



THE RESOLUTION OF THE CONGRESS
“Values and role of IVS in the current political, social, economic situation”
of
the Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations

We, the participants of **the first Congress** of the Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations **“Values and role of IVS in the current political, social, economic situation”**, held in Rispecchia (Italy) from 2-7 November and hosted by the member organisations Legambiente and YAP Italy,

representing 42 International Voluntary Service organisations from 26 countries,

based on the Alliance Constitution and Standing Orders, and contribution in policy papers, outcomes of events, proposals made by General Assemblies, Working Groups and Committees in the years leading to the Congress,

reaffirming the values of common ownership, solidarity, peace, understanding, acceptance, respect, diversity, dignity, trust and responsibility,

giving recognition and our gratitude to the volunteers at the organisational and network level for their contribution to the development of the Alliance, its members and local communities who host workcamps worldwide, for their effort for social inclusion and cohesion of different vulnerable groups, for the protection of the environment and for promotion of solidarity and intercultural understanding,

we conclude that the current state of development of the network, its strengths and weaknesses, are as follows:

The Alliance as a cooperative network

The Alliance is a democratic, accessible, efficient, supportive and open network, based on the active voluntary participation of its diverse members, a cooperative structure and a permanent secretariat.

The trust and common values form the main ground for the cooperation among member organisations and partners.

Thanks to the contribution and strong partnership existing among its members, the Alliance has developed a set of cooperative tools, documents and activities enabling an efficient functioning network, able to empower its member organisations and to advocate for its principles.

The means of communication and dissemination of the information need further development.

The dependance on the voluntary based contribution of the members as well as on funding and membership fees create challenges for the Alliance to be tackled in order to reach its vision on being a sustainable cooperative network.

The Alliance Membership Policy

The sense of belonging to a cooperative network and having an equal role in an international community of organisations built on trust and solidarity, is a strong point of the Alliance membership. This brings also responsibilities and implies consideration of a common understanding of commitment, continuity, support and active participation.

The Alliance has come a long way from a technical platform to a cooperative network, and this is reflected in our practice. A better assessment of the needs of its members by addressing them is needed. In this way the members will understand and commit to the common vision, assessment of the activities and results on both an organisational and network level.

It is our strength to have the capacity and mutual understanding to keep the network open for everyone sharing the Alliance common values and who is willing to contribute to the development of the network, so to ensure the achieved level of quality. It is on us to tailor our future identity.

The Alliance Sustainability Framework

The Alliance is a European based voluntary, cooperative network, with a global vision.

Its strengths are the diversity and freedom of its members, a strong and effective unique volunteers' exchange system, its ability to draw on a body of professional staff and volunteers and a potential to influence policies on European and global levels as well as good relations with institutions.

Having diverse members, acting in various social and economic environments, important knowledge, practices and experiences are still not fully shared and the network should seek for ways and measures to address these issues. The lack of participation of some members and lack of opportunities for partner organisations to participate more actively reflects there is an absence of a model of financial solidarity.

The Alliance commits itself for the next ten years in addressing the causes and consequences of unbalanced exchanges between its members, in building an independent income derived from guaranteed and diverse funding sources to fully cover its administration and constitutional meetings costs, and in developing a solidarity system to support its members.

The Alliance intends to replenish human resources by transferring knowledge and experience, to allow a proficient share of information among its members as well as to put in place an efficient consultation system with its governance, in order to enhance the equal participation of all its members in its management.

Alliance Monitoring and Evaluation

Alliance has developed a series of methods, documents and tools, aiming to monitor its activities and partnerships, including workcamps, and evaluate their quality and impact in order to create guidelines, policies, procedures, standards and new indicators.

There is no common understanding yet among members on what is the Alliance level and what is the organisational level in terms of monitoring and evaluation. The issue about synergies of the Alliance and members needs to be further explored and elaborated. The necessity of measuring the impact of workcamps on organisational level should be underlined and the various monitoring and evaluation actions that member organizations do on a national level, should be shared on a network level. The Alliance needs to develop a common evaluative framework which is actively used by

organisations in order to improve the quality of workcamps and to understand the impact on volunteers and local communities.

Evaluation is and should function for inspiration, motivation and improvement.

The Alliance Visibility and Advocacy

The Alliance is a cooperative network, active in its advocacy on a European level, thanks to its elected representatives within the Advisory Council for Youth by Council of Europe and membership within the European Youth Forum, lobbying for IVS, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, peace, recognition of non formal education and mobility.

One of the biggest strengths of the Alliance in terms of visibility and advocacy on a local, European and global level are its campaigns on social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

Main weaknesses of the Alliance come from the fact that there is an underdeveloped advocacy plan, as well as from lack of resources, both financial and human, which are limiting the network in using its full potentials within relevant international institutions. The mission, goals, values, good practices and the democratic governance system are not yet clearly visible nor promoted among the members, partners or other stakeholders.

The representation plan of the Alliance should be developed even further, by strengthening the capacities of the existing pool of ambassadors, reinforcing cooperation with our sister networks and development of clear structure on external representation issues, as part of a wider visibility, advocacy and lobbying strategy.

* * *

Together we the participants, as members of the Alliance, its Working Groups and Committees, are committed to developing our network based on the values and principles of volunteering and peace towards a more democratic, more responsible and humane society locally and globally. We commit to solidarity, cooperation and active participation by sharing experiences and knowledge and through building our common capacities, starting from our own management and activities.

In Rispescia (Italy), on the 6th of November 2014

ANNEXES - Visions and recommendations

Annex I: Cooperative network

Annex II: Membership policy

Annex III: Sustainability

Annex IV: Monitoring and Evaluation

Annex V: Visibility and Advocacy