supply and demand.

help to build intercultural dialogue, but this is not the only goal of art; artists create for deeper reasons".

For Laura, *"what is most important is to meet the people; to go where they live, to see how they create, how they work, what is the economic and social situation in which they live and not only watch it in movies"*. *"Then we can work together, but first we need to meet"*, she added and recognised that with the Union for the Mediterranean *"there are more exchanges, structures and opportunities to do this; although we should be aware that there are other interests as well behind".*

Laura's story is just one story among thousands of other artists and cultural operators, that are trying to establish 'organised'[60] intercultural dialogue encounters in the EuroArab region. While the gap between the West and the global Arab community widens, arts and culture appear to offer a way to bridge the divide as a window into different societies and belief systems. Bashiron Mendollichio (2011: 19) observes that artists and cultural operators foster cultural projects, art exhibitions and exchanges "in search of a possible language and a common creativity in the region. The fundamental objective of these projects is social and cultural transformation through art and the rediscovery of the Mediterranean as an area of creative and heritage effervescence" (2011: 19).

This reading of cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue, has been the 'flag' with which political institutions have also justified their activity in the region. In the same time many projects, initiatives and funding opportunities are asked to justify their contribution to intercultural dialogue in order to be eligible. The Arab (and European) cultural sector had to incorporate this narrative in its strategy if aspiring to any international support for international activity. Neisse however (2007b: 10) warned that using the label of intercultural dialogue as an excuse for dialogue**:**

> [...] brings a certain danger, in order to appear 'intercultural', one falls into the exaltation of 'identity', paradoxically contributing to a withdrawal into it. On the contrary, it is necessary to research the breaking down of one's own culture in order to allow for its reorganization, nourished by elements transmitted by meeting, contact ('dialogue') with the other. It is this hybridity, which gives the intercultural dialogue all its value. It is by this that we will have indicators of the change in society.

[60] A distinction between 'organised' and 'casual' intercultural dialogue is made in (1.2.2.4).

Laura and David were given the opportunity through a mobility grant of the Cimetta Fund to work on a project in Lebanon, called *Marseille- Beyrouth* where they organised a screening of French filmmakers living in Marseille, that was followed by a screening of Lebanese filmmakers in Marseille. Laura observed that *"it doesn't work the same way in both sides of the Mediterranean; it depends if you are at the 'good' side, or the 'bad' side"*, she said referring to the privileged conditions that artists and cultural managers have in the European side, as they are able to travel more easily. Which brings us to discuss the concept of mobility.

4.3.1.3 Mobility: a bridge over troubled water

When in summer 2012 I contacted Mohamed Aredjal, a Moroccan visual artist for an interview, he told me *"I will send you my story in a graphic novel"*. And so he did. The graphic novel's title is *La Brûlure* (The Burn). It is published in French and Mohamed worked on it with the help of his friend Cedric Liano from France. It is the story of Mohamed's first trip to Europe. *"I wanted to keep this story alive, for my own personal memory but also as a way to share it with other people- especially with the adolescents that dream about their future and in order to help them reflect on the image of the 'false paradise' that we have about Europe",* he said. Mohamed's story starts from when he was a young boy and everyone was encouraging him to leave Morocco to go to Europe, talks about his illegal journey into the Canary islands, the conditions that he found when he arrived there, the jail, the police and the first time he entered a plane in his life- which was when he was deported back to Morocco. The story ends with the second time Mohamed was about to take a plane to go to Europe. He was invited in 2008 to participate at the Biennial of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean[61]. And here is what the protagonist of the graphic novel says at the last image in Casablanca airport: *"I will present a part of my work which talks about the relation to the Other, about our relation with frontiers, those between countries and those between 'artists' and 'spectators'. It's the second time in my life that I leave my country. There is an internal voice that tells me to escape at the moment that I put my feet on European ground. But I will not listen to it. It is not by escaping that I will be able to change things. It's from where I come that I have to*

[61] The BJCEM Association is a network comprising local bodies, ministries, associations and cultural institutions from Europe and the Mediterranean. BJCEM have been organizing biennales and working with artists from a wide diversity of different fields. The main aims of the BJCEM Association are to promote the creativity of young artists, to develop pacific relations across the Mediterranean and to encourage international exchange beyond existing political and cultural borders. Its' work is tackled in (4.4).

work to change them"[62].

Participating at the Biennial was for Mohamed the first time he *"travelled outside Morocco in a legal way and as an artist"* which filled him with *"a feeling of dignity". "I had worked hard to get at this level and it was the first time I filled in an application with so many requirements",* he said. For him, *"the most important thing about the Biennial is that it is not addressed to recognised artists; it is encouraging the choice of studying the arts, it is encouraging the talent, not the professionalism"*. After his experience with the Biennial, Mohamed with a groups of other young artists from Morocco founded the organisation *Jeunes Artistes Africains*, a non- profit association aiming at encouraging young people and stimulating their artistic potential, focusing on regions with inadequate infrastructure. *"An association is something legal that allows you to gain more liberty as an individual"*, Mohamed says. His dream was to host a Biennial in Morocco, but his attempts were not successful. *"Here we lack the structures, and it was too early"*, he said, *"but when we are young we dream a lot, we are way too optimist"*.

Mohamed's story touches on the challenges related to mobility of artists and cultural operators from the Arab world. It shows that there is desire to travel but there are restrictions due to intensified measures against the free movement of people and the introduction of severe measures regarding visa policies. It is not rare to hear for different international cooperation schemes that this or that person did not make it to a certain meeting because they were denied the visa, or the visa did not come on time. Even beyond EuroArab programmes, this is an everyday reality for Arab artists. Charbel Samuel Aoun, a Lebanese painter interviewed during my field trip in Lebanon in November 2012, was telling me about a time that he was invited to go to an exhibition of his painting abroad, and he was not granted the visa. *"Sometimes my paintings can travel, but I can't"*, he said.

In (4.4) a more in-depth study into different programmes and initiatives that have tried to tackle the issue of mobility and offer opportunities for cultural operators and artists to move in the region is attempted. At this point, a reference is made to an initiative put in place by two of the most prominent mobility operators in the EuroMediterranean area,

[62] Translated from French by myself. Original text "C'est la deuxième fois de ma vie que je quitte mon pays. De l'intérieur me vient une petite voix que me dit de m'échapper une fois que je serais sous le sol européen… mais je ne l'écoutera pas. Ce n'est pas en fugant que je pourai faire changer les choses. C'est d'où je vies que je dois travailler à les faire changer".

the Roberto Cimetta Fund and the Arab Education Forum/ Safar Fund. These two organisations came together and initiated the *Istikshaf programme* to expand and develop a renewed understanding of contemporary mobility by bringing together people able to think mobility in its widest sense. More organisations joined this initiative such as l-Act, Studio Emadeddin, the Tamasi network for performing arts, Al Balad theater, the Drama Institute- Stockholm Academy for theater arts and the Arab Theatre training center and received partial support from the Anna Lindh Foundation. Further support came from the European Union in 2011 and guaranteed a second phase for the Platform, however, as Angie Cotte, Secretary General of RCF told me during our interview, *"we didn't get any funding to continue the programme, so it is on stand-by".*

It should be also noted here that what once was observed as a weak South-South cooperation among Arab states (Neisse, 2007a; Neisse, 2007b; Bouquerel & El Husseini, 2009) is now slowly but steadily changing. This does not mean that the issues that prevented this cooperation are not there any more. Neisse (2007b: 9) had identified as obtacles for this visa problems, lack of funds, rivalry between Arab states, structural shortcomings in the local professional and artistic landscape including the lack of financing frameworks (institutional cooperation), lack of appeal, structural weaknesses in the professional landscape, little circulation of information, rare networking, lack of artistic stimulation and isolation of independent cultural actors (Neisse, 2007a: 24).

A special mention should be made to foreign cultural institutes that are still an important actor in mobility opportunities. Besides the support in forms of funding for local events, activities, or initiatives, foreign cultural institutions in the Southern Mediterranean countries play an important role in terms of supporting cultural relations in the form of mobility grants. Sharif Sehnaoui a musician and organiser of the Irtijal Festival interviewed in Beirut in November 2012, described through his own experience this fact:

> *"The festivals that invite us [in Europe] they ask us 'can you get a travel funding?' which in Europe is often the case. For example, in Europe, French artists from Institut Francais, or Germans can get* [funding from] *Goethe. In Lebanon there is no such thing… or in Cairo or in Egypt … All these countries they do not have a state programme to help artists travel abroad, this doesn't exist. There is not even something resembling this. So in that case, mobility funds can be really helpful, because, if you get it, you can go and perform to a festival, get paid for it adequately, have a good experience, get your music be known, meet other musicians in the framework of the festival and maybe make a project, so it does help exchange, for sure. There is no doubt about it and the other way around. Festivals here are not extremely rich and don't have that finance and we want to get European artists to perform here and often what we can give them is not according to the standard. So if we get at least the money for the travel, then we can pay a fee, then the person is here and Lebanese artists and audience will discover his music.* […]. *For me,* [as a festival organiser] *looking for mobility funds is 30-40 % of my work.*

> *It could go through Funds or through the main cultural institutes. Goethe, for example, for me is becoming mobility funder because often that is what they will fund. They say we cannot pay the fee but we can support the flight and that is great because at least you can make the project."*

This leads us to the question raised in the following section: what would the cultural life in the Arab region be without foreign support?

4.3.1.4 No cultural life without foreign support?

International foundations, mainly European and American ones, have a strong presence in the cultural life of Arab countries. The same applies for foreign cultural institutes and embassies, as well as supra-national organisations. Although the actions and programmes of especially European organisations is the focus of section (4.4), it is worth mentioning in this part the importance of their role in the cultural life in the Arab countries.

Xuereb (2013) states that it is difficult to distinguish between where European influence starts and where it stops in relation to local cultural relations, production and expression in the Southern Mediterranean countries. In the same line, Guardans (2013: 26) says:

> A simple review of any flyer or poster announcing the smallest cultural activity in Egypt and Morocco will testify of the essential, indispensable role played by foreign embassies and foreign cultural national institutes in the support of cultural events and projects. […] There is almost no cultural event, project or activity in those countries, which could survive without the support of foreign public funding, channeled through foreign institutions in that country.

And adds the following:

> A cultural environment in which it is impressive to see in detail the huge, vital foreign contribution, and its fundamental role in the survival of most, if not all private activity in the cultural and creative sector. A contribution which comes from foreign public agencies, but also from foreign private donors involved in development aid, who are having a direct impact in cultural activities. Still there is obviously a large space for external support (2013: 57).

Two major dynamics can be observed in this respect. From one side, the foreign presence is formulated through national, state initiatives in the framework of cultural agreements with target Arab countries- related to the concept of cultural diplomacy analysed in (1.2.2.1) of the previous part of this thesis. In an initial diagnosis of the arts and cultural professional's profiles in non-European Mediterranean countries that was undertaken in 2007 (Neisse, 2007b: 8) the following was observed:

> Concerning exchange with Europe it is important to aim for a balance, which would allow us to get beyond the North-South logic. Amongst the possible forms of mobility, bilateral exchanges with the European countries are the most common (especially with France, Spain, Belgium and Germany, Italy and Switzerland), for different reasons: links with the colonial past, funds offered by the host country, the highly

> professional cultural sector (especially in France (which allows for apprenticeships, offers of residence and links with the immigrant community in the host country.

This observation confirms the persistence of the classical, bilateral direction of international cultural cooperation. 'Classical' circulation patterns that exist are "linked to bilateral frameworks inherited for the most part from the post-colonial relations notably between Europe and the Maghreb" (Neisse, 2007a: 24), perhaps as an "effort to alleviate post-colonial guilt" (European Cultural Foundation, 2008: 53).

On the other hand, we observe that there are a number of programmes supported by non-governmental funders addressing regional and multilateral cultural exchange. For example, the Ford Foundation has helped throughout the years to strengthen the infrastructure of arts and culture in the region by moving from funding for individual artists and productions to funding large organisations, such as the Young Arab Theater Fund and concentrating on institution and capacity-building by relying on Al Mawred and AFAC to disperse grants to individuals. In the same line, the Open Society Foundation and the Drosos Foundation among others have devised a number of programmes in the region addressing explicitly (support to artistic production) or implicitly (support to freedom of expression, intercultural dialogue) the arts and culture sector[63].

Although this research is not touching on international cultural cooperation and support systems in the Arab region in general but is focusing in the EuroArab web of cooperation, it is worth mentioning an observation made by Schneider and Nelson (2008). They observe that, in contrast to the relative absence of US foundations in the cultural field in the Muslim world, European donors "spend considerable time in the region in order to meet the players and expand their knowledge of the context" (2008: 31), while the U.S. government "tends to adopt a top-down approach, rather than listening and learning about the local context and adapting to it" (2008: 24). Additionally, they write:

> It is the coordinating, monitoring, desire to understand and learn, and commitment to collaboration that distinguishes much of the work of these institutions and earns them credibility in the region. By contrast, most of the sparse arts programming of the United States, both public and private sector, is couched in the rhetoric of 'bridging gaps', 'understanding' and showing that 'we're not all that bad (Schneider and Nelson, 2008: 31).

There is, however, also another aspect to this. During my field trip in Lebanon in November 2012, I interviewed a staff member from the Al Bustan festival. One of the

[63] All the institutions mentioned here are not EU-based ones.

things she told me attracted quite a lot my attention. She said, *"we are not competing with other festivals, but with foreign embassies",* meaning that the budget and possibilities that are managed by the foreign cultural institutes and are invested in their cultural programming are higher than the ones of local cultural operators, creating unequal dynamics of symbolic power. In this sense, foreign cultural institutions acquire a role of contemporary maecenas and enter into the constellation of groups and institutions that constitute the 'art worlds' as defined by Becker (1982) that have the power to classify certain object as 'art' and certain persons as 'artists'.

4.3.1.5 Structures on moving sand and the 'Système D'

One of the challenges already identified in the Bouquerel and El Husseini report (2009: 40) regarding foreign funding is that it mainly comes on a project-based basis, which does not allow organisations to plan on the long-term. However, the need of the cultural operators in the region is more on structural/ operational support and in view of becoming stronger and more sustainable. Additionally, what Guardans (2013: 16) notes for Egypt is that the high level of dependence of the cultural sector from the ministries responsible for them has negative consequences in many fields, especially because they prevent organisations to have independent initiatives and to be promoters of new projects.

Furthermore, in terms of international cultural cooperation, El Husseini (2010) comments that interaction with world cultures when it comes to Egypt's cultural policy has the emphasis of sending 'official' groups and artists abroad. In this respect she writes:

> No long- or medium-term multicultural projects are initiated or supported by the ministry. Independent centres and organisations attempting to organize multicultural projects receive no ministerial support and are often harassed by security authorities, who believe international exchanges should be handled only by government institutions (El Husseini, 2010: 42)[64].

This entire environment is also affected by the unstable political situation in most of the Arab countries, wars and weak democratic practices. The above-mentioned dynamics shape the cultural environment in which organisations operate in the Arab region. Ferdinand Richard, President of the Cimetta Fund, during our interview in December

[64] The Young Arab Theatre Fund (YATF) supported in the late '00s informal meetings of independent cultural spaces in the Arabic speaking region aiming at creating mobility circuits and stimulating touring possibilities for contemporary artistc creations in the region and to creating a platform where programmes and young cultural operators could meet, expose thir needs and obstacles they face and discuss and axchange information concerning their artistic programmes.

2016 he observed that artistic and cultural organisations in the Arab world open and close all the time. *"I have a large agenda of [cultural and artistic] contacts in the Arab countries, but does it count? If I try to reach half of them most probably they will not exist anymore*", he said.

How do organisations cope with this fragile environment? Nisrine Chiba, a cultural operator from Morocco, that was interviewed in the framework of the EUNIC/ MENA training case study presented in section (5.4), told me in this respect: *"We have our Système D".* 'Système D' in French slang means 'to manage', 'to get by', 'to fend for oneself'. In short, it means to show admirable resourcefulness in dealing with the changing rules and regulations. It refers to a manner of responding to challenges that requires one to have the ability to think fast, to adapt, and to improvise when getting a job done.

For example, Mohamd El Baaly, interviewed in the framework of the Cimetta Fund case study presented in (5.6), is running an organisation in Cairo with two strands: one that is a publishing house focusing on translation and the other one organizing the Cairo Literature Festival and Egypt Comic Week. He explained to me how he manages to make these initiatives sustainable:

> *"Number one: I have a profitable company. Number two: I have my profession, as a journalist. Sometimes I feed my family from my writing not from the publishing house and this helps me a lot. Like in the comic week. I applied to the embassy of Finland [to bring an invited guest]– they agreed to support the ticket so I will support his accommodation from my publishing house in Cairo. So this helps to make sustainable the event. I also knock on all doors: embassies, institutes and the Ministry of Culture in Egypt. Many cultural activists don't like to cooperate with the government. It is not easy and they give really small amount of money, but this is people's money, not only governmental money."*

This said, and based on my field observations and the interviews, I cannot but agree with Bashiron Bendollichio (2012: 337-228) when he writes that there are many strong, cultural organisations in the Mediterranean besides the European part that also engage in international cultural cooperation:

> From Townhouse Gallery in Cairo, the Beirut Art centre and Ashkal Alwan in Beirut, Makan House in Amman, A.M.Qattan Foundation in Ramallah, the Appartament 22 in Rabat to Xalant of Mataró and Hangar in Barcelona- just to mention a few- these centers and many more, demonstrate an important creative activity that is also based on the value of exchange and the emergence of new communicative paradigms.

Bashiron Bendollichio refers to some of the most 'resilient' cultural organisations in the Arab region. Of course this does not mean that they are the only ones. Neither that the

situation in each Arab country is the same. From the field trips in Lebanon and Tunisia though, it was observed that there is a strong desire to work albeit the 'moving sand' under the structures.

In Beirut this was obvious during my field visit when discussing with the Collectif Kahraba, or visiting Zicco's House, one of the artistic residencies in the region. Or listening to Hisham Jaber, the Artistic Director of Metro Al Madina at that time, asking himself: *"When we came out of the war, we had to start to experiment…* [there was] *lack of audiences… lack of spaces*". Or Omar Rajeh from Maqarat Dance Theater, asking himself "*how can you do your own artistic work in the middle of civil war? How do we deal with an event such as a war, how do we propose it on stage?*". Or seeing how Askhal Alwan has put together the first programme for Lebanese artists and then expanded the programme to participants from the whole Arab region and has for years organised *Home Works*. As Viktoria Lupton, a staff working at Askhal Alwan told me during our interview in Beirut in 2012, this initiative was really important because *"it is really about creating communities of critically-minded artists in the region and help them develop their skills".*

Moreover, in Tunisia during my second field trip in 2014, I interviewed Ramzi Jebabli, a young lawyer who inaugurated the *Café Théatre du Nord* in Tejerouine, a small town of around 35.000 inhabitants close to the Algerian border at the Kef region. His example confirms the above as well and adds an additional dimension to it: that initiatives can also be resilient in the periphery. Underlying the absence of concrete cultural policy and cultural life beyond the capital, Jebabli explained how through their culture and development association they have succeeded in managing a multi-use space in this town, but also in the whole Kef region, and even inaugurate a Jazz Festival in Kef.

What these examples go in line with what El Bennaoui (2015: 73) observes:

> [...] practitioners are also re-questioning the traditional mechanisms of production relationships in an attempt to re-discover and re-invent new relational dynamics through new alliances, in order to create new niches of power.

Does this mean that what was an intense criticism towards the Arab intellectuals in their past regarding their failure to act as effective carriers of socio-cultural and ideological transformations in their respective societies (Kassir, 2005; Khalaf, 2001) is changing? Dragićević Sesić (2014: 9) argues that the Arab intelligentsia still faces challenges in creating institutions and organisations capable of leading processes of democratisation. But at the same time, it seems that we are in a moment where there is a lot to learn in

Europe from the Arab cultural sector. Using Jotham Sietma's words, the Tandem Programme Manager, during our interview in December 2016:

> *"A lot of the approaches that you might find in the Arab region as compared with the European region, we need now here. Also because we are now in a much more volatile cultural sector than we were a few years ago before the financial and refugee crisis happened. And we have a lot to learn in terms of tactical cooperation rather than this whole strategic longer-term institutional cooperation. Sometimes you need to move fast, without having resources in place, you need to bloody do it and I think there is a big learning that is already happening between the two regions".*

4.3.1.6 Doing the homework: Arab cultural policies in the making

In summer 2012, I was undertaking a study on the role of young people in the promotion of international and interfaith dialogue, commissioned by the Euromed Youth Platform. One of the people interviewed in the framework of the study was Ahmad Alhindawi, a young youth worker from Jordan[65]. When I interviewed him we were talking about international cooperation in the youth field, but I consider that what he said can be meaningful for the cultural field as well. He said that every time he worked with young people on the local level he stressed the need for not forgetting *"to do the homework"*, meaning that sometimes people get excited with international cooperation because it might be enriching in personal experiences and a unique platform of intercultural dialogue and forget to work on improving their local realities. This is something that people from the cultural sphere interviewed in the scope of this research are actually doing: a lot of 'homework'. And this is particularly visible in the field of cultural policies that have been identified as a major obstacle to cultural production and cultural development in the Arab countries (Bouquerel & El Husseini, 2009; Culture Resource, 2010; Guardans, 2013). This section reflects the work and the developments in the field when it comes to framing and articulating the need of cultural policies in the Arab countries.

I first met Rana Yazaji at the IV International Conference on Cultural Policy Research that took place in Barcelona in 2012 and interviewed her as part of the exploratory work I undertook to understand the cultural sphere in the Arab countries in 2012. Rana at that moment was an activist, researcher and programmer in the field of culture living and working in Syria. As a researcher in the field of cultural policies, Rana had contributed to a study on monitoring cultural policies in Syria, which was published in the book *An*

[65] Only two months later Ahmad was appointed as the first UN Youth Envoy. This appointment had a lot of significance at that moment, both in terms of the creation of this new role on the UN level, but also in terms of appointing a young Jordanian at this post. Alhindawi kept this post until March 2017.

Introduction to Cultural Policies in the Arab Region (Culture Resource, 2010) and she also conducted a number of studies on related topics, among which the *National Planning and the Rising Role of Civil-Society Institutions in Syria*, which she considered important because, as she said *"we first need to understand the situation and then plan actions; and for this, research is absolutely necessary"*. Rana considered as well that it is necessary to conduct research in order *"to understand what has happened in other regions that have been through similar processes (like the Balkans and Russia) and see similarities with what is happening in the Arab/ Mediterranean countries now".* At the end of 2011, Rana founded together with a group of independent cultural activists in Syria, Ettijahat- Independent Culture, an organisation that works on activating an authentic relationship between cultural and artistic acts on one hand and the Syrian society with its diversity and plurality on the other. The work of Ettijahat in the development of cultural policy research and advocacy in the Arab region has been fundamental and will be further touched upon in (4.4).

In September 2014, I also interviewed Cyrinne Ghannoun, an actor and cultural manager that had been recently appointed to the Cabinet of the Minister of Culture in Tunisia to deal with the dossier of sponsorship and funding for arts and culture and the restructuration of cultural organisations, including festivals, heritage organisations, and national libraries. Ghanoun explained the setting in cultural policy after the government change when a positive climate was created for the introduction of new approaches, which allowed also for a law to be passed in cooperation with the Ministry of Finances for a tax redemption scheme for cultural sponsorship, the first one of its kind in the Arab countries. Cyrinne underlined the importance of formulated cultural policies and the need to learn from Europe on what works and what doesn't and adapt it to the Arab setting.

Another interview that shed light to this respect was with Hanan Al-Hajj Ali during my field research trip in Lebanon in November 2012. Hanan Al Hajj Ali is an actress, cultural activist, researcher and trainer. She has participated in and led many regional training workshops in arts and cultural management and works as part of the Al Mawred/ Culture Resource research and training team in the field of cultural policy and she has edited the book *An Introduction to Cultural Policy in the Arab World* (Culture Resource, 2010). Hanan explained at what point they were at that moment in regards to research and create advocacy towards cultural policies in the Arab region in the framework of her work with Al Mawred/ Culture Resource:

> *"We feel that the issue of cultural policy was a main issue in the region and with the ECF and other partners we launched the first two years programme about picking up researchers through open application and train them on cultural policy research based on the European Compendium. So we brought once again the Compendium and with some help of a council with Milena and Philipp[66] we tried to adapt it and it was taught. In the Arab countries there is no transparency, there is a lot of corruption, Ministries do not have some figures about budget … so till now we have a lot of information lacking but at least we reached a structured plan to do research. And we are proud of the result after two years and now we know that the cultural policy research must be updated regularly. So what we did in Culture Resource* [is that] *we associated with Ettijahat and really do a thorough follow-up with what we call the Arab Groups who are formed after the book and the researches. In each country that we did research we tried to create a local group who will follow-up what are the challenges and major trends in the cultural policies and try to push for some change".*

As seen from the interviews and from desk research, Culture Resource/ Al Mawred's and Ettijahat's work have been pioneer in trying to develop and strengthen the environment in which artists and cultural operators work and in empowering them to contribute to the process of democratisation of the Arab societies through research and advocacy for cultural policies[67]. They have worked on this axis through the following actions:

- A *Culture Resource cultural policy program* was launched in 2009, which aimed to build a knowledge base to support planning and cultural cooperation in the Arab region, through research and publication, advocacy and networking. The program also aimed to provide a data base of research, reports and statistics as a reference for researchers and policy makers working in the Arab region, and to spark debate and discussion about cultural policy among different culture activists, artists and organisations in the region who are drawn from different sectors (governmental, private and independent) through regional conferences, country-specific working groups, and multiple platforms for sharing research, publications and experiences. The publication *Cultural policies in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia: an introduction* (Culture Resource, 2010) summarises the result of this effort and was supported by the European Cultural Foundation.

- As Al Hajj explained, a result of this exercise has been the creation of *national cultural policy groups in the Arab countries*. These groups were formed for creating the knowledge base of cultural policies in each country and in the same

[66] She refers to Milena Dragićević Sesic from the University of Belgrade and to Philipp Dietchmair from the European Cultural Foundation, both interviewed in the framework of this research.

[67] Racines is also another organisation (based in Casablanca) that has recently received support from the European Commission for doing work in the field of cultural policies.

time to put pressure and raise awareness on the need of cultural policies to improve the system of cultural work in countries undergoing democratic transformation, through providing alternative cultural policy proposals to the Arab governments, creating a channel for dialogue with the state, to empower the independent cultural sector and civil society to play an important role in the development of cultural policies in the various Arab countries and the drafting of the new policies. National cultural policy groups are currently operating in a number of Arab countries, while others are in progress.

- Besides the national policy groups, there is also a website dedicated to Cultural Policy in the Arab region managed by Al Mawred/ Culture Resource and Ettijahat with the support of ECF and Mimeta. Moreover, currently complete policy profiles for six Arab countries (Jordan, Algeria, Morocco, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt) are available on WorldCP, the international database of cultural policies[68].

At this point it needs to be underlined that for the developments regarding cultural policies in the region, the European Cultural Foundation has played a very decisive role that will be tackled further in section (4.4).

4.3.1.7 Reversed geographies: EuroArab relations within European grounds

"Funds are much much less since 2014. Because there was a huge interest in the Arab Spring, a lot of money was spent here and there. 50% went to the wrong people but this happens when you have suddenly a lot of money. But now I think there is more focus on the migration movement. So they reinvest this extra money for cooperation between Arabs in Europe and the European culture."

Those were the words of Mohamd El Baly, a RCF grantee interviewed in the framework of the case study explored in (5.6), who observed that a lot of the previously available funding has diminished and nowadays the focus is on dealing with the 'Other' inside the European territory. In April 2016, for example, the European Commission published a specific call under the Creative Europe programme for creative projects dealing with migration- refugee integration projects (European Commission, 2016b). This extra funding supported 12 projects from high quality consortia formed by bodies working in the creative and cultural sectors with grants worth a total of 2.35 million euros that involve 62 organisations from 20 countries. European networks have started being very

[68] The publication of these studies on the World CP website is a product of a partnership between the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA), the Culture Resource Foundation, Ettijahat- Independent Culture and the European Cultural Foundation (ECF).

active in the topic as well. In 2016 IETM published a report (IETM, 2016a) on sample projects that reflect practices of artistic work being produced across Europe and neighbor countries that specifically deal with a variety of issues around migration. These initiatives include activities related to creative engagement with displaced communities, work made by artists who identify as refugees, asylum-seekers, newcomers or migrants, non-refugee artists making work about refugee and asylum-seeking communities primarily for non-displaced audiences and networks and platforms for art made by those with refugee or migrant backgrounds. Moreover, ENCATC's External Academy in March 2017 dealt with the issue of culture in the current refugee crisis.

The topic is of course of interest to Arab organisations as well. For example, in the framework of the Arab European Creative Platform, AFAC prepared the publication *Europa- an illustrated introduction to Europe for Migrants and Refugees* (AFAC, 2016b), a book initiated by a group of photographers and journalists who have been covering both the refugee crisis in Europe and the many contexts across the Middle East, Asia, and Africa that gave rise to these migrations.

In this setting, EuroArab cultural cooperation has no concrete geography- it is a matter of co-existence. Moreover, in different European states there are programmes specifically for supporting artists from an Arab migrant background in continuing to exercise their profession. This brings a new challenge for cultural managers, who are confronted with the need to mediate between audiences. This was the focus of the interview held with Lydia Ziemke during the observation trip to Marseilles in December 2016, where I assisted at the Tandem Shaml III Closing event and the launch of Tandem Shaml IV round. Lydia Ziemke is a German theater director, participant of the Tandem Shaml IV round, who explained to me how institutions in Germany are investing on artists and companies from an Arab migrant background, however she challenged the way this is done. She underlined that what is mostly important is to focus on the artistic production from the region, and not its semantics. For her, the role of cultural organisations in this respect shifts to "educating" the European audiences against a "narrative of victimism". She explained this as follows:

> *"It is very important to confront* [audiences] *with very high artistically cultural work which exists in a large quantity. For the people in Europe, especially in Germany, culture and theater and literature are very high and once they feel that the companies from the Arab region are doing the same thing, artistically high quality work, they can relate to them, they can see them as equal. And then the can relate to the context. First we need to*

> *connect them on the artistic level. And to stop the audiences from thinking only about the war, or only about religion."*

4.3.2 The full swing of contemporary Arab creation beyond funding lines

In this section, reference is made to the contemporary dynamics regarding contemporary Arab artistic creation beyond the scope of support schemes and funding lines. On a first level it is shown how narratives of resistance, revolution and 'Otherness' have resulted in a modern form of Orientalism and interest in the artistic creation from the Arab countries. Secondly, the proliferation of Arab-focused events-based initiatives (festivals, Biennals, etc) inside European geographies is described and specific examples are given to justify this observation. Finally, the contribution of the Gulf countries in the promotion of contemporary Arab artistic creation is touched upon together with the new dynamics in cultural cooperation between established cultural organisations in Europe and the Gulf countries.

Although this research mainly focuses on frameworks of cooperation supported on the institutional level, it is nevertheless necessary to describe the alternative dynamics that enable cultural interactions among the Euro and Arab zones because they mark the pace of how the relations evolve. Therefore, the focus here is on the dynamics of the artistic circles themselves beyond the influence of cultural policy, cultural diplomacy or priorities of foreign cultural institutions or foundations. This does not mean that to a certain point there is no interconnection, however the focus here is mostly on the artistic production and the artistic market as such. This section also reveals the multi-level aspect of international cultural cooperation that was underlined in chapter 1.

4.3.2.1 Art beyond itself[69]

Contemporary art in the region has gained more attention since 9/11. The global artistic market has turned its attention to the Arab contemporary creation and the Middle East became a zone of attraction to many curators and programmers from all over the world beyond traditional funding mechanisms. Referring mainly to the field of visual arts, Bank (2011: 120) summarises the 'hype' towards contemporary Arab artistic creation as follows:

> Since the international art world 'discovered' Arab and Middle Eastern art around the year 2000, almost all major art institutions in Europe have hosted at least one large show of contemporary art from the region. This new interest has opened up

[69] This title is borrowed from Canclini's book (2014) under the same title.

> opportunities for a new generation of Arab artists to receive a degree of international exposure unknown to earlier generations.

This 'hype' was intensified after the Arab spring uprisings and has created an even more market-related interest in artistic productions from the Arab region. Some even observe an "interest in and funding of so-called revolutionary art, a specific narration of the uprising […] and of social change" (Eickhof, 2014: 43) that is related to "the notion that art from the Arab world has to cater to a certain geopolitical interest" (Eickhof, 2014: 45)[70].

In many occasions, the artistic community has criticised the 'artification' of the Arab Spring and how it was used for political purposes. One of the artists interviewed in Tunisia in December 2012, the photographer Delel Tangour El Bouslama, talked to me about her mobility experience in Marseilles in the context of the Averroes meetings where she raised the following issue:

> *"We raised the question of recognition of the artist, his visibility. Here we are not visible. Now maybe because there was the Tunisian revolution and people want to see what happened, but we are still the same. This means that because Tunisia and the Arab Spring happened, now we are interested? But we are still the same. Nothing changed. Why you want to meet me now? Did I not exist before?"* [71]

Often such exhibitions do not necessarily reinforce individual subject positions, but tend to erase individuality in favour of an 'Arab' or 'Middle Eastern' collective identity. Oriol (2011: 103) observes that this framework has made artists from the Arab world to try hard to fulfil the expectation of the global art market by distancing themselves from local aesthetic values while boldly stressing the expected local concerns, in a form of "self-orientalisation" (a term used by Said, 2003). Moreover, Winegar (2006: 5) notes that "[m]iddle Eastern art, then, becomes not just a space for the elaboration of utopian visions of autonomy. It also becomes the locus of West/ East difference, the site of ultimate Eastern backwardness: even their artists do not know what freedom is".

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[70] It is interesting to note in this respect that the 2011 project call from the European Commision under the title *Revolution meets the Arts for projects in Egypt* it was stated that "The global objective of this Call for Proposals is to contribute to the diversity of cultural creation and promote a culture of human rights. […] Proposals should contribute to a culture of Human Rights and especially freedom of expression. In particular, proposals should take into consideration the recent political developments that unfolded in Egypt and build upon them".

[71] Translated from French by myself. Original text: *"On a posé la question de la réconnaissance de l'artiste, la visibilité, nous on est pas dans la visibilité ici. Maintenant parce que il'y a eu lieu la révolution tunisienne et les gens veulent voir ce qui est passé, mais on est le mêmes. C'est à dire parce qu'il y a eu la tunisie et le printemps arabe on s'interesse. Mais on est toujours les memes. Rien a changé. Pourqui vous voulez maintenant me connaître? Avant je n'éxistais pas?".*

4.3.2.2 Contemporary Arab artistic production on European ground

Besides the above-mentioned interest on arts from the Arab countries, what we observe after 2011 is the creation of a number of cultural event-based initiatives aiming to promote Arab culture in Europe and provide alternative narratives to the mainstream ones promoted by political and media channels. For this research it is not possible to make a mapping of all these initiatives- although this would be an interesting topic for further research- however, it is considered relevant to mention a few of them that demonstrate the ever-growing interest in the Arab culture from the European side that goes beyond institutional/ funding support lines.

Some examples of this kind of events/ activities are mentioned below:

- Conceptualised and promoted by an 'Arab' organisation, the Young Arab Theater Fund (YAFT), *Meeting Points* has been a reference for the promotion of contemporary Arab artistic production on the international scene. Meeting Points is a multidisciplinary bi-annual event organized by the YATF, currently Mophradat, in collaboration with regional and international partners that has allowed the circulation of performing arts in Arab and European countries[72];
- The *54th Venice Biennale* held in 2011 was Europe's largest ever show of contemporary Arab art under the title *The future of a promise*[73]. A pivotal event was a landmark exhibition bringing together more than 25 recent works and commission by some of the – so claimed- foremost artists from the Arab world;
- The *Malmo Arab Film Festival* was conceived in 2011 as an intercultural platform for the Arab cinema in Sweden and Northern Europe. The Festival is widely regarded as one of the most influential and largest festivals with an Arabic cinema focus and offers a platform for collaboration between the Nordic and Arabic film industries. It has developed into the largest festival with an Arabic cinema focus outside the Arab world.
- The *Arab Film Festival* in Berlin was launched in 2009 by the association Makan – Centre for Arab Film, Arts and Culture and since then it brings every year perspectives on the Arab filmmakers to Berlin's international film audience;

[72] YATF has been renamed to Mophradat in 2015 and is now in a new phase of operations.

[73] In the catalogue (Downey & Lazaar, 2011) we read that this exhibition "is not a promise to actively engage with nor reflect upon the socio-political and cultural realities of a region, but to use the aesthetics as a potentially pivotal toll in realigning how the social and political orders understand the role and importance of culture in discussions about globalisations, modernism. Civic society, open debate, political change, freedom of expression, justice and equality, and the overarching need for institutional infrastructures to support culture as an expression of communities throughout the region".

- One of the most known interdisciplinary initiatives promoting contemporary Arab culture is *Shubbak* that was founded in 2011 by the Mayor of London. As it is stated on its website, the event "connects London audiences and communities with the best of contemporary Arab culture through ambitions festival programmes of premieres and commissions of visual arts film, music, theatre, dance, literature, architecture and debate";
- Country-specific initiatives also exist, like the *Eye on Palestine Festival* that promotes Palestine-related film and arts in Belgium. Born in 2010, it has evolved from an exclusively film-based programme to also include visual and live arts, theater and music performances along with lecture and debates;
- *Arab Arts Focus*, a showcase of new Arab work, was first presented in 2014 as part of the Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival in Cairo (D-CAF) and is co-produced by D-CAD Festival (Cairo) and Northern Stage (Newcastle) in collaboration with Tamasi collective for Performing Arts. In 2017 the Arab Arts Focus will be part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe;
- *Middle East Now* is also a new festival that started in Florence, Italy in 2015 and claims to be the only event in Italy dedicated to contemporary Middle East and North Africa with the aim, as stated on its website, "of highlighting the culture and identity of the countries of this part of the world and bringing them to the attention of the Italian public, overcoming stereotypes that often come out from the international mass media";
- Finally, it is worth mentioning that *Marseille Province 2013* and *Valetta 2018 European Capitals of Culture* have placed a certain emphasis on their programme on building bridges with the Mediterranean world.

4.3.2.3 The artistic fever in the Gulf countries

Although the Gulf countries are indeed part of the 'Arab world' as described and considered it in (4.2.1), it is true that cultural cooperation between that specific region and Europe - in the framework of support and funding for exchange and collaboration- is very limited. Therefore, there is almost no reference to cultural exchange between Europe and the Gulf countries in the rest of the research and there are no concrete examples of cultural cooperation schemes between Europe and the Gulf countries. Some programmes might be open to participants from the Gulf countries but it is not the norm. This is the case for example for the Tandem Shaml, the Cultural Innovators programmes, the Cimetta Fund (that are among the case studies to be examined in the next chapter) or even the Cultural Innovators Network. For Tandem Shaml, as Jotham Sietma mentioned during our interview *"for the moment, the way we frame it is Arab region – it includes*

every country, which somehow can identify itself as having roots with the Arab culture- I am not saying it is an homogenous block but…still", while for Cimetta Fund, it became clear at some point that it's mandate was not only around the Mediterranean but was expanding to the Arab world as a whole (Neisse, 2007b).

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the Gulf countries are becoming increasingly important in cultural affairs on a global level. At this point and for the scope of this thesis, it is worth making reference to the ever-growing influence of this region in artistic terms for two main reasons: a) because of the role that the 'artistic fever' in these countries is playing in promoting contemporary artistic production of the Arab world at the international level, including Europe and b) because a new form of EuroArab cultural cooperation is taking shape through the establishment and collaboration of major cultural institutions in the region in cooperation with European partners, like the Louvre Abu Dhabi or the Doha-Giffoni Film Festival.

In connection to what was described in the previous section, the contemporary art biennales that have been organised in the Gulf countries have gained ground and reputation internationally. The Sharjah Biennal[74] and Art Dubai are vivid examples, while an important role is being played by the fist Museum of Modern Arab Art (Mathaf) that has opened in Doha, Qatar in 2010. As Schneider and Nelson (2008: 37) observe:

> Nowhere is there more cultural activity today than in the Gulf, where the arts are taking on a new meaning as the oil-and gas-rich capitals of Doha, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Sharjah compete to become the cultural mecca of the region.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) are seen as "potentially the most important player in the art market in the region because of its highly ambitious museum-building programme" (Adam, 2014: 152). The Saadiyat Cultural District, as stated on its website, is claimed to become "a place where people can build bridges and connect with each other through the universal language of the arts". Besides the Zayed National Museum, the forthcoming opening of Louvre Abu Dhabi and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi demonstrate the close collaboration established with international partners. Especially interesting in the scope of this research is to make reference to the Louvre Abu Dhabi Museum, which is opening in 2017 and claims to become a universal museum in the Arab world. The statement on

[74] In this line it is interesting to mention that the 2017 edition of Sharjah Biennal is being curated by Christine Tohme, one of the leading figures in modern artistic affairs in the Arab world and initiator of the influential Lebanese Association of Plastic Arts, Ashkal Alwan based in Beirut.

its website is revelatory of the nature and importance of the cooperation with the French Louvre museum:

> Its' very name is a statement to what is an unprecedented alliance of an intergovernmental agreement between the emirate of Abu Dhabi and France, through one of the highest level of cultural cooperation ever created between two sovereign countries. This unprecedented gesture establishes a long and solid relationship between Musée du Louvre, the greatest museum located in Paris, and Abu Dhabi, which is a dynamic force in the contemporary world.

The influence of the Gulf countries in the artistic production in the Arab countries and the cooperation with Europe can also be observed in the field of cinema. The raising influence of countries from the Gulf, mainly UAE and Qatar, has contributed to a number of co-productions involving European and Arab companies. The three main festivals and film organisations established during the last year in Qatar, Dubai and Abu Dhabi are organisations that do not only act as festivals but also have a training program, professional meetings and networking events as well as film financing lines acting as grants-givers or as co-producers depending on the project. Europe is the main historical partner in terms of co-productions where the Gulf influence and involvement in terms of financing and exposure of the films continues to be prominent. Although this is still a reality in the making, in a study undertaken in 2012 (Rosant, 2012: 43) it was observed that:

> As of today, the co-productions with the Gulf countries only represent 8% of the whole co-productions with the South Mediterranean Region, but the ever growing level of activity from these above-mentioned organisations as well as the nurturing of a new generations of talents and producers through the workshops and networking events enable to predict an increasing percentage of co-productions with the Gulf in the near future.

In this section, the present tense of EuroArab cultural relations has been explored. As a first step, the concept of Arab identity was approached allowing to a better understanding of the EuroArab binary and issues related to the recent history of cultural relations were touched upon. Several observations related to the challenges and current state of affairs in the Arab countries that influence the frameworks of EuroArab cooperation have been shared.

In the last part, reference has been made to contemporary dynamics regarding artistic and cultural production in the Arab world highlighting the role of the Gulf States in this. As Tounkan (2010) observes, these two dynamics (from one hand a market-motivated one and on the other hand a civil society- motivated one) reveal a politically motivated space that has been developing in different Arab countries. As she notes, it is within the framework of international cultural diplomacy that the civil society promotion of

contemporary arts and culture production has been enabled in parts of the Arab region. Focusing on the case of Lebanon, she observed that thanks to the international sustained support, a rich infrastructure of contemporary artistic production has been created, including funding and support of cultural organisations, capacity building programmes and training of cultural operators, support to mobility and production, etc. This aspect is the main point of interest of this research.

This section should be considered as a starting point in exploring the field of EuroArab cultural cooperation, while the next section sheds light upon the actors and programmes that exist and function in this framework, supporting civil society and independent initiatives in the region and encouraging interaction with European partners.

4.4 The panorama of EuroArab cultural cooperation: actors and programmes

Since the objective of the empirical research is related to understanding the value of international cultural cooperation programmes/ schemes in the EuroArab region and consider how they are evaluated, it was considered necessary to do a preliminary mapping of the actors and stakeholders that support EuroArab cultural cooperation. The purpose of this mapping was two-fold. From one hand, the aim was to sketch the web of actors in EuroArab cultural cooperation and understand the ways in which they support cultural cooperation in the region. On the other hand, the nature of the existing programmes in the framework of funding schemes is explored as well. It is inevitable though that in order to describe the work of the actors, reference needs to be made to the programmes they put into place. Therefore, the second part of this section should be considered as a further step to discuss programmes in terms of the objectives that they aim to achieve. This exercise is connected to the previous section of the chapter since it gives answers to how actors of EuroArab cultural cooperation respond to the challenges identified and the setting described but also to the first chapter of this research where, on a more conceptual/ abstract level, the actors involved in international cultural cooperation were identified revealing a multi-level system of governance.

The structure of this sub-chapter follows the same logic. Therefore, the first part of this section (4.4.1) takes a look at the actors in the region. Some of them and their work have been already mentioned in the previous parts of this chapter, but this section is looking at them as entities that function individually and groups them according to their

institutional role. Since the focus of this research is mainly on EuroArab cultural cooperation, schemes supporting the cultural and artistic development of the Arab countries by other non-European countries (for example the US) are not included in this analysis.

The second part of this section (4.4.2) analyses the gathered information through a different angle and attempts to sketch the different forms that this support takes using examples of programmes and schemes supported. This exercise is undertaken in order to get a deeper understanding of the kind of schemes that exist, what needs they cover, the objectives and aims of the programmes, the areas of interest and the forms that this 'support' takes.

This mapping had two phases. The first phase consisted in investigating into documents and largely on information available on the Internet to identify the organisations that are involved in the EuroArab cultural cooperation and understand their scope of work. The overall aim of this mapping exercise was to draw the current institutional panorama of EuroArab cultural cooperation in relation to intermediary organisations at national and regional level and through this analysis shed some light into the current state of affairs in the EuroArab cultural cooperation framework. The second phase consisted in examining the examples of programmes operating in the EuroArab region. The criteria were that a) they either involve both European and Arab participants, b) they are not cultural cooperation activities between two countries in the framework of bilateral agreements, b) they are (co)funded by European institutions and organisations to support cultural life in the Arab region or c) funded by Arab organisations with some level of European involvement. The websites of the respective organisations were consulted to update and complement the outlines of each programme. Twenty programmes have been identified fitting the above-mentioned criteria. The result of this exercise can be found in Annex 7, where information is assembled in a table on the following categories: Programme, Organiser, Funder, Aims, Beneficiaries, Methodology/ Activities, Area of focus, Time frame, Website.

It should be underlined that this is an exploratory mapping aiming to give an overview of the actors and programmes supporting EuroArab cultural cooperation and not an in-depth analysis of these organisations and prorgrammes profiles, therefore, certainly some activities are inevitably left out. The aim is to showcase the breadth of actors and programmes operating in the region and to extract a number of conclusions regarding the

aims of their actions. This exercise can also be considered as a first contribution to the selection of the case studies. Only by knowing what kind of schemes exist in the EuroArab region would it have been possible to research on whether they have been evaluated and how, and if, it was possible to get access to relevant information[75].

4.4.1 Actors and programmes in EuroArab cultural cooperation

As already identified in chapter (1), the environment of international cultural cooperation is changing and we are in an era in which multiple actors are involved in it. We have also seen that from the concept of cultural diplomacy we are moving towards a people-to-people approach and an "understanding of culture as an arena of exchange and mutual learning" (British Council, 2013: 26). In chapter (1) the forms of international cultural cooperation were explored and it was explained that often it takes the form of funding schemes and programmes. This will be focus in the section as well, since organisations that fund programmes in the region contribute in this way into policies and trends in cultural cooperation.

Before entering into the analysis of the different actors and programmes, it is necessary to keep in mind the framework regarding funding in the Arab countries. Farhat (n/d) explains the situation as follows:

> Unfortunately, until today, the sector remains primarily dependent on foreign and international funding in the realization of its projects and agendas. Governmental financial involvement (with the exception of the Arab Gulf States) remains minimal. In the past few years, in a shift that was very much needed, the governmental clasp on cultural programming and events has lessened. Unfortunately, this positive shift was not complemented with a change in the mandate of governments as per cultural sphere. Until this moment, most governments of the region have failed to propose funding opportunities for local independent artists and organisations. Governments are not active players in the stipulation of national or regional cultural policies (including financial policies). Furthermore, they have failed to use their power and influence in attracting the private sector to the support of the cultural and artistic sphere.

As explained previously, the actors and programmes that are described in this section are actually funding organisations or funding schemes that operate in the arena of international cultural diplomacy and cooperation. This can be seen as a limitation to the study, but it was been a choice as well in order to delimit the research topic. In looking at the different entities that are involved in supporting in a way or another EuroArab

[75] It should be acknowledged that the mapping, however, gave very little results in relation to finding out whether the programmes had been evaluated, and it was mainly through personal contacts and communication that this information was gathered and informs chapter (5).

cultural cooperation, three main categories can be identified. The different actors mentioned in this section.are captured in Table (4.1):

Table 4.1 Actors in EuroArab cultural cooperation

ACTORS IN EUROARAB CULTURAL COOPERATION		
SUPRA-NATIONAL	**NATIONAL**	**EU**
A) Europe based	**A) Foreign Cultural Institutes**	**Instruments**
European Cultural Foundation (ECF) Mophradat Cimetta Fund (among others)	for example, the British Council (Cultural Protection Fund, Cultural Skills, Create Syria) and the Goethe Institut (Cultural Innovators Network, Kultur Akademie, Moving MENA)	ENPI - EU programme: Media & Culture for development in the Southern Mediterranean Region (MedCulture, SouthMed CV, Drama, Diversity, Development)
B) Arab based	**B) Humanitarian/ Development organisations**	
Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC) Al Mawred Al Thaqafy Ettijahat Independent Culture (among others)	HIVOS (MidEast Creatives) Prince Claus Fund Danish Centre for Culture and Development (among others)	DG EAC (Creative Europe) Anna Lindh Foundation (EuroMed Exchange Programme)
Networks	**C) Other**	
EUNIC BJCEM (previous ones include FEMEC, EMYAN, DBM)	German Commission for UNESCO	EU Delegations EU Delegations

Source: Elaborated by researcher.

(a) Supra-national foundations and institutions that are independent of a single country support;

(b) National initiatives, which include both foreign cultural institutions as well as humanitarian organisations of a single country;

(c) The EU as an institution, which I separate from the above given the numerous activities related to EuroMed/ EuroArab cooperation that are put in place and because it constitutes a unique organization acting on the supranational level and has established its own external cultural relations strategy as outlined in (1.6).

4.4.1.1 Supra-national Foundations and institutions

Europe and Arab based organisations

The first step to describe the supra-national level of actors in EuroArab cultural cooperation goes through examining the cooperation between the European Cultural Foundation and Al Mawred Al Thaqafy. The European Cultural Foundation is an

organisation based in Amsterdam and striving for an open, democratic and inclusive Europe within which culture is valued as a key contributor. Through its programmes it supports and connects change-makers whose work contributes to an ongoing cross-sectoral debate on Europe and Europe's place in the world. Al Mawred Al Thaqafy/ Culture Resource is a regional non-profit organisation that seeks to support artistic creativity in the Arab world and to encourage cultural exchange between intellectuals and artists within the Arab region and abroad. The work of these two institutions in the field of EuroArab cultural cooperation is discussed here jointly because they have partnered to deliver a number of programmes and initiatives since the '00s.

The work of both organisations has been already referenced in previous paragraphs and especially in (4.2.1.6) but it is important at this point to be reminded of the nature of the cooperation. It has been explained that ECF has been one of the first organisations from Europe to actually engage in an equal-to-equal dialogue and cooperation in the region partnering with Al Mawred Al Thaqafy already in the early 2000s. Their interest in the Arab region was also there from an earlier stage and this can be proved by the fact that ECF already in the early nineties initiated the *Arabic translation project* and established an Arab donors group to coordinate the work of foundations active in the Mediterranean. Moreover, in their action-line *Enlargement of minds* back in 2004 they included reflections regarding the cultural impact of enlargement on the EuroMediterranean cultural cooperation.

ECF was pioneer in entering the region in an effort to support the capacity building for arts and culture. Many of the people interviewed, especially from the Arab side, were impressed by the way ECF works in the region. Philipp Dietchmair, Tandem programme manager at ECF interviewed in the framework of the case study explored in (5.7), recalls that Basma El Husseini from Al Mawred had in the early '00s applied for a collaboration grant for cultural management projects in the region. He explained the following:

> "*And then she came and we said that maybe this grant is not enough. This is why we are here with Al Mawred. It was a co-development and that's how we always work between trainers and experts from the region and trainers we had worked with in the Balkans. It was explicitly non- Western Europeans".*

ECF partnered with Al Mawred to design and implement a Training of trainers programme in the Arab region and a few years later, a Training for cultural policy research, which had an impact on the development of cultural policy research and cultural policy groups in the region, as mentioned already in (4.3.1.6). In 2006, ECF and

its partners initiated the *Mediterranean Reflection process*, a reflection on cultural cooperation between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean with the aim to revisit the parameters around which EuroMed cultural cooperation was organised. As stated by Odile Chenal and Susanna Mors in their article *Building cooperation on shared ground* in the publication that marked this process (ECF, 2008) "we tend to regard cooperation from our own perspective, but not much time is dedicated to understanding the partnership context from the perspective of the 'other'". ECF has committed a lot of work in bringing to the wider arena and to advocate for more funds in the region and more cultural cooperation on an equal basis. Their rationale for this approach is explained below:

> Only if this sector is strong and flourishing at home can it engage in successful and sustainable cooperation across borders. Our partners in the region need more than ad-hoc support. They need to feel that we are committed to helping build a firm ground for this genuine cooperation to flourish (ECF, 2008: 12).

The Abarra capacity building scheme organised by Al Mawred was also supported by ECF. As Dragićević Šesić and Mihalijnac note (2016: 26) this was a complex programme addressed mainly to the countries that experienced the Arab spring revolutions (Tunisia, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Egypt and Sudan). What made the programme unique was that is was open to people representing organisations that were not necessarily officially registered in their countries and that it aimed to construct a new body of knowledge involving aspects related to governance, administration, financing, contracting, etc[76].

In 2012, ECF partnered with Al Mawred and opened its Tandem programme also to the Arab countries, under the title Tandem Shaml. Tandem Shaml is a programme that offers cultural operators from European and Arab countries the opportunity to establish long-term cooperation to exchange knowledge in different disciplines and is one of the case studies to be explored in (5.7).

In autumn 2014, a new presidential decree in Egypt caused fundamental changes in the legal situation for civil society organisations. The work of cultural institutions became considerable more difficult through those stricter regulations and the criminalisation of accepting foreign funds. Al Mawred continued its work in the Arab region under the name Culture Resource and operates from Brussels and Beirut. This way, as Mermier (2016:

[76] Al Mawred also established in 2006 another funding line for supporting South-South mobility across the Arab region, Mawa3eed. The fund gives the opportunity to Arab artists to circulate and diseeminate their creative output throughout the region.

n/p) puts it "Al Mawred Al Thaqafy escaped the rigidities and inefficiencies of the Egyptian national context, however, its role at the regional level became stronger".

Special mention should be made to AFAC- the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture that, as Mermier (2016: n/p) notes, "is the only Arab fund of this kind in the Arab world". AFAC was incubated by Al Mawred and has developed into a private independent Arab initiative dedicated to empowering the Arab contemporary narrative through 'strategic cultural philanthropy'. It was initiated based on the realisation that the decrease in state control over cultural activities resulted also into further decrease of state funding. Its birth was an answer to the questioning of how the Arab artistic world can be self-supported without the dependence from international donors that support the arts (a question raised already in (4.3.1.4)) and based on the recognition of the social and political importance of an independent cultural practice.

AFAC provides grants to creative communities in the Arab region in order to increase and enhance contemporary art and culture production and research, to support capacity-building and training in the cultural sector, to perpetuate cultural exchange and collaboration across the region and globally and to deliver a sustainable source of funding for meaningful cultural work while identifying and developing distribution channels for Arab cultural production in the region and beyond. Oussama Rihafi, who was the Director of AFAC until the end of 2016, in his introductory text of AFAC's Annual Report for the year 2015 wrote:

> Cultural exchange has proven so far to be the most effective antidote to these divisive trends of modern times. What else could substitute that? Across borders, culture is a basic human expression that is traded actively by individuals and institutions alike to narrate, create, inspire, reflect on our shortcomings and celebrate our successes. It is through the rich diversity of cultural expressions, the mobility of artists and the advancement of artistic freedom that we stand the best chance to promote better understanding and transcend the difficult times we live today in our region (AFAC, 2016a: 7).

AFAC is currently putting in place a three-year-programme of an Arab European Creative Platform[77]. The aim of this platform is to galvanise the inventiveness of Arab and European artists and institutions, towards empowering and enabling the production of art, culture and knowledge. As stated on the organisation's website, the programme (that is still under development and will be announced at the beginning of 2017) aspires:

[77] It is interesting to note that the formulation 'ArabEuropean' instead of 'EuroArab' is being used here. My interpretation is that AFAC, as other pan-Arab organisations in the region, is putting a lot of effort in supporting a resilient cultural sector in the Arab countries that will be in a position to lead the discussions and practices in the binary of European and Arab cultural cooperation.

> […] to explore innovative and constructive actions, commissions and productions, because we are confident that establishing a platform that probes and explores imagination and expression, engages the creative and artistic communities from both Europe and the Arab world, holds keys to allaying fearful minds and hearts and shifting perceptions. We feel compelled by the necessity and urgency to take action, because we believe the alarming crises that have aggravated the social and political polarizations, as the outcome of the massive influx of migrants, pertains to European societies in equal measure to Arab societies.

Since the beginning of the '00s, the Young Arab Theater Fund has been an organisation supporting the production and circulation of artistic works (visual or performing arts) from the Arab region and the travel of numerous artists in order to participate in events and international festivals. For a couple of years now one of the most prominent projects of YAFT has been Meeting Points. As explained in (4.3.2.2), *Meeting Points* is a multidisciplinary bi-annual event organised by YATF (currently Mophradat), in collaboration with regional and international partners. Until recently it took place simultaneously in different cities, aiming to showcase the richness of the emerging Arab individual voices in visual arts, theater, contemporary dance, and music. Meeting Points is neither purely an artistic and performance event, nor an academic and theoretical forum. Each edition is an invitation to artists, as well as cultural producers and thinkers across all cultural sectors to think, reflect and present their visions and art productions while engaging with the socio-political context. The productions tour in European and Arab countries. YATF has been renamed to Mophradat in 2015 and is now in a new phase of operations. As Mai Abu ElDahab, the new Director of Mophradat, explained in an interview conducted in October 2016[78], the organisation has shifted from an organisation that supports the arts field to an arts organisation itself, and as she explained, "trying to move our resources- financial and logistical- towards the production of interesting and important content".

The organisation that has, however, per excellence worked since 1999 on EuroArab cultural cooperation through supporting individual artists and cultural managers wishing to travel in order to develop contemporary artistic cooperation projects in the EuroArab geographical zone and beyond is the Cimetta Fund. The Cimetta Fund runs a mobility grants programme, which is also the focus of the case study explored in (5.6). The Board of Directors of the Fund, the Committee of experts and its staff have considerable expertise on the development of funding mechanisms and management of funding for the benefit of international cultural co-construction processes within the artistic community at large. This expertise is offered to local, regional, national and international

[78] Mai Abu ElDahab is one of the experts interviewed for chapter (6) of this research.

governing bodies and private entities to implement well-planned strategies in international cultural relations that provide an enabling environment for artists and cultural operators, promoting a fair-trade attitude to culture, that entails stability and sustainability in the Euro-Arab geographical region and beyond. The fund often liaises with local governments and European Capitals of Culture to support the mobility of artists and cultural operators and different funding lines exist depending on the synergies created. Since 2014 they also provide a sustaining support grant for venues, platforms and networks in the Arab geographical zone exclusively through their Tamteen programme. The programme supports the strengthening and sustainability of organisations and artists' collectives from the Arab world (including Turkey) and to stabilise projects in their local environments allowing them to establish recognition and develop their networking capacities. Furthermore, the programme aims to create a leverage effect that could contribute modestly to rebalancing forces between Arab and European components in the exchange, as well as strengthening and sustaining cultural exchange between Arab regions. It should be noted as well the Cimetta Fund devotes a lot of its efforts to advocacy for mobility, especially in the EuroMed and EuroArab regions.

Cultural networks

It is worth at this point to mention the role that cultural networks, these "micro-universes of international relations" (Bashiron Medolicchio, 2011: 20), have played in the region. Already at the end of the '90s, a number of cultural networks with an explicit EuroMediterranean character were created. Tanzarella (2004) notes that these attempts of building networks were "frequently informal and non-institutionalised, based on relationships of trust and related to a particular project or meeting".

For example, the EuroMediterranean Network for Contemporary Dance and Performance (D.B.M.- Danse Bassin Méditerranée) has been an international network and non-for profit organisation existing since 1998 and supporting the development and exchange of contemporary dance and performance in the Euro-Arab Mediterranean area. Since 2013, DBM's membership covers all countries of the Union for the Mediterranean (including the Arab League countries and North and Central European countries). Although the main focus of the network has been on contemporary dance, interested professionals and organisations working professionally from other artistic disciplines related with body and movement have been part of its membership[79].

[79] Unfortunately, at the moment of the research the DBM is in a status of *"La Belle au bois dormant"* as Krystel Khoury, one of the experts interviewed for this research mentioned. She

Another initiative that has ceased to exist is the Euro-Med Young Artists Network (EMYAN), a youth initiative aiming "to provide valuable networking opportunities within the field of young artist's empowerment, promote the value of artist-driven initiatives, and serve as a voice for the young artists in forums that debate issues of cultural policy. This network came as an initiative from the South "to increase the sense of ownership for the non-EU members to represent their contribution in reinforcing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership" (Rebernak, 2009: 146). EMYAN aimed to create a wide-ranging network of creative young artists, art institutions, associations, experts and others working in the field of supporting young artists. Membership of EMYAN was open to young artists (aged 18-30), art institutes, associations, and cultural centres in the European Union member states, the Mediterranean Partner countries and the countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

One could say that one of the most successful examples of cultural networks – understanding success as endurance throughout time- is the Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean (BJCEM- Biennale des Jeunes Créateurs de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée). While the first edition of the Biennale took place in Barcelona in 1985, it was not until 2001 that the network was founded and registered in Brussels with an executive office based in Turin. The network includes more than 60 members and external partners from more than 20 countries and brings together municipalities, state departments, foundations, as well as independent associations and cultural institutions. A "travelling youth art happening" (Stillo, 2007: 17), the Biennal started as an opportunity for Southern Europe and then it expanded into the Mediterranean. In the publication to celebrate the 20 years of the Biennal, Stillo, it's Secretary General, mentions:

> The aim was to compare and exhibit the production of a generation that, in the eighties, had no voice in the institutions, museums, galleries, and markets, but had a strong desire to use the languages of art as a means of expression and at the same time, as a professional goal (Stillo, 2007: 17-18).

BJCEM is still today an event that gathers together hundreds of young talents in various disciplines, such as cinema, music, gastronomy, visual art, theatre, dance and literature. In its 30-years history, 17 Biennials have been organised, involving more than 10.000 young artists and over 700.000 visitors. The organisation supports the development and support of collaborative projects that involve the Network members, such as residencies/workshops programmes, transnational research paths, participatory

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explained that "*Last time they met was in Cairo in December 2015. The DBM is part of the non-working networks presently. I think it is dormant - La Belle au bois dormant. It wakes up when someone is excited to revive it but with no financial support given, this seems very hard".*

processes of engagement and inclusion of local communities through the use of creativity, innovative strategies of audience development and engagement. Its impact can be identified on different levels, however it is interesting to read how Stillo describes it and relates it to what was exposed in section (4.2.1.2) regarding the role that the Mediterranean has formed in the dynamics of EuroArab cultural cooperation:

> And here we come to the hidden heart of the Biennial and our work with young artists—the Mediterranean. Timidly at first, then in an increasingly determined, almost overwhelming way, loads of energy came into the Biennial from lesser known corners of this sea. From territories where conflicts had torn souls and bodies apart, like the Balkans for example. From areas where tensions are still unsolved, or rather, where they are one of the causes of instability in the contemporary world like the Middle East and the Maghreb. The Mediterranean, cradle of the old world, has become what its name actually means. It serves as mediator, communicator and a trade route between the lands it bathes and between the people it nourishes. These aspects have filled the Biennial with things that go beyond art (Stillo, 2007: 18).

FEMEC, the EuroMediterranean Forum of Cultures, was established in 2000 and aspired to be an instrument for the defence of the EuroMediterranean Partnership's cultural aspects (Tanzarella, 2004) could be considered the first step towards the Network that is being supported by the Anna-Lindh Foundation (ALF). Actually today ALF runs the largest network of civil society organisations involved in the promotion of intercultural dialogue across Europe and the Mediterranean. From its very beginning, the Foundation was conceived as a 'network of national networks'[80] from each of the 43 members of the Union for the Mediterranean. One could say that this might be the reason why other networks have seized to exist, since membership to the ALF's wider network gives them access to numerous potential peers and partners from the EuroArab region from the broader areas of civil society and culture. Another reason could be that the digital technologies have multiplied the possibilities for non-institutionalised encounters and the need of communication through networks is not necessary. As seen from the first examples mentioned here, the cuts in financial support is also one of the challenges that networks face. Although the added value of cultural networks is recognised as central in international cultural affairs, as also presented in (1.3), as Steinkamp observes, (IFACCA, 2016: 14) most funding programmes focus on bilateral or bi-regional cooperation and the needs of international networks are not taken adequately into account and their sustainability cannot be guaranteed.

[80] In each country there is a National Network ensuring coordination among members, consultation and mobilization inside the network but also the development of cooperation activities among member organisations or across networks and strengthening the cooperation between the heads of network and the ALF headquarters.

Another observation in the field of cultural networks is the role that German cultural institutions have played in creating networks of individuals- and not of organisations- in the region. One example is the effort of the German Commission for UNESCO to establish a regional 'U40 Arabesque' in the framework of the CONNEXXIONS programme. The 'U40 Arabesque' network aimed at being a forum to advocate for cultural participation, to create strategic partnerships and self-organisation of civil society actors in the cultural field, to position young experts and their work into a wider context of international cultural policies and to exchange information, knowledge and practices in the field of promoting cultural diversity. 'U40 Arabesque' was supposed to be part of the global U40 Network Cultural Diversity 2030, a network of young experts from all over the world[81]. Another example of network creation is the Cultural Innovators Network (CIN) supported by the Goethe Institut this time and that will be further analysed in the respective case study explored in section (5.5).

Morever, the emerging role of EUNIC in the panorama of EuroArab cultural cooperation and of European external relations is to be touched upon here. As already mentioned in (1.3), EUNIC aims to become by 2025 "the delivery, research and training partner of choice for cultural diplomacy and cultural relations at European and international level" (EUNIC, 2015: 1). EUNIC works in each country through its clusters that group the foreign cultural institutes present in a country and in this way they have a capacity to deliver collaborative transnational projects connecting culture and society, as well as potential collaboration for training and research in cultural diplomacy and cultural relations. The work undertaken by EUNIC Tunisia has been pointed out in two occasions during the interviews[82] as exemplary because they signed in 2016 a contract with the EU-Delegation under a wider package financed by the ENPI. The programme focuses on strengthening the cultural and creative sectors of Tunisia as well as facilitating access to culture. It is composed by the Governmental Twinning actions (managed by the Tunisian Ministry of Culture), a grant scheme for local cultural operators in the whole country and technical assistance to build the capacity of local operators to apply and receive grants (both managed by EUNIC).

[81] The U40 Network is an independent civil society actor and gives a voice to young experts (under 40) in the implementation and promotion of the *2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*.

[82] Interview with Andrew Murrey, Director of EUNIC Global in the framework of the EUNIC/ MENA case study and Javier Galván, Director of the Instituto Cervantes in Rabat in the framework of the expert interviews.

Finally, while the above-mentioned examples have an explicit EuroMed/ EuroArab objective, we can observe a growing interest from the side of European cultural networks to deepen more into the Arab cultural world and research or create bridges. To name just a few examples, the 9th ENCATC Young Researcher's Forum organised in Brussels on the 16th of December 2016, focused on the MENA region (Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia)[83]. Furthermore, the last ENCATC Tour visit took place in the UEA in March 2017. IETM, already in November 2012 organised a Caravan meeting[84] in Beirut and in October 2016 again in Beirut the Satellite meeting for Freedom of Expression, which was backed by *an International Campaign for Freedom of Expression*[85] and bringing together actors of the media, art and cultural sectors, with the aim of endorsing ongoing reforms of the censorship laws in Lebanon and similar initiatives in the region. Finally, the European Festivals Association in the framework of its Festival Academy organised an Atelier for Young Festival Managers in Beirut in March 2015.

4.4.1.2 National initiatives

When it comes to national initiatives, it should be reminded that bilateral agreements between two countries in the framework of cultural diplomacy (in its traditional reading) have not been included here. The section touches upon the work of European foreign cultural institutes and of humanitarian aid organisations based in Europe that are addressing a number of Arab countries with their programmes[86].

On a first level, the work of the foreign cultural institutes will be discussed. As mentioned in chapter 1, foreign cultural institutes have been the bodies through which a country has traditionally deployed its cultural diplomacy in another country. Xuereb (2013) analyses the role that the foreign cultural presence in the Mediterranean countries has taken and

[83] As mentioned in the Introduction, I had the opportunity as a young researcher to present my ongoing research work at that Forum in a Session under the title *Distilling value from EuroArab cultural cooperation projects* moderated by Cristina Ortega Nuera and with respondents from the Catherine Magnant, Deputy Head of Unit of the EUropean Commission – Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Cultural Diversity and Innovation Unit, Manuèle Debinay-Rizos/ Head of International Relations, Institut de Management Public et Gouvernance territoriale at Aix Marseille University France and Valentina Montalto, Research Fellow at the Joint Research Center.

[84] IETM Caravans are study visits that give the opportunity to a small number of participants to plunge into the local cultural life of the selected destinations. I had the opportunity to participate at the Caravan Beirut 2012 and some of my understandings and findings on the cultural and artistic life in the region come from the encounters we had with local artists and cultural operators and the cultural and artistic spaces we visited at that moment.

[85] The campaign was initiated by IETM during the dates of the Beirut Satellite meeting in 2016, several organisations and artists from different countries have undertaken activities to challenge censorship and promote freedom of expression around the world.

[86] There is no information about similar Arab countries initiatives towards European countries.

in (4.3.1.4) it was discussed that foreign cultural institutes are main sources of funding of the cultural life in the Arab countries.

Foreign cultural institutes

Ana Vasquez, previously responsible for Culture at the Instituto Cervantes in Rabat and a former colleague of mine at the EXPO Zaragoza 2008, was a person with whom I held an informal discussion about cultural cooperation in the Arab region. She made an observation that although the British Council and the Goethe Institute are more 'visible' in terms of what they do in the Arab region, the French and Spanish institutes are actually the ones more engaged on the ground. The scope of this thesis does not allow making any judgements or comparisons around the amount of investment of different countries through their cultural foreign institutes. However, not being able to have a comprehensive picture of different countries' support (which could be a whole new research on its own) is a limitation to the assumptions presented here. Therefore, interpretations and examples included here are indeed the ones that are more 'visible' because they are the ones for which information is available. Therefore the focus is on the work of two cultural institutions, namely the Goethe Institut (Germany) and the British Council (UK), particularly because they have conceptualised programmes that were not country-specific (for example Germany- Lebanon) cooperation but cover the Arab region as a whole.

The Goethe Institut has put in place several initiatives related to the region, among which:

- The *Cultural Innovators Network*, which constitutes one of the case studies, analysed in (5.3). Initiated in 2012, the programme engaged more than 20 Goethe-Instituts in the Mediterranean region to take part in the emergence of this network. The rationale behind the programme is that in particularly difficult times for cultural activity in the Arab countries, establishing long-term contacts can contribute to improving the situation. Its main aim is to support pluralistic transformation processes through artistic means and cultural processes.
- The *Kultur Akademie* is another programme organised by the Goethe Institut since 2011 to feed into, as mentioned on Goethe Institute's website, the need of "well- connected and adequately trained protagonists in the cultural scenes of the Arab region". The programme offers six-week cultural management training for members of non-state cultural institutions from the Arab region in the fields of cultural management, cultural policy, communication and marketing, audience

development, budgeting, fundraising. The programme gives the opportunity to 'independent', non-state protagonists from various cultural fields from the Arab region (Algeria, Egypt, GCC, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen) to network with institutions of the KulturpartnerNetzwerk of the Goethe-Institut all over Germany. The programme's aim it to professionalise the Arab cultural sector, developing a sustainable pan-Arabian network between cultural institutions as well as promoting cooperation between Arab and German cultural institutions.

- Finally, the *Moving MENA* programme 2016 is a new travel grant that is managed from the Goethe Institut in Cairo but is open to all cultural actors from Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan allowing them to participate in festivals, exhibitions, and other relevant events in Germany and also in other countries of the Arab world, or to do research for future projects. In the same time, the programme is addressed to German cultural institutions that want to invite people from these countries.

Secondly, the British Council has in the recent years implemented a number of programmes related to the region. Among them, it is worth mentioning the Cultural Protection Fund, which helps to create sustainable opportunities for economic and social development through building capacity to foster, safeguard and promote cultural heritage affected by conflict. The Fund gives attention to 'tangible' (physical monuments and religious sites), as well as 'intangible' heritage (inherited traditions, beliefs and cultural identity passed through generations) that have been increasingly under threat in the MENA region.

Furthermore, in the framework of their *Cultural Skills* programme, the British Council has published a research (Mansour, 2016) on skills gaps and shortages in Egypt, Morocco and Saudi Arabia as the beginning of a process that aims to share and develop the cultural sector in the MENA region. Based on the outcomes of this report, the British Council is planning a series of new skills offers, aiming to increase cultural relations between the UK and the country in focus by working together with UK based expertise to support and enable the creative and cultural sectors. The programmes will focus on four core areas: policy, professional development, youth engagement and English language qualification for the sector. In line with the skills gaps identified in the report, the focus of the trainings will be on facilitating the entry into the sector for young professionals, mentorships and

residencies with UK-based experts, engagement with cultural policies, discipline-based skills training and transversal cultural management skills training.

It is worth mentioning at this point that due to the recent developments in Syria, all foreign cultural services have closed down their operations. However, in line with the needs of the Syrian artistic community and displaced population (and the long history of cultural relations with Syria) the British Council has kept working for Syria from Beirut and from London. For example, in 2015 they organised the exhibition *Syria: Third Space, a British Council exhibition about recovery and resilience* in Brussels, a collection of work by displaced Syrian artists as part of their global programme *Artists in Recovery*. The programme involved a structured small grants scheme given to displaced Syrian artists in more than 10 countries in an effort, as stated on the organisation's website, to "highlight the vital roles artists play as storytellers, conveners facilitators, spokespeople and the alternative space they provide (Third Space)". Moreover, they cooperate with Ettijahat- Independent Culture and International Alert on another project under the title *Create Syria: a project to empower Syrian art in exile* aiming to enhance the expertise of artists and cultural activist living outside of Syria, including displaced Syrians.

Humanitarian/ development organisations

The organisations mentioned below have a mandate related mainly to development: they are employing, however, cultural concepts, claims and methods in achieving their goals. This is an approach linked to on of the interpretations of culture in development, explained more thoroughly in (1.2.2.3). The focus here is on examples of organisations from three European countries' that use the culture and development and human rights-based narrative to their intervention in the Arab region: the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway.

In the Netherlands, the Prince Claus Fund is one of the institutions supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch Postcode Lottery with the aim to support artists, cultural organisations and critical thinkers in spaces where freedom of expression is restricted by conflict, poverty, repression, marginalisation or taboos. It has a grants programme for individuals and for projects and MENA countries among its field of activities.

Another example is Hivos, until recently financed by the Dutch government as well, that has put in place a flagship programme in relation to culture and the Arab region: the Mideast Creatives HIVOS that supports the cultural and creative sector in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), through three strategies:

- Support for creative coworking spaces. This is achieved through grant giving for coworking spaces and beehives in the region. So far grants have been given to coworking spaces in Egypt, Iraq, Sudan, Tunisia and Morocco. These grants aim to create or maintain community spaces where creative entrepreneurs can jointly procure projects, exchange ideas and access services and support and use technology that can aid their growth individually and as a collective;
- Business trainings for the creative sector. Together with local partners they have developed a business-training programme for entrepreneurs within the cultural and media sector that have evolved into the Disrupt! /events training events which are in fact competitive three-day workshops that bring together entrepreneurs from different creative fields to work on business plans with the support of experienced local trainers, mentors and investors;
- Alternative financial models for the arts. Hivos has supported the creation of the online crowdfunding platform Zoomal for the Arab word aiming to make is easier for creative projects to raise funds from the crowds in partnership with four major Arab investors[87].

Secondly, the Danish Centre for Culture and Development supported cultural programmes, especially in Egypt and Palestine. Denmark's Strategic Framework Document 2013- 2016 for the Danish Arab Partnership Programme (DAPP) was the main guiding policy framework for collaboration between Denmark and the MENA region of which Egypt was a focus. Its core thematic areas were knowledge-based societies, economic growth and job creation. It fell under the strategy for Denmark's Development Cooperation strategy *The Right to a Better Life* and its approach to culture and development was *The Right to Art and Culture*.

Finally, the Norwegian organisation Mimeta is working within culture and development in more than twenty countries by the means of financial support, knowledge building and art promotion. Its' aim is to give people access to free artistic expressions created on

[87] These investors are Wamda/ UAE, Middle East Venture Partners/ MEVP=MENA, Cairo Angeles/ Egypt, N2V/ KSA, Sawari Ventures/ Egypt.

independent terms. Their funding programme gives priority to organisations that work as service providers to improve the sector's position on rights issues, in political and legal matters, the professionalism, the distribution of the arts and the sustainability of the cultural sector. They claim that this decision is based on the recognition that such organisations are rare in most of the geographic areas where they work but they are needed for an efficient development of the sector. As explained on the organisation's website, "from a practical point of view you cannot expect from the artist, producers or event organisers that they will leave their main focus to take on issues relating to the framework conditions of the sector as such. Furthermore, policy, advocacy, organisational development, training, education, research, fund management etc. calls for experts and specialised organisations to succeed". This explains why Mimeta is part of working partnerships for development processes, support and re-granting in the Arab world, supporting, for example, programmes of Al Mawred and Ettijahat, as well as Tandem Shaml.

It is interesting though that during the moment this research was being written, organisations in both the Netherlands and Denmark underwent an important change. From one side, in 2015, Hivos went through a period of transition from a Dutch development organisation mainly funded by the Dutch government co-financing system to a networked organisation with social innovation at its core. On the other hand, the Danish Centre for Culture and Development (CKU) announced the end of its operations at the end of 2016. Both examples demonstrate the changing environment of funding in Europe.

4.4.1.3 The EU

Fanny Bouquerel, one of the experts interviewed in the framework of the expert interviews that are analysed in chapter (6), mentioned during the interview: *"Surprisingly, the EU is considered the primary donor in the region".* In chapter (1) several references on the political texts that guide the role of the EU in the region have been made and more in detail in (4.2.2). At this section, the focus is mainly on the implementation mechanisms.

Following the Barcelona Declaration, two main programmes were put into place, the EuroMed Heritage and the EuroMed Audiovisuel. These two programmes are mentioned here because, although their activities seized recently (2013 and 2014 respectively), they have been pivotal in informing the web of EuroMed/ EuroArab cultural cooperation also

due to their relatively long-lasting character. EuroMed Heritage run from 1998 to 2013, chartered by the Barcelona Declaration and funded through the EuroMed Partnership. As from its last edition (2008- 2012) it was embedded in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). The programme worked on recognising culture as a catalyst for mutual understanding between the Mediterranean people. A number of projects were funded through this programme offering a framework of exchanges and channels of disseminating best practice, as well as increasing the capacities of the professionals involved. EuroMed Media aimed at developing the film and audiovisual sector in 10 Southern Mediterranean countries and enhancing sustainable knowledge and best practices transfer through a wide set of trainings, capacity building, funds, productions and co-productions of feature films and documentaries, distribution and exhibition, fight against piracy and networking activities.

We have see already that the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) that was established in 2005 in the framework of the EuroMediterranean Partnership and is based in Alexandria (Egypt) has been one of the main EU instruments in the region. The aim of the ALF is to bring people together from across the Mediterranean in order to improve mutual respect between cultures, to support civil society that is working towards a common future in the region and to contribute to the creation of a space of prosperity, coexistence and peace through restoring trust in dialogue and bridging the gaps in mutual conceptions, as well as promoting diversity and coexistence. The ALF has launched and supported actions across fields impacting on mutual conceptions among people of different cultures and beliefs. Moreover, it has developed a network of over 3.000 civil society organisations and publishes reports on EuroMed Intercultural Trends (Anna Lindh Foundation, 2014). As one of the important actors in the 43 countries of the EuroMediterranean space working on the third pillar of the Barcelona Process, from the very beginning the Anna Lindh Foundation has tried to place culture at the centre of its priorities. Although throughout the interviews with experts and with the case studies interviewees the ALF was often criticised by cultural actors in the region as a too bureaucratic, too political and far from the everyday reality institution, its contribution to providing spaces for exchange and dialogue cannot be neglected.

Besides the forums and events that it organises, the ALF has established as part of its *DAWRAK-Citizens for Dialogue programme* a component dedicated to Arts for Change and aiming to support cultural expression and dialogue to gain a prominent role in the on-going social and political discourses developing in the Arab region, to improve access to

culture across diverse Arab communities and to enable young Arab cultural operators to effectively increase the social impact of their work through advocacy and outreach. Currently though they have launched a call for a new programme under the title *EuroMed Exchange Programme (EEP) Dialogue- Innovate- Cooperate* which gives traineeship opportunities to support synergies, cross-disciplinary activities and new project ideas related to intercultural dialogue (ICD), involving young actors from both shores of the Mediterranean while giving them the spaces to gain new perspectives on how to drive development and make positive changes.

Moreover, following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009, the EU has set up a unified diplomatic service called the European External Action Service (EEAS) and EU Delegations are part of it. An EU Delegation represents the European Union as a whole in a specific country and functions more or less like an embassy and represents the EU in its dealing with political issues, trade, development and cooperation but also civil society, media, citizens. In this capacity, they organise cultural activities and also launch calls for supporting projects in the countries where they operate. European Delegations are a mechanism for implementation of the EU external action and are gaining slowly an increased role in the countries where they operate.

Finally, one of the programmes of the ENPI is the *EU programme: Media and culture for development in the Southern Mediterranean region.* The programme is running from 2013 and expires in 2018 and has been the EU tool to support the efforts of the Southern Mediterranean countries in building deep-rooted democracy and to contribute to their sustainable economic, social and human development, through regional co-operation in the fields of media and culture. Media and culture are seen as vectors for democratisation and economic and social development for societies in the nine Arab beneficiary countries[88].

Particularly in the field of culture, the following three main grant projects are supported within this programme:

- Med Culture, which is a 4-year (2014-2018) regional programme funded by the European Union to accompany South Mediterranean partner countries in the development and improvement of cultural policies and practices related to the

[88] The beneficiary countries of the programme are: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria and Tunisia.

culture sector. The approach that this programme uses is consultative/participative and takes place in partnership with civil society actors, ministries, and private and public institutions involved in culture as well as other related sectors. Med Culture's ultimate goal is to pave the way towards the development of institutional and social environments that will confirm culture as vector for freedom of expression and sustainable development.

- SouthMed CV operates in the framework of EU and regional strategies for sustainable development, like the MDGs, the EU's Europe 2020 Strategy, the European Agenda for Cultural and Neighborhood Policy and the 2005 UNESCO *Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (UNESCO, 2005). The Consortium that is running the programme is formed by Interarts, a non-for-proft organization working for the support of cultural policies internationally and based in Barcelona, BAC Art Centre, an independent non-profit cultural organisation focused on contemporary art from Tunis, Khayal Arts and Eduction, a non-profit organisation promoting artistic projects with social and educational application from Lebanon, the King Houssein's Foundation National Center for Culture and Arts, a non-profit organisation focused on social development through performing arts and the German Commission for UNESCO. SouthMed CV aims to bring culture from the margins to the center of the public sphere in the Southern Mediterranean, exploring its potential connections with economic, social and political development strategies. SouthMed CV intends to foster the role of culture in social cohesion.

- Drama, Diversity and Development (DDD) uses culture to promote diversity and challenge discrimination against minorities and raises awareness of the role of culture in social cohesion in a wide-ranging but profound way. The programme was developed based on research that showed that matching minority and artist-led organisations would bridge the need for drama, technical, marketing, media and project management skills in the former and the need to build knowledge/ trust of minority communities in the latter. Through an open call for street theatre projects in the MENA, the programme supports regional training courses,

feasibility studies for cultural rights abuses and advocacy projects on abuses of/ and increased respect for cultural rights.[89]

Not explicitly under a culture-related call**,** the project *Development of clusters in the cultural and creative industries (CCI) 2014- 2017* in the Southern Mediterranean is a programme conceptualised within the framework of the ENP between the EU and the southern Mediterranean countries aiming to contribute to inclusive growth by fostering entrepreneurial cooperation in CCI. It focuses on providing technical assistance programmes among which the development of clusters in CCI. During its inception phase, the project completed a mapping of clusters and related economic realities in the seven beneficiary countries[90] and following this, a number of clusters received direct technical assistance. The project benefits from financial contribution of the Italian Development Cooperation and is implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO).

Several support programmes involving cultural operators, cultural sectors of activity and/ or cultural content towards the Southern Mediterranean countries fall under the responsibility of the European Commission's International Cooperation and Development Directorate General, demonstrating that culture is considered to contribute to current EU development policies. Despite the fact that culture is not explicitly included in the communication *Increasing the impact of EU Development policy: an agenda for change* (European Commisison, 2011c), a great number of EU funded projects "integrate culture as a core sector of cooperation- and an integral part of development" as the *Study on projects using cultural expressions as a lever for employment, human rights, democracy and other human development areas has shown* (Jeretic, 2014:5). One example is the call launched for *Cultural activities in Egypt: Revolution meets the Arts!*[91]. The objective of the call was to contribute to the diversity of cultural creation and promote a culture of human rights.

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[89] The partners running the programme on behalf of the European Commission are the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development, the Minority Rights group international and the civic forum initiative and the Andalus Institute for tolerance and anti-violence studies.

[90] Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

[91] Reference: EuropeAid/131155/L/ACT/EG. The action was justified by a number of political agreements (EuroMediterranean Partnership; European Neighnorhood Partnership Instrument – which is the legal base regulating this call- UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the 2007 Commission Communication on a Agenda for culture in a globalized world).

An observation that needs to be made is related to the variety of instruments that fund cultural cooperation on the EU level that are managed from various DGs in the European Commission which prioritise different aspects (for example DG EAC, DG NEAR and DG DEVCO).

4.4.2 Brief analysis of EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes

Following the preliminary mapping of institutional actors and their work in the EuroArab cultural cooperation context, a further step was to have a structured overview of the kind of programmes supported, which aims they claim to achieve and what are the expected outcomes. This exercise helps to understand the ways institutions and stakeholders in the region give responses to some of the observations and challenges identified in section (4.3).

Annex 7 reflects the outcome of this 'mapping' exercise. There, 20 programmes of actors mentioned in the previous section are included, which are currently functioning. The mapping is based mainly on desk research and information available on the Internet and builds on the previous section where the actors involved in EuroMed and EuroArab cultural cooperation were identified. In some cases, some additional documentation (reports, articles) was consulted whenever available. While undertaking this 'mapping', six main broad formats of cultural cooperation programmes in the EuroMed/ EuroArab region were identified, which are reflected in Table 4.2 and which are explained below.

Table 4.2: Areas of international cultural cooperation programmes in the EuroMed/ EuroArab region

(i) Initiatives supporting the mobility of artists and cultural operators
(ii) Initiatives supporting the development of skills of individuals
(iii) Initiatives supporting the capacity building of organisations
(iv) Initiatives supporting the development of joint EuroArab projects
(v) Initiative supporting cultural policy development
(vi) Initiatives supporting artistic production and heritage protection in the Arab region
(vii) Initiatives supporting the creation of 'communities of practice'

Source: Developed by researcher.

(i) Initiatives supporting mobility of artists and cultural operators

We have seen that there are a great number of programmes explicitly supporting mobility. The Cimetta Fund has an explicit mobility-funding component in its work especially with focus in the EuroMed/ EuroArab region. In the same time, there are many

other programmes that support cultural mobility, among which the *Step beyond* mobility grant programme established in 2003 by ECF, which is destined to emerging artists and cultural workers to explore and to exchange views, skills and inspiration while traveling between the EU and countries bordering the EU – including the Mediterranean.

Mobility and cultural cooperation opportunities within the Arab region have been recognised as a need for supporing independent and non-mainstream artists and structures, that's why we can see that there are more and more programmes supporting South-South mobility including the Al Mawred programmes such as *Mawa3eed*, as well as AFAC grants programme and Moving MENA supported by the Goethe Institut.

Besides the preliminary mapping undertaken for the scope of this study, a mapping of mobility funds in the Meditteranean commissioned by the Arab Education Forum in cooperation with the Cimetta Fund for the Istikshaf Platform (Raei, 2011) includes information on 18 organisations that support cultural mobility in the EuroArab region. Moreover, On-the-move (2014) has undertaken another study that includes information about funding opportunities for the international mobility of artists and cultural professionals.

(ii) Initiatives supporting the development of skills of individuals

The lack of educational policies and employment policies specifically designed for the cultural and creative sectors, together with a mismatch between the supply of skills and the market needs have been identified as some of the obstacles regarding the cultural sector in the Arab countries (Dragićević Šešic & Mihalijnac, 2016; Hariri & Kassis, 2013; Mansor, 2016). A study on the different education and capacity building programs in the MENA region was recently published by MedCulture (Dragićević Šešic & Mihalijnac, 2016). In the study, the main cultural management-related courses offered on the higher education system in the Arab countries are presented. Given that the there is limited offer on higher education level, offerings in qualifications for cultural managers come mainly from the independent sector (Winkler & Faltin, 2014: 24). As Dragićević Šešic and Mihalijnac (2016: 24) note, a number of "diversified sporadic programmes devoted to cultural project management and fundraising exist in the region targeting two clearly distinct groups: cultural professionals and youth interested to develop cultural projects within civil society activism".

At the same time, a number of international organisations have developed initiatives that try to tackle this issue on a more consolidated basis. Already in the '00s a cultural management workshop for operators from both the European and Mediterranean area was supported by a programme called MELOPEE, developed by AMUNI and aiming at implementing a better professional cultural environment in the EuroMed area, through the organisation of cultural management trainings and other activities addressed to those based in the region leading or willing to lead their own projects on their territory[92].

Clear examples of more recent initiatives that fall under this category, are the training course organised by Al Mawred and ECF (Training for trainers programme, Training for cultural policy researchers, Abarra) or trainings offered by the Goethe Institut (Kultur Akademie). EUNIC also run a training course for culture and creative industries, that will be one of the case studies examined in (5.4). Another example is the Training of Trainers in Fundraising for the Arts and Culture in the MENA project that was realised in 2013 by management center UK and the Tamasi collective[93]. A less clear example of a training programme is Tandem, which adopts a project-based approach to learning.

Finally, a certain level of cooperation is also observed on cultural management training provision also on the academic level. While these lines are being written, a two-year MA course in Cultural Policy and Culture Management for students from the MENA region is being developed between the University of Hassan II in Casablanca Morocco and the University of Hildesheim, Germany.

(iii) Initiatives supporting the development of joint EuroArab projects

Tandem Shaml is the most prominent example of this category, since it gives the opportunity to cultural operators from Europe to 'tandem' (which means 'to pair') with other cultural operators from the Arab world and work together on developing a project for a period of 15 months. The Cultural Innovators (CIN) network also provides such an opportunity to its members[94]. For example, one of their projects that emerged from the network was the Dome project that is engaging network members from different

[92] MELOPEE was Initiated by two French organisations, L'Echangeur, Scene conventionnes de Fere en Tardenois a center for artistic production and exchanged that had focused in particular in the Arab world and Amuni operating for the production, distribution and promotion of artistic projects and the implementation of international cultural coopeeation projects in Europe and the Mediterranean area. Supported by Fondation Rene Seydoux and the French Ministry of Culture.

[93] TAMASI is a collective of 11 independent performing arts organisations with members based in Jordan, Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon.

[94] To be tackled further in (5.6).

countries. The main European programme for culture, Creative Europe (2014- 2020) is also formally open to ENP countries. However, while formally eligible, few of them participate in the programme, probably due to the eligibility criteria (Trobiani, 2017: 21).

(iv) Initiatives investing on cultural policy development

Reference has been made already to the work undertaken for the support of the development of cultural policies. The European Cultural Foundation and Mimeta have supported organisations to develop capacities in this field, especially through Al Mawred/ Culture Resource and Ettijahat's programmes. As already mentioned, in 2009 Culture Resource in cooperation with the European Cultural Foundation and the British Council launched a regional programme for the monitoring and development of cultural policies in the Arab region in order to build a knowledge base for the promotion of cultural policy planning and cooperation between Arab countries. A specific website was launched in 2014 and is administrated by Ettijahat that acts also as the regional coordinator of the programme.

(v) Initiatives supporting artistic production and heritage protection in the Arab region

Khoury (2014: 106) reports on a cooperative project supported by the European Delegation in Egypt:

> Amid the local critical and transitional socio-political situation of 2012 Egypt, the 'Raqs 3a Tayer' dance experience empowered young individuals with a feeling of liberation and responsibility. It foregrounded the transformative and emancipatory aspect of learning through dance. It offered subtle and stimulating tools in dealing with a present situation full of uncertainty by 'extending the thinking beyond the known […]. Furthermore, by introducing practices that privileged subjective experience, dancers participated actively in enhancing the autonomy process of the emergent Egyptian contemporary dance field.

This is only just one example of how funding programmes are investing in artistic creation. The European Delegations funding schemes support to a great extent the production of new artistic work in the countries they operate. Moreover, Mophradat is focusing its attention to the artistic product and often projects supported by the Tandem Shaml programme, might result in artistic productions, such as the Lambedusa mirrors, a theatre coproduction between Eclosion d'artistes (Tunis) and Teatro dell'Argine (Bologna) that reflected the life at the island of Lampedusa as a symbolic site of the ongoing migration crisis.

Another line of interest has been the protection of heritage in the region. As seen above, EuroMed Heritage has been a programme that has invested in the protection of heritage, both the tangible and the intangible ones. The Cultural Protection Fund of the British Council would fall under this category as well.

(vi) Initiatives supporting the creation of 'communities of practice'

A community of practice can be seen as a social learning system, which allows for an active negotiation of meanings (Wenger, 1998). The CONNEXXIONS programme supported by the German Commission for UNESCO, the Cultural Innovators Network or MedCulture would fall under this category. One of the programmes supported by MedCulture, SouthMed CV, uses explicitly the notion of communities of practice in their website "as a valid and tested model to enhance and sustain the professional capacities and development of cultural organisations and operators [...] in order to bring culture from the margins to the center of the public sphere in the programme countries". Finally, although not explicitly stated, the Tandem programme also serves this goal. It is interesting to note that in these cases the focus is on individuals rather on the organisations that they represent. These new constellations are more and more replacing the traditional networks that have been explored in section (4.4.1.1).

(vii) Initiatives supporting the capacity building of organisations

Capacity building refers to a process of facilitating the consolidation of capacities of organisations to allow them to evolve and adapt to new contextual requirements and fulfil their role within a governance structure. One could say that all the above-mentioned categories serve in reality the goal of investing in the capacity building of individuals and through them to the capacity building of their organisations. Others however, are addressed directly to organisations. For example, initiatives that are addressed explicitly to organisations in terms of a long-term investment on resources in view of sustainable strategies include Tamteen from the Cimetta Fund and funding opportunities provided by Mimeta, as well as the programmes by Hivos presented above.

The six categories identified do not mean that each programme/ scheme only serves one particular aim. Most programmes/ schemes tackle more than one of the above-identified aims. This kind of existing support mechanisms is in a way related to what Dragićević Šešić, (2010: 247) has identified as a lack of a model of cultural policies or a model of cultural practices. As she explains:

> Governance is not an issue (yet), which is the reason why notions like cultural entrepreneurialism, art management, cultural management, strategic planning, assessment and evaluation are not part of the overall public/ governmental system in a majority of the countries. These terms are neither widely known nor used.

Following this observation, she claims that through supporting a number of programmes the foreign Foundations and international organisations introduce cultural policy and cultural management to improve governance and raise the level of professionalism in the cultural field (2010: 248). Considering what has been exposed above, it is easy to agree with the author. Her arguments can be backed with the data that have been gathered in the framework of this research.

4.5 Closing Reflections

> *"I really believe in the humanistic values in general and I don't fake it. When there is a real exchange it gives real results. If cultural managers from both sides can meet and [for example] can do training together, the projects will be naturally born. If I like it, if I find it interesting I will begin to exchange and then all the important projects are born like this. From peer-to-peer, not to fit international demands."*
>
> Hanan Al-Hajj Ali, actress, cultural researcher and trainer

This chapter has discussed the context in which EuroArab cultural relations are shaped and developed. Firstly, the terms Euro and Arab in relation to geography and identity were reviewed. On a second level, three periods in contemporary EuroArab cultural relations were identified and the socio-political context and dynamics than evolved around them and had an impact on EuroArab cultural relations were sketched. Finally, in this chapter an attempt was made to outline the forms in which cultural cooperation takes place in the EuroArab region while making reference to the main actors in the field and their programmes.

As Becker (1982) had noted, art (and cultural) processes are cooperative and alongside with artists, many other individuals and organisations assist in producing and disseminating their works to the public. Funding organisations and stakeholders actually act as intermediary organisations. Although trying to define what is an intermediary organisation "remains large in scope and comprises a multitude of organizational natures and functions with a lot of blending in between" (Farinha, 2011: 22), the organisations mentioned above are considered important players when it comes to supporting and promoting international cultural cooperation in the EuroArab region.

All that has been exposed in this chapter shows that there is an enhanced environment of cultural cooperation in the region dictated by several desires and limitations. Undoubtedly, the Mediterranean and EuroArab regions are at the focus of the attention at the moment. Unresolved conflicts that bring to the surface power relations, the democratic changes underway, economic interests in the region, the financial crisis, challenges posed by the climate change, the role of religion in social and political relations as well as the issue of increasing immigration flows from the Southern to the Northern part of the Mediterranean are some of the reasons why this region has attracted and is still attracting a lot of attention. In this context, "[c]ultural cooperation between Europe and the Mediterranean region is repeatedly hampered by artificially-coined strategic orientations and artificially imposed geopolitical and geographical demarcation lines" (European Cultural Foundation, 2008: 16).

DeVlieg (2008) had observed that the interest of international funders in the Arab world was an effort to give an answer to the agony in which some western nations find themselves towards multiculturalism and the growing Muslim communities in their ground and a quick fix for the challenges of cultural renewal within the Arab region itself. Today, almost 10 years later, this observation cannot be considered most accurate.

We should recognise that the programmes and projects mentioned in this chapter have indeed created enhanced frames for EuroArab cooperation. What we don't know is their impact and their actual capacity of reaching the objectives set. In a recent study (Jeretic, 2014: 13) we read that "EU-funded projects and programmes do not include explicit and operational provisions to collect data for measuring impact" and "there is usually no follow up or monitoring of effects and impact after the end of a project". It is not claimed here that this is the case for all funded programmes. However, searching for evaluation reports or evidence on long-term impacts from the above-mentioned programmes produced limited results. It was however possible in four cases (and one personal experience) that will be examined more thoroughly in the next chapter.

What can be extracted from chapter (4) is there is still a lot of way to go so that EuroArab cultural cooperation can go beyond the traditional colonial lines of force, the narratives of intercultural dialogue, migration or security, and becomes a genuine cooperation in equal terms that does not make chameleonic efforts to satisfy different funding lines according to the offer available. The quotation of Hanan Al-Hajj Ali, interviewed in Beirut in 2012 and used at the beginning of this section, reflects this agony for a genuine cooperation.

This chapter ends with the words of Fathi Heddaoui, Director of the Cultural Centre Hammamet in Tunisia interviewed in December 2012 in regards to his opinion on the importance of EuroArab cultural cooperation:

> *"Only the arts can do this. Not commerce, neither politics. It's the artistic expressions, literature, poetry, images and people in all their intellectual aspects that can really create- or find again- a point of understanding".*

Chapter 5:

Evaluation of international cultural cooperation schemes in the EuroArab region: one meta-reflection and four case studies

5.1 Presentation of the chapter

5.2 Note on the case studies methodology

5.3 This is not a case study:
Reflections on the evaluation of the CONNEXXIONS programme

5.4 Case study 1: EUNIC/ MENA training in cultural and creative sector management

5.5 Case study 2: the Cultural Innovators Network

5.6 Case study 3: Cimetta Fund's mobility grants programme

5.7 Case study 4: TANDEM Shaml programme

5.8 Learning from the case studies

5.9 Closing Reflections

5.1 Presentation of the chapter

The overall aim of this research is to respond to the call for more robust evidence of the evaluation of international cultural cooperation schemes and to make recommendations for improving how it is done. Although the area of focus of this research is the EuroArab region, the ambition is that the conclusions drawn from this exercise could serve programmes and schemes in other regions as well. To explore this question, further research in four case studies in the area of EuroArab cultural cooperation was undertaken and the motivation for this exploration was two-fold.

From one side, this exercise was undertaken for exploring on a practical level how evaluation is put into place, what were the aims and objectives in each case and what was the motivation behind the evaluation exercise, who is evaluating, what methodological approach is followed and what is the focus of each evaluation. It was considered that in this way conclusions could be extracted regarding the practice of evaluation of international cultural cooperation schemes, which can contribute to generating a valuable evidence-base for knowledge production around the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes.

On the other hand, as explained in the Introduction and following Matarasso's approach (2009), the feelings and concerns of those involved in the evaluation practice (those who commission, those who evaluate and those who are evaluated- what I call the 'evaluation triangle') was considered important to be highlighted. This part gives some understanding around the 'human factor' and how it influences the evaluation practice.

Conceptualising, implementing and producing evaluation always involves value. Therefore, the exploration of the case studies serves in the same time another latent aim. In chapter (4) some observations regarding EuroArab cultural cooperation were exposed and an attempt to 'draw' the panorama of actors and programmes supporting this cooperation was made. This exercise also contributed to identifying "a large population of hypothetical cases and a small subpopulation of accessible cases" (Stake, 2005: 451) for the selection of the case studies. Going deeper into the case studies gives a more detailed outlook on the ways cultural cooperation in the EuroArab region is exercised and what value it brings. Since the case studies selected represent activities of different stakeholders who deploy different strategies and tools for the delivery of their programme, this analysis helps extract more general conclusions that contribute to

answering further the question regarding how EuroArab cultural cooperation takes shape and is by no means a comparison of programmes and schemes.

The choice to approach the case studies through the question of how evaluation is done was taken because this gives a clear picture of the programme format and structure, the stakeholders involved, the effect on the participants and what is perceived as valuable from each programme and from each corner of 'the evaluation triangle', namely the person/ entity that commissions the evaluation, the evaluator and the beneficiary/ participant.

In this section, in (5.2) the rationale for selecting the cases is explained, the propositions or hypotheses being examined, and the broader theoretical or policy relevance of the inquiry is presented, while making reference to the potential limitations of the chosen methodology. The starting point for this inquiry has been a personal involvement as external evaluator for the CONNEXXIONS 2012-13 programme by the German Commission for UNESCO. In (5.3) a meta-reflection on this experience and the questions raised are presented. The rest of the chapter is structured around the case studies and more precisely:

- In (5.4) the evaluation of the EUNIC/ MENA training course is touched upon;
- In (5.5) the Cultural Innovators Network, a programme promoted by the Goethe Institut is explored;
- In (5.6) the Cimetta Fund's mobility grant programme and the efforts to measure its impact is analysed; and
- In (5.7) the focus is on theTandem Shaml programme and its evaluation.

Finally, in (5.8) some closing reflections regarding the case studies are shared in the form of an evaluation synthesis. At this point it is necessary to underline again that the aim of the case studies is not to judge or to evaluate the evaluation processes. The limitations of some approaches or the use of some of the outcomes might be discussed, but this is more in an attempt to generate learning. The primary aim is to shed light on them and to bring to the surface the voices of the people involved around them, to reflect their worries and aspirations and find commonalities on how to demonstrate the value of such programmes.

This chapter aims to answer the following questions:

- How is evaluation of international cultural cooperation schemes, especially in the EuroArab context carried out?
- What are the methods used, the challenges faced and the expected outcomes of the different evaluation exercises?
- How do the people involved in the evaluation practice, either as commissioners, evaluators or beneficiaries feel about it?

These questions are answered for each specific case study but then two more questions rise and are tackled in section (5.8) where a summary of findings is attempted based on the four case studies:

- Can evidence from the individual case studies help accumulate knowledge on the topic of evaluation of international cultural cooperation schemes? Can patterns and trends be identified?
- Finally, can overarching/ case independent results and recommendations be drawn?

5.2 Notes on the case study methodology

5.2.1 The case study methodology

The four selected case studies are the core of the empirical part of this research. The case studies method was chosen because, according to Yin (1994):

- Case studies emphasise detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships;
- Case studies are applicable to real-life, contemporary, human situations and relate directly to the common reader's everyday experience while facilitating an understanding of complex real-life situations;
- Case studies offer a general advantage when a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events on which the researcher has little or no control.

Case studies rely on multiple sources of evidence; with data needing to converge in a triangular fashion and producing another result and can either benefit from the prior development of theoretical propositions that guide data collection and data analysis (Yin, 1994: 13) or contribute to the development of new theory. In this research, each case

study is approached looking into its story-telling potential. The desired result is to create a rich dialogue with the evidence, an activity that encompasses both the facts regarding the evaluation practice, but also the opinions of the people involved in it, which were interviewed. Thus, in each case study "there is an ordering and understanding of events that tells a coherent story not in a chronological sense but through the integration of inferences and interpretations of events" (Simons, 2009: 5). People and their experiences are described and interpreted in the unique context of each programme and each evaluation. In this way I aim to facilitate "the conveying of experience of actors and stakeholders as well as the experience of studying the case" (Stake, 2005: 454). However, as will be mentioned below, "even when empathic and respectful of each person's realities, the researcher decides what the case's 'own story' is, or at least what will be included in the report" (Stake, 2005: 456).

Case studies have played a distinctive place in evaluation research in general. Yin (1994: 15) describes at least five different applications, namely:

- To describe an intervention and the real-life context in which it occurred;
- To explain the causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for a survey or experimental strategies;
- To illustrate certain topics within an evaluation, again in a descriptive model;
- To explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes;
- To do a 'meta-evaluation' – a study of an evaluation study.

In our case, the fifth application describes better our approach. The other applications could be considered as a potential specific tool in the toolbox of an evaluator, but do not apply in our case since we are not doing an evaluation but reflecting on a number of evaluations already conducted. In the final section of this chapter (5.8), an evaluation synthesis is made.

Stake (2005: 445) distinguishes between intrinsic and instrumental interests in case study research. He describes a case as 'intrinsic' when "one wants better understanding of this particular case" and "in all its particularity and ordinariness, this case itself is of interest". He uses the term 'instrumental' when a particular case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalisation. In this situation, the case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role and facilitates our understanding of

something else –therefore helps to pursue an external interest. When there are further case studies in order to examine a phenomenon, he talks about 'multiple case study' or a 'collective case study'. In such situation, the case studies are used "because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better understanding, and perhaps better theorizing, about a still large collection of cases" (Stake: 446), which is attempted here on a second stage.

5.2.2 Steps for the elaboration of the case studies

In order to research and report on the case studies the following steps were undertaken, which are also summarised in Table 5.1 and explained below.

Table 5.1: Steps in the elaboration of the case studies

Step 1: Research for identification of case studies
Step 2: Definition of the case studies questions
Step 3: Review of relevant material
Step 4: Further inquiry into the case studies
Step 5: Data collection and analysis
Step 6: Triangulation of main findings
Step 7: 'Dancing with the data'
Step 8: From interpretation to story
Step 9: Follow-up activities
Step 10: From single stories to a 'universal' interpretation

Source: Developed by researcher based on Simons (2009).

Step 1: Research phase for identification of case studies

A number of strategies to identify available evaluations of cultural cooperation initiatives in the EuroArab region were used. More precisely, web desk research on programmes in the region and checking whether they had been evaluated[95] was undertaken. In the same time, I mobilised my network of personal contacts to see whether they were aware of programmes that had been evaluated and whether they could facilitate access to me to documentation or suggest people to interview.

A number of criteria were taken into consideration when choosing the case studies.

[95] This step also informed section (4.4) of the previous chapter and the results can be found in Annex 7.

- First of all, I wanted to select case studies that represent different schemes of international cultural cooperation.
- Secondly, each case study should represent a different approach to evaluation.
- Finally, access to available information was a key decision factor.

When it comes to the nature of each scheme, a differentiated sample was achieved both in terms of content, target group as well as in terms of stakeholders involved. This allows having an overview of how international cultural cooperation schemes are conceptualised, put in place and evaluated which also reflects the variety of actors involved and the multiple forms that it can take, something that was tackled already in (1.3) and in (4.4) specifically for the Arab region. More precisely:

- The *EUNIC MENA training* was a training event organised by two Europe-based organisations (EUNIC and Marcel Hicter Foundation) for Arab only participants;
- The *Cultural Innovators Network* (CIN) was conceptualised and put in place by a German international cultural cooperation mechanism (Goethe Institute) with the primary aim to create a network of cultural and social practitioners active in their respective communities;
- *The Cimetta Fund* is mainly a granting-giving organisation that supports the mobility of artists and cultural operators in the EuroArab region;
- The *Tandem Shaml programme* is a scheme that oscillates between a grant-giving programme for project implementation, a mobility programme and a network creation initiative and involves a number of stakeholders in its concept definition, decision-making processes, implementation and funding.

When it comes to the evaluation practice, the sample studied in this research represents different practices regarding resources allocated, people involved, outcomes and how results are communicated that will be further explored in the individual case studies and at the evaluation synthesis. I just make reference here to a limited number of aspects:

- In the case of the EUNIC/MENA training course there was a call for an external evaluator for this single event that did not adhere into an overall evaluation strategy;
- In the case of the Cultural Innovators Network, its evaluation falls into the overall evaluation strategy of the Goethe Institute, which is described in a document that was published recently under the title *Kultur wirkt- Culture works: using evaluation to shape sustainable foreign relations* (Goethe, 2016). An external

consultancy was commissioned to undertake the evaluation and used a theory-based approach inspired by the work of Michel Callon and the Actor-Network theory (ANT);

- In the case of Cimetta Fund we have the results of an internal evaluation effort to bring to the surface evidence on the work that the Fund conducts. Due to limited resources, all evaluation attempts have been conducted internally and were guided by the Secretary General with the support of grantees;

- For Tandem Shaml, the institutions involved in the programme have developed and tested through the various editions of the overall Tandem programme different tools to gather evidence, including an adaptation of the Most Significant Change method used mainly in international development contexts. In the same time, in 2016 they conducted an external evaluation, where – following an unsuccessful attempt to cooperate with a University institute- they worked with an external consultant in the evaluation of all Tandem rounds. The publicly available 'product' of this evaluation does not have the form of a report, but of an essay that, using Philipp Dietchmair's[96] words *"proves that 'impact assessment' can also be written in a style that speaks to artists and creatives".*

Finally, my choice was determined by what Stake (2005, 451) calls "opportunity to learn". For the research it was important to take the most accessible case studies into consideration, meaning the ones access to was provided in terms of material and people to be interviewed. Therefore, access to available information was a key aspect. Given that evaluation –when is done- is an internal and/ or a delicate topic for most organisations, it is difficult to find publically available evaluation reports. The fear that internal information might be revealed or judged makes access to documentation quite challenging. Furthermore, from the point of view of the humans involved in the schemes and their evaluation, there were also limitations. Sometimes people were not open to discuss about something they were not happy with, felt they were not entitled to do so or did not have a function anymore that allowed them to participate in the interview. This explains why the documentation on which the case studies selected is based on comes in multiple forms.

Following the selection of the schemes, the first contacts with the organisations involved were established to get approval and to assess whether access to all the people needed in

[96] Programme Manager from the side of the European Cultural Foundation.

order to achieve my wish to interview representatives of the 'evaluation triangle' was possible.

Step 2: Definition of the case study questions

This step involved identifying the research questions and sub questions for each case study. At the beginning of the case studies research, a data collection inquiry sheet was drawn for gathering the necessary data for studying each case including the specific questions that I had to keep in mind while collecting data. This data collection inquiry sheet was developed based on literature related to programme evaluation in general (King et al, 1987; Patton, 1997; W.K.Kellogg Foundation, 1998). A 'table shell' for each case study was then created where notes of the specific arrays of data and the potential sources of information for answering each question were reflected. Multiple means of data were gathered, providing a rich database from which to tell the story of each case. The template below outlines the key themes and questions that guided the data collection process for the case studies. Annexes 8 to 11 show which sources were used for each of the case studies.

Table 5.2 Key themes and questions for case study research

Block A) Purpose and focus of the evaluation
- Why is evaluation undertaken? Is it part of the obligations of the organisation (accountability), is for improvement (learning) or is it for supporting a cause (advocacy)? - Is the evaluation primarily formative or summative? Does it feed back to the staff for the purpose of program improvements or does it constitute a programme summary? - Is it more a process evaluation or an outcome evaluation? - What is the context of the evaluation? Are there restrictions, constraints of time or money, or other limitations influencing the evaluation? - Who has the overall responsibility of the evaluation? - How are the aims and objectives of the evaluation decided? How do partners agree on aims and objectives (if applicable)? - If the evaluation is external, what is the profile of the evaluator? What specific skills he/she has that are related to the programme? What experience does he/she have in relation to evaluation? What experience does he/she have in relation to international cultural cooperation? - Who are the audiences of the evaluation? - What measures of success are applied? - How are unexpected outcomes recognised and valued?

- Is evaluation external or internal?
- Is evaluation included in the programme's budget?

Block B) Evidence collection procedures

- How is evidence collected? Is evidence collected before, during and/ or at the end of the scheme?
- Which critical program elements- material and activities- are the bases for gathering the data? Why?
- What approach is taken in collecting evidence? Quantitative? Qualitative? Both? What methods? Is it a single method or a combination of methods?
- Who is involved in collecting evidence?
- What methods are used to collect evidence?
- How is track of changes kept over time?
- How are ethics and confidentiality issues taken into consideration?

Block C) Analysis of evidence

- Who is involved in analysing the data gathered?
- How is it done?
- Are all stakeholders involved?
- How are findings documented?
- What limitations or deficiencies are there in the instruments used?
- What role does culture play in the analysis of data?

Block C) Learning from the evaluation

- What are the lessons learnt from the evaluation practices implemented? Did the evaluation bring something new to the overall understanding of the programme?
- Was there room for unexpected outcomes? And how are they dealt with?
- What is missing? What further questions would those involved in the evaluation would like to be able to answer?
- What is the level of satisfaction with the methods used?
- How do the evaluation results inform the programme's future steps?
- How are partners (if applicable) engaged with the evaluation findings?
- What change(s) did the evaluation bring about?

Block E) Communicating the evaluation findings

- What is the format of the final evaluation?
- If there is a written report, what is its structure?
- Who is informed about the results of the evaluation and why? How do they relate to the firstly identified audiences of the evaluation?

- Which parts of the evaluation are communicated? Through which channels?

Block F) Challenges in the evaluation practice
- What challenges were encountered internally in relation to the programme evaluation? - What challenges were encountered externally in relation to the programme evaluation?

Block G) The Human Factor in evaluation
- How do people involved in the evaluation practice in their capacity as commissioner, evaluator or beneficiary feel about the evaluation practice? - How is the added value of the programme they conceive, evaluate or participate in reflected in the evaluation practice? - What do they think can be improved and how in terms of programme development, impact and evaluation?

Source: Developed by researcher based on King et al (1987), Patton (1997) and W.K.Kellogg Foundation (1998).

This exercise was also a first attempt to identify the anticipated topics that were to be covered in the eventual case study report. Moreover, while the case study research developed, I realised that I had to be responsive to other issues arising as the study proceeds, which are included in each case study as *Further points of interest*.

Step 3: Review of relevant material

This stage consisted in reviewing documentation of different kind available for each case. The documents ranged from information available online and projects application for participation at each programme, to project evaluation documents, reports prepared for funders and information available online. The nature of the material depended on what was publically available and what was made available to me by the people interviewed. For example, in the case of Tandem Shaml the organisers shared with me all the material possible, including project applications and report, internal evaluation documents and external evaluation documents, while in the case of the Cultural Innovators Network (CIN) I did not have access to the final evaluation report.

Step 4: Further inquiry into the case studies (interviews and observation)

Besides reviewing the material, the main tool for the case study research was the semi-structured interviews conducted with representatives from each corner of the 'evaluation triangle'. My initial aim was to interview people representing the three sides of the human factor in the evaluation triangle: the institution/ funder, the evaluator and the

recipient(s)/ participant(s). This was possible in all cases, besides in the case of Cimetta Fund because of the nature of the evaluation[97]. This approach was chosen because interviewing gives us access to the observations of others and allows us to learn about people's interior experiences, while in the same time we learn what people perceived and how they interpreted their perceptions (Weiss, 1994: 1). Having the possibility to interview people that were involved in the evaluation in a different capacity, made the inquiry even richer.

Besides the intention to have answers to fill in the questions on each block, the way the interviews were approached was very much inspired by the work of Francois Matarasso (2009), *The Human Factor in evaluation.* Matarasso has been involved in evaluation of arts and cultural projects for many years and this text is written in the framework of a Clore Fellowship. What Matarasso tried to uncover in this research was *"how do people professionally involved in arts evaluation feel about their experience of it and how does their experience influence the process?"* (Matarasso, 2009: 1 – emphasis of the author).

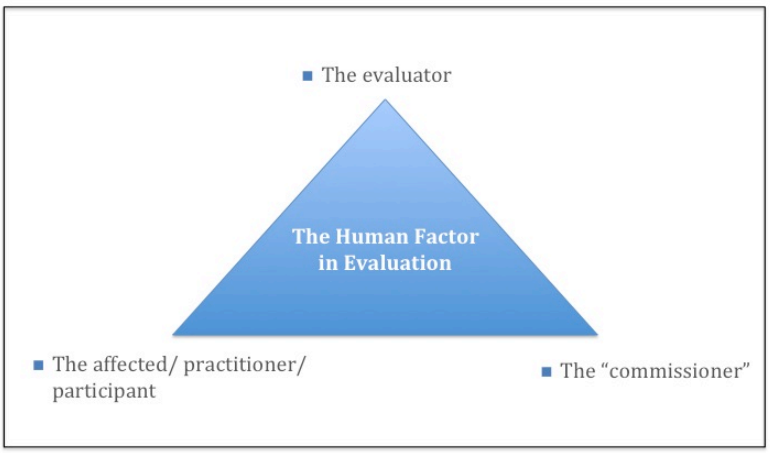
I thought that this question is very pertinent, because it is actually related to the idea of value as well: the value that we attribute as individuals to our experience with something influences our judgment, our opinions. Matarasso claims that although in the arts and cultural sectors we have been profoundly interested in finding answers on how to evaluate, "insufficient attention has been given to what the people feel about them and still less to the way in which those feelings may fundamentally change both the systems *and the knowledge they produce in their use*" (Matarasso, 2009: 1- emphasis of the author). His aim was to explore the impact of evaluation on those involved and particularly the gap between theoretical and policy discourses around the issue and what happens in everyday practice.

Matarasso's starting hypothesis was that people's experiences would vary according to their roles in the evaluation cycle. He identifies three different 'human' capacities in which those involved with arts evaluation could find themselves, reflected in Figure 5.1. More precisely, these categories, according to Matarasso (2009: 2), are:

[97] This was not possible only in the case of the Cimetta Fund which has conducted an internal evaluation, therefore no one is interviewed in the capacity of external evaluator, while the Secretary General can be seen as the person that both 'commissions' and 'conducts' the evaluation.

- *Practitioners,* by which he refers to artists, managers and other professionals who had been required to deliver evaluation reports about their own art projects as a condition of funding;
- *Evaluators,* by which he refers to independent professionals, including consultants and employed researchers, who had been commissioned to evaluate cultural projects, programmes or organisations with which they have no other connection; and
- *Commissioners,* by which he refers to managers and staff in public or independent funding bodies who had been required to commission or receive evaluations on behalf of their organisations.

Figure 5.1: The evaluation triangle



Source: Developed by researcher based on Matarasso (2009).

Given the nature of the study, a questionnaire that was adapted according to the person interviewed and can be found in Annex 14 . More precisely the different levels considered when adapting the interview list to the individual interviewee are captured in Table 5.3.

Finally, besides the interviews in one case I managed to participate in one of the meetings of the programme in review. With the support of the MitOst Foundation and the ECF I was invited to the Tandem Shaml round III Final Meeting that took place in Marseille, France (6- 10 December 2016). There I had the opportunity to interact with the programme participants and to attend the application of the methods used for the internal programme evaluation, more precisely the adaptation of the Most Significant Change technique (MSC).

Table 5.3: Interview questionnaire levels

Level 1: Questions asked to the specific interviewee regarding his/ her role in the programme and its evaluation. Level 2: Questions related to the individual case that I needed to answer in order to fill in the shells. Level 3: Questions asked for finding patterns across multiple cases. Level 4: Questions asked related to the entire research calling on information beyond the case study evidence. Level 5: Normative questions about policy recommendations and conclusions going beyond the narrow scope of the study.

Source: Developed by researcher.

Step 5: Inserting data into the table cell for each case study

This step was happening in parallel with steps 3 and 4. While I was reviewing the available material, I was filling in the table shell for each case study and this allowed me to see what information was missing and had to be extracted from the interviews and vice versa. At the end of this step, a clear picture of the evaluation process for each case study was reached that would feed each case study report.

Step 6: Triangulation of main findings

At the same time, using a table sheet for each case study allowed to scrutinise and to see if the findings were supported by data from other sources and methods or from the different interviews. This way the significance of issues was cross-checked through different methods, different perspectives, and different participants- interviewees. As mentioned by Stake (2005: 454) triangulation helps to identify different realities. So besides being a process of "using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation", "triangulation serves also to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the case is being seen". Annexes 8 to 11 reflect this work.

Step 7: 'Dancing' with the data

Simons (2009) explains how in order to analyse her data for the writing of a case study she has often cut interview transcripts into illustrative excerpts and laid these down on the floor, along with observations and field notes on 3x5 cards. Then she moves around

these data physically, standing on them, stepping between them, backward and forwards, positioning and repositioning them until they make a certain case. She argues that "in working in this way, many of the usual processed engaged in analysis and interpretation- confirming, disconfirming, verifying, deciding on outliers- are at play" and that "what the movement adds is another sense and a 'knowing' that is embodied" (Simons, 2009: 140).

More or less this approach was used to analyse the data. Although some 'preliminary steps' were defined when designing the table shells for each case study, by moving the data around, a form of concept mapping was created that would help not only in the interpretation of each individual case study but of the four case studies in general. The aim was to seek interrelationships between the issues that were explored to see what themes and patterns were beginning to emerge. Issues and themes that were identified consistently and had sufficient data to verify their significance in understanding the case were incorporated into the major findings for each case study and some observations for the conclusions part were drawn at this point as well.

Step 8: From interpretation to story (ies)

This step involved making sense of the data and exploring the potential of story building. Each case study is structured around the same thematic areas, however the amount of information for each case study might differ. This is due either to the available material or information that could be gathered, or because of the specific characteristics of each case.

The thematic areas explored for the evaluation practice of the four different schemes are structured along the following model:

a) The evaluation practice

In this part, issues related to the purpose and focus of the evaluation, the evidence collection procedures, the analysis of evidence, learning from the evaluation are tackled as well as how evaluation results are reported and communicated (in relation to Blocks A to F identified in Table 5.2)

b) The human factor in evaluation

In this section an attempt to echo the voices of the people involved in each programme is sought. This gives the opportunity to see how individuals feel with the issue of evaluation and of the impact of such programmes in general.

c) Further points of interest

As explained before, throughout conducting the case studies and given that they are not identical in scope or implementation, there were some points that arose and were considered relevant to reflect upon in relation to each case study because they contribute in a way or another to the whole research topic.

Finally, at the end of each case study the main findings are summarised and some questions for further thought are raised.

Step 9: Follow-up activities

After finalising the transcription of the interviews and while selecting excerpts to be used, I got in touch with some of the interviewees for authorisation and confirmation for accuracy. I also sent thank you notes to all the people participating in the interviews. Finally, in some cases I asked for feedback on drafts regarding the case, which proved to be a very rich exercise since I could guarantee that what was written was accurate and representative, without however sacrificing my own view on each case study.

Step 10: From single stories to a universal interpretation

Simons writes: "the tension between the study of the unique and the need to generalize is necessary to reveal both the *unique* and the *universal* and the *unity* of that understanding" (Simons, 2009: 167, emphasis in the original). I consider this to be the guiding principle when conducting a multiple case study research and my responsibility as a researcher.

A widely adopted approach to generating theory in case study research is grounded theory (Denzin, 1994) and generating theory though a cross-case analysis of a number of case studies is actually part of the intent. As we move from case to case, identifying themes, exploring patters and interconnections, they ultimately result in a theory of the phenomenon we are researching.

In (5.8) preliminary conclusions are drawn around the case studies while attempting to find commonalities across them that could feed into general recommendations about how evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes can be improved.

5.2.3 Challenges and limitations with the case studies methodology

There are of course strengths and weaknesses in every research approach. Case studies cannot be an exception to this. Following the exploration of the case studies, the following observations were made:

First of all, case studies are complex because they involve multiple sources of data. Thinking and thinking again which data to get and from which source is a first challenge. As explained above, for each case study different background material, including internal or publically available programme reports, research questionnaires, interview transcripts, etc were consulted. Therefore, at the end there was a large amount of data produced that needed analysis. Moreover, checking the initial ideas in the light of the information gathered and having to deal with the inevitable discrepancies between what was expected and what was finally found was one additional challenge.

Furthermore, the case study approach has been criticised for not offering grounds for establishing reliability or generality of findings and is considered useful only as an exploratory tool. Guetzkow (2002: 22), for example, claims that when working with multiple case studies:

> [...] the cases are generally not chosen in such a way as to gain much empirical 'leverage' from the comparison. Cases appear to be selected on the basis of capturing the widest diversity of programs possible- sometimes with an implication that this will ensure representativeness. The most that comes from this sort of comparison is a list of some factors that appear to affect the relative success of the programs.

This was something that I definitely had in mind while writing this section and especially the part related to the analysis of the multiple case studies. I do believe however that they serve the initial research aim, which is to contribute to the knowledge base around the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes.

Another challenge is related to the researcher's bias. Simons (2009: 162) warns that "subjectivity, uncertainty, complexity can be troublesome and the ethical risks and danger of becoming personally involved are potential threats". As a researcher you are asked to develop a firm understanding of the issues being studied, develop the ability to ask good questions and be adaptive and flexible while in the same time to know how not be trapped by your ideologies or preconception to avoid bias. The guiding principle should be to produce "experiential knowledge" and differentiate with what is "opinion and preference" (Stake, 2005: 454). My involvement in some of the case studies and my

personal connection with some of the case studies was a parameter that I had to take into considered and be prudent in how knowledge was constructed and presented.

Furthermore, Yin (1984: 23) describes the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its *real-life* context. Since people and institutions in their everyday situations collect data, real-world events need to be integrated in the data collection plan. This means that often the researcher does not have the control over the data collection environment as when using other research methods. Moreover, in this research, multiple case studies are taken into consideration in a single study, which means that it was necessary to establish a kind of road map throughout the research. Yin (2013: 402) explains that "the demands of a case study on your intellect, ego, and emotions are far greater that those of any other research method [….] because the data collection procedures are not routinized" and adds that "[…] case studies require an inquiring mind *during* data collection, not just before or after the activity" (Yin, 2013: 403).

Finally, since a lot of the data collected is based on qualitative interviews, there is also complex dynamics of meaning- making, as the opinions of the interviewees both inform and are informed by the positions they as individuals, or as part of a group, occupy in the here and now. As Mathews (2002: 29) notes, "[i]nterviews can never be transparent windows in other people's minds, in that all interviews and all conversations between people are in some sense performances: we tell ourselves in different ways to different people in accordance with who we think we are, and how we want them to see us". Therefore, although all interviewees spoke on their own, individual and personal capacity, I do considerer that they cannot really escape from a form of 'representation'. This adds another dimension regarding the ethical work of the researcher, which requires that the language used, should pertain to the protection of human subjects as sources of data.

Guetzkow (2002: 20) claims that researches that intend to distil meaning from employing multiple or comparative case study approaches, are limited in a number of ways, among which "that they are rarely representative of the overall population" and that they "tend to be anecdote-rich and evidence poor". The limited number of evaluations included in the study means that the findings are useful primarily as illustrations of the range of evaluation practices in the evaluation of international cultural cooperation schemes. This does not mean that other evaluation practices are non-existent in other organisations,

donors, and international relations stakeholders. It also means that we cannot "overgeneralize" from the cases, but we are rather obliged to provide "circumscribed 'contingent generalizations'" (George et al, 2005: 84) and accept that "case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes" (Yin, 1994: 10).

Besides the limitations explained here, the methodological choice seems appropriate in our research. At the end of day, case studies "are what they are- studies documenting and analyzing phenomena appealing to subjective ways of knowing to gain insight and understanding" (Simons, 2009: 162). Stake (2004: 24) argues that for him the best use of a case studies approach in research is "for adding to existing experience and humanistic understanding" and because "its characteristics match the 'readiness' people have for added value".

5.3 This is not a case study: reflections on the evaluation of the CONNEXXIONS programme

5.3.1 Presentation of the non-case study and data collection process

In the Introduction of this chapter, the case studies that are explored in this part of the research are presented. It was considered however appropriate while writing this research to reflect on my own experience with evaluation of an international cultural cooperation programme. After all, this experience was what intrigued my interest to investigate further into the topic of international cultural cooperation, focusing more particularly on the EuroArab region.

The evaluation of the CONNEXXIONS programme 2012- 2013 of the German Commission for UNESCO was commissioned to me and my colleague Maram Anbar in summer 2014 following an open call for evaluators. Before sharing my reflections on this experience, I have to say that it has been an honour to be given the opportunity to work on that evaluation. It was a programme put in place by a respectful organisation and trusting me and my colleague in this task was a great motivation for engaging further in international cultural cooperation and wanting to gain further substantial knowledge around the topic of evaluation.

Given my personal involvement in this evaluation and respecting the ethics of the evaluation practice, it was not considered appropriate to count on this experience as a

case study as such. However, sharing some reflections on this experience brings an added value in the exploration of the subject under question and in the formulation of the final conclusions and recommendations in relation to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation projects, especially the ones that focus on the EuroArab region.

When it comes to the sources consulted for this section, my reflections are based on personal experience mainly related to challenges that have been encountered from an evaluator's point of view. Furthermore, reference is made to documents that are publically available (for example the terms of reference in the open call) and not the ones shared with us during the evaluation process. The final results of the evaluation are not commented here, since this would be unethical given my role in the evaluation and therefore no approval from the commissioning body to do this was requested.

During the last stages of the research, I also had the opportunity to meet with one of the people that were working at the German Commission for UNESCO at the moment that the evaluation was commissioned to us, Anna Steinkamp. She was also one of the people that I had interviewed for the evaluation. At that moment Anna was Programme specialist at the Culture Division of the German Commission for UNESCO and was the person responsible for the CONNEXXIONS programme design, organization and communication. I coincided again with her in January 2017 in Athens while attending the final meeting of the Tandem Europe programme. This time she was there as the external evaluator and we arranged an interview to discuss some of the issues that were to be touched upon in this meta-reflection and to get her point of view.

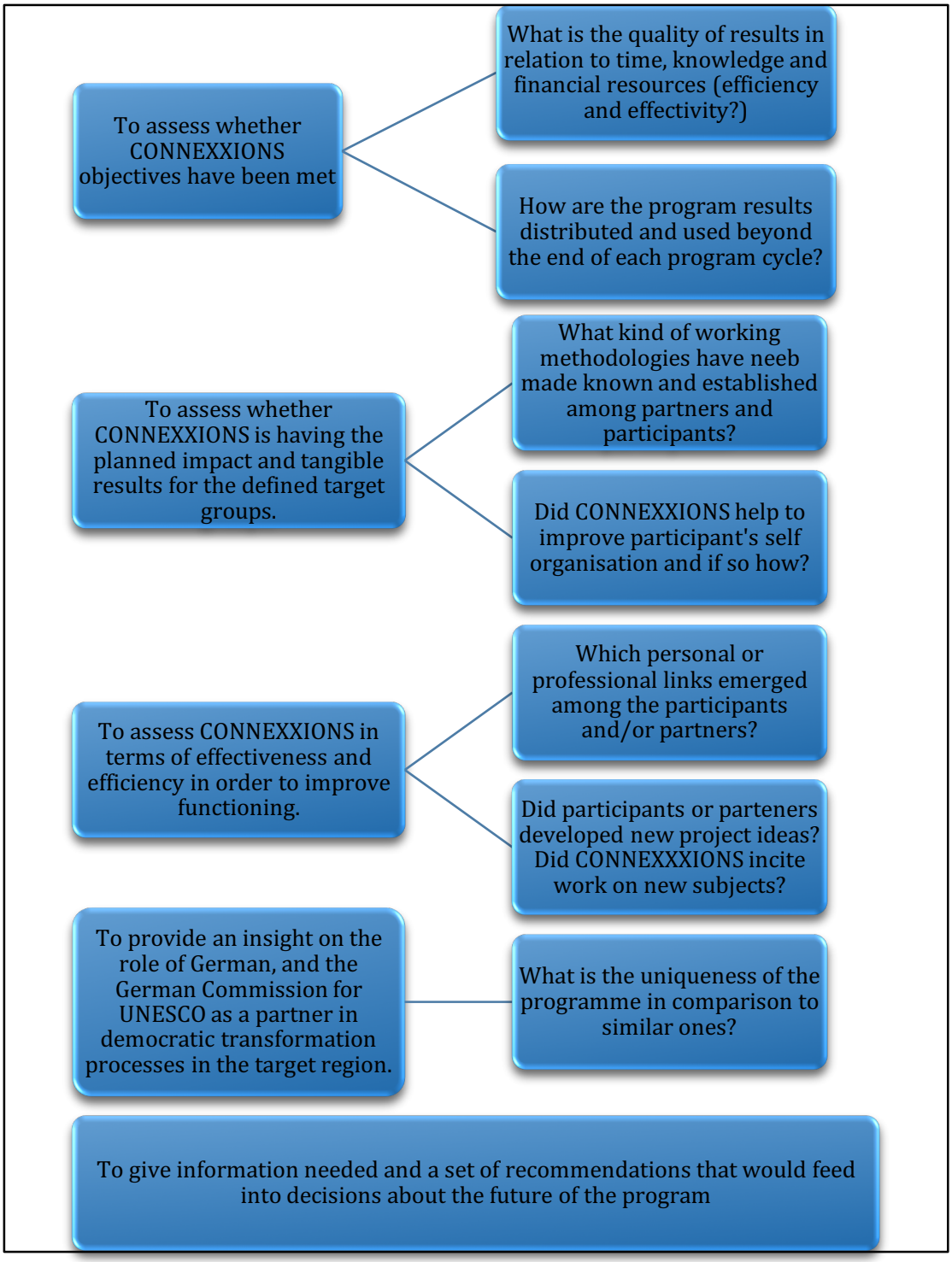
5.3.2 The evaluation in context

The CONNEXXIONS programme was a capacity building programme in the Arab region, funded by the Federal Foreign Office as part of the German-Tunisian and German-Egyptian transformation partnership. The aim of the programme was to contribute to the democratic development in the region, building on the framework and the expert communities of the *2005 UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*. It was implement through a series of measures and actions initiated in 2012 covering the fields of capacity building, training of young experts, knowledge transfer and networking.

In August 2014 a call for expressions of interest for the evaluation of the CONNEXXIONS was released and was also published on the website of On-the-move, the cultural mobility information network. The call was addressed to experts with an overall aim to evaluate

two first years of the CONNEXXIONS programme (2012- 13). The call already specified the purpose and set the evaluation questions. In Figure 5.2, the evaluation aims are connected with the evaluation questions posed in the Terms of Reference.

Figure 5.2 Purpose and questions of the CONNEXXIONS 2012-13 evaluation



Source: Developed by researcher adapted from the Terms of Reference (German Commission for UNESCO, 2014).

5.3.3 Purpose and focus of the evaluation

The evaluation aimed to examine the implementation and impact of the CONNEXXIONS Programme between 2012-2013 in different countries as well as the overall programme. More precisely, the evaluation had to assess:

- The way CONNEXXIONS measures implemented in 2012 and 2013 have had tangible results for the defined target groups;
- How the main programme objectives have been met;
- How the quality of the results can be further enhanced in 2014 as well as in a medium term perspective; and
- The degree of visibility of Germany and the German Commission for UNESO as partner in democratic transformation processes in the target region.

Table 5.4 Specific objectives of the CONNEXXIONS 2012-13 programme evaluation

- Assessment of the quality of results in relation to time, knowledge and financial resources (efficiency & effectivity) - Distribution of programme results and use beyond the end of each programme cycle (medium & long term impact)? - Working methodologies shared - Improvement in participant's self-organisation & new professional or personal links - New working subjects and partnerships - Expectations of participants and partners/ suggestions from improvement? - Uniqueness of programme in comparison to similar ones

Source: Developed by research adapted from the Terms of Reference (German Commission for UNESCO, 2014).

The requested profile of the evaluator was stipulated in the Terms of Reference (German Commission for UNESCO, 2014) as follows:

- Proven experience and knowledge of the target region (especially Tunisia and Egypt);
- Excellent communication skills in French and English (Arabic would be an asset);
- Excellent written language skills in either English or French;
- Experience in the evaluation of projects, programmes and in conducting qualitative interviews.

Together with my colleague we prepared a joint proposal. We had previously worked together in training activities for intercultural dialogue in the EuroMed region and we knew that we could cooperate well- even if working from a distance since we were living in different cities at that moment. Maram that is from Egypt was (and still is) living in

Madrid, Spain, while I, that I come from Greece, I was at that moment living in Doha, Qatar. For us, the choice to apply in a team was motivated by recognising that we could complement each other on the following points:

- Knowledge and experience of the target region: I had previously worked in Tunisia and done field research there and in Lebanon. But Maram *was* from the region and has spent most of her life in Egypt, while she had also worked for many international projects, which enabled her to have a better understanding of the issues at stake in the countries addressed by the programme.

- Professional and evaluation specific skills and expertise: My academic background and experience with evaluation was considered an asset. As a researcher I could demonstrate that I am acquainted with research techniques (including interviews, focus groups, questionnaires), documents review, have good drafting skills and ability to synthesize information and produce reports. Moreover, Maram had experience in different international programmes and had done evaluations. She works as a trainer and consultant with civil society organizations and institutions, in the framework of youth and capacity development programmes, developing, planning, implementing and evaluating educational activities for multipliers in international work. Her fields of expertise are participatory dialogue, social inclusion, Non-Formal Learning (NFL), migration, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, Euro-Med/Euro-Arab cooperation, human rights education (HRE), inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, employment, global education and volunteering. Maram has also collaborated with a number of organisations and networks including the Anna Lindh Foundation, the League of Arab States, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the Open Society Foundation, among others.

- Language skills: As a team we could cover all language expectations since I speak and write well in English and French, while Maram speaks and writes well in English and Arabic.

Finally, we also considered that working together in a team would give us the opportunity to exchange ideas and test our thoughts before producing the final report.

5.3.4 Conducting the evaluation

The first step of the evaluation included desk review of key programme documents provided by the German Commission for UNESCO team. Following this, a questionnaire was developed reflecting main questions raised in the evaluation aims and objectives. The questionnaire was provided both in English and French and can be consulted in Annex 12. The questionnaires included questions on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and learning of the activities participants and partners took part in. Finally, a total of 19 key interviews were conducted either via Skype, telephone or face-to-face with programme participants, German Commission for UNESCO staff and partners. The list of interviews was elaborated in consultation with the German Commission for UNESCO team and the team of evaluators.

The evaluation included qualitative and quantitative assessment regarding the activities carried out and the learning produced. A SWOT analysis was elaborated for each of the programme activities to summarise the main findings. The questionnaire and the interviews provided some evidence in relation to best practices as a result of the programme activities and finally all the data gathered helped in defining lessons learnt and drafting a set of recommendations addressed to the German Commission for UNESCO.

5.3.5 Challenges encountered

Throughout the development of the evaluation, and despite facilitation from the German Commission of UNESCO team, we faced a number of challenges that had implications on the success of the methods adopted and that I will summarise here.

Firstly, the time frame for conducting such an evaluation was very short. To this I should add that there was a delay in the starting date of the evaluation process due to administrative issues, which had a huge impact on the availability agenda of us as evaluators and consecutively on the initially proposed work plan. The time frame was not negotiable since for administrative reasons the evaluation process had to be concluded before the end of the year 2014. Therefore with the new starting date it was not possible anymore to organise the field trips foreseen or to have the possibility to prolong the deadline given to participants for submitting their answers to the questionnaire and to an extent follow a more personal approach through email reminders and follow-up to guarantee maximum response rates. The fact that the initial deadline for submitting the

final report was slightly extended allowed for a more thorough assessment of the data and the interviews.

Secondly, gathering information through the questionnaire proved to be more challenging that first thought. A comprehensive list of key participants and partners was made available by the German Commission for UNESCO team, however a few of the emails bounced back (incorrect email address or the person was no longer working in the organisation), and a few emails had an auto out-of-office reply. Most importantly though, there was a relatively low response level to the questionnaire despite the extended deadline and a reminder email sent by the German Commission for UNESCO. Furthermore, there was a challenge in terms of data gathering as not all the respondents provided substantial information while answering the questionnaire, especially regarding good practice initiatives resulting from their participation in the CONNEXXIONS programme.

Another issue was related to the fact that given possible difficulties in having regular access to internet, we as evaluators and after discussing it with the German Commission for UNESCO staff, opted for providing both a word document as well as an on-line format for the questionnaire – both were available in English and French. Given the choice, the majority of the respondents used the word format of the questionnaire instead of the online one. As a result, some questions were left unanswered and furthermore extracting the data from the word documents required more time than initially anticipated to compile and assess the questionnaire results. Furthermore, some participants sent their questionnaires after the deadline and given the overall low response rate, we included these responses in the analysis, which resulted in regular update and adjustments to the data collected.

Moreover, through the questionnaire we had envisaged to identify good practices, but at the end the information given by the participants was not indicative and targeted follow-up was required to obtain further information on how the participants used the learning acquired during the CONNEXXIONS programme activities. This fact also made us understand that there were no set criteria for defining or describing what a good practices could be, especially taking into consideration the nature of the programme which was not projects or training-oriented. Nor could it be proved that the specific program had the specific spillover effect.

When it comes to the interviews, although it is obvious from the beginning that some of the interviews would have to take place from a distance, it was a real misfortune that the field visits could not take place since they would give a more rich insight into the realities of the participants in their 'natural' environment. Interviews were mainly conducted via skype or over the phone, which sometimes resulted in technical difficulties and affected the quality of the recording material. In some cases Internet connection was poor, which did not allow for video calls and then in some cases the sound quality was not too good or was interrupted/cut.

Most importantly though, choosing the right people to interview and arranging the interviews proved to be a time- consuming and not so straightforward exercise since it had to be adjusted to the availability of both the evaluators and the interviewees taking into consideration time differences and work/ travel schedules. People that were considered key for the interviews expressed their unavailability due to several travel and professional plans and, given the timeframe, the interviews could not be rescheduled therefore other people were approached. Some participants never responded to the request for interview besides personalised follow-up and we had to approach other participants while maintaining the diversity of interviews between participants, partners and institutions.

Language also proved to be a challenge in the gathering of information, whether in the questionnaires and/ or the interviews. We had not anticipated that so many people would opt for replying to the questionnaire or being interviewed in French[98]. Although as a team of evaluators we had the capacity to work in English-French or English-Arabic and this had been of an added value to the evaluation process, extra work was required for the French speaking evaluator than foreseen.

What proved to be necessary and contributed to a great extent to the quality of the evaluation was attending the workshop that was taking place in Jerash (Jordan) in October 2014 in the framework of the programme- even if the seminar as such was beyond the programme's evaluation timeframe. This opportunity was valuable because it provided an insight on the dynamics between the organisers, the partners and the participants and also gave the possibility to conduct a few face-to-face interviews with people that had already participated in the CONNEXXIONS programme in 2012- 2013. It

[98] For example, most questionnaire responses came in French (21 in French vs. 13 in English).

was also the only opportunity that the evaluators (actually one of the evaluators, myself) had in meeting in person the staff that commissioned the evaluation and to discuss with them about the background and purpose of the evaluation.

5.3.6 Learning from the evaluation

When it comes to the results derived from the evaluation process, I try to be cautious on how to deal with the knowledge acquired without revealing any concrete findings. Therefore, reference is made only to a few general points considered relevant for this research.

Evaluating the CONNEXXIONS programme proved that there is an ongoing desire for improved networking dynamics and inclusive partnerships between different players of the cultural field in the Arab region. The CONNEXXIONS programme has been a comprehensive initiative in this direction, placing culture at the heart of development. The German Commission for UNESCO had the expertise, the network and the institutional capacity that allows putting into place such an ambitious programme. Moreover, using the 2005 UNESCO Convention provided a comprehensive framework and allowed planning interventions to benefit the civil society and the cultural sector in the region. As explained by Christine Merkel, the Head of the Division of Culture, Memory of the World at the German Commission for UNESCO's Director (Merkel & Steinkamp, 2012: 10):

> "[…] already since it's negotiation phase, this Convention has become a very potent platform for international networking among civil society capable and active in this field, as well as a shared framework for international cooperation. This includes capacity building for improving cultural governance and strengthening the arts and culture sector as a development strategy"

This allowed to the CONNEXXIONS programme to provide an intellectual and ideological framework that fed into the dialogue around the upgrade of cultural policies across the region and provided platforms for the organisation of debates involving different stakeholders.

5.3.7 Meta-reflection on the evaluation of CONNEXXIONS

In the following case studies, the opinions of all those involved in the evaluation practice are reflected. Here a number of observations are exposed in a kind of meta-reflection on the evaluation process from the point of view of an evaluator.

Matarasso (2009: 47) observes that:

> The role of evaluator is fascinating but problematic. He or she occupies an uncertain ground between practitioner and commissioner, accountable to each but also to their own values and professional standards.

This quotation reflects the main learning as an evaluator in this programme. It is possible that even someone that is not evaluating a programme of international cultural cooperation would feel the same problematic around the role of evaluator. However, what makes this role a bit more 'problematic' when it comes to international cultural cooperation schemes and programmes is that the dynamics between participants/ beneficiaries, commissioners and evaluators is more fascinating and in the same time more challenging. Several questions have bothered me since then that are connected with that evaluation assignment and have informed this research. The first set of questions is mainly related to me as an evaluator and the profile and role of evaluators in general. More precisely, the questions are the following:

- Was the previous experience I have had with respect to this programme enough to conduct the evaluation? Especially since it is a programme related to the Arab region and funded by a German organisation, how much knowledgeable was I of the region and its challenges and of the profile of the German Commission for UNESCO in Germany and abroad?
- Had I ever received any kind of training that qualifies me in being an evaluator, and even more in such an intercultural setting? Do other evaluators have an academic or vocational training in this topic?
- What does my perspective on this type of programme/ organisation reflect? In what ways might my own values influence any work? Is it possible for an individual to conduct a programme evaluation in an objective manner?

The second set of questions was mostly related to the evaluation process and the report itself:

- Did we produce something meaningful?
- Were the methods we used appropriate? Are there other, better ones for international cultural cooperation programmes?
- Were our opinions about how the programme could be improved taken into account?

- How is my own perspective on this type of programme/ organisation reflected in the final report?
- In what ways might my values have influenced my work?
- How far were we capable to reach the objectives set by the terms of reference?
- How culturally sensitive were we in conducting the evaluation?
- Did we manage to bring to the surface the real value of the programme as experienced by the people that have been affected by it?

As mentioned above, I have little information on how our evaluation report has informed the future decisions of the German Commission for UNESCO regarding the programme. I also question whether the evaluation served mainly accountability motives (as a check-list element to justify the funding received to the German Foreign Federal office for it) or whether it contributed to organizational learning.

Discussing this topic with Anna Steinkamp in January 2017 was revelatory in this respect and confirmed my initial questionings of the process.

5.3.8 Take away points

Conducting this evaluation gave me an insight from one side in international cultural cooperation programs in the EuroArab region, and on another hand in the place of evaluation in this. If I were to summarise my main thoughts, I would say that:

- Conducting an ex-post evaluation as an external consultant after the programme that is to be evaluated has concluded is very challenging because of the nature of international cultural cooperation programmes that span in different countries and involve participants from different geographies. I felt that better results could have been obtained if an evaluation strategy would have been designed in parallel with the programme development and there would have been a thoroughly conceived process of gathering data and a clear idea on what were the evaluation objectives from the very beginning;
- When it comes to the role of evaluators, I felt that they have substantial power to influence processes and this aspect should be exploited in a more comprehensive way and be more focused towards organisational learning instead of just 'ticking a box' for accountability reasons. This also means that evaluators themselves have a great responsibility, need to develop skills and master evaluation techniques but also the context in which they work and to be integral in how they

deliver the work. Furthermore, issues related to cultural sensitivity become even more important in international environments; and

- Finally, another important realisation was how crucial a physical meeting between the commissioning body and the evaluator is before diving into any evaluation exercise. Clarifying understandings around aims and objectives as well as the expected outcomes from the evaluation and how it will be used can be extremely beneficial when conducting an external evaluation.

These reflections were the starting point for the formulation of the research questions and hypotheses exposed in the Introduction of this thesis. What are the challenges that an external evaluator faces when conducting an evaluation of an international cultural cooperation programme? Do organisations opt for external or internal evaluation? Do they do evaluation throughout the process or at the end? What is the norm? Is the role of evaluator appreciated? What are the profiles, skills and preparation that these people have? Do evaluators work in teams? How are the evaluation purpose and methodology negotiated with the evaluator? How are the methods used influenced by such process? Are the recommendations actually taken on board? Or evaluations happen for the sake of evaluation? These reflections were influential in designing the inquiry into the four different cases studies that follow and to defining the overall research questions.

5.4 Case study 1: EUNIC/ MENA training in cultural and creative sector management

5.4.1 Presentation of the case study and data collection process

The EUNIC/ MENA training in Cultural and Creative sector management was an example that caught my attention after a discussion with the Secretary General of ENATC, GiannaLia Cogliandro that I interviewed in July 2016 regarding their programmes in the MENA region. Cogliandro introduced me to Jean Pierre Deru, the Director of the Association Marcel Hicter, one of the programme partners with whom we had a brief discussion about it in the offices that they share with ENCATC.

The reasons why this training was selected as one of the case studies are the following:
- Firstly, because it is inspired by a training scheme that so far had been focusing mainly on the European geographical territory- the European Diploma in Cultural management- and this training was an adaptation to the MENA context;

- Secondly, because EUNIC (the network of European national institutes of culture and national bodies engaged in cultural and related activities beyond their national borders), which was the initiator, funder and organiser of the programme is one of the most significant actors of EuroArab cultural relations (as explained as well in chapter 4.4) and has a supra-national character at the same time with a strong national component;
- Finally, the evaluation approach followed by the programme was different compared to the other case studies examined in this research, given that there was a public open call for the selection of an external evaluator, which adds a different dimension to how evaluation is commissioned and conducted compared to the other case studies studied.

The materials that inform this case study are varied. The organisers of the programme shared with me the final external evaluation report, which forms the basis on which knowledge on the programme was acquired before conducting the interviews. Furthermore, the open call for the evaluator was available online and provided significant information regarding the scope of work of the evaluation and the profile of the evaluator sought (EUNIC, 2015). My research was backed by interviews with Jean Pierre Deru, the Director of the Marcel Hicter Association (via skype December 2016) and with Andrew Murray, the current Director of EUNIC (telephone interview, November 2016). Deru also made an intervention at the 9th Forum of Young Cultural Researchers organised in Brussels by ENCATC on December 2016 where I participated and made specific reference to this project. Furthermore, I also interviewed Antje Klesse, the evaluator of the programme (via skype, January 2017), who gave me her insight in the process of the evaluation. Unfortunately, and despite the emails I sent, I did not manage to interview more than one participant from the programme. I managed to get hold of Nisrine Chiba, with whom we had arranged a skype interview in January 2017, however, due to connectivity issues, we had to do part of the interview in written[99].

While conducting this case study an additional aspect was revealed that was not foreseen in the initial design for it. During the interview with EUNIC Director, Andrew Murray, it was revealed to me that EUNIC is currently focusing on advancing its approach to evaluation. The observations made by Murray were considered relevant for this research and adding an additional scope to the topic of evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes. This aspect was not anticipated in the research

[99] To a certain extent, this programme was also discussed with one of the experts I interviewed for the complementary qualitative study of chapter (6) since he was Director of the Instituto Cervantes in Rabat at the moment when the first part of the training took place (in Casablanca).

design, however it reveals one of the rich points of the research process when conducting case studies, also highlighted by Yin (1994: 68) that suggests that exactly because of this aspect the case study research, an inquiring mind *during* data collection is required and not just before or after the activity.

5.4.2 Background information on the case study

Before entering into the description of the programme, it is interesting to make a reference to the framework in which the EUNIC MENA Pilot 1 programme was conceived. The policy backbone on which the programme was developed was influenced by the 2007 European Commission's *Communication for an Agenda for Culture on Culture* (European Commission, 2007) on one hand and, on the other hand, by the *Preparatory Action Culture in EU External Relations* (European Parliament, 2011) where EUNIC Global played an important role[100].

The Pilot 1 project was born as a result of a consultation process carried out by EUNIC in the MENA region in 2011 and 2012. In the framework of this consultation, the EuroMed Creative Industries and Society Forum was held from the 13th to the 15th of May 2012 at the Dead Sea in Jordan aiming to record the expectation of EUNIC's partners in order to conceptualise the structure of a long-term EUNIC/ MENA project. Furthermore, a concept note was drafted to support the creative sector in the MENA region (EUNIC, 2012), which summarised the main conclusions and sets the framework of action (without specifying concrete activities) and was distributed among stakeholders.

The training course tied closely with the objectives developed at the Forum and especially the ones related to "foster[ing] cultural exchange among cultural players" and to "enhance[ing] collaboration between the EUNIC Clusters in the MENA region" (EUNIC, 2012: 1). The programme of the project was elaborated in close partnership with the Marcel Hicter Association, which, as mentioned above, has expertise in similar programmes since it has been running the European Diploma in Cultural Management since 1989. The project aimed to gather 16 cultural professionals from 8 MENA countries having a project proposal for developing cooperation within the MENA region. In the end,

[100] EUNIC Global was an associated partner of the Preparatory Action for Culture in External Relations. The European Commission commissioned a consortium of cultural institutes and organisations led by the Goethe Insitute to carry out this preparatory action from 2013 to 2014. The initiative consisted of an extensive mapping and consultation process, which involved a wide variety of stakeholders from inside and outside the EU.

15 people participated at the training since one person from Palestine didn't manage to attend due to visa issues[101].

The main objectives of the training were to improve the skills and competences of MENA cultural practitioners and more specifically in the fields of:

- Networking and exchanges with operators of various MENA and European countries;
- Developing new approaches in cultural policy reflecting the new trends in the region and the importance of civil society;
- Supporting capacity building and professionalizing of the cultural and creative sectors;
- Managing cultural projects, programmes, especially with the cultural cooperation dimension;
- Mapping creative industries and cultural policies.

Following the model of the European Diploma, the programme of the training project was organised around two six-day residential training sessions. The first training session took place in Casablanca/ Morocco in November 2014 (5-12/11/2014) and the second one in Beirut in April 2015 (6-13/04/2015). As it is the practice for the European Diploma in Cultural Management, participants in between the residential sessions spent time working on their projects in their own in their respective countries/ cities and during this time they receive coaching from international tutors.

5.4.3 The evaluation in context

Despite the fact that it was incorporated in the middle of the project (just before the second residential phase of the training), evaluation was conceived as a parallel activity of the Pilot project and was seen as an accompanying process that would give insight into the new learning acquired while contributing to developing a list of recommendations for future projects, initiatives and actions in relation to the support of the cultural and creative sector in the region but also in EU external relations and between Member States[102].

[101] Visa delays and non approvals is, as explained in (4.3), a critical issue regarding the mobility of artists and cultural operators from the Arab region.

[102] The Preparatory Action for Culture in EU External Relations explicitly encouraged organisations to organise a number of pilot projects in the various countries and regions concerned (among which the geographical context of this research) and to evaluate them.

In the paragraphs below the way evaluation was incorporated in the programme is described and the focus is mainly on the external evaluation since very little information was available for the internal evaluation process.

5.4.4 The evaluation practice

(i) Purpose and focus of the evaluation

As explained in the introductory part of this case study, there was an open call to identify an external evaluator. The EUNIC Jordan cluster took the responsibility to manage the open call and the contract with the evaluator. Table 5.5 summarises the objectives, the tasks and the profile of the external evaluator sought based on the open call.

Table 5.5: Objectives and framework of the EUNIC/ MENA training evaluation

The evaluation of the Cultural & Creative Sector Management Pilot Training is intended:

- To assess the relevance and benefit of the training to the individual trainees, as well as the potential for wider impact of the pilot project;
- To assess whether the training is transferable and scalable, and whether it is relevant within the context of EUNIC Global's strategy for engaging cultural counterparts;
- To assess whether this training matches with the key recommendations of the Preparatory Action 'Culture in EU External Relations' report;
- To identify lessons learned and make recommendations that EUNIC MENA and Global might use to improve the implementation of other related projects and trainings.

Tasks for the evaluators

- Attend the training in Beirut from 5 to 12 April 2015;
- Conduct desk-based research;
- Conduct feedback interviews with participants during the training in Beirut and in-depth follow-up telephone interviews with participants and relevant EUNIC clusters following the training;
- Evaluate the project's return on investment;
- Assess the broader impact of this training on the participating countries;
- Assess whether there is a possibility to replicate this project in other regions;
- Make recommendations for cascading the training knowledge and material at national level and for implementing this training activity in other regions.

Profile of the evaluator

- Fluency in written and spoken English;
- Good knowledge of French and Arabic is highly desirable;
- Knowledge of the MENA region cultural and creative context;
- Availability to attend the training in Beirut from 5 to 12 April 2015 – essential and non-negotiable;
- At least 10 years of experience of international projects, at least 5 of which should be in the field of monitoring and evaluation.

Working days: up to 20

Source: adapted by the researcher based on Terms of reference for EUNIC/ MENA training evaluation (EUNIC, 2015b)

At this point I would like to make a few observations on the requirements and the process as stipulated in the call:

- It was a prerequisite for the evaluator to have both a good knowledge of the MENA region (geographical specification), the cultural and creative sector (field specification) plus professional experience in monitoring and evaluation of international projects (skills specification);
- The person engaged would be contracted on a freelance basis halfway through the process (the first training course had already taken place when the call was issued). He/ she had the opportunity to observe the process and meet and 'interact' with programme participants and stakeholders in their 'natural' environment (meaning during the course of the programme and not only ex-post) and his/ her physical presence was considered as part of the methodology. This also explains why in total 20 working days were calculated by the assignment and distributed throughout the duration of the programme;
- The call already makes a suggestion about the possible methodology for conducting the evaluation (desk research, interviews, observation);
- The objectives of the evaluation are clearly defined and include from one side measuring concrete impacts of the project on participants and their communities and suggestions on if the pilot programme can be replicable in other geographical settings and what lessons can be derived.

The person selected was Dr Antje Klesse, a German consultant for projects in culture and society based in the MENA region.

(ii) Evidence collection

The main elements that the evaluation wanted to extract were a) the benefits, lessons learnt and the change the training brought and b) a set of recommendations for the improvement of the programme and its adaptation in other contexts. The methods used for this were:

- Desk-based research (analysis of documents);
- Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders[103]";

[103] As stakeholders for this evaluation the following were stated: trainers, lecturers and EUNIC representatives.

- Flexible feedback interviews from a catalogue of questions with participants (14 out of 15 participants);

Interviews with stakeholders were less standardised than those for participants and adapted to individual roles and kind of involvement in the action. Furthermore, the evaluator requested written feedback from interviewees on the notes she had compiled.

As mentioned above, the evaluator was engaged half- way through the process but was however free to chose adequate methods and tools. 'Appreciative inquiry' was chosen as an approach between the evaluator and EUNIC considered as "an open, flexible and non-theory-based approach" (Klesse, 2015). Appreciative inquiry is about the co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organisations, and the relevant world around them. In its broadest focus, it involves systematic discovery of what gives 'life' to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological and human terms. Appreciate inquiry involves in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential.

(iii) Analysis of evidence

Table (5.6) summarises the levels of analysis of the data gathered and reveals the guiding principles that formed the final report. We observe that from one hand there are elements related to the overall functioning of the programme itself (programme evaluation that can be seen in the categories *Contribution* and *Performance)* but on the other hand we also have elements related to the impacts on the participants (*Benefit/ Change*) as well as what would be stakeholders and participants' views on its *future*.

Table 5.6: EUNIC/ MENA external Evaluation Guiding Categories

Contribution: What did the individual stakeholders contribute to the action? **Benefit:** What was the benefit for participants and beyond individual participants? In the long/ short term? **Performance:** What worked well in the actions? What are the 'Lessons Learned'? **Change:** What difference has the action made? What positive change has it brought about? **Needs:** Which future support measures are needed? What are the recommendations for future actions?

Source: Developed by researcher based on EUNIC (2015).

The areas of impact (described as benefits for the participants and their organisations) that the evaluator set for her inquiry are summarised in Table 5.7 below:

Table 5.7: Benefits and change domains for the participants (and their organisations)

Benefits for the participant (and their organisations) - Project conceptualisation and planning - Project funding/ sponsorship - Practical project management - The role of cultural policy - Peer-to-peer exchange with other cultural practitioners from MENA - Cooperation with other cultural practitioners **Change domains** - Vision of project idea - Contacts and networking - Strategies, tools and methods - Partnership and cooperation - Position and identity

Source: Developed by researcher based on Klesse (2015)

(iv) Learning from the evaluation

The findings and recommendations included in the evaluation report provide information on the success and areas of improvement of the programme. Among the positive sides of the training, as identified by the participants, are the following:

- Learning various methods such as peer-to-peer exchange, interactive workshops;
- Gaining new skills, information and knowledge in planning cultural activities (input on strategies), cultural policies and the cultural scene in the MENA countries (inputs from MENA actors);
- Networking and forming partnerships.

On the other hand, the critical points identified were related to the Europe-MENA balance and more precisely there was some criticism that too much accent on the European perspective and on theory was put, and finally that there was a lack of follow-up following the second training session in Beirut. Moreover, the visibility of EUNIC was questioned, as little presence of EUNIC representatives at both trainings was noted (also mentioned in Dragićević Šešic, 2016: 27). Moreover, although the report opens with a very positive statement ("The EUNIC Pilot 1- MENA / European training in Culture and

Creative Sector Management was implemented according to plan and concept and turned out an overall success with the participants" (Klesse, 2015: 3) it is also noted that there was a missed opportunity for genuine Euro- MENA cultural cooperation.

Among the observations made by the consultant, two of them drew my attention:

- Firstly, that there was a desire for an experience and practice- based exchange between MENA and European actors at personal level and at eye level that was not achieved through the programme. Basically, the main pedagogical team consisted of European experts, while participants had no chance to interact with cultural operators from Europe[104];
- Secondly, there was no real vision about the follow- up of the activity, which adds to a number of 'one-shot' initiatives that happen in the region without a clear strategy.

(v) Communicating the evaluation findings

The final report of the evaluation is dated as of 31st of July 2015. The evaluation report follows a standard structure, starts with an executive summary and then it is written in six sections including annexes that comprise background information on the project, a description of the project, a description of the methodological approach, a summary of the feedback interviews and, finally, conclusions and recommendations. The evaluation report was not made public, but was shared among EUNIC staff, the clusters involved and with the Association Marcel Hicter[105].

(vi) Challenges in the evaluation

The biggest challenge identified by the evaluator regarding this evaluation was that she was assigned the task halfway through the process and this required additional effort to build trust with the involved parties. In her own words, she said:

> *"As you know the evaluation did not start from the beginning but much later so I had to sort of take away fear from people. Some of them might have not liked me being there.*

[104] Of course, this can be justified to a certain extent by the fact that the main aim of the programme was to cultivate intra-MENA cultural relations among cultural operators, identified as a need for the improvement of the cultural sector and not necessarily with European peers.

[105] Interestingly, Dragićević Šešic (2016) in the thematic study on *Higher Education and Training in Cultural Management and Cultural Policies in Southern Mediterranean countries* prepared for Med-Culture Project makes reference to this specific training and bases her observations on the Klesse (2014) evaluation report, although she was a trainer herself in this project.

> *And I knew that and I understood them because I myself thought 'well this is a difficult situation', but I think it worked rather well in the end because I liked it and everybody was being very nice generally and we worked it out."*

Antje Klesse explained that this 'fear' was coming mainly from the pedagogical team and was a result to a certain extent to lack of communication and unclear ownership by all stakeholders involved in the programme regarding the evaluation process:

> *"The trainers were not expecting me. They were given very short notice and probably they felt they were being controlled because things were imposed on them quite bluntly- which not my fault. It was nobody 's fault, it just happened. Just that at some point the organizers in Amman or in Brussels even realised that some evaluation was needed".*

Klesse also explained that the fact of entering in the project while the first part of it was already completed, influenced the evaluation approach:

> *"I could not actually apply more abstract or formal ways of evaluation because it was not planned from the beginning. For a proper evaluation you need to start much earlier. Of course I mentioned that when I was on board. But of course there was nothing that could be done then. And I had again to be flexible and to approach it in a rather flexible way, trying to talk to people and working out what is their attitude and how I could make up for missing information because I missed the first part of the project. So I could not plan it systematically at all, really, and I was going by individual opinions and attitudes and I tried to sort of group them- in a rather informal manner to be honest- because there was no way of using a scheme, like a conventional scheme- for that."*

When it comes to the implementation of the evaluation, Klesse observed that it was very difficult to get hold of the participants and stakeholders to interview them. She explained though that this is not an intercultural issue but that it happens in all kind of ex-post evaluation processes. Attending the second part of the training in Beirut enabled her to establish contacts with the larger amount of people that were to inform the evaluation, but since all the interviews took place following that event, not all of them replied. She explained the situation in the following words:

> "*They live in various countries and I couldn't get hold of all of them* […]. *I really had to contact some of them a lot of times. And I missed out to quite a few of them. And this was part of the text, part of the report: I had to say I could not reach him because he was ill or because she did not respond to me. But that does not apply only to Arab participants but also to some of the stakeholders in the background, especially in Morocco, because I had not met them. And if you have not met them it becomes even more difficult to get hold of them. … Some people replied 6 months afterwards when the evaluation was over, some did not reply at all… The participants and the trainers were OK. Everybody I met* [in person during the training], *I managed to get hold of. "*

I also asked Antje how different would the evaluation be if she wouldn't have attended the second part of the training. She explained that the observation at the second training

gave her a better insight into the programme and also the possibility to establish person-to-person connections with the people she had to interview in the following weeks. *"I had something there and I had a grasp of the atmosphere, the people and personalities. If you do it otherwise, it is just less satisfactory",* she admitted.

5.4.5 The human factor in the evaluation

(i) From an evaluator's point of view

The very first thing that Antje Klasse told me when we started our interview was:

> *"I am not mainly an evaluator, not at all.* […] *So I am not really a professional evaluator in the sense of focusing on evaluation but I've done a lot of project work so maybe that's why they took me on board there and because I had done the Russia evaluation[106]. So it was a job for me, it was an interesting task and I have been working in running and designing and doing publications in culture rather than evaluating projects.* […] *In an organisation where you have people concerned with evaluation, there might be departments, sections that deal with this, but when you are free lance you need to do many things. That's reality."*

Klesse holds a PhD and another point that was raised in the interview regarding the profile of the 'ideal evaluator' was related to how having experience in research helps in evaluation. Antje Klesse said in this respect that:

> *"You learn to be diligent perhaps, you take care that you use data in the right way or how to communicate. That does not really have to do with writing a thesis or doing research, but rather with general professional experience. That's something you learn along the way. If I learnt it, I don't know, I am doing my best."*

When it comes to evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes, Klesse underlined the need of knowing the region but most importantly being flexible and adaptive to intercultural differences. In this respect she said:

> *"Of course you need to know the region. Otherwise I could not have done the job. Of course you need to have a faint idea about how people think, react and work and what is important and what is not so important if it is mentality and cultural profiles. Of course it helps in a very general way, I cannot put my finger on it. It is all about communication. If I hadn't been in the Arab countries before, I would have had more of a hard time talking to people, obviously."*

And added that:

> *"I am not sure if all of this has to do with my experience in the Arab world or if it is a general intercultural thing. To become a little bit more flexible maybe that helps. So it is not mainly the region, it is more of an international experience and being able to adapt".*

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106 This refers to a previous evaluation experience Antje Klesse had with the evaluation of a Goethe Institut funded project in Russia regarding a project around German minorities in Russia.

Finally, regarding how she feels on the way the evaluation results were put forward by the programme organisers, she said:

> *"You never know, maybe in three years there might be someone saying 'let's run it again, let's do another training' but I am not sure they'd use my results or if they would ask people again. And of course an evaluation like that happens because something needs to be completed, there has to be a report so you shouldn't as an evaluator expect things to happen, you shouldn't rely on that [otherwise] you get frustrated very soon because it goes so slowly. And I am happy I got some positive response there and the communication part was very nice and it was an experience I would do again".*

(ii) From a commissioner/ organiser's point of view

When examining the human factor in this case from the point of view of the commissioners/ organisers, there are two entities involved: from one side EUNIC, that was the initiator and, financially speaking, the manager of the project and officially the commissioner of the evaluation, and on the other side the Marcel Hicter Foundation that was assigned the educational part of the programme. As explained above, the EUNIC/ MENA training was conceived as a pilot project, but besides the generally positive evaluation, there have been no plans so far to repeat it in the MENA region, or elsewhere (as one of the evaluation requests was to recommend whether the programme could be replicable in another region). Jean Pierre Deru from the Marcel Hicter Foundation made reference to this training during his intervention at the 9th Young Cultural Researcher's Forum, which focused on the MENA region[107] and explained what happened after its evaluation:

> *"The good news was that the evaluation had highlighted how great the programme was. The bad news was that it would not be repeated because the geographical priorities of the EU had shifted to other regions (China… Brazil…)".*

For Deru, the training course was a non-sufficiently exploited opportunity in the framework of EuroArab cultural cooperation. During our interview, he said:

> *"It is a strategic mistake because our direct neighbours are the Arab countries and it could be a great benefit both for the MENA countries as well as for Europe."*

When it comes to the evaluation, Deru confirmed what the evaluator commented, that at the beginning he was skeptical about it since it was kind of 'imposed' to the pedagogical

[107] For more information about the ENCATC Young Cultural Researcher's Forum, see note in the Introduction.

team. However, he ended up respecting a lot the work of the evaluator and the way the evaluation was put in place.

> *"I was very much against the fact that I had an external evaluator coming but in the same time I think she did that in a very loyal and very professional way. Because she interviewed everybody, she participated in all sessions, except the ones I told her not to come because it was private, and I think she was very reliable to do evaluation. But of course it is heavy [task], you must be on the spot, you must have criteria. I negotiated with her very much to be sure that she will not be a spy but she will do it professionally and also engaging with the project, while being totally free to say what she thinks should be improved etc. And since it was a pilot, it is normal that things are not perfect. 80-90% was considered as very good* […]. *For me it was a good counter- example from the bad evaluation I see from all over the place."*

Unfortunately, from EUNIC's side I did not manage to talk with EUNIC Jordan that was the cluster that managed the project and commissioned the evaluation to the external consultant. I did, however, interview Andrew Murray, the current Director of EUNIC Global, that only took over this role after the end of the project. Although he recalled the project and the evaluation itself, he did not consider this exercise exemplary regarding the way EUNIC currently deals with evaluation and he preferred to share with me the current state of affairs regarding how EUNIC deals with evaluation in general, which is discussed in (5.4.6).

(iii) From a participant/ beneficiary's point of view

Nisrine Chiba is a cultural manager in Espace Darja in Casablanca and the only participant of the EUNIC/ MENA training that I managed to get hold of. For her the main motivation for participation in the training was to learn more about how to manage a project. Although she had already a Masters in professions of culture and international exchanges from the University of Nanterre in France, she felt that the training would bring an added value given its practical nature. She felt that it would be something more concrete than university education and would give participants the opportunity to discuss with their peers that live and work in similar circumstances but that can at the same time be quite different. The same motivation drove her at the end of this training course to apply and participate in the *European Diploma in Cultural Project Management* managed by the Marcel Hicter Foundation.

She also confessed having little memory of the process of evaluation and the interview with the external evaluator. Discussing however with her gave me some insight regarding her opinions on the programme and its impact on her. For example, when thinking about

the networking aspect of the training, Nisrine observed that she is still in contact with one participant from Lebanon, but the most important connection she made was a colleague from hew own city, Casablanca, that she did not know before and who has become a great friend and a person she collaborates with even today. Furthermore, Nisrine observed that the training gave her the opportunity to open her eyes not only towards the North but also towards the East, since there are not many opportunities for people from Arab countries to work together, mainly for funding-related reasons. For her, *"paradoxically, it was Europe that enabled this encounter".* Her explanation of this is reflected in her words:

> *"Maybe because we still see Europe as a model that could bring us recipes and recently Europe is very much interested in this kind of programmes, but they are not always well done"*[108]*.*

And she added:

> *"I feel that in many of these training, there is a lot of money to be spent and it is politically correct to be interested in this moment at the famous 'Arab springs'* [...] *They had it in their check list and that's all"*[109]*.*

Nisrine, however, observed that since she started participating in cross-national trainings and programmes, the projects of international cultural cooperation that she has managed to engage with have multiplied, especially the ones with organisations from other Arab countries. She mentioned that a great satisfaction for her is that currently through her organisation she is involved in a large training programme (Shapers) with Morocco, Egypt, Spain and France supported by the Creative Europe programme and she explained to me how this was achieved:

"In principle I wanted to work with Egypt because I have a friend that also works for a dance organisation and we wanted to bring closer our structures. But then it became bigger… more participants added up and we submitted a project proposal to the Creative Europe [programme*] without thinking we would get it being the first time we applied"*[110]*.*

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[108] Skype, 07/01/2017 Translation from French by myself. Original text: "Peut être aussi parce qu'on continue voir un peu l'Europe comme un modèle qui pourrait nous donner des recettes. En fait dernièrement l'Europe s'intersse beaucoup à ce genre de programme mais c'est pas souvent bien fait".

[109] Translation from French by myself. Original text: "Je sens dans beaucoup de ces formations qu'il y a beaucoup d'argent à dépenser et que c'est politiquement correct de s'intéresser en ce moment aux fameux « printemps arabes". [...] Ils ont rempli leur cahier des charges et c'est tout!".

[110] Translation from French by myself. "Je crois qu'ils sont intéressant s'ils reversent la tendance… qu'ils montrent que le nord a aussi à apprendre du sud. c'est assez marrant de voir la réaction des européens face à ce qu'on arrive à faire ici malgré des conditions qui sont bien moins confortables et comme la situation de la culture est en baisse aussi chez eux…Il va falloir qu'ils viennent prendre des cours de 'système D', c'est à dire à se débrouillller un peu sans les institutions".

In general terms, when it comes to international cultural cooperation programmes and projects in the EuroArab region, Nisrine also said:

> *"I think that they are interesting if they manage to reverse the tendencies, if they demonstrate that the North has also to learn a lot from the South. It is quite interesting to see the reaction of Europeans when they see what we manage to achieve here besides the conditions, which are far less comfortable. They would need to come and take some 'système D' classes from us, which means to get along a bit without the institutions"*[111].

5.4.6 Further points of interest

5.4.6.1 Note on the internal evaluation practice

As explained above, the training course accompanied the elaboration and implementation of projects by the participants. Internal evaluation was an integral aspect of the training programme in the sense of providing feedback and support to the programme participants for their projects. More specifically, programme organisers:

- Requested a report from the participants integrating theoretical and methodological inputs as well as practical elements and including a study of the problems encountered when implementing their project, an analysis of the actions taken and the results obtained, as well as a first evaluation of the achieved results;
- Run an evaluation session during the second residential seminar where participants were evaluated according to the following criteria:
  a) Ability to relate their actions to cultural challenges in the MENA region;
  b) Skills to coordinate actions which connect partners from the region;
  c) Ability to evaluate their own action and propose a strategy for future actions.

Unfortunately, not a lot of information is available on this, however we should note that the approach was similar to the practice tested out within the European Diploma on Cultural Management for several years, which has been developed by the Marcel Hicter Association in cooperation with a pedagogical team.

5.4.6.2 Towards a more comprehensive evaluation strategy in EUNIC

As explained above, when I interviewed Andrew Murray, the current Director of EUNIC Global about the evaluation of this programme he was surprised at the beginning. He asked me why I chose that specific evaluation, since he considered that it was a minor one. What Andrew Murray explained to me is that EUNIC is currently trying to make a shift in the way evaluation is approached and is investing on enabling its members to develop their own monitoring and evaluation skills. He underlined that this is not against the practice of hiring an external consultant to do evaluation, as it was the case for the EUNIC/ MENA training, but that it reflects the need to encourage member organisations to take evaluation more seriously and develop a coherent approach across the network. What he said in this respect was that:

> *"We are interested in helping our members building their own monitoring and evaluation methodologies. External evaluators that you can buy in can do the usual stuff, looking at inputs and outputs and processes. But that only takes you so far. We are more interested in the long-term goals of cultural relationships, which is the part on how you improve cultural understanding. That's the thing we are missing".*

He also explained that some of the Institutes have already their own Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) teams and have developed their own methodologies (for example the Goethe Institut or the British Council) but the very small ones do very basic M&E.

> *"So for them it is more that cultural diplomacy and relations is a kind of faith, like a religion in which you believe in that is doing good, but you cannot prove it. So we want to move from 'a faith-based approach' to a more 'scientific-based approach', where you can provide evidence that you are making a difference to people's lives. The secondary effect of this is to help you into planning your strategies in the long-term. At the moment they* [EUNIC members] *mainly do events, exhibitions, exchanges of artists and so on, but they have no clue whether they have any effect on cultural relationships".*

Murray's observation confirms what has already been identified as a challenge in the evaluation of international cultural cooperation: finding the right methods to measure longer-term impacts. He made an explicit reference to the fact that the European Commission has identified EUNIC as a strategic partner in its work for Culture in External Relations and highlighted that the approach that the European Commission is adopting reflects a shift from cultural diplomacy to people –to-people relations. He explained this as follows:

> *"Public diplomacy is a state talking to people, cultural diplomacy is a state using culture to talk to people and cultural relations is people-to- people, without the state. Having the state involved is unlikely to move trust and understanding. That's why now this move is*

being made by the EU to people-to-people work which is more likely to give you more long-term results, although there is no methodology yet how to measure those results".

This for Murray marks the beginning of a new era, especially on how the EUNIC members function and how they document their work. EUNIC Global is currently building on measures and tools to help the clusters and their members build a strategy that goes beyond organising events and to help them describe why they exist and who they are working with. He explained that EUNIC has commissioned two consultants to do a research on how EUNIC members monitor and evaluate their impact while in the same time they are in the process of developing a tool that they (provisionally) call 'the cultural relations mapping tool'. Murray explained this as follows:

"*We are also developing alongside a tool called 'the cultural relations mapping tool'. Our theory of change is that first of all you have to look at the cultural relationships between two countries, or for example between Tunisia and the EU. What are the strengths and weaknesses of those relationships? That would give you some baseline data about cultural relationships, where it is strong, where it is weak. And if you do it again in 3 or 5 years' time you can see if the work you've done has changed that relationship. So if it is a better or worst relationship and what is directly related to the work you've done. So this is our theory of change about cultural relations, which tries to show how working in cultural relations and diplomacy can help you improve the relationship between people-to-people. Because that is what cultural relations is all about: people-to-people. This is the very beginning of a long-term project that we will be doing using Creative Europe funding and will be over in the next 4 to 5 years".*

5.4.7 Take away points

The case study presented the evaluation practice of the EUNIC/ MENA training in cultural and creative sector management, which consisted in a project-based training and peer-to-peer cooperative learning experience aiming to foster regional exchanges within the MENA region and to improve the skills of the selected cultural managers. The evaluation focused on this specific activity and on its outcomes, while forward looking to a possibility for its replication in other regions.

Summarising the main conclusion regarding the programme itself, we can say that such type of programmes that are more hands on and project-based respond to the needs of capacity development of individuals and organisations in the region, as explained in chapter (4) and analysed in Dragićević Šešic and Mihalijnac, (2016); Hariri & Kassis, (2013) and Mansor (2016). Moreover, programmes that allow South-South connections, as in this case where all participants were from the Arab region, has a positive side since it allows for peer-learning among people from similar backgrounds that do not, however, have many opportunities to meet and exchange, and even less to cooperate. Nonetheless,

the predominance of a 'European' approach to the implementation of the training (pedagogical team, mentors, material…) was considered as one of its weak points and although connections were made with local cultural agents both in Casablanca as in Beirut, their involvement was not considered sufficient.

When it comes to the evaluation practice, one interesting point that came out from interviewing both Jean Pierre Deru from Marcel Hicter Foundation and Andrew Murrey from EUNIC was that when there are several partners/ stakeholders involved in a programme, there is a need on negotiation and agreement on the way evaluation is conceived and executed. Moreover, the experience of the evaluator revealed the need to have an evaluator accompanying such programmes from the very beginning.

In December 2015, EUNIC's first *Strategic Framework 2016- 2025* (EUNIC, 2015a) was adopted by its General Assembly and the vision statement that will guide the work of the network was formulated as such: "By 2015, EUNIC will be the delivery, research and training partner of choice for cultural diplomacy and cultural relations at European and international level". Although there has been no clear commitment of adapting the training to a different region for the time being or holding it again in the MENA region, it would be interesting to see, in case this happens in the future, to which extent will the evaluation results be taken into consideration.

5.5 Case Study 2: The Cultural Innovators Network

5.5.1 Presentation of the case study and data collection process

The second case study to be examined is the Cultural Innovators Network (CIN) initiated by the Goethe Institut. This case is interesting for a number of reasons both related to the nature of the programme, but also to the evaluation practice itself. As stated in the title of the programme already, the aim of the Goethe Institut was not to create a grants giving programme or a project, but the aim was explicitly to create a *network* that after a few years of support from the Institut, would become an entity on its own. In terms of the evaluation practice, this case study is relevant for this research for three main reasons:

a) The evaluation was part of an overall evaluation exercise of the Goethe Institut to examine how its international cultural cooperation programmes are functioning and what was their impact that was documented in the publication *Kultur wirkt-*

Culture works (Goethe Institut, 2016). This practice is interesting if we consider from one side the role that foreign cultural institutions have in the countries they operate (and especially in the ones from the Arab world, as already outlined in 4.3.1.4) and on the other hand, if we consider the belated efforts of other cultural institutes to cope with Monitoring and Evaluation (as revealed in the interview with Andrew Murray, Director of EUNIC Global and discussed in the previous case study in (5.4);

b) The second reason is that this evaluation was assigned to an external consultancy (and not to an individual as in the case study explored in (5.4)) following an open call, which again gives another perspective both on how evaluation is commissioned and on who carries out the evaluation;
c) Finally, the third reason is that this evaluation uses a theory approach and applies the concepts of the Actor-Network-Theory (ANT), a sociological theory. Some of its elements and how they have been 'interpreted' and 'used' in this research will be analysed further in (5.4.4).

I was encouraged to investigate deeper on this case by Birgit Mandel, Professor at the University of Hildesheim that has collaborated with the Goethe Institut and has contributed to the *Kultur wirkt- Culture works* publication (Goethe Institut, 2016) regarding the impact of its international cultural programmes. She was also the one that put me in touch with Anke Schad, the external evaluator of the programme on behalf of EDUCULT, the organisation that was responsible for conducting the external evaluation. Although Anke was not working anymore for EDUCULT at moment of my research, she openly shared her insights on the topic with me during a skype interview. She was also very keen in sharing material with me, more precisely an article she had written for the upcoming edition of the *Journal of Cultural Management: Arts, Policy, Economics and Society* (Schad, 2017) on the evaluation of the CIN.

My skype interview with Anke took place at the beginning of November, however it came as a surprise that both of us would be attending the symposium organised in Plovdiv (Bulgaria) under the title 'Local Perspectives- Evaluation Symposium'[112] where we met in

[112] The 'Local perspectives- Evaluation Symposium' took place at the University of Plovdiv from the 7th to the 10th of November 2016. The Evaluation Symposium was organized by LOCOP in collaboration with the Plovdiv University, Goethe- Institut and local operators from Plovdiv. Plovdiv will be the European Capital of Culture in 2019. The Symposium aimed at addressing evaluation as an important step towards measuring the impacts of the European Capitals of

person and exchanged more ideas on the topic and her experience with the evaluation. As mentioned before, Anke does not work anymore for EDUCULT, so she speaks in her own capacity when sharing with me her experiences regarding the evaluation of CIN but also of the overall Kultur Wirkt / *Culture Works* exercise.

Anke also suggested to me to talk to one of the Goethe Institut representatives that was behind the CIN at the beginning of its conception, Mr Enzio Wetzel. Enzio Wetzel was working at the Culture and Development team of the Goethe Institut and was responsible for the Transformation Partnership[113] with the Federal Office when the CIN project was proposed. Wetzel is currently the Director of the Goethe Institut in Sofia and Head of the Cultural department. I therefore had the chance to meet him in person during my trip to Bulgaria in November 2016, but for time-restrictions we agreed on arranging the interview via skype in the following weeks.

Given that the Goethe Institut in comparison to other foreign cultural institutes has a more elaborated approach to evaluation and even a Department that deals centrally with the topic, I also considered important to arrange an interview with one of its staff to get also their perspective on the subject matter. In mid- January 2017 I managed to have a skype interview with Tina Lierheimer, Advisor for Evaluation and Quality Management at the Goethe Institut's Central offices in Munich that devoted some of her time to discuss the evaluation of the CIN and the *Kultur Wirkt/ Culture works* project in general that will be explained in detail in the following paragraphs.

Two more interviews inform this case study. I was fortunate enough that through my network I managed to reach out to two participants of the programme and members of the Steering Committee of CIN that shared their feelings about the network and its evaluation with me. I am satisfied with this also because one of them comes from the Arab side, Haneen Hijjawi from Jordan, and the other one from the European side, Lazaros Damanis from Greece. I interviewed Haneen via Skype in December 2016 and had a face-to-face interview with Lazaros in Athens at the end of 2016.

Culture programme on the local cultural and social field and to monitor the cultural sustainability of the local scene.

[113] The Transformation Partnership, is an initiative by the German government to support Egypt and Tunisia in bringing about democratic change, by establishing the rue of law and good governance, political inclusion, employment and addresses as well civil society and professional media.

I have to admit that in order to develop some understanding about the way evaluation was conducted and how the theory used was incorporated in the process, my interpretations and observations are mainly based on the testimonies and opinions of the people interviewed. Unfortunately, I did not have access to the final evaluation report, since it is an internal Goethe Institut document, however the interviews contributed substantially in developing my understanding of the case.

5.5.2 Background information on the case study

The background of the Cultural Innovators Network's creation was revealed to me by Enzio Wetzel who had served as Goethe Institut staff in Egypt in the '00s. During our interview he recalled that at that time, the Goethe Institut Director in Egypt was a charismatic and innovative person that had identified that the Goethe Institut should invest on young people and on building bridges of communication between Europe and the Arab countries. That was the reason the Mediterranean Youth Parliament was established, which Wetzel considers to be *"somehow the grandfather of the CIN",* as he said. He also explained that:

> *"*[At that moment…] *we realised that the youngsters* [in the Arab countries] *are very engaged and much more enthusiastic about political engagement and about reconstructing society and about networking than those in Western Europe. Because in Western Europe we are already accustomed with the possibilities to communicate and just take a trip to another big city and you will find friends and you go there, and back again. So it's a totally free society in comparison to what was there before the so-called Arab Spring. Now to some extent it's back or even worse than it has been, but the Mediterranean Youth Parliament was then our role-model when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked us to find interesting projects for their line regarding the Transformation Partnership between Egypt, Tunisia and Germany".*

And he added that:

> […*] we argued it would not be so helpful just to educate young Egyptians how to be free or how to re-design their society if they are not in contact with their neighbours and with other European and Arab perspectives".*

The Cultural Innovators Network (CIN) was born as an idea after the Arab Spring and the decision of the German Federal Foreign office to establish Transformation Partnerships with a number of Arab countries in their process of bringing about democratic change in their countries. It was conceived as a cross-sectoral and cross-cultural network of young activists from countries north and south of the Mediterranean. Its members are artists, cultural managers, civil society professionals and activists. As stated in a press release of the CIN (2014):

> Cultural Innovators Network brings together culturally engaged young people from different professional and social backgrounds in the Euro-MENA region, united by a common desire to get involved and to create a better future for their communities, countries and to find innovative solutions to bring about social transformation via a network of activists around the Mediterranean region.

Enzo Wetzel also made two comments related to the mandate of the Goethe Institut to initiate a project such as CIN and explained the reasoning behind applying the words 'cultural' and 'innovators' in the programme title.

> *"So we needed also a claim which would make clear that it's about culture, that through culture you may change society. And so it was clear that culture should be part of the claim not only to convince the Goethe Institute itself -because many of our own colleagues were not so engaged at the beginning to support a network that is dealing with so many social issues. Because we normally invite famous German artists to our institutes and this is our normal job. Normally it is not about how to improve the special situation of a city or of a country but it's more about the German way of doing art. "*

Through this statement we can see the transition between the traditional mission of a foreign cultural institute -which is related to the promotion of its own arts and culture- to a more cultural development approach recognising the role that culture can play in bringing about change. What is interesting here is that we are not talking about a programme/ intervention of the Goethe Institut in a specific country, but of a regional programme engaging people from different European and Arab countries.

> "[…] *the other point, 'innovation', is of course a bit strange especially for artists, but it makes a bit more clear that it could be an idea which is not totally only creative or artistic or aesthetic revolutionary invention but it could be some even technically…in some aspect maybe you could change society only by opening the metro one hour longer…or by changing the admission to the cinemas for youngsters, or to screen other films, or one film per week for another audience. So it means innovation could be something also in the construction, in the structure area in the concept and not only about artistic. So, innovation is part of this concept. Because we did not want to find the best artists all over the Mediterranean countries because for them it is mostly possible to travel and to meet each other and to get invitations. But for those who are still stuck into their societies and try to change it there…and so it was a meeting or a network for young activists mainly, not necessarily artists but energetic young men and women who would like to change something and to do something to improve the living conditions of their environment."*

Here again the role of culture to bring about change is being highlighted. This statement reveals an understanding of culture closely related to the social impact that it can have.

The first selection of participants took place in 2012 by the Goethe Institut. Several of the selected people went on learning journeys in Egypt, Germany and Italy. A major moment

in the creation of the Network was at the end of 2012, when around 100 people gathered in Istanbul for a first Forum from which 20 pilot projects were initiated across the Euro-Mediterranean region. Since then, a number of Forums has been organised and CIN has organised more specified activities and projects, as well as what they call Cultural Innovation Days and Cultural Innovation Journeys. The Network accepts new members regularly through an open call and an internal selection process.

As mentioned above, the Cultural Innovators Network has been supported by the Goethe-Institut and financed by the German Federal Office through its German-Arab Transformation Partnerships Project. Since its inception, the idea was that it would become an entity on its own. At the end of 2014, "a year of maturation", CIN became "more professional, more sustainable and more structured" (Goethe Institut, 2015: 42) and has been registered as a legally independent entity under Belgian law.

The methodology of the organisation is based on a participatory setting in the decision-making processes and an elected Steering Committee composed by members of the Network has the responsibility of framing the decision-making processes. Figure 5.3 shows how the Network is structured.

5.5.3 The evaluation in context

The evaluation of the Cultural Innovators Network took place in the context of an overall effort of the Goethe-Institut to examine the impact of its international cultural programmes. By being the cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany with a global reach, the Goethe-Institut has as primary aims the promotion of knowledge of the German language abroad and fostering international cultural cooperation. As stated at the website of the Goethe Institut:

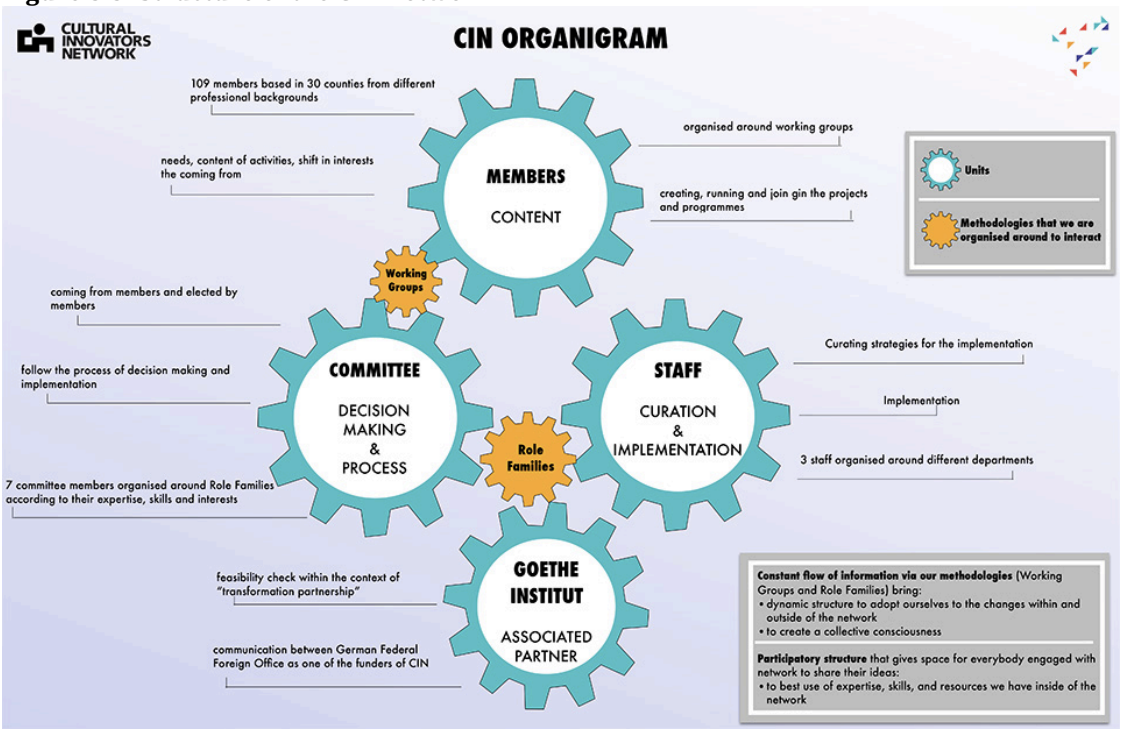
> We convey a comprehensive image of Germany by providing information about cultural, social and political life in our nation. Our cultural and educational programmes encourage intercultural dialogue and enable cultural involvement. They strengthen the development of structures in civil society and foster worldwide mobility.

What was the reason for engaging in such a reflection process? The guiding question for this exercise was how would it be possible to demonstrate what knowledge, experience, attitudes, new networks, creative ideas and expanded horizons of action have been achieved by the cultural work and input of the Goethe Institut abroad (Lierheimer &

Schad, 2017). Furthermore, as explained by Tina Lierheimer, the Advisor for Evaluation and Quality Management in the central office of the Goethe Institute, there was a need for looking closely at their international cultural programmes. Tina explained to me that the Goethe Institut already since 2007 is working within the 'target agreement' established by the Foreign Federal office (from which the Goethe Institut depends) and they have developed practices and quality management systems for their programmes. However, as she explained:

> *"We still had a kind of feeling that our instruments were not exactly fitting for the cultural programmes or that they were a bit too general…".*

Figure 5.3: Structure of the CIN Network



Source: Taken from the CIN website.

For this reason, the Goethe Institut throughout three years engaged a number of partners, evaluators, experts and representatives of field offices to discuss and propose an approach on measuring the impact of its international cultural work. Besides a review of the relevant bibliography, the Goethe Institut commissioned pilot evaluations to a number of external consultants for different international cultural projects, using both established as well as more experimental methods. Anke Schad, one of the external evaluators that had been involved in this process and which I interviewed in the framework of this case study, commented this was a unique exercise given the fact that

the Goethe Institut functions in a system of different layers, including the central Goethe Institut and its partners, the Goethe offices in different cities worldwide, the wider context and the 'in-between-space' between Germany and the world.

The overall aims and objectives of the evaluation exercise undertaken by the Goethe Institut are reflected in the questions raised in *Kultur Wirkt/ Culture Works* document (Goethe Institut, 2016). In Table 5.8 the questions are summarised in a thematic category is assigned to them:

Table 5.8: Evaluation questions and thematic categories

Evaluation questions	**Thematic category**
To what extent does the Goethe Institut manage to position itself as a partner of dialogue, high quality and innovation?	Cultural diplomacy/ national image abroad
To what extent do they actually manage to arise people's interest in the arts and culture sector and encourage a free exchange of opinions?	Support for the arts and artistic awareness/ freedom of expression
How far does the networking of relevant actors really contribute to the generation of new concepts, activities and new structures- even independently from the Goethe-Institut?	Networking Innovation Spillover effects
To what extent does the communication of an image of contemporary Germany contribute to the trusting relationships between Germany and the host countries?	Cultural diplomacy/ national image abroad
Does the Goethe Institut succeed in promoting cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue in a globalised world?	Cultural diplomacy/ national image of Germany as actor of intercultural dialogue

Source: elaborated by researcher based on presentation of CIN evaluation results (EDUCULT, 2015)

The result of this consultation and reflection process culminated in the production of the publication *Kultur wirkt/ Culture works* (Goethe Institute, 2016) which summarises the approach to evaluation for a number of Goethe Institut initiated and supported projects and presents a general framework for the evaluation of international cooperation projects from the point of view of the Goethe Institut and the impact of cultural work in foreign policy. One of the projects was the Cultural Innovators Network, which is the subject of this case study.

5.5.4 The evaluation practice

(i) Purpose and focus

The Goethe Institut launched a number of calls inviting organisations/ external consultants and consultancies to submit proposals for the different programmes. Tina

Lierheimer explained to me that criteria for the selection of the contractor might differ, but besides the proposed price they also looked at the overall quality of the contractor, including the profile of the people responsible for the project management, how the contractor understands the project, what experience they have in other similar programmes and if the evaluator has experience in this specific region. Specifically for the CIN programme she explained that *"in the ideal case, there is someone in the team that speaks Arabic or comes from an Arabic country or has evaluated a programme in the region. EDUCULT had evaluated programmes in the region and had experience in evaluation of international cooperation projects"*.

Following the open call, the Goethe Institut commissioned the evaluation of CIN to EDUCULT, an Austria-based NGO specialising in the domains of culture, education and policy and offering applied research and professional project management. As explained above, the Goethe Institut was open into receiving proposals on how to deal with the evaluation of each programme. Here the consultancy proposed a theory-based approach, the Actor-Network theory, which is going to be further analysed below. A meeting was organised between the contractor and the Goethe Institut where the timeframe, the objectives of the evaluation and the methods were negotiated and agreed upon.

The evaluation assignment was realised between July 2014 and March 2015. The length of the evaluation assignment is justified by the fact that the evaluation was conceived as an 'accompanying' process throughout the action that would produce a report of the interim results of CIN and recommendations for action. Therefore, the evaluation was primarily formative and looked into feeding back to the Goethe Institut for the purpose of programme improvements and for deciding on strategies on how to go on.

(ii) Evidence collection

In terms of methods for the collection of evidence, the external evaluators used the following:

- Analysis of existing documents (desk research);
- An online survey with CIN members sent to all 139 members (as of October 2014) of which 66 valid ones (completely completed) including quantitative and qualitative questions;
- 15 qualitative interviews with members of the Network and Goethe-Institut staff as well as external consultants related to the programme;
- An evaluation workshop with members of the Steering Group in Izmir;

- Participant observation at a meeting in Izmir and at a public networking meeting in Berlin.

We observe that both qualitative and quantitative approaches have been used in this evaluation. Anke Schad together with a colleague of hers from EDUCULT were responsible for putting in place the evaluation methods and for gathering and analysing the data.

Although I did not have access to the initial questionnaire sent to the CIN members, I did have access to the presentation of the final results of the questionnaire. From it I extract a few elements in Tables 5.9 and 5.10 which reflect which aspects of the programme were evaluated. More precisely, Table 5.9 shows the identified areas of impact on personal and professional development while Table 5.10 shows the identified areas of added value of the programme.

Table 5.9: Areas of personal and professional impact

Areas of personal and professional positive impact	- Overall quality of the projects - Keeping my motivation to work for a better society - Capacity to present ideas and projects - Capacity to facilitate and moderate - Capacity to cooperate in cultural diverse settings - Capacity to find people with skills and experience for my project - Capacity to deal with bureaucracy - Capacity to take responsibility - Capacity in project controlling and accounting - Advocacy capacity - Fundraising capacity - Project management capacities - Capacity to realise projects on a regional level - Capacity to realise projects on a local level

Source: Developed by researcher based on presentation of CIN evaluation results (EDUCULT, 2015)

Table 5.10: Identified areas of CIN's added value

Finding new sources for project financing
Lasting friendships
A new balance of new and experienced members
Possibility for members to follow their ambitions
Learning about national and regional developments
Open exchange of views and ideas
The realisation of projects

Individual qualification and training
Mutual learning across professional sectors
Active participation in decision-making
Travel and mobility

Source: Developed by researcher based on presentation of CIN evaluation results presentation (EDUCULT, 2015)

Furthermore, the questionnaire addressed elements related to the efficiency of the work of the Goethe Institut and its involvement in the CIN, which are reflected in Table 5.11, as well as factors that hinder or facilitate the CIN development and aspects that should be strengthened.

5.11: Potential areas of work for the Goethe Institut

Potential areas of work for the Goethe Institut
- Facilitating strategic partnerships eg. With sponsors and public authorities
- Providing trainers and consultants
- Providing contacts and enabling networking
- Offering infrastructure and rooms for meetings
- Supporting the development of a legal entity
- Helping with publicity/ PR
- Administrative and payment of budgets
- Supporting travel and mobility

Source: Developed by researcher based on presentation of CIN evaluation results presentation (EDUCULT, 2015).

(iii) Analysis of evidence

As already mentioned above, this evaluation took a theory-based approach to frame the evaluation findings. Already in the call for proposals, EDUCULT had suggested the Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as a methodological-theoretical framework for approaching the evaluation. In comparison to the other case studies explored in this research, this is the only example that uses a theory to approach the evaluation assignment. When I interviewed Anke Shad, the evaluator, she explained that:

> *"Actor-Network theory is different from traditional evaluation projects because it focuses on development processes, not looking at impact and outcomes firstly but looking how things come about. And this is very different because you look at it from a developing point of view rather from a final point of view."*

In the same line, Tina Lierheimer from the Goethe Institut explained that the ANT was used more as a conceptual framework to give more structure to the evaluation. She considered that this approach fitted the aims and objectives of the evaluation since it was applied in a programme that aims to consolidate a network that goes through different phases in its formation. A few points related to the ANT and how they were applied in this evaluation are tackled below[114] that shed light into how a theory- based approach can provide a canvas on which an evaluation can be developed.

The ANT theory

ANT has started as an approach in the sociology of science and technology and then it spread to sociology, management and organisation studies, anthropology, economics and other disciplines. The main theorists behind it are Michel Callon and Bruno Latour. Other names that have been used throughout the years to refer to the ANT have been Sociology of Translation, Co-Word Analysis and Actant-Rhizome Ontology (Almila, 2016). As a theory it has been contested. Even its 'initiators' have stated that it is more of a method, than a theory. Almila (2016: 131) explains that ANT is not one, stable thing but instead is a body of empirical knowledge. "In other words, ANT should be done, not explained" but "this 'doing' is not guided by clear advice on the research methods to be used" (Almila: 135), so it uses no specific set of methods for data collection and analysis. As explained above, the ANT has been used in different settings, but often not as a whole. Almila (2016: 139) for example, observes that the most developed ATN-influenced approaches to cultural sociology today involve taking particular elements of ANT and making use of them for the sociology of art and cultural sociology without necessarily taking up all the various facets of ANT. For this case, ANT should be considered as a framework of analysis for approaching the questions of this evaluation, which was also confirmed by the interviews with Tina and Anke. It should be reminded at this point, that the evaluation took place *while* the CIN was developing, it was not an ex-post evaluation thus concepts evolved along with the network.

Human and non-human elements as (equal) actors in a network

One of the significant elements of ANT is that it considers both human and non-human elements equally as actors within a network, which allows understanding and seeing the logic in complex processes and relationships. According to Latour (2005), an 'actor' is "a

[114] Most of the information exposed in this section is the result of the interview with Anke Schad and an article she has written on the topic (Schad, 2017- in German) and some basic research on the theory itself, since I did not have access to the final report to understand exactly the application of the theory in this case.

semiotic definition" and can literally be anything provided it is granted to be the source of action". Therefore, an actor should be understood as what is made to act by many others. An 'actor', in the hyphenated expression actor-network, is not the source of an action but the moving target of a vast array of entities swarming toward it and implies a lot of metaphors (Latour, 2005: 46).

Human actors are the people identified as 'intermediaries' and as spokespersons that function as transfer channels. Within the framework of the evaluation this concept allowed to identify which are the actors involved in the formation of the network, what is their role and interconnections but also how the network of actors has expanded over time and how actors have been involved throughout the programme. For example, a key agent at CIN was an independent Consultant, who was responsible for the institutional framework of the Goethe- Institute as well as a trainer and 'facilitator' for the needs of the CIN members. Furthermore, Latour also explains that to delineate a group, no matter if it has to be created from scratch or simply refreshed, you have to have spokespersons that 'speak for' the group's existence. "Groups are not silent things, but rather the provisional product of a constant uproar made by the millions of contradictory voices about what is a group and who pertains to what" (Latour, 2005:31). Which can be though the non-human actors? The people interviewed gave me some examples. Tine Lierheimer from the Goethe Institut said:

> *"Looking into non human actors is just another way of thinking and looking at things, for example how money influence the network, or the ocean, or the Internet."*

Moreover, Enzio Wetzel explained:

> *"It could be the Mediterranean Sea for example in between or the language, or the spontaneous sympathy between two who out of the sudden decide to find a good project between each other because they would like to see each other again and again."*

Lierheimer and Schad (2017) also give two more examples of non-human elements that act as actors in this network and that are relevant especially in the context of international cultural cooperation projects: space and time. These are not only understood in the context of the activity but also as active agents of the network. For example, the influence of borders and the possibilities for overcoming them (visas, travel support) become a central part of the analysis of the functioning of the CIN.

Obligatory passage points

Another significant element of the ANT is the concept of obligatory passage points. As Schad explained:

> *"The obligatory passage point concept allows you to identify people or things that are important in certain key moments at the network. For example, there was one consultant that the Goethe Institute engaged from the beginning of the project and this consultant was sort of acting like a third ground because he was a person that did not belong to the Goethe Institut but was also not part of the network".*

Moreover, she also explained that another obligatory passage point was the Internet because without it a transnational project such as CIN would not be possible:

> *"In ANT it is an ongoing process. What you look at is at the relations; you look at the strength of relations that are formed through the process of such a network. In ANT they have some concepts about what they call "obligatory passage points". With these concepts you can identify for example both things that are important (actants in the network – actor theory) and of course in such a cross national project it is also very important to see the role of things such as the internet."*

Looking into obligatory passage points helped the evaluators build the story of the network, where they also used the Callonian phases of the Actor-Network formation as a basis for analysis of the chronology of the emergence and development of the network.

The concept of translation

Another aspect introduced in the analysis is the concept of translation: how relationships and acts are mediated and translated. At this point, both human actors (intermediaries) who serve as transfer channels, but also non-human actors, such as time and space metaphors, can be determining in the translation processes. Schad, in our interview, explained the importance of translation when looking into international cultural cooperation schemes in this way:

> *"The question of translation is very important in any cross-cultural cooperation because it is always about how things get translated- and this is a very complex question because it is related to identity, ownership, language. You never transfer an idea from one context to another. A lot of things change, there are crucial issues about any cooperation. It is about the dynamics of how things develop."*

The evaluators use the concept of translation in two ways:

a) To describe the role that the evaluators play in this network as actors themselves. As Lierheimer and Shad (2017) note, the evaluators become themselves part of the actor-network and the existing contract with the client (the Goethe Institut in this case becomes an 'actant');
b) The 'translation' of the evaluation results, which becomes a clear task for the Goethe Institut that assumes the responsibility of knowledge-sharing.

(ii) Learning from the evaluation

During our interview, Schad mentioned that her understanding of the background drivers explaining why Goethe Institut was engaging in this overall evaluation exercise were the following:

a) Legitimacy. As she noticed, the Goethe Institut's main mission is the promotion of the German language. *"Measuring the impact of language programmes is more predictable than measuring the impact of cultural programmes"*, she said. Finding out how to produce results that help into the legitimacy of cultural action was more challenging due to its nature. At the same time, approach-wise, the Goethe Institut was not satisfied with the outcome of traditional impact analysis methods, like questionnaires, or media analysis and they were looking to find out about more suitable methods for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation;
b) Organisational learning. As Anke said, although in reality staff in the Goethe Institut knew they were effective, they were more interested in enhancing organisational learning. Especially this aim justified the selection of the method used. As she explained:

> *"We wanted to actually know how things actually develop. Once you know this, it is easier to find out how you can steer processes and maybe also how to repeat in other regions. And this has a lot to do with organisational learning."*

Given that no access to the final report was possible, my knowledge about the concrete findings of the project is limited. The synthesis of the findings was actually put together to tell the story of the project, and describe the different stages of CIN during its formative steps, while recommendations gave some ideas on how to create the independent network.

(iii) Communicating the evaluation findings

There are two levels of communicating the evaluation findings in this case: from one side the results of the evaluation were communicated to the CIN's Steering Committee in a process of mutual learning and on a second hand, the findings were communicated within the *Kultur wirkt/ Culture works* project of the Goethe Institut.

Anke explained to me that there was an interim report and then a final report containing a synthesis of the findings and some graphs from the online survey among CIN members.

She also mentioned that the Goethe Institut was clear from the beginning that they had to share the results of the evaluation with the Steering Committee. As Anke said *"it didn't make sense if they wanted to have an independent project to keep the results".* She also explained that this was an important element for them when approaching the participants because they could underline that this evaluation was actually *for* them and not *about* them. The Goethe Institut held a meeting with the Steering Committee to discuss the results of the evaluation, without the presence of the evaluators themselves.

Furthermore, the results of the evaluation were shared with the members of the Kultur wirkt team and they were also included in the final publication of the project (Goethe Institut, 2016). As stated in the publication, "the insights gained in this process are such that we would like to share them wherever possible, so that other cultural institutions and institutions of foreign cultural and educational policy can draw inspiration from them" (Goethe Institut, 2016: 1). Tina Lierheimer explained that one of their main purposes when initiating the *Kultur wirkt/ Culture works* exercise was indeed to initiate a conversation. A sort of synthesis evaluation resulting from all the pilot evaluations commissioned to different external consultants formed the basis on which the Goethe Institut's *Impact Model for Evaluation* has been conceptualised. As explained again in the publication, "understood this way, evaluation can enrich the dialogue between institutions and policy-makers, making a valuable contribution to the shaping of sustainable foreign relations" (Goethe Institut, 2016: 1).

The main findings of the *Kultur wirkt/ Culture works*, which as explained above is the result of a meta-analysis of different evaluations of Goethe Institute's international cultural cooperation programmes including CIN, are summarised below in Table 5.12:

5.12 Summary of main findings of Kultur wirkt

● Cultural work can only have an impact if it is relevant. The intrinsic value of artistic or, as the case may be, cultural creativity creates a societal dynamism, which thrives because it is not dedicated to any particular purpose and not always predictable. The reception of ideas, information, artefacts, and ways of working is in itself a creative cultural process.
● In cultural evaluations it is not a question of finding unambiguous answers, but of asking the right questions which are relevant to the context, and investigating them with quantitative and qualitative methods.
● Social and cultural phenomena are dynamic and processual. In particular, qualitative, dialogue-oriented methods such as interviews or group discussions are suitable for helping participants to

develop a holistic view of impact and inter-relations and learn from one another.

Source: Taken from Goethe Institute (2016)

As Lierheimer and Schad (2017) explain, such an approach allows insights at different levels but not only answering 'what' is done and achieved but also the 'how'. She also claims that such an approach makes it possible to talk about a learning organization that is moving from wanting to have control, to wanting to have the relevant knowledge for follow-up projects and programmes. Finally, they argue that the 'methodological openness' of the model allows for flexibility and experimentation in the data collection process. As she explained, taking account that the projects and programmes of the Goethe-Institut are very diverse, only a flexible approach would allow raising the relevant questions and finding the appropriate methods that would fit each one of them.

(vi) Challenges in the evaluation

An unstable socio-political setting

The main challenge identified by the evaluator was related to the unstable socio-political setting. During the interview, Anke explained that due to this setting, during the evolution of the programme it became even more complicated to operate in the region. It therefore became evident that a main question that the network had to respond to is how a cross-cultural network can actually support people in difficult and unstable contexts and how to strengthen those who do not have an institutional background, who operate in the independent scene or even are threatened for their work in some of the countries included in the programme. Reflecting on the context in which the evaluation took place, Anke recalls:

> *"The whole framework of this Transformation Partnership was the democratic transformation in the Arab region. We started with high hopes and optimism but within the course of events all this optimism was actually turned down, or reversed due to what happened in the countries, the political instability, the wars, the conflicts. So that was the year when we started the evaluation that you couldn't really talk about a success story because of the events that took place. So the whole story was actually what in this very difficult context could the CIN do and how did it evolve. Because the Goethe Institut was very keen to making it a participatory programme not only to label it so but to involve young people in the process of the programme. This was experimental for the Goethe Institut because from one side it was giving up to some sort of control to the people who were engaged in the project. They knew it was necessary in order to make it a sustainable and long-lasting programme. If you do it top down, the funders stop giving money and the programme dies. To prevent this, they knew they had to engage people to make it their programme and give up some ownership. It shouldn't be labeled as a Goethe Institut programme but as the CIN."*

Building trust between evaluator and participants in a very short time

As also seen in the previous case study, another challenge for the evaluator was related to the need to establish a certain level of trust with the people around the evaluation is tackling, both participants, organisers and stakeholders. Anke explained:

> *"It was a lot about trust, how to establish trust in a cross-national network with people that are used to work in very unstable contexts and are not used to trust any institutes. This was one of the challenges."*

This means that the evaluators had to be well documented and prepared. However, as Anke explained:

> *"We didn't have so much time. We were supposed to be present at one of their meetings and it was one or two weeks after we were assigned the evaluation."*

She also explained how they went about with this challenge:

> *"[the] first thing that we did was talking to one of the coordinators of the programme because he knew a lot about the structure, the key informants. We didn't have a lot of time to deal with background information, we jumped right into the middle of things."*

5.5.5 The human factor in evaluation

(a) From an evaluator's point of view

When I asked Anke how did she become involved in evaluation, she said that after she finished her Masters in Anthropology she started working in EDUCULT and since they needed to enhance their clients list, they offered evaluation-consulting services. *"I did not have the plan to become an evaluator, but there was a need for people who are more from the cultural field rather than from general consulting agencies that do not have specific interest in the arts and culture sector"*, she explained.

Anke described the attitude of the evaluator in the CIN process as "exploratory" (Lierheimer and Schad, 2017), as taking the role of a critical friend with a lot of interest to learn from other people working in different areas and to help them think and find solutions. In the same time, she explained that "willingness to learn" is in general a very important attitude for an evaluator. When asked about the skills for an evaluator she said the following:

> *"You need to have a certain openness and curiosity about their stories when you encounter people and also to learn about evaluation methods- which is a craft to me.* [...] [An evaluator] *should actually work between different stakeholders. Because you need to understand the cultural networks artists, their aims and ambitions and then you have to understand some perspective on the more structural level, the political parts of*

> *programmes and to switch between these two worlds, and for an evaluator it is very important if you manage to do this. You have to translate between the different stakeholders and their different interests to make a more 'round' evaluation."*

In relation to how the Goethe Institut approached the topic of evaluation, she commented that they usually have a rather clear idea about what they want and sometimes they even propose the methods. So what you get as an external evaluator from the Goethe Institut is a pretty clear structure on how evaluation should be tackled. She said that this is also the result of having a specific department inside the institution working on the topic of evaluation.

(b) From a commissioner's point of view

The Goethe Institut is one of the few foreign cultural institutes that have an Evaluation department and I was interested to find out the profile of the person responsible for evaluation and the role of the department and how they work. Tina Lierheimer studied Phycology and Education and got interested in the field of evaluation when she started evaluating educational programmes already during her university years. She explained that although the Goethe Institut is one of the few foreign cultural bodies that have an evaluation department, it is still quite a small team. "*It is me and half a colleague",* she explained. She also told me that for her the *Kultur wirkt/ Culture works* project was also an attempt to make evaluation interesting to her colleagues in the Culture department. In her own words:

> *"We really wanted to be in contact and talk with our cultural department about how they think, what is necessary for them, to have a good discussion within the institution that would help to do inter-institutional development while reflecting in this process."*

Tina Lierheimer also said that by initiating the *Kultur wirkt/ Culture works* project, they wanted to have a closer look to what is relevant within the needs of the Goethe Institute offices abroad, the context of the programmes and how everything fits in their strategy goals. Although the CIN evaluation took place in the framework of the overall *Kultur wirkt/ Culture works* exercise, Enzio Wetzel from his side, commented that in fact the evaluation of CIN helped them mainly to build the argumentation for the prolongation of the money flow and to have the arguments to convince the Foreign Office to finance CIN for a third year.

(iii) From a participant point of view

From the first moment I met Lazaros for our interview, he was passionate when talking about the impact of CIN in his life. Using his own words, he said that CIN was "soul

blowing" and that it opened his horizons 360 degrees. What he considered to be the most outstanding point of the network is that:

> *"It's all about cultural experimentation. It gives you the room to fail. And unless you fail you can't talk about cultural innovation* […] *and this is something that* [my colleagues] *in the Arab countries did not have: the right to fail".*

The same enthusiasm was reflected in Hannen's words:

> *"When you hear my CIN story and how CIN empowered me and improved my professional path is perhaps different than when you listen to another one who when they entered CIN were already cultural managers in their countries. So the effect on that person is totally different than on me so I cannot speak generally. But I can say personally that CIN has a great impact on me improving, growing,* [for my] *empowerment and giving* [me] *a space in this word to collaborate and make this world a better place."*

Although they might not seem representative of the whole CIN group, the two people interviewed were very satisfied with the evaluation and how it was conducted. Haneen recalls being interviewed at some point from the evaluators and was very keen in sharing her own experiences from her involvement with the network. She said "*the questions were super general, they wanted to measure the impact of CIN on me".*

Lazaros on the other hand, explained to me how useful the evaluation report was for him when he took over his responsibilities in the CIN Steering Committee. Before me asking him, he made a reference to the external evaluation of the network. He explained that when he was elected as member of the Steering Committee he asked from his predecessors and from the Goethe Institut staff to send him all the available documentation. One of the documents he received was the EDUCULT evaluation report. Referring to the recommendations in the report, Lazaros said: *"When I read the report I realised things that if someone could apply them to CIN from the beginning, it would function in a perfect way".* Also referring to the use of the ANT theory to structure the report he said "*it helped me realise the correlations and the behaviours".*

5.5.6 Further points of interest

5.5.6.1 Note on the internal evaluation processes

Although I will not make a detailed analysis on the internal mechanisms that the CIN is currently experimenting to evaluate its impact, I consider that it is worth mentioning that Lazaros explained to me how they are dealing with it within the Steering Group and the rest of the network. Currently they are in a process of gathering information about the

members of the network through an online questionnaire where they ask information from the participants regarding their current professional or academic status, their involvement in CIN projects or other structures, their motivations for being part of the network and what would they like to get out of it. He explained that the primary motive behind this is not to produce a report for accountability reasons, but for advocacy[115]:

> *"If you want to attract funds, bring in new members, make new projects… you need a nice story to tell. We have a core of information that needs 'translation' regarding what we want to achieve and whom to address".*

Haneen also explained this in her own words:

> *"Each project has its success story. We rely on the projects that run in the EuroMENA region and some of them have very successful stories, like Dome project and many others… Now we start thinking how we can share the experiences of the CIN on the members to the external world. So now we are preparing a document that can describe everything about the network and we can go to our donors and say that this is what we are doing now, this is our success story and this is how you can support us. It is still in progress. It's an impact report."*

5.5.6.2 Investing on people- the soft side of diplomacy

The interview with Enzio Wetzel developed into a conversation around the added value of programmes such as the CIN for the organising institution. Enzio noted that investing into young people is today even more important and can bring change. *"It will be after all also good for Germany, or for the German foreign office if we invest into young people who after all turn out to be important, maybe even decision-makers in their country",* he said. He also explained that investing on culture in foreign relations is a long-term investment that cannot be compared with development aid interventions that have clear outcomes and results. He added that through international cultural cooperation programmes *"we invest into relations and if we have a carefully done selection process, the investment into these people will be rewarding".*

A question that arose while investigating into this case study is why Germany is investing so much in democratic processes in the Arab region. Wetzel explained at this respect that we "*are still in the post-colonial phase and therefore the Goethe Institute is still somehow in its own post-colonial reflections wishing to find out how to support young artists and young innovators without being too paternalistic".* Avoiding to take a political position, he also noted that there is traditional friendship between Arab countries and Germany since the last century and given the recent migration explosion, it is interesting for the German

[115] The questionnaire starts with the sentence: "Let's start with knowing each other better and presenting us to the outside world".

state to establish a channel of communication with young people from the Arab countries which one day might also be among the ones that seek in Germany a better future. He underlined however that this support is not something recent but that already since 09/11 the German Foreign Office had invested funds for the *Dialogue with Islam* initiative in an effort to work again terrorism.

5.5.7 Take away points

CIN is an example of a EuroArab cultural cooperation programme with a special governance model. As Schad explained:

> *"On the background you have the Goethe Institut with very established, German interests involved* […] *but in the same time it had to be an open space in order to allow to the network to work. You cannot impose on people but you need to have a sort of collaboration."*

The ANT was considered by both the evaluator and the commissioning body as an adequate approach for evaluating the CIN because seeing through the lenses of ANT leaves space for uncertainties and unexpected twists or breaks in the course of events. Schad explained that:

> *"In this way, the theory makes room for the unexpected, for new turns and discontinuities and is particularly suitable for the evaluation of cultural projects in societies undergoing change."*

A drawback for using such a theory - based approach to evaluation could be that it requires a lot of conceptual understanding and background reading and the capacity to translate between concepts and real life events and dynamics.

What makes this case study unique though is that it demonstrates how a foreign cultural institute approaches the issue of evaluation and how through a meta-analysis of single evaluation cases tries to create a model for its whole activity. Although there seems to be quite some room for improvement, this attempt demonstrates that the evaluation and impact of international cultural cooperation programmes starts gaining special attention and that it becomes a subject of inquiry. The fact that the results of this study were made public offers a starting point in the discussions. This case study complements the observations made by Andre Murray, Director of EUNIC Global, who explained- in the framework of the previous case study- that EUNIC is currently trying to work on an approach to measuring the impact of foreign cultural institutes work abroad.

5.6 Case study 3: Cimetta Fund's mobility grants programme

"We always come back to mobility. It's the magic world of cultural co-operation[116]*"*

Odile Chenal

5.6.1 Presentation of the case study and data collection process

In autumn 2012, I had the opportunity to collaborate closely with the Roberto Cimetta Fund (RCF) in the framework of my PhD research by spending a month in Paris, at the headquarters of the organisation in the framework of an internship with the purpose to work as a researcher in the organisation's effort to gather evidence related to the impact of the mobility grants on ex-grantees. Furthermore, at the end of November 2012, I participated with the support of a STEP beyond mobility grant of the European Cultural Foundation at the Medarat- Platform for exchange meeting organised by RCF and other partners in Beirut (21 and 22 of November 2012), where the results of this RCF research were presented.

As already mentioned in (4.4), the RCF is an international association supporting artistic exchange and professional mobility, especially with a focus on the EuroArab region. More precisely, RCF operates as intermediary re-granting organisation acting between funding institutions and individual artists and cultural operators or those working between Europe and the Arab worlds.

The case study mainly refers to two RCF efforts to demonstrate the impact of it work. The first one was the one undertaken in 2012 in which I was involved. In this case study, the context in which the survey took place and where it was presented, who contributed to it and what were the elements that were considered as 'indicators' of impact are explained. The second attempt examined is an effort undertaken by RCF to document the impact of mobility regarding one of their funding lines supported by the Conseil Général des Bouches-du-Rhône (Cimetta Fund, 2013).

Besides my personal involvement in this exercise, this case study is based on:

- Information from the first report trying to measure the impact of the mobility fund (Cimetta Fund, 2012a);
- The report for the Conseil Général des Bouches-du-Rhône (Cimetta Fund, 2013);

[116] Odile Chenal, European Cultural Foundation in Neisse, J. (2007). Made in the Med.

- An interview undertaken with Angie Cotte, Secretary General of RCF (via skype) in October 2016;
- An interview undertaken with Ferdinand Richard, President of RCF in December 2016 in Marseilles;
- Reports of grantees from the period 2014-2016 kindly shared with me by Angie Cotte;
- Two interviews with ex-grantees, namely, Mohamd El Baaly from Egypt that was interviewed on skype in October 2016 and Eduardo Cassina from Spain interviewed in Athens in November 2016.

5.6.2 Background information on the case study

Roberto Cimetta Fund was officially established as an independent entity in 1997 dedicated to the Mediterranean and has been fully active since 2000. Since then, it has been building partnerships with foundations, ministries, local authorities and European Capitals of Culture and has established a mobility grant programme for individuals, which contributes to the travel and visa costs necessary for participation in a professional cultural network meeting, workshop, artists' residency, festival, seminar, etc.

The Cimetta Fund has also an advocacy mission steaming from the recognition that there is an unequal cultural exchange between the North and the South and this is also due to the disparity in the conditions of circulation of artists and cultural operations. Considered as a major political issue at the heart of cultural mobility, the flows/ direction of mobility has been a central question in the work of the organisation. As stated by Odile Chenal in a RCF publication (Neisse, 2007: 5), "the question is particularly delicate in the perspective of Euro-Mediterranean exchange where North-South mobility is asymmetrical, and timid in comparison with South-North mobility which is even more difficult".

While in its early years of work, the RCF had a focus on Europe and the Mediterranean, the scope was enlarged and today it focuses on the EuroArab region in general, expanding until the Gulf countries and including Arab diaspora (see reference in 4.2.1.3). In some exceptional cases, mobility grants to other parts of the world have also been given based on the potential for the development of the participant, the project or the community involved.

5.6.3 The evaluation in context

At this point, a distinction needs to be made between the ongoing data gathered by Cimetta Fund for each mobility ground and the overall effort to measure the impact they initiated in 2012. I consider that it is valuable to look first on how each round of grantees is organised and how the selection takes place as well as on how the experiences are reported before entering into the discussion of the more coordinated evaluation exercises that RCF undertook.

The process for applying and being granted a grant can be considered straight –forward: interested applicants fill out an application form following the open calls launched by the Fund. A selection committee formed by a pool of experts identified by RCF coming from different countries and representing different disciplines takes the responsibility of reviewing the applications and assessing them. The criteria on which this assessment is based are: a) the quality of the artistic/ cultural-related initiative and b) the potential local impact of the travel grant when the artist and/ or cultural operator returns to his or her home country.

After the end of each funded trip, the beneficiary needs to send a report based on a standard template. Besides factual data (data of departure/ return, from which city to which city, etc) the report is structured on a number of questions. For the purpose of this research, for each question a thematic category has been assigned which summarises which aspects of the international mobility experience are 'valued'. Some questions require a fact-based answer, while others are opinion-based. The summary of the questions is reflected in Table 5.13.

Table 5.13 Questions and themes from grant reporting questionnaire

Question	Type of question and themes tackled
1. How did this grant contribute to the realization of your project in regard to artistic exchange, local cultural development and/or the promotion of cultural diversity?	Type: fact based/ concrete experience Contribution of mobility on: a) project and artistic exchange b) local cultural development c) promotion of cultural diversity
2. Please indicate the name of the organisations/individuals you have met and any collaborative project that is foreseen.	Type: fact- based / concrete experience Networking opportunities/ Partnership potential
3. How does exchange, networking and international contacts contribute to the development of your artistic and cultural project?	Type: opinion- based/ general practice Impact of cultural exchange and

	international networking to artistic and cultural projects
4. In your opinion, which elements should be taken into account in relation to the specific need of your artistic field in your country when implementing your euro-arab project and/or upholding project?	Type: both fact and opinion based Needs for international cultural cooperation in the EuroArab region
5. What kind of assistance or funding have you been able to receive to set up your project in your home country or abroad?	Type: fact- based Additional sources of funding
6. Have you met any difficulties in the realisation of your project? If yes, please explain briefly (in obtaining travel permit, political and social context, linguistic barriers...).	Type: fact based Challenges in mobility Challenges in project implementation
7. Do you speak the language of the country you stayed in? If not, what language did you use to communicate? Do you have any comments or recommendations to make on the issue of language and communication skills or difficulties within the context of artistic and cultural cooperation?	Type: both fact and opinion based Language barriers in mobility Recommendations
8. Do you agree that mobility has lead to increasing your competences and skills? If so, could you explain briefly the vital or artistic learning that your mobile experience has lead to (intercultural competences, flexibility, sense of initiative, funding, new techniques, artistic creativity…)	Type: opinion based Contribution of mobility to skills and competences development
9. Could you briefly explain if this mobile experience has lead to difficulties (Were you unprepared to face the new political/economic/cultural contexts?)	Type: opinion based Challenges to mobility
10. Could you briefly explain how you find the information that you require for your journey and stay in a foreign country (resources on official documents required for travel and short or long term stay in a foreign country)?	Type: fact based Logistical information prior to travel

Source: Elaborated by the researcher based on the RCF reporting questionnaire sent to the grant recipients.

One could say that the above questions could apply to whatever travel grant Fund or Foundation and are not specific for mobility in the EuroArab context. There are however some nuances related to the challenges of cultural cooperation, cultural

misunderstandings, mobility and free movement that imply specific challenges encountered in the EuroArab context. The replies to these questions constitute the basis on which the Fund bases its internal evaluation and its annual reporting regarding its funding schemes.

5.6.4 The evaluation practice

(i) Purpose and focus

Although not specifically formulated as such, the publication *Made in the Med* (Neisse, 2007a) supported by RCF provided some first data that can be considered as a first attempt to 'measure' the impact of the RCF mobility grant and communicate them to the wider public in the form of statistics[117]. More recently however, two efforts that resulted in published and publicly available reports can be considered as a more coordinated approach to measure the impact of the mobility grant. For the purpose of this research, the focus will be mainly on the first one undertaken in 2012, however reference will be made to the second one since it was particularly undertaken for accountability reasons towards the funding body.

The first one was conducted in autumn 2012, when RCF wanted to investigate into the impact of the grant on all its grantees so far in an attempt to answer how the mobility grant impacts the professional and personal life of the grantees. This exercise aimed to gather evidence around the following questions: How much impact do grantees believe that the mobility grant had on them? At which levels? What happens after the end of the mobility grant? What happens at the local and at the community level upon return?

A second effort that RCF has made in this respect was in 2013 when they focused on gathering and analysing evidence that would contribute to measuring the impact of the grant of the General Council of Bouches-du-Rhône funding line that had supported a number of mobility grants through RCF (Cimetta Fund, 2013). The primary aim of the survey and the report was to provide to the funding organisation, the General Council of Bouches-du-Rhône, evidence for their investment.

[117] More precisely, the publication provided some info regarding number of travel bursaries awarded since 2000 to artists and professionals of the contemporary and visual arts, place of origin (specifying that half of the grantees came from the south Mediterranean) and grants allocated per artistic sector in 2006.

(ii) Evidence collection

For the first attempt, a questionnaire was drafted by RCF with the support of Inga Farina Petzhold from the University of Hildesheim (Germany) and my feedback as I was collaborating at that time as a research intern. A total number of 111 responses were received, out of which 108 valid ones that formed the body on which the results were put together in a form of a report. The questionnaire itself can be found in Annex 13. The questions that were included in the survey and are specifically related to the subject of this research are the ones that make reference to impact and follow-up. Moreover, the ones related to motivation give us some guidance related to the value of such grants for the beneficiaries. In both sections, multiple answers were allowed. The possible outcomes of the mobility grant were pre-defined by RCF are included in Table 5.14:

When it comes to the second effort, the report was based on a new questionnaire that was sent to ex-grantees, this time that had benefited from the specific General Council of Bouches-du-Rhône budget line. The report includes on a first instance a few numerical facts (presented by RCF as 'statistical data') regarding the number of grantees for three consecutive years, number of eligible applications, city of origin and city of destination, percentages per aims of the travel, the discipline, and the average amount of the grant. On a second level, the report contains the results of a survey sent to 60 grantees from which 32 valid ones were received. Among the questions of the questionnaire, some were kept from the previous questionnaire and some new were added. Besides the factual info, the results are structured around the following topics:

Table 5.14 Possible outcomes of a mobility grant

- publications - exhibitions - awards - press coverage - selling of artwork - project implementation - lectureship - follow up project - another mobility grant - rise in the recognition as an artist - better integration into your cultural field - none - other (please specify)

Source: adapted by researcher from RCF questionnaire addressed to ex-grantees of mobility scheme in 2012

Table 5.15 Aspects analysed in report to General Council of Bouches-du-Rhône

- Reasons for traveling - The hosting structure - Impact of the grant - Networking - Links established between the cities and the regions of cooperation of the General Council of Bouches-du-Rhône - Change in perception on grantees departing city and on the way they can contribute to local development - Opinions on the support to artistic and cultural mobility

Source: Developed by researcher based on Cimetta Fund (2013).

(iii) Analysis of evidence

The results of the first questionnaire were analysed by Angie Cotte and myself in the framework of my research period spent at the headquarters of RCF. The results of the second questionnaire were analysed again by Angie Cotte in cooperation with a grantee that was working for RCF at that time. The approach undertaken in both cases was primarily quantitative. Both reports are filled with numbers in terms of the profile of the grantees and their opinions on the different aspects are quantified as well.

This was something that was raised with Angie Cotte during our interview. Angie commented regarding the utility of the 2013 report to the General Council of Bouches-du-Rhône that the person responsible for the funding told her that what he remembered mostly was that it concerned 125 artists. And she added in this respect:

> *"So you know, it is figures that stay at their heads and because they need these figures, we do our best to provide them. But I know that if we want to argue for mobility this is not enough. We need to have a qualitative approach because it is quite a difficult thing to understand."*

(iv) Learning from the evaluation [118]

As explained in the report (RCF, 2012: 2) the results of this basic impact assessment did not pretend to be a holistic evaluation, neither to represent the opinions of all grantees. The report claims to contribute to providing some "food for reflection" and "some conclusions, which are open to revision" while this being "just the first stop of a 'work in progress' in which RCF is engaging" (RCF, 2012a: 2). Three elements are important to reflect upon from the results of the evaluation. The first one is related to the reasons for travelling (motivations), the second one is related to the impact of the mobility grant

[118] For the purposes of this research, we will make reference to the first evaluation, which was conducted in 2012. Although as a researcher I was involved in the process and have made the summary of the final report, there is no ethics issue here since the results are publicly available online.

upon return and the third one to the contacts/ networking enabled after the mobility grant.

In regards to the first one, the main reasons for travelling were identified in the following five categories (reflected in Table 5.16) and the respondents had the possibility to give more than one answers to this question

Table 5.16: Motivations for mobility

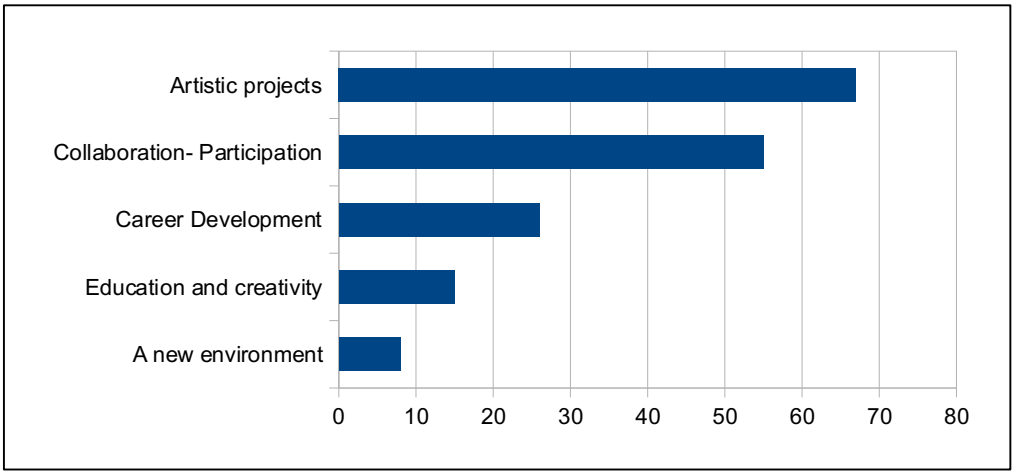
Artistic projects: to collaborate with other artists on a new art project, to realise site-specific projects, to look for future production in the region, to use specific technical tools, facilities and resources.
Collaboration / participation: exchange with local artists, exchange with international residency artists, to give lectures and workshops, to work with the public.
Further your career: to expand your network of peers, to get in contact with professionals that can enhance your career and outlets, to get to know the professional circuits of a different country, to use the grant as recognition.
Education and creativity: to learn specific skills and tools to get critical feedback from other peers or professionals to learn about another country and culture to be in a different environment with new impulses and inspiration
A new environment: to provide me with inspiration, to get away from daily worries in my home region, to work in a more promising environment for economic reasons.

Source: Developed by researcher based on Cimetta Fund (2012a)

The order of importance that came as a result of the answers is reflected in the chart below and shows that the primary motivation lies in the artistic projects themselves, followed by a desire to collaborate with peers from the region and participate in different activities in relation to one's own work.

When it comes to the impact of the travel grant, 57,5% of the respondents replied that they realised the impact their grant had on them either during or right after their travel, 30,5% of them said that they realised it one to six months after their travel (medium term) and 12% of the more than six months after the grant (long term). Concretely, the impact that the grant has had on the grantees is reflected in the following chart. Respondents had the opportunity to give multiple answers.

Figure 5.4: Results regarding motivations for travelling



Source: Developed by research in the framework of the Cimetta Fund (2012a) report.

The third element of focus was related to the contacts/ networking facilitated by the mobility grant. 96% of the respondents are still in touch with their host from their RCF grant, 33% of them for networking reasons, 31% of them for project implementation or evaluation and 16% of them for friendship reasons.

Figure 5.5: Impact of a mobility grant

Source: Developed by research in the framework of the Cimetta Fund (2012a) report.

The most common means of communication is the email and social networks (such as Facebook), but also a meeting opportunity in another country, a new travelling opportunity in the same country, a friendship visit, skype, telephone and lastly normal mail. 67% of the respondents have returned or have concrete plans to return to the hosting country for professional reasons. The three main reasons for return have been

the implementation of the project they had initiated, the follow up of the project and networking reasons. A small number of them returned for a new project and some of them only for friendship reasons.

Since 2014, and as a result of the reflection deriving from the evaluation practice, RCF established a complementary grant system with the support of the French Ministry of Culture and Communication. Tamteem, as already mentioned in (4.4) is sustaining support grants for venues, platforms and networks in the Arab geographical zone. *"We realised that mobility alone does not make sense",* told me Ferdinand Richard, President of RCF, and explained that with the establishment of this support grant, they give the opportunity to structures in the Arab geographical zone to improve, for example, their electricity or to buy a dance floor. Investing on structural support gives the possibility to organisations and structures to grow and to stop disappearing. This according to Richard is a sine-qua-non condition if you want to establish an 'equal exchange', because, as he said:

> "[…] *today the exchange is unequal. We have the people from the North that have the ideas and the people of the South that try to follow. While in reality, the people from the South have the same competences as the people of the North. But what they don't have are the structures to support their projects."*

(v) Communicating the evaluation findings

The results of the first evaluation attempt were presented by the Secretary General at the Madarat Platform of exchange that took place in Beirut from the 20th to the 21st of November 2012. The results have also been publically online in a form of an executive summary of the findings (Cimetta Fund, 2012a). However, the commitment made that the study will be continued in order to provide data and findings on how mobility can impact local development in the host or departing countries has been left until today unfulfilled.

In the second case, the report was mainly addressed to the funding organisation. Given however that is provided substantial arguments for supporting mobility, the results were also available on line.

(vi) Challenges in the evaluation

Establishing a monitoring system beyond ad hoc evaluations

When I interviewed Ferdinand Richard our conversation started like this:

> *"What is important for us is to have means for monitoring. The paradox in the framework of a mobility grant is that what is interesting for us is what happens when [the grantee is] back. We are not a travel agency. What interests us is how the grantees share the benefits of their travel with their community- whichever this is, geographical, ethnic or artistic."*[119]

What Richard is highlighting here is the most evident challenge related to measuring the impact of a mobility grant. The results of the survey undertook in 2013 show that 53% of the respondents mentioned that they realised the impact of their mobility grant right after their trip, which means at short term. However, 32% amongst them replied that they realised it within a period of 6 months after their trip (medium term) and 15% in a period beyond 6 months (long-term) (Cimetta Fund, 2013).

When talking with one of the grantees interviewed, Mohamd El Baaly from Cairo that had received a mobility grant to attend the Comics Festival in Angoulême, he said in this respect:

> *"Normally the first impact is an exchange experience. When I travelled I saw many people, I had some connections, I updated some old connections, I caught up with old friends, I saw how they organise the festival. I gained a lot of experience and contacts but this is the very first thing. If you want to invite someone* [to Cairo] *and to start a cooperation, it takes months, sometimes it takes more than a year. There was an author from Finland I knew his work before travelling to France, I met him at the Festival in France and he will come to Cairo this December* [at our Festival*]. So sometimes it really takes a long time. Now we publish his book in Arabic and he will come to Cairo to launch the book and join our Festival."*

The above confirms that the results of a mobility grant are to be grasped on the long-term. Sometimes grantees themselves might not realise and make the connection that a specific grant or opportunity brought them to the next stage. Such an exercise would require a rigorous impacts assessment and tracking the trajectories of people over time.

Quantitative vs qualitative

As it was shown, the approach undertaken in this case study was mainly quantitative. Evidence was gathered via a questionnaire, and besides a small number of open questions (and few answers received), the focus has been to gather numerical facts regarding the grants programme. Angie Cotte, however, admitted that this approach is

[119] Translated from French by myself. Original text: *"Ce qui est important pour nous c'est d'avoir des moyens de monitoring. Le paradoxe dans l'aide à la mobilite c'est ce qui se passe au retour. Nous sommes pas une agence de voyage. Ce que nous interesse c'est comment les boursiers partagent les benefices de son voyage avec sa communauté- quelle que soit, geograhique , ethnique artistique".*

not enough but it is a choice because of the limited time and resources and dictated by the fact that funders are interested in numbers. In this respect she said:

> *"If we want to argue for mobility we need to have a qualitative approach because it is quite difficult thing to understand, although I think we are pioneers in this topic somehow because if you think about how things are moving around the world and how globalisation is affecting our lives, the question of mobility, forced mobility through migration will be more and more recurrent. So any kind of decision-making or foundations will have to get into the discussion about mobility. It is not only the idea of sharing and meeting, but it is the crucial question of understanding. Because if people are mingling so much and moving around between countries, mobility has to be understood. And qualitative evaluation is needed for that."*

5.6.5 The human factor in evaluation

(i) From a 'commissioner's' and 'evaluator's' point of view

The word 'commissioner' is put here in brackets exactly because this case study has only an internal evaluation component, so the RCF is both the 'commissioner' and the 'evaluator' since they are involved in the data collection and analysis as well.

What is worthwhile mentioning here is what Angie Cotte commented in relation to the documentation they receive from the individual reports after the end of each mobility grant. It should be reminded at this point that the replies to these questions constitute the basis on which the Fund bases its annual reporting regarding its funding schemes. She commented on this as follows:

> "*Reporting on their mobility experiences is quite a challenge. I can tell that they are not confident in doing this reporting. There are only 1 or 2 that are really really good at it and all the other it's not very well done. They don't understand a lot of the questions related to how to evaluate the visibility of the project, the impact of the project, they just don't evaluate that. So it is difficult to get the information from them. And it is almost like we are teaching them to do this because they don't have the idea how to do it and also sometimes it is very difficult for them to argument what are the benefits for them as far as their own mobility is concerned and their own cultural values, economy, environment and what is the benefit of what they are doing to their community. You always get the impression that they are thinking about how the funding benefits us than them as a community."*

Cotte went on giving an example of an artist from Tunisia:

> *"I realised this was not his thing; writing documents and stuff. But I went to see him in Tunis when he finished his project and I talked with him, I interviewed him in a way. And what he said was fantastic. I wish I had a recorder with me. Because that would have been perfect. Everything that he said, if it would have been written down, it would have been a perfect report."*

When it comes to collecting evidence and communicating the results, Angie Cotte, Secretary General of the Cimetta Fund said:

> *"There are so many missed opportunities and so many good things going on and ways to put people together, but I feel because there are not enough resources, there is not enough funding so this doesn't happen. If I had more funding to do evaluations and to communicate these evaluations, I could send them to local authorities, to ministries, to the Anna Lindh Foundation, to all kinds of people and I am sure that we could raise awareness about the needs, statistics, the data, I am sure it could have a greater impact. I know it is really important and I know that the data is missing a lot."*

Her words go in line with what was raised in chapter (3) as one of the main challenges when it comes to evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes: the question of financial and human resources. She recognises, however, that such documentation would be extremely valuable towards their advocacy work and in the search of further funding.

A relevant comment was made from Ferdinand Richard on evaluation specifically in regards to the EuroArab region.

> *"For me, before speaking about evaluation, we should first have a more stabilised cultural sector in the South so that we can see the duration of what and who works well, who works less well, who has the structural development effect, etc. For the moment we cannot see this. So the question is that we cannot do any monitoring on things that move all the time. We can do some monitoring on a structure that exists already for five years, to see if it has progressed, if it has not progressed and why, how they have multiplied their partners network[120]".*

The point made here by Richard reminds us the observation made regarding the cultural sector in the Arab countries in (4.3.1.5). There it was noted that cultural organisations are operating on moving sand and that the structural environment is not supporting their sustainability. The focus here regarding this challenge is related to the principle that the RCF has in regards to the impact that mobility has on local cultural development. Angie Cotte said in this respect:

> *"When we tell them the mobility grant has to be related to local development. We don't just fund your travel to go somewhere, there has to be a return benefit to the local community and that sometimes they hear it for the first time."*

[120] Translated from French by myself. Original text: "*Alors pour moi avant de parler d'évaluation il faudrait déjà qu'on ai un paysage culturel au Sud plus stabilié pour qu'on puisse voir sur la durée qui travaille bien, qui travaille moins bien, qui a des effets structuraux de development etc. Pour le moment on peut pas le voir. Donc, la question c'est qu' on peut pas faire un monitoring sur des choses qui bougent tout le temps. On peut faire un monitoring sur une structure qui est là depuis 5 ans, pour voir si elle a progresée, si elle n'a pas progresée et pourquoi, comment a augmenté son réseaux de partenaires".*

(ii) From a beneficiary point of view

Through the 2012 questionnaire grantees were asked to share their opinion regarding the most valuable aspects of travelling in the EuroArab/ EuroMediterranean regions. The answers of some of the respondents are captured in Table 5.17 and are significant of the appeal and the attraction that the region induces and the level of interest in inter-cultural dialogue and cooperation that was revealed as well by the *Report on Intercultural Trends and Social Change in the EuroMediterranean Region* (Anna Lindh Foundation, 2014).

The views expressed by the two grantees that were interviewed in the framework of this research cannot be considered representative of the whole sample of RCF grantees. They do however shed some light regarding how the reporting and evaluation practice within RCF are perceived from the point of view of the beneficiaries. First of all, grantees feel that they are evaluated already from the first selection process they go through after submitting their application. This process however was well perceived by one of the grantees interviewed, Eduardo Cassina who said that he found very fair that:

> *"They were not evaluating my work but my objectives, not my CV but my desire*[121]*."*

Cassina reflected on the process of reporting and commented that the impact and experience of a mobility grant is so wide that filling it in a few words is not enough and perhaps not even the most appropriate way. For example, he suggests that alternative ways of gathering evidence could be:

> *"Write on an A4 paper the most important conversation you had during the trip. Or write in one tweet an idea that crossed your mind these days. Something very short, very precise. Travel diaries- which is what is mostly asked from report- are unnecessary*[122]*".*

Cassina also underlined the importance of respecting the fact that there is a report to fill since it is the only way that the funding organisation can found out what has been the outcome of the mobility grant. He said:

> *"Every time we finalise a grant, we write the report with a lot of energy because it is polite. You need to put the effort, because they have trusted you and you have to make their life easier".*

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[121] Translated from Spanish by myself. Original text: *"No evaluaban mi trabajo pero mi objetivo, no mi trabajo pero mis ganas."*

[122] Translated from Spanish by myself. Original text: "*Escibe en una hoja A4 la major conversación que has tenido en el evento. O escribe en un tweet una idea que te ha surgido estos días. Una cosa muy corta, muy precisa. Los diarios de viaje, que son la mayoria de los reports, son inecesarios."*

Mohamd commented upon the timing of the reports. He echoed the issue raised again in chapter (3) from the ENCATC WG participants that when a project is concluded and the report is submitted, one cannot foresee what the impact will be in a couple of months, or even years later. The example of Mohamd highlights this aspect:

> *"We brought to Cairo a Swiss artist from the French speaking area of Switzerland, Barbara Mauli. I met her in Angoulême, her and her publisher. It takes some time before we find a way to bring her to Cairo. In that time when I wrote the report it was not that concrete."*

Finally, when Mohamd was asked on the impact of the grant he identified the three levels where the grant has been beneficial:

> *"I learnt a lot of things, I hope I can have some things and use them in my Festival but the scene is different. The comics scene in France is much much bigger and we are still in a growing context. On the personal level it was very interesting and impressive. For my organisation level it is really about opening horizons. On my community level it is important to bring experience and people to my community".*

To add to the experiences shared by the two interviewees, it was considered to include here some of the quotations that ex-grantees used in describe the impact of the mobility grant of them and especially on the value of mobility in the region.

5.6.6 Further points of interest

As mentioned before, in designing the questionnaire that was sent to the ex-grantees in 2012, the RCF collaborated with a researcher from the University of Hildesheim, and myself, a PhD student at the University of Deusto. When I interviewed Cotte and asked her particularly on this experience, she mentioned that:

> *"Universities are of tremendous help to enable us to have a more structured, academic approach. When you are working on a something and you need to have a more immediate, advocacy reaction, you build your arguments so that you try to get funded* […]. *But when you have someone from the University, you can approach the subject from a different angle and I find it very enriching. I would really enjoy working more with Universities".*

The need to build bridges with the academic community to develop approaches for data collection regarding mobility is also reflected in the RCF's Action Plan adopted on the 6th of May 2011 in Paris (Cimetta Fund, 2011) where it is stated that:

> "[…] artistic and institutional actors of cultural cooperation should collaborate with study and research centres to provide cultural data on actions, facilities and policies related to culture throughout the region to evaluate qualitatively and quantitatively the long term multilateral projects that are emerging".

Table 5.17: Valuable aspects of mobility in the EuroArab/ EuroMed region

"What are the most valuable aspects of travelling in the EuroArab/ EuroMediterranean region?"
"The region is so culturally appealing and we do not know enough about one another"
"To go beyond that European naval-gazing"
"Presenting non superficial, complex and artistic representations of the Orient to the west"
"Breaking down prejudiced ideas and being able to go back and tell about the experience"
"Learn/adapt to a different culture, explore and share new stories and point social, environmental or political aspects that can help or make a difference"
"For the work to be seen by different people and interact in person living some time out of your own town and crowd it gives you anther inner view about what to do and opens doors for more projects to come. Just the lack of money makes things go slower"
"Create better opportunities for intercultural dialogue highlighting the role of diversity and human dynamics for the peoples of the region"
"Occasion to familiarise oneself with the art scenes of different countries, especially the independent spaces that might not be part of the international institutional network, opportunities to visit artists' studios and learn more about their practices in a direct encounter, open up possibilities for unbureaucratic, direct collaboration with small art spaces and artists outside the institutionalized infrastructure"
"The sea, its a major source of inspiration to anyone living in this region"
"To go over the taboos of the general public opinion about Arab cultures"
"Reinforcing common cultural roots in the region"
"Opening of a wide landscape (intellectual, artistic, human)"
"The understanding of what artistic concerns can be carried through different contexts and what habits remain locked in local discourse"
"Exchange between artists and identities that are close together; artistic dialogue directed to social change; self-education and solidification of artistic identity"
"Understanding of the complexities of the region"
"It allows exchanges about different ways of thinking and approaching artistic work, the cultural exchange creates a great, strong energy and motivation for doing artistic work!"
"Establishing a network of fellow artists for support and nurture"
"Reaching different publics with different interests"
"Allows us to function in the global market"
"Development of new concrete ideas through the confrontation with local practices"
"The possibility to share and exchange practices and to find new ways to look on your work"
"Expand the borders of my country beyond its limited space and beyond the political conflicts"
"Experience the situation of a country on my own and in collaboration with the local inhabitant without passing through the media filter"
"An urgency for a situation of political, social and cultural transition"
"The political situation in the region creates a momentum"

Source: Elaborated by researcher in view of the Cimetta Fund report (2012a).

Ferdinand Richard, however, in our interview was a bit more skeptical regarding the long-term value of such an approach:

> "*We often say, let's work with universities for this. But the universities they do it in the framework of their research, and when they are done, they are done. While what we need is a professional, embedded in our team to do this throughout a number of years.* [Today] *we do it, empirically by doing surveys or by following the case of this or that person, and this gives some results, but they are not scientific"*[123].

5.6.7 Take away points

The main point of interest in regards to this case study is that it reflects the internal effort for monitoring and evaluation effort of the RCF. Both reports mentioned served the motivation for gathering evidence for advocacy and organisational learning, while the second one was undertaken also for accountability reasons. This case is the only one that only has an internal evaluation component, which means that no external consultant/ agency/ institution has been deployed to undertake an evaluation. This also implies that given the resources of the organisation, the result is the best possible.

Following a mapping of mobility operators in the EuroMediterranean region, which included RCF, Rai (2011: 25) had noted that:

> Mobility operators are in need of tools to assess the long-term impact of their programmes and to indicate how mobility contributes to further inform the artistic scene in a particular context and enforce learning to improve the artistic quality through exchange. Desk research has reflected a lack of data on what indicators we can measure the impact of mobility.

This summarises the importance of further reflection that is needed on indicators for the impact of mobility and more precisely on the long-term.

5.7 Case Study 4: TANDEM Shaml programme

"When we look ourselves across the wine-dark sear, we look into a mirror.
We need to get to know ourselves better.
And there, Tandem can help" (Matarasso, 2016b)

5.7.1 Presentation of the case study and data collection process

Tandem Shaml belongs to the 'family' of Tandem programmes that are focused on specific geographic regions and are organised by the European Cultural Foundation in

[123] Translated from French by myself. Original quotation: "On dit souvent on va travailler avec une université, mais les universités ils le font fans le cadre de leur recherche et quand ils finissent, ils finissent. Car nous, on a besoin d'un professionel, qui soit embedé dans l'équipe et faire ça pour plusireurs années. On le fait empiriquement en faisant des sondages, ou en suivant le cas de tel ou tel artiste, et ca donne des résultats, mails ils sont pas scientifiques".

cooperation with the German organisation MitOst and a number of partners depending on each programme's geographical focus. Its' aim is to strengthen civil society in Europe and its neighbouring regions. There are currently five Tandem programmes, which focus on different regions and topics. More precisely there is Tandem Shaml (which is the focus of the case study), Tandem Turkey, Tandem Ukraine, Tandem Community and Participation (C&P) and since recently there is Tandem Europe, which enables collaboration between participants from within Europe and has replaced the Tandem (C&P).

Tandem Shaml focuses on the EuroArab region and the programme organisers collaborate with Al Mawred/ Culture Resource as an implementing partner in the Arab region. Tandem Shaml supports experimental collaborations between change-makers from the Arab region and Europe. For one year, cultural actors work in tandems and as a group, being part of a larger network and sharing good practice. Their joint projects confront global challenges and support local community development by linking local people, places, art forms and ideas.

This case study was selected to be included in the research for three main reasons:

a) My interest in the evaluation process of the Tandem Shaml programme coincided with the programme management's decision to undertake an evaluation of the five years of the overall Tandem programme. Therefore, this case examines the evaluation of a EuroArab programme that is part of a wider evaluation effort;
b) The programme has a thorough internal evaluation approach that is also worth exploring at this point;
c) Having been a participant in one of the other Tandem programmes (more precisely Tandem Europe) allowed me to get a better understanding of the programme and develop a relationship of trust with the programme managers who have kindly shared a number of internal material with me.

For this case study it was possible to have access to the project reports and evaluations of participants of the Tandem Shaml first three rounds, as well as to the internal evaluation documents produced at the end of each round and distributed among the partners and the funders. Moreover, programme organisers shared with me the final evaluation, which was produced as a *Discussion Document* by the external evaluator (Matarasso, 2016a) for the whole Tandem programme. Finally, I participated at the celebration of the five years

of Tandem meeting that was held in September 2016 in Berlin where participants from different rounds were gathered. There, the essay produced by the external evaluator under the title *Mirror Images- cultural collaboration and civil society* (Matarasso, 2016b) was presented reflecting the outcomes of the evaluation exercise. During the meeting I assisted in different workshops that were conducted regarding the future of the programme.

Furthermore, a number of interviews with programme partners and participants were held. More precisely, I interviewed from the Programme organisers Jotham Sietma, Tandem Programme Manager and Hatem Hassan Salama, Tandem Shaml Project Manager at MitOst, Philip Dietchmair, Tandem Programme Manager at ECF and Reem Khattab, Tandem Project Manager at Culture Resource. From the Tandem Shaml participants, I interviewed Micaella Casalboni from Italy, Astrid Thews from Germany[124] and Inga Lace from Latvia. Finally, I also interviewed the external evaluator, François Matarasso and discussed the case with Dr Birgit Mandel from the University of Hildesheim that was at the same time doing a research on international cultural management where Tandem was one of the case studies (Mandel, 2017). Finally, I had the opportunity of participant observation during the final meetings of the Tandem Shaml III round that was held in Marseilles in December 2016 where I assisted in the evaluation sessions as an observer with the financial support of MitOst and ECF for the purposes of this research.

5.7.2 Background information on the case study

Jotham Sietma, Programme Manager of Tandem in MitOst, summarised the particularity of the Tandem programme in general as follows:

> *"We are not specifically about training and capacity building, although this learning is happening. We are not about mobility per se, although there is a lot of traveling happing. We are not about grants per se, but there is a small grant to start with and we see that there are more long-term and bigger partnerships coming out of this.* […] *What I feel is very specific for Tandem is that we really focus on finding a different approach for working together, which is not about doing something for show, it is not about doing something with your own agenda but is really about linking your needs and your questions and expectations to a wider story and seeing how you connect to that. And to see how we can create a common agenda, a common understanding on how we want to move in the future and how do I position myself in this. And I think*

[124] Astrid had participated in the programme representing an Arab-based organisation from Egypt.

> *this is something unique in the sense that I do not know of any other programme from where all participants come out and say that 'I feel part of something bigger, that I have people I can call 24/7 with any kind of question and I feel that the values that I have and my being fits in this group because everybody has this kind of approach and is motivated to make that change happen'".*

The programme consists in forming Tandems, partnerships of two organisations that develop a collaboration proposal to work together on a specific prototype project. The two people/ organisations collaborate as a pair during a period of 12 to 18 months and they also participate in trainings with the rest of each Tandem's edition group. Each member of the pair spends an up to 12 days' placement period in their partner 's organisation and city in order to learn from each other's reality. The processes might differ in each case, so do the outcomes of each Tandem, however the underlying principle is that these new cross border collaborations create links between cultural actors and enable the exchange of learning, the strengthening of cultural organisations and of civil society as a whole. Moreover, another underlying principle lies in the peer- learning aspect of the programme and the context-specific learning it encourages.

As mentioned above, the main partners of this programme are the following:
- The European Cultural Foundation, a key institution in Europe that works to bridge communities and cultural change-makers across a wider Europe. The over-arching thematic focus of ECF include Connecting Culture, Communities and Democracy which they approach through support schemes and grants, research and advocacy.

- MitOst, which is an institution that supports civil society and cultural diversity initiatives. It is an organisation that aims "to bring together people from across cultures, countries and communities and create space for vivid dialogue at eye level"[125]. MitOst achieves this through support, advice and training of individuals, organisations, initiatives or people that share the same goals.

- Culture Resource (Al Mawred Al Thaqafy) is a regional, non-profit organisation that seeks to support artistic creativity in the Arab region and to encourage cultural exchange between intellectuals and artists within this region and abroad.

At the moment of writing this research, three Tandem Shaml rounds have already been

[125] Taken from the MitOst website.

concluded. The Kick-off meeting of the fourth round took place in December 2016 in Marseilles, coinciding with the end of round III, in which I participated as an observer.

In its first pilot edition, Tandem Shaml aimed at promoting greater mutual understanding and trust between countries in the Arab region and Europe by creating new cooperation links between selected cultural organisations from Europe and emerging cultural operators from Arab countries, especially Egypt, Tunisia and Syria (Tandem, 2013c). The European Cultural Foundation and MitOst had already been key actors in international cultural cooperation and exchange of cultural operators for many years, while Culture Resource had just initiated the Abarra programme, which was launched in 2011 aiming to further strengthen the capacity of emerging cultural organisations in countries across the Arab region that are witnessing political transitions[126]. Table 5.18 summarises the anticipated aims and expectations of the programme's first pilot edition.

Table 5.18 Anticipated aims and expectations of Tandem Shaml I

- To enhance knowledge, mutual understanding and trust between cultural managers from Europe and the Arab World as a prerequisite for successful cooperation tapping into the potential offered by the unique cultural, political and historical position after the Arab Spring.
- To increase and consolidate the number of tangible, influential and long-lasting direct cooperation links between pioneering cultural organizations from Europe on one hand and emerging cultural professionals from across the Arab World on the other
- To mutually increase knowledge transfer and capacities of cultural organizations in the Arab World and Europe required for engaging in productive international cooperation projects which ultimately result in new creative long-term partnerships on equal footing
- To profile professional capacities of European and Arab cultural managers for showcasing new forms of cooperation breaking prevailing stereotypes on all sides and contributing to a firmer integration in professional practice
- To foster socio-cultural development, art-based innovation and modernisation of education in the Arab countries by encouraging engagement in real-life cooperation experiences (for professionals/artists) and surprising artistic encounters (for a wider public/local population)
- Increased mobility, trust and knowledge of cultural operators from Europe and the Arab World for engaging in trans-national cooperation projects with each other
- Increased visibility for and public awareness of importance and practice of creating exchange- and cooperation channels between Europe and the Arab World

126 More information in regards to the collaboration of the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) and Al Mawred/ Culture Resource can be found in (4.4).

- Innovation of international cooperation and exchange between Europe and the Arab World exemplified by the circulation of 6 artistic works coproduced and presented by participants
- Increased level of knowledge and skill in the field of managing international cooperation and exchange projects, developing new curatorial approaches and sharing artistic conceptualisation for the overall benefit of the participating European and Arab organisations
- Increased level of theoretical and practical knowledge on intercultural understanding and collaboration facilitated by training workshops, study/working visits and exchange for a representative number of key multipliers from Europe and the Arab World
- Increased leadership capacities and improved recognition of professional profiles of the cultural managers involved within their own organisations
- 6 highly viable, practice-proven cultural collaboration channels between Europe and the Arab World form the core of a new and steadily growing European - Arab World cooperation network
- Several participating organisations and cultural managers from the Arab countries become key players of cultural development in their cities and in cooperation with other cities in the Arab World start to form organisational network hubs integrating and animating cultural life for the benefit of the entire local population
- The overall operational framework proposed for the action becomes a reference project for similar actions of other public and private stakeholders in the field of exchange between Europe and the Arab World

Source: Taken from Tandem (2013c).

5.7.3 The evaluation in context

The need to take stock of what had been achieved during the first five years of the overall Tandem programme and identify potential suggestions for improvement of future work was a request from all Tandem partners. As Matarasso (2016b: 10) notes "[…] with such a substantial body of work, Tandem's next challenges is how to capitalise on its networks, knowledge and experience".

Initially, the idea was to commission the evaluation to a University based in The Netherlands. The University suggested the application of a logical framework approach for the evaluation of the Tandem programme in order to clarify its processes and results and its theory of change. It is interesting to note that the academic institution approached did not have any explicit connection with arts and culture but more expertise on international development and cooperation schemes for philanthropy. The partners,

however, felt that the evaluation proposal and methodology received did not really reflect the values of the programme.

In December 2015, François Matarasso, an external arts and culture evaluation expert, author of publications which have been referenced widely in this research (Matarasso, 1997; 2009), was approached to suggest an alternative approach. Matarasso is a freelance writer, researcher and consultant with a 35- year career in socially engaged arts practice. Between 1979 and 1994 he worked in visual arts, theatre and as a producer with people in neighborhoods, hospitals, care centres and prisons. He got involved with research and its implications, while from 1994 to 2003 he undertook a series of studies on arts and culture. He has served on the Arts Council of England as committee member and as a writer for the think tank Comedia. He is the author of *Use or Ornament*? (Matarasso, 1997), a debated contribution to thinking on the social outcomes associated with the arts and of *The Human Factor* (Matarasso, 2009), which, as already mentioned, is a paper which deals with the topic of evaluation from the perspective of those involved in it.

In parallel, the external evaluation exercise coincided with a research project by Professor Birgit Mandel from the University of Hildesheim who worked as principal investigator for an empirical study on internationalisation and international cooperation in arts/ cultural management in cooperation with the Goethe Institut and the European Cultural Foundation and MitOst. One of the aspects of the research was related to an in-depth analysis of the Tandem programme itself and its findings were included in the recently published book Arts/ cultural management in international contexts (Mandel, 2017). Echoes of this study on the Tandem programme in general are included in this section as well.

It should be reminded at this point which are the main objectives of the Tandem Shaml programme. Sietma's quotation above describes its nature, but what the programme aims in reality is to enhance mobility, trust and knowledge of cultural operators from Europe and the Arab Region for engaging in trans-national cooperation projects with each other and provide increased visibility for and public awareness of importance and practice of creating exchange and cooperation channels between Europe and the Arab regions. Innovation of international cooperation and exchange between the two regions is one of the underlying principles of the programme, which is exemplified by the circulation of artistic works coproduced and presented by participants. A difference of the Tandem

Shaml programme in comparison to the other Tandem programmes is that it aims to increase the level of knowledge and skills in the field of managing international cooperation and exchange projects, developing new curatorial approaches and sharing artistic conceptualisation for the overall benefit of the participating European and Arab organisations, as well as an increased level of theoretical and practical knowledge on intercultural understanding and collaboration. Moreover, implicitly the programme aspires that several participating organisations and cultural managers from the Arab countries will become key players of cultural development and social innovation in their cities and in cooperation with other communities in the Arab region start to form organisational network hubs integrating and animating cultural life for the benefit of the entire local population.

An interesting point, though, that was raised by Philipp Dietchmair when he was asked during our interview whether the programme organisers have observed substantial differences between the different Tandem programmes was that there is a difference between the groups in general because every group is very different and this is what mainly influences the process, not the geographical region of acrivity. *"There is an endless variety of group dynamics that has not specifically to do with the regions",* he explained. He added however, that his observation is that often in the Tandem Shaml you might find the more politically and activist engaged group of people given the general context in the region. During our interview in the framework of the final meeting of the Tandem III round he said in regards to that particular group:

> *"The urgency of the context is much more present and gives the whole thing much more of a direction. I don't know if it is a coincidence that it is the most activist and political group or if there is a connection between an emotional glue of why they feel connected to each other which is quite unusual".*

5.7.4 The evaluation practice

(i) Purpose and focus of the evaluation

At this point it should be clarified that the focus of this section is on the external evaluation practice of the Tandem programme in general, however where possible concrete connection with the Tandem Shaml programme will be made since the EuroArab region is the focus of our research. In part (5.7.6.1) there is special mention to the internal evaluation processes which focus on examples and people related to the Tandem Shaml rounds.

The purpose of the external evaluation, as defined in the *Discussion Document* produced as a final result of the evaluation (Matarasso, 2016a) was "to identify the learning from the work of the past five years so as to:

- Do more of what works and less of what does not;
- Develop the practice to create more value;
- Get closer to the goal of 'making societies more open, democratic, just and inclusive'".

The programme managers and the evaluator himself claim that rather than an external assessment, this evaluation exercise was "a starting point for further discussion" and "a work on active participation". This is also the reason why the final report document does not use the word evaluation but has the heading *Tandem Programme 2011- 15, Lessons and Questions: a discussion document* (Matarasso, 2016a).

(ii) Evidence collection

The first step in the evidence collection process was a face-to-face meeting with the programme partners that was held in Berlin (where MitOst office is located) in January 2016 with the aim to clarify the objectives of the evaluation and set the cooperation framework.

Unlike the other evaluations that focused a lot on qualitative interviews, in this case the evaluator worked basically on reviewing the documentation obtained from the programme organisers relevant to the evaluation. This included project applications, final reports of the participants, as well as internal programme reports addressed to the funders at the end of each round. It should be reminded that this exercise did not only involve the Tandem Shaml participants, but also all the other Tandem programme participants, which resulted in an extensive amount of data.

Moreover, the evaluator facilitated a second session with Tandem staff in Berlin in May 2016 where the aims and objectives of the evaluation were negotiated and agreed upon. A focus group with the people involved in the programme from the side of the different stakeholders was organised to feed into the evaluation evidence base. Thirdly, the external evaluator had the opportunity to attend one of the Tandem Shaml III meetings held in Casablanca, Morocco in June 2016. There, besides participant observation of the meeting and informal conversations with the participants, he also run a workshop with

the participants regarding evaluation. During our interview, Matarasso underlined the importance of triangulation in the evaluation practice and the approach undertaken in this case reflects this standpoint. It is, however, interesting to note that this case represents the only example from the ones examined in this research where the external evaluator did not undertake any individual interviews with the programme participants. As he explained during out interview, this would require a lot of time and would not necessarily give the expected outcome.

The external evidence collection for the evaluation process accompanied the internal evaluation process that the programme organisers have put in place since the beginning of the programme. After the end of each round, a programme report is written and submitted to the funders and stakeholders involved, gathering reflections in regards to the programme's aims and the expected outcomes, the profile of the participants and the Tandems they created and the foreseen outcomes, especially on the long term. Furthermore, the final report gathers a number of quotations from the individual reports.

(iii) Analysis of evidence

During the interview, Matarasso explained that what he tried to do with the material gathered was *"to look for commonalities and discrepancies".* He explained that the material was too vast and at the end he did not have the opportunity to review everything thoroughly. This was an aspect shared by the programme organisers as well since on the internal level, they had faced this challenge. Although the organisation has invested resources in conceptualising different internal evaluation methods to be used (like the an adaptation of the Most Significant Change technique or 'case clinics' which will be further touched upon in 5.7.6.1), there has been no coordinated effort for documenting the results in a coherent way and at the end it always becomes the responsibility of one person to put into a report the main findings, while feedback is sought from all the programme partners.

A point that clearly highlights this was raised by Matarasso during our interview that explained how while revising the internal evaluation documents he received, he identified that the questions asked throughout the five years of the programme had not been consistent. He explained that it would have been better to identify a few indicators that organisers would like to track over time instead of changing the questions and asking participants to report on different things every time. He explained this as follows:

> *"This is one of the lessons learnt and we' ve done some work on refining and identifying the questions they do want to use and they should now have those and stick to them. I've been saying this to people for 20 years: if you track five indicators about your work but you do it over five years you will have a serious amount of useful data that you could analyse. You can also do other things, but if you have the five key things that are the critical things, then actually you have got statistically relevant data and credible data and you can identify change over time- which is what you need to do."*

(iv) Learning from the evaluation

> *"Programmes do not have to solve every challenge to be worthwhile: they only need to make a contribution on the right side of the table. And if they are to do that, those involved need to work with a clear rationale and realistic expectations*" (Matarasso, 2016a: 3).

As it has been pointed out above, the external evaluation accompanied the internal evaluation of the programme. Matarasso was given access to the different applications and reports from the programme's rounds so far, and this was a substantial amount of material I have attempted to extract a few quotations from the project reports. These are reflected in Table 5.19.

Table 5.19 Experiences with Tandem Shaml programme

"We are now officially the first artistic and cultural organisation which introduced in Istanbul the Tunisian art and artists who have been neglected or overlooked."
"The organisation gained from having this project in its CV as well as having the project participating in the main event being organised by the [partner] organisation"
"For the Egyptian participants it was a very new and interesting experience"
"The fact that their opinions were listened to, (even internationally) can reinforce the concept that they have a voice that can be heard, and which could encourage their participation in a wider society as well."
"Another huge out come is the fact that we have a huge collection of material regarding the situation in Syria (interviews, texts, statements, analyses, press, audio recordings, films, images) we are continuing collecting and working with it."
"it gave the organisation a "safe" space to work on the very urgent matters of the reality of Syria. it also positioned us (in regard to Syrian artists and cultural players, our main target group) in the scope of potential partners in their project.
"Being part of Tandem Shaml offered a whole new world to us as it is the first time for us to partner with colleagues from the Arab region. The social and political changes/ crisis in Syria, Tunisia and Egypt and the high demands they make for artistic/cultural activists lead us to ask ourselves the crucial questions again: why are we doing what we do, and do we have an impact? How can we make the world a better place? And are art and culture the means to do it? The programme opened up a whole new field of working/cultural activism.
"The project helped me understand important new communities that we need as artists and organisations to know how to work with"

"Exchanging with persons from different countries, travelling with them and spending time together has been extremely useful in terms of learning new cultures, being familiarized with different work styles and obtaining direct feedback on the processes of change in Arab countries."

"All Tandem Shaml meetings have provided us with methodological tools that will be useful for project design, communication, groups' management, evaluation of activities."

"Other important aspects to mention are intercultural skills and networking: working in an intercultural group requires being patient and organized, listening to the others, not judging the other's point of view, having a positive attitude, being self-confident."

"The Tandem experience was a very good teaser to start doing even more international projects."

"It has also developed my awareness of the endless possibilities of triggering totally a new powerful initiative on the spot by speaking with another peer who has also a mirroring motivation to it."

"And the one on one consultancy sessions for evaluation, which took place during the final event, this helped us a lot to reread the graphs we made for our project timeline."

Source: Developed by researcher based on Tandem Shaml evaluation reports (Tandem 2013 and 2015)

Overall the evaluation of the programme as reflected in the documents is positive. This is connected with the observation of Philipp Dietchmair that he said during our interview that one reason why this evaluation exercise was undertaken was exactly because the organisers felt that the Tandem model needed to be documented since the overall feeling of satisfaction that they are receiving from participants is very high. Matarasso (2016a: 13) explains this success factor as follows:

> *"What makes Tandem so productive is the shared professional interests of the partners, which creates common ground even as their different perspectives make them question long-held assumptions and discover new solutions to familiar problems. Shared responsibility for the success of a joint project creates lasting bonds".*

(v) Communicating the evaluation findings

In reality, the external evaluator produced two types of final documents: firstly, a *Discussion Paper* (Matarasso, 2016a) that was shared among stakeholders and funders, and secondly a report in the form of an essay (Matarasso, 2016b).

The first moment when the evaluation findings were publically shared was at the celebration for the 5 years of the TANDEM programme that took place in Berlin in

September 2016. The presentation consisted actually in the presentation of the *Mirror Images* essay (Matarasso, 2016b). Using Matarasso's own words:

> *"That paper, 'Mirror images', is story telling- it is not an evaluation and it is called an essay for that reason."*

Hatem, Tandem Shaml's project manager, clearly made this distinction between the two levels of target group for the evaluation results. From one side, he identified the participants and connected their relation with evaluation in a more internal process, and in the same time he identified the level of the stakeholders and funders of the programme and explained that the external evaluation assisted the programme organisers in creating the arguments for the continuation of the programme's funding. He explained this as follows:

> *"I think if you take the first level, the one of the participants, I think in that case it's about really giving them a reflective tool that helps them to see and understand how they can build on the learnings that they gained. This is at the level of the participants. And if we take the level of the funders is mainly to prove to them that the machine is working and that it makes sense to keep on doing the work or to support the work that you are doing. But also to help them change their way of thinking towards how or what kind of support they should offer."*

The way, though, he presented the need to share the findings with the funders revealed his belief that evaluation is not driven from purely accountability reasons. He translated this process more as a need to 'educate', to bring them on board with the essence and the purpose of the programme. He explained this as follows:

> *"Because I think it is important… maybe educate is not the right word to use but…to bring the support of the funders along with us on the way, so that they can see actually what kind of improvements need to be done, because at the end of the day, they have a saying on this, they can say 'ok lets go, lets add some money, lets not do that, lets go for that', so they have a saying somehow, and the moment that you are able to show them bring them along with you within the process, they understand much better."*

Regarding the choice of having two different formats of the final evaluation results, Philipp Dietchmair from ECF said the following:

> *"I am glad that at least we had a talk that was at least inspiring for our participants in Berlin. We have a fantastic essay, interesting to read and inspiring. But for the formal part, I asked from Francois to make a summary of the main points so that I can share them with the stakeholders and push forward in our board of Directors meeting".*

(vi) Challenges

According to the external evaluator, the two major challenges encountered in this specific case were, from one hand, trying to make sense of narrative reports and retrofitting them to a series of conceptual categories and, on the other hand, the fact that the programme allowed for projects to have diverse creative outputs, fields of work and areas of interest. When it comes to the reports, he said the following:

> *"Most of the evaluations I've read from the Tandem participants are not very good of useful. Partly because they haven't been asked very good questions. Also the questions have changed over the five years so there is no consistency and you cannot observe change because people have been asked to do different things."*

Here Matarasso raises an important element when it comes to programmes that are repeated over time and that for evaluating their process a consistent approach is needed that would allow comparisons over time.

5.7.5 The human factor in the evaluation

(i) From the point of view of the evaluator

The interview with Matarasso evolved in general about evaluation in arts and culture. He claimed that organisations evaluate mostly for the wrong reasons. According to him, they confuse monitoring with evaluation and they aspire from evaluation to prove the value of their work. In this respect he said:

> *"If you go to evaluation trying to prove the value of your work you can't possibly be intending to be objective."*

What was striking to me was the fact that Matarasso had never been before in the Arab region. In the framework of the Tandem evaluation he assisted in the Interim meeting of Tandem Shaml III in Casablanca, Morocco where he also held a seminar on evaluation. When it comes to evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes, Matarasso observed that claiming that one can know very well the context for each programme he/ she is evaluating, is a vain attempt.

> *"It is obviously more difficult because you work with different countries and languages. I have started working internationally around 25 years ago and I was very conscious from the beginning that I know nothing about the people and the places I am working. I don't even know anything about Berlin, and it is in my cultural neighbourhood. So that is a major obstacle that you have to understand. And the only thing that you could do is to try and be aware of it.* […] *One of the things I now do in all my work –whether it is called evaluation or not-is, I ask other people to read it. For instance, I wrote a case study*

> *about a project that I saw a week ago … and I wrote it up and it is now on the blog, but before I published it I sent it to the two organisations involved to check 'have I got anything wrong?'. And this is in my own city. That is what I do now consistently."*

Matarasso explained to me that when he is doing evaluations in international contexts, he often deploys different experts to work with him. For example, for an evaluation that he did in the past for Pro Helvetia's programmes in the Balkans (Matarasso, 2013), he worked with local journalists to create the profiles of the people that had benefited from the programme. He said that when working with people like journalists, or interpreters he often finds himself asking questions to them to check if he has understood correctly. *"I often understand what has been said to me, but I might not understand why it was said to me- so that is all really difficult"*, he said.

> *"I think the other thing that is difficult is the power relations. Power relations are difficult in all evaluation projects, but as a particular thing in a programme like Tandem, power relations are complicated because you have people, so that on one level, the power relations are uneven on another level, they are completely equivalent because you have culture professionals who share a set of values and ideas and actually they might have even more in common with other people that live in their city. So that is something that you have to be very aware of."*

(ii) From the point of view of the commissioner/ organiser

When it comes to the Tandem external evaluation practice, Philipp Dietchmair was very open in discussing the process and his feelings around it. He also raised questions regarding the actual meaning of evaluation exercises and touched upon the topic of budget, which was not something that naturally came out from the previous interviews. He commented the following:

> *"That's why we also have to limit what we do. The biggest problem with evaluation is that 90%of people are not interested in finding out the truth. Particularly when what they have been doing might not be the best way to come to the results that they want. So that's why we became very disillusioned and critical about how we even deal with impact assessment. You can turn every evaluation in a direction that shows anything"*

He even used the following phrase when thinking about the different forms and tone that an evaluation can take depending on what the organisation is looking for: *"What do you want to have? A justification? Critical evaluation? A meta-story to provide some political arguments?".* "When it comes to the cost of the evaluation he

said that it was the equivalent of one Tandem round and that was the limit he had put. "*I might have had more impact with one more Tandem*", he commented, which underlines the challenges identified already regarding the resources that need to be invested in the evaluation practice.

Hatem Hassan, Tandem Shaml's project manager tackled the issue of relevance of investment of resources for an evaluation in relation to the expected outcome, which he described as follows:

> *"These things are different in understanding how do you evaluate and how do you understand the impact of the change in the community that you are making to work. So for me, instead of keeping a budget for evaluation now, just get a report to get the outcomes and keep this budget and come back after five years to see the results. So, save the money and then do a proper evaluation after five years and see, five or seven or ten years whatever. And see. Is there anything that is there a tracing of that, the sand has it changed because of the wave or not, did it make any difference or move things or whatever. But before that, I think it's a bureaucratic work that is not using some resources that could be better used in a different way."*

The same aspect was raised by Philipp Dietchmair who also commented that what is for him an indicator of success is what happens after the end of the programme, although he placed specific emphasis to the transformative power of the programme on the individual, especially for young professionals. He explained this as follows:

> *"One generally valid indicator is if a Tandem continues afterwards, in their collaboration or with the Tandem universe. But it can also be meaningful on the personal, organisational or community level. Eva from Riga for example tells a story of how a very young professional starts to immediately understand the complexities of working in Palestine and Israel and to learn that the real working world is not only black and white but it is also grey. And this is fantastic. The personal learning of young professionals is wonderful".*

Regarding the challenge of measuring the long-term impact Hatem Hassan used the following metaphor:

> *"I keep using a metaphor, I think that it clearly represents my opinion about this.* [Evaluation] *is as if you have a very long beach and the water is really calm and then a boat just passes by. So twenty minutes later you have a very big wave on the beach. But the boat is no longer there. So the boat in itself cannot see the result, because this result needs time, needs a certain amount of energy, of flow, of environment for it to happen. If the boat stops to observe, then the machine stops, so it's ridiculous to stop, to wait and see…".*

According to Philipp, if the organisation sends the right person to the programme, *"there is huge Research & Development potential to explore".* He also made the observation that there are cases in which participants - because of their Tandem experience- they realise that they work for a completely wrong organisation and decide to move out of it. Mandel (2017: 123) describes that the Tandem experience helps participants develop a critical perspective of their home organisation and also to question their own role as arts/ cultural managers. She explains this as follows:

> The common time with other arts/ cultural managers from different contexts helps to reflect goal, practices and perspectives of one's own work and organisation and inspires personal and sometimes also organisational changes. The common cultural project that is placed in the context of another political, cultural, social and economic reality requires an intercultural and interdisciplinary approach that simultaneously questions the own perspective and the usual artistic and organisational practice.

From his side, Jotham Sietma, Tandem Programme Manager from the side of MitOst was asked what element he considers crucial in regards to the evaluation of a programme.

> *"One that we are doing incidentally is I want to know what happens after and did the partnership you started within Tandem Shaml continue? Or most of all are there others in the group that you continued to work with? I want to know what effect this has had to their organisation or on their team or the people that they work with because the hypothesis that we have is that there is not only a single person in the TANDEM but an organisation. While it is very difficult to engage a whole organisation in this process, it is also very difficult to check that. Because whatever story we are going to get it is going to be on that person and we cannot go to all these places and interview a bunch of people. So, to find a tool where we can do that could be for me very interesting and this on an another layer will be on the community level but this is even more difficult. Plus you don't know because this is a wave that comes much much later. These two things would be on my wish list*".

Regarding how unattended effects are dealt upon, Dietchmair admitted that if there was enough time, they should have a discussion on this with the different stakeholders. *"But the evaluation cannot go out of hands",* he said.

(iii) From the point of view of the participant/ beneficiary

Three Tandem Shaml programme participants were interviewed for the purpose of this research. All of them emphasised the learning aspect of their experience, especially on the intercultural level. Inga Lace from summarised her learning from the programme as follows:

> *"One* [learning*] was this working together or like learning to work together with one person and somehow understanding like that this collaboration is like this. It's somewhere in between. Like you meet each other in the middle. So that's very not connected to any cultural differences anything, you are just like purely working for instance, like that you need to collaborate with another person you are not individual anymore and then the second one i think was more all this context around middle east, Egypt after revolution, because actually going there, seeing that somehow through meeting with people, learning about history of the place that was just very very important, that is something that stayed with me I think. It becames a place for me it was not just something in the media but it's ok, I know some people there and this is how they live and yes you go from stereotypes to some actual information."*

Since a few years had passed since the participation of Inga in the Tandem programme, the focus of the interview was mainly on what happened in her life after the Tandem programme and that might have had a relation to this experience. I got the impression that only when we had this conversation she did actually realise how influential this experience was on her. However, a concrete encounter she made during her placement in Egypt was revealing and gave a different boost to her professional life. She explained her experience as follows:

> *"Well actually somehow I've met very interesting people at the time when I was visiting Cairo and Alexandria and that was also...somehow the time when I decided that afterwards I should study curating. So I mean it has nothing so much to do with exactly the Arab context or whatever but I remember that I met someone that worked in an art centre in Cairo called Beirut and she was actually from Italy and she said like well 'I finished the Appel curatorial program it was really great' and she had set up this beautiful art centre there in the middle of Cairo and this is when I kind of started to think like 'yes, I should also go forward in my educational kind of development, towards curating'".*

In relation to the different levels of impact of such a programme, Inga pointed out that she considers that impact is mainly identified on the personal level, especially because in the community it is very hard to measure what the impact has been. She said though, that she feels that in the institution she works for in Latvia there was a kind of change- at least her colleagues were intrigued in finding out what she was doing when working in the Arab region.

Another person interviewed, Micaela Casalboni representing the organisation Teatro dell'Argine, shared with me her experience with the Tandem Shaml programme, which consisted in a cooperation with an organisation from Tunisia on the project

Lambedusa Mirrors. She summarised her motivation for joining the programme as follows:

> *"The first reason was that we wanted to strengthen out relationship with the Arab region*. [...] *We already had these partners in Palestine, we knew companies from Lebanon already but we wanted to do something more with that region. This was the first thing.*
>
> *The second one was that intercultural dialogue for us as a company in Europe now days, concerned the actual situation in Italy which was very very hot, the perception of migration and as you may know here is very difficult, we have a society having fear and hate in the majority regarding migrants coming here, or even passing from here to go maybe to the North Europe and so on and this is it*.
>
> *The third reason was to involve our community here. We are already working here with intercultural groups to know more about the reasons why people are coming here. And so to work out with theatre these issues that are very tough but without inventing things or just as artists knowing nothing about the world, so we say you have to dirty your hands if you want to understand something.*
>
> *This was the main reason why. And also the fact that there were some training for trainers in the Tandem programme, the fact that they teach you also something concerning organisation, how you can plan events, how you can face challenges or things that were not expected and so on, this was very interesting for us because we are artists, all that we do as organisers and cultural managers and project managers has been self-teaching so when we find somebody teaching us, we are very happy about that."*

Lambedusa Mirrors was one of the projects highlighted in the essay written by Matarasso on the Tandem programme (Matarasso, 2016b) that tried to underline its storytelling power. He writes in this respect: "That story dominates the headlines, but it is still a story, one way of interpreting reality's immense complexity. And it is not the only story being told about how Europeans and their neighbours meet across the wine-dark sea" (Matarasso, 2016b: 2).

The project is also a reflection of the challenge identified in relation to the migration flows in Europe and demonstates how the collaborations evolving within the programme cannot but be influenced but the general environment. Micaela said in this respect:

> *"Well maybe it is a short premise that now everybody is talking about the refugee crisis. But concerning Italy, this so-called crisis is going on since like twenty five, thirty years, it is not since yesterday. These people are arriving, dying at sea, not only at sea and so on. So, now of course with the Syrian situation it is clear that we have something different but not that different. So Governments could and should have done something even before now, before the so-called refugee crisis. In 2011 with the Arab spring, in Italy we had a situation in the welcoming center for migrants, they called it Emergenta Africa, Emergency Africa. So we always deal this issue and unfortunately these people only with emergency processes, not with programs or projects or thinking about the individuals.*

> *The position is always let's guess how we can keep them out of here, its not let's guess how to avoid them like dying in the sea, or how we can have a bed for everyone and maybe not only a bed, maybe something more, school for kids, etc."*

Astrid Thews was the last of the participants interviewed. In her case it was interesting to investigate into the fact that she was representing an Arab organisation being German herself. Astrid had moved to Egyp in 2011 and co-founded a cultural organisation there with some friends.

> *"We said actually 'ok yes that could be interesting' and then we were thinking about what kind of project would be valuable to the organisation and then actually I did not write the application, my business partner did; she wrote the application for Tandem Shaml, we had agreed upon what would be the main thing and she said 'well if we are going for this, this definitely is under your responsibility, not under mine. So then it would be natural that you would be the participant'. And then I said 'sure, it's a bit odd because I'm not you know, I'm German', but like strategically for the organisation it made absolutely sense. Then we were sure that this may be a bit weird for the rest but then we said well if we participate in this then also it makes sense for our organization. And if the programme does not make sense for our organisation, we don't go for it."*

At the moment of our interview she was already back in Germany and working as a free lancer, including for evaluation of programmes. She explained that her approach is mainly focusing on assisting organisations to realise and articulate their impact, rather than evaluation for purely administrative reasons.

> *"Ok, so of course the reports for funders are important but they are not the thing that interests me. I mean they interest me in the sense that sometimes i feel like, not sometimes, often i feel that people who are away from the underground work they need to be informed and learn. I'm not sure though this happens through the reports to funders. But it's important to also be critical there and challenge a bit you know, funding practises if you feel that this is really a thing. But i'm more interested in personal impact on the surroundings and what to do with the experiences, how to move forward; As an individual you know, has something moved me, have I changed, the organisation also so i'm really interested in you know trying to figure out from the experiences I am looking at these practises and lessons learnt and really looking at ok if this worked out really well, why did it work out really well? What made it so good? And is it posible to you know.. of course every project, every individual, every context is different but are there factors that we can look at to pay attention to in the future when we have similar projects, or not we but the organization working on it, or the individuals. Just to be aware of it".*

5.7.6 Further points of interest

5.7.6.1 Note on internal evaluation

As Mandel (2017) observes, the programme encourages continuous evaluation and allows shared time for reflecting on working practices. For example, from the beginning

of the programme[127] the participants are given a 'learning journal' in which they are encouraged to document their reflections, insights and learning moments. The journal serves the goal of stimulating and structuring ideas through specific reflection questions. Another example are the case clinics, she even writes in this respect that: "'Tandem' workshops enable a continuous recirculation of the just made experience, of the just received input. It's all about: what did I just learn, does it have any value for me, for my project or for my organisation? Can we adapt that for our project?" (Mandel, 2017: 124). 'Case clinics' is another example of how the programme facilitates this reflective learning. Case clinics is a method which guides a team or a group of peers through a process in which a case giver presents a 'case', something that is worrying, problematic for him/ her and then a group of three to four peers function as 'consultants' and help their colleague in responding in a effective way to the challenge he/ she faces[128]. In general, one could say that this self and peer-reflection process is taking place throughout the Tandem programme and not only at the end.

During our interview, Hatem Hassan explained the different methods that are used in the Tandem programme internal evaluation at the end of the programme as follows:

> *"We have different ways. We use the Most Significant Change and the findings are taken directly and this is the main thing that we use for group evaluation. And then we have a narrative report that we have been working really hard to completely change the approach and to make it better. It's called the narrative report still, but we are working on how it can be a reflective tool for the participants. So it's not about just reporting on things that happened, but it's actually about reflecting, so we might call it the reflective report or whatever."*

For TANDEM Shaml rounds I and II, participants were asked to submit narrative reports. A document with specific pre-established questions was addressed to them to which they needed to respond individually, although all TANDEM programme participants submit one single report including answers from both of them. The narrative reports are structured around the following domains:

- Individual learning, where participants are encouraged to recall the observations shared during the final Tandem Shaml evaluation meeting. More precisely, they are

[127] The first step of the programme consists in a Partners Forum meeting where participants meet with their potential Tandem and start working in pairs to submit a project proposal. Not all project proposals are accepted, so at the next meeting only the selected ones are invited. The 'learning journal' is shared with the selected programme participants at that moment to reflect on their Tandem journey from that moment on.

[128] This approach is based on the principles of the U-Process guided by Theory U (Scharmer, 2009).

asked to give input regarding the important lessons learnt (acquired skills and competences as a cultural professional, new insights in the cultural field and on cross cultural exchange), future plans related to this experience and to select specific programme elements that contributed mostly to the learning experience and how.

- Organisational level, where participants were asked to describe changes identified in the organization as an effect of the Tandem Shaml experience. Here participants are asked to include their own reflections as well as reflections of their colleagues and director and of their organization.
- Project management level, where participants are asked to report on lessons learnt regarding the management of international cultural cooperation programmes.

Hatem explained that already for a year he with some of his colleagues they were trying to improve the narrative report and make it more interesting to the participants so that they don't see it merely as a formality. They were thinking that perhaps it could be made in a form of an interview where the participants would ask a colleague of them to interview them a year after their participation in the programme. The input received from Matarasso helped them redefine the way they collect evidence and they are waiting to see in the following rounds how the results would unfold.

During the final meeting of each Tandem round, the organisers also use a technique they call 'exit interviews'. In Marseilles I attended as an observer one of this sessions of a Tandem pair formed by Farah Makki and Mohab Saber that had worked on a project in the neighbourhood of Karmouz in Alexandria that was focusing on the city where a six day workshop was organised combining methodologies on how to create space in that community (cultural mapping, collaborative processes, cultural tours, collection of stories etc). At the end, a small publication was produced for the inhabitants to help them understand and diffuse a proud image about the neighbourhood. Philipp Dietchmair firstly explained *"this session is simply a mixture of things you have done in Tandem Shaml before- here you review and go deeper in an aspect of collaboration you chose".* They could pick one experience from the collaboration and they would have to do a feedback curve exercise for the whole Tandem process – from the application phased to the end of the programme- and draw their own timeline with the ups, downs and transitional points.

5.7.6.2 The adaptation of the Most Significant Change method

At the last meeting of each Tandem round, the programme organisers spend a few hours with the participants for an evaluation session using an adaptation of a method called *The*

most significant change (MSC) which was developed by Davies and Dart (2005). In its core, MSC is a storytelling approach used to gather stories of significant change from the beneficiaries/ participants of a programme. In December 2016 I attended this session for the Tandem Shaml III round and then I held an interview with Philipp Dietchmair, Tandem Programme Manager from ECF, that explained to me how they have adapted this method to fit their needs.

Dietchmair explained that the Doen Foundation had firstly experimented with the method in one of their programmes and they though that it would be worth trying it out. The first attempt was in one of the first Tandem Turkey rounds, but in Philipp's words "*it was a total disaster".* Philipp also explained, that undertaking the steps exactly as presented by the method's authors it would be impossible in the setting of the Tandem programme:

> *"If you do it how it is described in the guide, you do nothing else than evaluating. Basically what we do is the first step, which is based on people sharing change stories, and from this we identify the change domains. According to the method this is the very first step. So we have a complete fundamental mutilation of the method because they would only start working now after picking the change domains and working deeper, deeper, deeper and then the method wants the stories collected to be shared and organise feedback rounds with management and stakeholders.* […] *But the amount of time you need at the end is not really balancing the effort."*

The MSC technique is defined by its 'creators' as a "form of participatory monitoring and evaluation" (Davies & Dart, 2005: 8). Its main characteristic is that it does not start with a framework of pre-defined indicators, nor the emphasis is put on measuring and numbers. The approach mainly focuses on 'stories of change'. Initially the technique was designed as a monitoring tool for development aid projects, however its 'creators' consider that it can contribute to evaluation "because it provides data on impact and outcomes that can be used to help assess the performance of the programme as a whole" (Davies & Dart, 2005: 8). The focus of the technique is placed mainly on intermediate outcomes and impact and its guiding principle was intended to propose an evolutionary approach to organisational learning. The participatory aspect of this monitoring and evaluation tool lies in inviting various stakeholders in deciding upon the change stories and the data analysis.

Following the observation during the Marseilles meeting, Philipp explained to me that:

> *"The stories are not that complex usually and it is easier to write the essence of the story down on the paper card. Usually it is one group, you collect the stories and cluster them*

> *and by clustering you identify the change domains and then you let them [participants] vote. Then I take a photo and I type down the results and which ones received the most votes and which were the change domains".*

One difference in regards to the technique and its adaptation in the context of the Tandem programme is that normally participants themselves allocate their stories to a domain category, however here participants' stories are clustered by the session facilitator and the notes taker to speed up the process. As explained by Philipp:

> *"We had a kind of epiphany and said let's let people vote… and then it was clear 'oh yeah, this is about organisational learning, this is about personal development…' So this is how we define the change domains. It was just a complete coincidence- you experiment with the method and this is where you get".*

During the session that I attended as an observer in Marseilles, the organisers introduced a further change in the process by splitting the whole group in two smaller groups. *"It was an attempt to go deeper into the stories in the small groups",* Philipp explained, but *"in the bigger group the ranking becomes more clear".* Clustering the stories is of course not a straightforward exercise. In this respect Philipp explained:

> *"Usually stories are about organisational learning or methodological improvements in a specific art form. This is easy to write own… but when it is about the Israeli- Palestine conflict, it is not so obvious".*

There lies the role of the facilitator or the note takers that assist in the process.

> *"The weakness is that you frame a lot the change domains based on how you write the stories down. I don't know what it actually means, and this is the role of the evaluator, or note taker. Interpretation and writing down is more conceptual – to understand the essence of a story from a cultural management and from a political point of view is more challenging than moderating the group discussion."*

He also underlined that the note takers are the ones that cluster the change domains. This is the reason why, as he explained, *"you need people that are competent and that you have the same understanding."*

> *"It is not about empirical value or a qualitative solid thing we do here. The focus is simply to see what was the most important for the group and if there is a new topic arriving. We say that Tandem has an effect on personal, organisational or community level, but everything under the umbrella of cross cultural cooperation."*

> *"It is not a coincidence that it* [the technique] *comes from the development sector where they have just larger budgets and time and it is more for standard development services, vaccination, schools, where you work for a long time, with a big machinery and you can offer the same thing in another region and you want to see if the event is the same".*

It is interesting at this point to include a number of quotations from the observation during the implementation of the technique during the Tandem Shalm III final meeting, especially in order to reconnect this section with the regional focus of this research, which is related to the EuroArab region. It should be noted that the section here does not include a valorization or hierarchy of the stories but instead shows the variety of answers and approaches and significant moments to the same question and also points to the potential of the method to bring to the surface meaningful information for the evaluation of a programme such as Tandem Shaml.

For that edition's participants, some of the most significant change stories- in participants own words- were, for example, in relation to: the home organisation (*"the 'me and my organisation' issue and the recognition from my peers"); s*elf imagining ("*the challenge is how to keep doing this self imaging produced through this exchange")*; a specific object ("*a book I found in Ramallah that summarises my experience - a metaphor of what the Tandem programme was for me - it was not about the project but the process");* change of stereotypes *("*[it was] *a paradox of how I perceived them* [migrants*] through a romantisation of their position per se and then* [during the placement*] I was robbed but I felt really bad and changed my perception about migrants – it was a reality check ...");* experiences that made understand to work with communities differently ("[it made me] *think about possible answers* [...] *and ask myself about this level of consciousness and censorship about the role as citizens, it brought me more into a deep conversation with the community* [...] *and as a group we decided 'let's do something on what we realised to tackle the anxiety and opportunities that the community might have"* and finally cultural political landscape experiences which will be tackled further below.

The setting in which the most 'impactful experiences' occurred were related to the placement periods which proves to offer a privileged setting for genuine intercultural encounter but also for self-reflection and learning and working deeper on issues related to stereotypes. For example, one of the session's participants from Italy shared the following story:

> *"When we came to Tunisia we were expecting to meet people that had a relation to migration ... They don't trust Italian people and I thought it would be difficult to convince then that an Italian organisation wants to talk with your about your stories. We arranged to talk with some key persons that live in poor communities and they were so welcoming and it was so good that they were so kind and talk about that to them. If I had done that in Italy it would not have been so successful ... It was important to have key persons and now they are working with us in our*

organisation. It was also my prejudice that they will not want to meet Italian people but the opposite happened…"

And further to this, a participant from Sweden that travelled to Egypt explained:

"I learnt about the concept of Eid - your guest cannot get hungry. This gave me a new dimension on understanding then other culture and relating to the European reality it is not about money and the connection about humans ... An embodiment with the 15 different people taking me ... They were saying 'you are my guest' and this makes me compare the immediate or natural unconscious reaction of interaction with the stranger or the foreigner ..."

Another participant from the Arab side described how significant was for him an encounter with an Israeli artist during his placement in Belgrade:

"During the placement in Belgrade I met an activist in the cultural field that she is originally from Israel and she was proposing [to my Tandem colleague] *a project and we were discussing* […]. *This meeting was one of most intense conversations I have made in my whole life. Her father is one of the strategic people in Mossad so it was a powerful encounter to discuss and talk about these issues and we started talking about the project. She took the decision to leave Israel although she is from an extreme right wind family and she was a leftist and all the discussions starting from project, politics, individual responsibilities were powerful. At the end I said 'I respect you but I cannot forgive you because I cannot neglect the personal and individual responsibility' although I understand that people are obliged to be in certain circumstances and we talked about culture as well and what was reflected and it is important to reflect in our projects is to demonstrate the conflict than building projects that moralise the confrontation- so instead of building projects about peace and reconciliation there is an importance of doing projects that reflect the conflict itself ...".*

His Tandem colleague added to this story the following:

"I was just watching how things happened. It was a valuable experience. […] *We got from Europe the world reconciliation. And I was there the third eye. My conclusion* [is that there] *was no reconciliation but political solidarity and intensity. I was too naïve to think: 'let's sit on a table and we will solve it…' The limits of reconciliation…".*

Highly context specific was the most significant change story of a participant from Latvia that collaborated with a participant from Palestine:

"The placement in Palestine: seeing the check points made me emotional distressed and physically noxious ... I then met an Israeli [person] and he made me some tea and there was an immediate connection. I was feeling I needed a friend and he was so warm I decided to go back the next day and it was it was when Donald Trump won the elections. And I went back to the store and he had the pictures of Donald Trump on the wall and this was stressing me. He was saying everything I disagree with and goes against with everything I think ... This situation was stressing me out and he said you shouldn't be afraid because this was life ... I could not understand how to deal with these mixed feelings... Question in mind disagrees with your entire beliefs system and how you say I

> *accept this and we can still be friends or is this is so fundamentally different to what I believe? And where do you put the line...?"*

Or the one of a participant from France that did a placement in Egypt:

> *"*[We were gathering] *public statements from the audience about their feelings regarding gender and it was hard at the beginning. No one wanted to commit or share their feelings in public but during the workshop we did in Egypt there was an open call and we had a group of 3 men that were always skeptical. There was a physical exercise - th men did not want to do it. But at the end there's s temporary change: they asked the photographer to have their photograph taken and became willing to engage in the discussion, going out of their comfort zone".*

Another comment that drew my attention was a participant that explained that following her placement in Amman she realized that for the next year the project for her organisation should be to have the stairs clean. "*I realised that small scale is meaningful and accessing your ambitions about what you want to do with real needs and the negotiation between these two, was a real reality check".*

A participant originally from Lebanon and residing in France during many years shared two interesting significant stories as well. The first one was related to the programme allowing her during the project implementation in a neighbourhood in Alexandria to re-think her role as a professional. The second one was related to her own identity being a person from an Arab background representing though a European- based organisation in a EuroArab cultural cooperation programme. Both stories are reflected below in her own words:

> *"It changed my position as a professional. We were supposed to go as cultural managers to do cultural mapping. At the end I was questioning my relation to my social class as my profession. We are used to be the experts and tell to people what we do... The more we know, the more we are aware for our ignorance, the more we are open to learning collecting and changing to people and influencing the community. I ended up questioning my role as a professional and this has a relation to my professional development".*
>
> *"I don't know where I belong. For a long time that I was feeling integrated in France, there were moments that I was feeling I was pointed out without having done anything ... And in Lebanon I was always the French. I arrived to the reflection that we are living in a world that we cannot talk about homogenous identities and has the concept of multidimensional identity and one will be predominant related on the circumstances".*

Although, the way that the Tandem programme approaches the technique does not touch upon on the potential it could have when shared with the various stakeholders, the results are shared with the stakeholders in the form of a final report. The technique

5.7.7 Take away points

It is very difficult in this case study to distinguish the overall concerns and thoughts around evaluation of the Tandem Shaml programme from the whole TANDEM scheme. It was however an insigful exercise to look deeper into this programme for this research given its various possible levels of analysis.

Matarasso, reflecting on his experience regarding the evaluation of the Tandem programme, described the complexity of evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes as follows:

> *"To do anything that you could credibly call an evaluation of a programme that has involved 300 different people and has stretched back 5 years in all different places, you would have to spend a fortune doing it in terms of time and travel and cost. And one of the things I sometimes say to people, is you can know everything if you are prepared to pay for everything. Evaluation is not difficult: you can absolutely know everything. Now the question is 'is the value that you produce worth what you've paid for it?'. And most of the times, it isn't'."*

What Matarasso raises here is a challenge for all evaluations of international cultural cooperation programmes, and even more when it applies to evaluating a programme that has a long life cycle and tracks the development of participants, projects and networks over time, such as Tandem Shaml and even more the Tandem programme as a whole.

Tandem Shaml is a EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes that compared to the others examined here is the only one that enables explicitly the development of mutual, one-to-one cooperation between practitioners in both regions. Its' evaluation practice is revealing on both the internal and external aspect of it. On the internal level, it should be recognised that the programme offers an arena for trying things out and experimenting with methods firstly because it is a programme repeated throughout the years and accumulates learnings from all its rounds (and not only its EuroArab component). Secondly through, because there is a culture of evaluation inside the organisation that feeds into the organisational knowledge. The Tandem Shaml staff seemed engaged with the evaluation aspect in the project management cycle, and additionally they have a supportive environment to develop their approaches.

Besides the elaborated internal evaluation system, bringing an external consultant on board with the profile of Matarasso, gave the opportunity to the programme organisers to create a story out of the programme, reflected in the paper *Mirror Images* (Matarasso, 2016) that contributes to the overall aim of the Tandem Shaml programme which consists in

proposing an operational framework which would become a reference project for similar actions of other public and private stakeholders in the field of exchange between Europe and the Arab region.

5.8 Learning from the case studies

"We can evaluate anything- including evaluation itself" (Shadish et al, 1991: 19)

This section provides a summary of the case study key findings, stressing the patterns and challenges when it comes to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes. More precisely, the points highlighted by the case studies presented in this chapter are looked into with a critical eye. Since the overall aim of chapter (5) was to explore how organisations deal with evaluation of their international cultural cooperation programmes in the EuroArab region through the four case studies examined, the analysis in this section is mainly focused on the practical sides of the evaluation practice and the human factor in the evaluation. Further issues that arose from the interviews feed into the conclusions of this research.

More precisely, by investigating into the chosen case studies, the research aimed to understand and gather evidence on the elements included in Table 5.20 that guided the data collection inquiry for the case studies.

5.20 Elements examined in the case study research

Block A) the purpose for which evaluation was undertaken and its focus;
Block B) the profile of the evaluator (if applicable);
Block C) the ways evidence is collected;
Block D) the analysis of the evidence;
Block E) lessons learnt from the evaluation;
Block F) communication of the evaluation findings;
Block G) challenges in the evaluation practice and
Block H) the human factor in evaluation

Source: Developed by researcher.

Given that the schemes selected are not identical, neither in content nor in the way evaluation is approached, there is no attempt to make any comparisons between the cases. I have instead opted for discussing strengths and weaknesses of each of the cases

analysed individually in each case study, especially as seen through the eyes of the people involved in each one of them. Nevertheless, in order to draw some conclusions, some overall observations for each of the pre-defined blocks will be discussed here.

The main element emerging from the analysed case studies is that it is difficult to come to the conclusion that the description of the evaluation approaches of the four selected case studies displays any systematic good practice. We observe from one side that a very modest and unsteady effort is made by programme managers to document systematically their own work by collecting and systematising the memory of the programmes to contribute to their evaluation practice, while in the same time they often seek external expertise to verify or question their assumptions. None of these processes however is considered 'perfect' from the people involved in it and organisations and evaluators are looking for better ways to approach the subject matter.

From the analysis of the four case studies, the main points emerging can be summarised as follows:

- The case studies confirm the observation exposed in chapter (2) that evaluation is motivated by the following aims a) accountability , b) organisational learning and c) advocacy;
- There is some ambiguity in understanding what exactly evaluation means, which explains the existence of multiple approaches and terminology that is applied to different practices;
- There are increasing attempts to practice programme evaluation in international cultural cooperation however, even if not formulated as such, in most cases the point of attention is on impact: what changes happen on the individual participants and as a consequence to the organisations they represent and to their community;
- In reality though, the evaluations conducted are programme evaluations although they claim to make an impact assessment in the same time;
- In some cases the commissioning body had already an evaluation model in mind (EUNIC/ MENA case) while in the case of TANDEM and of the Cultural Innovators Network, the commissioning bodies were open to testing evaluation approaches;
- The findings are communicated to different audiences in relation to the initial aims of the evaluation, more precisely they are a) used for accountability and reporting and therefore shared with funders and stakeholders (for example the

case of TANDEM Shaml and EUNIC/ MENA training), b) distributed internally to people who are related to the programme (for example, the case of CIN) but also contributing to the communication of an overall evaluation strategy (as was seen through the *Kultur wirkt/ Culture counts* project) and c) making the case for the programme and often also communicated publically (Cimetta Fund and TANDEM Shaml);

- - The major drawback of programme evaluations is their perceived bias towards the programme, since they are usually commissioned by programme organisers seeking to legitimise the relevance of their programme and work on advocacy for securing financial support for the continuation of the programme;
- Although information on the budget available for the evaluation was never disclosed, none of the case studies examined includes a benefit-cost analysis, which would define whether the cost of each programme outweighs its benefits (Patton, 1995);
- It was confirmed that qualitative data are said to be used to describe how programmes function and "what it may mean to the people involved" (W.K.Kellogg Foundation, 1998: 72). Qualitative techniques, such as in-depth interviews and participant observation were identified by the case studies as important in helping an evaluator understanding the context of the programme or the outcome itself;
- With a few sporadic exceptions, there is a tendency to follow standard tools and practices from other fields, with a not so prominent creative effort to find more adequate instruments for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes. There is also a lack of using creative methods in the evaluation design;
- Among the particular challenges of international cultural cooperation programmes evaluation is the typically large number of stakeholders and the multiplicity of possible outcomes. Also geographical distance and technological means for communicating make their evaluation even more challenging;
- The biggest challenge through remains "how to link micro-level effects on individuals to the more marco level of the community" (Guetzkow, 2002: 15). Therefore, the most challenging part is to find instruments in evaluating the programme experience and communicating with the policy makers and the public opinion in order to demonstrate the role, potential and the impact on the local community;;

- There are unexploited potentialities of relationships, partnerships and support throughout the life span of the programmes to monitor and gather evidence related to the success of the programmes and their impacts, while there is a lack of effort and instruments in monitoring change;
- There is a lack of professional competences in evaluation practice and an unstructured nature of knowledge, therefore evaluators gain their experience on the ground;
- The issue of culturally sensitive evaluations is not really tackled and we see that evaluators mainly come from Europe and do not necessarily have direct previous experience with the Arab region;
- None of the evaluations questioned whether the people selected to participate to each program were the appropriate ones, neither whether the channels of communication of the programme were sufficient.
- Evaluation methodologies applicable to the sector and the nature of international cultural cooperation programmes still need further development. However, the four case studies testify to the fact that cultural organisations and funding bodies are recognising the utility of reliable information and insightful analysis and shows a commitment to develop further expertise in the field.

5.9 Closing Reflections

This chapter has shown that international cultural cooperation programmes are evaluated in a way or another. As it was noted in the methodological note of the chapter (5.2), a limitation to this study is that it can only be based on evaluation examples that were made available to the researcher, therefore the scope is limited and perhaps not representative enough. However, given that there is a lack in the literature on the subject, these findings can contribute to extrapolating a number of observations.

We have seen that what is evaluated in international cultural cooperation programmes is determined by a variety of factors. Most of the times this depends on the nature of the programme itself (grants programme, collaboration programme, network formation programme or training) but more importantly it is conditioned by the needs and programmatic aims of the funding institutions.

The benefit of examining international cultural cooperation programmes instead of single projects is that they give an overarching view on policy priorities. The programmes

studied in this chapter, confirm the categories of aims that were identified in chapter (4). It can be said that none of them focused on the 'quality' of the artistic and/ or cultural outputs, nor on the mechanisms of delivery, but mostly on the benefits that the programmes have offered to participants, their organisation and their community and the processes unfolding in the specific programme. This point was explicitly made clear in Hatem Hassan's (project manager for Tandem Shaml) words:

> *"I think it is important to emphasise from the beginning that we are process oriented we are not outcomes oriented. Which means that we focus a lot on the process. So if a Tandem comes and says 'ok we do an exhibition', 'oh good for you, sorry we don't care'.* [The question is:] *How are you going to collaborate to make the exhibition? What are the processes of collaboration that you are going to go through? What are the learnings, what are the challenges that you are facing? And this is mainly what you can do because this you can evaluate at the end and you are evaluating a process. And the process already happened and the evaluation is* [focused on] *'how much did I learn from this process'?. How much can I benefit from this process for future collaborations on an international level? And then it's different."*

It was also shown that evaluation can be either internal or external, or sometimes even both. And the methods can vary from quantitative to qualitative, although clear 'preference' and validity was attributed from the people interviewed to qualitative approaches. Given the variety of the actors and programmes that form international cultural cooperation, any effort to standardisise and propose a single evaluation format would be in vain. What is however useful, and was requested from the people interviewed, is a wider body of knowledge regarding methodologies that could be adapted and tested in different environments.

This chapter is at the core of the research since it reflects how evaluation is perceived and conducted in practice. Issues raised during the empirical part of the research will be discussed with a number of selected experts in the following chapter (6) in an effort to extract conclusions that are independent from the single case studies.

Chapter 6:
Expert opinions on EuroArab cultural cooperation and evaluation

6.1 Presentation of the chapter

6.2 Notes on expert interviews methodology

6.3 Selection of experts

6.4 Profile of experts

6.5 The interviews

6.6 Findings from the expert interviews

6.7 Closing Reflections

6.1 Presentation of the chapter

Chapter (6) is the last one of the empirical research. It includes a complementary qualitative study based on the analysis of 10 interviews conducted with experts related to the research questions and the subjects of this thesis. This chapter answers the third of the main research objectives, which is to voice the concerns and opinions of the people involved in international cultural cooperation programmes and their experiences and gather their suggestions regarding the evaluation practice. At the end of Section II this was achieved through summarising the questions and concerns of those participating at the ENCATC Working Group on the evaluation of international cultural cooperation projects and cultural networks in chapter (3). Here, the scope is delimited to the EuroArab region in particular since it is the setting chosen for the empirical research.

In chapter (5), the topic of the value of EuroArab cultural cooperation has been approached through examining how evaluation is being commissioned, carried out and perceived and how it contributes to programme development and improvement in four selected case studies. In addition to this analysis, it was considered necessary to contrast the preliminary reflections and findings and to discuss the main questions of this research with a number of experts coming both from the Arab and European regions and listen to their opinions. This additional research method allowed approaching the subject matter through an additional angle, taking a certain level of distance from the concrete programmes/ schemes investigated as case studies.

Another added value of this supplementary qualitative inquiry is that it sheds light to further evaluation practices besides the ones analysed in the case studies. Since all selected interviewees had been involved in a way or another in the evaluation of cultural cooperation programmes, they shared their reflections based on their own experiences. Given that, in general terms, access to information around evaluation of programmes is not easy due to issues of confidentiality and because, in most of the cases, evaluation is an internal exercise (regardless if an external evaluator is brought on board), this input is considered relevant to be included in this research since it contributes substantially to the subject under study.

As mentioned already in the Introduction that outlines the methodology of the empirical part of this research, some of the people interviewed in the framework of the case studies are to a certain extent already experts in the field given their experience in international cultural cooperation or in the EuroArab region. In the section that summarises the case

studies findings (5.8), reference is made to the 'fluid' roles in the evaluation practice, meaning that perhaps in this specific case I had interviewed them in their capacity as 'participants'/ 'beneficiaries', but this does not mean that in other instances they had not been the ones commissioning evaluations or even undertaking them[129]. However, in this chapter, the 10 people chosen to constitute the 'experts' sample had no connection with the case studies analysed in chapter (5).

The structure of this chapter is as follows:

- Section (6.2) describes the methodology of conducting the expert interviews.
- Section (6.3) provides the analysis of the expert interviews following the topics identified in the topics list and the additional topics that came up from the interviews.
- The last section (6.4) includes the final reflections on the added value of the method and the relevance of the findings for the research topic.

6.2 Notes on expert interviews methodology

Expert interviews fall within the canon of what is known as 'qualitative interviews'. When defining the role of an expert, Bogner and Menz (2009: 72) claim that the expert should be seen as "a person who disposes of, or is believed to dispose of, particular competences, and who consequently has a social status, or exercises a function, which places him/ her in a position where she or he may be able to gain general acceptance for his or her orientations and situation definitions". An expert is different to a specialist in the sense that he/ she "is that type of knower who has a good overview of the overall known knowledge in one field, that is an overview of a specialist knowledge field" (Pfadenhauer, 2009: 82) and that can comment on the nature of problems and contribute to problem-solving.

Nonetheless, besides their overall knowledge on the topics of this research, interviewees were invited to reflect on their own situation and to provide information about their own perceptions, social relations and motives related to EuroArab cultural cooperation and the evaluation of programmes. The interviews conducted were open in order to allow interviewees to develop their subjective attributions of meaning by a far- reaching non-

[129] Matarasso (2009: 47) had already identified this aspect in the evaluation in arts and culture and explains that people that he interviewed for the scope of his study had different experiences and stories with evaluation and some had occupied more than one of the three identified roles in the course of their working lives.

intervention from my side as a researcher. In this way, the expert interviews are "building a context for sociability, rather than data gathering" (Warren, 2002: 93). Restraining from imposing "an external relevance system upon the interviewed, letting him [the interviewee/ expert] develop and formulate his own relevances instead" (Pfadnhauer, 2009: 84) is of the main differentiated characteristics of the expert interviews in comparison to other types of interview techniques. A short topics list was developed before conducting the interviews to cover the main aspects tackled in this study and that are connected to the research questions and the preliminary findings of the previous empirical research. However, when undertaking the interviews some alterations were made while the conversation was developing. As in the previous interviews, the approach was more 'conversational' with the aim to establish a fluid discussion, which would allow extracting conclusions in relation to the main research questions. In some cases it was not possible to tackle all the topics conceived beforehand- either because of time limitations or because of the course of the interview.

In comparison to other qualitative interviews, an expert interview is not an asymmetrical exercise where the interviewer mainly consults the expert. Although unintentional at the beginning, I soon realised at my first interview with an expert (interview with Khadija El Bennaoui, 24/10/2016) the importance that it had to place myself as a person with an equal status, someone with whom the expert can exchange knowledge, information and opinions. In expert interviews, by assuming a "shared store of knowledge" (Bogner & Menz, 2009: 58) the interviewer is considered as a co-expert. Establishing this confidence among the interviewees to 'accept' me, the interviewer, as a co-expert, allowed the interviewers to reveal information and knowledge they would be unlikely to make available if my role would have been assessed differently and my competences attributed differently. It was considered necessary to demonstrate my specialist interest in the subject, making use of my own knowledge and engaging in a lively discussion on this basis with the interviewees. Soon it became clear that this was necessary for the interviewees as well. For example, one of the experts interviewed when we started our conversation, she started addressing questions to me first. For example, she asked, "why did you decide to do a research on this subject?" and this gave me the opportunity to explain to her my research trajectory and to sketch the knowledge acquired so far throughout the research. In a way this was like reversing our role between interviewer and interviewee. Therefore, in all expert interviews, a more "emphatically horizontal communication structure" (Bogner and Menz, 2009: 58) was achieved, which took the form of a conversation between specialists. Nonetheless, the status of the interviewer as

a co-expert was constantly re-negotiated throughout the course of an expert interview, therefore it did not come as a surprise when the interviewees were asking me questions/ opinions or to share material with them.

A final note regarding the expert interviews is that my aim was to conduct these interviews at the end of the research period, after finalising all the interviews and research related to the case studies. However, given that some interviews related to the case studies took place later than foreseen while the expert interviews were already defined, this was not in all cases possible. This is the case for the interview with Khadija El Bennaoui, Marie Le Sourd and Krystel Khoury. I have to admit though that the main conclusions regarding the case studies were already drawn at that point and this fact did not influence the importance and relevance of the expert interviews.

An issue arising when conducting expert interviews is how large should the 'panel' of experts be. When talking about interviews in general, Weiss (1994: 21) says that "you stop when you encounter diminishing returns, when the information you obtain is redundant or peripheral, when what you do learn that is new adds too little to what you already know to justify the time and cost of the interviewing". Since all people interviewed were representing a different organisation or a different capacity, albeit all of them being knowledgeable on the subject matter, I have to admit that I felt that every single interview was contributing further to the research questions. Therefore, although my initial idea was to reach out to around 6-8 people, the final number of interviews undertaken was 10. As the research was unfolding, I was thinking of more people that could be enriching to talk to. I wrote to a number of people that I considered valuable for the research believing that not all of them would be interested and/ or available for an interview. At moments when I reached the equal number between Arab and European informants I was satisfied. But then another person would reply saying that he/ she would be interested in contributing to the research or another interesting contact would unfold, so at the end my sample consists of 10 people, equally representing the Arab and the European side, as well as other criteria that I identify below.

The preparation for the expert interviews had two levels:

a) The first level consisted on one hand in identifying the potential experts and on a second hand to get a good knowledge about their work, the institution they represent and their relation to EuroArab cultural cooperation before interviewing them;

b) The second level consisted in reviewing the research questions and the results from the previous empirical research and identifying the interview topics list.

6.3 Selection of experts

This section describes the profile of the selected sample that allows for an attribution as 'experts' and discusses the selection criteria. First of all, it goes without saying that all interviewees had to have in a way or another an affiliation, personal involvement and exposure in regards to the topics of this research. The main areas of interest were understood as 'international cultural cooperation' and 'evaluation'. An important criterion was also their knowledge, professional position and understanding of the region in focus. As will be shown below, it is considered that all 10 interviewees cover substantially these two criteria.

The selection of interviewees was affected by a number of issues that I wish to hold in balance. First of all, as mentioned already, an equal number of people from both the European and the Arab side with expertise in EuroArab cultural cooperation was to be identified. At the beginning I was hesitant to write to people I did not know at all asking them to answer to my questions in their capacity as an expert in the topic of EuroArab cultural cooperation. But the high level of response and their interest in the subject matter surprised me positively. At the end I managed to conduct 10 interviews in total (of which only three I knew in person from before), which is considered a sufficient number for the purpose and scope of this study.

Furthermore, a geographical balance among the countries represented by the experts was aimed, that would also be complementary to the people interviewed for the other parts of this research. However, this was not always possible and for example three among the interviews are with experts that are related to Morocco in a way or another: one from the point of view of a cultural operator in the country (Dounia Benslimane from the organisation Racines), the other one as a Moroccan free-lancer with substantial international experience and based in Europe (Khadija El Bennaoui) and the third a Spanish official (Javier Galván Guijo), the Director of the Instituto Cervantes of Rabat and General Coordinator of the Instituto in Fez. Finally, I wanted to identify people that from their position and experiences could represent different points of view on the subject matter and guarantee that academic, institutional/ policy and practice perspectives are voiced- as it was the case in chapter (3) with the ENCATC WG participants.

The experts were identified through personal contacts, research and through snowballing effect. It considered necessary in this point to describe the profile of each of the selected experts and their relation to the research topic. The list of the interviewees is included in Table 6.1. Details of the interviews in terms of how, when they took place and in which language are presented in Annex 6.

Table 6.1 List of expert interviewees

EXPERT INTERVIEWS	
Name	**Organisation/ Capacity**
Marie Le Sourd	Secreatary General of On-the-move
Fanny Bouquerel	Capacity Development Expert MedCulture
Javier Galván Guijo	Director of Instituto Cervantes in Rabat
Karsten Xuereb	Executive Director - Valetta 2018
Milena Dragićević	University of Belgrade, UNESCO Chair in Studies of Interculturalism, Art and Cultural Management and Mediation.
Khadija El Bennaoui	Free lance associated with More Europe, AMA, YAFT among others
Mai Abu ElDahad	Director of Mophradat
Krystel Khoury	Free lance associated with the RCF, Mophradat and TANDEM among others
Dounia Benslimane	Development and Partnerships of Racines
Abdullah Al Kafri	Executive Manager of Ettijahat

Source: Developed by researcher.

6.4 Profiles of experts

Marie Le Sourd

I firstly met Marie in 2011 in a Conference on mobility. From January 2012 till August 2014, Marie was the Secretary General of On-the-Move (OTM), ensuring the daily management of the organisation and the implementation of OTM's strategic plan. While OTM did not receive any further operational support grant from the European Commission, Marie continues to search for additional sources of funding for keeping OTM alive while she maintains the news section of the website. Moreover, she has recently attended training on evaluation.

Marie has studied Political Sciences and International Cultural Exchange and Relations. From 1999 to 2006 she was in charge of programmes in the Cultural Exchange Department of the Asia-Europe Foundation based in Singapore (ASEF), particularly in the fields of young artists' exchange, development of cultural policies and networks of

cultural professionals. In September 2006 she joined the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, working as the Director of the French Cultural Centre in Yogyakarta (Indonesia). Her expertise is on mobility and on funding mechanisms and recently she has been involved as an expert in the Med Culture programme activities. She has also overviewed the OTM report on mobility opportunities in the Arab countries (On The Move, 2014).

Fanny Bouquerel

It was considered relevant to approach Dr Fanny Bouquerel for two main reasons. On one hand, she is currently the Capacity Development Expert of the Technical Assistance Unit of the EU funded Med Culture Regional Programme which has been described in (4.4). Moreover, she is the co-author of the report conducted in 2009 for the European Commission *Towards a Strategy for Culture in the Mediterranean Region* (Bouquerel & El Husseini, 2009) – which has been referenced several times throughout this research- and of a commissioned study on the creative industries for the Ministry of Culture in Tunisia in 2014. She started her career working for IETM in Brussels and then in international performing arts organisations. In parallel, she worked on designing, implementing and providing technical assistance for cultural cooperation projects developed mainly in the framework of European programmes in the Mediterranean area and conducted research in the field. She has designed and managed the capacity development programme MELOPEE, which dealt with cultural management training for young cultural operators in the Mediterranean region (2004-2010). Fanny has studied theatre studies and European Cultural Policies and Management, holds a PhD in Social Sciences, while she teaches European cultural institutions and policies to MA students.

Javier Galván Guijo

Dr Javier Galván Guijo is the Director of the Instituto Cervantes in Rabat and General Coordinator of the Instituto Cervantes in Fez. Javier was introduced to me through Ana Vásquez who was the former Director of Cultural Activities of Instituto Cervantes in Rabat and Coordinator of Culture for Morocco[130]. Ana warned me that he is a 'super jefe' (meaning in English 'super boss'). I was positively surprised by his openess and wilingness to share his experience, insights and material with me. The Instituto

[130] I had worked with Ana at the International EXPO in Zaragoza in 2008 and I had visited her in Morocco in March 2010, a few months before starting my PhD. I mention this here because I consider that this was quite influential to the decision of the topic of my research. Currently Ana is the Director of Culture in the Cervantes Institute in New York.

Cervantes' presence in Morocco is the largest in the world. This demonstrates the strategical importance that it plays for Spain due to historical ties and geographical proximity. The EUNIC/ MENA programme, one of the case studies anaysed in Chapter (5), was one of the first activities Javier was exposed to when taking over the role of Director in Rabat so we discussed about it in our interview, as well as on the role of EUNIC and the clusters and how the Instituto Cervantes cooperates with other foreign cultural institutions on the ground. His background is in architecture and has also extensive experience in different Cervantes Institutes around the world.

Karsten Xuereb

Before thinking about contacting Dr Karsten Xuereb, I read his PhD thesis. Karsten holds a PhD in cultural relations in the Mediterranean from the Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona that has studied how local cultural actors in selected Mediterranean countries perceive foreign cultural presence. Currently he is the Executive Director for Valetta 2018 Foundation which his responsible for Valletta's preparations as European Capital of Culture in 2018. Valetta 2018 has a strong component of EuroMediterranean cultural relations in its programming and is also cooperating with the Cimetta Fund on a funding line supporting mobility of artists and operators in the region. Previously he was responsible for culture at the Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU in Brussels. Moreover, he is a fellow of the U40 Network 'Cultural Diversity 2030' established by the German Commission for UNESCO and a member of the Diplomatic Culture Research Network.

Milena Dragićević Šešić

The research would be 'incomplete' without including an input from Milena, as everyone calls her. Dr Milena Dragićević Šešić is Head of the UNESCO Chair on Interculturalism, Art Management and Mediation in the Balkans and Professor of Cultural Policy and Cultural Management. She has expertise in participatory approaches for the design and development of local cultural policies and large experience in policy interventions in South East Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia and the Arab countries. She is highly appreciated by the civil society and cultural sector in the Arab countries and many people interviewed in the framework of the exploratory interviews or for the case studies made a reference to her work. She has worked closely with ECF and with Al Mawred in the Arab region as trainer and consultant, she was involved in the EUNIC/ MENA training that was one of the case studies of this research (from her capacity as core team member of the trainers pool of the European Diploma in Cultural Management) and is working as an

expert with the Council of Europe, EU funded programmes, Pro Helvetia, the British Council and others. She is also member of the UNESCO Technical Assistance in Cultural Governance. She has done research (Dragićević Šešić, 2016) to which I refer in (4.4), has written extensively about Arab cultural policies, including a chapter in Culture Resource's (2010) *Cultural Policies introduction to eight Arab countries* and has undertaken evaluation assignments of cultural programmes, including in the Arab region (more precisely Al Mawred's Abbara programme). She has been the Professor of dear research friends I have made through the Young Cultural Researchers Forums of ENCATC, namely Aleksandar Brick and Visnja Kisic, both winners of the award in 2011 and 2013 respectively.

Khadija El Bennaoui

I met Khadija in person during the CONNEXXIONS meeting that took place in Jerrash (Jordan) in October 2014. At that moment I told her already *"Khadija, one day soon I will interview you for my PhD thesis".* Khadija is an intercultural activist, researcher and practitioner from Morocco with a focus on the global South. She has worked for almost 20 years on programmes related to providing funding, improving work conditions of independent contemporary artists and building capacities of cultural practitioners in the Middle East and Africa. She has worked for a variety of international organisations, such as the Youth Arab Theatre Fund (currently Mophradat), Art Moves Africa, Arterial Network, the Cimetta Fund and the European Cultural Foundation. As a researcher she has participated in researches to map the funding landscape in the Arab world, establishing a placement scheme in the cultural management sector in the Mediterranean and for the establishment of an African Fund for Arts and Culture. She has also been involved in the initial stage of the EUNIC/ MENA Pilot training project analysed in (5.4). She is currently based in Belgium and after working for various Belgium – based cultural organisations, she is returning to free- lancing and consultancy.

Dounia Benslimane

Talking to Dounia Benslimane was suggested to me by Jean Pierre Deru from the Marcel Hicter Foundation. Dounia is the General Secretary of Racines and works in the cultural sector since 2008 (before she was a practitioner doctor). After managing a theatre association in Morocco, she became coordinator of the 'La Fabrique Culturelle des anciens abattoirs de Casablanca'. In 2011 she co-founded Racines- Association for cultural development in Morocco and Africa and in 2013 became its General Director. It is worth mentioning here that Racines is benefiting of financial support through the

MedCulture programmes, namely the Drama, Diversity and Developent and SouthMed CV. Racines was recently awarded funding from MedCulture for the Marsad project (Mediterranean Action and Research for Sustainability and Development) which aims to create a collective platform of research, implementation, monitoring and observation of cultural policies in the MENA region. She is also a member of the board of experts for the Roberto Cimetta Fund and attended the European Diploma on Cultural Projects Management of Marcel Hicter Association in 2013/2014.

Krystel Khoury

I first met Dr Krysel Khoury in November 2012 at the Madarat Platform meeting organised in Beirut by RCF**.** Since then I have met Krystel in several occasions, including during the CONNEXXIONS Jerash meeting (October 2014) and in Marseilles (December 2016), where I was doing observation of the Tandem Shaml meeting and she was one of the participants of the new round. Krystel comes from Lebanon and has lived in France for the last 10 years. She is a dance researcher and cultural activist and holds a PhD in the Anthropology of Dance focusing on the creative and transmission processes in dance within intercultural contexts. She has worked for Cimetta Fund as staff, and is also part of their experts' team that is responsible for the selection of grantees. She currently collaborates with Mophradat and was responsible for communications for the latest Meeting points that took place in December 2016 in Brussels. In 2009 she created the association Soukoun, a cultural association interested in developing dance research in the Arab Region and she has participated in several programmes related to EuroArab cooperation.

Adbullah Al Kafri

In one of the exploratory interviews that I did in 2012, Hanan Hajj Ali -a prominent figure in Lebanese and Arab cultural life and a core member of Al Mawred- explaining to me the efforts undertaken for developing cultural policies in the Arab region (see also 4.3.1.6). At that moment she underlined the important of involving the younger generations in the process and she mentioned explicitely Abdullah Al Kafri. At that moment I did know about him. Going through the interview transcription when I started writing the PhD I realised that the person she had identified at that moment, is who today is the Director of Ettijahat[131], a Syrian organisation now operating from Beirut that has informed substantially the discourse about cultural policies in the Arab states and has cooperated

[131] The work of Ettijahat is analysed more deeply in section (4.4).

with a number of European institutions, including ECF, Mimeta and the British Council, to promote cultural research and policy development, as well as opportunities for Syrian artists in the current context. Al Kafri was one of the founding members of Ettijahat and took over the Executive Director role from Rana Yazaji (that I had already interviewed in 2012 as one of my exploratory interviews presented in (4.3.1.6)) in 2014 when Rana became the Director of Al Mawred/ Culture Resource. Al Kafri is a playwright and cultural activist and also works as a trainer in various cultural fields with organisations including Al Mawred- Culture Resource and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

Mai Abu ElDahab

Mai Abu ElDahab is the Director of Mophradat since 2015 and I interviewed her in their office in Brussels in October 2016. Mophradat is the 'evolution' of the Young Arab Theatre Fund (YATF) which has changed its name to better accommodate its current mandate which focuses on creating opportunities for thinking, producing and sharing among contemporary artists from the Arab World and their peers everywhere[132]. I considered important to interview her for two reasons. On one hand it was interesting for me to understand what marked the certain shift in the role and mandate of the organisation, especially since YATF had played an important role in giving opportunities to young Arab artists in the past. On the other hand, being an 'Arab' organisation based in Europe also provided another perspective. Thirdly, AlDahab has a different background compared to the other people interviewed since her main professional activity has been related to curating and she has a solid knowledge of contemporary artistic creation in the Arab world. She comes from Cairo but has lived for a number of years in Brussels. In 2014 she was the co-curator of the Liverpool Biennal.

6.5 The interviews

6.5.1 The interviews' topics

In line with Meuser and Nagel (2009: 31), I considered that an open interview format based on a topic-guide was the appropriate method for data collection in this complementary qualitative research. This was done mainly because at the point when the expert interviews were conducted -meaning towards the end of the research period- as a researcher, I had already accumulated a great level of knowledge on the subject matter. This put me in a position of a "quasi-expert" (Pfadenhauer, 2009) allowing a more 'genuine' conversation could provide more added value to the research.

[132] More info on Mophradat and YAFT is presented in (4.4).

The interview topics were divided in three main blocs, in line with the research objectives, more precisely: a) the web of EuroArab cultural cooperation, b) experiences and methods for evaluating international cooperation schemes in this context, and c) recommendations/ suggestions for improvement.

The first part of the interview consisted in explaining briefly to the experts what the context of the interview was, more precisely the aims of this research. I also shared with them some details regarding my methodology and the selection of the case studies, as well as what I understood from their role as selected experts and how the interviews with them would contribute to the research. The second part was a conversation based on the pre-defined topics, which as explained already, provided merely the framework of the interview. Table 6.2 summarises the interview topics. It should be noted that this list served as a guide and it was adapted slightly according to each interviewee.

Table 6.2 Expert interviews topics guide

Expert interview topics guide
1. The web of Euro Arab relations
- Opinions on actors and programmes
- Own experiences from the organisation they are working for
- General observation of impact of sociopolitical environment to EuroArab cultural cooperation
2. Evaluation of EuroArab cultural cooperation programs and schemes
- Evaluation practices in the organisations they represent
- Challenges for evaluation
- Ideal profile of evaluator in international cultural cooperation programmes
3. Recommendations and suggestions for improvements
- Good practices in ICC programmes' development and evaluation
- Criteria for the success of cultural cooperation programmes in the region

Source: Developed by researcher.

6.5.2 Conducting and transcribing the expert interviews

Given that the expert interviews took place during the last months of this research, it was impossible for me to travel and meet the selected experts in person. This would be even in any case quite complicated given the different geographical locations where these people live and operate. An exception to this was the interview with Khadija El Bennaoui

and Mai Abu ElDahad who are based in Brussels and I managed to meet in person when I travelled to Brussels in October 2016 to attend the ENCATC Working Group on the Evaluation of international cultural cooperation projects[133]. The rest of the interviews were organised remotely mainly via skype, although due to Internet access constraints two interviews were interrupted and had to be conducted by phone.

All interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and one hour. As with the previous interviews, the expert interviews were recorded with a digital recording device and were transcribed later. In case there were questions or confirmation was needed on specific quotations, interviewees were conducted by email to confirm the accuracy of the transcription.

6.5.3 Analysis of interviews

Once the interviews were transcribed, I was confronted with a large, voluminous and complex amount of generated data, which were however rich in content and definitely contributing to the knowledge base of this research, as well as to contrast assumptions and findings. For the analysis of the qualitative data I followed the steps identified by Weiss (1994: 153- 167) for an issue-focused analysis, which are explained below:

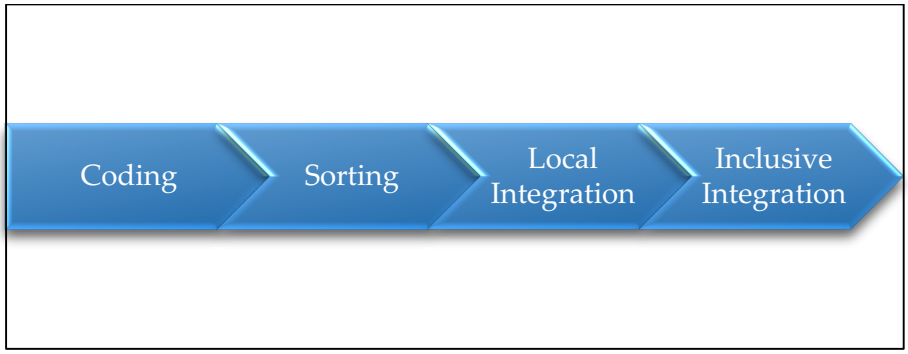
- *Coding.* The first step consisted in linking what the respondents said in their interview to the concepts and categories that appear in the final analysis. Some of the categories coincided with the already identified ones for the interview blocs, however some were added as interviews unfolded. In each transcribed interview I wrote my codings in the margins of the transcribed interview. Categories might have been added or modified as the overall material was available, but this exercise was the initial step to the analysis.
- *Sorting.* Given that I was not interested in a quantitative analysis of the qualitative data gathered, I deliberately did not use any computer-processing programme for the analysis of the interviews. Instead, I started creating 'folders' containing excerpts of the interviews, each folder holding a category of material. As Weiss (1994: 158) notes, "the codings of the material in an excerpt file constitute a statement of what we believe the material tell us".
- *Local integration.* This phase consisted in organising and integrating my observations and understandings in each section of the final text and in this way

[133] More information on this meeting is included in Chapter (3).

to give coherence and meaning to the individual files. In this part I had clearly in mind the previous steps of the research and the main findings in order to start making connections to this material.

- *Inclusive integration.* This part involved knitting "into a single coherent story the otherwise isolated areas of analysis" (Weiss, 1994: 160) that result from the previous step. I was already trying to elaborate a sketchy framework from the previous phase, however as material was gathered throughout almost a 3 month period, the final format was not clear to me until the very end of the analysis.

Figure 6.1 Stages of issue-focused analysis of expert interviews



Source: Developed by researcher according to Weiss (1994).

In the following section, the findings from the expert interviews are shared. The structure followed tries to relate to subjects already identified in previous chapters of the empirical research and the topics list of the open interviews. More precisely:

- The first one is related to the web of EuroArab relations and main actors in the region. The people interviewed have different capacities, so different themes are tackled and different observations are made, however I try to summarise main opinions on the topic.
- The second part focuses more on the evaluation practice and brings about different organisations' approaches to evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes. I consider this as an additional source of information to some of the research questions that I tried to answer with the case studies exposed in chapter (5), and more precisely on how evaluation is conducted and what are the challenges for international cultural cooperation programmes/ schemes, especially in the EuroArab region.
- Recommendations, ideas and suggestions as well as conditions considered as prerequisites for successful international cultural cooperation programmes/

schemes in the region and their evaluation are incorporated in the above two sections.

6.6 Findings from the expert interviews

This way a patchwork of the material was gathered and analysed in a systematic way. This approach also allowed the creation of bridges between observations from the previous empirical research or even from the case studies and contrasting knowledge and opinions from the different experts and from the previous interviews, case studies and chapters of the thesis.

Not all topics from the initial list were addressed to all the experts or their answers did not provide substantial knowledge that would give an added value to our research questions. Therefore, what follows is a 'curated' text based on excerpts from the interviews in a way that makes sense and contributes to the research questions.

6.6.1 The panorama of EuroArab cultural cooperation

Chapter (4) described the environment of EuroArab cultural cooperation and the actors and programmes that exist and function in this framework supporting cultural organisations, civil society and independent initiatives in the Arab region and encouraging interaction with European partners. Chapter (5) also gave some insights into how international cultural cooperation is exercised in the EuroArab context and in some cases the opinions of people involved in the case studies' programmes were shared. Here, the interviews with the experts focused mainly on their opinions regarding the distinctive elements and challenges of cultural cooperation in the region and on the role of the different stakeholders involved.

6.6.1.1 A context in constant evolution

In chapter (1) we have seen that international cultural cooperation is often driven by political motivations in the framework of cultural diplomacy and serves collateral goals. This was also shown for the case of the EuroArab cultural cooperation. Khoury raised a critical voice in this respect regarding the European influence in the Arab region, especially after the Arab Spring. Firstly, she made a distinction between the individual, civil society-led connections that have multiplied in the EuroArab region since then and the institutional level in EuroArab cultural cooperation. She felt that following the uprisings, all of the sudden the EU and the EU member states felt that they had to do

something about it and to give answers through culture for what could not be achieved at the political level:

> *"Every time I speak about the institutional level, it is not so genuine- it is politics. There was a fear also and people felt 'we need to accompany the democratisation process' and there was a lot of money put in culture* […]. *It is as if culture sometimes has become the white napkin so that you can clean up al the dirt that you have been doing. You can include culture in a very smart way in politics*".

What became clear from the interviews is that in this context, a lot of pressure has been put on cultural and civil society organisations to bring change, to empower, to bridge. Dragićević Šešić' had already raised this question in her publication *Arts management in turbulent times* (2003) where she wrote that "in the case of the Balkans, even during times of war, cultural organisations were expected to go ahead with their transformation, although the legal, political and economic systems to support the transformation in culture had not been established" (2003: 15). This can be applied to the Arab region today as well. However, this has also resulted into a situation where organisations in the Arab world feel stronger and more eager to work on an equal basis with colleagues from Europe and can be distinguished from the period in which, using El Bennaoui's words that were already mentioned in (4.2.2), *"to collaborate there was price to pay".* This evolution in the DNA of cultural relations in the region has resulted in a stronger civil society and cultural organisations in the Arab countries. It has also allowed a deeper reflection on the mission of some organisations. Abu ElDahab, the current Director of Mophradat explained how this recent context has affected the organisation:

> *"*[We are shifting] *from an organisation that supports the arts field to an arts organisation itself* [which implies] *moving our resources – financial and logistical- towards the production of interesting and important content which is a shift we consider important since 2011 because one of the things that became evident after the event of the Arab Spring and the euphoric aftermath was the absence of an intellectual class that was able to insert ideas and visions of the future on whatever was being constructed or what existed on policy level- and this is not to say that those people do not exist in general, but they do not have a platform or they have become a diaspora years before".*

Furthermore, ElDahab made reference during our interview to the difficulty of the Arab intelligentsia to contribute to the creation of institutions and organisations capable of leading processes of democratisation, an observation also made by Dragićević Sesic (2014: 9), which is also touched upon in section (4.3.1.5).

Although the research was developed during a period following the Arab Spring where the conditions for an even more enhanced environment of cooperation were created, it can be observed that during the last years this intensity has been diminishing. As also explained in (4.3.1.7), currently there is is a shift from EuroArab cultural cooperation on the international level to the EuroArab cooperation inside European grounds, where the migration discourse has been brought on the spotlight. Using Khadija El Bennaoui's words, *"now we move from the narrative of the Arab uprising to the refugee crisis".* This perhaps also explains, what Karsten Xuereb mentioned during our interview when he said that he feels that people are now less ambitious about what this cooperation can bring:

> *"People are more down to earth now with what they can achieve because of the reality now in Europe as well. When the crisis and migration are major issues and the war in Syria is still going on, people nowadays are more realistic".*

6.6.1.2 Shifts in funding schemes and priorities

EuroMed/ EuroArab cooperation is still an area of enhanced funding opportunities. As Fanny Bouquerel observed:

> *"My personal perception is that there are more opportunities in the Southern Mediterranean countries than elsewhere right now. And I am not sure they [*Arab cultural operators and artists, Arab beneficiaries in general] *realise this".*

However, shifts in political priorities are reflected in the funding schemes. Since recently, funding organisations have been taking into account the overall financial and political situation both in Europe and in the Arab region and have adapted their funding schemes accordingly, often re-directing funding towards a different focus. According to Marie Le Sourd from On-the-move, this can be observed especially in mobility funds that are shifting the way they operate in order to answer to the most urgent needs of the region. She noted that currently the focus is from one side on structural schemes for organisations in the Arab world and on the other hand on solutions for the recent migration and refugee crisis, which has resulted in special support for Arab artists living in Europe, and made reference to the 2016 special Creative Europe call mentioned also in (4.3.1.7). What she describes, reminds us of the Cimetta Fund's decision to launch the Tamteen programme mentioned in (4.4.1), going beyond its traditional funding schemes and providing financial support to organisations in the Arab region for their organisational development. A different dynamic though can be observed in other organisations. For example, in the case of Mophradat, Mai Abu ElDahab mentioned that although previously they were giving grants to support

independent spaces in the Arab region, the grants were eventually too small and it was not worth it, therefore they decided to shift to further support artistic productions as such.

6.6.1.3 New responsibilities towards the displaced artistic communities

The topic of how displaced Arab artists in Europe can be further supported was a topic particularly raised in the interview with Abdullah Al Kafri. Al Kafri commented that there have been endless debates about how the importance of arts and culture in times of crisis can be increased and what is the new role that organisations are coming to play in the current setting. He focused especially on foreign cultural institutions and said that:

> *"There is a big question regarding these institutions, about how they can support the artists that moved recently to Europe. Technically it is not their mission. The British Council cannot implement any activities in the UK, the same with the Goethe. They have to do their activities in the regions where they work. This is a new role we start to think about it… Ettijahat is trying to bring this conversation and how we can respond to this need to move from an emergency situation to a more sustainable situation to deal with the artist that moved. Till the moment, I believe that most organisations - not only the European* [ones]- *they keep working with the Syrian case as an emergency, as a short-term situation. But we need different mechanisms, different ways of thinking".*

Al Kafri underlined that shifting the focus to the displaced artistic community should not take away the support for artistic and cultural life in the Arab countries.

> *"We need to definitely start to work to help them in their new environment and in the same time keep working in the Arab region because the artists there are not a big percentage."*

He pinpointed that for him the two working lines that European actors in EuroArab cultural cooperation should invest in are, from one side, to give opportunities to artists from the Arab region to be exposed internationally, and on the other side investing on a rights-based approach to culture rather to a purely artistic one. He argued that such an approach should be adopted in order to maximise the support from the overall community:

> *"We don't have any tools to map the scene. Where is the artist? This role the institutions in Europe can develop more: to help the artists be exposed more and more. On the displaced scene and also keep working in the region- although the situation is very vulnerable. It increases the understanding of culture and arts work by linking it more to the rights- based approach rather than cultural work. If we are linking more the cultural work to make it related to the right of culture, access to culture and art we will have a better chance to get support from the community".*

6.6.1.4 What happens to cultural life after the end of foreign funding?

In (4.3.1.4) the importat place that foreign funding plays for arts and culture in the Arab region was drawn. One of the questions raised to the interviewees was related to the future of this cooperation after an eventual shift in political priorities. I shared with Milena Dragićević Šešić's my observation that the level of interest to the Arab region (especially the Southern Mediterranean countries) is comparable to the case of the Balkans in the late '90s and '00s and asked her to compare the situation with her experience in the Balkans where a similar 'funding fever' dominated in the late '90s and in the '00s. She explained that in her own opinion:

> *"It will be more hard to Arab cultural operators than it was for the Balkan cultural operators when the West interest was lost because till that moment national cultural policies, and cities' policies especially, had been developed in a manner that there was competition for NGOs and for the independent sector this transition was possible. And plus the European integration opened path for Balkan countries. Even if they are not yet members, they are eligible for EU money and funds.* [...]. *In the Arab region it is going to be more difficult. Their cultural policies, state and city cultural policies are not developed and that is a mistake of not organising a capacity building program for the public administration".*

6.6.2 The actors in EuroArab cultural cooperation

In chapter (1) the multi-layer set of actors involved in international cultural cooperation was sketched. Here the approach is more qualitative, since interviewees expressed their own opinions about the different institutions involved in international cultural cooperation in the EuroArab region.

6.6.2.1 The EU as main donor

> *"The EU is still perceived as the main donor in the South- it was not very clear to me at the beginning, but it is a fact."*

Fanny Bouqurel made this observation. She explained that although the situation inside Europe is changing given the recent economic crisis and the migration flows, the commitment towards the Southern Mediterranean as priority region still remains. The number of actors programmes described in (4.4.1) confirms this as well. Although the Anna Lindh Foundation is the main EU organisation dealing with civil society and culture in the EuroMediterranean framework, it should be noted that it was very few times mentioned in the interviews as an actor in the region. The main actors identified were primarily the EU through its specific programmes and the foreign cultural institutes.

6.6.2.2 An enhanced role for EUNIC

In parallel to the individual foreign cultural institutes, EUNIC's developing role in EU's external relations and the role of the clusters was raised in a number of interviews, especially the ones with Dounia Benslimane and Javier Galván Guijo. Javier explained that the Instituto Cervantes is currently leading the EUNIC cluster in Morocco and that they are trying to change the dynamics it has had since it was initially established. He explained that this commitment is the result of the fact that the Secretary General of Cervantes was the President of EUNIC since 2015. He observed that EUNIC has still a weak identity and that at the beginning even the EU delegation in Morocco did not know what EUNIC was. Currently though, the EUNIC Rabat has been awarded funding from EUNIC Global to contribute to the research project *Diagnosis and inventory of arts and culture in Morocco*, which has been carried out by Racines by supporting the participation of EU experts in a 2-day workshop to write recommendations for a cultural policy proposal in Morocco.

The new working culture that is being establishing in Marroco goes in line with EUNIC Global's overall efforts. As a result, EUNIC Casablanca and EUNIC Rabat currently work together with the EU Delegation in Morocco on a country-wide programme under the title *Cultures pour vivre ensemble* that got funding from EUNIC Global and which has as an objective to teach skills to young people and keep them away from radicalism. The two clusters in Morocco have chosen this thematic area of work for the three-year overall strategy they are developing in the country.

Dounia Benslimane, that had collaborated with EUNIC during the organisation of the EUNIC/ MENA training described in case sudy (5.4), underlined that the success and efficacy of a cluster depends a lot on the person that is in charge:

> *"EUNIC clusters really depend on who is leading the cluster. I remember that when we did the fist edition of États Généraux we had a good collaboration with the EUNIC cluster in Rabat* […] *and we had a constant exchange with them and they participated to bring experts from Europe to work together with us on the recommendations and it was really depending on the Belgian delegation*[134]*. Once they were not at the head – we didn't hear from them anymore. This is the problem of a collective like anywhere- it depends on who is leading."*

[134] The Belgian foreign cultural institute was the lead of the EUNIC cluster at that moment.

6.6.2.3 ECF standing out

Various interviewees referred to the work of ECF in the region as exemplary. Some of them had even cooperated very closely with EFC. For example, Milena Dragićević explained to me how she worked closely with ECF at the beginning of the '00s to establish the training courses in cooperation with Al Mawred in the region.

The overall feeling derived from the interviewees is that they look up to the work of ECF. Fanny Bouquerel for example referred to the pioneer influence of the ECF in the region especially when it comes to raising awareness about the importance of cultural policies[135]. Fanny mentioned that in April 2015 they were organising a regional meeting within the *Houna Al Shabah* programme in Casablanca and when they asked participants what kind of programmes would they need:

> *"*[...] *one of the general themes was cultural policies. This would not have come up before. You need to be quite mature to identify this as a need."*

This observation goes in line with what interviewees during the field trips or the case studies had observed: the need to invest on policies.

Abdullah Al Kafri explained in a few words why ECF as an institution has managed to have this role:

> *"What I like about ECF is that for them it is not a short mission in the Arab region. It is about putting it within an international context and to become another player. Not to tick a box, but more for engagement and understanding and sharing".*

6.6.2.4 Cities as actors in the web of EuroArab relations

The interview with Karsten Xuereb, Director of Valleta 2018 European Capital of Culture revealed a point that had slipped my attention when analysing the different actors in EuroArab cultural cooperation in section (4.4): the role of cities, and of initiatives such as the European Capital of Culture programme in enabling and giving an impetus to EuroArab cultural cooperation.

He mentioned that other European Capitals of Culture have not really included the EuroMed as a key component in their programme, despite being geographically very much in the region (for example Pafos 2017 or Matera 2019). He referred to the concept of 'territorial diplomacy' (Cimetta Fund, 2012), which was introduced by Guimares 2012

[135] The work that ECF has done in this respect has been explained in (4.3.1.6) and (4.4).

European Capital of Culture, and encourages cities to think about how they position their territory in the 'global arena'. Furthermore, he commented that the Chair of the current Selection and Monitoring Panel of the European Capitals of Culture, Ulrich Fuchs (former Artistic Director of Marseilles 2013) in meeting a held in 2015 in Athens suggested to all future European Capitals of Culture to include more Mediterranean-related topics and activities in their programming. Xuereb explained:

> *"You can do it in a way that ticks boxes: migration, cultural diversity… But there is something else which is actually reflecting the diversity of the Mediterranean when interacting with people that have been in Europe for a while. There is a very local dimension which is very international in the same time".*

Valetta 2018, on the contrary, has incorporated a strong EuroMed component in their programme, which can be translated in the following activities:

a) A strong cooperation with the Cimetta Fund in having a funding line regarding mobility;

b) The preparation of a big exhibition to take place from January to April 2018 bringing on board many artists from the EuroMed, that -in Karsten's words- *"possibly live in the EuroMed or in diaspora but their conversation is EuroMed related"*; and

c) Every year on the line-up to the European Capital of Culture year there is a conference which addresses the EuroMed[136].

6.6.2.5 Cultural networks

Few of the interviewees recognised current cultural networks as powerful actors in EuroArab cultural relations. In line with my observations around cultural networks in the EuroMed / EuroArab region shared in (4.4), Xuereb observed that even BJCEM - that I considered a successful example of cultural networking- is undergoing a lot of changes and taking a more curatorial form than one based on the need to create opportunities of dialogue, since the countries that were mainly involved before have stepped back, namely, Spain, Italy, Greece among others. Sadly, as Xuereb noted, *"the Northern Africa side never really took off".*

During the interview with Xuereb, I made a comment related to what seems to be now working better in terms of cultural networks and referred to the success of the Cultural

[136] In 2016 it coincided with a number of meetings that took place in Malta in autumn such as the IFACCA Cultural Leadership Summit and the ALF EuroMed Forum. Of course this is related to the European Capital of Culture happening in 2018 but mainly to the fact that Malta had the Presidency of the EU during the second semester of 2016.

Innovators Network as transmitted to me by the two participants interviewed. Karsten claimed that perhaps networks that are based on people are currently working better compared to networks of cultural organisations. In relation to the Anna Lindh Foundation, Xuereb said that it has played a role in the overall situation regarding networks in the region, since the ALF is claiming to be 'a network of networks'. However, he observed that:

> *"It seems that ALF is still questioning what kind of network it is becoming.* […] *It is like a big ship but just going from here to an island just a few hours away."*

6.6.3 The EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes

In (4.4) the results of a preliminary mapping focusing on intitiatives that foster EuroArab were presented. It was shown that the region is attracting particular interest and a great number of programmes and initiatives exist in the name of capacity building and intercultural dialogue. The mapping was in no means qualitative. Its primary aim was to describe the setting. In the expert interviews the focus was mainly to opinions that the experts have regarding the efficiency of such programmes and the potential missing links.

6.6.3.1 Added value or marriages of convenience?

The added value of EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes that enable real encounters was recognised by all interviewees. In Khoury's words:

> *"The more you meet people on the personal level, you understand a lot of things and you stereotype less. There are less misunderstanding and more advocacy for cultural coexistence* […]*. When you are physically going to another country, you are confronting yourself, you are meeting very concretely the other person and the more you meet the other people, the more you accept them".*

Khoury raised a further pertinent topic in relation to international cultural cooperation. Very often the institutions adopt policies related to political priorities trying to talk the language of the creatives, but this is not always compatible. In the same time, often organisations have to adapt their own priorities and aims to respond to the calls published (which don't always fully represent them) just to guarantee some funding. This issue was also raised among people interviewed for the case studies. For example, Jean Pierre Deru from the Marcel Hicter foundation had made the observation that from his experience with the European Diploma, often organisations follow the priorities and frameworks that funding institutions develop when conceptualising international cultural cooperation projects and this might endanger their own creativity and genuine cooperation.

Khoury though also raised another topic of relevance: very often organisations enter into collaborations just because they have to cooperate to fit funding requirements. A criticism towards such an 'imposed' EuroArab collaboration was raised when she explained to me one of her experiences related to a EU funded project:

> *"Within the dance reflection process we needed to invite some people from abroad. Those are the limits of these collaborative projects- they force you to collaborate with someone- it can end into an exchange, but sometimes we still talk about power balance. One part of this dance reflection project, was concerned about the dance pedagogies in the Arab region but we involved European partners so that we can get the funding.* […] *As long as we are trapped into the geographical zone, we are being unable to get out of it. If I decide to work on my own, whom would I chose? This is happening with other programmes, which are not EU funded. We should think of an exchange program not between two geographical spaces but between people or on a topic."*

6.6.3.2 Best of both worlds

Khoury made a reference to an experience she had while participating in cultural management training organised by a European organisation. Talking about the (European) trainers she mentioned:

> *"*[…] *they did not speak Arabic, they had never been to an Arabic country and we were a very intellectual group. We ended up training them, explaining them how we were matching funds, how we were working on the different projects, our societies, our cultural sector and how it works. It was more of us teaching them and it became very clear for them"*.

Krystel here makes a point that was also raised in a previous chapter (4.3.1.5) when I was talking about the 'Système D' of the organisations in the Arab countries and that was also one of the negative aspects considered by the participants of the EUNIC/ MENA training who criticised the lack of balance in the educational teams. It also reminds

On the other hand, Marie Le Sourd from On-the-move reflected on an experience she had delivering training in the framework of CultureMed in Tunis in 2016 and commented that it was inspirational to learn from the Arab participants:

> *"These people are a living library, they know better the context, they know how eventually they can develop projects, so really to gain from this peer-to-peer experience is the most important asset of this kind of workshops.* […] *I was really amazed by the level of energy of these people particularly working in very difficult context with no funding, some are very involved into using performing arts in a way to heal the trauma that children experience with the war, they work in very very difficult situations. My little story with On-the-move is peanuts compared with what they do. It is inspiring to see the level of dynamism and energy and ideas of these people".*

6.6.3.3 Outreach

Another topic that was raised during the interviews was the level of outreach that these programmes manage to achieve. Many of the interviewees observed that often it is the same organisations and people that participate in different programmes. Javier Galván Guijo mentioned that this is perhaps due to the fact that many programmes include isolated events, such as one-off meetings that do not add any value and it is evident that the same people are invited to participate. *"Those activities mainly reach a privileged club",* he said. From her side, Fanny Bouquerel from MedCulture explained that they have dedicated a lot of time trying to map the sector in the Southern Mediterranean countries and underlined that they are trying to be very cautious with the selection of participants to make sure that they give opportunities to a wide spectrum of organisations and individuals. Milena Dragićević Šešić, however, observed that often mappings rely a lot on Internet research and offer only partially good answers when it comes to representativeness of the organisations, mainly because not everyone is on the Internet, especially when it comes to organisations from rural areas in the Arab region.

6.6.3.4 What kind of programmes are needed?

Abdullah Al Kafri claimed that the current trend in international funding in the region is to support small-scale projects. According to him, this approach can be risky, because in this way:

> *"*[...] *we will not be able to talk about accumulation or about impact at all. If we are thinking about a 6-month project or a three artists support, that cannot help us think of something more wider and concrete."*

From her experience as facilitator at the SouthMed CV in Tunis (December 2016) Marie Le Sourd observed that European funded programmes bring in the region enhanced opportunities among actors from the South to meet and exchange:

> *"[...] for most of the these people it was the fist time that they met and many of them had already an international experience, but going to Europe or to the US, rather than going to their neighbor and this is a key advantage"*

Finally, Abdulla Al Kafri underlined that the kind of support that is needed in the region is also related to giving opportunities to Arab artists to be more exposed to international platforms. He observed that most of the times the same people are circulating in Europe and to confront this reality, deeper research from the side of European partners, curators and programmers is required to improve the situation.

Milena Dragićević Šešić's opinion is that programmes such as Abarra are much more needed in the Arab region than any other kind of programmes. Basically Abarra (as also

explained in 4.4) offers a combination of training, funding for project development and implementation and additionally provides money for overall structural costs. She also clarified that through the training component of the programme, participants get the change to go across the region and meet with peers[137]. Dounia Benslimane highlighted further the need to focus on policy development:

> *"I think this kind of projects bring to our region the opportunity to activate civil society to develop tools not only to connect and to network but also to advocate and make a kind of structural work. It depends on how as an applicant/ beneficiary you embrace the subject and how deep you go in the advocacy and in the ground. It is important to use these programs to focus on what is a need and as Racines for the moment in our region what is important is to work on the policies and advocacy and on the data collection and to make a scientific work. Of course, it is important to develop artistic projects, but now we think the priority is policy".*

6.6.4 Evaluating EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes and schemes

6.6.4.1 Organisational experiences in evaluation

Talking about how success is understood, Mai Abu ElDahab commented upon a difference between reflecting on a concrete programme and on the overall mission of an organisation. She said in this respet:

> *"There is a very practical way to assess it: you use this money, and people did this and it was shown here… But what is needed is another kind of assessment which is what does it mean to have such an organisation, what does it mean for the field and what it means for the organisations in the region- I think that this takes longer time to understand.* […] *In practical terms it is quite simple to say what is planned is implemented, we work happily with the team, that people achieve what they want, we are within our budget. What is built into our logic is if the projects we support somehow produce a new idea about how art can be thought about or presented and how to relate to an audience. I think it is really about a project that people feel that questions the conditions in which it happened and the context in which it happened – to make us think differently.*"

Karsten Xuereb mentioned that within the Valetta 2018 Foundation they have a strong team doing qualitative and quantitative research. The issue of evaluation of impacts of the European Capital of Culture scheme has gained a lot of interest during the past few years and cities are encouraged to develop strong mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. In this context, Xuereb explained how they deal with measurement related to the EuroMed/ EuroArab component of their programme within the organisation:

> *"*[Our approach*] is two-fold: you have the general approach which looks at a programme and gives a clear picture on how many exchanges have taken place for example. And this might not be big, but it is a significant part of our programme and I can say that more than 50% of our program has a EuroMed imprint. On the other*

[137] Milena Dragićević Šešić was the evaluator of the Abarra programme and she mentioned that one of the downfalls of the programme she observed as its evaluator, was the lack of decent mentoring, which she feels is a gap in general in the Arab setting and underlined the need to invest on the education of mentors.

> *hand you also have a more detailed approach related to engagement of the audience and we are doing a conscious effort on not going with traditional formats* [when measuring this]*".*

Javier Galván from Instituto Cervantes admitted that in the Instituto Cervantes *"we are a bit delayed when it comes to measuring our own work".* He mentioned that a few years ago when working at the Cabinet of the Secretary General, he promoted the creation of a research department that would be in charge of this work, but this it is still in the making.

> *"Now every Department has it's own data* […]*, data are not interrelated, nor analysed, and that is something that if done properly could allow informed decision-making"*[138]*.*

In line with what Anke Schad, the evaluator of the CIN programme analysed as case study in (5.5), Javier Galván underlined that foreign cultural institutions face a challenge when trying to measure their impact on culture, while the impact for their educational programmes, can be more easily measured. Furthermore, he observed that until recently the way culture was 'done' in each country depended heavily on the Director of each Institute and his/ hers personal interests. However, nowadays "*we are maturing towards a long-term programme with a strategy and concrete objectives",* he said.

Fanny Bouquerel distinguished two levels of evaluation practice within MedCulture. From one hand she referred to the already established tools that are requested when reporting about a programme to the funder (in this case the European Commission that 'imposes' the logical framework approach) and on the other hand regarding the evaluation that the organisation does on its own to recognise its strong and weak points. This reflects that evaluation can be linked to both accountability and organisational learning motives. She also expressed her reservations related to the efficacy of the logical framework approach, since with this tool they are actually expected to provide a lot of quantitative data, while what they actually need is qualitative evaluation. Furthermore, she explained that the practice of the European Commission is to engage an external evaluator to report on the programme[139], however, what is surprising was that the results are not made available to them. She said the following:

> *"We were not supposed to see the results. So for us it was not really helpful and it was a pity because we were looking forward to have this report to orient our activity."*

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[138] Translated from Spanish by myself. Original text: *"Ahora cada Departamento tiene sus datos* […] *no hay interrelación de datos, ni analysis y si eso se consiguiera, permitiría a su vez tomar deciciones concientes".*

[139] This took place in April – June 2017 through the Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) approach used by the Commission.

Fanny also shared with me that for one of their recent activities they had asked the coordinator of the activity to arrange interviews with the people attending the programme to put the basis of what could constitute a sort of qualitative evaluation. She also said that at some point during the programme they decided to also do their own evaluation and to invite people that were beneficiaries of their activities to a meeting to discuss about the way MedCulture had implemented activities, and what were their recommendations for improvement. Unfortunately, as she explained, this could not take place mainly due to financial constraints. *"And I don't believe you can really do this at a distance with a group"*, she said.

The experiences and concerns raised here remind us of the observations arising from the participation at the ENCATC WG and reflected in chapter (3), especially when it comes to the recognition of the limitations of the sector in terms of time and financial resources to engage with evaluation in a consistent way. However, Al Kafri made an observation that applies specifically to the Arab context and is connected to the challenges observed in (4.3.1) and the fact that most funding programmes are focusing more on short-term opportunities. As he explained, this makes evaluation and impact assessment even more challenging:

> *"It is really hard to do evaluation in a situation where we don't have the luxury of accumulation. Based on what will you be able to evaluate the impact? How are you going to do this if you are talking about a six-month project? There is an understanding, desire or tendency to see how we can develop that."*

Finally, all interviewees agreed that investing in evaluation is a vain exercise if undertaken just to fulfill purely accountability requirements and not for organisational learning. Marie Le Sourd said in this respect:

> *"*[...] *when you do evaluation of course the result is at the end that you can send the report. But how it can be really optimised by the people and to be able to nurture a long-term relationship and conversation based on what would be the findings to the evaluation knowing, is a different thing".*

Both El Bennaoui and Al Kafri made reference to an innovative evaluation exercise undertaken by the Drosos foundation. Abdulla explained it as follows:

> *"Something very interesting happened this year. Drosos* [Foundation] *after 10 years of working they decided to evaluate their work in the region. Because their theory is that we re not sure if we are listening the right thing from our grantees all the time. How about having independent evaluators to work with grantees not to evaluate the grantees but to evaluate the organisation? I was part of this committee and it was really inspiring to see that the organisation was interested to understand the context,*

> *how they could develop their work after 10 years working in the region* […]. *They asked from experts from the region to evaluate them"*[140]

Abdullah also made reference to the reporting and evaluation tools that the Mimetta fund is using, as well as to ECF as good practices.

6.6.4.2 In the evaluator's shoes

Some of the people interviewed had had experiences as evaluators themselves. This was the case for example for Marie Le Sourd that was also one of the participants of the Working Group on the evaluation of international cultural cooperation projects organised by ENCATC in October 2016 that informs chapter (3). She explained to me the approach that she is taking when it comes to the evaluation of a specific European funded programme currently:

> *"We are still at the beginning of the process. We are directly beginners. At least I know what I don't want to have. You know people say* [evaluation] *it's boring; it's just something you need to do at the end of the project. What is different for me is that I am associated from the beginning* [of the project], *people know who I am, why I am there. Of course you need a questionnaire and interviews but you can learn a lot about the organisation and how people feel about the project by observing them – there are a lot of info related to observation and new ways to convey the learning. It is still the beginning."*

Furthermore, Milena Dragićević Šešić reflected on a personal experience as the evaluator of Al Mawred's Abarra programme and explained how she went about with the evaluation:

> *"*[There] *was a little conflict of interest because I had helped Basma*[141] *in designing the programme but I was not in charge of its implementation… So I was in 2012 in the group that helped imagining Abarra as a capacity building program and then 3 years later I was invited to evaluate it.* […] *For Abarra I was reading internal reports and evaluations and from there I had selected organisations from the 1st, the 2nd and the 3rd round whom I was going to visit and then I went and visited organisations in Egypt, Tunisia and I met Sudanese representatives in Egypt and some Yemeni through skype because the war had started in Yemen and at Mauritania I could not go for health reasons. The most important was this part of the direct interviewing and visits on the spot. Because I could for example in Egypt and in Tunisia visit different types of spaces and communities which were engaged* [in the programme]."

Her experience confirms the challenging part of evaluating international cultural cooperation projects when participants come from different countries and live in different geographies. Given the complexity and life cycle of the project, I was also interested into how long did the evaluation exercise take and she said *"two months* [full

[140] The evaluation was done in Morocco, Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan and Lebanon.
[141] She refers to Basma El Husseini from Al Mawred.

time] *in a span of six months".* After my personal experience with the evaluation of the CONNEXXIONS programme, I would say that this is a realistic estimation for such kind of programmes. The difference is that, as Dragićević Šešić said, she was engaged in the evaluation as the programme was unfolding. The same condition occurred with the evaluation of CIN and Tandem Shaml explored in (5.5) and (5.7) respectively.

Khoury was one of the few interviewees that used the word 'indicators'. She explained that in the evaluation of an EU funded project she was involved with in Egypt, they based their evaluation work on the UNESCO culture for development indicators and not on quantitative ones. She went on explaining that for her, the most accurate methodology when evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes is participatory observation that needs to accompany the whole programme process from the very beginning:

> *"In order to a evaluate programme the people that are planning a programme they need to engage the evaluator while it is happening and to be able to analyse the whole process.* [This way] *people end up knowing you and trusting you and don't give you the same information as when you come after. After it is done they will give you a* very *positive image about it. But you need to understand what were the dynamics going on. All the evaluations focus on the positive things because we need to prove to the funders that what we are doing we do it well. It is mainly a money issue".*

Most of the interviewees agreed that qualitative approaches are most accurate in the evaluation of cultural cooperation schemes in general and in the region in particular. Khoury even suggested that, given the particularity of international cultural cooperation programmes, it is important that evaluators adopt an anthropological view when looking into its impact on beneficieries:

> *"You can always make evaluation from far away; you can do some desk work and have it. But when it comes to culture, because we are talking about people that have experiences, you need to go through the experience that people are having."*

In (2.4.4) it was mentioned that a number of toolkits have been developed on how to evaluate cultural programmes, mainly written by funding bodies themselves. The downfalls of such an approach were reflected there. However, it was noted that there was no reference found on any toolkit or manual specifically on evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes and projects. Therefore, it was not surprising that none of the interviewees made reference to any. Marie Le Sourd, though, revealed that something like this is in her and On-the-move's plans, but the knowledge is not there yet:

> *"In 4-5 years I would like to produce such kind of toolkit, a very practical one, to make sure that reports are not only to fill your drawers or as files on your computers but to build knowledge and argumentation for what is needed in relation to cultural policy for international cooperation and mobility."*

6.6.4.3 In search of the perfect evaluator

The expert interviews confirmed the observation that there is a limited body of knowledge around conducting evaluation in arts and culture and more particularly regarding international cultural cooperation programmes. As said above, among the people interviewed, some of them have had experiences as evaluators themselves. El Bennaoui observed in this respect that cultural practitioners learn about evaluation on the job and are training themselves constantly, what was already observed by Matarasso (2009)[142]. Since there is no formal training about evaluation for the arts and culture sector, Marie Le Sourd told me that the previous year she had followed training on evaluation and methodology for the development sector. In this respect, El Bennaoui highlighted that one of the qualities that an evaluator should possess is *"to master the art and evaluation and to be able to translate between them"*, which reveals the evaluator's role as mediator in the evaluation process.

Given her wide experience, I was interested in finding out how Milena Dragićević Šešić started getting involved in cultural policy development and training in the Arab countries, and eventually evaluation. She recalled that everything started after an invitation from the European Cultural Foundation. When ECF started being active in the region of the Balkans, the Soros Foundation recommended her as an expert, while until that time similar kind of work *"was always done by foreign experts"*. She explained that together with other qualified people from the Balkan region, they advocated so that in the Balkans, people that run capacity building programmes should come from the region and do not need to be foreign experts. As she said *"foreign experts might help, but they cannot lead, they don't understand the needs of specific groups of people*". She also explained that at that time (back in 2002- 2003) it was unusual to count on experts besides British people. Finally, she explained that this experience helped her and a group of colleagues from the Balkan region to build their own "*hybrid methodology"* taking from the methodologies of other countries the methods that were most appropriate to them.

> *"In that time, it was 2002- 2003, this was unusual because people looked at British people as the real experts and that all the others are not experts. It helped us to develop our own methodology, because we didn't want to accept this* [...]. *For us it*

[142] *"We learn on the job- I am training myself"* (Khadija El Bennaoui).

> *was important to go to the Arab region with this approach, not patronising, but as catalysers."*

What came out of the interviewees was that, besides skills and methodologies, evaluators in international cooperation contexts are expected to have a certain level of knowledge of the region. Milena explained that acquiring such experience is a long process. She explained that in her case she learnt a lot through the trainings she delivered to the participants from the region and she added:

> *"So now even you are interviewing me as an expert in the Arab region although I never lived there, I never worked there. You know that it is a paradox. I was lucky enough to have this opportunity and intelligent enough not to blow it. It took me 10 years to put all this knowledge together."*

Although the case studies explored in the previous chapter revealed that the evaluators did not necessarily have strong knowledge of the context, the experts interviewed underlined the necessity of this. For example, El Bennaoui said:

> *"First you need to know the context or have affinity for the context. And you need to have a passion. Or knowledge from living there for many years, knowing the language, knowing the stakeholders and the context in which people work."*

Khoury underlined the advantage of speaking the mother tongue of the beneficieries when conducting evaluations that involve interviews:

> *"Language is a very important thing, although sometime you don't even need language. But when you are doing an evaluation and you are evaluating people, language is a very strong tool. I see the difference when I am doing interviews with people: when you speak in their native language, the content is different* […]. *And when you are speaking the same language and they know that you know the context, you know that you can gain their trust".*

Al Kafri underlined this aspect as well:

> *"The most important thing is in which extent this evaluator understands the context and the drastic changes that are happening in the Arab region. I don't expect them to come for 10 days or a month but I want them to understand the scene in a way or another, to have an idea about the main player. To understand the public institutions and the legislations is really something very important".*

However, my observation is that mostly evaluators of EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes and schemes come from Europe. Which leads us to the following question.

6.6.4.4 Can non-Europeans evaluate?

While writing this research I came across Hamid Dabashi's book *Can non-Europeans think?* (Dabashi, 2015) which reflects the author's thinking about the relation between

knowledge and power and how enduring – mostly colonially manufactured- bifurcations between the West and the East, between Europe and its alienated other, have prevailed.

I altered the title of the book to formulate a provocative question to a number of the experts interviewed by asking why we only find evaluators from the European side doing evaluation of EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes? This question is related to my own meta-reflection following the CONNEXXIONS programme where I cooperated with a colleague from Egypt (but based in Europe) and which I describe in (5.3). I asked this question because as it was shown in the case studies, the experience of the evaluator is a determining aspect of the evaluation process. And producing evaluation reports is in a way producing knowledge and value that entails a potential to influence power dynamics.

El Bennaoui, coming from Morocco and forming part of the 'Arab' side of my sample has conducted evaluation herself. Therefore, when I discussed this with her, it did not come as a surprise. She even said that the concept of evaluation might be problematic in the Arab region perhaps because:

> *"In the Arab world we feel and believe that we are being judged- because our history and our institutions and education is about this."*

On the contrary, Dounia Benslimane felt that this was a very interesting question because it was something she had not realised before but made her think how this aspect could be incorporated in the future programmes that they are putting in place. Reflecting on the reasons why there is no equal representation of Arab evaluators in evaluation exercises she said:

> *"This has nothing to do with education. We have competent people in the arts and culture sector who can evaluate programmes and projects even when funded by European money. But this is something that is very common in the international gatherings: you will rarely find speakers from the Arab region. We are still in this kind of power- relation between the North and the South. It is rare to find partners who respect your knowledge and expertise in your context."*

Al Kafri from his side acknowledged that there are rarely evaluators from the Arab side, however he claimed that what is mostly important is how evaluation is done, regardless of the nationality of the evaluator. He also made a reference to how Al Mawred dealt with this and supported Milena Dragićević Šešić in the evaluation of the Abarra programme:

> *"When we are using the term 'expert' there are no Arab experts most of the times. Unfortunately, this is the situation. But on another level, the experience of Al Mawred is very inspiring. From one side providing experts able to evaluate and also when they*

work with evaluators from Europe they don't work with suspicion. I was impressed by the work of Milena to evaluate the cultural policy programme of Al Mawred and the way of conducting the research with the task force members. We are talking about an expert who believed in the cause and knows the context."

6.6.4.5 Grasping the long-term impact

As it resulted from the case studies, one of the major concerns of the organisations engaging in evaluation is to find out the long-term impact of their programme to the beneficiary people and organisations, as well as to society in general. ElDahab explained this for the case of Mophradat (until recently YAFT):

"I don't think that there is any kind of impact assessment of what we are doing possible before 5 years. Historically, I think that the impact of YAFT is very clear – the organisation supported a lot of established now artists very early in their careers through grants or Meeting points and by creating opportunities for them to present their work internationally. I could provide a list of successful names. Also YAFT was doing the rehabilitation of spaces to become public art spaces in the region and this had a very clear effect of creating spaces where people could work- it stopped to be the mandate but it was very important and the impact was very tangible along with the grants programme."

The same opinion was highlighted by Khadija El Bennaoui:

"The investment you do in the arts you cannot see it before 5 years [have passed]*".*

Milena Dragićević Šešić's even argued that this is an almost impossible task:

"It is absolutely something that cannot be done. I think that you need at least 5-6 years to pass so that we evaluate anything related to the cultural field. If you want to see immediately, like in Abarra – it is was still ongoing and I am doing the evaluation… it is really possible when evaluating a programme but not when evaluating impact… We can evaluate a programme to reform it, to make it better […] but to really measure the impact, is nearly impossible."

In chapter (3) and in the case studies included in chapter (4) we have seen that this aspect is the most challenging one when it comes to international cultural cooperation programmes and requires a realistic approach into how it can be achieved and what kind of resources need to be mobilised

6.6.4.6 Suggestions for improvement

Those interviewees that had conducted evaluations themselves recognised the great level of responsibility that lies on the single person to which the evaluation of an international cultural cooperation programme is assigned. They even suggested working in teams of evaluators as a way to improve the practice of international cultural cooperation programme's evaluation. For example El Bennaoui said:

> *"You need a facilitator* […]. *I have experienced working with an evaluator from the North and for me it was a great experience. As human beings we have different ways of seeing things."*

Khoury also highlighted the need to work in pairs in order to have accesses to a wider reference canvas of interpretation:

> *"When you are alone, you end up questioning yourself and you have no one to confront your thinking with. There is always the need of dialogue- one cannot understand everything. There are hidden thoughts or you need when you are doing an interview to understand where* he [the interviewee] *comes from, why he is using this or that term all the time."*

Another suggestion was to go beyond technical reports and explore more creative means when evaluating or when communicating evaluation results. El Bennaoui said in this respect:

> *"I am tired of boring reports. We need to tell a story in more creative way* […]. *Of course this needs a negotiation with the person that funds the evaluation. We are speaking about creativity. I have to have the conservative classical skills in order to be constructive but I also need to be creative".*

6.6.4.7 It always comes back to cooperation on equal grounds

In the first chapter of this research it was underlined that a determining factor in cooperation is that there are always personal costs when engaging in a joint activity "that confers benefits exceeding these costs to the other member of one's group" (Bowles & Gintis, 2003: 430). It was mentioned at that point that this becomes particularly relevant in an international cultural cooperation framework, since such cooperation requires exceeding one owns' presumptions and investing energy and resources. In the case of EuroArab cultural cooperation, we have seen that there are different power dynamics that define the framework of cooperation. This is the reason, why almost all experts mentioned equality as a sine qua non factor for a successful cultural cooperation. Reflecting on her own participation in the Tandem Shaml programme, Khoury mentioned the following:

> *"We are the only Tandem Shaml Arab organisation that we are signing the collaboration* [for the Tandem grant]. *And it is very sad. We go back to the idea of collaboration but because of all the problems that are there, for example with registering an organisation in Egypt, we always need to try to find solutions."*

What she underlined through this example is that the general institutional, financial and social context in the Arab countries is not enabling organisations to take ownership of

the projects they are doing in collaboration with European partners. Dounia Benslimane even argued that cooperating is not only a matter of choice, but of sustainability:

> *"It is almost impossible to find public funds to work on our projects. So we are kind of obliged to have international partners and it is important to have this cooperation. The only thing is that these institutions need to work in a kind of win-win cooperation. We are in a state of where the southern NGOs have started to understand that they have to have the control on their projects and they know better so the money is important but the position of the local organisation is more important. It has to be strong, autonomous, and independent."*

For El Bennaoui as well, this equal status between EuroArab partner organisations is a condition is a fundamental criteria for successful cultural cooperation programmes and projects in the region:

> *"We need to be equal. Because organisations in North Africa still depend on funding from the North, to reach this equality, cultural operators in the South have to negotiate what collaboration and value they bring to it because it is not only about money".*

Benslimane explained exactly what cooperation on equal grounds consists in:

- *"Relationship between the partners, a kind of equality in the involvement in the project which is very important. We are all experts in our context;*
- *Involvement in the conception of the project. We have been requested by a lot of partners from Europe who came with a ready-to-use project and they ask 'do you want to be our partners?' and we say no. So this kind of relation this is not acceptable any more […];*
- *It is also important to agree on the vision. People call you and they start to discuss issues and they focus on their own context. They call for you for a brainstorming and they only focus on how migration is impacting the European society and they completely forget you. They invite you but they don't listen to you. If you don't share the vision, it is not possible to work together."*

Al Kafri underlined again the importance of cooperating on equal grounds and also suggested that a possible way to achieve this is by including a research component in each collaboration project, which would allow deeper understanding of the needs. Involving the funding institutions was also regarded by him a condition for this:

> *"Win-win situation is a key word- what we will learn and what we will share. It should not be symmetric in a way or another, like 10 days here, 10 days there. It should be about what I will get and what I will share. Understanding the needs of the artists in the Arab region that they have a surviving battle to keep their work everyday. They have challenges regarding the relation with the politics, the audience, the institutions. Understanding that, will help appreciate the efforts done from the region but also to be more open and more general to learn, explore and then implement. This is why definitely every project should include one research component and to engage the institutions with whom they are working* [and that are] *based in the region with their planning. This is extremely important and should be done in this way otherwise this collaboration will end out not being effective."*

6.7 Closing Reflections

The main motivation for elaborating this final chapter of the empirical research was to gather a complementary view around programmes, actors and the evaluation of EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes that would allow concluding this research. For this reason, 10 interviews with experts from the Arab and the European regions were conducted and analysed.

The expert interviews confirmed that although there are numerous options from different geographical regions for researching on the subject, the choice to focus in depth on the EuroArab region was appropriate for a number of reasons. The Arab region has been a geographical zone receiving considerable attention from various international institutions and numerous programmes have been put into place to connect artists and cultural operators from the Arab region with other parts of the world. From the European side, various levels of actors and various levels of 'intervention' under the umbrella of EuroArab international cultural cooperation can be identified. These actors and programmes constitute the web of EuroArab cultural relations that has been worth unfolding. In more conceptual terms, the EuroMed/ EuroArab region has offered a fertile ground for discussing the concepts addressed in chapter (1) and chapter (2). From one hand because the Arab region has been receiving an unattended attention during the last years. And on another hand, because historically and geographically the region has been a zone of continuous cultural exchange and of negotiation of values and identity. Using Akrimi's words (2008: 39) that refer mainly to the Mediterranean area but can be extended to the whole EuroArab region:

> The Mediterranean area is already, and will continue to be, a concrete testing ground for evaluating the success of dialogue between the North and the South, the East and the West. The core perspective of this contribution is a comprehensive approach to reshaping the intercultural dialogue: from a dialogue of cultures to a culture of dialogue.

As explained in the introduction of this chapter (6.1), topics discussed during the expert interviews, had already been tackled with some of the people interviewed before for the case studies- since they all in a way or another have a certain expertise in the topic, either because they work for an organisation/ institution that is supporting EuroArab cultural cooperation, either because they have evaluated a EuroArab cultural cooperation project/ scheme, either because they have participated in one and have implemented their own projects on the ground. But while in the previous chapter, the primary aim of the inquiry when interviewing was to examine the specific case studies and the interviewee's, opinions on more 'overarching' matters that are part of the research

questions were not analysed in depth. Although this fact does not make them less experts on the topic, it was considered necessary to widen the references and opinions spectrum around the main axes of the research with 10 people that had significant knowledge and could provide substantial input to the research.

If we consider the topics raised during the ENCATC WG on the evaluation of international cultural projects and networks, we can find numerous similarities to the issues raised in this chapter. Questions of skills, capacity, time and resources are puzzling policy makers, practitioners and academics involved in the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and projects besides their nationality or capacity. The major difference, however, is on the political side of the cooperation when it comes to the EuroArab region. The main observation is that in the ENCATC WG there was no discussion at all about power dynamics, political aims or shifts in funding priorities. More importantly, the need to work on an equal basis was not even touched upon- it was taken for granted.

There could be many interpretations to this observation. It is, however, unavoidable not to consider that this is partly related to the politically charged context in which EuroArab cultural cooperation unfolds and to a certain extent to the traces of a period of interactions when "*to cooperate, there was a price to pay".* What is made clear from this realisation is that every single context of international cultural cooperation can be unique and different. And possessing the right tools might simply not be enough for conducting valuable evaluations, unless a certain level of knowledge and care for the region and for cooperation is manifested by who evaluates and a genuine environment of equal cooperation prevails.

Chapter (6) is the last of the empirical research and the last one before entering to the conclusions where the learning and results from the overall research will be shared and the recommendations for the improvement of the evaluation practice of international cultural cooperation programmes will be formulated.

IV. Conclusions and ways forward

The end of a process is the beginning of another one (Alasuutari, 1995: 175)

Presentation

The Conclusions section of this thesis allows for a dialogue between the two core sections of the research: on the one hand, *Section II. Conceptual framework: setting the scene*, and, on the other hand, *Section III*, which consisted of the empirical research focusing on the EuroArab region. In Section II the focus has been at a more conceptual-theoretical level, while in Section III the questions raised and the objectives set have been studied under the prism of a region-specific context.

As a first step, in this part of the thesis the research problem is restated and the major approach and methods applied in the thesis are reviewed looking into how the three first research objectives were tackled in each of the chapters of the research. The fourth objective consisted into proposing recommendations for the improvement of the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes. The conclusions section tries to respond to this fourth objective.

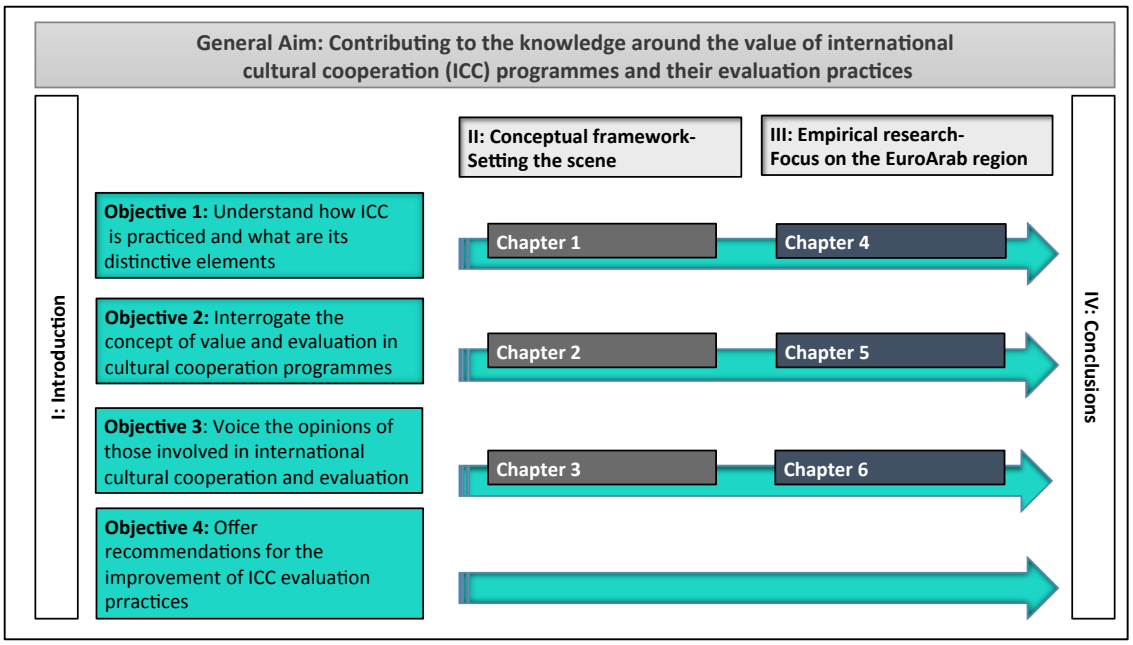
Following the revision of the chapters and the research objectives, the central research findings are presented, which portray the environment and conditions of evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes. For doing this, a certain degree of distance from the geographical focus-specific findings is taken to reflect on more overarching aspects of the three main axes of the research: international cultural cooperation, the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and the human factor in the field. In some points, however, it has been inevitable to make concrete reference to the EuroArab context, since it has provided a fertile ground for unfolding all the research questions.

Following this, the contribution of this thesis to policy, research and practice is discussed together with future lines of action. Finally, a reflection on the limitations of the research's design and findings is presented together with a forward-looking view on how the could be overcome in future research.

Reviewing the research

In order to arrive to the main conclusions, we need to recall the main objectives of this study and how they were approached in each of the chapters of this thesis. It should be reminded at this point that the research was nurtured from the wish to address the widely perceived need to articulate the value and benefits of international cultural cooperation programmes and how they can be evaluated. For doing this, two levels of analysis were sought: a more theoretical one that was tackled in Section II of the thesis *Conceptual framework: Setting the scene* and a more practical/ empirical and region-specific level which focused on the EuroArab region and was tackled in Section III *Empirical research: focus on the EuroArab region.* Figure IV.1 reminds us the connection between the objectives and the chapters of this research.

Figure IV.1 Relation between objectives and chapters



Source: Elaborated by researcher.

As it can be shown from the image and as it was explained in the Introduction, there is a dialogue between the chapters of Section II (conceptual/ abstract level of analysis) and those of Section III (region-specific/ empirical research). As explained in the Introduction, the three first objectives are also related to the three research axis, namely international cultural cooperation, value and evaluation in international cultural cooperation and the human factor in evaluation. As it was clarified already, objective 4 is a more overarching one that has guided the whole research work and does not refer specifically to any research axis and therefore it is mainly touched upon in the

Conclusions section. An analysis on how each objective was approached at both levels of analysis (conceptual/ abstract and region-specific/ empirical) in the two different core sections of the research is presented below.

Objective 1:

To understand how international cultural cooperation is practiced and what are its distinctive elements

The first objective of the research was to understand how international cultural cooperation is conceived and what forms does it take. For achieving this objective, three action points were identified: identifying and interpreting the conceptual framework and the distinguishing elements and challenges of international cultural cooperation, reviewing the frameworks in which it develops (especially in the EU context) and investigating into how international cultural cooperation is practiced on the ground, through which actors and what means. This objective was tackled in chapters (1) and (4).

As a first step, in chapter (1) of the thesis in Section II, the term 'international cultural cooperation' was approached through the three words that constitute it. Following this, concepts related to international cultural cooperation, namely cultural diplomacy, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, mobility and culture and development were tackled to give a conceptual framing of the term. It was shown that international cultural cooperation has evolved in a way that has acquired a scope far beyond its traditional cultural diplomacy understanding between countries and has developed into a complex arena, where different stakeholders and actors are engaged in different capacities and where a variety of dynamics are being generated. An initial sketch of these actors and the forms that international cultural cooperation takes was attempted as well. It was also claimed that, as in most areas of cultural policies, international cultural cooperation worldwide has evolved into adapting a broader meaning of culture beyond a narrow focus on arts. More precisely, special attention was given to the European narrative of international cultural cooperation since it influences the context under study for this research. It was shown that in the European case, there are two parallel dynamics of international cultural cooperation: one within EU geographies and another one beyond them driven by the concepts of 'unity in diversity' and 'cosmopolitanism'. The recent developments in regards to the inclusion of culture in the EU external relations, has

influenced the European narrative around the topic under study and has created an environment where it is foreseen that further actors and programmes will unfold in the future.

In Section III, chapter (4) addressed the same objective but specifically in the framework of EuroArab cultural cooperation. Since the European dynamics of the binary were extensively discussed in chapter (1), here the focus was placed on understanding the other part, the Arab. Although, as it was explained, it is not possible in the framework of this research to give a wide spectrum of all the countries and realities encompassed under the term 'Arab region', the main characteristics and elements of the region that influence and define the environment of EuroArab cultural cooperation were sketched. The EuroArab geography and imaginary were explored, together with issues related to the Arab identity and its relation to a European one. A short review of the contemporary cultural relations in the region was attempted and issues that are at stake in the cultural life of Arab states as well as some trends in the artistic life were highlighted. This analysis was needed in order to understand in which context the cooperation takes place and what challenges the different cultural cooperation schemes try to address. It was explained that this section was informed, besides literature review and desk research, from a number of preliminary interviews and three field trips in Lebanon (2012) and Tunisia (2012 and 2014) and other observation and interaction opportunities. Moreover, insights from the interviews undertaken throughout this study (especially for the case studies) were referenced where it was deemed necessary and appropriate.

A second way to respond to the first objective in the same chapter and contribute to understanding the main players and their aims in the region was through a preliminary mapping of actors and initiatives. Once this mapping was undertaken, it revealed the complex governance system of international cultural cooperation and showed the variety of programmes operating in the region, which were grouped under six main categories according to their anticipated aims. This overview of actors and programmes was the first step before choosing the case studies that were analysed in chapter (5).

Objective 2:

To interrogate the concept of value and evaluation in international cultural cooperation programmes

In order to respond to the second objective, it was considered necessary to understand the current discourse around the value of arts and culture and how the evaluation discipline has been approached from the cultural sector, to investigate into examples of international cultural programmes' evaluation and carry out a meta-analysis of the selected programmes. This objective was mainly tackled in chapters (2) and (5).

Chapter (2) in Section II of this research has shown that considerable importance has been attached to the discussion around the value of arts and culture on the policy, practice and research levels. Different examples on how the topic of evaluation has been brought forward and dealt with on these three levels were presented. Furthermore, a literature review reflected that although the topic of value has been discussed a lot on a theoretical and abstract level regarding the claims around the value of arts and culture, there has been no significant contribution regarding the field of international cultural cooperation. It was also shown that the question of how value in arts and culture is understood and measured is already challenging in non – intercultural/ international contexts and that a lot has been written on the instrumental versus the intrinsic value of culture. Little evidence, however, exists on how evaluation is actually performed by cultural actors and organisations. The policy or funder-driven nature of the available evidence justifies why the focus has been mostly on measurement, communication and evidencing of instrumental outcomes and there has been less significant content which takes into consideration the practice of evaluation from practitioners themselves. For this reason, the deliberate choice to focus on case studies to reveal how organisations deal with evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes was taken for the empirical part of the research.

Therefore, in Section III (the empirical part of the research) examples of international cultural cooperation programmes that have been evaluated (meaning funded by official sources and reported upon) were presented. These case studies were explored in chapter (5). Prior to entering into the analysis of the four selected case studies, the main steps in choosing and undertaking them were presented and a brief review of the case study

methodology was made, explaining its added value in this specific study. Following this, a personal experience with the evaluation of a cultural cooperation programme in the EuroArab region, namely the CONNEXXIONS 2012-13 programme supported by the German Commission for UNESCO, was shared. It was explained that this meta-reflection informed the questions raised in the case studies examined. The four case studies (EUNIC/MENA training, Cultural Innovators Network, Cimetta Fund mobility grants programe and Tandem Shaml) showed examples by which international cultural cooperation is put into place and revealed the variety of forms and outcomes that they might have. It should be underlined that the utility of the case studies to practitioners, policy makers and academics lies in their "extension of experience", since "the methods of qualitative case study are largely the methods of disciplining personal and particularized experience" (Stake, 2005: 460).

At this point it is necessary to remind that the aim of the case studies was not to judge or to evaluate the evaluation processes. The limitations of some approaches or the use of some of the outcomes might have been discussed, but this was done more in an attempt to generate learning. The primary aim was to shed light on them and to bring to the surface the voices of the people involved around them, to reflect their worries and aspirations and find commonalities on how to demonstrate the value of such programmes. Therefore, a main aspect when conducting the case studies' interviews was the human factor in evaluation. A balance was sought between interviews with those commissioning the evaluations, those evaluating and those benefiting from the programmes and in the same time being the subjects of evaluation. This way, the interviews conducted for the case studies responded to both objective (2) and objective (3) since they provided substantial information regarding the opinion of those involved in the 'evaluation triangle'. The human factor was primarily the main aspect of the third objective of this research that was tackled specifically in chapters (3) and (6), but the case studies' interviews were guided by this principle as well and gave a wealth of opportunities to explore how those involved in evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes reflect about this.

Objective 3:

To voice the opinions of those involved in international cultural cooperation and evaluation

As we have seen above, while literature on how value should be measured is quite extensive, how cultural actors and organisations themselves actually use methods, performance indicators and how they feel with them, is spare. Inspired by the work of Matarasso (2009) in the topic, that worked on the hypothesis that people's experiences would vary according to their role in the evaluation practice, grasping the experiences and opinions of those involved in the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes as commissioners, evaluators and beneficiaries was sought. This was covered substantially in the case studies, however less context-conditioned answers and non-programme specific answers were also needed. Chapter (3) presented and reflected on the concerns and opinions of a group of experts from academia, policy and practice that gathered together on the occasion of the first meeting of the ENCATC WG on the Evaluation of European and transnational cultural projects. It was made clear through the WG that with the growing forces of globalisation and the shifts in global governance, various practitioners, policy makers and academics are more and more articulating the need to investigate further into the value of international cultural cooperation and that there is a lack of systematic presentation of how evaluation of international cultural cooperation is conducted, its relation and relevance frameworks as well as any implications for methodological and practical tools. Chapter (6) in Section III, gathered the opinions of experts especially from the EuroArab region that reflected on the topics raised in this research and shared experiences and opinions based on the knowledge that had been gathered up to that moment. It was shown that similar preoccupations and concerns are at stake, however in the EuroArab context issues of power dynamics and cultural sensitivity in evaluation were regarded as highly important.

Objective 4:

To offer recommendations for the improvement of international cultural cooperation evaluation practices

As explained in the Introduction, the fourth objective was a more transversal one throughout the whole research. It consisted in processing the results of the research inquiry and translating them into a body of knowledge that could be useful for the policy, research and practice fields in international cultural cooperation programmes. From one hand, this requires an exercise of summarising the contributions of the research in relation to the objectives and on another hand to propose several recommendations and points of action to the three levels identified. Therefore, objective four is mainly covered in the section on recommendations that follows the articulation of the contributions of the research in relation to the research objectives while all the previous work was required in order to arrive to a position to articulate them.

Contributions of the research in relation to the objectives

In this section, the main findings related to the three objectives of the research are presented which correspond to the thematic axes identidied, namely international cultural cooperation, value and evaluation in international cultural cooperation and the human factor in evaluation.

Findings in relation to international cultural cooperation

The first objective of the research was related to deciphering international cultural cooperation. The main findings help into understanding the framework in which it develops and its main characteristics and challenges. It is unavoidable though at this point to make reference to the EuroArab setting, since the results are meaningful to the overall research questions.

1. The present tense of international cultural cooperation

A complex arena

The research has shown that a multi-layered set of actors is involved in international cultural cooperation nowadays even more than before. It was demonstrated that international cultural cooperation occurs in various forms and at various levels, involves

various actors and develops organically without necessarily governmental support. The international cultural cooperation's governance system is therefore complex and occurs at bilateral or multilateral levels, involving actors on the international, national, regional, and local levels as well as non-governmental civil society actors, private entities and independent artists and cultural operators.

Globalisation has played a primary role in intensifying cultural interactions on the international level and creating spaces-in-between where they flourish. The quantitative change in the crossovers facilitated by globalisation and the overall political and institutional environment has brought about a qualitative change in the way cultural interactions and -per consequence- international cultural cooperation are performed and experienced nowadays. In this context, it can be observed that international cultural cooperation is shifting gradually towards people-to-people relations, which represent the "non-governmental voice in translational relations" (Melissen, 2005), where "interest-driven governmental practice" loses ground to "non-state actors" and tends to be driven by ideals rather than interests.

Wide-ranging conceptual connotations

The above implies, however, that if we try to compare goals and objectives from the point of view of the various actors involved in cultural co-operation, we find that the term has different meanings for each actor and hence there is no common approach to cultural co-operation. The underlying principles however can be summarised in: arts development, cultural development, cultural diplomacy and often even export development, although this last point was not really touched upon in this research but is mainly linked to the cultural industries discussion and their international promotion.

In the same time, the conceptual stretching of culture to encompass values, beliefs, norms besides a purely artistic interpretation together with the intensified ways of communicating and interacting enforced by globalisation, have given the possibility to various actors to engage in international cultural cooperation and to promote the transmission of knowledge, skills, arts, products and information across geographical borders. In this line, as arts and culture are more and more recognised not only as means for economic development and political positioning, but also as tools for stability, peace, reconciliation, intercultural dialogue, governance, democratic values, civil society development and societal changes, international cultural cooperation is offering great

avenues for intercultural exchange, formation and confirmation of identities, as well as the understanding and promotion of a global cultural citizenship.

2. Europe as a main actor in international cultural cooperation

When it comes to the European paradigm, we have seen that its policy objectives are largely reflected in the funding programmes conceived. The EU has been a main trends-setter and an influential actor in the development of cultural relations with other regions, especially in the EuroArab context studied in this research.

In the internal EU framework, we have seen that there are parallel dynamics of identity formation encouraged by enhanced cultural cooperation opportunities inside the EU and confirmation of a European cultural citizenship still under process through the encounter with the 'Other' in other regions of the world. Therefore, international cultural cooperation with other regions of the world is understood as a step towards speaking out loud of a cultural component of European culture and citizenship and sharing its richness and variety with a range of different artists, cultural operators and audiences around the world.

There is no doubt, however, that EU member states will always deploy, develop and use their own cultural diplomacy and relations in specific regions according to their priorities, to their interests or to their historical connections with different parts of the world. Therefore, any EU intervention which includes a cultural component in the EU external relations should be seen as an intervention that supports and complements any other national, regional, local or private initiatives in the field, given that EU action in the field of culture should respect the principle of subsidiarity. The European delegations, EUNIC and other instruments, as well as coordination among them, are gradually gaining further importance in the support of these policies.

3. EuroArab cultural cooperation: he who pays the piper calls the tune[143]

Power dynamics in the field of play

Since no programme or intervention can be understood in isolation of its environment which influences the processes established to convert resources into desired outputs, the

[143] This proverb is used to explain that the person who provides the money for something has the right to determine how it is spent. The Arab equivalent of this proverb is "Money delivers the genie bound" (Arnander & Skipwith, 2007). This sentence is used here since throughout the research it was shown that the EU and European actors and institutions are the main funders in the Arab region.

EuroArab region was selected for further exploration. Undoubtedly, the EuroArab region offers an enhanced environment for cultural cooperation and is at the spotlight at this moment. Unresolved conflicts that bring to the surface power relations, the democratic changes underway, economic interests in the region, the financial crisis, challenges posed by the climate change, the role of religion in social and political relations as well as the issue of increasing immigration flows from the Southern to the Northern part of the Mediterranean are some of the reasons why this region has attracted and is still attracting a lot of attention. It is, however, still an area "repeatedly hampered by artificially-coined strategic orientations and artificially imposed geopolitical and geographical demarcation lines" (ECF, 2008: 16). Furthermore, it was shown that the institutional web of EuroArab cultural cooperation is quite heterogeneous in what comes to the level of implication and density of the organisations involved.

The quest for symmetry

It was identified that in this arena, international cultural cooperation is dictated by several trends and limitations. As it was shown through the empirical research, the level of maturity of the cultural sector in each reality- in terms of policies, funding possibilities and social roles- is not symmetric. Symmetry, however, is determinant in guaranteeing an equal and balanced international cultural cooperation, which is not always the case in the EuroArab region. We have seen that when international cultural cooperation comes in the form of funding and remains a privileged field of action for entities that are capable- in financial and political terms- to engage in it and to initiate at, traditional power constellations prevail and create an unfriendly environment for genuine cultural relations to flourish.

It was made clear throughout the research that the narrative that prevails is that the international community, especially Europe, tries to respond to this situation by providing more capacity building and more opportunities to the arts and cultural sector in the Arab region to develop and become more resilient and sustainable. Moreover, it was observed that through supporting a number of programmes, the EU and European foreign foundations and organisations introduce cultural policy and cultural management training to improve governance and raise the level of professionalism in the cultural field in the Arab region. In the same time, within the framework of international cultural cooperation, the civil society promotion of contemporary arts and culture production has been enabled in parts of the Arab region (Tounkan, 2010).

It was underlined in many occasions throughout the research and especially through the voices of the interviewees, that only by supporting a resilient cultural and civil society sector in the Arab countries would bring them into a position to lead the discussions and practices in the binary of EuroArab cultural cooperation. A lot has been achieved so far and definitely we are far beyond the era when '*to cooperate there was a price to pay'*, however more confidence building needs to be infused among the Arab cultural and civil society sector and as well as equal engagement when designing common programmes. This is not only a responsibility of the European partners, but should be accompanied by actions and programmes that respond to the desire for improved networking dynamics and inclusive partnerships between different players of the cultural field within the Arab region itself.

4. A liminal geography of international cultural cooperation

We have seen that DeVlieg (2008) had observed that the interest of international funders in the Arab world was an effort to give an answer to the agony in which some western nations find themselves towards multiculturalism and the growing Muslim communities in their ground and a quick fix for the challenges of cultural renewal within the Arab region itself. Today, almost 10 years later, this observation cannot be more accurate. The above becomes even more relevant today in the context of forced migration. While the term 'international cultural cooperation' until today has implied moving across borders, today, in our ever-growing multicultural societies, international cultural cooperation might occur even in our own neighborhood as our societies become more and more intercultural. Although this research does not discuss in depth this parameter and focuses mostly on international cultural cooperation that occurs across borders, it is crucial to keep in mind this changing environment because it will definitely influence the way international cultural cooperation is conceived and exercised in the near future.

Findings in relation to value and evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes

The second objective of the research was related to the evaluation practice and specifically to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes. The different findings drawn here are mainly related to questions in regards to the practice of evaluation, since the human factor is discussed in the third objective.

1. In absence of reliable information

This research has shown that there is a gap in the existing literature on the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and a lack of understanding of what makes international cultural cooperation work. Evidence is primarily from funding bodies and not from the research field and the most relevant coordinated effort identified so far has been the *Culture works/ Kultur wirkt* effort of the Goethe Institut (2016). This little amount of documentation on evaluation of concrete programmes and projects of international cultural cooperation can be explained if we consider that reporting evaluation findings is mainly done for accountability reasons and is considered internal information. However, if we attribute a learning element to the act of evaluation, it would be very interesting to extract conclusions and lessons learnt from a number of cases.

2. From resistance to evaluation to the search for systematic good practice

The main element emerging from the case studies and the expert interviews (that were used to bridge the gap in the literature identified) is that it is difficult to come to the conclusion that the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes displays any systematic good practice. However it became clear that from the practitioner's point of view, what used to be a 'resistance to evaluation' (which can be understood as the result of different factors, among which the lack of motivation or inclination, limited time, unavailable resources or skills, lack of understanding about the value of evaluation, and hesitations regarding the methodologies used so far) is gradually shifting to an articulated need for more and better evaluation. The international cultural cooperation process is a long-term one, which is deep, subjective, and difficult to quantify and assess and it has recently raised the attention of policy makers, researchers and practitioners.

3. Towards an elucidation of terms

Despite this desire, there is still quite some ambiguity in understanding what exactly evaluation means, which explains the existence of multiple approaches and the terminology that is applied to different practices. The use of vague and diverse definitions of international cultural cooperation makes comparability and accumulation across programmes very difficult. Different terms are used to describe different concepts: 'evaluation', 'impact', 'spillover effects', 'value', 'outcomes' are words that are constantly being used, without necessarily meaning the same thing in each setting and by the different users. An additional confusion exists between monitoring and evaluation and between evaluation and impacts assessment. We observe that even if not formulated as such, in most cases the desired point of attention is on impact- what changes happen on

the individual participants and as a consequence to the organisations they represent and their environment and not so much on the programme governance. However, given the limited time and budget resources and the need for immediate results, in reality evaluations of international cultural cooperation programmes are conducted with tools used in programme evaluations although often they claim to make an impact assessment in the same time- something. In reality though, this was considered impossible from most of the practitioners interviewed since it would require a certain time distance from the actual period of conclusion of the programmes, for which often no human, time and financial resources nor skills are available within the organisations examined.

4. On purpose, process and outcomes

International cultural cooperation programmes' evaluation should be focused on measuring, assessing and monitoring whether programmes have been able to achieve their stated intent in a systematic manner. This requires on a first level the formulation of concrete programme objectives that can be translated into concrete actions and outcomes. However, the aspect of process should be also taken into consideration and be translated into indicators. Most programmes aim to produce results on the personal, organisational and community level, while the examples examined showed clearly that individuals are the main target and more easy to assess. The basic assumption is that when a few key individuals are affected, organisations and communities may be affected as well. However, these aspects are even more difficult to identify and assess. It becomes therefore crucial to define precisely what aspect of international cultural cooperation one is evaluating, because different activities are likely to lead to a different set of outcomes.

5. On approaches and methods

Throughout the research it was demonstrated that when evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes, different approaches are adopted. Given the complexity and variety of the international cultural cooperation field, there is definitely no one model that fits all. Therefore evaluating the quality or impact of artistic interventions, collaborations and cultural exchanges is open to argument and interpretation. Any evaluation models developed should be viewed not so much as recipes but as frameworks that provide "flexibility and fitness for purpose" (Woolf, 2004: 4-5). The question of method becomes central in the discussion regarding the international cultural cooperation evaluation practice.

Contrary to what might have been expected, the case studies revealed that organisations do not feel compelled to focus their evaluation efforts merely on the collection of quantitative data, primarily in response to the expectations of donor agencies for evidence to demonstrate accountability for the use of program funds. Even in the case of Cimetta Fund where data were gathered solely by means of a questionnaire and were represented in numerical facts, the organisers themselves underlined the limitations of such approach. Sophisticated quantitative approaches were considered insufficient to grasp the meaning and complexity of international cultural cooperation programmes and interventions. Qualitative methods, especially interviews and observation were considered as most appropriate data collection methods for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation to describe how programmes function and "what it may mean to the people involved" (W.K.Kellogg Foundation, 1998: 72). This goes in line with what Lierheimer and Shad (2017) have observed and that has been the result of the *Kultur wirkt* exercice (Goethe Institut, 2016): that social and cultural phenomena are dynamic and process-oriented, therefore qualitative, in particular dialogue-oriented methods seem appropriate to provide a holistic picture of effects and contexts to develop and collide evaluation as a learning process.

Interviewing is an important method in any social scientist's methodological toolbox, but even more essential to evaluators and can "illustrate the power of qualitative data, beyond a concept or label to tie together data (Patton, 1990: 392). Interviewees agreed that interviews allow an evaluator to understand the context of the programme or the outcome itself. Moreover, story-based approaches, such as the Most Significant Change (MSC) were recognised as rigorous qualitative methods of reporting and an effective way of collecting evidence of change, especially in contexts where there are not adequate empirical indicators, where causality is hard to establish, and where there may be external factors that influence the outcomes (Vanclay, 2012: 19). This becomes event more relevant in the context of international cultural cooperation where programmes are "subject to long lag times and can be subject to the influence of multiple external influences" (Vanclay, 2012: 24).

6. Embracing the challenges

Interviewees and participants of the ENCATC WG underlined the fact that the arts and cultural sector lacks skilled people in evaluation techniques, and the experience is mostly empirical and imported from other sectors. Moreover, although toolkits and manuals can be considered a way to provide a structured way to approach evaluation, there is no

evidence in the bibliography that they are actually used by practitioners when evaluating their projects and in which way Developing though such material in the form of orientation manuals including a number of concrete case studies could benefit the sector.

The biggest challenge, though, remains the evaluation of the long-term impacts of the programmes on the beneficiaries, their organisations and their communities. It was shown that although organisations wish to know what happens after the conclusion of a programme, they don't necessarily have the capacity to do it since participants might be in different geographies or it might be difficult to track them a few years after the end of a programme. Most of the times this is done in an informal way, through personal contacts that last throughout time, but no systematic efforts are put in place. Most of the interviewees agreed that such an exercise would require 3 to 5 years time in order for the results to be visible.

7. Value beyond a certain degree of faith

The research has shown that evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes is complex. Therefore, it should be examined within the discussion around cultural value since this influences the decisions regarding the frameworks of cultural valorisation and the methodologies for evaluation, in their nature, application and validity. In this quest, the central question between the intrinsic and instrumental contribution of culture is still influential in the discussion. Throughout the research process we were constantly reminded of Einstein's quote that opened the second chapter: "not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that is counted counts". However, appropriate methodologies and approaches to the evaluation of cultural cooperation programmes can be beneficial to reveal this value.

8. A multilayer environment for international cultural cooperation programme's evaluation

Based on the above conclusions, Figure IV.2 captures the environment in which international cultural cooperation programmes are conceived and implemented and that needs to be taken into consideration when conceptualising and conducting their evaluation.

Figure IV.2 Spheres for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes

Source: Developed by researcher.

What becomes clear through this image are the elements that determine a programme's theme, setting, beneficiaries and benefits:

- The general context, by which we mean the global forces impacting on organisations and programme and the external context that shapes or constraints a programme. This can be translated into a) policy developments and b) major contemporary events and situations. In the case of EuroArab cultural cooperation for example, this could be from one hand the policy developments on the European level regarding culture in external relations, and on the other hand, for example the Arab Spring or the intensified forced migration phenomenon;
- The community contexts, by which we refer to local forces and conditions where the intervention takes place. In reality, when it comes to international cultural cooperation programmes, most of the times it is not a single community that is being addressed, but several ones since programmes take place across different countries. Here the challenge lies into having the capacity to reflect on the local conditions and situations in each sphere of intervention and knowing where to base the assumptions for measuring the change produced and how programmes contributed to social change;
- The internal context, by which we make reference to the organisation conceptualising, running and evaluating the programmes and its management systems. This implies examining how programmes are structured internally, what

functions they fulfill and how they operate. As it has been explained in the research and especially through the case studies, each organisation involved in international cultural cooperation might have different objectives, management systems and evaluation capacity which should be taken into account when conducting an evaluation. Here it is important to add that often in international cultural cooperation there might be different stakeholders involved (as seen in the Tandem programme for example) and their individual internal context should be taken into account.

Findings in relation to the human factor in evaluation

The main principle in this research was the human factor in evaluation, inspired by the work of Matarasso (2009) in the topic. Therefore, a balance was sought between interviews with those commissioning the evaluations, those evaluating and those benefiting from the programmes and in the same time being the subjects of evaluation. Another principle was related to having representatives from the academia, policy and practice fields. These criteria were fulfilled by gathering data from the ENCAT WG on the evaluation of European and translational cultural projects (chapter 3) and the expert interviews (6), but also from the case study interviews (chapter 5). The main results in relation to this objective are presented below.

1. Putting a face into the evaluation practice

First of all, throughout the research it became obvious that conceptualising, implementing and producing evaluation always involves value. Since evaluation is "a series of processes for constructing, for certain purposes, particular kinds of knowledge by adding value within power structures in the wider social, economic, cultural and political context" (Cars, 2006: 186), values can have both a universal attribute and a subjective one. Since evaluation processes produce value statements, investigating into the perspectives of the people involved in evaluation is a useful and much needed exercise (Matarasso, 2009; Newsinger & Green, 2016). An observation in relation to this concerns the 'fluid roles' in the evaluation practice. It was shown from the interviews conducted, that a person who might be the evaluator at a specific instance, in another setting might be the commissioner of an evaluation or even a beneficiary. A second observation is related to the level of influence on the process and outcomes of the evaluation depending on the socio-cultural differences, asymmetries of power and

divergent views concerning evaluations. This aspect becomes particularly relevant in the context of international cultural cooperation programmes' evaluation.

2. Sharing learnings

The case studies provided different examples of dissemination systems for the evaluation results, some systematic and some less systematic and effective. Although the people interviewed agree that evaluation can have a catalytic function in providing opportunities for various stakeholders to exchange opinions on various issues, it was not clear to what extent stakeholders actually use or put in practice evaluation findings and recommendations. Moreover, dialogue among key stakeholders groups is a very significant feature of a 'joint learning' in international cultural cooperation programmes, which should be initiated from the very conception of an evaluation process. Only this way it would be possible to pass from divergent views to co-creating value and knowledge through evaluation. Finally, it was confirmed that collaboration in evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes is essential. As Torres et al (1996: 11) had observed, collaborative evaluation:

> [...] enhances use by different audiences; it values individual's experience and opinions; it contributes to the sense of ownership; it produces better understanding and depiction of the context; it leads to more useful recommendations; it educates clients/ audiences about the program and evaluation; it helps identify and resolve conflicts before the end of an evaluation. In essence, it embraces different perspectives and lets many voices be heard.

This comes by no surprise but it definitely acquires a special dimension when it comes to the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes.

3. Voices from programme managers/ funders

It was observed that a very modest and unsteady effort is made by programme managers to document systematically their own work by collecting and systematising the memory of the programmes and contributing thus to their evaluation practice, while in the same time they often seek external expertise to verify or question their assumptions. None of these processes however is considered 'perfect' from the people involved in it while organisations and evaluators are looking for better ways to approach the question of evaluation.

People interviewed agreed that evaluation is something imported to the arts and cultural field rather than developed by the sector itself. With a few sporadic exceptions, there is a

tendency to follow standard tools and practices from other fields, with a not so prominent creative effort to find more adequate instruments for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes.

Although the people that informed this research acknowledged that indicators offer the possibility to categorise and quantify, and even "transform intangible phenomena and contested concepts into authoritative and seemingly objective knowledge" (Bloomkamp, 2015: 12), there was no systematic practice that revealed the use of indicators. The need to identify process indicators and not only outcome indicators, given the particularities of international cultural cooperation programmes, was underlined as well. Moreover, it was claimed that indicators cannot be neutral since they always remain quite subjective or charged by meanings and cannot be considered a panacea since the most important impacts are not the easiest to collect.

4. Voices from participants: experiences for human development

From the interviews with the beneficiaries of programmes analysed in the case studies, it became clear that international cultural cooperation programmes are catalysts for experiential learning. The type of learning experiences that participants describe is very closely related to renewal, critical reflection and transformation experiences that characterise learning for human development and positive leisure (Cuenca, 2010). Reflecting and evaluating these experiences starts with the assumption that the individual experiences and perspectives of beneficiaries are meaningful, knowable and able to be made explicit. The task of the evaluator is to find out those things that cannot be directly observed and therefore building the necessary trust and talking the language of the persons interviewed or observed, becomes of great importance. In international cultural cooperation programmes, individual stories become a valuable source of insight and sometimes the only kind of evidence available of the type of practice and attitudinal changes taking place over time.

5. Voices from evaluators: co-facilitating learning

It was confirmed that external evaluators are brought on board "to confirm what they know is supported by data", "to disabuse them of misconceptions" and to "illuminate important things that they didn't know but should know" (Patton, 1990: 423). For this though, there is a clear need to decide and clearly articulate the purposes of the evaluation because it influences also the methods used. As Matarasso (2009: 13) puts it "without consensus about *why*, agreement about *how* is hard to imagine". Most evaluators

interviewed admitted having a limited range of methodological expertise, which almost always involves the use of a range of complementary methods so that the limitations of one method can be compensated by the strengths of others. There is, however, clearly considerable need for training with regards to various methodological aspects of evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes.

It was made clear that the evaluator, especially in international cultural cooperation programmes where access to all the beneficiaries and contexts of interaction and intervention is not possible, needs to be supported during the design and implementation of the evaluation by programme organisers to identify the unifying nature of the particular settings. In this way, they can assume further responsibility for owning the evaluation findings and following through on the recommendations with the organisation. Perhaps this seems obvious, but as seen through the case studies, it was not always the case. This implies that in order evaluation to be meaningful and productive, there is need of shifting from evaluating others to learning from others and with others. Rather than being a capacity of independent experts, evaluators are seen more and more seen as introducing a participatory approach that empowers and builds capacity within institutions and amongst all programme and project partners (as was the case in both the evaluation of the CIN and of Tandem). This requires also a change in mentality in the evaluators as well that need to be oriented and motivated mostly "toward learning as well as to develop their self- concept as knowers, opportunities for accounting for one's own position and engaging in guided reflection" (Becker, 2016: 23).

Roles of evaluators can vary from objective-judgmental to empathetic-facilitative. It is important to cultivate the second role where organisational learning is one of the aims of the evaluation. It was underlined from the interviewees that a good strategy for meaningful evaluations in the international cultural cooperation setting is that evaluators should be engaged from the beginning in a programme, which will enable them to develop a clear understanding of its evolution (whenever it is possible).

What arose as a prerequisite in the evaluation of international cultural cooperation is the context-specific knowledge of the evaluator. Only for a few of the people interviewed the methodological tools were considered more important when designing and implementing an evaluation strategy than the context itself. Cultural competence in evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes is an essential factor for selecting the right evaluator. Cultural competence can be translated as both knowledge of

the cultural context of the programme, but also the ability of cooperating internationally and interculturally since the role of the evaluator requires a high level of soft skills and mediation skills among different stakeholders. Moreover, cultural competence goes beyond the individual to become a condition for appropriate and meaningful international cultural programmes' evaluation.

6. On cultural competence in the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes

The above reflects a need to have an understanding around the general and the community specific contexts in which the programmes are developed and evaluated. Producing culturally sensitive evaluations is crucial in all programmes, but appears even more important in the international cultural cooperation field. Of course it is unrealistic to expect an evaluator to have specific cultural knowledge around each region/ programme he might be assigned an evaluation for, however the interviewees revealed that it is very much appreciated. On the other hand, competence in one context does not assure competence in another. Milena Dragicevic explained how it took her 10 years to build the knowledge around the Arab region in order to be in a position to consider herself a knowledgeable expert that can conduct evaluations. On the other side, we have seen the examples of Francois Matarasso that had no previous experience in the Arab region, but was called on board for the evaluation of an international cultural cooperation, which had a strong EuroArab pillar, and dynamics he totally ignored. However, in this case, his experience and valuable insights in regards to the evaluation practice, his engaging writing skills and his previous experience evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes in the Balkans were enough for considering him capable for undertaking this task. The cases of Anke Schad or Antje Klesse were also different: Anke had never been to the Arab region but was working for a consultancy being responsible for many studies and evaluation, while Antje Klesse had personal strong experiences working in the Arab region. It was also commented in chapter (6) that there are mainly European evaluators and besides a few exceptions, Arab experts are not considered for evaluation assignments, they are however developing the skills and capacity to do it.

Having said this, it should be recognised that cultural competence and culturally sensitive and responsive evaluation does not refer only to the evaluator as an individual. It should be a part of the whole evaluation practice. Edno and Yu (2003: 6-7) define cultural competence as follows:

> The root of cultural competence in evaluation is a genuine respect for communities being studied and openness to seek depth in understanding different cultural contexts, practices and paradigms of thinking. This includes being creative and flexible to capture different cultural contexts, and a heightened awareness of power differentials that exist in an evaluation context. Important skills include the ability to build rapport across difference, gain the trust of community members, and self-reflect and recognize one's own biases.

In Table IV.1 the culturally responsive evaluation is considered in the different stages of evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes based on the work by Frierson et al (2010) and SenGupta et al (2004) and using the blocks created for the data inquiry of the case studies.

Table IV.1 Culturally sensitive evaluation in international cultural cooperation programmes

Cultural sensitive evaluation in international cultural cooperation programmes	
Evaluation Block	**Culturally sensitive evaluation approach**
Purpose and focus of the evaluation	- Taking into account the sociocultural context in which the programme is developed. - Having a team that is culturally sensitive to the programme environment can ensure that cultural nuances will be captured. - Assessing the organisation's cultural self-awareness. - Engaging stakeholders who reflect the diversity of the community to be included throughout the evaluation.
Evidence collection procedures	- Selection of an evaluator or team that truly hears what Is said and is fully aware and responsive to the participant's and stakeholder's culture.. - Framing the right questions - Ensuring all voices are heard. - Data collection methods that factor in cultural and linguistic distinctions. - Substantial use of qualitative techniques. - Story based approaches and interviews. - Building of trust with community.
Analysis of evidence	- Engaging stakeholders in the analysis. All key voices should be accurately heard and listened to. - Determining accurate meanings. - Involve evaluators with 'lived experience'. - Discussion of cultural implications during analysis.
Learning from the evaluation	- Involving all stakeholders and staff in the debriefing. - Developing inclusive decision-making processes for the dissemination of the results.
Communicating the evaluation findings	- Engaging with stakeholders. - Sharing findings with beneficiaries and engaging them to give further feedback. - Tailoring dissemination of evaluation results to all stakeholder need.

Source: Elaborated by researcher based on Frierson et al (2010) and SenGupta et al (2004).

The above underlines the important role that the evaluator has in the evaluation process, which constitutes a knowledge and value-making proposition. The voices that are heard in the evaluation are not only the ones of the beneficiaries of a programme, but also those of the person(s) who is analysing, interpreting and presenting the findings. Therefore, reflection on one's own cultural position should be the first step when involved in the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes.

Recommendations and future lines of action

Towards an upgrading of international cultural cooperation programmes

The research has shown that conscious efforts should be deployed in deciding the content and format of international cultural cooperation programmes, the dissemination of the results and the consolidation of the human networks evolving, taking into consideration the challenges related with the unstable political situation in the region, the expectations and needs of the target group and the activities of all the stakeholders in the region. Taking on board ideas and opinions of engaged participants and organisations could also provide a level of ownership to those involved and ensure sustainability of the work and the networks developed. Moreover, in order to enhance the work and impact of individual programmes, synergies need to be identified to ensure a complementary approach among partners, especially when engaged in a specific region. Such an approach could provide a multiplying effect for the results, pooling of resources, strengthening the capacity and skills of the participants addressed, diversity in approach and methodology as well as a wider scope of outreach and participation.

Evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes can play a decisive role in this direction. As observed by Cummings (2003) and mentioned by Andrew Murray, Director of EUNIC Global, in our interview, any attempt so far to verbalise the value of international cultural cooperation has implied 'a certain degree of faith'. Going beyond that requires the development of a systematic approach to understand international cultural cooperation and cultural relations as a phenomenon through conceptualising and implementing appropriate evaluation standards and approaches.

Habermas (1971) suggested that any form of knowledge is ultimately linked to a sort of interest. We produce knowledge either to master our environment, to achieve for greater cultural understanding or to change our conditions and question our own practices and ourselves. Keeping this in mind, at this point I find useful to address the challenge of

developing "usable knowledge" (George & Bennett, 2005: 269) to cultural policy, research and practice. The two questions that arise are:

- What kind of knowledge has this research produced that can be useful for policy makers, practitioners and researchers?
- How can such knowledge be further developed?

Of course the answers to these questions can be interrelated and no advancement can be achieved without a collaboration of all stakeholders involved in the conceptualisation, implementation and evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes. This section takes into consideration how the findings can be useful and meaningful to policy, practice and research and calls for synergies between them for achieving better results. It also corresponds to the fourth objective of this research, which was to offer recommendations for the improvement of the evaluation practice of international cultural cooperation programmes.

The policy level

Evaluation carries within it a political element. Programmes do not simply happen, but come into being through political processes. There are three means by which evaluation acquires a political role (Weiss, 1997: 313):

- Selecting which programmes will undergo evaluation is in itself a political statement;
- Evaluation reports can be political documents as they support decision-making; and
- Evaluation implicitly makes political statements.

We have seen in chapter (2) that the main motivation for the policy level to engage in evaluation is to assess the impact of selected interventions and the relevance to policy objectives, as well as to assess outcomes that could inform future evidence-based policy. In line with what was mentioned at the beginning of the section, such an exercise requires the involvement of researchers and practitioners. As (Van Eijck, 2012: 36) puts it: "the principles of evidence-based policy encourage both scholars and practitioners to engage in theory together" (Van Eijck, 2012: 36). For this to happen though, a number of conditions need to be taken into consideration in the context of international cultural cooperation:

1. By considering evaluation in advance while designing or supporting international cultural cooperation programmes, policy makers (and programme organisers) can become familiar with research designs that are aimed at an optimal assessment of the causal effects of their interventions, allowing them to judge the results of previous evaluations better (Van Eijck, 2012: 36).
2. Any programme supporting international cultural cooperation, should leave space for approaches that allow for recognition of "core values" (Caust, 2007: 231) besides purely economic ones. The case studies reflected that the emphasis is mainly on attitudes, skills, human relations, capacity building and the connections that last after a programme is concluded.
3. Although it is almost impossible to define indicators that would be suitable for all kind of international cultural cooperation programmes, certain overarching elements can be defined. The nature of international cultural cooperation, however, implies that when searching for indicators for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes, not only of outcome variables, but also of processes variables should be considered. This was also made clear during the ENCATC WG.
4. A commitment from the policy side to support and encourage further research in the field is needed. Van Hamersveld (2012: 3) observed that outcomes from research in the field of culture play a less well- developed role in cultural policy-making in comparison to economic or social policy. Therefore, besides funding for cultural policy research, attention should be placed into ensuring that the research results are implemented in daily cultural practice and public cultural policy. As George and Bennett (2005: 265) note "scholarly research can make a greater contribution to policymaking by emphasizing the development of middle-range theories that are narrower in scope but closer to types and forms of knowledge needed in policymaking".
5. Case study research regarding the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programs should be encouraged in an evidence-based policy approach, since, as Simons, observes, case studies can present "multiple perspectives, interpretations in context" and "aspire to directly encounter and re-present the phenomenon" they are trying to understand. Such an approach would offer policy-makers the opportunity "to increase their understanding of complex social settings and programmes in order to inform the policy judgments they need to make" (Simons, 2009: 167).

6. As Ortega and Claudio (2012) observe, a possible solution to bridge the gap between cultural policy research and the users of cultural research findings is to provide systematic information in the sense of a 'translation' for users that uses "their language and imaginery" rather than "the context of the economic/ managerial jargon currently in vogue" (Caust, 2003: 62). Policy-makers have a great responsibility in this direction and should encourage such an approach and provide opportunities for exchange to take place.
7. Finally, the last two recommendations are related to the specific region studied. The evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes in the EuroArab region can provide valuable insights for the future culture in external relations EU strategy focusing on the Arab region, by helping identify the real needs, conditions and also achievements so far to inform future programmes and interventions in light of cultural cooperation.
8. It was shown from the research, there are already culture and arts-driven initiatives taking place on the European ground to support artists from the Arab region that face forced migration and also to engage culturally diverse audiences in cultural practices in their new environment. Findings from the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes with third regions, especially the Arab region that was examined can contribute to the debate around the question of culture in Europe's refugee crisis by enlightening the situation from the perspective of arts and culture building on what has been achieved so far and listening to the voices and concerns of those coming from the region in question. Such an understanding can help policy makers in finding solutions in the frame of the long-lasting refugee crisis that Europe is facing today.

The practice level

Radaelli and Paquette (2016) remind us that that cultural practitioners "will at some point, be in search of knowledge and see themselves as knowledge users" either in order to have a better command of their environment, or to gain deeper cultural understanding of their community or in a quest to understand how they impact their sector. One of their assets is that they can repurpose and adapt what they learn, both in practical and theoretical terms to fit their own organisational and context realities. This research contributes to knowledge production for practitioners in the following aspects:

1. The empirical study revealed that the only way to produce meaningful evaluation results is by taking evaluation into account from the start of the programmes. This becomes even more important in international cultural cooperation programmes where aims and objectives need to be negotiated and thorough monitoring processes need to be put in place to respond to time and space constraints.
2. Practitioners, especially programme managers, should make sure that information is not only gathered after their programme has been implemented, but also beforehand starting with a context analysis in order to better assess to what extent did their intervention actually produce a change. The limiting factors of evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes appear to be cost and time. Although the timing of evaluation tends to be determined largely on the organisational capacity of those commissioning the evaluation, it should rather be carefully planned according to the conditions and/ or situation of each particular programme.
3. What was also revealed throughout the empirical study is that a combination of internal and external evaluation techniques is recommended. From one hand, internally, a diversification of evaluation tasks to appropriate organisational levels would be of assistance in the development of an evaluation culture at various organisational levels (Rebien, 1996). This would also allow for a better triangulation between different sources of data. Such an approach implies having a representative and steering committee to actively guide the evaluation and organising regularly briefing and debriefing sessions and supporting the external evaluator (if external evaluation is conducted).
4. In this way, effective monitoring becomes itself an indicator of a programme's success. All programmes should incorporate a degree of adaptive management or reflectivity into them allowing them to respond to feedback along the way. Another key factor to success is the ability of the programme to be adaptive to change and unforeseen outcomes.
5. Evaluation is more likely to be used if an understanding of the organisation as a learning organisation is adopted and supported by the leadership of the organisation (Owen & Lambert, 1995). This can happen only within a setting where creating, acquiring and synthesizing knowledge is part of the organisation's routine together with an openness to change on the basis of the knowledge acquired. It was shown from the research that organisations are

committed to this, but still time constraints prevent them from doing if effectively.

6. External evaluation is not enough. This means that staff in an organisation needs to be encouraged and supported to enhance their capacity to conduct their own evaluative activities. This is often understood as internal evaluation practice in an organization and could involve discussing evaluation plans, making suggestions regarding appropriate data collection techniques, assisting with data analysis, providing advice on the preparation of an evaluation report or on-going monitoring and discussing the dissemination and utilization of evaluation findings.
7. Moreover, evaluation should be designed in a manner that is able to deal with the value pluralism that exists in the social reality of international cultural cooperation programmes as well as the variations in what is regarded as acceptable knowledge on the part of different stakeholders prior to the evaluation exercise. Only such an approach encouraging mutual consultation can move from a perspective's gap to co-creating knowledge.
8. An important element in the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes is cultural competence. Therefore, those evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes should be trained both in evaluation methodologies but also have the cultural understanding of the context they are working in and/ or the ability to deal with intercultural contexts. As Frieson et al (2010: 69) notes, "if those collecting data are not attuned to the cultural context in which the program is situated, the collected data could be invalid".
9. Practitioners are also encouraged to share their evaluation findings with policy makers and researchers beyond reporting requirements. This could contribute to building substantial sets of knowledge.
10. Knowledge sharing is also needed among peer practitioners. Fora such as the ENCATC WG where different working practices and experiences can be shared are contributing enormously to this direction, especially given their potential to bring to the same table representatives from the policy, research and practice perspective.

The research level

This thesis has shown that evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes is still in its infancy, with a lot of maturing yet to come. By identifying and

acting upon research gaps and setting a research agenda, we help advance the entire field. This section aims to contribute to the formulation of such a research agenda and by implication, provide guidance to educators regarding curriculum development.

1. The evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes needs a research base covering a more thorough reflection on the unique aspects of international cultural cooperation schemes and on the fundamentals of evaluation applied to them. Coming in terms with the 'worth' or 'value' of international cultural cooperation and schemes requires research on concepts, methods and measures.
2. It is important to recognise evaluation of international cultural cooperation as a field of study in cultural policy and management, even though much of its theory and knowledge come from other fields and disciplines. In order to achieve this there is a need to produce an identifiable body of knowledge specific to the cultural sector by investigating further into international cultural cooperation programmes and their evaluation practices.
3. There is a need for more suitable methodologies for evaluating international cultural cooperation programs and their impacts and more comprehensive methods and measures of value must be used. Research can help shed light into this by investigating into various examples providing methodological tools to practitioners.
4. Although qualitative researchers might insist, as Weiss (1997: 69) observes, that "all truths are local and contingent" and therefore "each program is its own world and has to be understood in its own terms", it can be beneficial to undertake a kind of meta-analysis of individual studies of like-kind programmes, as she proposes, to come to more general observations and recommendations. This was attempted in this research, but there is definitely further room for improvement in this direction and hundreds of programmes that can offer the basis for such an approach. Comparisons between regions could also provide further insights.
5. Involving practitioners in the research processes is of outmost importance, since professionals tend to identify tangible needs and working with them would make research more useful. From the interviews with people working in the field, a clear need for this cooperation was articulated. Practitioners should be encouraged to contribute to the research process through interviews, conferences where both practitioners and academics meet and exchange, publication of case studies and focus groups for identifying needs and priorities.

6. Following the above, research results and insights must also be communicated or transferred to non-academic people and organisations and their lessons should be "mediated, deliberated and drawn out in useable ways" (Bastow et al, 2014: xiii). Results and recommendations deriving from academic research should be communicated and 'translated' into the language of policy makers and practitioners through fora, exchanges and publications in non-academic media.
7. Further research is needed on a methodology to study to what extent models of different programmes in international cultural cooperation are valuable to the personal level, the organisational level and the societal level. Moreover, further research is needed on the connection of international cultural cooperation programmes to cultural diplomacy, culture and development, arts and international commerce.
8. Undertaking a comparative study of international cultural cooperation programmes that have been evaluated and of others that have not been evaluated would shed light into the essence and meaning of evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes.
9. The potential of arts-based methods for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes should be further explored. So far, story telling based techniques, such as the Most Significant Change, have been used but there is no documentation on their effectiveness in the field of international cultural cooperation.
10. Evaluation is emerging into a profession in the cultural field, but also into a tool for cultural practitioners to perform their work better. Academic and training institutions in the field of cultural policy and management should introduce the concepts and theory or evaluation in their curricula. Moreover, since working on culture is becoming more and more international and intercultural, training on dealing with evaluation in such a setting is becoming even more important and developing cultural competence in evaluation and culturally sensitive evaluations is needed.
11. Finally, every field of study can draw on other disciplines and fields for its knowledge base and theory. There is a lot of learning on the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes that can be derived from other fields. In Table IV.2 specific international cultural cooperation programme evaluation aspects are connected to pertinent disciplines and fields for further research and reflection.

Table IV.2 Future lines of research

Perspectives on international cultural cooperation programme's evaluation: sample research topics and related disciplines	
'Beneficiary' perspective	- Motivations to participate in international cultural cooperation programmes; - Skills developed by participating in international cultural cooperation programmes; - Programme outreach strategies; - Long term impacts on individuals (on careers, attitudes, further engagement in international cultural cooperation, etc). Related disciplines: Communication and marketing; Arts and cultural management; Educational evaluation; Leisure studies.
Management perspective (performance evaluation)	- Organizational management (marketing; human resources; finance; organization and co-ordination; stakeholders management). Related disciplines: Business; Public and non-for-profit management; Programmes evaluation, Leisure studies.
Economic perspective	- Distribution of costs and benefits; - Economic impacts on local communities and income generation. Related disciplines: Business; Public management and non-for-profit; Social programmes evaluation; International cooperation.
Social impact perspective	- Change in attitudes; - Promotion of intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and a culture of peace; - Social development; - Democracy and participation; Related disciplines: Social programmes' evaluation; Cultural policy; International cooperation; International relations.
Community / local perspective	- Promotion of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity; - Local development; - Participation in arts and culture; - Capacity building and development of arts and cultural institutions. Related disciplines: International cooperation; Local and urban development; Arts and cultural management and policy; Leisure studies.

Political perspective	- Programme's political goals; -Diplomacy through international cultural cooperation programmes Related disciplines: International relations; Arts and management; Public policy; Programme evaluation.
Image of programme organiser/ funder	- Profile of organisation before and after programme implementation. Related disciplines: International relations; International cooperation; Communication and marketing; Public Policy.

Source: Developed by researcher.

Limitations of the study

Recognising that all research suffers from limitations, this study is no exception. The limitations identified in this section have potentially influenced the quality of the findings and my ability to effectively answer the research questions and hypothesis. As a consequence, recognising some of these limitations from the very beginning of the research process required a number of choices, which are explained below.

The first limitation is related to the breadth of the literature review. Both thematic axes of this research, international cultural cooperation and evaluation of arts and culture, explored in chapter (1) and chapter (2) respectively, have been the subject of numerous researches and publications and it would have not been possible to claim that I have managed to consult all of them. My attempt was to gather the main concepts and ideas and see how they are applied in practice. Reviewing the evaluation theory has not been considered necessary in this case since it would have resulted in numerous references and approaches but none of them applied to the cultural sector. In relation to this, as it has been shown from the literature, most of the literature on the topic of evaluation is produced by commissioning bodies and consultancies while there is little academic literature on the topic, especially in regards to international cultural cooperation, that further limits the scope of the study. An explanation to this can be that in reality evaluation is applied social research and it is more often the subject of inquiry of policy makers and practitioners or used as a tool and not to produce scientific results.

Another related limitation is that most literature available on the topics is in English language and represents either UK-led discussions or discussions at European level. There is no doubt that in a way or another the discussions are influential and bring about a significant contribution to the topic. What is, however, missing is a discourse from other paradigms - non-UK ones and non-European level led ones- that could perhaps offer an alternative contribution to the topic.

Secondly, as explained in chapter (1), a great variety of programmes and actions can be put under the umbrella of international cultural cooperation. Claiming that this study can produce a comparative or a holistic analysis would be unrealistic. As it was explicitly shown in the empirical research that formed chapter (4), the case studies selected and analysed in chapter (5) as well as the reflections shared by the experts in chapter (6), international cultural cooperation comes in different forms, involves different actors and has different expected outcomes. Choosing to study more thoroughly a certain number of programmes was directed by the fact that "programme evaluation can be seen as a type of meta-evaluation" (Vanclay, 2012: 23) as the success of a programme encloses the evaluation of the single projects that constitute it. There is however a great number of other initiatives, personal encounters, projects of international cultural cooperation that do not necessary receive international funding but still they carry on. The reality of international cultural cooperation is definitely beyond what we know from funding institutions- it is between festivals cooperating with each other, it is between artists and cultural operators that meet in networking meetings or training. This research does not consider commercial or amateur forms of international cultural cooperation, not because we would not like to, but simply because it is not documented and it is difficult to trace. Nonetheless, this study allows for a better understanding of the particularities and complexities of each case studied individually and for extrapolating preliminary remarks on how international cultural cooperation is practiced and how its value is perceived. Generalising however the results for all international cultural cooperation activities would have required a larger sample of case studies and a greater number of expert interviews to cover all possibilities.

The case studies were chosen with the above in mind to guarantee the representation of different possibilities, but mainly with another important criteria: access to information, which can be considered a limitation to a certain level. Evaluations very often happen behind closed doors, serve internal interests and are not publicly available. Often they serve the purpose of justifying why and how public money has been spent, and therefore

their main audience is funders themselves. Other times, evaluations are just not documented. In these cases organisations and the individuals involved develop 'silent', unconscious and non-negotiated forms of understanding value. They might not need to provide evidence, because nobody asks for it or because everyone takes it for granted. In relation to this, we should also keep in mind that evaluation studies only look at organisations or communities that won a supporting grant, never comparing with a similar community that didn't get a grant, let alone one that never even applied (Guetzkow, 2002: 20). This limitation could be taken into consideration for a future line of research.

As a result of limitations on time and resources, the empirical part of the research had to be restricted to a specific geography, namely the EuroArab region. The reasons why this particular geography was chosen are explained thoroughly in the introduction of this research. However, even the notion of a EuroArab geography is so vast that it would be impossible through a limited number of field trips and interactions with a limited number of stakeholders to reflect all realities. Furthermore, it is to be recognised that looking into the evaluation practices in EuroArab cultural programmes while trying to generalise the observations and assumptions for all international cultural cooperation programmes might be naïve. As Stokke (1991: 4) observes, evaluations do not possess "cross-cultural generality" but they may highlight "different concerns, values and perceptions of what matters in life". It would be interesting to apply the same research methodology in another region of international cultural cooperation to see whether there would be similar findings.

Furthermore, considering that the methodology developed is purely qualitative and keeping the nature of the evaluation practice in mind, it can be contested that the level of information and knowledge that a researcher can attain might be conditioned by the openness of the stakeholders involved to share data and their opinions. Although the aim of the research is to depict the main elements of the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes, I chose to enter into the field through the multiple truths of the people involved in them. Both in the case studies as in the expert interviews, I held sincere conversations with the people involved trying to see through their eyes. In relation to this, I must admit that I feel privileged that all the people contacted and interviewed seemed very keen in sharing knowledge and reflections with me. This confirms that they considered that such a topic might result of interest in their everyday work. Therefore, what was achieved through this research it to bring to the surface the

individual experiences and to produce meaning about value in international cultural cooperation programmes from the people who commission evaluations, those who evaluate and those who are the subjects of the evaluations.

Finally, my own experience and implication in some of the different programmes analysed could be considered to a certain extent a limitation. I tried to mitigate this limitation by not including my own personal experience as evaluator of the CONNEXXIONS programme as one of the case studies but only approaching it as a meta-reflection. It was not though possible for the case of the Cimetta Fund grant programme where I was involved in the elaboration of the questionnaire and the findings, and also to a certain extent with the Tandem programme because I have been a participant of a different Tandem round. It should be recognised however, that exactly this experience and this network of people I have known in my non-academic capacity has enabled me to get a better understanding and entry point when conducting the field research, the case studies and selecting the experts to be interviewed.

Final Remarks

The aim of this research was to respond to the call for more robust evidence around the value and the evaluation practice of international cooperation programmes and to propose recommendations for its improvement. Although the area of focus of this research was the EuroArab region, the ambition was that the conclusions drawn from this exercise could serve programmes and schemes in other regions as well and that it will be useful at the policy, research and practice levels.

This research seeked to add to and enhance existing work in the field of cultural management and cultural policy studies through investigating and analysing international cultural cooperation programmes and how they are evaluated. The findings of this research were intended to engage those involved in international cultural cooperation programmes and schemes – be it in their design, implementation or evaluation- to reflect about the value of their programmes and projects and to help public and private policymakers reach informed decisions. The guiding principle for the research has been to create new knowledge-sets through a combination of qualitative research methodologies. Putting the emphasis on the evaluation practice to distill conclusions on the value of international cultural cooperation does not mean that the research is an ode to evaluation as a practice. It is a search towards value in evaluation and a contribution to how evaluation can be more meaningful for those working in international cultural cooperation. Meaningful to stakeholders, funders, organisers,

practitioners and researchers. Meaningful beyond the mere concept of a 'checklist approach' or for accountability purposes. Meaningful for culture and international cultural cooperation.

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Arab Region database on cultural policies	http://www.arabcp.org/site/index?_lang=1
Arts Council UK	http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/
Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean	http://www.bjcem.org/
British Council	https://www.britishcouncil.org/
Cine(m)assalia	http://cinemassalia.org/
CONNEXXIONS programme	https://www.unesco.de/en/kultur/kulturelle-vielfalt/connexxions.html
Creative Europe programme	https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/
Cultural Policy in the Arab Region	http://www.arabcp.org/
Cultural Value Project	https://culturalvalueproject.wordpress.com/
Cultural Metrics Research	www.culturemetricsresearch.com
Cultural and Creative Spillovers	https://ccspillovers.wikispaces.com/
Cultural Innovators Network	http://www.culturalinnovatorsnetwork.org
Culture Action Europe	http://cultureactioneurope.org/
Culture in external relations	http://www.cultureinexternalrelations.eu/
Council of Europe	http://coe.int
Doha Film Institute	http://www.dohafilminstitute.com/
Drama Diversity and Development	http://www.medculture.eu/about/grantprojects/drama-diversity-and-development-ddd
EDUCULT	www.educult.org
Eeeemerging project	http://eeemerging.eu/
EACEA	https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/homepage_en
EEAS	https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en
ENCATC	https://www.encatc.org/
ENPI	http://www.euneighbours.eu/
EUNIC	http://www.eunic-online.eu/
European Cultural Foundation	http://www.culturalfoundation.eu/
Ettijahat Independent Culture	http://www.ettijahat.org/
Goethe Institut	https://www.goethe.de/en/index.html
Hivos Mideast Creatives	https://hivos.org/focal-area/mideast-creatives?snid=29739
Flandres Arts Institute	https://www.flandersartsinstitute.be/
IETM	https://www.ietm.org/
Louvre Abu Dhabi	http://louvreabudhabi.ae
Institute of Cultural Capital	http://iccliverpool.ac.uk/liverpool18/

MedCulture	http://www.medculture.eu/
Mimeta	http://www.mimeta.org/
MitOst	http://www.mitost.org/en.html
Med Creative	https://www.medcreative.org/
Middle East Now	http://www.middleastnow.it/
Most Significant Change	http://mande.co.uk/special-issues/most-significant-change-msc/
On-the-move	http://on-the-move.org/
Racines	http://www.racines.ma/
Shubbak Festival	http://www.shubbak.co.uk/
Tandem programme	http://www.tandemforculture.org/
Valetta 2018	http://valletta2018.org/
UNESCO	http://unesco.org

Annexes

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Annex I: Research Trajectory

Events, discussions and networks

(i) Trainer at the *Training for European and Arab Trainers in Democratic Youth Participation* (Tunis, Tunisia/ December 2012) contracted by the Council of Europe and the League of Arab States;

(ii) Facilitator of the experts' meeting *Mobility Spaces, Learning Spaces- linking policy, research & practice I + II* (Berlin, Germany /March 2013 and Bonn, Germany/ November 2013) contracted by the European Platform on learning mobility in the youth field;

(iii) Trainer at the *Arab Spring: youth participation for the promotion of peace, human rights & fundamental freedoms* (Tunis, Tunisia/ August 2012) contracted by the Youth Partnership and the League of Arab States;

(**iv)** Author of the paper *Leisure time proposals coming from cultural centres born in the middle of the economic crisis- two case studies* presented at the OcioGune organised by the Universidad de Deusto (Bilbao, Spain/ June 2012);

(v) Participant at the *Young Cultural Change Makers for the regional network U40 Arabesque"- Capacity Shaping Working and Network for Young Experts from the Arab region kick-off event* (Jerash, Jordan/ October 2014) organised in the framework of the CONNEXXIONS programme;

(vi) Author of the paper *The European 'narrative' on culture in a globalised world: from an agenda to action?* Presented in the framework of the panel *Transnational Perspectives on Citizenship and Indigeneity* at the Liberal Arts International conference 2015 under the theme *Looking forward, looking back: Transnational Perspectives on Globalization* hosted by the TEXAS A&M University of Qatar (Doha, Qatar/ February 2015);

(vii) Author of the paper *Exploring the potential of art-based methodologies for cultural evaluation* presented at the 9th Annual Conference of the Association of Cultural Management in Germany, Austria and Switzerland (Zurich, January 2016) organised under the topic *Evaluation of Culture and the Arts*;

(viii) Presenter of ongoing research at the ENCATC 9th Young Researchers' Forum (Brussels, December 2016) under the title *Distilling value in EuroArab cultural cooperation programmes* that focused on the MENA region[1];

[1] The Forum gave an opportunity to the invited researchers to enhance their own skills by being challenged by experienced researchers, academics and practitioners and, at the same time, gain visibility in an international context. In my case the respondent were Catherine Magnant, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission DG for Education and Culture, Cultural Diversity and Innovation Unit, Manuèle Debrinay-Rizos, Head of International Relations, Institut de Management Public et Gouvernance territoriale at Aix Marseille University, France and Valentina Montalto, Research Fellow, Joint Research Centre.

(ix) Member of the Compendium of Cultural Policies and Practices community since 2012 and member of the working group on mobility and international cultural cooperation and co-author of the chapter on Greece (ERICarts and Council of Europe, 2013);
(x) Participant at the TANDEM Europe cultural exchange training programme (October 2015- January 2017) organised by the European Cultural Foundation and MitOst;
(xi) Trainer for the Cultural Skills Academy of the British Council in Greece for museum professionals and member of the Task Force for a Museum professionals' network (2017);
(xii) Participant at the second Global Cultural Leadership training course organised in the framework of the Cultural Diplomacy Platform (Athens, June 2017) by the Goethe Institut, the British Council, Bozar, Institut Francais, EUNIC Global and the European Cultural Foundation;
(xiii) Panel intervention at the Summer Institute for Leadership in the Performing Arts organised at the American University of Athens (June 2017).

Publications

(i) I was commissioned to write a publication by the EuroMed Youth Platform on the role of young people in the promotion of interfaith and intercultural dialogue in the Mediterranean (May- August 2012). Writing the publication, under the title *Can we talk about it?* gave me the possibility to interview a number of young people that work on intercultural programmes and gave me an overview of the challenges and issues at stake.
(ii) My article *Geographies of artistic mobility for the formation and confirmation of European cultural citizenship* was included in the publication *The cultural component of citizenship: an inventory of challenges* prepared by the Access to Culture Platform Working Group on Audience Participation in 2012.

(iii) The article *Still moving and learning? Questioning previous and further research* co-authored with Xavier Landabidea and Cristina Ortega was published at the Bashiron Mendolicchio,H., Huleileh, S. (2015). *The Challenges of Mobility. Research, Debates and Practices*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing: London.

(iv) Not directly linked to the present research, but very close to the work of the Leisure Studies Institute and to my training and trajectory as a researcher, I would like to mention that wrote a *Manual on Teaching volunteering to secondary education students*

(February- April 2012) commissioned by the Greek General Secretariat for Youth and did the research for and the report for the *15th University on Youth and Development* (Mollina, 19- 28 Sept 2014) commissioned by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe. Moreover, I was Editorial Coordinator for the publication *Perspectives on Youth* for the 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 editions commissioned by the Youth Partnership- in the field of youth (European Commission and the Council of Europe).

Awards and scholarships

a) Finalist for the Young Cultural Researcher Award (2012)

In 2012 I was finalist for the Young Cultural Researcher Award (ENCATC and European Cultural Foundation). Standing in front of highly qualified researchers and the general public and presenting my research proposal was a unique experience. Although my proposal was not chosen, though this process I met and connected with young cultural researchers that I admire for their academic and professional practice and I am proud to be considered as part of their network and of the wider ENCATC network.

b) STEP beyond mobility grant

In autumn 2012 I received a mobility grant from the STEP beyond programme of the European Cultural Foundation for the field research in Lebanon for conducting research and participating at two events that were taking place at that time in Beirut. This support allowed me to undertake the trip and spend some considerable time meeting cultural operators in the country and talking with them.

c) Deusto Research Training Programme

In May 2014 I was accepted at the Deusto Research Training Programme (Programe de Ayudas para la Formación de Personal Investigador- F.P.I.). This was a moment of personal satisfaction and enthusiasm and the start of a new, more dedicated period to my research. The programme started on the 15th of September 2014 and contributed enormously to the accomplishment of the PhD.

Participation in research activities of the Institute of Leisure Studies

Given my experience in international cooperation projects and evaluation and the evolution of the topic of my research more towards evaluation of international cooperation projects, I was involved in the development of an evaluation methodology for the CORNERS project, a platform for artists and audiences designed and driven by cultural organisations at the edges of Europe. The project was assigned to the Institute

of Leisure Studies by the San Sebastian 2016 European Capital of Culture and involves the development of the methodology for measuring civic participation and training of the partners in the implementation of the methodology. It also consists in the development of an evaluation methodology for the overall management of the programme. The programme runs until the end of 2017.

Research periods abroad

i) Research internship at the Roberto Cimetta Fund

From the 6th of November to the 6th of December 2012, I spent a research period with the Cimetta Fund, in Paris, France. The tasks during the stage consisted in collecting the results of an impact assessment survey sent to the grantees of the mobility programme (approximately 420 valid email addresses), producing a presentation of the preliminary results that was presented at the Madarat exchange platform in Beirut in November 2012 and producing the final report of the results gathered.

ii) Research period spent at the University of Hildesheim

In 2017, I spent a research period of three months, from the 1st of December to the 28th of February at the University of Hildesheim, Germany at the Institute of Cultural Policy. I collaborated with Dr. Birgit Mandel and other members of the academic community and used this period of stay at the University to advance in my PhD research. In the same time I participated in a number of Faculty activities and at the Doctoral research workshops where I gave presentations on my PhD research to the other PhD students of the Faculty. Finally, I also prepared and delivered a two days workshop on international cultural management for the MA students. I liaised with members of the Faculty and staff as well as peer students and exchanged views on my research while learning on other research projects. I also provided feedback on research and academic publications of the Faculty while sharing my insights and experiences from my research and previous professional background.

Annex 2: Agenda of ENCATC WG meeting on the Evaluation of international and European transnational cultural projects

AGENDA OF THE DAY

EVALUATION OF INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN TRANSNATIONAL CULTURAL PROJECTS

Kick-Off Meeting - 25 October 2016 in Brussels

09:30 – 09:40	Welcoming words **GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens** , ENCATC and round table with participants
09:40 – 10:00	Introduction to the working group and the agenda of the day **Pascale Bonniel Chalier**, Illusion&Macadam and University Lyon 2
10:00 – 10:20	Evaluation of European projects: why should this question matter to us? **Alejandro Ramilo**, European Commission – DG Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
10:20 – 10:50	Open discussion
10:50 – 11:40	How to build a successful monitoring and evaluation system for European transnational cultural projects? **Annick Schramme**, ENCATC President, University of Antwerp / Antwerp Management School **Olga Kolokytha**, University of Vienna, Erasmus + programme **Annalisa Cicerchia**, Culture Action Europe, Creative Europe, networks' strand
11:40 – 12:10	Evaluation of cultural cooperation projects in the EuroArab Region **Matina Magkou**, University of Deusto
12:10 – 12:30	Open discussion
12:30 – 13:40	Lunch Break (at participants' own expense)
13:40– 14:30	Monitoring and evaluations tools and indicators: qualitative and quantitative methods **GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens** and **Elizabeth Darley**, ENCATC **Renilde Knevels**, Alden Biezen, Digital Storytelling - network - tbc **Emilie Wacker**, Théâtre National de Belgique, European cultural project Cities on stage / Villes en scène.
14:30 – 15:15	Exchanges on evaluation methodologies: Identification of indicators to measure and qualify the assessment *Presentation of the evaluation methodologies for emerging project (Creative Europe)* **Pascale Bonniel Chalier**, Illusion&Macadam, University Lyon 2
15:15 – 16:00	Open discussion and sharing experiences between participants
16:00 – 17:00	Wrap up and adoption of a working plan for 2017 by the participants **Pascale Bonniel Chalier**, Illusion&Macadam and University Lyon 2 **GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens**, ENCATC

Annex 3:
List of participants of ENCATC WG meeting on the evaluation of international and European transnational cultural projects

PARTICIPANTS

EVALUATION OF INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN TRANSNATIONAL CULTURAL PROJECTS

Kick-Off Meeting - 25 October 2016 in Brussels

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	INSTITUTION	JOB TITLE	COUNTRY OF HEADQUARTER
Bonniel Chalier	Pascale	Illusion&Macadam and University Lyon2	Expert	France
Cicerchia	Annalisa	Culture Action Europe	Member	Belgium
Cogliandro Beyens	GiannaLia	ENCATC	Secretary General	Belgium
Darley	Elizabeth	ENCATC	Publications and Communications Manager	Belgium
De Vos	Benedikte	AMATEO – amateur arts network	- - -	Belgium
Dimitrova	Milena	Bulgarian Diplomatic Institute	Lecturer	Bulgaria
Dominguez	Ángela	Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)	Project and Communication Manager	Belgium
Huts	Nikki	Fotography network	Photographer	Belgium
Jutant	Camille	University Lyon 2	Maître de conférences et responsable du master DPACI (Développement de projets artistiques et culturels internationaux)	France
Kolokytha	Olga	Department of Communication at the University of Vienna	Assistant Professor	Austria
Le Sourd	Marie	On The Move	Coordinator	France
Magkou	Matina	University of Deusto	Researcher and Cultural Manager	Spain
Mosor	Natalia	Institut Polonais à Bruxelles	Director	Belgium
Ramilo	Alejandro	EACEA	Selection Coordinator - Cultural Networks, Project Adviser - Cultural Heritage	Belgium
Schramme	Annick	University of Antwerp / Antwerp Management School	Professor	Belgium
Van Ransbeeck	Karel	Theater De Spiegel	Artistic Director	Belgium
Wacker	Emilie	Théâtre National de Belgique, European cultural project Cities on stage / Villes en scène.	Directrice des relations avec les publics & du Développement international	Belgium

Annex 4:
List of interviewees- Exploratory and field trip interviews

EXPLORATORY INTERVIEWS AND FIELD TRIPS					
No	**Interviewee**	**Capacity**	**Type**	**Language**	**Date**
EXPLORATORY INTERVIEWS					
1	Rana Yajazi	Ettijahat Independent Culture (Damascus, Syria)	skype	EN	15/07/2012
2	Reem Kaseem	AGORA and Biblioteca Alexandrina (Alexandria, Egypt)	skype	EN	20/07/2012
3	Mohamed Aredjal	Visual artist (Casablanca, Morocco)	skype	EN	27/06/2012
4	Laura Ghaninejad	Cultural manager (Marseilles, France)	skype	EN	23/07/2012
5	Manlio Castana	Doha Giffoni Film Festival consultant	face-to-face in Doha	EN	10/12/2015
6	Tony Guarino	Doha Giffoni Film Festival consultant	face-to-face in Doha	EN	10/12/2015
FIELD TRIP IN BEIRUT (LEBANON) NOVEMBER 2012					
7	Charbel Samuen Aoun	Painter	face-to-face in Beirut	EN	24/11/2012
8	Anonymous staff	Al Bustan Festival	face-to-face in Beirut	EN	25/11/2012
9	Sharif Sehnaioui	Musician and director of Irtijal Festival	face-to-face in Beirut	EN	27/11/2012
10	Hanan Al-Hajj Ali	Actress, cultural researcher and trainer	face-to-face in Beirut	EN	28/11/2979
11	Omar Rajeh and Mia Habis	Dancers and managers of Maqamat Dance Theater	face-to-face in Beirut	EN	28/11/2012
12	Victoria Lupton	Staff member at Askal Alwan	face-to-face in Beirut	EN	28/11/2012
FIELD TRIP IN HAMMAMET (TUNISIA) DECEMBER 2012					
13	Delel Tangour El Bouslama	Photographer	face to face in Hammamet	FR	15/12/2012
14	Mourad Hamdi	Visual artist	face-to-face in Hammamet	FR	16/12/2012
15	Fathi Heddaoui	Actors and Director of Centre Culturel International de Hammamet	face-to-face Hammamet	FR	17/12/2012

FIELD TRIP IN CARTHAGE AND TUNIS (TUNISIA) SEPTEMBER 2014					
No	**Interviewee**	**Capacity**	**Type**	**Language**	**Date**
16	Nawel Skandrani	Choreographer and cultural activist, member of RCF board	face-to-face In Carthage	FR	07/09/2014
17	Ramzi Jebabli	Lawyer and initiator of Café Théâtre du Nord	face-to-face in Carthage	FR	07/09/2014
18	Cyrinne Ghannoun	Ministry of Culture	face-to-face in Tunis	FR	08/09/2014
19	Karim R'madi	Music manager	face-to-face in Tunis	EN	09/09/2014
20	Rim Temimi	Photographer and manager of the TunisiArt Galleries	face-to-face in Carthage	FR	09/09/2014

Annex 5:
List of interviewees- Case studies

CASE STUDIES INTERVIEWS					
No	**Interviewee**	**Capacity**	**Type**	**Language**	**Date**
CONNEXXIONS					
Organisers					
1	Anna Steinkamp	Former Programme Specialist, Culture Division, German Commission for UNESCO	face-to-face in Athens	EN	26/01/2017
EUNIC/MENA					
Organisers					
2	Andrew Murrey	Director EUNIC Global	telephone	EN	07/12/2016
3	Jean Pierre Deru	Director Marcel Hicter Association	skype	EN & FR	21/12/2016
Evaluator					
4	Antje Klesse	Cultural and Social projects consultant	skype	EN	10/01/2017
Participants					
5	Nisrine Chiba	Participant from Casablanca	skype	FR	07/01/2017
Cultural Innovators Network (CIN)					
Organisers					
6	Tina Lierheimer	Evaluation and Quality Advisor at Goethe Institut Central	telephone	EN	23/01/2017
7	Enzo Wetzel	currently Director of Goethe Institut	skype	EN	02/12/2016

		Sofia			
Evaluator					
8	Anke Shad	external evaluator from EDUCULT	skype	EN	02/11/2016
Participants					
9	Haneen Hijjawi	CIN Steering Committee member	skype	EN	22/12/2016
10	Lazaros Damanis	CIN Steering Committee member	face-to-face in Athens	GR	23/12/2016
Cimetta Fund mobility grant programme					
Organisers					
11	Angie Cotte	Secretary General RCF	skype	EN & FR	19/10/2016
12	Ferdinand Richard	President RCF	face-to-face in Marseilles	FR	09/12/2016
Participants					
13	Eduardo Casina	RCF Grantee	face-to-face in Athens	ES	18/11/2016
14	Mohamd El-Baaly	RCF Grantee	telephone	EN	17/11/2016
TANDEM Shaml					
Organisers					
15	Jotham Sietma	TANDEM Programme Manager at MitOst	face-to-face in Berlin	EN	05/09/2016
16	Hatem Hassan Salama	TANDEM Shaml Project Manager at MitOst	face-to-face in Berlin	EN	05/09/2016
17	Philip Dietchmair	TANDEM Programme Manager at ECF	face-to-face in Marseilles	EN	08/12/2016
18	Reem Khattab	TANDEM Shaml Project Manager at Al Mawred	face-to-face in Marseilles	EN	09/12/2016
Evaluators					
19	Francois Matarasso	External Evaluator	face-to-face in Berlin and follow up session on skype	EN	2/09/16 and 21/12/16

20	Birgit Mandel	Professor at University of Hildesheim	face-to-face in Berlin	EN	04/12/2016
Participants					
21	Micaella Casalboni	TANDEM Shaml participant	skype	EN	22/11/2016
22	Astrid Thews	TANDEM Shaml participant	skype	EN	12/12/2016
23	Inga Lace	TANDEM Shaml participant	skype	EN	12/12/2016

Annex 6:
List of interviewees- Expert interviews

EXPERT INTERVIEWS					
No	**Interviewee**	**Capacity**	**Type**	**Language**	**Date**
EXPERT INTERVIEWS					
1	Marie Le Sourd	Secretary General on-the-move	skype	EN	03/01/2017
2	Fanny Bouquerel	Capacity Development expert, MedCulture	skype	EN	12/01/2017
3	Javier Galván	Director of the Instituto Cervantes in Rabat	skype	EN	12/01/2017
4	Karsten Xuereb	Executive Director Valetta 2018 European Capital of Culture	skype	EN	18/01/2017
5	Milena Dragićević Šešić	University of Belgrade, UNESCO Chair in Interculturalism, Art Management and Mediation	skype	EN	21/01/2017
6	Khadija El Bennaoui	Free lance expert	skype	EN	23/10/2016
7	Mai Abu ElDahad	Director of Mophradat	skype	EN	24/10/2016
8	Krystel Khoury	Free lance expert	skype	EN	28/12/2016
9	Dounia Benlismane	Racines	skype	EN	09/01/2017
10	Abdullah Al Kafri	Etiijahat Independent Culture	skype	EN	12/01/2017

Annex 7:
EuroArab Programmes mapping

EXAMPLES OF EUROARAB CULTURAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES									
	Programme	**Organiser**	**Funder**	**Aims**	**Beneficiaries**	**Methodology/ Activities**	**Area of focus**	**Time frame**	**Website**
1	**Abarra**	Al Mawred Al Thaqafy/ Culture Resource	Supported by Stichting DOEN (Netherlands), Mimeta (Norway) and the Open Society Foundation	To support and empower independent cultural institutions in playing a central and sustainable role in fostering values of freedom, respect for artistic creativity and critical thinking, and the acceptance of diversity. And to support these organisations in performing their basic role as providers of cultural and artistic services to the different sectors of society.	Independent cultural organisations in specific countries in the Arab region.	Targeted support in the form of core funding (salaries of the key staff, rent, running costs, legal counselling, website development, etc), tailor-suited technical assistance through a pool of experts, specific capacity-building in the area of cultural manaagement and networking opportunities.	Yemen, Syria, Libya, Egypt and Tunisia	since 2011/ currently in its 5th edition (2017- 18)	http://mawred.org/grants/abbara-grant/
2	**European Creative Platform**	Arab Fund for Arts and Culture	Arab Fund for Arts and Culture	A multi-disciplinary platform that aims to galvanize the vital inventiveness of Arab and European artists and institutions, towards empowering and enabling the production of art, culture and knowledge.	Artists and cultural operators living and working in the Euro-MENA region.	A three-year program that aspires to explore innovative and constructive actions, commissions and productions, because we are confident that establishing a platform that probes and explores imagination and expression, engages the creative and artistic communities from both Europe and the Arab world, holds keys to allaying fearful minds and hearts and shifting perceptions.	EuroMENA	Starting in 2017	http://www.arabculturefund.org/aecp/index.php
3	**BJCEM, Biennale des jeunes créateurs de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée,**	BJCEM, Biennale des jeunes créateurs de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée,	Various	To create opportunities for the young creators of training, mobility, exchange, mutual understanding, intercultural dialogue and collaboration. The Association supports their creativity processes and put them in contact with local and international realities in order to help them to grow personally and professionally.	young artists and creators	Among the activities that BJCEM organises, the most important is the Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, an event that gathers together hundreds of young artists in a different city, showcasing their art in the various disciplines, such as cinema, music, food, art, theatre, dance and literature.	EuroMed	Since 2001- ongoing	http://www.bjcem.org/
4	**Cimetta Fund mobility grants**	Cimetta Fund	Various	The trip must contribute to cultural development at local level in South or East Mediterranean countries or other countries of the Arab region. The candidate must develop local initiatives or policies on his/her return that contribute to the cultural dynamism of his or her own country or region. They must be committed to transmitting the benefits of their experience abroad to the other artists and professionals in their region in a networking fashion.	Artists and cultural operators living and working in the Euro-Mediterranean region.	Grants programme through open call	Euro Arab/ EuroMENA (and other regions)	ongoing	http://www.cimettafund.org/

Annexes

EXAMPLES OF EUROARAB CULTURAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES									
	Programme	**Organiser**	**Funder**	**Aims**	**Beneficiaries**	**Methodology/ Activities**	**Area of focus**	**Time frame**	**Website**
5	**Creative Mediterranean-Resilience through creativity**	European Commission, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, Union for the Mediterranean, United National Industrial Development	EU	Aims to contribute to inclusive growth by fostering entrepreneurial cooperation in cultural and creative industries through the promotion of promising cluster initiatives.	Cultural and creative industries.	Development of clusters (geographic concentrations of interconnected businesses, suppliers and associated institutions in a particular field), capacity building, cluster-to-cluster partnerships and private-public partnerships, linkages with international buyers, local suppliers, etc	Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia	ongoing	https://www.medcreative.org/
6	**CONNEXXIONS**	German Commission for UNESCO	German Commission for UNESCO through German Federal Foreign Office	Projects in cooperation with regional and local partners to strengthen the cultural sector in Arab countries in transition. The 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions provides a platform and reference point for this knowledge exchange.	cultural experts, activists and operators	capacity building, exchange of experiences, knowledge transfer and networking, U40 Arabesque	MENA	Since 2012--ongoing	https://www.unesco.de/en/kultur/kulturelle-vielfalt/connexxions.html
7	**Creative Europe**	DG EAC	European Commission		Cultural and creative organisations.	Support for cultural, media and cross-sector projects.	EU Member States, as well as non-EU countries incuding ENPI.	Since 2013 and ongoing	https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/about_en
8	**Cultural Innovators Network**	self-organised	Initiated and supported by the Goethe Institute until 2014 through the German Federal Foreign office	Establishing a cross-sectoral network of young activists from countries north and south of the Mediterranean which promotes mechanisms of democratic, inclusive discourse, exchange of working experiences, acceptance of innovative approaches, and mutual consultation and cooperation,	young people, activists, artists, change makers	Meetings, common projects	EuroMed	ongoing	https://culturalinnovators.org/
9	**Cultural Protection Fund**	British Council	British Council in partnership with the Department for Culture Media and Sport	The Fund aims to protect and preserve physical monuments and religious sites, as well as 'intangible' heritage: inherited traditions, beliefs and cultural identity, passed down through generations.	organisations working in the heritage sector	Funding support.	MENA	ongoing	https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/cultural-protection-fund
10	**Drama, Diversity and Development**	European Commission	European Commission						
11	**EuroMed Exchange Programme (EEP) Dialogue- Innovate-Cooperate**	Anna Lindh Foundation	European Commission	To give traineeship opportunities o support synergies, cross-disciplinary activities and new project ideas related to intercultural dialogue (ICD), involving young actors from both shores of the Mediterranean, giving them the spaces to gain new perspectives on how to drive development and make positive changes.	young talents and key actors, such as members of civil society organisations.	Traineeship exchange programme	EuroMed	Starting in 2017	http://www.annalindhfoundation.org/sites/annalindh.org/files/documents/news/guidelines.pdf

EXAMPLES OF EUROARAB CULTURAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES									
	Programme	**Organiser**	**Funder**	**Aims**	**Beneficiaries**	**Methodology / Activities**	**Area of focus**	**Time frame**	**Website**
12	**EUNIC training EU/MENA**	EUNIC in cooperation with Marcel Hicter Foundation	EUNIC	To improve the skills of cultural managers in the field of cultural management and to coach them to develop collaborative regional projects with help of EUNIC clusters.	Cultural operators s in the cultural/creativ e sector with a position of a decision-making role. Involved in a project of cultural/artistic development linked to civil society and open to cultural cooperation, networking and exchanges and come from the public, private or NGO sector.	Training in cultural and creative sector management is a project-based training and a peer-to-peer cooperative learning experience to foster regional exchanges within MENA region.	8 MENA countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Jordan)	2015	http://www.eunic-online.eu/?q=content/eunic-mena-pilot-1-training
13	**Kultur Akademie**	Goethe Institut in cooperation with Al Mawred Al Thaqafy	Goethe Institut	The programme aims at professionalizing Arab cultural sector workers, developing a sustainable pan-Arabian network between cultural institutions as well as promoting cooperation between Arab and German cultural institutions.	„Independent", non-state protagonists from various cultural fields from the Arab world (e.g. curators, (executive) employees of cultural centres, festival organizers, gallery owners as well as theatre and film professionals)	sixweek cultural management training The theoretical seminar phase is an excellent opportunity for the participants to discuss their own project plans in-depth with experts from both theory and practice. Afterwards there is the opportunity to apply for a project development fund in order to implement the finalized project plan. The seminar language is English. In addition, individual project-related guest visits to partner institutions of the KulturpartnerNetzwerk of the Goethe-Institut all over Germany will offer the participants further opportunities for professional networking.	Addressed to Arab cultural operators and German cultural institutions	sine 2011-ongoing	http://www.goethe.de/ges/prj/ken/qua/kum/nan/en14179766.htm

EXAMPLES OF EUROARAB CULTURAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES									
	Programme	**Organiser**	**Funder**	**Aims**	**Beneficiaries**	**Methodology / Activities**	**Area of focus**	**Time frame**	**Website**
14	**MedCulture**	Technical Assistance Unit (TAU)- linternational Consortium, led by HYDEA (Italy), includes TRANSTEC (Belgium), INA-Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (France) and The Royal Film Commission (Jordan)	European Comission (within the Regional Programme MED Culture)	To pave the way towards the development of institutional and social environments that will confirm culture as vector for freedom of expression and sustainable development.	Cultural sector (public and private) in selected Arab countries.	The approach is consultative/participative and takes place in partnership with civil society actors, ministries, private and public institutions involved in culture as well as other related sectors.Med Culture curates the design and implementation of priority-based actions identified through wide consultations both with national authorities, civil society actors, as well as International organisations, and regional EU-funded programmes.	Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Palestine, and Libya with the exception of Syria where cooperation is currently suspended until further notice from the European Commission.	2014-2018	http://www.medculture.eu/
15	**MidEast creatives**	Hivos	Supported by Swedish International Development cooperation Agency and Dutch Cutlure and Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	To suppore agents of change who are building creative and entrepreneurial movements through coworking spaces, business training, access to finance and media campaigns.	young people/ co-working spaces	a) Support for creative coworking spaces through grants b)business training for the creative sector and c)alternative financial models for the arts (Zoomal crowdfunding platform)	MENA	ongoing	https://hivos.org/focal-area/mideast-creatives
16	**Moving MENA**	Goethe Institut Cairo	Goethe Institut	Moving MENA wants to make it easier for young culture makers from the transformation countries to get to the German cultural scene, enable interactions which give new stimuli for the local and regional cultural scene and thereby serve to strengthen and network the independent cultural sectors.	young local culture actors & curators, artistic directors, producers and project leaders of initiatives and institutions from the Arab world can apply in order to meet current and potential partners in Germany in order to develop and carry out joint initiatives.	Program 1 is directed at cultural institutions in Germany that would like to invite people from transformation countries. In Program 2 individuals can travel to cultural events in Germany. In these cases, the travelers themselves will present the purpose and goal of the trip, and the relationship to the transformation processes in their countries of origin will be presented in an application.	Particularly from the Arab transformation countries including Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and Jordan	Since 2016-ongoing	https://www.goethe.de/ins/eg/de/kul/sup/trp/mob/20714592.html

EXAMPLES OF EUROARAB CULTURAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES									
	Programme	**Organiser**	**Funder**	**Aims**	**Beneficiaries**	**Methodology/ Activities**	**Area of focus**	**Time frame**	**Website**
17	**South MedCV**	Interarts, German Commission for UNESCO, BAC Art Center, Gurdan for Art and Development, Khayal Arts and Education, King Hussein Foundation	European Comission (within the Regional Programme MED Culture)	To bring culture from the margins to the center of the publica sphere in the Southern Mediterranean exploring its potential connections with economic, social and political development strategies and to address the need to enhance the professional capacities of cultural operators, practitioners and organisations active in this field.	Cultural organisations and professionals/ local, national and regional networks	Funding addressed to non-profit organisations and local authorities for cultural and artistic projects that contribute in strengthening the place that culture occupies in local, regional or national development strategies through cooperation with other agents in the public sphere/ identification and development of learning opportunities/ publications/public conferences	Southern Mediterranean (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine Lebanon)	2015- 2018 (ongoing)	http://www.smedcv.net/
18	**STEP Travel Grants**	European Cultural Foundation	Compagnia di Sao Paolo	To give the opportunity to emerging artists and cultural workers to explore and to exchange views, skills and inspiration, create long-lasting collaborations and to instigate a positive change in their communities.	emerging artists and cultural workers	Travel grant.	travel within and between the EU and EFTA (European Free Trade Association) and countries bordering the EU	ongoing	http://www.culturalfoundation.eu/step/
19	**Tamteem**	Cimetta Fund	French Ministry of Culture and Communication	To support the strengthening and sustainability of organisations and artists collectives from the Arab world (including Turkey and to stabilise projects in their local enviroments allowing them to establish recongition and develop their networking capacities.	Organisations, artists collectives and independent cultural managers based in the Arab world and who have been operating for at least a year.	Funding allocated for supporting any action that will allow the organisation or its activities to last (for example, salary to an administrator, equipment, renovation of space, other operational costs)	Arab region and Turkey (particularly rural and suburban areas)	ongoing	https://www.cimettafund.org/article/index/rubrique/5/lang/en/fm/1
20	**Tandem Shaml**	European Cultural Foundation, MitOst and Al Mawred Al Thaqafy/ Culture Resource	Supported by Robert Bosch Stiftung, Stichting DOEN and Mimeta	To support experimental collaborations between cultural change makers from the Arab region and Europe.	change makers from the Arab region and Europe/ people working in culture and civil society	Participants form cross- national partnerships of twoand organise working visits to each others' cities or regions and develop a joint pilot project which serves as a space for mutual learning and engagement. Throughout the year, participants meet for networking, workshops and peer-to-peer exchange.	All Arab and European countries	since 2012/ currently in its 4th edition (2016- 17)	http://www.tandemforculture.org/

Annex 8:
Data gathering grid for Case Study EUNIC / MENA

Variable	Sources of evidence						
	Evaluation report (if available)	Interview with programme manager(s)	interview with evaluator	interview with beneficiery/ participant	Observation	Website	Other material
Block A) Purpose and focus of the evaluation							
Context of evaluation	X	X					X
Organisational approach to evaluation	X	X					X
Rationale for evaluation	X	X					X
Formative or summative evaluation	X	X	X				X
Responsibility for the evaluation	X	X	X				X
Measures of success	X	X	X				X
Budget related to the evaluation							
Anticipated results from the evaluation	X	X					X
Audiences for the evaluation	X	X					
Block B) Evidence collection procedures							
Timeline of evidence collection procedure	X		X				X
Program elements to be considered for the evaluation	X		X				X
Approach and methods to collecting evidence	X		X				X
People involved in collecting evidence	X		X				X
Ethics in evaluation practice							
Beneficiaries/ Participants' response to methods used	X		X	X			

Blok C) Analysis of evidence							
Person responsible for analysing data gathered	X	X	X				
Procedure for data analysis	X		X				
Involvement of stakeholders	X	X	X				
Documentation of findings	X		X				
Limitations or deficiencies in the instruments used	X	X	X				
Block D) Learning from the evaluation							
Expected and unexpected learnings from the evaluation	X		X				
Further questions to be addressed in future evaluations	X	X	X				
Satisfaction in relation to methods used	X	X	X				
Impact of evaluation in informing future steps		X	X				
Level of commitment of partners with evaluation results		X	X				
Block E) Communicating the evaluation findings							
Format of final evaluation	X		X				
Structure of final report	X		X				
Final audiences of evaluation findings	X	X	X				
Channels of communicating evaluation findings	X	X	X				

Annex 9:
Data gathering grid for Case Study CIN

Variable	Sources of evidence						
	Evaluation report (if available)	Interview with programme manager(s)	interview with evaluator	interview with beneficiery/ participant	Observation	Website	Other material
Block A) Purpose and focus of the evaluation							
Context of evaluation		X	X				X
Organisational approach to evaluation		X	X				X
Rationale for evaluation		X	X				X
Formative or summative evaluation		X	X				X
Responsibility for the evaluation		X	X				X
Measures of success		X	X	X			X
Budget related to the evaluation							
Anticipated results from the evaluation		X	X				X
Audiences for the evaluation		X	X			X	X
Block B) Evidence collection procedures							
Timeline of evidence collection procedure		X	X				X
Program elements to be considered for the evaluation		X	X				X
Approach and methods to collecting evidence		X	X				X
People involved in collecting evidence		X	X				X
Ethics in evaluation practice							
Beneficiaries/ Participants' response to methods used		X	X	X			

Variable	Sources of evidence						
	Evaluation report (if available)	Interview with programme manager(s)	interview with evaluator	interview with beneficiery/ participant	Observation	Website	Other material
Blok C) Analysis of evidence							
Person responsible for analysing data gathered		X	X				X
Procedure for data analysis		X	X				X
Involvement of stakeholders		X	X	X			X
Documentation of findings		X	X	X			X
Limitations or deficiencies in the instruments used		X	X				X
Block D) Learning from the evaluation							
Expected and unexpected learnings from the evaluation		X	X				X
Further questions to be addressed in future evaluations		x	X				X
Satisfaction in relation to methods used		X	X				X
Impact of evaluation in informing future steps		X	X				
Level of commitment of partners with evaluation results		X	X				X
Block E) Communicating the evaluation findings							
Format of final evaluation		X	X				X
Structure of final report		X	X				X
Final audiences of evaluation findings		X	X	X			X
Channels of communicating evaluation findings		X	X	X			X

Annex 10:
Data gathering grid for Case Study Cimetta Fund

Variable	Sources of evidence						
	Evaluation report (if available)	Interview with programme manager(s)	interview with evaluator	interview with beneficiery/ participant	Observation	Website	Other material
Block A) Purpose and focus of the evaluation							
Context of evaluation	X	X			X	X	
Organisational approach to evaluation	X	X			X		
Rationale for evaluation	X	X			X		
Formative or summative evaluation	X	X			X		
Responsibility for the evaluation	X	X			X		
Measures of success	X	X					
Budget related to the evaluation							
Anticipated results from the evaluation		X					
Audiences for the evaluation	X	X				X	
Block B) Evidence collection procedures							
Timeline of evidence collection procedure	X	X			X		
Program elements to be considered for the evaluation	X	X					
Approach and methods to collecting evidence	X	X					
People involved in collecting evidence	X	X			X		
Ethics in evaluation practice	X	X					
Beneficiaries/ Participants' response to methods used	X	X		X	X		

Variable	Sources of evidence						
	Evaluation report (if available)	Interview with programme manager(s)	interview with evaluator	interview with beneficiery/ participant	Observation	Website	Other material
Blok C) Analysis of evidence							
Person responsible for analysing data gathered	X	X					
Procedure for data analysis	X	X			X		
Involvement of stakeholders	X	X			X		
Documentation of findings	X	X			X		
Limitations or deficiencies in the instruments used	X	X			X		
Block D) Learning from the evaluation							
Expected and unexpected learnings from the evaluation	X	X					
Further questions to be addressed in future evaluations	X	X					
Satisfaction in relation to methods used	X	X			X		
Impact of evaluation in informing future steps		X					
Level of commitment of partners with evaluation results		X					
Block E) Communicating the evaluation findings							
Format of final evaluation	X	X			X	X	
Structure of final report	X	X			X	X	
Final audiences of evaluation findings	X	X					
Channels of communicating evaluation findings	X	X					

Annex 11:
Data gathering grid for Case Study Tandem Shaml

Variable	Sources of evidence						
	Evaluation report (if available)	Interview with programme manager(s)	interview with evaluator	interview with beneficiery/ participant	Observation	Website	Other material
Block A) Purpose and focus of the evaluation							
Context of evaluation	X	X	X		X	X	X
Organisational approach to evaluation	X	X	X		X		
Rationale for evaluation							X
Formative or summative evaluation	X	X	X		X		X
Responsibility for the evaluation	X	X	X		X		
Measures of success	X	X	X	X	X		
Budget related to the evaluation		X					
Anticipated results from the evaluation	X	X					
Audiences for the evaluation	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Block B) Evidence collection procedures							
Timeline of evidence collection procedure	X	X	X				
Program elements to be considered for the evaluation	X	X	X				
Approach and methods to collecting evidence	X	X	X				
People involved in collecting evidence	X	X	X				
Ethics in evaluation practice		X	X				
Beneficiaries/ Participants' response to methods used		X	X	X			

Variable	Sources of evidence						
	Evaluation report (if available)	Interview with programme manager(s)	interview with evaluator	interview with beneficiery/ participant	Observation	Website	Other material
Blok C) Analysis of evidence							
Person responsible for analysing data gathered	X	X	X				
Procedure for data analysis	X	X	X				
Involvement of stakeholders	X	X	X		X		
Documentation of findings	X	X	X			X	
Limitations or deficiencies in the instruments used	X	X	X				
Block D) Learning from the evaluation							
Expected and unexpected learnings from the evaluation	X	X	X				
Further questions to be addressed in future evaluations	X	X	X				
Satisfaction in relation to methods used	X	X	X				
Impact of evaluation in informing future steps		X					
Level of commitment of partners with evaluation results		X					
Block E) Communicating the evaluation findings							
Format of final evaluation	X	X	X			X	
Structure of final report	X	X	X				
Final audiences of evaluation findings	X	X					
Channels of communicating evaluation findings	X	X			X	X	

Annex 12:
CONNEXXIONS 2012-2013 evaluation questionnaire

Evaluation of the CONNEXXIONS programme 2012-2013

Since 2011, the German Commission for UNESCO has intensified its activities in the Arab region, especially in Tunisia and Egypt, as a knowledge partner on cultural policies for cultural diversity with the capacity building programme CONNEXXIONS. Measures and actions initiated in 2012 were deepened in 2013 and are being continued in 2014.
In regard to improving our work we are evaluating the CONNEXXIONS programme. We would be very grateful if you were willing to support the evaluation and share your experiences with the CONNEXXIONS programme. It takes approximately 30 minutes. Your contribution will be highly appreciated.

Best regards,
the German Commission for UNESCO

ON-LINE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE CONNEXXIONS PROGRAMME

Your involvement in the CONNEXXIONS PROGRAMME

1. In which activity (ies) did you take part? (multiple responses possible)

a) CONNEXXIONS - Cultural life, diversity of cultural expressions, human development- perspectives and actions (6-8.09.2012, Hammamet, Tunisia)
b) CONEXXIONS U40 – Culture, human development, dialogue: resources, actions, networks (7-9.11.2012, Alexandria, Egypt)
c) Forum des Associations Culturelles Tunisiennes (FACT, 20-23.06.2013, Hammamet, Tunisia)
d) Cultural Resources for Human Development (24-25.11.2013, Casablanca, Morocco)
e) Training Lab 'Le travail créatif dans les quartiers populaires' (5-7.12.2013)
f) Atelier international 'Promouvoir la diversité culturelle – Renforcer la formation académique appliquée en matière de politique et gestion culturelle en Tunisie' (7.12.2013, Tunis, Tunisia)
g) Pilot Collaboration and Cultural Resources Online Coaching 'Identify and mobilize (endogenous) cultural resources' (2013)

2. What was your involvement in the CONNEXXIONS project? (multiple responses possible)

a) participant b) expert c) partner d) speaker e) project management

f) other (please specify)

3. Did you have to make a personal contribution (speech, research, provide a case study or best practice) during your participation in the project? If yes, in what way? (up to 30 words)

4. How did you learn about the activity, you took part in? (up to 30 words)

5. What were your specific expectations/ particular interests in participating at the project?
a) learning
b) sharing expertise
c) networking
d) improve my capacity in cultural activity
e) learning more about the 2005 UNESCO convention
f) other: (up to 50
words)

6. Were these expectations met? (up to 70 words)
If YES, in what way?
If NO, why?
If partially, in what way?

7. Are you satisfied with the activity you took part in?
1 (very satisfied)/ 2 (satisfied)/ 3 (partially satisfied)/ 4 (rather not satisfied)/
5 (not satisfied)/ not applicable

Any particular strengths you would recommend to maintain? (up to 50 words)
Any particular weaknesses you would recommend to improve? (up to 50
words)

8. What do you remember most about the CONNEXXIONS project? (up to 60 words)

9. What was your most important insight due to the CONNEXXIONS programme? (up to 60 words)

10. What did surprise you while taking part in the activity? (up to 60 words)

11. Did the participation in the CONNEXXIONS activity motivate you for your work in cultural activities?
yes/ partially/ no

12. Did the participation give you new energy for your work?
yes/ partially/ no

IMPACT

13. Did the following aspects meet your expectations?
1 (better than expected)/ 2(rather better than expected)/ 3 (just right)/ 4 (rather worse than expected)/ 5 (worse than expected)/ not applicable
- increased empowerment in the cultural field
- stronger relationships in the local cultural sector
- stronger relationships in the international cultural sector
- increased and regular interest in cultural opportunities
- development of new creative, life and social skills
- better understanding of the UNESCO Convention & its implication to your work

14. Did you meet any people through CONNEXXIONS, who became important for your work/ your projects/ your future plans?
yes/ few/ no
Can you name the most important contact(s) you made and explain the reason why? (up to 60 words)

15. Did your participation in CONNEXXIONS facilitate new partnerships? Did it result in new collaborations or projects? Please give details. (up to 70 words)

16. Are you still in contact with the people you met?
yes/ no
If YES for what reasons?
Joint activities/ networking/ shared interest
if YES, through which means?
E-mail / social networks such as facebook/ telephone/ mail/ regular meetings/ skype/ a travelling opportunity in
another country/ participation in another project/ other:

17. Did CONNEXXIONS provide you with any knowledge or information, that is important for your work/ your projects?
yes/ few/ no

18. How did you share the knowledge and information you received and practiced in the CONNEXXIONS activities? (up to 40 words)
Who received this information?
Colleagues/ members of your organization, network/ your community/ others:

19. Did you learn any methodology through CONNEXXIONS, that you have used in your own activities?
Yes/ no
If yes: Please give details (up to 60 words). Is it easy to use? Has it helped to achieve the results you wanted to see? If not why?

1. **Has your experience in any of the CONNEXXIONS events inspired you to organize an event, activity or project in your community?**

If YES, please tell us more about your work:

Theme or Topic:
Date & Place:

Target group and number of people participating:
Name your Partner organizations in the activity (if any) - did you establish this partnership through the CONNEXXIONS project.
Main objectives and activities:
Lessons learned/Outputs/Outcomes:
What inspired you to organize this activity/project?
Please include any links, websites, pictures or videos from your activity:

If there is more than one project that were the result of CONNEXXIONS please create a separate document and send it per e-mail to mmagkou@gmail.com

OBJECTIVES EVALUATION

21. Did the following aspects meet your expectations?
1 (better than expected)/ 2(rather better than expected)/ 3 (just right)/ 4 (rather worse than expected)/ 5 (worse than expected)/ not applicable
- Organisation/ Preparatory support by German Commission for UNESCO
- Organisation/ Preparatory support by local organizers, partners
- Staff support, attitude, friendliness
- Time- and result-orientation of the activity
- Programme
- Methodology
- working material
- Communication before the activity
- Communication during the activity
- Communication after the activity
- Networking possibilities

Do you have any suggestions for improvement concerning these aspects? (up to 80 words)

22. How would you rate the success of the project in making a contribution to:
(1 (highly successful)/ 2 (successful)/ 3 (partially successful)/ 4 (rather not successful)/ 5 (not successful)/ not applicable
a) strengthening the self- organisation of civil society in the cultural sector?
b) project development to expand cultural participation?
c) democratization of the culture?
d) knowledge transfer by networking between national, regional, trans-regional and international stakeholders and cultural experts?
e) development of a deeper understanding of a cooperative and sustainable cultural policy?
f) capacity building for the Arab region?
g) understanding the possibilities offered through the 2005 UNESCO Convention on diversity of cultural expressions?

23. In your opinion, has CONNEXXIONS achieved its objectives?
Yes/ No/ Partially

24. Has it reached relevant target groups?
Yes/ No/ Partially

25. How likely are you to recommend the CONNEXXIONS project to a colleague or partner organization?
Definitely yes
Probably yes
Neutral
Probably not
Definitely not

26. Are you aware of any other similar projects taking place in the region? If YES, please specify. (up to 40 words)

What do you think makes CONNEXXIONS different?

27. How would you rate the role of the German Commission for UNESCO as a partner in transformation processes in the Arab region?
(1 (very important)/ 2 (important)/ 3 (partially important)/ 4 (rather not important)/
5 (not important)/ not applicable

28. How would you rate the role of Germany as a partner in transformation processes in the Arab region?
(1 (very important)/ 2 (important)/ 3 (partially important)/ 4 (rather not important)/
5 (not important)/ not applicable

CONTINUITY OF CONNEXXIONS PROJECT

29. Would you participate again in a CONNEXXIONS activity?
YES NO
Why? (up to 50 words)

(if yes) What would you want to learn, share or practice (new or different) in a future CONNEXXIONS activity? (up to 50 words)

30. What would you like to see improved in a future CONNEXXIONS activity? (up to 70 words)

INFO ON RESPONDANT

Name: Country of residence: Nationality:

Gender
female male

Age

Which of the below describes best your field of experience?

a) cultural manager	b) artist, curator, producer	c) cultural activist	d) cultural researcher, cultural consultant	e) other (please specify)

Email address
Telephone:
(could we contact you by phone or email if we need more information or for an interview?)
Yes
Yes, but only by phone
Yes, but only by email
No

Is there anything we didn´t ask but what you would like to share? (up to 60 words)

Your data will be used only for the purpose of evaluation and will be treated confidentially. Any publication will be strictly anonymised.

Annex 13:
Cimetta fund questionnaire to ex-grantees (2012)

ABOUT YOUR RCF TRAVEL GRANT

1. How long ago did you travel with an RCF travel grant?
less than a year ago (from October 2011 to October 2012)
between 1 and 2 years ago (from October 2010 to October 2011)
more than 2 years ago (before October 2010)
other

2.What was the duration of your travel?
Less than a week
A week
Two weeks
A month
More than a month (please specify)

3. What was the "flow" of your travel?

4. Where did you get information about RCF travel grants?
RCF website
another website (please specify)
a cultural newsletter (please specify)
an information activity of opportunities in the cultural field (please specify)
a friend
a former grantee
other (please specify)

5. How did you establish your contact with your host?
we had met in a networking meeting/ seminar in the past
we had studied together
we had worked together in the past
I admired and followed their work
they found me
through internet looking for partners in the country
other

6. What was the purpose of your travel?
participation in a networking meeting
exploration and research of new opportunities
production of new work
exploration and research of new opportunities
participation in a residency
participation in a training course/ learning opportunity
other (please specify)

7. With whom did you meet during your travel? (multiple responses possible)
artists/ colleagues
artists' collectives / initiatives
producers, circulation contacts
interested sponsors
art critics

journalists
exploration of the art scene in general
other

8. What was your motivation for travelling in the Mediterranean region? (give at least two responses to this question and no more than five)

A new environment
to be in a new environment with new impulses and seek for inspiration
to get away from daily worries in your home region
to work in a more promising environment for economic reasons
other (please specify)
Artistic projects
to collaborate with other artists on a new cultural project
to realise site-specific projects
to look for future projects in the region
to use specific technical tools, facilities and resources
other (please specify)
Career enhancement
to expand your network of peers
to get in contact with professionals that can enhance your career and outlets
to get to know the professional circuits of a different country and explore new markets
to use the grant as recognition
other (please specify)
Education and creativity
to learn specific skills and tools
to get critical feedback from other peers or professionals
to learn about another country, language and culture
other (please specify)
Collaboration / participation
to exchange with local artists
engage in an international collaboration project with culture professionals from different countries
to give lectures and workshops
to expose your work to a different public
other (please specify)
Intercultural dialogue
to engage in the promotion of intercultural dialogue through culture
to develop intercultural communication and learning skills
to bring aspects of your culture to the hosting environment
to raise awareness back to your local environment about the cultural reality in the hosting environment
other (please specify)

AFTER YOUR TRAVEL

9. What were the concrete results of your RCF mobility grant ? (multiple responses possible)
publications
exhibitions
awards
press coverage
selling of artwork
project implementation

lectureship
follow up project
another mobility grant
rise in the recognition as an artist
better integration into your cultural
none
other (please specify)

10. Are you still in contact with the people you met?
YES NO

If the answer is NO please go to question 11

If YES, for what reasons?
friendship
follow up, implementation or evaluation of the concrete project
a new project
networking
other (please specify)

If YES, through which means?
e-mail
social networks such as facebook
telephone
mail
skype
visiting / inviting friends
an new travelling opportunity in the same country
a meeting opportunity in another country (networking meeting, new project etc)
other (please specify)

11. Did you return or do you have concrete plans to return to the hosting country for professional reasons?

YES (please specify how often) NO

if your answer is YES, for what reason?
for the follow up of the project
for a new project
this country is now central to my personal life
this country is now central to my professional life

if your answer is NO, for what reason?
lack of money
lack of time
not necessary anymore
other (please specify)

12. Have you travelled to another country in the Mediterranean area since your travel grant?
If yes, which one ……..
Why did you go there ? Please explain briefly.

13. How important are mobility practices in the Mediterranean for your artistic/ cultural work?
very important
important
less important

14. How often do you engage in mobility practices in the Mediterranean in your artistic/ cultural work?
less than once a year
once a year
twice a year
more often (please specify)

15. Did the RCF grant increase your interest in mobility opportunities in the Mediterranean area?
YES NO

Did the RCF grant increase your interest in mobility opportunities in general?
YES NO

16. What reasons prevent you from engaging in mobility practices?
lack of money
family / partner / children
no time away from another job
too much effort
language difficulties
unsafe areas
not interested anymore
others

OPINIONS ABOUT MOBILITY GRANTS

17. How would you rate a mobility grant in terms of significance to your:

Career development
Very important Important No so important

Networking
Very important Important No so important

Influence on artistic practices
Very important Important No so important

Internationalisation of your cultural activities
Very important Important No so important

18. What are the most valuable aspects of travelling for professional reasons especially in the Mediterranean region?
Please bullet point three pros and three cons.
PROS

-
-
-

CONS

-
-
-

19With what do you agree the most?
Mobility grants are a support to produce and further your own art.
Mobility grants help to be more present in the international art field, to gain access to the international art market and for networking.

20. What is the role of cultural mobility in the EuroMediterranean region today? Please bullet point answers.

21. What do you think about the importance and support of artists' mobility in your art field in particular? Please explain.

22. Do you think there should be more mobility grants for artists and professionals in the field of culture in the EuroMediterranean region?

23. Do you think that mobility grants are more important in the Middle East, North Aftica and Balkan regions than in Europe? Please explain (whether your answer is yes, no or whether your opinion is neutral)

INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESPONDANT

24. How many times have you applied for an mobility grant?
once 2-5 times 6-10 times 11-20 times more

25. How many mobility grants have you received so far?

26. When did you receive your last mobility grant? (year)

27. Would you apply again for an mobility grant?
YES NO

if your answer is NO, why not?
not interested anymore
do not want to work abroad anymore
do not want to be away from my family, partner, children, etc.
others

PERSONAL DATA
28. Gender: FEMALE MALE
29. Age:
30. Discipline:

31. Education:
art Education (academy, school, college, etc)
other Education (University, Academy, School, college, etc.
self-taught
other
32. What is your current situation as an artist or cultural professional?
I manage to live off my art work/ my profession in the field of culture
full-time artist or cultural manager plus side jobs to make a living
full-time job to make a living, doing art and cultural management on the side
other

COMMENTS

Finally there is space for **thoughts** and **comments**.

Was anything expressed unclearly? Where there any question you felt you didn't want to answer? Were there any other questions you felt could have been asked?

Please put any thoughts and comments in the box.

Annex 14:
Interview script for case studies interviewees

Overall research aim:
To contribute to the knowledge around the value of international cultural cooperation programmes and their evaluation practices.

Specific aims for research questionnaire.
- *To identify the distinguishing elements of international cultural cooperation;*
- *To examine how organisations deal with the evaluation of their international cultural cooperation programmes;*
- *To investigate into the human factor in the evaluation exercise;*
- *To extrapolate challenges, patters and suggestions for improvement.*

Note: This questionnaire was developed in an indicative manner. Questions were adapted according to the interviewee and his/ her capacity (commissioner, evaluator, beneficiary) and according to the different levels identied.

INDICATOR BLOCK **A**: **CULTURAL COOPERATION IN THE EUROARAB REGION**

Research objectives related to this block:

- *To identify the distinguishing elements of international cultural cooperation;*
- *To identify specific elements from the EuroArab region;*
- *To examine the role of the EU and other actors in the region;*
- *To reflect on the relation between the general context and the design of programmes.*

1. Can you briefly describe the distinctive elements of cultural cooperation in the EuroArab/ EuroMed area?
2. Can you briefly refer to the challenges of cultural cooperation in the region?
3. What do you think is the added value of projects of cultural cooperation in the area?
4. Which do you consider are the main actors/ stakeholders of cultural cooperation in the region?
5. Do you think that the opportunities for artists and cultural operators to produce multidisciplinary contemporary artistic and creative collaborative projects have been adequate to shift towards a more comprehensive picture of European Arab/ EuroMed relations? In what sense?
6. Do you think that the EU brings a valuable contribution to cultural cooperation in the EuroMed area? If yes, in which way?
7. How do policies and global developments influence the interest in the region? Has it always been there? Was there a before and after the Arab Spring?
8. What are the elements that define a successful cultural cooperation programme in the region?

Indicators taken from this block: influence of context on programme development; EU intervention in the region; achievements of international cultural cooperation programmes

INDICATOR BLOCK **B**: **EVALUATION PRACTICES IN CULTURAL COOPERATION PROJECTS**

Research objectives related to this block:

- *Describe how do organisations evaluate their practices;*
- *Reflect on methodologies for cultural evaluation;*
- *Reflect on the aims of the evaluation practices and its end users;*
- *Examine whether there are specific characteristics to be considered when evaluating EuroArab programmes.*

1. What are the challenges for arts and culture organisations regarding evaluation and impact when working with international cultural cooperation programmes?
2. Why do cultural organisations evaluate?
3. Are there any specific characteristics of cultural cooperation projects that make evaluation processes more challenging?
4. Are there specific challenges related to EuroArab cooperation programmes?
5. Are you aware of any reports/ evaluations of cultural cooperation projects that could be used as reference to develop a framework of evaluation for international cultural cooperation initiatives? Any documents specific regarding EuroArab cooperation?

Indicators taken from this block: challenges in evalution; specific challenges for international cultural cooperation programmes and in the EuroArab region; available literature or material.

INDICATOR BLOCK **C: EVALUATION OF A SPECIFIC EUROARAB CULTURAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME**

Research objectives related to this block:

- *To understand what are the specific aims and objectives of the selected programmes;*
- *To examine how beneficiaries are involved in the evaluation exercise;*
- *To examine whether there are internal or external practices in evaluation and what factors determine the choice;*
- *To understand how the general context might influence the evaluation practice;*
- *To identify the competences of someone evaluating international cultural cooperation programmes;*
- *To understand how different stakeholders are involved in the evalution practice;*
- *To reflect on the use of evaluation in relation to reporting and accountability.*

1. What are the main objectives of the programme?
2. How does this programme integrate and compare with other programmes promoted by the organisation you represent? Who has the overall responsibility for the evaluation?
3. How is evaluation incorporated in the project management cycle? Is it part of your budget?
4. Can you briefly describe the objectives of the evaluation and the indicators (quantitative or qualitative) that you use?
5. Can you briefly explain the evaluation process?
6. Briefly explain the following aspects:
   a. Is evaluation internal or is it outsourced (subcontracted, etc.)?
   b. Is it continuous (processes are checked as they are developed) or is it based on end-results (at the end of each year or programme round)?
   c. Do you contrast and review your assessment methods with those of other organisations in some way?

7. What reporting systems do you use for your evaluations? Who receives them? To whom are they addressed?
8. What challenges do you face when evaluating? Are there specific characteristics that determine the process or outcome?
9. Are participants able to participate in the evaluation process (from setting objectives and indicators to evaluating and explaining results?)
10. How does the context of intervention and activity (EuroArab area) influence the evaluation process?
11. What competences are necessary to conduct evaluation of cultural cooperation projects? Are there any specific competences you identify for projects related to the EuroMed area?
12. How might you ensure that data collection activities are culturally sensitive and appropriate?
13. What is the return on investment from your efforts to evaluate to the programme?
14. If you receive funding from some public and/or private institution, what is the way in which things are assessed in exchange for receiving financial assistance?
15. If multiple partners are involved, how are they engaged in the evaluation process?

Indicators taken from this block: internal assessment methodology; usefulness of assessing return to institutions; effectiveness of inter-institutional collaboration

INDICATOR BLOCK **D**: **EVALUATION TOOLS**

Research objectives related to this block:

- *To identify which are the most common and preferred evaluation tools used in practice;*
- *To identify which tools are used during throughout the development of a programme.*
- *To indicate what future decisions are taken in relation to the use of the tools.*

1. Can you briefly describe the tools you use for the evaluation?
2. Why do you choose this tool(s)? What is the added value for cultural cooperation projects?
3. How are projects documented? How does this documentation contribute to the ealaution practice?
4. How satisfied are you with the results you get from the tools you use?
5. How do you use the results gained from this tool? Would you use it/ recommend it for the evaluation of international cultural cooperation programmes?

Indicators taken from this block: evaluation methods and tools; monitoring; internal and external evaluation; satisfaction with tools; effectiveness of methods.

INDICATOR BLOCK **E**: **EVALUATION RESULTS**

Research objectives related to this block:

- *Understand how the findings from the evaluation practice are used;*
- *Identify indicators of change in relation to the personal, organizational and community level;*
- *Investigate into the level of involvement of the various stakeholders.*

1. Who do you tell about the evaluation results and why?
2. How do you tell them?
3. What indicators do you use for reflecting on change produced through the programme on:
    i. Individual learning
    ii. organisational capacity development

iii. community development

4. Overall, how do you understand value / impact in the framework of your organisation's programmes?
6. How do evaluation results inform your future programmes? What changes has the evidence collected made you implement?
5. How are stakeholders engaged with the evaluation results?

Indicators taken from this block: change theories; dissemination of evaluation results; engagement of stakeholders; value attributed to evaluation.

INDICATOR BLOCK **F**: **THE HUMAN FACTOR**

Research objectives related to this block:

- *To understand how those involved in evaluation, either as commissioners, evaluators or beneficiaries feel about it.*
- *To sketch the profile of the evaluator of international cultural cooperation programmes*

1. How did you get involved with evaluation? (evaluator)
2. Did you received any training? (evaluator)
3. What relevant experience did you have in relation to the programme you evaluated? How did they affect the way the evaluation was done (evaluator)?
4. How was the cooperation with the commissioning body? (evaluator)
5. What were you looking when choosing an evaluator? (commissioner)
6. How were you as participant involved in the evaluation practice? (beneficiary)
7. What impact has the programme had on you on the long-term (beneficiary)
8. What are your overall impressions regarding evalution? Where do you think it is useful?
9. What improvements can be made on how international cultural cooperation programmes are evaluated? (all)

Indicators taken from this block: the human factor in evaluation; cultural competence in evaluation; previous experiences with evaluation; opinions on improvement of evaluation practice.