



**Cultural Mobility
Information Services in
Spain: analysis and
proposals
Executive Summary**

Interarts
June 2011

Cultural Mobility Information Services in Spain: analysis and proposals Executive Summary

Document prepared by Interarts
PRACTICS Infopoint– Spain
June 2011



Education and Culture DG

This document has been produced by Interarts within the PRACTICS project, supported by the European Commission. A complete version in Spanish can be found at www.interarts.net and www.practics.org.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which can be made of the information presented herein.

For more information: Interarts.
Tel (+34) 934 877 022. practics@interarts.net.
www.interarts.net. www.practics.org.



1. Context and methodology

PRACTICS is a European project that aims to enhance information about the international mobility of artists and other cultural sector professionals in the EU. The project is supported by the European Commission and associates various networks and cultural organisations, among which some have established Mobility Infopoints in 4 EU member states. One of these organisations is Interarts, that coordinates the PRACTICS Infopoint in Spain.

With the aim of analysing the existing informational infrastructure on the international mobility of artists and cultural professionals in Spain and exploring the possible opportunities for better and sustainable information services in this field, in April 2011 Interarts carried out the first mapping of **more than 30 institutions**, organisations and information centres that provide specialised information for cultural professionals and organisations, including information regarding cultural mobility and cooperation, among other issues.

As in the broader context of the PRACTICS project, the analysis of existing information services has taken into account primarily the following areas: funding sources for mobility and cooperation projects, employment in the cultural sector, training opportunities, legal aspects related to mobility, fiscal and social security in mobility and information about the cultural sector in Spain and/or other countries to strengthen international cultural cooperation (country profiles).

The analysis of the existing information services was initiated through an Internet research and followed through direct contacts with some of the information centres identified. Telephone or personal interviews with a number of relevant organisations were carried out thereafter, which allowed for the preparation of an initial mapping document that was discussed and analysed at a working meeting that took place in Barcelona, on 10 May 2011. The present document is the result of the whole process, including the conclusions of that meeting.¹

2. Analysis

The first part of the analysis focuses on some general features regarding the international mobility of artists and cultural professionals in Spain. Secondly, a more specific analysis of the information services specialised in the field of mobility is presented.

2.1. The context of mobility

Over recent decades, cultural professionals and organisations in Spain have increasingly found more opportunities to be active in the international scene. However, the Spanish cultural sector still faces some **significant deficits as regards its internationalisation**. The main concerns, at individual level, include the limited foreign languages skills and difficulties found by some

¹ For a full list of participants in the meeting and the complete list of organisations identified in the process, please see the complete Spanish version of this report, available at www.interarts.net and www.practics.org.

stakeholders to access specialised information. At collective level challenges include the limited participation in networks, the low institutionalisation of mobility in relevant policies and the effects of the financial crisis on the programmes supporting international cultural relations.

Very few references to mobility can be found in political and institutional discourses as well as in the professional debates about culture. The **limited presence of mobility within institutional structures in Spain** also means that the occasional relevant initiatives in this field tend to be fragmented and are often discontinued due to changes in the financial or political contexts.

The majority of funding opportunities relevant to international mobility address **artists rather than other cultural professionals** (cultural managers, public administrators etc.). Thus some cultural subsectors face specific difficulties in this respect.

A whole range of **difficulties related to funding programmes have been identified**: unclear priorities and procedures, obstacles to access information and the non-adequacy of criteria and forms of support in relation to the needs expressed by artists and professionals, etc. These difficulties can be identified both in local, regional and national programmes and in those belonging to other governmental levels, including the EU.

2.2. Mobility information services

The analysis of the sector indicates a remarkable range of legal figures, with the majority of mobility information providers being either public institutions or non-profit organisations. **The heterogeneity of the sector** can also be found in the type of information services and the geographic scope of the information provided: the majority of services provide information about international, mostly European opportunities. There are also differences among information services regarding their focus: for some, providing information is the main objective, whereas others consider activities in this area as complementary to a wider range of services. Another distinction concerns information channels, with some information centres providing face-to-face interactions and others focusing mostly on electronic services which are accessible globally. The heterogeneity has been recognized also in the identification of beneficiaries: artists from all disciplines, public authorities, cultural managers from different sectors, students, researchers, etc.

The existing information supply is based mostly on the **ad-hoc collection of data** rather than the result of a stable, well-established information infrastructure. On the other hand, and partly related to this, the information provided tends to have a qualitative rather than quantitative nature.

Most of the services analysed provide information about **funding opportunities** (scholarships, grants etc.) **and employment offers**. On the other hand, there is a deficit in the information about legal and fiscal aspects that affect mobility (contracts, double taxation, etc.). Moreover, information for *outgoing mobility* (i.e. that for Spanish professionals willing to move abroad)

significantly overcome *incoming mobility* services (i.e. for foreign professionals with an interest in Spain).

The analysis also points to the **lack of detailed studies on the specific needs and demands in the field of international cultural mobility** among Spanish professionals. The lack of studies is partly compensated through alternative meeting spaces (seminars, courses, professional meetings, etc.) and interactive communication tools (information requests, customer services, forums to share doubts, etc.). When expressed, information needs are often very general (“search for employment abroad”, “project funding opportunities”, etc.).

Many artists and cultural professionals, especially those in a less stable professional position, **have a limited knowledge of existing information services**. Some of the interviewees emphasise the need for “multipliers” or “mediators”, that is, individuals or organisations that could build on existing information and data and adapt them to the needs and requests of specific constituencies.

In addition to information, several specialised bodies provide other types of services, within which awareness-raising and training activities particularly stand out. On the other hand, despite of the fact that some organisations, mostly private, have recently set up consultancy services to respond to practical needs or to provide help at different stages in project development, e.g. project design and management, it seems that **there is still a gap in this kind of more specialised services**. In addition, further efforts may be needed to ensure the mid- and long-term capacity-building of multipliers and mediators.

The **lack of coordination and cooperation** among organisations and institutions that provide specialised information has also been identified. In consequence, there is not enough control over duplication or deficiencies in the information provided.

Most of the institutions, organisations and information centres that have been examined in the study focus on addressing practical difficulties, rather than on the consideration of the institutional and policy framework within which mobility takes place – in this respect, some interviewees identified **the need for a more clear focus on the broad range of policies that refer to mobility**.

The **importance of the social media** in recent years has clearly influenced information services in the field of mobility: while some Internet portals have transformed themselves into social networks, or intend to develop this feature, several others have set up profiles on social media. The majority of the institutions analysed aim to further reflect on the use and potential of these communication tools.

The **evaluation of services provided generally takes place in a spontaneous, informal manner**, on the basis of customers’ comments and remarks, with few permanent assessment methods. Evaluation is indeed a broad area of concern, not only as regards the effectiveness and quality of information services but also, more broadly, the evaluation of policies and programmes in the field of mobility and of the impact of mobility on professional development and on the sector’s development.

3. Proposals

Based on the analysis presented above, some proposals to strengthen the information services on international cultural mobility were discussed during the working meeting in Barcelona. The main areas identified are presented hereafter:

- **Coordination.** The analysis indicates that 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.
- **Internationalization.** 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.