OVUNQUE A CASA. ACCOMPAGNARE LA MOBILITÀ

Mobility has now become an ordinary condition in the lives of many people. More and more often, for reasons of study, work, or family choices, members of Catholic Action move to other cities or countries, spending shorter or longer periods away from their community of origin.

As Italian Catholic Action, we have reflected on what it means to accompany these people. We have realized that mobility can no longer be considered an extraordinary event, but rather an **ordinary dimension of associative life**. This reflection concerns the entire association, without distinction of age or experience: children, adolescents, young people, young couples, and adults. Today, mobility crosses every stage of life and asks us to rethink our way of being a community.

From this awareness, a process of reflection was launched during the 2024 National Assembly of Italian Catholic Action. Among the challenges that emerged most strongly was precisely that of mobility, recognized as one of the issues in which the association is called to invest with determination.

The analysis of membership data showed that many members, when they move, struggle to maintain a connection with ecclesial and associative life. In particular, when those who move are leaders or people actively involved in the life of the association, the change can lead to the loss of the relationships built over the years and, not infrequently, to a gradual distancing from both the community and the association itself.

From this observation arose a simple but decisive question: **how can we continue to care for people even when they change city or country?** How can we ensure that no one feels alone or "orphaned" from their associative experience during a period of mobility?

The first response was to imagine a network capable of connecting the different associations. On the one hand, by promoting links among the Italian dioceses for those who move within the country; on the other hand, by developing an increasingly close collaboration with the International Forum of Catholic Action (IFCA), so that those who leave for another country, or those who arrive in Italy from abroad, may find a community ready to welcome them.

This is how "**Ovunque a casa. Accompagnare la mobilità**" was born, a project developed jointly by the Formation Area, the Promotion Area, and the International Area of Italian Catholic Action. The collaboration among these different areas stems from the conviction that mobility concerns the whole associative life and that each of them can offer a valuable contribution in accompanying both the people who move and the communities that are called to welcome them.

The initiative also builds upon and develops the experience of what over the years was known as the "**Associative Erasmus**," an initiative promoted by the International Area to help students and workers spending a period abroad establish contact with a Catholic Action association in the destination country. Starting from that experience, we felt the need to broaden our perspective by creating a tool that would not concern only Europe or specific categories of people, but all members, at every stage of their lives and wherever they may be in the world.

In recent years, we have worked to make the international dimension an ordinary component of associative life. We are convinced that the encounter with different people, cultures, and Churches represents an opportunity for growth both for each individual and for our associations.

At the same time, increasing international mobility reminds us that we must care not only for those who leave, but also for those who arrive in our communities.

For this reason, the guiding principle of the entire project is **reciprocity**. Mobility is not a one-way journey, but an intertwining of departures and arrivals, of people seeking a community and communities called to open themselves to encounter. To accompany means to make this encounter possible in both directions.

In this journey, dialogue with the **International Forum of Catholic Action** (IFCA) is essential. By presenting this initiative to all the associations belonging to the Forum, we are asking for concrete collaboration: to create a network of contacts among the different national associations so that every person may be accompanied throughout their journey of mobility.

The idea is simple: when a member of Italian Catholic Action moves to another country, we wish to be able to put them in contact with the Catholic Action association present in the place of destination. Likewise, **we would like every person belonging to a Catholic Action association who arrives in Italy to be able to easily find a community ready to welcome them, accompany them, and offer them a place where they can continue living their ecclesial and associative experience.**

Our desire is to promote a true culture of accompaniment, in which the association continues to care for people in their faith and in their lives, regardless of where they are.

For this reason, we wish to share this initiative with all the Catholic Action associations present throughout the world. We believe that only through an international network of relationships and collaboration will we be able to ensure that every member, wherever they may be, feels welcomed, accompanied, and part of the same associative family.
The dream that inspires this project is simple: to make sure that everyone can truly feel **at home anywhere.**