



## **THE ACCESSING WORKCAMPS CAMPAIGN 2014**

### 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.

25 organizations from 18 countries joined the campaign and planned to facilitate the participation for sending more than 199 volunteers and receiving around 295.

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.

In order to show a bigger diversity of the activities that accessing volunteers attend in the organisation, we have added specific questions concerning projects apart from workcamps.

For exchanges that were not directly linked with workcamps, the organisations also used Youth exchanges, Youth initiative, Youth in Action training course to include volunteers in international projects in their country and abroad. In total 36 participants with fewer opportunities have been included in these activities.

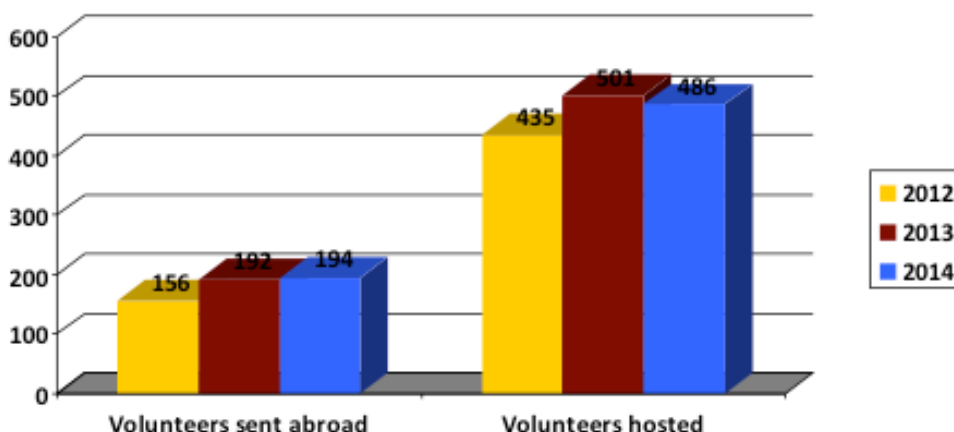
Additionally to the participation in Workcamps, 61 volunteers had the chance to join other volunteering activities abroad.

### 2. The results

At the term of this campaign 2014, we can present the following: **21 organisations from 14 countries sent back their evaluation form** and reported about their participation in the campaign: CBB, CIA, COCAT, CONCF, CONCUK, DE AMICITIA, EGYESEK, ELIX, GENCTUR, GRENZENLOS, IBG, IJGD, INEXSDA, LUNARIA, SFERA, SIW, SJ, UNA, UNAREC, WS, YAP-I.

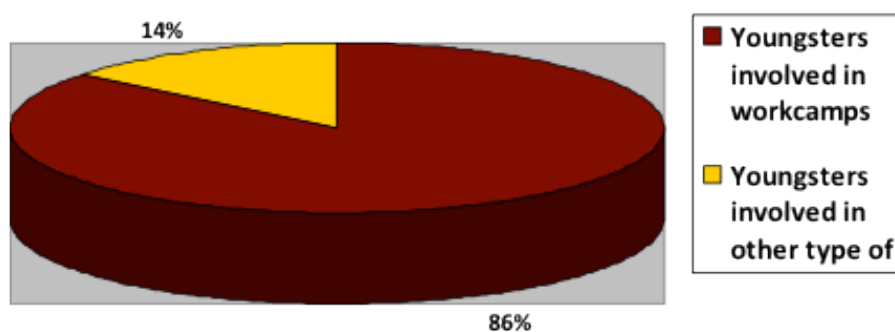
According to these reports:

- **161 volunteers were sent to a camp abroad** within the A4A frame - In the last years we have sent 192 in 2013, 156 in 2012 and 113 in 2011
- **422 volunteers (international and national) are accounted in the hosting** - they were 501 in 2013, 435 in 2012 and 330 in 2011. Among them, 300 volunteers have participated in an international workcamp in their own country.
- **18 participants have been involved in educational programmes and trainings** of which 5 participated in an activity in their resident country and 13 participant went to these activities abroad
- **61 volunteers participated in voluntary services other than workcamps**, of which 39 joined an activity in their home country.
- **18 youngsters with fewer opportunities have participated in intercultural projects** such as Youth Exchanges. Ten of these participants have joined an activity abroad.
- This makes a total number of **680 accessing participants** in the activities of the organisations involved in the A4A Campaign; from which 194 were sent abroad.



According with our plan of action, we included in our statistics the volunteers with fewer opportunities being involved in other activities than workcamps. It doesn't necessarily mean the organisations didn't include these participants in their statistics before; it mainly means we now pay attention to the number of volunteers being involved in workcamps compared with participants being involved in other type of activities. These numbers don't mean anything as such this year but will allow us to monitor the evolution of the participation of youngsters with fewer opportunities in different type of activities (are they more and more involved into other activities than workcamps? Which kind?).

In 2014, 14% of the youngsters participating in activities within an organization member of the Access for All Campaign took part in other activities than workcamps.



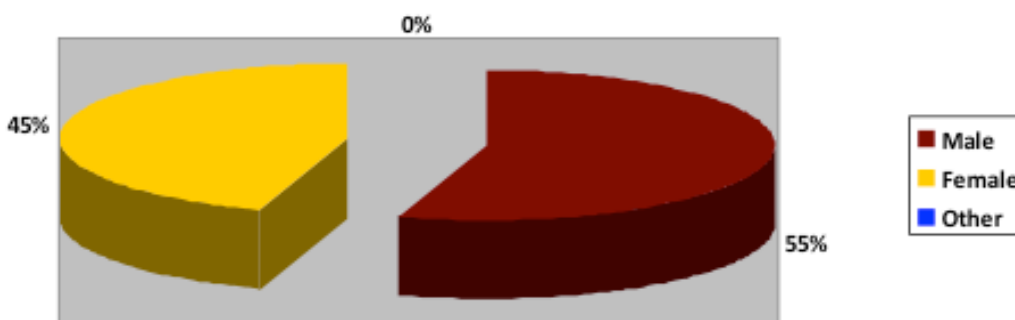
### 3. Profile of the participants

- The majority of these volunteers with fewer opportunities are **male**: 55% of the volunteers sent; 63% of the national volunteers. This is a confirmed trend (even though slightly decreasing) and express the opposite of the data referred to the usual figures of participation.
- Most of the volunteers sent abroad (74%) are **youngsters** from 18 to 30 years old, and the second biggest group are teenagers (19%). Compared to last year the participation of teenagers has increased a lot. Especially, on the national level the organizations continue to host a big number of minors (62%).
- **The most mentioned reasons of fewer opportunities were 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.

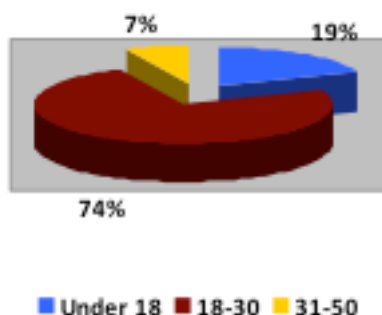


- 17% of the “accessing volunteers” who were sent to a camp abroad had a disability or health problem. This is a huge increase compared to 2013.
- What is also interesting is the fact that only 72% of the participants have attended their first workcamp in 2014. 17% have attended their second, 8% their third and even 3% have already participated in more the three Workcamps in the past. This shows that the participation in a workcamp is a positive experience for many of our volunteers.

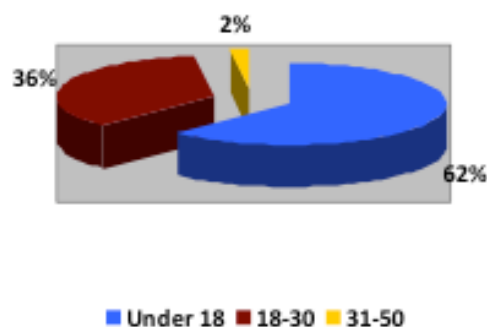
Gender distribution in volunteers sent abroad



Age of volunteers sent abroad



Age of national volunteers



#### 4. Trends

The majority of the trends observed in the last two years are also confirmed in the 2014:

- **Offer complete educational process:** a strong majority of the volunteers sent abroad (86%) receive a special preparation process. This number has increased for this season. 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). **Nearly all of the hosting organizations**, who have hosted accessing volunteers, **provide the leaders with special preparation**. This is a positive trend, as last year it was only half of the organisations, who provided special preparation for the leaders. Therefore, a complete process is even better facilitated, 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. As only 42% of the volunteers sent abroad attend an evaluation meeting and only 19% of them become active in the organisation after their project.

- **Financially supported:** The majority of the international exchanges are financially supported, representing the 86% of the places for volunteers with fewer opportunities. This number has been increased year by year (83% in 2013); therefore, the A4A exchanges seem to be closely linked to the access to specific grants. Among the places financed 55,12% of them were financed by the (Erasmus+) Youth in Action Program. This is a lot less than in the last years. The reason for this could be the insecurity of the changes from Youth in Action to Erasmus+: Youth in Action. 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. They have also stated that it is important to have reliable partners through a network like Alliance to be able to carry out accessing projects. 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 that the registration and communication of free places for accessing volunteers could be made more visible for all partners.
- **Partnerships with social organizations or institutions:** As proven in the last years a stable partnership with social organizations, institutions is very helpful and a good basis. Of course every organisation is also interested in creating new cooperations and open to support volunteers that approach them without being in a known structure.

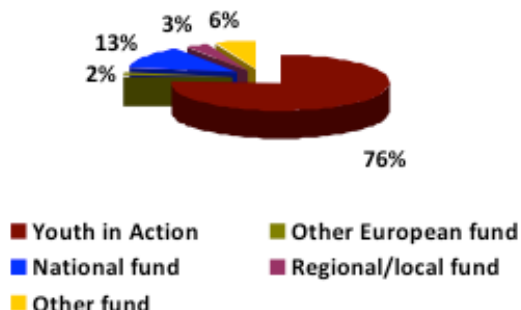
Working with social partners, institutions or youth centres is the basis for the development of an inclusion project and it allows promoting international volunteering in youth who wouldn't have had access or wouldn't have approached to voluntary organizations. Nevertheless, the A4A percentage of volunteers coming from social services has decreased again to the 57% (instead of 64% in 2013) of those sent abroad. The percentage of those participating in a camp in their own country has increased to 88% (instead of 86% in 2013). 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.

The possibility and quality of the cooperation's with social institutions as partners differs in each country. Some can use the cooperation as a solid base to develop projects and recruit volunteers, others have faced beaurocratic difficulties and have stopped these cooperation's.

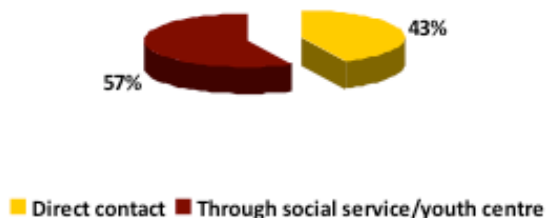
- **Positive evaluation of these participations:** the experience for the A4A volunteers is successful and very few volunteers left, or had to leave, their camp before its end (6 %).
- **Other inclusion activities:** As already mentioned we have asked for the involvement of participants with fewer opportunities in activities apart from camps. 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 and youth initiatives.



Funding of the international mobility  
(volunteers sent abroad)



Partnership with local services  
(national and international vols)



### 5. 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;
- due to the uncertainty of the EU programme, less EVS ST projects could be realised;
- 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;
- Not all exchanges of volunteers with fewer opportunities are carried out in the frame of A4A. The definition and meaning of the WG as well as the Campaign is already an ongoing process to support the work and the visibility one in this field by the network.

### 6. 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 the key for a successful experience; this preparation is in the best case also facilitated by the local social worker; 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**.