

# **VILLA VIGONI - Italian-German Centre Activity Report - Year 2018**

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## **1. Introduction**

Villa Vigoni is an Italian-German Centre in Europe with a Board of Directors and an Assembly of Members; the National Research Council is one of the partners supporting the exchange of scientific knowledge. The Association main stakeholders are the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) for Germany and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAECI) for Italy.

For its annual activities, Villa Vigoni identifies a steering theme, which, for 2018, was "European cultural heritage: Italian-German perspectives" inspired by the "Year of European cultural heritage" proclaimed by the European Union.

Villa Vigoni has thus become an official partner of the European Commission within the network of institutions involved in the 2018 "Year of European Cultural Heritage" (EYCH - European Year of Cultural Heritage). Consequently, 15 Villa Vigoni events of 2018 annual program were acknowledged and reported on the official portal of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (MIBACT), the empowered authority in Italy for ECHR.

After Prof. Immacolata Amodeo's mandate expired, as of October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 Dr. Christiane Liermann Traniello was appointed as the new Villa Vigoni General Secretary with a four-year mandate pursuant to art. 7 paragraph 5 of the Statute.

## **2. Main activities carried on by Villa Vigoni during 2018 relevant for Italy and for CNR**

The Italian-German Centre has organized a series of scientific and cultural events of considerable interest with a European and international focus on the leading theme. In particular, with reference to the proposed subject "European cultural heritage: Italian-German prospects", the 2018 events officially acknowledged and reported by MIBACT have been divided into:

- Meetings of the DFG-Villa Vigoni Program "Italian-German Cooperation in the Field of Human and Social Sciences".
- Events that Villa Vigoni organizes, together with partner institutions, on the leading theme, having a wide-ranging platform and, at the same time, a rather specific approach.
- Villa Vigoni institutional events that address the steering topic from an Italian-German-European and interdisciplinary perspective, also addressing present political and social issues.

The events scheduled by Villa Vigoni for 2018 were divided into the following subjects:

- Steering topic 2018 "European cultural heritage: Italian-German prospects"
- European history - European stories
- Transformation processes in a global world
- Migration and history of migrations
- Cultural dynamics in the fields of science, art and media
- Villa Vigoni with and for young people
- Challenges within the field of medicine and natural sciences
- Legal issues in the European debate
- Private meetings and partner institutions celebratory events
- Concerts and other events of general interest

Furthermore, Villa Vigoni launched in 2018 a Call for proposals within the framework of the "Italian-German Cooperation in the field of Human and Social Sciences" (cooperation partner: Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) for projects to be carried in 2020.

Also this year, the Centre has achieved the goal of obtaining greater visibility as for current political, social and economic issues, other than scientific. In addition to membership fees, the Centre receives basic financing from the two responsible Ministries, the German BMBF and the Italian MAECI.

### **3 Activities carried out within the Association as a Representative in 2018 and impact on the Italian scientific community**

In my role of CNR appointed representative, I participated in both meetings of Villa Vigoni Association's Executive Council (Spring session on March 12 and Fall session on November 15) as well as in the Shareholders' Meeting in the following days.

The 2019 planning was also discussed in the two Board of Directors, which will be mainly dedicated to "Creativity, Sustainability, Development. 250 years Enrico Mylius".

After about 30 years since the Statute of Villa Vigoni is in force, the Board of Directors proposed in 2018 to modify it. In November 2018, The Assembly of Members discussed the resolution to amend Villa Vigoni Statute. This important decision-making process will be examined during the regular Assembly in November 2019, in view of which a draft of the designed changes will be sent in advance. The implementation process for amending the Articles of the Association was approved by the Shareholders' Meeting in November 2018 as follows:

- the two ministries BMBF and MAECI are in charge of proposing changes to the Statute and submitting them to the Association's Members;
- Members can then in turn submit proposals for amendments, which will be included by the Ministries whenever possible;
- presentation of the revised draft, at the next Board of Directors meeting and at the Assembly of Members in 2019.

As CNR representative, I took part in the process of revising the Statute, suggesting considerations and clarifications.

The Villa Vigoni Association can act as a platform for a joint discussion between research Institutions German, Italian, French and hopefully others, on future strategies in the field of development and scientific research in Europe. As a CNR representative, I also suggested an even greater involvement of French partners in joint scientific projects.

### **4 Evaluation of the participation in terms of benefits and membership cost**

The National Research Council has been a member of the Association since 2006 with the role of representative of the Italian institutions operating in the field of research, science and education. CNR is an Italian Permanent Councilor of Villa Vigoni's Board of Directors. CNR's official, regular Representative is its President while I, have received his mandate. Numerous are the initiatives organized by the Association and the small annual membership fee is greatly rewarded by the strengthening of bilateral relations and much more.

### **5 Evaluation of Italians' attendance and how to improve interest and involvement**

The events organized by Villa Vigoni can count on a constant good Italian participation. In particular, in the Centre's annual most relevant events which are:

- Vigoni Forum "Cultural policies in the era of migration and globalization" (6 July).
- The Vigoni Lecture "Italy and Germany between Europeanism and Sovereignism" held in Berlin on November 26 by former Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni. Already scheduled is the publication of the book "Warum sich Europa lohnt" with contributions from the Vigoni-Lecture, accompanied by an essay by Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa, one of the most important Italian personalities in the process of European integration, translated, for the first time, into German.
- The Vigoni Forum for Students "Political cultures as essential part of European cultural heritage - Internal disagreements and global perspectives". As in previous years, around 20 young students from different study curricula and different backgrounds are selected via a call for proposals, with the purpose of having them deepen the conference topic, together with eminent European experts in the scientific, political and cultural fields (September).

Currently, seventeen Italian experts are Villa Vigoni single members. A greater visibility and dissemination of the multiple activities proposed by Villa Vigoni could encourage the involvement of important experts already committed to promoting relations between the two countries.

#### **6 Italian experts with important roles within the Union or within related Commissions and Programs (if known)**

Two non-permanent members of the Board of Directors have been renewed for Italy since January 1<sup>st</sup> 2018: prof. Elda Morlicchio (Naples) and prof. Angelo Bolaffi (Rome). Ambassador Michele Valensise is the Italian President of Villa Vigoni appointed as early as 2016.

#### **7. Conclusions**

With a view to making the Association's contents and objectives clearer and expanding the user base, Villa Vigoni has renewed its communication with a series of new paper and digital tools (newsletters and new website available for both PC and smartphone/tablet with a restyling of the layout and contents, as well as its logo). Villa Vigoni's website can be reached at this address: [www.villavigoni.eu](http://www.villavigoni.eu)

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