

PRACTICS: a pilot project for cultural mobility

Final report
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Index

Introduction	4
Section 1. PRACTICS - main activities and results	7
1. Main activities undertaken	7
Objective 1: Develop a pilot network of Mobility Infopoints	7
Objective 2: Promote coordination and networking to ease mobility.....	13
Objective 3: Improve the sector’s capacity to enhance and support mobility.....	15
Objective 4: Identify key factors stimulating mobility and present recommendations on how to overcome obstacles to mobility.....	16
2. Main results achieved	20
Section 2. A mobility pilot project - lessons learned and experiences	24
1. Informing about cultural mobility - a moving target	24
1.1. The work of the 4 pilot Infopoints	25
1.2. Monitoring and Evaluating Pilot Mobility Infopoints.....	35
2. PRACTICS - a dynamic coalition to improve information on mobility	40
2.1. A European-wide partnership.....	40
2.2. Preparing future professionals for mobility.....	50
Section 3. Removing obstacles to mobility and improving information	56
1. Removing obstacles to mobility	56
2. Improving information on mobility	59
3. Improving support to mobility	63
4. A changing environment for cross-border mobility	63
Section 4. Beyond a pilot project	66
Annex 1. Information Standards for the Mobility of Artists and Cultural Professionals	

Introduction

Cross-border mobility has always been a reality for artists; both the history of arts and the history of Europe are full of examples of artists working across borders who have significantly enriched the culture of the host and home countries.

Since the late 1980s cultural organisations in Europe, such as IETM - International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts and many others, have been very active on questions of mobility of artists and cultural professionals. At EU level, the transnational mobility of artists and culture professionals has been a priority of the Culture Programme since 2000 and is a top priority of the European Agenda for Culture¹. Many projects on mobility were initiated by the cultural sector in the 1990s and the first decade of this century – thanks to the above-mentioned Culture Programme, other EU programmes, national, regional and local support schemes, and private foundations.

At the end of 2007, the European Parliament approved an additional line (€1.5 million) to the 2008 EU budget dedicated specifically to supporting the environment for the mobility of artists through new pilot projects. The pilot projects were intended to contribute to the work of the EU within the framework of the European Agenda for Culture, and serve to test new ideas to contribute to the preparation of the Culture Programme for the following programming period beyond 2013. The first element of this pilot project consisted in a *feasibility study for a European wide system of information on the different legal, regulatory, procedural and financial aspects to mobility in the cultural sector*². This study was carried out by ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd for the European Commission and published in March 2009. Its aims were notably to analyse the precise needs of artists and cultural workers in this respect and to provide an overview of existing information systems, to identify the gaps in the functioning of existing information systems and to make recommendations to national and European actors for remedies to fill these gaps with a view to setting up a Europe-wide system of information. The European Commission also published in June 2008 a call for proposals (EAC/16/2008) for pilot projects, focusing specifically on networking of existing structures supporting mobility in different cultural sectors. The aim was to promote mobility by capitalising on the knowledge and experience which already exists among organisations supporting mobility, by facilitating the exchange of experience and mutual learning. Expected outputs of the networking were the exchange of best practices, the exploitation and reuse of results, the identification of key factors enhancing mobility, the promotion of information dissemination, the comparison of evaluation methodologies, as well as possible joint actions³.

¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0242:FIN:EN:PDF>

² http://ec.europa.eu/culture/documents/cultural_mobility_final_report.pdf

³ At the end of 2008, the European Parliament approved a new budget line on the 2009 budget (€1.5 million) for the continuation of the pilot project on artist mobility implemented in 2008. The objective of this new appropriation is to enable contributions to the operational costs of mobility funds, programmes or schemes on a matching basis, in the sense that European Union support will free up or elicit new funding to be used exclusively to achieve concrete mobility, and/ or is used to open access to a new target group, geographical area, expressed need or other similar improvement/development (added value) and/or is used to generate new programmes, formats or structured experiences of mobility. To this purpose, a call for proposals was published by the European Commission in March 2009 based on the results of the "[Mobility Matters](#)" study

The European Commission received 33 applications which were evaluated by an evaluation committee. Four projects were selected for a co-financing: SPACE⁴, e.mobility⁵, Changing Room⁶, and PRACTICS⁷.

PRACTICS follows on from a project called "Mobile.Home", initiated in 2006, which resulted in the study "Impediments to Mobility in the EU Live Performance Sector and on Possible Solutions"⁸. Building on the outcomes of this study, PRACTICS was set up to address one of the main obstacles hindering cultural mobility: **the difficulty to find reliable and complete information on mobility-related issues.**

Under the leadership of **TINFO** - the **Finnish Theatre Information Centre**, PRACTICS brought together 12 partners and associated partners from 7 countries (Belgium, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain, the United Kingdom): **ACW/WAI - Arts Council of Wales/Wales Arts International** (Wales/United Kingdom), **Kunstenloket** (Belgium), **Interarts** (Spain), the **SICA Centre for International Cultural Activities** (the Netherlands), **Fondazione Fitzcarraldo** (Italy), the **National Museum Network of Romania** (Romania), **Pearle* - Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe**, **IETM - International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts**, **NEMO - Network of European Museum Organisations**, **AEC - European Association of Conservatories**, and **ELIA - European League of Institutes of the Arts**.

The main aim of PRACTICS was to pilot four 'Mobility Infopoints' to offer artists and cultural professionals who want to be mobile across borders information advice in order to help them overcome obstacles in pursuing an international career. In this respect the PRACTICS project "tested" a model which is close to the model as outlined in the feasibility study for a European wide system of information on the different legal, regulatory, procedural and financial aspects to mobility in the cultural sector. In addition, PRACTICS also carried out research in Finland and Italy to find out how such a PRACTICS Infopoint could be set up there in the future. PRACTICS also offered training to cultural professionals on issues related to mobility, and promoted coordination and networking with other information providers. On the basis of the concrete piloting of Infopoints and the mapping research the project identified key mobility stimulators and formulated recommendations for overcoming obstacles to mobility and for continuing the PRACTICS Infopoints network in the future.

The project lasted from December 2008 until the end of November 2011 and had a total budget of €436,000, with 80% co-funded by the EU.

The world in which cultural mobility is possible in 2011 is not the same as it was when the pilot project started at the end of 2008. The economic, political and social environment of the culture sector has changed significantly and become increasingly challenging for cross-border mobility: The sector is undergoing severe unprecedented financial cuts in many EU Member States and this is impacting heavily on operators, artists and their desire and financial ability to be mobile. The cuts also force operators and artists to become increasingly mobile and look for funding sources abroad - just to be able to survive - regardless of their wish to be mobile or not.

(http://ec.europa.eu/culture/key-documents/mobility-matters_en.htm). The Commission received 102 applications which were evaluated by an evaluation committee and nine projects were selected for co-financing: [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/support-to-mobility-of-artists-\(2009\)_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/support-to-mobility-of-artists-(2009)_en.htm)

⁴ <http://www.spaceproject.eu/>

⁵ http://www.art4eu.net/art4eu.php?page=article_en&id_secteur=32&id_rubrique=152&id_article=799

⁶ <http://teh.net/CHANGINGROOM/tabid/200/Default.aspx>

⁷ www.practics.org

⁸ http://on-the-move.org/files/news_files/Pearle_report.pdf

Over the past few years the cultural organisations across Europe have been subjected to ever more complex administrative procedures, which make it more and more difficult for operators and artists to be mobile across borders.

Environmental constraints raise the question of the ecological responsibility and sustainability of cultural mobility.

The digitalisation of culture impacts more and more the performing and visual arts and new forms of 'mobility' have appeared, including 'virtual' mobility, which raises increasingly complex questions in terms of intellectual property rights.

This report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the main activities undertaken as part of the PRACTICS project, the main results achieved, the lessons that the project partners have learned, and the key recommendations they put forward as a result of the experiences gained through participating in PRACTICS and supporting mobility of artists in a constantly changing and increasingly challenging environment.

Section 1. PRACTICS - main activities and results

The PRACTICS project was set up to pursue four objectives:

- develop a pilot network of Mobility Infopoints to stimulate mobility between EU countries and help overcome existing obstacles;
- promote coordination and networking between key players for mobility at national level and with European networks to ease mobility;
- deepen the cultural sector's capacity to enhance and support mobility;
- identify key factors stimulating mobility and present recommendations on how to overcome obstacles to mobility.

For each of these objectives a specific methodology was conceived and actions were carried out over the three-years of the project. The following pages provide a detailed overview of what PRACTICS did and what it achieved.

1. Main activities undertaken

Through its various activities the PRACTICS project managed to achieve all of the above-mentioned objectives. The following section explains in more detail the main actions undertaken by the project and the results achieved.

Objective 1: Develop a pilot network of Mobility Infopoints

PRACTICS partners decided to develop and pilot a network of Mobility Infopoints in Europe to stimulate mobility between EU countries and help overcome existing obstacles. Four project partners decided to form a pilot group of Mobility Infopoints for their countries/regions: SICA for the Netherlands, Kunstenloket for Belgium, Interarts for Spain and Wales Arts International (WAI) for Wales/United Kingdom.

All four pilot Mobility Infopoints set up under the PRACTICS project were organisations which had already been in place for several years. When the project started, they all had different expertise and experience as regards information on cross-border mobility; some had sound expertise in providing advice on mobility (such as SICA, Kunstenloket and to some extent WAI), others had little or no experience or information on mobility. However all of them were well embedded in the local culture sector of the country/region where they are located. The richness and diversity of the structures they come from is to be considered as an enriching element in the implementation of the project.

According to PRACTICS partners a 'Mobility Infopoint' had to be understood as a first entry point for people seeking information related to incoming and outgoing cultural mobility and designed to offer administrative support.

It was decided that the national Infopoints would focus on the following levels of support:

- provide necessary **information** for incoming and outgoing mobility, in particular with regard to the legal framework of their country, such as taxes, customs, employment law, intellectual property, visas, but also information about the national cultural sector and market, available financial support schemes for mobility (except the EU Culture Programme and other EU funded support schemes), education and training facilities and employment opportunities. It was agreed that Infopoints would make information available in the form of ready-at-hand materials like information sheets and user-friendly handbooks;
- provide **administrative support**, such as the provision of administrative forms to be filled in by cultural operators and artists and cultural workers;
- provide (management) **advice** on the market in their own country for foreign cultural operators and workers;
- give **assistance and support** focusing on the sector's particularities in their own country to foreign cultural operators/workers:
 - where necessary **intervene** in particular cases;
 - disseminate information to stakeholders and organise information and **training** sessions in their own country.

The project was designed in a way that allowed each national/regional Infopoint to have its own "identity", priorities and combination of the above areas of expertise and levels of support. It was considered to be inherent to the pilot project that the national partners have different resources and capacities which they contributed to the project. This was reflected in the profile of the partners, the diversity of which would allow them to share expertise and good practices and learn from each other with regard to developing the role of a focal information point on cross-border mobility. The co-organisers therefore presented different models from different countries and recommendations of what kind of organisations would be in the best position in their country to be a Mobility Infopoint in the future.

To be able to develop the network of Infopoints in a coherent way, the partners decided at the beginning of the project to define a **common framework**, determining some common lines of working methods for the Infopoints, the thematic areas they would cover with the information services they provide, how they communicated and cooperated with outside organisations and administrations (at national and EU level), and how they reached out to the users of their services. The common framework helped to build a shared vision amongst Infopoints and all project partners about the tasks and remits of an Infopoint. The common framework developed under the PRACTICS project covered four strands:

- Strand 1 identifies the topic areas that are covered by information provision by each Infopoint and those information tools that are needed to inform users properly;
- Strand 2 defines how information services should be provided by Infopoints;
- Strand 3 identifies the tools needed by Infopoints to establish strategic partnerships with national administrations and professional organisations and bodies which are important in the context of cross-border mobility in the cultural sector and which should help the Infopoints to be able to better provide information services;

- Strand 4 defines the external communication tools that are developed at national and European level to communicate effectively about the Infopoints and the PRACTICS project.

The common framework became the roadmap of the Infopoints and project partners on how to advance all four core objectives of the PRACTICS project. It allowed the Infopoints and the project partners to develop and conduct their activity as they believed was best for the 'users' of the info services, according to commonly agreed objectives and principles.

Each of the four strands was worked out in detail by the project partners (and in particular the pilot Infopoints) during the first two years of the project. Obviously the first objective was a very important objective for the project and a lot of energy was put into activities to achieve this objective.

Strand 1: Information topics

PRACTICS partners decided the mobility Infopoints are "first entry points to a country providing information and administrative support for incoming and outgoing cultural mobility to cultural professionals". The aim of Infopoints is to "inform and advise artists, cultural workers and operators and help them to deal successfully with administrative issues related to cross-border mobility". The pilot Infopoints should be able to provide information to users on the following topics:

- (1) **Regulatory issues**, including social security, taxation, intellectual property rights, visas, work permits, customs duties, transportation and insurance, contracts (employment/service contracts), recognition of professional qualifications
- (2) **National funding sources for mobility**
- (3) **Country profile**, including sources indicating where to find the main existing venues, residencies, events, professional contacts
- (4) **National job and employment market**, including where to find information on: job opportunities, internships, professional and vocational training, co-production and cooperation opportunities

Project partners agreed that it made sense that the Infopoints focus primarily on incoming mobility, as they are more competent to give information on regulatory issues and the cultural sector linked to the country and region where they are based. However it was also acknowledged that basic information on the above-mentioned topics should be provided on outgoing mobility, including basic information on regulatory issues and foreign funding sources for mobility. It was also decided that the objective of PRACTICS is not to achieve immediately the same level of information provision for all pilot Infopoints. Infopoints should take the time to build their capacity and undertake the necessary research and training of their staff to enable them to provide information services on the commonly agreed information topics.

Practics partners also defined those **information tools** (infotools) that are needed to inform users properly. It was agreed that users should be able to contact Infopoints directly for personal advice (either through face-to-face meetings, over the telephone, by e-mail or through information events). It was also agreed that Infopoints should make available on their websites information relevant for cross-border mobility through guidelines, info sheets and handbooks. Project partners decided that research and designing of infotools on incoming mobility should be undertaken individually by each Infopoint, as they have different levels of knowledge and as demands of users for information about a specific country may vary from one country to another. For example Belgium has a formal artist status, which the other countries covered by the other pilot Infopoints don't have. Naturally it seemed logical for Kunstenloket to develop a specific infotool on this issue. All pilot Infopoints agreed to share

their documents and infotools they had developed internally. This allowed an exchange amongst Infopoints on different ways to design the content and formats of infotools. However research and infotools on outgoing mobility were shared as this concerned questions which were of common interest to all Infopoints.

Strand 2: Pilot Infopoints quality charter for mobility information provision

Practics partners decided that it was important that the 4 pilot Infopoints commit themselves to certain quality standards in their service provision. For this reason the **PRACTICS Infopoints Quality Charter** was created, defining commonly agreed principles of service provision which the Infopoints promised to respect and which helped ensure high quality information services provided in the interest of the service users (see page 12).

Strand 3: Strategic partnerships between Infopoints and national authorities and professional organisations in the culture sector

As foreseen, the pilot Infopoints all established strategic partnerships with national authorities and professional organisations and bodies which are important in the context of cross-border mobility in the cultural sector. The aim of these partnerships was to establish a permanent direct link between Infopoints and national/local authorities to enable Infopoint to rely on first-hand information on topics that are relevant for mobile cultural professionals and thus provide quality information services to users. Although the exact list of strategic partners varies from one country to another, the following list includes the main categories of strategic partners:

- National, local and regional authorities in the fields of social security, taxation, visas, work permits, customs;
- Professional organisations in the cultural sector (employers' organisations, cultural institutes, trade unions, etc.);
- Collecting societies;
- Employment office;
- Institutions for professional and vocational training;
- Cultural Contact Points and Media Desk.

As regards establishing contacts with professional organisations in the cultural sector, the other project partners which were not acting as Infopoints helped to establish these contacts for their respective fields of activity. Pearle* and IETM helped establish and/or deepen contacts within the live performance sector of the countries of the four pilots; NEMO did the same for the museum sector, and ELIA and AEC established closer links with higher art education institutions and conservatories.

Each Infopoint developed appropriate tools to establish and maintain a strategic partnership with partners. This includes the following:

- A directory with the contact details of all relevant national authorities and cultural organisations. The directories are partly made available online to service users as well as to partner Infopoints in other countries.
- Specific information on communication tools targeted to each strategic partner, explaining the aim of an Infopoint, its main activities and the way it functions. Strategic partners were encouraged to promote the activities of the Infopoint and inform their target groups and users about the Infopoint to make information services widely known.
- Permanent communication links were established between the Infopoints and each strategic partner to enable the Infopoints to access directly relevant information from each strategic

partner and to be able to refer to each strategic partner if they received specific questions which they could not handle entirely themselves (e.g. submitting a tax declaration, etc.). The Infopoints also started to provide feedback to strategic partners on recurrent problems linked to mobility and to suggest changes (e.g. in terms of administrative formalities).

- Strategic partners were involved closely in training and information sessions organised by Infopoints on cultural mobility for cultural operators and artists and cultural professionals.

Strand 4: External communication tools

All project partners were involved in this activity, the aim of which was to publicise the existence of PRACTICS and the Infopoints, and promote the services of the latter. Two main types of communication tools were used:

Online tools: the PRACTICS project website (www.practics.org); the websites and newsletters of each project partner; other organisations' websites and newsletters, in particular those organisations with whom strategic partnerships were established throughout the project period, such as On the Move.

Offline tools: presentations about PRACTICS at a number of events, organised at local, national and EU/international level by the project partners in the frame of their general activity as well as organised by other organisations; organisation of meetings (including training and information sessions) with the cultural sector in the partners' countries.

The external communication targeted three main target groups: potential users of the Infopoints' information service (mainly artists, cultural workers and cultural operators); the strategic partners; policy and decision makers at national, international/EU level, with whom the project partners tried to set up strategic partnerships with the aim to receive support for the Infopoints' activities.

Alongside the conceptualisation of the mobility Infopoints through the establishment of a common framework, the partners decided to do a '**mobility information mapping**' in Italy and Finland with the aim to identify organisations which could in the future take on the tasks of an Infopoint. A methodology paper for the mapping was developed by Fondazione Fitzcarraldo and subsequently used for the mapping in Italy and Finland and then for a mapping in Spain, which was initiated during the last project year by the Spanish Infopoint Interarts. The decision to do a mapping in Spain was partly due to the success of the Italian mapping and the networking and cooperation it prompted between Italian cultural organisations working on mobility. Last but not least, WAI - the Infopoints in Wales - did a comparison of information provision between Finland and Wales.

PRACTICS INFOPOINT QUALITY CHARTER

1. Information is reliable and accurate

Infopoints commit to provide information which is reliable and accurate. Infopoints commit in particular to check information on applicable national regulations and procedures before it is released to mobile artists, cultural professionals and operators.

2. Information is regularly updated

Infopoints commit to regularly verify and update the information they provide and the further information sources to which they refer.

3. Information is provided in several EU languages

Infopoints commit to provide information in the main national official language(s). Infopoints also commit to make their information services available in English.

4. Information is provided online as well as through personal contact

Infopoints commit to provide information online, including downloadable toolkits and other information tools.

Infopoints also commit to make available a service where users have a direct and personal contact with a mobility advisor and can ask specific questions.

5. Information is as tailor-made as possible

Infopoints commit to provide information as tailor-made as possible to respond to the specific needs and the specific situation of mobile cultural professionals. Infopoints also commit to provide professionals with any information which helps them build a sustainable career path.

6. Information is provided within a reasonable time-limit

Infopoints commit to reply to individual questions and enquiries within a reasonable time-limit which shall not exceed 2 weeks. In exceptionally urgent cases, Infopoints commit to provide relevant information in a shorter time limit.

7. Information is provided with respect to confidentiality and data protection

Infopoints commit to provide information in a confidential way and to keep service user information in a form and in a manner which protects the identity and privacy of the service user. Infopoints provide services in accordance with the national law on data protection of the country where they are registered.

8. Information is provided without discrimination

Infopoints commit to provide information to service users without any discrimination as regards nationality, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

9. Collecting customers' feedback about the quality of the information service

Infopoints commit to get feedback from their customers on the services provided in order to be able to improve the quality of their services.

10. Collecting basic information about service provision

Infopoints commit to record basic information on the questions and enquiries they receive for monitoring and evaluation purposes with the aim to improve the quality of their services and reach out better to target groups. This can result in the compiling of FAQs (frequently asked questions) and other appropriate tools.

Objective 2: Promote coordination and networking to ease mobility

The second objective of PRACTICS was that project partners initiate and promote multi-sector networking on different levels, through communication, exchange of staff and good practices as well as the dissemination of information.

During the project period the Infopoints established **strategic partnerships at local, regional and national level** as described in the common framework. All in all they developed tools to enter into and maintain contacts with more than **150 strategic partners**. As outlined above, the aim was to network, make the Infopoints known and establish working relations in order to be able to solve obstacles to mobility and better answer questions related to mobility.

At **international level**, the four pilot Infopoints established regular contacts among themselves in order to signpost questions to each other concerning a specific region/country of one of the four Infopoints. They also established contacts with similar organisations in other Member States which also provide information on cross-border mobility. This included, amongst others, the Arts and Theatre Institute in the Czech Republic, BAAPE (Guest artists and professionals office at the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris) in France, the SCCA Centre for Contemporary Arts, Ljubljana/ArtServis in Slovenia, Trans Artists in the Netherlands, International Society for Visual Arts (IGBK) in Germany, Arts Professional in the UK, Trans Europe Halles in Sweden, CIMO (Finnish Centre for International Mobility) in Finland, the Roberto Cimetta Fund, On the Move, and many other organisations, especially those based in the countries of the project partners, namely in Belgium, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Spain. PRACTICS partners also decided to cooperate with the mobility pilot projects; they drafted joint recommendations (see section 3) and participated in two major events bringing together the mobility pilot projects in Europe. These were obviously very important moments to network and discuss synergies and ways of better cooperating together to improve conditions for mobility and information relevant for mobility.

The **staff exchanges** between Infopoints and project partners were a key activity to achieve the project's second objective. They were aimed at facilitating:

- the identification of key factors related to the support of mobility to provide information about the activities of the Infopoints;
- the exchange of best practices aiming at supporting the mobility of cultural workers (How do other organisations collect and disseminate relevant information?);
- the promotion of information;
- the training of trainers (How do other organisations train cultural operators?);
- the comparison of evaluation methodologies.

Before starting the **staff exchanges**, a thorough needs assessment was carried out first to identify the needs and expectations of partners as regards mutual exchange of knowledge and skills. Five staff exchanges were organised in Amsterdam (SICA), Wales (WAI), Finland (TINFO), Spain (Interarts) and Belgium (Kunstenloket), allowing a deeper insight into how each of the organisations works on a daily basis, how they are structured, funded, operate and provide information to users on mobility. The staff exchanges and the partner meetings allowed partners to discuss good practices. The following main **good practices** have been identified as regards providing information on mobility:

Good practices in providing information about cross-border mobility

- Kunstenloket developed on its website specific web pages on regulatory issues with clear structures and in simple language, working with interactive schemes. Such a scheme guides users who have a specific question on VAT, for example, towards certain general questions before providing them with a more specific but not necessarily complete answer to their actual question. WAI and Interarts developed similar tools for Spain and Wales.
- The ECAS systems for monitoring and quality assessment of the Citizens Signpost Service provide a model of good practice on how to monitor and evaluate an Information service.
- Coordination with strategic partners established through long-term contacts is the most effective to help Infopoints answer a question or help users to solve a problem. Kunstenloket, for example, has a well-established relationship with the Belgian National Social Security agency. During the whole project WAI continued its regular face-to-face meetings with regulatory bodies, including the UK Border Agency. This proved to be particularly useful for WAI's information services since regulations on visas are often subject to change.
- The design of the Interarts PRACTICS website pages, combined with the Google Analytics statistics package that allows for precise evaluation of site users and downloads, has been considered a model of good practice. All three other pilot Infopoints developed similar systems for their new websites.
- The directory of international and national funding opportunities for cross-border mobility initially developed by On the Move was recognised as a useful tool as it tries to structure information in a user-friendly way. The project partners therefore decided to publish an updated directory jointly with On the Move.
- ECAS' publications in the form of "Questions and Answers" about EU citizens' rights were identified as good practices. As a result it was decided that ECAS - PRACTICS would publish a joint FAQ document on artists' mobility and EU citizens' rights.
- Kunstenloket organises "Meet and Greet" events, which operate as a meeting point between artists and organisations from the international artistic field to share and exchange information and opinions. These events are considered a good initiative for networking and getting in touch with the artistic and cultural sectors which are active across borders.
- A very concise and clear communication note about the services of a Mobility Infopoint was sent by Kunstenloket to a number of stakeholders in Belgium (artists, organisations, art schools, etc.). PRACTICS partners translated the same note into their national languages and send it out in a similar way.
- Face-to-face meetings with regulatory bodies, especially when building a new relationship, have been highlighted by many Infopoints as a good practice.
- The Infopoint mapping in Italy allowed the identification of a number of organisations already providing mobility-related information, whose experience can be considered as good practices to look at when setting up an Italian Infopoint. TINFO and Interarts took it as a model for their mappings in Finland and Spain.
- WAI improved its knowledge on communication and new technologies with specific trainings and shared the results with other project partners.

At national and international level all project partners disseminated information and the results of PRACTICS to their members and contacts in numerous conferences and seminars Europe-wide and even outside Europe in over **70 events** reaching out to over 400 cultural organisations across Europe. During these events the different project partners linked with the other mobility pilot projects, thus creating interesting synergies and raising awareness about the existence of the Infopoints.

Objective 3: Improve the sector's capacity to enhance and support mobility

The third objective of the project was to develop the knowledge and skills of cultural professionals and organisations in order to find appropriate solutions to increase mobility. The main activity was for the Infopoints to organise **information sessions and training seminars** aiming at cultural professionals and organisations, including enterprises, self-employed artists, managers, promoters, students, cultural workers, national ministries and authorities or export agencies and the Cultural Contact Points. In conjunction with external experts the Infopoints had to provide training on particular aspects of mobility, including law-related issues, management aspects and entrepreneurial skills.

Throughout the project period the Infopoints organised over **15 information and training sessions for cultural operators and artists** to increase their capacities to deal with mobility and overcome obstacles. The training and information sessions were held in the four countries of the four pilot Infopoints, as well as in those EU countries where project partners or cultural sector organisations in Europe organised major events (e.g. annual ArtLab meetings of Fondazione Fitzcarraldo in Italy, IETM meetings, etc.).

A major contribution to capacity-building of the cultural sector on mobility was undertaken by project partner Pearle* which organised three thematic seminars in Brussels:

- Seminar on social security and taxation in the context of mobility - application of EU regulations and impact on performing arts organisations⁹;
- Seminar on visas and work permits - incoming and outgoing mobility in the live performance sector¹⁰;
- Seminar on copyright in the live performance sector in the context of mobility – from physical to virtual mobility¹¹.

The seminars brought together experts from the EU and national level and professionals from the performing arts sector and other art forms. The seminars were open to cultural professional and were attended also by the staff of the Infopoints.

Finally, the above-mentioned staff exchanges between Infopoints were also an opportunity to train their staff to be able to provide better quality services for Infopoint users. Specific workshops were organised in the fields of taxation, social security coordination and on communication.

⁹ See the report of the seminar: http://www.pearle.ws/cms/files/file_0613584001259573411_Document_38.pdf

¹⁰ See the report of the seminar: <http://www.pearle.ws/en/projects/detail/14>

¹¹ See the conclusions of this seminar:

http://www.pearle.ws/cms/files/file_sys_PDF_Meetings_Document_181.pdf

Objective 4: Identify key factors stimulating mobility and present recommendations on how to overcome obstacles to mobility

A key activity of this objective was that all project partner evaluate their activities at regular intervals to collect data and information, including on the following:

- a list of the information provided by the Infopoints;
- an overview of information and training sessions organised;
- ways of organising communication flows;
- descriptions of difficulties encountered regarding the organisation of the Infopoints and the network;
- good practices identified;
- examples of concrete cases and questions asked;
- issues raised by users of the Infopoints which were not initially covered by information services.

The objective was that this monitoring and evaluation throughout the project would help identify key factors stimulating mobility and present recommendations on how to overcome obstacles to mobility. It was agreed that the project would communicate the ongoing activities and the project results to national and EU authorities and working groups set up by the European Commission to promote mobility, and during meetings and conferences of the project partners and other cultural organisations.

At the beginning of the project, partners put in place a **self-evaluation system** collecting relevant information from each project partner on their activities within the PRACTICS project. With the help of the methodological advisor Judith Staines the collected data was compiled in an annual project stocktaking of the project environment – both the internal and external context in which the PRACTICS project was developing. In addition, specifically for the Infopoints' activities, the project partners developed together with Judith Staines a **monitoring system** to collect information about how the services of the Infopoints were used. The monitoring was conducted for two full years, from November 2009 till November 2011.

Section 2 of this study provides a detailed analysis of the lessons learned by each individual Infopoint and the main outcomes of the monitoring of the Infopoints' activities. The following table summarises the main lessons learned as regards running an Infopoint and being part of a network of Infopoints:

Lessons learned as regards running an Infopoint

- Running an Infopoint carries different benefits and challenges, according to the nature of each organisation, its overall activity and the know-how of the staff.
- The Infopoints' activity benefits from implementing such activity within already established organisations, which have internal know-how about some of the information areas covered and have established connections with the cultural sector and institutions in their country.
- It proved to be beneficial for the information service that all four Infopoints have significant experience in advising artists about international activities, with particular attention to their home countries. All of them also have strong networks of contacts across the EU and beyond, which help them advise on specific enquiries from artists as well as promoting the Infopoints services.
- Being aware about the specific national/regional context is of key importance for Infopoints, both in terms of the information provision and the overall activity of each organisation. For example, visa issues are a particularly hot topic in the UK. As a result WAI provides very detailed information and further references on this topic. Another notable example is SICA. The culture sector in the Netherlands faces particularly severe cuts and re-structuring. Detailed information on funding has become therefore of key importance.

Benefits for Infopoints from being part of a network of Infopoints

- Capacity building of the Infopoints' staff, in particular through exchanges with other Infopoints; this is especially advantageous given that the organisations started from different levels of expertise and experience in information provision and were able to attain common quality standards by the end of the project. This benefited the EU culture sector as a whole.
- Visibility of the Infopoints as a network, and acknowledgment of each Infopoint as part of such a network.
- Possibility of producing information and translating contents into other EU languages than those of the Infopoints' countries; this is part of the EU-added value of PRACTICS, and it is in line with the Infopoints' aim to make the information widely accessible.
- The network of Infopoints made it possible to share pre-PRACTICS information tools, develop common new information tools, and share contacts, expertise and information on relevant events and training. For instance, the Infopoints got in touch with each other for specific information on their regional regulations while researching a problem on behalf of a user and always received timely and correct responses, with helpful suggestions of other bodies to contact for further help.
- Recognition of the Infopoints as "good practices" in the information provision on artists' mobility-related issues at EU level.
- An interesting point and lesson learned concerns the PRACTICS partner SICA, which is hosting the Dutch CCP and which, during the PRACTICS project, also hosted a pilot Mobility Infopoint. Both services were provided operationally and budgetary-wise separately. However the experience of combining in one organisation a Mobility Infopoint and a CCP was interesting in so far as it allowed PRACTICS partners to examine with the Dutch case the advantages and disadvantages of an organisation offering both services: a CCP and a Mobility Infopoint. According to SICA offering both services can be beneficial to users as the service provider has a broader overview and knowledge of cultural mobility related issues, especially those relevant for cultural cooperation within Europe. A combined or closely connected service also provides wider access to European networks for exchanging information, experiences, contacts, partner search activities, etc.

As agreed by all project partners, the Infopoint activity also carries benefits for the networks to which the pilot organisations belong, especially as many of them represent “users” of information services (IETM, Pearle*, NEMO, AEC, ELIA). Section 2 of this report also contains detailed interviews with all other project partners as regards the lessons learned and benefits for them of being part of the PRACTICS project.

The partners, especially those representing European networks, also linked with the **other mobility pilot projects** to create possible synergies and ensure that the cultural sector knows about the projects and benefits as much as possible from all the possibilities offered by the pilot projects. In particular IETM was very active in linking the four mobility pilot projects selected in 2008 (PRACTICS, SPACE, e-mobility, Changing Room¹²). A joint meeting open to all mobility pilot projects, including the nine selected for a two-year period in 2009¹³, was organised in May 2010 in Brussels, thus enabling all pilots to exchange. A second meeting of mobility pilot projects was organised by On the Move in May 2011 in Budapest¹⁴. Section 3 of this report gives a more detailed insight into the common work undertaken by four mobility pilot projects (PRACTICS, SPACE, e-mobility, Changing Room) and in particular the joint set of **recommendations** they have adopted **on how to foster cross-border mobility in the culture field and how to overcome obstacles to mobility**.

The already mentioned ‘**mappings**’ on **information provision on mobility** in Italy, Spain and Finland included a number of recommendations on how to improve information provision in these three countries and how to set up an Infopoint in Italy and Finland.

Finally, project partners thought hard; about the **future of the Infopoints** as information providers and of the network of Infopoints beyond the project period. Several challenges were identified, namely:

- The financial sustainability of the Infopoints’ services;
- The changing information needs of the target audience of the Infopoints and the need for Infopoints to adapt constantly to these needs;
- The need for a clearer positioning of the PRACTICS Infopoints network towards other networks (e.g. stressing the difference with CCPs), its visibility, communication and promotion.

Partners also identified the following opportunities for a successful continuation of the project and the network of Infopoints:

- The possibility of strengthening and widening the Infopoints network and the information service;
- The increasing and continuous information needs from the culture sector.

Following the discussion about a follow-up, some of the current partners considered revising their role in the frame of a new project, and some eventually decided not to be partners or associates, for various reasons. However the links created between all the partners are likely to continue in the future, and represent a valuable outcome of the project. The partners decided to apply for co-funding of a follow-up project under the EU Culture Programme (2007-2013). A more detailed description of the future of PRACTICS is outlined in Section 4 of this report.

¹² [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/networking-of-mobility-support-structures-\(2008\)_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/networking-of-mobility-support-structures-(2008)_en.htm)

¹³ [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/support-to-mobility-of-artists-\(2009\)_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/support-to-mobility-of-artists-(2009)_en.htm)

¹⁴ <http://on-the-move.org/mobilityprojects/article/14327/final-report-of-otm-meeting-of-eu-mobility/>

2. Main results achieved

With the above-mentioned activities PRACTICS achieved its four main objectives and many tangible results. The following list gives an overview of the **10 most important results that PRACTICS achieved**:

(1) PRACTICS set up a network of 4 pilot mobility Infopoints which is now active, providing reliable, up-to-date, complete and relevant information, free of charge and available to artists and cultural operators from all sectors and countries.

The Infopoints bring together information which is usually scattered throughout a whole array of information sources and present it in a user-friendly way to the final users - artists and cultural operators - allowing them to use the information directly, without the need for intermediary agents. This benefits the cultural sector in the EU (and beyond), i.e. artists and cultural professionals from all fields, individuals and organisations, students in disciplines related to the culture and the arts. All of them now have at their disposal:

- **60 online Infotools developed and updated by the PRACTICS Infopoints** on relevant topics for cultural mobility, including legal and administrative issues, funding opportunities and networking opportunities. **Infotools are available in five languages spoken in the EU:** English, Dutch, French, Spanish and Welsh. Infotools were published in the national language/s of the author Infopoint and translated whenever possible into other major EU languages. The Infotools mainly deal with *incoming mobility* (foreign cultural professionals wishing to travel to the Infopoints' countries). All the Infotools are available and can be downloaded for free from each Infopoint's website; a comprehensive list, with links, is also available on the *On the Move* website.
- **The PRACTICS Infotools will remain available beyond the end of the project period**, thanks to the strategic partnership developed with *On the Move*, which created a specific section on its website called PRACTICS Infotools¹⁵. The PRACTICS Infotools section provides a comprehensive view of the information tools produced under PRACTICS, following the classification defined by the *information standards for the mobility of artists and cultural professionals* produced by the experts group on Mobility information standards set up by the European Commission in 2011 (see annex 1).
- Two main tools *for outgoing mobility* were developed jointly by the project partners: a handbook on *Most frequently asked questions by artists and answers about their European Citizens' Rights*, developed by PRACTICS partner ECAS¹⁶, and a *Guide to Funding Opportunities for the International Mobility of Artists and Culture Professionals in Europe*¹⁷, developed jointly by PRACTICS partners Interarts and *On the Move*. These tools, together with other "useful documents", are available for free download on the PRACTICS website¹⁸ and on the *On the Move* website.
- **Direct, tailor-made advice by telephone, Skype, e-mail, live meetings.** During the two years of fully operational activity of the Infopoints (Nov. 2009 - Nov. 2011) **1,700 users contacted the**

¹⁵ <http://on-the-move.org/practicinfotools/>

¹⁶ <http://on-the-move.org/news/region/article/14179/most-frequently-asked-questions-by-artists-and/?category=39>

¹⁷ <http://on-the-move.org/funding>

¹⁸ www.practics.org

Infopoints directly to ask for advice. The total number of enquiries received by the Infopoints increased by 41% from 2010 and 2011, thanks to the increased visibility gained by PRACTICS and the Infopoints through an **external communication strategy**, the project partners and the strategic partners. This increase shows that there is a real need and demand from cultural professionals for professional information services on cultural mobility.

(2) PRACTICS produced recommendations on how to improve the conditions for cultural mobility across the EU. The recommendations come from the direct experience of the Infopoints and the project partners in the framework of PRACTICS (and other pilot projects), as well as from the monitoring and evaluation of the Infopoints' activities. The recommendations reflect the evidence that there are real needs and problems if the cultural sectors are to be mobile. Concrete proposals for solutions are put forward. The benefits are the following:

- The EU cultural sector at the grassroots level – artists, cultural operators, cultural organisations, training institutions – can use the recommendations to make their voices heard for their regional/national institutions and authorities to improve the conditions for mobility;
- Policy and decision makers at national and EU level have at their disposal practical proposals on how to improve the conditions for cultural mobility and how to optimise existing tools and services supporting mobility.

(3) The four pilot Infopoints identified strategic partners in their countries, and established cooperation with more than 150 partners, including local, regional and national authorities dealing with regulatory issues of importance for mobility (taxation, social security, visas, etc.). The benefits are as follows:

- Artists and cultural operators have a better chance of finding out about accessing the information services provided by the Infopoints;
- The Infopoints improved their capacity to deal with mobility and the quality of their services, thanks to the exchanges and connections with other organisations (not just from the cultural sector) and public authorities;
- Authorities and institutions at different level benefitted from the exchange with the Infopoints, which were able to provide feedback about regulations applying to artists and cultural professionals (e.g. ill-adapted rules, recurrent problems). They received concrete proposals as to how to improve the circulation of artists and cultural professionals;
- Networking ensured good visibility for the project partners across the EU (and beyond), thanks to international events organised by IETM, Pearle*, Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, ELIA, AEC and NEMO).

(4) Information about the PRACTICS project and the Infopoints was disseminated through online and offline tools by all project partners. PRACTICS was presented or mentioned in over 70 events inside and outside the EU. Such meetings constituted essential opportunities for visibility and communication about PRACTICS and the services of the Infopoints. The **central PRACTICS website** was developed (www.practics.org) and used as the main communication tool for the project activities, as well as for internal communication between project partners. The benefits are as follows:

- The project partners gained visibility and made their services known among a wider audience;

- The cultural sector could access the information services of the Infopoints more easily and get direct advice during the events.

(5) PRACTICS developed and tested a model for a network of Infopoints and Mobility Infopoints. This is an essential achievement of PRACTICS as a pilot project. PRACTICS was able to develop and test a working methodology and working tools for mobility-related information provision which can be used in the future in different national/regional contexts, duly taking into account the results of the monitoring and the lessons learned by the PRACTICS partners and Infopoints. The working methodology includes common quality standards and a common monitoring and evaluation system which allowed partners to monitor, evaluate and adapt the services of the Infopoints and guide the work of the network of Infopoints. The benefits are as follows:

- The authorities of EU Member States wishing to set up/develop a mobility-related information service for cultural professionals will not need to develop a new working method, but will have at their disposal a tested working methodology;
- Organisations providing information on cultural mobility which are willing to adopt the same working methodology tested by PRACTICS will have at their disposal all the tools and references on how to further develop their information service.

(6) PRACTICS had a multiplier effect on other mobility information providers. Evidence of this is the fact that 12 external organisations with which the PRACTICS Infopoints developed strategic partnerships at European level are ready to join the Infopoints' network by becoming partners in a follow-up project. The benefits are as follows:

- In the short term the EU cultural sector will be able to refer to a wider network of Infopoints;
- In the mid term (throughout the period of a follow-up project) the partners can further exchange good practices, learn from each other and mutually increase the quality of their services;
- In the long term the authorities of Member States who wish to engage in supporting cultural mobility can adopt the same model tested and further developed by PRACTICS and encourage organisations providing information on mobility to join a wider PRACTICS network. This obviously also benefits the EU cultural sector.

(7) PRACTICS developed the first common framework for cultural mobility-related information provision in the EU, establishing a list of topics on which information should be provided and 10 quality principles for information provision. This framework, tested by the four Infopoints, enabled PRACTICS partners to contribute to the EU *information standards for the mobility of artists and cultural professionals* adopted by the Expert Group in December 2011. These standards form the structure of improved mobility-related information services to be put in place in other EU countries. The benefits are as follows:

- Policy makers at the national level who decide to implement the EU information standards have at their disposal practical evidence of a system tested over three years in at least four EU countries;
- The cultural sector will benefit from a coherent and high-quality system of information provision.

(8) PRACTICS developed a precise methodology for mapping mobility information provision which can be used in all EU countries. The methodology of the mapping reports was developed by Fondazione Fitzcarraldo for the mapping in Italy and was then used for the mapping reports in Finland and Spain, as well as for the report comparing information provision in Finland and Wales carried out by WAI. The methodology proved useful for three countries which are very different from each other in terms of cultural policies and information provision. The benefits are as follows:

- Researchers/institutions carrying out similar mappings in other EU countries have at their disposal a clear research methodology;
- Policy makers and information providers in the three countries where mappings have been carried out have at their disposal recommendations how to improve information provision in their country;
- The EU cultural sector can find in the mapping reports a comprehensive list of information providers active in each country.

9) Partner meetings and staff exchanges provided opportunities for joint work and exchanges between project partners. Over the three years of the PRACTICS project, 12 organisations based in seven EU countries were able to work together to achieve four common goals, converging towards a main aim: easing and fostering the mobility of artists and cultural professionals across the EU by easing the access to relevant, useful and reliable information. The benefits are as follows:

- The project partners' meetings and staff exchanges helped to tighten the relations between partners on mobility, and increased their knowledge and skills on providing information on mobility;
- The cultural sector benefits from increased cooperation and coordination on information on mobility.

10) PRACTICS provided targeted training sessions for the project partners (including the Infopoints' staff) and the cultural sector to improve their capacity to deal with mobility. The benefits are as follows:

- The Infopoints' staff increased their knowledge and skills on issues related to mobility and developed other skills (related to research, monitoring, communication);
- External organisations which were invited to join training sessions and meetings of partners exchanged experiences with the PRACTICS partners;
- Artists and cultural operators across the EU benefitted from the training sessions offered to them and increased their knowledge and skills to deal with mobility.

Undeniably all these results have an impact on the European cultural sector, including individual artists and cultural workers, operators and organisations that are mobile across borders. The actions undertaken and the results obtained also had an immense benefit as regards improved cooperation and networking between all project partners and with the cultural sector on mobility, and as regards providing information relevant for mobility. Although the exact impact of a project like PRACTICS is sometimes difficult to measure, PRACTICS certainly contributed significantly to **raising awareness of the need for the cultural sector and public authorities to work in a more coordinated way** to facilitate access to information relevant for mobility.

Section 2. A mobility pilot project - lessons learned and experiences

1. Informing about cultural mobility - a moving target

Under the PRACTICS project four organisations piloted Mobility Infopoints following a common framework as outlined in section 1: Arts Council of Wales/Wales Arts International in Wales (United Kingdom), Kunstenloket in Belgium, Interarts in Spain and SICA Centre for International Cultural Activities in the Netherlands. When the project started, the four Infopoints were all well-established cultural organisations within their region/country and had close contacts with the culture sector. Kunstenloket in Belgium, WAI in Wales and SICA in the Netherlands were known within the cultural sector of their country and abroad as organisations also providing information related to cross-border mobility. However, they were not known to their audience as specific 'mobility information points'. All four points had therefore to spend some time to make themselves known as organisations which provide specific information relevant for cross-border mobility to and from their country/region.

Obviously each organisation was set up in a specific national/local context and is funded and managed under different rules. In addition, the cultural sector in each of these countries is organised and functions very differently. Similarly, mobility to and from these countries may happen in different ways and as a result information needs of operators and artists may vary considerably. In no way did PRACTICS try to 'harmonise' the four Infopoints, how they are organised and financed, and how they interact with the cultural sector or serve the cultural communities in their country/region. What the pilot project did was to see how far the four pilots can work according to a common methodology on how to provide information services related to cross-border mobility, as described in section 1.

In line with the priorities and specific demands of their users in terms of information on mobility, the Infopoints developed their own national/regional information tools, which were shared with the other project partners. They built their strategic partnerships at national, regional, local and European level according to their specific needs. Alongside their daily advice services, Infopoints also set up information events and training for the cultural sector to increase artists' and operators' capacities to deal with mobility. They also organised training for their own staff to increase their capacity to advice users better. Infopoints also worked together to develop several common infotools, to exchange their staff and good practices, to learn how other Infopoints work, and to train their staff together on specific European questions such as VAT, intellectual property rights, social security coordination and visas.

This section shows what lessons each individual pilot Infopoint has learned during the pilot project, what experience the Infopoints have acquired and how they see themselves and their role as Infopoints now the project has come to an end.

Monitoring the Infopoints was one of the core activities of PRACTICS. PRACTICS ‘tested’ a common way of monitoring users’ enquiries both quantitatively and qualitatively. This section gives also an overview of some key data of the work undertaken by the Infopoints including findings as regards user profile, and the type of enquiries Infopoints answered.

Finally the section also looks more closely at the other project partners of PRACTICS. Although they did not operate as Infopoints they have contributed significantly to the success of the project by promoting the services of the Infopoints, training the Infopoints and building up the capacity of the cultural sector to deal better with mobility and networking with the cultural sector across Europe and beyond.

1.1. The work of the 4 pilot Infopoints

At the end of the PRACTICS pilot project, the four pilot Infopoints took stock of their achievements: what was their experience and what were the lessons learned from participating in PRACTICS and being operational as their regional/national mobility Infopoint. Interviews have been carried out with WAI, Kunstenloket, Interarts and SICA to obtain a deeper insight into how PRACTICS has fundamentally changed the way they understand mobility, deal with information on mobility, the way they see PRACTICS and how they understand their own role.



The purpose of **Arts Council of Wales/Wales Arts International**¹⁹ (ACW/WAI) is to help build a dynamic international context to the arts in Wales, working with artists and cultural organisations committed to contemporary practice, intercultural dialogue and collaboration. Wales Arts International is a partnership between the Arts Council of Wales and the British Council: it works to promote knowledge about contemporary culture from Wales and encourage international exchange and collaboration. Wales Arts International works to support the promotion and development of professional practice across all art forms, providing information about the arts in Wales for cultural organisations and practitioners overseas, and supporting international opportunities through our programmes and funding schemes.

Interview with Eluned Hâf, Director and Zélie Flach, European Officer, Wales Arts International

“The benefits are numerous for our organisation from being an Infopoint and from being part of the PRACTICS project”.

- **Why did you decide to become a Mobility Infopoint under PRACTICS?**

One of the main reasons that WAI wanted to become an Infopoint was because it supported and enhanced our core work. We provide advice and support to artists and arts organisations from Wales who work on an international level. We are also a contact point for international artists and arts organisations working in Wales. Becoming a Mobility Infopoint gave us the opportunity to enhance this service to artists by broadening the service to include information on such practical matters as tax, social security and visas.

¹⁹ <http://www.wai.org.uk/>

- ***What are the benefits for your organisation and for the culture sector from being a Mobility Infopoint and having been part of the PRACTICS project as an Infopoint?***

The benefits are numerous for our organisation from being an Infopoint and from being part of the PRACTICS project. As a PRACTICS Infopoint and partner we are part of a network sharing good practice, information and resources on artist mobility issues; we also received training for our staff in specific topics (i.e. social security and tax). Thanks to the project we also did comparative research into information provision between Finland and Wales, developed online information provision for artists coming to Wales, and we established close links between WAI and other UK agencies which are of key importance for the mobility of artists, such as the Foreign Entertainers Unit of the Tax Office and the UK Border Agency.

Being part of PRACTICS has also benefitted the culture sector in Wales and beyond. We have established an information service (email/phone/online) on incoming and outgoing mobility to/from Wales, and artists in Wales looking to travel to Belgium, Spain and the Netherlands can access information services in these countries. The project also contributed to increased advocacy on behalf of the culture sector on mobility issues and obstacles.

- ***Who did you effectively manage to target as Infopoint?***

We effectively targeted the arts organisations in Wales who were looking to bring international artists over to Wales. Through new information pages on our website we targeted international visitors to Wales and we also commissioned a country profile for those new to Wales. We also started to develop links with organisations that we could signpost enquiries to such as the UK Border Agency and the Tax Office.

- ***What are your strengths as an Infopoint?***

One of the strengths has been the fact that we have involved all members of the WAI team in Infopoint activity. Different members of the team have taken part in training and exchanges and have answered enquiries from artists. As a result the whole team of WAI contributed to the activities of the Infopoint.

WAI also has significant experience in advising artists from Wales on developing international partnerships and collaborations, as well as making links from artists coming into Wales.

Another strength is our network and contacts. We have built a large network of contacts across the EU and internationally. This helps support us as an Infopoint in advising on specific enquiries and in promoting the services of the Infopoint. Additionally, our Canfas newsletter is circulated to over 2300 contacts. Finally, we have a strong brand and a great number of visitors to the website, including the Infopoint website pages.

- ***What challenges and difficulties did you come across working as an Infopoint?***

There are challenges in developing the connections with bodies such as the Tax Office and the UK Boarder Agency. This includes increasing their understanding of the needs of the culture sector - and in keeping up with the changes in legislation. There are also challenges in maintaining the information service updated, visible, and accessible, especially online.

- ***What new trends and hot topics have you identified as regards mobility of artists/culture operators?***

The visa system for entering the UK is currently proving to be a real obstacle for many artists with 3rd country nationality trying to work in the UK.

An important issue concerns information provision in itself, meaning the way in which users search for information and the way in which information is presented and available online. For example the rise of social media such as facebook and twitter, the use of smartphones, apps and QR codes, and online translation tools such as Google translate are rapidly transforming the landscape in which we work.

Finally, environmental issues are increasingly important. The rise in fuel costs and increased awareness of the environmental impact of travel and mobility – combined with the current technological advancements – are making “green mobility” an ever-increasing factor when talking about working internationally.

- ***What improvements do you see for yourself as an Infopoint in the future?***

We have put in an application for EU co-funding to continue the PRACTICS project for two years. The aim is to expand the PRACTICS network, and WAI has presented itself as lead partner on the bid; so we are committed to continue as an Infopoint. In the meantime we are keen to informally maintain the links we established through the project, through our membership of *On the Move*. We will look to improve the online information provision of WAI and further develop the links with external bodies as described above.



Kunstenloket²⁰ is based in Belgium and provides information and advice to anyone who has questions about the commercial/organisational and legal aspects of an artistic activity, including questions about the social status of the artist, income tax, VAT, copyright, forms of organisation, marketing and promotion, financial management, insurance, international work, etc. Kunstenloket's website provides the answer to many questions. Kunstenloket can also be contacted by email or phone. If necessary, an appointment can be made with a consultant, in Antwerp, Brussels or Ghent, or on Skype. Kunstenloket is also organising training during to go into the various topics in more detail.

Interview with Jan Timmermans, Director, Kunstenloket

“The achievement of PRACTICS is an openness and willingness between organisations across Europe to discuss in an open way about each other's experience. It is a dialogue that has been established”.

- ***Why did you decide to become a Mobility Infopoint under PRACTICS?***

Kunstenloket was already an Infopoint for Flanders before PRACTICS was set up. We are funded by the Flemish government and we had already had questions about outgoing mobility. It was interesting for us to be part of PRACTICS, to see how others think and work, look for best practices and understand what is good and less good in how we operate.

Another reason for joining PRACTICS was the need to highlight in Belgium and at European level the importance and the impact of the work of an Infopoint and the impact legislation and administration has on the cultural sector - not only in terms of mobility, but also as regards business development.

²⁰ <http://www.kunstenloket.be/en>

- ***What are the benefits for your organisation and for the culture sector from being a Mobility Infopoint and having been part of the PRACTICS project as an Infopoint?***

Thanks to PRACTICS we were able to translate parts of our website and information tools into English and French. Also more artists and operators became aware of the existence of Kunstenloket as the Belgian Mobility Infopoint. Before PRACTICS we were mainly concerned about people leaving Belgium to work abroad. Now Kunstenloket also can provide solutions and answers to people from abroad who come to work in Belgium. There are also other benefits, although they are sometimes difficult to evaluate. Many benefits are certainly in the long-term, including the increased knowledge within Kunstenloket staff and a wider network of Infopoints across Europe.

- ***What was the added value for PRACTICS to have your organisation as a partner?***

I suppose that Kunstenloket is a 'good practice' model, with all its own limits and difficulties. We have some experience on how you organise an Infopoint with the staffing and funding complexities.

- ***Who did you effectively manage to target as Infopoint?***

With our work we mainly target artists and cultural operators, but also civil servants, the public authorities and the political level of the government.

The number of artists and operators asking questions related to mobility has increased since the beginning of the project. Approximately some 5,000 users per year ask Kunstenloket questions related to mobility. This represents a mix of individual artists, companies and agents. Users come mainly from Brussels and Flanders, but also increasingly from outside Belgium: the UK, the Netherlands, France and Germany. Kunstenloket has yearly 5,000 clients; 3,000 of them ask questions about several issues. Questions about in- and outgoing mobility are increasing.

- ***What are your strengths as an Infopoint?***

Kunstenloket operates as a neutral and objective Infopoint; we are 100% funded by government. This also contributes to our credibility. A clear strength is also the quality and accuracy of the information we provide. Further, we also have a good online tool: our website. The information provided is fine-tuned to meet the needs of artists and cultural organisations. We provide information about legal texts in plain language understandable for almost everyone. This is absolutely essential, but of course costs a lot of money, because experts are not always able to put complex issues in commonly understandable language. Kunstenloket is also very knowledgeable about the status of the artist in Belgium. Finally, Kunstenloket also has well-established contacts with the public authorities, mainly in Flanders, where we are recognised as experts.

- ***What challenges and difficulties did you come across working as an Infopoint?***

At European level, Kunstenloket has been recognised as a 'good practice' model in terms of providing information on mobility of artists. This also brings some 'pressure' to maintain a high quality standard. The tricky thing with providing information on mobility is that we operate in a 'reversed economic model'. Supply creates demand. When you offer a service as an Infopoint, the demand increases immediately and more and more questions are asked. Also, users are asking increasing complex questions; there are many individual situations which need an individual answer. This means you need to increase the knowledge and quality of your services. A small organisation can be quickly pushed to its limits.

Other challenges include the following: the fact that we operate as a small team, the complexity of Belgium and how increasingly complex and difficult it is to explain things, the need to constantly update the information we provide.

Finally the fact that many organisations in Belgium face heavy budget cuts will also impact our work as an Infopoint. In this sense we think that 'peer-to-peer' information shared by artists is likely to

develop further. We consider this is a challenge to avoid as, when it comes to legislation, we observe that very often the information given by artists to artists is incorrect.

- ***What trends and hot topics have you identified as regards mobility of artists/culture operators?***

For people from abroad who want to work in Belgium, the main question is how they can find work and start working, given the fact that there is a special artists' status in Belgium. So people want to know how it works and how they can access benefits. The question of visas and work permits is of key importance for non-EU nationals.

For people who want to work outside Belgium the main topics are visas and work permits (e.g. working in the U.S.) and taxes.

Value added tax (VAT) is also an important issue.

We can definitely observe a trend towards an increased mobility from cultural professionals from the Netherlands; this may be due to declining funding in the Netherlands.

- ***What improvements do you see for yourself as an Infopoint in the future?***

We definitely need more in-house expertise on intellectual property rights (IPR) and mobility. IPR is a booming issue and a very complex matter.

What else is needed is advice for artists on how to organise themselves more efficiently as professionals, including for instance questions on 'How am I going to be able to look for a good accountant?', 'How can I build up my career?', 'In times of declining public funding, how can I find other income sources from the private sector?'. Another important issue is the increase in cross-over cooperation between arts disciplines while working on a project internationally. As we know, mobility is not only physical but also virtual (over Internet). The question is how can artists establish international cooperation across arts disciplines within a legally correct format?

- ***What challenges and difficulties did you come across being part of PRACTICS?***

Sometimes it is difficult to have a clearly measurable output of the benefit of your participation while investing working time and resources in a large-scale project such as PRACTICS; especially if you are a small organisation with limited resources as regards staff.

- ***According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?***

PRACTICS started to establish a network of Infopoints at EU level. This is an important achievement. The achievement of PRACTICS is an openness and willingness between organisations across Europe to discuss in an open way about each other's experience. It is a dialogue that has been established. The experience of PRACTICS has shown what are the 'do's and don'ts' when you want to set up and run an Infopoint. Yet there is still a long way to go.

- ***What challenges and opportunities do you consider for the future of PRACTICS?***

We need to have reliable Infopoints in more countries with approximately the same quality standards, same working conditions and similar approach to similar situations. A challenge will be to ensure all partners respect the quality standards. There must be a strong commitment on the part of future PRACTICS Infopoints to quality standards. Also I believe it is essential that Infopoints are neutral and objective, ideally funded by government and that they are not self-supporting.

PRACTICS could also establish some more in-depth exchange at manager level and exchange should also focus on the every day activities of the Infopoints in their professional environment.



Founded in 1995 in Barcelona, Spain, **Interarts**²¹ is a not for profit independent organisation set up to promote human development through culture. Its mission is to foster the role of culture from a theoretical perspective – through research, strategy design, knowledge transfer- as well as from a concrete and practical approach – through local and international cooperation, project coordination and management. Thanks to its pioneering activity in many diverse areas and to its consolidated group of international experts, Interarts can make unique content contributions on cultural rights, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, the creative industries and innovation fields. From its central office in Barcelona, Interarts works, through a network of solid alliances with local agents, in different geographic areas, mainly in Europe, the Americas and Africa.

Interview with Jordi Baltá, Project Coordinator and Dace Kiulina, Project assistant, Interarts

“PRACTICS raised awareness on issues related to the mobility of artists and cultural professionals at European level. It also helped to provide specialised and user-friendly information on topics related to mobility, such as funding opportunities, country profiles, regulatory issues, which helped to improve information provision considerably”.

- ***Why did you decide to become a Mobility Infopoint under PRACTICS?***

Interarts has always aimed to support international cultural cooperation, including the mobility of artists and culture professionals. In this respect, participation in the PRACTICS project presented a good opportunity to further develop our activities in this field and to engage in relevant ongoing processes at European level. In addition, becoming an Infopoint under PRACTICS gave us an opportunity to develop new contacts with local artists and cultural professionals, gain visibility and be more responsive to the sector’s needs.

- ***What are the benefits for your organisation and for the culture sector from being a Mobility Infopoint and having been part of the PRACTICS project?***

Carrying out work as an Infopoint has enabled us to deepen our knowledge in some specific issues related to artistic mobility in Europe, including the cultural infrastructure in other European countries as well as legal issues and other professional development needs in Spain.

The project has helped us also to establish contacts with some authorities responsible for areas of interest in the field of mobility, as well as some important umbrella organisations working in the field of culture. To a certain extent, this has also allowed us to gain visibility among professionals in the field, even though this process has proven difficult.

Moreover, we could provide our experience and knowledge, as well as our resources, to provide as expert and user-friendly information as possible.

- ***According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?***

PRACTICS raised awareness on issues related to the mobility of artists and cultural professionals at European level. It also helped to provide specialised and user-friendly information on topics related to mobility, such as funding opportunities, country profiles, regulatory issues, which helped to improve information provision considerably. Finally, PRACTICS provided a common template for information services in this field, which will however need to be further refined.

²¹ <http://www.interarts.net/en/index.php>

- ***Who did you effectively manage to target with your activities under PRACTICS and to whom have you communicated about PRACTICS?***

In the first place, we targeted Spanish artists and cultural professionals, by communicating about the services provided in the context of PRACTICS. We also tried to establish contacts with some relevant national and regional government institutions working in the cultural field, informing them about the obstacles that artists encounter when going abroad. Through the mapping activity we were able to identify relevant information providers in Spain and Catalonia, which helped us to establish links and encourage discussions on the improvement of mobility information at national level. We communicated information about PRACTICS in the first place to Spanish artists, cultural professionals and the umbrella organisations representing them, as the main users of the Interarts Infopoint, as well as to professionals wishing to come to Spain. We also made contact with relevant universities and MA programmes in arts and culture, which are links with young emerging artists and cultural professionals. In the context of the Spanish mapping on mobility information provision, contacts were established with other information providers. At institutional level, we contacted national and local authorities responsible for cultural policies. Finally, information has been provided more broadly to subscribers of Interarts' *Cyberkaris* newsletter, sent monthly to roughly 5000 e-mail addresses, which includes students, cultural professionals and other interested parties in many countries.

- ***What are your strengths as an Infopoint?***

Interarts has a long experience in the field of culture and international cultural cooperation at national and international level. This knowledge helped us to be able to provide competent and expert information in a user-friendly way. Given our knowledge in some specific issues, such as funding and training, we can produce documents aimed at improving the accessibility of information which can facilitate international mobility. Interarts is also a well-known organisation in Europe; this facilitated the work with other European organisations and networks.

Thanks to our connections with Latin America, we were able to work beyond Europe, even though this was not the major purpose of the project.

- ***What challenges and difficulties did you come across working as an Infopoint?***

Being an agency that works mainly in the field of cultural policies at institutional and international level, it was a challenge to reach individual artists and cultural professionals and develop a regular relationship with them; nevertheless, we think it was positive to us to become better known among certain sectors. However, the complex political and social nature and the large size of Spain, as well as the importance of informal information channels in the country, have made it difficult to gather as much information as necessary and to reach all relevant target groups.

Some of the topics covered by PRACTICS were also rather new to us, including in particular regulatory issues. Anyway, we tried to overcome this obstacle by deepening our knowledge in this field through participation in training activities and carrying out research. Where necessary, external advice has been sought, and exchanges with other Infopoints have also helped on a number of occasions.

- ***What (new) trends and hot topics have you identified as regards mobility of artists/culture operators?***

Difficult to say – most enquiries correspond to rather well established themes and needs, including funding, training and employment. This may also be due to our own image as an organisation. On the other hand, it has become increasingly clear that mobility trends go beyond the EU - indeed, many requests involved cooperation between Europe and other world regions, particularly Latin America.

- **What improvements do you see for yourself as an Infopoint in the future?**

We would need to improve our communication strategy and to establish more regular contacts with artists and cultural professionals, so as to be more aware of needs and test the information tools more regularly. We would also need to continue networking with other information providers in Spain and Catalonia in order to exchange information and signpost users when necessary.

- **What challenges and opportunities do you consider for the future of PRACTICS?**

There are several challenges and opportunities, including the need to maintain mobility as a European priority, especially in the context of the global crisis. We also need to improve the exchange of information among partners, and particularly among Infopoints. It is also essential to develop more active networks among information providers in Spain. Finally, PRACTICS partners will have to improve the outreach of information tools and to improve the quality of their use, including through training and capacity-building activities of professionals and public authorities.



SICA Centre for International Cultural Activities²² stimulates and supports the Dutch cultural sector's international activities and ambitions and acts as a platform for the debate on international cultural policy. It also provides information and advice pertinent to all cultural sectors and disciplines regarding specific countries, activities, sources of financial support and available networks. The European Cultural Contact Point (CCP) and European Citizen's Point (ECP) are both part of SICA and provide information about the European Culture programme, Citizens for Europe and other European opportunities for international cultural cooperation. In addition, SICA is responsible for the secretary ship of EUNIC Netherlands, the Dutch branch of the European Union's umbrella organisation for national institutes for culture from various European countries. SICA also acts as the executive agency for a variety of programmes by the Ministries of Education, Culture and Science and Foreign Affairs, as well as the European Union. SICA is also the entry point to the Dutch cultural sector for Dutch Embassies and foreign cultural organisations.

Interview with Jan Kennis, Deputy Director and Ellen Adriaanssen, Project leader, SICA

“PRACTICS managed to involve many organisations in the whole cultural sector on mobility and it helped to put mobility onto the political agenda at EU and national level”.

- **Why did you decide to become a Mobility Infopoint under PRACTICS?**

SICA had already been advising about mobility for many years when PRACTICS partners approached us to join the project. Participating in PRACTICS was for us a means to deepen and improve our service provision. PRACTICS is an interesting network of organisations. Working with PRACTICS led us towards a standardised way of presenting information relevant for mobility of artists and operators. SICA also has a strong expertise outside the EU.

- **What were the benefits for your organisation and for the culture sector in your country from being a Mobility Infopoint and having been part of the PRACTICS project?**

The PRACTICS network proved to be important for us, to be able to discuss mobility and information on mobility, and to get appropriate information from other countries. PRACTICS also helped us to access other audiences in Europe and it helped us to profile SICA at European level, through easy contact with other organisations.

²² <http://www.sica.nl/en>

Definitely PRACTICS helped to consolidate SICA as a portal for foreign organisations to reach the Netherlands.

- ***What was the added value for PRACTICS to have your organisation as a partner?***

We had worked as an Infopoint for 10 to 12 years. Right from the start of the project we had experience to share with other project partners. Because SICA is also hosting the Culture Contact Point and the Infopoint for the European citizens' programme, our Infopoint has several entry points and we managed to work in a more coordinated way on mobility.

- ***According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?***

PRACTICS managed to involve many organisations in the whole cultural sector on mobility and it helped to put mobility onto the political agenda at EU and national level.

- ***Who did you effectively manage to target as Infopoint?***

Alongside its activities as an 'entry point' into the Netherlands for foreign artists and operators, SICA also advises all Netherlands-based culture organisations who are active or want to be active abroad. SICA deals with the whole cultural sector and is actively working on improving and promoting mobility at all levels, with the Dutch government and with EU institutions.

- ***What are your strengths as an Infopoint?***

SICA has a good network in the Netherlands. However we usually focus less on individual artists and more on cultural organisations.

SICA is very much in tune with what is happening internationally in culture, and in the Netherlands we are the only organisation that works internationally in all sectors. SICA also has a strong expertise in some countries outside the EU which was also beneficial to PRACTICS partners.

We also have close working relations with sector-specific organisations like the Theatre Institute, Trans Artists, and others.

- ***What new trends and hot topics have you identified as regards mobility of artists/culture operators?***

Currently the cultural sector in the Netherlands is undergoing important changes. Funding is a very important topic for many cultural organisations and artists in the Netherlands. Everyone is looking more to Europe to find funding. However, for many operators this is quite difficult as one needs to work in a different way to access EU funding. Visas are another important issue. In 2006 there was a change in policies and regulations. We have in the Netherlands quite good regulations, now, for foreign artists staying less than 4 weeks. Those staying over 4 weeks can get a work permit more easily, provided they are paid a certain amount of money, but smaller theatre groups in particular have difficulties to pay these high salaries. Questions on taxation have been solved quite suitably in the Netherlands in the past few years and also questions concerning social security don't appear too often.

We can also observe that organisations are now operating more and more commercially and going abroad when they get higher fees. Decisions to work abroad are based more on money, and less on artistic considerations. It also means that organisations are less investing in artistic terms. This may trigger a shift towards questions and information around fees.

- ***What challenges and opportunities do you consider for your future as an Infopoint and for the future of PRACTICS?***

As regards SICA's activity as an Infopoint we need to have more focus to achieve a higher level of quality and in-depth information. We also need to manage better the expectations of users as regards general information about other countries. The current changes in the cultural sector in the Netherlands may ultimately also impact the provision of information on mobility.

As regards PRACTICS, we need to address more efficiently the common concerns of mobility at the political level. The wider the network of PRACTICS Infopoints is, the more it will be taken seriously. A key challenge for PRACTICS will be how to ensure independent funding for the network in the future.

1.2. Monitoring and Evaluating Pilot Mobility Infopoints

by Judith Staines, PRACTICS Evaluation Expert

At the start of the project, it was agreed that it was important to track the results through an ongoing monitoring process. Partners were consulted on what information should be collected. While some PRACTICS partners were keen to collect a large amount of data about users of the pilot mobility information services, the Infopoints themselves were more pragmatic and recommended a realistic, user-oriented balance between data collection and information provision. As a result, a monitoring template was developed, collecting up to 19 data elements on each service user. Data protection legislation also had to be taken into account in how the data was collected and stored. Following a test phase in late 2009, Evaluation Expert Judith Staines requested the return of the monitoring information every quarter through 2010 and 2011 and produced regular analytical reports. As a result, nearly two full years of monitoring (January 2010 – November 2011) was collected and is presented in this summary.

1. *Mobility information enquiries logged*

Interarts	108
Kunstenloket	366
SICA	443
Wales Arts International	781
Total enquiries	1698

Enquiries increased by 41% from 2010 to 2011, partly due to improved communications activity. The number of enquiries received by Wales Arts International (WAI) substantially increased, nearly doubling between 2010 and 2011. Kunstenloket registered 32% more enquiries in 2011, while SICA and Interarts remained fairly static.

In addition, Interarts and Kunstenloket ran a mobile Infopoint at 2011 Culture in Motion conference in Brussels. All Infopoints, together with other mobility information providers, ran a mobile Infopoint at the ArtLab conference in Lecce, Italy (September 2011). WAI responded to mobility enquiries on their stand at WOMEX in Copenhagen in 2010 and 2011, dealing with around 80 enquiries per year. Enquiries dealt with at these mobile events are not included in the above statistics.

2. *Enquiry topics*

Funding & mobility opportunities	728	43%
Tax, Social Security & other fiscal, regulatory issues	251	15%
Information, research, networking and contacts	245	14%
Project development/general advice & partner search	191	11%
Visas & work permits	99	6%
Employment related (including internships)	83	5%
Other regulatory, mobility issues (copyright, qualifications)	22	
Miscellaneous	82	

The large majority of enquiries are on funding and mobility opportunities. This may reflect the fact that the majority of users are identified as individuals (artists, freelance cultural operators, curators, producers etc.) and are seeking individual mobility advice and resources.

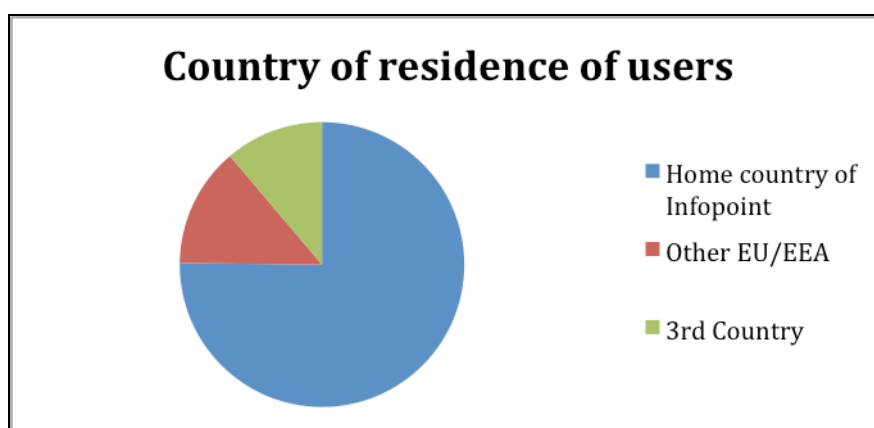
It is also noted that the pilot Infopoints are very heterogeneous and have different expertise and relationships with the cultural sector in their country/region. The spread of enquiry topics is entirely different for each Infopoint. The PRACTICS project established common quality standards and a shared information framework but each Infopoint has a different positioning in relation to cultural mobility, e.g. Kunstenloket provides legal and technical expertise on regulatory and administrative issues but it does not offer any advice on funding or international project development (being the responsibility of other agencies in Flanders). WAI works closely with the arts sector in Wales and indeed runs its own international funding schemes – it therefore fields a high number of enquiries related to funding, opportunities and project development and offers an advisory service on these topics. Interarts is more closely connected with cultural policy and cultural management organisations and networks than artists and artistic companies. SICA has a separate role as EU CCP (a different enquiry process) and has built up a good information service on funding and contacts which is accessed by both artists and Dutch embassies.

It should be noted that the Evaluation Expert found it difficult to get consistency in the reporting of enquiry topics (each Infopoint has their own system with different descriptors) and the breakdown should be taken as a guide only.

3. Country of residence of Infopoint users

Three quarters of Infopoint users come from the home country where the service is located. The large majority of these users seek information about outgoing mobility (although some are local cultural operators who have mobility questions about incoming artists). Around 25% of users are located elsewhere and they seek information about mobility into that country. It was notable that the proportion of users by country of residence remained consistent across 2010 and 2011.

'Home' country of respective Infopoint	1248	75%
Other EU/EEA country	226	14%
3 rd country/non-EU	186	11%



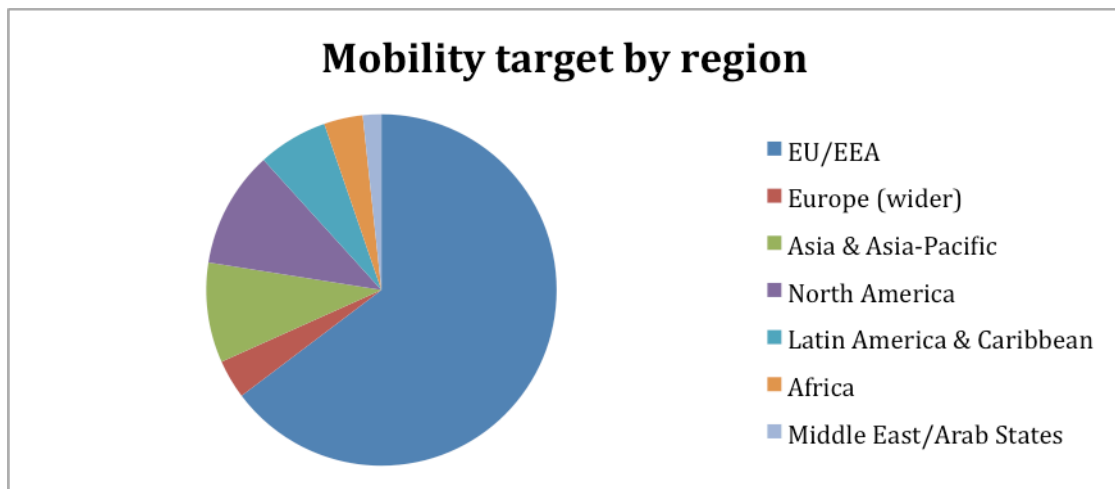
4. Mobility target countries and regions

Since the majority of mobility enquiries were from artists and cultural operators based in the country of the Infopoint and concerned outgoing mobility, the Infopoints were required to develop an extensive range of contacts and expertise about mobility worldwide. It has been interesting to track the mobility target countries and regions and to note evolving patterns.

'Home' country of respective Infopoint ²³	416	23%
Other EU/EEA country	758	42%
3 rd country/non-EU	640	35%

Requests were fairly evenly split between EU/EEA countries (41%) and Third Countries (36%). Again it was notable that the broad geographical spread changed very little from 2010 to 2011. Analysed in more detail, the following results show the mobility target by global region:

EU/EEA	1174	65%
North America	195	11%
Asia & Asia-Pacific	167	9%
Latin America & Caribbean	117	6%
Europe (non-EU/EEA)	65	
Africa	65	
Middle East/Arab States	31	



A total of 110 countries were cited as mobility targets over the period (more than half the countries of the world). Over the two years, some countries emerged as significant mobility targets, eliciting a large number of requests. Popular EU target countries were Italy, France, UK, Netherlands and Germany. The USA received the most overall enquiries (9% of total), and other significant 3rd country targets were India, China, Canada, Japan, Brazil and Australia.

More detailed analysis indicates:

- good evidence that the choice of mobility target country is driven by *economic factors* (i.e. a thriving cultural industry/rising economy).

²³ i.e. Belgium, Netherlands, Spain, Wales

- some evidence that choice of mobility target country is influenced by *linguistic, geographical or historical proximity*.
- a high level of *cultural diversity* interest is visible in the choice of mobility target country.

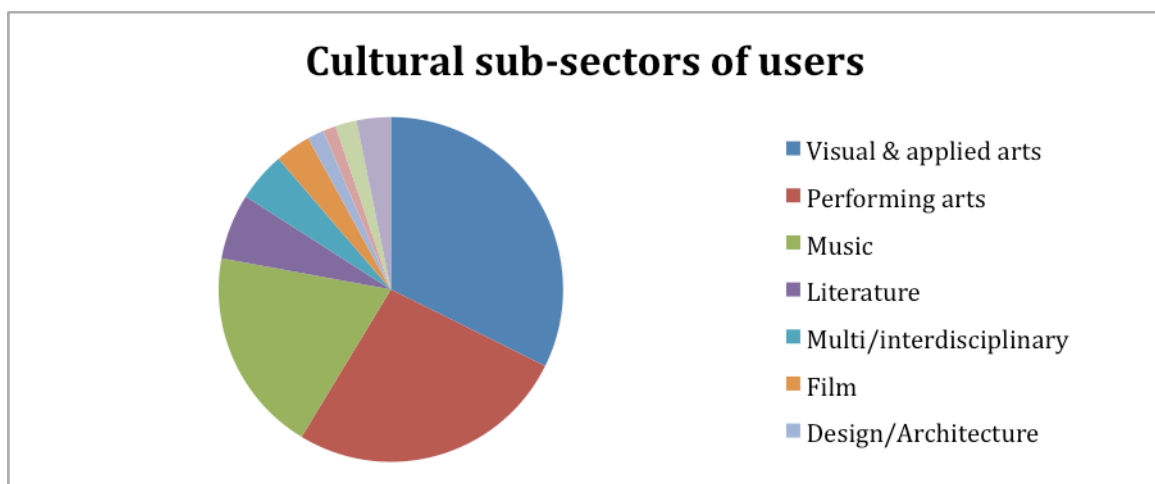
The main observable patterns of mobility are:

- A consistent proportion of country interest is incoming mobility to Infopoint countries (23%)
- There is a high proportion of interest from residents of Infopoint countries in mobility to other EU countries (42%). Many of the most popular target EU countries are in close geographical and/or linguistic proximity Infopoints.
- There is a consistently high interest in mobility to 3rd countries, most strongly demonstrated by users of WAI and SICA Infopoints, but low or very low interest in mobility to 3rd countries from users of Kunstenloket and Interarts
- Mobility target countries outside the EU are extremely diverse
- The non-EU countries which are the most popular mobility targets have relatively strong cultural and creative industries and/or rising levels of economic development.
- There seems to be interest in world cultural hotspots: China, Brazil, Japan, Turkey & USA (+ EU targets) – although information is collected for countries, not cities.
- There is some interest in mobility to countries with historic links, including former colonies
- Interest in cultural diversity, culture and development and intercultural dialogue is evident from the fact that many countries cited are obviously not economically favoured at present, and have little or no sources of country-specific funding.

5. Typology of PRACTICS Infopoint users

Infopoints gave information on users and arts discipline, distinguishing between individuals and organisations. Individuals (mostly artists and freelance cultural operators) have less access to information and are an important target; enquiries from organisations present different needs and may generate mobility activity (touring, festivals etc.) which reaches a larger number of cultural workers and more substantial impacts on creative and cultural industries and cultural exports.

Individuals/Artists:	937	(55%)
Organisations:	752	(45%)



PRACTICS virtual/online mobility advice services

Throughout 2010-11 there were considerable difficulties in accessing web statistics to analyse the reach and impact of the online mobility services offered by the Infopoints. Several organisations had incompatible or inaccessible analytical tools. Only Interarts provided consistent data (Google Analytics) for the period, though some data was received from Kunstenloket and WAI. Interarts reports demonstrated a much more extensive user base for the new mobility information service than is shown by the number of enquiries: nearly 4500 visitors, mostly from Europe and Latin America, registering over 1700 downloads of PRACTICS Infotools.

Monitoring and Evaluating the PRACTICS project – main learning points

At the start of the project, concern was expressed by some partners about setting up a continuous evaluation process, with apprehension about comparisons between Infopoints results and how this might impact on perceptions of the organisations by public funders. There has been a considerable evolution since that point. The process of collecting, analysing and sharing the results has been perceived as a very useful benchmarking exercise by all concerned. It has produced valuable results which will be of interest to the EU, national institutions and other mobility information providers.

Of course, there were inevitable problems in chasing up monitoring reports and continued inconsistencies in presentation of data. At the start, the reporting period of 3 months was considered very short and it was thought that Infopoints would quickly adapt to the process of continually logging enquiries and it would only be necessary to collect the data once a year. However, this was not the case. For many, the production of a 3-monthly report remained an onerous task and took some time.

In any future project, attention should be given to create an online or offline tool which can be – and IS – used to log enquiries as they are received and dealt with. The local coordinator should only have to aggregate monitoring by different staff within the same organisation for regular reports. More work should also be done at the start of any follow up project to ensure greater compatibility in the reporting language of information topics, arts disciplines and user type to ensure meaningful comparisons.

It is regrettable that the quality, frequency and availability of web analytics were so patchy. All the Infopoints had a redesign or upgrade of their website over the project period and it was hoped that Google Analytics would be integrated to ensure comparability of site users and downloads of Practics Infotools. This did not materialise for three of the Infopoints, possibly due to staff training and web design decisions. A future project should pay considerably more attention to this, with training and support for an efficient monitoring of the online, as well as offline, mobility information service.

The organisational stock take initiated by the Evaluation Expert was appreciated as a valuable contribution to the project, allowing partners to voice concerns and present different perceptions of the development of the project and any new issues to be incorporated. The stock take exercise was felt to be so useful by one partner it has been adopted in a new EU project.

2. PRACTICS - a dynamic coalition to improve information on mobility

2.1. A European-wide partnership

The four pilot Infopoints worked closely together with their project partners from different countries and thematic fields. Under the project coordination of TINFO, the Finnish Theatre Information Centre, PRACTICS brought together the four above-mentioned pilot Infopoints plus Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, the Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe (Pearle*), the European Citizen Action Service, IETM - International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts, the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC), the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), the Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO), and the National Museum Network of Romania.

Enhancing coordination and networking between these organisations was part of the activities undertaken as part of the PRACTICS project. Each of these organisations had and still has a different approach and distinct experience and history as regards the support of mobility to artists and cultural professionals and the provisions of information related to mobility; each of them has his/her priorities in terms of target groups, countries. The heterogeneity of the project partners and the richness of the exchanges during the numerous conferences, workshops, seminars, staff exchanges and exchange of best practices was undeniably one of the richest elements of the PRACTICS pilot project.

Obviously the dialogue within the culture sector did not limit itself to those who were officially partners in the project. PRACTICS opened up the dialogue to numerous cultural organisations in Europe, encouraging networking with PRACTICS partners, and fostering coordination to ease mobility. This included the other mobility pilot projects, but many other cultural organisations in Europe and beyond. PRACTICS partners spoke about PRACTICS and established and/or further strengthened contacts with cultural organisations in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. PRACTICS was mentioned and/or presented as 'good practice' in numerous meetings and seminars outside the EU, including Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Morocco, Russia, South Africa, Switzerland, and Turkey.

The following pages give a closer insight into what some PRACTICS partners which were not involved as Infopoints consider as the main benefits and challenges of the PRACTICS project and the lessons they have learned from being part of PRACTICS.



Created in 1991, **Pearle*** is the **Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe**²⁴, the European Trade Federation of Performing Arts Organisations. Pearle* is an international non-for-profit organisation which represents through its member associations almost 4,000 theatres, theatre production companies, orchestras and music ensembles, opera houses, ballet and dance companies, festivals, and other organisations within the performing arts sector across Europe.

Interview with Anita Debaere, Director, Pearle*

“As such PRACTICS has attracted the attention of policy makers at national and European level, of key stakeholders in the cultural sector and of the individual and cultural operators on the issue of mobility and information relevant for mobility”.

- ***How has your organisation benefited from being part of PRACTICS?***

The European Parliament has sent an important message to the culture sector by making available the funds for the mobility pilot projects. The MEPs explicitly endorsed the importance of cultural mobility. The decision of the EP was fully in line with the demands of civil society asking for these pilots and being ready to develop them. It was of key importance to have the opportunity to enter into a project, to develop it and to test the possibility of such an information system and to be allowed to get the outcome we would hope we would get out of it. ‘Piloting’ means ‘testing out’ and right from the start PRACTICS was allowed to conclude that this works or does not work. This approach was a very positive part of the pilot project.

Pearle* is and has for a long time been very much in favour of creating for our sector ‘hubs’ where necessary information for mobility can be found. In many EU Member States information is fragmented between different institutions and organisations and it’s impossible for a culture professional to find all relevant information in one place. Pearle* members, ranging from smaller to bigger organisations, are all confronted with touring companies and foreign artists and they believe it would really make their lives easier if all the information that is needed for mobility is collated in one central Infopoint. At the same Infopoints also help individual artists who seek information for their specific situation.

Pearle* benefitted from being involved in the process of setting up a pilot network of 4 Info Points. We have learned how information can be transferred to the sector in different countries and by different organisations. There is not one-size-fits-all solution. You always have to look at the specificity of each country. For Pearle* this was an interesting learning experience. It was also important for Pearle* to be part of a larger network supporting PRACTICS and to work with other partners coming from sectors other than the performing arts. It was very enriching to hear about issues and problems linked to mobility that we do not encounter in own sector. From the conservatories it was interesting to hear about professional qualifications; from museums and visual arts other issues came up.

²⁴ <http://www.pearle.ws/>

- ***What was the added value for PRACTICS to have your organisation as a partner and what activities have you undertaken within PRACTICS?***

Pearle* is working a lot on mobility and regulatory matters (e.g. taxation, visas, social security) and we monitor EU legislation closely. We also involved PRACTICS colleagues and partners in this work by giving them the opportunities to share examples and take part in the workshops we organised on regulatory obstacles to mobility. All in all Pearle* organised three thematic seminars: one on taxation and social security, one on visas and work permits and one on intellectual property rights.

The seminars drew the attention of the EU institutions and the cultural sector to the main areas of mobility to which artists and cultural operators are confronted. We also did a series of interviews in Spain with culture practitioners on mobility and the obstacles they come across. From these interviews we learned that there are specific questions depending on the country people want to travel to. In terms of information provision required for people coming to a given country, the number and type of questions asked might be different from those for people going to the neighbouring country. As a result an Infopoint might operate slightly differently in each country, and become specialised in certain questions, because of a different demand. This is something also to be aware when talking about the Infopoints.

Pearle* also actively promoted the PRACTICS project and tried to involve other stakeholders, such as trade unions, or other culture sector organisations, including the music sector. Together with partners from the creative industries' platform we co-organised an event on mobility. One of the outcomes of this event was that there has been a full acknowledgement and endorsement of mobility Infopoints for the wider cultural sector. Pearle* and the trade unions in the performing arts sector at European level adopted a joint statement where we endorse the importance of such mobility information services and the need for employers and trade unions to be associated with mobility Infopoints to ensure quality and accuracy of information.

- ***To whom have you communicated about PRACTICS?***

Pearle* has communicated about PRACTICS to its members (and their members) to whom we reported, amongst others, at our General Assembly meetings. We also gave information about PRACTICS to different Directorates General of the European Commission in all areas we are working in (employment, justice and home affairs, taxation, internal market) and to fellow networks (such as organisations which are members of the platforms of the culture and creative industries, and the access to culture platform) and trade unions. We also informed national governments on an ad hoc and informal basis, depending on each country.

- ***What challenges and difficulties did you come across being part of PRACTICS?***

A challenging part was certainly to work with different types of organisations: the starting point is different and the knowledge about mobility and information on mobility is very different too. Moving towards each other and working together was an interesting experience. The new partners of a follow-up project to PRACTICS won't have to go through this process anymore; they can step in and learn from the experience of the pilot project.

- ***According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?***

PRACTICS has contributed to the notion of 'facilitating mobility'. PRACTICS has shown that it's the grass root level which develops a system to make mobility work better. Undeniably, the project also

has helped those working in cultural policy understand that they must look beyond the artistic aspect of mobility. If you want artists to create their work and to be able to develop and also get promoted in other countries, you also need a framework to allow them to do that. As such PRACTICS has attracted the attention of policy makers at national and European level, of key stakeholders in the cultural sector and of the individual and cultural operators on the issue of mobility and information relevant for mobility.

- ***What challenges and opportunities do you consider for the future of PRACTICS?***

The most important thing is to 'keep the flame alight'. We need to widen the network of Infopoints, which is also a challenge, because we need to find a common way of providing information while committing to quality standards. After the testing phase of the pilot project with 4 Infopoints, we need to find out how to make the network of Infopoints work on a larger scale. Other challenges will be to ensure the financial sustainability of Infopoints and of the network of Infopoints, to communicate about the services to cultural professionals in the wider cultural sector, and to be recognised as the main entry point on cultural mobility by the cultural organisations and public authorities. It will also be important to have good European coordination amongst such mobility Infopoints in order to guarantee and ensure that the quality criteria of information provision are applied across Europe.



European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)²⁵ was created in 1991 as an international non-profit organization, independent of political parties, commercial interests and the EU Institutions. ECAS' mission is to enable NGOs and individuals to make their voice heard with the EU by providing advice on how to lobby, fundraise, and defend European citizenship rights. ECAS is a large cross-sectoral European association bringing together members from different areas of activity: civil liberties, culture, development, health and social welfare, as well as general civil society development agencies.

Interview with Claire Damilano, Legal Officer, ECAS

"PRACTICS is at the origin of the creation of a real network of local organisations. It will facilitate the exchange of information and of local practice, which is essential when signposting artists to a competent body".

- ***How has your organisation benefited from being part of PRACTICS?***

ECAS is used to working with organisations specialised in immigration and mobility rights in general. PRACTICS gave us the possibility to work with organisations coming from an area that we are not used to working with. To meet people who give advice on a day-to-day basis as we do but in a different way, PRACTICS was a chance for ECAS to exchange experiences and good practices.

- ***What was the added value for PRACTICS to have your organisation as a partner?***

ECAS has extensive experience and competence in the area of free movement of persons within the EU and in managing an advice service. This experience helped in the preparation of the joint ECAS-PRACTICS publication *Most frequently asked questions focusing on the main difficulties for artists who work across borders, such as social security and taxation*.

²⁵ <http://www.ecas-citizens.eu/>

- ***What challenges and difficulties did you come across being part of PRACTICS?***

ECAS assists different kinds of users, but it was the first time that we worked in the cultural area. So we had to adapt ourselves and the way we see mobility. Usually ECAS' partners are Brussels-based organisations and European organisations, but within PRACTICS we worked with organisations which are more regional, which changed our perspective and point of view.

- ***According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?***

PRACTICS helped to reduce the obstacles faced by artists and those in the cultural sector when working internationally, and highlighted the need for correct and adapted information in very specific areas (social security rights, visas, etc.). PRACTICS is at the origin of the creation of a real network of local organisations. It will facilitate the exchange of information and of local practice, which is essential when signposting artists to a competent body.

- ***Who are the targets groups of your activities and to whom have you communicated about PRACTICS?***

ECAS' target group is very large as we are a large cross-sectoral European association bringing together members from different areas of activity: civil liberties, development, health and social welfare, as well as general civil society development agencies. We have communicated about PRACTICS to our members and to our partners from other projects and also to the wider public when ECAS was present in conferences and meeting linked to mobility.

- ***What challenges and opportunities do you consider for the future of PRACTICS?***

Over a number of years free movement rights have been reinforced by European Union law, decisions of the European Court of Justice and all the initiatives put in place to promote mobility inside the EU. However, with the recent economic crises, more and more obstacles to mobility are developing, including unnecessary red-tape, limitation of exchange programmes, etc. PRACTICS has the opportunity to show the necessity of being able to access good and free advice to help artists and cultural professionals and operators to develop their cross-border projects.



IETM – International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts²⁶

is a network and membership organisation which exists to stimulate the quality, development and contexts of contemporary performing arts in a global environment by initiating and facilitating professional networking and communication, the dynamic exchange of information, know-how transfer and presentations of examples of good practice. IETM's legal status is an international non-profit association under Belgian law (AISBL). For more than 20 years IETM has been actively advocating improved arts mobility in Europe and beyond. In 1989 IETM founded the Roberto Cimetta Fund for mobility of Central and Eastern Europe performing arts professionals, as a programme of IETM. Between 1990 and 1994 IETM published guides on all sorts of EU funding which could finance cultural projects, including mobility. In 1994 IETM wrote 'An Action Plan for Arts Mobility' as a contribution to the Dutch EU Presidency. In 1996 IETM re-founded the Roberto Cimetta Fund as a fund for arts mobility in the Mediterranean as an independent not-for profit organisation. Since 2000 IETM has contributed significantly to the arts' mobility agenda in Europe. In 2002, with the financial support of the European Cultural Foundation, it carried out a feasibility study on an online mobility information tool and launched in 2003 the *On the Move* website as a project funded by the European Commission, the European Culture Foundation and the Dutch Fonds voor Podiumkunsten. IETM supported *On the Move* (OTM) in various financial and non-financial ways until 2007 and helped establish OTM as an independent not-for-profit organisation. In 2006 IETM brought a consortium together to form the partnership for the "Mobile.Home" project funded by 2006 EU Year of Workers' Mobility. A year later IETM helped draft the European Parliament's amendment setting up the budget line for mobility pilots projects which became operational at the end of 2008 and which enabled the funding of PRACTICS. Last but not least, in 2011 IETM fought for a Mobility Fund Asia with various Asian ministries and foundations. IETM has been a partner of two pilot projects: PRACTICS and SPACE.

Interview with Mary Ann DeVlieg, Secretary General, IETM

"The PRACTICS project has been very useful for the sector, in two ways: making mobility information more accessible to professionals and greatly improving the visibility of arts mobility and the competences of the Infopoints in the countries involved".

- **How has your organisation benefited from being part of PRACTICS?**

IETM, whose mission is to facilitate and encourage cross-border exchange and collaboration, is an aggregator and disseminator of information useful to the contemporary performing arts sector. As such, it is in our interest and the interest of our members to provide up-to-date information and hand-on help regarding mobility of cultural operators, artists and their works.

- **What was the added value for PRACTICS to have your organisation as a partner?**

IETM being part of PRACTICS had the advantage of disseminating information to a very large segment of the total professional sector relatively easily and effectively. IETM has communicated about PRACTICS to approximately 570 contemporary performing arts professionals from almost 60 countries, and their funders (our associate members).

- **According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?**

The PRACTICS project has been very useful for the sector, in two ways: making mobility information more accessible to professionals and greatly improving the visibility of arts mobility and the

²⁶ <http://www.ietm.org/>

competences of the Infopoints in the countries involved. The best result of the PRACTICS pilot project is the continuation into PRACTICS 2 with more partners and an increased 'professionalisation' of the project.

- ***What challenges and opportunities do you consider for the future of PRACTICS?***

Those concerned by mobility in the EU (together with local authorities and ministries) should be working together and consider themselves a whole 'ecology' which has a sense for those they are working for. Fragmentation and duplication make no sense and is a waste of time and money. I am not calling for an EU-run ERASMUS for culture as small is indeed beautiful in our sector, but it needs a kind of coordination point. I would argue heartily for a PRACTICS and OTM merger to become the starting point of such a coordination tool.



The Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO)²⁷ is an independent network of museum associations and similar bodies representing the museum community of Europe. NEMO connects European museums and their organisations to help ensure their place in the cultural development of Europe. NEMO fosters European policies that help museums in fulfilling their role as keepers of cultural heritage by promoting their importance to European policy makers. NEMO supports European museums in their aim to learn from each other by networking and cooperation.

Interview with Margherita Sani, NEMO

“Several useful tools were developed under PRACTICS, such as the Guide to funding opportunities which contains useful information for professionals working in museums”.

- ***How has your organisation benefited from being part of PRACTICS?***

It has been useful for NEMO to come in contact with the project partners and be informed about the functioning and the achievements of the PRACTICS project. It is especially useful to know about the existence of the Infopoints.

- ***What was the added value for PRACTICS to have your organisation as a partner and to whom have you communicated about PRACTICS?***

NEMO was able to disseminate the outcomes of PRACTICS to museum professionals across Europe and to segments of the heritage sector. In addition NEMO also encouraged the “testing”, so to speak, of the Infopoints by people working in the museum sector.

- ***What challenges and difficulties did you come across being part of PRACTICS?***

One of the challenges NEMO came across is the transfer of all the knowledge gained by PRACTICS to the museum and heritage field, which has its specificities when compared to the performing arts and other art forms. Museum people, generally speaking, seem to be more interested in short-term mobility, study visits or placements and job shadowing. As a result, so far a lot of the information provided by PRACTICS Infopoints is not so relevant for our audience. However, several useful tools

²⁷ <http://www.ne-mo.org/>

were developed under PRACTICS, such as the *Guide to funding opportunities* which contains useful information for professionals working in museums.

- ***According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?***

In the first place PRACTICS has established a network of four Infopoints, which is a very good start. They can become more resourceful and progressively satisfy the information needs of a variety of cultural workers in different fields. The outcomes of the Infopoints mappings and some of the tools produced are also interesting.

- ***What challenges and opportunities do you consider for the future of PRACTICS?***

One key challenge for the future is to ensure that PRACTICS Infopoints widen the scope of their action and of the information they provide. It would be interesting if Infopoints could carry out a specific mobility information needs analysis of museum professionals.



Fondazione Fitzcarraldo²⁸ is a foundation focused on groundbreaking approaches in planning, research, consulting, training and documentation of activities and projects, at the service of all those who create, practise, take part in, produce, promote and support the arts and culture.

Fitzcarraldo's work is based on a combination of specific expertise and integrated approach of the two departments, Research and Training, which are supported by a Resource and Documentation Centre and a New Media Unit. Fitzcarraldo was the PRACTICS project coordinator for the final project year (2011).

Interview with Elena Di Federico, Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, PRACTICS Coordinator

"The whole system set up by PRACTICS aims to achieve increased quality of information services for the benefit of artists and operators who work across borders".

- ***How has your organisation benefited from being part of PRACTICS?***

Being part of PRACTICS enabled the Fondazione Fitzcarraldo to consolidate and deepen its knowledge about the issues of artists' mobility, both in Italy and in the EU. The Foundation reinforced its connections with international organisations active in the field of mobility and increased its international visibility. Thanks to the high-quality partnership of PRACTICS, from 2009 to 2011 Fondazione Fitzcarraldo organised international workshops on mobility during its annual conference ArtLab. ArtLab was finally recognised by the Italian Ministry of Heritage and Cultural Activities as the national platform for the debate about artists' mobility.

- ***What was the added value for PRACTICS to have your organisation as a partner?***

Fondazione Fitzcarraldo is very experienced in the field of research on cultural policies and cultural affairs. The Foundation therefore carried out an Italian mobility information mapping, which helped the project partners understand by whom and how information on mobility is currently provided in Italy. The research methodology developed by Fondazione Fitzcarraldo was also used for similar mappings carried out by PRACTICS partners in Finland and Spain.

²⁸ www.fitzcarraldo.it/en

Also, thanks to its in-house capacities in the field of IT and new technologies, Fondazione Fitzcarraldo set up, managed and updated the PRACTICS website and its back office section, which was used as a tool for the internal communication and exchange of documents among all project partners.

Finally, the Foundation is very experienced in the management of international cultural projects, and therefore Fondazione Fitzcarraldo took over from TINFO to coordinate the project for the final year.

- ***What challenges and difficulties did you come across being part of PRACTICS?***

Fondazione Fitzcarraldo encountered some challenges during the final year of the project, after taking over the coordination. As the project lasted three years, obviously there had been staff changes in the organisations of several project partners. Also the difficult financial situation for many cultural organisations in EU, including some project partners, required unexpected changes in project activities, requiring last minute changes also in the budget planning. However, the Foundation and PRACTICS partners eventually met these challenges successfully.

- ***According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?***

PRACTICS has achieved several goals. It has helped to facilitate cultural mobility in the EU thanks to coordinated, high-quality mobility information provision, by setting up an effective network of pilot mobility Infopoints. The main asset of this network is the commitment towards common quality criteria and the undertaking by each Infopoint to set up strategic partnerships with other information providers and public authorities at national and international level. The whole system set up by PRACTICS aims to achieve increased quality of information services for the benefit of artists and operators who work across borders. PRACTICS has also produced several useful documents that can be shared between Infopoints in several countries and which showed the added value of having Infopoints and cultural organisations connected in a network. The project has contributed to the political discussion on artists' mobility at European and national level and in particular has helped raise awareness about cultural mobility in countries where so far only little attention had been paid to the issue. Finally, together with other mobility pilot projects, PRACTICS has also adopted a set of coherent policy recommendations on how to overcome obstacles to mobility and what support mechanisms are needed to sustain mobility.

- ***Who are the target groups of your activities and to whom have you communicated about PRACTICS?***

Fondazione Fitzcarraldo works in Italy and abroad in the fields of research, training and documentation. The Foundation communicated massively and in depth about PRACTICS and the Infopoints to all its contacts in Italy, including cultural institutions and the grassroots level (artists, operators, venues, etc.). In addition, during and after its work on the mapping of information providers, the Foundation spread the word about PRACTICS and the outcomes of the mapping to all actual and possible cultural mobility information providers in Italy as well as to relevant regional and national institutions and policy and decision makers.

- ***What challenges and opportunities do you consider for the future of PRACTICS?***

The current situation in most EU countries, and in particular the drastic cuts in public funding to culture and the increasing red-tape obstacles to the mobility of people across borders, are real challenges for the future of the information system set up by PRACTICS. In spite of all the efforts undertaken at EU and national level highlighting obstacles to mobility and possible solutions, there

seems to be no real effort by most EU Member States to overcome existing obstacles to cultural mobility and more and better information will not be able to remedy these difficulties.

However, given the interest of the European Commission and its work on EU-wide mobility information standards, there is hope that national mobility information services can be jointly supported by the Member States and the EU.

In addition, PRACTICS partners have set up solid cooperation with many other organisations in Europe active in the field of cultural mobility information provision. Ultimately a wide coalition of cultural sector organisations committed towards improved quality of information on mobility can consolidate and increase the achievements made by the PRACTICS pilot project.



TINFO - the Finnish Theatre Information Centre²⁹ - is a non-governmental organisation for professional theatre in Finland. At the core of TINFO's activities are the promotion of Finnish theatre and playwriting and international collaborations. TINFO commissions new drama translations, organises training for drama translators and supports the international exchange of Finnish theatre companies and artists. TINFO collects and disseminates information about Finnish theatre and shares information about events, plays, interesting artists, arts education and possible partners. TINFO was the PRACTICS project leader, responsible for all the administrative and financial aspects of the project, during the whole project period, and responsible for the coordination of partners and activities between 2008 and 2010.

Interview with Hanna Helavuori, Director, TINFO

"The awareness of artist-specific mobility has definitely increased in Finland, thanks to PRACTICS".

- ***How has your organisation benefited from being part of PRACTICS?***

Thanks to PRACTICS TINFO has been able to more efficiently and professionally spread information on various issues on artists' mobility and take it to European level. During the project, awareness and understanding have risen within TINFO about the cross-national nature of legislative, structural and practical issues of artist's mobility.

- ***What challenges and difficulties did you come across being part of PRACTICS?***

TINFO coordinated the project at the beginning and continued as project leader in administrative and financial terms when the coordination of the project moved for the final project year to Fondazione Fitzcarraldo. For TINFO it was challenging to be responsible for the financial administration of an EU-wide project with partners from different countries with different working practices and habits, including as regards financial and administrative issues. In addition, the different PRACTICS partners participated to a different degree in the project. Some of them had good knowledge of EU-projects whereas others did not and co-operation was more complicated.

- ***According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?***

In Finland TINFO found the right Finnish organisation (CIMO) for a Finnish Infopoint to become a partner of PRACTICS in the future. The Finnish ministry of education and culture has become more conscious of their role as a facilitator of a mobility network which includes public authorities in the

²⁹ <http://www.tinfo.fi/site/?lan=3>

field of social security, taxation, etc. The awareness of artist-specific mobility has definitely increased in Finland, thanks to PRACTICS. Awareness of EU-wide (mutual) problems and obstacles for mobility and the need to solve them have also increased. We also realised how different things are in the different countries as regards information on mobility and that any development takes time. For example in Finland each arts and performing arts sector has its own information centre, and the need to organise a new Infopoint might be quite different compared to many other European countries. The open dialogue of PRACTICS will hopefully have a bigger “cultural policy level effect”.

- ***Who are the targets groups of your activities and to whom have you communicated about PRACTICS?***

TINFO's primary target group were national authorities dealing with mobility issues. We realised that the key question to enhancing artists' mobility is to familiarise the authorities (ministries, tax and social security departments, etc.) with the specific questions for artists and culture professionals. Other important target groups were all current mobility operators in the Finnish field of art and culture. They are already working internationally or planning international activities. Due to limited time, our communication activities concentrated a lot on public authorities, but we tried to underline the importance of the voice of the “real players”, artists and producers, in all decision-making processes. The Mobility Infopoint Mapping in Finland and its results were communicated via TINFO's and CIMO's wide audience.

2.2. Preparing future professionals for mobility

During the project, partners met several times with international coordinators from higher arts education institutes and conservatories, members of the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC) and the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA). The aim of these meetings was to establish closer links between PRACTICS and AEC and ELIA and to think together about how to inform future cultural professionals and artists about mobility and prepare them for their future international careers. Although from the start of the pilot project it was clear that PRACTICS Infopoints do not aim primarily at informing students about student exchange programmes, as a matter of fact several Infopoints provide regularly information sessions in art schools and conservatories. During the discussions the following questions were debated:

- How should we best prepare graduates of art schools/conservatories for cross-border mobility in their future professional lives?
- What could be the role of Infopoints (current/future) in this and how can Infopoints establish long-lasting and meaningful partnerships with AEC/ELIA members?
- What are the benefits of student mobility for arts institutes/conservatories beyond international profiling and 'promotion'?
- How can cultural professionals, including professors in higher arts education institutes and conservatories, best transfer the knowledge and know-how they have gained on mobility to art students?
- What concrete tools could AEC/ELIA members develop in the future jointly with Infopoints to support the mobility of future professionals?

The following main points came out of the joint debates, outlining areas of possible future cooperation between higher education art schools, conservatories and Infopoints:

- **Defining responsibility of students and of higher arts education institutes and conservatories to prepare for future mobility**

During the debates representatives from higher arts education institutes and conservatories discussed the responsibility of students to prepare themselves properly for their future international careers and the responsibility of such arts education institutes and conservatories in this respect. Many representatives from these arts education institutes and conservatories agree that the most difficult and delicate moment for their careers is when the students have just graduated. They also agree how important it is to keep track of their graduates in their professional career and support them during their first steps in the professional world. Many representatives consider that it is important to raise awareness and teach students to think ahead and be concerned about/take responsibility for their future professional careers. Higher arts education institutes and conservatories also need to be aware of tools (such as the Infopoints) which can support the future careers' of their students.

- **Benefiting from the mobility experiences of higher arts education institutes and conservatories and their staff**

Many higher arts education institutes and conservatories have good information about student exchanges but little career training is currently undertaken, and virtually no advice is provided on 'professional' mobility. In fact, these arts education institutes and conservatories need to be trained themselves in order not only to be 'Info-providers' for their graduates, but also to advise their own teachers properly. However, a lot of expertise is to be found in these institutes and conservatories since many teachers and international relations officers have extensive personal experience of being professionally mobile across borders as teachers or as artists/cultural professionals. Also many higher arts education institutes and conservatories have developed internship or placement programmes which provide useful experience for students and can prepare them for mobility during their future professional lives.

- **Defining useful synergies between higher arts education institutes, conservatories and mobility Infopoints**

AEC and ELIA delegates agreed that PRACTICS Infopoints are useful tools for their higher education institutes and conservatories, and should be open for requests from their teaching staff, career officers and their students as regards current and future mobility and help organise specific career-days. At the same time higher arts education institutes, conservatories, musicians' unions and the European orchestra can provide information and build up expertise for the Infopoints. Useful synergies between these arts education institutes and conservatories and Infopoints can be found in the employability strand in the Bologna Declaration, reinforcing the links between education and profession. The new edition of AEC's Polifonia Project (2011-2014) contains a work package specifically for the links with the profession, and future collaboration between Polifonia and PRACTICS Infopoints could be further explored.

The following two interviews provide a more detailed insight into the lessons learned by AEC and ELIA from participating in the PRACTICS project.



The **European Association of Conservatoires³⁰ (AEC)** is a European cultural and educational network, established in 1953, which represents the interests of institutions that are concerned with training for the music profession. Today, the AEC includes 269 member institutions in 55 countries.

Interview with Jeremy Cox, Chief Executive, European Association of Conservatoires (AEC)

“The fact that higher education and the profession operate in different worlds when it comes to mobility is a reason for greater collaboration and information sharing. We believe that the outcomes and the material produced by the project will provide valuable input for our future AEC actions in establishing links between education and profession”.

- ***How has your organisation benefited from being part of PRACTICS?***

Being part of PRACTICS has enriched the experience of our organisation in the field of mobility and has given us an important wider context in which to locate our activities. As a membership association for higher-education institutions in the field of music, we are aware that it is important always to observe the professional world so as to understand and to bring to the attention of the sector the key challenges and needs coming from the market. Mobility is a key feature in modern higher music education and the AEC is very active in the promotion of student and staff mobility within the sector. The mechanisms that support these types of mobility are very different from those available to assist professional musicians in pursuing their careers across the European space. We have come to realise the extent to which organisations concerned with higher education and those focussed on the profession have extensive reserves of separate but complementary knowledge which, if brought together, could be mutually strengthening. An increased awareness of future challenges of conservatoire’s graduates and the possibility of bringing them to the attention of the AEC member institutions has been a major benefit for the AEC.

- ***What was the added value for PRACTICS to have your organisation as a partner?***

As well as contributing the extensive knowledge and experience of mobility issues gained within the higher education context, the project was also a unique opportunity for the AEC to bring to the attention of the organisations dealing with mobility issues the importance of the recognition of studies across Europe. This issue is not often taken into consideration to the same extent as practical issues like visas, mobility grants and insurance arrangements. Artists are more and more in the need of shaping a portfolio of activities that supports their artistic production. This often includes teaching activities. The teaching profession often requires that practitioners possess appropriate qualifications. These need to be recognized at international level – especially, of course, if the teacher/artist works abroad. The role of the AEC has been to highlight this issue in the mobility debate.

- ***Who were the target groups of your activities and to whom have you communicated about PRACTICS?***

Throughout the lifetime of the project, information about PRACTICS was accessible to all AEC member institutions via the communication channels and tools developed by the AEC (website, newsletters, PRACTICS postcards, conference reports). Therefore, the material about the

³⁰ <http://www.aecinfo.org/>

PRACTICS Project has been made available to a potentially wide audience of teachers, students and staff members of the 280 or so AEC member institutions. In particular, the International Relations Coordinators of member institutions had the chance to attend the PRACTICS workshop in Porto (2011) at the AEC's Annual Meetings for International Relations Coordinators, while Conservatoire Directors could attend the sessions given by representatives of the PRACTICS Project at the Annual Congress in Warsaw (2010).

- ***What challenges and difficulties did you come across being part of PRACTICS?***

The very fact that, as indicated, the expertise held on the professional side and that accumulated in higher education are different from one another arguably led to an initial sense of disconnection which, in turn, may have diminished the sense of mutual relevance. As the project has progressed, however, there has been a profound reversal of perception. Now it is clear that the fact that higher education and the profession operate in different worlds when it comes to mobility is a reason for greater collaboration and information sharing so as to create a seamless framework of support for students moving into the profession and for professionals working as teachers as a component of their portfolio careers.

- ***According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?***

PRACTICS has highlighted in a very helpful and clear manner the challenges which still confront professionals in arts-related disciplines when attempting to build their careers across a truly European stage. The mechanisms developed through the project, in particular the network of Infopoints, may need further time to become properly embedded. Certainly, there is still more to be done in the context of higher education institutions to ensure that graduates are widely aware of their existence and the service they can offer but the potential of the Infopoints is clear and the need which they address is incontestable.

- ***What challenges and opportunities do you consider for the future of PRACTICS?***

The key challenge for the future of PRACTICS is to maintain the momentum that has now built up. From the AEC's perspective, the moment is now ripe to build upon the mutual understanding that has been generated so as to deepen and enrich the concept of seamless support between higher education and the profession referred to above. We believe that the outcomes and the material produced by the project will provide valuable input for our future AEC actions in establishing links between education and profession. Indeed, possible future synergies between the newly-approved third edition of the AEC-coordinated project Erasmus Thematic Network for Music Polifonia and a possible second edition of the PRACTICS Project would be a natural extension of the current level of good mutual understanding and cooperation.



ELIA, the European League of Institutes of the Arts³¹, is an independent membership organisation founded in 1990 and representing approximately 350 higher arts education institutions from over 45 countries. ELIA represents all disciplines in the arts, including architecture, dance, design, fine art, media arts, music and theatre. Through its members, ELIA represents unique bodies of knowledge and facilitates dialogues, mobility and activities between artists, teachers, administrators, senior managers, key decision makers and more than 250,000 students.

Interview with Truus Ophuysen, Senior Advisor, European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA)

“PRACTICS definitely helped us to further explore the relationship between students’ and teachers’ mobility and the mobility of professionals”.

- ***How has your organisation benefited from being part of PRACTICS?***

Mobility of artists is not in the core of ELIA’s work, but we do focus on students’ mobility and in fact ELIA was created because of student exchanges and the ERASMUS programme. From the side of many cultural organisations student mobility is structured differently, because of the ERASMUS programme and the intense work some art schools are undertaking in this field. But in fact the mobility between students and professional artists is not so clear-cut in real life. Student mobility is often also clearly artistic and for many students it is the first step to establishing long-lasting relationships with the culture sector of their host country, which may continue when they return to the host country in their later professional lives for projects, or to become a teacher, etc. However, the context and framework of student mobility, including under ERASMUS, is very different from artistic professional mobility. Student mobility under ERASMUS lasts normally 3 to 6 months within the framework of a master’s degree or joint projects; there are also students who simply enrol for a period of one year abroad. Student mobility prepares them for professional mobility. The mobility of art school teachers is also very common and they do a lot of projects abroad, including for their students, building on their own contacts and network. This is an important issue for ELIA which we need to explore further. PRACTICS definitely helped us to further explore the relationship between students’ and teachers’ mobility and the mobility of professionals.

- ***What was the added value for PRACTICS to have your organisation as a partner?***

For a project it is always interesting to have connections with different networks. ELIA was a logical partner for PRACTICS. We provided additional and different channels of dissemination. During ELIA’S bi-annual meeting in Nantes in October 2010 we organised a session on how to develop students’ skills, during which we also discussed PRACTICS, and how far art schools prepare their students for mobility during their future professional lives. During the discussions the issue of internships came up, which is a “bridge” between the mobility of students and the mobility of professionals.

- ***According to you, what has PRACTICS achieved?***

PRACTICS developed a system that connects arts and cultural organisations involved in mobility issues. PRACTICS as a pilot project started a joint effort to think up a common format of providing

³¹ <http://www.elia-artschools.org/>

information about mobility across Europe, including developing common material and common resources.

- ***What challenges and opportunities do you consider for the future of PRACTICS?***

It is important to expand the PRACTICS network. Rather than develop a heavy Infopoint structure, I believe PRACTICS needs to focus on the online provision of information, develop a set of common tools (such as the one developed on funding opportunities) and coordinate as much as possible. If I look at the work plan for the future, it's definitely there.

As regards ELIA, the opportunities are to find synergies with PRACTICS to prepare students (for example organise joint career days), and organise awareness raising in schools by international coordinators and teachers. We also need to communicate more efficiently about any tangible outcomes of the project.

Section 3. Removing obstacles to mobility and improving information

During the period of the mobility pilot projects, PRACTICS cooperated actively with its fellow mobility pilot projects and in particular SPACE, Changing Room and e-mobility. In 2010 the four pilots published ***Recommendations of 4 mobility pilot projects on cultural mobility***³². The recommendations are addressed to the EU institutions and the governments and public authorities of EU Member States. The following section summarises the recommendations that have been put forward, in particular as regards obstacles to mobility and improved information on mobility.

This section also gives an overview of the main outcomes of the 'mobility information mappings' which have been carried out in Finland, Italy and Spain. These 'mappings' helped to understand better how information on mobility is provided in these three very different EU countries. They also highlight good models for information provision and put forward recommendations on how information provision could be further improved in these three countries.

1. Removing obstacles to mobility

The ***Recommendations of 4 mobility pilot projects on cultural mobility*** are based on informed observations of the organisations involved in the pilot projects and aim to improve the conditions of mobility for individual artists, culture professionals, companies and cultural products (including performing arts shows, art works, etc.) in the cultural sector as a whole. Six core actions were identified:

- Ensure a coherent EU culture mobility policy framework
- Develop appropriate tools to better monitor and measure mobility
- Reduce regulatory and administrative obstacles to mobility
- Set up a coherent system ensuring transparent, accessible and high-quality information for mobile culture professionals
- Enhance the capacity building of the sector to support mobility
- Ensure coherent EU and national funding supporting mobility

As regards removing obstacles to mobility, the pilot projects put forward several proposals on how to remove regulatory obstacles to cross-border mobility³³. The pilot projects underline that while the EU has increasingly set up specific rules which are meant to facilitate cross-border mobility, all too often these rules are not applied effectively throughout the EU. Many obstacles are also due to the fact that national and European rules are ill-adapted to cross-border culture mobility, making it sometimes impossible and often difficult, time-consuming and expensive for cultural operators and artists to cross borders.

³² <http://on-the-move.org/news/article/95/recommendations-on-culture-mobility-from-the-4/>

³³ Many research studies undertaken in recent years have identified regulatory obstacles to cross-border mobility. See in particular: Judith Staines, From pillar to post - a comparative review of the frameworks for independent workers in the contemporary performing arts in Europe, IETM, on-the-move.org, 2004, 2007: http://www.ietm.org/upload/files/16_20061123164008.pdf; Richard Poláček, Study on impediments to mobility in the EU live performance sector and on possible solutions: http://on-the-move.org/files/news_files/Pearle_report.pdf; ERICarts Institute, Mobility Incentives for Cultural Professionals in Europe, 2008: <http://www.mobility-matters.eu/web/index.php>

The pilot projects calls for an ambitious action plan aiming to substantially reduce existing regulatory and administrative obstacles by creating rules and procedures at national, EU and international levels which will have a positive impact on the mobility of artists (and their work) to and from the EU. The aim of this action plan is to ensure that the cultural sector benefits from the core principles of the EU on free movement of services, goods and persons (art 27 EC Treaty).

The pilot projects underline that particular focus needs to be put on the following key areas: visas, customs duties, social security, taxation and intellectual property. In each area, the action plan must include initiatives that respond to the following 4 priorities:

- The EU, Member States and their administrations must provide clear, accurate information about all rules and procedures applicable to mobile culture professionals.
- EU Member States must ensure that applicable regulations are applied uniformly at national and local level.
- The EU and Member States, in close cooperation with the sector, must carefully monitor and evaluate currently applicable rules (EU and national) with the goal of further adapting them to the specificities of the cultural sector where necessary. The sector has the responsibility to more efficiently report shortcomings in current rules and in their application.
- The EU and Member States must commit to implementing specific targeted measures such as training and capacity building for national authorities dealing with visas, taxation, customs and social security coordination for very mobile sectors, such as the cultural sector.
- National authorities and their staff need to better understand the specific difficulties and needs of the mobile culture sector (complex labour situations characterized by a diversity of nationalities and employment status, short-term contracts, last-minute artistic changes, etc). This needs to be done in close cooperation with professional organisations in the cultural sector.

More specifically for the different key areas identified, the pilot projects ask for the following:

1. Visas and work permits

- The EU and Member States must monitor and evaluate closely the new EU visa code and applicable national rules on visas as regards their impact on the culture sector. Any future revision of the visa code must take better account of the needs and specificities of mobility in the arts sector.
- The EU and Member States must examine further the possibility of establishing common EU-wide fast-track procedures for short-term visas for non-EU artists.
- To facilitate visas for long-term stays of non-EU artists, the Commission should make a proposal for a specific Council directive for cultural professionals, similar to the one for researchers³⁴.
- The EU, and in particular the Council, should urgently adopt the proposal for a single application procedure for a single EU work permit for third-country nationals.
- In its external relations, partnership agreements and neighbourhood agreements, the EU should reinforce the cultural cooperation provisions by including visa facilitation procedures for cultural professionals.

³⁴ See Council Directive 2005/71/EC of 12 October 2005 on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research.

2. Customs duties

- The EU and its Member States must ensure the ratification and the full implementation by EU and non-EU countries of those international conventions which have proved to considerably facilitate cross-border mobility of artists and art works³⁵.
- The EU needs to monitor how these conventions are applied in practice.

3. Social security

- The EU must set up a transparent and open process to monitor and evaluate the impact of the new EU rules on social security coordination and their application by EU countries on cultural cross-border mobility and the needs of the highly mobile culture sector.
- Member States have to ensure fast-track procedures and centralised services managing the data of mobile professionals in order to avoid double payment of social security contributions or gaps in the rights that have been built up by mobile artists.
- In the context of possible upcoming revisions of the 'posting directive', the EU and Member States have to better include the needs of the culture sector and in particular the need to avoid unnecessary administrative burdens, especially as regards very short-term postings.

4. Withholding tax and value-added tax (VAT)

- Member States have to set up central one-stop-shops for taxation where mobile cultural organisations and artists could not only seek relevant and reliable tax information, but also pay taxes and receive all necessary certificates for their home country's tax authorities directly.
- The EU has to set up a central database with precise and updated information for each country about tax systems, rates, allowances, exceptions and refund procedures as regards withholding tax and VAT, including help in interpreting double taxation agreements.
- The EU and Member States have to harmonise the official tax forms and certificates and make them available in all EU countries in English, French and German in order to help to speed up administrative procedures and increase transparency and legal certainty.
- Member States need to adopt an income limit for the application of their rules on taxation of non-resident artists and smaller live performance organisations, such as in Belgium, Germany and the UK.
- The EU has to actively encourage Member States to set up more advantageous tax models for foreign mobile artists, either by following the example of Denmark and the Netherlands to abolish the taxation of artists in national legislation and bilateral tax treaties or by adopting a more favourable deduction of withholding tax at source for non-resident artists.
- The EU has to further monitor the implementation of the ECJ decisions (Skorpio, Gerritse, Equestre) and start infringement procedures against those EU Member States which have not yet implemented the decisions.
- The EU has to increase transparency about the newly applicable VAT rules in cases of cross-border culture mobility and undertake a thorough monitoring and evaluation of the new rules as regards their impact on the culture sector.

5. Intellectual property

The collective management of rights is guided by territoriality, meaning that rights must be cleared and licensed for each Member State. For mobile cultural projects, this quickly becomes an obstacle with time-consuming and complex administrative burdens, and frequent lack of transparency for both

³⁵ The Brussels Customs Convention (1961), the WCO Customs Convention on the ATA carnet, and the UNESCO Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Material, the so-called 'Florence Agreement' (1950).

users and right-holders. In order to reduce obstacles in this area, the following measures need to be implemented:

- The EU and Member States must set up databases including the repertoire (and respective right-holders) of each collecting society.
- The EU and Member States must set up easier application procedures for using copyright-protected material, including standard forms across the EU and individualised accounting for right-holders (artists).

Although the above-mentioned ‘obstacles’ are problematic to artists and cultural operators in nearly all European countries, some countries face particular problems. Throughout the PRACTICS project Infopoints have been asked what the ‘hot topics’ they come across are when users contact them; and what the problematic issues in terms of obstacles to mobility are. All Infopoints underlined their ‘specific’ national context which often determines why certain issues are more problematic than others. For example, visas and work permits for non-EU nationals remain a particularly hot topic in the UK. The cultural sectors in the Netherlands and in Spain face particularly severe cuts and restructuring, which raises more questions in terms of accessible funding sources for mobility.

2. Improving information on mobility

Despite the many players providing information regarding culture mobility, this information is still only partially available, and in an unstructured and unprocessed way that is often hard to access. For this reason the joint **Recommendations of 4 mobility pilot projects on cultural mobility** also include recommendations on how to set up a coherent system ensuring transparent, accessible and high-quality-information for mobile culture professionals. Based on the experience of PRACTICS, the 4 pilot projects ask the EU and Member States the following:

1. To set up **high-quality Infopoints at national level**

- The information provided by the Infopoints should focus on three main areas: regulatory issues, national funding opportunities for cross-border mobility, country profiles including sector profiles and information about job and employment markets.
- The Infopoints should adhere to a set of quality standards as indicated in the PRACTICS quality charter.
- In order to ensure the provision of quality services based on first-hand information, the Infopoints need to commit to establishing strategic partnerships with national authorities, professional organisations and other relevant bodies in the field of culture and cultural mobility.
- The Infopoints should apply a communication strategy that ensures high visibility and easy accessibility for all its target groups, which include individual artists and other cultural professionals, small and medium size enterprises, venues, museums, galleries, concert halls, cultural institutions, festivals, associations, federations, network organisations and funding bodies.
- Data collection about culture mobility should be included in the task description of the Infopoints as well as capacity building in the cultural sector.

2. To set up an **EU-wide Infopoint network** with the support and commitment of the EU and the Members States, to ensure its coherency and, more precisely:

- In order to identify Infopoints in each country, Member States should make use of existing structures which are already deeply rooted in the professional cultural sector of their country. The network of Infopoints in Europe should be flexible in terms of the nature and number of organisations taking on the task of Infopoints in each Member State, as well as respectful of the diversity of structures allowing each Infopoint to have its own focus.
- In order to support the network at EU level, a secretariat should be put in place as a coordinating body. This secretariat should also build on an existing structure and make use of existing expertise. It should be a light structure that runs a web portal serving as a gateway to the national Infopoints' websites. It is the task of the secretariat to support the capacity building of the Infopoints, to ensure the visibility and a common branding of the network, as well as to promote synergies between the network members. It is important that this secretariat is very closely linked to the sector and engages in networking at EU level.

In the frame of PRACTICS, '**mappings of mobility information providers**' were carried out in Italy, Finland and Spain. The aim of these 'mappings' is to describe the context of mobility information provision in a given country, to explore current information providers, and to list a set of criteria for the setting up of a future mobility Infopoint and recommendations on how information on mobility can be further improved. Although these recommendations are specifically targeted to the three countries, they may nevertheless be inspiring for other EU countries.

- **Mapping in Italy**³⁶

The mapping on mobility information provision in Italy was the first study to be done on this topic in Italy. It analyses mobility in the context of cultural policies and artistic practices and highlights the main obstacles to mobility to and from Italy. The mapping highlights four main features of mobility information provision in Italy:

- since information is scattered among a multiplicity of sources, information provision involves a multiplicity of players (organisations, networks, venues, structures, festivals, public authorities), but none of them explicitly includes "mobility information provision" in its mission;
- mobility-related information is often relayed through informal channels, relying on personal connections and networks, rather than through formal and official channels, which paradoxically appear less reliable, clear and up-to-date than professionals, artists, venues, etc;
- current "mobility information providers" target precise groups, not a wider audience (e.g. only visual artists; only artists based in a single region, etc.);
- existing information provision services are not well-known among artists and operators.

The mapping further suggests criteria to set up an Infopoint in Italy in order to respect the common quality criteria shared by the PRACTICS Infopoints, while duly taking into account the specificities of the Italian context. The mapping concludes that existing information provision activities need visibility and additional resources targeted on formalising a real information provision system, a solution which would seem to be more time- and cost-effective than creating a brand new "Infopoint" and which would definitely be a fair and useful recognition of successful activities already put in place by the

³⁶ http://on-the-move.org/files/mobility_infopoint_report_en.pdf

cultural sector. Four recommendations are put forward as guidelines for the creation of an Infopoint Italy:

- improve the visibility of the existing structures (networks, organisations, projects) currently providing different kinds of information about mobility;
- foster opportunities for meetings, comparisons and discussions between those who currently provide information, so they can work together on developing existing tools and fostering networking and lobbying, thus empowering the sector and allowing it to “speak with one voice” to the public institutions and the private sector;
- provide additional resources to the existing information providers, thus enabling them to widen, deepen, strengthen and focus their information provision service (which could be explicitly stated in their mission);
- strengthen and increase training opportunities clearly targeting professional development in an international perspective, including tutoring and mentoring.

▪ **Mapping in Finland**³⁷

The mapping in Finland provides an overview of cultural mobility and includes statistics and data about the “volume” of mobility of Finnish performing arts companies. Finland has a relatively small arts sector where individual operators have been able to acquire considerable knowledge and expertise relevant to international mobility over the past decades. The study analyses the situation of information provision in the country and suggests a “four-dimensional” model for the provision of mobility-related information in Finland. This model is based on the common framework developed by the PRACTICS project and adapted to the national context. The four dimensions of the model are the following:

- Mobility Information and Service Point;
- Advisory group of public authorities;
- Flexible network based on strategic partnerships; and
- Peer-to-peer information sharing.

To ensure an efficient and accessible Infopoint, and to make sure high-quality information is shared via networks related to the Infopoint, the mapping also defined the following principles for the Finnish context:

- Ensuring easy access for everyone
- Taking a service-orientated approach allowing flexibility
- Building commitment and mutual trust between strategic partners
- Simplifying the exchange of information between different governmental institutions and NGOs
- Enhancing public engagement: active peer-to-peer information
- Strengthening an open source approach
- Actively using different media and sources
- Implementing awareness: the quality of existing databases run by official authorities should be improved with special pages dedicated to artists
- Continuing monitoring of own actions
- Active reacting based on monitoring and feedback
- Facilitating access to all information sources (regulatory, NGOS, statistics)
- Producing guidelines for managing and monitoring cultural mobility and new needs.

³⁷ http://on-the-move.org/files/Mobility_Infopoint_Mapping_Finland_lopullinen.pdf

Finally the mapping also makes several recommendations to enhance mobility, which are mainly addressed to the Finnish Ministry for Education and Culture:

- start negotiations with CIMO - Centre for International Mobility for setting up a mobility Infopoint;
- allocate sufficient additional resources (two full-time equivalent person years) to CIMO, thus ensuring “art-specific” knowledge in the Infopoint;
- nominate a high-level advisory group of public authorities for mobility;
- bring together members of the network of strategic partners and the Arts Council of Finland;
- organise a seminar or a workshop in co-operation with CIMO for the operators at grass-roots level in order to clarify the specific information needs of the field;
- create a mobility strategy by renewing the artists' mobility grant scheme in cooperation with the Arts Council and the art information centres;
- participate actively at the European level in the process of building up a network of culture mobility information services, including the follow-up activities of the PRACTICS pilot project.

▪ **Mapping in Spain**³⁸

The Spanish mapping was not initially planned when PRACTICS started, since a mobility Infopoint was piloted in Spain by the project partner Interarts. The practical experience of running an Infopoint and the need to clarify the complex context in which information is made available convinced Interarts to carry out a study on information provision in Spain. An integral part of the study was a workshop with representatives of a number of Spanish information providers (documentation centres, cultural organisations, etc.), organised by Interarts in Barcelona in May 2011. The mapping is made up of two main parts. The first part of the analysis focuses on some general features regarding the international mobility of artists and cultural professionals in Spain. The second part presents a more specific analysis of the information services specialised in the field of mobility. The mapping ends with concrete proposals to strengthen the information services on international cultural mobility in Spain:

- **Coordination.** There already exist several information sources on the international mobility of artists and cultural sector professionals in Spain. Therefore, rather than designing new information tools, there seems to be a need to enhance mutual knowledge. Actions that could be taken into consideration in this area include further dialogue among information providers and the design of new products in the non-covered fields (e.g. legal and tax issues).
- **Research.** Among the areas in which research activities could be undertaken are the detailed identification of the needs experienced by artists and cultural professionals as regards international mobility and the analysis of measures in several policy fields which directly or indirectly affect mobility (education, employment and Social Security, immigration, etc.).
- **Education and training.** Activities such as training seminars for professionals that could multiply information and support artists and other cultural workers in the internationalisation processes, as well as for public authority officials in non-cultural departments to raise awareness of the specificities of cultural mobility, could be considered.
- **Institutional impact.** On the basis of the research outlined above, dialogue with the institutions relevant to international cultural mobility could be strengthened, so as to improve the design of policies and measures which have a direct or indirect impact on this field. Consultations with organisations and bodies representing cultural professionals could also be furthered in this respect.

³⁸ <http://www.interarts.net/descargas/interarts943.pdf>

- **Internationalisation.** The flow of information with relevant European and international networks and platforms (e.g. *On the Move*, IFACCA, ENCATC, etc.) should be further pursued. There is also a need to consolidate existing information services in EU countries, making data more easily comparable and improving the visibility of existing resources.
- **Evaluation.** The development of evaluation models regarding information services in the field of international cultural mobility and the development of assessment methods for policies and support programmes in the area of mobility could be taken into consideration.

3. Improving support to mobility

Next to the need to remove regulatory obstacles and provide accurate information relevant for mobility, two other issues are of key importance for mobility to happen smoothly and to be encouraged: capacity building of the cultural sector and appropriate funding support schemes. The **Recommendations of 4 mobility pilot projects on cultural mobility** therefore also included suggestions on how to effectively help the capacity building of the sector to support mobility and some proposals for coherent EU and national funding supporting mobility.

Based on the analysis provided in the notable study undertaken in 2008 by the ERICarts Institute *Mobility Incentives for Cultural Professionals in Europe*³⁹, PRACTICS, SPACE and Changing Room adopted at the end of 2010 joint **Operational Proposals for the new EU Culture Programme (2014-2020) to improve the support of mobility in the cultural sector in Europe**⁴⁰. The proposals focus on simple and straightforward ways to improve support for the mobility of small and medium-sized cultural operators, individual artists and non-artistic cultural professionals. The proposals were submitted by the pilot projects as a joint contribution to the public consultation for the new EU Culture Programme 2014-2020. *On the Move*, the cultural mobility information network bringing together more than 35 organisations across Europe involved in mobility, officially co-signed the proposals.

4. A changing environment for cross-border mobility

Since the start of the mobility pilot projects, the work on mobility of artists and cultural professionals has increased and gathered speed considerably at European and national level. Numerous studies about cultural mobility were provided, including by countries such as Portugal⁴¹ and the Czech Republic⁴², or by specific sub-sectors in the cultural sector such as the visual arts sector⁴³. *On the Move*⁴⁴ developed its network further in 2009 to become Europe's network for cultural mobility information and started cooperating increasingly with PRACTICS until the end of the pilot project.

In March 2008 the European Commission set up the **Expert Working Group on Improving the Conditions for the Mobility of Artists and Professionals in the Cultural Field** as one of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) working groups of experts nominated by Member States to consider, report and make recommendations on the following areas:

³⁹ <http://www.mobility-matters.eu/web/index.php>

⁴⁰ http://on-the-move.org/files/Rec_CULT_Mob-Pilots_OTM.pdf

⁴¹ http://ec.europa.eu/culture/documents/portugal_study_mobility.pdf

⁴² <http://new.institutumeni.cz/media/document/umelci-bez-hranic.pdf>

⁴³ http://ec.europa.eu/culture/documents/challenges_mobility.pdf

⁴⁴ www.on-the-move.org

- mapping the existing practices in each Member State in order to make it possible to suggest ways of improving the regulatory conditions and related administrative processes for mobility;
- suggesting solutions at the national and Community levels regarding the inclusion of mobility (in and outside Europe) in the professional training curricula of artists and culture professionals;
- ensuring the collection of and access to the relevant information on the conditions for mobility in Europe (tax, social, entry and residence conditions in different Member States);
- reinforcing regional, national and Community-level support mechanisms for mobility and ensuring their complementarity.

In 2009, PRACTICS partners were invited to present to the expert group their project, the lessons they had learned so far and the joint recommendations they had adopted along with the other mobility pilot projects. In June 2010 the Expert Working Group adopted its final report⁴⁵ confirming many of the recommendations set out above, and in particular the proposals put forward by PRACTICS partners on how to improve the information relevant for mobility.

The 2011-2014 **Work Plan for Culture**⁴⁶ gives a prominent place to mobility, foreseeing different activities over the coming years, including the screening and assessment of mobility support programmes to identify barriers and problems faced in particular by small-scale cultural operators and by young artists and cultural professionals. Based on the Work Plan for Culture, the European Commission also set up in May 2011 an EU expert group on mobility information standards to develop common content and quality standards for information and advice relating to the mobility of artists and cultural professionals. The group was composed of representatives from the culture ministries of EU Member States and representatives of European cultural sector organisations from all arts disciplines who have proven experience of dealing with the mobility of artists and cultural professionals. PRACTICS was officially represented in the group, as well as individual PRACTICS partners, such as Kunstenloket and Pearle*. This enabled PRACTICS partners to share their experience and help design European-wide **Information Standards for the Mobility of Artists and Cultural Professionals**, which the expert group adopted in December 2011 as its final document (see Annex 1). This document recognises the fragmented state of information services across the EU and points out that where information services exist, they tend to provide information primarily for their own nationals but they don't necessarily provide information targeted specifically on cross-border mobility. The main target group of the *Information Standards* are policy makers in the EU Member States, providing them with practical guidance for setting up information services by identifying mobility-related issues for which the availability of information at national level would benefit outgoing artists and cultural professionals, as well as those coming from abroad (from EU and non-EU countries). Ultimately the information provided as a result of applying these standards will benefit cultural organisations, individual artists, cultural professionals and small-scale cultural enterprises which are mobile or wish to be mobile across borders.

The *Information Standards* include two parts:

- Part 1 includes a prioritised list of information topics which are relevant to the mobility across borders of artists and cultural professionals and for which information needs to be made available at national level.
- Part 2 includes content guidelines on customised information for cultural mobility, including a set of recommendations on how to make quality information available at national level and for

⁴⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/culture/documents/moc_final_report_en.pdf

⁴⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:325:0001:0009:EN:PDF>

other EU countries, as well as an open list of best practice on how to overcome difficulties in information provision.

PRACTICS partners are committed to building their future work as Mobility Information points on these information standards and implement them.

It is also important to mention that the European Parliament and the Council have also been active on the topic of mobility of artists and cultural professionals. In May 2011, the Council of the European Union, in its **Conclusions on mobility information services for artists and for culture professionals**⁴⁷, confirmed the importance of the mobility of artists and cultural professionals⁴⁸ for the EU and for achieving its objectives within the EU 2020 strategy. It clearly states that “one of the main obstacles cited by artists and cultural professionals seeking to be mobile within the EU is the difficulty of obtaining accurate and comprehensive information and advice on mobility-related issues”. The Council conclusions call upon the Member States and the Commission “within their respective spheres of competences and with due regard to the principle of subsidiarity, to facilitate the provision by mobility information services of comprehensive and accurate information to artists and cultural professionals seeking to be mobile within the EU”.

The European Parliament (EP) repeatedly called for improved conditions for artists' mobility and, thanks to its position, a specific budget was made available which allowed the funding of the pilot projects. On 12th May 2011 the EP adopted a **Resolution on the cultural dimensions of the EU's external actions**, asking the Commission to propose a short-term visa initiative with the aim of eliminating obstacles to mobility in the cultural sector. The resolution also proposes the creation of specific information systems to support the mobility of artists and other professionals in the cultural field, as envisaged by the study entitled ‘Information systems to support the mobility of artists and other professionals in the culture field: a feasibility study’⁴⁹.

The cultural sector will have to face many challenges in the coming years as regards mobility of artists and cultural professionals. As observed by the pilot Mobility Infopoints during the project, the economic, political and social environment of the culture sector changes constantly, and especially at times where the sector is undergoing severe financial cuts in many EU Member States which impact heavily on operators, artists and their desire and financial ability to be mobile. The cuts also force operators and artists to become increasingly mobile and look for funding sources abroad - just to be able to survive - regardless of their wish to be mobile or not.

With all these changes already happening and those still to come, operators and artists have different needs and demands for appropriate and accurate information regarding mobility. This makes the provision of information on cross-border mobility a “challenging activity”, at the present and also for the future.

⁴⁷ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/122111.pdf

⁴⁸ According to the Council conclusions “the community of 'artists and cultural professionals' includes all artistic, managerial, logistic, communication and other professionals in the cultural sector and in artistic professions, which are exercised in other sectors”. The broader group of cultural professionals includes curators, directors and staff of cultural institutions, technicians, stage building workers, ICT experts, communication specialists, etc. In addition to individual artists and cultural professionals, operators include groups, ensembles and organisations.

⁴⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/feasibility-study_en.htm

Section 4. Beyond a pilot project

Built on the lessons learned and the experience gained through the PRACTICS pilot project, the partners of PRACTICS decided in the autumn of 2011 to continue their cooperation beyond the pilot project period and to submit a project for EU co-funding as part of the Culture Programme, under the leadership of the Arts Council of Wales /Wales Arts International. The project is entitled PRACTICS 2 and aims to enrich the content of information provision, widen the geographic reach of the network of Infopoints and improve the way information is provided and technology exploited. PRACTICS 2 aims to build on the initial work of the pilot project and pursues four main objectives:

- To provide a quality information and advice service on cultural mobility through the development of a network of national mobility Infopoints in line with and that will test a common set of EU information standards currently being drawn up by the European Commission;
- To widen and deepen the PRACTICS Infopoint network and ensure its sustainability by further developing the capacity of the existing Infopoints and by establishing new Infopoints;
- To build up the capacity of the culture sector and national authorities to deal with mobility;
- To contribute to improving the conditions for mobility in the culture sector and where possible, to remove any barriers that currently exist.

PRACTICS 2 includes a wide range of cultural organisations in Europe and nine national or regional Infopoints will be part of the project:

- Austria: IG Kultur Österreich
- Belgium: Kunstenloket
- Czech Republic: Arts and Theatre Institute
- France/ Île-de-France region: Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris/Bureau d'accueil des artistes et professionnels étrangers (BAAPE) - Guest artists and professionals office
- Poland: Narodowe Centrum Kultury - National Centre for Culture
- Slovenia: SCCA Centre for Contemporary Arts, Ljubljana/ArtServis
- Spain: Interarts Foundation
- Wales: Arts Council of Wales/Wales Arts International
- The Netherlands: SICA and Trans Artists

In addition, there are two German organisations which, in the next few years, will be building a website on the mobility of artists and cultural operators to and from Germany: the International Theatre Institute in Germany and the Internationale Gesellschaft für Bildende Künste (International Association of Art (IAA) in Germany). Both organisations will also be closely involved in the PRACTICS 2 project to ensure this initiative is linked to the information services available in other EU countries. Finally, *On the Move*, the European network on cultural mobility, will play an active role to bridge the project with the cultural sector in Europe, including with the other project partners: Roberto

Cimetta Fund, EAEA (European Arts & Entertainment Alliance), Pearle* (Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe), ECAS (European Citizen Action Service), NEMO (Network of European Museum Organisations), ELIA (European League of Institutes of the Arts), IETM (International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts), AEC (European Association of Conservatories), and GAI (Giovani Artisti Italiani).

PRACTICS 2 plans several core activities:

- **Providing information**

Providing information and intelligence on artistic and cultural mobility is one of the core activities for PRACTICS 2 partners. They will inform and advise artists and cultural operators on key issues relating to working beyond borders, including relevant regulatory issues (taxation, visas, social security, intellectual propriety rights, etc.), and developmental opportunities for artists and cultural workers (e.g. funding opportunities for cross-border mobility, residencies, training & employment opportunities). The nine Infopoints will provide information on incoming and outgoing mobility to foreign/domestic artists and operators within the network of PRACTICS 2 Infopoints. The project partners also commit to complying with the European standards on mobility information as elaborated at EU level by a Commission-convened expert group. The standards determine a set of information topics (i.e. regulatory issues and mobility opportunities) on which artists/operators will find information from a PRACTICS 2 Infopoint, as well as a set of guidelines on how this information is provided. The aim of PRACTICS 2 is to test how Infopoints can operate and conform to these standards.

Under PRACTICS 2, Infopoints will also continue to develop and update their own online info-tools following common branding, translate their tools into other languages and jointly develop common info-tools. Infopoints will also further develop and deepen their strategic partnerships at local/regional, national and European level with the aim of improving the quality of information provided to artists and cultural operators.

- **Training and Exchanges**

Building on the lessons learned under PRACTICS pilot project, PRACTICS 2 plans to organise cultural mobility training for the culture sector and for public authorities at regional/national level. Partners also plan to organise staff-exchanges on a bilateral basis and focus on the transfer of knowledge and experience to the operational aspects of running an Infopoint (ways of replying to user enquiries; info-tools developed; strategic partnerships set up, etc.). These will be an opportunity to increase the capacity of the new Infopoints which can benefit from the experience gained by the original Infopoints.

- **Monitoring and evaluation**

Ongoing monitoring of the Infopoints' activities was undertaken in the PRACTICS pilot project and proved to be a useful instrument to adapt the services to users' needs, to evaluate the performance of the different Infopoints and to collect useful data, such as the mobility movements to/from a given country and the types of problems encountered by artists and culture operators. To build on and develop this, PRACTICS 2 plans to develop a common methodology between Infopoints to analyse users' needs and also an EU-wide users' needs assessment. PRACTICS 2 partners will also develop a revised system of monitoring Infopoint services. In particular the new system will test the services against the EU standards, while taking into account the specific local context in which the Infopoint operates. Finally, PRACTICS 2 aims to carry out an external evaluation of the PRACTICS network itself and the European added value of the Infopoint service to the culture sector and to users.

- **Communication about mobility**

Finally, the PRACTICS 2 project aims to raise the awareness of policy makers at national and European level on key mobility issues, the need to improve conditions and procedures for mobility, as well as the specific problem of visas and work permits for non-EU artists and operators.

The final decision on the co-funding of the project by the European Commission is expected in early 2012, but even if no EU funding can be secured in the short-term, all partners are firmly committed to continuing their cooperation and improving the quality of information for artists and cultural operators.