

BRA-001 MOTION FOR SI GA 2015

Subject Working Group: Technology - Future

Title of motion

Include Spanish as a working language of SI

National secretary and national member group proposing motion
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Maria Fernanda Vomero, National Secretary, Servas Brazil Servas Chile, Servas Peru, Servas Russia and Servas Spain endorse it.

Summary of the motion

Include Spanish as a working language of Servas International

Background information and reasons for proposing the motion.

According to Servas statute, at the present the working language of Servas International is only English. As Servas is an international organization, present all over the world and based on the friendship among people, principles of peace and inclusion, at least another UN official language must be considered a working language too. Taking into account the large number of Spanish-speakers countries in the world and also in Servas network, Spanish should be the other working language of Servas International. Besides that, Spanish is the second language for many Servas no-English-speakers members. It would mean that all official documents and communications in and out SIEXCO, among the countries and towards regional coordinators and National Secretaries should be made necessarily – not occasionally – in both English and Spanish.
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Likely benefits for Servas International and national groups if the motion is passed.
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To make Servas still more open-minded and inclusive;
• To increase the participation of volunteers;
• To avoid translation problems and to improve the communication between SIEXCO and Latin countries;
• To allow that no-English-speakers volunteers take over positions of leadership in Servas (it means, the idiom can't be an impediment for that). |
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Resource implications if the motion is passed in terms of time, human resources and specialist expertise.

- To have at least one person at SI EXCO who is able to speak both English and Spanish (independently of his/her nationality);
- In order to not overburden the bilingual member, two possible solutions: to create (1) position at SI EXCO for at least two official translators or (2) a committee of translation, with tree members openly elected.
- Another idea is: according to decision 8, at SIGA 2012, p. 6, "Each member, every committee, when possible, should appoint a young member as an assistant". This assistant could be a bilingual (English/Spanish) one.

What are the budget implications, if any, of the motion for Servas International and for national groups in the short and longer term?

In short time, in case of the translation of Servas International website and general documents into Spanish not being made by a team of volunteers, there can be translation expenses. National groups will be told to include a version in Spanish of the introduction pages in their host lists, but those pieces of information can be a standard version prepared by the team of translators.

Who should be responsible for the actions arising from the motion in terms of planning, development and management, for example which officer within SI Exco or SI Committee.

As it was told previously, two official translators whose position would be created by SI EXCO or a committee of translation, with tree members openly elected.

Would there be implications for the Servas International statutes if the motion is passed?

There is no mention of English in the SI Statutes, but the fact that they are only in English implies that English is the working language. Then, it will be recommended to include the mention for both idioms as working languages in the statutes and elaborate a Spanish version of them.

What is the likely impact if the motion is not passed?

To keep many no-English speakers apart from some discussions, events and activities for not being able to read or write in English. To miss the chance to make Servas a more inclusive organization.