

HOW NETWORKING WORKS | IETM Study on the Effects of Networking

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IETM Study on the Effects of Networking

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Informal European Theatre Meeting

IETM exists to facilitate among its members, the dynamic exchange of information on the production and presentation of contemporary performing arts. This is achieved through meetings, publications and other forms of communication.

Fondazione Fitzcarraldo

Fondazione Fitzcarraldo is an independent centre for research, training and documentation on cultural, arts and media management, economics and policies, at the service of those who create, practice, take part in, produce, promote and support the arts and culture.

The Foundation aims to contribute to the development, diffusion and promotion of innovation and experimentation in the aforesaid fields of activity, also through the systematic search for collaboration agreements and synergies with local, regional, national and international authorities and bodies.

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The Arts Council of Finland and its nine art form councils provide financial support for individual artists in the form of artists grants, travel grants, artists in residence grants etc. and advise the Ministry of Culture and Education on matters related to the arts and culture. It also conducts research in the field.

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Foreword

The Arts Council of Finland has always actively supported and promoted the work of networks. They do provide us from our Northern corner of Europe an easy access to the various artistic communities all over Europe; and they are the main channels of new intellectual stimuli. The Arts Council is also a member of several networks: Ars Baltica, CIRCLE, it is linked to EFAH as an observer, it was a member of the Pèpinières- network, it has steadily worked together with ELIA and ENCATC.

It was in the 1990s when I participated in IETM and other network meetings as the administrative director of the Helsinki City Theatre. Consequently I was interested in seeing what types of new productions and producers were emerging in Europe. IETM was already then a big organization and many debates and performances took place during each of the meetings. The meetings really gave me an opportunity to see how useful contacts were being created and joint productions emerged.

This is the first time that a network has had its own work evaluated scientifically. The study was carried effectively out by Fitzcarraldo, a Turin-based research institute, and it assesses the benefits the members receive from networking and proposes how functioning of the network could be improved. The results, although critical in some respects clearly show that Europe still needs artistic networks and that they are invaluable working tools for the professionals.

European artistic and cultural networks are, however, going through a very difficult period in their development. Their number has grown exponentially since the days when IETM was created in 1981. This, of course, reflects the need of the European artistic community to work together, exchange ideas and carry out joint productions. The great number of networks has, however, negative effects in the sphere of financing. International funding for networks is very restricted and national funding is often not available because national governments consider most of the networks European, not national. This is a problem, which awaits a solution at the European level. The issue of network financing has been on the agenda of policy debates for years and was discussed also during the IETM Helsinki meeting in April 1999.

I hope that this publication financed by the Arts Council of Finland, will benefit not only the IETM members but also all networking Europe. It will hopefully also be read by the cultural policy decision-makers and convince them that networks are an excellent means to support mobility of artists, an objective they have committed to promote.

RISTO RUOHONEN
Chair
Arts Council of Finland

Why This Study

In 1996, in the context of EFAH's (European Forum for the Arts and Heritage) advocacy actions on behalf of European cultural networks to the European Commission and the European Parliament, MEP Roy Perry remarked that convincing politicians of the value of networking would be a lot easier if some statistics were available. "What do networks do? What are the results? Where is the proof?" Frustratingly, we networkers could only counter with endless anecdotal evidence. "Networking? Well, it changed my life, that's all I can tell you, it changed everything I do and how I do it."

In that same year, EFAH published Judith Staines' seminal work on European cultural networks, "Working Groups, Networking Solutions for Cultural Co-operation in Europe", which led to a series of European meetings, think tanks and conferences, manifestos and papers, about networking. These events and activities brought together hundreds of committed networks and their co-ordinators, networks' Boards, and public authorities. Doubtless they opened minds, defined in some way the evolution of the cultural network movement in Europe, and were an important step in its development.

But although the passion was unquestioned, the challenge remained unanswered: "Where is the proof"? The networking movement in Europe needed 'proof' in order to advocate its benefits to public authorities.

In 1998, IETM, the most established and largest European network for contemporary cultural expression, decided to take its responsibility and commission the first-ever scientific study of the effects of networking. IETM has been constantly growing since its beginning in 1981; we needed to see ourselves objectively, to see how IETM 'works' from an outside perspective, to know what actually happens in the network, to understand if our central organising principles are still valid.

IETM felt that it could put its history and numbers to good use, in offering inspiration to the other networks. Such a first study could form the basis of further studies, in order to build up a serious body of knowledge about cultural networking in Europe. What is it about networks, indeed, that makes them 'change our lives'?

We hope that the findings in this study will be helpful to the European Parliament, which has put together a task team in order to identify ways of evaluating cultural networks, and criteria for funding them.

We hope that it will assist new members of IETM and other networks to 'learn the rituals' of networking more quickly and enable them to integrate and engage in network life more easily. And, last but not least, we hope that, in understanding their own behaviour, 'old' members can be sensitised to opportunities they may be missing, and to feeling an enhanced sense of responsibility for the network as a whole, and especially for new members.

MARY ANN DE VLIEG
IETM Network Coordinator

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Research group:

**Luca dal Pozzolo, Ugo Bacchella and Giulia Agosto
Paolo Anderson (Statistical Appendix)**

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PREFACE

The present study was carried out by Fondazione Fitzcarraldo in collaboration with IETM and represents a first attempt to study the phenomena of cultural networking in Europe. The Study aims at describing network practice in a quantitative as well as a qualitative way and to offer a reflection on some unique features of IETM. The research project was discussed in summer 1998 and encouraged by the IETM Council in Cardiff October 1998. It was carried out over a period of one year.

The analysis of an informal network is indeed an issue of great complexity for several reasons:

- IETM gathers more or less 450 member-organisations with huge spans of interests and motives: theatres, centres, festivals, performing companies, documentation centres, service organisations, public authorities from over 40 countries.
- IETM is not only a framework for facilitating exchanges but also for communication, information, collaboration and transmission of experiences and know-how between generations;
- The very same word “network” plays a twofold role. On the one hand it is the description of a web of relations, whilst on the other hand it is a metaphorical term which evokes an “environment” rather than a precise structure or an identifiable physical object;

The study analyses how the network is evolving, how it is becoming more diversified and less homogeneous and defines some of the important qualitative changes that networking produced to the activity of the individuals as well as to their organisations.

Research process

The methodology adopted by the research team included questionnaires and in-depth interviews as well as participation in working groups and attendance at some IETM meetings (Cardiff October 1998, Helsinki April 1999 and Barcelona October 1999). The research team was continuously supported by an international steering committee comprising André Nayer, (Centre de Recherche et de Prospective en Droit Social, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgique), Jannine Rannou, (CNRS Centre National de Recherche Scientifique, Paris), Mik Flood (Strategies for Art and Space, London), Dragan Klaić, (Theater Instituut Nederland, Amsterdam) who discussed the main issues on several occasions (1st April–30th June). In the period March–June 1999, 410 questionnaires were sent to the members of IETM. The sample of responders includes 63 units. A statistical appendix and a section commenting on the data resulting from the analysis of the questionnaires are to be found at the end of the document. The structure of the questionnaire elicited quantitative data and it served also as a model for framing the outline of the in-depth interviews. 32 face to face in-depth

interviews were made with members of the network chosen on the basis of different activities, backgrounds, size and types of member organisations and length of membership. The interviews obtained qualitative information that usually cannot be comprised in a questionnaire method and served as a model for the reconstruction of certain behaviours, professional and cultural attitudes, as well as of dynamics triggered by individual action. 15 phone interviews were made with members who have withdrawn their membership in order to explore the reasons for leaving the network.

The report

The report includes the following sections:

- analysis of the individual pathways and ways of using the network
- analysis of the effects of networking
- analysis of the effects of interaction on the structuring of the network
- a survey of ex-members
- some conclusions and suggestions for further investigations
- a bibliography
- a list of interviewees

A final section includes notes on the economy of the network, a statistical appendix and related comments.

The outcomes

The core of the survey is the analysis of the behaviour of members, inside as well as outside the network, the identification of the motivations on which the network is based and the expectations about the network activities.

Since IETM lacks a physical structure but is the consequence of the interactions of its members, analysis can be only focused on the experience of the individuals and in a second phase on the impact of the interactions at a higher level. The individual pathways show the behaviour of the members and their ways of using the network according to several “attractors” that were identified. These do not permit a description of the operating procedure of the network as a whole but identify a series of operating procedures, a series of dynamics typical of the informal network as well as the perception of IETM. The main outcomes resulting from the analysis of the information are related to the perception of the network, to the effects of networking and the effects of interaction on the structuring of the network. The network is perceived either as a web (network perceived as a web of constant contacts, connections) or as a context of emerging phenomena (network perceived as a constantly changing context in which things happen). Each member experiences the network only partially: each participates in informal sub-networks¹ formed by personal interests and individual points of view. IETM is perceived as an incubator of innovation and ideas and the meetings are the place where opportunities are catalysed. Meetings

¹ Groups formed within IETM, having a high degree of internal communication, formed on the basis of social reasons, because of frequent collaborations, or because of the particular type of work they do.

are also the place for participation in civil life like in a medieval market square, a place for exploration and acquisition where interchanges can be either territory oriented (related to the individual's own work-area) or network oriented. Those who use the network in a very confident way find it hard to see it as something external to them, therefore the results (intangible and tangible) and the changes resulting from networking on individual members are difficult to separate from the result of individual action: these individuals have personalised, internalised the network. The stress lies on the processes that the network can trigger and feed: participation in the network life is often described as broadening professional horizons, and enabling the discussion of values and the process of learning from others' experiences. Since IETM is a living body, a place where people communicate as in a democratic assembly since it is horizontally oriented (the movement being member to member) the analysis of the interactions within the network focus on issues of size, diversity, rules, democracy, organisation and bureaucracy.

1 Introduction

A network offers a source of potential and opportunity, which unfolds to its members through the course of gradual exploration. In this sense, the network is similar to a labyrinth. The comparison is only valid in relation to the point of view of the person who has entered and is following the labyrinth: the strategies adopted for finding one's way through a labyrinth and returning to the starting point are drastically different from those governing the construction of the labyrinth. To the architect, the labyrinth is finite in scope; its structure is visible from a bird's eye view, revealed by a global understanding of the construction. However, the person travelling through the labyrinth is confronted by a series of alternatives, chances, and individual choices to be made one by one and which are conditioned by previous choices and on the hoped-for outcome of each successive step.

In any type of labyrinth, from the one represented by Ariadne's thread to Tarry's Theorem², the strategies for finding one's way through are characterised by the impossibility of attaining a global view. Decisions are conditioned exclusively by "local vision", and are made one after the other (as in an algorithm) based on "local attention". Even Daedalus, who was imprisoned in the labyrinth of his own design, managed to escape only after taking to flight. From above, he was able to recognise the structure of the labyrinth and to identify solutions to the problems which had remained unresolvable while he remained on foot.

Global vision is unattainable to the members of IETM and to researchers alike, no matter how lofty their flight. IETM lacks a physical structure, corridors and predetermined paths; it is the paths forged by individuals themselves, which generate the multidimensional structure of IETM in both time and space. Intersections occur in physical locations and in time: the connections between information and ideas to be transmitted and exchanged are established in a particular place and time (a sufficient description at least for the dynamics of meetings). An overall graphical representation of the network in all of its complexity cannot be drawn by retracing each of the individual paths. The only global image possible can be likened to the memory of a dance performance during a specific moment and viewed from the particular angle of the only seat in the theatre.

² Tarry's Theorem offers the solution for resolving the problem of labyrinths. The study of labyrinths and of the strategies of choosing paths is one of the first mathematical applications of network theory.

Notwithstanding its complexity (compounded in this case by the intangible nature and informality of the IETM network), the problem in general terms is already well-known: it can be summed up with reference to some of the classic issues of network theory: “The network is the classic model whose overall transformation is determined by local transformation”³; related directly to this issue is the question: “To what extent is a system, whose components act only on the basis of local information, capable of global performance?”⁴

It is thus impossible to offer a global description of the network (unless turning to metaphor). IETM does not exist as a physical structure or entity, but is the consequence of the myriad interactions and strategies of its individual members. This implies that IETM cannot be described through an analysis of the organisational structures from which it is composed.

Analysis must instead be centred upon interactions between the pathways, on the experience of the individual and on the effects and results stemming from participation in the network, as described necessarily from an internal or “local” point of view. Only then can the impact of these interactions at a higher level on issues such as organisation, size and structure be explored.

The following notes intend to offer a summary of the issues and problems identified on the basis of investigations (questionnaires, interviews, participation in working groups, telephone interviews, etc.). They are organised under the following main headings:

- 1 Individual pathways: analysis of professional behaviour and ways of using the network
- 2 Effects of networking; intangible and tangible results, expectations, changes resulting from networking on individual members of the network
- 3 Effects of the interactions on the structuring of the network: size, organisation, economies of the network
- 4 Reasons for leaving IETM: A supplementary survey of ex-members
- 5 Notes on the economy of the network
- 6 Statistics and comments on data

³ Pierre Rosenstiehl, *Rete*, 1980, Torino

⁴ Jean Petitot, *Centrato/acentrato*, 1980, Torino

2 Individual pathways: analysis of professional behaviour and ways of using the network

The study considers professional behaviour and attitudes as the prime movers of the pathways within the network, which are capable of directing the itineraries and the structuring of the map of the network from the point of view of individual members. The common theme expressed in all of the interviews was that the network experience is the direct result of interaction with others on the level of individual dynamics. Just as the sky was not furnished with a map, but is drawn up on the basis of experience, there are as many different maps of the network as there are members, perhaps even more: these maps evolve according to the unfolding of time, to places, to the interests of individuals who comprise the network. However, there is not one definitive map.

Attractors

The 32 interviews conducted thus far have been analysed, and information regarding the individual questions has been collated. In addition, three different flow-charts have been drawn-up which reflect similarities of members according to a set of common factors (see attached flow-charts and legend). If we consider as relevant the answers referring to the non-measurable effects of networking and changes on personal professional attitudes influenced by networking, a number of different pathways can be defined according to two different “attractors”⁵.

Attractor 1 “Existential-Political”

There are unlimited solutions of continuity between the personal plane and the collective dynamics. Personal enrichment is closely linked to the comparison with other members. This dynamic represents a political value since it makes the different individual’s hierarchies of values understandable. According to it, existential and political issues blend together in one single attractor. The emphasis for these individuals is on “values”, whether personal or collective. Example: Networking increases understanding of others’ values, forces self-examination of values, builds cross-cultural relations, carries political significance, builds channels of communication between different environments, allows for personal enrichment, enhances the intercultural competence of its members.

Attractor 2 “Professional”

The emphasis for these individuals is on the positive effects to be gained “for my own organisation” or “for my own work in the arts”. Example: as well as being an instrument for understanding the evolution of the per-

⁵ The term “attractor” is adopted from differential topology. “So what does a general dynamical system do in the long run? It settles down to an attractor. An attractor is defined to be... whatever it settles down to!”. Ian Stewart, *Does God Play Dice?*, The New Mathematics of Chaos, p.99, London, 1990.

forming arts in Europe and in the world, to get to know new realities and ideas, to expand professional horizons, networking is a field of activity basic to the development of one's own organisation, for identifying new opportunities for collaboration and co-operation at an international level. In this sense, the activity of networking fosters interesting developments of one's own professionalism.

The two "attractors" do not stand in a strict opposition to each other. They represent two keys to an understanding, two different attitudes by which experiences within the network are perceived and evaluated. In other terms they represent two different polarisations of interests.

For those attracted by existential-political issues: the comparison of values, the questioning of the own way of behaving, the comparison with other members, are the prime movers of dynamics having a strong impact on the own way of working and on the cooperation with other people.

For those attracted by professional issues: the development of working relations, the need of collaboration and partnership, the set up of common projects are the prime movers of questioning of their own hierarchies of values, of a wider and intercultural approach to different issues.

Since similar dynamics are described according to different viewpoints and with different languages that stress the subjective starting condition of the interviewee, it seemed worthwhile to use the term "attractor". "Attractor" means in our case whatever polarises and organises in its sphere of influence dynamics and phenomena in a specific shape. Dynamics and phenomena involved are similar but the attractors stress diversities of subjective interpretations and show different paradigms.

The attractors lead to the identification of three "pathways" or behaviours, corresponding to the three different flow-charts (see attached):

- 1 *existential-political*, whose pathway tends toward the left side of the chart;
- 2 *professional*, whose pathway tends toward the right side of the chart;
- 3 *intermediate*: whose various pathways are spaced horizontally and represent various combinations of the two components: existential-political and professional.

It is interesting to note the age groups of the members of the different flow-charts. The curve representing those influenced most by existential and political aspects range from 33 to 55 years, with an average of 43.7 years. Those most influenced by professional aspects ranged from 29 to 46 years, with an average of 39.2 years. Those in the intermediate positions ranged from 33 to 53 years, with an average of 44.5 years.

Although the numbers are not of high statistical relevance, there is a paradigmatic shift concerning the political–existential plane (that attracts more the older members), and the professional plane (that attracts more the younger members) over the generations: the attractiveness of the political gives way to a more professionally oriented behaviour. Changes are reflected both in the language used and in the focal points of interest observed as indicators of individual experiences.

Representativeness, closed-end (internal) mediation, open-ended (external) mediation

Members of the network serve both as points of articulation and as fulcrums between the unfolding situation within IETM, and their own organisations and territory in which they operate. Members' functions can be categorised according to two different modalities.

Closed-end (internal) mediation:

existential and professional growth experienced by the individual within the network is felt to be perfectly consonant and useful to the growth of their own organisation and to the development of activities in their own sphere of reference. Mediation (between the network, the individual's own organisation and their own sphere of reference) is internalised and is directed towards managing a position of personal leadership within the various areas: the network, the organisation belonged to, the territory.

Open-ended (external) mediation:

mediation between the network, the individual's own organisation and their own sphere of reference is externalised in a dialectic process. There is an attempt to reveal, involve and make available to other colleagues a patrimony of experience and information not only through personal entrepreneurship, but also through a process of verbal communication that includes seminars, workshops, articles, interviews as well as informal exchanges.

The “closed-end” condition corresponds more highly with the existential and political curves on the flow-charts, while the “open-ended” condition characterises most of the instances of the managerial–professional curve.

Here, too, observations are made on the basis of differences in emphasis, rather than alternatives. Hardly any of the organisations evaluates or analyses their participation in IETM according to stated criteria or even criteria which could be stated; above all, participating members do not have an agenda imposed upon them when going to the meetings. Data from the interviews is amply confirmed by the questionnaires. The role of mediation by members is not assigned to them according to their own or anyone else's expectations. Instead, participation is viewed as a “cultural investment” characterised by a broad mandate: it is up to the individual to define their

own responsibility in communicating or not communicating events, experiences and results to co-workers. In brief, this implies – within IETM – a high level of autonomy of the delegates in relation to their organisations. The delegate doesn't participate at the IETM meetings with a specific mandate given by the organisation, nor is found in a context ruled by the normal rules of representative democracy. The delegate's main function is not to vote or to represent a specific interest with a vote, but rather to participate in an informal environment in order to grasp the most interesting opportunities available to himself or his organisation. His or her individual ability in finding their way, in communicating, in seizing opportunities, is of fundamental importance in creating positive effects from the activity of networking.

Strengths and weaknesses accompany this high level of autonomy

Weaknesses:

The delegate who maintains relations with IETM may represent a “bottle-neck” in the flow of information between IETM, his own organisation and the regional context in which he operates. If the delegate – for whatever reason – does not “propagate” the information and experience gained at the meetings, he does not create other personnel capable of taking his place in the activity of networking, he acts as a strong filter between his own organisation and the regional cultural context and the network. Relations between IETM, the organisation and the regional cultural context hinge upon a single individual rather than a structured and systematic series of relations that include several individuals.

Strengths:

The high level of autonomy given to the delegates by their organisations is the basic condition that allows for a rich exchange on an equal footing during the meetings. The characteristics of the organisation (size, economics, prestige, and seniority) remain in the background, and do not represent the principal criteria with which the participants at the meetings establish relations. Once again, the individual's capacity to create relations on the basis of cultural proposals which involve other members, the ability to propose collaborations, the variety of one's experience (by type of event, location, type of work etc.) are the most determining criteria for successful participation.

In a certain sense there is a breakdown of any existing hierarchy: this permits otherwise difficult communication. Several interviews underlined the fact that during the IETM meetings, relations were established on an equal basis with practitioners from the same city, from the same territory, and that the foundation for collaborations at the local and territorial level were established thanks to the fact that they found themselves outside their usual roles. On “home territory”, the size of the organisation, its prestige, its economic strength and politics tend to inhibit such horizontal relations.

The breakdown of hierarchy also permits intergenerational relations: among equals, members of IETM, it is possible to establish master-student relations, otherwise impossible in the context of a younger and older director of theatre who meet within the context of their own territory of activity.

Sub-networks and connectivity of the network

No single person can experience the network in its entirety. Each member chooses from among the countless possibilities offered according to preference, and therefore experiences the network only partially. All of the interviewees reported that they participate in a usually informal sub-network. In some cases the sub-network was related to a particular sector (dance, theatre, etc.), and in others the sub-network was cross-sector or multi-sector and extremely individualised: "I'm interested in the people as people." It was harder for the interviewees to identify whether their individual network is perceived in a similar fashion by its other members. Personal interest and the individual point of view seems to prevail over considerations of potential effects on structure. A map of the sub-networks cut off from the local point of view is difficult to create, and it is difficult to determine whether such sub-networks are effectively defined as such from the various points of view, and to identify who functions as the fulcrum or intermediary of the various sub-works.

In any case, connectivity within the sub-networks appears high. Normally two or three contacts by telephone, fax, email, etc., not necessarily motivated by common projects.

A "friendly" network seems to emerge, serving frequently as a means of exchanging opinions and as a mode of reflection taking place outside of the member's own daily context or isolation.

Perception of the network: web and the context of "emerging phenomena"⁶:

The description and perception of the network is here, too, characterised by two different points of reference characterised by differences in emphasis but which in some sense are related.

The context of "emerging phenomena":

the emphasis is placed on the meetings, on face-to-face interaction, on events. IETM produces a context within which ideas, exchanges, collaborations and opportunities emerge. Everything is preparation for the culminating event, the meeting, which is the true point of interest.

⁶ A good example of an "emerging phenomenon" is represented by Reynolds' algorithm. The problem consisted in simulating the flight of a flock of birds on a computer. In mathematical terms, the global performance of a flock cannot be described, given the complexity of collective behaviour. Reynolds found the solution by imposing three rules on each of the computer simulated birds (boids): the boid moves towards that which it perceives as the center of the mass of other birds, it maintains a velocity similar to the boids around it, and it maintains a constant distance from the other boids and from obstacles in order to avoid collisions. Using these three rules, and distributing the boids randomly on the computer, resulted in constantly obtaining a flock with a precise geometry, capable of avoiding obstacles present in the computer, of dividing and re-uniting. It is worthy to note that the three rules never specify "shape of a flock", but simply apply the rules of behaviour to each single boid. The formation of the flock is an "emerging phenomenon", a phenomenon which results from the local behaviour of individuals, an overall performance resulting from the interaction of the individual actions. Reynolds' algorithm was later used successfully in the film industry to achieve special effects (for example the behaviour of the flock of penguins in "Batman").

Web:

while the meetings are perceived to be the primary point of interest, there is also emphasis on the importance of establishing channels of information exchange, constant connections, contacts, circulation of information, continual multilateral relations, and the network of relations and exchange even outside the meetings.

Perception of the network as a system of “emerging phenomena” is characteristic of the existential-political paths; perception of the network as a web, on the other hand, is characteristic of the professional path.

Concentration/Dissemination of information

Meetings are considered to be a rich platform for the exchange of information, ideas and opportunities, within which it is possible for the members to direct their own personal energies towards locating objects sought (or objects happened upon), or to participate in whatever it is that can only happen in that moment in time and space. Meetings can be likened to a medieval market square where rare and exotic goods could be found alongside the common, all of which was destined for perusal by travellers, jugglers, artisans and soldiers alike. Transactions among individuals dealt not only with goods to be sold or purchased; the square was not a supermarket. It was a meeting point, a point of discovery of new streets, new cities, strange customs. It was a place to be married, to hear about the unicorn and learn from others’ gestures. Items were bought and items were sold, of course. But above all, the squares were the place for participation in civil life.

What one gleans and takes away from an experience is motivated by one’s personal agenda, by chance meetings and by serendipity: “I was looking for this and I found that” (which doesn’t exclude finding “this” another day...) There is a distinct similarity between the meeting and the market square as an accumulation of riches located in time and space for exploration and acquisition. This is the prevailing attitude. Nonetheless, it is curious that only a few (only three cases in our interviews) reveal that the meeting venue is not only a concentration of information, but also the ideal place for disseminating information. In the market square proclamations and edicts were also read.

In three separate cases the meeting was interpreted as a possibility for disseminating and diffusing information, and not just as the possibility of acquiring it. It is interesting that several institutions (the three cases represent institutions) use the “market square”, the meeting, by underlining the relevance of dissemination of information. This is the direct result of marketing sense, in quantifiable and measurable terms: cost per contact is low, receptivity is very high, and the concentration of opinion leaders is elevated. The potential to disseminate information efficiently and effectively could be one of the aspects to emphasise to institutions, as long as care is taken to avoid mere instrumental use of the meetings as part of marketing policies.

Interchanges within the “market square”: territory oriented mediation, network oriented mediation

In a manner consistent with the previous paragraph, the attention of most members is concentrated on the potential for acquiring things at meetings and on the difficulty of adapting them, mediating them, or rendering them apt for their own field of territorial activity. For many, the meetings represent a sphere of innovations to be adapted and translated into their own context; the emphasis is on the cross-cultural difficulties inherent in “adapting” to the territory. Far fewer members mentioned that there is exchange on an equal basis or, in contrast, if there needs to be “mediation” in order to adapt their own patrimony of experience to the meetings. Among those who did, obviously, are the institutions using meetings as an opportunity for disseminating information. In any case, if the exchange were truly very unequal, characterised by a large number of people who “take” and fewer who “offer”, the risk of progressive sterility would indeed be great. In reality, the problem appears somewhat different. Everyone contributes something – although they are not necessarily aware of doing so. Yet the richness of offerings in the meetings is perceived as an “unfolding phenomenon”, a magical event which results from the interaction and concentration of the participants, although taking responsibility is attributed to the individual.

3 Effects of networking: tangible and intangible results, expectations, changes induced in individual members as a result of networking

One of the principal qualities recognised in IETM is that of offering fertile terrain for the growth of ideas and serving as an incubator of innovation. These results are indicated by both the interviews and questionnaires. One need look only at the majority of answers to questions concerning the birth of ideas, in order to understand that the role of the meetings and reflections is to furnish the contacts which are taken immediately afterwards. The answers outline a fundamentally important role of IETM: it is the meetings which catalyse possibilities and ideas by favouring the conditions for their formation. This is not the case, however, concerning projects. Projects are considered the result of the individual efforts of those who elaborate them, as is the research for partners and the further development of the ideas. There is thus a division between the forming of the idea, where IETM's important recognised role is that of a fertile ground, and the following up on the development of the project, which is no longer traced to an initial moment and which attributes little credit to the birth of the idea. To the further development of the project, IETM represents a resource, which is placed on the same plane as any other opportunity.

It is difficult to determine whether all of this should be considered as a tangible or an intangible result. Obviously the role of catalyst and incubator of ideas is of fundamental importance for the triggering of any process. Many policies directed towards creating incubators and conditions for creativity have failed precisely because of their inability to create the real conditions for sparking ideas and innovation. From this point of view, IETM represents a model of success, which should be made known and used to advantage.

Intangible effects

These are unanimously considered the most important effects, whether they be on the existential or professional plane. They include the broadening of personal horizons, new knowledge, deeper understanding, discussion of values and increased individual skills following the activity of networking. These are the effects most often mentioned. Worth mentioning, however, are other aspects which are not measurable yet are nonetheless more concrete.

Confidence

IETM increases confidence in at least two ways. The first regards the sense of belonging to a circle, which combines prestigious experience, personalities and important institutions with new idea makers and young professionals. The second concerns instances in which one's own ideas and projects have been realised in another context. Intercultural considerations (the project realised in another country or in another context), rather than undermining ideas, can affirm the pertinence of those projects and allows members to learn from the experience of others.

Territorial reinforcement

Participation in IETM also politically reinforces one's own position within a particular territory of action. The possibility of realising a project on more than one territorial level, from the local to the international, is an element of strength in dealing with local authorities. This reinforcement within one's own territory is even stronger if an IETM meeting is hosted. The presence of outside operators and members underscores the importance of the performing arts as well as the individual economic contributions that the members sustain in order to meet and talk. When taken together, these factors encourage consideration of the performing arts on the agenda of local policy in a less marginal position.

Material benefits

Much less important than the intangible benefits for all of the interviewees were the material benefits cascading from the intangible ones. These include invitations to festivals and season performances, collaborations and individual performances. Nonetheless, in few cases was IETM directly credited with such benefits (consistent with the previous notes). The true economy lies with the intangible benefits: information, contacts, opportunities, job mobility (several people moved from one job to another thanks to the IETM exposure and an active role/reputation within the network) and increased individual skills.

It must be remembered that the development of projects, as mentioned previously, is considered within the personal range of action. IETM is given little credit beyond having created the opportunity for the initial formation of the ideas. Even the fact that the projects involve other members of IETM is considered almost exclusively as the result of personal individual efforts.

It is nonetheless possible to cite, at least as an indirect indicator, the number of projects underway which involve members of IETM, as well as the number of projects realised in past years (see responses to the questionnaires). It is important to note that the results of the interviews indicate that even the material benefits are considered as a consequence of intangible benefits reaped by the individual during the activity of networking, rather than as material benefits to be traced directly to IETM. It is the ability to work in a

group, acquire professional experience, and the capacity to understand the values and experience of others which are recognised as the “cause”, the true driving force of the economy, considered even more precious since it is individual patrimony which bears fruit over long or extended periods of time.

This makes it difficult to make considerations about the local or global economic impact; above all, it would risk appearing to members as an “undue appropriation” by IETM of individual projects. It would be best to underline the central role of IETM in creating the conditions for the creation of ideas. Counting and quantifying projects could be presented as an “indirect” consequence.

An “indirect” material confirmation of the importance attributable to networking is represented by the global costs sustained by individuals to participate in the activities of IETM, and the total economic volume of expense per year. (See 8: Notes on the economics of the network).

4 Effects of interaction on the structuring of the network: size, organisation, economics of the network

Size

In all of the interviews the increase in the number of members and the resulting size of the network was considered as a positive phenomena which should be encouraged in order to translate into greater potential and richness. Consequently, the workload of the Secretariat is increasing, and must be dealt with in some way. Other global effects are not perceived, such as the fact, for example, that increased numbers not only lead to greater workloads, but may also lead to problems in the functioning of the organisation. The vision of the individual rarely pays attention to global performance of the network.

One problem which can be pointed out is that while the increased size of the network in terms of a “web” (an infrastructure of communications, information, relations etc.) has no defined physiological limits, the same is not true for the web as a scenario of “emerging phenomena”. It is not only a question of finding larger meeting spaces, but a question of balancing entropy and order in order to allow development of both structured communications and casual or chance communications. It is conceivable that above a certain threshold (500 people?) chaotic circumstances might block communications and decrease both the efficiency and effectiveness of exchanges within the meeting. Increasing quantities, above a certain threshold, becomes a “transfer of state” in the physical sense, a change of quality. Given the impossibility of setting selective criteria for entrance into the network, a viable alternative might be to multiply opportunities by “replicating” meetings, much in the same way the ancient Greeks expanded into the colonies, or in the way a cell divides.

New members and rules

Related to the preceding problem are the question of rules and the imparting of those rules to new members. As there is no manual or formal code, the ability to participate in network activities is the result of a complex on-location learning experience. One could say that it is necessary to learn “the rituals” of participation in the network, rather than the rules. In other words, encouraging the individual’s natural disposition towards interaction, conferring responsibility towards one’s own personal goals and those of others, and assisting members in gaining their bearings.

It is more a question of ritualised half rules. In this light, the fundamental role implicit in the transmission of this knowledge is played by the more experienced members, and enough time must be dedicated to the process. Rapid growth, with large numbers of new members, might threaten these conditions, since less time would be available and a higher proportion of newer members would be present. Most of all, rapid growth could destroy the ritual of “mutual choice” which, to a large degree, maintains the “atmosphere” within IETM.

Diversity

Diversity is seen as the particular trait which distinguishes IETM from other networks. Richness is offered by IETM’s diversity: of role, of operators, of thematic field and profession. Richness does not imply being a professional association of similar members, but a true “cross-sector” network featuring different potential and interests for each of its components.

Democracy

The problem with non-representativeness of members (i.e. they represent only themselves as individuals or at most their organisations, not their country, region, city or sector etc.), with “horizontal” communication, and with the network as a context of “emerging phenomena” creates for some (those who assume an institutional vision) a problem of democracy: who represents whom? who guides the global performance of the network? From the point of view of the network as a context of “emerging phenomena”, the problem seems insurmountable. Guiding an ecosystem towards a goal or a platform is a politically dangerous operation and generally results in a drastic reduction of interaction and richness of the system. Meetings are rich because an entire range of possible positions is presented regarding any problem. This must not be confused with the activity of advocacy: declaring the importance of finance for culture, the role of performing arts in society or the role of the network does not mean directing the network towards a goal, but rather underlining some of the conditions necessary for development, independently of the specific outcome. The activity of advocacy does not aim at deterministic and controllable effects.

The contrast of “basic democracy” and “emerging phenomena” versus representative democracy is at the basis of the contradictions created by growth of the network. In order to maintain the complexity of interactions at the level of the members it is necessary not to complicate the organisation, not to create hierarchy, not to represent, and not to increase the levels of the governing bodies. But at the same time, this points out a potential limit to the expansion in size of the network.

Organisation, bureaucracy

The preceding considerations help define some of the fears around strong organisation and hierarchy, which are more pressing than fears about increasing costs to members. The central point seems to be represented by a complex contradiction. The “fragile magic” of the network as a context of “emerging phenomena” is recognised, but constantly risks being damaged by organisational interference and attempts at control. The desire to develop and enlarge upon the context of this magic contrasts with the fear of interference, and of not being able to control the effects of such actions. As with problems posed in biotechnology, interference/control/ethics/evolution/responsibility are inextricably linked. To consciously control evolution and interfere with it represent at one and the same time a fear and a desire, and prior even to that, a limit on our capacity to understand its insurmountable complexity.

In this framework, the oppositions evoked for an organisational structure which is lighter/heavier; informal/formal; basic democracy/bureaucracy, seem to be modelled more by the fear or desire to control (or to not control) than by a rational analysis: lighter/informal/democratic could be substituted by lighter/ritual/bureaucratic, if the last term is stripped of its negative connotations and understood as the crucial work which has been organised and is sufficient to maintain a high level of interaction of the network. It is probably useful to keep in mind the difference between the network as a web, and the network as a context of “emerging phenomena”. The network as a web has no dimensional limits and its enlargement does not necessarily involve a strong investment on the organisational structure. The network as context of “emerging phenomena”, as face to face interactions at a horizontal level has precise physiological limits and is strictly linked to informality and to light structures. This is the magic and at the same time the fragility of the network.

5 Reasons for leaving IETM: A supplementary survey of ex-members

In parallel with surveys conducted via questionnaires and interviews with IETM members, investigation was made into the motives that caused some organisations to leave IETM. These motives could then be compared with the reasons given by current members for taking part in the network. This supplementary survey was conducted through a number of telephone interviews of approximately 20 minutes each. Asking ex-members to dedicate more time to detailed completion of a questionnaire or to a longer interview would have been unreasonable. Of the 35 members who have left IETM since 1995, 15 telephone interviews were conducted. In the other 20 cases, the organisation could not be contacted (addresses, names, contacts were in fact not updated in the database following the resignation of membership) or the contact person was not aware of the reasons for which the organisation left IETM.

Following is the list of reasons – not listed in order of priority – cited by the interviewees for leaving the network:

Negative reasons

- 1 Network too large, contacts difficult to maintain, increased entropy;
- 2 Network too “closed”, made up of tight cliques which are difficult to enter;
- 3 Membership costs not justified by actual membership benefits;

Neutral reasons: most commonly cited

- 4 Type of work of the member-organisation has changed;
- 5 Difficulties in financing membership and participation costs;
- 6 The person in contact with the IETM left the organisation;

Positive reasons

- 7 Participation in different networks which are more appropriate to needs of organisation;
- 8 Withdrawal is only temporary: future re-enrolment foreseen.

The 15 interviews obviously do not represent a reliable statistical sample of all of the ex-members. Even so, attention to the reasons they give for having left IETM is useful as it allows a qualitative examination of the reasons for which people take part in IETM. At the same time it may give some indication of problems and risks noted by current members.

The first three reasons are a clear indication of a body of criticism raised against the working method of IETM. In particular:
in the first reason, the increase in size of IETM is perceived as an increase in “confusion” at the meetings: the “chaotic” elements are seen to outweigh any potential opportunities;
in the second, the emphasis is placed on the difficulty of access to interactions according to the interviewees, the real opportunities for exchange and information take place in “limited circles”, characterised by strong internal relations which are difficult to penetrate, especially by new members;
the third is determined by economic considerations, even if not monetary in the strict sense: the interviewees do not consider the investment of time and money to be sufficiently justified by the results obtained.

This first group of reasons is based on the perception of negative factors, which are not counterbalanced by the potential for opportunity or other positive benefits. The expression “perception of negative factors” is not intended to call into question the validity of such motivations: individual experience, including the individual’s perception of and reaction to the experience, is not subject to evaluation. It does need to be pointed out, however, that experience is the result of interactions within the network of and between a multitude of other individuals and other subjective factors. It is within this framework that personal talent and skill in “networking” play a significant role in the materialisation of actual benefits and opportunities. The subjective aspects of perception of the network are of central interest to this research. The risk for increased chaos in relations associated to increased network size and the difficulties in entering into the network were both considered as central issues of research, and they represent basic challenges to be faced by IETM as it develops.

It is more difficult to comment on reasons for leaving the network, which concern the discrepancy between membership costs and the actual advantages gained. Even among current members of IETM the benefits (especially economic ones) are considered “secondary effects”. In other words, potential benefits are subjectively determined and primed by the process of networking itself and the primary objective is not defined in terms of economic return. Potential benefit is also determined in some way by the individual’s talent at networking. It may also be prescribed by the economic ability of an organisation to finance mid- to long-term investments in time and money for participating in the network without gaining directly quantifiable results.

The second group of motivations for leaving IETM is in a certain sense more “neutral” than the first. They are represented by three categories of motivation (types 4, 5, and 6), and are described in further detail below.

In type four, membership in IETM is no longer justified because of a change in the type of work done; in the fifth type, economic difficulties render membership difficult to sustain despite satisfaction with the network. The sixth is that the person who maintained relations with IETM left the organisation for one of a number of reasons, such as a change in role, transfer to another organisation, etc. This last type represents the most common reason for leaving the network, representing 7 instances in 15.

In only one of these was a group evaluation made by the organisation whether to maintain relations with the network following the loss of the contact person. Further action was not possible in other cases: when the IETM contact person left the organisation, information on the network was no longer available.

Of this second set of motivations, in addition to being the most common, the last reason was also the most revealing. It offers further evidence concerning the role of “hinge” played by the single delegates who maintain relations between IETM and their home organisation. The informality in relations between the organisation, the delegate and the network allows for flexibility in participation in the meetings: delegates may come to the meeting with a specific mandate from their home organisation, they may have autonomous decision-making power or they may represent themselves as a single individual. This informality also facilitates the circulation of information and increases the potential for exchange. Yet in some cases it may have the negative effect of concentrating information networking skills in a single individual, and those skills and information are not communicated to others (for any number of reasons). It is no coincidence that new organisations are often represented by delegates who had transferred from an ex-member organisation.

The last two categories of motivation suggest interesting possibilities for interpretation.

In type 7 the experience gained within the context of IETM allowed the choice of another network which is more coherent to the specific objectives or mission of a particular organisation. In two cases, IETM was given credit for having made it possible for the organisation to select a more appropriate network for its specific objectives. This made up the content of positive feedback concerning experience with IETM.

Type 8 includes second thoughts. After a period of disassociation from IETM, changing conditions and developments within the organisation made membership desirable once again.

These last two reasons underline how experience gained through IETM can represent a stage in the search for interlocutors who are considered “appropriate” for the needs of an organisation in a specific period of time. From this point of view it is just as interesting that IETM represents an intermediate step towards other networks which are somehow related to IETM itself. This underlines the “functional” role in the development of relations in a network, which in any case obviously goes beyond the scope of IETM.

It is just as interesting to note that the final positive or negative balance of the experience within IETM depends on the evaluation of different subjects in given conditions. Were those factors changed, the evaluation and overall balance would also change.

This points out how the “openness” or “closed aspect” of a network depends not only on its morphology and function, but also on the subjective conditions of those taking part. Such conditions are necessarily subject to modification over time. Networking does not only concern “space” in relations but also “a time” for relations. The plasticity of the network, the entrance of new members, and the exit of old ones is not just a simple question of addition and subtraction, but also of evolution, of adaptability of the interactions over time of the single organisations and the network. The network is thus understood as the complex outcome of individual activities.

6 Final remarks

This research suggests, in summary, two points of view from which networking can be analysed. The first is the point of view of the individual, of the single actor, which is characterised by subjectivity of action and by the perception of the network from the inside, of “local attention”; the other is the “external” point of view which analyses the impact on interaction at the level of the “system” and the birth of “emerging phenomena”.

One can observe a double matrix of activity in the way in which the single participants use, explore and experience the network, that is, communicative and strategic activity. Participation in the meeting takes place in order to exchange ideas, information, to compare value systems (communicative activity), but also to test the possibility of creating projects together with others, to find partners, to compare projects in order to improve their content and feasibility (strategic activity).

If one adopts instead the “external” point of view in order to identify the global performance of the network, i.e. the overall result of a myriad of interactions among the single participants, one is operating in the context of communicative activity. The analysis shifts from the interdependence of the participants to the emerging phenomena, onto the hypothetical and actual models of functioning of the network. The network is the context and the collection of interactions of the single participants and by these is moulded. There is not a central control unit or operator of the network, offering guidance towards specific objectives, towards a determined strategy. The existence of the network allows the participants to communicate with each other and to reveal their individual strategies, according to a dialogue, a contrast or in co operation with other practitioners, but the network is not itself a bearer of competing projects with these single participants, nor does it encourage or discourage – as a network – individual projects. The initiatives undertaken by the network by way of its various internal structures (Executive Committee, advisory council, Secretariat) are geared towards improving the conditions for exchange and participation by individuals; they are not projects but meta-projects, in other words projects of context, of environments appropriate for communication.

Analogy

For these reasons, analysis at the level of the entire system took into consideration the network insofar as it is an “ecosystem” within which members act. On the other hand, the analogies which can be made between network and ecosystem are numerous and relevant:

- Both evolve according to the evolution and interaction of single participants;
- In both cases complexity emerges from bottom up by way of the multiplicity of individual and group relations;

- In both cases the target of the evolutionary process, no matter how vast in their interactions, remains the single individual or member of the network;
- In both cases the bio-diversity between members is one of the basic conditions for exchange;
- In both, even if one cannot predict in a deterministic fashion the effects of any single action, it is possible to identify conditions and evolutionary and co-evolutionary processes;
- In both, it is impossible to attribute a strategic intent to the system, whether it be an informal network or an ecosystem;
- In both, energy is consumed in order to maintain vital conditions of exchange; the ecosystem consumes solar energy; the informal network consumes organisational effort and human energy. This supposes the existence of a structure: information circulates in the network, but a work of organisation within the structure is first necessary in order to permit the information to circulate and to be used.

There is nonetheless one very significant difference between networks and ecosystems that must not be overlooked. While geographic distance separating the individuals of a network who interact has not only a cost but an extremely high value (such as in creating diversity among members), in an ecosystem interactions of proximity, factors of conglomeration in one location are fundamental to the evolutionary and co-evolutionary process.

In this light, the translation of ecosystem in terms of socio-economics finds a parallel in the concept of “milieu”, i.e. of a geographically fixed location that supports socio-economic and cultural process of specific interest. Nonetheless, the distinction between ecosystem-milieu and network is not fixed: economists and sociologists studying innovative milieu underline how they – even when limited geographically – make up part of a planetary system which connects other research centres, other individuals engaged in similar or analogous work. The dynamics through which an innovative milieu attracts competence and professional talent from other parts of the world passes through a network of relations. This interesting complementary relation between network and milieu is exactly reflected in the context of IETM, for at least two reasons.

- Annual meetings cause the network to “converge” in a specific location and to allow face-to-face interaction, the production of conglomerate economies; they produce the “medieval square” (also this a milieu, albeit temporary) where products deriving from numerous other geographically separated milieu are exchanged.
- The choice of holding meetings in different cities and countries allows the network to come into contact with a specific milieu, and vice versa offers the local milieu the opportunity of coming into “physical” contact with the network.

- The most interesting aspect lies in the complementarity of this synergy between network and milieu which produces a certain type of “environment”, at one and the same time virtual, but which does not set aside the local roots of the members involved, and which each time is hosted in a milieu in another location.

Environment

The metaphor of a biological environment – as the analogy and distinction between network, milieu, ecosystem – is not simply an intellectual game, but serves to bring to light why it is so difficult to answer such an apparently simple question as: What is the network good for? What are the results of networking? What is its economic impact? If one tries to substitute the words “network” and “networking” with the words “environment” and “ecosystem” (with all due caution considering that these terms are used metaphorically), it is the meaning of the question itself which proves to be difficult to define and highly abstruse. (What is the environment good for? What are the results of the ecosystem? What is its economic impact?). If we substitute the word “project” or even “strategy” in place of network, not only is the sense of the question itself perfectly clear, but several answers come to mind. The crux of the problem is that the cultural instruments with which single projects are evaluated and analysed, and from which the criteria of evaluation used in administrative-bureaucratic fields are derived, are not useful for the analysis and evaluation of the activity of networking. What is needed first of all is a shift in the cultural paradigm, one which is certainly not motivated solely by the existence of cultural networks, but by the organisation into networks of the most dynamic and powerful economic subjects today. The following passage is from Manuel Castells’ work on “network enterprise”.

“For the first time in history, the basic unit of economic organization is not a subject, be it individual (such as the entrepreneur, or the entrepreneurial family) or collective (such as the capitalist class, the corporation, the state). As I have tried to show, the unit is the network, made up of a variety of subjects and organizations, relentlessly modified as networks adapt to supportive environments and market structures. What glues together these networks? Are they purely instrumental, accidental alliances? It may be so for particular networks, but the networking form of organization must have a cultural dimension of its own. Otherwise, economic activity would be performed in a social /cultural vacuum, a statement that can be sustained by some ultrarationalist economists, but that is fully belied by the historical record. (...) Any attempt at crystallizing the position in the network as a cultural code in a particular time and space sentences the network to obsolescence, since it becomes too rigid for the variable geometry required by informationalism. The ‘spirit of informationalism’ is the culture of ‘creative destruction’ accelerated to the speed of the optoelectronic circuits that process its signals. Schumpeter meets Weber in the cyberspace of the network enterprise.”⁷

7 Manuel Castells, 1996, pp.198-199

As this passage points out, even the analysis of the network enterprise requires a change in the paradigm of the instruments of analysis in order to evaluate its functioning: Nonetheless, the post-Fordian network enterprise finds justification in its efficacy and efficiency – in the first place economic rather than cultural – with which it dominates the market. This is not so obvious in the case of cultural networks and for live performance: since Baumol and Bowen’s studies it has been clear that the economy of art and live performance doesn’t provide for significant increases in productivity, just as the market is not sufficient to sustain the activity of artistic production, especially of live performance. In so far as the cultural network can assist the growth of its members and furnish new opportunities for exchange and work, it does not modify the economy of live performance, and the network itself also requires financial support. Quite the contrary, the attempt at justifying in economic terms the existence of the network poses the following risks.

Attributing to the network results obtained by individual members. Their activities, their projects would not be seen as other than the deterministic consequence of the belonging to the network. We have already shown how this concept is contradicted by the functioning of the network, how the network does not substitute for the activity of the individual participant but rather represents a potential context for the confrontation and development of the single activities.

Thinking of the network as an economic entity which pursues its own projects. That is, transforming “communicative activity” with “strategic activity”, instead of creating conditions for exchange, for the development of members’ projects, it would be seen as an actor itself. The network would be reduced to a consortium in order to pursue a limited number of projects. The reduction of potential in such a scenario is obvious, and is alien to the concept of network itself.

Importance

Returning to the central issue: the importance of the network lies in its being the environment, ecosystem, milieu, field of expression of single members.

If it is important:

- To maintain a process of dialogue and intercultural exchange that magnifies the specificities and differences and at the same time increases understanding of different cultures;
- To stimulate artistic creativity at a transnational level;
- To foster and strengthen collaborative relations and partnerships at the European and international level;
- To enhance the role of the arts and culture through confrontation of national, regional and local cultural heritage;

- To guarantee space for a liberal and independent confrontation and dialogue which is not circumscribed by attempts to fulfil specific objectives determined a priori,

then the activity of networking which is developed within “complex environments” and which at the same time contributes to their development (as with IETM and other cultural networks) represents an extremely efficient means of allowing this to happen.

Therein lies the “true” economy – not quantifiable in terms of money – of the activity of networking, which must be nourished by constant investment over time in order not to destroy its environment. In this sense the value of an environment, of a milieu (which is surely also economic although not translatable in terms of money) is qualitatively different from the value of projects which are born thanks to that milieu (and which at least in part can be evaluated in monetary terms).

Consideration of the “value” of the environment has been emphasised recently through the proposals in many different economic fields of “incubators” or pépinières, aimed at creating suitable environments in which innovative projects may be developed, and in order to avoid falling into dangerous “vacuums”. Studies of the factors of success and lack of success in several cases of incubators may furnish precious clues as to the modality and difficulty in creating environments suitable for the development of project creation, and may allow further analysis of the analogy between network-milieu-incubator as a context for the development of individual project creation. It would be interesting to identify elements of economic measurement, on the costs necessary for building an environment from scratch or to safeguard its functioning. A comparison with the costs of networking activity within IETM may also furnish interesting indicators for comparative analysis.

Currently, consideration of the economics of the IETM network comprises the statement of a state of fact: an annual cost of 2 million Euro per year, mostly at the expense of the single members, is considered (by the members themselves) worthwhile for the maintaining of the IETM milieu and of its potential.

Another particularly interesting line of research lies in the analysis of other cultural networks, to identify similarities and differences in their functioning. It is precisely the peculiarity of the IETM experience that calls for a confrontation with other network organisations in order to clarify which of its aspects are particular to the organisational structure of the network and which instead are particular to each specific case.

This may lead to important clues as to the limits in dimension of a network, on the minimum requirements for an organisational structure, which permits interaction among members without risking the complex, and highly bureaucratic centralised structures.

A comparative analysis of networks (including those networks similar to or overlapping the cultural sphere, such as city networks, environmental networks etc.) may lead to definition of the specificities of the cultural paradigm of network organisation, and contribute to the creation of appropriate instruments of evaluation, radically different from those employed today to evaluate costs and benefits, efficiency and efficacy of single projects.

7 Bibliographical notes

The specific character and uniqueness of the functioning of the IETM network makes it extremely difficult to indicate a limited number of pertinent texts: a reference list which takes into account the principal aspects characterising a network tends to become incredibly long. The decision has been made to include a selection of texts and references, which form the basis for the ideas and metaphors included in this text, accompanied by explanatory comments.

Beginning with texts available on cultural networks in Europe, “Arts Networking in Europe”, edited by Rod Fisher and published by the Arts Council of Great Britain in 1992, offers a panorama on the European cultural networks, with index pages describing the activity of each network and listing contact information. The brief introduction describes the increase in the number of networks and the methodological point of view in defining a network: the determining element is not the form in which the network takes but rather the way in which it functions.

“Shifting Gears” edited by Rudy Engelder and Dragan Klaic gives a portrait of the life of IETM through the experiences of some of its members. It collects reports from daily practice, creating an inter-generational arch, reaching from the veterans’ brigade of the sixties to today’s younger colleagues.

“Working Groups, Network Solutions for Co-operation in Europe”, defines the cultural networks in Europe, describing features and principles of the way they function and points out the importance of cultural networks, of cultural co-operation at the European level.

On the general subject of networks, the monumental trilogy by Manuel Castells is fundamental: “The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture” and especially the first volume “The Rise of the Network Society”, Blackwell, Massachusetts, USA, 1996. The implications of network organisation in the “informational” society are delineated in numerous examples, from the innovative milieu of new technologies to the Russian mafia, to the problems raised by the opposition of “self” and “net”, to the problems of economic development in South-East Asia or Latin America. Changes in work, enterprise, the concept of time and space induced by network organisations are analysed with a great number of research techniques and hypotheses.

Also on the general subject of networks, the theme of the labyrinth and the description from the subjective point of view of the user of the network – the “local mind” – are examined by Pierre Rosenstiehl and his text “Rete”, included in the “Enciclopedia Einaudi”, Torino, 1981, while Jean Petitot in his text “Centrato/acentrato” also included in the “Enciclopedia

Einaudi”, underlines the relation of interconnections in the a-centred systems among local change and global performance of the system. No English version has been made known to us.

Chaos

The theme of the relation between action/local change and global performance is strictly related to analysis of complexity, of turbulent dynamics in physics, to “emerging phenomena”, to the mathematics of chaos, today all the focus of attention. A vast quantity of literature is available on these subjects, and here we mention only a few: their pertinence to research on IETM is obviously only of a methodological nature, but is fundamental in research of the instruments and metaphors adopted and translated for specific aims of the research.

Gregory Bateson in “Steps to an Ecology of Mind” and in “Mind and Nature” offers numerous examples of analysis of complexity: particularly interesting is the concept of “mind” as extended to a field of interaction, to an ecosystem.

Morris Mitchell Waldrop in “Complexity. The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos”, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1992, in a fictionalised account of the Institute in Santa Fe, presents the principal paradigms in the analysis of complexity: the definition of emerging phenomena, the edge of chaos as a point of dynamic equilibrium in which the chaotic organisation and dynamics which are in continuous evolution allow at the same time the emergence of complex orders, dissipation of resources, new configurations, with applications in physics, biology, economics, and the social sciences. Along the same line of thought, there is “Chaos and Order” by Frederick Cramer, which gives an account of the development of the biological sciences and the analysis of ecosystems.

The concept of “attractor”, used in the interpretation of the behaviour of IETM members, is derived from studies by Edward Lorenz, a well-known figure in differential topology and in the study of non-linear equations. Use of the form herein was confined to a metaphoric adaptation of the term to the present research. For further work, see Ian Stewart “Does God Play Dice? The New Mathematics of Chaos”, Penguin Books, London, 1997.

Kevin Kelly, in “Out of Control. The New Biology of Machines”, Fourth Estate Limited, 1994, develops the concept of “vivosystem” in which biological and technological elements are combined in a “new” ecology: it is stimulating to analyse in this light the distinction between the network in “emerging phenomena” and “web”, that is of interactions which essentially stem from face-to-face human interaction and telematic networks, especially as regards possible integration of the various components in the near future.

Arnaldo Bagnasco's "Fatti Sociali Formati Nello Spazio", Milano, Franco Angeli, contains a vivid description of the city as the place of serendipity. This concept is the basis for the interpretation of the mechanism of functioning of IETM meetings, and is obviously strongly related to "emerging phenomena". From here is derived the metaphor of the meeting as a temporary medieval square.

The distinction between "strategic action" and "communicative action" was first made by Jürgen Habermas in "The Theory of Communicative Action", 1981. The former is guided by desire to dominate, the latter by the urge to compare, to co-ordinate. The test is quoted herein in reference to organisation in networks in Barbara Imperatori's "Le Reti di Impresa: Crisi Sociale od Occasione di Sviluppo della Persona?" Ticonzero <http://www.sda.uni-bocconi.it/ticonzero/numerozero/a980106a.htm>

No direct references were made to the concept of network as elaborated within the theories of systems or in cognitive science.

The geography of economics makes wide use of the concept of network both as metaphor and as a spatial system of relations. The informality and the lack of hierarchical relations in the IETM network represented a serious obstacle to the use of certain key concepts used in geography and in territorial planning.

Another sector in which the theory of networks is pertinently applied and accompanied by a wealth of mathematical instruments (such as graphs and hypergraphs, for example) is transportation and traffic engineering. It seemed, however, that the specificity of networks relying on channels which are physically determined (infrastructures, streets, flight paths) did not allow for suitable metaphors of a network such as IETM.

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8. Notes on the economics of the network⁸

In 1998 the IETM had 455 members (organisations, institutions, associations, etc.), representing an estimated turnover of approximately 650 million Euro. It involved about 6,100 permanent staff members as well as 1,800 “full-time equivalent” posts (the sum of partial and full work days, expressed in full time), for a total of approximately 7,900 full-time positions. This was supplemented by the efforts of about 1,300 volunteers.

The following table lists a breakdown of the costs arising from IETM networking activities in 1998:

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Total Turnover IETM (Brussels Secretariat only) 1998 | 315,272 EURO |
| Total Expenditure Rotterdam meeting (Rotterdam organisers only) | 125,000 EURO |
| Total Expenditure Cardiff meeting (Cardiff organisers only) 52.900 GBP | 78,955 EURO |
| Other estimated expenses: All Satellite Meetings, Delegations, Training Sessions 1998 | 50,000 EURO |
| Publications (Theater Instituut Nederland contribution only) | 11,590 EURO |
| Estimated Travel Expenses: Members 1998 | 700-800,000 EURO |
| TOTAL expenditure | 1,280,817 - 1,380,817 EURO |

Notes

The figures for the first three entries refer to actual costs recorded on the 1998 balance sheet, while the last two (other meetings and membership expenses – not counting the membership fees paid by members –) have been estimated.

Expenses sustained by members for participation in the Rotterdam and Cardiff meetings (recorded in detail from the moment of participant registration) were just under 300,000 EURO, representing less than half of all costs for the year. The average amount spent on networking activities varied considerably according to the length of membership, ranging from almost 1,300 EURO for members of less than two years to 1,500 EURO for members of two to four years, and reaching over 2,350 EURO for those who had been members for more than four years.

⁸ The economic estimates included herein rely on data gathered by means of questionnaires. Concerning the representability and reliability of the statistical data and a comparison of response vs. non-response, refer to the statistical appendix.

Total expenditure for the meetings (Rotterdam, Cardiff and other meetings) refers to the local resources engaged specifically for the event by host organisations and territories.

Approximately 150,000 EURO of the total turnover of IETM is accounted for by membership fees. Total institutional contributions from national bodies, the European Union and sponsorship accounts for another approximately 127,000 EURO, of which 100,000 was furnished by DG X.

While the total from the preceding table gives a general indication of the dimension of the direct expenditures on networking, and DG X financing represented from 7.2 to 7.8 percent of the direct expenditures according to variations in estimates, the remaining costs were covered by the members' own resources or by resources engaged in the territories and cities hosting IETM activities.

In fact, in addition to the costs for organisational and travel expenses, the cost of working days and expenses incurred by individual members for networking activities needs also to be taken into consideration. Enrolment statistics from the Cardiff and Rotterdam meetings indicate an investment of 1,380 working days on the part of members at the two meetings. This estimate does not take into consideration the cost for working days invested by the organisers or support staff of the events, which appear in their own respective budgets; nor does it consider costs incurred by non-members present at the meeting.

Calculating an assumed 200 EURO per working day indicates a further labour cost of 276,000 EURO for the Cardiff and Rotterdam meetings alone. Also to be taken into account are the estimated eight full working days per year which each of the 455 IETM members dedicates to networking activities (including telephone calls, meetings, sub-network meetings, etc.). This estimate can be considered a modest one in that all of the organisations that attended both the Rotterdam and Cardiff meetings exceeded the eight working days per year assumed. Calculated once again at 200 EURO per day, this estimate implies a further labour cost of about 730,000 EURO per year.

Therefore in terms of general dimension it becomes obvious that the total "value" of networking promoted by IETM is certainly not less than 2 million EURO, which is almost entirely financed by resources of single members or those made available by local and national organisations and institutions.

Projects

The activity of networking as discussed in the preceding paragraph obviously does not include time dedicated to the realisation of projects of international scope involving the participation of IETM members. Networking has proven to be a fundamental catalyst for the generation of ideas and for identifying the possibilities and potential of joint projects. The projects are later evaluated, studied, developed and put into action outside of the context of network meetings and contacts.

The 53 questionnaires used for the description of projects indicated 172 international projects involving IETM members, and especially members from Eastern Europe, were realised between 1996 to 1999. Fifty projects were underway for 1999, of which a little more than 30% exceeded a total of 100,000 EURO. A modest estimate indicates that at least 500 international projects between 1996 and 1999 were realised with the involvement of at least two members of IETM working with other partners not involved in the network.

The idea for the major part of these projects was born during network meetings or in follow-ups to the meetings, demonstrating that networking leads to concrete results which, however, are often difficult to define in economic terms.

It seems logical, therefore, that results from interviews and questionnaires reflected the unanimous view that it is impossible to attribute single projects to the activities of IETM as an organisational structure, but that IETM is acknowledged for creating the conditions for idea-making, inventing, arranging and realising projects which immediately become the shared patrimony of each participant to a specific project. Thus, while no relation of economic dependence is perceived between participation in IETM and the dimension of single projects – for which the responsibility and ownership is totally assumed by the participants in the project – there is nonetheless a more general view that an important opportunity is offered by the conditions of meeting and networking provided by IETM to set up a process of collaboration and exchange. While the costs sustained directly by members of the network thus do not appear in an economic balance sheet or in a detailed cost-benefit analysis, they do figure in most cases as secure investments independently of positive controls.

APPENDIX I

Individual pathways: flow-charts

Legend

The following flow-charts offer a graphical representation of the thirty-two interviews conducted with IETM members. Summaries of the questions are located to the left of each heading. The boxes to the right indicate the various types of answer received for the questions. Each line represents a single interview and was drawn by tracing the responses given by each member. The various paths were then separated into three groups according to affinities in response type to the questions referring to *Non-measurable effects, change in professional attitude and relationship with the local context* experienced by each within the context of IETM attendance. The three groups are: Professional path, Existential-political path and Intermediate path. The following legend explains the reference made by the different variables on the flow charts.

Relation member/org

Refers to the relation between the interviewee, his/her organisation, and the sphere/territory of activity with participation in the network.

Coinciding: if professional and existential growth of the interviewees within the network coincides with existential and professional growth of the organisation.

Dialectic: if a dialectic process was detected in the mediation between the interviewee, the network, the organisation and the local context of reference.

Sub-network

Refers to the characteristics of the sub-network, or in other words, of the preferential contacts made with other members within the IETM.

Personal: if there are no affinities in the professional fields, but only a “transversal” interest regarding content: it is a network of people considered interesting and which is in frequent contact.

Thematic: if the preferential contacts work within an analogous professional field (dance, festival organisers, etc.).

Institutional: if the contacts take place within a sub-network, which has been formalised and is recognised as such by all of its members.

Frequency of contacts

Indicates the frequency of contacts with other members.

Frequent: if contact is made 3–4 times a month.

Regular: if contact is made at least once a month.

Perception

Refers to the interviewee's perception of the network.

Emergent Phenomena: if the network is perceived as a context within which "things happen".

Web: if the network is perceived as a collection of structured connections that allow for relations and exchanges.

Not measurable effects

Existential: if the effects from participation in the network are mainly linked to the existential sphere or to values of interior enrichment.

Not measurable, but concrete: if it is not possible to quantify the effects economically, but the effects are concrete (for example political recognition of the organisation as a result of participation in the network, which influences professional activity).

Professional: if the effects induced by participation in the network are linked to the working sphere and to professional life.

Measurable effects

No: if the interviewee did not detect measurable effects.

Market: if the measurable effects are considered in terms of new opportunities, new projects, participation in artistic initiatives or important contacts for the future activities of the organisation.

Change in attitude

Identifies changes in professional attitude caused by participation in the network.

Existential: identifies changes linked to effects of existential character, that is, exchanges of values and interior growth.

No: if the interviewee does not think that any changes were caused by participation in the network.

Not definable: if the interviewee states an inability to describe the effects.

Professional: if the changes refer to an accumulation of a professional nature, working attitudes etc.

Relation with the local context

Identifies the type of relation between the participant at the meeting and the local context.

Mediation Territory Oriented: if participation in the meetings influences the tendency of the interviewee to adapt ideas, innovation etc from the network to the territory, that is, if he/she serves as an intermediary of information gained at the meeting with the local context

Balance: if there is a balance between the mediation internally of what was gained from the meeting and mediation externally, or towards the meeting, of the personal activity and of the local context.

Mediation Network Oriented: if participation at the meetings primarily influences the activity of the interviewee of “bringing contacts” to the network, who serves as mediator from his own activity externally towards the network.

City/Meeting

Describes attitudes about the context of where meetings are held.

Risk: if risk is perceived that the meeting has feeble relations with the territorial context where meetings are held.

No risk: if no risk is perceived that the meeting has feeble relations with the territorial context where meetings are held.

Personal Background

Refers to the background of the interviewee, to education and work experience.

Cultural: if the education and previous work experience were in the cultural artistic sector.

Not cultural: if the education and previous work experience were in fields other than the cultural artistic sector.

Length of membership

Membership in IETM according to four categories:

More than 10 years

5-10 years

3-5 years

less than 3 years

The last two factors were purposely listed at the bottom of the chart as they do not affect the curve, but only serve to characterise the interviewees anagraphically.

The three flow-charts were defined by a number of factors individuated on the basis of answers to the indicators on the measurable effects and on changes in professional attitudes.

Professional path

The curve tends toward the right side of the chart. It identifies the path of those who identified their participation in the network prevalently in terms of changes in professional attitudes. The non-measurable effects induced are of a professional nature, and changes are in entrepreneurial behaviour.

In most cases, IETM was perceived as a web, and in only six cases was it perceived as a context of “emerging phenomena”.

Existential-political path

The curve tends towards the left side of the chart. It identifies the path of those who declared that the effects and changes produced on professional attitudes by participation in the network were primarily existential in nature. In all cases, these effects corresponded to a perception of the network as an “emergent phenomena”.

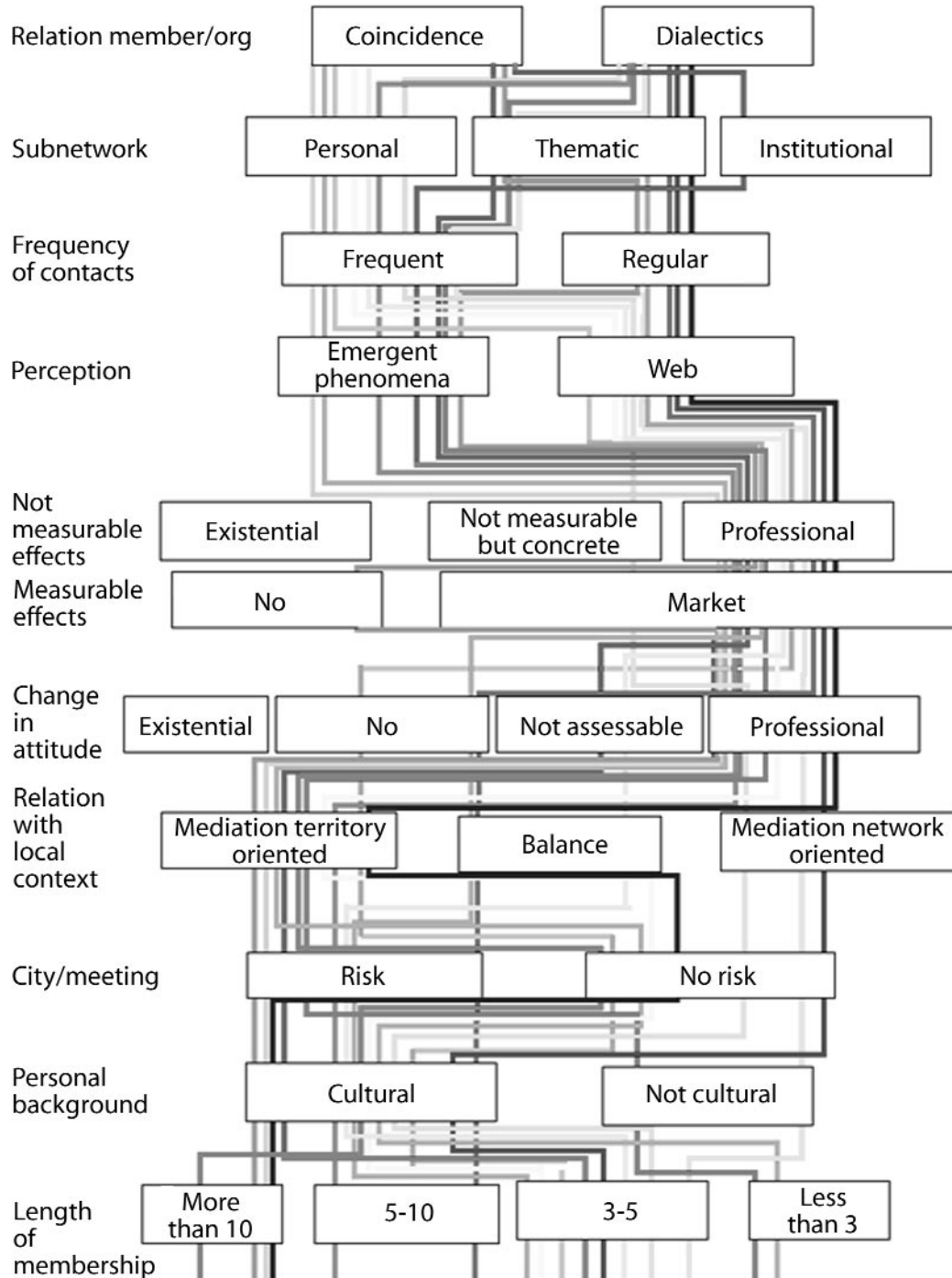
Intermediate path

The paths vary according to the various existential-political and professional components.

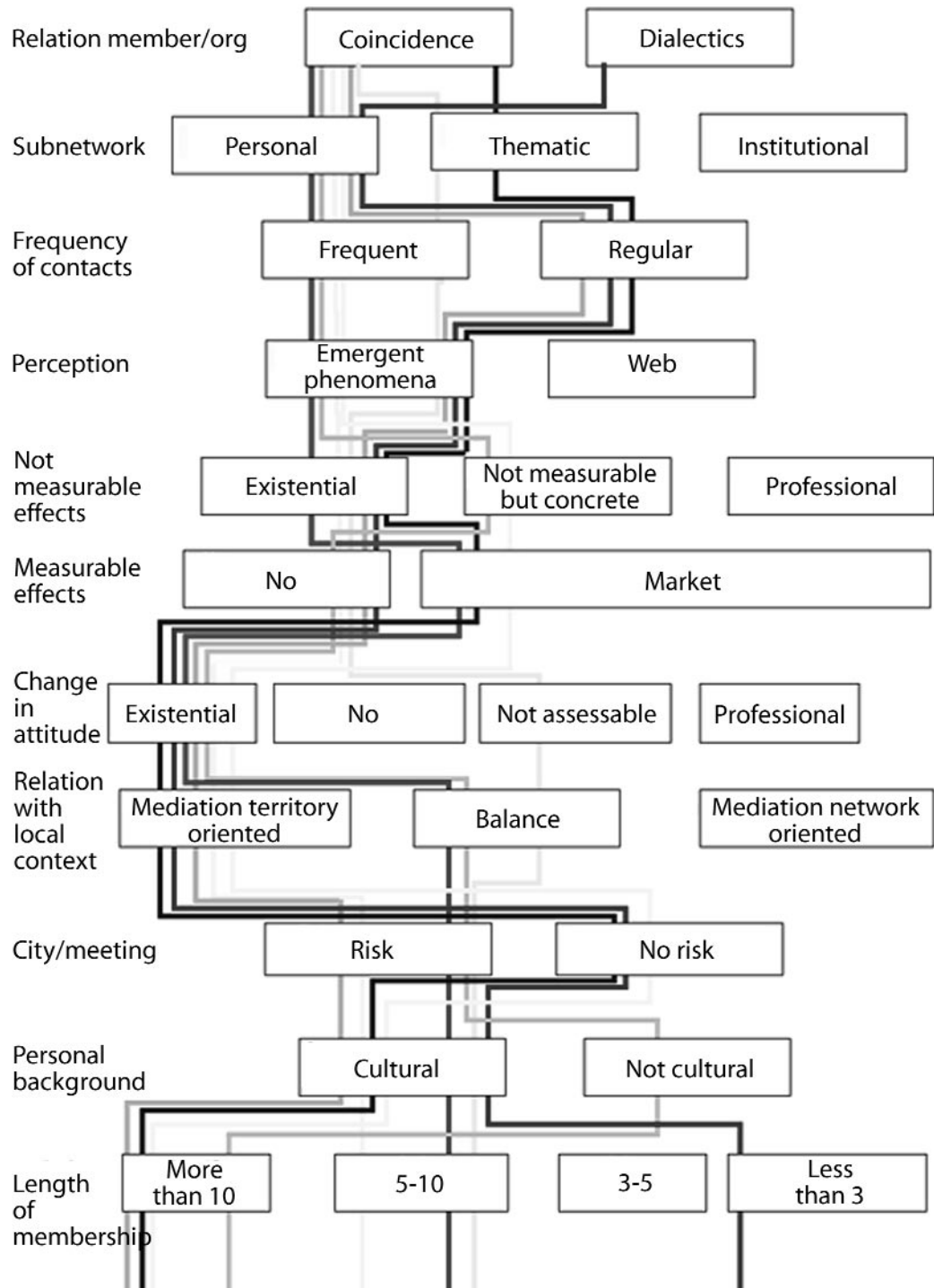
N.B.

Easier to read flow-charts in colour can be found on the IETM web site, www.ietm.org

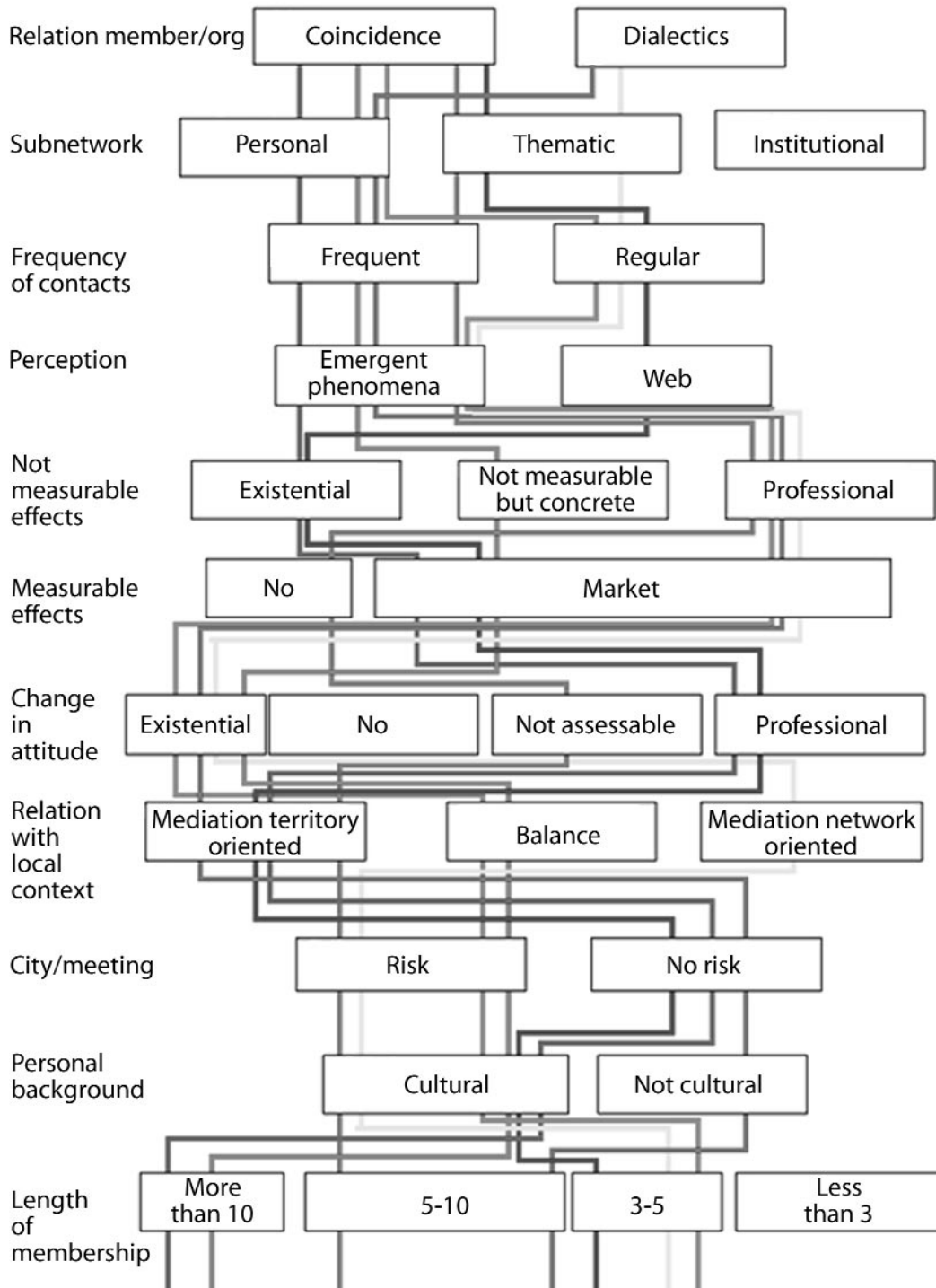
Professional path



Existential-political path



Intermediate path



We wish to thank the interviewees as listed below:

Name, country of work, place and date of interview

BAKKER HAN, (NL), Amsterdam, 2.9.99
BERBEE INKE, Bureau Berbee, (NL), Amsterdam, 1.9.99
BERTOLINO STEFANIA, Compositae, (I), Helsinki, 24.4.99
BOOTHMAN CATHERINE, The Arts Council of Ireland, (IRL), Helsinki, 23.4.99
BUCHARDT PIA, Kulturhus Aarhus, (DK), Helsinki, 23.4.9
CETINSKI URSULA, Cankarjev Dom, (SLO), Helsinki, 22.4.99
CHILDS NICKY, Artsadmin, London, (GB), 27.8.99
CREMONA KILINA, Athena, (HR), Helsinki, 24.4.99
DAVIES TREVOR, KIT, (DK), Paris, 9.5.99
DE CONINCK BARBARA, Troubleyn vzw/Jan Fabre, (B), Helsinki, 23.4.99
DEBRINAY RIZOS MANUËLE, Eden Productions Gds, (F), Helsinki, 23.4.99
DRÉANO LAURENT, Parc de la Villette, (F), Helsinki, 22.4.99
EVERITT PAUL, The Oval House, (GB), London, 5.9.99
GROMBEER PHILIPPE, Les Halles de Schaerbeek, (B), Helsinki, 24.4.99
HRAB ONDREJ, Archa Theatre, (CZ), Helsinki, 25.4.99
KHAKSHOURI NANI, Entredance, (CH), Helsinki, 24.4.99
KILBY JOHN, Footsbarn Travelling Theatre, (GB, F), Helsinki, 22.4.99
KOVAROVA MIROSLAVA, Contemporary Dance Association, (SK), Helsinki, 24.4.99
LUNDMARK ASA, The Swedish Institute, (S), Helsinki, 23.4.99
MAREK JANUSZ, Centre for Contemporary Art, (PL), Helsinki, 24.4.99
MELANO GRAZIANO, Teatro dell'Angolo, (I), Torino, 24.3.99
NEAL LUCY, Lift, (GB), London, 28.8.99
PEREIRA JOSÉ FILIPE, Acto-Instituto de Arte Dramatica, (P), Helsinki, 23.4.99
PILGRIM GAIL, Culture Coalition, (NL), Amsterdam, 2.9.99
PLUKKER MENNO, Six Stages, (CND), Helsinki, 22.4.99
SANTOS EZEQUIEL, Forum Dança, (P), Helsinki, 24.4.99
SZABO GYÖRGY, Workshop Foundation, (H), Helsinki, 24.4.99
TANGERDING AXEL, Meta Theater München, (D), Helsinki, 24.4.99
VAN BAASBANK JAAP, Van Baasbank and Baggerman, (NL), Helsinki, 24.4.99
VANACKERE ANNEMIE, Rotterdamse Schouwburg, (NL), Rotterdam, 3.9.99
WAAGE SVERRE, Theaterfest I Kongsvinger, (N), Helsinki, 23.4.99
WOLFF ANN-ELISABETH, Euro Szene Leipzig, (D), Helsinki, 23.4.99

APPENDIX II

Statistical Appendix

Estimate of parameters not known in the population (means and totals), and the grade of reliability of such estimates

The population studied is composed of organisations that were members of IETM from February to September of 1998 and consists of 455 units. The statistic unit is the single organisation. The quantity of units belonging to the population examined that answered at least one of the questions in the questionnaire is 63.

The degree of error can be defined as the difference between the estimate obtained in a particular survey and the real number in the population; it is the sum of various errors of various specific types. The most invalidating errors relative to the present research are *the variable sampling error* and *distortion due to lack of response*.

The variable sampling error is determined by randomness in the extraction of the sample. The present study is a census survey with missing answers; for this reason the amount of the variable sampling error is zero, and the estimates obtained therefrom are constants. The group of non-responders is not random but is constant, because it consists of the unyielding units which, after three recalls, clearly demonstrated that they still had no desire to collaborate with the survey.

The distortion due to lack of response is present when the non-respondents show substantial differences from the responders in relation to a particular variable. The size of this type of error can be quite considerable, since as much as 14% of the 455 units in the studied population gave response to the questionnaires sent to them.

In order to discover and correct these distortions, variables called “auxiliaries” can be useful. Each “auxiliary” variable possesses the characteristic of being known to all units in the study. On the basis of answers to one or more auxiliary variables it is possible to subdivide the study group into a definite number of sub-population or strata.

The auxiliary variables utilised in the present research are listed as follows, and each mode described corresponds to a specific sub-population.

Auxiliary variable “Years of membership in the organisation IETM”

The modes of response to this variable are:

- a1 “Less than two years”
- a2 “2-4 years of membership”
- a3 “More than five years”

Auxiliary variable “Annual subscription to IETM (in EURO)”

The modes of response to this variable are:

- b1 “0 EURO”
- b2 “1-276 EURO”
- b3 “277-1900 EURO”
- b4 “More than 1900 EURO”

Auxiliary variable “Geographic region of the organisation”

The modes of response to this variable are:

- c1 “Western Europe”
- c2 “Eastern Europe”
- c3 “North Africa”
- c4 “Other regions”

In the following table are indicated the percentages of the auxiliary variables relative to the study-group and to the sampling of responders and also the difference between these two percentages.

TABLE 1 Auxiliary variables: comparisons between the study population and the responding sample.

| | mean/percentage population | mean/percentage sample | difference population – sample |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| membership <2 years | 15,16 | 12,70 | 2,47 |
| membership 2-5 years | 42,42 | 47,62 | -5,20 |
| membership >5 years | 42,42 | 39,68 | 2,74 |
| amount subscription 0 euro | 9,01 | 3,17 | 5,84 |
| amount subscription 1-276 euro | 61,10 | 68,25 | -7,16 |
| amount subscription 277-1900 euro | 27,69 | 26,98 | 0,71 |
| amount subscription >1900 euro | 2,20 | 1,60 | 0,60 |
| country in Western Europe | 73,62 | 80,95 | -7,34 |
| country in Eastern Europe | 20,66 | 15,87 | 4,79 |
| country in North Africa | 1,54 | 3,18 | -1,65 |
| country in other regions | 4,18 | 0,00 | 4,18 |

Observing the table it is clear that the population and the sample of responders have similar means of the auxiliary variables. Percent differences between the relative frequency of the population and the relative frequency of the sample are not more than 7,5 % in modulus.

The sampling variable studied shall be called y , and Y^* the dichotomic variable (known in the population) “non - response to y ” (which assumes the value 1 if the unit responded to y and 0 otherwise). The linear correlation between the couple of generic variables a and b shall be called $r(a,b)$. r is a statistic that measures the intensity of the interrelation between a generic couple of quantitative variables; it varies from a maximum of 1 (maximum positive linear correlation) and a minimum of -1 (maximum negative linear correlation). The k th auxiliary variable Z_k finds a distortion due to lack of response in y if the correlations $|r(y, Z_k)|$ and $|r(Y^*, Z_k)|$ both assume a high level (in this study the limit posited by the statistician is 0,2). The correlation r is a statistic reserved only to quantitative variables. The auxiliary variables “Years of membership in the organisation IETM” and “Geographic region of the organisation” are qualitative. They have been transformed in quantitative variables in this way:

Years of membership = 1 if “Less than two years” is true and 0 otherwise. This is a rough way to subdivide the IETM members between “novices” and “veterans”.

Geographic region of the organisation = 1 if “Western Europe” is true and 0 otherwise. The amount in population of the modes of response “North Africa” and “Other regions” is really marginal (less than 6%), and they can be included with the mode of response “Eastern Europe”.

The auxiliary variables transformed are now dichotomic and consequently they are quantitative.

In the following table are presented the correlations $r(Y^*, Z_k)$ between the missing responses Y^* of the variables regarding the questions in the questionnaire and each of the 3 Z_k quantitative auxiliary variables. In the last column **MAX** is presented the correlation in modulus $|r(Y^*, Z_k)|$ which assumes the highest value for each variable Y^* .

Definitions:

- Question n. = Number of the question in the questionnaire
- Variable = Description of the variable to which the question refers
- Membership = Auxiliary quantitative variable “Years of membership”
- Amount = Auxiliary quantitative variable “Annual subscription to IETM”
- Country = Auxiliary quantitative variable “Geographic region of the organisation”

TABLE 2 Correlations between Y* and the auxiliary variables.

| question n. | variable | membership | amount | country | MAX |
|-------------|--|------------|--------|---------|------|
| 9,00 | activity own production/performing | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,0 |
| 9,00 | activity independent production | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity programming/presentation | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity organising meetings | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity distributions | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity education or outreach work | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity information, dissemination | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity consultancy | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity artists' training | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity artists' residencies | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity documentation | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity exhibitions | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity publications | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity funding | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 9,00 | activity other | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 10,00 | profit organisation | -0,03 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 10,00 | non profit organisation | -0,03 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 11,00 | n. full-time staff | -0,02 | 0,04 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 12,00 | n. full-time other people working | -0,09 | 0,04 | 0,08 | 0,09 |
| 12,00 | n. volunteers | -0,08 | 0,05 | 0,09 | 0,09 |
| 13,00 | turn over (in euro) | -0,03 | 0,09 | 0,09 | 0,09 |
| 15,00 | n. staff in IETM meetings | -0,04 | 0,04 | 0,08 | 0,08 |
| 16,00 | premeeting hold formal discussion in organisation | -0,03 | 0,04 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 16,00 | premeeting hold informal discussion in organisation | -0,03 | 0,04 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 16,00 | premeeting define task by yourself | -0,03 | 0,04 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 16,00 | premeeting no specific task | -0,03 | 0,04 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 17,00 | premeeting other | -0,03 | 0,04 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 17,00 | postmeeting hold informal meeting in organisation | -0,04 | 0,03 | 0,07 | 0,07 |
| 17,00 | postmeeting experience solely for yourself | -0,04 | 0,03 | 0,07 | 0,07 |
| 17,00 | postmeeting hold formal meeting in organisation | -0,04 | 0,03 | 0,07 | 0,07 |
| 18,00 | expectations: develop projects with economic return | 1 0,01 | 0,01 | 0,01 | 0,01 |
| 18,00 | expectations: develop projects with economic return 2 | 0,01 | 0,01 | 0,01 | 0,01 |
| 18,00 | expectations: develop projects with economic return 3 | 0,01 | 0,01 | 0,01 | 0,01 |
| 18,00 | expectations: access to network 1 | -0,04 | 0,05 | 0,06 | 0,06 |

TABLE 2 Correlations between Y* and the auxiliary variables.

| question n. | variable | membership | amount | country | MAX |
|-------------|---|------------|--------|---------|------|
| 18,00 | expectations:access to network 2 | -0,04 | 0,05 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 18,00 | expectations:access to network 3 | -0,04 | 0,05 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 18,00 | expectations:cultural investment 1 | -0,04 | 0,05 | 0,10 | 0,10 |
| 18,00 | expectations:cultural investment 2 | -0,04 | 0,05 | 0,10 | 0,10 |
| 18,00 | expectations:cultural investment 3 | -0,04 | 0,05 | 0,10 | 0,10 |
| 18,00 | expectations:lobbying to EU 1 | -0,04 | -0,01 | -0,02 | 0,04 |
| 18,00 | expectations:lobbying to EU 2 | -0,04 | -0,01 | -0,02 | 0,04 |
| 18,00 | expectations:lobbying to EU 3 | -0,04 | -0,01 | -0,02 | 0,04 |
| 18,00 | expectations:be strong in local environment 1 | -0,08 | 0,06 | 0,09 | 0,09 |
| 18,00 | expectations:be strong in local environment 2 | -0,08 | 0,06 | 0,09 | 0,09 |
| 18,00 | expectations:be strong in local environment 3 | -0,08 | 0,06 | 0,09 | 0,09 |
| 18,00 | expectations:create job opportunities 1 | -0,02 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,04 |
| 18,00 | expectations:create job opportunities 2 | -0,02 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,04 |
| 18,00 | expectations:create job opportunities 3 | -0,02 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,04 |
| 19,00 | involved in international project with IETM members YES | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 19,00 | number of projects in year 1996 | 0,00 | 0,01 | 0,03 | 0,03 |
| 19,00 | number of projects in year 1997 | 0,00 | 0,01 | 0,03 | 0,03 |
| 19,00 | number of projects in year 1998 | 0,00 | 0,01 | 0,03 | 0,03 |
| 19,00 | number of projects in year 1999 | -0,02 | 0,01 | 0,03 | 0,03 |
| 19,00 | number of projects in year 1996-1999 | -0,03 | 0,04 | 0,04 | 0,04 |
| 20,00 | involved in international project with IETM members currently (1998-1999) YES | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,01 | 0,04 |
| 20,00 | number of projects with IETM members currently (1998-1999) | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,04 | 0,04 |
| 20,00 | % of current project with a turnover with <50000 euro | -0,08 | 0,06 | 0,06 | 0,08 |
| 20,00 | % of current project with a turnover with 50000-100000 euro | -0,08 | 0,06 | 0,06 | 0,08 |
| 20,00 | % of current project with a turnover with 100000-200000 euro | -0,08 | 0,06 | 0,06 | 0,08 |
| 20,00 | % of current project with a turnover with >200000 euro | -0,08 | 0,06 | 0,06 | 0,08 |
| 20,00 | % of current project with a number of countries involved <3 | -0,08 | 0,06 | 0,06 | 0,08 |
| 20,00 | % of current project with a number of countries involved 3-5 | -0,08 | 0,06 | 0,06 | 0,08 |
| 20,00 | % of current project with a number of countries involved >5 | -0,08 | 0,06 | 0,06 | 0,08 |
| 21,00 | idea of above projects during IETM meeting | -0,04 | 0,05 | 0,11 | 0,11 |

TABLE 2 Correlations between Y* and the auxiliary variables.

| question n. | variable | membership | amount | country | MAX |
|-------------|--|------------|--------|---------|------|
| 21,00 | idea of above projects during IETM meeting: n° projects | -0,03 | 0,05 | 0,09 | 0,09 |
| 21,00 | idea of above projects following IETM meeting: | -0,05 | 0,06 | 0,10 | 0,10 |
| 21,00 | idea of above projects following IETM meeting: n° projects | -0,05 | 0,01 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 21,00 | idea of above projects in organisation but with IETM help | -0,07 | 0,07 | 0,14 | 0,14 |
| 21,00 | idea of above projects in organisation but with IETM help:n° projects | -0,05 | 0,05 | 0,11 | 0,11 |
| 21,00 | idea of above projects: proposal of another IETM member: | -0,07 | 0,04 | 0,12 | 0,12 |
| 21,00 | idea of above projects: proposal of another IETM member n° projects | -0,06 | 0,05 | 0,10 | 0,10 |
| 22,00 | international projects mostly with IETM members | -0,07 | 0,04 | 0,06 | 0,07 |
| 22,00 | international projects partly with IETM members | -0,07 | 0,04 | 0,06 | 0,07 |
| 22,00 | international projects very little with IETM members | -0,07 | 0,04 | 0,06 | 0,07 |
| 23,00 | involved in project with other partners in local/regional area | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,07 | 0,07 |
| 24,00 | involved in project with other partners in national area | -0,03 | 0,02 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 25,00 | involved in project with other partners in other networks | -0,03 | 0,03 | 0,07 | 0,07 |
| 26,00 | expenses in travel YES | -0,05 | 0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 |
| 26,00 | expenses in travel amount (in euro) | -0,06 | 0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 |
| 26,00 | expenses in accommodation YES | -0,05 | 0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 |
| 26,00 | expenses in accommodation amount (in euro) | -0,06 | 0,03 | 0,03 | 0,06 |
| 26,00 | expenses in subscriptions YES | -0,05 | 0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 |
| 26,00 | expenses in subscriptions amount (in euro) | -0,06 | 0,02 | 0,03 | 0,06 |
| 26,00 | expenses in other YES | -0,05 | 0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 |
| 26,00 | expenses in other amount (in euro) | -0,03 | 0,00 | 0,04 | 0,04 |
| 26,00 | amount of total expenses (in euro) excluding subscription | -0,05 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 26,00 | % of total expenses excluding subscriptions for travel | -0,06 | 0,02 | 0,04 | 0,06 |
| 26,00 | % of total expenses excluding subscriptions for accommodation | -0,06 | 0,02 | 0,04 | 0,06 |
| 26,00 | % of total expenses excluding subscriptions for other | -0,06 | 0,02 | 0,04 | 0,06 |

TABLE 2 Correlations between Y* and the auxiliary variables.

| question n. | variable | membership | amount | country | MAX |
|-------------|---|------------|--------|---------|------|
| 27,00 | expenses covered by EU funds YES | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 27,00 | % of expenses covered by EU funds | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 27,00 | expenses covered by your general budget YES | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 27,00 | % of expenses covered by your general budget | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 27,00 | expenses covered by other | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 27,00 | % of expenses covered by other | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM because old/ founding members 1 | -0,08 | 0,02 | 0,03 | 0,08 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM because old/ founding members 2 | -0,08 | 0,02 | 0,03 | 0,08 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM because old/ founding members 3 | -0,08 | 0,02 | 0,03 | 0,08 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM to build partnership with other organisations 1 | 0,00 | -0,01 | 0,00 | 0,01 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM to build partnership with other organisations 2 | 0,00 | -0,01 | 0,00 | 0,01 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM to build partnership with other organisations 3 | 0,00 | -0,01 | 0,00 | 0,01 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM to enlarge our relations 1 | -0,01 | 0,02 | 0,02 | 0,02 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM to enlarge our relations 2 | -0,01 | 0,02 | 0,02 | 0,02 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM to enlarge our relations 3 | -0,01 | 0,02 | 0,02 | 0,02 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM to participate in specific projects 1 | 0,02 | -0,02 | 0,01 | 0,02 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM to participate in specific projects 2 | 0,02 | -0,02 | 0,01 | 0,02 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM to participate in specific projects 3 | 0,02 | -0,02 | 0,01 | 0,02 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM because I need wider information 1 | 0,00 | -0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM because I need wider information 2 | 0,00 | -0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM because I need wider information 3 | 0,00 | -0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM because members of my organisation knew IETM 1 | -0,07 | 0,05 | 0,06 | 0,07 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM because members of my organisation knew IETM 2 | -0,07 | 0,05 | 0,06 | 0,07 |
| 28,00 | involved in IETM because members of my organisation knew IETM 3 | -0,07 | 0,05 | 0,06 | 0,07 |
| 29,00 | secretariat fulfils its essential tasks | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 29,00 | secretariat has to increase its activities | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,05 | 0,05 |

TABLE 2 Correlations between Y* and the auxiliary variables.

| question n. | variable | membership | amount | country | MAX |
|-------------|--|------------|--------|---------|------|
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities: co-ordinating meetings 1 | -0,02 | 0,02 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities: co-ordinating meetings 2 | -0,02 | 0,02 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities: co-ordinating meetings 3 | -0,02 | 0,02 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities: ensuring financial stability 1 | -0,05 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities: ensuring financial stability 2 | -0,05 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities: ensuring financial stability 3 | -0,05 | 0,03 | 0,06 | 0,06 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:lobbying EU 1 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:lobbying EU 2 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:lobbying EU 3 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:facilitating communications besides meeting 1 | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,07 | 0,07 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:facilitating communications besides meeting 2 | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,07 | 0,07 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:facilitating communications besides meeting 3 | -0,02 | 0,03 | 0,07 | 0,07 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:promoting IETM 1 | -0,05 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:promoting IETM 2 | -0,05 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:promoting IETM 3 | -0,05 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:promoting arts/ culture in network 1 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:promoting arts/ culture in network 2 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:promoting arts/ culture in network 3 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,05 | 0,05 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities:supporting members to get in touch 1 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,04 | 0,04 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities: supporting members to get in touch 2 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,04 | 0,04 |
| 30,00 | secretariat task/priorities: supporting members to get in touch 3 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,04 | 0,04 |
| 31,00 | secretariat at present level | -0,05 | 0,00 | 0,03 | 0,05 |
| 31,00 | secretariat more powerful | -0,05 | 0,00 | 0,03 | 0,05 |

Observing table 2, it is evident that all the observed correlations never exceed in modulus the fixed limit 0,2; therefore, it can be affirmed that the auxiliary variables have not found much noteworthy distortions due to lack of response.

It is possible that the auxiliary variables utilised have not uncovered all the distortions that affect the sample, but other auxiliary variables that could be used by the statistician were not available.

Concluding, it can be declared:

- 1 The estimates of the present study are not variables but are constants, because all the statistical units in the study-group were contacted. This means that the variable sampling error is zero.
- 2 The available auxiliary variables did not uncover distortions due to lack of response of any relevant size; consequently it is possible to use the simple “expansion” estimator for means and totals (mean of the population is estimated by the mean of the sample; total of the population is estimated by the mean of the sample multiplied by the amount of the population (455 IETM members)).
- 3 The estimates obtained from the sample are quite reliable.

IETM QUESTIONNAIRE

RESUME OF THE RESULTS

Definitions:

- Question n. = Number of the question in the questionnaire
Variable = Description of the variable to which the question refers
Valid answers = Number of IETM members who responded to this variable in the questionnaire
% of population = Percentage of the total of the population studied (455 IETM members) who responded
E mean/frequency = Estimated mean or percentage of the variable referred to the population studied

Question 9: "Main activities of your organisation"

TABLE 3

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 9,00 | activity own production/performing | 62 | 14 | 45,16 |
| 9,00 | activity independent production | 62 | 14 | 37,10 |
| 9,00 | activity programming/presentation | 62 | 14 | 48,39 |
| 9,00 | activity organising meetings | 62 | 14 | 35,48 |
| 9,00 | activity distributions | 62 | 14 | 11,29 |
| 9,00 | activity education or outreach work | 62 | 14 | 19,35 |
| 9,00 | activity information, dissemination | 62 | 14 | 19,35 |
| 9,00 | activity consultancy | 62 | 14 | 17,74 |
| 9,00 | activity artists' training | 62 | 14 | 24,19 |
| 9,00 | activity artists' residencies | 62 | 14 | 20,97 |
| 9,00 | activity documentation | 62 | 14 | 12,90 |
| 9,00 | activity exhibitions | 62 | 14 | 11,29 |
| 9,00 | activity publications | 62 | 14 | 17,74 |
| 9,00 | activity funding | 62 | 14 | 9,68 |
| 9,00 | activity other | 62 | 14 | 12,90 |

Question 16: "Pre - IETM meetings behaviour"

TABLE 4

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|---|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 16,00 | premeeting hold formal discussion in organisation | 58 | 13 | 10,34 |
| 16,00 | premeeting hold informal discussion in organisation | 58 | 13 | 39,66 |
| 16,00 | premeeting define task by yourself | 58 | 13 | 13,79 |
| 16,00 | premeeting no specific task | 58 | 13 | 31,03 |
| 17,00 | premeeting other | 58 | 13 | 5,18 |

Question 17: “Post-IETM meetings behaviour”

TABLE 5

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|---|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 17,00 | postmeeting hold informal meeting in organisation | 59 | 13 | 23,73 |
| 17,00 | postmeeting experience solely for yourself | 59 | 13 | 61,01 |
| 17,00 | postmeeting hold formal meeting in organisation | 59 | 13 | 14,56 |

Question 18: “Expectations of your organisation and of the members not taking part in IETM meetings toward your participation in IETM”

Definitions:

1 = main option

2 = second in order of priority

3 = last in order of priority

A = Get in touch with partners to develop international projects with an international scope and to have economic return

B = The chance to get access to a network of information and contacts not necessarily having an economic benefit

C = A cultural investment, because to compare experiences, scale of values, contents is essential to professional development

D = To share attitudes, build lobbies and outline of action towards EU

E = Be part of an international network to be strong in local environment

F = Create job opportunities, build project together

TABLE 6

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|---|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 18,00 | A1 % expectations: develop international projects with economic return | 36 | 8 | 36,11 |
| 18,00 | A2 % expectations: develop international projects with economic return | 36 | 8 | 36,11 |
| 18,00 | A3 % expectations: develop international projects with economic return | 36 | 8 | 27,78 |
| 18,00 | B1 % expectations: access to network not necessarily with economic return | 52 | 11 | 69,23 |
| 18,00 | B2 % expectations: access to network not necessarily with economic return | 52 | 11 | 21,15 |
| 18,00 | B3 % expectations: access to network not necessarily with economic return | 52 | 11 | 9,62 |
| 18,00 | C1 % expectations: cultural investment | 46 | 10 | 34,78 |
| 18,00 | C2 % expectations: cultural investment | 46 | 10 | 43,48 |
| 18,00 | C3 % expectations: cultural investment | 46 | 10 | 21,74 |
| 18,00 | D1 % expectations: lobbying to EU | 13 | 3 | 23,08 |
| 18,00 | D2 % expectations: lobbying to EU | 13 | 3 | 30,77 |
| 18,00 | D3 % expectations: lobbying to EU | 13 | 3 | 46,15 |
| 18,00 | E1 % expectations: be part of I network to be strong in local environment | 27 | 6 | 7,41 |
| 18,00 | E2 % expectations: be part of I network to be strong in local environment | 27 | 6 | 29,63 |
| 18,00 | E3 % expectations: be part of I network to be strong in local environment | 27 | 6 | 62,96 |
| 18,00 | F1 % expectations: create job opportunities, build project together | 17 | 4 | 29,41 |
| 18,00 | F2 % expectations: create job opportunities, build project together | 17 | 4 | 23,53 |
| 18,00 | F3 % expectations: create job opportunities, build project together | 17 | 4 | 47,06 |

Question 19: "In the last three years was your organisation involved in international projects or exchanges with other members of IETM?"

TABLE 7

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|---|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 19,00 | involved in international project with IETM members YES | 60 | 13 | 73,33 |
| 19,00 | number of projects in year 1996 | 53 | 12 | 0,51 |
| 19,00 | number of projects in year 1997 | 53 | 12 | 0,92 |
| 19,00 | number of projects in year 1998 | 53 | 12 | 0,96 |
| 19,00 | number of projects in year 1999 | 53 | 12 | 0,85 |
| 19,00 | number of projects in year 96-98 | 53 | 12 | 3,24 |

Question 20: "Are you currently realising (period end 1998 to end 1999) international projects with IETM members as your partners?"

TABLE 8

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|---|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 20,00 | involved in international project with IETM members currently (1998-1999) YES | 51 | 11 | 50,98 |
| 20,00 | number of projects with IETM members currently (1998-1999) | 51 | 11 | 0,98 |
| 20,00 | average of current project with a turnover with <50000 euro | 23 | 5 | 39,00 |
| 20,00 | average of current project with turnover with 50000-100000 euro | 23 | 5 | 28,99 |
| 20,00 | average of current project with a turnover with 100000-200000 euro | 23 | 5 | 15,01 |
| 20,00 | average of current project with a turnover with >200000 euro | 23 | 5 | 17,00 |
| 20,00 | average of current project with a number of countries involved <3 | 18 | 4 | 19,00 |
| 20,00 | average of current project with a number of countries involved 3-5 | 18 | 4 | 53,00 |
| 20,00 | average of current project with a number of countries involved >5 | 18 | 4 | 28,00 |

Question 21: “Do you have any recollection where you got the idea of the above mentioned projects?”

Definitions:

A = During an IETM meeting

B = Following up information and contacts established during IETM meetings

C = Within my own organisation; afterwards I/we got in touch with other members of IETM to check its feasibility or to seek for partners

D = We joined a proposal of another IETM member

TABLE 9

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|--|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 21,00 | A % idea of above projects during IETM meeting | 32 | 7 | 50,00 |
| 21,00 | A: n° projects | 28 | 6 | 0,64 |
| 21,00 | B % idea of above projects from information established in IETM meeting. | 25 | 5 | 64,00 |
| 21,00 | B: n° projects | 16 | 4 | 0,81 |
| 21,00 | C % idea of above projects in organisation but IETM help | 23 | 5 | 60,87 |
| 21,00 | C: n° projects | 16 | 4 | 0,88 |
| 21,00 | D % idea of above projects: proposal of another IETM member: | 23 | 5 | 43,48 |
| 21,00 | D: n° projects | 20 | 4 | 0,50 |

Question 22: “About your international project”

TABLE 10

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|--|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 22,00 | international projects mostly with IETM members | 49 | 11 | 28,57 |
| 22,00 | international projects partly with IETM members | 49 | 11 | 63,27 |
| 22,00 | international projects very little with IETM members | 49 | 11 | 8,16 |

Questions 23-24-25: "Are you involved in projects with other partners/networks?"

TABLE 11

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|--|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 23,00 | involved in international project with other partners in local/regional area | 55 | 12 | 81,82 |
| 24,00 | involved in international project with other partners in national area | 56 | 12 | 80,36 |
| 25,00 | involved in international project with other partners in other networks | 55 | 12 | 43,64 |

Question 28: "In which way have you been involved in IETM?"

Definitions:

1 = main option

2 = second in order of priority

3 = last in order of priority

A = We are founding members of IETM or members for more than 10 years.

B = It represented an evolution of our increasing policy of building partnership with other organisations.

C = It represents the enlargement of our international network of relations.

D = It represents an investment to participate in specific international projects.

E = Need of a wider information at international level.

F = It was a proposal of one or more members of my organisation who already knew or were already IETM members when working in another organisation.

(See table 12, page 70)

TABLE 12

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|--|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 28,00 | A1 % involved in IETM because old/founding members | 16 | 4 | 68,75 |
| 28,00 | A2 % involved in IETM because old/founding members | 16 | 4 | 25,00 |
| 28,00 | A3 % involved in IETM because old/founding members | 16 | 4 | 6,25 |
| 28,00 | B1% involved in IETM because it represented an evolution in building partnership with other org | 34 | 7 | 52,94 |
| 28,00 | B2 % involved in IETM because it represented an evolution in building partnership with other org | 34 | 7 | 29,41 |
| 28,00 | B3 % involved in IETM because it represented an evolution in building partnership with other org | 34 | 7 | 17,65 |
| 28,00 | C1 % involved in IETM because it represents an enlargement of our relations | 42 | 9 | 45,24 |
| 28,00 | C2 % involved in IETM because it represents an enlargement of our relations | 42 | 9 | 42,86 |
| 28,00 | C3 % involved in IETM because it represents an enlargement of our relations | 42 | 9 | 11,90 |
| 28,00 | D1 % involved in IETM because it is an investment to participate in specific projects | 29 | 6 | 20,69 |
| 28,00 | D2 % involved in IETM because it is an investment to participate in specific projects | 29 | 6 | 34,48 |
| 28,00 | D3 % involved in IETM because it is an investment to participate in specific projects | 29 | 6 | 44,83 |
| 28,00 | E1 % involved in IETM because I need wider information at international level | 41 | 9 | 48,78 |
| 28,00 | E2 % involved in IETM because I need wider information at international level | 41 | 9 | 24,39 |
| 28,00 | E3 % involved in IETM because I need wider information at international level | 41 | 9 | 26,83 |
| 28,00 | F1 % involved in IETM because members of my organisation knew IETM | 11 | 2 | 45,45 |
| 28,00 | F2 % involved in IETM because members of my organisation knew IETM | 11 | 2 | 28,27 |
| 28,00 | F3% involved in IETM because members of my organisation knew IETM | 11 | 2 | 27,28 |

Question 29: "In your opinion the Secretariat ..."

TABLE 13

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|--|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 29,00 | secretariat fulfils its essential tasks | 56 | 12 | 83,93 |
| 29,00 | secretariat has to increase its activities | 56 | 12 | 16,07 |

Question 30: "What in your opinion should be the main tasks/priorities of the secretariat be in the future?"

TABLE 14

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|---|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 30,00 | %:co-ordinating meetings 1 | 61 | 13 | 86,89 |
| 30,00 | %:co-ordinating meetings 2 | 61 | 13 | 13,11 |
| 30,00 | %:co-ordinating meetings 3 | 61 | 13 | 0,00 |
| 30,00 | % ensuring financial stability of network 1 | 56 | 12 | 67,85 |
| 30,00 | % ensuring financial stability of network 2 | 56 | 12 | 30,36 |
| 30,00 | % ensuring financial stability of network 3 | 56 | 12 | 1,79 |
| 30,00 | % lobbying EU 1 | 53 | 12 | 67,92 |
| 30,00 | % lobbying EU 2 | 53 | 12 | 18,87 |
| 30,00 | % lobbying EU 3 | 53 | 12 | 13,21 |
| 30,00 | % facilitating communications besides meeting 1 | 59 | 13 | 67,80 |
| 30,00 | % facilitating communications besides meeting 2 | 59 | 13 | 27,12 |
| 30,00 | % facilitating communications besides meeting 3 | 59 | 13 | 5,08 |
| 30,00 | %:promoting IETM 1 | 57 | 13 | 35,09 |
| 30,00 | %:promoting IETM 2 | 57 | 13 | 49,12 |
| 30,00 | %:promoting IETM 3 | 57 | 13 | 15,79 |
| 30,00 | % promoting arts/culture in network 1 | 55 | 12 | 47,27 |
| 30,00 | % promoting arts/culture in network 2 | 55 | 12 | 38,18 |
| 30,00 | % promoting arts/culture in network 3 | 55 | 12 | 14,55 |
| 30,00 | % supporting members to get in touch between meetings 1 | 55 | 12 | 56,36 |
| 30,00 | % supporting members to get in touch between meetings 2 | 55 | 12 | 30,91 |
| 30,00 | % supporting members to get in touch between meetings 3 | 55 | 12 | 12,73 |

Question 31: "If ignoring the question of cost, in future in your opinion the Secretariat should be ..."

TABLE 15

| question n. | variable | Valid answers | % of population | E mean/frequency |
|-------------|------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 31,00 | secretariat at present level | 50 | 11 | 82,00 |
| 31,00 | secretariat more powerful | 50 | 11 | 18,00 |

APPENDIX III

Brief comments on the data

The first step in this research was the analysis of the data gathered from the questionnaires, and was useful for two main reasons. Firstly, the results revealed several quantitative elements, such as the costs sustained by the various organisations in order to participate in the activities of IETM. Secondly, it served as the basis for determining the structure of the interviews conducted with members of IETM.

The report provides a complete description of the principal results attained during the course of research, including the analysis and elaboration of the data from the questionnaires. Thus, this text deals only with those significant elements which merit emphasis. Evaluation and comments of a more general nature are deferred to the final report.

Informality/informality of relations between the IETM delegate/IETM delegate's home organisation and IETM meetings

Questions 16 and 17 of the questionnaire allow for an analysis of the IETM delegate's role within the context of the home organisation and IETM meetings. They take into consideration activity prior to meetings, including eventual mandates or tasks assigned to the delegate by the home organisation, as well as meeting reports and evaluation following completion of IETM sessions.

In less than 10% of the cases considered a formal meeting was called to discuss the topics of the meeting within the home organisation. Instead, in almost 40% of the cases, discussions were held informally by those interested in the topic, and no formal meeting was called. It is worth noting that IETM delegates themselves defined their own tasks and objectives in almost 14% of the cases; furthermore, no specific a priori tasks were defined whatsoever in an additional 31% of the cases. In short, preparation for IETM meetings in almost 90% of the cases was generally characterised by a certain degree of informality, and ranged from casual exchanges of opinion to allowing the delegate complete responsibility for participation in the meetings.

Reports following meetings tended to be of a slightly more formal nature. Almost 15% of the delegates contacted stated that they organise a meeting within their home organisation to discuss the results of the IETM session, while in just less than 24% of the cases evaluation takes the form of informal discussions with the persons concerned. It is worth pointing out, nonetheless, that in 61% of the cases the delegates state that information acquired at the meeting is used primarily for their own enrichment and purposes. Since IETM delegates are often in management roles within their own organisations there are no contradictory interests between the organisation

and the delegate; any eventual positive affects deriving from participation in IETM activities are directly assimilated into the delegate's activities. Responses to the two questions (activity prior to and following meetings) emphasise the complex role of "link" played by the delegates between their organisation and IETM activities. In most cases definition of their role is entrusted to the individual's ability to make use of experience acquired during the ordinary course of business and their ability to identify the most suitable channels for communicating information to their organisation. The informality of IETM meetings is mirrored in the informality of relations between the delegate and the home organisation.

Expectations of your organisation and of the members not taking part in IETM meetings toward your participation in IETM

This question (18) allowed examination of the same issues as above from a slightly different point of view. The questionnaire allowed the subject to list three choices numbered 1, 2, 3 according to the order of priority. The most frequent reply was "the chance to get access to a network of information and contacts, not necessarily having an economic return"; this reply was also the most frequently indicated as being of highest importance. The most frequent choice for the second priority was "a cultural investment, because to compare experiences, scale of values, contents is essential to professional development; next in order was "the chance to get in touch with partners to develop projects with an international scope and to have an economic return". Other answers follow, characterised by motivations linked to benefits which are more easily evaluated and quantified.

The distribution of answers indicates that the economic expectations, the need to develop projects and employment opportunities, and the necessity for consolidating organisations – indeed central issues of importance – are in many cases considered as consequences of participation in the network. Participation is based more on structural motivations rather than on direct or automatic associations to immediate benefits, such as access to greater information, the possibility for exchange and comparison of content or the enrichment of experience. The capacity of translating these more intangible elements into concrete benefits is considered the responsibility of the individual rather than a task of the network per se. This is one of the subjects, which was examined more closely in the questionnaires: the delegates and their home organisations demonstrated a balanced attitude in their expectations of the network.

The Role of the Secretariat

Of the responses given, 84% stated that the Secretariat is adequate to its function. According to 16%, on the other hand the secretariat should have an increased role, and 82% indicated that the secretariat "should be kept on the present level (structure, personnel) or the lightest possible". Only for 18% was a "more powerful" secretariat considered necessary.

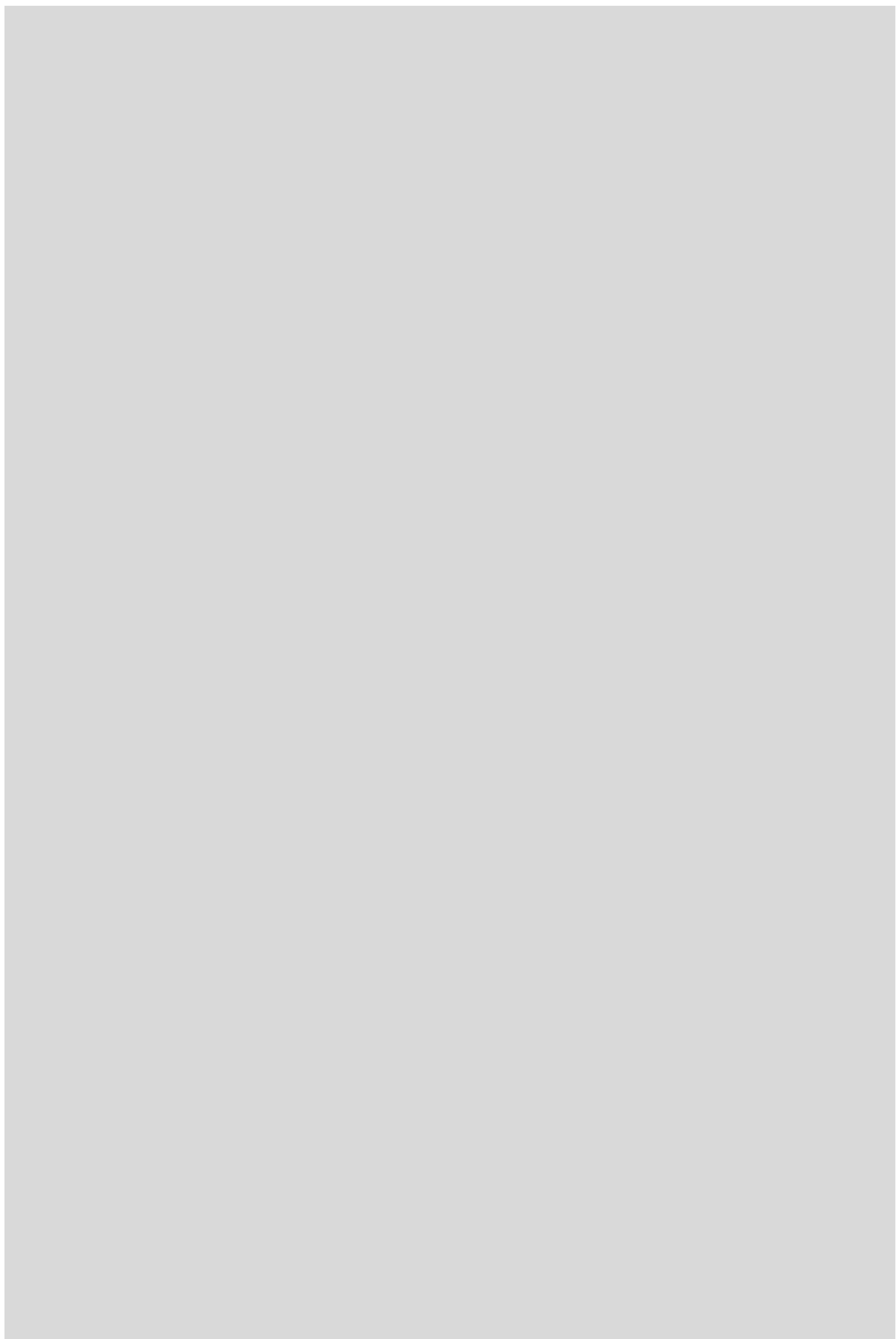
This is one of the few cases where the data reveals some significant differences in response depending on the location or seniority of membership. While 89% of the cases representing Western Europe believe that the secretariat adequately fulfils its function, the percentage decreases to 66% for eastern countries, where a third of the answers indicate a need for an increase in activity. Similarly, 85% of the responses from Western Europe indicate that the current level should remain the same, while for Eastern Europe the percent is lower at 70%, with a correlated increase to 30% of responses indicating the desire for a “more powerful” secretariat”.

Analysing the data according to seniority of membership, one actually observes an inversion of the trend: only 40% of new members (with a membership of less than two years) indicated satisfaction with the secretariat’s fulfilment of its duties, while 60% of the cases recommended an increase in activity. For those who were members from two to four years, instead, the secretariat is seen to adequately fulfil its duties in 82% of the cases, and this percentage increases to 95% for members of over four years.

Comparative results of this and the following question reveal a certain element of contradiction in responses from newer members: 60% of the answers from those who have been members for less than two years indicated the need to maintain the current state of the secretariat and 40% indicated the need for a more powerful secretariat. It is true that some discrepancy in response is maintained between junior and senior members (only 14% of the responses from members of more than four years chose the option of a “more powerful” secretariat). Interpretation of the overall responses from members of less than two years, however, indicates a certain ambivalence: what is indicated is the desire for an increase in activity without a corresponding increase in the size of the structure.

The newer members also strayed from the norm on the question of priorities in the function of the secretariat. They indicated the need for promoting IETM in so far as it is a network as such. This need was not as strongly felt by more senior members, who instead identified the role of the secretariat as “supporting members to get in touch with each other during and between meetings”. This discrepancy is especially interesting considering, since one would have expected the newer members to have greater difficulty in establishing relations in a new environment, and thus to be more interested in activity by the secretariat which would facilitate such relations within the context of the meetings and in the periods between meetings.

The attitudes shown toward the secretariat and its duties reflect the complexity of the positions and possible interpretations of networking. Although the secretariat is limited in size, it represents one of the few “crystallisations” of a primarily intangible activity. The secretariat is structure, which exists physically and has a tangible nature. It should come as no surprise that the secretariat sometimes becomes a metaphor for the entire network. Such a metaphor is erroneous, however, for a part is mistaken for the whole.



Summary

If it is important to maintain a process of dialogue and intercultural exchange that magnifies the specificities and differences and at the same time increases understanding of different cultures;

If it is important to stimulate artistic creativity at a transnational level;

If it is important to foster and strengthen collaborative relations and partnerships at the European and international level;

If it is important to enhance the role of the arts and culture through confrontation of national, regional and local cultural heritage;

If it is important to guarantee space for a liberal and independent confrontation and dialogue which is not circumscribed by attempts to fulfil specific objectives determined a priori;

If all this is important, then the activity of networking represents an extremely efficient means of allowing this to happen.

This is, in a nutshell, the outcome of the survey. For a complete description and an insight into the methodology used it is recommended to read the study in its entirety. Below follows a summary of the observations that led to the conclusions.

Attractors and pathways

It is the individual's professional and personal behaviour, attitudes, competencies and qualities that are of primary importance in and to the network. Effective networking styles can be learned; they also are influenced by age. The high level of autonomy and broad mandate given to participants by their organisations, breaks down hierarchies, assures a rich exchange based on equality and favours intergenerational transfers of experience in the network.

The individual participant (representative of a member-organisation) is the fulcrum between his/her organisation, the other IETM members, his/her local territory. The individual's capacity to create relations, propose collaborations or react to others' proposals, and the variety of his/her experience are the most determining criteria for successful participation. His or her individual ability in finding their way, in communicating, in seizing opportunities, is of fundamental importance in creating positive effects from the activity of networking.

As there is no manual or formal code, the ability to participate effectively in a network is the result of complex, on-location learning. This is likened to 'learning the rituals' of networking, rather than learning rules.

As each individual chooses his/her own unique series of pathways through the network, professional behaviour and attitudes are the prime movers. The study identifies two 'attractors' (and a third that combines qualities of the other two).

For those following the 'existential/political' attractor, 'values' – personal or collective – are all-important. Networking increases understanding of others' values, forces self-examination of values, builds cross-cultural relations, carries political significance, builds channels of communication between different environments, allows for personal enrichment, and enhances the intercultural competence of its members. These people tend to be in the older age range, and tend to internalise their role of mediation (between themselves, their organisation and their sphere of reference) by adopting a leadership role.

For those following the 'professional' attractor, the emphasis is on the positive effects to be gained 'for my own organisation' or 'for my own work in the arts'. Networking is an instrument for understanding the evolution of the performing arts in Europe and in the world, to get to know new realities and ideas, to expand professional horizons. Networking is also a field of activity basic to the development of one's own organisation, for identifying new opportunities for collaboration and co-operation at an international level. These 'managerial' people tend to be in the younger age group, and tend to externalise (to colleagues) the experience and information gained.

Broad mandate

Despite the above, hardly any organisations evaluate or analyse their participation in IETM according to stated criteria: there is no 'imposed agenda' on the participants to the meetings. They have a broad mandate.

In all cases, it is the high level of autonomy given to the individuals by their organisations, which allows for a rich exchange on equal footing in the network. Indeed, there is a breakdown of hierarchy in IETM: the size of the own organisation, its prestige, its economic strength and politics are left behind. This permits otherwise difficult communication. This also applies to intergenerational relations: among equals (IETM members), it is possible to establish master-student relationships.

The individual's own personal evolution, their organisation's development, their adaptability and the accumulation of experience and interactions imply that networking relations occur over 'time' and not just space. Those who use the network confidently find it hard to see it as something external to them; they have internalised the network.

Context and web

A network has a unique, living structure in time and space. Like a labyrinth it is composed of endless individual pathways whose evolving and/or constant interaction in time and space make up the network. IETM's diversity is its unique quality. There are many sub-networks within the larger one. Too much control or direction could harm the network, yet it requires organisation in order to maintain its high quality of interactivity.

Diversity as seen as the particular trait which distinguishes IETM from other networks. It is a true cross-sector network featuring different potential and interests, diversity of role, of operators, of thematic field and profession.

IETM is a living body, a labyrinth that lacks a physical structure, corridors or predetermined paths. The network favours horizontal communication: member-to-member. The paths forged by the individuals generate the multidimensional structure of IETM in time and space. Thus no one sees the network entirely, in its global form. Yet there are two main perceptions of it: as 'a context of unfolding or emerging phenomena' or as a 'web of constant contacts'.

Those who have the first perception place the emphasis on the meetings, on face-to-face interaction, on events. IETM produces a context within which ideas, exchanges, collaborations and opportunities emerge. Everything is preparation for the culminating event, the meeting, which is for them the true point of interest.

Those who have the second perception, even though they as well see the meetings as the primary point of interest, place also emphasis on the importance of establishing channels of information exchange, constant connections, contacts, circulation of information, continual multilateral relations, and the network of relations and exchange even outside the meetings.

All those interviewed participate in sub-networks, either multi-disciplinary, or based on a particular artistic discipline. Connectivity is high in these sub-networks which are used frequently to exchange opinions, and share reflections.

Growth and control

The growth of the network was felt to be positive, a source of greater potential and richness. Little consideration was given to the resulting practical problems, or to the need for balancing order with entropy in order to maintain the quality of structured as well as chance communication in the network.

The members only represent themselves, their work and their organisations and not their city, country et cetera. The communication in the network is horizontal and not vertical. This unguided free space poses, for some, a question of democracy or control. The study points out the contradiction between fears of central interference or hierarchy in the network, and the necessity of crucial organisational work necessary to maintain a high level of interaction in the network. To consciously control evolution and interfere with it represent at one and the same time a fear and a desire.

Ecosystem and milieu

The study points out similarities and differences between the network and a biological ecosystem, and also between the network and a socio-economic milieu.

A milieu is a geographically fixed location that supports socio-economic and cultural processes of specific interest, and which, if innovative, can attract competence and profes-

sional talent from elsewhere. In a network, the specific milieu of IETM allows an interchange between a local community of professionals and those from abroad, without loss of the importance of anyone's local roots.

In an ecosystem, proximity is fundamental; in IETM geographic distance is highly valuable in assuring diversity. The biological metaphor is illustrative: it brings to light why it is so difficult to answer such apparently simple questions as: "What is the network good for? What are the results of networking? What is its economic impact?" If one tries to substitute the words 'network' and 'networking' with the words 'environment' and 'ecosystem' (with all due caution considering that these terms are used metaphorically), it is the meaning of the question itself which proves to be difficult to define and highly abstruse.

The network's meetings are its "fertile terrain"; the place where its richness is realised. They are considered to be a rich platform for the exchange of information, ideas and opportunities. Meetings can be likened to a medieval market square where items were bought and sold, of course. But above all, the squares were the place for participation in civil life. Everyone contributes something to the network, even if they are not necessarily aware of this. If the network became only a place of taking, it would soon become stagnant. Meetings catalyse possibilities and ideas by favouring the conditions of their formation. Many policies directed at creating incubators and conditions for creativity have failed because of their inability to create the conditions for sparking ideas. From this point of view, IETM represents a model of success, which should be made known and used to advantage.

Intangible and material benefits

The most valued and most essential benefits of networking are intangible. Even the material benefits arise from the intangibles gained. The knowledge, skills, confidence, territorial reinforcement, opportunities are recognised as the 'true driving force of the economy', precious since it is acquired over time. Although it is the IETM meetings which catalyse ideas, by the time the ideas are developed into projects, they are seen as the domain of individual effort.

Intangible benefits are unanimously considered the most important effects, whether they be on the existential or professional plane. They include the broadening of personal horizons, new knowledge, deeper understanding, discussion of values and increased individual skills.

There are other aspects that are not measurable yet, but are nonetheless more concrete, such as the confidence that comes from belonging to a circle which brings together prestigious personalities and institutions with new idea makers and young professionals. Another benefit is the reinforcement in one's own local/ national territory because of the ability to realise projects on a variety of levels (local, regional, national, international). Taken together, it can encourage a higher profile for the performing arts in the local policy.

The material benefits are considered as a consequence of intangible benefits reaped by the individual during the activity of networking, rather than as material benefits to be traced directly to IETM. It is the ability to work in a group, acquired professional experience, and the

capacity to understand the values and experience of others which are recognised as the 'cause', the true driving force of the economy.

Existing tools for evaluation and analysis are not relevant for cultural networks, and might even be dangerously misleading. The true economy of the networks is not financial, but is the framework which networks create for intercultural exchange, artistic creativity, independent confrontation and collaborative partnerships within the European space and beyond.

The cultural instruments used to evaluate and analyse single projects are not useful for the analysis and evaluation of the activity of networking. However, these inappropriate tools are then used by administrations to set criteria for funding. A change in the very paradigm of analysis tools is needed in order to analyse a network enterprise.

MARY ANN DE VLIEG

Notes on the History of IETM

The story of IETM's romantic beginnings in Polverigi, as the sun set over the foot hills of The Marches in the summer of 1981, has been told so many times that it is in danger of becoming victim of its own mythology. This would not a good thing for a cultural network organisation like IETM (the largest of its kind in the world), because it claims that its longevity has been due to its capacity for re-inventing itself and adapting to the changing needs, cultural and political environment of successive generations of theatre professionals in Europe. However, on examination, it is a claim that is hard to refute; particularly as it has happened during a 20 year period when the geography and politics of the European continent has changed more dramatically than at any time since 1939.

Concepts like 'Mission Statements' were not in vogue – or even heard of – in 1981 except on the lips of young corporate *wunderkinder* emerging from Harvard Business School and elsewhere. The common interests of this group of producers and presenters was to push the envelope of their collective knowledge of, and experience in international contemporary theatre so it would find new voices and reach new audiences beyond the rigid infrastructures and orthodoxies that dominated much of the production and diffusion of European performing arts. It might have been expressed in more modest language at the time, but the fact remains that the participants of the early IETM meetings in Paris (1981), Amsterdam (1982), London (1982) and Sarrebrück (1983) were pioneers, visionaries and innovators. They formed a vanguard against cultural complacency and above all, were committed to working across geographic and ideological borders.

During the last decade of communism, much of the collective energy of IETM was concerned with building bridges and creating platforms of production and dialogue with colleagues inside central and Eastern Europe. Ironically, movement across these borders, particularly from East to West seemed easier then, than it is today with the effect of the Schengen Laws actively creating tougher barriers into EU Europe and provoking a 'Fortress Europe' mentality. During this time, the major cities of Western Europe were able to see some of the most amazing and innovative new theatre from Poland, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. IETM members were responsible for producing, co-producing or presenting most of it.

Watershed

The IETM meeting in Zagreb (1990) was in many ways a watershed. With bellicose mutterings already in the air, the IETM plenary in May of that year seemed to portend growing tensions and frictions that were emerging within the cultural sector itself. Although there was, as usual, heated debate about the role of theatre, its style and content in the context of the Yugoslavian work we saw during those three days in Zagreb, we could not know then that we would never again talk about Yugoslavian theatre - at least, not in the present tense.

The legacy of war in the Balkans traumatised every IETM member in some way or other. Former colleagues lost contact with each other and previous friends sometimes found themselves in different ideological camps. A generation of former Yugoslavia's most prodigious artistic talent had become irrevocably fractured through no fault of its own.

During the years of war in the Balkans, IETM, like many other cultural organisations was virtually helpless to do anything more than offer expressions of support to its colleagues in the various countries affected. IETM never saw itself as much of a lobbying organisation anyway, as its concerns lay elsewhere, but in this situation, there was actually nobody to lobby. Instead, the Network started to develop new contacts with artists and organisations in the South of Europe, the Mediterranean and beyond.

Is there still an iconoclastic spirit inside IETM? Yes, but it is more diffused and less emphatically expressed. The laissez-faire and sometimes forthright style of some of the earlier movers and shakers of our network has been replaced with a quieter, more consensual approach. The "I" of IETM has, for some, been replaced by the "F" word – i.e.: Formal. The truth is somewhere in the middle. IETM is now a recipient of EU and other financial support, and has become obliged to conform to certain statutory conditions imposed on it. Another psychological factor that may have affected the perception of informality – is, perhaps, to do with the way national and European policies for the arts have changed over the last 20 years. Many producing organisations have been forced to retrench during the 1990's because of shifts (usually down) in their country's funding programmes for the arts. There is definitely less ability to take risks. Leaner and less ambitious artistic projects are evident in the programmes of many organisations in countries of the West, and in countries from the former communist bloc, the situation – at least in relation to cultural production – ranges from minimal survival to modest optimism. Co-productions and cultural exchange across borders, which is at heart of what many IETM member organisations do, is now more expensive and bureaucratic. Even the considerable financial support from the Soros Foundation that was so important in stimulating cultural activity during the transitional period of the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe through its Open Society organisations, is now being either withdrawn or phased out.

Ambitions

As IETM moves into its 21st year of existence, most would agree that it is a challenging time for the performing arts in Europe – at least for the independent sector. Economic factors, and reduced organisational budgets have undoubtedly restricted the ambitions and scope of many of the projects undertaken by IETM members. Perhaps as a direct result of this, much of the one-on-one contact between artists and organisations in different countries that used to take place, is now replaced by electronic contact through e-mail and the internet. In fact, IETM's own interactive web-site is now the primary communication tool that connects the membership between its twice-yearly meetings.

So, what is it about a network like IETM that makes it operate differently from other kinds of professional organisations? For an answer, we need to look at a few of the philosophical principles that guide the seemingly unguided behaviour of IETM's membership. Young and old, experienced and inexperienced, individuals and organisations, artists and institutions, big players and wannabes – all seem to be able to find a place inside the IETM network. Why?

At its most basic level, a network is a structure without hierarchy. As the word suggests, it is simply a grid of interconnecting points. In human terms, this usually means a collection of individuals who come together in a spontaneous, informal initiative to share some common values, needs or goals. As they start to organise themselves and exchange information, they start to realise that having no structural hierarchy allows greater opportunity for an unregulated flow of this information and each member's ability to have access to it. If this principle is carefully maintained, a network can become largely self-steering and self-regulating – requiring only minimal 'management' across the 'grid' to keep the information flowing. Another defining feature of a network is how it grows. Most organisations enlarge because of centrally determined policy. This type of exponential growth is not the way that networks work. The size of a network at any give time is dependent on a set of external factors, few of which are pre-determined. In the case of IETM, the membership has enlarged and contracted over the course of its history responding to prevailing conditions inside the cultural sector itself. Sometimes, new networks have been formed by members who first met at an IETM meeting, and, after realising their needs were more specific, they then break away. In fact, it is this ability to behave in a ways more akin to a biological system that sets networks apart from other kinds of organisational structure.

Unfortunately, the word network has been used to describe all sorts of groupings of individuals that are not. Networks require a conscious – but usually informal – decision to function that way. Networks are simply a distributive way of working where information is the currency and human contact (often supported by the application of technology) is the means of distributing it.

Carriers of change

IETM was one of the first cultural organisations in Europe to recognise the benefits of adopting network practice as a collaborative principle. The need to work across national borders and with organisations of different type, size, and financial means, made other forms professional association inappropriate. The presence of cultural networks operating in the context of post-communist Europe can offer particular benefits. To start with, they can assist in the process of de-centralisation while providing new sources of transnational cooperation and financial partnership. They also help to increase sectoral participation, heighten public awareness and can provide new, more efficient methods of distribution and diffusion. Networks thrive when they reflect and affirm the shared values of its members, and flourish in the gaps left by conventional cultural provision where they become counter-balances to the prevailing orthodoxies. Above all, they are important carriers of change, and are probably making a greater contribution to European cohesion than many of the politically inspired and better funded initiatives of the European Union.

People who have heard about IETM but who have never been to a meeting, sometimes ask: "what happens during the meetings?" I find myself answering the question and feeling slightly apologetic for the dullness of my answer which normally goes something like: "Members share and exchange information", or "We examine topics of mutual interest". My anodyne response to the question, underlines part of the problem that networks have when trying to describe their collective behaviour to others. The decision by IETM to produce this publication is an attempt to illustrate both qualitatively and quantitatively how and why networks like ours function. We hope it will help to dispel some of the misunderstanding that undoubtedly surrounds the work of network organisations, and that it can provide a basis for a clearer perception of how they might be an invaluable and cost-effective tool for the development of a given sector. We hope you find it interesting and thought-provoking.

MIK FLOOD
IETM President
Spring 2001

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