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**Transnational partnerships: assessment of Norway-Romania cooperation in waste
management**

by

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This thesis was written as a part of the master program at NHH. Neither the institution, the supervisor, nor the censors are - through the approval of this thesis - responsible for neither the theories and methods used, nor results and conclusions drawn in this work.

Preface

This master thesis is a part of a two-year Master of Science degree in Economics and Business Administration at the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH). Undertaken research has been awarded E.ON Ruhrgas Scholarship, that was not only a good sign of approval at the start of the work, but also allowed extensive travels essential for primary data collection.

The fact that authors graduate in different master programs, namely Master in Energy, Natural Resources and the Environment and Master in International Business is regarded as a possibility to extend the scope of traditional approach to the issue of developing sustainable waste management practices in the so-called emerging environmental markets, as well as supplement the research with distinct yet related theoretical and empirical research tools and methodologies.

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Summary

Concentrating on the transnational project work entitled “*Improve regional-level waste management in Romania through a combination of institutional building, small-scale pilot project implementation and awareness raising actions*” that lies within the scope of the Norwegian Cooperation Programs with Romania, authors of this thesis have undertaken an endeavor to fuse several theoretical schools of thought in order to create a way to approach the aspects and outcomes of the cooperation under study in a comprehensive manner.

Conducted research is based on the case study that took place in a thriving field both practically and theoretically. Increasing number of research projects aim at assessing development of waste practices in the so-called “emerging environmental markets”. The mode of such cooperation projects, mostly addressed as “transnational network” – a network of institutions and individuals of different kinds working on a project across national borders – is topic of great interest and relevance for the success of global goal of combating climate change. It is evident, that for the establishment of the theoretical framework for assessment of such mode of cooperation first step is to gather substantial amount of empirical evidence.

Considering all the above, this thesis contributes to the research field in the following manner: formulated case study adds to the body of empirical literature that is of critical importance for the development of the emerging of research; analysis of several theoretical constructs, on transnational networks, knowledge transfer and behavior and attitude to waste gives an overview of the ways to complement the only existing framework for transnational networks assessment: the context-based approach to network form of governance. Additionally, public good nature of knowledge and sustainable waste practice is discussed and represented as one of the reasons for the particular behavior and willingness to transfer knowledge, observed within the network under study; this assumption creates the basis for the overall conclusions of the research and represents a novel approach to the issue.

Due to the nature of the studied subject, theoretical and practical take on the case is the main characteristic of the thesis. Theoretical constructs thus are discussed in the light of their close link to the waste management practice and prevailing market trends – the authors believe that, taking conducted research a step away from the pure academic paper, it makes it better aligned with the needs of the market actors.

1. Introduction

1.1. Brief overview of the research area

A case study on the cooperation project between Norway (donor state) and Romania (beneficiary/recipient state) under the Grants of European Economic Area and Norway Financial Mechanisms (EEA/Norway Grants) serves as a basis for this thesis. The goal of the addressed project was to establish a “Partnership for a clean environment, low waste and sustainable development in Region 7 Center”. Conducted research is predominantly concentrated on describing knowledge transfer and learning process within the partnership project entitled “Improve regional-level waste management in Romania through a combination of institutional building, small-scale pilot project implementation and awareness raising actions”, that was carried out between May 2009 and June 2011, excluding the preparation phase.

According to the EEA/ Norway Grants, to be eligible for grants, projects should meet to goals: reduce economic and social disparities within the European Economic Area and strengthen the bilateral relations between the EEA EFTA states Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and the 15 recipient states (EEA and Norway Grants Guideline, 2012, p.5). As defined by the Norwegian Financial Mechanisms Committee (EEA and Norway Grants Guideline, 2012, p.6), bilateral relations refer to political, economic, cultural and historical ties between participant countries. In the very broad sense, bilateral communication between private and public entities in the two countries constitutes the core of the bilateral relations.

The underlying principle of the cooperation is the involvement of a broad variety of partners, including national and local authorities, educational and research institutions and civil society organizations, private and public enterprises and public-private partnerships. Attention is paid to changing mentality and raising awareness among young generations; students are involved in international exchange and company internships in both participating countries.

Mechanism of goal fulfillment is knowledge transfer from donor state, covering the area of its expertise, to beneficiary state, addressing the specific need within the country; yet bi-directional learning process is desired, as the outcomes of cooperation are intended to positively benefit both partners. In order to assure better results, initiative of the recipient state and pro-active behavior is needed, control takes place both on the part of the recipient and donor state.

1.2. Purpose and research problem

Increased scholastic interest in the formation of the theoretical approach for the evaluation of the work of transnational networks corresponds to the impressive potential of this form of partnership for provision of sustainable livelihood models in the developing countries. Additionally, substantial funding directed to the new EU entrants under EEA/Norway Grants and, on a larger scale, cohesion grants, as well as their increasing amount and influence on policy making on an international level cannot be overlooked when discussing the acuteness of the issue.

Throughout the period of 2004-2009, Norway supported more than 1240 projects (EEA/Norway Grants, 2010), together with Iceland and Liechtenstein, Norway provided €1.3 billion to the 12 newest EU member states, and Greece, Portugal and Spain; within the period of 2009-2014 countries are providing additional €988.5 million (ibid.). Norway contributes 97% of the total funding, as well as is accountable for the largest amount of partners from within donor states (ibid.).

At the same time networks divert their focus increasingly to the environmental challenges faced by recipient states - in 2009, out of allocated cohesion funds that totaled €105 billion, €54 billion were directed to help the new member states comply with EU environmental legislation, and €28 billion directly to water and waste management schemes (Hall, 2010). ¼ of EEA grants is spent on environmental projects, focusing on energy efficiency and renewable energy in public buildings, and cutting emissions of CO₂ and other pollutants (EEA/Norway Grants, 2011).

Romania, the beneficiary state in the considered study, is investing 42% of the cohesion funding into environmental projects (Hall, 2010). Under EEA and Norway Grants, within the funding round 2002-2009, 24 projects in Romania have been supported in the area of environment and sustainable development, accounting for € 26,312,572 in grants (EEA/Norway Grants, 2011).

The cost of the project under study was equal to € 2,400,000 with the grant rate of 83%. Out of the funds allocated to the Project, Romania managed to spend only 91,67% of the funds (REPA Sibiu, Interview 2012).

Thus, considering the value of the grant system for the development of the sustainable environmental practice, and increased budgets directed to the projects initiated by the beneficiary states, necessity to theoretically approach the aspects of the presented mode of cooperation, termed within the scope of the paper as “transnational networks”, “transnational network-based

project work” or “cooperation”, but mostly “focal cooperation”, is evident – availability of the assessment model would allow both beneficiary and donor state to effectively reach the goals of the cooperation and prepare for the potential pitfalls. At the same time, any approach to the issue should be of a comprehensive manner.

Thus, for the purpose of the research, following research questions and hypotheses are formulated:

Research question 1: what are the characteristics and the outcomes of the focal cooperation from the perspective of waste management and transnational network-based project work?

Research question 2: what is an appropriate way of accessing the characteristics and the outcomes of the focal partnership theoretically and empirically-wise?

Hypothesis 1: similar modes of cooperation, based on short-term intensive transnational project work, are to prevail in the coming years within the waste management sector in particular; integrated theoretical and practical approach is needed in order to fully access the outcomes of such cooperation projects.

Hypothesis 2: existing theoretical constructs should be adjusted in order to be applied to the focal project and similar cooperation.

Hypothesis 3: limited amount of time (1 year) that passed after the official project completion and lack of empirical evidence covering similar cooperation projects prevent a more in-depth analysis of the processes within and outcomes of the cooperation under study.

1.3. Structure and composition of the thesis

The thesis structure is consists of four main chapters: description of theoretical approach, presentation of the empirical evidence, theory application and presentation of findings and conclusions.

However first of all, extensive research into the process of social research is described. This work provided necessary knowledge as to structuring interviews and conducting field research, working with gathered material and acting responsibly when processing individual interviews.

Peculiarity and complexity of the research subject necessitates the division of the first theoretical part into several main areas of concern. Discussion on global public goods includes brief introduction into the current trends in waste management and theory on behavior and attitudes as

related to the environment and waste in particular. It is followed by introduction and modeling of the operation of transgovernmental/transnational networks and description of the contextual model applied to analyze knowledge transfer within the transnational network.

The second chapter – empirical study – consists of two subparts. First subpart describes the state of the waste management practices within Norway and Romania, and is based on a desk-top research and, partially, on insights from the field study and interviews. The same is attributed to the description of the cultural aspects of the donor and beneficiary state. The second subpart is based on the narratives formulated during the interviews and presents individual insights and opinions as to the contexts shaping international cooperation. Thus, the first subpart mostly has to do with the discussion on the outcomes of cooperation as related to the future of sustainable waste practices within recipient state, while the second refers to the observations and insights into transnational project work.

The third chapter, theory application, is aimed at addressing the stated hypothesis and research questions. Core elements of this chapter are: theory application and theory fusion, the first being utilization of the theory for case analysis and the latter addressing potential benefits of merging several theories together to approach the issue in a comprehensive manner.

The thesis concludes with findings and suggestions for future research, as well as some insights into potential improvements in the organization of the project work under EEA/Norway Grants. Answers to the research questions and summary of the discussion on the hypothesis are presented.

1.4. Research method

An approach based on case study methodology is considered to be the most suitable way of fulfilling the goals of this master thesis. This is due to the useful tools that it offers in terms of comprehensive approaching the problem and the basis for social and political decision-making provided by the empirically based knowledge and increased political and practical relevance of social research (Flick, 2011).

Observations were largely made during the study tour to Romania in line with Yin (1984, p. 23) who states that this research method best investigates the phenomenon in its real-life context using different sources of evidence. The importance of case study approach is stressed by Gillham (2003) who highlights the necessity of observing activity within the context. Yin (1994) also states that case studies are appropriate for theoretical generalizations.

Cooperation with Innovation Norway on the early stages of the research helped to obtain the set of relevant contacts. Being a part of the Norwegian delegation during a study tour to Romania that took place one year after official completion of the project under study, allowed authors to acquire substantial amounts of “in-house” information, reach a certain level of trust during undertaken interviews.

Theorists dealing with applied research methodology did not reach a common agreement as to the necessity of a before-hand desk-top research. According to Yin (1984), literature review has to be undertaken in order to see what research has been previously conducted. On the basis of this interview questions with deeper level of understanding can be formulated. According to Flick (2011), traditional way of formulating the case study consisting of three consequent stages – description, understanding and explanation - can be enlarged to introducing an initial stage of drawing on the formation of the theory-derived understanding that is further adjusted. For the purpose of the conducted research, it seemed natural to investigate prior work on the subject, that provided authors with basic knowledge of the state of waste management practice and the aspects of the described mode of cooperation.

Thus the research method comprised the following steps:

1. Information acquisition and formulation of the theoretical framework and approach

Empirical evidence of the presence of transnational/transgovernmental cooperation in waste sector has been addressed first from the theoretical perspective of privatization within the sector and technology and knowledge transfer within the multinational corporation active in the field. Though the focus on knowledge transfer within multinational corporations has been abandoned in favor of knowledge transfer within transnational networks, insightful body of concepts has been already analyzed by the time authors moved to the next step. Especially helpful was the research conducted within the waste sector as such.

2. Design of questions for the first interview round

Each interview was structured in the same manner, with the three sets of open questions. First set was related to the interviewee’s own story and role within the organization. The next body of questions was concerned with the issues of waste management in the country of residence of interviewee. The third and main body covered questions related to the cooperation in question and mechanisms for knowledge transfer applied or developed.

3. Data collection

In order to obtain quality information on the topic, the issue was addressed in a comprehensive way. This resulted in a large number of participants from both Norwegian and Romanian sides, several rounds and forms of interviews, field studies and desk-top research on related issues and opinions. Empirical methods applied included interviewing, observing and analyzing data.

Data was collected in two question rounds. First round was devoted to individual face-to-face or skype interviews. In the first round, interviews were semi-structured with prevalence of open questions. This was due to researchers' intention to acquire more insider information and not to restrict the interviewee to the answers suggested by the researchers.

Second round took place after the field research in Romania and was based on a uniform questionnaire based on the specific questions identified after the first round. It was distributed among all research participants. The questionnaire had to incorporate a comprehensive list of open questions from different subject areas. Level of deviation from the sequence of questions was moderate, mostly low. To ensure data consistency, interviews were recorded and communication via email was used to double-check certain aspects if necessary.

During the study tour, some of the research questions were asked during "natural" conversation and thus were not recorded, but helped build the perception and basic knowledge of communication for the researchers.

The interviewing process was based on the ethical theory frameworks provided by Murphy and Dingwall (2001) and Schnell and Heinritz (2006). Principles of general research ethics, including non-maleficence, beneficence, autonomy/self-determination of respondents, justice guided our approach to research and respondents. All the interviewees were asked whether they agree that the interview will be recorded and scientifically analyzed.

4. Data analysis

As literature on case formulation and analysis suggests, accurate documentation of facts should be done in order to avoid possibility of replacing the interviewee point of view with the researcher point of view (Stake, 1995). To allow for case formulation, narratives were recorded and write-ups prepared. Researchers interpretations play vital role when accessing the narratives. Interpretations are partially based on the personal observations during the study tour to Romania.

5. Rebuilding theoretical framework, "gray literature" assessment

As Flick (2011) refers to it, “gray literature” represents practice reports or reflection of practitioners about their work that is not available through the usual bibliographic sources (Flick, 2011). Sources like practice reports received from project participants contributed valuable insights for this thesis and are listed in the respective section of the reference list.

6. Hypothesis formulation

Though hypothesis formulation as described in Punch as an activity necessary to make a number of particular predictions before the research is conducted, thus, a priori (in Flick, 2011), authors reformulated the hypothesis as an outcome of the rethinking of a theoretical approach and framework applied to the case.

7. Formulation of the case

To guarantee comprehensive analysis authors were trying to avoid either drawing on additional assumptions outside the material or reading something into the text that is not documented in it as recommended by Flick (2011).

Language-related aspects of research should be considered. The working language of research was English, with participants including Russian, Norwegian, Romanian and Dutch native speakers. During the study tour to Region 7 Center, project manager, who was part of the project under study, was of great help: communication with all the Romanian participants went through her translation from Romanian into English. Working language of the analyzed project was English as well, however there were number of trainings where an interpreter was used, and several documents collected for research were in local languages. Otherwise, interviewees responded in English on their own behalf.

Theory suggests that the level of proficiency in the language, cultural and personal backgrounds affect the communication through acknowledged and unacknowledged sets of assumptions, feelings and values (Phillips, 1960). Extensive research as to the cultural aspects of Romania, as well as authors experience with the Norwegian culture due to the study-related arrangements in this country serve as a mediating mechanism for potential fallacies stemming from differences in the named sets. Substantial interest of participants in transferring the knowledge could be seen as a basis for additional effort put into obtaining conceptual equivalence that in the case of the research was, as suggested by the literature, preferred to lexical comparability (Overing, 1987; Temple, 1997). Frey (1970) observes that familiarity with the culture positively affects the implications of terms that are used carry for the people under study. In addition to what has been

said, topic of the project under study seems to be very general and readily available for easy understanding.

Use of an interpreter could be seen as a factor that affects the quality of research and is beyond the researchers' control (Phillips, 1960). Though the source language and target language were English, rephrasing individual statements for the purpose of case formulation remaining the initial statements and meanings required consultation with interviewees for clarification. As Warwick and Osherson (1973:33) suggest, particularly important is to ask respondents not only for their answer but also for their interpretation of the item's meaning. As important is seen a necessity to constantly discuss and 'debate' conceptual issues with their interpreters and translators in order to ensure that conceptual equivalence has been achieved (Temple, 1997). In a number of cases during the interviews, this advice was handy; yet generally there was clarity between the interviewers and the interviewees.

Though write-ups represent word-by-word presentation of the narrative, for the presentation within the case part of the thesis narratives have been reformulated in order to present information in a short and coherent way. Risk of misinterpretation was taken into account and mediated through the elaborate discussions on the meaning of certain statements, several rounds of interviews containing similar and open questions, that gave respondents an opportunity to reply in extensive explanatory manner to the question, reducing the level of misunderstanding.

1.5. Practical limitations

It has been decided not to attribute information provided in the case to any particular interviewee in order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, otherwise it might have negatively affected inter-personal relations within the network.

Authors are aware of the fact that removing identifying information increases the possibility of losing value that comes from the contextual information within the case and might be a platform for number of fallacies when analyzing the project work. However, potential benefits of positive experience within the Partnership that greatly affect improvements in the local waste management system, are at this stage preferred, considering company names remain. Names of the employees in this case are perceived as irrelevant.

The information on the project under study has been collected one year after its end. Considering this time delay, it is necessary to account for the difficulties for individuals to recall particular

aspects of it. Incorrect information might also be provided without the intention to mislead the interviewer but as a consequence of the time gap.

From the side of the interviewers, interpretation of narrative presents a strong limitation. Starting with writing down recorded narratives and later with reformulating the interviewees' thoughts into the case creates a fruitful platform for wrong assumptions and misunderstandings. The fact that the research team consisted of two people is seen as being able to mediate this shortcoming of the research method because both authors could countercheck each others' conclusions.

In relation to the panel interview with REPA, group composition can be seen as a disturbing factor, since it included participants who were not directly involved in the project under study or the events of the study tour. What is more, it seems that language barrier also prevented some of the project parties to participate in the discussion and provide their opinion.

2. Theoretical perspective

The thesis covers theories on several research areas with the ground concept of the research being presented by networks. Subsequent parts are devoted to theories on public goods, behavior and attitudes to the environment, transnational/transgovernmental network and knowledge transfer within these networks, as well as contextual approach to the assessment of knowledge transfer within them.

Network theory stems from computer sciences and today is widely used within a number of fields, including economics and social sciences. Particular attention to the networks has been paid within the realms of social networks, organizational networks and transnational governmental networks. Thus the complex notion of network and complexities associated with the knowledge transfer within the network spanning across international borders are presented in this chapter in an intertwined manner. This all-including approach is justified by the fact that no theory solely concentrating on networks has been found, making it a notion binding various realms together by the handiness of its application.

Knowledge transfer theory comes from a well-established knowledge-based theory of the firm, where knowledge represents a competitive advantage of the multinational corporation that is, from the transaction cost perspective, faster and more efficiently transferred within the firm, than through the open market. Interestingly, within the environmental sector, knowledge is handled absolutely differently – especially with expanding networks. Inside environmental industry knowledge is easier and more freely shared within a particular network thus aiding a larger scope of smaller firms involved in this network.

From this point, for the purpose of the holistic approach to problem assessment, theoretical chapter will start with the discussion on public goods, that would cover both – knowledge and environment – and the implications of suggested perspective on prevailing market mechanisms and policy instruments in the waste management sector. Discussion on transgovernmental/transnational networks and knowledge transfer as addressed by the context-based model to network assessment will follow. Addressed networks are termed “transgovernmental/transnational” within the paper as these are the most widely used terms in the research field, where they define intrinsically close matters.

2.1. Research and market implications of the public nature of knowledge and the environment

The notion of a public good, stemming from economic theory and whose introduction in 1954 is credited to P.A. Samuelson (Stiglitz, 1999), encompasses to a large extent intangible items such as knowledge, clean water and air, waste disposal and such, due to the fact that they are perceived as having the possibility of being consumed by several individuals simultaneously without diminishing the value of consumption to any of the individuals (Zilberman, 2006). Thus, their main characteristics are non-rivalry and non-excludability.

Though for the theoretical purposes the notion of a pure public good is traditionally used (Zilberman, 2006), it should be acknowledged that no good is purely rival or non-rival that makes it a relative characteristic. Many products have characteristics of both a public good and a private good. Thus, the term public good is usually used to describe products that are dominated by their public good nature, and the term pure public good is used to describe products that do not possess any of the characteristics of a private good (LINFO, 2006). Non-excludability is as well a relative, not an absolute characteristic of most public goods. Good is called non-excludable when the cost of excluding individuals is very high (Zilberman, 2006). In the same line of argument, Romer (1986) states that knowledge can not be perfectly patented or kept secret.

Both pure and impure public goods are subject to market failures (Zilberman, 2006). As individuals are not able to state the optimal price for the good, they will opt for the lowest possible price that would create no incentive for the production of good. In the situation when good is produced, free-rider problem arises. What is more, in case individuals have no knowledge in relation to the value of the public good, they can be dramatically undervalued and underpaid for.

Stiglitz (1999) states that articulation of knowledge as a global public good dates back to Romer (1986) and Arrow (1962), not to mention Samuelson (1954). He attributes the expense on acquisition of knowledge not to its exclusiveness, but to the “transmission charge” while at the same time good remains free. Indeed, this statement serves as a cornerstone both for the knowledge-based theory of the firm and network-based theory of the firm.

Traditionally knowledge has been approached from the perspective of intellectual property rights and transaction cost economics. Just as knowledge form competitive advantage of multinational enterprises, the same way it is the basis for competitive advantage of the whole nations. Move to knowledge economy necessitates emergence of new understanding of knowledge – as a global public good (Stiglitz, 1997).

Knowledge produced by private enterprises is subject to being covered by patent or IPR. In this scenario public goods that possess knowledge or information traits are made excludable. They are still being addressed as public because were the artificial constraints removed, every actor could use as much as desired (LINFO, 2006).

Applicability of the patents and trade secrecy within the waste sector has hardly been addressed. It is clear that patent applications serve as knowledge-disseminators and force firms rely on secrecy rather than on property protection (Stiglitz, 1999). If firms can not appropriate returns to producing knowledge, they have limited incentives to produce it (Stiglitz, 1999). However, it is not clear to what extent firms in waste can be named knowledge-intensive and how sophisticated the technology applied is.

Privatization in the environmental and, particularly, waste sector, however, keep new technology and related knowledge in-house: it can be expected, that donor state only shares the knowledge and technology that are widely used and new only for the recipient state.

The commonly accepted opinion with respect to public goods is that their provision and control is carried out by state. There are though forms of cooperation between public authorities and private business when the former subcontracts or purchases goods or services from the latter for the purpose of provision the goods to the public sector.

For example, public–private partnerships (PPPs) are special entities which fully or partly overtake the transfer and control of a public good or a service currently before provided by the state (Massoud, El-Fadel, 2002). Traditional benefits associated with privatization of public services are efficiency by employing innovative operation and maintenance methods, increased level of knowledge and proficiency of personnel, increased environmental protection (Massoud, El-Fadel, 2002); traditional downsides are related to the workers protection (Hall, 2007).

MNCs in this sector, such as Veolia Environment, which is the world’s second largest player with the global market share of 5,7% by value in 2010 (Datamonitor, 2010) are able to attract private capital for infrastructure investment both on domestic and international level: this benefit

is essentially important considering the cost of compliance with new stringent regulations as to landfills, incineration plants etc. Another benefit is low and consistent cost of service provision to population, however this is subject to great controversy.

Outsourcing by the private sector has first stimulated emergence of numerous small providers, but ended up in consolidation leaving 6 big environmental multinational corporations (Hall, 2007). Traditional perception of private enterprise as being efficient, when compared to municipality, has yet to be complemented with the creation on the basis of enterprise models for knowledge sharing and technology development, open to larger audience. Absence of this openness, together with dubious working conditions as compared to public service and raised numerous concerns in relation to contracting in the sector, however, strengths of this way of improving domestic waste management practices, though subject to local legislation, have also been identified (Hall, 2007).

Bel and Warner (2008) found little support for the claim that privatization entails cost savings. Empirical results showed the importance of market structure, industrial organization of the service sector, and government management, oversight and regulation over the cost-benefit discussion. Named authors suggest application of network governance theory in the situation when municipalities outsource provision of public services and government agencies become a node in the larger network responsible for monitoring. Bel and Warner (2008) comment that in the described situations, their costs might increase due to complexity in comparison to the former costs of service provision.

Along with the privatization of the municipal services, another remarkable trend is the increased attention to implementation of green public procurement (GPP). In 2008, the European Commission set an indicative target that, by 2010, 50% of all public tendering procedures should be green (Bouwer et al, 2005). Study of Bouwer et al (2005) shows that there are 7 countries (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and UK, known as the Green-7) that were during the time of the study implementing more elements of GPP (i.e. they consistently have more tenders with green criteria); other countries perceive greener products in terms of additional costs - in general, there is a lack of management and senior officials support, low awareness and perceived importance of the issue. Therefore, Bouwer et al (2005) conclude that it can be ascertained that communicating, disseminating and practical training is extremely important if a country is to increase its GPP. They state that an important step forward would be

the creation of (linked) national and European GPP knowledge bases, naturally in the form of websites.

European Commission and government of Norway, concerned with adverse health effects of inappropriate waste management, stated the importance of facilitating co-operation between European towns and cities to allow information exchanges so that the best solutions in terms both of administrative management of municipal solid waste and of processing technologies are disseminated and used Europe-wide (EEA/Norway Grants, 2011). This necessity is due to the fact that environment and health are public goods where free markets generally fail to provide equitable and sustainable long term solutions. Public relation and training and education are among procedures and elements of a modern solid waste management concept (EEA/Norway Grants, 2011).

Stiglitz (1999) recognizes knowledge in today's environment as not only a public good, but as global or international public good. He refers to the type of knowledge essential for world competitiveness – knowledge for development. In order to compensate for market opportunism, grants are used as one of the means of promoting and financing production of public goods (Zilberman, 2006). Grants can be aimed at or supported by collective action that is as well required in order to compensate for under-supply of public goods. Civil responsibility in this case is an outcome of increased public awareness of the outcomes of neglect of the needed activity.

Following discussion represents an important part as to providing inputs into the attitude to environment and perception of sustainable waste practice as global public good due to the fact that households' recycling effort is of a significant size (Bruvoll, Halvorsen and Nyborg, 2002) to improve local and national performance in waste management.

A number of studies (Refsgaard, Magnussen, 2009; Barr, Gilg and Ford, 2001) address the interrelation between attitudes to sustainable waste practices and motivational and behavioral aspects of households. This field of research presents valuable insights into the attitudes to waste management and consequent outcomes on micro-level and is seen as able to complement existing three-context model with an operative tool to analyze the particularities of transnational cooperation in waste sector.

Barr, Gilg and Ford, (2001) stress the importance of the disposal of household waste for industrialized countries in tackling environmental issues. Also according to Agenda 21, the

world's most prominent blueprint for sustainable development, waste from domestic sources was identified as a major hinder for development of sustainable practices in 21st century. This clearly raises the importance of this venue of research.

Theory suggests that traditional world-wide approach to public policy in waste has been centered around changing household attitudes by information campaigns and awareness raising actions and stimulating dialogue among the local population (Barr, Gilg and Ford, 2001, Refsgaard, Magnussen, 2009). Pro-environmental behavior to a large extent is prevented by the limited awareness of the population as to the questions related to the aspects of sustainable waste management practice.

Refsgaard and Magnussen (2009) report on different attitudes to waste management as an outcome of different waste management systems prevailing in the region they studied in 2003. Named authors identify availability of information, knowledge of price and technology and easiness of applying the technology as driving factors behind improved waste management practice.

Various institutions, such as NGOs and governmental institutions, are identified as able to facilitate desired environmental behavior (Refsgaard, Magnussen, 2009, Vatn, 2004). Vatn (2004) states that institutions define local norms and perceptions of what is proper behavior. Hernandez et al. (1999) and Robinson and Read (2005) add that information systems for awareness-raising are institution-related factors. Publicity of recycling opportunities was reported as having positive effect and large empirical evidence was collected by the named authors.

Norms and traditions, shared by the citizens in the community and shaped by institutions, force individuals to consider outcomes of their deeds on others. Though it is suggested that financial incentives potentially have more possibility to change the behavior (Refsgaard, Magnussen, 2009), Ebreo, Vining (2000) name educational programs and increased accessibility to recycling opportunities as motivational factors. In general it can be said that a combination of these approaches can offer results.

Bruvoll et al (2002) add that policy that places individual responsibility for sorting/recycling on a household will be supported by the motivation of an individual to perform well and be accepted by the members of community. Perception of potential negative effect on the surrounding environment that decrease personal welfare is also called poignant in motivating

actions (Barr et al., 2001). This abstract knowledge on general negative effects supplements the specific knowledge as in waste management logistics.

According to Barr, Gilg and Ford, positive general environmental values and attitudes are able to increase the level of sorting and recycling on individual, as well as a group level. Even though situational variables, that define particular circumstances at a point in time, might have effect on performance, they are not generally present and thus do not affect the general line of behavior.

Bruvoll, Halvorsen and Nyborg (2002) found that perception of sorting activity as mandatory does not entail more sorting as when otherwise. In many cases, respondent perceived sorting mandatory, even when it was not so. Participants in the study undertaken by the named authors were motivated by other factors rather than that the municipalities oblige households to sort their waste and impose fine in case of non-compliance.

According to the research of the named scholars, conducted in 1999, 38% of respondents who sort perceive it a pleasant activity. 97% of the respondents sort because they want to contribute to a better environment as a benefit to them directly, or to future generations.

2.2. Operative realm of networks within European Union

Increasing attention has been paid to networks since the new form of governance in the European Union has been theorized during the Lisbon European Council in 2000. Then, a new method, entitled “open method of coordination” (OMC) was drawn in order to, without condemning the Commission legislative and regulative authority, turn to a pluralist and decentralized cooperation aiming at emphasizing the development of common interpretations of situations, common values and techniques through an iterative learning process (Dehousse, 2002).

The decentralized nature of the method is increasingly network- and project-work based, with the aim of bringing together various actors, ranging from member states to civil society representatives. This method highlights the need for pooling knowledge and searching for best practices to nourish the mutual learning process (Dehousse, 2002). According to Dehousse, (2002, p.4), “this systematic search for comparisons and knowledge is undoubtedly the most innovative element of the Lisbon strategy: governmental structures are often prisoners of tradition anchored in their history and, except for during periods of crisis, rarely seek to learn from the experience of other actors”.

Dehousse (2002) outlines that the extension of the existing vocabulary and theoretical base has been made to support the new emerging approach; notions from the areas of corporate management, new public management, the information society, research, company policy, social policy, and education now form the united approach to new governance. Three areas where OMC should be used were stressed, them being the struggle against exclusion, social protection and the environment.

OMC is addressed by Dehousse (2002) as the “network of networks”. He also uses the term “transnational network” when describing the forms of cooperation that OMC is aimed at fostering. Those are horizontal (i.e. lacking a hierarchical nature) relationships among the state authorities (with the aim being to include more representatives of a civil society) with the absence of a hegemonic player endowed with a formal authority (Dehousse, 2002). The purpose of their creation is the cognitive conversion among EU states and the integration of the new members.

As learning and cross-national knowledge transfer is facilitated through consultation and expert advice, the influence of the latter on the network has been addressed. Dehousse (2002) concludes that the quality of the performance might be paid increased attention to by policy-makers in order not to lower themselves in the eyes of the counterparts. Credibility is highlighted as a criterion for accessing network performance.

Four potential hindrances have been identified as preventing the successful functioning of the networks under OMC as related to credibility. Firstly, management by objectives, required by OMC, may force the local government to dedicate more resources to the network, as the quantitative measures are clear monitoring indicators for the society. This can also be done in order to preserve government credibility (Dehousse, 2002). Thus, reluctance to indicate outcomes qualitatively can be seen.

Second, the time horizon of 10 years that is set for most objectives is longer than the average time of the government term. Desire to maintain credibility will prevent new government from leaving the network even though no legal bindings exist (Dehousse, 2002). The desire to leave the network, or, more importantly, not to engage into cooperation, can be explained by the complexity associated with the outcomes prediction and associated uncertainty, as the time frame is rather limited.

The other two constraints are procedural. They are attributed to the alteration of power within traditional administrative structures and the limitations as to acquisition of benefits from cooperation for the countries already close to the established objectives (Dehousse, 2002).

2.3. Introduction to network form of governance

Joint actions of governments, governmental organizations and other parties aiming at combating issues related to climate change, land contamination, pollution and improving livelihoods around the world via pursuing sustainable development, are widespread today (Betsill, Bulkeley, 2004, Raustiala, 2002, Setzer, 2009, Gharawi, Dawes, 2011;2011, Slaughter, 2004). As it has been discussed, in the context of the European Union, the network model has often been supplanted more centralized alternatives, that lie in the domain of the traditional liberal internationalist organization (Dehousse, 2002). This is mostly due to the fact that in areas such as environmental management, actions and their effects are not limited to the area of one particular country. As an outcome, number of cross-cultural exchanges of knowledge, information, practices, know-how, expertise and people is increasing, shaping new contexts to the knowledge-related theory.

Raustiala (2002, p.22) states that the technological advancements of today suggest new structures both for organizations and governments: “decentralized networks of peers versus hierarchical, stratified, and linked organizations”.

Setzer (2009) mentions that transnational actors and networks have attracted increasing interest since as early as the 1990s. As international treaties have often been coupled with overseas interests of international organizations, it is understandable why no progress has been made in merging private and public research literature (Raustiala, 2002). The cross-cultural relations and knowledge transfer literature has been concentrated on the non-state actors both theoretically and empirically, it is only now that attention to sub-national governments and public sector networks is drawn.

On the common ground, these networks involve regular interaction of actors across national boundaries. In this interaction, at least one of the actors when at least one actor is a “non-state agent or does not operate on behalf of a national government or intergovernmental organization” (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004). Gharawi and Dawes (2010) shortly describe the network as two governmental sub-units located in different countries involved in the exchange of knowledge, information, or both in order to address a mutual concern.

Theory on multinational corporations suggests that knowledge network organizations are not alternative to structures, but an informal overlay that makes use of available means of efficient knowledge transfer (Gooderham, Nordhaug, 2003). Holden (2002) defines a network as a pathway to key resources that can benefit MNC. Networking thus is an activity of building and maintaining the pathways, and maintaining the resulting information channels.

Gulati (1998, p.295), in line with structural theorists, suggest the most important facet of the organization to be its social network, which is defined as “a set of nodes (e.g., persons, organizations) linked by a set of social relationships (e.g., friendship, transfer of funds, overlapping membership) of a specified type”. Social network perspective thus diverts the attention from the organizational to individual level of behavior and action expressed in linkages among members of the group, embedded in a social context.

Knowledge-based approaches to the firm concentrated the research on aspects of knowledge as an asset providing competitive advantage to organizations. In the same venue, the competitive advantage of nations is built on the open sharing of knowledge, especially in the realm of environmental protection. As characteristics of knowledge remain the same within these two theoretical realms, research has to be done on the intersection of the two, to identify the influence of the network form of governance on cross-country knowledge transfer.

2.4. Characteristics of network form of governance

Transnational networks are normally established in order to address a particular problem or for the purpose of pursuing governmental goals such as capacity building, technical assistance and harmonization of standards (Dawes et. al, 2011). Typically these networks combine social and technical dimensions to facilitate knowledge and information flow (Dawes et al, 2011). Critical element to unfold collaboration and learning as two facilitating processes are the knowledge and information sharing that occurs in these networks. Generally, if they reach a requisite level of trust, participants look for additional ways to benefit from the collaboration (Dawes et al, 2011).

Raustiala (2002) argues that there are three driving forces behind the evolution of the networks: expansion of domestic regulation, increased economic interdependence and technological innovation. She adds that the networks foster experimentation and innovation. She argues that networks promote what she terms “regulatory export” – the export of regulatory rules and practices from major powers to weaker states.

Named scholar (2002) blames that through building bureaucratic capacity networks can improve domestic regulation and enhance treaty compliance and effectiveness. The driving force behind the actor participation is the possibility to better implement agreed changes for the recipient partner. According to Raustiala (2002), actors within organizations are largely self-enforcing, they can better implement their domestic mandate as a result of the network.

Thus, shortly, the potential power and benefit of the network is in their ability to make treaties work better. Another potential advantage is that they represent an alternative mode when established institutes or mechanisms fail. Third side to them mentioned by Raustiala (2002) is that they can smooth the negotiation of treaties. Slaughter (2004) states that the direction of the work of the networks is to create the capacity for developing countries to comply with the treaties signed on paper. This is acute in times when local governments fail, are weak or in transition - when the support is needed and can be provided by the network.

In the dichotomy of North and South, exclusiveness of networks promotes the laws and regulations of the more developed country from the Global North over a less developed partner (Raustiala, 2002). For the less developed partner, who is to a large extent a recipient of financial and technological aid, integration in the global community and the medium term of the related benefits overweighs the potential threat of getting locked-in into wrong technology.

In a complex, uncertain economic environment, the strategy of adopting successful foreign models can markedly reduce regulatory costs (Raustiala, 2002) importing jurisdictions do not bear the (often considerable) expense of creating the regulatory institutions they adopt. The costs of change are partly absorbed by exporting states, in the form of technical assistance and capacity building programs.

Betsill and Bulkeley (2004) found that the mobilizing factor for the local governments to engage with the network is not the access to the shared knowledge and information and norms formation, but the financial and political resources it offers, and the legitimacy conferred to particular norms about climate protection. According to the researches, different actors seek legitimacy for their interpretations of what local climate protection policies should mean.

Empirical findings of Betsill and Bulkeley (2004) show, that as local authorities commit themselves to certain measures and policy changes, technical information on how to, in their case, reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, was less important and desired than the access to financial resources, personal connections, endorsement, national and international recognition.

It is valuable that networks promote uniformity without centralization that is essential when issues such as climate change involve several nation-states to be addressed by, that can be attributed to achieving the capture of network effects (Raustiala, 2002). Disaggregating the state into its functional components makes it possible to create networks of institutions engaged in a common enterprise even as they represent distinct national interests (Slaughter, 2004).

Looking from the development country point of view, policy learning can be named one of the main reasons to enter the network, together with the access to funds and information, as well as further benefits, such as improved trade and standards of living (Betsill, Bulkeley, 2004). Theory addresses policy learning from two perspectives: as a rational process in which thinking and action on a problem are changed as a response to additional information, and the one in which also the nature and interpretation of the policy problem is challenged and reframed.

In the first case, also addressed as “single-loop learning”, new information secures better, improved means to realize the previously given political goals. The second approach empirically has not been observed and there is little evidence that it has taken place. It involves a cyclical process of reporting, forecasting, creation of targets, implementation plans and measures and progress monitoring.

Within the organizational theory, it is assumed that for firms in the developing world, the low skill, technological and other resource constraints make internal knowledge development difficult if not impossible (Narteh, 2008). Learning from a more developed partner becomes an opportunity to leverage on the existing knowledge bases.

According to Betsill and Bulkeley (2004), attention to network governance that affects the knowledge-aggregation, social capital formation and collective action within networks is crucial to predict their development and the outcomes and extent of the policy learning.

Notion of transnational governmental network encompasses legislatures, executives, agencies and courts as the dominant actors that constitute modern states (Raustiala, 2002). These networks involve the direct interaction of specialized domestic officials with partners in other countries without the involvement of the foreign ministries, or with minimal supervision from thereof (Raustiala, 2002).

In the network model she draws, networks are composed of national government officials, either appointed by elected officials or directly elected themselves. “These officials can perform many

of the functions of a world government—legislation, administration, and adjudication - without the form” (Slaughter).

As Raustiala (2002) defines the network, it is a cooperation based on loosely-structured, peer-to-peer ties developed through frequent interaction rather than formal negotiation. Raustiala (2002) observes that networks are most apparent among regulatory officials, though they can also be found among judges and legislators. According to her, networks are concentrated among the wealthier, more industrialized states that possess complex administrative states.

Gharawi and Dawes (2010) point out that in this scheme, “disaggregated” public, private, and nonprofit entities interact with each other on the basis of expertise and interest rather than formal power.

Raustiala (2002) states, that cooperation is frequently guided by informal or non-legally binding agreements. While incentives to “violate” “obligations” exist, common interests predominate. Power is not absent in networks, but it is primarily “soft power” rather than hard power that is at play; persuasion and attraction rather than coercion and compulsion.

Network formation is described with the reference to the literature on policy networks as originating from mutual dependence among network members, both on specific material resources (e.g., money and information) and because in order to achieve policy outcomes with a minimal level of conflict, (national) government demands substantial support and legitimization from other actors. Naturally powerful states play leading roles in networks and it is the weak nations of the world that are adopting many of the regulatory policies of the more powerful (Raustiala, 2002). Betsill and Bulkeley (2004) state that resource interdependence and co-production of material and non-material resources are the critical factor that facilitates network functioning.

Partner selection depends on the regulations under which the cooperation is pursued. Some types of regulation may require hiring close associates or locals without regard to their level of competence, which negatively affects absorptive capacity (Narteh, 2008).

Deep involvement in the project, that is also an outcome of the full access to relevant information, supports the maintenance of the network. This factor that allows members to capitalize on material and nonmaterial resources is critical. Another factor for network maintenance is the creation of “open” connections. Open connections are fueled by individual political champions, that secure participation and maintain involvement. These champions have

to secure continuity in their approaches to the issue, when reelected. Raustiala (2002) observes that networks are arranged around a peak organization, that acts as a focal point and forum for the various bilateral networks. It can also be the point through participating organizations meet and interact.

Links between the network partners are maintained through the creation of nonmaterial resources such as monitoring, reporting, creation of best practice. As Bestill and Bulkeley (2004, p.483) state, "these activities are not merely technical exercise, but provide a continual source of contact between the local authority and the network, as well as a sense of mutual dependency and common purpose, which keeps the network together". Engagement of all the network participants in these processes is crucial for capitalization on resources provided by the network.

Authors highlight, that the knowledge, shared norms and financial and political resources are all linked in the process of building and maintaining networks. Creation of internal funding opportunities may be seen as crucial in supporting the flexibility of the network operation. They state that the network participation has to be analyzed not from the point of view of the number of participants, but rather the depth of the connections between them.

On the downside, Slaughter (2004) states that transgovernmental networks are underappreciated, under-supported, underused and, it seems from her description, under-analyzed to be understood fully. This affects their ability to address the basic issues of global governance. In terms of applying the regulation, knowledge and technology of a developed partner, Kogut and Zander (1993) refer to Rosenberg's (1976) observation, that "reliance on borrowed technology (by developing countries) perpetuates a posture of dependency and passivity".

2.5. Theoretical approach to knowledge transfer within the network

To a large extent researchers agree that horizontal networks, both transgovernmental and business networks, involve diverse types of knowledge and information content and are created for the purpose of bi-directional learning process to exchange knowledge (Gharawi, Dawes, 2010). Nevertheless, it is stated, that there is a little research done on the difficulties that surround the knowledge and information sharing process in these networks (Gharawi, Dawes, 2010).

An integrated framework to address the issue has been presented by Dawes et al (2010; 2011). The number of external and internal factors on which the efficiency, complexity and success of

the transnational knowledge networks depend has been identified. These factors are organized in three clusters: knowledge and information context, organizational context and national context.

These contexts shape the performance of networks, through “distances” or “gaps” between the partners within the network (Dawes, Gharawi, Burke, 2011). These are distances that affect individual and organizational ability to engage into communication and knowledge-sharing process, essential for the success of the common project and complicate the transnational cooperation. They arise when there exists a difference between the partners in terms of the level of technology development, goals and ambitions as related to the participation in the network and similar.

Distances, or gaps, affect outcomes, termed by Dawes, Gharawi and Burke (2011) “products” of two types. Hard products could include formal decisions, laws, software or systems, events, data resources, funding, or new organizations. Soft products refer to such elements as generated techniques, trust, distrust, power sharing, volunteerism, or informal relationships (Dawes, Gharawi, Burke 2011).

It has been stated that theory on cross-border knowledge sharing, stemming from the research on e-government, and theory on cross-border knowledge transfer, coming from the theory of the firm, can provide valuable insights into the complexities surrounding knowledge transfer process within the networks. It should be mentioned, however, that application of theories from different fields should be done with caution: knowledge-based theory of the firm concentrates on a) uni-directional knowledge flow and b) accesses knowledge transfer as institutionalized in the firm (Dawes, Gharawi 2011).

Subsequent parts analyze the intersection area of theories of the firm, social sciences and cross-cultural information sharing and organizational learning as to their ability to shape knowledge transfer within the networks.

2.5.1. Knowledge and information context

Attention to knowledge sharing has been first drawn within the technology transfer and innovation literature and has been utilized to explain the different nations’ successes and failures in fostering economic growth through technological development (Cummings, 2003). As has been discussed, the dominant purpose for network creation is the exchange of relevant knowledge.

Knowledge context represents the main characteristics of knowledge and information being exchanged and is the origin of knowledge and technical distance. Through this, it draws attention to the mode of knowledge transfer that is affected by the type of knowledge in focus and its characteristics.

Terminological inconsistencies shape modern knowledge-related theory. Within the scope of current research, knowledge transfer will cover the scope of activity of transferring knowledge from the point of generation to the point of use. It starts with knowledge generation, that includes both acquisition and generation of knowledge, and proceeds with knowledge codification, meaning conversion of knowledge in a ready-to-use format (Sharpe, 2001). The latter refers to the socialization of knowledge in terms of Nonaka and Takeuchi. For transfer to take place, some change in knowledge or performance in the recipient unit must be involved (Inkpen, Tsang, 2005).

Sharpe (2011) characterizes knowledge as being the most difficult to manage as it emerges and is applied in the minds of individuals and is context-specific. Within the knowledge-based approach, knowledge of two types is analyzed: embedded and organizational knowledge. Organizationally and cognitively embedded knowledge are also termed organizational and individual knowledge in the literature (Kogut, Zander, 1992). Knowledge stock, found in individual members of the firm, interact with the organizational structures, standard operating procedures and practices, culture of the workplace (Narteh, 2008). It affect the organizational and individual vision, as well as desire to share. It has been established that part of an organization's knowledge stock can't be codified because it is tacit and embedded in its people (Kogut and Zander, 1992).

Bulkeley and Betsill (2004) in the study on transnational networks, distinguish between information as a set of data or facts that can be readily communicated across contexts, and knowledge, that represents a broader category to which information belongs together with perceptions, understanding and comprehensions, thus representing implicit or unconscious asset, that is communicated through experience and/or personal interaction. Though it seems that the named scholars didn't want to draw lines between the governance research and knowledge-related theory of the firm, this description corresponds with the notion of "tacit" knowledge, coined by Polanyi in 1966 (Kogut, Zander, 1993).

Knowledge characteristics, predominantly addressed as tacit and explicit, found themselves in the center of attention as they determine the cost and mode of the technology transfer, affect its transferability and imitability (Kogut, Zander, 1993).

Division to “tacit” and “explicit”, is, perhaps, the most known division of attributes of knowledge. Underlying dimensions, developed by Kogut and Zander (1992), are “codifiability”, “complexity” and “teachability”. “Tacit” is attributed to the dimensions of non-codifiable and complex knowledge. Codifiability refers to the ability of the firm to structure knowledge into a set of identifiable rules and relationships that can be easily communicated.

Considering the fact that technical knowledge is easily codifiable, Narteh (2008) argues that it will be a dominant type of knowledge when transferred to the developing partner. Effectiveness of the method of knowledge transfer varies depending on the nature of knowledge being transferred.

To transfer knowledge, appropriate channels should be used. Narteh (2006) have identified expatriates as a channel for routing knowledge from the parent companies to the alliances. When it comes to expats, apart from the cost savings, the experience with the local environment will make the reconstruction of the knowledge to fit local environment less problematic.

Kogut and Zander (1992, 1993) add that knowledge can be transferred vertically and horizontally. Horizontal transfer of knowledge takes place within the same function, for example, when the second, identical plant is built, that has to do with exploiting and developing capabilities. This form of transfer attenuated the problem of different professional languages, unlike in vertical transfer, that is, along the value chain. This represents, together with the different characteristics of knowledge already possessed by organizations, a basis for the existence of a contextual distance between partners.

Presented variations and typologies, when presented to different extent within the organizational structures of partners, form the basis for knowledge and technological gap (also referred to as distance) – this distance should best be assessed beforehand and taken into consideration when the cooperation mode is shaped.

2.5.2. Organizational context

Organizational context embodies the structures, capabilities, and constraints of the involved organizations. As an outcome of the differences within the organizational context, cultural, intention, organizational and relational differences arise.

Trust is considered to have a critical effect on knowledge transfer as related to the extent of the openness of the partners. Levinthal and Fichman (1988) state that trust is build on the positive record of past relations and has a direct influence on establishing and sustaining collaboration. According to them, trust is also related to relationship-specific investments made by at least one party. In organizational theory, this investment loses its value when applied to other situations and relationships, that bounds parties together. Narteh (2008) argues that in newly established relationships, the absence of any basis for judging the partner's true intentions, reliability and trustworthiness will make the transferor to be more protective of its knowledge.

Sheth, Parvatiyar, 1992 state that as trust, as a behavioral construct, for the purposes of the empirical study is best measured by self-assessment and individual perceptions. Level of trust depends on the expected behavior of the partner (Sheth, Parvatiyar, 1992).

Trust is promoted by collective learning. Zucker (1986) identifies three major sources of trust: process-based, character-based and institutional based. The latter relies on formal rules and norms, defined by the governing system. Process-based trust depends on past and expected future exchanges between the same parties and contributes to the collective learning between partners. Character-based trust is about common cultural identity. It also contributes to collective learning.

Organizational intent to cooperate is rooted in the goals and mission of the organization as perceived by its members (Dawes et al, 2010; 2011). Convergence of goals and mission, or, as termed by Narteh (2008), "business relatedness", creates common grounds for partners to better understand each other. Referring to the knowledge and technical distance, Powell, Koput and Smith-Doer (1996) state that what can be learned is significantly influenced by what is already known. Business relatedness in this sense increases the absorptive capacity of the recipient.

Lane and Lubatkin (1998) identify three methods for learning new external knowledge: passive, active and interactive, that each provides different types of knowledge. Passive learning is observed when from hard sources such as journals or from seminars and consultants easily codified knowledge is transferred. Active type of learning is somewhat similar, as it too occurs at

the arms-length, but involves also activities like benchmarking and observations. Both of them also have limited ability for value creation as knowledge transferred is not rare and thus is not competitive from the point of view of organizational theory. In this way, no firm develops unique capabilities of its own. On the other hand, learning complex knowledge embedded in organizational context requires face-to-face interaction. To facilitate interorganizational learning, similarity in the existing knowledge base and organizational structures that facilitate learning, readily observable in the compensation policy, are essential.

Tsang (1999) described the learning that occurs between developed-developing or transitional country strategic alliances as asymmetric because the partners normally learn with different intentions. He argues that while the developing country partner learns the skills, knowledge, technology and management system of their counterparts, the developed country partner only learns from the alliance experience, i.e. implementing the technology transfer, managing the alliance and learning about the new environment. There is an implicit assumption that the developing country partners have no technology and know-how worth learning (Narteh, 2008).

Organizational absorptive capacity depends on the one of its individuals, as all learning in the organization starts at the individual level (Nonaka, 1991; Narteh, 2008; Inkpen, Tsang, 1995). Individual absorptive capacity is affected by the qualifications, exposure and experience of the transferees (Narteh, 2008). Kogut and Zander (1992) stress that not only asymmetries in information, but also the stock of know-how affects the differences in performance. In the same venue, Wang, Nicholas (2005) state that partners possessing same knowledge bases get easier to the knowledge transfer.

Nature of knowledge, reflecting also in its age and complexity, results in the level of teaching capacity of the transferor (Narteh, 2008). Transferor's intents and experience in prior knowledge transfer also. Narteh state that in this situation, the learning curve effect takes place. Teaching intent, strongly affected by the possibility of the opportunistic behavior of the transferor, increases the level of protection, decreasing trust and amount of knowledge transferred.

Relational distance describes the extent to which member organizations know and relate to each other. A prior positive relationship can facilitate trust, which is a main promoter of collaboration in any network.

According to Gulati (1998), in network analysis, the position an actor occupies in the structure is a function of the actor's relational pattern in this network. Actors occupying similar positions

need not be tied with each other. Instead, they are likely to be tied to the same set of other actors or to similar sets of other actors, and there is a whole array of network measures to capture the position an actor occupies in a network.

Intentional distance stems from the vision and goals of their separate organizations. If they are similar, overlapping or sharing, it bonds the network actors and facilitates knowledge sharing through mutual understanding (Inkpen, Tsang, 2005).

Samaddar, Nargundkar, and Daley (2006) contend that the degree to which the participants perceive a match in their goals may impact the nature and amount of knowledge and information they are willing to share with each other. Divergent interests may increase the chances of opportunistic behavior. In order to mitigate this, authors suggest goal congruence as a governance mechanism that can lead to mutually beneficial performance.

Organizational gap describes the degree to which organizations' separate business practices, institutional heritage and organizational culture differ. Differences in organizational structures, processes and values, as well as decision-making processes, norms and organizational objectives are likely to affect the ways individual members interact with one another.

Reward system that recognizes and rewards learning shapes the way managers see their tasks and has an effect on knowledge transfer.

Narteh (2008) adds differences in the process of decision-making, organizational structures that define authority and responsibility relationships as well as corporate norms and objectives as influencing the knowledge transfer though affecting the way of the employee interaction. He states, that transfer knowledge and ensure that it is absorbed, a minimum level of interaction would be needed. Cohen and Levinthal (1990) argued that interaction between individuals with different knowledge bases is crucial for innovation. Tsang (2002) has also noted that this interaction or relationship becomes even crucial in alliances separated by wide geographical distance.

2.5.3. National context

National context corresponds to national cultures and political systems. It deals largely with the ability of the participants to work through the national barriers, which include language barriers, differences in culture, norms, beliefs, laws, regulations (Dawes, 2011). It is acknowledged that

geographical distance affects the intensity of interaction and thus ability to create and maintain trust, as well as application of particular mechanisms for knowledge transfer.

Four main areas of concern can be identified as able to create distances within the network: cultural aspect that also encompasses value systems, behavior and language, countries' laws and policies, countries' stage of development in relation to technology in focus, and historical and geographical relation of participating actors.

Bresman, Birkinshaw and Nobel (1999) state that the degree of the challenge and problems increases significantly as the geographical and cultural proximity shrinks. Such activities as communication, visits and meetings have a valuable impact of transferring the technological know-how. Additionally the analysis revealed that the degree of the knowledge transfer between the international units is increasing significantly over time. Being only unidirectional in the beginning, to acquired company, over time this process becomes more elaborate and involves both parties.

Existing theoretical approaches based on scales and weights (Hofstede, 1985, Trompenaars, 1998, E.T. Halls, 1990) specify that organizational culture is not independent of national culture (Ford, Chan, 2002). Different national cultures emphasize distinct values and are associated with diverse languages. National culture is the primary focus of this research; organizational culture will be discussed as a component of the organizational environment.

Within the cross-cultural management discourse, Holden (2002) brings attention from employing the differences as an explanatory device to the mounting necessity of looking for how to fruitfully join cultures. Holden (2002) expresses harsh critique to the outdated and diverse yet traditional and well-established cultural frameworks, such as Hofstede's (1985) and Trompenaars (1998). Also E.T. Halls (1990) high context and low context cultural division, he blames it of polarizing countries unnecessarily. Holden's proposition to the scholar and research society at large, then, is to analyze the outcome of the combination of the several cultures, not ranking the differences identified between them through listing their standalone characteristics. Holden (2002) suggests not to see these new cultural hybrids as something unpleasant and hard to manage, but as something essential for the continuous development of, in the scope of his approach, MNC. He finishes with the statement that "the core task of cross-cultural management is to facilitate and direct synergistic action and learning at interfaces where knowledge, values and experience are transferred into multicultural domains of implementation" (p.59).

Though staying within the borders of MNC, Holden (2002) addresses the changing view on the culture as being associated with nation state and today, increasingly, becoming more complex and multiple, that shines through the various cultural communities that coexist in today's complicated intra and inter firm environment. Thus, culture is addressed on three levels: on the level of state, organization and single individual.

The cultural gap is fueled by differences in beliefs, values and practices. It is negatively affected by the increase of the duration of cross-cultural relationship (Gulati, 1995). With more time, cultural distances tend to shrink as the partners become more familiar with each other's expertise and idiosyncrasies (Meschi, 1997; Simonin, 1999). Though Dawes et al (2011) also refer to the cultural gap as a factor negatively affecting the performance of the network, latest research concentrates on the rents and benefits that are possible to extract from pooling representatives of different cultures together (Holden, 2002).

Political gap describes issues related to the legal barriers that stem from differences in countries laws, political environments and government goals that might prohibit the sharing of knowledge. This highly relates to the issues of the access to information and intellectual property rights.

As participants in the network represent developed and developing countries, their contribution in terms of resources to the network, as well as the type and amount of resources they possess or need from the network, vary. Ability to manage a variety of resources within the network adds to overall success, especially when resources possessed by organizations are complementary, rather than similar.

3. Case study

3.1. Country profile: Romania

3.1.1. General overview

Romania is situated in the south-eastern part of Europe and has population of 21,410,000 inhabitants (Eurostat, 2012). The capital and the biggest city of Romania is Bucharest with the population of 1,677,985 (Eurostat, 2012). Romania joined the European Union on January 1, 2007 and is the ninth largest country in terms of area in the confederation and seventh largest in terms of population.

Foreign Direct Investments according to Surd, Kassai, Giurgiu (2011) as of 2007 totaled 42770 million – an increase of 19.4% compared with the previous year. Most investments go to manufacturing, financial services and insurance, telecommunications activities, services rendered to enterprises. To a large extent these are coming from Austria (food industry, banking and insurance, building materials, sanitation and waste management, etc), and Netherlands (food, beer, commercial) and Germany (trade, transport).

In order to comply with EU regulation and improve local waste management practices, already before joining the EU Romania introduced national plan on improving waste management practices. Drastic changes to the traditional way of conducting the practice took place together with reorganization of the country processes at large.

In 1998, in order to overcome regional disparities, 8 development regions have been created in the country. Region 7 Center encompasses 6 counties, covers the land area of 34,100 sq.km. and is populated by 2,521,745 inhabitants, rate of urban population is 58,3% (Surd, Kassai, Giurgiu, 2011). This division was created under the EU recommendation as to the proper division of funds and had the following objectives (after Surd, Kassai, Giurgiu, 2011):

- a) reducing the lack of balance between the regions by stimulating the well-balanced development by recovering the delay in development from the disadvantaged areas;
- b) preparing the institutional frame correspondent to the accession criteria to EU and the access to the structural funds;

- c) at regional level, correlating the government sectorial politics by stimulating the initiatives and capitalizing the local and regional resources in order to obtain a sustainable socio-economic development of regions;
- d) stimulating the interregional cooperation nationally, internationally and over the borders, the attendance of the regions to the European organizations, economic, regional and institutional development promoters.

Regions created are not administrative units, but are referred to as development regions and are rather based on inhabitants' heterogeneity. Capital of Region 7 Center is Brasov (228 000 inhabitants). Core cities from this Region that were involved in the Project are Sibiu (154 500), Medias (53 500), Saliste (5 040). Location of REPA in Sibiu, as well as individual interest and motivation of governors of the cities defined their main role in the Project.

According to latest assessment (Surd, Kassai, Giurgiu, 2011), in terms of evident economic development, Region 7 Center is third in terms of GDP per inhabitant rate, with EUR 3980 (first is Bucharest-Ilfov Region with EUR 8753). As it is, together with Western and North-Western regions located closer to Western markets and is less dependent on primary sector, it benefiting more from the direct foreign investments, that positively affect its competitiveness: according to synthetic aggregate regional competitiveness indicator (2011) Region 7 Center occupies 3d place after Bucharest-Ilfov Region and Region West – the most developed and competitive regions in the country. It can be concluded that regional disparities are high in Romania with regions East and North-East significantly lagging behind the rest (Surd, Kassai, Giurgiu, 2011).

3.1.2. Cultural characteristics

Cojocaru (?) describes Romanians as of today as being conservative and exhibiting traits of high context culture in sharing information through a “ciphered communication”. Named author acknowledges that in comparison to the time-management perspective of most of the western business practices today, Romanian time is tied to the rhythms of nature. The high lightened features of the population for the current moment are such as “selfishness and individualism, short-term vision, focusing strictly on money that single goal, the decentralization of business, to some extent return to religion, tolerance and excessive tendency to copy Western models, lack of information and vision and hope, the need for obedience to "someone" to take decisions, to judge and monitor, the belief that all must suffer because we are in a time of crisis”.

Pandelica et al (?) underline the concept of “vicious circle of inertia” which presents beyond the business activities in Romanian communities and prevent the business development from developing successfully and competitive, providing the examples of “the fear for the superior or the spur to hide mistakes” to be common within the Romanian business operations. Named the author suggests that the external events may be the best facilitator in order to overcome the tendency.

Culturally, Region 7 Center has deep historical involvement with Germany; shared historical heritage affects cultural identification of the population. Population of this area tends to compare their performance on regional and national level with Germany. Conducted assessment of regional development states that the proximity of Western Europe allowed named front-runners to quickly assimilating European spirit – here Surd, Kassai, Giurgiu (2011) include tolerance, decentralization, competition. According to authors, these regions are not characterized by expressive ethnic diversity – these factors make them engines of national competitiveness.

With the reference to Hofstede dimensions, Romania has a score of 30 in regards the individualism. The society is considered to be collectivistic, in such type of society’s employer/employee relationship are of great importance, and in personal relationship offence leads to shame and loss of face. Hofstede assigned a score of 90 in power distance dimension. In the countries where the power distance is high, people are used to being told what to do. In respect to the masculinity dimension the country gets a score of 42 and reveals feminine feature of the country, where people value equality and the best way for resolving the conflicts is through the compromise and negotiation. A score of 90 is assigned in regards uncertainty avoidance, what drives the people to have an inner urge to be busy and work hard.

3.1.3. Environmental orientation

However according to the survey taken by the European Commission (UN National Reports: Romania, ?) Romania is represented second last among European countries after Finland in regards to the importance of protecting the environment personally for the people. Although the country is on the 4th placing in admitting the fact that the environmental problems actually have a significant impact on the daily life, deeds so far show the opposite view. Another research shows the lowest level of awareness of the environmental problems (30%) in comparison to all the rest European countries.

One of Romania's challenges in order to minimize this loss is to change mentality of people, public authorities and economic sector toward an environmentally friendly behavior (UN National Reports, ?). Observations collected during the study tour show that there exist a large number of individuals and organizations, willing to introduce sustainable waste management practices in the daily lives of population, yet these are rather exceptional individuals with substantial personal devotion to green living and motivation. Their actions still need to be supported by appropriate infrastructure, both legal and technical.

3.1.4. Waste profile

The waste management sector is subject to extensive development in the coming years. In 2000 analysis was conducted in Romania, with a final statement that financial needs of Romania in order to improve waste management are EUR 30 billion. For the transition period 2008-2016 a number of different programs have been developed in order to adapt EU legislation on the Waste Management. Romanian National Strategy for Waste Management and National Plan for Waste Management have been adopted already before the accession to EU - in 2004 (Atudorei, 2007). Programs developed have been targeting number of changes necessary to take change in Romania.

Necessary actions involve inter alia closure of 238 existing landfills which are not in compliance with EU legislation (app. 93% of all existing landfills) and construction of 65 municipal landfills which are in compliance with EU regulations (Atudorei, 2007). The aim is to construct as much as possible waste treatment platforms, including recycling and final disposal of municipal waste which are technically and economically based on the EU regulations (Report on the Waste Sector in Romania, 2012). National policy documents mentioned above adopted the approach to waste management termed "waste hierarchy", which created the basis for waste treatment in European Union (Oroian et al, 2009).

In Romanian urban areas, the management of organized municipal waste is either by municipalities or sanitation operators (National Strategy). In rural areas, National Strategy states that as of 2002, there are in general, with the exception of areas, located close to big cities, no organized waste management services, with transportation and disposal being performed by waste generators individually. In cities, waste management services are provided based on contracts concluded with individual generators, with not more than 95% of them being covered as of 2002 (National Waste Strategy, 2012).

The responsibility for handling and transportation of construction and demolition waste is attributed to the waste generators/owners (in compliance with the “polluter pays” principle). Municipalities are required to indicate the places for disposal of waste, disposal method and transport route (Gurau, Melnic, Armeanu, 2011). The obligation to organize the management of production waste reverts to the generator. Economic operators use their own means for the purpose, or they conclude contracts with specialized operators. There are currently very few operators involved in the management of production waste; moreover, their services are limited both concerning the waste types they can attend to, and their working capacities.

The total market for waste management equipment and technology was conservatively estimated at EUR 50 million in 2008. After the slowdown during 2009 - 2010, the market is expected to pick up in 2011 and to further increase at about EUR 80 million around 2017 (Larive Romania, 2011). Generally, it is suggested that Romania is a good place to invest in waste management (Larive Romania, 2011).

Atudorei (2007) characterizing the main problems in Romania as related to waste, highlights that some “major deficiencies related to education, information and the lack of sustained actions on the part of the competent institutions, especially schools and town halls” create basis for main obstacles and severe discrepancy in relation to the obligations to EU; he also notes that austerity budgets do not provide funds for important sectors of environmental protection, support by competent state bodies to private sector is insufficient, as well as actions of ecological parties and non- governmental organizations to promote solutions and measures of cleaning (Atudorei, 2007).

Pandelica et al (?) add the negative effect of what can be seen in a shallow media approach to reporting on waste management, that mostly takes form of the sensation delivery, without expert involvement, lack of transparency on the level of investments, that results in low population and NGO’s participation in taking decisions, that results in supply of a low quality products and services.

Data collection on waste is a task performed by the National Agency on Environmental Protection since 2005, in collaboration with the National Institute of Statistics and county agencies for Environmental Protection (Oroian et al, 2009). EU legislation on public services continues to be implemented in Romania and revisited periodically, however in the present legislation there are no provisions on Public-Private Partnership (Atudorei, 2007).

However, there is no one reliable source on waste in Romania; data provided is rather fragmented and inconsistent. Reasons for this are different systems for waste evaluation used by different waste generators and their different level of awareness concerning the benefits of potential data collection process, the changes that occurred in the activities of industrial operators and service providers; different level of engagement of local authorities to data collecting process.

According to Oroian et al (2009) in 2004, the total quantities of waste generated in Romania were about 363,315 thousand tons, which represents 99.4% and 0.6% hazardous waste. In 2007, the total quantity of waste generated decreased to 281,200 thousand tons, of which 99.85% were represented by non-hazardous waste. As of 2008, hazardous waste amounted 524 000 tones (Eurostat, 20011). Out of total waste, hazardous represents approximately 0.15%. Most of this hazardous waste was co-incineration or incineration in the producer own facilities or private operators' facilities, or landfilled.

The total quantity of municipal and similar waste (along with construction and demolition waste, and sewage sludge from urban water purification plants) generated in 2002 was estimated to 9,58 million tons, the share of household waste in the total quantity being estimated taking into account the values of the average generation index (1.04 kg/inhabitant/day in the urban area and 0.15 kg/inhabitant/day in the rural area). The total value of household and similar waste generated in 2002 was therefore estimated to 7.66 million tons (out of which only 5.72 million tons were collected by the sanitation services).

Household waste collection is non-selective (there are only a small number of pilot projects doing that) and is disposed of by landfilling (in urban waste disposal sites); according to estimates, a mere 5 % of the total quantity of household waste is collected with a view to recovery.

In 2008, amount of construction and demolition waste generated totaled 318 000 tones (Eurostat, 20011). Slightly different number is presented by Gurau, Melnic and Armeanu (2001), 466.983 tons of waste from construction and demolition works for year 2008. This represents a decrease from 473 280 tons in 2006; decrease is attributed to the fact that construction companies are developing their activity on sites all over the country and do not have a centralized waste record (Iacoboaia et al, 2006).

The amount of waste recovered in 2004 was approximately 18,067 thousands tons (5.08% of total), the highest rates of recovery/recycling being obtained from waste recovery activities and scrap recycling (39%), metallurgy (18%) and manufacture of chemicals and chemicals (17%). At the end of 2007, the degree of recovery reached 7%. Concerning waste disposal, this was achieved by storage. The reason is the lack of incinerators for thermal treatment of waste.

Recent conferences dedicated to the aspects of waste management in Romania report, inter alia, that reporting and statistical practices still need to be improved; that collection sites and separation sites in Medias should be taken by other cities and counties as benchmarks; use of prevention methods, including education of the population to be increased (Dragan, Marinoiu, Voicu-Dorobantu, 2009, UN National Report). Corruption remains to be the main obstacle for the efficient country development (O'Brien, 2009).

3.2. Country profile: Norway

3.2.1. General overview

Norway is situated in the north-western part of Europe and has a population of 4,691,849 inhabitants and a total area of 323,802 sq km (index mundi 2012). Norway hasn't joined the European Union however it appears to be a founding member of the United Nations, NATO, the Council of Europe, and the Nordic Council; and also Norway is a member of the European Economic Area, the WTO, and the OECD; and is also a part of Schengen Area. The biggest cities are Oslo (580,000 people), Bergen, Trondheim and Stavanger. The GDP per capita is \$54,600 in 2010 according to the Indexmundi statistics.

1.1.1. Cultural characteristics

Norwegian society is characterized as egalitarian. The Law of Jante expresses a widespread cultural belief of egalitarianism: "you should not believe that you are better than we are". One of the most common features supporting this trend is the willingness to be fully responsible for the future and orientation toward providing equal opportunities to current generations and generations to come, that is also reflected in the Brundtland Report (MINN, 2009)

The way of doing business is mostly informal and Norwegians prefer to be direct and "not focus on rituals and social environments for negotiations. They see openness and directness as virtues"

(MINN, 2009). Besides it is very important for Norwegians to make a significant contribution to the things which are in their lives: family, work, studies and etc.

Norwegians define themselves as individuals and not as members of a group. On this dimension, Hofstede assigned the score of 69 to Norway (Hofstede, 1985). Referring to the rest of the Hofstede dimensions, Norway scores 31 in the dimension of power distance: in this country, control is disliked, communication is direct and explicit, participatory and consensus oriented. This dimension supports the egalitarian feature of the country. Norway's masculinity score is 8, that defines the feminine feature of the society resulting in taking care of the environment and behaving in a solidarity manner in life is important. Uncertainty avoidance score is 50 that is reflected in Norwegian devotion to planning, respecting deadlines and agreements.

1.1.2. Environmental orientation

Norwegian concern for the environment can be traced back to the early 70s, when population attitudes to the surroundings have been changed in a way that made individuals more responsible to the public good they own in the form of nature (Interview, Waste Management Norway, 2011). As of today, Norway is among nations that can be referred to as the most environmentally conscious, idealizing natural environment and rural life. This resulted in regional policies are aimed at providing a high level of public services in less populated regions to encourage people to remain there rather than migrate to urban centers. At the same time, as shown in the Brundtland Report, issued by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987, Norway acknowledges "multilateralism and interdependence of nations in the search for a sustainable development path"..

In 1990s serious environmental concerns started to occur, what caused the necessity to increase individual awareness of the possible outcomes of inappropriate environmental behavior and actions and ways to prevent them. With waste increasingly becoming a tool of combating climate change, endeavors were directed to raising awareness through campaigning. In order to motivate people to contribute to tackling the problem, authorities were involved in design and implementation of different policies (Trehjorningen, 2010). Campaigning and awareness raising actions were essential in order to align institutional actions with household perceptions and behavior: a lot of skepticism was expressed from the population towards the prevention practices until the mid 2000 (Refsgaard, Magnussen, 2009). Awareness raising actions complemented by engineering work and implementation of developed technological solutions resulted in the level

of sophistication that Norwegian waste sector represents today (Barr, Gilg, Ford, 2001, Interview, Waste Management Norway, 2011).

Continuity of the actions when working with changing individual attitudes is achieved through the focus on young generations. However, educational campaigns were created for the whole population, as at the outset all age groups lacked critical knowledge related to the environment and waste. As of today, it can be observed that Norwegians do not tolerate unsustainable environmental behavior and are willing to dedicate time to desirable waste-related actions, such as bringing waste to the recycling facility and waiting in line in order to submit it.

Even though the awareness in regards waste has been significantly raised during the last years to the advanced level, the study by Refsgaard and Magnussen (2009) revealed that that “in some municipalities in Norway in 2003 even though households sorted out food waste, knowledge and execution of sorting hazardous waste and textiles was much lower”. More sophisticated practices of waste management are normally not known to the most people, yet the more critical issue is partial lack of information regarding facilities location, collection time and prices at the disposal of individual households.

3.1.3. Waste profile

Norwegian waste management practices, regulations and related technology are considered to be advanced compared to other countries' national regulations. The goal of the national government has long been to make Norway a lead country on environmental policy through the international cooperation (EEA/Norway Grants, 2011). Due to accumulated knowledge and expertise, the country contributes towards the development and updating of EU legislation through the involvement in more than 50 EU expert groups. To reach this high level of expertise, over 40 years of close work of engineers, who developed and implemented suitable and sophisticated technological solutions, and campaigners, who changed individual attitudes to waste, were required (Interview, Waste Management Norway., 2011). As soon as Agenda21, which prescribed to solve the environmental problems in the starting at their inception point and was adopted on a global scale, new wave of campaigning was observed; waste management became a tool in combating climate change.

Norwegian waste management regulation system mainly falls into the line with the general EU regulations. Nevertheless, particular regulations, as for example Norwegian Pollution Control

Act, that covers almost all waste management activities, appear to be ahead of the EU regulations (EIONET, 2009). Based on the waste hierarchy approach, focus on energy recovery and recycling dominates the endeavors in this industry. To improve outcomes of these methods of waste utilization, levels of waste separation on the household level should be increased, that calls for increased campaigning and educational programs.

With respect to the municipal waste, the collection and disposal of municipal waste is the municipality responsibility, however following the general trend of privatization in the public sector, more and more inter-municipal waste companies and private sector firms emerge (Refsgaard, Magnussen (2009). Free market exists for industrial waste collection with the discussions going on around the introduction of a free market for household and hazardous waste, that is currently a sole concern of the municipality. Each authority has the freedom to design the system for waste management itself, as long as it fits into the general framework of the national legislation. As an outcome, local differences exist in regard to organizations, institutions and technical solutions (Refsgaard, Magnussen, 2009).

Typical inter-municipal company is owner and operator of just one landfill. Landfill ban, that prevents penetration of the landfill by organic waste, led to the closure of many landfills due to their inability to survive in business. Main reason is lack of waste, great portion of which is directed to Sweden for incineration or energy recovery. The quantities of landfilled waste have decreased by 600 000 tons in 2010 comparing with 2007, and has reached the lowest level ever since the waste accounts has started (Norway statistics, 2011). Landfill ban is not part of the EU regulation, but some North-West countries not satisfied with the EU standard on landfill situations decided to be ahead of the general trends.

Household waste tracking started in 1992 with 237 kg of waste per inhabitant, and but since then the amount of waste has significantly increased by this moment for about 70% in total, due to the extreme growth of the industrial waste quantities for the last 8 years which encounter of about 17% of the total amount of the waste. In 2007 the waste amounts have reached 10,7 million tons. Food waste comprises about 28% by weight of total waste; of this, about 30% is landfilled, 30% is composted and 30% is incinerated (Refsgaard et al., 2004).

The share of household waste that was delivered for material recovery increased from 8 to 33% from 1992 to 1998 (Bruvoll, Halvorsen and Nyborg, 2002), and the government has stated as an objective that at least 75% of the waste be recycled or energy recovered by the year 2010 (Ministry of the Environment, 1999). This increased reliance on recycling implies more sorting

of different waste components by households. Today about 78% of all waste goes to material recovery now, while about 25 per cent of all waste is recovered as new energy. (Waste and Recovery, 2010). As of 2009, landfills encounter for about 18% of all waste in Norway.

As for the demolition and construction waste, some critical improvements have happened since the 2004. The volumes of the waste which go for the reuse and recovery were raised up to 75% of the total waste collected at the building, whereas it was only 60%, when the rest 40 went for unknown treatment. As for the regulation it has been subjected to important change, and the authorities requested that at least 60% of the total construction and demolition waste have to go for sorting. Considering all the numbers in 2010 there were collected up to 1,54 million tons of construction and demolition waste. 40 % of this figure included heavy building materials such as bricks and concrete; 18% is mixed waste, and 14% represent wood waste (Statistics Norway, 2009-2010).

Statistics Norway reveals the total amount of hazardous waste to be collected in 2010 of 1, 2 million tons, which is a 14% growth in comparison to the last year. The main sources of hazardous waste in Norway are represented by the waste from the oil and gas industry. This is a considerably big change in comparison with 1999, which mostly explained by the extension of the list of the possible hazardous waste (EIONET, 2009).

The volumes of hazardous waste which are treated in unknown way have reduced for the 36% from the 2004 which is considered as significant improvement. Different schemes and taxes have been implemented in Norway in regards to hazardous waste. Some of them represent the refunds when the waste is delivered to the collection facilities as for the oil industry, other - the free delivery to the collection points, as for the PCs or phones (Environment.no, 2012).

4. Project work

4.1. Joint work on defining the project areas

Innovation Norway launched EEA grants and Norway Financial Mechanisms for Romania and Bulgaria in 2007. In the Summer 2008, The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS), received a request from Regional Environmental Protection Agency (REPA) in Sibiu, Romania, expressing their interest in cooperating with Norway on waste management.

KS acted as the main partner of the project, intermediary between Innovation Norway and participant Norwegian organizations on one hand and Romanian partners on the other hand. It

has considerable experience in international cooperation projects both in Europe, the Balkans, Russia, and in developing countries; during the focal project organization was responsible for the coordination, planning, organization and implementation of Norwegian partners according to the overall and specific objectives, in order to achieve the results established on the project.

REPA Sibiu, a governmental public institution subordinated to the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA), acted as the beneficiary of the Project. REPA Sibiu focuses its activities on the whole Region 7 Center, and has six counties under its authority.

In Romania, whole project was to be implemented at the county level, being the pilot and example for future extrapolation within the region and, potentially, the country. Main actors on Romanian side came from cities Sibiu, Saliste, Sibiel, Medias and Vale

To invite potential partners of the Project within Norway, KS reached out to its broad (about 500 members, approximately 80 dealing with waste management) group of member institution, encouraging municipalities to cooperate with colleagues from other country. Traditional forms of cooperation are with partners from within Norway and Nordic countries.

The first step of cooperation was for REPA Sibiu and KS to together specify the goals and develop the elements that should be included in the project application, identifying the areas that requested Norwegian assistance. Together with the members from beneficiary state, parties started negotiation of the project application. Telephone conferences and e-mail exchange lasted for 2-3 months, however personal meetings did not take place. The advisory programs of Norwegian side were elaborated without being personally acquainted to the area where the changes were expected to be implemented.

Three institutions that responded to the call of KS were allocated to the three core areas of concern: hazardous and construction and demolition waste (StavangerMunicipality), composting (Green Living Norway) and landfills (Waste Management Norway). Previous international engagements of the mentioned organizations were mostly limited to the bordering and culturally close cultures, such as Denmark, Sweden, Russia, the Netherlands and UK. For most of them it was also a first assignment through EEA/Norway Grants.

As stated by Green Living Norway, the benefit of defining the goals and means in a cooperative manner helped in reaching common understanding and vision, that was kept throughout the project. A very basic approach, that for Green Living Norway proved beneficial in other

countries, like Madagascar and Palestine before, was based on personal touch and priority of agreement.

The work on the project was the first cooperation between Romania and Norway. This raised the initial thoughts and expectations of the participants of the other party in importance. For Romanian partners, deep German involvement in the life of the region, that started centuries ago, was the basis for the constant comparison of Norwegians with the German way of living and conducting business, also as related to the environment. Low context features of the German culture were thus transferred in an exaggerated manner to the image that was created about Norwegians before the start of the cooperation (it has been thought that Norwegians are stricter and more precise, than Germans).

For Norwegian partners, that were involved more than general operators, personal motives defined the expectations at the initial stage: cultural relation to the region, desire to explore unknown land and expand the reach of green initiatives, perceived by Norwegian partners as a lifestyle aspect, was complemented by strong stereotypes in relation to the partner country, fueled by generally low level of awareness about it. This, supplemented by no previous experience with the country's representatives and thus lack of assurance in their professional competencies, especially related to actually transferring received knowledge into practice, served as a basis for the more negative perception of the partners and desire to improve the level of control over agreements and budgets. It was stated that during the Project work, despite the expectations, high level of education and competence of Romanians supported the Project's implementations.

Throughout the whole Project it was clear that Norwegian partners valued possessed knowledge over the one existing in Romania and, generally, saw no opportunities or practices to be learned from the beneficiary state. At the same time, some of Norwegian partners think that there are benefits in looking outside one's respective country and get inspiration from abroad. Positive outcome of cooperation might be the creation of a more dynamic municipality that would also learn how to include the experiences of its inhabitants that came from other countries.

Nevertheless, though done on a high professional level, service provided to Romania at the initial stage represented more a contractual agreement, than actual cooperation: Norwegian members faced no financial risks, as expenses were covered by the two governments, and were not personally interested in the realization of the Project goals related to the implementation of practices and activities. Most of them only concentrated on their bit of common work, with

regrets expressed after the Project execution showing that more involvement to the not directly related areas was now seen as providing more potential benefits and being more desired from the members themselves.

Within the Norwegian partner network, high level of trust was documented and observed. Working in the same industry, some of the participants knew each other already before the Project. This perception was complete opposite as with the Romanian partners, no personal communication with who never took place before the start of the Project and was conducted at the initial stage by the means of indirect contact only by KS.

Time duration was specified by the funding round. The application date was set for the 31 December 2008; so the time given for developing the application (Summer 2008 to December 2008) in order to get it approved was rather short. In April 2009 the project application has received an approval and the deadline for the project implementation was set for 2011. That was the deadline for all the EEA Grants in Romania. The project was executed within the time period from 23/04/2009 to 30/04/2011. Total budget of the project was EUR 2 400 000, grant accounted for EUR 2 000 000.

4.2. Mode of cooperation and main activities

Both countries made some effort prior to cooperation to learn more about the other partner. Norwegian partners relied on books and guides, while Romanians had the presentation by the Norwegian ambassador to Bucharest about the Norwegian people and culture. Presentation stressed the wide-spread cliché that Norwegians are extremely reserved and avoid social interaction.

As the level of trust at the outset was low, some of the Norwegian partners took a formalistic approach to communication and meetings, double-checking and confirming the authenticity of protocols, budgets and agreements represented additional costs to the project. Norwegian partners reckoned inaccuracies in documents, but acknowledged on a later stage that these were caused by lack of experience, preparedness and accuracy in similar cooperation from the side of Romanian partners; need for adjustments of agreed activities, budgets and roles was understood by all the members of the Project. In relation to the budget, misunderstanding took place as the budget in Norway was referred to as being “sacred” and changes are in general not welcomed. Romanian partners tried to extend the scope of the project by inviting more partners, however as this was not covered by the Project’s budget, agreement was not reached.

Preparedness exhibited itself mostly in the lack of knowledge related to the Romanian regulations and procedures, that by both parties was referred to as complicated and incomplete. Aspects related to tendering were not thoroughly understood that affected the supply of composting bins to the population on a later stage.

Norwegian partners report contradictory views on the level of regulatory knowledge possessed before the start of the Project. Some state that partners entered the project work on equal basis, as for both EU regulations were not known in detail. On the other hand, Norwegian partners responsible for legislation aspects in hazardous, construction and demolition waste management, reported on a substantial research into the topic made before the delivery of knowledge and organization of the workshop. This allowed them not only to refresh their existing knowledge, but also to become experts on waste management within Norway as well.

Romanian answer identifies their concern in relation to Norwegians having perfect knowledge and understanding of EU legislation, increasing the level of attention when it came to particularities of EU and Norwegian legislations delivered, and differences between the two. Benefit of Norwegian regulation was that high level of its development allowed educators to be critical and provided freedom in analyzing EU legislation and shortcomings of it.

All areas of cooperation relied on study tours and workshops as ways of learning and knowledge sharing. Throughout the whole Project and in every core area, emphasis was made not on direct technology transfer, but on training and introduction of practices used in Norway as exemplary for Romanian partners, mostly through workshops and study tours. Direction of the workshop was set by the general framework Agenda 21, that focuses on sustainable development: in the light of its guidelines Norwegian waste management system is arranged. Three projects, corresponding to the three identified areas of assistance, were set in a form of pilot projects. There was no extensive cooperation between the partners on the information to be delivered, as responsibilities and areas of activities were clearly described and separated. Norwegian visits to Romania were undertaken at different times.

During the first study trip in 2010, 22 Romanians from different stakeholders visited Norway. First destination was Stavanger where different waste management installations were presented and discussed; workshop on waste management tariff systems, construction and demolition, hazardous were organized by representatives of Stavanger Municipality. As an outcome of workshops and discussions, Romanian visitors prepared guidelines, which were analyzed and

evaluated by workshop organizers. Tour lasted five days and was followed by a trip to Oslo, where the Norwegian policies developed by the Ministry of the environment were presented.

During the visit Norwegians presented, among other things, different techniques related to recycling and composting. Visitors from Romania were taken to recycling stations, farms focusing on ecological farming and eco houses. The main concern was to show how to live sustainably. Interestingly, it has been acknowledged on a later stage of the Project, during the visit to Romania, that Romanians live closer to nature than Norwegians do: from this point, adjustments in the cooperation mode and the directions of the workshops have had to be made.

Another study tour involved a much broader share of Romanian stakeholders. 12 students of Blaga University in Romania had internships in seven Norwegian waste management companies with the duration of an internship on average being 10 day. Students started their internship in KS where they had a theoretical introduction to the policies, models and structures in Norway. After that the students were spread over the country to appointed waste management companies. Together with them there were also 3 professors that participated, and they had their internship in Trondheim Technical University in cooperation with Trondheim municipality.

During the Project, REPA Sibiu were mostly responsible for providing the guidelines for the further actions, the organization didn't implement the processes such as transportation, incineration, waste management processes themselves. However REPA Sibiu attracted actors from outside who were directly responsible for doing the activities elaborated by them. Following these guidelines, Romanian parties were facilitated to assume the responsibility and take the action.

Though general structure of cooperation was defined at the early stage, particular delays affected the execution of certain activities. Local coordinator of composting-side of the project, that was needed to coordinate the work in efficient and professional way, was found half-way through Project execution, with the position previously occupied on a voluntary basis. New Project coordinator became Adriana Horstman, an individual entrepreneur dealing with land and water management and experienced in land rehabilitation and conservation. Adriana served as an intermediary between the two Project partner countries mediating the cultural misunderstandings and different working styles, with her acting promptly and in a result-oriented manner.

On all 3 areas in the Project several workshops in Romania complemented those in Norway. In these workshops, Norwegian partners presented their respective aspects of waste management

practice, the systems and models in Norway, and had discussions with the Romanian partners on how it could work in their country. In the realm of hazardous and construction and demolition waste, Norwegian guidelines served as the basis for the guidelines that were developed for Romania. In terms of the potential benefits provided by the regulatory framework, it has been noted by Norwegian partners that, surprisingly, there is still no clarity as to the administrative responsibilities in waste management on different local and regional levels. Fundamental legislation (namely, acts and regulations), according to Stavanger Municipality, was substituted with a lot of tentative, provisional acts and regulation.

Green Living was deeply involved with the work with local population in Romania. Trainings with approximately 200 households were conducted, some of them followed by shared activities as grocery and meal. English translations of manuals and product information for two compost bin types suitable for the home- and school composting project was provided to the participants of the Home Composting workshop. To involve schools, training for teachers on Green Flag registration and certification process was given.

Particular attention was given to waste reduction and recycling from source. Initial goal was to involve at the initial stage 40 motivated households in the village of Sibiel, and then, as the next stage, expand the pilot to the remaining 160 households in Sibiel/Vale and Saliste villages. These 40 households have been chosen based on their involvement in eco-tourism and are owners or managers of guesthouses, pensions and restaurant businesses.

The training involved a climate awareness presentation followed by creating a home made, 3-course meal from local produce, together and for each other. After the meal, we had a presentation of sorting the different waste produced from this meal and composting the organic waste. The fees for renovation will stay at the present level for those who wish to join the home composting project, and will rise (double?) for those who do not wish to begin to compost at home yet.

Personal motivation of the employees of participant institutions and companies was complemented by engagement of administrative staff on a very high levels. Mayor of Medias was acknowledged as a driving force beyond the changes taking place. He himself was present during the cleaning of the park near the Town Hall and handed out chocolate to everybody. He was very pleased with the action and mentioned that it was the first time since seven years that the students of the school had a cleaning action in the city.

The working language of the Project was English. According to Romanian respondents, language was not a problem, as everything was clear and well documented. During the training session the services of professional translator were used. Interestingly, KS representative took a study in Romanian, making an effort to make bridges and to overlap whatever misunderstanding in cultural or language issue there could be. However, translations of the Project assistance manager were not seen as precise by some of the Project partners; at some point it was suspected that personal attitudes were substituting the initial content. Most of the Romanian partners were not able to converse in English that decreased their possibilities to participate in discussions and share ideas. Translator was not being accounted for in the initial budget, as partners were unaware of the difficulty to find someone on the local level who possessed enough English skills.

After the training sessions and workshops in both countries, the Romanian had to start the creation of a new waste management system in Romania. Participants of the study tour, once back to Romania, had to pass the knowledge further by giving training to different groups in Romania, including to local councils, schools, teenagers, pension holders, villagers, NGO's. With some groups only sessions with PowerPoints were organized, followed by an explanation on composting, but to some the introduction to presentation technique was given, to continue the educational spiral.

By the end of the Project, former director of REPA Sibiu, took over other projects in the county and the vicinity, and newly appointed director to take over. Newly appointed employee already had some experience with European projects both in public and private sector. She had experience in writing and winning funding for the projects on the level of municipality of Sibiu. She adds, "I was very proud to take forward the activities started by my predecessor". In the mean time, when their responsibilities as to Project management were not clearly separated, common intention to take the Project forward, after the statements by both of them, prevented internal conflicts.

4.3. Behavioral and relational aspects of the project under study

As an outcome of common work, Romanians, unlike what was presented to them initially at the Norwegian Embassy, started seeing Norwegian members of the cooperation as open, easy to establish relationships and communication with, proactive in starting a conversation. Good example comes from Green Living, when members of the organization got involved with going to the market in Romania together with householders and doing grocery to cook later together

with the villagers. Current director of REPA Sibiu adds that learning happened also on interpersonal level, as Norwegian partners were very correct, polite, respectful, open, that, according to her, strengthened the relationship not less, than the technical expertise, provided by them.

Considering initial doubt in relation to the outcomes of the project, Norwegian partners visiting Sibiu one year after the Project completion were surprised to find people still actively pursuing their goals. Most of the concern was related to the relation between the activity and fund availability; however, there was no dependence on the funds that would prevent personal drive of REPA Sibiu and its Romanian partners. Both parties stated pride in the achievements and continuity of the Project in Romania.

Within the Norwegian side of the Project, concerns were raised related to the role of KS in the Project. REPA Sibiu as Project owners was responsible for the implementation and outcomes of the Project. KS' role was decisive in creating the project and still important in the phase of implementation. However, Norwegian authority required ongoing reporting on the project, steps. For some Project members, necessity to report to KS was perceived as unnecessary and time consuming, that affected the overall tone of communication between the partners.

General agreement is reached in terms of personal willingness to cooperate on similar projects. Green Living Norway expressed excitement and usefulness of these cooperation projects both personally and professionally. Other participants responded on behalf of the departments they lead: from shared perspective, involvements like these create a positive and stimulating atmosphere in the department, supporting employee satisfaction. At the same time it gives to the department as an entity a prestige of being a very interesting and meaningful working place.

Despite these aspirations, involvement of Norwegian partners depends on their workload; situation is different for their Romanian counterparts. From Romanian perspective the work load was addressed as “crazy” – especially considering the fact that there were few and those taking part had to work over time for no private monetary benefit, but mostly because of the overall complexity of the topics covered. Projects were intentionally created to be complex. It turns out that the complexity is one criteria that eases the access of funding. REPA Sibiu director points out that the level of expertise of the project members was unequal and Romanians lacked infrastructure that hindered the implementation of certain aspect of the project. At the same time she points out that the endeavor to tackle the difficulties raised trust and assurance of the cooperation success in Norwegian partners.

From the Norwegian perspective, time to be spent on the meeting could never be predicted with certainty: other meetings should have been postponed or cancelled because of the Project work. Though some of the Norwegian partners would be willing to participate in similar projects on a continuous basis, others would prefer to engage themselves again within two years after the completion of the previous project. No partner, for whom the Project was not a sole area of concern during the span of it, would like to sacrifice its own internal goals in favor of such international projects as focal one. Seen as facilitating activities, cooperation projects like focal one are not natural engagements of typical organizations, and thus working capacity is not always at the department's disposal. Individual fit for international collaboration can at the same time divide the previously united group of colleagues into "insiders" and "outsiders".

Reward systems in the organizations were not created to cover for the overworking on projects like the described one. Many participants acknowledge the reward received to be of a rather intangible nature: a) participation in an exciting and challenging activity, b) internal reputation (by colleagues inside and outside our department), c) to become acquainted with an unknown country far away and with unknown people, d) the feeling that your knowledge and your experience is being highly esteemed by other people.

4.4. Results of cooperation and further events

Delay with the decision on supplier of composting bins was perceived as one of the most drastic hindrances of the project implementation. It prevented follow-up from the side of the Project assistants from Norway to assess the implementation of the composting techniques by the population. Aspects of Romanian bureaucracy, but also particularities of the culture, referred to as "slow, laid back", were mostly mentioned by non-Romanian parties as core reasons for the delay, together with already mentioned complexity and incompleteness of the tendering legislations.

Technically, the delay was caused by the sequence of following events. Public tender organized for container purchase, inviting EU companies for participation (though the initial wish of the Project members was to search for and invest in local suppliers). At first the quote from the company from Romania wasn't accepted by REPA Sibiu because of the conclusion that the product was not in accordance with the requirements. Rejected supplier attested this decision in court, with the final decision being to confirm the suitability of the product and order to purchase from Romanian supplier. This process consumed a lot of time – Norwegian partners sadly agree

that had there be more attention to the issue from their side, time amount spent and outcomes of the issue could have been different.

As to the tariff systems and legislation, one year after the Project there is no change in their completeness or sophistication. Norwegian visitors found it disappointing that considering the level of involvement and personal drive their counterparts devote to the issue, regulations prevent them from acting effectively – this can be attributed to the most extent to the tariff and hazardous waste management legislation frameworks.

Despite these minor inaccuracies and failures, all the participants of the Project state that “the network is still working”. Questions from Romania are always welcome, and Norwegian partners are eager to provide advice over the internet. Some of the project participants are intending to take a study leave and go to Romania to participate on some Projects in this country, together with the former partners. Green network in Romania, NGO, created on the basis of the Norwegian example, today provides environmental/sustainable living information to the public and represents an organ for voicing the public opinion in return to the public authorities. For Romanian actors, Project is not over either: there is a recycling facility to be build. Thus, none of them refer to the Project as “completed.”

According to the consultant on Network formation, as most of the local and regional NGO’s in Romania have volunteer based activities, few active members and few or none a professional (paid) administration, the Green network membership NGO’s are prone to seasonal based activities, discontinuous project follow-up and fragmented routines along with other challenges such as loss of active members after hectic project periods and difficulties in reaching new members who would like to work for a worthy cause, but decline, due to busy schedules in their personal lives. The newly established network is therefore directed to creating a forum for informal exchange of information, capacity building and motivation between the membership NGO’s, and, most importantly, making it possible to reduce the administrative workload which ties up a lot of volunteer based time, effort, money and productive energy.

4.5. Improvements in Romanian waste management practice: year after

The results have been very significant and performed extensive changes. To compare in 2004 Romanians had in Medias only one tractor, after the cooperation, one of the active members of cooperation, company Eco-Sal , expanded to 200 people. A new waste plant was established in Medias. The plant is well equipped and operated with all 3 types of waste presented in the

project: hazardous waste, construction and demolition and composting. Eco-Sal constructed the whole chain starting with pre-separation and finishing with recycling.

Waste collection was established in the region and takes place 6 days a week in 2 shifts, each lasting 16 hours - what allow to cover large time periods. Problems are faced only due to the infrastructure that prevents effective curb-side collection, though recent innovation by Eco-Sal, based on a fully equipped mobile container for picking up hazardous waste from households. This (manned) container could be moved to different districts in Medias and surroundings for temporary collection and proves to be effective. This innovation was mentioned by Norwegians as being worth learning more about, as a low-cost creative solution to the current necessity.

One of the technologies, that was not part of the workshops or study tours, but was implemented in Romania, namely underground containers, that was implemented first in the city of Medias, in the nearest future is to be implemented on the county level.

The waste from households first goes to the plant, where it is sorted and processed by special equipment purchased as part of the grant, and then landfill (landfill is located near Sibiu; in general landfills are constructed 1 or 2 per county depending on the amount of population in the surroundings). By 2011 137 non-compliant waste landfills were closed, with 100 remaining (FRD, 2011). Yet landfilling remained the most frequent method for waste disposal.

Waste which is presorted goes to recycling companies (plastic and paper), which are also partners of the newly created network. Glass is crushed and goes as a construction material for pavements.

All the waste is still separated manually, however an investment in automatic separation and larger presses is expected. Waste from outside Medias is not presorted, since the population there is not yet aware of how to sort waste, thus it goes directly to the landfill. Only household waste can be sorted, the rest also goes directly to the landfill. The hospital waste it is the only waste which is incinerated.

Strong educational campaigns are organized for the young populations. Schools are obliged to have special containers at schools, though children only deal with plastic and paper waste. Containers appear at local events to raise awareness during the population.

Composting they do by hand in Autumn and Spring, however don't have composting plant at the facility yet.

For hazardous waste, two ways of collection were developed: fee-free collection at the “pool center” (audience was informed about the option through the local media) and “mobile stations” that appear on special days, with time and location communicated to the population beforehand.

Through educational campaigns people are informed about what hazardous waste is – descriptive pictures, trainings, social media through local channels are employed as communication tools, however the knowledge of the population is still lacking. This lack exhibits itself in household not bringing hazardous waste to the facility, but rather storing it at home. Nevertheless, introduced system makes Medias is the first and only city in Romania with separate hazardous waste collection. In the situation when local authorities agree to pay tax, that they currently avoid, system can be extrapolated to the whole country, as facilities are big enough for this move.

Special equipment, such as separating machines, has been bought with the help of grant in order to collect and sort construction and demolition waste. System in Romania is organized in such a way that in case containers are ordered from a company, ordering entity has to separate waste on individual basis. In case the entity fails to separate, tariff is imposed and the overall price appears to be much higher.

Two associations have been established in this area, apart from already mentioned Green Network: one during the project, “National Associations of Waste Management Operators” and one after the project, “Romanian sanitary service operators” with HQ in Medias. They are perceived to get recognition on the national level and serve as a mean to promote sustainable waste management practices nationally. This is an essential aspect, as focal Project serves as an example to other counties in Romania. Center 7 Sibiu and Project participants are regularly addressed on the aspects related to application formulation, but also with requests for technology and knowledge transfer.

On the side of the market development, another project under EEA grants, Eco-Emerge (2009-2011), concentrated on improving the link between eco-innovation/eco-technologies and sustainable consumption/green procurement, building the national platform for the emergence of the Romanian green markets. Romanian Ministry of Environment and Forests acted as project promoter; Norwegian Ministry of Environment was a project partner. Total budget for the project was 1,92 million euro with 85%Norwegian financing and 15% Romanian co-financing.

New ambitious projects are not only expected to be covered by EU grants (funding round 2016-2020), but also to be executed with the help of established partners. In particular, Association of Waste Management Operators is to be promoted together with Waste Management Norway. Challenging goals have to be designed, as Romanian partners know: the more complicated the project, the more chances that the funds will be allocated to it. The director of the association is the director of EcoSal. Next goal is to build a recycling plant: for Romanians, Project is finished before this goal is achieved. On the other hand, Norwegian partners of cooperation see the Project as being completed.

5. Theory application

Way to the comprehensive assessment of the flow and outcomes of the project under study can be described as follows: theory approach to the notion of public good (two of them - knowledge and waste collection - were at the heart of the addressed project), followed by the discussion on networks, both transgovernmental and transnational, and, finally, on the contextual approach to the process of knowledge transfer, that is the core reason for the creation of the transnational networks.

Before moving to the theory application, authors would like to acknowledge that the developed research methodology for this thesis proved useful during the whole study. The only concern worth mentioning, that should be taken into consideration in case research is to be extended, is the issue of translation. Just as the theory suggests, use of an interpreter is associated with three problems: a) the interpreter's effect on the informant; b) the interpreter's effect on the communicative process; and c) the interpreter's effect on the translation (Phillips, 1960). These effects were observed not only by the authors of this thesis, but also by members of the partnership under study. Dependence on the interpreter was also acknowledged on the level of the perspective on the issue provided. Substantial help came from the previous experience of the interpreter with whom authors have been working in interpreting within different cultural and physical settings, yet the issue is perceived as deserving particular attention.

5.1. Discussion on public goods within the project under study

Conducted research shows, that intrinsic nature of knowledge and waste collection as public goods was the core reason why particular actions of participants took place. In the best definition of non-excludability (Zilberman, 2006), but also due to the necessity to sustain organizational learning, that would be discussed below, large number of partners was involved into the Project work. During the interview with Romanian actors, some of the presented in the room had no direct relation to the Project, yet were invited and willing to come in order to aid to the overall learning and knowledge-sharing process.

Non-rivalry characteristic of goods, however, cannot be fully observed on the Project: to obtain granting, countries have to file project applications. As noted by Project participants, lack of prior experience and particularly awareness of actions and assistance required diminish the probability of the application for being accepted.

Since new EU entrants cannot be attractive investment targets for knowledge intensive firms, open market for knowledge transfer has been established under the grant system. At the same time institutional involvement coming from the recipient state – in need for tacit and explicit knowledge and technology – conditions the tailored shape of the transfer process, as local contexts are taken into consideration. Once knowledge is discovered, codified and externalized, there is no marginal cost to adding new users (Stiglitz, 1997).

Yet it is possible to hypothesize that knowledge and technology developed by a private actor will be subject to protection. Though applicability of the patents and trade secrecy within the waste sector has hardly been addressed, knowledge and technology dissemination in Romania at this stage, supported by grants, is subject to moderate level of open-sharing. Yet, the more sophisticated technology will become, the more incentives to facilitate open market will be required from the side of authorities.

This necessity might call for the protectionist measures and prevention of strong international players from entering the market – this scenario seems plausible as far also under the EEA and Norway Grants Guidelines beneficiary states are required to select among local suppliers – in the case of the focal cooperation, we observe that this requirement caused particular disturbances in the overall flow of the project.

Theory on public goods and behavioral relation to waste proves useful when analyzing participants' behavior and motivation: in this sense, it can complement the framework based on contextual approach to knowledge transfer. Costs of network management, theoretically capable of decreasing the cost of knowledge acquisition, are nevertheless substantial due to the necessity to control the flow of funds under the grant system. In terms of Stiglitz (1999) this can be attributed the “transmission charge” for knowledge transfer. This is the first difference, and more are to follow, that distinguished grant-based network that relies on project work, from the theoretical construct.

From the third perspective, a number of studies (Refsgaard, Magnussen, 2009; Barr, Gilg and Ford, 2001) address the interrelation between attitude to sustainable waste practices and motivational and behavioral aspects of households. This field of research presents valuable insights into the attitudes to waste management and consequent outcomes on micro-level and is seen as able to complement existing three-context model with an operative tool to analyze the particularities of transnational cooperation in waste sector.

Here however, a longitudinal study would be needed: as one of the interviewees suggested, change in the attitude of Norwegians to waste and recycling took 10 to 15 years to reach what we observe today. Though Romania expresses deep interest and devotion to sustainable waste practices, as theory suggests, "given the amount of media coverage devoted to environmental problems, it could be that many people have learned the language of environmentalism without developing a simultaneous behavioral commitment." - thus we have not made any questionnaire for the local population in Romania (Barr, Gilg and Ford, 2001) Thus, judgment on the basis of real activities, which would span longer than the involvement of the people who started and supported the Project should be assessed.

In order to sustain benefits of cooperation within Romania, training and education are of great importance – it can be observed, that this has been acknowledged in the focal project. Theory suggests that dissemination of knowledge on public goods plays an important role when change of actions is required to become more environmentally-friendly. As stated by the authoritative sources, waste, knowledge, environment and health are public goods where free markets generally fail to provide equitable and sustainable long term solutions. Particular attention to the market should be paid: even though Hull's (2010) research states that there continues to be evidence of established companies from western or central Europe exploiting business in eastern Europe through contractual manipulation, tendering process in Romania, due to its complexity and absence of transparency, still in some cases prevents entrance of the market by international players: this is the limitation on the scope of potential ways for knowledge and technology to flow into the country.

Cooperation project in focus can be seen as facilitated by the necessity to compensate for the market failure in the provision of a public good - knowledge on sustainable waste management practice. Theory suggests that grant mechanisms are applied in order to facilitate dissemination of knowledge and compensate for market opportunism (Zilberman, 2006).

It is clear that low level of attractiveness of markets such as Romania for investment prevents big international companies from tapping into the market: though consolidation takes place in waste management sector on a global scale, small regional companies prevail in the country. In-house sophisticated technology, developed by global players such as Veolia Environment or Remondis, had so far no opportunity to be applied for the benefit of the population of Romania. Since new EU entrants cannot be attractive investment targets for knowledge intensive firms, open market for knowledge transfer has been established under the grant system.

Technology provided by Norway was of established nature and can be associated knowledge can be addressed as of codified and explicit nature. Case provides insight into the fact, that underground containers were implemented in Romania even though they were not subject to transfer or discussion within the scope of the project work. This means that the technology in waste sector is rather straightforward and given availability of producers can be purchased and installed without the involvement of donor state.

Thus, the main purpose of cooperation can be seen as giving recipient state and opportunity to broaden the perspective on available alternatives, leaving the choice of what to install in the country to beneficiary state itself. In line with Arrow (1962), learning that took place during the cooperation was a product of experience and takes place during activity - in the case of the project, during the study tour to Norway.

Grants can be aimed at or supported by collective action that is as well required in order to compensate for under-supply of public goods. Civil responsibility in this case is an outcome of increased public awareness of the outcomes of neglecting the needed activity.

Stiglitz (1999) recognizes knowledge in today's environment as not only a public good, but as global or international public good. He refers to the type of knowledge essential for world competitiveness – knowledge for development. In the same line, municipal solid waste management is seen as non-exclusive and non-rival service that affects public health, environmental protection increases the overall welfare (Massoud, El-Fadel, 2002). As far as negative effects of inappropriate waste practices, such as methane emissions, can not be kept within the borders of one country, collective action is needed in order to tackle potential environmental threats.

Market-wise, weak competition between firms erodes potential cost savings in Romania. This should be taken into account as grants are of limited supply: actions on policy learning should in the future prevail. For the time being, analysis by Bell and Warner (2008) suggests regulation may be more effective than simple privatization in cases like the described one.

The theoretical concept of public goods does not distinguish with regard to the geographical region in which a good may be produced or consumed. However some theorists distinguished between public goods available to whole world and only to some region or area. In the case of the focal cooperation, waste effects can be seen as global public “bads”, and the opposite works. Yet the knowledge, mostly accumulated within Region 7 Center, has yet to reach other regions in

the country. Free rider problem in knowledge dissemination is not present as the ultimate goal of the actors is free sharing on knowledge as related to the environment. Nevertheless, free-rider aspect of household behavior potentially should be taken into account.

Considering increased interrelation of actors, and their large number both nationally and internationally, number of scholars (Bell and Warner, 2008) suggest application of network governance theory to the issue of privatization of municipal services, as the number of actors working in one field is increasing, that required their cooperation in order to deliver public good (service) to the population on a good price. In this situation government agencies become a node in the larger network responsible for monitoring, their costs might increase due to complexity in comparison to the former costs of service provision. This is increasingly what is being observed in the waste sector: as related part of the thesis shows, there is no empirical evidence on the private companies providing more affordable services than municipalities.

5.2. Network form of governance

It has been decided not to extrapolate existing terms such as “transnational knowledge sharing network” or “transgovernmental network” on the cooperation in focus, but rather address it as transnational project work/Partnership/cooperation in order to first test the hypothesis that theory on transgovernmental networks can be successfully applied to the cooperation in focus. Authors found that the application of the theory is possible if the project is considered the starting point of future network, for what the following signs have been identified: sufficient level of trust created.

Within the realm of social sciences and national governance literature, terms transnational networks (Betsill, Bulkeley, 2004; Dehousse, 2002), transnational governmental networks (Gharawi, Dawes, 2010), transnational public sector knowledge networks (Burke, Gharawi, Dawes, 2011), transnational networks of sub-national governments (TNSG) (Setzer, 2009; Raustiala, 2002) have been used.

It can be concluded that theory on transgovernmental, but mostly transnational networks can be successfully applied to the focal cooperation. Identifying the main characteristics of the established transnational knowledge sharing networks, they can be limited to main three: large number of varied participants involved, purpose of creation being knowledge transfer and bi-directional learning, establishment in order to address particular problem and dependence of life of the network on completion of the initial goals.

Transnational project work, that is the focus of this research, due to the underlying principle of the cooperation as defined by EEA and Norway Grants mechanisms, involved a broad variety of partners, including national and local authorities, educational and research institutions and civil society organizations, private and public enterprises and public-private partnerships.

It has a clear goal of improving the situation with waste management in Romania Region 7 Center through the combination of such mechanisms as knowledge transfer and technology support from a donor state, as well as Norwegian population behavior change model adaptation, for example work with population and schools through awareness raising actions.

Traditional, or, better to say, theoretically-shaped transnational networks are based on the equal interest of partners in cooperation. The outcomes of cooperation are intended to positively benefit both partners, however in the case of EEA/Norway Grants the initiative for initiating cooperation should come from the project promoter in the beneficiary state. Norway's interest in participation in the common market cannot be compared with the urgent need for Romania to develop its waste management practice (reasons for the development of this sector are not seen as initiated by the desire to enter EU, as the work on the issue started already before the decision on entering EU was taken).

Summarizing the peculiarities of the network created under Partnership between Norway and Romania for a clean environment, low waste and sustainable development in Region 7 Center, Romania, it can be concluded that: unlike suggested by the theoretical construct, control costs in the case of the focal cooperation are not lower, as reporting to the supervising authority was needed (KS) – these costs are present in form of time rather than in the form of money; yet they need to be taken into consideration as not all the reporting institutions devoted 100% of their working time to the Project. Next, according to the theoretical construct, transgovernmental/transnational networks are dominated by horizontal partner relations. Within the common framework of EEA and Norway Grants, but also coming from the Romanian willingness, vertical and horizontal cooperation of partners, that included large number of governmental and non-governmental actors, can be observed. Finally, presented project is of a rather short-term nature, that is the outcome of the funding aspects. Yet, theory application is possible due to the similarity of the intrinsic characteristics within transnational networks in theoretical concepts and in the analyzed project-work.

5.3. Theory on contextual differences application

Context-based approach to transnational networks introduced by Dawes et al (2010; 2011) allows access to the characteristics and outcomes of cooperation under this mode of governance along the following dimensions: knowledge, organizational and national. As an outcome of the analysis of these contexts, gaps, or distances between the network partners are identified - attention to these distances should be paid when drafting cooperation activities. As stated by Dawes et al (2011), these distances affect individual and organizational ability to engage into communication and knowledge-sharing process, essential for the success of the common project. The following analysis of the focal cooperation is based on the conclusion that knowledge transfer represents the main reason for network creation and its main activity (Dawes et al, 2011).

Distances, or gaps, affect outcomes, termed by Dawes, Gharawi and Burke (2011) “products” of two types. Hard products could include formal decisions, laws, software or systems, events, data resources, funding, or new organizations. Soft products refer to such elements as generated techniques, trust, distrust, power sharing, volunteerism, or informal relationships (Dawes, Gharawi, Burke 2011).

5.3.1. Knowledge and information context

Applied framework extensively draws on the insights provided by the knowledge-based theory of the firm and theory on cross-cultural knowledge sharing. Within the focal project, knowledge of two types have been identified: knowledge on waste management related to the use of particular technology and knowledge related to the network mode cooperation and participation in transnational knowledge-sharing network.

Dominating theoretical approach to the theologization of knowledge is to divide it in tacit and explicit (Kogut, Zander, 1993). Underlying dimensions, developed by Kogut and Zander (1992), are “codifiability”, “complexity” and “teachability” of knowledge.

Codifiability refers to the ability of the firm to structure knowledge into a set of identifiable rules and relationships that can be easily communicated. Considering the mode of cooperation, characterised by rigid deadlines, constant lack of time and manpower, as well as limited amount of time allocated to Project work in general, clear necessity of transferring knowledge in a prompt manner prevailed; tacit knowledge transfer is much more time consuming.

Even though that the theory suggests that the mode of knowledge transfer that is affected by the type of knowledge in focus and its characteristics, following evidence provides an opposite view.

In order to transfer knowledge, Norwegian partners were codifying existing knowledge thus to present it to the partners from beneficiary state. Explicit knowledge related to legislative frameworks and technology use has been identified as the easiest to be transferred. In terms of the continuous conversion of knowledge, ones practiced in Romania, knowledge took on characteristics of being tacit.

Within the scope of the Project, knowledge on campaigning has been identified as tacit, due to the fact that it is complex, non-codifiable and context specific: though behavioral attitudes of population were not documented to be different from country to country, particular cultural differences and relation to environment have been observed. This makes the aspects of knowledge related to the close work with interested stakeholders one of the most difficult to be transferred.

Existing knowledge in the recipient state affected the level of adoption of the explicit knowledge transferred by the Norwegian partners. Lack of expertise in formation of suitable regulatory framework prevented transformation of the existing regulation based on the Norwegian example.

Within the knowledge-based approach, knowledge of two types is analyzed: embedded (individual) and organizational knowledge (Sharpe, 2011; Kogut, Zander, 1992). Knowledge stock, found in individual members of the firm, interact with the organizational structures, standard operating procedures and practices, culture of the workplace (Narteh, 2008). It affect the organizational and individual vision, as well as desire to share.

It has been established that part of an organization's knowledge stock can't be codified because it is tacit and embedded in its people (Kogut, Zander, 1992). From this, decision of Stavanger municipality to visit Sibiu one year after cooperation and include the whole department can be seen as an endeavor to acquire shared knowledge that would be the strength of each individual, yet collected on the organizational level.

Visits and study tours during the span of the Project played important role in adjusting modes and types of knowledge to be transferred. They were used as facilitating channels in order to transfer the knowledge in the most efficient manner. In addition to that, with the reference to the theory, expatriates are defined to be an effective channel in the process of knowledge transfer between units. In the focal project, the project coordinator is serving in this role. Being Dutch,

her living experience in Romania for several years before the Project brought a valuable input into the focal cooperation in terms of understanding interpersonal relationship between the parties. Adriana played an important role of mediating and explaining cultural differences to both parties, having more experience with the parties individually than any member of the Project.

Kogut and Zander (1992, 1993) suggest two ways of transferring the knowledge: vertically and horizontally. In the focal cooperation both ways of transferring the knowledge were applied. Horizontal transfer of knowledge takes place within the same function. In the project the knowledge was supposed to be transferred within the similar institutional structure as it was in Norway, however on the Romanian side several institutions were lacking what became an obstacle for the efficient knowledge transfer. In order to conform the institutional level, Romania had to establish two additional organization, “National Associations of Waste Management Operators” and “Romanian sanitary service operators” with HQ in Medias. The first one was established together with Norwegian participation. By means of this activities the knowledge could be transferred within the similar units but in different countries.

In regards to the vertical way of transferring the knowledge, in the focal cooperation, the knowledge acquired from Norwegian partner was supposed to be transferred further: to the population, teachers, other participants involved in the downwards knowledge transfer in Romania.

In the focal project the vertical knowledge is estimated to be more challenging, as individual households lack substantial amounts of knowledge attributed to the environmental concerns and sustainable waste management practices. As Norway possesses certain experience in the issue, during the activities in Romania that involved local population, use of Norwegian videos and other learning materials, translated in Romanian, is seen as beneficial, also villagers in Romania were given opportunity to learn about Norwegian culture, as images and contexts used in the learning materials were based on Norwegian cultural products.

Knowledge context is the origin of knowledge and technical distance. Obviously, level of development of waste management practice in Norway and Romania is different: respective parts in the Case describe the forerunner position of Norway in most of contemporary waste management technologies, with the exception of waste-to-energy plants, and legislation. Lack of this knowledge in Romania, as well as tough process of regulation change in accordance to the EU requirements present no stable ground for successful assimilation of the received knowledge

on waste and waste technology: every bit of information conducted during the training sessions, also as an outcome of the focus of the initial intention of the project owners on making the scope of topics covered more complex, posited difficulties as to acquisition of knowledge.

Knowledge distance is estimated to be high. The concentration of the knowledge transfer was on advanced aspects of waste management, due to the Project specifications and initial goal of Romania to improve the level of practice. For the moment when the Project started Romania possessed no knowledge in regards the waste management practices, so the whole expertise was expected to be acquired from Norway. Norwegians are characterized as experts in the field of waste management's practices. Being very environmentally conscious, their performance within the field is on the leading positions in the world. However even though the gap is estimated to be high, this fact doesn't have a significant impact on the process of knowledge transfer. The initial goal of the focal cooperation was to provide the efficient teaching campaign among households of the beneficiary state in order to maintain the establishment of the waste management system in Romania from the scratch. Norwegians realized the superiority of the knowledge and technology they possess in comparison with Romania and thus prepared in appropriate manner. In spite of the gap the results and outcomes of the project testify that mostly the goal was successfully accomplished; distance was overcome mostly due to the improved inter-network understanding and trust, as well as personal motivation of Romanian actors to bring the project forward. Extensive description of the accomplishments can be found in the findings. As for Norwegian side, partners consider that within the areas planned in the project the knowledge needed for the future development within the field have been acquired.

Technical distance is estimated to be high. Romanians are not technically developed enough in order to match the Norwegian level. Special teaching session were needed in order to provide the teaching courses about the purchased equipment. In addition to that specially equipped teaching area was needed to be constructed in REPA Sibiu, for students and population, who were participating in the educational process, with computers and database access, in order to fulfill the required tasks.

Due to bureaucracy, that is, according to the latest market and government reviews and interviewee observations, still present in Romania, suppliers of proper technology are mostly lacking in the market, also due to the fact that the tender process transparency is low. However some Norwegian participants of the project claimed that Romanians were very educated and technically advanced, to their surprise.

The distance has significantly influenced the efficiency of the transfer in a negative way. The impact was expressed by slowing down the operation process by additional preparations and extra resources.

5.3.2. Organizational context

The authors observe that most of the org cultural distance comes from national context. Organizational context covers aspects, inherent to the participating organizational structures, including trust, learning intent, absorptive and teaching capacity, and the intersection of the contexts of the organizations when they cooperate. The organizational context is tightly linked to the national context, which is described in the following session, and thus goes under its influence. Trust is defined as an aspect of a great importance within the discussed context (Dawes et al, 2010). Theoretical findings attribute high level of trust to the positive record of past relations (Levinthal and Fichman, 1988). The cooperation within the Project represents the first interaction of the parties. It indicates the lack of previous relationship between the representatives of Romania and Norway, and defines the level of trust to be low.

The absence of basis for judging true partner's true intentions, reliability and trustworthiness slows down the initial pace of cooperation. Nevertheless, unlike Narteh (2008) observation of transferees acting in a protective manner in similar cases, due to the specifications of the Project and established state of waste management technology in Norway, which cannot be named innovative, this behavior was not observed within the project work.

In the focal cooperation Norwegian side didn't have the intention to protect the knowledge, since sharing was the core reason for the cooperation. However some doubts on the process and success of the project were present. Sheth and Parvatiyar (1992) grounds self-assessment and individual perceptions as best measurement for the level of trust. The initial attitude of the participant to each other was basically formed of the stereotypes and attitudes to the country, so the cultural aspect played a significant role within the attitude formation.

The attitudes were characterized by the low level of trust from the Norwegian side in terms of business cooperation, and cultural background. The presence of skepticism about the future collaboration caused the negative impact at the initial stage of cooperation in terms of trust. Interestingly, some Romanian respondents described the level of trust in relation to their country nationals as low, with level of trust to Norwegian partners being 100%. As for Romanians, they perceived Norwegian partners in a better perspective, due to the connection of the country with

the German parties in their past and believe that Norwegians resemble the nationality Romanians know - sharing the same cultural identity in terms of character-based type of trust within Zucker's (1986) model.

Expanding on the character-based trust within the Focal cooperation, with the reference to the culture perspective of both Romania and Norway, small number of similarities was revealed. The level of development of the countries significantly differs what caused the diversity in the attitudes of the people to the environment, waste management etc. There were also observed the differences in people's mentalities, business like activities, attitudes to the concepts of time, control, punctuality. However both parties, by the end of the project claimed that in reality, the communication happened much smoothly that it was expected, due to the revealed similarities in cultural approaches of both parties along the project. Another important issue which significantly smoothed the degree of dissimilarities was the preparedness of both sides to adapt to each other's cultures, try new things and reveal new opportunities. Both partners, being host, followed the plans provided by home partners and reacted very openly, willing to explore new culture. This tendency had a very positive impact on the character-based level of trust within the cooperation.

Sheth and Parvetiyar (1992) state that levels of trust are significantly dependent on the expected behaviors' outcome on the construction of character-based trust. In the focal cooperation from the Norwegian perspective, the expected behavior of the partner was expected to be negative. By means of successful communication between the parties the agreements were achieved. The dissipation of the initial attitudes within the short period of time indicates the success of the cooperation.

Zucker (1986) detects two more types of trust; process-based and institutional based. The first type is achieved through the collective learning of the parties within the knowledge transfer process. In the focal cooperation workshops, training sessions and visits were the main facilitators for the level increase of the process-based trust, by means of personal communication.

Institutional-based trust is an outcome of the rules and norms that are dominant in a democratic and civil society. legislation and aspect such as bureaucracy, if not meeting this level, form a negative reputation for the country and, in the focal case, served as the basis for certain beliefs and prejudices from the side of Norwegian partners. At the same time, indicated level of trust to one's country nationals within Romania show, that Norwegian attitude is not unique. This type

of trust, though first affecting the project work, is mitigated by character-based and, most and foremost, process-based trust during the span of the project.

Organizational context, supplemented with the inputs from the internationalization theory of the firm, provides insights into learning process that occurs between developed and developing countries. Tsang (1999) refers to it as asymmetric. Different intentions for learning among partners are also observed.

Tsang (1999) argues that the degree of knowledge acquired by the developing country is much higher compared to the developed one. The evidence of the focal project confirms these findings. Norwegian partners claimed that the focal project helped them improve the knowledge about their own legislative systems, while preparing for the workshops, however no essential knowledge was learnt within the teaching field.

Organizational absorptive capacity is directly linked to the absorptive capacity of the individuals, involved in the process of knowledge transfer (Nonaka, 1994; Narteh, 2008; Inkpen, Tsang, 1995). The absorptive capacity of Romanians is estimated to be high. The donor state claims that all the knowledge needed for the future development of the waste management practices in Romania have been acquired within the focal project.

The visit of Norwegian partners years after the focal project completion provides a good evidence for that since the impression of the achieved results of Romanians appeared to be very positive. In addition to that Romanian established the system of the underground containers, which was not included in the workshops provided by the donor stated, so the Romanians implemented it from what they could see. So they managed to obtain the practices which haven't been taught. This fact also gives an example of the active learning, happening within the cooperation.

Active learning is observed when the easily codified knowledge is transferred through the activities like benchmarking and observations. Finally in regards to innovativeness of Romania, the company Eco-Sal provided an interesting solution to the existing problem by introducing the fully equipped mobile container for picking up hazardous waste from households. The level of Romanian absorptive capacity had a positive impact on results of the project.

By continuing with the other methods of learning new external knowledge the core method implemented in the project under study was interactive. Lane and Lubatkin (1998) define this method as the most value creative and however the similarities in the existing knowledge base

and organizational structures are needed in order to achieve the best results. As it was mentioned before these aspects were not enough developed at the initial stage of the project.

The teaching capacity is estimated to be high as well. Narteh, 2008 finds such factors as transferor's intent and experience in prior knowledge to be crucial within the concept. In the focal cooperation for most of the Norwegian partners were very experienced in transferring knowledge to other countries, however for Stavanger Municipality it was the first experience. Overall the process of teaching is perceived to be accomplished in a very effective manner. Due to the well-done preparations Stavanger Municipality provided high quality educational programs. The Norwegian teaching capacity can be also linked to the cultural point of doing business they are described as very disciplined, plan-oriented and punctual.

Time management, related to the aspect of organizational processes, is considered to be an important organizational issue within the cooperation. Even though the Norwegian side was mostly in control of accomplishment their own tasks, it was mentioned that Romanian side was acting not in accordance to the developed plan and were late on different tasks. Since it was mostly of the concern of the Romanian side, it didn't affect the outcomes of the project significantly, but could speed up the decision-making process.

The delivery of the compost bins was delayed beyond the date of the project finishing. Many other things deviated from the appointed plan. As for Norwegian side, they didn't argue about the issue since they were mostly concentrated on their personal tasks, however it was noted that a lot more was expected from Norwegian side to be done during the project.

Observations presented above highlight organizational distances between focal project partners, exhibited in their business practices and organizational culture. Though theoretical model states that different institutional heritage presents another aspect where distance may potentially arise (Dawes et al, 2011), absence of this distance in the described project downgraded the importance of organizational distance as such: common devotion to environment, shared by the focal partners of cooperation, and their similar institutional heritage were safe grounds to act on. This fact is especially acute considering coinciding goals of the Project partners and their willingness to take on responsibility. Interviewees note though, that not all project partners have shown the same willingness as to the latter, yet the common trend remains positive.

Presented traits of the distance are summarized in the following. For the moment when the project started Romania didn't possess enough institutions in order to conform the Norwegian

platform, developed in their country in regards waste management Industry. In order to fill the gap, Romania had to establish additional organizations and institutions appointed in the future for the required tasks, such as National Association of Waste Management Operators; Romanian Sanitary Service Operators. The distance had a significant impact on the Project in regards to the introducing new units within the project.

It takes a lot of resources to establish new organizations, to become efficient and useful in a short time. Besides the level of organization wasn't the same as in Norway due to the cultural issues as well. The Norwegian way of doing business is described as accurate, structured and consistent while the Romanian way is more chaotic. The desire to attract more Norwegian budgets in order to increase the extent of the Project is a good evidence for that. Finally during the project REPA has stand crucial changes within the structure, when the new director was appointed during the project. It appeared to be very challenging for the Romanian side, what caused the additional workload.

The intentional distance is estimated to be low. Both countries pursued the same goals within the project. The main goal of the Norwegian side was to teach and transfer the knowledge in a most efficient way. As for Romanians, they had to learn as much as possible in order to implement an efficient waste management system so they could conform the European level of development. As for the personal goals, they didn't conflict between each other.

Being the first cooperation the relational distance is estimated to be very high. The relational distance is normally decreasing, while the relationship of the parties is developing. The distance is tightly linked to the concept of trust. The relational distance decreased while the level of trust rises.

Resource distance is estimated to be high. For the moment when the project started Romania possessed absolutely no suitable equipment for the waste operations. The lack of equipments was filled by the Norwegian Grants, however the time period of the delivery appeared to be much higher than it was expected. Besides that the lack of technological advancement played a significant role within the project. Both of the factors had a negative impact in regards slowing down the project. Some of the equipment as f.ex.the compost bins haven't been acquired within the timeline of the project, but arrived even later.

5.3.3. National context

Theory has no definite conclusion in relation to the degree of influence of national culture on organizations yet national culture is considered have influence on the organizational culture (Ford, Chan, 2002). Dawes and Gharawi (2010) apply the approach on the basis of cultural scores developed by Hofstede (1985) to address the potential pitfalls in the network. It has been acknowledged by Holden (2002), that concentration on differences, rather than synergies, prevents the ability to act utilizing the strengths of the national background each network member possesses. Authors observe that in the focal case the latter approach proves to be a priori utilized by the network members.

Dawes et al (2011) describe the ability of network members to work through national barriers, including language, cultural differences, laws and regulations as founding pillars in overcoming related distances. In relation to that, Bresman, Birkinshaw and Nobel (1999) state that geographical distance increases the degree of the challenges and problems.

In the presented case, representatives of three nationalities have been involved: Romanian, Norwegian and Dutch. Traditional approach to cross-cultural knowledge transfer concentrates on identifying differences fueled by distinct values that affect the transfer process. Taking into consideration the fact that partners a)joined the network on a basis of a free will and b)managed to establish high level of trust, it has been observed that cultural differences represented a minor aspect that had only very little effect on the process of knowledge transfer.

Four main areas of concern can be identified as able to create distances within the network: cultural aspect that also encompasses value systems, behavior and language, countries' laws and policies, countries' stage of development in relation to technology in focus, and historical and geographical relation of participating actors.

Different value orientations, as part of the cultural heritage, affected the particular aspects within the cooperation. It can be exemplified by the relation to the project budget. Norwegians, being very accurate and plan-oriented, perceive budget as "sacred", and prefer dealing with the at the very initial stage of the cooperation. Once it is planned, no corrections are expected to be put in it. The attitude of Romanian part differed within the question, what was exemplified by their intention attempt to extend it in order to complete other goals, beyond the plan. However the Norwegians were very direct about this point, so the parties achieved the consensus in a short time within the issue.

The language issues are considered to be a significant barrier within the knowledge transfer process. As the cases study stated all the workshops have been conducted through the translator. Romania was lacking the staff who could fluently possess the English skills. An important issue was that the lack of the English skills was unexpected event, so the translator was not accounted on the budget. However the Romanian side doesn't consider the language issue to be an obstacle. The evidence shows that the language issues significantly influenced the timeline of the workshops. Further, the double translating always reveals in loss of information. Focal project, as suggested by the theory, did not evade misunderstandings and second guesses that gave certain level of uncertainty to representatives of some Norwegian partners. This was mainly challenged by the language issue: all the communication happened by means of translation so the suspicion of wrong information interpretation presented within the dialogue.

However, the level of trust that was established fast due to intensive cooperation at the outset and that was maintained high throughout the span of the project, helped to negate the hinders to knowledge transfer posted by language barrier and different value orientations. To a large extent authors conclude, that for partners cooperation represented a unique and pleasant chance to get to know another culture. Also due to the short time allocated to the project, member did not have a chance to grow negative and frustrated due to the cultural differences, that is always the case when prolonged contacts are necessitated.

Cultural gap is fueled by differences in beliefs, values and practices. It is negatively affected by the increase of the duration of cross-cultural relationship (Gulati, 1995). With more time, cultural distances tend to shrink as the partners become more familiar with each other's expertise and idiosyncrasies (Meschi, 1997; Simonin, 1999). Though Dawes et al (2011) also refer to the cultural gap as a factor negatively affecting the performance of the network, latest research concentrates on the rents and benefits that are possible to extract from pooling representatives of different cultures together (Holden, 2002).

Political gap describes issues related to the legal barriers that stem from differences in countries laws, political environments and government goals that might prohibit the sharing of knowledge. This highly relates to the issues of the access to information and intellectual property rights.

The greatest difference that affected the knowledge transfer in the focal cooperation is presented by the difference in laws and policies. It has been worsened by the fact that Norway and EU have slightly different regulation. To a large extent, due to the complexity surrounding the issue, legal

aspects were only briefly discussed during the trainings. Much more emphasis was put on cultural training that, as was mentioned, positively affected the level of trust.

As a conclusion to the context analyses, the hard and soft outcomes of the cooperation are needed to be identified. Overall the cooperation worked out in efficient way and achieved all the goals were set. The cooperation led to the cognition of the participants of unknown areas, helped to build the relationship within the network, enriched the experience of both sides in transnational cooperation. The work on the Project can be used as an example in further international cooperation projects. These aspects should be considered as the soft outcomes of the project under study.

In regards to the hard outcomes, the critical issues within the Project were the establishment of the new organizations and the new agreement on the environmental issue within the related are. Policy learning, being out of the scope of the Project, took place, but outcomes remained in the form of guidelines, as actual legislative change requires substantial amount of time.

5.4. Potential for construction of a comprehensive model

Conducted research made it evident that several theoretical constructs and models, stemming from diverse research areas, are able to explain particular aspects of transnational project work in waste management sector. Separately, most of them are characterized by certain downsides, presented below.

Research so far has concentrated on why and where networks arise, the nature of their impact on domestic regulation and predicting their future in the international cooperation. This to a large extent covers the focus of the most prominent works in the sector.

Notion of transgovernmental/transnational network describes a wide range of possible forms of cooperation. Though the focal cooperation is not a network as a theoretical construct presented above, general literature on networks can be to a large extent attributed to our case. The key point in our line of argument is that presented case can be seen as a conceiving point for the next network or production/coaching of a next partner. So far it seems from the literature analysis that mostly the attention to sub-national governments and government agencies, rather than wide range of actors involving NGOs and private enterprises and individuals, has been paid.

Most research has been based on addressing networks that include US and some other countries. Never was it made clear how the theory should be applied to the two states within European

Union. At the same time, it has been acknowledged, that already in competition policy and environmental policy, and corporate governance, EU attracts many imitators (Slaughter, 2004). Findings of the paper can be seen as of a limited explanatory power as the fact that both countries are within EU requires them to act accordingly. Regarding the funding program in focus of the case study, no empirical research and thus theoretical suggestions have been made as to the donor and beneficiary state. Thus, this thesis would like to expand the model to include these discrepancies.

As far as the case involves the transfer of well-codified explicit knowledge, and the cooperation happens under the EU regulation dominating and governing the decisions of both countries, possible elaborations as to the individual opportunistic behavior are limited. Rather, another attempt to combine distant yet related fields of research in an eclectic framework to see how the existing theory reflects empirical evidence and could direct the management of a project-like network, is made.

Stemming from the fact that the essence of network creation is knowledge transfer, unlimited amount of theoretical constructions and approaches has been applied to analyze knowledge flow within the network. In general, knowledge transfer has been analyzed within the research on international alliances and acquisitions. This venue of research has built on input from other related fields, such as social sciences, and has much to aid to the emerging literature on knowledge sharing within international networks. However, Bresman, Birkinshaw and Nobel (1999) state that a very important limitations is given to the conclusion above is that “transfer process in acquisitions is distinctly different from the process under other modes of governance, because of the rapidly-evolving relationship between the two parties”.

Dawes et al (2010; 2011) do not explain to which extent distances can be attributed to particular contexts. This leaves the user of the framework a relative degree of freedom also in terms which distances to identify by any particular cooperation. This freedom has both positive effect that shows itself in the mentioned flexibility of the model and serves as the representation of the interrelation of its concepts and components, as well as negative effect exhibited in confusion that might arise when approaching distance stemming from several contexts, as for example, technical distance. This overlap hinders identification of the main cause of the distance.

Models also do not distinguish between technology and knowledge transfer processes: the latter is mostly seen as sharing similar characteristics with the first one. From the theory on knowledge-based view of the firm, differences as to the transfer modes prevail.

6. Findings

At the outset of the research, two research questions were stated. The answer to the first one, addressing characteristics and the outcomes of the focal cooperation from the perspective of waste management and transnational network-based project work, was only possible through answering the second question about an appropriate way of accessing the characteristics and the outcomes theoretically and empirically-wise.

The second research question is not explicitly described in the text; it has been managed during the work on the thesis, when application of various theoretical approaches was considered. Selection of the presented theories is justified by their potential to complement and extend each other.

Theory on social behavior and attitudes towards environment, waste and recycling represents an established field of research that aims at addressing aspects of contributions of individuals to the environmentally-desired actions. Its importance, together with the discussion on global and local public goods, has more of a learning intent for the authors of the thesis, yet is essential for the formulation of the suggested approach to the focal and similar projects.

On the behavioral level, that affects the understanding of the necessity of sorting and recycling of waste on the household level, it has been concluded that in Romania extremely low level of understanding of the general environmental and health outcomes of unsustainable waste management is first and foremost the result of the lack of information related to the issue. But also on the level of industry, existing information on national and regional levels on the construction and demolition waste was found to be incomplete and inconsistent. Thus, also considering difficulties faced by Romania in terms of commitments made in order to enter EU, focus of the project on three areas (construction and demolition and hazardous waste, landfills and campaigning and household composting) is fully justified theoretically and practically wise.

Behavior related aspects of waste practice deserve particular attention also because the scope of the project work was directed to awareness raising activities, that are named among the essential policy actions in stimulating desired environmental behavior. Communication with the local population, campaigning were attributed the credit for improvement of environmental consciousness in Norway by the Project participants, and the same practice was employed in Romania: we see that in the cities of Medias and Saliste local radio and TV stations supported

the dissemination of specific knowledge of recycling, workshops with population improved both general knowledge of environmental benefits of recycling and specific knowledge on composting techniques. Students were involved in international exchange and company internships in both participating countries.

It can be concluded that Romania has potential benefits from transferring the Norwegian approach to behavior change due to its recorded success worldwide. Same confusions, motivations and expectations have prevailed among households in Norway, as of the empirical studies dating back to late 90s, as well as in today's Romania, as presented by Project participants. To offer more insight and serve as an operative tool for policy makers, a large scale research into household motivations in Region 7 Center should be conducted. The uniformity of the household relations might signal that the scope and methodology of the Project in Region 7, that was a pilot, can be successfully extrapolated to other Regions, considering stated parameters. Or, quoting Garrett Hardin (2003), "the population problem has no technical solution; it requires a fundamental extension in morality".

Discussion on the notion of global public good is seen as essential to grasp the characteristics of two public goods around which the Project was shaped: knowledge and waste collection sustainable utilization/recycling. Non-rivalry characteristic of goods, however, cannot be fully observed on the Project: to obtain granting, countries have to file project applications. As noted by Project participants, lack of prior experience and particularly awareness of actions and assistance required diminish the probability of the application for being accepted.

Observed high Internet coverage in the villages of Region 7 Center is seen as supporting movement of ideas within the country. This can motivate public to support the changes and insure that the public good is not underprovided.

Insights from the theory on transnational network aided the understanding of similar forms of cooperation. Though pure transgovernmental/transnational networks are different from the described project work, intrinsic traits are present in the latter. As theorists moved their research from the analysis of transgovernmental/transnational networks to transnational, this is seen as a sign of benefits of extrapolating existing theory on a large scope of cooperation modes. Thus, second hypothesis is supported by the fact that particular differences were found in the theoretical construct of transnational network and the focal cooperation.

In terms of the future cooperation and possibility of the network to develop, authors conclude that there is no possibility to turn the focal project network into an established transnational network on waste: rather, focus on creating and maintaining the network within Romania was at the core of the focus of the whole project under study.

Rather, at least for several years to come, creation of the network is facilitated within the recipient state by the requirements of the Grant Guidelines. Under EEA/Norway Grants several projects on waste management and development of emerging ecological markets in Romania are supported: their scope encompasses establishment of sustainable waste practice, campaigning, fostering innovation in the private sector through the establishment of innovative start-ups, introduction of a monitoring scheme for green public procurement – all on the basis of best practice from Norway (EEA/Norway Grants, 2011). A corresponding project ECOEMERGE in January-April 2011 organized 7 regional technology transfer events in Romania as well as created a web platform for evidence-based policy making, that would also include relevant statistics. These projects, as described in the case study, are the nodes of the created networks.

Summarizing the reasons for potential absence of the transnational network that could be created on the basis of the project under study, following points should be mentioned. First of all, unavailability of certain technologies in Norway, such as waste-to-energy plants, due to the fact, that historically Norway has no networks for district water and heating, would prevent potential benefits of its participation in any future network. Taking into account that grants are for the most part provided by Norway, it can be predicted that the next allocated funds will be directed to other beneficiary states. Romania, striving for advice from specialists in particular area, would also seek for other possibilities. Already setting itself ahead of the governmental agencies in Romania, REPA Sibiu would rate potential donors on the basis of the level of their expertise, always opting for leading ones in the areas that would interest it.

Though some guidelines were created by Romanian partners on some aspect of waste management, no guidelines or recommendations exist for future similar cooperation projects. The NFP will report on the use of the bilateral fund and the results achieved in the annual Strategic Report. Closing meeting with presentations and summaries of the lessons learned included partners of the project. In this way, sharing of knowledge on actual network work and its aspects to future network members is seen as being rather unclear and complicated. Authors tried to shortly summarize main suggestions for the future networks.

First of all, pre-cooperation that would include all the partners is needed in order to avoid dominance of prejudice and mistrust, negatively affecting the project work at its outset. Timing of the application process should also be taken into consideration. Obviously, in the case of the focal project, too much work had to be done with the deadlines approaching, that might have affected selection of particular projects or budget allocation in a negative way.

Next, within networks including developed and developing/emerging countries, budget should include expenses on the professional translator. Respondents of the research project name this aspect of critical for the proper workflow within the network.

It should be underlined that project work entails dramatic overworking. In the project case, both partners referred to the workload as “crazy”, though for a different reason. Romanians were not prepared to the level of knowledge to be shared with them. Norwegian authorities were not prepared to combine their normal working responsibilities with new ones. Organizations should be prepared for the negative effect of the project work, such as splitting the team in two parts - “insiders”, who participate in the project, and “outsiders”, not involved in international collaboration.

Necessity of knowledge sharing from former to future network participants is essential also due to the fact that applied means of knowledge transfer, as for example presentation on Norwegian culture given by Norwegian Ambassador to Romania, fail to prepare partners for the project work. This activity already takes place as closing rounds of the projects and in a form of workshops organized in one of the participating countries. However variety of topics to be covered and substantial number of participants leave no time for individual actors to acquire the knowledge they need: in this case, individual coaching is suggested by the authors of this research.

Initial research in the field of empirical observations let authors hypothesize that similar modes of cooperation, based on short-term intensive transnational project work, are to prevail in the coming years within the waste management sector in particular; integrated theoretical and practical approach is needed in order to fully access the outcomes of such cooperation modes. Findings provided by the research in relation to future cooperation among the same partners, as well as evidence of the availability of more funds, prove this hypothesis true.

Theory on knowledge transfer and contextual dependence of its success has been found to be rather multifaceted. This theoretical approach presents a link between network form of governing transnational cooperation and knowledge-based theory of the firm.

Among findings related to this interrelation of theory and empirical evidence it should be noted that individual belonging to a particular agency - governmental or NGO, public or private - affected initial level of trust and behavior not less than cultural background and traits.

It has been found in the theory that the degree of knowledge acquired by the developing country is much higher compared to the developed one. The evidence of the focal project confirms these findings. Norwegian partners claimed that the focal project helped them improve the knowledge about their own legislative systems, while preparing for the workshops, however no essential knowledge was learnt within the teaching field.

Thus, vertical knowledge transfer to the population can be seen as dominating the scope of the project. In her Evaluation Report (p.17), Adriana Horstman states that “overall the project was received very positive by the participants of the training sessions and workshops”. She highlights the importance for participants of being included in the project and given a possibility to receive information. Their behavior during the project is described as interactive.

Adriana reports that “most people in Saliste and Sibiel are already making compost from kitchen and garden waste, using ditches or pits in the gardens. They are not aware if/that the waste decomposes anaerobic, which produces methane gasses and thus they are adding to the greenhouse gas problem. The participants have now a bigger understanding of the process of composting”.

This approach takes us a step further away from the general understanding that there is no learning benefit for the donor state, which was expressed by some of the project participants. Initial goal of the project and grants is the bi-directional learning, however most of the participants are skeptic about it. We see that particular learning outcomes can be assigned to the donor state as well.

Suggestion to direct more attention to the literature on knowledge sharing between partners possessing different initial level of knowledge seems relevant, as theory on transnational networks concentrates on the aspects related to equal partners.

Hypothesis 3 stated that the limited amount of time (1 year) that passed after the official project completion and lack of the body of empirical evidence covering similar cooperation projects prevent a more in-depth analysis of the processes within and outcomes of the Project work. Cooperation guidelines developed by Financial Mechanisms Committee identify a wide range of results expected after the completion of the projects. Different kinds of results are separated into tangible deliverables (the outputs) and wider medium term results (the outcomes). Both for donor and beneficiary states outcomes are in general separated in 4 large categories: extent of cooperation, shared results (referring to that the input from both partners was essential to reach the result), knowledge and mutual understanding, wider effects.

Concerning outcomes from the waste-management perspective it has been observed that improvements in waste separation and collection took place in Region 7 Center. Findings show that, considering initial estimate of all investments needed for Romania to improve its waste management practice to be EUR 30 billion, Norwegian input money-wise was not big. This is why Romania will keep looking for other grant systems and options. Research on grant-funded projects in waste in the EU shows that so far, only 7 countries have finalized the projects for the integrated waste management, another 23 counties have the documentation ready and are expected to start the project implementation by 2013, while the remaining 11 countries are expected to start the process after 2014, when the next financing period starts. This clearly sets Romania ahead of other countries and provides a possibility for it to “coach other EU freshmen.” However, today Romania is sustainability-wise far from EU standards.

Authors would like to conclude with the finding that longitudinal study is needed. From the second perspective, it can be derived, that for assessment of environmental outcomes or change of attitude a longitudinal study is needed, that falls out of scope of current research. For instance, study on interrelation between sustainable waste practice and behavioral aspect to waste, conducted by Refsgaard and Magnussen in 2003, analyzed the change on the period that spanned 7 years.

6. Conclusion

The authors of the thesis were challenged to acquire information on the cooperation project between Norway and Romania on developing sustainable waste management practice in Region 7 Center in Romania under the EEA/Norway Grants through several rounds of interviews and a field research. Case study, that constitutes a separate chapter of the thesis, is in itself an outcome of the conducted research.

Additionally, for the purpose of accessing mode of cooperation presented by transnational network in analyzed sector, and the outcomes of the cooperation between Norwegian and Romanian individuals and institutions, several theoretical approaches have been investigated and applied to the formulated case study. These theories cover the following areas: transnational/transgovernmental networks, knowledge transfer within MNCs and within transnational networks, behavior and attitude to waste management and notion of public good as presented by knowledge and sustainable waste management practice. Core theory applied was the context-based approach to knowledge transfer in transnational network developed by Dawes et al (2010;2011).

This paper contributes to the literature in several fashions. First, Dawes et al (2011), describing their context- state that the model needs to be checked on real life case to gain reliability – focal case study provides valuable insights into the work of transnational network and the usefulness of the proposed model. Second, theory on networks is adopted for project-work analysis: shortcomings and strengths of this approach are identified.

Generally speaking, though there is still a lack of empirical evidence to draw broad generalist conclusions, accumulation of this information on the international scale is acknowledged by scholars as necessary; thus this thesis aids to the overall body of empirical evidence on transnational cooperation in waste sector.

From the practical perspective, today Romania is sustainability-wise and in terms of waste management practice far from EU standards. Yet the ultimate goal of the Romanian Waste Strategy, that is to develop an integrated management system, largely benefit from support provided by the Norwegian and other partners. Undertaken study shows, that the ultimate goal of similar cooperation projects is rather the creation of a sustainable network within the beneficiary

state, than the formation of a transnational network. The goal of strengthening bilateral relations, set by the Norwegian Financial Mechanisms Committee, during the span of the addressed project has been successfully achieved.

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2. The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities, interviewer: Valeria Rozhdestvenskaya. On: 17 November 2011, Oslo, Norway.
3. Green Living Norway, interviewers: Valeria Polyakova, Valeria Rozhdestvenskaya. On: 10 January 2012, St. Petersburg, Russia, Stavanger, Norway (skype).
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6. S.C.ECO-SAL S.A, interviewers: Valeria Polyakova, Valeria Rozhdestvenskaya. On: 21 April 2012, Sibiu, Romania.
7. Adriana Horstman, consultant on land and water management in Romania, interviewers: Valeria Polyakova, Valeria Rozhdestvenskaya. On: 21 April 2012, Sibiu, Romania.

Annex 1. Core project participants

Norwegian partners of the focal project

Stavanger municipality (Stavanger Kommune), unit working with waste management and renovation;

Green Living (Grønn Hverdag), non-governmental umbrella environmental organization dealing with consciousness raising and training with regard to waste management and environmental issues in general. Focused on supporting the establishment of the Green Network in Romania and school and house-level composting;

Waste Management Norway (Avfall Norge), interest organization, campaigning interest for the public sector in the area of waste management. Acted as an advisor on landfill management and closure.

Romanian partners of the focal project

REPA Sibiu - governmental institution, whose responsibility is also to authorize all environmental projects and activities;

Municipalities: Sibiu; Medias (pilot projects on hazardous and demolition waste were implemented), Saliste (pilot project on composting were carried out);

Association for Local and Regional Authorities;

The Ecologic Club BIOS Sibiu (NGO), responsible for the extension the project to the other local authorities and environmental NGO's;

University „Lucian Blaga”;

The Association of Towns in Romania;

SC Lafarge Ciment Romania S.A. – Hoghiz - one of the largest concrete producing companies, that had a pilot on construction waste in Medias;

SC Fabis SRL Sibiu - the Romanian-Norwegian company – took on the responsibility to help match partners in two countries. Fabis provided the network with inspiration for the logo creation;

Adriana Horstman, citizen of the Netherlands who devoted her later life to work in Romania, entered the project as a volunteer and then project coordinator in the area of composting. Before the start of the project she has already lived in Romania for three years.

Annex 2. General questionnaire

A uniform questionnaire to the participants of the research project

Knowledge sharing in transnational networks: the case of Norway-Romania cooperation to improve Regional Waste Management in Region 7 Center Romania (23.04.2009 – 30.04.2011)

Conducted by Polyakova V., Norwegian School of Economics

Rozhdestvenskaya V., Norwegian School of Economics

Dear Respondent!

This is a uniform questionnaire addressed to the participants of the cooperation project in Romania that have been met and interviewed during the study tour to Sibiu in April 2012 (REPA Sibiu, Stavanger Municipality, S.C. Eco-Sal S.A., Adriana Horstman) and those contacted prior to the visit (Avfall Norge, Green Living Norway).

This questionnaire was prepared on the basis of the research framework presented by Dawes et al (2011) and aims at analyzing the contextual factors that affect knowledge transfer within transnational networks. Findings of the project are considered as adding the empirical evidence on challenges and solutions provided by the network in the light of the increasing number of transnational knowledge sharing arrangements within EU and in the world.

We are grateful for your input in our research and looking forward to receive your answers the soonest. Please send them to Valeria.Polyakova@stud.nhh.no and feel free to attach any comments or documents you find applicable.

Instructions:

Questionnaire comprises 15 questions that are stated in grey box. Please provide your answer in white box below, directly in this document.

Please note that the number of characters is *not* limited.

You are free to chose any answer and type format you like.

Estimated time of filling in the questionnaire is 50 minutes.

If there are employees of the involved organizations who participated in the project but were not directly interviewed during the study tour, willing to answer the questionnaire, their input will by highly appreciated.

Please state your name and the name of the organization you work for.

...

Please answer the sub-questions in 1 in relation to the following factors:

- your own performance
- performance of your colleagues
- performance of other country nationals
- combined performance of the project team
- knowledge-transfer related factors?

1a. What were your expectations from the project?

...

1b. Which expectations were met, which were not?

...

1c. Describe the gap between your expected result and the occurred result.

...

2. Who was the closest partner(s) for you during the span of the project? (It can be partner from any country)

...

3. Please describe the level of trust as you perceive it at the initial stage of the project.

- in relation to your country nationals
- in relation to the other country nationals

...

4. How do you think the level of trust affected your work with the closest partner(s)?

5. Please shortly describe your experience in cross-national projects before the cooperation. What knowledge did you obtain before that you applied to the focal project?

...

6. Considering your previous experience in other projects what was unexpected in the focal cooperation?

...

7. What did you personally learn from the focal cooperation?

...

8. What conclusions did you make for yourself in relation to your further international engagements?

...

9. What problems did you experience within the own structures (working time-wise, work allocations, employee rotation/assignments etc) internally in regards to the project during the cooperation?

...

10. How was your working time divided between the project and “normal” work? Do you think it was divided beneficially for the focal project? Your direct responsibilities outside the focal project?

...

11. Please describe the system of financial benefits (reward system) in your organization as related to the project and in general in organization.

...

12. Would you like to cooperate within the same network in the future on the different project?

...

13. How were the best practices documented? Any manuals/notes/recommendations for future cooperation created as an outcome of the project and input in subsequent projects? Would you find them useful if you had them?

...

14. Please describe the level of trust as of today (nearly one year after the project).

-in relation to your country nationals

-in relation to the other country nationals

...

15. What was the desired goal and outcomes at the outset of cooperation and did they change during the span of the project?

This question refers to the notion of single- and double-loop learning, when the single-loop learning describes the permanent goal and the changing means of reaching it and double-loop learning stands for the continuous reassessment of the goal and the means.

...

