



0105/2016

3.10.2016

## WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on supporting ‘Odysseus’ for the relaunching of the European Voluntary Service

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Lapse date: 3.1.2017

**Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on supporting 'Odysseus' for the relaunching of the European Voluntary Service<sup>1</sup>**

1. The Union has established, by means of Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013, the 'Erasmus+' programme, of which the IVO4All project is a key action in promoting cross-border voluntary activities in the EU.
2. European volunteering contributes directly to strengthening European citizenship. However, there is an urgent need to develop this concept further, particularly in times of crisis, as a building block of the integration process and a key element for the promotion of togetherness, friendship and solidarity in Europe, and with third countries.
3. The European Voluntary Service (EVS), which is also part of the 'Erasmus+' programme and celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2016, is of fundamental importance in developing a committed new generation of European citizens. However, the EVS is not sufficiently well known or user-friendly.
4. The EVS should therefore be directly accessible, more sought after, better financed, endowed with additional slots, geared to learning universal and European values and life and labour market skills, and properly incentivised.
5. The Commission and the Council are hence called upon to consider initiatives to promote better use of the EVS, including on the basis of the recent 'Odysseus' proposal.
6. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Council and the Commission.

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<sup>1</sup> Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.