
THE ACCESSING WORKCAMPS CAMPAIGN 2013

1. Start of the campaign

The A4AWG launched its international campaign on the thematic of social inclusion in workcamps, sending a call to all the Alliance's member and partner organisations to participate in the annual "Accessing Workcamps Campaign".

The campaign is meant to raise awareness, encourage and support IVS organisations to participate in inclusion work, inviting them to reserve places in their camps for volunteers with fewer opportunities. It proposed the organisations to develop their communication and pedagogical methods in order to better involve volunteers from diverse social origins, facing specific difficulties or presenting special needs.

30 organizations from 21 countries joined the campaign¹ and planned to facilitate the participation for sending more than 181 volunteers and receiving around 167.

The A4AWG promotes and follow-up the whole campaign. Its members can act as advisors, sharing good practices and experiences, as well as proposing the use of different tools (sent by email and in the Alliance website) that facilitate the preparation and follow-up of the exchanges.

As last year, a specific emphasis was also given on the collect of datas, in order to enable the ALLIANCE to valorize the results.

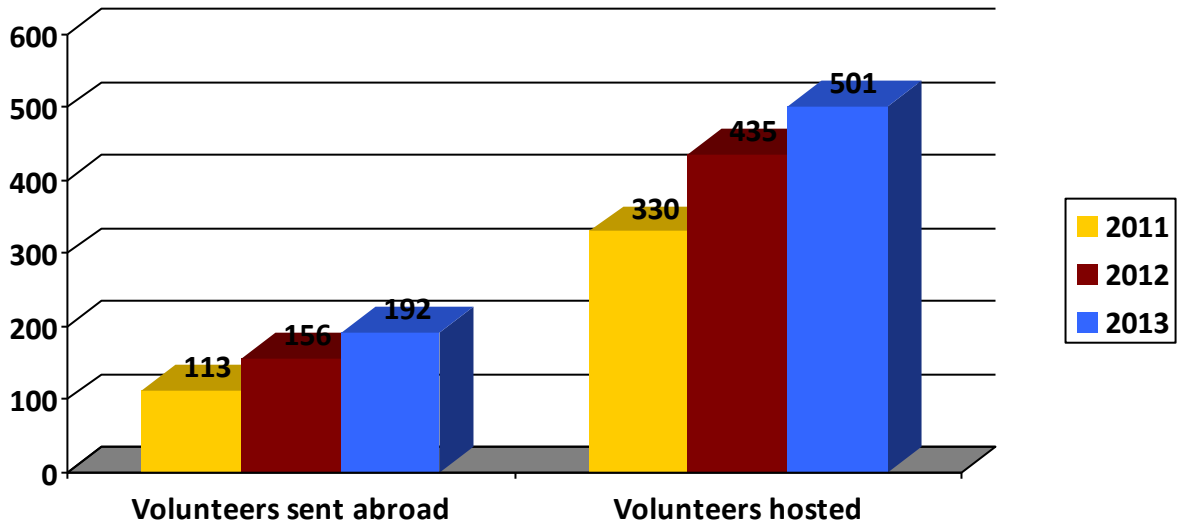
2. The results

At the term of this campaign 2013, we can present the following: **26 organisations from 17 countries sent back their evaluation form** and reported about their participation in the campaign: ALT V, CBB, CBF, CIA, COCAT, CONCF, CONCUK, DE AMICITIA, EGYESEK, ELIX, ESTYES, GRENZENLOS, IBG, INEXSDA, INEX-SL, JAVVA, LUNARIA, SFERA, SIW, SJ, UNA, UNAREC, VIVE, VJF, WS, YAP-I.

According to these reports:

- **192 volunteers were sent to a camp abroad** within the A4A frame - they were 156 in 2012 and 113 in 2011
- **501 volunteers (international and national) are accounted in the hosting** - they were 435 in 2012 and 330 in 2011. Among them, 321 volunteers have participated in an international workcamp in their own country.

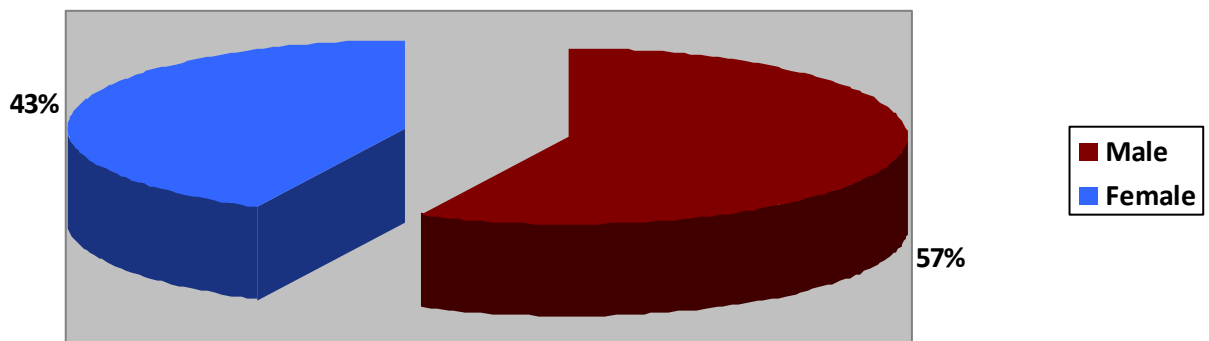
¹ Among these organisations, four were involved only in the NEET's project and are therefore automatically considered as part of the Campaign



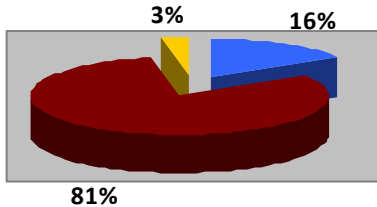
3. Profile of the participants

- A big majority of these volunteers with fewer opportunities are **male**: 57.3% of the volunteers sent; 65.3% of the national volunteers. This is a confirmed trend and express the opposite of the data referred to the usual figures of participation.
- Most of the volunteers sent abroad (80.7%) are **youngsters** from 18 to 30 years old, and some of them teenagers (16%). However, in the national level the organizations tend to host a big number of minors (62.5%).
- Most of them suffer **social and economical difficulties**, usually linked with educational difficulties, and in some cases, with cultural differences. It can also be observed that family problems as well as behavioural problems are also very often present in such case.
- 7.8% of the “accessing volunteers” who were sent to a camp abroad had a disability or health problem.

Gender distribution in volunteers sent abroad

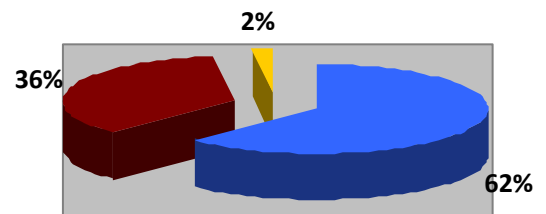


Age of volunteers sent abroad



■ Under 18 ■ 18-30 ■ 31-50

Age of national volunteers



■ Under 18 ■ 18-30 ■ 31-50

4. Trends

The majority of the trends observed in the last two years are also confirmed in the 2013:

- Offer complete educational process:** a strong majority of the volunteers sent abroad (81.7%) receive a special preparation process. The sending organizations usually provide different actions to prepare the volunteer for the project; the most used are the previous meetings and preparatory activities, but other ideas are implemented, such as trainings, or short workcamps. A first experience often proposed to the volunteers is to participate in a workcamp or other initiative in their own country as a previous step (it can be seen in the statistics the big number of youngsters with fewer opportunities participating in a local project). Almost half of the hosting organizations provide the leaders with special preparation. Therefore, a complete process is often provided, consisting in the preparation but also including a reinforced mentorship when participating in the project and once back home an evaluation and follow-up. Most of the organizations try to involve the volunteers in their activities, even if this goal is not easy to reach (10.8% of the volunteers become active in the organisation after their international or national project).
- Financially supported:** A big majority of the international exchanges are financially supported, representing the 83% of the places for volunteers with fewer opportunities. This number has been increased year by year (74% in 2012); therefore, the A4A exchanges seem to be closely linked to the access to specific grants. Among the places financed 75.6% of them were financed by the Youth in Action Program thanks to EVS short term projects. About exchanges not directly linked with workcamps, the organisations also used Youth exchanges, Youth initiative, Youth in Action training course... Some organizations also count on regional or national funds, depending in many cases on the country. A very clear fact is that the participation of volunteers with fewer opportunities is really higher in countries where the public bodies support the workcamp as a tool for non-formal learning and social inclusion.
- Quality of the partnerships:** almost all the organisations are either happy, either very happy with their collaboration under the A4A frame. In general the collaboration between partners is good but there is a will from many organisations to include more partners in the A4A Campaign. The communication among partners is often designated

as the most important point to take care of. Some organisations pointed out the late registrations of the volunteers.

- **Partnerships with social organizations or institutions:** As it was already identified last year most organizations (especially those with a longer path of social inclusion issues) maintain stable and successful collaborations with social organizations, institutions (although they are opened at the same time to receive volunteers directly in their organization) or youth centres. They have partnerships established that continued over the years, and create new ones.

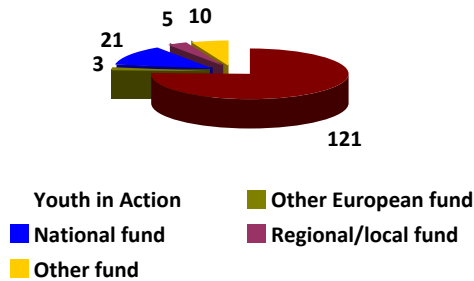
Working with social partners, institutions or youth centres is the basis for the development of an inclusion project and it allows promoting international volunteering in youth who wouldn't have had access or wouldn't have approached to voluntary organizations. Nevertheless, the A4A volunteers coming from social services have represented the 64% (instead of 71% in 2012) of those sent abroad, and the 86% (instead of 93% in 2012) of those participating in a camp in their own country. Although a good local networking seems to be an important factor in favour of more social diversity in the workcamps, some organisations expressed the difficulties to work with such services in the actual context.

Moreover, the organisations stretched out the fact that it is important to have clear basis in such partnership in order to avoid bad experience for the volunteer or the hosting organisations.

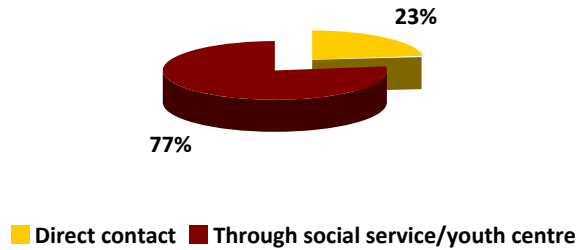
Nevertheless, the social organisations can also play a role of mentor, support the follow-up of the experience, and include an experience such as an international voluntary project in a wider path. It can also encourage the volunteers to involve themselves more in the organisations and to go on with the volunteer path.

- **Positive evaluation of these participations:** the experience for the A4A volunteers is successful and very few volunteers left, or had to leave, their camp before its end (less than 4 %).
- **Other inclusion activities:** many organizations work on the social inclusion further than the exchanges of volunteers with fewer opportunities. Thus, other inclusion activities are done, with local or international partners, using different techniques and formats, such as trainings, workshops, youth initiatives, Grundvigt.... Many organisations express their will to have leader training with the topic of inclusion.
- **Convenience of tools:** in 2013, new tools were used within the Accessing Campaign. Mostly, the feed-back about these new tools was positive. The most used has been the "Volunteer Background and Feed-Back report" (now gathering the former "pre-departure form", the VEF, the "Volunteer evaluation form" given by the hosting organisation, as well as the "Leader's report") which was followed by the "Volunteer evaluation form" (that should be filled in together with the sending organisation) and the "Accessing Workcamp Campaign Guide".

**Funding of the international mobility
(volunteers sent abroad)**



**Partnership with local services
(national and international vols)**



6. Difficulties

- **In carrying out a bigger number of exchanges:** even if the exchanges done have successfully exceeded the ones planned at the beginning by the organizations, this number could have been higher, as in some cases some difficulties have arisen:
 - in case of financially supported exchanges: all the sending organisations weren't able to fill in the places there committed to fill;
 - the mobilisation of the youngsters as well as their preparation and follow-up is time-taking and asks extra human resources. Moreover, some youngsters eventually don't participate in the projects;
 - a lot of non-foreseen costs are not covered and have to be supported by the sending organisations or the volunteers (missed flight, early return...);
 - it is very hard to have a long term involvement from youngsters with fewer opportunities;
 - the number and type of the exchanges is conditioned by the financial support.

7. Tips and advices from the organizations

Some tips and advices expressed by the organizations this year have been:

- The most common recommendation refers to **establish partnerships** (both with local social services and international organizations) and the regular communication among them. Promotion and contacts among the partners can lead to a bigger number of exchanges and is crucial for the good development of the project.
- The **preparation of the volunteer** is clue for a successful experience; together with a good preparation of the projects, local hosts and camp leaders.
- The follow-up of the volunteers is also important and allow to include the experience in a longer term perspective.
- It's important not to make participant feel different than the other ones, **avoid labelling**.
- The presence of another national volunteer could be helpful in some cases as a **peer-to-peer support**.