

International Film Cooperation inside the Baltic Sea Region and with Japan

Malla Paajanen, Otto Kupi, Aleksander Panfilo
and Juhana Urmas



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International Film Cooperation inside the Baltic Sea Region and with Japan

Publisher School of Economics**Unit** Center for Markets in Transition**Series** Aalto University publication series BUSINESS + ECONOMY 13/2011**Field of research** Filmmaking and international cooperation**Abstract**

This study explores international cooperation in the field of filmmaking in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) concentrating on the filmmaking companies and organizations and the significance of international cooperation in their operations. The purpose of this study is to provide information about international cooperation in general, cooperation inside the BSR, and cooperation between BSR and Japan. A special focus has been set on collaboration activities between BSR and Japan especially from the viewpoint of attracting young talent to international projects. Research data was collected among filmmaking companies and other organization using electronic questionnaire and individual interviews.

The study reveals that international cooperation is very active among filmmaking organization and the most common type of collaboration is coproduction. However, despite the relatively long track of international cooperation in the filmmaking sector in general there appears to be substantial need for education and training in order to open new growth potential, new target countries, and more demanding forms of cooperation. International workshops in which young talent and established film professionals interact and initiate new projects were considered an attractive method to support the process of internationalization.

This research has been carried out by Center for Markets in Transition (CEMAT) at the Aalto University School of Economics (Helsinki, Finland). The study is part of the BaltMet Promo project and part-financed by the Baltic Sea Region programme.

Keywords Baltic Sea Region, Japan, filmmaking, international cooperation, young talent**ISBN (printed)** 978-952-60-4380-7**ISBN (pdf)** 978-952-60-4381-4**ISSN-L** 1799-4810**ISSN (printed)** 1799-4810**ISSN (pdf)** 1799-4829**Location of publisher** Espoo**Location of printing** Helsinki**Year** 2011**Pages** 88+8**The publication can be read at** <http://www.baltmetpromo.net/>,
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Foreword

The scope of international cooperation has grown remarkably worldwide. Simultaneously the need to learn about the international coproduction environment, organizations and structures has grown substantially. The filmmaking sector has developed various networking formats for professionals to market new productions, find new partners, and to learn about the new talent that is entering the filmmaking business. Film festivals, pitching forums, master classes for new talent, and various kinds of professional networks for producers and script writers are market places and arenas for professional growth.

In the context of global filmmaking business, the Baltic Sea Region and its countries are not among the biggest players. However, many films that have been produced in the Region have won international awards and creative filmmaking teams and individuals have achieved great personal success. This is a crucial starting point to bringing up new talent. International cooperation plays an important role by offering new and more diversified forms of cooperation and platforms, sharing new technologies, and finding new partners. In other words, international cooperation offers room to grow.

The present study focuses on international cooperation in filmmaking sector in the Baltic Sea Region with a special focus on cooperation with the Japanese filmmaking sector. The study shows that international cooperation is considered altogether interesting and important in the Region, and most of this cooperation takes place within Europe. Among the survey respondents 68% have experience in international cooperation, and this most commonly takes place in coproduction. Compared to the overall high intensity of international cooperation the role of Japan is low: only 12% of respondents have experience in cooperation with the Japanese film making sector. The problems that limit this cooperation include the lack of relevant contacts, poor understanding of the complex Japanese filmmaking sector, and inadequate resources to enter the Japanese collaboration environment. However, at the same time there is a clear interest to look for opportunities to learn about the Japanese market to initiate more cooperation in the future.

I hope that this study will give insight into the current status of international cooperation in filmmaking in the Baltic Sea Region, and encourages operators in the film industry to broaden their collaboration and networks even further. I would like to thank all those individuals and organizations who gave their valuable contribution to this study.

Helsinki 1.11.2011

Riitta Kosonen
Professor, director
Center for Markets in Transition
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Summary of the BaltMet Promo Project

The BaltMet Promo project is an initiative enabling collaborative promotion of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) in the global markets. BaltMet Promo works from both metropolitan and transnational perspectives in the framework of the Baltic Metropolises (BaltMet) Network¹ and Baltic Development Forum (BDF) which provide the project continuity and necessary synergy with other actors and existing frameworks in Baltic Sea Region (BSR). The Project is co-financed by the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013 (European Regional Development Fund).

The Project simultaneously strives for the advancement of interaction inside BSR and attraction of foreign investment in various fields. The Project aims to form a wide transnational and multi-sectoral marketing community for attracting tourists, film talents, and investors to BSR. The Project also aims to enhance economic competitiveness of BSR by advancing cooperation of BSR countries. This will create greater visibility for BSR in the global markets and enhance BSR's identity within and outside the area. The Project supports the objectives of the EU Strategy for BSR by aligning its horizontal activities in the fields of identity building, marketing and branding.

The BaltMet Promo project is based on two pillars: concrete promotional projects in remote markets, and identity building within BSR. In the first pillar, new transnational and promotional BSR products and methods for doing collaborative promotion for European macro-region are produced. In the second pillar, various branding initiatives in BSR are mapped in order to develop a dynamic, transnational and multi-sectoral marketing community for BSR. The entire promotional process is documented with the aim to transfer the promotional activities to other thematic and geographical areas.

The BaltMet Promo project is committed to produce three concrete BSR Pilots that are designed, executed and evaluated in selected global markets. Pilots are tailored to highlight the strengths of BSR as tourism, film talent and investment destination. Tourism Pilot produces "Live like locals" –

¹ Baltic Metropolises Network (BaltMet) represents a forum for capitals and large metropolitan cities around the Baltic Sea. It brings together the cities of Berlin, Helsinki, Malmö, Oslo, Riga, Stockholm, St. Petersburg, Tallinn, Vilnius and Warsaw (<http://www.baltmet.org/pub/>). City of Copenhagen has been member of the BaltMet Network earlier.

package, offering a new way to experience the BSR. Investment Pilot aims to increase the awareness level of the BSR as a preferred investment area. The concrete product of the Film Talent Pilot is a cooperation event (Workshop) for BSR and Japanese film professionals, which aims to attract Japanese film talents to the region and advance cooperation of the creative industries.

The BaltMet Promo project works as a common BSR marketing platform with a comprehensive perspective to the target market. The creation of new pilot products is based on demand and supply research. Demand research analyzes existing demands of target markets and provides information on customers' perceptions on BSR. Supply research gathers information on existing supply of specific products and services in the BSR.

The special focus of the BaltMet Promo project in Japan derives from positive experiences and interests of Project Partners and their existing contacts with Japanese. The BaltMet Promo project offers a great opportunity and tool to intensify, widen and utilize these experiences and networks. The BaltMet Promo project is led by the City of Helsinki and coordinated by Aalto University School of Economics CEMAT, and the partnership includes also Baltic Development Forum, Berlin Partner GmbH, City of Warsaw, City of Riga, City of Vilnius, Greater Helsinki Promotion Ltd and Research Institute of the Finnish Economy. In addition, the Project has a large number of associated organizations from each partner country in the fields of tourism promotion, creative industries and investments.

1.Introduction

This research investigates international cooperation in the field of filmmaking in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). The research concentrates on examining the filmmaking companies and organizations as well as the significance of international cooperation in their operations. The aim of this research is to provide intelligence regarding the field of film in BSR – its players and activities – and their cooperation potential with Japanese filmmaking professionals. The research, carried out by Center for Markets in Transition (CEMAT) at the Aalto University School of Economics (Helsinki, Finland), is part of the BaltMet Promo project and its service platform. The purpose of the service platform is to produce research on the demand and supply sectors of the three BSR pilot products that are created during the project lifecycle. In accordance with this process, the current research produces new information about the supply sector of filmmaking in BSR to be utilized by Talent Pilot. This was preceded by a study on the demand sector: research on Japanese views regarding cooperation between BSR and Japanese was produced and published in November 2010 (Niskanen et al. 2010).

In the Talent Pilot a special focus is placed on young Japanese filmmakers and their willingness to conduct coproductions and other types of cooperation with young professionals from BSR. This research contributes to the planning and implementation of the Talent Pilot by producing new knowledge about the international cooperation activities between companies and organizations in BSR filmmaking. A special focus in this study has been set on activities between BSR and Japan. This research report aims at delivering relevant market research data for the Talent Pilot. It illuminates BSR organizations' and companies' attitudes and readiness for international cooperation. Furthermore, the reasons and motives for engaging in international cooperation are examined. The results of this research will be utilized in the planning and implementation of the Talent Pilot of the BaltMet Promo project. The Talent Pilot will take form of a workshop² organized for both young and experienced talents in BSR and Japan.

This report has been compiled in four themes: 1) international cooperation, 2) cooperation within BSR, 3) cooperation with Japanese film industry, and 4) Talent Pilot workshop. The report presents the process of empirical data collections that were carried out and the key findings.

² Intensive 3-day workshop, organized in Vilnius, Lithuania (November, 2011), in connection to the European Film Forum Scanorama.

Examples of international film cooperation are presented in four case studies.

1.1 Research methods and materials

This research consists of three parts: survey, interviews and case studies. The aim is to provide information on the players in the field of film, specialist views regarding BSR's film industries and concrete international cooperation activities. The research was initiated in spring 2010. The contact info databases for the survey and interviews were completed in the beginning of fall 2010.

The survey was designed to gather research data on companies and organizations in the field of film and to find out their international cooperation activities, attitudes, international relationships and cooperation among different stakeholders in the film industry.

The questionnaire covered the following themes: *background information, international cooperation, cooperation in BSR, cooperation with Japanese film industry companies or organizations* and *workshop* section. In total, there were 46 questions (Annex 1). Under each theme, there were multiple choice questions, open questions and scale questions.

The survey was targeted to professionals in the field of film in the BSR countries³ and in BaltMet cities in particular. As for the main field of operation, the focus was on the companies and organizations of *film production, film festival, distribution and post production, film schools* and other *educational organizations as well as support and finance organizations*.

Contact information of the survey's target group was collected from different databases on the internet and other sources during the summer of 2010. A contact database of approximately 1550 e-mail addresses was prepared for the survey, of which approximately 300 proved inactive later. After careful preparation of the questionnaire the survey was sent to the target group.

The survey was implemented with internet survey tool *Webropol*. The questionnaire form was prepared in English. Altogether, approximately 1250 respondents received the questionnaire. Respondents were reminded for answering three times. Finally, in total 104 responses were registered, resulting to a response rate of 8 %.

³ Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden.

The aim of the specialist interviews was to gather in-depth research material from professionals of film in the BSR. The interviewees were asked about their country's film industry's current situation and development prospects. In addition interviews covered topics of development of film industry in BSR as a whole, identity building of BSR and potential for cooperation inside the BSR as well as with other regions and countries.

Research interviews were conducted by the CEMAT research team in November and December 2010. Interviews were done by phone or face-to-face, and discussions were recorded and transcribed for analysis. Duration of interviews varied from 30 to 60 minutes. The interviews were semi-structured in-depth interviews. The interview data was designed to provide in-depth specialist views to supplement the results received via survey. The framework for the interview questions was prepared to support the possible deficiencies of the mechanical structure and responses to the electronic survey. Interviewees were selected in each BaltMet city in order to create a comprehensive picture of the filmmaking sector in BSR.

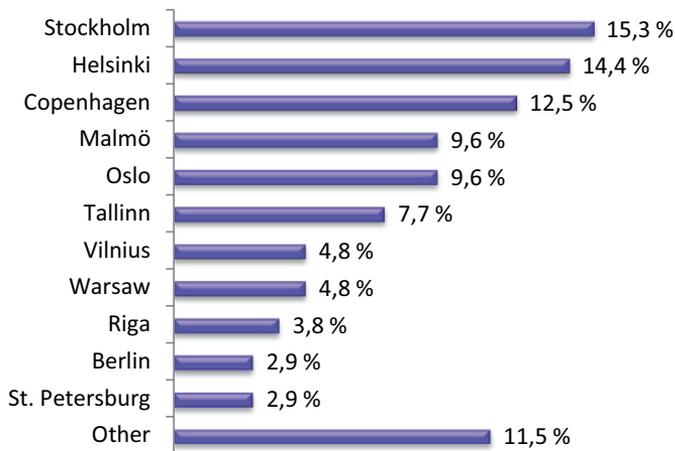
The interviewees represented support organizations, such as film institutes or foundations, and private companies, such as film studios. All of the specialists who were interviewed had several years of working experience in the field of film. In interviews valuable specialist data was gathered from various fields in the film industry. Altogether, 20 specialist interviews were conducted (see Annex 2 for interview questions and Annex 3 for the list of organizations that were interviewed).

The objective of the case studies was to provide examples of international film cooperation – especially, between BSR and Japanese professionals. Case study interviews were conducted between November 2010 and February 2011. Case studies were implemented in order to provide concrete examples of cooperation in the film industry. Case studies are based on in-depth interviews of key participants as well as on additional material from e.g. organizations' own websites and from interviewees.

1.2 Background information of the survey respondents

The majority of the survey responses were received from the Nordic Countries. Altogether, the share of replies got from Stockholm, Helsinki, Copenhagen, Malmö and Oslo was ca. 62 %. Fewer replies were received from the cities of the Baltic Countries, Warsaw, and St. Petersburg. In Berlin the interest to participate in the survey was very low, despite of lively international filming sector. It can be assumed that this is largely due to the fact that the role of BSR is rather small in the overall international filmmaking culture in Germany. It is also possible that film professionals in Berlin do not consider themselves as representatives of BSR⁴.

Figure 1: Location of the survey respondents, (N=104)



Category *Other* includes respondents located in non-BaltMet cities in Great Britain (1), Finland (5), Norway (3), Russia (2) and Sweden (1). City of Copenhagen, although not currently a member, is one of the BaltMet founding members.

Almost two thirds of all organizations reached through the **survey** were film production companies. All other categories of field of operation remained each below 10 % of all respondents. Regarding turnover, the organizations were predominantly small. Turnover of less than 100 000 euros was reported by 30 % of companies and only 2 % had turnover of 5 million euros or more. Also the number of personnel was typically small in most of the organizations: in 85 % of the cases the organization had less than 10 employees. Usually there were 2 to 10 employees.

⁴ It has to be taken in account, also, that the definitions “the Baltic Countries” and “the Baltic Sea Region” can get mixed, although the geographical definition of BSR was explained in the survey questionnaire.

Table 1: Respondents by field of operation, turnover and number of personnel

Field of operation (N=104)		Turnover (€) (N=100)		Number of personnel*** (N=104)	
Film production company	63 %	Below 100 000	30 %	1	22 %
Film school or other educational organization	7 %	100 000 – 199 000	16 %	2-10	63 %
Film festival organization	8 %	200 000 – 499 000	17 %	11-20	5 %
Distribution company	4 %	500 000 – 999 000	8 %	21-30	3 %
Support / finance organization or equivalent	2 %	1 000 000 – 2 000 000	7 %	31-40	1 %
Post production company	3 %	2 000 000 – 5 000 000	6 %	41-50	2 %
Other*	13 %	< 5 000 000	2 %	Over 50	5 %
		NPO**	14 %		
(*Category other includes mainly companies with more than one field of operation, of which some were not from the film industry. ** Non-profit organization. ***Due to rounding, figures are not summarized to 100.)					

Limitations

In the interpretation of the survey results, it has to be taken into account that almost two thirds of the respondents were production companies. A corresponding emphasis regarding the distribution of the target group was noticeable already in the database of contacts to whom the survey was sent. Fewer responses were received from the Baltic Countries, Russia and Germany which hinders the comparing of results between the countries.

It has to be taken into consideration that in the questionnaire the respondents were not obliged to answer all questions and hence the number of replies varied from question to question. In addition, some questions were targeted only at a certain group of respondents, depending on the answers given in some previous questions.

1.3 Structure of the report

In the **second** chapter, international cooperation in general is reviewed. The **third** chapter examines cooperation inside the BSR: type, partners, success, benefits and BSR-cooperation potential. The **fourth** chapter explores the identity building in BSR and the image of BSR in the field of filmmaking. The **fifth** chapter probes the cooperation with Japanese film industry: type, success, drivers and challenges for cooperation, preferred support activities and cooperation potential. In the **sixth** chapter, usefulness and the content of the workshop are discussed. The **seventh** chapter describes cooperation in the film industry from viewpoint of four case studies. The **eighth** chapter concludes and sums up this research.

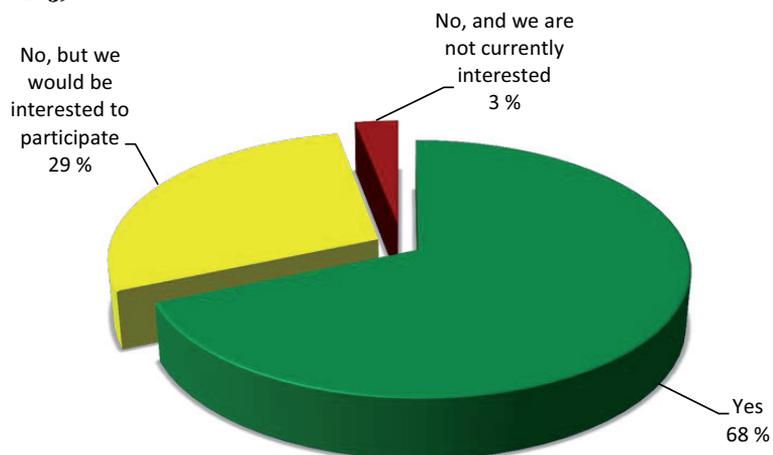
2. International Cooperation

In this chapter international cooperation activities of film industry actors in BSR are explored on general level. Insights from the survey as well as from specialist interviews are jointly presented under the following subfields: overview of international cooperation, drivers and challenges for internationalization, as well as financing and support for internationalization. In order to cover every possible field of international activity in the film industry the definition of international cooperation was left open. Therefore, survey respondents and interviewed specialists could define international cooperation according to their own conceptions.

2.1. Overview

The general tendency in film industry of BSR is towards internationalization. The survey showed that companies and organizations related to film industry in BSR are highly active with international cooperation projects. A vast majority of the respondents had taken part in two or more international projects during the last five years. Over two thirds of all respondents have had such projects (Fig. 2). In addition, nearly all of the remaining organizations who had not yet had any international cooperation projects were interested in participating in such in the future.

Figure 2: Participation in international cooperation projects, % of respondents, (N=105)

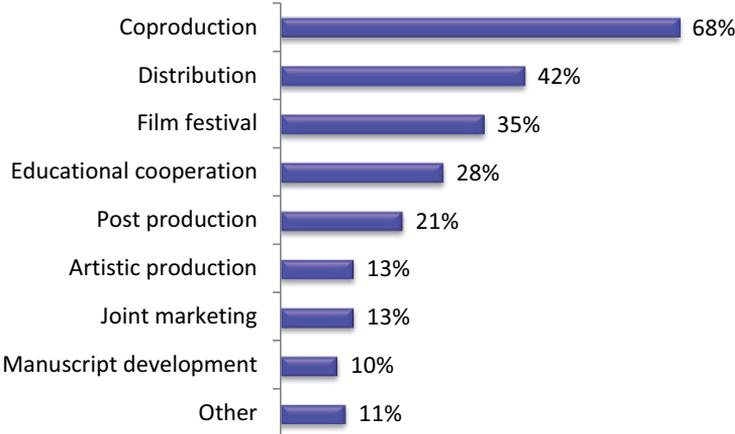


Survey material showed that participation in international cooperation was particularly active in film schools: every film school surveyed had taken part in international projects. The corresponding activity of film festivals was not lagging too far behind. Furthermore, two thirds of the production companies were internationally involved.

Also the interviewees supported the view of growing internationalization in the film industry of BSR. For example, an expert from Norway mentioned that the value of Norwegian film exports have more than doubled after 2005 with annual growth rate of around 22 %.

According to the survey the most common type of cooperation was coproduction, however here it must be noted that around 70 % of the respondents of the survey were production companies thus high rate of coproduction projects is not surprising. In addition to coproduction, also distribution, organizing a film-festival and educational cooperation were common types of cooperation. It is also worth noticing that it was quite typical for international cooperation projects to encompass more than one type of cooperation: 43 % reported that their cooperation usually aimed at least three or more different forms of cooperation. Most typical combination of three was coproduction, distribution and post-production.

Figure 3: Fields of international cooperation, (N=72)



(Respondents were able to choose multiple options.)

For production companies international cooperation focuses first of all on coproduction and on distribution. However, also other fields of cooperation such as post-production and festivals were mentioned rather frequently among the respondents from production companies. On the other hand film schools have limited their interest in cooperation with other films schools and festival organizers. Film festival representatives stated that their international cooperation is mostly with other festivals and

educational organizations, however, sometimes in distribution, joint marketing and artistic production.

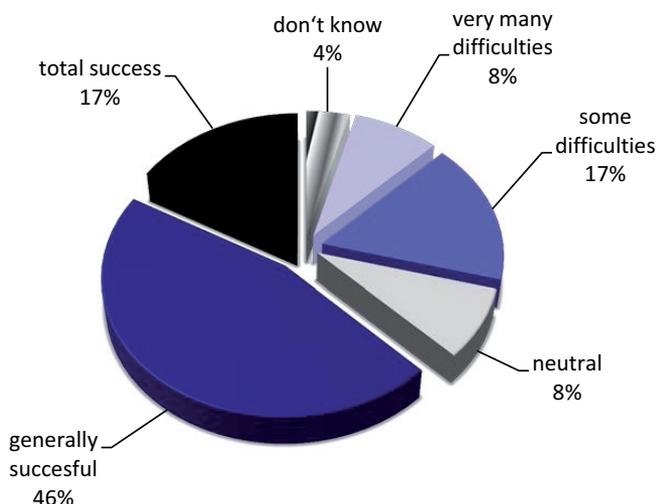
In terms of fields of cooperation, comments from the interviewees were generally in line with the results of the survey. Besides coproduction, interviewees mentioned frequently international cooperation relating to festivals and education. Festivals were generally seen as a way to access the international markets. They were also considered to be good networking opportunities and a good way to expose local audience to foreign films. A high level of internationalization of a film festival was generally considered as a sign of good quality. As for education, in some cases it was mentioned as a facilitator of international cooperation. For example, an Estonian expert raised educational connection towards Russia. Also, many international educational programs were mentioned. One of these educational programs was described by a Polish film industry expert.

“Most of the professionals have graduated from Russian film academies, maybe in the early nineties, so it also gives them strengths to operate in the Russian markets, as well.”

“The program contains three workshops organized in spread over several months. Directors, sub directors with their writers and producers come to the workshops three times, each time for 10 days. During these times they develop their projects and shoot scenes from their scripts. So, it is very practical and professional. They get consultancy from experienced directors, directors of photography and script writers from all over Europe. This program is addressed to directors who have already made at least one feature film. The level is high and the program is financed by some European partners and, first of all, by Media Program of the European Union”.

According to the survey about 60 % of respondents who had had international cooperation had also participated in some EU-funded (or equivalent) projects or programs. Almost half of these referred to some project supported by MEDIA Programme. Also other EU projects or programs were brought up, such as Sources2. Experiences from EU projects and programs were in general quite positive. More than 60 % evaluated these projects generally or totally successful. Positive feedback for the EU programs and projects was related to, for instance, good education, networking possibilities and *“extreme importance of EU-funds for the small country with little resources”*.

Figure 4: Assessment of the EU-funded projects, (N=48)



However, there were also challenges in participating in EU-funded projects. A quarter of respondents had encountered some or very many difficulties. Problems specified by respondents were related to e.g. “*too many documents*” required by the program rules or too much time taken by the program. One company had tried several times to participate in EU-funded projects but never had found “*a proper partner*”.

2.2. Drivers and challenges

Most of the interviewees (excluding specialists from Germany, Poland and Russia), raised small size of local markets as the main reason for international cooperation. According to one interviewee if a producer has an ambition of making project with larger budget it is necessary for them to look for international partner. Some genres, such as thrillers, horror movies and animation were considered to be more internationally appealing than others. For example, animation was viewed to be relatively easy to coproduce across borders and furthermore the language of animation was regarded as universal. Animations were also mentioned to be very expensive and therefore it was good to have financing from multiple sources. Artistic reasons were also mentioned among reasons for internationalization. However, they were rarely seen as the main incentive for developing cooperation. According to one interviewee only few films are actually co-produced due to the contents. In most cases the reason for international cooperation was either purely economic or related to technological part of production process.

“You find a co-producer for post-production and then post-produce in Germany, or where ever – it is not because you have part of the action in Germany; you simply need the post-production to be done in Germany.”

Other common benefits of internationalization raised in the interviews were economic benefits, promoting country and company abroad as well as opening new markets. Some of the drivers of internationalization were highly country specific. For example, an Estonian expert pointed out that the country’s location on the EU-Russia border is suitable for attracting European and Asian film industries who want to operate in Russia. Inducing presence of international film industry in Estonia would also develop domestic film industry along the process. In addition, experts from the Baltic States mentioned the underdevelopment of services for film industry in this region. For example, many of the secondary services, such as equipment services, were brought from the Scandinavian countries. Also post-production was considered to be underdeveloped in the Baltic States. One interviewee argued:

“We do not have film laboratories here. Therefore all film people who make their film on 35mm film go to post-produce abroad. And also, for example, restoration of old films (like digitizing and restoring the digital material) is done by international companies because we do not have locally this kind of services or businesses.”

The small size of the markets was seen not only as a driver for internationalization but also as one of the key challenges for attracting international cooperation to BSR. According to the interviewees, this is true especially in the Baltic States. As a result big players prefer to cooperate with other countries which have larger market potential. Also low financial input from the side of BSR countries was considered as a challenge for international cooperation. Lack of funding was seen in the way of establishing equal partnership.

“For a big Japanese distribution or production company the whole Scandinavian market is ten times smaller than Japan. The difference is so huge. Basically, to work here would be much more expensive than the profit from the area”.

“For example, in Estonia – which is in the best position of the three Baltic countries – average budget for a feature film is like 2 million euros. And in Japan the average budget for a feature films is maybe 15-20 million euros.

So, it's not an equal partnership. The lack of funds already discriminates establishing good coproduction."

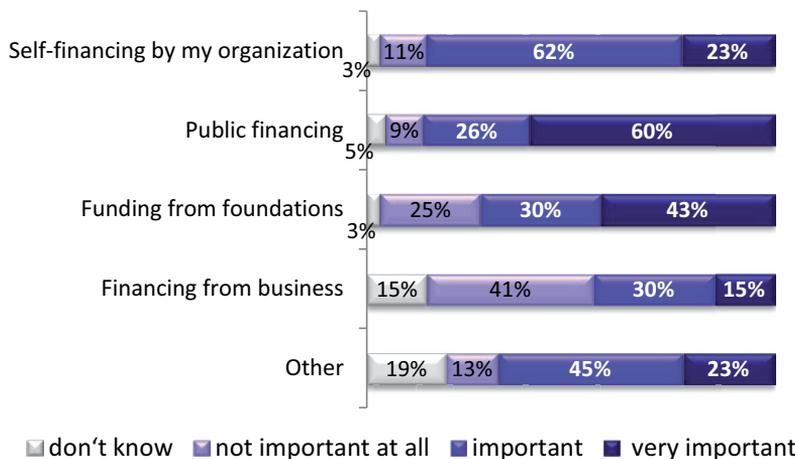
Additional challenges mentioned were language problems and cultural differences. Cultural differences, instead, were not considered as a big challenge for international cooperation. One interviewee argued that additional costs for international cooperation result from time consuming decision making and application processes. Also, difficulties in finding partners were brought up. In the context of Baltic States lack of good content was pointed out by one interviewee:

"The feature films made here are too local by their content and they won't necessarily appeal to world."

2.3. Financing and support

Regarding the financing of the cooperation the survey showed that for realization of international projects, public financing is the most important type of financing, before self-financing. Over 40 % of respondents also regarded financing from the business significant financing source.

Figure 5: Financing of the international cooperation projects, (N=72)



(Due to rounding, figures are not summarized to 100 in each category.)

In terms of financing and support for internationalization the interviewees considered governmental and regional financial support to be very important in facilitating international cooperation. Also for the inter-BSR cooperation, the importance of public financing was emphasized. According to a Finnish expert, a lot of cooperation already exists on

practical level – a lot of know-how is being exchanged but building some support mechanisms is a different question and at the moment, the financing is lacking.

There are some support systems for funding the cooperation projects between operators from BSR countries. A good example of that is co-development fund managed by Polish Film Institute for supporting the cooperation with Germany.

Apart from financial issues also informational and political support were considered to be important. Continuing the example of Poland also the government of the country has influenced significantly the development of film industry.

“In Poland this support was expressed in a form of changing the law, which allowed Polish Film Institute to be created and to get money from the market because all TV-companies and movie theatres had to pay 1.5 % of the revenues to Polish Film Institute. It was initiated by the parliament. It was a huge step, which changed a lot. In 90’s we were making around 5-10 films per year, now we produce 50 film per year with the higher quality. It was a huge help from the state.”

Also in other countries support for internationalization can be observed on political level. For example, Norway has recently signed on the European coproduction agreement and Baltic States attract foreign film productions with financial benefits. In general, tax reliefs for foreign productions were regarded to be a good way to support international cooperation and they were considered to be working well in those countries where they are implemented. These kinds of actions also support indirectly the development of local services for film industries by attracting foreign production companies to film in the country.

However, in some cases the state was seen as an obstacle rather than a facilitator for international cooperation. An expert from Latvia criticized the general weakness of support structure in Baltic States which made it difficult to offer credible cooperation possibilities for international partners. Expert from Russia argued that the management level of governmental organizations in Russia has not changed enough since the Soviet times, which makes it difficult to get involved in international projects. In addition, he provided a concrete example of filming-related bureaucracy in St. Petersburg. Also experts from other countries criticized their governments for lack of support for international cooperation. According to a Swedish expert, the support is in many cases limited to coproductions only.

“The screen script should be provided in 45 days before shooting the film, if the movie is going to be filmed on the streets of St Petersburg. Within 45 days the script will be discussed, and the final decision will be announced. This regulation is extremely unprofessional and makes the filmmaking in St Petersburg unattractive. The government does not understand the specificity of the cultural values of St Petersburg”.

“If they don’t have a co-producer, they just come to Sweden and shoot. There are no incentives, they get no support whatever from Sweden. They just spend a lot of money and we don’t give anything for return.”

Particularly support for international cooperation seemed to be lacking in terms of information and networking. Some interviewees argued that adding informational and networking support would partly solve challenges in finding partners. Apart from these challenges the interviewees felt that currently support focused especially on BSR, is almost non-existent.

“It is still necessary to stimulate producers to go outside the country to co-produce. They are eager to go outside the country to get funding but they don’t really understand what it is to co-produce creatively and how to go and find partners from other countries”.

“It would be nice to have, for example, a database or some kind of system to get the access to search for people who are looking for location, place to shoot, or cooperation...something like that.”

3. Cooperation inside the BSR

In this chapter the focus is on international cooperation of film industry actors inside BSR. In the first part of the chapter the general overview is supplemented with geographical review of cooperational ties. In the latter part of the chapter the benefits of cooperation are brought up and potential for future cooperation inside the region is assessed.

3.1. Overview

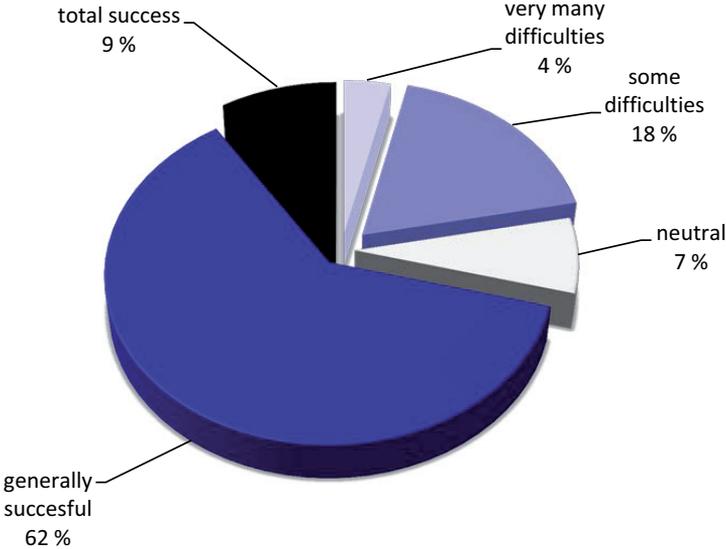
Nearly 78 % of the survey respondents (N=72) have had cooperation projects with a partner from the BSR countries during the last 5 years. Number of projects with partners from the BSR per company or organization was usually from 1 to 3. A couple of respondents reported participation in more than 100 projects. Also the interviewees perceived cooperation inside the BSR to be quite active and growing. Similarly to the international cooperation types in general the survey showed that cooperation inside the BSR is in the first place involved with coproduction (67 %), followed by film festival (38 %) and distribution (29 %). Instead, joint marketing, manuscript development and artistic production are quite unusual types of cooperation. In addition, some support activities were mentioned (as a form of cooperation), such as financing, “*statistical and general information services*” and “*curatorial work*”. Compared with (international) cooperation projects in general, cooperation inside BSR related to film festivals and post production more frequently. Differences are in general quite insignificant. The most explicit exception is in the case of distribution, which is somewhat more uncommon form of cooperation in BSR than globally.

Figure 6: Cooperation in the BSR is typically involved with, (N=55)



Survey respondents were also asked to assess how successful have the cooperation projects been with partners from other BSR countries. According to a clear majority (62 %), these projects have been generally successful or even a total success (9 %).

Figure 7: Assessment of the cooperation projects with BSR countries, (N=55)



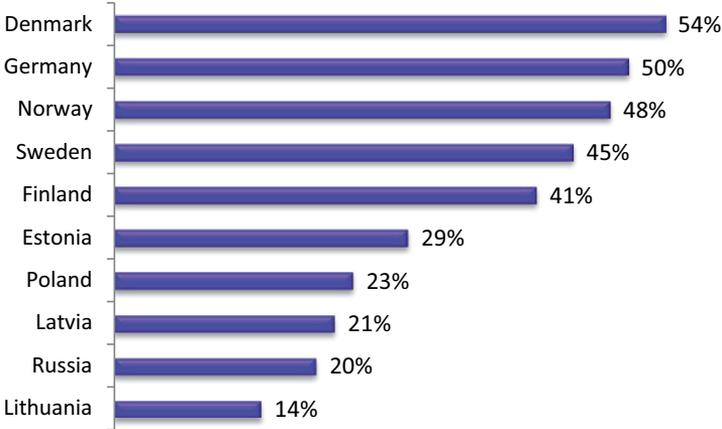
However, more than fifth of the respondents had encountered some or many difficulties. These difficulties were tied to for example “*different financing systems and specific regulation as what part of financing should be invested in the funding country and what could be used in other areas*”.

3.2. Geographical coverage

Generally, cooperation inside BSR was seen quite natural due to such facilitating factors as proximity and common cultural denominators. However, the cooperation was mainly implemented on between single countries and was mostly project oriented. The survey respondents gave a wide variety of reasons for considering some country especially attractive for cooperation projects. Typically, neighboring countries praised each other for similar mentality and culture. While Denmark was regarded to have a “*high standard of film education*” and “*experienced producers*”, Germany was not only “*a big market*” but also there is “*a lot of money in regional funds*” and “*most opportunities*”. According to the respondents, Finland and Sweden both have “*interesting audiovisual media education system*”. In addition, Sweden has “*huge resources of storytelling talent*” and Finland has a “*high developed game industry*” which today is increasingly connected with the film industry. Norway was considered to have a distinct advantage because it is a “*rich country with hard currency*” and there is also a lot of public support available. Estonia was given thanks for “*tax incentives, eager-to-learn producers and well organized organizations*”. Concerning Poland, there are “*good prices and service*”. Like in Germany, market size is big also in Russia where market is rapidly growing e.g. in the field of movie distribution. Both Latvia and Lithuania were almost unanimously considered to have “*ambitious producers*” and being “*well organized, less financed but with good perspectives*”. The reasons for cooperation given by the interviewees were quite similar to the survey results. For example, common cultural denominators were brought up especially in the context of the Nordic countries.

The three most common project partner countries for the respondents of the survey were Denmark, Germany and Sweden, followed closely by Norway and Finland. Consequently, the same five countries were also seen as especially attractive from the perspective of cooperation projects. On the other hand, a quarter of respondents considered that no country in particular in the BSR stands out in light of cooperational attractiveness.

Figure 8: Typical partner countries in the BSR cooperation, (N=56)



(Cases when cooperation partner was from respondents own country, are not included)

Survey data shows that if a film industry organization has had more than 20 international cooperation partners they have typically been from Nordic countries and sometimes from Baltic Countries.

Table 2: The origin of BSR-cooperation partners

	Nordic Countries	Baltic Countries	Germany	Poland	Russia	Total number of partners
Denmark	63 %	15 %	15 %	5 %	2 %	41
Estonia	48 %	30 %	11 %	7 %	4 %	27
Finland	56 %	16 %	16 %	5 %	7 %	43
Germany	43 %	29 %	14 %	14 %	0 %	7
Latvia	0 %	50 %	25 %	0 %	25 %	4
Lithuania	41 %	27 %	9 %	14 %	9 %	22
Norway	82 %	0 %	9 %	0 %	9 %	11
Poland	40 %	20 %	20 %	10 %	10 %	10
Russia	19 %	27 %	27 %	18 %	9 %	11
Sweden	72 %	14 %	8 %	3 %	3 %	35

Generally supporting the findings from the survey the interviewees also provided some additional information on the cooperation inside BSR. According to the interviews, while Baltic States were very keen for cooperation with Nordic countries, the latter ones seemed to concentrate more on cooperation within the Northern region. The reasons for that were well established cooperation ties as well as cultural closeness of the Nordic countries. For situation in Nordic countries, a good analysis of strong cooperation connections was provided by a Norwegian expert.

“The most part of cooperation (in Norway) is inside the Nordic region. It is also because of producers, directors, stenographers know each other. There

has been a networking going on for one, maybe two generations of filmmaking. They know each other. We have support infrastructure. We have a business infrastructure in terms of Nordic distribution through the major Norwegian and Nordic media houses in Sweden and Denmark.”

If the cooperation exceeded the scale of single countries it was rather perceived as a part of other kinds of regional dimensions such as Baltic States, Nordic countries and EU. As an example of cooperation among Baltic States a Latvian expert mentioned institutional collaboration.

“We have collaboration between three Baltic countries on the institutional level meaning National Film Center of Latvia, Estonian Film Foundation, and the Ministry of Culture of Lithuania. We have formed a collaboration platform for Baltic films which is similar to the Scandinavian Films, and we take part normally bigger international film events like Berlinale and Cannes, but we also make some common international projects in the Baltic Countries.”

Other cooperational examples mentioned were joint support funds, projects and networks such as First Motion project, Nordic Film & TV Fund, and European Film Promotion. Many experts from Nordic countries mentioned that Nordic Film & TV Fund has been an important facilitator of the cooperation between these countries. Nordic countries seem to be the most integrated with each other having many joint projects and umbrella organizations. One of such organizations mentioned in the interviews was Scandinavian Films – a network which combines film institutes of all five Nordic countries. One interviewee described the importance of Nordic cooperation as follows:

“We cooperate very closely in Nordic network. And for us, I think, it is very important that we have for example umbrella stands at the all main film festivals, like Cannes, Berlin, Toronto. When we promote Scandinavian films, we have a common stand. We have common offices at the festivals... To be honest, if you look at the America, they can't really make such a big difference if it is a Swedish film or a Danish film or a Finnish film. It is more important that it is a Scandinavian film or a Nordic film.”

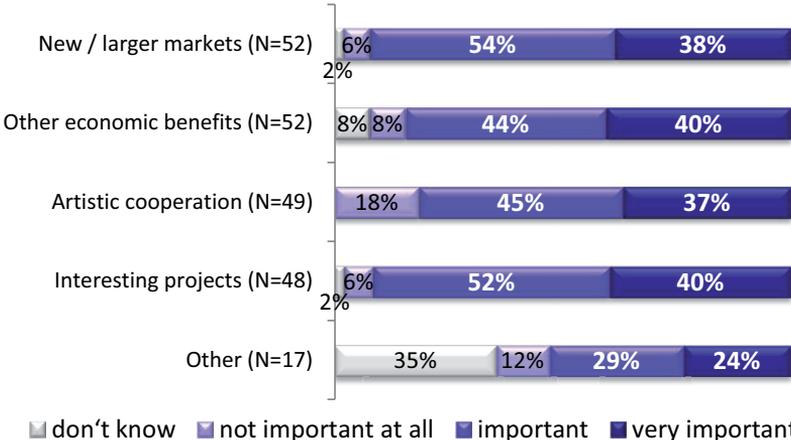
Here it must be noted also that according to the interviews cooperation activities combining countries from Scandinavia and Baltic States seemed to be growing. One of the interviewees noted that some discussions of expanding Nordic Film & TV Fund to Baltic States have been in the air. However, according to the same interviewee it could be difficult due to current economic situation in the Baltic States. The idea of expanding

Nordic Film & TV Fund to include Baltic States or create a separate Nordic-Baltic fund for supporting projects with regional involvement received some support among the interviewees. According to one interviewee this kind of approach could be expanded to other industries as well.

3.3. Benefits

When respondents of the survey were asked about the benefits or added value that could be achieved from cooperation inside the BSR, new or larger markets was considered as the most important option followed closely by interesting projects and other economic benefits. Instead, artistic cooperation was assessed to be less important.

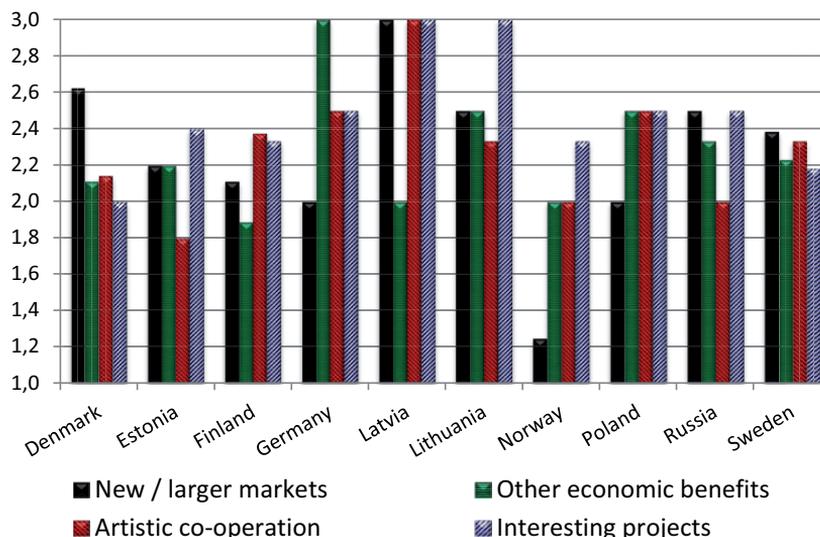
Figure 9: Benefit / added value achievable from cooperation in the BSR



From the viewpoint of cultural characteristics, larger markets can however be a “double-edged sword” because productions could end up to be more “EuroGeneral”, as one respondent reminded. This respondent added that viewers usually prefer to watch own productions and are less interested in seeing something coming in different language about different cultural issues.

Country specific results reveal some differences. In Denmark, new or larger markets are clearly more important factor than others, while in Finland artistic cooperation was valued most important. Instead in Sweden all four factors were rated quite evenly, however new or larger markets was number one.

Figure 10: Benefits / added value from cooperation in BSR, weighted average, (N=55)⁵



Apart from sought benefits the respondents of the survey were also encouraged to describe the added value which their company or organization could offer for international cooperation in the BSR. Basically, four main types of added value were pointed out. In most of cases, some type of (1.) support or service was mentioned. Almost as often respondents referred to (2.) experience, (3.) knowhow or (4.) expertise. In some of the cases, respondents highlighted their network or contacts. Other types of added value mentioned were rather diverse ranging from low salaries to locations.

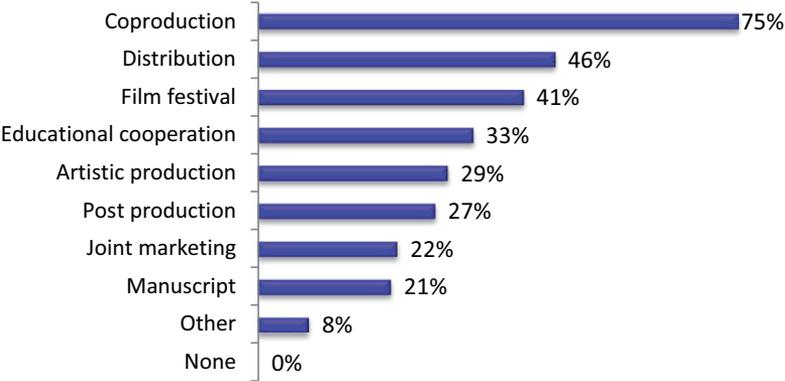
3.4. Potential

According to the survey the cooperation potential inside the BSR is substantial. The survey showed that about 53 % of the respondents considered that there is a lot of potential and almost 34 % saw some potential for international projects in the field of filmmaking. Only one of 101 respondents did not view any potential at all. Furthermore, according to respondents, the cooperation inside the BSR is highly important: almost 90 % considered it important (ca. 46 %) or very important (ca. 43 %) and only 2 % did not see any importance at all in cooperation. Region was also seen as a natural direction to expand cooperation activities due to overall knowledge of the region and cultural similarities even without special

⁵ Weighted average of each country's replies in each category. Scale: 0 – don't know, 1 – not important at all, 2 – important, 3 – very important.

economic instruments. Concerning the future cooperation, respondents were asked to name the three most interesting types of cooperation. These turned out to be coproduction, distribution and film festival. Each respondent was interested in at least some kind of cooperation.

Figure 11: Attractive forms of cooperation in the future, inside BSR, (N=102)



Survey respondents also mentioned some additional activities for future cooperation with BSR partners. There were, for example, “animation outsourcing”, “curatorial work”, “joint production services network”, “non-profit distribution”, research & development, services for international production and “talent collaboration”.

Similarly to the results of the survey the interviewees perceived a great cooperation potential inside the BSR. Though, some of the experts were quite skeptical in this matter due to the lack of financial resources in smaller countries. One interviewee raised lack of information as a barrier for successful development of cooperation in the region. Another potential threat for successful development of cooperation in the scale of BSR was seen in political initiatives on country level.

“I don’t think there is a lot of information, even inside the BSR, for example, in Denmark or Sweden about Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. And there are not that many connections between the filmmaking people inside the region. So, it is necessary to work more on this.”

“I think the direction is BSR... Unless there are special initiatives decided on some strategic level in the country. For example, economic ministry says that now our priority is China and you’ll get a development instrument for developing of connection or collaboration with China.”

4. Identity Building in the BSR

In this chapter the current state and future prospects of developing common identity for BSR are evaluated. The first part of the chapter focuses on current situation of BSR's image in the field of filmmaking while in the second part of the chapter competitive advantages of single countries as well as the region as a whole are brought up.

4.1. The image of BSR in the field of filmmaking

In the survey the respondents were asked to state their views on the BSR countries as filmmaking countries. Positive comments highlighted not only professional quality, creativity, potential in filmmaking, rich heritage and interesting locations but pointed out also non-commercial thinking, *“unexplored territory”*, *“mutual understanding”*, *“low-key manuscript”*, low production costs (in some countries) and good availability of public funding. In general, BSR has

“all the resources to create a significant and great film production.”

Negative comments concentrated in many cases on the small size of the market and also diversity, *“unevenness”* and *“compartmentalized markets”* which is reflected, for example, in a way that *“it is big business for some and not business at all for some other countries”*. Some pointed out *“negative competition, age and sex discrimination, prestige and commercial thinking”*. According to some, there is a lack of cooperation which could be due to unequal funding possibilities. Furthermore, as one respondent noted, *“film funding does not attract private investors in the area”*. In addition, *“most companies work by themselves or in local cooperations which creates small domestic markets instead of a broader one”* and region's filmmaking industry is *“mostly concentrated on art-house movies.”* One respondent remarked that although the proximity to the sea is a unifying factor

“there should be more in order to call it as a filmmaking region.”

According to some respondents of the survey, concept of a *region* in the case of BSR is unclear. These ten countries are perceived as a one region *“to a very small degree”* – perhaps only, because they are located around one particular sea. Instead, other blocks of countries such as Nordic countries and Baltic Countries are clearly established themselves as regions.

Many of the interviewees emphasized the importance of cooperation in some smaller areas concentrating on countries nearby or some already established regional divisions such as Nordic countries. On the other hand, especially the experts of smaller countries of the BSR were more eager to develop cooperation activities on a broader regional scale. An expert from Latvia stated:

“It would be great to have a more dialogue and more work together. It’s the same region and it would be nice to promote the region. I mean, Latvia is small ... it’s always better to look to the bigger picture.”

Interviewees seemed to be quite skeptical about the whole intention of creating a common BSR brand. Some of the Nordic experts were quite happy with the cooperation in Nordic countries through networks like Scandinavian Films, and didn’t really perceive any substantial benefits in creating an additional brand for BSR. Another interviewee emphasized the importance of countries’ own brands for developing cooperation. Additional point of view was that also European wide networks like European Film Promotion offer opportunities for collaborating with other countries of BSR.

“I collaborate quite lot with Poland and the Baltic States and other BSR countries as well through European Film Promotion. I am not sure if there would be a need for creating even another network for the bigger region of the 10 countries in between Scandinavian Films and European Film Promotion.”

In addition, many interviewees argued that the countries in the region are too different for establishing a common brand when it comes to film industries. Differences are involved with e.g. cultural differences or size of the market. However, some saw more potential in creating common brand for the region.

“In my opinion they are too culturally diverse to be seen as a one group. However, being the part of one European family they share common stories, themes and values, which need to be explored.”

“They might be too different. I know that the Baltic States have cooperation of course and they have similarities. They are not too different from Nordic. But our film industries are quite different. Sweden produces approximately 40-50 feature films every year so it is quite big film industry. And Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania they are so small as for today. It might be a little bit too different situation.”

“I think when describing the BSR, as you do, and particularly if the idea is to build the brand, a lot of work should be done in sense of providing information, a climate for cooperation and infrastructure for cooperation.”

4.2. Competitive advantages of BSR

The interviews showed a great variation in opinions about competitive advantages depending on the country and region. Location was considered to be one of the most important factors when attracting foreign film productions. For example, St. Petersburg was promoted as an interesting decoration set as such. Experts from Eastern part of the BSR emphasized pricing issues. Baltic States as well as Poland were seen to have competitive advantage in pricing of work force as well as lower cost of film production in general. For example, an expert from Latvia advocated for a great amount of experience in Latvian film industry combined with cheap prices,

“We have a lot of highly skilled professionals working in the movie industry. For example directors and location managers, they are all very well trained people. So, it’s a good combination of value and high quality, I think.”

whereas a Polish expert emphasized the flexibility of the working force.

“We are quite competitive when it comes to prices of film production, working force, equipment and post production. Working force is important, as in Poland there is no trade union in film industry. Maybe it is not good from viewpoint of people who work, but from the viewpoint of producers it is very good, because they can negotiate for salaries. In some countries it is impossible due to the regulations, there are no discussions. In Poland it is still flexible.”

Survey respondents emphasized similar issues when discussed about BSR countries as filmmaking countries. According to them, interesting locations and country sides, extreme climate conditions, cultural and historical identity, professional skills and experience and also cheap production costs could be regarded as competitive advantages of the BSR.

Whereas Eastern part of BSR relied on pricing issues, separating competitive advantages especially in smaller countries of the western side of BSR was a bit more challenging. Interviewed experts of some countries advocated for more focus in their country’s film industry in order to achieve concrete competitive advantages. For example Norwegian expert stated:

“We are still searching for something that could be explored as a Norwegian brand. But my guess is that this would probably be in the region of drama with a personal voice and directors, who have a strong story to tell and whose artistic signature is at each film. I do not think Norwegian industry is up to do a big commercial in commercial cinema market. “

In BSR countries, some obvious commonalities were found on geographical level. It was considered that proximity makes it easier for movie makers to travel between countries. In addition, nature- related commonalities such as white forests, lakes, white nights and purity of the environment were emphasized. One interviewee even mentioned a special tone of the films coming from the BSR. Also common history, old cities and cultural similarities were brought up however, some of the interviewees considered cultural similarities to be imaginary.

“I think the Baltic Region has a special tone in their films, they have some similarities of course coming from same part of the world. It is exotic for people from USA or Great Britain or France to see films from the BSR”.

“If we compare the Baltic countries and Mediterranean countries, of course we can say that Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Germany have different mentality, food, and approach to life than Italians. But I find it quite superstitious”.

The general perception was that the countries of BSR are rather diverse to have many common competitive advantages. However, one interviewee mentioned that the BSR could have some joint competitive advantages, while another made a proposition of combining strong points of different countries in the region.

“I think yes. But it is very far to go because there are small countries like Baltic Countries and Nordic Countries which are not so big. Germany stands out itself, it’s a very big country with very big production and strengths of culture. And the same with Russia. And also Poland.”

“I think the region has something to offer because if you combine all of these countries’ strong characteristics it will become even stronger – the brand. And I think it would be quite interesting idea to combine.”

Adding to the previous comment a Finnish expert characterized Poland as a big market where internal relations are largely guiding international cooperation. A couple of interviewees mentioned that Germany’s interests

seem to be somewhere else than in the BSR. Being outside of EU, Russia was seen as a more distant partner by many interviewees. This opinion was indirectly supported by a Russian expert as well.

“I cannot notice the proximity of Finland in St Petersburg, with the exception of Nokia phones”.

To conclude this chapter it can be noted that in general, experts from the Baltic States had a more optimistic view on development of common identity of BSR while experts from Nordic countries shared more skeptical views. At least partly this can be explained by the views provided by a Finnish expert. According to him Nordic countries are not very eager to establish any funds for the BSR since they have their own working support mechanisms such as Nordic Film & TV Fund. On the other hand Baltic States are lacking in this kind of support system. Thus they would like to either join the Nordic support system or create something similar in their own region. Thoughts of an expert from Poland serve here as a perfect sum up of this section of the study.

“This is very difficult and delicate part. If you look from the viewpoint of Japan or Australia, this idea might work, as there are some countries, which surround Baltic Sea. But looking from our perspective, it seems very awkward and very strange, because it is difficult to find a common denominator for Denmark or Germany between Russian or Lithuania, for example. All these countries are so different. It seems very difficult to find some common identity. On the other hand, it is natural that these small countries form a bigger entity. Sometimes it works naturally, like Scandinavian countries. It also works for films. When they go to film festivals, they promote under one umbrella the Scandinavian films. But here, I think, it would be very difficult to do it. The most difficult would be to persuade these countries that they have something in common and to make these countries feel similar.”

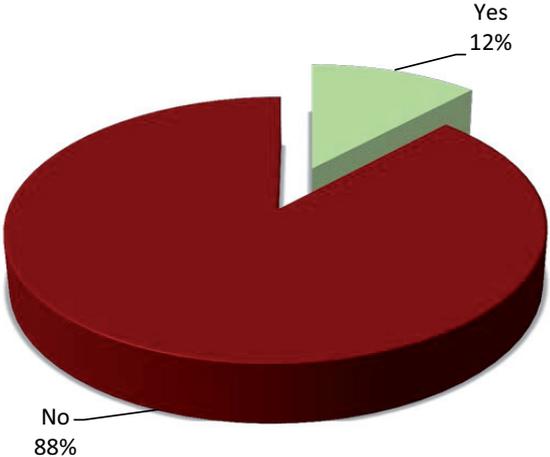
5. Cooperation with Japanese Film Industry

In this chapter the cooperation between film industry actors of BSR and Japan is explored. First, an overview of cooperation with Japanese film industry is provided. Second, drivers and challenges for cooperation are evaluated. In the latter part of the chapter various support methods for cooperation with Japanese are assessed and potential for developing cooperation activities is discussed.

5.1. Overview

The survey showed that 12 out of 100 companies or organizations have had some kind of cooperation with Japanese partners during the last 5 years. Of those 12, five have had more than one cooperation project. Number of projects varied from one to three.

Figure 12: Cooperation with Japanese, the last 5 years, (N=100)



Typically, the cooperation with Japanese has concerned film festivals (five respondents) and coproduction (four respondents). As for the other⁶ cooperation types, each category were referred from one to three times. Also, music video production and “supplying services for a TV-program” were mentioned under category other. In total, there were 19 cooperation projects mentioned. The companies who have had cooperation with

⁶ Distribution, Artistic production, Educational cooperation, Manuscript and Other. Among realized projects there were no Joint marketing or Post production projects at all.

Japanese were predominantly film-production companies and clear majority of them had a turnover less than 500 000 euros.

Generally, the cooperation with Japanese partners had been a success: altogether 9 out of 12 respondents considered cooperation with Japanese successful or very successful. Among difficulties encountered in the cooperation was, for example, “*extremely long decision process in Japan*”. However, “*when the decision was made, the process of contracting and funding was of unbelievable high speed*”.

Also, some of the interviewees mentioned a few concrete cooperation projects with Japanese. Many of those were part of some bigger programs such as workshop with Japan in Media Mundus Programme. In addition, educational cooperation in the film industry was mentioned as well as some events like Week of Japanese film in St. Petersburg. On the other hand there were also pure coproductions such as *Ito, A Cloud upon a Slope, Tomorrow Will Be Better, Avalon* etc. Some of the experts pointed out that Japan is an important market for sub-fields of their country’s film industry. For example, an expert from Sweden emphasized good reception of Swedish documentaries among Japanese audience. Also a Latvian expert mentioned that Japanese are very interested in documentary films from Europe. On the other hand, many of the interviewees could not recall any kind of cooperation with Japanese and argued that there are not that much cooperation between film industries of Japan and BSR in general.

5.2. Drivers and challenges

According to the survey, interesting projects and artistic cooperation were both considered to be important or very important added value to respondent’s organization from the cooperation with Japanese film industry. Also, new markets or achievement of special field of knowledge were ranked important or very important by 85 % of the respondents. Suitable markets for own products was considered least important. On the other hand, respondents gave a lot of suggestions what kind of added value their organizations could offer to international cooperation with Japanese film industry. Among these were a “*gateway to Europe*”, “*experience on the BSR*”, “*skilled professionals*”, “*cheap labor*”, “*good locations*”, “*good network in environmental themes*”, “*experience from ethnographical filmmaking*” and “*knowledge of cultural cooperation*”.

Despite the quite low level of Japan-related experience, the interviewees considered market in Japan to be quite interesting and they were eager to establish cooperation ties with Japanese. One of the main triggers for

interest was the size of Japanese market. However, even with existing interest entering the Japanese market was seen as a challenging task.

“From one point of view, the Japanese market is very attractive because it is quite big. But realistically looking at this, I think it would be very difficult to approach this market”.

“It would be needed to create and to shape some audience for these European films in Japan. It needs a lot of preparation and a lot of work, but there are some possibilities.”

Also other challenges were brought up. One of the challenges seemed to be the overall vagueness of the perspective of cooperating with Japanese. Quite naturally countries in BSR seem to concentrate on developing cooperation with neighboring countries, while cooperation projects with Japan seem to be more of exceptions rather than results of some kind of established strategies. Other challenges brought up were cultural differences and lack of information. For example, one of the interviewees argued that the BSR does not produce content which is popular in Japan at the moment. Also language barrier was mentioned. Apart from cultural differences also lack of information about Japanese film industry was reflected in some comments.

“Important thing that should be realized is that there is an immense language barrier. I would say that 95 % of Japanese people do not speak English – and that also applies to film industry. Which means that if there are no translators or if there is no-one who speaks Japanese, the chances to engage in business with Japanese companies are really low.”

5.3. Support methods and activities

In general, survey respondents were in need of help with establishing contacts and information about Japanese operating environment. In addition, there was also in some measure demand for support services, such as market research, translation services and showroom searching. As for the detailed needs, majority of respondents saw assistance in finding partners as the most significant way to support the cooperation between professionals from the BSR and Japan. It was considered to be important by 64 % of the respondents. Other important activities were networking services (58 %) as well as information about the filmmaking environment, procedures and organizations (55 %). Some respondents wished for providing *“neutral ground for personal meetings with producers and*

directors” and also “possibility to attend Japanese festivals and film related events”.

Table 3: Support activities advancing film industry cooperation between BSR countries and Japan

Support activity	% of respondents (N=92)
Assistance in finding partners	64 %
Networking services	58 %
Information about the film- making environment, procedures, organizations etc.	55 %
Information about the (financial) support systems	50 %
An agent / manager / producer familiar with Japanese market	48 %
Market research	41 %
Translation services	37 %
Exhibitions, events and other marketing events	37 %
Information / feedback on existing work-in-progress projects	37 %
Support when searching production facilities, theatres, exhibition showrooms etc.	34 %
Information about licenses and other issues related to contacts with authorities	25 %
Information about immaterial property right issues	21 %
Recruitment services	14 %
Other	8 %
None	4 %

In response to open question about enhancing cooperation possibilities between BSR countries and Japan the respondents brought up various ideas. Many of the suggestions were related to different events where counterparts could meet face to face, such as workshops (most popular suggestion), meetings, seminars, networking and “*get-togethers*”. While the workshop was seen as useful method for enhancing cooperation possibilities, some reminded that it should be for producers and directors, not for students. Workshop should be an event where “*interest between the regions would be first created*” before the cooperation itself could take place. Other events mentioned were, for example, coproduction-, joint export- and pitching events. In addition, film festival was mentioned several times. According to one respondent, participation into film festivals should be “*100 % free*”.

Besides the events, informational support and funding were seen as important aspects among survey respondents. Information was needed, for instance, “*on respective film industries*” and “*on organizations working in film industry field and their activities*”. In addition to public funding, financial support could be realized also in form of e.g. equity financing or

coproduction funds. Also, some other methods were suggested for the support of cooperation, such as “*creating international artistic teams between countries*”, “*cooperation with Japanese scriptwriters*”, “*internship and exchange of personnel*”, “*student exchange projects*” and “*setting up an organization in both places that can put people in contact with each other*”. According to one respondent, “*there are talents and experience of film production in the BSR and also money in some of the countries and in EU*”. Thus, “*all the prerequisites for creating a significant film production*” exists in the region. On the other hand, there were some concerns about the Japanese market and how the cooperation possibilities could be enhanced. One respondent argued that “*Japanese companies are not very eager to do coproductions with European countries*”. Another respondent even suggested: “*Skip it and work with your neighbors*”.

Similarly to the survey respondents the interviewees emphasized the importance of support in developing cooperation activities with Japanese. One of the interviewees noted that informational support and research was absolutely needed just to find connections between different societies of BSR and Japan. The role of connections as well as promotion was emphasized also in the phase of entrance to Japanese market. It was reminded that Japan is a challenging market for Europeans and relations with Japanese partners should be built patiently throughout the years.

“It’s always necessary to research before you go there because Japanese society is different from European. It’s like a nice small village. So, it is absolutely needed to find some connection, even just for entering there. And then it’s like chain: you know one person who knows another person and so on.”

“The interest has so far been in Japanese film export because entering the Japanese market is entirely different story. Basically, the product that would be sold in Japanese markets would need to have promotional budget and network of contacts already in advance – otherwise it’s practically impossible. In many cases more money would be lost than would be made.”

“With Japan there’s no official partner that would offer some operational structure. Everything relies on personal relationships and personal responsibility. In my own experience, to establish working business relationship with a major Japanese distributor can take about 10 years of work. It’s important to have someone Japanese to recommend you. It’s really hard to go to a Japanese business and say ‘hi, I want to do this.’”

One way of establishing these relations is the presence at the film festivals and promotional events. Also support measures in forms of programs,

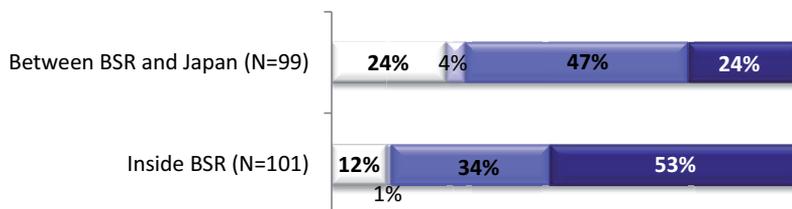
networking and such initiatives as trainings and workshops were considered to be beneficial for bringing filmmakers from Japan and BSR together. For example, a Russian expert mentioned that cooperation activities with Japanese started with the help of officials.

“There were official events at the Japanese embassy and Council which were organized in Moscow and St Petersburg. Our organization communicated with the embassy through Cultural attaché. We were asked to arrange film shows, posters, translations, etc.”

5.4. Potential

Not surprisingly, the survey respondents were little less optimistic about cooperation potential between the BSR and Japan than within the BSR. However, altogether 71 % saw some potential (47 %) or a lot of potential (24 %) in cooperation between film industry professionals of the BSR and Japan. Only four percent did not see any potential at all. However, there was rather substantial share of don't know -answers (24 %). This is perhaps due to the lack of experience and qualm towards Japanese markets. As for the cooperation inside BSR, in total of 87 % of respondents considered that there is some or a lot of potential.

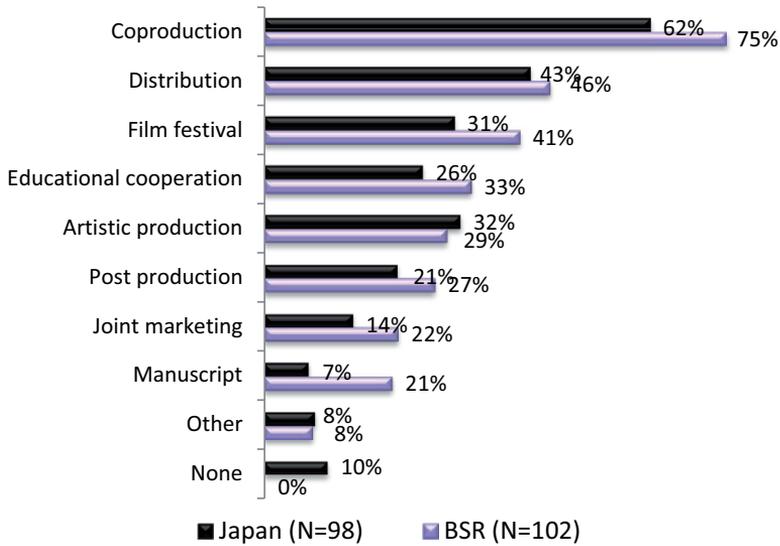
Figure 13: Cooperation potential in the field of filmmaking



don't know
 no potential at all
 some potential
 a lot of potential
 (Due to rounding, figures are not summarized to 100 in each category.)

Respondents were also asked about the attractive forms of future cooperation with Japanese film industry companies or organizations. Cooperation in coproduction was mentioned by 62 % of respondents. It was followed by distribution (43 %), artistic production (32 %) and festivals (31 %). Cooperation in manuscript writing did not spark too much enthusiasm and interested only 7 % of the respondents.

Figure 14: Attractive forms of cooperation in the future with Japanese film industry



When compared future interests of cooperation inside the BSR and BSR-Japanese cooperation the given options were almost similarly preferred. In both cases, coproduction was most interesting and manuscript least interesting type of cooperation. Concerning the cooperation between BSR and Japan a tenth of all survey respondents had no interest at all, when in the case of the BSR-intra cooperation each respondent was interested at least in one type of cooperation. Additional topics of interest mentioned included (e.g.) “*voice recording*”, “*film music recording*”, “*research & development and innovation*”.

6. Workshop

The Baltic Sea Region Coproduction Forum, organized in November 2011 in Vilnius, Lithuania as part of BalMet Promo project, in connection to the European Film Forum Scanorama and its workshops for young cinematographers “Go Young Generation”. The target group of the workshop is new generation of film professionals from Japan and the BSR countries (producers, directors, screenwriters etc.) who already have at least one film done and also young film professionals with a film project which have coproduction potential between Japan and the BSR. The aim of the workshop is to share experiences, exchange ideas about new projects, organize screenings and to look for ways to learn about making films together. Attendees will participate in master classes, panel discussions, pitching of film projects, coproduction market, film screenings and informal meetings. They will also receive feedback to their film project plans from well-known film experts. The teachers will be gifted professionals from BSR and Japan. Both survey respondents and interviewees were asked their views about the content of the workshop, usefulness of the workshop and their interest to participate in it.

6.1. The objective and content of the event

Both interviewees and survey respondents saw the workshop mainly as a possibility to network, get in-depth knowledge of each other’s cultures and exploring similarities and differences between the film industries of Japan and BSR countries. In addition, the workshop was seen as a way to “*bridge the gap between education and industry*”. Also knowledge about local and target market (for example how producing/financing/distribution works in Japan/BSR) was considered to be important. Some interviewees argued that one workshop would not be enough for such a broad theme and suggested either to make the workshop longer or to make a series of workshops.

”I think it is more like social event first. To check out who is interested in the BSR and to let the people meet and discuss, what should we do together. And next step could be more business-oriented workshop. Maybe it should be a series of workshop.”

Opinions about the content of the workshop varied. Some of the interviewees felt that “*first, workshop should focus on networking and cultural aspects in order to find out whether it is possible to work together*

at all". Also learning about producing films in different countries would be very useful.

"First it is important to learn another's culture and meet each other. Only after this it is possible to start discussing what can be done together."

Others argued that the workshop should be business-oriented. For example, one interviewee pointed out that the training of how to make actual films *"shouldn't be the duty in this kind of a workshop since it is the duty of international film institutions and universities"*. Another interviewee mentioned that the weakest link in film-producing is usually the management. So, the workshop for management in film industry may be very helpful.

"We still don't have this culture of marketing and selling and promotion, so it is absolutely necessary to do a workshop for the business side."

An additional point made was that it would be very useful for Scandinavian and Nordic sales agents to get to know Japanese counterparts, distributors and buyers. This could help to raise interest in Japan for movies from BSR.

In the survey, among concrete suggestions for what type of learning experience would benefit best the future professionals from respondents own field, workshop, scriptwriting/-development, networking and coproduction were mentioned in many cases. Also, such activities as *"sharing experience of cooperation and best practices"*, presenting case-studies, *"learning by doing"*, *"collaborating with industry professionals"*, *"combination of technical and inspirational master classes"*, as well as *"actual film shooting in joint film crews"* were brought up.

In addition, there might be *"exchange of ideas and watching/commenting each other's film productions"*. Also, *"information about local law regulations and film funding/support rules"* could be offered. Finally, it would be useful if there could be given *"an introduction in how a cooperation could be arranged"*.

"To encourage talents to develop individual gifts and ideas. To support the creativity without controlling and judging. To experiment different techniques and form of telling stories and reality. The technical education and exchange of experiences are most important. To make some inventory of the talents in the area. Let them present themselves and show some productions and tell their ideas, dreams and plans that could develop the future film productions in the area."

Workshop itself should above all be practical “*hands on experience*” and involve realistic production, “*where older and more experienced filmmakers are listened*”, in order to avoid organize a workshop which is a “*just good party*”. Workshop could be arranged for “*established professionals from Japan and BSR in order them to meet, plan and execute real projects*”.

One of the interviewees suggested that the workshop could contain “*expert seminars on coproduction possibilities in Japan and BSR*” as well as “*master classes with some notable filmmakers from targeted countries*”. Another suggestion was to “*teach the Japanese filmmakers the system of European funding and pitching system, as well as vice versa (for filmmakers of BSR)*”. Another respondent suggested that there could be arranged a “*general introduction about cooperation in film industry in order to give people the overall picture of pros and cons of working together*”. Also pitching of films was seen as useful content of the workshop.

“I think that to have a combination of pitching and workshop is always a good and compact.”

In the survey, for hosting the workshop, a variety of venues and film festivals were suggested. Venues receiving more support from respondents included, for example, Black Nights Film Festival in Tallinn (Estonia), Stockholm Film Festival (Sweden), Copenhagen DOX or PIX (Denmark), Tampere Film Festival (Finland) and Norwegian International Film Festival (in Haugesund). The general idea was, however, that it does not actually matter where the workshop will take place or to which festival it is connected to as long as it will bring the right people together.

6.2. Lecture topics and lecturers

Survey participants and interviewees proposed many lecture topics for the workshop. These suggestions are summarized in the following table. In general, propositions for lecture topics varied very much without emphasizing any particular topic.

Table 4: Lecture topics recommended by the respondents

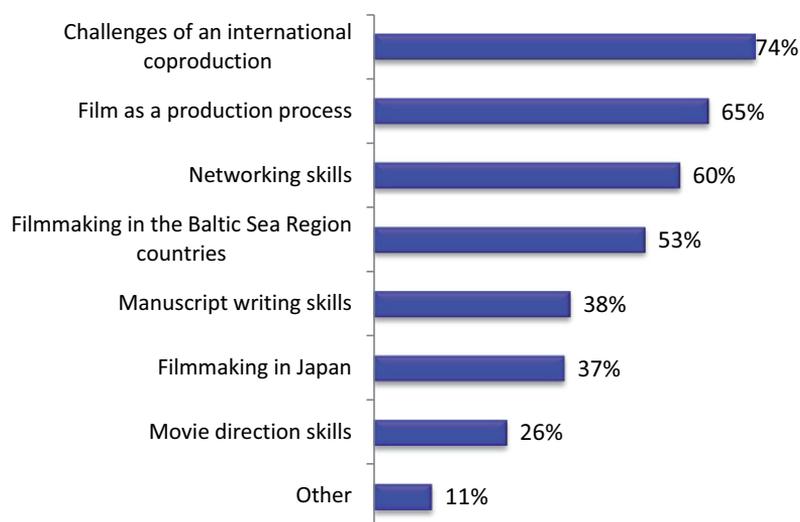
Topics	<i>(continued)</i>
Aesthetics and artistic expressions	Global filmmaking
Animation	Legal rights
Budget planning for production	Marketing
Casting	Networking
Coproduction (e.g. case studies)	Post-production
Copyright issues	Reciprocal showcases of films with intros by local filmmakers
Digital distribution	Script development (e.g. workshop)
Digitalization	Stereoscopic (3-D imaging)
Distribution	Success & failure stories
Emerging distribution channels	Tax shelter programs in different countries
Film traditions	Tendencies in filmmaking
Final cut issues in related countries	Trans-cultural film collaborations
Financing, Co-financing	Visual storytelling

Survey respondents recommended a wide range of possible lecturers. Among them, there were e.g. documentary film expert, Japanese animation expert, representatives from film schools, universities and film institutions. In addition, film- and TV-series director, feature film consultant, screenwriter and producer familiar with international co-productions were suggested.

6.3. Skills to be developed and activities to be organized in the workshop

Survey respondents were asked what *skills* they thought should be developed in the workshop. Altogether, they supported different activities widely. All of the given alternatives received the support of over quarter of respondents. Coping with challenges of an international coproduction was considered to be important skill to be trained by 74 % of the respondents. Other three topics considered as significant by over half of the respondents were film as a production process (65 %), networking skills (60 %) and filmmaking in the BSR countries (53 %). Generally, activities related more to the actual content of film, for example, manuscript writing skills as well as movie direction skills were regarded not as relevant in this context. However it must be noted that if the workshop will be more properly targeted the interest towards filmmaking in Japan will surely be higher. Among other suggestions for skills to be developed during the workshop were “*dramaturgy in the process of editing*”, “*international financing*”, “*international sales*” and “*digital distribution*”.

Figure 15: Skills to be developed during the workshop, (N=89)



The following table shows survey respondents' views by country level, which skills should be developed during the workshop. In almost every country, the three most important ones were same as it was the case in the previous figure.

Table 5: Skills to be developed during the workshop, by country level, the three most preferred skills

Country	Skill (order of importance)
Denmark	Film as a production process, Networking skills, Challenges of an international coproduction
Estonia	Challenges of an international coproduction, Networking skills, Filmmaking in the BSR countries (*)
Finland	Challenges of an international coproduction, Film as a production process, Networking skills
Germany	Filmmaking in the BSR countries, Filmmaking in Japan , Manuscript writing skills (*)
Latvia	(All given options were ranked evenly important)
Lithuania	Challenges of an international coproduction, Filmmaking in the BSR countries, Networking skills, Film as a production process,
Norway	Film as a production process, Networking skills, Movie direction skills
Poland	Challenges of an international coproduction, Filmmaking in the BSR countries, Filmmaking in Japan
Russia	Challenges of an international coproduction, Film as a production process, Manuscript writing skills, Filmmaking in Japan
Sweden	Challenges of an international coproduction, Film as a production process, Filmmaking in the BSR countries

(*) These options were ranked evenly important

According to the survey respondents, the most popular activities which could be organized in the context of a workshop were coproduction seminar (70 %), professional lectures (54 %), pitching forum (54 %) and professional feedback for film-projects (53 %). Among the least popular

were shooting a film, script co-writing and script development. Other activities suggested were, for instance, “*postproduction*” and “*workshop of marketing*”.

Figure 16: Activities to be organized in the context of a workshop, (N=92)



While the coproduction seminar was the most popular choice, in some countries pitching forum (in Estonia) or professional feedback for a film project (in Norway) were preferred slightly more than coproduction seminar.

Table 6: Activities to be organized during the workshop, by country-level, the most preferred activity

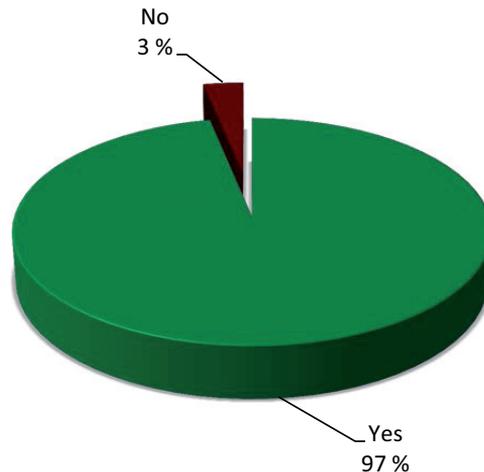
Country	Activity
Denmark	Coproduction seminar
Estonia	Pitching forum
Finland	Coproduction seminar
Germany	Coproduction seminar, Professional lectures, Screenings (*)
Latvia	(All given options were ranked evenly important)
Lithuania	Coproduction seminar, Pitching forum, Screenings, Questions & answers –panel (*)
Norway	Professional feedback for a film project, Filmmaking workshop (*)
Poland	Coproduction seminar
Russia	Coproduction seminar
Sweden	Coproduction seminar

(*) These options were ranked evenly important

6.4. Usefulness and interest to participate in the BSR workshop

An overwhelming majority (97 %) of survey respondents considered this type of workshop to be beneficial for filmmaking industry in general. One of the arguments for the remaining three percent was that the “*differences between Japan and BSR countries are just too big*”. Another one argued that “*one should not force tax payers to sponsor other people's movie dreams instead of their own personal priorities*”.

Figure 17: Workshop, beneficial for the filmmaking industry, (N=94)



Interviewed experts were cautiously optimistic about the usefulness of the workshop. Among the interviewees the workshop was seen as a generator of ideas and place for establishing connections.

“I think, in general young filmmakers will benefit from any sort of introduction to experts. In other words, they will benefit from expanding their network and being exposed to each other ideas.”

However, also some concerns were raised. Among these were cultural barriers and language issues. Also, differences between countries in BSR and lack of common denominators between BSR and Japan were brought up. One interviewee argued that in order “*to overcome this challenge a strong political will is needed*”. Another one emphasized the importance of “*starting the selection of participants early enough, since the theme of the workshop is interesting to a limited amount of people*”.

“Depending on what the subject will be in the end. From my department view, if it would be something that could be useful for sales agents and distributors in each country, it would be very interesting.”

“It should be interesting for us to be there and explain about our evaluation criteria and explain how to get support”

Interest towards participation in the planned workshop was very high among survey respondents: ca. 80 % were interested to participate. Also, many of the specialists interviewed in the research expressed their interest towards attending the workshop, typically in order to e.g. explain evaluation criteria of their organization and explain how to get support from them and to present different funding possibilities.

Table 7: Interest to participate in workshop, by countries and type of company / organization

Respondents home country, (N=91)	YES	NO
Denmark	9	4
Estonia	8	0
Finland	15	2
Germany	3	0
Latvia	2	0
Lithuania	4	0
Norway	6	5
Poland	4	1
Russia	2	1
Sweden	20	5
TOTAL (N)	73	18
TOTAL (%)	80 %	20 %
Type of company / organization, (N=94)	YES	NO
Film production, Distribution, Post production, (N=70)	79 %	21 %
Film school / Educational, Support / finance, Film festival, (N=13)	85 %	15 %
Other, (N=11)	73 %	27 %

Survey respondents were also asked what kind of role they would have if they participated in the workshop. In total, 53 propositions were given, of which ca. 30 % as participants and another 30 % as producers or directors. Few were interested to give lectures. In addition, a couple could contribute as co-organizers or co-financing with internet-related issues.

7. Case Studies

In this chapter we introduce four case studies about cooperation projects in the field of filmmaking. Three cases describe realized film projects between BSR countries and Japan. Fourth case study presents Tallinn based film market known as Baltic Event.

The *Ito* case portrays a coproduction between a world-famous Finnish documentary movie director and a big Japanese TV broadcasting company. *Restaurant Seagull* case illuminates concrete cooperation of Finnish and Japanese film crews on location. The *Cloud upon a Slope* case, on the other hand, looks into the process of searching for partners and locations of a Japanese television series. The *Baltic Event* case describes with many details the organizing of an international film market event on the BSR.

The authors of this report would like to express warmest thanks to the following individuals who gave their valuable professional insight and support to the production of case studies: Pirjo Honkasalo, Kristiina Pervilä, Miika Pölkki, Mark Lwoff, Misha Jaari, Olga Khomenko and Riina Sildos.

7.1. Ito – A Diary of an Urban Priest

Set in Tokyo, “Ito – A Diary of an Urban Priest⁷” tells the story of Yoshinobu Fujioka, a young Buddhist priest, and his search for the meaning of life. Ito takes the film-viewer to an intimate trip to the mind and life of the young priest and the individuals who left a mark on him. Like Ito, the film production process of Ito is a story of strong minds and characters who set up the initiative.

The case of making Ito started from a vision of producer Ryota Kotani at NHK Television who wanted to offer Japanese the opportunity to see Tokyo with the eyes of foreigner interpreters. He searched for outstanding directors in the field of documentary film in a network with his fellow producers abroad, including Mr. Iikka Vehkalahti, producer at the Finnish Broadcasting company YLE among, who knew the recognized work of Finnish documentary director Pirjo Honkasalo. Kristiina Pervilä as producer and founding member at Millennium Film joined the team based on her earlier productions with Honkasalo. For the production house Ito offered great potential because of its interesting topic and director. The challenging production structure and international potential added to Millennium Film’s motivation towards the endeavor.

⁷ Original Finnish name of the document is ”*Seitti – kilvoittelijan päiväkirja*”.

This case describes Ito as a film production which was initiated by strong personal urge of the small number of individuals who made the film. Making Ito was a two-year process of personal commitment, strive and creativity in a filmmaking environment that was smooth and colorful at best but an administrative jungle at worst. This case is based on personal interviews with director Pirjo Honkasalo, producer Kristiina Pervilä, and second script writer Miika Pölkki. Also a large amount desk research material on documentary filmmaking and its organization was used to prepare the case.

Background

The documentary film 'Ito – a Diary of an Urban Priest', directed by Pirjo Honkasalo, was filmed as a part of Tokyo Modern series which consists of international co-productions on the Japanese people and culture directed by non-Japanese filmmakers. Tokyo Modern project was introduced by NHK in 2005 and was welcomed by European broadcasters as a very novel approach. The 4-year project invited three documentary filmmakers from the UK, Germany, and Finland to creatively use the 109-minute time frame. Each director was to illustrate his/her vision of what non-Japanese find mysterious about the country and its people, using innovative visual expression. The selected three directors in the Tokyo Modern -project were Pirjo Honkasalo, Sean McAllister from UK and Veit Helmer from Germany⁸.

The film was produced by a Finnish producing company Millennium Film and financed by Japan Broadcasting Company NHK. The filming on location was made by a small crew of no more than five people (director, cameraman and technical staff) and the whole filming process took approximately two years. During the two years, the production crew visited to Japan a few times for a couple of month's shooting at each time.

Key actors in the production process

The director **Pirjo Honkasalo**, born in Helsinki in 1947, entered film school at the age of 17 and completed her cinematographic thesis at the age of 21. In the same year she shot her first full-length film. She continued to study and worked as an assistant at the Temple University in Philadelphia. Her first major directing role, the historical drama film "Flame Top" (Tulipää), was nominated for the Cannes Official Selection series in 1981.

⁸ <http://pf.nhk-ep.co.jp/detail/1324>

Another of her drama films, “The Fire-Eater” (Tulennielijä), won the AFI (American Film Institute) Grand Jury Prize in Los Angeles in 1998⁹.

As a documentarian, she has completed the trilogy of “The Trilogy of the Sacred and Satanic” of which the second film “Tanjuska and seven devils” (Tanjuska ja 7 perkelettä) won the Amanda Awards (Norway) for the best documentary film in 1993 and the third film “Atman” won the Joris Ivens prize in Amsterdam in 1996. “Three rooms of melancholy” (Melankolien kolme huonetta) won the Amnesty International DOEN Award at the Amsterdam International Documentary Film Festival in 2004. In Finland Ito was nominated a candidate for Jussi award¹⁰ in February in 2011.

Millennium Film is a Finnish film production company founded in 1999. The company produces creative documentaries and art house fiction films for both the Nordic and the international market. According to the company’s web site in its productions the company focuses on a strong author's signature and a high artistic profile in every field of filmmaking. The emphasis is made on long term partnerships, as it is the case between Millennium Film and director Honkasalo. According to the founder of Millennium Film Kristiina Pervilä the main reasons for Millennium Film to produce Ito were interesting theme of the documentary and challenging producing structure and international potential. As for the biggest outcome of the project Ms. Pervilä stated:

“It is always interesting to operate in different cultures and learn the habits and thoughts of ordinary people. Even if they are different from ours you still end up to the same conclusion that people quite the same in different parts of the world. It’s the structure of the society and governing models which are different.”

The Japan Broadcasting Corporation NHK is the sole public broadcaster in Japan. Offering television services since 1953 it currently operates five television channels and three radio networks. In addition the corporation offers satellite services and internationally oriented television and radio services under the NHK World umbrella. The corporation is quite active in international cooperation. According to NHK’s philosophy it promotes intercultural dialogue, and continually undertakes new coproduction projects with broadcasting stations, production companies and distributors around the world. For example, between April 2009 and March 2010, NHK broadcasted 165 co-productions under 54 titles¹¹.

⁹ www.millenniumfilm.fi

¹⁰ Jussi is an accolade to recognize excellence of professionals in the Finnish film industry (http://www.jussit.fi/?page_id=12).

¹¹ <http://www.nhk.or.jp/pr/koho-e.htm>

As a public broadcaster, NHK is the only broadcasting corporation whose budget is obtained not from advertising but from a license fee paid by each household that owns a television set. According to NHK's web site this system enables the corporation to maintain independence from any governmental and private organization, and ensures that the opinions of viewers and listeners are assigned top priority¹².

Success factors

As it was described earlier, the idea of inviting Pirjo Honkasalo to be a part of the Tokyo Modern series came from two producers of NHK and Finnish National Broadcasting Company YLE. Unlike traditional approach of international production, when everything is done in English language, Ito was done differently. Although the typical way of conducting cooperation with Japanese is to find some interpreter or assistant through Japanese film companies, in case of Ito approaching everything through English was not considered to be feasible since the poetic nature of the film required accuracy in language and nuances. The fact that Ito was made for Japanese audience made the project even more challenging. Many references to Japanese culture are made throughout the film and are not necessarily recognizable for non-Japanese viewers. Needless to say that the most important factor of success for this project was director Pirjo Honkasalo, who is known to be among the rare who are as genius as script-writers and editors as they are as directors.

On organizational level Japanese national broadcasting company **NHK** played an important role in the making of Ito. First of all the company was the main financier of the project. According to Mr. Pölkki NHK has always been ambitious and has made big financial inputs to such projects. Also in case of Ito their financial input was significant. NHK supported the production also in other ways. Apart from scheduling the project, the company was quite flexible and gave free hands to the creative team of the documentary. In addition they assigned a production manager to the project to take care of all practical issues. This allowed the filmmakers to focus on the artistic part of the project. According to Pirjo Honkasalo and Kristiina Pervilä the production manager as well as contacts inside NHK were very valuable for the project.

“The production manager which was appointed to this job was of a great importance. We would have been in much bigger trouble without her. Also our contacts inside NHK were very valuable and dealt with all the issues

¹² <http://www.nhk.or.jp/pr/koho-e.htm>

inside the company. So we didn't have to deal with all the issues inside the house. And this was the only right way to do it."

NHK was also an important partner in acquiring the necessary permits, which is never a simple process in Japan. The help of NHK in this matter was crucial since in Japan connections play an important role. According to Mr. Pölkki in Japan everything works on relations and if one doesn't accept system, big problems will occur. Although permits for this project were acquired with significant help of NHK; and all possible connections up to the top management were used, the bureaucracy still caused many challenges.

It is quite common to state that cultural issues are one of the main challenges in cooperation with other countries. However, there is also other side of the coin. In fact, in case of Ito **cultural similarities** can be raised as one of the success factors. According to Pirjo Honkasalo it is inaccurate to state that it is impossible to communicate with the Japanese.

"It depends on the approach. In this case a Finnish way of approaching people where you let people tell about themselves piece by piece and give them time to establish a contact and to decide what they want to tell you is more applicable instead of pouring a great amount of energy on them right away. In this sense Finnish and Japanese cultures are quite similar. To my mind Japanese are quite talkative and maybe even open. But they just don't like the enormous energy on the surface which is a part of the English culture and even more of the American culture."

Another important success factors were **personal contacts and cultural connection to Japanese society**. According to the interviewees the whole project was basically born on personal contacts and not through any system or any institutional cooperation. Strong cultural connection personalized in the second script writer Miika Pölkki. With over 20 years of experience of living in Japan and professional background in research on Japanese culture Mr. Pölkki provided a great deal of expertise on Japan and its traditions.

Additional success factor can be described as **trustworthiness of the Japanese partners**. According to the interviewees Japanese partners were fair and not greedy - as big production houses sometimes are. Also they followed contracts carefully and everything which was agreed was done properly; from equipment to transportations.

Challenges

The original idea was to make a documentary about women's imprisonment. However, the filming inside the prison proved to be very difficult and it was decided to switch the focus of the documentary to the Buddhist priest. Although the process of filmmaking inside the women's prison was already started, the filmmakers encountered many difficulties due to which the idea of making documentary about women's prison had to be given up. These difficulties can be described as **person specific**. The project of filming in the prison started in a quite promising way when the filmmakers managed to acquire all the necessary permits with the help of NHK. The making of ITO was special case on the Japanese soil. It was one of the first times in history of Japan when cameras were allowed into a Japanese prison. However, difficulties started to occur with the assigning of a new prison director.

"We had done a great amount of work and we got the permit to film in the prison. We interviewed there many of the prisoners but after filming for a while, the new director prohibited everything. She allowed us to film walls and other insignificant things like that but the prisoners could not be shown on film. In some ways we first encountered a progressive mindset which then changed into a perfect conservatism. I had never been that desperate in any other film productions..."

According to Miika Pölkki there were also some challenges encountered with the guards of the prison.

"It's a different thing to have a permission on a piece of paper and what they actually allow you to do. Let's say that Japanese hierarchy is more like boxes inside boxes and if the top management says something it doesn't necessarily mean that it is valid all the way down. There are different people on different levels who have power and if they say "no" then it doesn't work."

Another reason for giving up the idea of documentary about women's prison was strict limitations to what can be shown in film.

"The film was supposed to be shown also in Japan and it had NHK involved. This meant very strict limitations to what can be shown. For example face and voice must not be recognized, nothing can be recognized. Everything in film should be neutral. For film-making this is drastic."

In general, **issues related to permits and regulations** tend to be very complicated in Japan. According to Mr. Pölkki the permit jungle is so hard to break through that despite having a lot of ideas many directors quit the process of filmmaking in Japan in frustration. Complicated regulation and permit issues make it practically necessary to have a Japanese partner for filmmaking in the country. In case of Ito the NHK was the best partner that one could dream of, making it significantly easier to deal with permit issues. Despite having an optimal partner for co-production there were still challenges related to regulations and permits. According to Mr. Pölkki all the issues with permits were really tricky throughout the whole production process.

“For example if you go and film in the streets and a car’s license plate is showing or somebody is carrying some papers that could be recognized, everything must be censored. And even if you film a mass of people crossing the street in principle you need a permit from each one of them. But in that case it becomes impossible to work with such permit jungle, and therefore some things are made as discretely as possible. Sometimes you just go and film and if somebody comes then you run, this kind of things happened as well.”

Also the director of the documentary (Honkasalo) mentioned challenges with strict rules and permits.

“It was crazy. You couldn’t film in the park, not from a car, not from a roof, not in a train, you couldn’t show any license plates, nothing! Not even t-shirts with anything reminding a logo. The whole listing is absolutely endless. We were really in trouble with that one. Even when we went to record some bird singing in the park, we were thrown out of there!”

Apart from strict rules and permits there is also a strong mechanism of protecting those rules. This mechanism combines lawyer associations with ministries and country’s officials making it a strong actor in the field. In general, the whole issue with permits was worsened by the fact that even the Japanese partners couldn’t really say precisely what can and what cannot be filmed according to the rules. In addition to laws which can sometimes be unclear there are also common practices which can be described as unwritten laws. For example with the law of protection of privacy even NHK couldn’t really specify what can and cannot be done.

Although the film crew had extensive cultural knowledge of Japan, there were still some **cultural challenges** mentioned. One of them was related to the use of language and translation.

“The Finnish translation of the film is good, but still it cannot capture all nuances. For example in Japan there are something like 20 levels of language, the levels of hierarchy, which are chosen accordingly to whom are you talking to. In Finland there is basic language for everyday use, spoken language and then there is written language. It’s not in our minds to divide people on such many hierarchical levels. This kind of hidden information is impossible to translate.”

Another character typical to the Japanese culture is reluctance to state negative assessments. This became a challenge in the production process because many things in communication became then unclear. The interviewees wished that the Japanese partners would have stated their assessments in a more clear way and early enough.

“Saying no is difficult to Japanese. In some ways it is perceived rude to say a negative thing to a person.”

Additional challenge mentioned by the interviewees was **inexperience of co-productions** by Japanese. Although NHK is a big production house they were lacking organized coproduction system.

Concluding remarks

The uniqueness of filming Ito was emphasized by all interviewees. The idea of Tokyo Modern project developed from a vision of producer Kotani at NHK who wanted to open Tokyo as platform for foreign documentary directors. Director Honkasalo, producer Kristiina Pervilä and second script writer Miika Pölkki became the interpreters of the life and encounters of the young Buddhist priest. Ito is an extraordinary film of an ordinary young man’s ordinary life. The motivations that initiated Ito were purely person-related and in no way institutional. In this way Ito differs greatly from most international coproductions which are usually based on institutions’ business and/or artistic motivations. But although Ito is a rare case in its field it certainly serves as an interesting example of how the production process can adapt to cultural challenges and bureaucracy without losing the artistic core.

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Interviews of Pirjo Honkasalo & Kristiina Pervilä, 4.2.2001, Helsinki and Miika Pölkki, 27.1.2011, Helsinki.

7.2. Restaurant Seagull: a Finnish – Japanese filming cooperation

This case study discusses the concrete professional cooperation of Finnish and Japanese film crews through describing the filming of the movie *Kamome Shokudo* (Restaurant Seagull). The case describes from the Finnish point of view the cooperation and challenges that the Finnish–Japanese filming cooperation met in its work. The case supports international filming cooperation by illustrating the advancement of the filming and coping with challenges. Assistant director Mark Lwoff and production manager Misha Jaari who worked in the filming were interviewed for this case study. In addition, internet sources about the film and its reviews were used.

Beginning of cooperation

Kamome Shokudo is a Japanese movie shot in 2006 in Helsinki, Finland, in cooperation between Japanese and Finnish crews. The movie tells a story of a Japanese woman who lives in Helsinki and runs a restaurant serving Japanese food.¹³ The movie is about few Japanese women who have found

¹³ <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0483022/>

new lives and each other in Helsinki. In urban Japan, this kind of “escape to a faraway place” story is very appealing.¹⁴

The story of the movie is particularly placed in Finland and based on a novel written by popular writer Yoko Mure. Novelist Mure herself had not visited Finland before she wrote the novel.¹⁵ The producer of the film had visited Finland as a tourist some thirty years earlier and had become fond of the country and wanted to film there. The project was largely producer and scriptwriter-led, and consequently the story was fitted particularly for Finnish setting.

“The fact why they (the Japanese crew) decided to come to Finland to film is a deeper cultural and anthropological question why the Japanese are fond of Finns – this mystique we are not able to explain.”

Kamome Shokudo is not an international coproduction in the sense that the funding of the movie was entirely Japanese and the input of Finnish partners was mainly to provide services. The funding for the film came from a couple of Japanese sources including television and an advertisement company. Due to the fact that the film had funding ready they were not interested in spending resources for search of funding in Finland. Hence, Finnish Film Foundation was not included in the project.

For the filming the Japanese filmmakers outsourced the facility services to a Finnish advertisement production company. The Japanese production company approached possible cooperation partners via mailing list provided by the local film foundation. The advertisement production company Film Magica replied without delay and was selected to negotiations. Also, two other companies were negotiating about the project. The small-sized budget made the companies hesitate participating in the project. In the end, Film Magica was able to make the best offer and was selected to work as facility producer for the production. Compared to film production companies advertisement production companies are more prepared to execute and deliver with a given budget.

Working together: experiences on Finnish–Japanese cooperation

The preparations for filming were performed in a fast manner. Before filming the filmmakers had been in Helsinki twice. Preproduction was done by midsummer 2006. When the Japanese crew came to Finland to shoot in August they were already well prepared. Apart from few Finnish supporting

¹⁴ <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/ff20060317a2.html>

¹⁵ <http://www.nikkatsu.com/movie/official/kamome-movie/english.html>

roles, the production already had the actors, script and funding ready. When the Japanese crew arrived in Helsinki the work could be done quickly since there were no hindering factors. The filming schedule was tight. The movie was filmed in only 20 days. The Japanese crew was few in number: 4 producers, 3 actors, director, food-stylist, make-up artist, costumier and making-of reporter. From Finnish side there were the camera and sound teams, set designer and prop manager. For this particular intercultural filming cooperation challenges were caused by language, differences in working methods and social hierarchies.

Language and differences in working methods

Although the art of filmmaking is universal, in international filmmaking cooperation there are always cultural differences that have to be taken into account. Even when working with a crew from a neighboring country the language and different working methods present challenges to the cooperation.

“The bottom line from the very beginning was that the both crews communicated in a foreign language. We did not fully understand each other. And not just concerning the language but also the culture.”

There were differences in shooting methods and other practicalities. For example, the Japanese crew preferred to bring with them their own gear and materials, e.g. for filming they used large film cassettes which were trickier to move around.

Different working methods and ethic caused some confusion and challenges on the set. For instance, the Japanese working ethic expects everyone to be present on the filming set all the time. The Finns wondered about the Japanese rule of not leaving the set at times when one had idle time. According to Finnish work ethic it is expected to deliver the promised without constant making sure or being present; this double-checking was new to the Finns.

Social hierarchies

Compared to Finnish the Japanese film crew and their working method were rather hierarchical. Everything on the set needed to be approved by the producer. Even the props and shots had to be checked with the producer.

“We were working on the set in good spirit and everything went well. But because of these hierarchies it was difficult to grasp what went on behind the scenes.”

The Japanese value professionalism greatly. They are granted freedom to perform their expertise. The Finnish team had to learn to respect this and not to rush Japanese film professionals in their work. The hierarchy also defined the appropriate communication channels. For the Finns it was often unclear with whom it was appropriate to talk. The Japanese respect towards actors was on another level compared to the Finnish culture – the crew was not to disturb the actors.

Pursuit of authenticity

In the making of the film authenticity was extremely important to the Japanese crew. Authenticity was to be striven for, regardless of whether or not it would be noticeable for the audience in the actual film. For example, when shooting a scene in a butcher shop in Helsinki market hall, the Japanese crew insisted on getting the owner of the shop on film. In addition, when casting extras, the Japanese crew devoted a lot of effort for finding the right actors, although, the extras' input for the final film was limited. From the viewpoint of the Finnish crew, these procedures sometimes seemed time-consuming and difficult to understand. The restaurant where the film was shot was also chosen to be the set for reasons that were social or personal rather than related to actual filming. The restaurant itself was a challenging location for shooting because the room was long and narrow and the lighting conditions were difficult due to mirrors. However, technical difficulties were regarded as secondary and to be overcome since the Japanese held on to their first choice – the one that felt right. The fact that the movie was shot completely in Finland may well be linked to the Japanese deep commitment to authenticity.

The Japanese filmmakers wanted to capture their view of Finns, which does not necessarily comply with the views Finns have about themselves. In filming this meant visiting and filming at stereotypical, tourist attraction locations – places that Finnish filmmakers would normally avoid when shooting a film.

Success factors

Kamome Shokudo has been a true hit in increasing the number of Japanese tourists to Finland. Reportedly, in Japan watching the film is a way to prepare oneself for a trip to Helsinki. A lot of Japanese tourists visit the

“Kamome diner” while in Helsinki. Even still, years after the film, Japanese movie fans find their way to the diner. This phenomenon shows that the movie has reached the ordinary people to a great extent.

For the success of the project, it was essential that the project was very well planned and organized before coming to Finland in where coproduction support is weak. This, actually, in many cases prevents the productions from coming to Finland. It was crucial that the project had the funding settled.

“All in all, Helsinki must have been a favorable location for filming of Kamome Shokudo. Helsinki is a quite small capital city and spacious for movie making. All the movie making practicalities are easy to carry out, especially, compared to Japan.”

In spite of the aforementioned cooperation challenges related to language, working methods and social culture, the concrete cooperation between the Finnish and Japanese film crews ran smoothly because of mutual flexibility and trust in expertise and professionalism. Interestingly, the Japanese working method was, on one hand, extremely foreseen, well-prepared and organized. On the other hand, there was always an element of chance that could not be anticipated. In order to be successful, this kind of working method required flexibility and understanding from both teams.

Crucial for the success of the filming cooperation was also both teams’ trust in expertise and professionalism. The Finnish filming crew consisting of top professionals in the fields of filming, lighting, and sound was able to adapt to Japanese requirements. On the other hand, the Japanese crew trusted the professional skills of the Finns and knew that their performance was first-class.

The Finns were able to deliver efficiently what was needed by the Japanese. Naturally, this is important with every production but especially in this very case the constant availability of the Finnish team was crucial. For example, when the Japanese crew asked for certain locations to shoot, the next morning the Finnish team would present sufficient amount of alternatives. Also, kindness, politeness and respect for the Japanese crew were vital for a functioning cooperation. Openness to appreciate cultural differences and patience to understand the needs of the Japanese crew were essential.

Restaurant Seagull is an example of a film where geographical location matters. The story was located in Finland because the producer of the film was fascinated by Finland and saw something in the place and culture that would intrigue the Japanese audience. This setting offered a fruitful basis

for filming a small yet beautiful story of Helsinki from perspective of Japanese women. The topic and location of the film offered a great opportunity to pursue authenticity, an essential value in Japanese cinema and culture. The Japanese pursuit of authenticity brought the Japanese crew to film on location, in Finland.

Restaurant Seagull certainly reached the Japanese target audience – even to the extent that fans of the movie have travelled to the filming location in Finland. To trigger such a movement, the movie has succeeded to portray Finland and transmit it to the Japanese audience in a profound way. This kind of impact has been possible to achieve by employing a Japanese cultural approach to the subject of the film and presenting the story from Japanese cultural perspective.

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Interview of Mark Lwoff & Misha Jaari, 9.12.2010, Helsinki.

7.3. A Cloud upon a Slope: coordination of BSR – Japanese filming cooperation

“Saka no ue no kumo” (A Cloud upon a Slope) is a recent, massive Japanese television series about a significant period in the history of Japan. The story concentrates on historical themes starting from 1860s and lasting over the turn of the century, including events from the Russo–Japanese war 1904–05. The series is a production of Japan’s public broadcasting company NHK¹⁶. The timing of the production coinciding with the economic hardship experienced in Japan is important. Through this film the Japanese people will be shown that their great-grandparents lived in dreadful conditions, survived and still effectively developed the country that eventually became the second biggest economy in the world. In the end of 1860s, Japan’s industrial development was lagging severely behind and the country was completely underdeveloped. However, already in a couple of decades they collected all the information needed for industrial and military

¹⁶ <http://www.nhk.or.jp/pr/english/profile/pforile.html>

development and built a fleet and army. In 1904-05, they fought a war against the Russians and won.

Among various locations around the world, a part of the series was filmed in different places in the BSR in spring 2010. The case “A Cloud upon a Slope” serves an example of a Japanese television production coming to BSR to film. This case shows the procedures of contacting, finding partners, and locations for an international production. The case discusses also how the filming cooperation in BSR took place. The coordinator of the project Olga Khomenko was interviewed in order to achieve an insider view to the project and additionally internet sources concerning the series were utilized in this case study.

Production process

The idea for the series was created about 5 years ago by Japanese public broadcasting company. The series is based on a novel by a famous Japanese writer Shiba Ryotaro. Originally the novel was not intended to be a script for a TV series. However, after author’s death the broadcasting company got the rights to the story.

The series has been made in 2009–2011.¹⁷ Scenes for the series have been filmed all around the world in various locations. The series is the most expensive media project in the Japanese history. Altogether, there are 11 episodes of the series¹⁸. Due to its expensiveness the filming was divided into 3-4 parts. The broadcasting of the series takes place during 2009-2011. The final scenes for the series were shot in Japan in November 2010. The post production will continue until February 2011. The final three parts of the series will be broadcasted in the fall of 2011.

A Cloud upon a Slope television series has been a very international endeavor. However, in the beginning, filming abroad was not a prerequisite for the project. First of all, the production team wanted to make a great product. In the making, the project became a true international production: the Japanese crew filmed in Cuba, USA, Thailand, Japan, Finland, France, Latvia, and Estonia. In the end, there were also reasons why the movie could not be made in Japan alone:

“For filming the scenes of the Russo-Japanese war there were a lot of battle scenes and the Japanese team needed about 200 extras to play the Russians. It would have been difficult to find so many Caucasian actors in Japan and it would have been very expensive.”

¹⁷ <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0991330/>

¹⁸ <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0991330/>

International coordinator needed

Taking the filming process abroad required a lot of international contacting and cooperation. In order to effectively carry out the contacting the Japanese filmmakers turned to international cooperation specialist. For the Japanese crew it was important that they trusted and were familiar with the work of the coordinator. Ukrainian citizen Olga Khomenko was invited to work as one of the coordinators for the project. Ms. Khomenko has 18 years' experience working with Japanese television. She has carried out several big projects and also translated two books into Japanese. She has studied in Japan and has a PhD from Tokyo University. Olga Khomenko was approached by the project in the film's preparation phase when they were planning to shoot in 3-4 years' time.

Selecting locations

In the preparation phase, the project searched for a coproduction partner and location abroad. There were several ideas and the crew went to see different places. Ukraine was considered as a location because Balaklava – a port and ex-Soviet naval base near Sevastopol – has a nice landscape combining sea and mountains for filming battle scenes. The Ukrainian production was not possible, however, due to long term plan of the project on the Japanese side. Contrary to European practice, for Japanese it is natural to plan many years ahead. Ukrainian cooperation partner was not able to make such a long-term deal and therefore, the Japanese crew had to find other locations. The director suggested locations to a filming committee in Tokyo which made the final decision on the most suitable location based on financial and other reasons.

Finding partners

In the search for foreign partners, the Japanese crew started with partners with whom they were already familiar, preferably, with whom they had already worked or at least knew about their accomplishments. In search for partners the crew also turned to database for international productions. These databases, however, are not necessarily best tools for partner search since some companies are really good at selling services they are not really capable of delivering.

“When searching for partners the Japanese filmmakers looked at the previous experience, your ability to handle big a project and also printed materials of your company. If you had a nice presentation about your

company and if you had made several international projects, then why not, you could be included in meetings.”

The Japanese filmmakers traveled to Europe for meetings with potential partners. Meetings took place, for example, in Kiev, Ukraine, where they met several companies for shooting in Europe. In the meeting, there was also a production company from Latvia and they invited the Japanese crew to see Latvia. In general, the Japanese filmmakers preferred to do business with one key company; if additional contacting or outsourcing was needed it was left for the local partner companies to do. The Japanese crew would preferably have one contact person with whom the cooperation issues would be discussed. The cooperation is more about personal relationships and trust – and achieving this ultimately demands a lot of effort.

Latvia as a location

The Japanese filmmakers thought of coming to Latvia 3-4 years ago. They started to investigate the filming and service possibilities, e.g. costumes and locations. During this time members of the Japanese crew visited Latvia frequently. The idea was to shoot scenes from the Russo–Japanese war. The Japanese filmmakers chose Latvia for many reasons. Firstly, Latvia has a long tradition of filmmaking as it was an important filmmaking center in the Soviet times. Secondly, the Latvian army provided its training area and people to work as actors. Geographically Latvia was a great location to shoot in terms of both logistics and scenery. The Latvian landscape resembles Russia. The costumes for filming that were made in Poland could be transported to Latvia by car in one night. The movie’s train scenes could be filmed in neighboring Estonia at the train museum. Generally, in Latvia the costs were lower than they would have been in Japan.

The preparation period for filming in Latvia was thorough. Olga Khomenko & the art department started to work 2-3 weeks before the filming in order to make a set. The role of the coordinator communicating between various working partners and local professionals was crucial.

Filming in Latvia

In March 2010 the filming started. In Latvia the filming process took 7-10 days. On the set, a lot of people were involved from various countries. For example, pyrotechnics were German and Lithuanian; stuntmen came from Russia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Infrastructure and services functioned very well because they were carefully structured in advance: the tasks were described in detail and everybody had a schedule. The plan was originally

designed by the Japanese crew; then it was structured by production and distributed to all participants. For smooth filming process it was also crucial that the movie received support from the Latvian side. The project was well-known in Latvia due to attention it was given in the Latvian mass media. Latvian army offered facilities and people.

A Cloud upon a Slope was the first big Latvian-Japanese filming project. The cooperation between Latvian and Japanese crews was fluent: there were no conflicts and working atmosphere was peaceful despite the tight schedule and the occasional long working hours.

“After the project the Latvians said that they liked to work with Japanese because they were very polite, friendly and precise, for example, giving tasks to people.”

All local staff was pleased with the friendly and polite fashion they were treated by the Japanese crew. The project provided the opportunity to learn about foreign cultures and different ways of working, and also make a lot of personal contacts which is essential for getting new projects.

Success factors

A crucial factor contributing to successful completion of the filming process in the BSR was the careful planning: for the project there were four years of preparation. The Japanese side devoted a lot of resources for research about filming possibilities and networks of BSR. Especially, the fact that Latvia has a respectable tradition in filming was appealing to the Japanese filmmakers. Latvia could offer highly skilled professionals and attractive locations for competitive prices. The project received important support from Latvian government and army. Also, easy access to other countries in BSR was essential.

Managing and coordinating the multicultural project was a great challenge but it was a success because there were people involved who knew how to coordinate international cooperation with different nationalities. The coordinators have to be familiar with different cultures in order to be able to work in between and facilitate the encounters.

The fact that this project was carried out successfully provides huge reference for Latvia and BSR for in Japan credentials are very important. The movie is the biggest project in Japanese film and television industry. It is very popular and has received good response from the audience. The audience of the broadcasting television channel is 100 million people. This provides significant possibilities for Latvia.

“For example, if some (Japanese) company wants to make a film or commercial in Latvia and they know that A Cloud upon a Slope was shot there – it will give them not only a good impression but also positive expectations that it is possible to deliver an international project together. Such big project works as good credentials for a future project.”

A Cloud upon a Slope project has produced positive outcome for the filmmaking in BSR. In spite of the fact that only very few of the Japanese crew knew anything about Latvia when they came to the country, after working together with Latvian team, new real potential opportunities for future cooperation has been opened.

“I think that there will be more cooperation (between BSR and Japanese) because some people who worked with us said that they would like to come again with private projects.”

It is likely, though, that due to the current uncertain economic development such grandiose historical television projects from Japanese side will not take place in the near future. Nevertheless, compared to European filmmaking, Asian film industry is growing and BSR could offer them unique facilities and locations.

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Interview of Olga Khomenko, 1.12.2010, Riga.

7.4. Baltic Event

The purpose of this case is to illustrate how Baltic Event (BE) operates as a platform for creating international contacts between film industry operators and experts from BSR and other countries. Case provides an example of international and recognized event (organized in the framework of larger event), which was established based on the evident need and in where films from BSR countries, Russia and Central and Eastern Europe are promoted and marketed. This case describes the structure of BE and the process of organizing of such event. In order to gather more detailed information about BE, the managing director of BE (Riina Sildos) was interviewed. In addition, information was gathered from public sources and from Baltic Event Activity Report. All quotes in this case are by Riina Sildos.

Background

BE is a film market, which was founded in 2002. BE is arranged annually in Tallinn, within the framework of Black Market Industry Screenings, which is part of the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival (PÖFF)¹⁹. In 2010, BE was arranged for the ninth time. In 2010, duration of the whole BE was three days.

“Black Nights Film Festival (PÖFF) is like a partner to us. It is logical to have event during the PÖFF because it is always the festival atmosphere which has a value of its own. (...) There are two different bodies...so we work like partners more or less...”

BE consists of different sections, and in 2010 they were: Co-production market, Baltic Event for East, Market Screenings, Coming Soon and POWR Storymarket. The most important and the biggest part of BE is Co-production market, which is a two-day event (in 2010), set up around one-to-one meetings²⁰ between film project²¹ representatives and e.g. potential financiers. The main target of the Co-production market is European

¹⁹ Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival (original name is Tallinna Pimedate Ööde Filmifestival, PÖFF) consists of: Student and Short Film Festival Sleepwalkers, Animation Film Festival Animated Dreams, Children and Youth Film Festival Just Film, Nokia Mobile Phone Film Festival MOFF and Black Market Industry Screenings. PÖFF is founded in 1997.

²⁰ In 2009, there were 150 such meetings.

²¹ A film project, which can be accepted in the Co-production market, must be a full-length film with potential for theatrical distribution and international market and to have national support. Film project must originate from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden or Ukraine. In 2010 there were 16 Coproduction market projects, from nine different countries (4 of them were Baltic Event for East –projects from Russia).

networking, co-producing and distribution. After each Co-production market, organizers contact previous year's participants, in order to find out the current state and progress of the film projects and also enquire how the project has benefited from BE. In addition, all participants are contacted with a feedback form, in order to find out guests' opinions about the event in general, quality of projects, meetings and the outcomes of the Co-production market, such as possible agreements with film projects and buyers.

Baltic Event for East introduces projects from Russia and Ukraine. At the Market Screenings, newest films from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are screened for international TV and film professionals. Coming Soon screens trailers of Baltic film projects in post production, aiming to bring them together with sales agents and distributors. POWR Storymarket is a scriptwriters workshop (2 days in 2010), concluding with the pitching session for potential buyers and financiers.

In 2010 the number of participants in BE was approximately 200, which is "*a minimum and maximum*" for BE because organizer's team takes care of every person invited in order to keep the defined professional profile of the event. In 2009 there were participants from 26 different countries, mainly from Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Germany and Lithuania (ca. 75 % of all). BE participants are mainly producers, buyers/investors and distributors/sales agents (ca. 80 % of all).

BE participants are serviced e.g. with Video Bar, Press room, Screening room, Co-production meeting arrangements, panel discussions, receptions and airport transportation. BE is promoted with catalogue, Industry Guide, promotional flyer and Baltic Event-bags. Within budgetary limits, BE is also present at the major film industry meetings either with representatives or printed materials and press releases.

A need to start the event

In 2002 when BE was started, the films produced in the region²², not only in Estonia but also in Latvia and Lithuania, "*were not having enough distribution*" and films and the industry "*had to be pitched*". Also financing, production and the distribution needed "*urgently*" international promotion. In addition, the region needed "*a lot of support also in training*" and in the early years of the event "*pitching skills*" of the producers were "*not in high level*". Initially, BE was started with the Screenings and the Co-production market came along in 2004.

²² Predominantly Baltic Countries, Russia, Nordic Countries, Central and Eastern Europe.

Financing of activities

BE's budget is approximately 100 000 euros for whole year's activities. The main financial supporter is MEDIA Programme (MEDIA 2007). Support from MEDIA is crucial: if the Programme would be stopped, it could be fatal to BE. Other supporters are Estonian Film Foundation, National Film Center of Latvia, Estonian Cultural Endowment, Estonian Ministry of Culture, Enterprise Estonia and Nordic Hotel Forum. BE has received some support also from both Finnish and Latvian Film Foundations. A share of the financial input accrues from accreditation fees²³ related to participation in the Co-production market. As for the financial issues, at the moment BE is "*more or less on the safe side*". From sponsor's side, BE receives some prizes to be awarded to the film projects but this issue is not emphasized. More important instead is that film projects are "*really connected, making up network and projects which are presented here will be financed*".

Partners & cooperation

The juridical body of BE is a non-profit organization, which was founded by local governmental representatives of the film industry. BE is hosted by the Baltic Films²⁴. BE has 10 main partners, which currently are:

- *European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs (EAVE)*
- *Cannes Marche du film Producer's Network*
- *Screen International*
- *CineLink Co-production market (Sarajevo Film Festival)*
- *Moscow Business Square*
- *Kiev Boat Meetings*
- *Finnish Film Foundation*
- *Black Nights Film Festival*
- *Film New Europe*
- *Baltic Film and Media School.*

Partners' responsibilities vary from bare financial supporters to training providers. Some partners provide informational support (about e.g. latest film productions and film sales), while others promote BE in their operations.

In addition, BE works very closely with Media Desks and with national film foundations. BE has also partnership with Cannes Film Festival, Binger Institute, Industry Office in Karlovy Vary Film Festival, Berlin Film Festival Co-production market (part of the Berlinale) and Sofia Meetings. Between

²³ Accreditation fee is 30 Euros.

²⁴ Baltic Films is the association comprised of the three state financed governmental film bodies: Estonian Film Foundation, National Film Centre of Latvia and Lithuanian Ministry of Culture. Baltic Films is promotional body for marketing Baltic films and Baltic Event Co-production market.

BE Co-production market and some other biggest coproduction markets in Europe, there is exchange of information/knowhow and a working network. According to Riina Sildos, the cooperation between partners has been working very well. Partner composition has changed during the years of operation, depending on BE's stage of development. At the moment, the situation with the partner composition is *"quite stable"*.

Baltic Event – benefit for the film industry

Riina Sildos characterizes BE as a promotional, meeting and networking platform, which *"definitely has helped films to find sales agents"*. In addition, films presented in the Co-production market have *"really found coproducers"*. Also, BE has helped to bring more projects into the region and promoted the region as a shooting location. Moreover, international distributors contact BE in order to find projects from the Coming Soon - section which are available for distribution or international sales. In light of number of film projects realized from Co-production market, BE has been quite successful: of all projects presented in the market, approximately 90 % are completed or are currently in post-production, production, or continuing active development. Riina Sildos points out that BE has been *"acknowledged for it's efficiency and experience"* with region's projects.

Challenges & success factors

Continuation of BE is above all a financial challenge. In addition, for the success and the usefulness of BE, it is essential to know the directors, the film industry and local film culture, who are the directors whose projects will be presented, to know the production companies and their ability to produce and finance the project and also their cv's and previous works. Altogether,

"You have to know the people in the industry and then make the connections between them. It is like a marriage you know."

When organizing BE, the main challenge has always been to bring in *"high quality projects"*, which are interesting for international markets, and which later on would be in international distribution in Europe and also in globally. In order the event to have *"a very good film selection"* and be *"worthy"*, event organizers carefully review the profile of the film project's production company and also people who will be invited to participate in BE.

In addition there are other challenges, such as how to “*best present new talents*” and to give the project really the “*possibility to meet the representatives of the industry who really are interested financing and later also selling projects which are presented in BE*”. Moreover, the competition with other coproduction markets sets some challenges, even if other markets have their own specific profiles.

In the future, BE justifies its standings because there is a “*obvious need*” for a meeting place in the region, even if the regional film industry would (today) be “*developed enough*” and producers would already have “*their own capacities*”. Despite that producers are very professional and very well known and connected, it is “*good to have not only one meeting place during the year*”.

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8. Conclusions

Filmmaking sector highly internationalized

The research showed that the field of film in BSR is highly internationalized. Moreover, it is obvious that general tendency in the film industry in BSR is towards even stronger internationalization, and both surveys as well as expert interviews supported this notion. Typically international cooperation projects have involved coproduction, film distribution or film festival organization. These activities were also considered attractive in future cooperation.

BSR companies and organizations in the field of film are very eager to engage in international cooperation and there are various possible cooperation connections within BSR. Practical and economic factors, such as accessing larger markets seem to be the main drivers for internationalization of filmmaking while artistic reasons are considered as drivers to a lesser extent. Although the tendency of internationalization in film industry is characteristic for Baltic Sea region as a whole the reasons behind this development are very much country specific. For smaller countries of the region especially insufficiency of domestic markets was mentioned as one of the main drivers for internationalization. However, at the same time the smallness of local markets is also one of the main challenges in attracting international cooperation to the region.

Majority (89 %) of survey respondents saw potential in cooperation in BSR. Cooperation within BSR was considered important by 90 % of survey respondents. As with international cooperation in general also cooperation inside BSR was considered to be important as well as cooperation potential to be substantial. Quite naturally the most active international cooperation inside BSR tended to be between neighboring countries. Apart from neighboring countries cooperation concentrated inside already established regional dimensions such as Nordic countries and Baltic States. One of important aims in establishing regional identity of BSR will surely be expanding these regional concentrations of cooperation to include a broader range of countries. Some steps in this direction have already been taken. Amount of cooperation between Baltic States and Nordic countries is growing and Baltic States in particular are eager to develop this direction of international cooperation. However, Nordic countries seem to be more concentrated on cooperation inside their own region and establishing connections to Germany due to vast potential of German speaking markets. One of possible reasons for merely moderate interest of Nordic countries towards Baltic States is lack of financial resources in the latter.

Support for cooperation needed

Apart from international cooperation on a country level there are many cross-country initiatives for supporting international cooperation such as various EU-projects and regional organizations such as Scandinavian Films etc. In case some BSR specific initiatives are established an important point for consideration is what additional value it will have compared to the other cross-country initiatives. Approximately 40 % of survey respondents had participated in EU-funded projects. At the same time, however, these projects received criticism for rigid bureaucracy and lengthy time frame of the programs.

The research also showed an emphasized importance of public financing for actors in film industry of BSR. Public financing was seen as the main type of financing operations in general as well as the main method for supporting international cooperation. On the contrary, lack of financial inputs by some countries (Baltic States in particular), seems to be hindering international cooperation possibilities. Apart from financial issues also informational issues were mentioned. Lack of information was considered to be a barrier for successful development of international cooperation and informational support was emphasized in facilitating international cooperation. Thus, financial and informational support seems to be important factors to consider when establishing BSR specific initiatives.

Creation of BSR-brand and common markets challenging

Although there are many aspects supporting the view of creating a common brand of BSR the research showed that there are substantial challenges ahead in the process. Both respondents of the survey as well as the interviewees were generally skeptical about the perspectives of creating common brand of BSR. The main reasons for that were: excessive cultural diversity of the region, unequal funding possibilities and different approaches towards film industry in different countries. Furthermore, strengths of BSR in film industry are diverse and finding a common denominator can be rather difficult. The general agreement was that the area is rather diverse to have many common advantages. But most of all respondents and interviewees were struggling with perceiving additional value of branding BSR compared to already established identities such as Nordic countries.

Despite these substantial challenges, there is an existing basis for creating a common brand of BSR with growing internationalization of the region's film industry serving as the main building block. Along with growing internationalization BSR offers a unique opportunity for filmmakers in

terms of versatility of locations at a reasonable distance combined with cultural and historical heritage. BSR also merges in itself low cost advantages of some countries as well as high quality and technological advancement of others. In addition, the region offers nature related commonalities such as white nights, forests, lakes and purity of the environment. All of these aspects speak in favor of creating a common brand for BSR.

Another aspect speaking in favor of creating common markets is perception of the region by remote markets such as Japan. There is a high possibility that remote markets will perceive BSR as one entity much easier compared to actors inside the region due to distance and lesser in-depth knowledge of the region. This could be utilized in selling region as a whole to remote markets.

The main conclusion from the survey and interviews was that BSR is just too diverse to have many common advantages, which was seen as the main obstacle for creating a common brand. However, this challenge can be turned into advantage if the diversity of the region is given a central role in building the brand. In addition to some particular common competitive advantages, BSR can offer a functioning cooperation network (could be developed) and many country specific competitive strengths. In case of BSR that this kind of variety can be found in a compact area. After all, BSR is one of the few (if not the only) regions in the world which combines so much diversity in such a small area.

BSR-Japanese cooperation – successful but marginal

Apart from assessing internationalization of film industry of BSR in general, another important aspect of this research was to examine the state of cooperation between film industries of BSR and Japan. The research showed that it is not a common practice for film industry professionals to have cooperation with Japanese partners. Among the survey respondents only 12 % have had such cooperation and hence the experiences from BSR – Japanese film cooperation were few. However, it must be noted that most of the actors that had cooperation with Japanese were satisfied with results. The most important reasons for cooperating with Japanese were accessing new market, attaining a special field of knowledge, and purely artistic reasons.

Although the size of the market in Japan was attractive, it was approaching the market which was considered to be difficult. The main challenges in approaching Japan were seen in cultural differences and lack of information. In the case of Japan, the social and cultural hierarchies

differ greatly from the social practices in BSR. These cultural differences are evident in work and affect the implementation of international cooperation. In concrete filming cooperation with Japanese one has to take into account the language issues – finding a common working language can be difficult. English is not commonly spoken in Japan. Nevertheless, as different as cultures of BSR and Japan may seem, these differences must not be exaggerated. In fact, as the cases show, there are quite a few similarities between Japanese culture and cultures of some countries in BSR. Apart from cultural challenges the lack of information about film industry in Japan among actors in BSR was obvious. Many of the interviewed experts honestly confessed that they didn't know much about film industry of Japan and also the survey showed a lot of "I don't know" -answers when asked about cooperation potential with Japanese. Furthermore, the informational support along with networking services and funding were considered to be very relevant in facilitating co-operation between BSR and Japan.

The cases raised also additional points for consideration. Some of the projects encountered the whole complexity of Japanese system of permits and regulations. In fact, it can be argued that the permit jungle makes it practically compulsory for foreign filmmaker to have a Japanese partner when creating a film in Japan. Another important point taken out from the cases was emphasis on long-term approach in building relationships to Japan. In particular the importance of long-term connections to Japan was reflected in the case of Ito where connections and comprehensive knowledge of Japanese culture proved out to be one of the key success factors allowing director to create an in-depth look on Japanese people and Japanese culture.

Despite the challenges the case studies speak of successful filming cooperation between BSR and Japanese professionals in the last years. These cooperation projects clearly demonstrate that challenges of cultural differences can be successfully overcome. Crucial factors contributing to success of intercultural co-operation between BSR and Japanese professionals have been openness and flexibility towards foreign cultures and working habits. Also personal relationships and trust are extremely important when building a working cooperation with Japanese partners.

A wide spectrum of challenges and success factors were discussed in the research and the case studies. At the same time it must be remembered that the cases discussed are unique in their nature and thus the main findings of these cases cannot be generalized. The challenges and success factors are much dependent on the type of cooperation in questions. Many rocks will surely be avoided if the project is aimed to merely "scratch the surface" of Japanese culture. On the other hand projects like Ito, which take an in-

depth approach, will surely encounter more challenges specific to Japanese culture and society. Nevertheless, the cases presented in this research provide food for thought and many points to consider when planning cooperation with Japanese partners.

Workshop – useful and interesting

A concrete way for facilitating cooperation between film industries of BSR and Japan would be piloting a workshop for film industry actors of BSR and Japan. The workshop would bring together professionals of the field and would be an ideal venue for networking and discussing projects. Among survey respondents there were high unanimity about the usefulness of the workshop and high interest to participate in it. Workshop itself could be organized as a form of coproduction seminar, a set of professional lectures, pitching forum or professional feedback for film-projects. The research showed that preferred themes to point out during the workshop would be challenges of an international coproduction, film as a production process and developing networking skills. However, it should be noted that interest towards filmmaking in Japan was much lower than interest in filmmaking in BSR countries.

As for the venue of the workshop, the location is not decisive but the most suitable atmosphere could be found around some film festival (organized in BSR). Targeting the workshop for young film talents may have some potential since young talents are most likely more responsive to the new project ideas. However, the lack of experience requires continuation of events (multiple workshops). The first workshop will most likely result in merely established contacts and not in finalized projects.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Survey questionnaire form



Part-financed by the European Union
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Aalto University School of Economics, CEMAT Research Center (Helsinki, Finland), is carrying out an international study "Supply Research on Film-Making in the Baltic Sea Region". The purpose of our survey is to collect information about relationships and co-operation among different stakeholders in the film industry. We collect information about synergies, success stories (supporting factors) and obstacles in international co-operation between Baltic Sea Region and Japan. The results will benefit new co-operation initiatives.

We hope that you could give 15 minutes of your valuable time to reply to this electronic questionnaire. Your replies will help us develop new initiatives between film-making professionals. All replies will be analyzed with utmost confidentiality for this research purpose only.

The electronic questionnaire form is open until 18th October 2010.
Thank you for your valuable contribution!

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1) Personal information

Name Position Name of the company / organization

2) What is the country where your company / organization is located? In case of several locations, please select the country where your own office is located.

COUNTRY

3) What is the city where your company / organization is located? In case of several locations, please select the city where your own office is located.

CITY

4) Does your company / organization have offices in other countries in the Baltic Sea Region?

(BSR countries: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden)

- Yes (Please specify where)
- No

5) What is the main field of operation of your company / organization?

- Film production company
- Film school or other educational organisation
- Film festival organization
- Distribution company
- Support / finance organization or equivalent
- Post production company
- Other (Please specify what)

6) What is the turnover (if relevant) of your company / organization?

- Below 100 000 €
- 100 000 – 199 000 €
- 200 000 – 499 000 €
- 500 000 – 999 000 €
- 1 – 2 million €
- 2 – 5 million €
- Over 5 million €
- Non-profit organisation

7) What is the number of personnel in your company / organization?

- 1
- 2-10
- 11-20
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- More than 50

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

8) Has your company / organization been participating in international co-operation projects during the last 5 years?

- Yes (In how many?)
- No, but we would be interested to participate
- No, and we are not currently interested

9) How has your company / organization typically financed its participation in the international co-operation projects? Please mark 1-3 most important sources.

	0 - don't know	1 - not important at all	2 - important	3 - very important	Comments
Self-financing by my organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Public financing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Funding from foundations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Financing from business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>

10) In your field, what does an international co-operation project typically aims for?

- Co-production
- Joint marketing
- Distribution
- Manuscript development
- Post production
- Artistic production
- Film festival
- Educational co-operation
- Other (Please specify)

11) Has your company / organization participated any EU-funded (or equivalent) projects or programs? If yes, please specify below.

12) If you have participated in EU-funded (or equivalent) projects, how would you assess these?

- 0 - don't know
- 1 - very many difficulties
- 2 - some difficulties
- 3 - neutral
- 4 - generally succesful
- 5 - total success

CO-OPERATION IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

13) Have you had any international co-operation projects with a company / organization from the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) during the last 5 years?

(Baltic Sea Region countries: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden)

- Yes (How many projects?)
- No

14) From which Baltic Sea Region countries have you had co-operation partners? (You may choose several alternatives)

- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- Germany
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Norway
- Poland
- Russia
- Sweden

15) In your opinion, is there some Baltic Sea Region country which is especially attractive from the perspective of co-operation projects? Why?

- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- Germany
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Norway
- Poland
- Russia
- Sweden
- No country in particular

16) What are your co-operation projects in the Baltic Sea Region typically involved with? (You may select several options)

- Co-production
- Joint marketing
- Distribution
- Manuscript development
- Post production
- Artistic production
- Film festival
- Educational co-operation
- Other (Please specify)

17) In your view, how successful have your co-operation projects been with Baltic Sea Region countries?

- 0 - don't know
- 1 - very many difficulties
- 2 - some difficulties
- 3 - neutral
- 4 - generally succesful
- 5 - total success

18) In your opinion, what is the benefit or added value that you will / could ACHIEVE from international co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region?

	0 - don't know	1 - not important at all	2 - important	3 - very important	Comments
New / larger markets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other economic benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Artistic co-operation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Interesting projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>

19) In your opinion, what type of added value could your company / organization OFFER for international co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region?

20) What kind of co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region would interest you most in the future? (Please mark 3 most relevant)

- Co-production
- Joint marketing
- Distribution
- Manuscript
- Post production
- Artistic production
- Film festival
- Educational co-operation
- Other (Please specify)
- No interest

21) In your opinion, how much co-operation potential is there in the Baltic Sea Region for international projects in the field of film-making?

- 0 - don't know 1 - no potential at all 2 - some potential 3 - a lot of potential

22) In your opinion, how important is the co-operation inside the Baltic Sea Region?

- 0 - don't know 1 - not important at all 2 - important 3 - very important

23) How do you perceive Baltic Sea Region countries as a film-making countries? You can give your comments on any individual country or on the Baltic Sea Region as a whole.

CO-OPERATION WITH JAPANESE FILM INDUSTRY COMPANIES / ORGANIZATIONS

24) Have you had any international co-operation projects with a company / organization from Japan during the last 5 years?

- Yes (How many projects?)
- No

25) What has your co-operation with the Japanese typically been involved with? (You may choose several options)

- Co-production
- Joint marketing
- Distribution
- Manuscript
- Post production
- Artistic production
- Film festival
- Educational co-operation
- Other (Please specify)

26) In your view, how successful have your co-operation projects been with the Japanese?

- 0 - don't know
- 1 - very many difficulties
- 2 - some difficulties
- 3 - neutral
- 4 - generally succesful
- 5 - total success

27) In your opinion, what is the benefit or added value that you will / could achieve from international co-operation with Japanese film industry companies / organizations?

	0 – don't know	1 – not important at all	2 – important	3 – very important	Comments
Suitable markets for own product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
New markets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Artistic co-operation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Interesting projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Achievement of special field of knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>

28) In your opinion, what type of added value could your company / organization OFFER for international co-operation with Japanese film industry companies / organizations?

29) Who has typically been the initiator for your co-operation projects with Japanese film industry companies / organizations?

	0 – don't know	1 – never	2 – sometimes	3 – always	Comments
Our company / organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
The Japanese partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Some other organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>

30) What kind of co-operation with Japanese film industry companies / organizations would interest you most in the future? (Please mark 3 most relevant)

- Co-production
- Joint marketing
- Distribution
- Manuscript
- Post production
- Artistic production
- Film festival
- Educational co-operation
- Other (Please specify)
- No interest

31) In your opinion, how much potential is there in the co-operation between film industry operators from Baltic Sea Region countries and Japan?

0 – don't know 1 – no potential at all 2 – some potential 3 – a lot of potential

32) In your opinion, in order to enhance co-operation possibilities between film making professionals from Baltic Sea Region countries and Japan, what would be the best method?

33) Which kind of support activities / information services would advance co-operation between film industry professionals from Baltic Sea Region countries and Japan?

- Market research
- Recruitment services
- Assistance in finding partners
- An agent / manager / producer familiar with Japanese market / business environment
- Networking services
- Support when searching production facilities, theatres, exhibition showrooms etc.
- Translation services
- Exhibitions, events and other marketing events
- Information about immaterial property right issues
- Information about the (financial) support systems
- Information about licenses and other issues related to contacts with authorities
- Information / feedback on existing work-in-progress projects
- Information about the film- making environment, procedures, organizations etc.
- Other (Please specify)
- None

34) Would you like to make other comments on international co-operation projects (or other related issues) in your field?

WORKSHOP

The BaltMet Promo Project is planning a workshop "Go Young Generation" in the Baltic Sea Region in Autumn 2011 that would bring together young filmmakers and audiovisual professionals from Japan and the Baltic Sea Region countries. Workshop could be arranged in connection to some film festival. Aim is to share experiences, exchange ideas (e.g. new projects organize screenings) and to look for ways to learn about making films together.

35) When you think about training of future professionals in your field, what type of learning experience during the workshop could benefit them best?

36) Where could this workshop take place (e.g. in connection to some film festival)?

37) Do you have any recommendations of lecturers and/or lecture topics? (If not, please move to next question)

38) What skills should be developed during the workshop?

- Film-making in Japan
- Film-making in the Baltic Sea Region countries
- Movie direction skills
- Manuscript writing skills
- Networking skills
- Film as a production process
- Challenges of an international co-production
- Other (Please specify)

39) In your opinion, what activities could be organized in the context of a workshop?

- Pitching forum
- Shooting a film
- Script co-writing
- Co-production seminar
- Project advising session
- Film making workshop
- Professional lectures
- Screenings
- Professional feedback for a film project
- Script development
- Questions & answers -panel
- Other (Please specify)

40) Would you be interested to participate in this kind of workshop?

- Yes (What type of role could you have?)
- No

41) Do you think that this kind of workshop would be beneficial for film-making industry in general?

- Yes
- No (Why not?)

42) If you want to receive results of this survey, please write your e-mail address here:

Annex 2: Interview questions

Aalto University School of Economics, CEMAT Research Center (Helsinki, Finland), is carrying out an international study “Supply Research on Film-Making in the Baltic Sea Region”. The study is part of BaltMet Promo project. The purpose of our study is to collect information about relationships, co-operation among different stakeholders, international co-operation and co-operation potential in the film industry. We collect information about synergies, success stories (supporting factors) and obstacles in international co-operation between BSR and Japan. The results will benefit new co-operation initiatives. Information collection is done by survey and expert interviews.

1. Background

- 1) Can you first tell me about your own work history and the company / organization you work in?

2. International co-operation in film-making

- 1) If you look at the all film-projects you have now, what is the share of international co-operation projects?
- 2) What are the main motives behind your decision to have international co-operation projects?
(new markets / other economics benefits / artistic co-operation / interesting projects / achievement of special field knowledge)
- 3) What are the biggest challenges you have met related to the international co-operation projects?
- 4) In your country, how has the film industry been supported by for example the government?
(financial support, tax reliefs, information services, consulting etc.)
- 5) Which kind of support would be needed most in the film industry in general or in your projects?

Non-profit organizations:

- A. What is the level of internationalization of the film industry in your country in general?
- B. In the field of the film industry, which sectors are most internationalized?
- C. Which are the main motives for international co-operation projects?
- D. In your country, how has the film industry been supported by for example the government?
(financial support, tax reliefs, information services, consulting etc.)
- E. Which kind of support would be needed most in the film industry in general?
- F. Which are the key players in the film industry in your country?

3. International co-operation inside the Baltic Sea Region

Baltic Sea Region (BSR) does not yet exist as a region with a shared identity and a recognized image. Neither is the region's competitiveness potential as a common marketing area fully exploited. Marketing and branding of the Baltic Sea Region on the global market is not yet developed in a structured and systematic way. BaltMet Promo will strive to lower the barriers for collaboration by presenting the perspective that national and BSR brands can benefit from one another and find synergies. (Baltic Sea Region countries: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden)

1) How often your co-operation projects are done with companies / organizations from other Baltic Sea Region countries? How intense this co-operation is? Do you ever search partners primarily inside the Baltic Sea Region or neighboring countries?

2) If you look at the co-operation projects done with other Baltic Sea Region countries, are they supported by some specific means in your country? Or should they be?

If you look at the co-operation projects between operators from Baltic Sea Region, which kind of support activities or promotional means would benefit them best / develop the co-operation?

Should multilateral co-operation projects (especially inside the BSR) be supported or promoted any more than any other projects in the film industry? (support & promotion for individual projects)

3) In your opinion, how much co-operation potential is there in the Baltic Sea Region for international projects in the field of film-making?

4) If you look at the Baltic Sea Region as a whole, which are its competitive edges from viewpoint of the BSR brand? Does the Baltic Sea Region need any branding at all?

(Risk of confusion between terms Baltic Sea Region and Baltic States?)

5) Does your organization have or have had any co-operation projects, which involves or have involved operators from at least three Baltic Sea Region countries? Can you name such projects from your country?

4. Co-operation with Japanese film industry (organizations / companies / professionals)

1) Does your company / organization have or have had any co-operation projects with companies or organizations from Japan? If yes, can you tell me a little bit more about these projects? If you have had several, you can describe the latest or the one you consider as the most successful.

- (What type of project it was?)

- (Who was the initiator in this project? Your organization or the Japanese counterpart?)

- (Which were the main incentives behind your decision to do co-operation project with Japanese?)

- (What kind of obstacles or bottlenecks, if any, were related to this project?)
 - (Did you receive any support to this project? Financial or other kind of support?)
 - (How successful was this project?)
 - (Do you have any plans to continue the co-operation with Japanese? In general or with latest partners)
- 2) If you haven't had yet any co-operation with Japanese operators, would you be interested in it in the future? What kind of co-operation with Japanese would interest you most in the future?
 - 3) Do you think that entering Japanese markets would require some specific support activities or promotional methods in order to be feasible?

5. Prospects of the film industry in our country (briefly)

- 1) Can you tell me about the future prospects of the film industry in your country? Any expectations that the level of the internationalization would increase or decrease significantly in the near future?
- 2) What type of co-operation would interest your company / organization most in the near future?

6. Workshop

The BaltMet Promo Project is planning a workshop "Go Young Generation" in the Baltic Sea Region in Autumn 2011 (tentatively at Scanorama Film Festival, Vilnius) that would bring together young filmmakers and audiovisual professionals from Japan and the Baltic Sea Region countries. Aim is to share experiences and ideas (e.g. new projects, organize screenings) and to look for ways to learn about filmmaking. Workshop is targeted e.g. to young filmmakers, film talents, production houses, film schools and other film industry professionals from BSR and Japan. The event consists of an intensive three day period.

- 1) Do you think that this kind of workshop would be useful or beneficial for film-making professionals or for young talents in the film industry?
- 2) In your opinion, what skills should be developed during the workshop? (film-making / movie direction or manuscript writing skills / networking skills / film as a production process / challenges related to an international co-production)
- 3) What activities could be organized in the context of the workshop? (pitching forum / shooting a film / script co-writing / co-production seminar / project advising / film-making workshop / professional lectures / screening / professional feedback for a film project / script development / etc.)
- 4) Would you be interested to participate in this kind of workshop?

7. Other issues

1. Can you tell me examples of co-productions between companies or organizations from Baltic Sea Region countries or Japan? Which co-produced films are known to you?
2. Can you recommend some other person from your country, who we could interview too?
3. Is there something else which you would like to point out here?

Annex 3: Interviewed organizations

Denmark
MEDIA Desk Denmark
Estonia
Baltic Event
Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival
Finland
Finnish Film Foundation
University of Helsinki, Institute for Asian and African Studies
Oy Millennium Film Ltd
Oy Bufo Ab
Germany
Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg GmbH
Latvia
National Film Centre of Latvia
Riga Motion Pictures Studio
Lithuania
MEDIA Desk Lithuania
Norway
Norwegian Film Institute
Poland
Polish Film Institute
Wajda Film School
Sweden
Oresund Film Commission
Swedish Film Institute
Russia
Festival of Festivals

The publication reports the results of research on international cooperation in filmmaking in the Baltic Sea Region. The results provide information about the intensity and contents of international cooperation of filmmaking organizations with special focus on the cooperation inside the Baltic Sea Region and also between the Region and Japan. The report shows that international cooperation is active among filmmaking organizations. However, there appears to be substantial need for education and training in order to open new growth potential, new target countries, and more diversified forms of cooperation. Concrete international workshops are regarded an efficient way to further internationalization. The research was conducted by Center for Markets in Transition (CEMAT) at the Aalto University School of Economics, Helsinki, Finland. The study is part of the BaltMet Promo project and part-financed by the Baltic Sea Region Programme.



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