

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **CONFIDENCE AND NEW RESOURCES FOR THE GROWTH OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR: A MANIFESTO THAT LOOKS BEYOND THE RECESSION**

- **Acri – Associazione di Fondazioni e di Casse di Risparmio Spa, Assifero, Fondazione Cariplo, Compagnia di San Paolo, Fondazione Cariparo, Fondazione con il Sud, Forum del Terzo Settore, Alleanza Cooperative Italiane and Banca Prossima signed a document in the Nuova Aula of the Palazzo dei Gruppi Parlamentari building in Rome that confirms the common stance of the financial segment specialising in non-profit undertakings and the major networks representing the voluntary sector.**
- **The emphasis is on confidence: despite the difficulties generated by the severe recession, the Italian non-profit segment must assert its planning capacities by developing and implementing virtuous projects "aimed at a second Welfare state".**
- **Today's "Manifesto" is open and in the public domain, open for signature by the most active movements in civil society, the economic and manufacturing world, and Public Administration.**

*Rome, 4 December 2013* – **The manifesto entitled “Fiducia e nuove risorse per la crescita del Terzo Settore” (Confidence and new resources for the growth of the voluntary sector) was presented and signed today in Rome in the “Nuova Aula” of the Palazzo dei Gruppi Parlamentari building. Acri – Associazione di Fondazioni e di Casse di Risparmio Spa, Fondazione Cariplo, Compagnia di San Paolo, Fondazione Cariparo, Fondazione con il Sud, Forum del Terzo Settore, Alleanza Cooperative Italiane and Banca Prossima (the Intesa Sanpaolo bank devoted exclusively to secular and religious non-profit activities) signed this important document in the presence of over three hundred non-profit organisations, foundations and key representatives of public authorities. The meeting concluded with an address by Employment and Welfare Minister **Enrico Giovannini**.**

The “Fiducia e nuove risorse per la crescita del Terzo Settore” manifesto is an alliance open to all those that are willing to pledge resources, whether financial or otherwise. **The first eight signatories represent the main social and productive areas involved: the voluntary sector, in the shape of both its associations and undertakings, that is, social cooperatives; the providers (banking, business and family-owned Foundations); the specialist financial sector.**

**The banking Foundations system**, which in 2012 contributed around 1 billion euro carrying out over 22,000 operations, proposes a modern and synergic approach to the allocation of resources, whereby the philanthropic actions of the Foundations are combined with those of other entities from the private social sector and the local public authorities, with corporate welfare as well as social financing and the participation of the general public, in order to develop a second Welfare State that is deeply rooted in the community. The resources provided by Assifero's **non-banking Foundations** top € 150 million. The **Alleanza Cooperative Italiane** (43,000 businesses belonging to the Legacoop, Confcooperative and Agci organisations) carries out third sector activities of a productive nature by financing start-ups, re-employing people who have been made redundant or have been laid off temporarily, and capitalising and consolidating businesses. It is also considering opening up loan guarantee consortia to the non-industrial components of the non-profit world. The **Forum del Terzo settore** represents and supports associations for social promotion, voluntary work, social cooperation and development, a diverse world of commitments and activities that at this time of recession must become more efficient to keep its mission contemporary: the attention to costs and finance and the raising of funds thus become as important as involving new volunteers. **Banca Prossima** offers the benefit of its experience with the partner Foundations (Cariplo, Compagnia di San Paolo, Cariparo), supplementing this with new financial instruments: from the "Terzovalore" guaranteed crowdlending platform to the "Serie Speciale Banca Prossima" bond, subscriptions for which amount to well over 30 million euro as the issue closing date approaches.

**The Italian voluntary sector is one of the pillars of the Italian economy and society.** Over 300,000 organisations, 950,000 employees, 4.8 million volunteers and revenues of 4.5% of the GDP make it a key sector of the economy. Since 2001 it has grown by 28% in terms of number of organisations and by 39% in terms of employees; in the last three years social cooperatives alone created 20,000 new jobs. The non-profit world is crucial for managing the areas of social security that the public sector is unable to cover, since it cannot meet all of the demands of society. Requirements that grow and change because of the public finance crisis and the evolution of society: old age, immigration, reconciliation, divorces, new forms of material and cultural poverty.

**The non-profit system is showing alarming signs of a lack of confidence, which translates into a lower investment appetite,** a decline in credit applications (especially mid to long-term), reduced planning capacities and stricter financial conditions. This stalemate could compromise the ability of the voluntary sector to adapt itself, invest and invent: the real strengths of the Italian social segment.

However, in addition to its resilience, the **Italian non-profit sector also has many under-used resources:** European tenders set up to promote the social economy, a series of innovative financial instruments, and the desire to overcome its lack of efficiency in terms of organisation, management, energy consumption and supply chain. Finally, the pledge made by the Italian Government to regularly pay for the work carried out by the voluntary sector will make a big difference. Organisations will be able to count on more regular financing and use bank loans for long-term investments rather than to make up for late payments.

After today's presentation and signing, the **“Fiducia e risorse per la crescita del Terzo Settore” manifesto** will be further developed in two additional stages: publication on the website [www.manifestoperilnonprofit.it](http://www.manifestoperilnonprofit.it) to gather online support and suggestions from the private and public sector, and a **series of regional joint planning meetings** in which those involved will discuss problems as well as general and local opportunities with the non-profit segment, with the participation of public authorities. The first activities will be a campaign on energy efficiency, a reflection on accession to European tenders, the issuing of bonds for the development of the non-profit sector (similar to government securities but not related to the "National Stability Pact") and the examination of a Group Purchasing Organisation for the non-profit sector that is expected to lower costs considerably, thus enabling the organisations to focus more closely on their missions. Finally, specific proposals to promote the sustainability of non-profit education and healthcare will also be put forward.

*For more information*

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