



# Learning Outcome of Amateur Culture

Final Report

Public Part

## Project information

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## Executive Summary

This report addresses active in the European amateur culture sector both managers, board members, teachers, instructors, facilitators and other professional and voluntary staff as well as policy-makers, researchers and other multipliers in the field of amateur culture.

The overall aim has been to apply a humanistic learning discourse on amateur art and voluntary culture with the ability to provide a validation method of the learning outcome that could incorporate the learning dimension of personal formation (Bildung).

The project had four main objectives. The first was to complete a pilot survey of the learning qualities and outcome that could substantiate a humanistic learning discourse and a Bildung-oriented validation method. The second objective was to develop a double online tool for learning validation, one for the learners' valuation of the personal learning outcome, and another for the learning providers' valuation of the organisational learning. The third objective was to complete two pilot week courses, respectively a Grundtvig IST course and a Grundtvig workshop. The fourth objective was to publish a Survey Report, an Anthology on Best Practise, and a Course Compendium on European week courses in the field. The fifth objective was to complete a comprehensive valorisation of the results and a sustainable follow up of the outcome of the project.

The project consortium represents significant umbrella organisations of amateur culture in each participating country. This implies a huge network and surface of contact, and thereby a potential strong impact of the project results. Furthermore the coordinator organisation has research expertise in art based learning and voluntary culture in a civil society context.

The approach to document and validate the learning outcome is based on a humanistic learning discourse that has reference to Critical Theory, especially the Habermasian discourse of communicative action, and it is supplemented by pedagogical theories with reference to Neo-humanistic and Grundtvigian Bildung theory. The validation method seeks to incorporate the learning dimension of personal formation as well as the expressive and aesthetic qualities of the learning processes. This Bildung perspective improves the validation of the learning outcome in art based activities, and makes the documentation more relevant for the active in amateur culture.

The main results achieved are 1) a online double tool for validation of personal as well as organisational learning, and this double tool consists of a series of Danish, Dutch, Slovenian and English editions; 2) a pilot course programme for Grundtvig IST-courses and Workshops with focus on learning outcome in amateur culture; 3) three main English publications: A Survey Report, an Anthology on Best Practise, and a Course Compendium on European week courses for active in amateur culture; and 4) a comprehensive valorisation including three national conferences on the issue.

The outcome of the project, the double tools as well as the learning perspectives and validation methods will be promoted in the partners' national network and in AMATEO and other international meetings. The partnership plans to offer a Grundtvig IST-course and they will apply for a Grundtvig workshop in 2012. Furthermore some of the partners are preparing an application Feb 2012 for a Grundtvig Learning Partnership on art based learning for elder people; and a Nordplus Adult project on the aesthetical dimension of the art based learning.

The address of the project website is <http://www.interfolk.dk/loac> - It presents the project and its result and a range of project documents can be read and downloaded as pdf-files.

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# 1. Project Objectives

## **The project objectives and involvement of users**

The overall aim of the project has been to apply a humanistic learning discourse on amateur art and voluntary culture with the ability to provide a validation method of the learning outcome that could incorporate the learning dimension of personal formation (Bildung). The project included four main objectives and corresponding outcomes.

The first objective has been in the first project phase to prepare and complete a pilot survey of the learning qualities and outcome that could substantiate a humanistic learning discourse and a Bildung-oriented validation method. The pilot survey of learning qualities and outcome in amateur culture included questionnaires and interviews with representative groups of leaders, teachers and participants in the associations of the partnership circle, approx. 40 participated in the questionnaires and 10 in the interviews.

The survey thereby helped us during the second project phase to clarify the guidelines for the succeeding development of the online validation tools as well as to clarify the outline of the Compendium on Best Practice of providing and validating relevant learning outcome in amateur culture. The Survey also provided the key issues of the programme of the pilot courses in the third project phase.

The second objective was in the second project phase to develop the double online tool for learning validation by adjusting the learning questionnaires of the survey according to the feedback of the respondent groups and the project leaders. Furthermore, representative learners and learning providers from the partnership circle participated in test of the first English draft version of the double tools, including 2 – 4 persons from respectively Denmark, Holland and Slovenia.

The developed double tool for learning validation can validate the same learning process from two different angles. The learners (students, participants, and other active) can validate their personal learning profile and outcome; the learning providers (leaders, teachers, facilitators, board members and other staff) can compare their learning objectives and priorities with the learners' actual outcome. These tools can help to document, validate and profile the amateur culture activities as learning activities and thereby bring new focus on amateur culture as an important area of learning.

The third objective was during the third project phase to complete two pilot week courses, respectively a Grundtvig in-service training course targeting teachers, tutors, facilitators and other pedagogical staff, and a Grundtvig workshop targeting board members and other active in amateur culture.

These two week courses were completed as parallel courses in Ljubljana, Slovenia from Ultimo May 2011. Representative learning providers participated in the pilot Grundtvig IST course with 5 from DK, 6 from SI and 6 from NL; and learners and other active participated in the pilot Grundtvig Workshop with 5 from DK, 5 from SI and 6 from NL. The course material included the published Compendium of Best Practise, a summary of the Survey, links to the pilot tool, and three questionnaires for the home work, where the participants should 1) present their organisation and their own activities, 2) present examples of best practise from their own organisation, and 3) present the core learning values and their promotion in their own organisations.

An integrated part of the courses were 1) to introduce the developed learning discourse and validation methodology, 2) to use and test the English pilot edition of the personal and

organisational valuation tool, 3) to exchange experiences of best practise in different learning areas and countries of amateur culture using the published Compendium of Best Practise.

We got a lot of positive feedback using comprehensive evaluation questionnaires as well as follow-up interviews with 3 participants from each country. The pilot courses and their outcome and evaluation are presented in the Course Compendium. The aim is after the conclusion of the project to initiate a transnational course programme for staff and learners in Europe's amateur art and voluntary cultural associations as part of the Grundtvig in-service training programme and the Grundtvig Workshop programme.

The fourth objective was during the fourth project phase to initiate the dissemination of the results by launching the final series of online tools and by publishing the three English project publications.

The publishing of the interrelated double tool consisted of a series of Danish, Dutch, Slovenian and English editions. The validation data from the use of the two tools will be saved at a common database, and the data can be used for documentation and research on several levels, from the classroom to the whole organisation, and from a group of local associations to a national and a transnational European level. The network of national associations that uses the common transnational database can easily and by relative small costs be expanded with new associations from other European countries after the conclusion of the project.

The first publication was the Survey Report on learning outcome in amateur culture. It was published as an English edition, 160 pages, and it included 900 paper items and a virtual PDF-publication for wide distribution. The second publication was the Compendium of Best Practise with focus on providing and validating relevant learning outcome in amateur culture. It was published as an English edition, 90 pages, and it included 900 paper items and a virtual PDF-publication for wide distribution. The third publication was the Course Compendium presenting and evaluating the pilot Grundtvig IST-course and the pilot Grundtvig Workshop with recommendations for succeeding European course activities in the field of amateur culture. It was published as an English edition, 70 pages plus annexes, and it included 900 paper items and a virtual PDF-publication for wide distribution

The fifth objective was in the fifth and last phase of the project to prepare and complete a comprehensive valorisation of the project results and a sustainable follow up of the outcome of the project. The valorisation included three national conferences at the end of the project, where the results were presented. The valorisation strategy and activities will be presented below in section 3: Project outcomes and results.

### **The potential impact upon and benefits to the target user group**

The sector of amateur culture in the Europe Union represents the splendid diversity of European culture. All member states have a comprehensive sector of amateur art, voluntary culture and art based liberal adult education in a civil society context, where a vast number of cultural and educational associations provide learning activities for about 20 to 30 per cent of the populations in the member states.

Even though the sector of amateur culture provides lifelong learning on a huge scale, there exist only an initial acknowledgement of this reality among the organisations and their stakeholders. Typically, they interpret the activities in an artistic and cultural context, rather than in a learning context, and consequently the area also lacks an elaborated practise for documenting and validating the outcome from a learning perspective.

On this background, we think the impact on the main amateur culture associations in the participating countries has been strong. The learning agenda of the-project has gained a new stronghold among the leading learning providers in the main national associations, first of all in the participating national umbrella associations, but also in the network of neighbour associations in amateur culture, voluntary cultural associations and liberal adult education in the participating countries. These primary direct target groups from the cultural organisations of the partnership and their network have all in different ways incorporated the learning agenda and are now working with documentation of learning outcome.

For the time being it is more difficult for us to estimate or evaluate the impact on the secondary direct target groups of the wider European sector of amateur culture. However, the partnership gives a high priority to exploit the results in their different European network in the years to come and to elaborate the application of the learning discourse and validation methods by implementing succeeding transnational project cooperation and providing Grundtvig IST-courses and Workshops and other forms of European mobility activities.

In relation to the first indirect target groups of decision-makers, funders and other multipliers such as the related research area in the participating countries we have experienced positive feedback on our humanistic learning agenda and a new approval of the cultural activities as an important area of non-formal and informal learning in a civil society context. The possible impact on the second indirect target groups of decision-makers and other multipliers in the wider European community is more questionable.

Not at least because the potential impact must imply a change of the current main stream agenda of educational and cultural policy in the EU system and most of its member states, which is dominated by a one-sided lifelong learning agenda of promoting vocational training for the benefits of employability and economic competitiveness in a market context. This sets clear obstacles for the impact of a project that has the overall aim to promote a humanistic and democratic learning agenda for the benefit of active citizenship, cultural cohesion and personal fulfilment in a civil society context. The project can be seen as taken part in a ongoing paradigm dispute, where instrumental pedagogical discourses dominates at the expense of humanistic pedagogical discourses, as we will outline below in section 2: Project Approach.

## 2. Project Approach

### The methodological approach

The approach of this project takes the main principles of liberal adult education into account, because these principles permeate from the outset the learning in the amateur art and voluntary cultural organisations that offer a non-formal and informal learning for adults without vocational specific aims. The amateur culture shares the pedagogical tradition of liberal adult education that focuses primarily on learning for a personal fulfilling live and learning for the community, and only secondary on training people as employees for a specific job.

The lifelong learning in the amateur culture is free and voluntary, lacking a formal curricula and focus on the needs for personal fulfilment, cultural cohesion and active citizenship. The learning are considerably broader than in formal and vocational education and represents a diversity of learning methods, curricula and participants, and the learning processes involve experientially based learning with active exchange of experiences, ideas, values and observations between the participants. Great importance in knowledge development is thus attached to group processes that empower the participants on their own terms. The learning here imply a critical approach to change personal and common life situations, values and attitudes. The voluntary cultural organisations represent thus a learning capacity in civil society promoting humanistic and democratic values. These learning goals and values must this project take into account.

The project approach has thus been to provide a humanistic learning methodology for the amateur culture that can incorporate the learning dimension of personal formation. This approach was elaborated in the initial survey, where we substantiated the conceptual framework for a Bildung-oriented learning theory and the related methodology for validating the learning outcome of amateur culture in a civil society context.

This substantiation has been pivotal for the succeeding implementation of the project. The survey prepared the guidelines for the framework of the questionnaires of the online tools, the outline of the Compendium on Best Practise and the main content of the pilot courses, and it defined the identity of the project and the core issues for the final valorisation. The key activities of the survey can thus illustrate the overall project approach.

The first key activity of the survey was to define the initial problem formulation and the lead questions. The key problem is that we are confronted with two very different point of views on the *raison d'être* of amateur culture and derived there from the point of views on the learning aims, qualities and outcome.

Typically, the learners and learning providers in the area will emphasise the inner values of art and culture, that they here freely can do something they want to do, something they rejoice in and become revived and enlightened by as human beings and fellow citizens in a civil society context. Contrary, the political and administrative stakeholders will typically appreciate the outer values of amateur culture, when it provides useful means to solve system problems for the state or market, such as empowerment of social vulnerable groups, provision of preventive health care, contribution to employability in the culture industry, or promotion of cultural events, branding and experience economy. The active in amateur culture refer to a humanistic discourse that focuses on the main lifelong learning aims of personal fulfilment, active citizenship and cultural cohesion, while the representative of the system refer to an instrumental discourse that focuses on employability and the market values. In short we



can say that the reasons of the cultural active focus on the core services of the amateur culture, while politicians, administrators and businessmen focus on the peripheral services.

The lead questions are thus, how one can determine the overall discrepancy between the humanistic and instrumental discourse, and how one can determine the derivative contradictions in the understanding of the civil society, the learning and cultural activity, which the amateur culture takes part in?

The second key activity was to present a theoretical frame that had the ability to incorporate and explain these contradictions and succeeding paradigm disputes. The applied theoretical framework has reference to Critical Theory, and especially Habermasian discourses of communicative action, but it is also supplemented by pedagogical theories with reference to Neo-humanistic and Grundtvigian Bildung theory.

With this reference we can characterize the core service of the amateur culture as its ability to promote a rich life world, while the peripheral services contribute to solve problems in the system world. Modern societies are characterized by a differentiation of society in three relatively independent sectors: The state, the market and the civil society, and this differentiation is conditional for our ideals of human rights and democracy. It provides conditions for the rule of law, a productive working life, a responsible active citizenship and a rich personal life. This societal differentiation implies or rather requires that our rationality and related lifelong learning has become more differentiated, too. It implies on the one hand the continued development of technical-instrumental rationality in the system world including state and market, on the other hand the free expansion of communicative and expressive rationality in the life world including the public sphere and the civil society.

The life world constitutes the common horizons of understanding in our society, and it is conditional for our mutual communication and development of personal identity. Here we use our communicative and expressive rationality to interpret and create meaning and purpose in life. Its basis is a strong civil society and a free public debate, and without it, our personal as well as democratic communication fall apart, because meaning, solidarity and personal identity cannot be produced commercially or administratively. In the life world we primarily act as fellow human beings and citizens. The system-world comprises the market and the state, where money and power are the media for a constant demand of increased yield and efficiency. Here dominates the instrumental rationality with focus on the most effective means to ensure the material, economic and legal basis for prosperity and welfare. In the system world we primarily act as employers, employees, consumers and clients.

A modern civilised society has or should have an effective system world as well as a rich life world. An important prerequisite for a rich life world is a strong civil society with a comprehensive liberal adult education and an extensive sector of voluntary associations, in which citizens freely can apply their communicative and expressive rationality and develop themselves as human beings and active citizens. A well functioning society does not only need updated workers but also active citizens and enlightened fellowmen. A society without a rich life world is not just a poor community spiritually and humanly speaking, it is a one-dimensional society, where the nerve of society - a vibrant culture, a free public debate and a participatory democracy with active citizenship - dries out. The maintenance and development of a rich life world implies a comprehensive civil society with a strong independent learning capacity, where the keyword not is "lifelong learning" but rather "learning for life", as Grundtvig - the Danish father of the Nordic tradition of liberal adult education - named it.

The third key activity of the pilot survey was to present, how the derivative contradictions in the discourses on the *raison d'être* of amateur culture can be seen in the related paradigm

disputes on lifelong learning, culture and civil society. The idea of lifelong learning is not new. In our common history of ideas the humanistic tradition – from the ancient Greece, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment movement, and to the German neo-humanistic and the Nordic Grundtvigian Bildung tradition not to mention the Anglosaxian pedagogical tradition of John Dewey and the Latin tradition of Paulo Freire – has always seen education and enlightenment as essential for human freedom and democratic values. However, the concept of "lifelong learning" has in the last decades mainly gain influence, because two important international organisations have been its advocates, namely UNESCO from the early 1970'ies and OECD from the 1980'ies, and they speak of lifelong learning from two very different understandings.

UNESCO links lifelong learning to human and democratic development. Here education is as an end in itself, and not merely a mean for economic growth and governmental management. For example, the need for literacy was justified by each human beings need and right to gain access to knowledge and culture. The OECD on the contrary understands lifelong learning as an investment in 'human capital' and emphasises the commercial advantages. The humanist and democratic values has here been replaced by the economic demands of the new global world market. OECD's paradigm became the new meta-narrative during the '80s with a strong appeal to opinion formers, policy makers and businessmen, and it has influenced the understanding of education in the EU system very much, especially in the European Commission and subsequently in the EU member states.

The EU Commission's primary objective for "lifelong learning" was to strengthen the citizens' employability for the new knowledge economy. This was the recurring message in White Paper and declarations during the 90ies and it was also the main message in the "Memorandum on Lifelong Learning" from 2000 as well in the "Communication: Making a European area for lifelong learning" from 2001. However, the last papers present a double objective to promote on the one hand employability for the benefit of a competitive market economy and on the other hand active citizenship, cultural cohesion and personal fulfilment for the benefit of a democratic public and a free civil society. The papers comprise unsolved tensions between the needs of an effective system and a rich life world, or with the Habermasian terminology between the learning needs of instrumental and communicative rationality. The EU system has not unequivocally taken the side in the paradigm conflict, and although there is a clear predominance of the instrumental discourses, there is a theoretical and political opening for humanistic and democratic learning discourses.

The fourth key activity of the pilot survey has been to develop a learning theory and a related validation methodology that can describe and assess the learning outcome with a reference to the learning qualities of the communicative rationality of the life world. This methodology needs to comprise learning categories that can access the values of personal formation (Bildung) and the important moral-practical and aesthetic-expressive learning qualities, because they are essential for the communicative rationality.

The applied learning methodology defines learning as an interrelated unity of the three dimensions: Personal formation (Bildung), knowledge & skills, and competences; and these three dimensions are constituted by several main elements, and each element can be measured by using series of questions in a Likert Scale. The questionnaire we have developed for validation of the learning outcome includes the following elements of the three dimensions:

- *Personal formation* is defined by six elements: Authenticity, autonomy, reflexive general knowledge, moral sense, aesthetic sense, and personal integration.

- *Knowledge & skills* in a specific art based or cultural topic are defined by three elements: General knowledge, culture specific knowledge and skills, and didactic insight in the learning methods of the topic.
- *Competences* are defined by five elements: Social, communicative, creative, self-management, and learning competences.

Elements from the three dimensions are part of all learning processes, but their weight and qualities can and will vary a lot depending on the learning arena and the application in relation to the four main life spheres in modern societies:

- The life in the personal existential sphere - as a self-conscious, authentic and autonome human being (single individual)
- The life with family, friends and others in the private and civic sphere - as a fellow human being (l'homme)
- The life in civil society and the public sphere - as active citizen (citoyen)
- The working life - as an employee and employer (bourgeois)

The three dimensions of learning cannot do without each other. *Personal formation* becomes loose without anchoring in hard qualifications (knowledge and skills) and inactive without soft qualifications (transverse personal competences); *Knowledge and skills* becomes directionless without the personal formation and impractical without competences; and *competences* becomes empty without knowledge and bewildered without personal formation.

The learning dimension of personal formation is characterized by a communicative rationality, where issues of meaning and goal of the personal and the common life is thematized in a way in which personal clarification and world orientation are linked. The knowledge-related learning brings the learner a certain sum of knowledge and skills to enhance the understanding of specific subjects and the ability to act on them. The competence-related learning is zweck-rational and focuses on the transverse ability to function adequately or flexible and opportune in changing situations without questioning the meaning or purpose of the function.

In the work life it is important to have specific knowledge and skills and developed transverse competences to act zweck-rational, while there is not much need for personal formation, because no one, especially not the employer, expect the employee to question the purpose or meaning of the business plan, the command structures or the overall aim of being economic competitive in whatever area of activity. Contrary, personal formation is essential in the personal and civil sphere for having a fulfilling and free life and it is essential for democratic participation in the public life.

Here we must emphasise that different learning curricula may be reasonable at the right time and place, because the content and form of the learning must differ according to the specific context and perspective. General and liberal adult education is not more important or nobler than vocational adult education, but these two different areas of lifelong learning have different aims and qualities. Therefore, it is an imperative for a qualified pedagogical methodology to clarify the context of the learning and thus avoid a pedagogical reductionism, where appropriate learning needs from one context (for example employability in work life) as a sort of hidden agenda are colonising the forms and content of learning in another context (for example democratic and personal formation in the civil and public life). The context of learning in this project is amateur art and voluntary cultural activities in a civil society perspective. Therefore the validation of the learning qualities and outcome must be seen in the context of improved communicative action in the life world, where the learning is permeated by humanistic and democratic values.

The fifth key activity of the survey was to apply the main categories of the developed theoretical discourse in the questionnaires and interviews of the empirical part of the survey with representative respondent groups of learners and learning providers from the participating organisations. The questionnaires as well as the interviews documented that the representatives from the amateur culture gave priority to humanistic learning aims and rejected instrumental views and values, while they at the same were familiar with the perspective of a learning theory that included personal formation as well as knowledge and skills and transversal competences.

The sixth and last key activity of the survey was to present interrelated conclusions of the theoretical and empirical part of the survey and to provide guidelines for the development of the double online validation tool and the presentation of a Compendium on Best Practise in the succeeding second phase of the project and for the programme of the pilot courses in the third phase. The theoretical analysis and empirical evidence of the survey substantiated that the developed conceptual framework had the ability to combine the main concepts of the critical theory regarding the communicative rationality of the life world with a learning theory that incorporates the Bildung dimension and a civil society theory that points out the importance of a high learning capacity in a free and independent civil society.

This combined conceptual framework can provide a new learning perspective on amateur culture as an area of societal activity that provides essential humanistic values with a high level of personal and democratic formation; or put another way as a societal activity that maintains and develops the communicative and expressive rationality of the life world. Furthermore, this conceptual framework for documentation of the learning outcome can thereby put new light on the core services within amateur culture and offer new ways to profile the area in a wider context of culture policy and education policy;

#### **Added value**

The conceptual frame of this humanistic learning discourse is quite innovative in our point of view. Most actual valuation tools for non-formal and informal learning share a very narrow optic on the content and perspective of learning that reduces learning to transversal competences or to a combination of soft qualifications (transversal competences) and hard qualifications (knowledge and skills), but none of the tools we know of have a methodology that incorporate “personal formation” or “Bildung” as an important dimension of learning. The personality is more or less a blind spot in these instrumental oriented learning methodologies. Likewise the validation perspective on the learning outcome is typically reduced to the use in work life or the formal education, and the benefits for the personal, civil and public live spheres is also out of sight. .

This lack of “Bildung Theory” could be seen as a general problem for most learning validation, but it is especially a problem, when we try to validate the learning in voluntary and art based activities. Without Bildung you don’t find the nerve in the activities, and it will be difficult to convince the learners that the valuation tools have any relevance for them.

### 3. Project Outcomes & Results

#### Achievements

The first major achievement was the substantiation of a humanistic learning discourse and a Bildung-oriented validation method by developing a conceptual framework that had the ability to combine the main concepts of the critical theory of communicative action with a Bildung-oriented learning theory.

This conceptual framework was developed and tested during the completion of the survey in the first project phase, and it was refined by feedback in the second phase from the development work with the online validation tools and the Compendium of Best practise; and it was further refined during the completion of the pilot Grundtvig IST-course and pilot Grundtvig workshop in the third project phase.

The first main result of this substantiation was the Survey Report on learning outcome in Amateur culture, which was published in the fourth project phase. This English Report of 160 pages was published as a paper edition of 900 items and as a virtual PDF-publication for wide and easy distribution.

The second main result of this substantiation was the Compendium of Best Practise with focus on providing and validating relevant learning outcome in amateur culture. It was published as an English edition, 90 pages, and it included 900 paper items and a virtual PDF-publication for wide distribution.

The second major achievement was the development of the double online tool for documentation and validation of the learning outcome in amateur culture, voluntary culture and art based liberal adult education.

The first pilot edition of the validation tools was developed in the second project phase with initial testing by groups of learners and learning providers from the participating organisations, and it was further used and tested during the pilot courses in the third project phase. In the fourth project phase we finally launched a series of English, Danish, Dutch and Slovenian editions of the online tools at the website: <http://grundtvig.netschooltools.com>

The developed double tool for learning validation can validate the same learning process from two different angles. The learners (students, participants, and other active) can validate their personal learning profile and outcome; the learning providers (leaders, teachers, facilitators, board members and other staff) can compare their learning objectives and priorities with the learners' actual outcome.

This documentation can be of personal value for the learners and it can improve the learning providers work with monitoring, quality assurance and management of the learning activities in their organisation. The validation data from the use of the two tools will be saved at a common database, and the data can be used for documentation and research on several levels, from the classroom to the whole organisation, and from a group of local associations to a national and a transnational European level. The network of national associations that uses the common transnational database can easily and by relative small costs be expanded with new associations from other European countries after the conclusion of the project.

The third major achievement was the completion in the third project phase of the two pilot week courses in Slovenia, respectively a Grundtvig in-service training course targeting teachers, tutors, facilitators and other pedagogical staff, and a Grundtvig workshop targeting board members and other active in amateur culture.

The first main result of the pilot courses was the publishing of the Course Compendium

in the fourth project phase. It presented and evaluated the pilot Grundtvig IST-course and the pilot Grundtvig Workshop with recommendations for succeeding European course activities in the field of amateur culture. It was published as an English edition, 70 pages plus annexes, and it included 900 paper items and a virtual PDF-publication for wide distribution.

The second main results were the provision of pilot course materials in English, which included the published Compendium of Best Practise, an article on the learning view in the LOAC-project (that gave a summary of the conceptual frame of the learning discourse and validation methods), links to the English pilot tool edition, and three questionnaires for the home work, where the participants should 1) present their organisation and their own activities, 2) present examples of best practise from their own organisation, and 3) present the core learning values and their promotion in their own organisations. The article on the learning view has been translated to the Danish, Dutch and Slovenian, and been used as an Introduction text in the valorisation activities during the fifth and last project phase.

The third main results included the presentations at the pilot courses including power-point presentations that have been uploaded to the project website.

An integrated part of the courses was in dialogue with the participants to develop know how on the learning needs and priorities of possible target groups from the art based voluntary associations. The aim is after the conclusion of the project that the consortium can offer such week courses as part of the Grundtvig in-service training programme and the Grundtvig Workshop programme.

### **Valorisation**

The fourth major achievement was the completion of a comprehensive valorisation during the fifth and final phase of the project results and a sustainable follow up of the outcome of the project. The valorisation included three national conferences at the end of the project, where the results were presented.

The consortium represents significant cultural umbrella organizations in each participating country. This implies a huge surface of contact and a potential strong impact on the activities of the area. The results of the project were disseminated and exploited to the main target groups including:

1. The first direct target groups from the participating organisations and their national network of member associations;
2. The second direct target groups of neighbour associations in the national sector of amateur art, voluntary culture and art based liberal adult education;
3. The third direct target groups of national organisations in the sector of amateur culture from other European countries as well as pan-Nordic and pan-European fora.
4. The first indirect target groups comprises decision-makers, funders, research institutions and other multipliers from the participating countries
5. The second indirect target group comprises decision-makers, funders, research institutions and other multipliers from other European countries and pan-European fora.

The valorisation activities included:

- The Dutch group of participants have been in follow-up contact and had a network meeting in Aug 2011, where they participated in the planning of the conference. The Danish and Slovenian groups have participated in follow-up dialogue.
- Production of information material in national language on the publications, tools and the conferences,
- Invitations to the conferences with links to the web sites, where the publications can be down loaded and the learning tools can be seen and used.

- News mails where the three main project publications were attached.
- By distributing hand-outs at the Info-day in Brussels on 28 October 2011.
- Completion of three national conferences presenting the results and perspectives.
- Follow-up mails where power-point presentations at the conferences were attached.
- Multiplication activities to the broad network of art based member associations of the partners' umbrella associations; by direct mail, newsletters, articles and announcements in member magazines.
- Mainstreaming to the press and decision-makers and opinion-formers of the sectors of voluntary culture and liberal adult education; newsletters, articles to newspapers, magazines and academic journals.

The mail lists of recipient on the national level included for Slovenia (1371), Holland (1547) and for Denmark (1047). These national groups of recipient typical received three contacts:

- General information about the project including an invitation to the national conference
- Extra information up to the conferences
- Follow-up information after the conferences

The mail lists of recipient from other European countries and pan-European fora included for countries in the Baltic Sea Region (414), Trans-Baltic fora (47), Other European countries (415), other pan-European fora (97) and recipient outside Europe (24). These groups received typical two contacts:

- General information about the project with links and attached publications
- Follow-up information after the conferences

The partnership completed extra exploitation on the national level

- By publishing articles in own journals regarding the project outcome
- By interviews and articles in news media
- By networking to main multipliers (National Agencies, political decision-makers, and educational institutions)
- By organising follow-up meetings for participants at the pilot courses,
- By supporting networks in the field of amateur culture on the LOAC-subject for participants at the national conferences.
- By incorporating presentations and references to the project outcome in other meetings in the member associations

It can be mentioned in relation to follow-up and sustainability on the national level that:

- In Slovenia, JSKD had 9 media hits plus 1 radio interviews. Furthermore they have published a Video film on the conference and project.
- In Holland, KF will have a background article with interviews in Arts magazine 'Kunst Kraak', info at koepeldagen, tool sessions at Kunstfactor Live!", presentations at 6 Kunst factor meetings, References in our journal.
- In Denmark, KSD has published a special issue on the LOAC project in the journal Kultur.dk. The LOAC project and conference got a comprehensive coverage in news sites of Danish Adult Education Association, and AKKS and DO have covered the project. IF has been in dialogue with the Danish Focal point of the Grundtvig Programme, IU. KSD and IF have had three dialogue meetings with four cultural umbrella associations on the LOAC project issue and succeeding cultural policy initiatives.

We think the impact on the national level has been strong. The learning agenda has gained a new stronghold for the informal and non-formal learning activities in the sector of amateur culture of the participating countries.

It can be mentioned in relation to follow-up and sustainability in other European countries and the trans-national European level that the consortium has planned::

- To offer a common Grundtvig IST-course in 2012 and one or more Grundtvig workshop on the subject.
- To promote the tool in 2012 to associations from other countries in the field of amateur culture and liberal adult education to expand the use and data collection on learning outcome.
- To incorporate presentations and references to the project outcome in other Transnational meetings in the European networks of the member associations in 2012, especially AMATEO
- To use the project outcome as a platform or reference to new multinational project in a Baltic Sea and wider European context.

For the time being it is more difficult for us to see or evaluate the impact on the wider European sector of amateur culture. However, the partnership gives a high priority to exploit the results in their different European network in the years to come and during possible transnational project cooperation.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The tasks of coordination, monitoring, quality assurance and evaluation are closely connected in a well organised project. The first 18 work packages in this project correspond to the 18 main steps of the task plan, and each work package consists of a group of part tasks, and the completion of each work package constitutes a main milestone. The breakdown structure of the tasks and budget lines of each work package gives the decisive basis for the management, coordination and cooperation among the partners.

The work programme of this project consists of five main phases and the first four have been initiated (and ended) by partner meetings that have functioned as bridges between the project phases. At each partner meeting we have evaluated the concluded phase and made a detailed and possibly adjusted task plan for the next phase. The monitoring of the progress of the part-tasks in each work package consists of two checks, partly a contact to the responsible partner/person a week before the starting date of the part task to confirm that the partner are ready for the task, partly a check a week before deadline on the progress and quality of the planned result.

We have conducted a Mixed Method Evaluation combining Process Evaluation and Outcome Evaluation.

We have used the Process Evaluation to monitor the activities to make sure the project has been implemented and completed according to the task plan.

Process Evaluation has been an important session of each of the three last partner meetings (WP 4, 8 and 11) that conclude the previous main project phase, and they have been supplemented by questionnaires. A written summary of the evaluation is part of the minutes and has been sent to the partnership circle after each meeting. We have furthermore used questionnaires with closed and open questions for the interim and final evaluation of the process evaluation. We made a final process evaluation report in English, 49 pages.



We have used the Outcome Evaluation to assess the extent to which the project has achieved its intended effects and other effects it could have had on the project's participants or the environment.

Representatives of the first direct target group were involved in the survey (WP2), where respondent groups of all in all 49 persons from the three national organisations (KSD, JSKD and KF) filled out respectively the questionnaires for learners and learning providers and small groups participated in the three series of interviews. This data gave important feedback on the needs of the planned deliverables and for our refinement and priorities of the guidelines (WP 3), we used for the design of the learning frame for the online validation tools (WP 5 and 6) as well as for the outline of the Compendium of Best Practise (WP 7). The results of the questionnaires and interviews are presented in our Survey Report, especially section IV: Empirical data – questionnaires and interviews, page 97 -136

Representative learners (2-4 from each country) from the first target group participated in test of the pilot tools (WP 5 and 6). Representative learning providers participated in the pilot Grundtvig IST course (WP 9) with 5 from DK, 6 from SI and 6 from NL; and learners and other active in the pilot Grundtvig Workshop (WP 10) with 5 from DK, 5 from SI and 6 from NL. The pilot courses gave opportunity to test the results and discourse of our learning methods and tools and they gave very important feedback on the potential impact of the project outcomes. The participants filled out questionnaires at the end of the courses and we had follow-up interviews with 3 x 3 participants after the courses on the outcome. The results of these evaluations activities delivered important information for our Outcome Evaluation, and the results are presented in the Course Compendium, chapter 4, page 20 – 57.

The preparation and completion of the three national conferences during the final phase of valorisation gave important feed-back on the sustainable impact of the project outcomes as can be seen in the mini-reports from the conferences including the video movie from the Slovenian conference.

### **More information**

The projects website has further information on the project, and a wide range of project documents can as pdf-files be read and downloaded. The address of the website is <http://www.interfolk.dk/loac>

Contact details of the partnership circle:

- P1: Kulturelle Samråd i Danmark (Applicant) - See [www.kulturellesamraad.dk](http://www.kulturellesamraad.dk)  
Contact person: Bente von Schindel, General Secretary,  
(+45) 29647040 \* [bs@kulturellesamraad.dk](mailto:bs@kulturellesamraad.dk)
- P2: Interfolk, Institute for Civil Society (Coordinator) - See [www.interfolk.dk](http://www.interfolk.dk)  
Contact person: Hans Jørgen Vodsgaard, Head of Institute  
(+45) 51 300 320 \* [hjv@interfolk.dk](mailto:hjv@interfolk.dk)
- P3: Javni sklad RS za kulturne dejavnosti (Partner) - See [www.jskd.si](http://www.jskd.si)  
Contact person: Marjeta Turk, Assistant Director for General Affairs  
(+386) (1) 241 05 24 \* [marjeta.turk@jskd.si](mailto:marjeta.turk@jskd.si)
- P4: Kunstfactor, Sectorinstituut Amateurkunst (Partner) - See [www.kunstfactor.nl](http://www.kunstfactor.nl)  
Contact person: Wies Rosenboom, Head of Office staff and Dance and Writing  
(+31) (0)30 711 5140 \* [w.rosenboom@kunstfactor.nl](mailto:w.rosenboom@kunstfactor.nl)

## 4. Partnerships

The project consortium has been made up by the following organisations:

### **Kulturelle Samråd i Danmark (Applicant)**

is the National association of the local cultural councils, which are umbrella organizations for local associations within the area of culture and leisure-time activities. Cultural councils exist in approximately 90 of Denmark's 98 municipalities. The main purpose of "Joint Cultural Councils in Denmark" is to inspire and develop the cultural area, and to influence, initiate, debate, exemplify etcetera in order to create the best possible conditions for all cultural learning activities. "Joint Cultural Councils in Denmark" are on a national basis working closely with the rest of the cultural voluntary associations.

### **Interfolk, Institute for Civil Society (Coordinator)**

Interfolk is an Institute for liberal education and voluntary associations. The objectives are to promote popular enlightenment and active citizenship in the context of liberal adult education, voluntary associations and cultural activities in the civic society. The activities may include research, surveys and development projects, seminars and debate, and other cultural activities in Danish, Nordic, European and broader international context.

### **Javni sklad RS za kulturne dejavnosti (Partner)**

JSKD is a national institution covering all branches of amateur culture and art: vocal and instrumental music, theatre and puppet, folklore, film and video, literature, fine arts, dance. JSKD main tasks are: Organization and offering of cultural events; Preparation of seminars, workshops, lectures, summer camps; Counselling, supporting, informing; Publication of periodicals and other publications; Joint financing of cultural programs. JSKD headquarters in Ljubljana and fifty-nine branch offices all over Slovenia with about 100 employees (organizers, experts, technicians) stimulate the development of Slovenian amateur art. JSKD organizes international, national and regional programmes of education, presentations and reviews of non-professional culture and art. JSKD is a member of European umbrella networks ECuCo and Amateo and international organisations of music, theatre, puppet theatre and folklore such as Europa Cantat, IFCM, CISM, AITA/IATA, CIOFF etc.

### **Kunstfactor, Sectorinstituut Amateurkunst (Partner)**

Kunstfactor is the national Dutch institute for the development and promotion of amateur arts. As such the centre has expertise in the fields of voluntary arts development, management and education as well as in that of arts education per se. Kunstfactor is responsible for various training and learning curricula, used inside and outside of educational centres, as well as for training modules for volunteers who are active in the field of the amateur arts. Kunstfactor is constantly looking for ways in which cultural and artistic competences can be acquired and acknowledged. It is one of the founders and partners of the Standards and Accreditation Centre for Amateur Arts and Arts Education in the Netherlands.

### **Added value**

The strength of the Consortium lies in its being made up of both a research organisation and umbrella organisations operating in the area of amateur art and voluntary culture at local, regional, national and international level.

The issues addressed have benefitted from the collaboration of partners exchanging different experiences with lifelong learning in relation to amateur art and voluntary culture. Even though the partners all share a common interests in the topics and objectives of the project,

they at the same time represent different backgrounds and approaches and can involve diverse competences, skills, experiences and networks in the field. These differences have together brought more knowledge and experiences on the common European challenges as well as a more comprehensive approach to the work programme of the project.

We have experienced visible benefits accruing from the collaboration of organisations across national borders especially regarding collection of relevant data and exchanges of best practice. First, the survey in the first phase involved a wider range of expertise and provided a higher problem consciousness on the methodological challenges; likewise the validation methods of the online tools could be tested in different contexts bringing more reliability and validity to the results. Secondly, the participants from three countries at the two pilot courses implied exchange of diverse European experiences and a more comprehensive feedback on the project results. Thirdly, the transversal valorisation and the final valorisation of the results gained a stronger European impact using different channels for extensive dissemination and multiple levels of exploitation.

Not at least a sustainable valorisation can benefit from the European added value of the Consortium and the fact that nearly all partners are umbrella associations in the fields of the project with different networks both on a national and European level, such as Amateo and other forums with a strong valorisation potential. The joined valorisation effort can thus provide a focussed and more sustainable impact of the results of the project.

However, especially in the start of the project we experienced some language difficulties with finding a common understanding of the applied pedagogical terminology for the learning methodology and frame of questionnaires. The challenge had relation both to differences in the cultural-pedagogical traditions and the need to clarify a common English vocabulary.

### **Contact outside the consortium**

The partners in the project have during the project gained a significant increase of contacts and networking opportunities.

Especially the pilot courses implied a group of participants, where the majority came from other organisations than the partnership circle, and they have succeeded to a high degree contributed as ambassadors for the project in their own organisations and network. The Dutch group of participants have been in follow-up contact and had a network meeting in Aug 2011, where they participated in the planning of the Dutch conference. The Danish and Slovenian groups have participated in follow-up dialogue.

Many participants at the three conferences also formed informal dialogue groups on the issues and new networks had been established; primarily on a national level for the sector of amateur culture and new cross-sectoral relations with other organisations working with art-based learning and liberal adult education; but secondarily also on a cross-national level between the three participating countries, and furthermore the pan-European organisation for amateur culture, Amateo wish to promote the learning agenda of the LOAC-project in 2012, and this will strengthen the contacts and networking on a wider European scale.

## 5. Plans for the Future

The consortium represents significant umbrella organisations of amateur culture in each participating country. This implies a strong network and wide surface of contact with a potential strong impact of the project results on the future activities of the partnership circle and their network in the sector of amateur art, voluntary culture and art based liberal adult education, especially in the countries of the participating organisations.

The long term objectives are that the results of the project will be incorporated in the future activities of the participating organisations and the project partners will continue to use their own network and professional affiliations to promote the learning agenda of the project in the wider European sector of amateur culture as well as having more organisations in the field of voluntary culture and art based learning involved in using the online tools.

The partnership has at the end of the project discussed and planned on a regular basis to provide in-service training on validation of learning in amateur culture, both in a national and European context, especially by providing courses as part of the Grundtvig in-service training programme and the Grundtvig Workshop programme.

The partnership is also preparing applications for new transnational European projects to strengthen the European network and to further develop the results of the project

## 6. Contribution to EU policies

In relations to the broader objectives of the LLL-Programme this project addresses especially the following points,

- a) to develop the quality of lifelong learning (in amateur culture);
- b) to support the realisation of an transnational area for learning;
- e) to promote creativity;
- h) to develop innovative ICT-based tools for valuation of learning outcome;
- k) to encourage the exchange of best practise on transnational courses.

In relation to the specific objectives of the Grundtvig Action this project aims,

1. to value the voluntary cultural activities and amateur culture from the perspective of lifelong learning

In relation to the operational objectives of the Grundtvig Action this project aims

1. to promote mobility by offering Grundtvig IST-courses and Grundtvig Workshops on a regularly basis by the partnership targeting both pedagogical staff, board members and other active;
2. to provide new knowledge by using the database of the valuation tools for transnational research on learning outcome in amateur culture:
3. to improve the monitoring, quality assurance and management of the lifelong learning in the European sector of amateur culture.

In relation to the priorities of the Grundtvig multilateral projects this project aims

- 1, to improve the validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes;
- 2, to oblige the learning needs of teacher, trainers and other staff;
3. to motivate individual learners by offering transparency and documentation of the learning outcome.

