

How to set up a Mobility Information Point (MIP)... and make it last!

THE MIP HANDBOOK

to facilitate access to administrative information for mobile artists
and culture professionals in EU countries and internationally

ON THE MOVE

On the Move is the international information network dedicated to artistic and cultural mobility, gathering 66 members from 24 countries. Since 2002, On the Move has provided regular, up-to-date and free information on mobility opportunities, conditions and funding, and advocates for the value of cross-border cultural mobility. Co-funded by the European Union and the French Ministry of Culture, On the Move is implementing an ambitious multiannual programme to build the capacities of local, regional, national, European and international stakeholders for the sustainable development of our cultural ecosystems.

<https://on-the-move.org>



Mobility Info Points (MIPs) are information centres and/or websites tackling administrative challenges that artists and culture professionals can face when working across borders. Key issues are visas, social insurance, taxes, and customs. MIPs are central contact points for artists and culture professionals as well as organisations hosting or collaborating with them (producers, managers, curators, artistic companies or ensembles, venues, festivals, residency spaces, etc.) when it comes to administrative issues of international mobility in relation to their respective countries. MIPs currently exist in 8 EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Portugal, Slovenia, and The Netherlands), as well as in the United Kingdom and the USA. MIPs are all members of On the Move's network.

<https://on-the-move.org/mobility-information-points>

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All MIPs were involved in the production of this handbook, but two were particularly involved in developing its content through the MIP-Amplifier project:



Motovila - Slovenia

Motovila is a non-governmental institute aimed at promoting transnational and cross-sectoral cooperation in the cultural and creative sectors. Motovila implements information, advice, training, networking, promotion and research activities and is dedicated to empowering representatives of the cultural and creative sectors and facilitating their international connections. Motovila operates in the public interest in the field of culture and is committed to the transfer of knowledge and to improved conditions for artists and culture professionals.

<http://motovila.si>



touring artists via International Theatre Institute (ITI) - Germany

Based in Germany, touring artists (TA) is a cooperation project of the ITI - German Centre, the Internationale Gesellschaft der Bildenden Künste/IGBK (International Association of Art in Germany), and the German Dance Association (Dachverband Tanz Deutschland). Since 2013, TA has provided information and advice about administrative issues that are relevant for artists in transnational work, with a central focus on artists from Germany temporarily working abroad and foreign artists who come to Germany to work or to settle in the country long-term. Information on taxes, social security, insurance, transport, copyright law, visas, residency, and funding options are available in German and English. Some services are also focused on relocated and refugee artists and culture professionals.

<http://touring-artists.info>

This publication is part of the MIP-Amplifier project (MIP-A)

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The MIP-A project's main objectives are to empower MIPs to strengthen their capacities to better serve the sector, and to help develop potential new MIPs in the European Union; to reinforce the visibility of MIPs and their action through a dedicated website; to

advocate for fairer access to rights and information for mobile artists and culture professionals through a consolidated data report.

This handbook has been produced with a focus on EU countries that are part of the MIP-Amplifier project. Some connections with and information from the United Kingdom and the USA have been added when relevant in order to take into account the experiences of non-EU MIPs.

<https://on-the-move.org/work/projects/mip-amplifier>

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Introduction

Who is this guide for?

Context

Over the years, obstacles to the mobility of artists and culture professionals have been analysed in numerous reports in the EU context. One of the landmark pieces of research was the study on: *Impediments to Mobility in the EU Live Performance Sector and on Possible Solutions*, produced by Pearle*, IETM, and TINFO, and written by Richard Polacek.¹

Some experiments have since emerged to tackle these challenges. One of these was the PRACTICS

project back in 2008-2011,² which, despite a lack of follow-on funding, paved the way towards the set-up and further development of what we today call the Mobility Info Points or MIPs.

In the past 3 years, MIPs have been recognised at various levels as important organisations for tackling access to information, providing direct and/or tailor-made information on administrative issues related to mobile artists and culture professionals.³

Process to create this handbook

This handbook has been made possible through the EU-funded 'MIP-Amplifier' project and constitutes an important development step for current and emerging MIPs, particularly in the context of European Union countries.

This handbook is first and foremost a collective work, produced by the MIPs, the design and concept of which was developed during a training session hosted by Motovila in Ljubljana, Slovenia

on 11-13 September 2023. This session was based on a first peer-to-peer experience in 2022 hosted by the French MIP MobiCulture and focused on setting standards for further MIP training sessions, especially for new MIPs.

The training in Ljubljana, delivered in collaboration with the German MIP, touring artists, addressed a number of topics that helped to shape this handbook, such as:

¹ This study was carried out during the European Year of Workers' Mobility 2006 and was part of a wider project on mobility in the European Union's live performance sector, called Mobile.Home, which was initiated by several European organisations active in the live performance sector in Europe (Finnish Theatre Information Centre, Pearle*, On the Move, IETM, Goethe-Institut, Visiting Arts & associated partners). It identified the most important difficulties the EU live performance sector has to deal with when mobile inside the EU or when hosting live performance companies from other EU countries. https://www.ietm.org/en/system/files/publications/study_on_impediments_to_mobility_1.pdf

² <https://on-the-move.org/work/projects/practices>

³ See a few examples below that highlight the importance of Mobility Info Points:

- **The status and working conditions of artists and cultural and creative professionals - Report of the OMC (Open Method of Coordination) group of EU Member States' experts**, June 2023, page 64.
- **Council conclusions on reinforcing intercultural exchanges through the mobility of artists and cultural and creative professionals, and through multi-linguism in the digital era**, 4 April 2022, page 2.
- **UNESCO, ReShaping policies for creativity: addressing culture as a global public good, 2022**, page 143.
- International Cultural Relations Perspectives and recommendations informed by the participants of the **Voices of Culture Structured Dialogue on International Cultural Relations** (2 - 9 February 2022), page 22.
- **Voices of Culture, Status and Working Conditions for Artists, Cultural and Creative Professionals, 2021**, page 42.
- **The Situation of Artists and Cultural Workers and the post-COVID-19 Cultural Recovery in the European Union, Background analysis requested by the Culture Committee of the European Parliament, 2021**, pages 18 and 36 in particular.

- How to initiate an MIP in an EU country?
- What is an MIP work process?
- What is a national network of collaborators for an MIP?
- How to gather/share information and on which subjects?
- How to communicate with and advise artists and culture professionals from various disciplines, backgrounds and contexts?
- How to build a relationship with stakeholders?
- How to cooperate with officials and decision-makers?
- Proposed steps of development for an MIP.

From this training session and its learnings, the MIP handbook has been designed with input from all the MIPs between mid-September and 20 October 2023. The goal was to create an easy-to-access handbook with first-hand experiences from the MIPs, as well as to share experiences, challenges, tips and advice. We plan to update this guide on a regular basis.

Target group

The aim of this MIP handbook is to provide an overview of the goals and services, as well as the organisational and financial structures, of an MIP while describing how existing MIPs function. While they share the same mission of access to administrative information on cultural mobility issues, the MIPs differ in their activities and organisational structures. This diversity is interesting to take into consideration when setting up an MIP, as any new organisation can be shaped to the national context in which it is created. Indeed, the creation of a new MIP has to be viewed first in a national context – undertaken with national and local support, which can then be backed up in some cases by projects at a European or international level.

This handbook can therefore be used by:

- **Potential new MIPs**, e.g. organisations who are considering developing an MIP service within their constituency, or who are interested in creating a standalone MIP organisation.
- **Policymakers and funders, particularly in EU member states (ministries of culture, arts councils, etc.)** that wish to support the creation of a new MIP in their country or are thinking of supporting additional services within the MIP that already exists there.
- **Policymakers and funders at EU and international levels** interested in good practices related to access to information on administrative matters in cultural mobility.
- **Existing but recent MIPs and/or MIPs with new team members**, as a way to inform and update them on how MIPs function.
- **Culture professionals and artists** interested in the question of access to (administrative) information to facilitate cultural mobility.

Interested in joining the MIP network?

Are you working in the field of information provision for artists and culture professionals working internationally? Do you aim to join the MIP network or would you like to become an MIP yourself? Do you aim to support an MIP in your own country?

If after reading this handbook you are interested in joining the MIP network or in supporting the creation of an MIP in your own country, these are some of the steps to consider:

- Consult the **MIP Data Report** that has been produced in parallel to this MIP Handbook.
- Get in contact with On the Move (mobility@on-the-move.org) or with one of the MIPs.
- Join a(n) (online) working group meeting of the MIPs to exchange with peers and express interest.
- In conversation with existing MIPs, develop a strategic plan to identify which topics the new MIP will cover and how information will be provided. Existing MIPs are also available for training and mentoring sessions.
- Establish a website or a webpage with basic information in your national language and in English around the topics that will be covered and the services that will be offered.
- Apply to become a member of On the Move⁴.

If you are a funder (at national or local levels), get in touch with On the Move to share experiences and connections with other funders supporting MIPs.

⁴ <https://on-the-move.org/network/join>

1/

What are Mobility Info Points (MIPs)?

a/MIPs in a nutshell

Mobility Info Points (MIPs) are information centres and/or websites which aim to tackle administrative challenges that artists and culture professionals can face when working across borders. Relevant issues can involve visas and work permits, social security, taxation, customs, and so on.

The MIPs are convinced that solutions can be provided to artists and culture professionals working internationally, through the provision of free information and customised services in a European, international and interconnected context.

The organisational structure of the MIPs is very much inspired by a document produced in 2011 by an expert group on mobility information standards convened by the European Commission, titled *Information standards for the Mobility of artists and cultural professionals*.⁵ The document includes a prioritised list of information topics which are relevant to mobility across borders, as well as content guidelines on customised information for cultural mobility and related recommendations.

When it comes to the definition of cultural mobility, MIPs refer to the definition proposed by On the Move in the i-Portunus Operational Study: 'Mobility

is a central component of the professional trajectory of artists and culture professionals. Involving a temporary cross-border movement, often for educational, capacity-building, networking, or working purposes, it may have tangible or intangible outputs in the short term, and/or be part of a long-term professional development process. Mobility is a conscious process, and those involved in it, whether by directly engaging in it or by supporting it, should consider its cultural, social, political, environmental, ethical and economic implications.'⁶

The organisations maintaining the MIPs are all member organisations of On the Move. Within On the Move, MIPs formed an 'MIP working group' for exchange and cooperation, which meets online on average every six weeks. They usually also meet on-site during the annual Cultural Mobility Forum organised by On the Move.

Their meetings regularly include external guests and/or experts such as the International Federation of Actors, alba KULTUR (OTM members), or the federation Pearle* - Live Performance Europe, who have very deep expertise on the administrative subjects covered by the MIPs.

⁵ This document was produced part of the European agenda for culture, workplan for culture 2011-2014: http://on-the-move.org/files/MIS_FINAL%20TEXT.pdf

⁶ The Operational Study was published in April 2019 as part of pilot cultural mobility funding scheme i-Portunus, funded by the European Commission and coordinated by the Goethe-Institut with Institut français, Izolyatsia, and Nida Art Colony of Vilnius Academy of Arts: <https://on-the-move.org/resources/library/i-portunus-operational-study>

b/List of current MIPs

In EU countries:

- Austria: **Art-Mobility Austria**
- Belgium: **Cultuurloket**
- Czech Republic: **CzechMobility.Info**
(hosted by Arts and Theatre Institute)
- France: **MobiCulture**
- Germany: **touring artists** (a cooperation project by International Theatre Institute (ITI) Germany), Internationale Gesellschaft der Bildenden Künste (International Association of Art in Germany), and German Dance Association)
- The Netherlands: **DutchCulture**
- Portugal: **Loja Lisboa Cultura**
- Slovenia: **Motovila**

Outside of EU countries:

- United Kingdom (UK): **Arts Infopoint UK**
(hosted by Arts Council of Wales/Wales Arts International, in partnership with Arts Council England, Arts Council Northern Ireland, Creative Scotland)
- United States of America (USA): **Tamizdat**

Associate MIPs - in the process of developing information and/or consultation services: some organisations are currently considering becoming an MIP and attend some meetings. These include OTM members **Scensverige in Sweden** and the **Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute - ZRTI in Poland**.



Photo taken during the on-site meeting of the MIPs in Tunis on 9th of May 2023, @Mohamed Gharbi.

MIPs met one full day before the Forum and also had a public session with local guests and from the Mediterranean region.

c/Common features in brief

MIPs share basic criteria concerning topics covered, quality guarantees, information provision, and common values. However, each MIP has a specific structure and only offers certain services.

In terms of common features, all MIPs commit to:

- Offer free, accessible, accurate and reliable information and services about administrative matters related to cultural mobility, covering at least one artistic discipline (performing arts, music, visual arts, literature, cultural heritage, design, cross-disciplinary forms, audio-visual arts, etc.).
- Have a strong connection to the cultural field and a high level of awareness of the needs of the arts and cultural sector.
- Provide information adapted to the needs of the target group (artists, culture professionals), through general information (via websites, newsletters, workshops, factsheets, etc.) and/or individual consultation (emails, face-to-face meetings, phone or video calls) and/or events.
- Use their national language(s) plus the English language to facilitate information sharing in a European or international context.
- Direct users to further resources, publications, or experts when necessary or relevant.
- Cooperate with other MIPs at an administrative level for the sharing of resources and information in a European and international context.

d/Common Values

MIPs believe that international mobility is an integral part of artistic and cultural practice and is crucial for cultural diversity. MIPs share the values of access and contextualisation of practices as expressed by On the Move in its editorial policy⁷ and its sustainability policy.⁸

In line with this, MIPs strive to make their information as accessible as possible while considering the diversity of our society and the needs of marginalised groups and/or people with special needs.

We are immensely grateful to you for your assistance, advice, and support! Thank you so much! Now, we have some time and the opportunity to fully engage in our creative work.

TO READ MORE TESTIMONIES, [CLICK HERE.](#)

⁷ <https://on-the-move.org/about/editorial-policy>

⁸ <https://on-the-move.org/about/sustainability-policy>

2/

Why establish an MIP?

In 2022, the existing MIPs received about 2,500 direct requests from artists and culture professionals. The number of requests has seen a sustained increase in recent years (in Germany, for example, the number of requests doubled in the period from 2020 to 2022). MIPs have also been present at numerous events to increase their visibility and reach target groups. There is a great need among artists and culture professionals to have complex administrative issues explained – in a language they understand.

The administrative issues faced by artists working across borders are complex and highly dependent on national laws and administrative procedures. MIPs in different countries can address questions, explain national regulations and procedures (this

includes European regulations implemented at national level), point out difficulties, identify sources of information and contacts, and thus point to solutions for individual projects, work projects, etc. For bilateral questions, colleagues from other MIPs can be consulted or artists can be referred to the respective MIPs with their questions.

In this context, the ideal scenario would be a network of well-positioned MIPs, in as many countries as possible, that artists and culture professionals can use when needed. While informing the sector, members of the network also support and inform each other, and can jointly address issues by bringing them to the attention of representatives from national governments or European and international institutions.



© Katja Goljat

Sebastian Hoffmann (touring artists, MIP Germany) during the **MIP-A training**, hosted by Motovila (MIP Slovenia) on 11 September 2023.

3/

Topics

a/Temporary Mobility

All MIPs provide information on temporary **incoming** mobility – for individual artists or groups travelling to the country, or for organisers/host organisations inviting international artists. Most MIPs are experts on the mobility regulations **in their own national context**. Temporary mobility, in this context, can include a tour, a guest performance, an exhibition, a workshop, or a residency programme. It also includes topics without any actual physical mobility – such as value-added tax obligations for organisations and culture professionals buying services from abroad.

Some MIPs also deal with questions related to temporary **outgoing** mobility – focusing on regulations in the home country that are relevant for artists and culture professionals going abroad for a working stay, returning home, or working with clients or cooperation partners abroad. However, most MIPs don't offer detailed information and

consultation services on working conditions and regulatory frameworks outside of their own country. Instead, they tend to involve or direct people to the MIP in the respective destination country. In some cases, MIPs also provide information on regulatory issues in other countries with a high degree of mobility (especially bordering countries), or where recent changes occurred (e.g. the United Kingdom after Brexit).

Examples: Cultuurloket in Belgium published articles on posting workers to **France** and to the **Netherlands**. Touring artists in Germany published information **on withholding taxes in Denmark and Luxembourg**, in cooperation with Culture Booking.

Outside the EU: DutchCulture **published a video of a workshop on working in the US**, with input from Tamizdat (USA).

TOPICS COVERED BY MIPs

The abovementioned 'Information Standards for the Mobility of Artists and Cultural Professionals' define 10 regulatory issues which are essential for artists and culture professionals when working across borders (visa/work and residence permits, employment/work legislation, social security, taxation, customs/transportation, intellectual property rights/data protection, health/safety, insurance, licences, and freedom of expression/privacy).

Out of this list, the most common regulatory/administrative issues that MIPs tackle are:

- Visa, residence & work permits
- Working in the MIP country, status & contracts
- Social security
- Taxation (withholding tax, value added tax)
- Customs, transport
- Insurances
- Copyright, licences

All MIPs provide detailed, customised and accurate information on some or all of the listed issues.

Furthermore, 'opportunities' (programmes and schemes that support the mobility of artists and culture professionals, as well as opportunities for

finding work, cooperation or training) and 'resources' (e.g. links to useful information sources, at European and national level) are named as information topics which are desirable and can be covered in a basic manner.

SETTING CLEAR BOUNDARIES REGARDING THE TOPICS

Some MIPs deliberately don't offer information or consultations on 'opportunities' (such as finding work, cooperation partners abroad, or host organisations for international residency programmes or fellowships). Instead, they focus on tackling the regulatory issues and/or only provide information on mobility funding. In a similar vein, some MIPs that also target permanent mobility restrict their services to administrative issues and don't advise on how to start a career, or how to network or find work in the artist's new country of residence.

In practice, this can create misunderstandings regarding the scope of the MIPs' services. It is important to deal with the issue of expectation

management and to set clear boundaries regarding the topics that an MIP can help with. This can be done, for example, by including a paragraph on the website explaining what the MIP doesn't offer and cannot help with. To avoid misunderstanding, it can be helpful to highlight other consultation services for those issues.

In the following section, you can find the most common topics and specific sub-topics commonly covered by MIPs. Below each section, links to the specific sections on MIPs' websites are included as examples of how the topics are covered and explained.

VISAS / RESIDENCE PERMITS / WORK PERMITS

Incoming Mobility

- For MIPs located in a Schengen area country: **Schengen Visa Code:** Common rules for entry and staying in the Schengen area for short stays for non-EU citizens, Schengen visa application procedure, compliance with short-stay rules, Pre-Schengen bilateral agreements.
- Entry regulations: distinction between visa nationals and non-visa nationals.

- Work permit regulations and exemptions for artists coming to the MIP country for **temporary work**.
- Visa application procedure, dealing with rejections.
- Travel authorisation systems for visa-free travel (ETIAS, ESTA, ETA etc.).⁹
- For MIPs located in an EU country: **Freedom of Movement for EU citizens** and their family members.

⁹ ETIAS (Europe): https://travel-europe.europa.eu/etias_en, ESTA (USA): <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/>, ETA (Canada): <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/eta.html>, ETA (UK): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-an-electronic-travel-authorisation-eta>

- **National legislation for permanent mobility/migration:** Visa / residence / work permit legislation: procedures and regulations for self-employed workers, employees, and students in the cultural sector, information on Working Holiday or Youth Mobility agreements with other countries.

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, DutchCulture, Loja Lisboa Cultura, MobiCulture, touring artists and Arts Infopoint UK.

TAXES

Incoming Mobility

- **Withholding tax:** information on an MIP's national legislation on withholding taxes for performance and licensing fees, information on possibilities to avoid withholding tax according to national law or double taxation agreements, information on the national procedures for culture professionals/organisers to declare and pay withholding tax, procedure to issue tax deduction certificates for non-tax residents.

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, DutchCulture, MobiCulture, touring artists and Arts Infopoint UK

- **Value-added tax:** Reverse charge principle for business-to-business transactions: fiscal responsibilities for buyers of services and goods (especially challenging for VAT-exempt businesses), for intra-EU transactions: international VAT identification number, One-Stop-Shop procedure, information on possible exemptions from VAT for non-tax residents.

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, DutchCulture, MobiCulture, touring artists

Outgoing Mobility

- For MIPs located outside of a Schengen area country: **Schengen Visa Code** (see above).
- In some cases: detailed visa information on countries with a high degree of mobility (for example: USA, UK).

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, touring artists and Arts Infopoint UK

Outgoing Mobility

- **Withholding tax:** Information on how artists based in the MIP country are taxed abroad, information on the possibility to avoid double taxation according to national legislation or double taxation agreements, information on how to submit tax deduction certificates in personal income tax declarations.

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, touring artists

- **Value-added tax:** Information on invoicing abroad including the reverse charge principle for business-to-business transactions, international VAT identification number for intra-EU business-to-business transactions, One-Stop-Shop procedure for certain business-to-consumer transactions, information on the possibility to apply for a certification of exemption from VAT in other countries.

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, MobiCulture, touring artists

SOCIAL SECURITY

Incoming Mobility

- For MIPs based in Europe: **Coordination of Social Security in Europe**: Identification of the responsible country for social security in the case of multiple activities, A1 certificate for posted workers.

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, DutchCulture, Loja Lisboa Cultura, MobiCulture, touring artists, Arts Infopoint UK.

- Outside of the Scope of the Coordination of Social Security in Europe: **bilateral social security agreements**.

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, touring artists

Outgoing Mobility

- For MIPs based in Europe: **Coordination of Social Security in Europe**: Identification of the responsible country for social security in the case of multiple activities, issuance of the A1 certificate for posted workers.

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, DutchCulture, Loja Lisboa Cultura, touring artists

- Outside of the Scope of the Coordination of Social Security in Europe: **bilateral social security agreements**.

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, touring artists

TRANSPORT AND CUSTOMS

Incoming Mobility

- **Importing goods** from another customs territory to the MIP country (artworks, merchandise, musical instruments), information on declaring and paying import VAT (for EU MIPs: **EORI number**).
- **Options for temporary import** (Carnet ATA).
- **CITES certificate** for goods containing endangered species.

Examples: Arts Infopoint UK, Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, touring artists

Outgoing Mobility

- **Exporting goods** to another customs territory (artworks, merchandise, musical instruments), export formalities in the MIP country (for EU MIPs: **EORI number**).
- **Options for temporary export** (Carnet ATA).
- **CITES certificate** for goods containing endangered species.

Examples: Cultuurloket, CzechMobility, touring artists

OTHER TOPICS (INCLUDING MOBILITY FUNDING)

Mobility Funding

Some MIPs have a deeper involvement in the topic of mobility funding because they are integrated or hosted by an organisation that runs mobility funding programmes. DutchCulture is the prime example of this approach: more than half of its consultations are on mobility funding. It has direct connections with Dutch diplomatic missions and is also involved in running the residency platform TransArtists.

The four organisations behind Arts Infopoint UK (Wales Arts International, Arts Council Northern Ireland, Creative Scotland, Arts Council England) all administer mobility funding programmes. One of the three organisations hosting the German MIP touring artists, Dachverband Tanz (the German Dance Association), runs Kreativ-Transfer, a travel grant to attend trade fairs and networking events for the performing arts, visual arts, and games sectors. Motovila is also the Creative Europe Desk (CED) in Slovenia. Some MIPs are also involved in contributing to Mobility Funding Guides published on On the Move's website¹⁰.

While MIPs can benefit greatly from this direct association with mobility funding programmes or organisations, it is also important to highlight that it can be challenging when managing expectations on what the MIP can offer its users. In some cases, MIPs can be misidentified as funding organisations themselves, leading users to send MIPs applications for funding programmes they are not responsible for or believing that an MIP's central role is to provide financial assistance for international projects. In addition, it can be challenging for MIPs who aren't directly involved with mobility funding programmes to have an overview of available grants and their respective conditions. The possibility to signpost to On the Move's online resources (Mobility Funding Guides and Open Calls) is of great value for MIPs without their own databases or specialized expertise on mobility funding.

Some examples of actions related to mobility funding information are listed below.

Incoming Mobility

- Information on grants / funding programmes for **temporary** incoming mobility to the MIP country (residencies, go-and-see funding, etc.).
- Information on funding for **international cooperation projects** involving the MIP country.
- Programmes for **artists at risk** coming/relocating to the MIP country.

Examples: CzechMobility, DutchCulture, touring artists

Outgoing Mobility

- Information on grants / funding programmes for artists based in the MIP country for **temporary outgoing mobility** (e.g. travel and transport costs).
- Grants for attending **networking events and fairs** abroad.
- Information on funding for **international cooperation projects** involving the MIP country.
- Information on **residencies abroad** hosted by organisations based in the MIP country.

Examples: CzechMobility, DutchCulture, touring artists

¹⁰ <https://on-the-move.org/resources/funding>

OTHER RELATED SUBJECTS

Some MIPs offer in-depth information on additional topics on their websites. For example, touring artists (MIP Germany) provides information on **Germany's cultural scene** and a list of **regional contact**

points in Germany. Cultuurloket (MIP Belgium) offers an overview of **European networks** in the cultural field. Some MIPs focus on specific topics in their consultations as well.

b/Permanent Mobility

While temporary mobility is at the core of most MIPs' work, some MIPs have extended their information and consultation services to artists who relocated or wish to relocate to their country. In many cases, questions on permanent and temporary mobility overlap: artists who relocate to another country

often still work in their home country or invite artists from their previous countries of residence for cooperation.

SEE CASE STUDY 1 WITH TOURING ARTISTS
(MIP GERMANY)

c/Addressing current issues

Some MIPs address current social and/or political issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit, or the war in Ukraine. The information they provide aims to help with understanding new regulations in a rapidly changing and sometimes confusing world.

The same goal is being pursued by **Cultuurloket** (MIP Belgium) and touring artists / **Brexit Infopoint** (MIP Germany). The Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute (Associate MIP Poland) set up the **UA InfoPoint** as a reaction to the war in Ukraine.

DutchCulture (MIP Netherlands) set up a **Brexit Helpdesk** that provides support for continuing cooperation between the Netherlands and the UK.

SEE CASE STUDY 2 WITH ZBIGNIEW RASZEWSKI
THEATRE INSTITUTE (ASSOCIATE MIP POLAND).

4/

Services

There are three services that MIPs can provide: a) online information through a website, b) individual consultation, and c) workshops, information sessions and/or networking meetings.

a/Online information through a website

ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES

MIPs strive to make the information they provide as accessible as possible for artists and culture professionals who work internationally or wish to work internationally. The MIPs provide information online via the website of the hosting organisation or via a standalone website. All MIPs strive to tailor their information as much as possible to their respective target groups. Information is provided in the national language and in most cases in English as well. MIPs provide all or some basic services **free of charge**. Directing users to other MIPs and/or other relevant and reliable information and consultation services is another important aspect of the MIPs' information provision.

Most MIP websites contain sections including texts on mobility issues edited and updated by the MIP's staff. Whereas the Austrian, Belgian, Czech, French, German, and Dutch MIPs offer fairly extensive information on a wide array of topics, the websites of the MIPs from Portugal and the UK offer more

limited information in the form of checklists or an overview on a single page. The websites of the MIPs from Slovenia and the US do not currently contain any of their own editorial content covering the administrative side of cross-border mobility.¹¹ Tamizdat (MIP US) focuses on visa issues and links to the extensive website **Artists from abroad**, the largest online portal on visas and taxes for incoming artists touring in the US. With the exception of the Belgian MIP, all MIPs offer information on their websites in English. The MIPs from France and the Netherlands only offer information on incoming mobility, as far as administrative issues are concerned.

Overview of MIP websites with sections dedicated to temporary mobility issues (as of October 2023). All MIP websites are linked from the **MIP website** hosted by On the Move (available from November 2023).

¹¹ The MIP Slovenia will launch a sub-page by the end of 2023, accessible here: motovila.si/MIP

MIP	Directions*	Topics covered	Languages	Number of visitors (on average per month)
Art-Mobility Austria (Austria)	IM/OM	Labour Law, Inclusivity, Social Security, Taxation, Copyright, Contract Law, Visa and Residence, Funding	German, English	2,500
Cultuurloket (Belgium)	IM/OM	Taxes, Visas, Brexit, Transport, Social Security	Dutch	500
CzechMobility.Info (Czech Republic)	IM/OM	Copyright, Taxes, Insurance, Social Security, Status, Transport, Visas, Funding	Czech, English	900
MobiCulture (France)	IM	Visas, Social Security, Taxes, Work legislation/status	French, English	390
touring artists (Germany)	IM/OM	Visas, Status, Social Security, Taxes, Transport, Copyright, Funding, Insurances, Brexit	German, English, Turkish**, Arabic**	15,000
DutchCulture (The Netherlands)	IM/OM	Funding, Visas, Residence & work permits, Social Security, Taxes, Brexit.	English	29,021
Loja Lisboa Cultura (Portugal)	IM/OM	Visas, Social Security	Portuguese, (some information in English)	345
Motovila (Slovenia)	IM/OM	Funding. To be included from 2024: Visas, Residence & work permit; Working in the MIP Country; Social Security.	Slovenian, English	100
Arts Infopoint UK (United Kingdom)	IM/OM	Visas, Transport, Social Security, Brexit	English, Welsh	390
Tamizdat (USA)	IM	New updates only. For content reference to www.artistsfromabroad.org .	English	-

* IM: Incoming Mobility, OM: Outgoing Mobility

WHO WRITES THE CONTENTS OF THE WEBSITES?

There are two ways of compiling information:

- **Information is provided by external legal experts and edited by the MIPs.** Taking into account the information needs of artists and culture professionals, and the sorts of questions put to MIPs, an MIP can compile questions and work situations that need to be explained. An expert then takes these questions together with an outline for a written text and creates text modules accordingly. The resulting texts are 'translated' by the MIP for its target group, i.e. put into comprehensible language and related closely to artists' everyday work. Open questions are clarified.

Texts are passed back and forth between experts and the MIP, and it can be a lengthy process to get to a final text.

- **The MIPs do their own research and compile texts that are checked afterwards if necessary.** Information is checked and supplemented by external legal experts. If legal experts on certain topics work in-house, a review may not be necessary. Research and text drafting are time-consuming; however, working with (external) experts in this way is often more efficient.

WHO ARE THE EXPERTS?

The legal experts are often lawyers (migration law, copyright law, etc.) or tax advisors, or else work in the institutions that handle administrative matters and are familiar with the relevant legal background (Chamber of Commerce, social insurance institutions, etc.). In some countries, there are well-known legal experts for a specific cross-border topic, especially tax law.

Challenges: Sometimes it can be difficult to find experts for certain topics. Ideally, the person should

be an expert in their field and at the same time should understand the concerns of the cultural sector. In many cases, the experts receive a fee that must be negotiated individually, depending on the scope of the assignment and the professional background. Working with external experts can be expensive.

WHO EDITS THE WEBSITE?

Editorial work is done by an MIP's staff. The following challenges need to be considered:

- Administrative issues are complex and bureaucratic language is used. This needs to be adapted for artists and culture professionals.
- Translation into other languages: information on the website should be provided in the national language and in English. Translations must be done with care: sometimes a term is translated from the national language into English and the English term has a different meaning than the term being translated. This can easily lead to misunderstandings or ambiguities. Problems can be avoided by adding explanations.
- Updating information: a combination of the following approaches can be useful to stay up-to-date:
 - Learning from the field / through consultations, continuous reflection on the contents.
 - Experts are asked to check information regularly, if the budget of the MIP allows it.
 - Internal workshops or Q&A sessions for MIP staff facilitated by experts.
 - Newsletters from ministries, administrations, etc.
- How to deal with 'grey knowledge'? There is a huge 'grey knowledge' within the cultural sector regarding administrative procedures, and sometimes this does not correspond to the

correct procedure and thus cannot easily be put on a website. Publishing case studies written by artists that describe individual experiences with specific topics or situations can be an option to share 'grey knowledge'. MIPs can also decide that certain topics need to be treated in one-to-one consultations only to avoid any confusion.

STRUCTURE OF THE WEBSITE

The topics tackled are complex, detailed explanations are often necessary, and a complex navigation structure is sometimes inevitable. On the other hand, users often prefer to have short texts and fast answers to their questions, all the more since important information can get lost within a complex website navigation.

A decision on the style of texts provided online is necessary. They can be provided as explanatory texts, or information may appear in a Q&A style.

b/Consultation service

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSULTATION SERVICE

Most MIPs can provide information via individual consultations. Consultations can take place in person and/or by email, video call, or telephone. Consultations are usually provided in the national language or in English. Sometimes conversations in other languages are possible, depending on the consultants.

Consultations are in most cases provided free of charge. Some MIPs offer additional services for reasonable fees (significantly less than what a professional/expert in the 'free market' / for-profit sector would charge). Most MIPs have limited capacity for consultations. Therefore a decision must be made as to how many times in a row an artist or culture professional can use the service.

Other possible formats include:

- A guide function asking users personalised questions on their mobility (**example**).
- Templates for contracts and invoices.
- Checklists, including bilateral checklists for cross-border work between two specific countries.
- Glossary to explain the most common terms.
- Translations of existing texts into the national language (for example, select *Ultimate Cookbooks for Cultural Managers* published by Pearle* and the European Festivals Association are translated in Czech or French. **See examples here**).
- A database, but more for mobility funding than for administrative issues.

Most MIPs offer guidance rather than counselling and/or legally binding advice. MIPs offer general information, as well as tailor-made and case-specific advice, but do not offer support/accompaniment in legal cases.

Who provides the consultations? MIP experiences can be shared for three approaches to consultation services.

Examples: touring artists (Germany) limits the amount of personal one-hour consultations to three per person per calendar year, but this isn't always enforced in practice. MobiCulture (France) limits personal consultations to 15 minutes (but some situations can generate many exchanges which, in aggregate, can represent a large amount of time).

Approach	Advantages	Possible challenges	Examples
In-house legal experts	- In-house, direct contact with target group	- Experts must learn to speak the language of the target group - Often only experts in one legal field, no intersectional approach - Hard to find a staff member	Cultuurloket, Tamizdat, Loja Lisboa Cultura (LLC)
External legal experts	- Legal advice for a specific field	- Can take a long time before getting an answer - MIP as an intermediary - MIP staff must translate/explain the answer - Expensive	Cultuurloket, touring artists, CzechMobility.Info, Loja Lisboa Cultura (LLC), Motovila (from 2024 onward), Arts Infopoint UK
In-house general advisors from the arts scene	- Intersectional approach - Speak the language of the target group - Quick responses	- Advisors must receive regular training - No legally binding advice	touring artists, MobiCulture, CzechMobility.Info, Motovila

SEE CASE STUDY 3 WITH CULTUURLOKET
(MIP BELGIUM).

For more information, check as well the **MIP Data Report** produced in parallel to this MIP Handbook.

LIABILITY

When consultations are carried out by general advisers – rather than legal experts – we recommend making sure that beneficiaries (artists, culture professionals, etc.) understand that the MIP shall not be liable for their information and advisory services. It must be pointed out on the website and in emails that the help desk service is provided by non-lawyers and therefore no legally binding information is given. When an online form is used to request an appointment, a tick box can be used that clients must click before sending the request.

STAFF TRAINING AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

If the MIP doesn't have in-house legal advisors, regular meetings and training sessions with external experts are crucial. In some cases, MIPs without in-house legal staff have long-standing relationships with external experts. Consultants are also advised to attend training sessions offered by NGOs and government organisations on changes in the law. It can be challenging for the MIP staff to stay updated on the complexity of a wide array of legal topics. Internal knowledge transfer can be conducted during regular staff meetings and in-house training sessions.

Example: touring artists' (Germany) in-house consultants schedule regular meetings with an immigration lawyer and a tax expert to discuss consultation cases.

DOCUMENTATION AND EVALUATION

To identify mobility trends and the needs of the target groups, most MIPs have established an internal process to document consultation cases. In addition, MIPs are requested to submit all individual consultation cases and events to a data collection form created through the MIP-A project and hosted on the On the Move website, with a personalised internal log-in system for each MIP. Through this shared data collection, the MIPs aim at creating a base of long-term data to be used for policy discussions.

DATA PROTECTION

Data protection is a key issue to be communicated, especially for artists at risk. MIPs are advised to follow the **General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR** for storing any personalised data. For vulnerable and at-risk artists, it is recommended to set up encrypted communication services but artists are also advised to check if using encrypted services could lead to security issues (suspicion, prosecution) in their home countries. **Privacy International** offers country-by-country guidance.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

For artists at risk, it is strongly recommended that MIP staff and consultants don't try to provide mental health assistance themselves without proper training. It is recommended to identify professional local health services that can be contacted in the case of emergency situations. Mental health can also become an issue for MIP staff dealing with difficult cases, especially with artists at risk. It is recommended to reach out to mental health experts to receive training and learn coping strategies.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER CONSULTATION OFFICES

Some MIPs are in close contact with other consultation offices and services in their region or country, such as sector-specific services provided by professional artist organisations. Other service providers should be made aware of which services the MIP provides (and which it doesn't provide) so that potential users can be forwarded with the right expectations. It is important to note that staff members at other services have high turnover, so it is important to remind other organisations that the MIPs exist and what types of services they offer. In larger cities, it can make sense to set up roundtables or regular meetings of all consultation services targeted at artists and culture professionals. Besides transferring users to the MIP, it is also possible to cooperate with other services on joint public events on a particular topic. Another opportunity for cooperation lies in sharing resources for internal staff training, including, for example, mental health training for consultants or presentations by legal experts on pressing issues. For artists relocating to the MIP country (permanent mobility and artists at risk), it can also be helpful to establish a cooperation with private relocation agencies or consultation services connected to a government immigration department.

Example: In Germany, touring artists has commissioned the relocation agency **Red Tape Translation** to write articles for their website. Staff members attend free training sessions on immigration law provided by Berlin's **Welcome Center**, run by the city's department for integration.

c/Information sessions, workshops and events

Information is usually provided online, through publications or through individual consultations. Some MIPs also organise workshops on relevant topics and/or are asked to provide workshops for other organisations, or in cooperation with other organisations. Fees for workshops and participation at events can be another source of financing for MIPs, even if MIPs try to make sure that these events are free of charge.

POSSIBLE COOPERATION PARTNERS FOR WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

- Universities and university career centres
- Artist associations
- Arts and culture venues, production companies, and festivals (in-house training for staff)
- Information centres for artists and culture professionals
- Organisations for migrants
- Grassroots artistic collectives
- National cultural organisations, export offices, trade unions and networks
- Funding organisations
- Other MIPs

WHO CONDUCTS THE WORKSHOPS?

Workshops and information sessions can be facilitated by MIP staff who can provide basic orientation on the different topics, or detailed insight in certain topics, if specialised in a particular subject. External experts can also be invited to facilitate a workshop or info session. Sessions facilitated by both (MIP staff and external experts) can be more effective as they ensure that the target group is directly addressed. Involving external experts is also a training exercise for MIP staff as this can empower them on a particular subject.



© touring artists

Presentation by Anita Debaere (Pearle) during the MIP meeting hosted in Berlin on 1-2 December 2022.*

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How are MIPs structured and financed?

Each MIP is implemented in a different way, influenced by different national and or local political structures and debates, as well as subject to varying (financial) capacities and resources, and other specificities related to the national or local context.

In addition, the prior existence of other MIPs can serve as reference or best practice in the establishment of an MIP. MIPs can be stand-alone organisations or be part of existing cultural organisations funded through public and/or local means.

For these reasons, MIPs are all different in terms of structure, organisation, and budget/funding and can serve as inspiration for new MIPs depending on their contexts.

A FEW ARGUMENTS TO GET FINANCIAL SUPPORT (AT NATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL LEVEL)

Here are a few arguments used by MIPs:

- There is a strong demand for clear and easy-to-understand information, particularly on administrative matters related to cultural mobility. MIPs are easy to access and are connected with one another. MIPs can be seen as 'mediators' or 'translators' of complex information while helping to raise awareness to prevent problems from happening in the first place.
- A strong MIP reduces the stress and workload on national general information points and governments because the MIPs 'speak the language' of the target group, i.e. artists and culture professionals.
- An MIP is a competent partner for national or local governments to identify problems and to serve as a mediator for the target group.
- On related matters (that are connected to the scope of actions of each MIP):
- MIPs can be a competent information point for 'artists at risk' and can help accompany government-run fellowship programmes.
- A strong national MIP helps both artists residing in the MIP country to export their work abroad (outgoing mobility) and organisers and presenters in the MIP country when they invite artists from abroad (incoming mobility) to create a welcoming environment for cultural exchange and diversity.
- Not all artists and culture professionals have the budget to pay for a lawyer or tax advisor. This is especially true for the independent arts scene as well as for self-employed/freelance and emerging artists. In many countries, specialised legal experts aren't available or do not take on new clients. MIPs step in to fill this information gap.
- A strong MIP reduces bureaucratic problems and helps artists and culture professionals, as well as organisations, to follow the legal procedures that aim to protect them when working in a country other than their country of residence (for temporary or longer periods).

OVERVIEW

MIP	Independent organisation or part of another structure	Funding provided by (2022)	Budget (2022)	Staff (FTE in 2022)
Art-Mobility Austria (Austria)	Until 2022 in cooperation with Smart Coop Austria; 2023 building up new cooperation as part of a new entity	Austrian Ministry of Culture	40,000 Euros	0.25-0.6
Cultuurloket (Belgium)	MIP is a department of Cultuurloket	Flemish Government	17,000 Euros (including with a special 7,000 Euros scheme on knowledge building on international matters)	0.63
CzechMobility.Info (Czech Republic)	Hosted by the Arts and Theatre Institute	Ministry of Culture, Czech Republic	28,500 Euros	0.5-1
MobiCulture (France)	Hosted by On the Move (French association)	French Ministry of Culture and the Centre national de la musique	55,500 Euros	0.8
touring artists (Germany)	Cooperation project of the International Theatre Institute (ITI) Germany , IGBK (International Association of Visual Art Germany), Dachverband Tanz (German Dance Association)	Federal Commissioner for Culture and the Media (BKM) , Berlin Senate Department of Culture , Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR) via BKM (only in 2022 and 2023)	150,000 Euros (in 2022 and 2023, extra budget of 250,000 Euros via BAR)	3 (in 2022 and 2023: 5 because of extra BAR funding)
DutchCulture (The Netherlands)	MIP is a department of DutchCulture	Government of the Netherlands (Ministry of Foreign Affairs + Ministry of Education, Culture and Science)	79,000 Euros	0.8
Loja Lisboa Cultura (Portugal)	Part of Lisbon Municipality, Polo Cultural Gaivotas-Boavista	Lisbon Municipality	120,000 Euros	5
Motovila (Slovenia)	MIP is a service within Motovila Institute, non-profit NGO	City of Ljubljana	3,500 Euros	0.25
Arts Infopoint UK (United Kingdom)	Hosted by Wales Arts International , in partnership with Wales Arts International , Arts Council England , Arts Council Northern Ireland , Creative Scotland	Arts Council England, Arts Council Northern Ireland; Scottish Government; Welsh Government	£68,000	3 x part time staff
Tamizdat (USA)	Independent '501(c)(3)' non-profit organisation	US National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council for the Arts, New York City office of Cultural Affairs, private donors	\$100,000	5 part-time staff members

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Networking and connections with national arts and culture organisations

It is important to create (and sustain) strong alliances with arts and culture organisations at a national level and to ensure that the MIP is visible and referred to by other organisations.

It is particularly important to network with other information and consultation services so that artists and culture professionals can be referred to the right contacts.

Most MIPs work across all subsectors, including music, dance, theatre, visual and audio-visual arts, literature, and circus. MIPs cater to very specific topics that are important for all subsectors and

which are not always covered by subsector-specific organisations. Therefore, it can make sense to establish an MIP for the whole cultural sector since most cross-border regulations are the same for the whole sector. For new grassroots MIPs, it can make sense to create alliances with other national artist associations to work collectively for the creation of an MIP (as happened for instance with touring artists in Germany).

For MIPs directly connected to a government department or national funding organisation, it seems crucial to involve all possible partners from the cultural sector.



© Katja Goljat

*Networking meeting during the MIP-A training hosted by Motovila on 11-13 September 2023, within the scope of the **Mobility for Creativity Forum**, in **Ljubljana**.*

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Relationship to the national government

Some MIPs have established strategic partnerships with national/regional authorities and administrations.

MEDIATION

MIPs function as mediators between governments and artists / culture professionals. They raise awareness on administrative regulations that artists and culture professionals are often not aware of but must comply with. MIPs translate official texts into a more understandable language targeted at the sector and offer easy-to-access guidance on complex issues.

In light of often vague guidance from official government sources, MIPs fill the gap between regulations artists and culture professionals have to comply with and the lack of information provision by governments. Artists and culture professionals cannot always afford professional consultations by lawyers or experts in the cultural field.

ADVOCACY

Beyond their mediation work, MIPs and their parent organisations aim to be important contributors to their country's cultural fabric, and are committed to leveraging their perspective, expertise, resources and data to advocate for better conditions for artists and culture professionals working internationally – together with other networks and organisations. This advocacy can take many forms, including but not limited to: advising policymakers, gathering field data, education, publishing research and guidance, organising stakeholder collective action, litigation.

SEE CASE STUDIES 4, 5 AND 6
with **Loja Lisboa Cultura – LLC (MIP Portugal)**,
MobiCulture (MIP France), and **touring artists (MIP Germany)**

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Public relations and branding: 3 scenarios

MIPs present themselves to the public in diverse ways, particularly through online communication channels. Based on the group of existing MIPs, three approaches can be identified:

NO SEPARATE BRAND NAME, FULL INTEGRATION INTO THE HOST ORGANISATION

In Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Slovenia, the MIPs are fully integrated into a larger organisation or project advising artists or offering other services. The MIPs don't operate under a separate name and don't have their own brand, website, or social media channels. One advantage of this approach is that a larger target group can be reached through the popularity and visibility of the host organisation. Also, the MIP services are regarded as an integral part of the organisation's services. In some cases, however, full integration into the host organisation can obscure the fact that it operates as an MIP or offers MIP services.

OWN BRAND NAME, BUT CLOSE IDENTIFICATION WITH HOST OR PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

In the Czech Republic, Germany, the UK, and the US, MIPs operate under their own brand names and have their own websites and social media channels, but they don't always operate as their own legal entities. Instead, they're 'hosted' by one or more organisations (professional association, funding bodies, institutes, non-profit organisations, etc.), providing staff, resources, and (in some cases) extra infrastructure funding. This can sometimes lead to a challenge in striking a balance between the visibility of the host organisation and the MIP.

For users, it is often not important who the host organisations behind the MIP are, how they're structured internally, and who provides funding for the MIP. Instead, they want to find information and advice as easily as possible. Also, it can take a long time to build up enough visibility (and social media followers) for the MIP brand. Some host organisations decided against establishing separate MIP social media accounts and transmit MIP-related information through the host organisations' channels only.

OWN BRAND NAME, NO HOST ORGANISATION

In Austria and France, MIPs are run by entities/people dedicated only to offering MIP services.

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES

- Newsletters
- Direct email campaigns to cultural organisations, universities and schools, municipal and regional cultural offices, funding organisations, information/resource centres, etc.
- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, X/Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.)
- YouTube channels
- Flyers, booklets, leaflets
- Workshops and presence at events
- Interviews for sector-specific magazines/publications

OVERVIEW OF MIPS' SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE AND PR ACTIVITIES

As outlined by the three branding approaches above, it must be noted that not all MIPS operate under specific brands/names. The social media presence of MIPS hosted by organisations is usually boosted and amplified by the host organisation's own social media channels. The social media reach of the individual MIPS is often much higher than the numbers indicated in the following chart. This table is more an indicative one.

MIP	Social media presence and number of followers (October 2023)	Email newsletter, frequency (subscribers)
Art-Mobility Austria (Austria)	Currently no specific account (hosted by another organisation until the end of 2022)	No
Cultuurloket (Belgium)	Facebook (7.9k), Instagram (3.1k), LinkedIn (2.4k), X/Twitter (1.7k), YouTube (505)	Yes, weekly
CzechMobility.Info (Czech Republic)	Activities and news are included in the channels of the host organisation: Facebook Culturenet (2.6k), Facebook ATI (3.6k)	Yes, weekly Culturenet (9,200 subscribers)
MobiCulture (France)	Facebook (379)	No
touring artists (Germany)	Facebook (2.6k), Instagram (1k), X/Twitter (529), YouTube (16), posts are also shared via host organisations' social media platforms	Yes, monthly (1,000 subscribers)
DutchCulture (The Netherlands)	Facebook (9.2k), Instagram (3.7k), LinkedIn (7.7k), X/Twitter (5.7k), YouTube (135)	Yes, monthly (18,000 subscribers)
Loja Lisboa Cultura (Portugal)	Facebook (6.9k), Instagram (new)	Yes
Motovila (Slovenia)	Facebook (2.5k), YouTube (117)	Yes, monthly (1,100 subscribers)
Arts Infopoint UK (United Kingdom)	Facebook (73), X/Twitter (254) posts are also shared by host organisation and partner organisation social media platforms	Yes, monthly
Tamizdat (USA)	Facebook (1.3k), Instagram (462), LinkedIn (52), X/Twitter (250)	Yes (10,000)

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Quality standards

MIPs commit to providing accurate and up-to-date information. Information is kept as up-to-date as possible. However, due to regular and rapid changes to regulations, up-to-date information cannot always be provided immediately.

The staff of MIPs are legal experts themselves and/or are in contact with legal experts / delegates from administrations and ministries as regularly as possible. Online information has been compiled/reviewed by experts on the individual topics to make sure that the information provided is correct.

MIPs have good connections with artists and the cultural sector in general to meet the needs of artists and culture professionals.

Monitoring and evaluating information services: most MIPs evaluate their services with quantitative measures, some MIPs by qualitative surveys. MIPs strive to jointly develop a more comprehensive framework of evaluation.

Thank you very much for all of your assistance in introducing my letter to different departments and organisations. I appreciate all that you have done for me and I will follow up on the information below and let you know if I will someday be in your country.

TO READ MORE TESTIMONIES, [CLICK HERE.](#)



© Motovila

MIP-A Training in Ljubljana, hosted by Motovila in collaboration with touring artists.

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Cooperation between MIPs

Within the On the Move network, the MIPs have formed a Working Group to:

- Exchange views on administrative challenges on a regular basis.
- Review own information standards.
- Share good practices.
- Organise and prepare joint events and projects (information sessions, workshops, bilateral documents).

Meetings take place online every six weeks and, if feasible, one or two live meetings a year are organised. Within the meetings, important issues can be addressed, and joint or bilateral actions discussed. Sometimes experts in specific fields are invited to talk about issues relevant to all the MIPs (e.g. Schengen regulations, entry rule to the UK after Brexit, transportation of musical instruments, VAT).

This cooperation and exchange is in line with one of the best practice tools mentioned in 'Information Standards for the Mobility of Artists and Cultural Professionals': 'Networking at European level is vital in ensuring that best practice in service provision is shared across Europe. This leads to increased knowledge and exchange of know-how on information on mobility between national information providers. Cooperation with other countries' information services also ensures accurate and quality advice and

information for outgoing artists and professionals, as well as mutual signposting.' (MIS, p. 6).

The MIP Working Group also aims to establish/connect with potential MIPs within Europe (in unrepresented countries) and in other world regions (as is the case now with North America with an MIP in the USA) to expand the existing network. This handbook is an invaluable step towards this expansion.

Other ways of cooperating include:

- The creation of common online tools and documents, like the **Bilateral Checklists** (FR, BE and DE) funded by the Region Grand-Est in France and based on a cooperation between Cultuurloket, MobiCulture, and touring artists (2021).
- Feedback on reports and publications produced by On the Move on administrative issues related to cultural mobility, like the report **Schengen Visa Code and Cultural Mobility: Latest Insights with a Focus on Artists and Culture Professionals from the African Continent** (October 2023).
- Support towards advocacy actions at European and national levels (see the **Introduction** part and the *Context* sub-section).
- And of course, cooperation through projects like the EU-funded **MIP-Amplifier** project supported by ECAS (June-December 2023).

11/ Partner organisations in Europe and internationally: allies and interested parties

As described throughout this handbook, MIPs are not standalone organisations in their national and local contexts, nor are they at European and international levels.

One of the key allies of the MIPs is the network Pearle*, which is both instrumental in contributing to MIP activities and a provider of online guides for the sector on key administrative issues. **Pearle* - Live Performance Europe** is the European federation representing through its members and associations over 10,000 theatres, theatre production companies, orchestras and music ensembles, opera houses, ballet and dance companies, festivals, concert halls, venues, service providers, and other organisations within the performing arts and music sector across Europe. The aim of this international non-profit, non-governmental organisation is to establish a stable environment by supporting sustainability and the promotion of music and the performing arts across Europe.

Pearle* publishes cookbooks or guides for cultural managers, infographics, and other publications on cross-border administrative issues. **The cookbooks**, produced in partnership with the European Festivals Association, are a very useful introduction to key mobility topics, and some MIPs have published translations of select cookbooks into their national languages.

- Some examples of guides in English: **Social security in an international context, VAT, Schengen visas for third country nationals, Artist taxation in an international context.**
- Selection of guides (in other languages than English) : On **social security** (CZ), on **taxation in an international context** (CZ), on **copyright clearing for live events** (FR).

Other partner organisations include members of On the Move engaged with cultural mobility questions and international artistic exchange. They regularly participate in the online meetings of the working group, raise awareness on pressing issues, contribute their expertise, and support the visibility of the MIP network.

Some examples are:

OTM members:

- **alba KULTUR - International Office for Global Music**, Germany, particularly on visa issues and relocated artists
- **International Federation of Actors (FIA)**, Belgium, particularly on social protection and taxation issues.
- **Culture Funding Watch**, Tunisia
- **HowlRound Theatre Commons**, USA
- **Taiwan Art Space Alliance**, Taiwan

Interested parties and/or contributors to MIP sessions (examples):

- **European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)**, Belgium
- **International Federation of Musicians (FIM)**
- **KulturHub**, Switzerland

Annexes

Case studies

CASE STUDY 1: TOURING ARTISTS (MIP GERMANY) - INTERNATIONAL ARTIST INFO BERLIN

Germany's MIP touring artists receives extra financial support from Berlin's local government for international artists who moved or who wish to move to Berlin (via the funding programme **Weltoffenes Berlin**). This funding programme includes a fellowship for Berlin-based organisations hosting artists who relocated or wish to relocate to Berlin because of the political situation of their previous residence country. In addition, organisations can apply for project funding to accompany and consult this target group. Since 2018, touring artists has received this type of project funding each year. The project is aimed at two groups: 1) hosts and fellows of the city's own fellowship programme receive individual consultations on their contractual relationship, and fellows can participate in internal workshops on working in Germany, 2) any other artist/user who is from a 'country at risk' with questions on relocating to or arriving in Berlin. Touring artists also organises 'Monthly Meet Ups', on-site or online workshops, and networking meetings open to everyone (in 2023, in cooperation with **Goethe-Institut In Exile**).

In 2022, 37% of all individual consultations were conducted for this target group (63% on temporary mobility questions). There are some restrictions to the consultation service: touring artists doesn't accompany artists to meetings at public offices or help fill out forms and doesn't offer consultations on applying for asylum, German citizenship, and social benefits. It also doesn't match artists at risk with potential host organisations for fellowship programmes.

Information pages for the target group were published on the website, including translations into English. Touring artists cooperates with other organisations to reach the target group. These include local Berlin-based consultation services (often sector-specific), NGOs like **Artists at Risk** and **Reporters Without Borders**, and other fellowship programmes, including the German Foreign Ministry's own relocation programme (**Martin Roth Initiative**) or **INTRO** (Hamburg's fellowship programme).

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CASE STUDY 2: ZBIGNIEW RASZEWSKI THEATRE INSTITUTE - ZRTI (ASSOCIATE MIP POLAND) – THE UA INFOPOINT PROJECT

On 15 March 2022, the Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute in Poland launched the UA InfoPoint – a contact point for representatives of theatre professionals from Ukraine who have been forced to temporarily leave their country, as well as for Polish

theatres and cultural institutions offering support to Ukrainians following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia which resulted in a humanitarian crisis. The aim of the UA InfoPoint was to respond to the current needs of theatre makers from

Ukraine and to monitor the resources offered by theatrical institutions and organisations, in order to improve the flow of information about available support initiatives. As part of the UA InfoPoint, ZRTI provided information (in Ukrainian, Polish, English, and Russian) on the support available and the activities of partners in Poland and abroad. Beneficiaries could contact the InfoPoint via email, by telephone (with on-call staff available at certain times), and a Facebook group. It continued in this form until the end of October 2022 and later became a regular activity carried out by the team responsible for the BY and UA Artistic Residencies Programmes, which has been run by the ZRTI since 2021 (initially launched for Belarusian theatre artists and extended to Ukrainian artists in 2022).

During these few months in 2022, the InfoPoint provided support to nearly 500 theatre professionals. As a result of the needs identified within the framework of the InfoPoint's operation, a series of live meetings were organised in Warsaw, combining a cultural offer with a networking opportunity in a straightforward 'getting to know each other' format (observing a theatre rehearsal, participating in an acting workshop, visiting theatre sites in the vicinity during a communal walk, etc.). In addition to matching specific people and opportunities, the project also provided a more general opportunity to get to know the theatre community in Poland and to re-establish oneself as a cultural (theatre) worker in a new environment.

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CASE STUDY 3: CULTUURLOKET (MIP BELGIUM) - WORKING WITH IN-HOUSE AND EXTERNAL LEGAL EXPERTS

Cultuurloket (MIP Belgium / Flanders) is a knowledge centre and learning network where learning, orientating, advice, innovation and inspiration about entrepreneurship in culture are central.

The internal team of Cultuurloket consists of 14 FTE which include the functions of direction, coordination, communication, administration, human resources and consultancy. There are currently 6 internal consultants who are employed – almost all in a full-time employment – by Cultuurloket.

On the other hand, Cultuurloket also has a network of approximately 17 external freelancers whom the organisation can rely on to fulfil its assignment in advising the cultural sector. These external experts are not employed by Cultuurloket but are organised as self-employed persons. They often have their own professional activity in guiding and advising cultural workers and cultural organisations.

Consultations with clients are provided by a combination of in-house consultants and external freelancers depending on the availability. Within

the consultancy itself, there is a distinction between legal consultants, business consultants, and accountants. Depending on the nature of the question, the client will be advised by the suitable consultant.

Cultuurloket provides consultations by phone, via email, and through video call. The consultations are carried out daily. In the field of legal and business questions, both internal and external consultants help the client in advising them with correct information. Given the specialised knowledge involved in accounting questions, Cultuurloket mainly calls on the services of external accountants in such cases.

Cultuurloket is actively looking for new external experts/consultants to become part of the knowledge network of the organisation. Internal and external consultants meet monthly to exchange knowledge and provide each other with business questions on cultural practices.

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CASE STUDY 4: LOJA LISBOA CULTURA - LLC (MIP PORTUGAL)

Part of Lisbon Municipality, and integrated within the Municipal Culture Direction, Loja Lisboa Cultura (LLC) has created official partnerships with several central public administration entities covering mobility issues, such as the Social Security Public Institute, the Tax And Customs Authority, the Foreign and Borders Service, and the General Inspection for Cultural Activities. It has also established an informal cooperation with the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

With these channels in place, LLC has been able to use them regularly and to great effect. Some practices include:

- Social Security: a focal point has been the issuing of A1 certificates. At the time LLC was founded, A1 certificates were very difficult to issue for culture professionals because the requirements, adapted from European Regulation, had been formulated around civil sector activities. By advocating for the specificities of artistic activities, it became possible to define new and adapted requirements. It also became possible for LLC to receive applications, verify all the

documents, and deliver them to its contact point in the Social Security institute for the A1 certificates to be issued. Nowadays, A1 certificates (for employees and self-employed persons) must be submitted online, but LLC maintains a working focus on this area, for instance taking care of refused A1 certificates and helping to clarify the applications in order to get a positive response.

- Foreign Affairs Ministry: a cooperation was set up under which LLC, with the necessary permissions, can communicate with the Visa Department by sending a 'comfort letter' that confirms the purpose of a visa applicant's trip (working/training in the arts field). The Visa Department can then contact the embassy to facilitate the visa issuing process.
- Several workshops were delivered directly by staff of the Social Security Public Institute (A1 certificates and statute of culture professionals), by the Tax Authority (double taxation), and by the Foreign Affairs Ministry (visa and work permits in the arts field).

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CASE STUDY 5: MOBICULTURE (MIP FRANCE) - CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 'ARTIST VISA COMMITTEE' PILOTED BY ZONE FRANCHE

The **Artists visas committee** (Comité visas artistes) was established in 2009 to respond to the increasing difficulty to obtain visas faced by artists and culture professionals coming to France. Initiated by Zone Franche, a world music network, it is however open to all disciplines.

Its main mission is to liaise with the Ministry of Interior Affairs, competent in matters of visa issuing, in case of difficulties obtaining visas or stalled visa applications. This mediation role enables an inventory of the most frequently encountered problems which are then analysed in order to

report these main difficulties and obstacles to the Ministries of the Interior as well as Foreign Affairs and Culture Ministries, from an advocacy perspective. This dialogue with the competent administrations and frontline organisations from the cultural sector, via trade unions, networks, and public institutions is notably held during regular physical meetings.

MobiCulture's expertise on visas is particularly valuable for these missions. Indeed, situations in which a visa has been blocked or refused have to be deeply analysed, including by examining the documents provided for the application, before

contacting the relevant service at the Interior Affairs office. The Interior Affairs office then has the authority to contact the consulates and help them in reconsidering an application if necessary. MobiCulture, as an MIP, is usually contacted prior to the visa application, which helps with this analysis. The analysis itself includes checking if all documents were correctly provided, identifying potential missing elements, and in some cases even pointing out a misunderstanding of needs (e.g. for some long-stay visa application refusals: re-orientation toward a multiple-entry short-stay visa adapted to the project, etc.). This expert guidance helps nurture close dialogue and a sense of trust with all parties.

Zone Franche also entrusts MobiCulture with providing publications on visas for artists and culture workers. Whereas MobiCulture’s website doesn’t aim to be comprehensive on all administrative issues dealt with, the ‘Practical Guide to visas’¹² produced by MobiCulture and commissioned by Zone Franche is as exhaustive yet as accessible as possible on the topic of visa procedures and applications. It is therefore a useful tool to promote Zone Franche’s missions, as well as a capacity building device, not only for the members of the network but for all cultural organisations via the Zone Franche and MobiCulture websites.

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CASE STUDY 6: TOURING ARTISTS (MIP GERMANY) – ON OTHER WAYS OF INTERACTING WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

Touring artists is sometimes asked by their funding organisation, the Federal Commissioner for Culture and the Media, to provide them with recommendations on national policy, such as immigration policy. Acting on such a request, the project partners of touring artists contributed to the survey of the German Commission for UNESCO on the implementation of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Artists. Every four

years, the German Commission for UNESCO, under the auspices of the Federal Foreign Office, prepares the German response to the global consultation with the participation of civil society organisations from the arts, culture and creative industries. International mobility is one of the issues covered and touring artists is a point of reference to provide its expertise on the subject.

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¹² <https://mobiculture.fr/en/visas-and-residency-permits/>

List of relevant European information sources

Information portals and help desks at a European level are important to support the mobility of citizens within the EU. Their services offer information on mobility in particular, as well as on life and work in other member countries, and specific issues such as social security, work, residence, etc.

Likewise there are problem-solving agencies that can be directly contacted by EU citizens. Here are a few examples of such services:

YOUR EUROPE ADVICE

Your Europe Advice is an EU advice service for the public, provided by the European Citizen Action Service (ECAS). It consists of a team of independent lawyers who cover all EU official languages and are familiar both with EU law and national laws in all EU countries. They provide free and personalised advice, clarify the European law that applies, and explain how EU rights can be exercised.

Website

EURES

European cooperation network of employment services, designed to facilitate the free movement of workers.

Website

SOLVIT

Problem-solving network that deals with problems between individuals or companies and the authorities in another country, in cases where there is a possible misapplication of EU law.

Website

EUROPE DIRECT CENTRES

The centres help to bring the EU closer to people. They answer questions about EU policies, programmes and priorities and are ready to proactively engage with citizens and stakeholders so that they feel more involved in the European project.

Website

CREATIVE EUROPE DESKS (CEDS)

National contact points for the EU Creative Europe programme. CEDs are designed to provide information about and promote the Creative Europe programme in their country and to assist the cultural and creative sectors in relation to the programme and other support opportunities. Some CEDs also offer MIP services, such as in The Netherlands (DutchCulture) and Slovenia (Motovila).

Website

You can find other resources on the MIP website.

Website

Testimonies

FROM TOURING ARTISTS (MIP GERMANY)

'It's a big relief to better understand the workings of my situation.'

'Thank you so much for all of the detailed information you've provided. We greatly appreciate it. You gave a much clearer picture than the embassy and consulate.'

'I just wanted to write and thank you for your help on this. The artist went to the immigration office today and was given residency. He'll be able to work from tomorrow. I really appreciate your help.'

'Thank you very much for such a clear and thorough conversation, I feel a big shift in confidence with all the new information.'

'We are immensely grateful to you for your assistance, advice, and support! Thank you so much! Now, we have some time and the opportunity to fully engage in our creative work.'

FROM DUTCHCULTURE (MIP, THE NETHERLANDS)

'I wanted to extend my heartfelt gratitude to you for your kind and comprehensive response to my inquiries. I am delighted to learn of the positive response regarding my family's eligibility to join me on the visa application. Your detailed explanation has been immensely helpful, and I am sincerely appreciative of the time and effort you dedicated to addressing my concerns.'

Your support and assistance in this matter are truly invaluable (...).'

'Thank you very much for thinking along with me! I didn't know that DNB scheme yet: Super nice that you pointed it out to me!'

'Thank you for this tip, I had not found this option myself.'

'Thank you very much for all of your assistance in introducing my letter to different departments and organisations. I appreciate all that you have done for me and I will follow up on the information below and let you know if I will someday be in your country.'

'Thank you so much that we could come to you with our doubts. We are going to welcome our artist.'



**ON
THE
MOVE**

