

AEC PROJECT "ACCREDITATION IN EUROPEAN PROFESSIONAL  
MUSIC TRAINING

AEC TEST EVALUATION VISIT REPORT  
10 – 11 May 2007

Conservatorio de Musica "Giuseppe Tartini"  
Trieste

Evaluation Committee:  
Mrs. Cecilia Goncalves  
Mr. Gottfried Scholz  
Mr. Michael Uhde

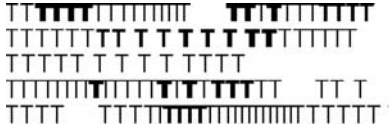
Secretary:  
Mr. Einar Solbu

### **AEC Test Evaluation Visit in Trieste**

The test evaluation visit in Trieste was the third test visit taking place in the framework of the Accreditation Project. The main aim of the visit was to test the set of criteria and procedures suggested in the framework document.

The Conservatorio de Musica "Giuseppe Tartini", Trieste was represented by Direttore Massimo Parovel, Vicedirettore Silvia Tarabocchia, Dott. Francesco Gabrielli and Professor Paola La Raja (responsible for international affairs).

The members of the Committee were Professor Cecilia Goncalves, Professor Gottfried Scholz (chair), and Professor Michael Uhde. Secretary was Mr. Einar Solbu.



**Conservatorio  
di musica  
Giuseppe  
Tartini**  
**Trieste**



## AEC test evaluation visit May 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> 2007 – Schedule

### Wednesday May 9<sup>th</sup>

When?	What?	Who?
during the day	Arrival in Trieste	1. Gottfried Scholz (chair) 2. Michael Uhde (expert) 3. Cecilia Goncalves (expert) 4. Einar Solbu (secretary) 5. Linda Messas (AEC Office staff for practical support)
18.30	Meeting	Evaluation committee, prof. Paola La Raja

### Thursday May 10<sup>th</sup>

When?	What?	Who?
9.30	Meeting at the Conservatorio Tartini with the Head of Conservatorio Tartini and members of academic and support staff	Evaluation committee Direttore Massimo Parovel, Vicedirettore Silvia Tarabocchia Prof. Paola La Raja
	Meeting with Academic council members	Prof. Giorgio Blasco, Paolo Da Col, Romolo Gessi, Massimo Gon, Flavio Zaccaria, Andrea Amendola, Stefano Procaccioli, and Direttore Massimo Parovel, Vicedirettore Silvia Tarabocchia, Paola La Raja
	Meeting with administrative staff	Head of Administrative Staff Dott. Francesco Gabrielli, Mrs. Sonia Ros
13.00 p.m.	Lunch break and committee meeting	
15.15	Meeting with representatives of profession	Evaluation committee Direttore Artistico del Teatro Verdi di Trieste M° Umberto Fanni Presidente dell'Orchestra Regionale del Friuli Venezia Giulia Avv. Mario Diego
16.00	Guided tour including the library. Meeting with Head of Music Librarianship Department	Evaluation committee Prof. Paolo Da Col
16.30	Visit some lessons and meeting with academic staff members	Class of professors: Igor Cognolato (piano), Pietro Serafin (cello) Marco Maria Tosolini (history of music), Rita Susowski (singer)
	Committee meeting	Evaluation committee Prof. Paola La Raja

### Friday May 11<sup>th</sup>

When?	What?	Who?
9.30	Meeting with academic members of Music and New Technology and Pedagogic department.	Evaluation committee. Prof. Paolo Pachini, Margherita Canale, Cristina Fedrigo.
	Meeting with students council	Zinajda Kordic, Clara Panozzo, Salvatore Perri, Raffaele Pisano, Laurentiu Stoica
	Meeting with former students	Andrea Zullian,
13.00	Lunch break and committee meeting	
15.15	Meeting	Director Massimo Parovel, prof. Paola la Raja
	Visit to some lessons and meeting with academic staff members	Classe of professors: Giuliana Stecchina (harp) Stefano Sciascia (double bass) Stefano Bellon (jazz composition)
	Feedback of the evaluation committee	Evaluation committee, Direttore Massimo Parovel. Prof. Paola La Raja
20.30	Concert and Dinner	Evaluation committee, Direttore Massimo Parovel, prof. Paola La Raja, dott. Francesco Gabrielli

### Saturday May 12<sup>th</sup>

9.15	Evaluation of the visit/preparation of the report	Evaluation committee
morning	Departure	

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the visit was to test the AEC scheme for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Music Education, in particular its criteria and procedures. Consequently, a double agenda guided the dialogue between the Committee and the Conservatorio: a review of the institution, made as realistic as the context of the review would allow (taking into consideration, for example, the short time frame for preparation), and an assessment of the relevance and quality of the criteria and procedures developed by the AEC.

The report on the institution has been presented in a format as close as possible to what the Committee would recommend for such reports in the future. It deviates, however, from a fully realistic report in that it does not draw conclusions with regard to accreditation. But even though the report is not fully realistic, its contents in terms of statements on the various criteria are based on the Committee's observations and a serious assessment of these observations. It is hoped, therefore, that the report will serve as a useful tool in the institution's endeavours to develop.

The Committee wishes to express its gratitude to the Conservatorio de Musica "Giuseppe Tartini", Trieste, for the positive way in which the Committee was received. The leadership of the Conservatorio, as well as its academic and administrative staff and students, met the Committee with openness and trust, and demonstrated real interest in exploring initiatives that may lead to quality enhancement for the Conservatorio.

## **A. Evaluation of the institution with regards to the established criteria**

### **1. Mission**

#### *- Institution's mission*

The Trieste Conservatorio is located in an area where a number of European cultures meet. The institution is highly aware of the uniqueness of its cultural environment and aims at taking advantage of it in forming its mission.

The Conservatorio is in a process of change. It has introduced the European systems of cycles of which the 1st and 2nd cycle is now offered to students. At the same time it maintains the old 10 year diploma system, awaiting a transfer of the responsibility for the pre-college specialised education and training of young musicians to the secondary school system. The Committee could not avoid noting that there seems to be some confusion among students and even teachers with regard to the terminology used to describe the two systems; the old diploma-oriented system and the new degree-oriented system. The institution has not yet introduced the terminology used to describe the two levels of the European system, namely BA and MA, in a consistent way, as apparently this is not required according to Italian law, which uses the terms 'diploma accademico di I livello' for BA and 'diploma accademico di II livello' for MA. The Committee noted, for example, that some students had the impression that the BA study level equals 2nd cycle whereas the preparatory course is the 1st.

The Committee believes that there are deeper reasons for the inconsistency and possible confusion. It got the impression that the Government is reluctant with regard to granting its Conservatorios the right to offer fully accepted 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle (MA) studies, and that 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle was not yet in the question.

In this situation the Conservatorio is developing its mission. It is clear that it sees itself as an institution which takes responsible for educating musicians, music educators and other types of musical personnel for the future culture life of Italy, thus responding to the continuously changing needs of the society for highly qualified human resources within the field of music. It also sees itself as a proactive player in the development of the cultural and musical life of its city, region and country. The Conservatory is well aware of the constantly increasing requirements put on various types of musicians by the international music life, and is aiming at placing itself in an international context of higher music education.

The Committee would like to encourage the institution to continue the ongoing process of defining and fine-tuning its mission as a tertiary educational institution serving the local, regional, national and international community within the field of music. It would also like to encourage consistent use of the European terminology for degrees.

- *Goals of its educational programmes*

Traditionally, the goals of the educational programmes have been targeted towards training of performers with a close to one-dimensional focus on the instrumental and vocal execution. The Conservatorio articulates awareness for a need for broader goals for the education of future musicians. On the one hand, each musician, regardless of professional aims, needs comprehensive knowledge, insight, experience and training in order to meet the requirements of professional life. On the other hand, the pallet of professional opportunities is constantly increasing and requires that music students are able to specialise in a variety of directions during his or her study time. Also, it is obvious that in today's society, professional people – also within the field of music – must be prepared to continue learning and developing their capacities during their life time. A prerequisite for successful life long learning is a comprehensive basis of knowledge and experience.

The Conservatorio seems to acknowledge the need for broadening the goals for their educational programmes and has started a process in that direction. This process should be supported. The Conservatorio should be encouraged to involve staff and students, as well as alumni and other representatives of the profession in the process.

- *Correspondence between the institution's mission and its educational programmes*

As noted above, the Conservatorio is in a process of change which encompasses both its mission and its educational programmes. The present awareness of the need for coherence in the whole structure of the institution is encouraging. Many challenges must be overcome to obtain full coherence. These will be dealt with in the following points and in the summary towards the end.

- *Specific values and/or policies reflected*

The tradition of the Conservatorio is based on high quality artistic creation and execution. The leadership seems to be concerned to maintain this important aspect in future study programmes. Conversations with members of the artistic staff as well as lessons the Committee were invited to experience gave evidence that this tradition is sustained.

## 2. Educational processes

### 2.1 Curriculum

*- Correspondence with institutional mission and with the goals of the educational programmes*

The Conservatorio has introduced study programmes which aim at responding to the basic ideas in the Bologna Declaration and in the Bologna Process. It has introduced the ECTS credit point system and opened up for electives for the students. As of today, the individual study programmes consist of a mixture of compulsory and optional courses. At first level, the majority of the course content is fixed, whereas there is more room for electives on the second level. In addition to their first studies (main instrument/vocal), all students have chamber music. Orchestra players have orchestra projects, and non-orchestral students have choir. All students have basic training in disciplines such as ear training, harmony, and music history.

The Conservatorio is in the process of introducing new study areas. A specialised study in new technology has already 20 students on the first level and six on the second level, and a special study programme within music library work (Biblioteconomia e bibliografia musicale) is in the final planning stage. The Committee understood that there were discussions taking place leading towards the introduction of music educational elements in the curriculum for all students.

Initiatives taken to broaden the spectrum of study options should be supported. The Conservatorio should be encouraged to pursue even further flexibility in the opportunities for the students to form their own study profiles. A mission which places the institution in a position as a proactive player in the future music life nationally and internationally should give all students insight in the wide variety of professional opportunities for creative musicians and offer each of them opportunities to develop their capacities in a variety of directions. The Committee would like to strongly support the existing initiatives aiming at giving all students opportunities to acquaint themselves with aspects of music pedagogy.

*- Aspects of the Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors (PDDs) or (if applicable) the AEC learning outcomes taken (or not) into account*

The leadership of the Conservatorio expresses awareness of both the PDDs and the AEC learning outcomes. However, the documents presenting these concepts as well as the concepts as such do not seem to play an important role in the internal educational discourse. In accordance with the tradition to which the Conservatorio belongs, there is more focus on *input* (curriculum, teaching etc.) than on *outcomes*. There is one exception though, the Conservatorio is highly aware of the importance of the artistic level in the performance of its students.

The leadership should be encouraged to continue the process of internalising the concepts of the PDDs and the learning outcomes as a tool



for developing transparent, flexible and forward-looking educational programmes, and as a basis for exchange and collaboration across national borders in Europe.

## 2.2 Delivery

### - *Correspondence between curriculum and teaching*

There is obvious consistency between the traditional curriculum and the teaching. As the Conservatorio develops new study programmes and curricula aiming at more flexibility and development of the individual student's capacities, the need for expanding teaching methods will occur. The leadership should be encouraged to support their teachers in experimenting with student-centred approaches to teaching, and in seeking new experience through collegial dialogue and interaction nationally and internationally.

The Committee's general impression is that the teaching represents a high standard. The Committee members had opportunities to be present in a number of teaching situations. It also studied written works by students. Both gave a very good impression, and reflected a high artistic and academic level.

### - *Teaching and learning processes based (or not) on the student centred and learning outcomes approach promoted by the PDDs*

See comments above.

The Committee noted that the teachers seem to be devoted to their students and their development. An obvious danger in any conservatoire is that the closeness between teachers and students – which has a number of positive sides to it – becomes a limitation for the development of the individual student's personality and independency. The Committee would like to encourage the Conservatorio to support students who want to change from one teacher to another and contribute to making such changes a natural thing.

The Conservatorio teachers might find it rewarding to discuss and further explore the term *student-centred*, and develop an active understanding of what the term may imply in terms of opportunities for student development.

### - *Student counselling and other types of services as support to the student centred and learning outcomes approach promoted by the PDDs*

The Conservatorio does not have an organised student counselling service. It seems that the Vice-Director very often plays an unofficial role as a counsellor or advisor for students. It was also pointed at the role of the Student Council which is in the position to bring general issues concerning the students' situation to the Director. It seemed clear that the Student Council was listened to by the leadership.

The Committee got the impression that the Conservatorio realised that it would be helpful to have a student counselling service to cater to students'

needs, and that this service would be even more important in the future because of the increase in flexibility in the study programmes.

- *Opportunities offered to students to present their creative work*

The Conservatorio organises a fairly comprehensive programme of student performances, mostly in the performance halls of the Conservatorio.

- *The institutional environment as challenge / support to the students*

The Committee got the impression that the leadership and the artistic and academic staff of the Conservatorio are strongly committed to the development of the students. However, at present the Conservatorio is not in the position to offer their staff working facilities on the Conservatorio premises beyond the time they teach. For that reason, the presence of the teachers in the Conservatorio environment is limited outside of classes. Most likely for the same reason, the student identification seemed to be stronger to their individual teachers ('schools' or classes) than to the Conservatorio as an institution.

The Conservatorio should be encouraged to enhance the institutional environment for the benefit of students as well as of staff colleagues.

## **2.3 Inter-national perspective**

- *International perspectives offered by the curriculum and the educational processes*

Students receive strong impulses from fellow students from a variety of countries, from visiting exchange students (ERASMUS), and – for some of them – from visits to conservatoires in other countries (also ERASMUS). The Committee experienced in its conversations with students that several of them were in the position to share perspectives on higher music education and the music profession from other parts of Europe. Obviously, also many of the members of staff had international experience as artists and guest professors. The Conservatorio also invited guest teachers to conduct master classes and seminars.

However, the artistic and academic staff as a whole does not include many members from other countries than Italy.

The leadership of the Conservatorio seemed to be well aware of the importance of international perspectives in a higher education institution and should be encouraged to explore ways in which to further develop strategies and methods for increasing the diversity of perspectives in its environment. They should also be encouraged to open up for regular employment of teachers from other countries.

- *Partnerships in which the institution is participating, contributing to providing international perspectives*

The Conservatorio is actively involved in the ERASMUS programme and has over the last some five years established partnerships with a number of sister institutions in Europe. The Conservatorio is proactive in informing

its students of the offers given at their partner institutions and is helpful in guiding their students in their search for rewarding studies abroad.

The Conservatorio is in a process of exploring how their collaboration with other European conservatoires can be taken full advantage of, not only for those directly involved but for the whole institution. This process should be supported.

## **2.4 Learning assessment**

### *- Examinations, projects and other assessment methods as a support to teaching and learning*

In the old system, many years of study were aiming at a final examination in the main study (final concert). The more or less one-sided focus on the final concert is also reflected in the very special composition of the examination jury; it consists of eleven members.

The Conservatorio is well aware that the new and more comprehensive and flexible study programmes require more varied methods for assessment and evaluation of the students. Already, more continuous assessment procedures have been introduced; one clearly positive example of which is that in the new system all disciplines count in the final evaluation of the students. The Conservatorio should be encouraged to further explore and develop assessment methods and regulations supporting flexible and student-centred study programmes.

### **3. Student qualifications**

#### **3.1 Entrance qualifications**

*- Artistic, technical, academic and mental capacities of students to accomplish the various aspects of the study programme within the expected timeframes*

Also with regard to entrance qualifications the change from a 10 year diploma study programme to a three cycle higher education programme, has had major consequences. The major change lies in the fact that the three cycle programme requires that the students have completed their secondary school before they enter the Conservatorio. As long as the Conservatorio still offers the 'old' as well as the 'new' study programme, it will operate with two different entrance requirements with regard to general academic background. However, for both study programmes, the artistic qualifications are essential. Each 'school' (department) defines the requirements for entrance. It is the Committee's impression that the artistic requirements for new students are on a high level.

The Committee has also taken positively note of the fact that special entrance exams have been introduced for admittance to the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle.

As the Conservatorio develops more comprehensive and flexible study programmes, it may want to explore the advantages of assessing a broader and more varied range of competencies when evaluating applicants, e.g. suitability for teaching and/or proficiency in several instruments for those who aim at specialising in music education.

#### **3.2 Employability**

*- Capacity of graduates to find work in a highly competitive music life*

There are no statistical data indicating to what extent the Conservatorio's graduates find work as musicians. The Conservatorio as well as representatives from the profession and alumni expressed that it is difficult for young musicians to find jobs. It was maintained that most graduates combine playing with teaching.

The Conservatorio should be encouraged to establish an alumni organisation through which it will be able to follow the career of its graduates and hence obtain valuable feed-back with regard to professional opportunities for musicians. It should also be encouraged to introduce courses in the study programmes aiming at giving students the opportunity to prepare for a variety of professional tasks (portfolio careers).

*- Contribution of graduates to the enhancement of cultural life locally, nationally and internationally*

The Committee's impression was that the Conservatorio has a high standing and plays an important role in its region, and many of its graduates become key players in the music life locally, regionally and nationally. However, there are no statistical data to underpin to what

extent such an impression is correct. Obviously, the competition regarding jobs in orchestras, theatres and other permanent organisations is either national or international, and the Trieste graduates will compete on equal terms with others - normally many others

The Conservatorio might be encouraged to explore ways in which it can be even more visible in the local and regional cultural environment, e.g. by initiating and implementing artistic projects challenging the well established structures and manners in which music is presented and communicated. Such projects might prove to be important stepping stones for graduates to find new niches as artists.

*- Spectre of music-related job arenas that graduates find themselves on immediately after graduation and later*

As indicated above, the Committee's impression was that most graduates find meaningful work and an income in a combination of performance (orchestra or freelance) and teaching. The Committee also got the impression that the conditions for musicians had become less favourable over the last few years as the public funding for the arts had been decreased.

## **4. Teaching staff**

### **4.1 Artistic and scholarly qualifications**

*- Teaching staff productive as artists and/or scholars on a high level*

The Committee's impression was that the teaching staff are highly qualified artists and scholars. The Committee was informed that the institutions was not in a position to require artistic or scholarly production from its teachers as part of their job at the Conservatorio, and that members of staff did not report such activities to the Conservatorio. Hence, the Conservatorio did not have systematic information about the staff's production beyond their teaching obligations.

*- Processes developed by the institution to support and enhance the teaching staff's artistic and scholarly production*

The Conservatorio leadership informed the Committee that a strategy for capacity building among teachers was developed but that at the present time the Conservatorio was not in a position to implement it.

The Conservatorio should be supported in obtaining the necessary resources and other conditions for implementing a strategy for capacity building among their artistic and academic staff, and thus supporting the individual teacher in his or her endeavours to enhance their qualifications. In today's world, where the competition in the musical arenas is increasing rapidly, and where changes happen fast, it is of paramount importance for those responsible for teaching at tertiary level to have continuous opportunities for enhancement of their competencies.

### **4.2 Qualifications as educators**

*- Processes developed by the institution to ensure that all members of the teaching staff have appropriate qualifications as educators*

There is no specific programme for this. See above about a general strategy for capacity building.

*- Processes developed by the institution to ensure the competencies necessary for supporting all aspects of the PDD in the educational processes*

As indicated above, the Conservatorio leadership is aware of the challenges embedded in the introduction of the concepts rooted in the Bologna Declaration and is eager to meet those challenges. The proactive approach, with which the leadership wants to deal with these challenges in order for the Trieste Conservatorio to develop into a higher education in music for the future music life of Italy and Europe, should be supported.

### **4.3 Size and composition of the teaching staff body**

*- Number of teaching staff adequate (or not) to cover the teaching volume within a frame of acceptable quality*

The Committee was informed about the system by which the artistic and academic staff of the Conservatorio is employed. The permanent staff is employed by the national Government and the composition of the staff is to a large extent given. The Government bases its employment on national competitions among artists, scholars and educators in music, a fact which reduces the individual conservatoire's possibility to form its own profile and make its own priorities to a minimum. Another consequence of this system is that the composition of the student body and the course programme is largely a result of the composition of the staff. To a limited extent, the Conservatorio can employ specialist teachers for shorter periods. The Committee's impression is that also the Unions play a strong role in decision-making processes related to employment and contractual conditions for teachers, and that this also may prevent the Conservatorio from developing in a flexible way towards the visions set for the institution.

The system seems to limit the Conservatorio's opportunity to develop new study profiles and change its foci with regard to preparing its students for new challenges in the future music life. The Committee would like to encourage giving the Conservatorio more freedom to compose its teaching staff in order to obtain a higher degree of relevance and flexibility. It would also like to encourage that certain positions are opened up for applicants from other countries. In order to build a specific profile it is important to be able to recruit the best possible teachers, either on a permanent basis or on long-term contracts.

*- Areas and disciplines included in the study programme covered (or not) by the teaching staff*

As indicated above, the present system for recruiting teaching staff limits the Conservatorio in introducing new disciplines in the study programme, e.g. various areas with the field of music education, and other disciplines which could prepare students for portfolio-careers. The Committee got the impression that there might be difficulties in realising certain new courses because of the limited freedom to engage and employ teachers (e.g. within the area of music education).

*- Composition of the teaching staff allowing (or not) flexible adaptation to new professional requirements*

See above.

The Conservatorio leadership expressed that they are well aware of the need to be flexible and that they try as best they can within the present system to introduce new courses to meet the needs of the present and future working market for musicians. The Committee would like to reiterate the need for giving the institution a higher degree of autonomy with regard to recruitment of teaching staff.

## 5. Environment, resources and support

### 5.1 Institutional culture

*- Processes developed by the institution to challenge students' and staff's intellectual and artistic creativity*

First of all, the Conservatorio runs concert series which give students the opportunity to present themselves as artists and gain valuable experience in relation to a future professional life. Furthermore, the Conservatorio organises master-classes for which students obtain special credits.

Teachers can apply for permission to concentrate on an artistic project for up to one month without losing their salary. The Conservatorio has a very small sum of money for teachers' professional development.

The Committee has already pointed at the importance for students as well as teachers to be challenged and to have opportunities for development of their special interests, and has noted that the Conservatorio leadership is aware of this. The Committee will encourage the Conservatorio to search for a variety of ways in which the institution can challenge and support their members' intellectual and artistic creativity.

*- Opportunities offered to students and staff to expose their individual creativity as reflective artists and scholars*

See above.

*- Values significant for music reflected by the institutional environment*

The Conservatorio is well aware of its history, and the cultural role the city of Trieste has played and is playing in Italy and Europe.

### 5.2 Facilities

*- Building facilities (teaching and practice studios, classrooms, concert venues, etc.) adequate (or not) to support curriculum requirements*

The Conservatorio is located in a beautiful old mansion which gives an inspiring atmosphere for music making. However, the premises are too limited, first of all with regard to practice rooms for students and rooms where teachers can work beyond the time they teach. The Conservatorio does not have adequate rooms for orchestra concerts. Sufficient maintenance of the present buildings also seemed to be a challenge. The Committee's impression is that parts of the building which originally were devoted to the Conservatorio now are occupied by private firms.

The limited facilities for students to practice are even further limited by the fact that the Conservatorio does not seem to be in the position to widen their opening hours due to union regulations, even if they wish to do so.

The Committee would like to express the hope that the Conservatorio in the near future will obtain buildings which will give staff and students working conditions appropriate for a tertiary institution in music. It will



also encourage flexibility on the part of those who are in the position to influence such practical things as opening hours.

*- Instruments (pianos, organs, percussion, etc.) of a number and standard adequate (or not) to support curriculum requirements*

The Committee will also express hope that the Conservatorio will be able to expand its collection of instruments in order to be able to offer staff and students the best possible opportunities to express themselves as musical artists.

*- Computing and other technological facilities adequate (or not) to support curriculum requirements*

The Conservatorio is well aware that the technological facilities are far from adequate at this point (today the teachers share *one* computer). There are plans for expanding the collection of computers in order for staff and students to study music, and indeed create music using the technical means of today. The Committee would like to support these plans.

*- Libraries and associated equipment (listening facilities, etc.) and services adequate (or not) to support curriculum requirements*

The institutional library contains a collection of gems for musicologists. The general collection is not magnificent but seems to cover basic needs in the institution. A broadened curriculum would undoubtedly require an extension of the collection of the library. The major challenge is, however, to have more qualified personnel to maintain and develop the library and to serve staff and students all through their (long) working day. There is also a need for more space and equipment for music listening. See even the Committee's comment above about opening hours.

There are plans for expanding the library resources in connection with the introduction of a new course in *Biblioteconomia e bibliografia musicale*. This should be supported.

### **5.3 Financial resources**

*- Educational programme tailored (or not) to be implemented with high quality requirements within the frame of the financial resources available*

The Conservatorio budget seems to cover basic expenses according to a concept of a conservatoire as a vocational school, training performers. The budget is not large enough for a higher institution for music education. Nor are the budget regulations flexible enough for the institution to develop and enhance its quality and relevance to a level compatible with major European music conservatoires. The Trieste Conservatorio has potential as well as courage to develop to that level and should be given the freedom and resources to do so.

The Committee noted that the salary level among the teaching staff is considerably lower than the level among teaching staff at other Italian tertiary institutions (universities), i.e. only some 25-35 percent of the university salaries. The leadership is fully aware that the Conservatorio is dependent on having equal status to any other institution on university

level in order to compete on the European market, and of the fact that in today's Europe the teaching staff at major music conservatoires have the same contractual conditions (teaching and administrative obligations, obligation to scholarly or artistic production, salary, resources for development etc.) as in the university world. The Committee would like to advise the relevant authorities that the contractual conditions for the teaching staff of the conservatorios in Italy will be developed in the direction of their colleagues in the university institutions.

#### **5.4 Support staff**

*- Technical and administrative staff adequate (or not) to support the teaching, learning and artistic activities?*

The Committee unfortunately did not have the opportunity to meet the President or the Administrative Council, consequently it bases its impressions on meetings with other members of the administrative staff, see schedule.

The Committee got the impression that the administrative staff is devoted to the aims and objectives of the institution and indeed supportive of the ongoing process of change and development

It also received indications that the administrative staff ought to be enlarged in order to cope satisfactorily with all organisational and administrative matters following the change.

#### **5.5 Organisation and decision-making processes**

*- Values embedded in the PDDs supported (or not) by:*

- *the organisation of the institution*
- *the organisation of the educational programmes*
- *the decision-making processes?*

It became clear to the Committee that the institution's autonomy in practical terms is limited, e.g. with regard to recruiting and contracting teaching staff, and managing its budgetary resources, in spite of the fact that the law seems to give the Conservatorio full autonomy as a tertiary educational institution. The Committee would like to encourage those with the relevant authority to give the Conservatorio full autonomy, equal to that of most major conservatoires or music universities in Europe. As indicated earlier, such autonomy is a basic prerequisite for a university level institution when enhancing its quality and ensuring that its educational programmes are relevant and proactive in relation to the society it is supposed to serve.

The Committee was informed about the Conservatorio's divided leadership: the elected Director who is responsible for the artistic and academic aspects of the operations, and the appointed President with the responsibility for the administrative aspects. It seemed not to be absolutely clear who of the two carries the ultimate responsibility for the end result of the Conservatorio operations. Each of the two top leaders related to a council (Academic Council and Administrative Council). The

Administrative Council seemed to have the final word with regard to budget matters. It is not obvious that a system with a division between artistic/academic and administrative decision-making systems contributes to effective and aims-oriented decisions. The Committee would like to encourage a review of alternative decisions-making systems. The Committee would also encourage the introduction of systems which ensure gender equality.

## **5.6 Internal quality assurance system**

- *PDDs taken (or not) into account in the quality assurance and enhancement system*
- *Involvement of staff and students in the quality assurance process*
- *Analysis and review of the process determining the level of students' and graduates' accomplishments*
- *Use of such reviews to improve the educational programme*

The Conservatorio has not yet established a comprehensive QA system. The leadership is aware of the importance of a good QA system for the enhancement of the quality of the artistic/academic as well as the administrative operations of the Conservatorio, and has started the planning of such initiatives. The Committee will encourage the introduction and development of a QA system which will positively influence the quality of staff's and students' work and consequently increase the competitiveness of the institution in national and international contexts.

## **6. Public interaction**

### **6.1 Influence on development**

- *Involvement of the institution in the public discourse on cultural and musical policies or other relevant issues*
- *Initiation and involvement in projects challenging existing musical policies and practices*

The Conservatorio interacts with major musical institutions in its vicinity and has hence a certain influence on the cultural life in the city and region. It seems that the institution only to a limited degree engages in the regional or national discourse on cultural and musical policies, although as a member of the national Directors' Conference for Italian conservatoires (where the Trieste Director is Vice-President) it has a say with regard to the development of music education in the country.

The Committee would like to encourage the Conservatorio to take advantage of the extensive knowledge and experience of its staff in proactive initiatives to develop the music life regionally and internationally. The Conservatorio should also be encouraged to be visible on international arenas as it undoubtedly has much to contribute.

### **6.2 Interaction with the profession**

- *Process developed by the institution to communicate and interact with various sectors of the music profession in order to keep in touch with their needs*
- *Participation of the institution in the exploration of new professional possibilities for musicians*

As indicated above, the Conservatorio seems to communicate and interact with the major orchestras and opera theatres in the city, which also offer opportunities for advanced students to obtain professional practice (guest players or substitutes). There is also contact with the middle school system with regard to their needs for specialised music educators, but there seems not to be a well established system for students who study music education (pedagogy) to obtain practice as part of their study.

The Committee is of the opinion that the Conservatorio should be encouraged to sustain and enhance its interaction with the well established musical institutions, and also to include in its networks of partners for dialogue and collaboration, musical groups which reflect and represent less well-established musical scenes. Contact with such groups may have a potential in the exploration of new professional possibilities for the Conservatorio's graduates. Such contact may also prepare the ground for a broadened spectre of practice opportunities for students, which, in the Committee's view, is of paramount importance for performers as well as music educators and others. The Committee will also encourage the Conservatorio to open up courses to professional people who need to update their competencies in various areas.

### **6.3 Information to potential students**

*- Consistency between the actual course programme and the information given to the public on what the institution offers in terms of educational programmes*

The consistency seems to be reasonable good. As long as the Conservatorio offers both the 'old' 10 year diploma study alternative and the 'new' European three cycle alternative (at this point 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle), it is a great challenge to give precise information and useful advise to the public, indeed to young people who aim at studying music.

## 7. Standards Summary

This summary contains two sections; firstly a list of items which stand out as being very strong relative to the AEC criteria, secondly an outline of some of the areas in which there seems to be potential for further development, based on initiatives already taken or signals given in the course of the review visit.

### Strong points

- **A leading role:** The Committee acknowledges the fact that the Director and the Academic Council of the Conservatorio de Musica "Giuseppe Tartini", Trieste, have taken a leading position in reforming the Italian conservatoire system, aiming at giving the institution an important position in the European framework of higher education. The Conservatorio leadership is well aware of this framework and has to a large extent developed strategies for obtaining an institutional position with regard to quality and relevance, compatible with major conservatoires in Europe. The Conservatorio should be given the external conditions necessary to implement these strategies.
- **Satisfied students:** The students of the Conservatorio generally express satisfaction with the learning environment created by the Conservatorio.
- **International co-operation:** The Conservatorio has established partnerships with conservatoires/universities in many countries, including opportunities for exchange for the artistic and academic staff as well as for students. This is of high value for those individuals who take advantage of these opportunities, and for the institutional environment as a whole. The Conservatorio is aware that there is still unexplored potential in its international collaboration.
- **Innovative projects:** As important elements in its strategies for developing the institution to meet new challenges from the professional life, the Conservatorio has initiated innovative projects such as Biblioteconomia e bibliografia musicale, and Musica e nuove tecnologie. Such projects will undoubtedly be considered an important response to needs in society and wishes among music students. The fact that the Conservatorio has taken such initiatives indicates clearly that it acknowledges the need for adjusting the study programme to the changes that take place in the music life, and for being proactive in relation to such changes.

### Potential for development

- **Autonomy:** In Europe, applied music is now acknowledged as a discipline equivalent to other disciplines studied at university level. Consequently, a majority of European conservatoires have been granted status as autonomic institutions within the country's university system. The Trieste Conservatorio has not in practical terms been granted the necessary autonomy, e.g. with regard to the right to employ professors and other members of staff, to giving the academic and artistic staff reasonable working conditions (contracts), or to take necessary budgetary and other decisions for developing their study programmes in order to serve the needs of students and the profession. Nor

has the Conservatorio been granted the right to offer fully accepted 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle study programmes. The Committee will support any move towards granting the Conservatorio a status equal to that of major music conservatoires in Europe.

- **Preparation for employment:** Preparing students for employment within the area of music is a conservatoire's main task. The music profession is rapidly changing, as a consequence of e.g. the technological development, globalisation, migration and other demographic changes. A high quality conservatoire should take such changes into account and prepare the students for a variety of jobs within creation, performance and education. Study programmes must prepare graduates for portfolio careers and for the ability to adapt to a changing market. All students should have the opportunity during their study period to qualify within such areas as music education, music technology and musical management (to administer one's own portfolio career).
- **Quality assurance and enhancement:** The Conservatorio should be encouraged to introduce quality assurance and enhancement systems including such aspects as self assessment, student assessment of teaching, appraisal of staff members, peer observation and assessment of teaching, regular review and assessment of students' achievements, and framed by internal processes which ensure that the findings from the various procedures are channelled back to and thus becoming a resource in the development process. A QA system should become a driving force for the enhancement of quality and relevance.
- **Facilities:** The Conservatorio should be encouraged to establish strategies to develop the already existing facilities (buildings, instruments, and equipment) to meet the needs of staff and students.
- **Alumni policies:** The Conservatorio should be encouraged to establish an alumni organisation in order to take advantage of the professional experience among their graduates. Continuous communication with alumni will give invaluable feedback to the institution in relation to updating study programmes and ensuring that they have professional relevance.

## **B. Evaluation of the criteria**

The Committee found the AEC criteria useful as a framework for dialogue and reflection around quality issues, both within the Committee itself and between the Committee and the Conservatorio. The criteria also seem to be complete. The Committee also took note of the fact that the leadership of the Conservatorio seemed to find the criteria helpful for their preparatory process and relevant in relation to the transition upon which the institution has embarked.

The Committee experienced, however, that the criteria reflect traditions and concepts developed in the northern part of Europe rather than in the southern part. Consequently, many institutions in the south will have to take longer steps in order to comply with the criteria than their sister institutions in the north. The Committee does not suggest that this should lead to any changes, it just wants to share it as an observation and reflection.

The Committee will suggest that the material normally should include:

- An easily readable overview over the structure of music education in the country, covering general as well as specialised music education.
- Information on and explanations to the institution's grading system.



## **C. Evaluation of the procedure**

### **1. Material given by the institution**

- *Adequate?*
- *Sufficient?*

The Committee experienced that the materials presented prior to the visit were somewhat limited in the sense that they were fairly general and contained only few specifics in the form of statistical data. However, on the scene, the Committee obtained all the material it requested.

It should be underlined that the material should respond very directly to the various questions asked in the criteria. It is also important to emphasise that it should contain statistical materials regarding staff, students, alumni, and study programme.

Obviously, it is a burden for an institution to translate all relevant material into English. The Committee accepted to receive materials in Italian even if that created some problems. In the future, institutions should be required to present all basic material in English.

### **2. Schedule of the visit**

- *Length (too long/too short)*
- *Content (in conformity with expectation? Elements missing?)*

Two full days for the visit seems to be adequate. The committee should meet in the afternoon the day prior to the official visit, and should have a morning together after the second day to summarise.

The schedule as it was worked out by the Conservatorio was highly satisfactory. The Committee experienced that it is important to have a certain degree of flexibility toward the end of the visit in order for the committee to follow up on or go deeper into specific issues, through ad hoc conversations with relevant representative, e.g. the director.

Even if the Committee realises that it is collectively responsible for process as well as conclusions, it found it helpful to, prior to the visit, divide special responsibilities for various areas and issues among its members, according to their special competencies and interests, and let the various committee members take a lead in the meetings relative to the various issues on the agenda.

### **3. Composition of the Committee**

- *Big enough?*
- *Adequate composition?*

The Committee found its composition satisfactory as all its members have long experience in leading positions in conservatoires and covered a

variety of relevant areas. It proved very helpful that a majority of the members were able to communicate in Italian.

The Committee will suggest that even if it is a requirement that the English language shall be used during the visit, it is important that the committee has at least one member with sufficient knowledge of the local language.