

The Communication Quality of Kuriiri project

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1. Introduction

The aim of this research is to investigate the communication quality of employees working in Keski-Suomen Yhteisöjen Tuki (KYT), the Supporting Association for Third Sector Organisations in Central Finland, which were involved in the national project Kuriiri and in the transnational project 4Work. Specifically it will be considered communication quality as indicator of functionality and efficiency of such group. The reasons of this investigation are related to the future developments of this project and its need for a better communication and functionality. Essential basis for this analysis comes from my questionnaire which were sent in summer 2004 to those people who were in 2002-2004 collaborating at the 4Work Transnational Partnership.

The importance of communication in public organizations as function of well-being for employees and external networking has been also reconsidered by the managerial area of the Kuriiri project as something to be implemented. In fact communication among employees working at national and transnational level is playing a key-role in the development of the activities and co-operation among different groups. Dealing with transnational projects requires also specific skills, such as knowledge of foreign languages, knowledge about different cultures and realities, spirit of initiative, collaborative attitude and etc, that are the essential instrument for the achievement of project's goals. Moreover communication plays an important role in knowledge management. Employees are the organisation's brain cells, and communication represents the nervous system that carries this information and shared meaning to vital parts of the organisational body. Effective communication minimizes the "silos of knowledge" problem that undermines an organisation's potential (Shapiro, Wong, Perreault, & McCarthy; 2001).

People working in Keski-Suomen Yhteisöjen Tuki (KYT) for Kuriiri project at national level have expressed their will to improve the quality of communication in view of future developments and co-operations with other organizations in Finland and abroad. As Porter and Roberts (1993) say, "Communication as a function enhances interaction between the organisation and its social environment". By keeping communication channels open, the public organisation is given a basis upon which it can operate together with other parties. In view of

this necessity an analysis of the current communication quality among Kuriiri employees was indispensable, before starting some specific training activities and/or some managerial planning.

2. Kuriiri project and its organization, Keski-Suomen Yhteisöjen Tuki (KYT)

Keski-Suomen Yhteisöjen Tuki (KYT), the Supportive Association for the Third Sector Organisations is an intermediary body, which provides special services and gives support for the non profit organisations in Central Finland. Its aim is to help non-profit organisations to develop their activities. In Finland NGO sector compared to the public sector is not very well established, in this sense KYT is trying to improve the quality of the management.

KYT has two organizational forms, the KYT cooperative and the KYT association, both founded between 1999 and 2001. The function of the cooperative is to maintain a firm of accountants, which provides administrative services for local associations such as bookkeeping, payment applications, auditing of the accounts and the overall financial administration of the associations. It also gives training for the non-profit associations on administrative matters. The cooperative has four hired accountants and 70 client associations at the beginning of the year 2004. The association provides counselling and guidance services for the local non-profit associations. It seeks for finance possibilities, helps to plan and evaluate projects. It can also administer some projects in behalf of the associations.

KYT association runs eleven projects of its own: the Kuriiri -project (EQUAL), Antenni project (continuation project for the ESF LSC project), InnoPoint –project for modelling social enterprises to the third sector (ESF), Palko –project (Emotr), Networkshop –project (ERF), Melting Pot –project (ERF), Selkkis –project (RAY), BE 4 KYT (Labour ministry), Social house managing -pilot project- and the rebuilding project of the local Artists House. The association has 48 employees in 2004. As an intermediary body the Supportive Association for the Third Sector Organisations in Central Finland maintains the networking between the public sector organizations and the NGOs in the area of Central Finland.

2.1. Kuriiri project

Kuriiri project is one of the eleven projects carried by KYT and it is also subdivided in four subprojects (Kuriiri subprojects) developed independently in four different municipalities, Jyväskylä, Kuopio, Lappeenranta and Rovaniemi, and it involves 36 employees. Each subproject in these cities has its own responsibilities and it develops local activities. The localisation of the activities and networking are the core methodologies for creating a more suitable service for the unemployed citizens.

Kuriiri's aim is to help people in these districts to get employment and to prevent social exclusion by using and improving local resources and regional networks. The project's original idea is to develop a model for the housing districts that can be activated whenever their unemployment rate exceeds the average and social problems begin to accumulate. In this sense this model can be applicable not only in Finland but elsewhere too, in order to regenerate housing districts that are declining or in danger of decline and help unemployed people living such district. In practice the Kuriiri's activities focused on training and empowering the unemployed people, while the idea of the regenerating work is still in process of development.

Kuriiri project, as national project regarding social exclusion in the labour market, is also part of the European Union programme called Equal. This programme was funded through the European Social Fund and is an initiative which tests and promotes new means of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in the labour market, both for those in work and for those seeking work, through transnational co-operation. Equal also includes actions to help the social and vocational integration of asylum seekers. It operates across identified thematic fields, which embrace the four pillars of the European Employment Strategy and support for asylum seekers. It funds activities implemented by strategic partnerships called Development Partnerships (DPs).

In Kuriiri project the transnational co-operation has been made with partnerships in Trier, Germany; Zaragoza, Spain; and Tortona, Italy¹. These partners co-operated and shared their knowledge about social exclusion under a transnational project called 4Work project. Moreover Kuriiri project as part of Equal, receives 50% of its budget from European Social Fund, 45% from the Finnish Ministry of Social and Health Affairs and 5% from the municipalities where the subprojects are implemented.

2.2. Structure of 4WORK project

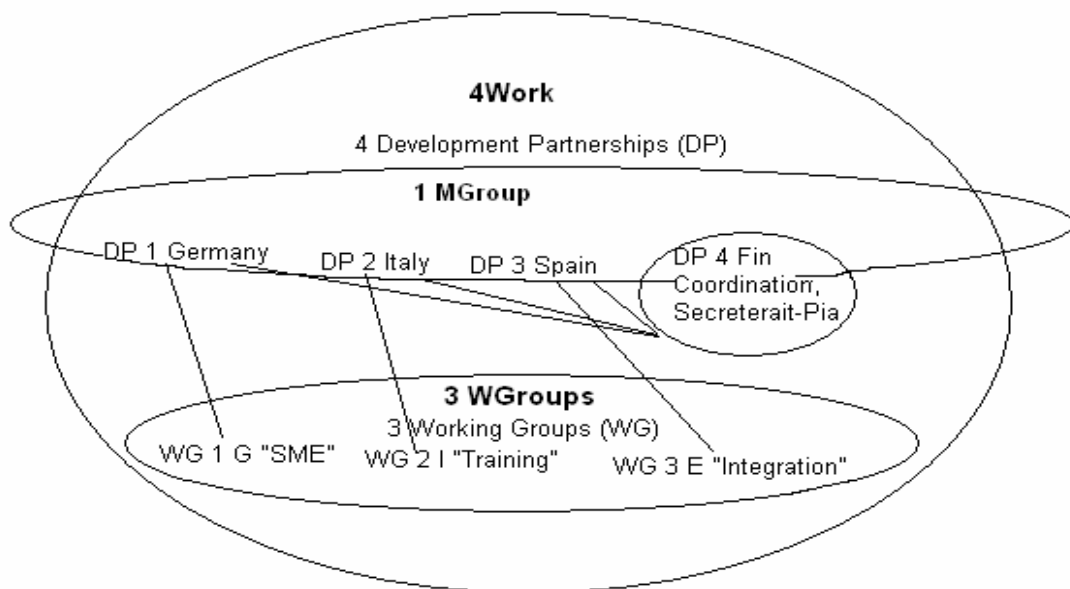
The 4Work project is the transnational co-operation of four partnerships under Equal programme. Kuriiri is one of the four national projects representing this co-operation. In 4Work project there are three working groups each concentrating on specified themes ("Training", "Cooperation with small and middle sized enterprises" and "Integration"). Each partners named 1-2 representatives to each working group. Then every working group chose among themselves the responsibility person.

The working groups' first task was to define their objectives, strategy, timetable and roles of members. Then its main target was to examine the methods, problems and solutions concerning their themes and develop new practises. They were on charge of producing material and sharing the developed and found practises (information, knowledge, ideas) to all others in partnership and also to wider audience. Instead the essential function of the management group

was the monitoring of working groups' work once they have been initiated and the co-operation among all of them.

The management group had the responsibility for monitoring the work progress, which was based on the working plan and on the aims and targets of the transnational partnership. A work plan was produced in the beginning of the project and covered the whole work period. It contained milestones, dates and responsibilities. The work progress had been under exam on every management group meeting. The idea was to check if the work progress was following the plan or differentiating. In the last case the management group task was to discuss alternatives and possibilities for keeping the original work plan.

Picture 1. Chart developed by Mr. Reijo Pesonen representing the structure of 4Work project.



3. The importance of communication for a public organisation

Communication as main strategic factor of a company for many years was underestimated and considered an appendix of marketing. Recently, the importance of communication has been reconsidered as fundamental and necessary function of any kind of organisation (Likert, 1993). In fact communication is one of the practical areas utilised by an organisation in order to solve or prevent problems (Glauser, 1984). Previously, finance, marketing and human resource were all particularly considered to be useful areas but nowadays it is also important to look at the functioning of the organisation from a communication viewpoint because the interdependency of society has increased (Dutton, 1998).

In the last 10 years many important private companies have developed new communication strategies and methods to evaluate their programmes, especially because of

this importance. Also public institutions and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) have recently understood the relevance of communication (Schuler, 1995). To be effective and less bureaucratic, public organisations are adopting more and more private methodology of managing, including communication; in this sense they are trying to become more competitive and market oriented (Shapiro, Wong, Perreault, & McCarthy, 2001).

Unfortunately for many employees of the public sector, communication is still seen as a collection of operational activities executed by communication experts, which does not have any relevance for their activities (McShane, 2001). Different studies have shown that not only the communication department needs to communicate well but also the organisation and its employees should do (Lengel & Daft, 1988; Likert, 1993; Barker & Camarata, 1998). It is an approach that is important for many within the organisation. In fact everyone within their own network of internal and external relations should be able to communicate promptly in any situation. Moreover dealing with communication has its own rules and implications. It is necessary in this sense that each employee is trained for it. Communication experts inspire others within the organisation to apply this approach in their behaviour and encourage others to be equipped for it (McShane, 2001). The whole organisation needs to have communication skills and think from the target groups' viewpoint.

4. How can communication be improved?

First of all it is necessary to evaluate the state of the communication among Kuriiri people, which means to estimate the communication quality. For communication quality, it is meant:

The degree to which communication contributes to the effectiveness of organisational policy and strengthens relations with parties upon which the organisation depends in order to be able to function well (Vos & Schoemaker, 2004).

Communication quality for its nature has always been very difficult to evaluate (Porter & Roberts, 1993). If it is easy to measure the results of a specific marketing strategy in quantity of products/services sold, it is not the same for communication. Recently some important scientists have tried to develop a method of investigation, which could score the communication quality (Vos & Schoemaker, 2004). This method, called "Balanced scorecard", analyses the scores of the respondents' answers by considering the specific function and dimension of the questions. This method, created for private companies, has been modified by Dr. Vos and her team, to be used also for public institutions. For its usability this method has been applied in this research for analysing the communication quality of Keski-Suomen Yhteisöjen Tuki (KYT) among people

working for Kuriiri project and for knowing which aspects of the communication should be improved inside this organisation.

5. The research context

Because of the complex structure of the project, the focus of this research is on internal and external communication of Kuriiri workers' dealing with the national and transnational project 4Work. The research will investigate if the organisational communication is effective and appropriate, and also it will investigate the partners' perceptions of state of communication in the project.

Cultural barriers related to different working habits, perceptions and methodologies of approach to the problem and the linguistic differences, considering that the official language is English and none of the countries involved is an English speaking country are important parameters to be measured in this analysis (Dutton, 1998). Bearing in mind this limitation it is remarkable to see if the Kuriiri group was able to deliver a proper and clear flow of information equally in the national project and in the transnational project.

6. Method of research

For this research it has been used a new version of the Kaplan and Norton's "Balanced scorecard" developed by professor Marita Vos for investigating the state of communication in the public sector (Vos & Schoemaker, 2004). Dr. Vos with her Research group in Governmental Communication at the Utrecht University of professional Education has created a questionnaire, which is based on balanced scorecard, that is an established research method to evaluate management system in different companies. The questionnaire is focused on three communication functions, namely corporate communication, policy communication and organisation-related communication.

In order to obtain a clear view of the options available for further improvement, the statements of the questionnaire are itemised on several dimensions such as the transparency, accessibility of information and organisation, publicity via the media, responsiveness, interactive policy, communication policy, effectiveness and efficiency of communication. Those dimensions are considered in each communication function. This technique implies a net structure where dimensions and functions cross each other giving a 360-degree prospective of the communication quality of the organisation investigated. In fact the questionnaire was divided in three sections, corresponding to the three functions of analysis, and each of them had 12 main statements and different sub-statements. The seven dimensions, mentioned before, were also present in all three sections within the sub-statements. Specifically each sub-statement

represented one specific dimension. The scores that respondents gave to each sub-statement, were first summed considering the section of belonging (vertically scoring). The vertically scoring gave a total score for each function per questionnaire analysed, so in this case three scores. Then the sub-statements scores were summed by considering the dimension they belonged to (horizontally scoring), which means summing all the sub-statements corresponding to a specific dimension in all the three sections. So at the end it was possible to have seven total scores corresponding to the seven dimensions. The idea is to have some numerical data per section of investigation and per item in order to evaluate each function and dimension. Because in each section there are all the dimensions considered, the analysis is vertically and horizontally made.

The form of the questionnaire developed by Dr. Vos and her group fitted quite easily to the Kuriiri project, because the organisation is a non-governmental institution. However some modifications were necessary to adapt it on the needs and specifications of this project (cfr. Vos & Schoemaker, 2004). Moreover, this questionnaire is a useful and practical method to figure out which are the strengths and weaknesses of an organisation from the point of view of the communication. Communication itself was not an easy subject to analysis and evaluate, perhaps for its structure and function, perhaps for the methodologies adopted (Fleisher & Mahaffy, 1997). With the “Balance scorecard” method for governmental institutions a big step was made toward this direction. It is a functional method, which can help each organisation to its state of communication and its possible improvement.

Moreover the communication quality of Kuriiri employees was analysed not only with the results of the questionnaire but also taking in consideration its information flow, its partners cooperation and its promotion and publicity in Finland. These data were gathered from official documents, by analysing the minutes of each 4Work meetings, and from a direct interview with the director of the Kuriiri project.

6.1. Target groups

The questionnaire was sent by email to each participant of 4Work meetings, the co-ordinator and director of 4Work and to the Kuriiri working group members. Specifically there are 3 kinds of respondents:

- Management and working groups' members of 4Work transnational partnerships from each of the four countries,

- Project Coordinator of the Kuriiri project and Director¹ of Keski-Suomen Yhteisöjen Tuki (KYT),
- Kuriiri employees from each of the four subprojects, who have participated in 4Work partnership collaboration

All of those target groups are essential in the analysis of Kuriiri project. All of them were working both at the national and transnational level and they are the physical link between their national project's members and the partnerships.

6.2. The questionnaire

A prototype of questionnaire was sent to some Kuriiri working employees to test its reliability. It came out that many problems appeared about the understanding of technical language, so a second questionnaire was created.

After this second round of questionnaireⁱⁱ, the quality of the answers ameliorate, even though some invalid answers remained. For invalid answer is meant the answer to a question that is misunderstood by the respondent, as far as can be determined by the interaction. For example, the question with the highest amount of invalid answers, concerned the internal image of the organisation. It appeared that respondents did not answer the questions related to the internal image of their organisation, basically because they do not have a clear idea about which internal image their organisation has or they are not aware about the activities implemented in this context. Another invalid question was related to the application of new policies and their clear and active communication. The management groups could answer properly about new policies and communication towards citizens, stakeholders and each national government but this was not the same for the working groups. These employees had a vague idea what their association was doing.

6.3. The information flow

The information flow and the principals of communication related to Kuriiri national project and 4Work project have been decided implicitly among other activities and in different, unpredictable situations. No specific communication strategies were used, neither specific training were implemented. Hence, the communication among partnerships was based on previous employees skills in information diffusion.

¹ The director is at the same time the project manager of Kuriiri.

The partnerships methodologies for sharing information, results and working tools was based in a Intranet environment where all the staff had accessibility to all information and could update its own activities too. Additionally emails, phone calls and exchange and study tours were organised in order to see the work context of each partnership and their activities in local backgrounds. Furthermore regular meetings, discussions between the management group and subprojects have been taken locally in the four project towns and then between the management group and the three working groups at transnational level in all the four countries.

Regarding the level of the information flow between sub-projects management group and other staff groups, recently studies (Mäkinen & Nupponen, 2004) on Kuriiri employees showed that those who have worked in a temporary contractⁱⁱⁱ for the sub-projects have a quite high level of satisfaction compared with those who have worked in a permanent position. This last group of investigation had also more concerns in the quality and the quantity of information needed. It is remarkable to notice that people who have worked in a permanent position, had a broader view of what it is needed as training material and information about Kuriiri sub-projects than those who came only for a short period and who dealt with one part of the project (Rosenfeld, Richman & May 2004).

From other hand almost all the respondents agree that the information flow between project management group and other employers was pretty sufficient. Again the differences between temporary and permanent employees were related with their different experiences in the project. People working in a temporary work relationship tended to see the information flow more positive than their co-workers in a permanent position, but none of them thought that the information flow is fully sufficient. Finally when the information flow was considered between the Kuriiri's sub-projects and KYT in general, permanent employees asserted that it was neither insufficient nor sufficient, while the temporary employees were more satisfied (Mäkinen & Nupponen, 2004). The reasons of these differences are related with the knowledge about the organization developed in a longer period and the importance of the self-satisfaction in a work environment (Porter & Roberts, 1993).

6.4. Partners' cooperation

In this kind of partnerships, an open and efficient communication between those involved was key for efficient partnership working and is fundamental to achieve the goals planned. Work collaboration showed to be effective to work as a network with a shared objective of "working together" and with a purpose to support local initiatives dynamics. Moreover Kuriiri managerial staff showed to have strong, existing links between local partners, due to the small size of the target area and past experience of working together. Those aspects contributed significantly to good partnership working. In addition involvement of most relevant organisations was a

fundamental issue not only for sponsoring reasons but also for know-how knowledge (Hargie & Tourish, 2000). Especially Kuriiri subprojects tried to benefit of the collaboration of different network such as social welfare office /local social work, local employment office, Association of unemployed persons.

Even though the communication among these associations and organisations were having high consideration, Kuriiri management group expressed its will to improve the communication among partnerships for further collaboration. It should be noticed that communication, particularly in meetings, is a key area, which managers frequently identify as a problem (Rosenfeld, Richman & May 2004). Too often they do not achieve what is intended, real meaning is lost, people feel frustrated because they are not listened to, and poor quality decisions result. In fact when communication among employees of subproject was investigated, not all employees replied that disagreements were solved in a constructive manner. Those who have a temporary position thought that the divergences were in some extend solved, differently those who have permanent position in Kuriiri subprojects had greater concerns regarding the way discrepancies were handled (Mäkinen & Nupponen, 2004). When the questions was extended to Kuriiri project (national level) many employees felt confused and did not know how agreements were made. This tendency was typical particularly for employees working in a temporary position and also occurred among some permanent employees of the actual management group (project coordinator, director and researcher). Hence it was recognised from the managerial group the necessity to ensure that organisations in the local and national partnership networks of Kuriiri are better informed and more consistent.

6.5. Promotion and publicity

The traditional means for Kuriiri project were press, in form of articles in local newspapers local, leaflets, posters and promotional information events radio. The press coverage included articles in the local press providing information on the size of total grant allocation in each area, the impact of the project on enterprise creation, the social economy and employment, details on specific, confirming political support to the project, etc. Information events included seminars about unemployment situation, economic regeneration, and equal opportunities, info sessions in municipalities to raise the awareness of the general public and dissemination conferences carried out in most areas at the beginning and end of the project.

The “Good Practice Book”, which was the results of the transnational cooperation, confirmed however to be most effective for promoting the project and attracting potential promoters. This, combined with direct contact with target groups revealed the importance of methods that reach directly the target groups as opposed to methods where target groups receive the information through an “impersonal” channel (broadcast media, press, leaflets, etc).

Experiences from different projects confirm the importance of direct contact. Direct contact were taken with municipalities, with potential participants and beneficiaries and local structures. Also in this context communication is very important because it promotes the reputation of the public organisation and increases awareness of its products and services. Information exchange is also necessary for co-operation within the organisation.

7. Results

Before analysing the results of this investigation some specifications about the weight of each function and dimension in the questionnaire need to be explained. The respondents had possibility to choose their answer for each sub-statement within a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents weak agreement to the affirmation and 5 very good agreement. When the assertion was not clear for the respondent or he/she did not know how to answer, an empty space was left. This empty space was considered 0 as score.

In the questionnaire there were 12 statements for each section. Each statement is composed of different in number and in aspect sub-statements. To calculate the value of each statement, it is necessary to sum all scores of its sub-statements and then multiply this value by 20, which gives the real value of the statement. Hence the values of the statements lie between 20 and 100. In order to get a weighted score, this value needs to be multiplied by a specific factor, which is a number between 3 to 10.

To calculate the total score per function, it is necessary to sum all 12 statements weighted scores in each section and then this total weighted score was divided by 70, which is the total factor for all the three functions. For calculating each single dimension a similar procedure has been made but with a different total factor, which was 30 for the dimensions.

Furthermore for interpreting the final result, the organisation's communication functions are examined to see which ones have a proportionally low score. The overall score is the weighted average of the three communication functions. The total score of "policy communication" is accordingly multiplied by the factor 3.5, the total score of "corporate communication" with 4 and "organisation-bound communication" with 2.5 respectively. The sum of these total scores is then divided by 10. Hence, the overall score will always lie between 20 and 100. Finally all the overall scores of each respondent was separated by country of origin and position of respondents in the national and 4Work projects. Again the sum of countries overall scores and their average makes the following results.

In Dr. Vos' opinion the critical value is always 70, below this value some improvements in communication quality are necessary. Considering the different cultural origins of the respondents and their perceptions of scoring, some cultural interpretations of the scores needed to be considered.

7.1. The communication functions

Among the three functions analysed in this survey, there was a strong difference in perception of corporate communication. If for the co-ordinator and management employees this function has reached the higher score than the others, for the working groups the results were totally different. Staff showed that it does not have a clear idea of what it is exactly corporate communication, which means no clear idea of the organisation as a whole, its image and norms and the communication regarding intention and establishment of the project organisation. This result about corporate communication was common in all the four countries participating the 4Work project. This is a clear sign of lack of or inappropriate information flow among staff (Körver, & van Ruler, 2003).

Regarding the second function, policy communication. Almost all respondents agreed that communication flow is an important factor in their co-operation and is an essential instrument for regulating and facilitating the achievement of organisations' goals. The internal communication of the KYT organisation is quite consistent and conscious both in Kuriiri project and in 4Work collaboration. The staff was quite careful and conscious in official connections, when working with municipal or national governmental officers. However, it is not so clear for each project manager how communication can be a fundamental mean for developing a policy together with citizens and/or organisations interactively. Instead the external communication with the other partnership organisations was particularly difficult.

The first problem was the language. The knowledge of English, as vehicle of communication for the transnational project, differed greatly among the participants of 4Work project. Also the technical terminology related to European project practices was unknown. Another relevant problem for the external communication was Internet prophecy. At the beginning not all the employees working at 4Work project knew how to use intranet-working environment. Nevertheless these initial problems all the participants of 4Work countries considered the partnerships network a great source of learning from the others' experiences. Communication, even though with some difficulties, was friendly and open-minded orientated.

Differently from the previous two functions, the third, the organisation-bound communication, had the lowest score. Organisation-bound communication represents the internal processes of an organisation and it focuses on the internal communication, labour market communication and crisis communication. Its role is essential for planning activities inside and outside the organization. As the questionnaire revealed there was no explicit communication strategy in the project work of Kuriiri, neither clearly written strategy document on communication in 4Work transnational project. The only information available was delivered to Finnish staff during two educational lectures held by one expert consult in communication matters in the end of May 2002 and in July 2002.

7.2. The dimensions of communication

Among the dimensions of the communication quality it appears that communication policy, effectiveness and efficiency of communication and responsiveness were those with the lowest score. Communication policy was one of the most difficult topics to approach in this questionnaire. Knowledge on how to communicate properly inside and outside the organisation was still a critical matter for the respondents. Certainly these results proved that communication policy among non-governmental intuitions and NGOs is not yet developed. This means there is a necessity for future strategic consideration and for determining factual choices and procedures.

The second dimension for lower score is the effectiveness and efficiency of communication. For almost half of the interviewees the communication flow was not efficient and many, partly linguistic, problems appeared and slowed down the activities. In this context it is essential to develop a result-focussed and efficient deployment of communication, which requires well-considered forms of research and cost-conscious procedures.

Moreover responsiveness had quite a lower score in general in almost all countries a part from Germany, which had a fairly clear idea of it. Responsiveness represents that part of evaluation and reconsideration of the activities done. Feedback should be observed and applied for improvement as part of the strategic development of a project. This requires a monitoring system and the willingness to use feedback.

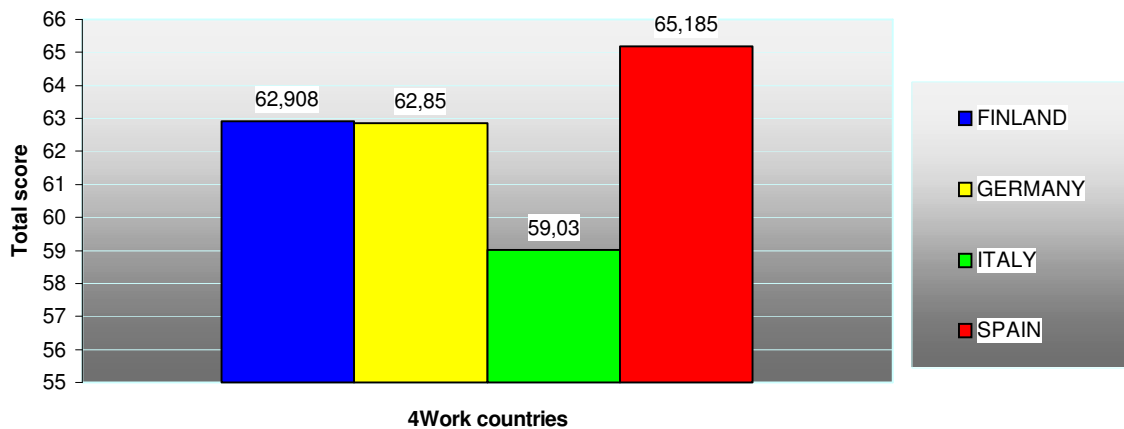
Among the positive results, accessibility of information and organisation, transparency, interactive policy are those dimensions with the high score. All the partnerships in 4Work project agreed that their citizens and organisations involved in their national projects could find what and who they were looking for, such as providing digital sources and contact people. This aspect demands a good information system and a clear organisation structure as well as an open culture. Also transparency obtained a good score, which means that everyone involved in 4Work project had clear idea of the message and policy. This aspect underlines the importance of a culture focussed on simplicity and justification.

Finally publicity via the media, which is also an important issue for Kuriiri project, had a middle score. The results shows that Kuriiri organisation is quite active with respect to media contacts and is open as possible in supplying information. Spanish partner had a different result regarding the publicity via media. This is not well developed as in Finland while the interactive policy is having a higher result. The Spanish organisation showed to be more focused on the active involvement of target groups (also those difficult to reach) in policy projects, which requires procedures and rules and culture focussed on collaboration. In the same dimension, Kuriiri project showed a much lower results.

7.3. The total score of communication quality

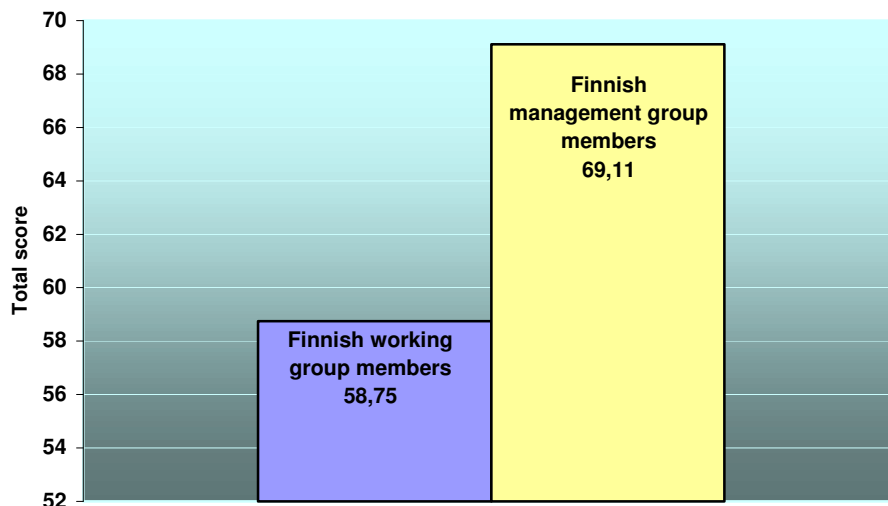
Considering that the data provided from the Italian partner was not enough to ponderate its communication quality with the other partners, the total score of the questionnaire was more or less the same in each of the three other countries for all the functions and dimensions analysed (see Picture 2).

Picture 2: Total score of communication quality



Considering especially the Kuriiri organisation, the greater difference of scoring was more between the management group and those members of 4 Work project working groups, which were working in Kuriiri's subprojects. This dissimilarity is in the concept of internal communication. That is Finnish employees have a different view of what communication is and should be inside KYT. The Picture 3 shows the differences among management group and working groups in 4Work partnership rate of communication quality in their organisation.

Picture 3: Total score per group



Furthermore these scores should be compared with the minimum total score proposed by prof. Vos as satisfactory level of communication quality. This score is 70 (Vos & Schoemaker, 2004). As we can see for the Finnish management group the level of communication quality has a more or less satisfactory result when communication is considered as vehicle to develop co-operation and to diffuse information among different partnerships.

Differently for the working groups the level is more than 10 points less the minimum. As the questionnaire pointed out the communication problems are concerning more Kuriiri's employees than the managerial area. The importance of communication is not only related to the success or failure of the organisation, but it affects also other dimension of workers' attitudes. In fact it is through communication that employees learn what is expected of them, find out how to do their jobs, and become aware of what others think of their work (Likert, 1993; Schuler, 1995). Because the transmission and reception of information play such an important role in organizational life, effective communication ought to be related to favourable employee work attitudes (Schuler, 1995). Beside this an effective communication can change the employee satisfaction on his/her job and motivation to work better.

Porter and Roberts (1993) argued that employees who are deeply involved in their jobs and whose jobs are central to their sense of self-worth are likely to be more affected by the quality of communication at work than are employees whose jobs are irrelevant to how they feel about themselves. Because self-worth is at stake, employees who are involved in their jobs want to perform well. As a result, they tend to respond positively to good communication but negatively to poor communication that makes performing well more difficult (Porter & Roberts, 1993). Because they are less affected by whether they perform well or badly, the quality of communications makes less difference to employees who are not involved in their jobs (Schuler, 1995). Employees who are involved in their work wish to maintain control over the work environment (Locke, 1993) and are thus concerned with a good quality of communication because it provides them with more control over what happens to them at work (Likert, 1993). This is the case of Kuriiri workers, where they express clearly in the questionnaire their need and will of a better understanding of communication strategies.

Moreover the needs and problems that were identified included: improving public speaking skills; improving employees' interpersonal skills; increasing the effectiveness of group communication (meetings); improving problem-solving, decision-making, and negotiation skills within the organization; improving communication channels and feedback systems; improving the quality and quantity of information dissemination; examining the means of communication within the organization and their relationships to each other; interpreting computer information; developing strategies for and measurement of organizational change; and providing opportunities for employees to explore their intrapersonal communication in relation to their work.

8. Conclusions

In this context it seems that the importance of communication knowledge among employees and managerial area is underevaluated. The survey revealed that there is a certain kind of communication flow among the partnerships and usually it is very friendly and supportative, but there is also a lack of planned communication strategies. This means that information with stakeholders, employees, transnational partners, are not following any specific and organise program, but they are spontaneous and not premeditated. Moreover people in the transnational cooperation have not been specifically educated in any matters – no more in communication affairs.

In this view KYT should re-consider its organisational program and include communication training in all the levels of the organisation. In fact the function of a communication strategy is to organize the quantity of information inside an organisation, to teach employee to be re-active to different situations and above all to transmit a unique and clear image of the organisation (Barker & Camarata, 1998). If there is not a well-developed communication strategy, it can happen that one employee could mislead the network partnership by saying something differently from the organisation idea. This means also to know how and when to say something (Daft, Lengel, & Tevino, 1987).

Finally it is remarkable to notice that some good promotional and publicity planning have been done at KYT at national level for being visible. As Likert (1993) explained if an organisation, private or public is not visible, it loses credibility in its work and also financial help. Nevertheless if the organisation is developing very successful projects for the community, it should show them as much as possible. The results will help to the organisation national and international credibility on its field of work. This means more research and more financial support to the organisation.

9. APPENDIX

Table 1. Sources of data – the size of target group, which received the questionnaire and number of answerers by partnership projects.

4WORK TRANSNATIONAL PARTNERS	TARGET GROUP OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE (number of people who received the questionnaire)	ANSWERERS	
		N° Persons	Percentage %
Partner project - country	Persons	N° Persons	Percentage %
Kuriiri - Finland	10	6	60,0
Improvement of Employment of Problem Groups in the Crafts - Germany	8	2	25,0
Tortona for Work - Italy	7	1	14,3
Aunaza - Spain	3	2	66,6
All	28	11	39,3

Table 2. Sources of data – the typology of the answerers

ALL TYPES	WORKING GROUP MEMBERS		MANAGEMENT GROUP MEMBERS	
	N° Persons	Percentage %	N° Persons	Percentage %
Questionnaire replies				
11	6	54,6	5	45,4

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Endnotes:

- i In 4Work transnational project each country had its own different national project. Those project were for Finland "Kuriiri subprojects" in Jyväskylä, Kuopio, Lappeenranta and Rovaniemi, for Germany "Improvement of employment of problem groups in the Crafts" in Trier, Mainz and Koblenz, for Italy "Tortona for Work" in Tortona, and for Spain "Aunaza" from Zaragoza.
- ii Info on the questionnaire in Appendix, Table 1 and 2.
- iii The differences between the positions of those people working as Kuriiri's employees depend on the nature of the employment contract. In reality no employee in Kuriiri was working in a permanent position. All contracts were based on the length of the project and ended 14.5.2005. The longest working period for some in the "permanent" contract group was 3 years and an half, the shortest periods for some in the "temporary" group could be some weeks.

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