



Save the Children

YOUNG INVISIBLE ENSLAVED

**CHILDREN VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING
AND LABOUR EXPLOITATION IN ITALY**

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CHILDREN VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING AND LABOUR EXPLOITATION IN ITALY



ATTENZIONE
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ABSTRACT

The 2017 Young Invisible Enslaved Dossier highlights the cruel practices many unaccompanied children arriving in Italy are subjected to at the hands of traffickers. Through the voices and stories told by boys and girls exploited sexually and at work in Italy, the dossier presents a detailed investigation into the main vulnerabilities experienced by victims and provides an up-to-date review of the criminals profiting from them. The report, in five chapters, report opens with a review of the international, European and Italian legal framework on trafficking and serious exploitation. It then presents the updated profiles of trafficking and exploitation victims in Italy, highlighting the connections between recent migratory trends and the different types of exploitation suffered by minors. The vulnerability examined this year also provides an overview of the main criticalities detected in Ventimiglia, Rome and Calabria, territories where trafficking and exploitation are becoming alarming also with regard to criminals, exploiters and abusers who make a daily profit on girls and boys. The profiles of those who take advantage of the vulnerability of trafficked children every day have been examined to provide a faithful picture of the criminal chain, which will also be useful to developing a political and programmatic plan of action against this repulsive crime.

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CHAPTER 1

Photo: Save the Children

“Trafficking in persons’ shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs”.

The distinguishing elements of trafficking in human beings were put down in print for the first time by the Palermo Protocol, the additional document of the United Nations Convention against transnational organised crime. It was 2000. Seventeen years later, despite the various repressive measures implemented at Italian and European level, the fight against trafficking continues to deal with a constantly increasing criminal phenomenon, the most vulnerable victims of which are children and teenagers fleeing from poverty, deprivation and wars.

Regarding forced labour, at global level the International Labour Organisation (ILO)¹ estimates that there are approximately 21 million men, women and children victims of forced labour or subject to the domination of employers or intermediaries who procure the contracts and facilitate movement from the countries of origin to those of destination. While most of the victims set out on their migratory journey voluntarily, it is often the debt incurred with the smugglers that transforms the migrants into forced labourers and reduces them into slavery. Of these, at global level, again according to the ILO, 4.5 million undergo forms of sexual exploitation, while the remaining 16.4 million are forced to work in farming, herding, construction or care work, where there is greater demand for low-cost labour and the processes of informalisation of more deeply rooted.

The social and economic profile of the victims of trafficking and severe exploitation offer a faithful picture of the geopolitics of global inequality: 81% are represented by women and children recruited in countries with high levels of unemployment and poverty, and with fragile welfare systems, institutional transitions and weak legal systems. Africa, Asia, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, and South America². This is where most of the forced labourers, including children and teenagers, who end up in the production cycles and illegal economies of advanced countries, come from. Flows of people which differ in terms of type of exploitation, origin of the victims and logistic and business needs of the criminal groups involved. Eastern European is the recruitment basin for child victims of sexual exploitation and organised begging. Then there are Asia and Africa, from which adults, children and teenagers are enrolled in illegal labour schemes and sexual exploitation.

Yet, as stated in the latest annual report of the Anti-Mafia Investigative Unit³, it is extremely difficult to quantify the victims of trafficking and grave labour exploitation due to the fact that this crime is hidden and the persistent difficulties in identifying the victims and offenders, particularly due to the transnational context of the investigations.

Meanwhile, the number of children involved is growing steadily⁴.

Figures published by UNODC in 2016 regarding a sample of 106 countries, state that “children remain the second most commonly detected group of victims of trafficking globally after women, ranging from 25 to 30 percent of the total over the 2012-2014 period”⁵.

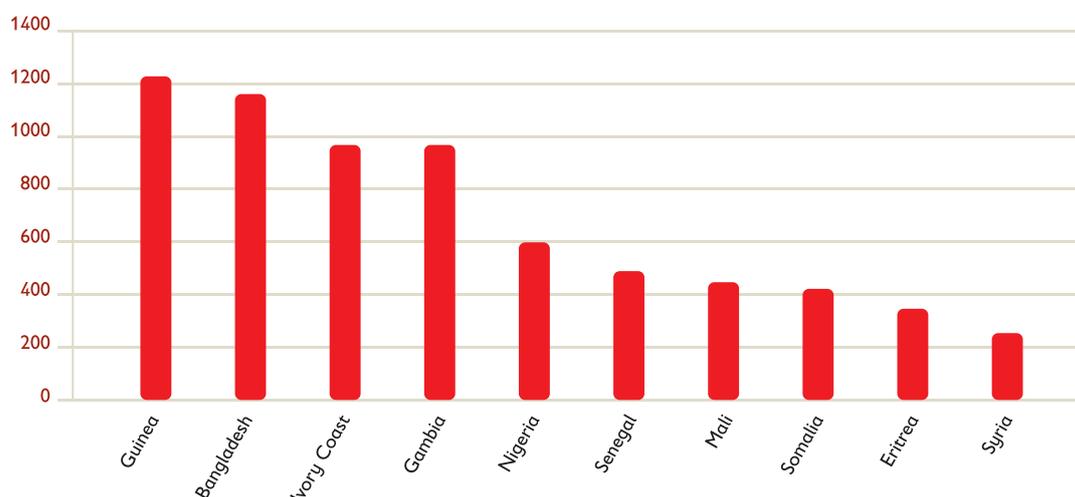
This is a considerable figure if we consider that 17.710 out of 63.251 victims are children, 5.060 of whom boys and 12.650 girls⁶.

On a global scale, the countries of the European Union play a growing role in the exploitation of men, women and children in forced labour and sexual exploitation. While the European Commission has observed that “*assessing the exact scale of the complex crime of trafficking in human beings at EU level is difficult because of its links with other criminal activities and the differences in national legislation*”, in its latest report, published in 2016, it counted 15.846⁷ certain or presumed victims throughout the whole Union. 76% of these are women and 15% children and teenagers⁸. Of the total, 67% are victims of forced prostitution, mainly of Nigerian and Romanian origin, while 21% are subject to labour exploitation, especially in farming, manufacturing, construction and domestic service, and restaurant sectors⁹. The four main areas in which many foreign children are employed in servile or slavery-like conditions¹⁰ are farming, restaurants, prostitution and begging. This is an underground world, marked by domination, in which Italy too is playing an increasingly important role as an area of exploitation.

The most vulnerable and invisible victims are unaccompanied migrant children, who have come to Italy to escape poverty, political tension and severe humanitarian crisis. Figures from the Ministry of the Interior¹¹ confirm that the flow is growing constantly. In 2015, the number of children that arrived on Italy’s beaches was 12.360, but in 2016, that flow was 25.846, accounting for 16% of the 181,436 migrants rescued at sea at the end of exhausting and dangerous journeys that began in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East or Asia. In 2016, the top ten countries of origin of these unaccompanied children were Eritrea (15%), Gambia (12.5%), Nigeria (12%), Egypt (9,5%), Guinea (9,3%), Ivory Coast (6,7%), Somalia (6%), Mali (5,4%), Senegal (4,5%) and Bangladesh (4%).

The growth in trend is also confirmed by the volume of flows recorded in the early months of 2017: in May, 60.228 migrants arrived, including 6.156 women (2.800 Nigerian) and 8.312 unaccompanied foreign children, with a growing number of young Nigerian girls and Bengalese children being drawn into labour exploitation circuits. On 31 May 2017, while the main nationalities were still the same, some of them had increased considerably in number. The top nationality is that of children from Guinea (14,7%), followed by Bangladesh (14%), Ivory Coast (11,8%), Gambia (11,8%), Nigeria (7%), Senegal (6%), Mali (5%), Somalia (5%), Eritrea (4%) and Syria (3%). A new element is the disappearance of Egyptian children from the top ten nationalities (just 11 arrived between January and May), along with a drop in arrivals from Somalia and Eritrea, while those from Sub-Saharan African countries (Guinea, Ivory Coast, Gambia and Senegal) have risen considerably.

Nationalities of Unaccompanied Children arrived between January-May 2017



Source: Italian Ministry of the Interior

The number of unaccompanied children that arrived at the Southern Border offers just a partial picture of unaccompanied child migration in Italy. Children arriving over land from Austria and Slovenia, across the Adriatic hidden in boats, or by plane with tourist visas or false travel documents, are not counted.

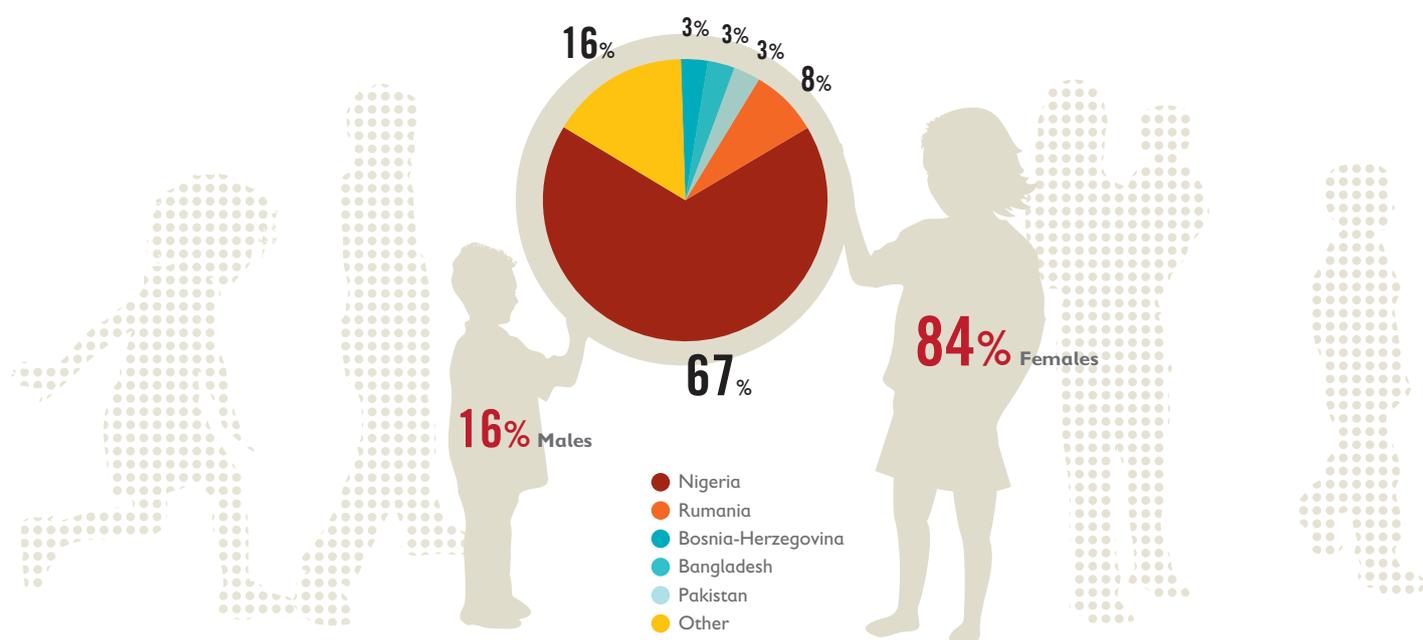
For the vast majority of these unaccompanied children, the downward spiral of exploitation begins at the start of the journey and often deteriorates and crystallises upon entry into Italy¹². Evidence gathered by Save the Children thanks to activities performed at the Border and in numerous Italian towns, together with data and reports supplied by the major humanitarian organisations, confirm that for many unaccompanied children, bullying and domination begin at the start of the journey to Europe, continuing during each phase of the transnational route travelled by the victims. Both in Italy and in destination countries like France, Spain or the Netherlands, the presence of illegal or poorly monitored markets favours the exploitation of children in underground work by criminal organisations of various sizes, often active in trafficking in human beings and smuggling in human beings. The contiguity between trafficking and smuggling of migrants is as evident in the labour exploitation of children as it is in their sexual exploitation¹³. Most victims of trafficking and exploitation are children escaping violence, conflict, severe humanitarian crisis or poverty. In the absence of safe and legal access channels, unaccompanied children arriving in Italy have had to rely on the smugglers, risking their lives in traumatic and often fatal crossings, the end of which, for many of them, has coincided with entry into trafficking and labour exploitation circuits.

According to Europol, approximately 20% of those presumed to be responsible for smuggling in Europe have connections with trafficking in human beings¹⁴. That the boundary between smuggling and trafficking in human beings and exploitation is becoming more and more blurred and porous is proven also by the evidence gathered by Save the Children during the last year of activity, which shows an increase in cases of trafficking, abuse and exploitation from the time of arrival in Italy, to pay off the debt incurred for the journey. In Italy, the labour exploitation of child migrants accounts for a large part of trafficking. Difference stories told by the children and teenagers intercepted by Save the Children show that the migratory experience often derives from being forced to immigrate rather than choice. In many cases, as confirmed by the stories told, these are children who set off with a migratory project focused almost exclusively on finding work and gaining economic independence, perhaps encouraged specifically by the family or subject to psychological pressure from relatives or people outside the family. The lack of perception of their working condition as one of exploitation and a lack of awareness of the risks connected to labour exploitation make child migrants, especially those who travel alone, particularly vulnerable to domination and less likely to report what is happening and try to free themselves, especially in those regions where child migrants are recruited as a result of dynamics traceable to organised crime, as in the case of child victims of labour intermediaries¹⁵. Another face of exploitation is that of a sexual nature, mainly involving young and teenage girls.

According to the findings of the Department for Equal Opportunities¹⁶, in 2016, the victims of trafficking enrolled in protection programmes, who broke free and are registered in statistics, within the scope of projects pursuant to Art.18 Legislative Decree 286/98 and pursuant to Art. 13 Law 228/2003¹⁷ in Italy, totalled 1.172¹⁸, 107 of whom men, 954 women and 111 children. Most of the latter are girls, representing approximately 84% of cases (93 girls and 18 boys). Of the children found by the Department for Equal Opportunities, 50,45% is exploited sexually, 0,9% of children are involved in forced marriages, 3,6% in begging, 5,41% are exploited at work and 9,91% in illegal economies like drug dealing. As regards nationality, with reference to all victims, as well as to children, more than half are

of Nigerian origin (59,5% total, 67% children), followed, to a much lesser extent, by victims of Romanian nationality (7% total, 8% children)¹⁹.

Children victims of trafficking and severe exploitation protected by the national protection system in 2016



Source: Italian Department for Equal Opportunities, Presidency of the Council of Ministers

It would be wise to remember that these figures do not include the vast majority of the victims of trafficking and exploitation, who remain outside the national protection system pursuant to Art.18 Legislative Decree 286/98 and pursuant to Art. 13 Law 228/2003²⁰. These victims help outline a phenomenon which is underground and hard to trace in statistic-quantitative terms, because often the exploitation of the youngest victims takes place in houses or closed places, and their discovery takes too long, and because many unaccompanied foreign children are travelling through Italy and are quickly moved from one town to another.

In this sense, that reported by the Group of experts on action against trafficking in human beings (GRETA) seems particularly relevant with regard to pre-identification in the hotspots for potential victims of trafficking, where “many persons interviewed by IOM are not formally identified as victims of THB because the requirements for granting a residence permit under Article 18 of the Consolidated Immigration Act - namely the reference to “concrete risk” and the “gravity and imminence of the danger” - does not exist or cannot be proven”²¹. This dysfunction places the victims at risk of being smuggled and subsequently exploited in Italy and in other European countries, or exposes them, in the case of victims erroneously identified as adults, to repatriation to their country of origin or to being sent to a structure for adult asylum seekers.

It should be highlighted that, while international attention has gradually grown and investigative and legislative tools have been considerably refined, the overall results of the anti-trafficking action still seen dissatisfactory. All the documents and analyses of the international organisations specialised in dealing with the phenomenon report ever-increasing numbers and global responses, at investigative and judicial level, are much less extensive than we would like and then would be necessary to reduce this increase.

At national level too, there is a shortage of tools suitable to provide a detailed awareness of the entire extent of the trafficking phenomenon, because they only intercept the part that rises to the surface.

Since 2012, Save the Children has intervened actively in the protection of young victims of trafficking with the Vie d'Uscita project. This activity aims to protect children and young adult victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation, offering them emergency shelter, advice, acceptance, legal advice and help to gain their independence. The action of the partners of Save the Children does not cover the whole of Italy but, in 2016, it extended to involve certain key areas in the trafficking and exploitation of children, such as Abruzzo, Marche, Sardinia and Veneto, and the city of Rome. The evidence reported by the outreach units of the partner organisations which worked on the streets offers a quite clear picture of the sexual exploitation of which foreign children are victims, this exploitation being, as mentioned earlier, the driving force that powers the trafficking machine in Italy.

Between May 2016 and March 2017, the outreach units of the partners of the Vie d'Uscita project came into contact with 1.313 victims or potential victims of trafficking, 1.076 of whom had just turned 18 or pretended to be 18, and 237 minors²², while between January 2015 and April 2016 a total of 356 victims or potential victims were contacted²³. This figure, however, only offers a picture of a limited number of areas, those where the partners of Save the Children²⁴ operate. Yet, as known to all the institutions and other organisations working to combat trafficking in Italy, the illegal economy linked to the trafficking of children extends much further than the numbers of victims who escape and who are helped by the territorial outreach activities carried out by the street units.

The picture revealed by the work carried out by the outreach units of Save the Children in 2016 and in the first six months of 2017 shows that growing numbers of Nigerian and Romanian children are being forced into prostitution on the streets. Similarly, Save the Children has carefully monitored the significant increase in the numbers of Egyptian and Bengalese children who have ended up in the circuits of labour exploitation and delinquent activities like drug dealing and prostitution. This is an underground area which risks becoming attractive to the thousands of Eritrean children in transit in Italy, who now risk being trapped due to the slow progress of relocation (in 2016, no children were relocated from Italy and in 2017 there have been just five relocations²⁵) and the tightening of border controls in the north of the country.

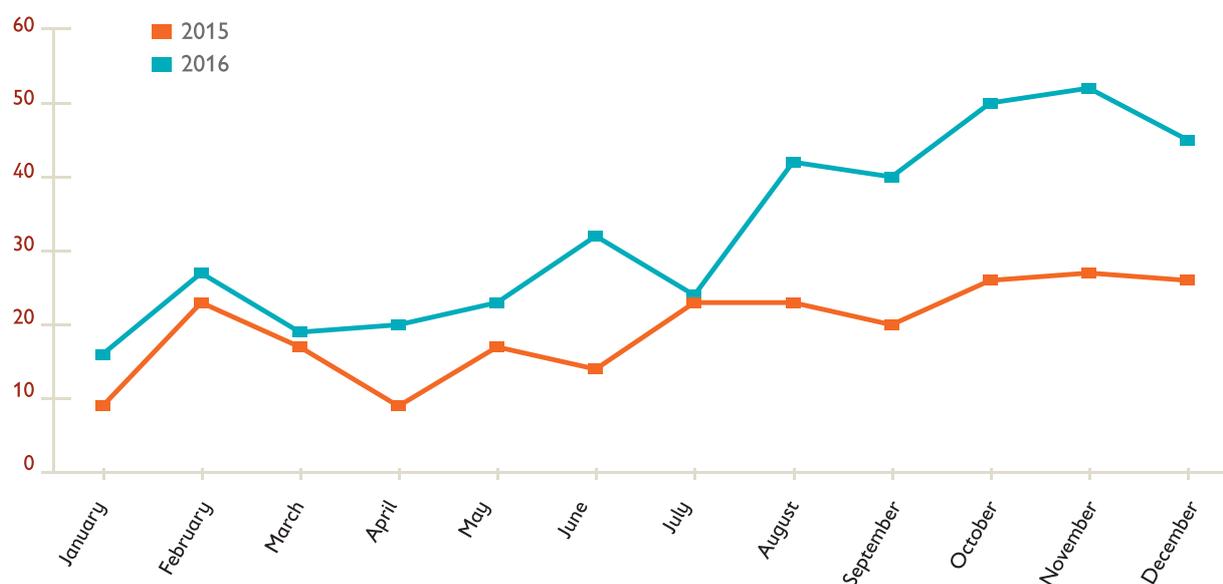
Meanwhile, while we find it hard to measure the phenomenon, especially the underground component, the trafficking and exploitation of children on the street is growing at an alarming rate. The latest national mapping of the victims of trafficking, carried out in May 2017 by the network of players united under the umbrella of the national anti-trafficking platform, identified, on just one evening, the presence on the street of approximately 3.280 victims or potential victims, 167 (5,1%) of whom were girls or teenagers presumed to be victims of trafficking²⁶. This finding concerned 50 Provinces (out of 93) and 11 Metropolitan Cities (out of 14). Data came in from 93 different territorial areas, involving 19 Regions out of 21. The numerous presence of exploited children on the street is also proven by various inquiries by the Italian Police and by investigations pursued by numerous departments of the public prosecution, the results of which show a widespread distribution of the phenomenon almost everywhere in Italy.

THE TRAFFICKING AND SEVERE EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN, AS INDICATED BY THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING FREEPHONE NUMBER

The Anti-trafficking Freephone number (800-290-290) is a free 24/7 service coordinated by the Municipality of Venice, covering the whole of Italy²⁷. Victims who all are guaranteed anonymity and the possibility to speak to specialised operators who speak multiple languages.

Comparing the trend in calls between 2015 and 2016, during the last year, the total number of calls received was 1,462, compared to last year's 1,024 calls. Of these, while in 2015 reports of trafficking were just 234 (11,5% regarding children), representing 23% of the total calls, in 2016, reports for trafficking were 390 (11% regarding children), not only representing a higher percentage of the total calls than in 2015 (+27%), but also recording an approximate 40% increase on last year.

Alerts to National Anti-Trafficking Freephone Number



THE TRAFFICKING AND SEVERE EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN, AS INDICATED BY THE SAVE THE CHILDREN HELPLINE FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN

(Helpline 800 14 10 16 - Lycamobile 351 2202016)

In 2017, out of a total 1.055 calls, the Helpline for migrant children launched by Save the Children received five calls relating to child victims of trafficking. Along with requests for help by girl victims of trafficking, requests were also collected by reception facilities for the management of unaccompanied children who are potential victims of sexual exploitation. The reports collected were followed up with the support of the Anti-trafficking Freephone number, IOM and the teams of Save the Children operating at Border Control.





Photo: Pedro Armestre / Save the Children

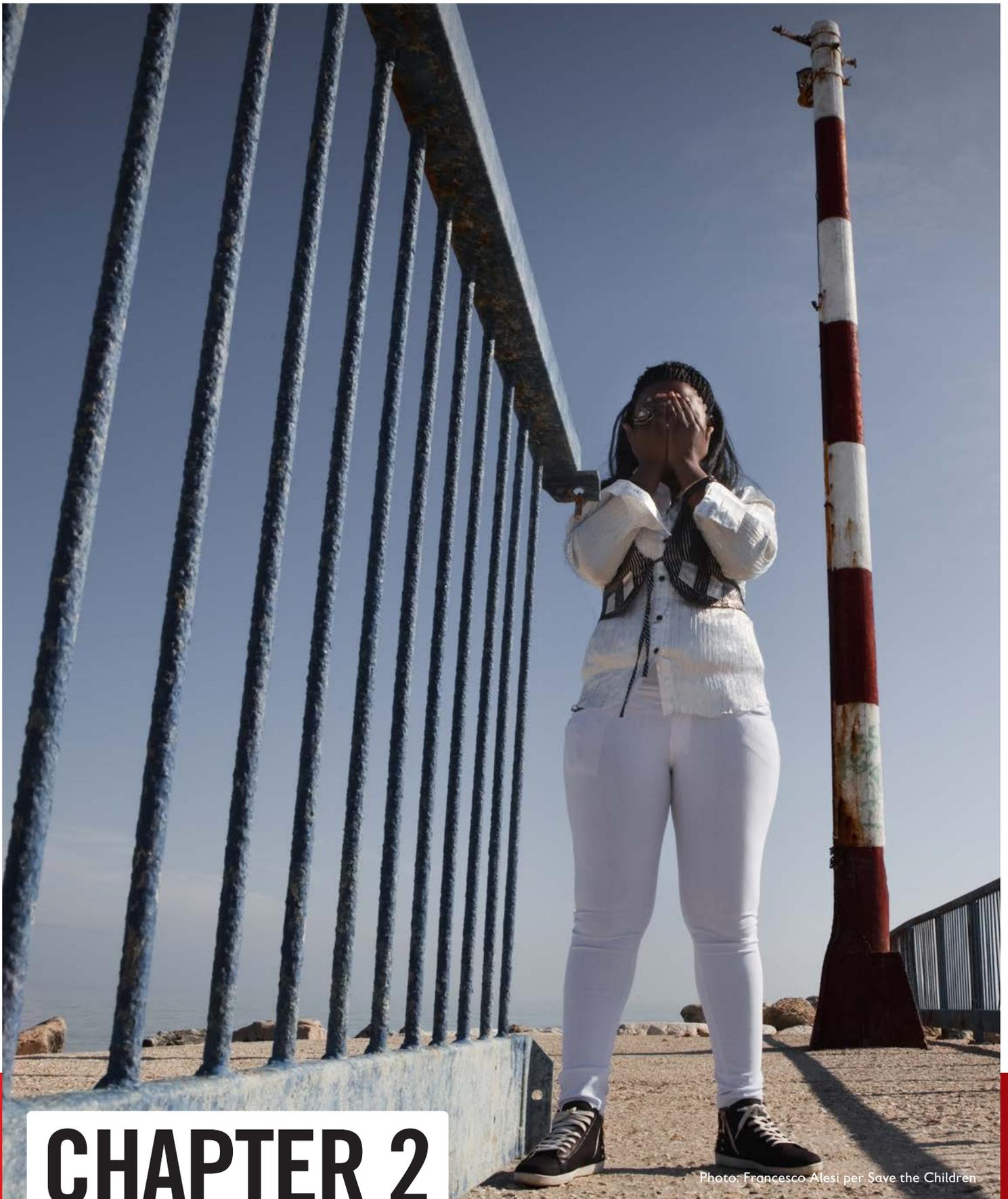
Notes

- ¹. See ILO, Forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking, <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/lang--en/index.htm>
- ². Ibidem.
- ³. Nazionale Directorate of Antimafia and Counter-Terrorism. Annual Report 2015 (Period 01/07/2014 - 30/06/2015), available at <http://www.publicpolicy.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Relazione-Franco-Roberti-Dna.pdf>, p. 325.
- ⁴. See UNODC, 2017, Human trafficking. People for sale, available at <https://www.unodc.org/toc/en/crimes/human-trafficking.html>
- ⁵. See UNODC, 2016, Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2016_Global_Report_on_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf
- ⁶. Specifically, 72% of victims are exploited sexually, 20% for labour, 8% in other forms and 0.1% in the smuggling of organs.
- ⁷. See European Commission, 2016. Report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings, available at https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/report_on_the_progress_made_in_the_fight_against_trafficking_in_human_beings_2016.pdf
- ⁸. The estimate of these figures, for 2013-2014, is also confirmed by the UNODC estimate, according to which, between 2012 and 2014, approximately 15,200 victims of trafficking were calculated, 8,512 of whom women and 3,800 children.
- ⁹. Ibidem.
- ¹⁰. The term “servile conditions” means “a socio-economic and socio-psychological state create between different people, in which some dominate and make the decisions for others. In these cases, domination is not usually based on violence, but on seeking consensus, blackmail and trickery aimed at perpetuating a state of subjection. Moreover, a specific role is played by physical proximity (by contrast with psychological distance) and by forms of cohabitation”. The term slavery-like means a condition “characterised by forms of exploitation based on domination and complete coercion. The main factor is the lack of freedom. In this type of relationship, the characteristic seems to be the distance between the parties involved, required to ensure maintenance of complete forced subjection of the victims”. In F. Carchedi, M. Mazzonis, “La condizione schiavistica. Uno sguardo d’insieme” in F. Carchedi, G. Mottura, E. Pugliese (edited by) “Il lavoro servile e le nuove schiavitù”, Franco Angeli editore, 2003.
- ¹¹. Ministry of the Interior, Department of Public Security - Central Administration of Immigration and Border Police. Summary for Nationality of Disembarked People.
- ¹². For more details, see Giovannetti M., 2016. “I comuni e le politiche di accoglienza dei minori stranieri non accompagnati. Una analisi longitudinale dei percorsi futuri-VI Rapporto”, ANCI- CITTALIA.
- ¹³. In labour exploitation, the most recent estimates by ILO are related to approximately 168 million children and teenagers trapped in forced labour at global level. ILO 2015. World Report on Child Labour 2015: Paving the way to decent work for young people.
- ¹⁴. Europol, 2016. Migrant Smuggling in the EU. Joint Europol-INTERPOL Report, 2016. Migrant Smuggling Networks, p. 6.
- ¹⁵. Despite the absence of quantitative and qualitative searches to investigate the exploitation of child migrants by labour intermediaries, something findings emerge from the news and from Sentences, including that issued by the Court of Palmi, (N. reg. Sent. N. 2/2014) regarding the case of a minor from Ghana exploited in farming labour in the Rosarno area (https://www.unodc.org/res/cld/case-law-doc/traffickingpersonscrimetype/ita/2014/tribunale_di_palmi_n_reg_sent_n_22014_html/Corte_di_Assise_Palmi_n_reg_sent._n._2_2014.pdf). See also A. Mangano, 2013. “Gli africani salveranno l’Italy”, BUR Rizzoli.
- ¹⁶. See the computerised collection of information on trafficking - SIRIT Projects pursuant to Art. 13 Law 228/2003 and projects pursuant to Art. 18 Legislative Decree 286/98, Department for Equal Opportunities.
- ¹⁷. Art. 18 (Legislative Decree 286/1998) envisages the issue of a permit to stay for reasons of social protection in order to “allow the foreigner to escape from the violence and conditioning of the criminal organisation and to participate in a Programme of Assistance and social integration” (Art. 18, paragraph 1). Art. 13 (Law 228/2003) envisages a special Assistance Programme for people over



whom powers corresponding to those of ownership are exercised or people in a state of constant subjection, forced to perform labour, sexual acts or beg, or other services implicating their exploitation. The projects of Art. 13 guarantee assistance for the presumed victims for a period of at least three months, which can be extended for another three months. The projects of Art. 18 have a duration of 12 months. For more information see the link: <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/index.php/component/content/article/70-smuggling-di-esseri-umani-/2295-contro-la-trafficking-di-persone>

- ¹⁸ See Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of the Ministers, computerised collection of information on trafficking - SIRIT Projects pursuant to Art. 13 Law 228/2003 and projects pursuant to Art. 18 Legislative Decree 286/98.
- ¹⁹ See the computerised collection of information on trafficking - SIRIT Projects pursuant to Art. 13 Law 228/2003 and projects pursuant to Art. 18 Legislative Decree 286/98, Department for Equal Opportunities.
- ²⁰ Art. 18 (Legislative Decree 286/1998) Art. 18 (Legislative Decree 286/1998) envisages the issue of a permit to stay for reasons of social protection in order to “allow the foreigner to escape from the violence and conditioning of the criminal organisation and to participate in a Programme of Assistance and social integration” (Art. 18, paragraph 1). Art. 13 (Law 228/2003) envisages a special Assistance Programme for people over whom powers corresponding to those of ownership are exercised or people in a state of constant subjection, forced to perform labour, sexual acts or beg, or other services implicating their exploitation. The projects of Art. 13 guarantee assistance for the presumed victims for a period of at least three months, which can be extended for another three months. The projects of Art. 18 have a duration of 12 months. For more information see the link: <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/index.php/component/content/article/70-smuggling-di-esseri-umani-/2295-contro-la-trafficking-di-persone>
- ²¹ See GRETA (2016) 29 Report on Italy under Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure for evaluating implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, available at <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806edf35>, p. 13.
- ²² The age range of the victims intercepted by the Vie D’Uscita project is between 12 and 24.
- ²³ The figure has to be assessed in consideration of an outreach activity which has not been developed in all the same areas of intervention. In fact, in Veneto, the street units began operating in May 2016, while in Sardinia they began in January 2017.
- ²⁴ The areas of intervention falling within the scope of the Vie d’Uscita project are Marche and Abruzzo, Veneto, the city of Rome, and Sardinia (which became an area of intervention in May 2016).
- ²⁵ At 30 June 2017, the unaccompanied children who can potentially benefit from the relocation procedure are approximately 800. Of these, five have been relocated, one application has been approved and the child is awaiting transferral, 22 applications have been sent off and are awaiting approval by the EU member state identified, and 25 applications have been registered and are waiting for the identification of an EU member state. For more details see Ministry of the Interior, Cruscotto Statistico Giornaliero, 2017, http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_del_30_giugno_2017.pdf
- ²⁶ See National anti-trafficking platform. National mapping of street prostitution, 3 May 2017, available at maantitrafficking.blogspot.it/2017/05/prima-mappatura-nazionale-della.html
- ²⁷ For details relating to the management of calls, please see <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/media/2780/accordo-numero-verde-trafficking-e-prospetto-finanziario.pdf>



CHAPTER 2

Photo: Francesco Alesi per Save the Children

TRAFFICKING AND SEVERE EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN IN ITALY: THE DEFINITIONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL, EU AND ITALIAN LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

2.1 Trafficking and smuggling: two phenomena that are often interconnected

While the smuggling of children differs, in theory, from trafficking due to the payment made by the child to the smuggler to illegally enter the country of destination, the main inquiries and investigative results²⁸ confirm that the trafficking of children is perpetrated through the same channels and using the same criminal strategies as smuggling. During the journey to the country of destination, the child endures violence and forms of coercion by the smugglers and by numerous others who are more or less involved in organising the irregular migratory flows (e.g.: corrupt border police, or criminal gangs). This is why the coercion and deceit perpetrated by the smuggler in relation to the victims means that, also in the case of smuggling, the victim's initial consent to exploitation is irrelevant.

THE DEFINITIONS

Trafficking in Human Beings

The crime of trafficking consists of three typical elements²⁹: the conduct, i.e.: recruitment, transport, transferral, hospitality or reception of people, the means, i.e.: the use of force, coercion, abuse of power, exchange of money or benefits to obtain “consent”, and, lastly, the aim, i.e.: the exploitation of prostitution of others, or other forms of sexual exploitation, labour or forced work, slavery, enslavement or the removal of organs. International law³⁰ defines severely exploited child labour as:

1. all the forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale or trafficking of children, service to pay off debts and enslavement, forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for the purposes of their use in armed conflict;
2. the employment engagement or offering of the child for the purposes of prostitution;
3. the employment engagement or offering of the child for the purposes of illegal activities;
4. any other type of work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is performed, risks jeopardising the child's health, safety or morality.

Regardless of the method of entry into the country of destination, the victims are always forced into dependency and exploitation through psychic or physical violence. By virtue of this, in many cases, the service into which the victims are forced can be likened to forced labour, the definition of which is contained in ILO Convention no. 29 (par. 29) of 1930. A child victim of trafficking is every individual under the age of 18 *recruited, transported, transferred, held or received for the purpose of exploitation*, either inside or outside a country, with or without coercion, deceit, abuse of power or other forms of abuse.

Smuggling

The smuggling of child migrants indicates the procurement of illegal entry by a person into a country where the person is neither a citizen nor resident, *in exchange for financial or material gain*³¹.

Exploitations

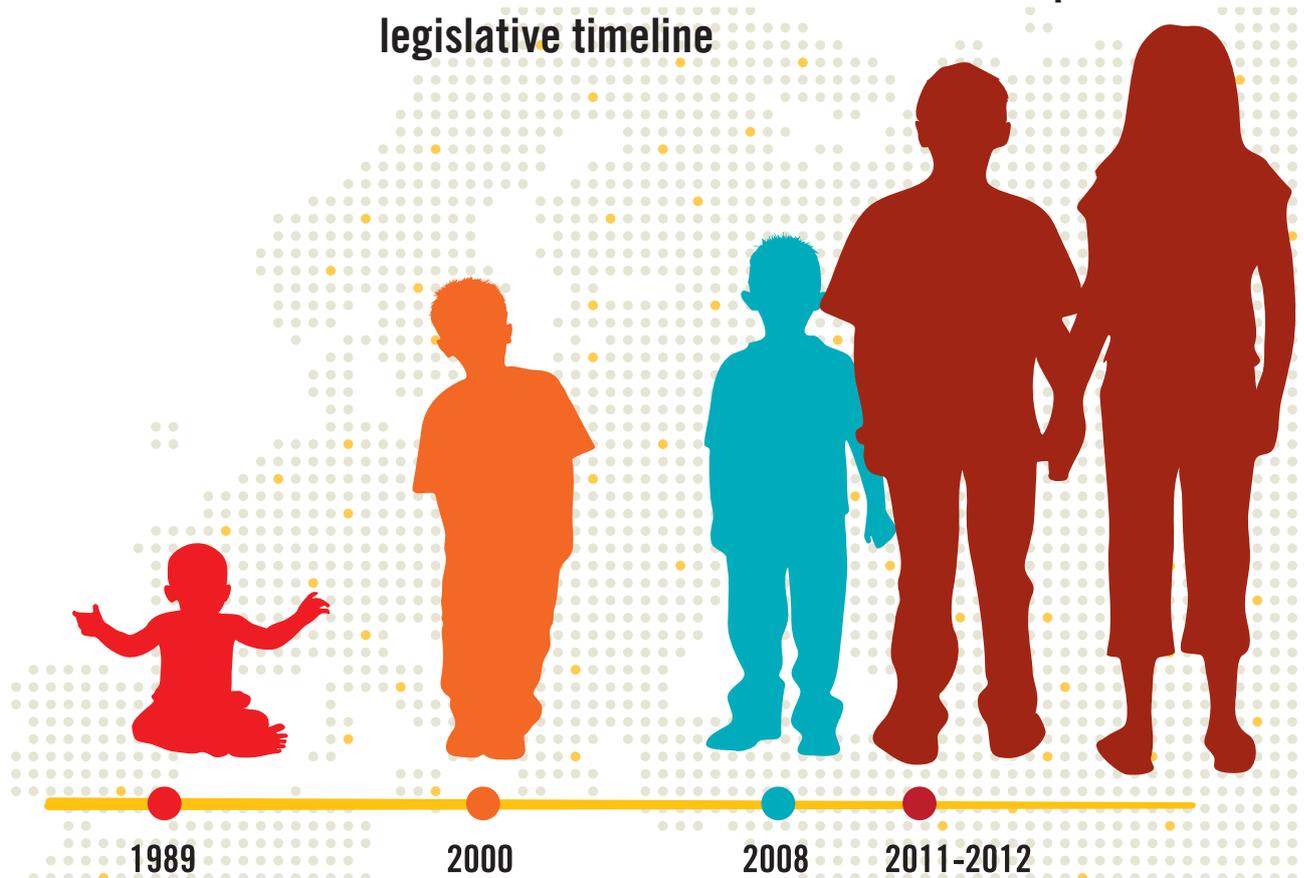
Exploitation envisages the *gain of unjust profit from the activities of others, via an “imposition”* based on a

conduct that influences the desire of the other person, and deliberately levers on young victims' lack of capacity for self-determination. As indicated in Article 3 of the United Nations Protocol³², exploitation can include:

- exploitation of prostitution of others, or other forms of sexual exploitation;
- forced labour or forced services;
- slavery or similar practices;
- enslavement;
- removal of organs.

CHAPTER 2

2.2 Trafficking, smuggling and labour exploitation of children: the international and European legislative timeline



● Convention on the Rights of the Child

Acknowledges the importance to adopt “all measures to prevent the abduction, sale or trafficking of children, for whatever purpose and in any form whatsoever”.

● Palermo Protocol

Defines the trafficking of children as the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbor or reception of a child for exploitation.

● Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

Explicitly prohibits trafficking in human beings.

● Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

Article 79 establishes that the Union shall develop a common immigration policy aimed at “combating trafficking in persons, women and children”.

● Directive 2011/36/EU and the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016

Establish the first strategic framework to address the phenomenon and recognize the responsibility of each Member State in combating trafficking in human beings in accordance with five strategic lines (protection, prevention, prosecution, partnership, knowledge of the phenomenon).

1989 - The Convention on the rights of children³³ established the need to adopt “every measure to prevent the abduction, sale or smuggling of children, for any reason and under any form”.

2000 - The Palermo Protocol of 2000³⁴ defines the smuggling of children as “the assumption, transport, transferral, acceptance or reception of a child for the purposes of exploitation.

2003 - The European Union Charter of basic rights specifically forbids trafficking in human beings.

2008 - The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) establishes, in Article 79, that the Union must develop a common policy on immigration, with the intention of ensuring, during every phase, the prevention and reinforced contrast of trafficking in human beings, and solicits the European Parliament and Council to take steps to fight trafficking in human beings, particularly women and children.

2011-2012 - The European Union sets up the first strategic framework to tackle the phenomenon, with Directive 2011/36/EU³⁵ and the “EU Strategy to eradicate trafficking in human beings 2012-2016”.

DIRECTIVE 2011/36 AND THE UE STRATEGY TO ERADICATE TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS (2012 – 2016)

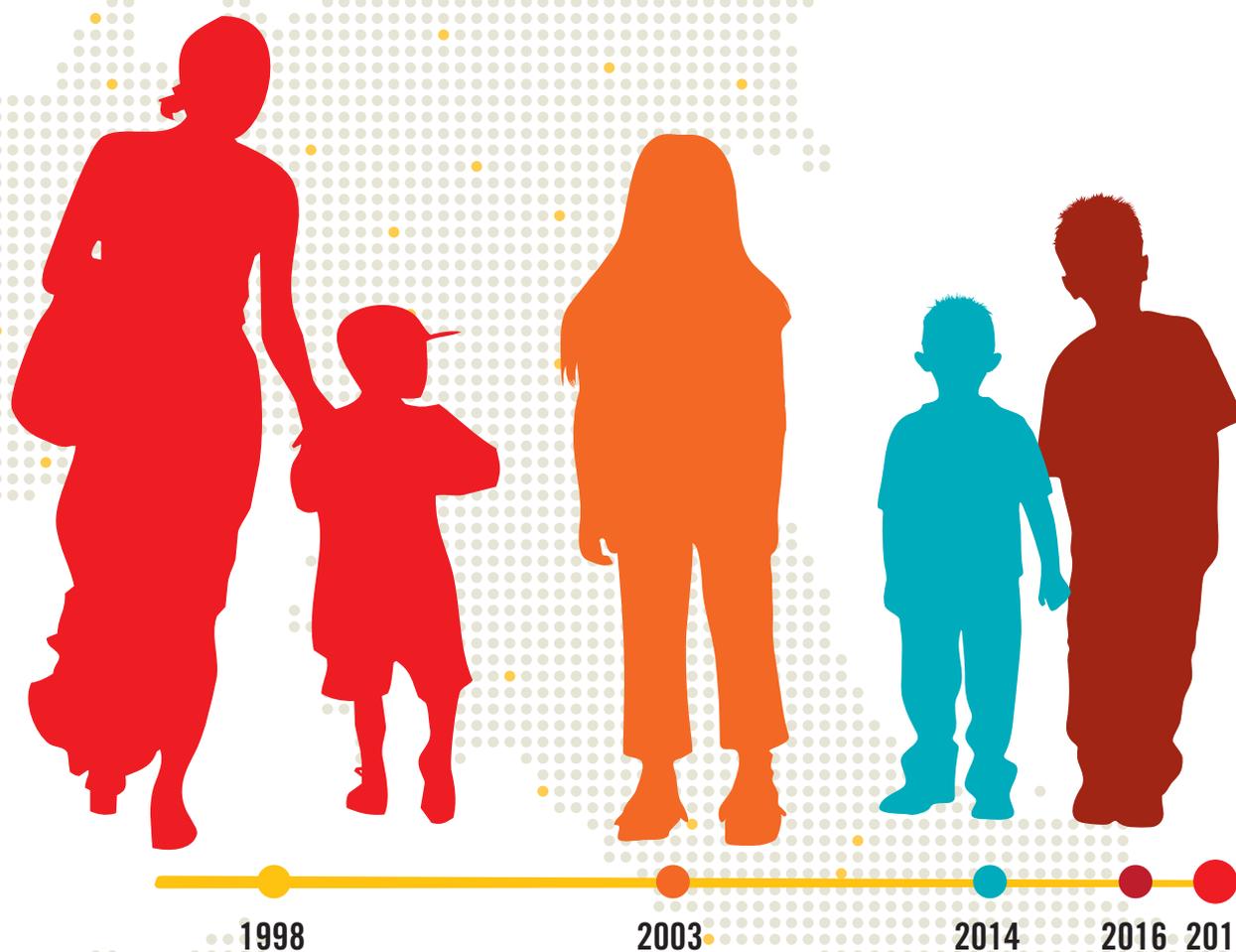
According to Directive 2011/36 the Member States must:

- consider primarily the greater interest of the child;
- consider the victim as a minor if there is any doubt;
- consider the child’s opinion, needs and fears;
- appoint a tutor or a representative of the child victim and ensure the support of the family if it is located within a Member State;
- ensure access “without delay” to free legal advice and legal aid;
- ensure particular attention and defence during hearings;
- assess the situation of unaccompanied children “case by case”, with a view to finding diversified solutions, such as repatriation, integration into the hosting society or international protection.

Responsibility for fighting trafficking in human beings lies mainly with the Member States.

For this reason, the Commission has solicited the promulgation, in all Member States, of a national anti-trafficking plan, structured in compliance with five strategic lines:

1. to identify, protect and assist the victims of trafficking;
2. to intensify the prevention of trafficking in human beings;
3. to strengthen criminal action against smugglers;
4. to improve coordination and cooperation between the main parties concerned, and the consistency of policies;
5. to increase awareness of problems emerging in relation to all forms of trafficking in human beings, and provide an effective response.



1998

2003

2014

2016

2017

Art. 18 of Legislative Decree no. 286/98

Introduces social protection with the aim of ensuring that victims are safeguarded so that they can come out from the conditions of enslavement.

Art. 13 of Law 228/2003

Establishes a special support programme guaranteeing adequate housing, subsistence and healthcare conditions for the physical and psychological recovery of victims of crimes defined under Articles 600 and 601 of the Penal Code, on a transitional basis.

Legislative Decree 24/2014

Introduces the individual assessment for each victim in accordance with her/his vulnerability.

April 7, 2017

Law 47/2017, known as Zampa Law

Specifically Art. 17 "Minor Victims of Trafficking", providing protection measures for unaccompanied minors exploited and abused in trafficking in human beings.

Law no. 199/2016

Provides a reformulation of the criminal offence of "Unlawful intermediation and labour exploitation".

February 2016

National Action Plan against Trafficking and Severe exploitation of Human Beings 2016-2018

Defines Government intervention strategies to prevent and tackle the issue of human trafficking and severe exploitation.

May 16, 2016

Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers (DPCM)

Concerning "Definition of the Single Programme for Emergency, Assistance and Social Integration for foreigners and citizens referred to in Article 18 of Legislative Decree no. 286/98, victims of the offences listed in Articles 600 and 601 criminal code".

Decree 10 November 2016, no. 234

Concerning "Regulation for determining the age of unaccompanied children victims of trafficking".

At national level, the crime of trafficking in people is envisaged under Article 601³⁶ of the Criminal Code, which refers to the transferral within the territory of a person reduced into a state of slavery through violence, threat, deceit or abuse of authority, or by profiting from a situation of vulnerability.

1998 - Institution of Social Protection for the victims of trafficking.

Art. 18 of Legislative Decree no. 286 of 1998³⁷ introduces, for the first time, the possible issue of a permit to stay to victims of trafficking, a social protection in favour of the victims of trafficking. This is an essential legislative provision, in that it allows access to programmes of assistance and social integration, even in the absence of reports to the authorities, so on the basis of the request by social services operating with local authorities, or by associations, departments and other organisations listed in section two of the Register held by the Ministry of Employment. However, the use of this tool is still very limited because it is still reserved almost exclusively to cases of sexual exploitation and is also subject to numerous restrictive interpretations by the police departments which, in many cases, continue to request that the victims report their exploiters.

2003 - Institution of the Programme of Assistance for the victims of trafficking and of the Fund for anti-trafficking measures. Art. 13 of Law 228/2003 sets up a special Programme of Assistance for the victims of trafficking, which guarantees, on a transitory basis, adequate housing conditions, food and healthcare.

Art. 12 of the same Law sets up a specific Fund for anti-trafficking measures.

SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE, PURSUANT TO ART. 18 LEGISLATIVE DECREE NO. 286 OF 1998 AND PURSUANT TO ART.13 LAW 228/2003

Social Protection pursues the aim of guaranteeing the defence of the victim to allow their escape from the condition of subjection, entered into by the exploited or the criminal network. With this aim, Art. 18 orders the instrument of social protection, which envisages the issue of a permit to stay (with a duration of six months, renewable for a year or the longer period of time necessary) which allows access to assistance and education, as well as registration in the employment lists and the pursuit of gainful employment. The permit to stay can be renewed if the holder is employed or can be converted into a permit to stay for educational reasons³⁸.

The Programme of Assistance guarantees, on a transitory basis, adequate housing conditions, food and healthcare to allow the physical and psychological recovery of victims of the crimes envisaged by Articles 600 and 601 of the Criminal Code³⁹.

2014 - Legislative Decree 24/2014 introduces the need for individual assessment of the victim in the light of specific situations of vulnerability. Those considered vulnerable are children, unaccompanied children, the elderly, the disabled, women, particularly pregnant women, single parents with children, people suffering from psychological disturbances, people who have been tortured, raped or subject to other severe forms of psychological, physical, sexual or gender-related violence. Art. 5 provides for the obligation requiring the administrative authorities to prepare training modules on trafficking, to be implemented within training courses for public officials. Art. 6 introduces the right to compensation for the victims of trafficking, to be managed by the Fund for anti-trafficking measures⁴⁰. The Decree orders a specialised multidisciplinary procedure to establish age, also taking into account specificities relating to the child's ethnic origin and culture. If there is any doubt, it orders classification of the person as a minor.



Photo: Francesco Alesi / Parallelozero / Save the Children

CHAPTER 2

2016 - Law 199 rewrites the crime of illegal labour mediation, including among the crimes pursuable with the existence of one or more of the following conditions:

1. repeated payment of amounts evidently non-compliant with the collective national or territorial agreements stipulated by the most representative trade unions at national level, or out of proportion with the quantity and quality of work performed;
2. repeated breach of laws relating to working hours, rest, weekly days off, compulsory leave, holidays;
3. breaches of the laws on safety and hygiene in the workplace;
4. subjection of the employee to working conditions, surveillance or housing conditions that are degrading.

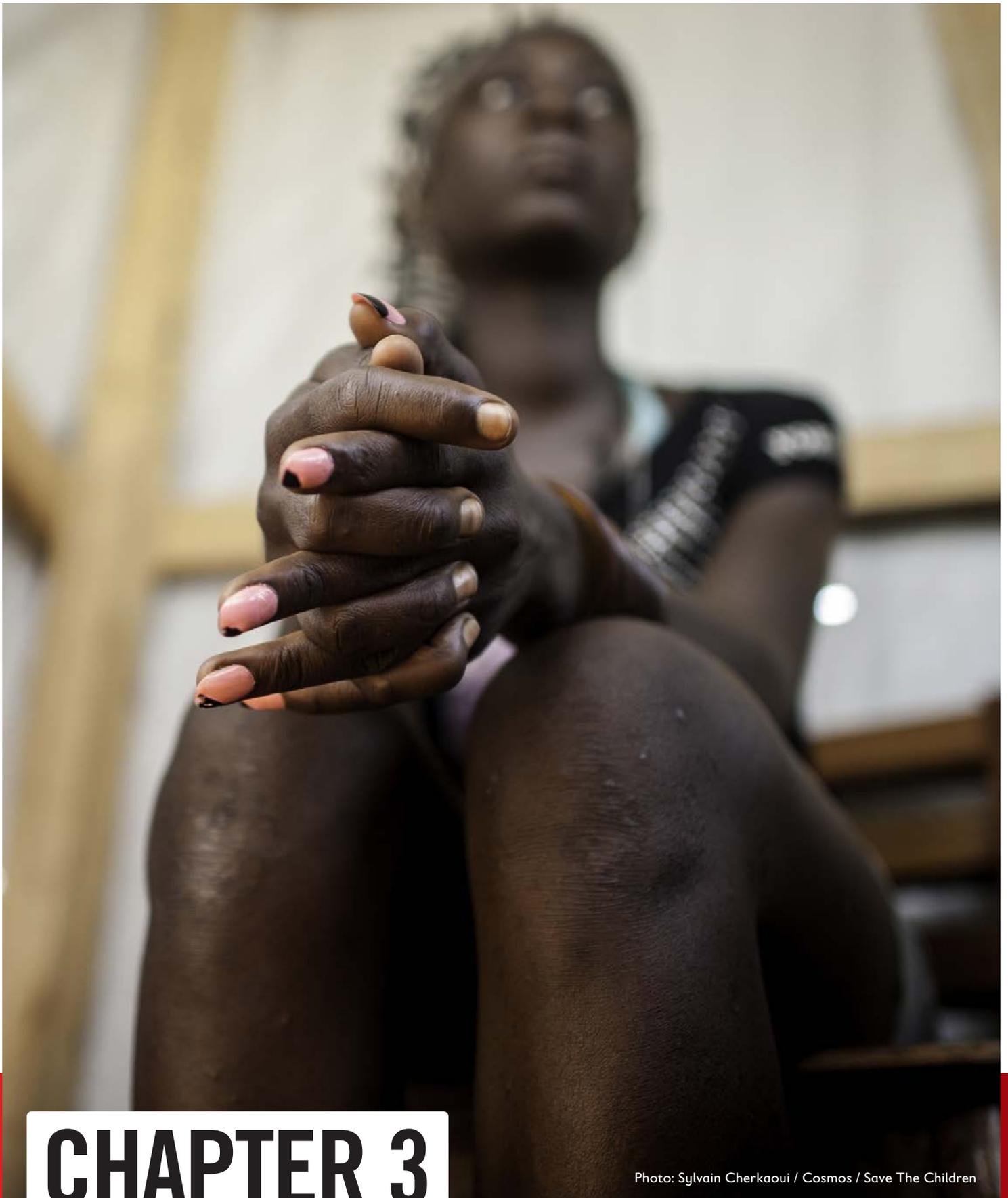
Furthermore, as regards the defence of child victims of labour intermediaries, it introduces specific punishment, increasing the sentence by between a third and a half, in the event that one or more of the recruits are children below employable age. The innovations of the law also include extension of the provisions of the anti-trafficking fund to the victims of labour intermediaries.

2017 - Law 47/2017 “Provision on the matter of measures of the protection of unaccompanied foreign children”, known as the Zampa Law, introduces (pursuant to Art. 17), specifically for the victims of trafficking, a specific Programme of Assistance providing psycho-social, health and legal aid, to be developed also after the coming of age (paragraph 1). The Law emphasises the applicability, for child victims of trafficking, of the laws in relation to the right to be heard and to receive legal assistance aimed at adequate assistance with applying for compensation for damages, pursuant to Articles 15 and 16 (paragraph 2). For these purposes, paragraph 3 authorises spending of 154,080 euro per annum, starting from 2017.



Notes

- ²⁸ National Antimafia and Counter-Terrorism Directorate, 2016. Annual Report 2015 (Period 01/07/2014-30/06/2015), available at <http://www.publicpolicy.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Relazione-Franco-Roberti-Dna.pdf>
- ²⁹ The definition supplied by the United Nations was subsequently likened to that used in the European Conventions and the European legislation.
- ³⁰ See ILO Convention relating to the Prohibition of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999. Available at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---ilo_rome/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms_152295.pdf
- ³¹ See Art. 3, lett. a), Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, United Nations, 2000: "Smuggling of migrants shall mean the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident".
- ³² See Art. 3, lett. a) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, United Nations, 2000, available at https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/Special/2000_Protocol_to_Prevent_2C_Suppress_and_Punish_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf
- ³³ See the Convention on the Rights of Children and Teenagers, available at http://www.garanteinfanzia.org/sites/default/files/documenti/Convenzione_diritti_infanzia_adolescenza_autorita.pdf
- ³⁴ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, United Nations, 2000, available at https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/Special/2000_Protocol_to_Prevent_2C_Suppress_and_Punish_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf
- ³⁵ Directives 2011/36/UE on trafficking in human beings and 2011/92/EU relating to the fight against the abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and which replaces framework decision 2004/68/GAI.
- ³⁶ See Art. 601 of the Criminal Code - "Anyone who recruits, introduces into the State, transfers outside of it, transports, transfers authority over the person, hosts one or more people who find themselves in the conditions pursuant to Article 600, or adopts the same behaviours with regard to one or more persons via deceit, violence, threat or abuse of authority, or profits from a situation of vulnerability, physical or psychological inferiority, or need, promising or giving work or other advantages to the person over whom they hold authority, in order to induce or force the person to work, beg, supply sexual services or perform illegal activities which implicate exploitation or the removal of organs. The same punishment will be applied to those who, without restriction to the provisions of the first paragraph, adopt the behaviours envisaged in relation to minors."
- ³⁷ See Art. 18, Legislative Decree 286/98 available at <http://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/deleghe/98286dlaw.htm>. Art. 18 envisages the formal adhesion by the victim to a Programme of Assistance and social integration; the permit to stay, referred to as "humanitarian" to protect the privacy of victims, can be withdrawn if the beneficiary pulls out of the integration programme or behaves in a way incompatible with the finalities of the programme; the duration of the permit to stay pursuant to Art. 18 is six months and can be renewed for a year; those adhering to the programme can study and work; upon expiry of the permit, the victim can convert the temporary permit into a work or study permit.
- ³⁸ See Art. 18, Legislative Decree 286/98 available at <http://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/deleghe/98286dl.htm>
- ³⁹ See Art 13, Law 228/2003 available at <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/media/2764/legge-11-agosto-2003-art-12-art-13.pdf>
- ⁴⁰ The indemnification is paid in the measure of 1,500 euro for each victim, within the annual financial limits of the Fund.



CHAPTER 3

Photo: Sylvain Cherkaoui / Cosmos / Save The Children

FACES, STORIES AND JOURNEYS OF THE CHILD VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION IN ITALY

3.1 Nigerian child and teenage victims of trafficking

In the whole of 2016, arrivals by boat of unaccompanied children from Nigeria were 3.040, over 197% more than 2015 when the number of Nigerian children who arrived here by boat was 1.022⁴¹. Children represent an important part of the flow and while, at the end of 2016, second accommodation structures reported the presence of 528 girls⁴², accounting for 40% of the total number of Nigerian children taken in (1.330 at 31 May 2017), the real percentage of those present in the country could be much higher, considering, on one hand, the current tendency among Nigerian children to declare that they are adults when they arrive here, and on the other, to declare their status as asylum seekers and claim inclusion in the international protection system. Research carried out by the IOM⁴³ and other international organisations feel that most of the Nigerian girls who arrive in Italy are destined to trafficking. This assessment is in line with the evidence collected by the Vie d'Uscita project which, from January 2016 to March 2017, intercepted 655 Nigerian girls on the streets who were either minors or had just turned 18. With particular regard to victims, a progressive transformation of the profile of children was observed in 2016: the victims are becoming younger and younger, are rarely schooled and are increasingly poor. They are most girls aged 15 to 17, with a growing number of girls aged 13 to 14. They are recruited in Benin City, in rural areas and the most remote villages of the States of Anambra, Delta and Lagos. They are lured in with a proposal of work in Europe, usually by someone they know⁴⁴ who, using the prospects of wealth, social climbing and independence achieved through transfer to Europe as bait, direct the girls towards a journey which puts them at the mercy of smugglers right from the start. The severe deprivation of the families of many of these girls and the fragility of their parental references means that they often fall victim to the deception of the "Italos", former prostitutes who have survived years of enslavement in Italy and have returned to Nigeria, boasting about a successful migration deeply rooted in the imagination of the local teenagers. A famous Nigerian popstar, Ohenhen, even had a hit with a song about the huge earnings of a young Italo called Dupay who had been asked to push other young girls to follow her example⁴⁵. Similarly, Nollywood, Nigeria's expanding film industry, has produced B-movies⁴⁶ like the famous Glamour Girls⁴⁷, which glorify prostitution in Italy as a rocket to financial success. Nigeria's fragile economic growth⁴⁸ and the strong social polarisation that characterises all the States from which the victims set out, show that the decisive factor is poverty. For girls from very needy and deprived backgrounds, especially the eldest daughters of families in which the mother has died, traditionally crushed by the moral obligation to keep their surviving parent and younger brothers and sisters, the option of moving to Europe takes on the guise of a choice that is painful but necessary, and often the only option. In addition, limited awareness of the injustice linked to trafficking⁴⁹ means that the girls, as revealed by the stories gathered by Save the Children, underestimate the implications of the fraudulent proposals of relatives, schoolmates, stepsisters and neighbours who act as "scouts".



- Faith's story - "Faith left in compliance with the wishes of her mother, who wanted her to leave the country in order to help the family cope with its financial difficulties. Initially, Faith refused; she knew about the difficulties involved in the journey, and was afraid. However, she eventually gave in to pressure from her mother and set off for Europe"⁵⁰.

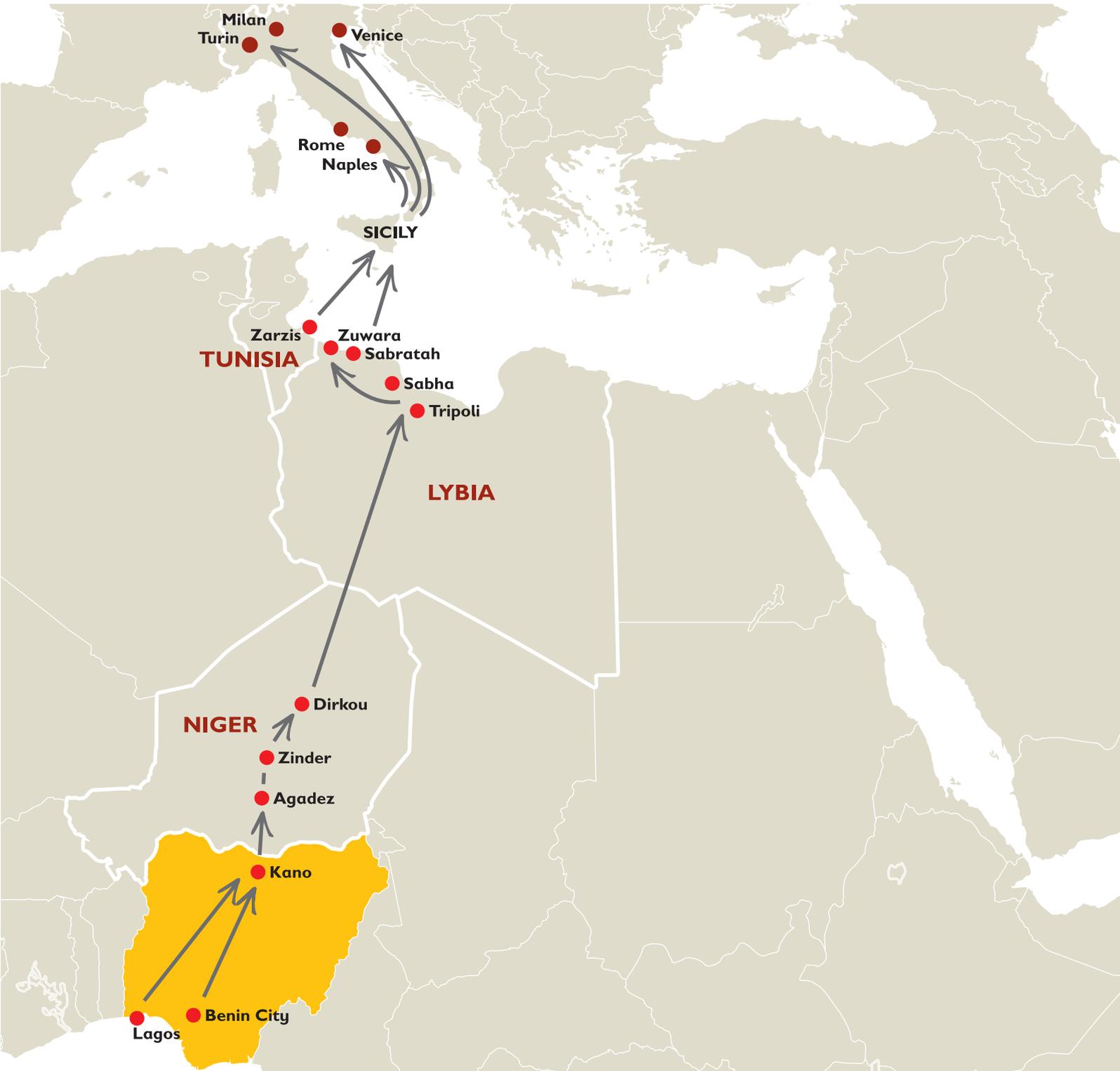
The girls' stories also reveal how most of them are subjected to a voodoo or juju ritual, sometimes so violent as to involve the sacrifice of animals and use of nails, hair and underwear taken from the victims. The ritual aims to make the women so frightened that they will say nothing and work as hard as they can to repay the debt incurred to travel to Europe without causing any problems for the smugglers⁵¹. In some cases, the ritual is performed in temples known as shrines, the sacred nature of which increases the girls' fear.

“Isoko agreed to leave her country and, accompanied by a boy, travelled to Benin City, where the “maman” made her take an oath. Isoko did not speak the Benin language as she was from another Nigerian State. She had everything that was happening translated by the boy: Isoko swore to repay € 25,000 to the maman plus another € 5,000 to the native doctor⁵², otherwise the juju would have killed her or made her go mad. Isoko arrived by boat in Italy in 2016. Here, her captors shut her in an apartment and raped her. After this, Isoko decided to escape, and contacted the Police. The girl was given shelter in a protected structure. For the first few days she was visibly terrified and very quiet, but as time went by she began to open up to the staff. Now, thanks to the Vie d’Uscita project coordinated by Save the Children, Isoko has started an apprenticeship as a cleaner in a guesthouse. She does her job with dedication and has a good relationship with the owner and her colleagues”⁵³.

Poorer girls are often lured by the offer of a free trip to Italy. Others initially pay small sums of approximately € 250 (87,000 Nigerian Naira). For all the girls though, the journey from Nigeria to Italy becomes a debt of between € 20,000 and € 30,000, which can only be repaid through forced prostitution, imposed by the exploiters for as long as over three years⁵⁴. Unlike what happened in the Nineties and the early Noughties, the mobility of Nigerian girls rarely takes place by plane now. While most of the first Nigerian girls flew to Italy directly from Lagos, carried false documents, nowadays the growing recruitment of younger and younger victims has imposed the use of new routes which are less exposed to checks. The road is usually through Kano (Nigeria), Zinder (Niger), Agadez (Niger), Dirkou (Niger), Sabha (Libya) and Tripoli (Libya). From Tripoli, the victims are moved towards the ports of Zuara, Zarzis and Sabratah (Libya)⁵⁵. The leg from Kano to Agadez in Niger, 715 km of travel along bumpy roads, exposes the young victims, without travel documents, to the retortions of border guards from both Niger and Nigeria. All the girls say that the journey became a nightmare when they got to Agadez, where the road to Libya starts, travelling approximately 3.500 km in the desert in pick-up trucks full of migrants. Between Agadez and Qatroun (in the Republic of Niger) and Sabha, in the middle of Libya, many victims undergo abuse and rape by armed groups often working with the drivers of the trucks, who earn a percentage of the money extorted following the abduction of the victims. The passage from Niger to Libya is an essential phase: according to the stories we are told, this is where the children are sold⁵⁶ by the Nigerian go-betweens who have accompanied them during the first part of their journey, to gangs of Arabs, often armed, who take them through Libya.

“Faith left home in March 2016 to travel to Benin City, where she met the man and a group of other people with whom she began her journey: there were 12 of them altogether, 7 women and 5 men. They travelled to Sokoto (North-West Nigeria) by minibus. From here, they were split up among small cars, and they crossed the border, driving to the desert, first on motorbikes and then in pick-up trucks. The group of travellers group bigger at every stage. Before arriving in Tripoli, in Libya, the man left them, after which Faith saw only Arabs run the organisation”⁵⁷.

The migration routs of Nigerian girls towards Italy



CHAPTER 3

For all the migrants and particularly for unaccompanied Nigerian children, the Libyan stop is the hardest and most traumatic during the journey. The gradual deterioration of the institutional arrangements and the escalation of violence in the country have dramatically worsened the welcome extended to migrants, particularly women and children, travelling through Libya. Stories told to Save the Children reveal how even children are targeted systematically by the various criminal groups operating throughout the territory, like the barbarous Asma boys, and the various militia groups manning the border crossing points with Niger and the coast. In Libya, for Nigerian girls, the state of physical/psychological coercion and exploitation for prostitution⁵⁸ begins in the connection houses, brothels where

Nigerian and Ghanaian guards and mamans keep the girls and exploit them for prostitution until they are purchased by the part of the Nigerian network operating in Italy⁵⁹. Victims are refused sex (prostitution) are bullied and beaten, and their families in Nigeria are sent ransom requests for sums of up to 500,000 Naira (approximately € 1,500).



“From Sabha, Faith is transferred by the connection man to a house in Tripoli, where she stays for five months. The Arabs expect the women to pay 100,000 naira each (approximately €284): they threaten to send them to a “connection house” as prostitutes, or to kill them. The aunt who encouraged Faith to leave asked the smuggler to involve her in prostitution in Tripoli, to pay for the journey to Italy. Of those months, Faith remembers a huge room in a dilapidated building, surrounded by a high wall, where everyone, both men and women, would sit on the ground. Food and water were rarely brought and in order to discourage escape attempts and to wear out the already weakened bodies of the migrants, the smugglers would often add sleeping drugs to the water. When Faith realises this, she stops eating and waits for the right time to escape. One night, she hears screams and gunshots, and amidst all the kerfuffle, she manages somehow to escape”⁶⁰.

Faith's story is emblematic of how, in recent years, for many girls travelling through Libya, escape and relative dispersion in the country has become easier. A recent report by Be Free attributes the phenomenon to the weakening of the territorial control applicable by Nigerian groups in Libya. This is one of the reasons why “one of the strategies implemented to contain the poor control of victims during their time in Libya is to increase the number of women recruited, moving large groups of very young women to make them easier to condition”⁶¹. Compared to the victims destined to dispersion in Libya, the remainder, which represent the majority, are re-intercepted by the criminal organisation in the connection houses, managed by the same smugglers who control the coasts and the departures. As soon as they arrive in Libya, the girls receive instructions about the identification procedures they will undergo when they arrive in Italy and about the possibility of being taken to adult accommodation centres or structures for asylum seekers. Once identified and accepted into a structure, they girls can escape on their own or with the help of other Nigerians who collect them from the accommodation centres and transfer them to the destination towns, where the mamans are waiting for them.

By virtue of these dynamics, the girls' arrival in Italy and their placement in emergency accommodation centres is one of the crucial points of the journey, especially due to the possible emersion and escape of the young victims. Upon arriving in Italy, the girls come into contact with Italian staff and operators who manage the landing operations. This is an essential phase, the first in which a series of typical indicators of trafficking can be identified and managed to guarantee the immediate placement of the victim under protection. The girls often deny that they are minors, even when their young age is obvious and visible, having been told by the exploiters to avoid the children's protection system. In many cases they claim that they do not know how they arrived in Italy and don't know which countries they travelled through. In others, they say that they paid nothing for their journey.

Save the Children has found that failure to promptly identify the victims upon arrival can actually help the exploitation circuit. The contact between the girls and the exploiters, and their introduction to prostitution, often takes place in the arrival and emergency structures, where other Nigerians are present, many of whom adults who act as go-betweens with smugglers and exploiters based long-term in Italy⁶². According to the evidence gathered by Save the Children, the mamans send their emissaries, men and women, to the accommodation structures to intercept the girls⁶³.

“Upon arrival in Italy, Faith received medical attention and was photographed and taken to a CAS. According to the agreements, Faith contacts her aunty, borrowing a phone from another guest of the CAS. The Aunty insisted that she travel to join her in Northern Italy to start work and get the documents to stay. Faith mentions the words “disturbing me” to describe the woman’s insistence, highlighting the fact that she was fine at the CAS and would have stayed there had she not believed the promises that were made, despite the fact that she was starting to have doubts about their truthfulness.

After joining her aunty, Faith refused to enter the prostitution circuit. Her aunty was furious. She wouldn’t accept Faith’s refusal and beat her repeatedly, leaving her without food for days. Exhausted and weakened, Faith ended up on the streets, knowing that the only way to save herself was to escape. One evening, Faith escaped and asked the Police for help. It was the start of a new phase. Faith has now found accommodation in a protected structure, thanks to which she has been able to have all the health checks which she urgently required. Thanks to the Save the Children’s Vie d’Uscita project, Faith began an integration process, learned Italian and is attending a course to prepare her for work. Faith enjoys studying and is happy to be able to do so. She has asked her educators if she can take part in a new training activity so that she can build herself a real future in Italy”⁶⁴.

CHAPTER 3

Escaping from the web of exploitation is complicated⁶⁵ but not impossible. The prompt intervention of the protection network, as proven by the results of the Vie d’Uscita network, represents a tangible possibility to draw the victims out of the exploitation network, helping them to achieve professional independence.

“Joy and Fatimah are two young Nigerians who arrived in Italy on a boat from Libya. Their journey was organised by Fatimah’s mother and brother, who pushed the two youngsters to look for work and join another Nigerian who was already living in Italy. Joy had been living for some time with her aunt’s family. Her father is dead and her mother was seriously ill. She set out with the intention of finding a cure for her mother, but unfortunately the woman died shortly after the start of Joy’s journey. Both girls ran up a debt of € 40,000. Upon arrival in Italy, they were repeatedly beaten and forced to work as prostitutes. When they decided to escape from their employers, neither had paid off their debt, because all the money they had earned had been used to pay for food and accommodation. After being violently beaten, the two young women decided to call the number that the Save the Children street unit operators had given them. Thanks to the collaboration between the operators and the services working in the area, Joy and Fatimah were taken into a partner structure of the Vie d’Uscita project coordinated by Save the Children and accepted into a protection and social assistance programme. The girls are currently involved in a training course and apprenticeship to work as a nursery school teacher and cook”

Non-entry into or immediate escape from the reception system crystallises the girl’s subordination and her incapacity to make life-changing decisions. As emerges from the stories gathered, for Nigerian girls, the first phase of life in Italy is characterised by a lot of movement which seems to be strongly facilitated and controlled by other Nigerians who offer them a place to stay⁶⁶. Both in Rome and Milan, we have seen frequent movement of Nigerian girls from one town, or even one region, to another, often upon indication of other Nigerians or reference contacts⁶⁷.

The generational turnover, with the constant introduction into street prostitution of young and very young girls, and the territorial turnover the girls, are very high and implemented mainly to avoid Police inspections or the creation of close relationships with clients or social workers.



Photo: Riccardo Venturi / Save the Children

“Upon arrival in Sicily, 17-year-old Blessing was identified as a minor and transferred by bus to Turin, to a shelter for women, where she stayed for a short time before leaving. She then headed for Florence, via Rome, where she says she met a Nigerian woman whom she knew, who invited her to stay at her home. However, the woman forced her into prostitution to pay for her food and accommodation. After spending more than three months in Florence, the girl escaped to Milan, following the advice of some other Nigerians”⁶⁸.

“After arriving in Sicily, Amaka travelled to Milan, via Novara, where she says she spent about two weeks, sleeping at the station for a few nights before being taken in by a Nigerian woman who allowed her to stay for a while without asking for anything in exchange. One day, however, she asked her to start working as a prostitute to pay the rent. The girl refused and the woman threw her out. In Novara, another Nigerian advised her to go to Milan”⁶⁹.

CHAPTER 3

The slavery of Nigerian girls rests on a tried and tested system of psychological and physical terror, aimed at guaranteeing as much domination as possible of the victims and immediate, constant earnings. The debt initially agreed to grows frighteningly due to the continuous requests linked to the maintenance of the victim, such as payment for a place to sleep, contribution to household bills and payment of the joint - the space on the pavement - which can cost between € 150 to € 200 a month. The burden of the expenses and the terror caused by constant bullying, forces the victims to work as prostitutes under every possible condition. Physical threats, balanced by a relationship with the maman who punishes the girls yet protects them at the same time, force the children into a seesawing psychological condition which reduces them into a state of physical and mental prostration. This condition of annihilation and isolation explains the difficulty in

consolidating a route to escape exploitation, and the girls' scarce capacity for creating points of reference outside the local community to which they belong. According to evidence collected in the various national territories, thanks to the CivicoZero low threshold centres which provide daily support, advice and protection for children and young adult migrants who find themselves in situations of social exclusion, deviance, exploitation and abuse, both in Rome and Milan, operators have sometimes felt like people, sometimes even young girls, are acting in the interests of their maman, to check up on the operators, or contact other Nigerian girls⁷⁰.



“Isa trusts the Save the Children street operators, despite the fact that the Nigerian network that she has fallen victim to is doing everything it can to discredit them. She talks about the operators to the other girls who are working as prostitutes, trying to convince them to trust them too. Then she disappears for a few weeks, and can't even be contacted by phone. As time goes by, despite maintaining an excellent relationship with the operators, it becomes clear that the girl's involvement in the Nigerian crime network has become irreversible, so much so, that while being aware that access to the request for international protection is free, Isa prefers to trust the lawyer imposed upon her by the exploitation network, the same lawyer who handles the applications of many exploited Nigerian girls for asylum, preventing access to free aid for the possible inclusion in a protection programme pursuant to Art. 18”⁷¹.

For all victims in the territories monitored through Save the Children projects, life on the streets is dramatic and results in physical and psychological trauma that is often irreversible. To avoid violence and extortion, also to the detriment of their relatives back in Nigeria, the victims of trafficking in Italy work in conditions of slavery for a long time (from 3 to 7 years), and in order to earn more money, they often agree to unprotected sex.

Their vulnerability is much worse in places where prostitution is less visible, in peripheries where the high risk of aggression is often accompanied by much lower rates of payment.

This is the case, for instance, of Bonifica del Tronto, in Abruzzo, where victims are forced into prostitution in exchange for 5 or 10 euros⁷² per service.

The greatest problems concern the marked absence of medical aid and use of specialised healthcare personnel, usually replaced by self-medication or the use of medicines procured from other Nigerians who buy them on the black market.

This practice is also confirmed by the abuse of abortion drugs, which the young victims use to interrupt pregnancies: one of these is Cytotec, an anti-ulcer drug containing misoprostolo which, if taken in excessive doses, causes such strong contractions as to cause abortion. Estimates by operators working with the outreach units claim that a Nigerian girl involved in trafficking will use Cytotec at least two or three times in her life.

3.2 Romanian child victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation

Among the victims of trafficking and exploitation, once again this year, Romanian children represent a stable and widespread presence throughout the whole of Italy. Sexual exploitation, forced labour and begging, and forced enrolment into crime schemes are the three main sectors that characterise the underground exploitation of this world of children⁷³. Despite the Romanian economy having been amongst the most active among the EU states in terms of growth since 2015⁷⁴, the economic development phase has not coincided with an equal

distribution of the wealth and welfare instruments. The persistent state of economic deprivation and social exclusion rampant among the weaker more marginal groups of the population is one of the reasons, even though the poverty ratios are declining, which leads many inactive and unemployed young girls and vulnerable people, such as those living in rural areas and gypsies, to emigrate.

While figures for 2016 relating to emigrations and the entry of Romanian child victims of trafficking into protection programmes supplied by the Department for Equal Opportunities seem rather low (9 in 2016 compared to an estimated 6 in 2015), assessments drawn up on the basis of the outreach activities carried out by the Save the Children street units lead us to believe that the phenomenon is much bigger. Between 2016 and the first three months of 2017, in the various territories covered by the activities of the Vie d'Uscita project, 375 Romanian child and young adult victims of trafficking were contacted on the streets.

The vast majority of these girls are aged 16 and 17 and come from very poor socio-economic backgrounds, like the Muntenia and Moldova regions, comprising the districts of Bacau, Galati, Braila, Neamt and Suceava⁷⁵, or have been severely deprived of affection. Teenagers lured by traffickers in these places represent an extremely easy target to attract and manipulate, especially when they have no authoritative parent, if they have escaped from orphanages or have been fostered. Particularly in the case of younger girls and those from the more outlying areas of the country, the ambition to find work abroad and break free from the state of destitution and lack of prospects exposes them to the risk of falling prey to false adverts of employment, used by smugglers as a recruitment tool for trafficking⁷⁶. In the cases mapped out by Save the Children, friends of the same age or adult men often take on a central role in the recruitment of victims, figures who give the girl an opportunity to abandon these contexts of economic uncertainty and family disaggregation in which they feel trapped. According to the girls, the journey to Italy is paid for and handled by their boyfriends and they travel in private vehicles or vans that travel from Romania to Italy every day, usually passing through Trieste. During the journeys, many exploiters use authentic documents (ID card for EU members), but declare false family links with victims who are minors. Once they are in Italy, the victims are housed in flats procured or inhabited by other Romanians, often located in parts of town where there is a strong Romanian community.

The girls' stories show how, as soon as they arrive in Italy, control by the exploiters is exercised with systematic physical and psychological violence, linked to constant threats of offence or death.

According to reports by the operators of the Vie d'Uscita project, after Nigerian girls, Romanian girls form the most numerous national group of street prostitutes (33%). The prostitution of Romanian girls takes place in city centres and also on the outskirts of town, at a price-per-service of about € 50. In some urban areas of Rome, Romanians and Nigerians alternate along the same stretch of road and, just like their Nigerian counterparts, the Romanians are encouraged to move frequently around the country.

Their young age and inexperience makes Romanian victims easy for their exploiters to manipulate. These exploiters either run or belong to organisations which are still quite small but are expanding specifically for the purposes of exploiting trafficking in Italy⁷⁷. In 2016, we noticed extensive use of men to exercise control over the girls on the streets, even over the phone. Sometimes, both at home and on the streets, a hierarchical relationship is set up, based on the control held by an older girl or woman, who supervises the work and activities of the other girls, reporting any slacking to the exploiter.

In all the cases monitored by Save the Children, the state of prolonged exploitation, psychological enslavement, continuous contact with other Romanians involved in the smuggling of people, and the ordinary nature assumed by violence as part of everyday life, mean that, over time, the girls decide to join the prostitution circuit, also taking on active roles. This explains why, especially during the recruitment phase, girls and young women, previously introduced into the exploitation circuits, play an active role in involving friends and relatives⁷⁸. As highlighted by the operators of Save the Children, children victims of exploitation frequently display symptoms associable to depression, which are manifested in a lack of personal care and in the visible prostration expressed particularly by younger victims.

“Alina is a 22-year-old Romanian girl. When she emerged from exploitation she was completely illiterate and had poor cognitive skills. Alina is in an evident state of psychological difficulty and often shuts herself off into a world of silence”⁷⁹.

A lack of attention to the monitoring and treatment of easily diagnosable diseases means that many victims realise that they are sick only in the advanced stages. This negligence is particularly relevant with regard to the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies.

Girls are often forced to have unprotected sex by their boyfriends/exploiters. The girls often handle cases of unwanted pregnancy by using Cytotec, like their Nigerian “colleagues”. In the case of advanced pregnancy, some girls have reported being taken back to Romani to have an abortion, often in underground clinics⁸⁰.

“ - Maria’s story - “The operators at Civico Zero brought in a 19-year-old Romanian girl who wanted to have her baby. The girl asked for someone to accompany her to the regular check-ups. She seemed fully aware and motivated, and turned up for every appointment on time, until the fourth month, when she didn’t turn up at all for the third appointment and wouldn’t answer the phone. After about two months, while they were out, the operators met the girl again. She told them she had been to Romania, where she had had an illegal abortion. The girl found it hard to hide her anguish about the abortion she’d been forced to have”⁸¹.

Exhausted by the degrading life and constant state of domination and fear, many girls become dependent on drugs, alcohol and abuse of medication. Those who manage to emerge and escape, generally go back to Romania or move to other Italian towns, thanks to the support of friends or relatives.



Also for 2016 and for the early months of 2017, unaccompanied children of Eritrean origin are confirmed as one of the most representative groups transiting in Italy. During 2016, 20.718 Eritrean migrants landed on the Italian coast, 3.832 of whom (18,5%) were unaccompanied children. In the early months of 2017, out of 2.344 new migrants, there were 338 Eritrean children, accounting for 14,5%⁸². Although the smuggling of Eritreans mainly involves boys aged 14 to 17, a significant increase has been recorded in teenagers in general.

The main factors that encourage Eritrean children to migrate include compulsory military service, imposed by the regime for both men and women⁸³, highly restrictive practices imposed by the government to prevent dissidence, constant restrictions to freedom of expression and poverty connected to the worsening of climatic-environmental conditions.

Despite two organisations close to the government - the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) and the National Union of Eritrean Young Students (NUEYS) - having reported that, in recent years, the duration of national years was to be reduced to 4/5 years for men and 3 years or less for women, different reports released by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Landinfo and the US Department of State confirmed that, to date, there is no time limit to military service, which can last longer than 10 years⁸⁴. Also, due to the compulsory military service, it is very hard for Eritrean citizens to leave the country legally⁸⁵. To obtain an exit visa, they must be able to prove that they have completed their military service or have been officially exonerated from it.

For children, the restrictions related to legal exit from the country are particularly tight. According to the laws in force, an illegal attempt at crossing the border or enabling someone else to do so is punishable with reclusion of up to five years and with a fine of approximately 10.000 Birr (€ 390)⁸⁶. According to the government, special provisions are in place for children who attempt to cross the national borders, resulting in their release without punishment or placement in a rehabilitation centre for a short period of time. However, both Amnesty International and the United Nations Investigative Commission report cases of children detained for having tried to cross the border. The report by the United Nations Commission⁸⁷ in particular reports detention of unaccompanied children as well as children accompanied by their parents.

In relation to 2016, the United Nations Commission has also reported episodes of sexual violence against women and girls who have tried to cross the border into Ethiopia⁸⁸ and has documented the growing discrimination suffered by the wives and children of men who have been made to disappear by the regime.

For example, the wives of dissidents often lose their jobs and have difficulty with insuring their cars or renting a house. Their children also face discrimination at school, sometimes so severe as to cause them to abandon their education⁸⁹.

For many of these children, like those placed in difficulty by the ever-increasingly aridity of the land due to Nino-related drought, the only option is to leave the country.

The journey by Eritrean children to Italy is very long and tiring, lasting anything from six months to as much as one or two years. Children who have arrived in Italy and been met by Save the Children are usually between the ages of 14 and 17, but some set off when they are so young as to be just 11 years old upon arrival in Italy. The youngest migrants don't usually have a precise migratory project beyond reaching safety and economic subsistence in a protected context. Many of them set out on their journey after seeing their neighbours or friends leave, or because they are encouraged by the fact that they see people travelling to the border with Ethiopia. Many begin their transitional mobility with the simple entry into this country, often in a group with others of the same age, subsequently

finding themselves trapped in a journey from which there is no way back⁹⁰, also by virtue of the strict laws on illegal exit from Eritrea. Eritrean child mobility towards Europe begins mainly in the frontier regions with Ethiopia (Gasc-Barca), those in south, like Senafe, Adi Keyh, Tserona, Adi kuala and Tesenay, and from the Dankàlia region on the Red Sea. These are mainly rural regions, the development of which is much lower than that recorded in urban areas, where just 21,3% of the country's population live⁹¹. In rural areas, 35% of children under the age of five are undernourished (seventh country in the world for this problem), while access to water is very difficult for about 40% of the population⁹².

The migration routs of Eritrean children towards Italy



For those who set out, the complete journey to Europe can cost more than € 6.300 and the standard legs are Ethiopia, Sudan and Libya. For the whole of 2016, the deterioration of living conditions in Libya forced a growing number of people to attempt the longer crossing from Egypt, to avoid violence and abuse. However, from January 2017, the flow of departures from Egypt has more or less stopped. IOM figures⁹³ sustain that 90% of migrants who arrived in Italy in the first four months of 2017 returned to Libya to make the crossing. While the journey from Sudan to Libya can cost up to \$ 2.000, the sea crossing from Libya to Italy is the part of the journey which involves the biggest payment to the smugglers. The first leg on the journey from Eritrea is usually travelled on foot and takes the migrants into Ethiopia, where the children head, in a group, to the refugee camps located along the border with Sudan⁹⁴, which they already know about when they set off and which already host 800.000 Eritrean refugees⁹⁵. The stay in Ethiopia can vary from a few months to 2/3 years and depends on the speed with which they children succeed in putting together the sum needed to pay the smugglers who are going to help them continue their journey in Sudan. Recently, the deterioration of the conditions⁹⁶ reserved for Eritrean forced migrants in these two countries have forced many migrants and asylum seekers, including children, to redefine their migratory project, focusing on Northern European countries.

“The girl tells us that she left her home on the border with Eritrea (Tserona) about three years ago, when she was 11: she was playing with two of her friends, one of whom was the same age while the other was older. They saw some other girls walking and carrying baggage and asked if they could join them, thinking that they wouldn't be going far. In actual fact, they ended up in Ethiopia (just a 30 minute walk away). They tried to go back but were sent back into Ethiopia”⁹⁷.

- The stories of two Eritrean girls - “The two girls crossed from Eritrea to Ethiopia without paying because they walked across the border from Tserona. One of the two girls spent almost two years and five months in Ethiopia (she was frightened to continue the journey and didn't know how to do it, but did want to proceed), while the second stayed for about three 3 months. From Ethiopia to Sudan, they paid \$ 1.600 (because they set out from the refugee camp, while those who set out from the capital say they pay just \$ 1000 because it's close to the border). From Sudan to Libya they paid a total of \$ 5.500 (until landing in Italy), because they were also abducted. They sent about four months in Libya before sailing to Italy”.

- The story of an Eritrean girl - “The girl says that she entered Sudan directly from Eritrea, paying 70.000 Nakfa, to reach Kesela, near the border with Eritrea, and then paid 200 Sudanese coins from the border to Khartoum. She spent about six days in Sudan and then about six months in Libya. To get to Libya, she paid \$1,600 and was then abducted by the smugglers. She paid a further \$ 5.500 for the trip to Italy”⁹⁸.

“The children said that they left Eritrea about a year ago, crossing Ethiopia, Sudan and Libya, finally landing in Messina. They say they aid a lot of money for their journey: \$ 1.600 from Ethiopia to Sudan, \$ 1.600 from Sudan to Libya and \$ 2,200 from Libya to Italy”⁹⁹.

After coming into contact with the smugglers who help them enter Sudan, the hardest part of the journey for unaccompanied Eritrean children begins. Loaded onto crammed pick-up trucks, the children cross the desert between Sudan and Libya. The danger of the trip is added to the horror of the violence to which the children are subjected, for the purposes of extortion, by the smugglers and the bandits close to the Islamist militia who infest the Sahelian region. The stories told to Save the Children confirm that this part of the journey is literally an inferno, marked systematically by horrifying cruelty and torture inflicted with the aim of demanding more and more money from the families.

During the journey, the boys and girls, who are often little more than children, are sold, abducted and imprisoned by the smugglers, criminal gangs and Border Guards, sometimes several times along the way. The UN and UNHCR groups that monitor Somalia and Eritrea have proved that certain exponents of the Eritrean military collaborate with the smugglers of the nomadic tribes and are direct beneficiaries of the payments extorted from the victims¹⁰⁰. While crossing the desert on the border with Chad, the children are often abducted and imprisoned in so-called “torture houses” until a sum of about \$ 3,000 has been paid¹⁰¹. In these centres, migrants are exposed to the extreme heat of the day and the intense cold of the night, deprived of food, water and sleep, often abused and raped, employed in forced labour and subjected to forms of torture¹⁰². According to some investigations, the abducted migrants who are unable to pay the ransom, are killed for the sale of organs (for a value of about \$ 15,000)¹⁰³. While little is said about it, men and boys are subjected to various forms of rape too¹⁰⁴.

“ - The story of a group of four children - “We were travelling tightly squeezed together. If someone died of suffocation, hunger or thirst, they were thrown on the ground and we continued to race on. Because the drivers never stop, they go as fast as the wind. It’s hot in the Sahara, we thank God that we’ve made it this far. Then, if someone’s abducted in Chad, they ask for ransom, if the smuggler isn’t paid 400 Dinars for each person, then you stay there, in a dark place where you never see the light. If the smuggler gets you, you have to guarantee him \$ 4,000 to get out of there. You pay when you’re certain you’re going to arrive. When you get to the sea, they ask you for \$ 2,000. It all depends on what happens to you and who you end up with. We heard some terrible screams from the camp closest to us and thought that people were beaten if they didn’t do what they were told or if they asked the smuggler the wrong question. In Libya, they only give you pasta with salt and water, nothing else. There were so many of us in the house that the dish they gave us wasn’t enough for everyone. We were lucky if we got a meal.”¹⁰⁵.

In this context, certain aspects of the scenario that the children have to cope with are even more horrifying. The awareness that they could be raped means that, when they arrive in Ethiopia the girls allow themselves to be convinced by relatives and acquaintances to inject themselves with a dose of contraceptive. They do this without any knowledge of the effects and consequences of the drug and that it often has a marked effect on the physical conditions and reproductive health of the girls travelling¹⁰⁶.

“ - Mynia’s story - “She says that the injection is banned in Eritrea and is only administered illegally, partly due to the fertility problems that can occur after injection with the drug. In Sudan, however, she is advised to have it because, in the desert, you never know what might happen. After talking to her husband on the phone and getting a positive reaction, Mynia and her traveling companion decided to go to the hospital to have the injection, which blocks their fertility for three months, the time it takes to reach their destination in Europe. At the hospital, the women aren’t checked before having the injection, and receive no information about the possible risks associated with this method of contraception. Both women say that if they could go back in time, they wouldn’t have had it. The report how the side effects of the injection are severe and hard to cope with physically and emotionally. Mynia, in particular, says that, after three months without a period, she began to bleed heavily and constantly. This has been going on for a couple of month now, like one long period. She feels constantly tired and bloated, and is suffering with pain in her tummy and sides/kidneys. Her travelling companion says she’s never had a period since the injection, about five months ago, and she too complains about tiredness and pains in her tummy”¹⁰⁷.



“ - The storied of two Eritrean girls - “The girls say that they had the contraceptive injection in Sudan, on the advice of some people they knew who had already left and explained that the Libyans do what they want to the girls. They both say that they had the injection at a pharmacy, paying about 45 Sudan coins. One of the girls says that her periods came back after three months, while the other one says that they came back after three months, when she was still in Libya, but then went away again four months ago”¹⁰⁸.

The arrival in Libya, as for all children from Sub-Saharan Africa, only worsens their already traumatic experiences. Imprisonment in centres known as mazraa has been indicated by the children as a practice. These are metal sheet buildings - a total of 34 according to the latest estimates¹⁰⁹ - locked 24 hours a day and used for the accommodation and detention of migrants, including children. According to a recent report by Unicef “for the thousands of women and children detained, they were infernal places where they were kept for months, with no form of “trial”, in the most appalling conditions and in anguishing spaces. Severe violations of the prisoners’ rights also took place, with accusations of violence and brutality, on an everyday basis”¹¹⁰.

“ - Solomon’s story - “There are men who have been in prison, all thin and skinny, and they sometimes get chicken, while us boys get water, salt, oil and some kind of macaroni all the time. The children younger than me got a biscuit every now and then, but they need to eat like us”.

The country’s extreme socio-political instability, the rife corruption of the police force and their closeness to the smugglers, as well as the presence of armed groups of extremists have a profound effect on the conditions extended to migrants arriving in Libya.

“ - Mynia arrived in Libya with her son, just before boarding the boat for Italy. The whole group of migrants she was travelling with was arrested and taken to a sort of warehouse where they slept on the floor and went to the toilet more or less in full view of everyone. Mynia can’t understand who actually imprisoned them. Through their smuggler, Mynia and her travelling companions managed to leave the place by paying a ransom of € 1000. The smuggler accompanies the migrants to another warehouse similar to the first, where he contacts their relatives to get them to repay the unexpected ransom money. It is a lot of money. After about three months, Mynia and the other migrants succeeded in sailing for Italy”¹¹¹.

“ - The Eritrean boy lived in Sudan from a very young age, and set off from there for Libya. We find out that he spent several years in Libya. He was captured there by ISIS. He tells us about being beaten and tortured and having lived through the most terrifying things. He also mentioned being forced to sign up as a child soldier at the age of 14, but the story is a bit confused¹¹². We thank God that we are here. The things that happened in Libya have to be forgotten, and now we hope to achieve our aim soon, finally being able to live in peace, study, learn and work to help our families”¹¹³.

For the last leg of the journey to Europe, the most ports that feature most frequently in the stories of the migrants are Zuwara, in North-West Libya, near the border with Tunisia, and Sabratah, west of Tripoli. Here, dreadful quality dinghies are loaded with as many as more than 400/500 people, crammed together with no room to move.

“ - Solomon’s story - “We were all tightly packed into the dinghy, one on top of the other. There were about 720 of us, there were also some Eritrean adults, I was the youngest. A big Italian boat came to meet us in the middle of the sea and gave out thermal blankets, and a German boat gave out food and blankets”¹¹⁴

Arrival in Italy represents salvation for young Eritreans, after months of abuse. From the moment they arrive in Italy, operators from Save the Children find traces of the physical and psychological violence endured during the journey. Infective skin diseases, like scabies, chronic intestinal problems and acute pathologies of the respiratory system are the most evident effects of the severe travelling conditions endured by the children. What is worrying is the psychological trauma that the young Eritrean victims of trafficking present when they land: post-traumatic stress syndrome, anxiety, depression and panic attacks. According to the latest ANCI report on the acceptance of children in Italy, in 2016, Eritrean children were most contacted or taken in by the social services in Southern Italy: approximately half of the Eritrean children are accommodated in Calabria¹¹⁵. Acceptance in the national reception structures is probably the most complex problem in the journey from Eritrea to Italy. At the end of 2016, according to the figures of the Ministry of Employment and Social Policies, the second reception structures reported the presence of 1.106 boys and 225 girls of Eritrean origin. At the same time, these structures reported that a further 1.381 children had left. The trend has been confirmed by figures for 2017, which recorded the arrival of 741 boys and 149 girls through the system and the dispersion of 863 children¹¹⁶. It is obvious that a particularly high number of Eritrean children choose to disappear after entering the reception system. “However - as observed by Sigona and Allsopp - the main cause of these disappearances, rather than presumed pan-European criminal infrastructures, is due to the gap between the way in which the state authorities treat unaccompanied children and the way in which the children imagine and undertake their migration project¹¹⁷. In many cases, the children who disappear in Italy simply evade the official reception system and start travelling again, trying to reach friends and relatives in Northern Europe, using an informal network of acquaintances¹¹⁸. The contacts, particularly those who act as go-betweens from one country to another, have a dual function: on one hand, they represent a point of reference in social-cultural contexts that are completely separate from those of origin and, on the other, they increase the mistrust of the reception systems and police in the countries the migrants transit through. The operators of CivicoZero report a complete indoctrination which threatens the trust that can be built up with the formal reception system and encourages children to transit in Italy as invisibly as possible to reach Northern Europe and start working, in order to pay off the debt incurred for the journey. Girls are particularly sensitive to this message, so it is hard for social operators to intercept them and obtain truthful and credible information¹¹⁹. This is why many Eritrean children consider time spent in a structure as a pointless waste of time, slowing them down on their way to economic independence, an assessment often based on the deep inadequacy of the education projects offered by many structures, the aims of which are seen as inadequate in relation to the children’s profiles and expectations. However, abandoning the reception system and becoming invisible, typical behaviours of migrants in transit, expose the younger, more fragile children to considerable risks. This target shows greater vulnerability to the abuse perpetrated by the criminal players, whatever their nationality, operating underground in the illegal economy linked to unlawful immigration, who often offer services to reunite families or provide illegal employment. Evidence released in 2016 by the Direzione Distrettuale Antimafia of Catania¹²⁰ has shown how, in 2014, a group of Eritreans had set up a criminal network in several African and European countries, including Italy, with the aim of favouring the illegal immigration of several thousand Eritreans, including numerous children. During the operation launched in Catania against the criminal group, nine Somali and Eritrean children, found locked in a house in Catania, were freed. The house was the home of an Eritrean national legally residing in Italy, who was subsequently arrested¹²¹. In Italy, the two main legs on the journey by Eritrean children are Rome and Milan. In Rome in 2016, there was an increase – about 10-15% compared to the previous year – in arrivals of young girls¹²², including unaccompanied children aged 10-14. Children and girls still account for a smaller percentage than boys aged 16 to 17,

who still represent the majority of Eritrean children intercepted by Save the Children. In general, the girls met in Rome by the operators of CivicoZero are less educated than the boys of the same age. They often rely on adult men and women from their own country and rarely declare that they are minors for fear of being separated from the people they have travelled with¹²³. More generally, to find somewhere to live and move away from Rome, Eritrean children rely on other Eritreans with better connections in Italy, who know the city and don't have the same problems of exclusion suffered by newcomers. The latter, especially girls, represent a particularly vulnerable group: these are often the people who remain invisible to the reception system, housed in unstable situations (shelters on the street, in squats or in the houses of other Eritreans) and expose to abuse by people of all nationalities.



The boy would like to go to Germany, because his cousin lives there¹²⁴.
- From the story of a 16-year-old boy - "He arrived in Agrigento and then moved to Rome, where he slept in the tents of the volunteers in the Piazzale Est part of Tiburtina station. At CivicoZero we gave his clothes and shoes, because he arrived wearing slippers. What we see with Eritrean youngsters, a group which was almost absent in the past, is the awareness that, once they get to Rome, they will find someone to help them get to Milan, where they then find another reference contact¹²⁵."

As far as Milan is concerned, Save the Children has reported that most Eritrean children say that they have been directed by Eritreans already living in Italy toward the emergency reception centre in via Sammartini, opened in May 2016 and managed by Fondazione Progetto Arca with the support of the Municipality of Milan and Fondazione Avsi, and where Save the Children has operated with a Child-Friendly Space and the protection team of CivicoZero Milan. At the structure, out of 13.233 migrants registered by Progetto Arca in 2016, 61% were represented by Eritreans¹²⁶, who used the hub as a pit-stop where they could rest before continuing their journey. However, the overcrowding at the hub in via Sammartini at various peak times has meant that many Eritrean children have found refuge in temporary reception facilities in situations of promiscuity and potential danger around the Central Station, where they were often exposed to abuse and recruitment to the detriment of the most vulnerable, as well as fighting amongst the migrants¹²⁷. Due to the tightening of checks at the borders and the consequential increase in the length of time spent by young Eritreans in Italy, the hub often had to cope with critical overcrowding which, in May 2017, imposed a conversion of its operational mission, which - from April of this year - no longer takes in transiting migrants but only asylum seekers waiting for assignment to the CARA¹²⁸. The remodulation of the services of the hub has had a considerable effect on the movement of young Eritreans travelling through Milan, who more and more frequently try to reach the frontier at Ventimiglia or that of Como/Chiasso and cross. However, for many Eritrean children, the journey from Italy to Northern Europe risks becoming a game of snakes and ladders with the more or less restrictive controls set up at the border, in the west with France and in the north with Switzerland.

In Milet Tasfemariam, the 16-year-old Eritrean girl who was hit by a truck on the motorway outside Ventimiglia while trying to reach France on foot along with her five siblings and a friend, lost her life. For other Eritreans, the possibility of leaving Italy is in the hands of the smugglers who facilitate their passage across the border, supplying false documents and accompanying them directly into the other country.



- From the story of three Eritrean girls - "The girls declared to the operators that they knew they had to take a bus or train to reach Germany and that, having no documents, they would have to contact smugglers living in Italy. These would be the only people capable of guaranteeing them false documents and tickets for the journey, at a much higher price than those available commercially¹²⁹."

The fact that Italy is just a transit country for most Eritrean migrants is obvious also on the basis of their applications for international protection. In 2014, most Eritreans were seeking asylum in Germany (with 13.255 applications presented, equating to 36% in the European Union¹³⁰), while in Sweden, of the 54.365 applications for international protection presented in 2014 (23,7% more than the previous year) 4.880 were presented by Eritreans¹³¹. The preference for these countries is often linked to the presence of local contacts, through family or friends, and to public reception systems that are structured and inclusive. As regards relocation or family reunification, Eritrean children are aware of the lengthy procedures and the fact that some European countries are unwilling to accept the relocation of unaccompanied children with no family ties. This is why many unaccompanied children seek illegal alternatives and continue the journey alone¹³².

This happened to Abiel Temesgem, an unaccompanied minor escaping from Eritrea who had attempted to cross the border into Switzerland, who was refused entry. Re-entering Italy, Abiel was contacted by the street unit of CivicoZero in Roma and told us that he only wanted to find a legal way to join his brother, who is already in Frankfurt. When he realised that relocation or children was difficult, he decided to declare that he was an adult in order to attempt the relocation open to adults. Meanwhile, Abiel frequented CivicoZero and actively participated in the centre's activities, repeating his desire to relocate. After waiting for a month and a half, Abiel realised that relocation for adults was hard too so, along with a group of other Eritreans, he decided to try crossing the border again. The outcome was heart-breaking: Abiel died in Bolzano station while trying to board a freight train heading towards the Brenner Pass.

However, within this general critical framework, we would like to mention the case of the 12 Eritrean children who travelled through Rome and who, thanks to the information and legal support supplied by CivicoZero from January 2017 "have begun the procedure for relocation to Switzerland, Germany, Finland and Norway"¹³³.

3.4 The labour exploitation of unaccompanied children in Italy

3.4.1 Bengalese children

After a phase of relative stagnation in the flow of children from Bangladesh (in 2015, none of the 1.053 registered migrants who landed on the Italian coast were children), in 2016 and even more so in the early months of 2017, there was a considerable increase in the number of children from this country. In the first five months of 2017, the number of Bengalese arriving by boat was 7.106, including 1.170 unaccompanied children, who not only represent 16,5% of the total new arrivals from Bangladesh, but also constitute the first nationality in terms of flow of unaccompanied foreign children¹³⁴. In 2016, according to the figures of the Ministry of the Interior, 8.131 migrants of Bengalese origin arrived by boat, including 1.053 unaccompanied children, accounting for 13%. This increase also impacted on the reception structures which, on 31 May 2017, reported the presence of 1.016 children, compared to 885 hosted in the whole of 2016¹³⁵. The increase in the number of unaccompanied children or those claiming to be such, from Bangladesh, is quite alarming because, given the evidence collected over the years by Save the Children and in other enquiries, most of the flow of Bengalese children is destined to the labour exploitation circuit. In 2016, the Direzione Investigativa Antimafia revealed, for example, an enquiry currently in progress at the public prosecutor's office of Milan, investigating over 200 people for transnational association aimed at the trafficking of children from Bangladesh and abetting illegal immigration, with the involvement of Bengalese politicians and consular staff¹³⁶.

Most Bengalese who arrive by boat are young adults aged 20 to 26, who often declare themselves to be minors. In general, they come from very poor and deprived family backgrounds and from big, poorly educated families.

Right from the planning stages of the journey, the youngsters receive very clear and precise information about the possibility of declaring that they are minors to obtain a birth certificate indicating their young age and help with converting their permit to stay into one for working reasons, preferably for work to take place where there are more numerous and extensive Bengalese communities, such as in Rome, Pisa, Bologna, Bari and Milan¹³⁷.

“ - From Mohammed's story - “The boy told us that he was sold by his mother when he was five. He spent a few years with a family where he worked as a slave, until he was sold to a Libyan family, who took him to Libya and exploited and tortured him. When the boy refused to do what they asked, they had him arrested. He spent several months in prison, during which they called his mother to have her pay for his release. She refused. The boy managed to escape from the prison and leave for Italy”¹³⁸.

The false declarations of age by Bengalese adults have made it harder to recognise children, who are frequently looked upon with suspicion:

“ “A 16-year-old boy from Bangladesh arrived in Milan this week. The boy only speaks Bengali, doesn't know his date of birth and would like to stay in Italy. We took him to the police station for identification but we were told that, for the moment, photo-signalling of Bengalese people with no birth certificate has been suspended. Given that, in the past, there have been numerous cases of Bengalese adults declaring that they were children, the Police Department, in agreement with the Consulate of Bangladesh, send all children without a birth certificate to the Bengalese Consulate and only after they have obtained a document proving that they are children are they identified”¹³⁹.

These stigmatising identification practices strongly affect the prompt identification and proper protection of Bengalese minors, youngsters who declare that they are aged 16 to 18 and are exploited by other Bengalese, Italian and Chinese in small commercial businesses or as travelling salespeople, working illegally for up to 12 hours in a row, six days a week, for a pittance.

As observed by the European project Trafficked and Exploited Minors between Vulnerability and Illegality, TEM.VI, these are a series of hybrid travelling sales activities, accompanying begging schemes, and they mainly involve Bengalese in methods of exploitation hidden behind the offer of solidarity for their countrymen¹⁴⁰.

The children's willingness to accept humble, tiring and poorly paid jobs is due largely to a lack of awareness of the implications of exploitation.

This is a matter which is often also present in Bengalese adults and influences, by reflection, children who attempt to achieve a migratory project¹⁴¹.

The condition of enslavement endured in the country of origin, especially by members of the Dalit caste, is reproduced in the relationship with the exploiters, so much so that the Bengalese victims of trafficking and exploitation do not realise the severity of the bullying suffered and rarely ask for social protection¹⁴².

Their poor language skills and the fear of finding themselves in potentially risky situations push children from Bangladesh to passively accept the abuse of the exploiters, who take constant advantage of their evident vulnerability.

These assessment, which seem to be proven by the figures of the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, which has circumscribed the cases of unaccompanied children from Bangladesh included in the anti-trafficking protection system in 2016 to three.

Illegal employment and exploitation also concern children who have been taken into the charge of the second reception system (1.016 at 31 May 2017 according to figures supplied by the Ministry of Employment and Social Policies), whose vulnerability could presumably increase when they turn 18 and consequently leave the reception programme. This is a condition which, in the absence of tools to extend their permit to stay, risks exposing former children involved positively in the integration projects to growing vulnerability.

3.4.2 Egyptian children

The numbers of Egyptian children are rising constantly and, from 2011, when just 560 arrived, a 340% increase was recorded in 2016, when 2.467 children travelled by boat. In 2016, the more frequent use of the sea route leaving Egypt, to the detriment of that leaving Libya coincided with an increase in unaccompanied children boarding boats in Alexandria or Rasheed with the aim of reaching Italy¹⁴³.

The very long and risky crossing lasts between 7 and 15 days and usually takes place on old fishing vessels or boats in a poor state of repair, which sail only when absolutely full. In 2016, according to the stories told by the children to the operators of Save the Children¹⁴⁴, a new way of entering Europe emerged, based on the granting of sports visas for participation in football tournaments EU countries including Germany and France, following which some children have reached Italy illegally. Considering the children's reports in 2016 and the early months of 2017, smugglers encourage the departure of Egyptian children with fraudulent marketing policies. The families of the children are told that they will travel in safety and comfort, on boats with air-conditioned cabins and shopping facilities on board. To convince the families, at the beginning of the season, the smugglers launch more stable boats. However, once the first promotional phase is over, the children are put on unsafe vessels which are unsuitable for the long crossing, leading them to believe

that the journey will last at most four days, that will become, to their horror, 10 or more.

Once the travel arrangements have been made, the children cannot go back: several of them have told us about spending several nights before sailing in the warehouses in the port, monitored and threatened by armed men who stopped them from escaping. In actual fact, for most Egyptian children, the journey is dramatic, exhausting and very traumatic. The fragility of the boats, together with overcrowding, tiredness and exposure to a cultural promiscuity which often causes arguments, tension and violence, creates an experience which the children are reluctant to talk about.

The children met by Save the Children in Rome and Milan come mainly from the districts of El-Gharbiyya, El-Buhayra, El-Minoufia, El-Sharkia and El-Dakhiliyah, while those met in Turin come from the provinces of Monofiya and Kalyobia: areas which are heavily destabilised by the profound economic crisis gripping Egypt and in which the prospect of moving to Italy is seen as the only realistic alternative for migrant children and the whole family.

The migration routs of Egyptian children towards Italy



The youngsters that usually set out on the journey are aged on average between 15 and 17 and they come from rural villages or outlying areas, lacking an education and already involved in underground labour circuits, having worked since infancy in farming, herding and construction. In addition to economic pressure, 2016, another factor that encouraged many Egyptian children to leave was the picture painted through social networks of the life of other children of the same age already in Italy.

The journey to Italy from Egypt is managed by a network of people considered by the family and by the child's community as authoritative and reliable. They are suppliers of services with whom the family signs a contract for a debt which varies depending on the type of journey. While youngsters from the southern parts of the country pay around € 4.000 to cross the Mediterranean, those who live in the coastal areas pay between € 2.000 and € 2.500.

Once in Italy, after being intercepted and rescued at sea, for many of these children it becomes possible to enter the reception circuit. Other Egyptians often direct the youngsters towards the territorial supervising departments that offer accommodation. However, while the figures released by the Ministry of Employment and Social Policies show that, until 31 May 2017, there was a widespread presence of Egyptians in the second reception structures, i.e.: 2.123 children, a significant number of young Egyptians (1.002) also abandon the structures and disappear just a few months after their arrival.

At the same time, for example, in 2016, in Turin it was observed that the Egyptian migratory chain that had provided reception facilities for children until 2015, with the assignment and albeit exploited and underpaid labour formula, witnessed a reduction in its absorption capacity and so most of the children who arrived in the city were taken into the second accommodation structure. From a management profile, the increased demand for placement, in the early months of 2017, made it necessary, in the specific case of Turin, to set up a waiting list. Here, from April onwards, the children on the waiting list were placed by the foreign minors' office in an emergency structure, a dormitory for homeless adults, where special spaces were reserved for the children. An increase in the number of Egyptian children on the streets was also recorded in Turin, not just because they were awaiting placement, but also because, due to violent, aggressive behaviours unsuited to community life, many of them had been thrown out of the centres where they had been staying and, given their attitudes, no structure was willing to take them in.

For youngsters who have left or been expelled from the reception system, the prospects of economic and existential stability which were vague at the start of the migratory process run smack up against a reality marked by violence and uncertainty. In practical terms, leaving the reception circuits is translated into constant exposure to the labour exploitation imposed by other Egyptians who offers shelter and accommodation, and to the abuse and violence typical of life on the streets. Many youngsters heard by the operators of Save the Children complained of the precariousness and poverty the characterises living with other Egyptians. The difficulties they talk about are confirmed by the information gathered by the operators of CivicoZero Turin, who, between April and August of last year, observed an increase in cases of scabies, the treatment of which was extremely complex due to the difficulties in disinfecting mattresses, blankets and pillows used by the youngsters on the overcrowded apartments where they stayed occasionally. What's more, in the vast majority of cases that Save the Children is aware of, when relatives and countrymen offer somewhere to stay, this usually coincides with the crystallisation of the downward spiral into exploitation which most unaccompanied Egyptian children fall victim to. While young Egyptians seem to be becoming more and more aware of the risks deriving from labour exploitation, for many of them, acceptance of the condition of exploitation is functional to the need to work to send money home and replay the debt incurred for the journey as soon as possible to prevent the situation of their families at home turning into expropriation or arrest.

This is what explains the unequalled capacity of Egyptian children to withstand extremely tiring and risky working conditions, such as those in general fruit and vegetable markets, carwashes and pizzerias, or, as registered in Milan by Save the Children, in construction companies managed by Egyptians. In most cases, the wages are pitiful. The children themselves talk about an awareness that every form of help from Egyptian adults corresponds to a price monetary cost. In the carwashes, the youngsters work seven days a week, 12 hours a day, and are paid between two and three euros an hour. In Turin and Tome, many Egyptians also work nightshift in pizzerias or kebab shops and fruit shops, rarely for more than € 300 a month. To sustain the physical load of these extremely tiring working conditions, *“children often take painkilling opiates, mostly found on the black market. These products are extremely harmful, cheap and easy to finds, and they often generate dependency”*¹⁴⁵.

The spasmodic search for opportunities to make money immediately encourages children to assess proposals of work carelessly and to accept dangerous working conditions which often clash with the educational courses proposed by the assistance network in which some of them are enrolled. The discrediting of many educational and professionalization tools proposed by the reception network stems from the idea that the courses offered are aimed at preventing them from achieving the main goal of the migratory project, which continues to be economic independence. For the vast majority of Egyptian children, realising what working in Italy is really like is a tremendous disappointment. Betrayed expectations, slave-like working conditions, poor wages and the destruction of the trust built up with Egyptian adults in Italy have, during the last year, severely damaged the roots of the optimistic stories told about life in Italy. According to the operators of Save the Children, in the last year, the awareness of having been tricked by smugglers with false promises has generated lots of malcontent, with many of the youngsters rebelling and adopting destructive and aggressive behaviours among themselves and with adults. The significant increase in cases of difficult children with a critical and, in some cases, deprived social and family background is another element that explains the difficulties of integration into reception structures and into long-term projects.



*“Definitely, compared to last year, we have intercepted youngsters who are much more vulnerable and also much more detached from the family network in the area. They are mostly youngsters who come from de-structured contexts with a very poor education, who are consequently more fragile also in terms of personal background. Some of them arrive with existing fragilities which are intensified during their time in Italy, especially when they turn 18 and the absence of a permit to stay coincides with entry into illegal status”*¹⁴⁶.

The elements highlighted by the operators of Save the Children outline the emersion of a new way of seeing moving to Italy, a migratory project which seems less linked to the family mandate on which young migrations from Egypt were once founded and more characterised by a lack of strategy and short-term aims linked to economic needs which define the main aim of moving on an individual basis. However, the absence of long-term plans amplifies the frustration deriving from exploitation and sharpens the sense of impotency perceived by many of the youngsters we met. Many of them told us that they take a combination of cocaine, crack and benzodiazepine-based drugs, in order to cope with the emotional stress connected to violence or deviant activities such as drug dealing, theft, abduction and prostitution. As regards prostitution, while the numbers might seem small today, in Rome, Turin and Milan, Save the Children has received reports of situations of extreme vulnerability connected to the prostitution of young Egyptians with abusive adults active in the underground world of prostitution and child-pornography. Within this framework, the prostitution of young boys has become progressively visible, accompanied or facilitated by the use of crack.



Photo: Dorothy Sang / Save the Children

In Turin, stories are told by children in relation to the offer of money in exchange for sex by adults/old men met outside the community or contacted via Facebook¹⁴⁷. This last phenomenon helps increase the situation of vulnerability experienced by the children and often implicates the emersion of severe psychological disturbances and heavy states of agitation and aggression. The marked aggression attributed to Egyptian youngsters is also creating the growing stigmatisation of these children, who are described by their peers and by some operators as argumentative and troublesome. Among the cases that emerged in 2017, there is one which occurred at the “Sorgente di Vita” reception facility in Ferentino, where two Egyptian minors beat up the owner, destroying the structure. Due to this stigmatisation, Egyptian children risk becoming victims of racism. The most severe cases recorded in 2016 include that of the attack on a 16-year-old Egyptian staying in an accommodation centre for child migrants in San Michele di Ganzaria, in Sicily, beaten to within an inch of his life by three Italians¹⁴⁸ for racial reasons.

THE TERRITORIES

Between 2016 and the first half of 2017, Save the Children observed that, in certain territories, the trafficking and exploitation took on alarming proportions which deserved monitoring and attentive management.

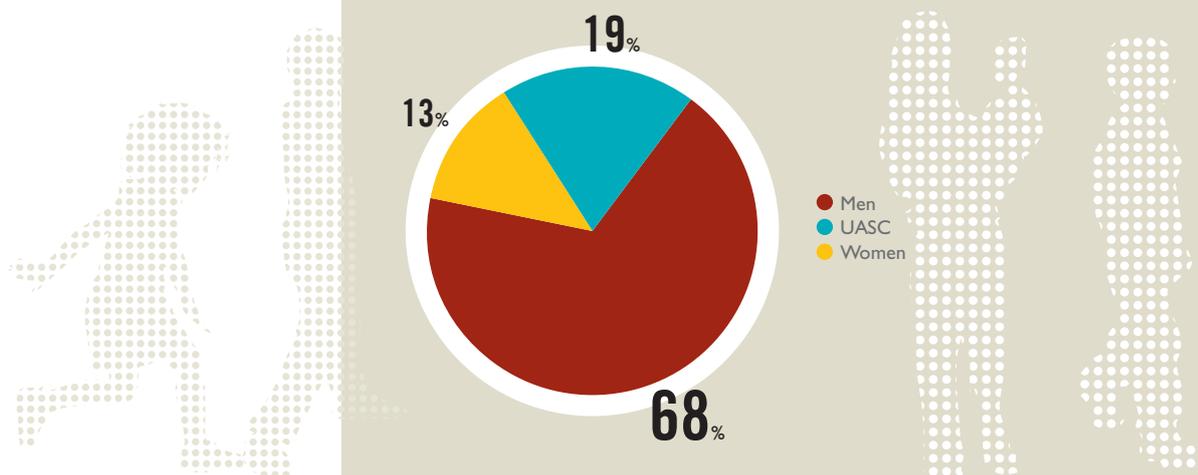
VENTIMIGLIA

In 2016, for the border town of Ventimiglia, the access point into France and, from there, to the countries of Northern Europe, unaccompanied child migration represented a chronic factor which became gradually worse in the early months of 2017.

Since the border controls have been strengthened at all the checkpoints along the northern frontier, crossing the border has require long waits and often fatal attempts at crossing in conditions of severe danger.

Considering the reports collected on the spot by Save the Children, in 2016, about 15.000 migrants passed through the Caritas centre and the informal reception facility at the Church of Sant’Antonio in the Gianchette quarter, about 1.500 of whom women (10%) and 3.000 unaccompanied children (19%)¹⁴⁹, most of whom Eritrean. At the end of June 2017, in the Church of Gianchette there were about 75 children, 60 of whom with no family references, and nearly all of them were from Sudan, Eritrea and Guinea.

Children on the move transited through Ventimiglia



Source: Diocesan Caritas Ventimiglia-Sanremo

In the absence of an institutional reception system reserved for minors in transit¹⁵⁰, their handling has been assigned to informal networks of volunteers who provide somewhere to sleep and hot meals at the Parish Church of Sant'Antonio. However, the small numbers covered by the structure have made it necessary to prioritise families, women and children, resulting in the refusal of unaccompanied teenagers. Some of the minors transiting through the town have been registered by the Social Policies Department of the Municipality of Ventimiglia¹⁵¹, which reported 187 unaccompanied minors during 2016 and 62 in the first quarter of 2017. These figures offer just a partial picture of child mobility across the Italian-French border, the full extent of which is hard to register because of the absence of a transit hub dedicated to unaccompanied minors. Stories gathered by Save the Children in the early months of 2017 confirm that, for many minors trapped in the grey area of invisibility, passage through Ventimiglia implicates various failed attempts at crossing the border and several days spent in makeshift camps along the banks of the River Roja and under the flyover or the rail bridge across the river. These are extremely degraded areas where the youngsters camp with others of the same nationality and live from day to day, using the river water for drinking and washing and sleeping where they can¹⁵². During the day, many of them meet at the "Hobbit"¹⁵³ a café behind the railway station frequented mainly by migrants, to whom Delia Buonomo, its owner, offers the possibility to recharge their phone and use the toilet and, in the most critical cases, a hot meal. The area around the station and along the River Roja is where minors in transit enter into contact with the underground economy of the smugglers, exploiters and abusers who try to take advantage of their need for mobility. If, for those who try to cross the border on their own - walking with groups of other migrants along the railway line to Nice or across the mountain trails through Grimaldi - the highest risk is accidental death¹⁵⁴, for minors to decide to use the services offered by the smugglers, the risk of ending up as victims of exploitation or sale is highly likely.

The organisation Terre des Hommes, present in Ventimiglia since July 2016, has reported¹⁵⁵ a growing increase in prostitution, especially by Eritrean girls, cases of extortion of money and an increase in the number of smugglers, risks which must be added to those resulting from the increase in predators and abusers who exploit the state of vulnerability of the children, offering them small sums of money or items of little value in exchange for sex. In relation to the increase in predators and abusers, last February, thanks to an enquiry¹⁵⁶ launched by Ventimiglia's police, a fifty-year-old Italian resident of Ventimiglia was taken into custody with accusations of having lured and isolated three unaccompanied youngsters between the ages of 14 and 16 to obtain sexual favours. According to the files, the man regularly went to a reception facility with the aim of contacting particularly vulnerable minors for sexual exploitation. At the moment, in the light of the evidence collected by police officers and social workers in the Municipality of Ventimiglia, the man's underage victims were three: two from Pakistan, induced into having sex with the man in exchange for payment of a few euros, and one from Albania, who says he complied with the man's requests because he was frightened by his obsessive attentions and by the insistence and frequency with which he asked him for sex. The absence of channels of safe and legal access is increasing the underground economy of smugglers in Ventimiglia.

Within the scope of an inquest which lasted two years and was coordinated by the Direzione distrettuale Antimafia of Milan¹⁵⁷, in February 2017, the Border Guards in Ventimiglia and the Flying Squad of Imperia made eleven arrests for aiding and abetting illegal immigration, identifying a group of

smugglers made up of Egyptians, Somalis, Afghans, Tunisians and Eritreans operating also at the border with France. Italian smugglers are apparently also marginally involved in the organisation, with the responsibility of transportation by car from Ventimiglia to France. The journeys, often in inhuman conditions, crammed into vans or trucks, cost between € 500 and € 1.000 from Sicily to France, or about a hundred to cross the border. Meanwhile, the restoration of checks at the Schengen Borders has coincided with an increase in reports of people being refused access at all the checkpoints on the Italian frontiers, from Ventimiglia to Chiasso. According to information available to Save the Children, numerous rejections by France concern children.

A story from the Northern Frontier

“François was born in 2000 in Abuan, Ivory Coast. His father is an imam who forbids him from going to school because he wants him to study only the Islamic doctrine. After his mother’s death, as a result of a bloody conflict, François decides to escape with five friends. These friends offer him hospitality in their home, forcing him to have sexual relations. François stays with them for two years, until he decides to return home, where he confesses everything to his father, telling him that he is confused about his sexuality. His father beats him and turns the whole village against him. The boy decides to run away, to avoid imprisonment or being burned alive. He sets off for Burkina Faso, Niger, Algeria and Libya, where he is abducted by Libyan criminals. In 2016, he reaches Sicily and subsequently attempts to cross Swiss border. He is sent back four times. After receiving legal advice from the Save the Children team, he says he wants to stay in Italy to study and work. François has been transferred and taken into a Community in Milan”.

CALABRIA

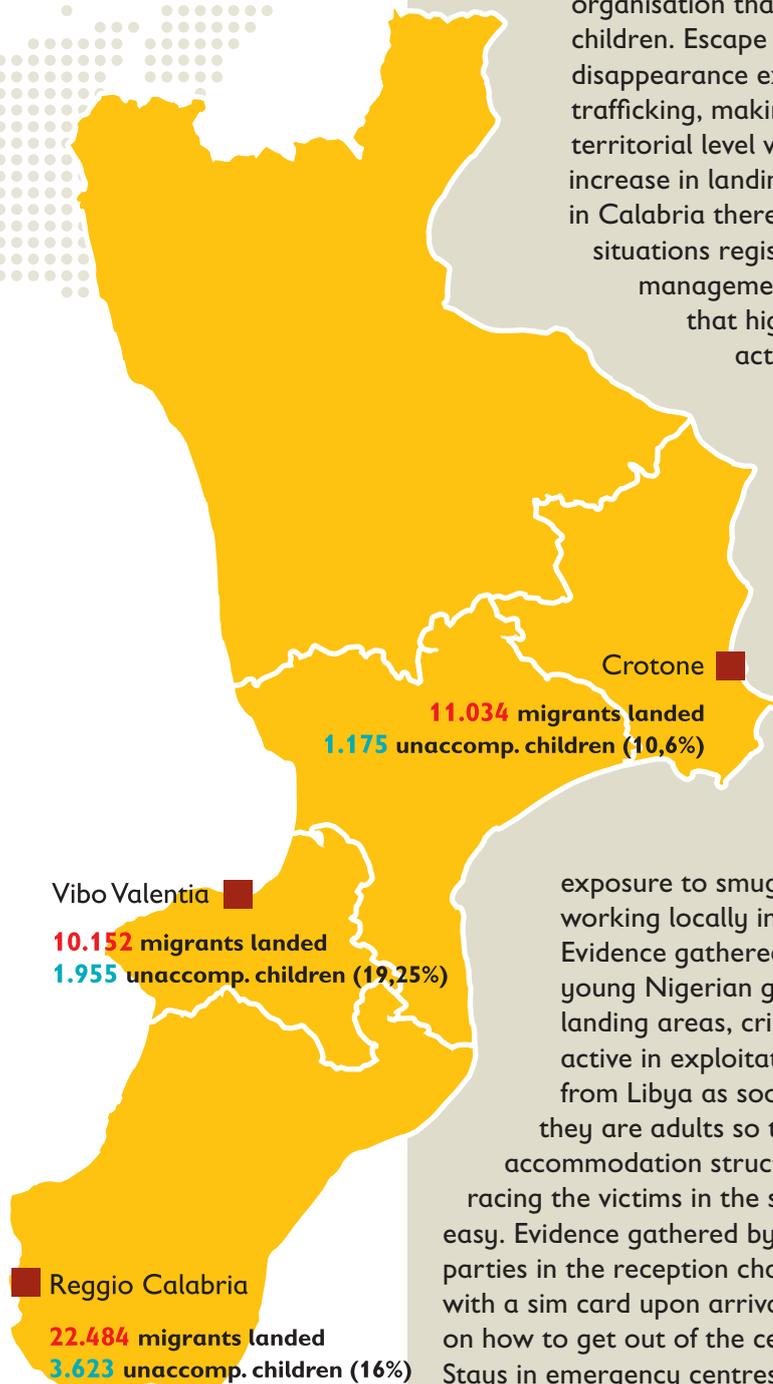
In the last two years, Calabria’s ports have been increasingly identified as landing points for boats that have rescued migrants at sea. From 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2017, according to figures from the Ministry of the Interior, the Region had to cope with 385 landings, for a total of 49.723 new arrivals which place the regions ports in second place, behind Sicily, albeit with a big difference in numbers separating the two Regions. The first, with the highest number of registered landings, is Reggio Calabria where, with 179 landings, 22.484 migrants arrived, 3.623 of whom unaccompanied children (16%). The next most crowded port was Crotone, where, following 84 landings, 11.034 migrants, including 1.175 unaccompanied children (10,6%), were transferred over land. In actual fact, as regards unaccompanied children, the port that registered the highest number of arrivals was Vibo Valentia, where, with 74 landings, out of 10.161 migrants, 1.955 were minors (19,25%). Calabria hosts 7,6%, amounting to 1.216, of unaccompanied children taken into the charge of the national reception system. The number of minors “signalled” in 2016 increased along with the number of children who became “unavailable” without having completed their identification or vanished into nowhere immediately after they were taken into the charge of the local social services: of Calabria was in third place in terms of invisible children between 2012 and 2013, after Sicily and Puglia, between 2014 and 2015 it had risen to second place.

JANUARY 1ST, 2016

JUNE 30, 2017

385 landings

49.723 new arrivals



Of course, the inadequacy of some of the structures reinforces spontaneous disappearance, the desire to leave already being fuelled by the desire of many children to complete their migratory project outside of Calabria. Calabria's critical situation has been confirmed by figures from the Save the Children Helpline for Migrant Children, which since the start of its mandate, has received calls for help due to the inadequacy of Calabria's reception facilities accounting for almost 30% of the total requests for help. In general, in Calabria, Save the Children as observed and reported¹⁵⁸ criticalities in the management of two structures, particularly relating to the number of operators, out of proportion to the needs of the children, the inadequacy of the psycho-social and legal services, and the defence of the right to be heard, the participation and involvement of children. In one of the two cases, the report by Save the Children has led to the closure of the structure due to unacceptable accommodation standards.

In the other, the report led to the appointment of a management organisation that now properly runs the taking into charge of the children. Escape from the structures and consequent disappearance exposes migrant children to the circuits of trafficking, making them easier targets for exploiters operating at territorial level with a network of partners and "officers". With the increase in landings between the end of 2016 and the start of 2017, in Calabria there has been an increase in the number of critical situations registered in connection to prompt identification and management of the potential victims of trafficking. Given that highlighted by the operators of Save the Children

active in the area, the general situation of complexity linked to the large number of minors in Calabria's reception system and the lack of staff specialised in the prompt identification and referral of the victims of trafficking causes considerable problems in the management of the vulnerable cases intercepted. Not all the prefectures and CAS have experts in measures for the protection of vulnerable children and many of the mediators recruited lack specific experience. Often the time spent by children in emergency accommodation structures which are unsuited to their needs and lacking in terms of the proper distribution of goods and services, worsens victims'

exposure to smugglers in the area and criminal organisations working locally in the illegal labour mediation sector.

Evidence gathered by Save the Children proves that, in this context, young Nigerian girls are an ideal target. In Calabria, like other landing areas, criminal figures within the criminal organisations active in exploitation are able to trace the Nigerian girls arriving from Libya as soon as they land. The girls are told to declare that they are adults so they will be sent to an emergency

accommodation structure, from which they can disappear.

Tracing the victims in the structures for minors and those for adults is very easy. Evidence gathered by Save the Children, and also available to other parties in the reception chain, proves that the girls are given a mobile phone with a sim card upon arrival, on which they are contacted with instructions on how to get out of the centre and what to do.

Stays in emergency centres which are unable to protect the victims of trafficking, given the evidence collected on site, often allow Nigerian men belonging to the exploitation network to take the girl from the centres,

sometimes threatening them. In addition, witness reports gathered confirm nocturnal prostitution near the reception structures where the girls are staying or at an informal settlement called “lo Scatolone”, which houses many migrants who aren’t registered at the reception structures. Proving the exploitation outside the structures, Save the Children has pointed out that many children have money and personal belongings that are not supplied by the organisation running the structure, such as mobile phones, sequined dresses, shoes with heels, hair extensions, make-up and food.



- Harmony’s story - “Harmony lands in Calabria. With a sad expression, she says she’s an adult, but ma Harmony is obviously under the age of 18. After the intervention of Save the Children, in tears, she admits that she’s 16. Due to a lack of places in a safe centre specialised in victims of trafficking, she is placed in an emergency accommodation centre. There are other Nigerian girls at the centre and Harmony says that she doesn’t want to stay there. During her stay at the centre, she continues to report frequent tummy aches and a general condition of malaise which causes her to faint. Medical check-ups attribute this to panic attacks. The only person Harmony trusts is the Save the Children operator and she asks her constantly for news about being transferred to a protected structure, saying that she’s frightened and telling her about blackmailing and the fear connected to the voodoo ritual that she was subjected to. One night, gripped by fear, she asks the coordinator of the centre to call the Save the Children operator with whom she had built up a relationship of trust. The coordinator suggests calling the next day. But the day after, Harmony runs away and the suspicion is that she had wanted to call the operator from Save the Children to warn her about the risk that that was about to be picked up by the exploiters. Five days later, the Save the Children operator meets Harmony by chance, wearing make-up and high heels, near Reggio Calabria railway station, with a Nigerian man. The operator follows her, Harmony sees her and bursts into tears. She tells her that the man is taking her to Rome on the train. The child and the man were reported to the Police immediately by Save the Children and taken to the Police Station. They were interviewed separately by the officers and gave different versions of the facts. However, in the absence of a formal report by the child, the man was released immediately and Harmony was taken back to the reception centre that she had escaped from”¹⁵⁹.

ROME

Between 2015 and 2016, in Rome, evidence has shown a rise in very young Nigerian and Romanian girls trafficked for sexual exploitation and an increase in the exposure of children on the move, mainly Eritreans, to the risks of exploitation and abuse.

As concerns, the trafficking in human beings, in 2016, the outreach made by CivicoZero intercepted 128 presumed victims of trafficking in Rome. 106 were Nigerian, 21 Romanian and 1 was from Togo.

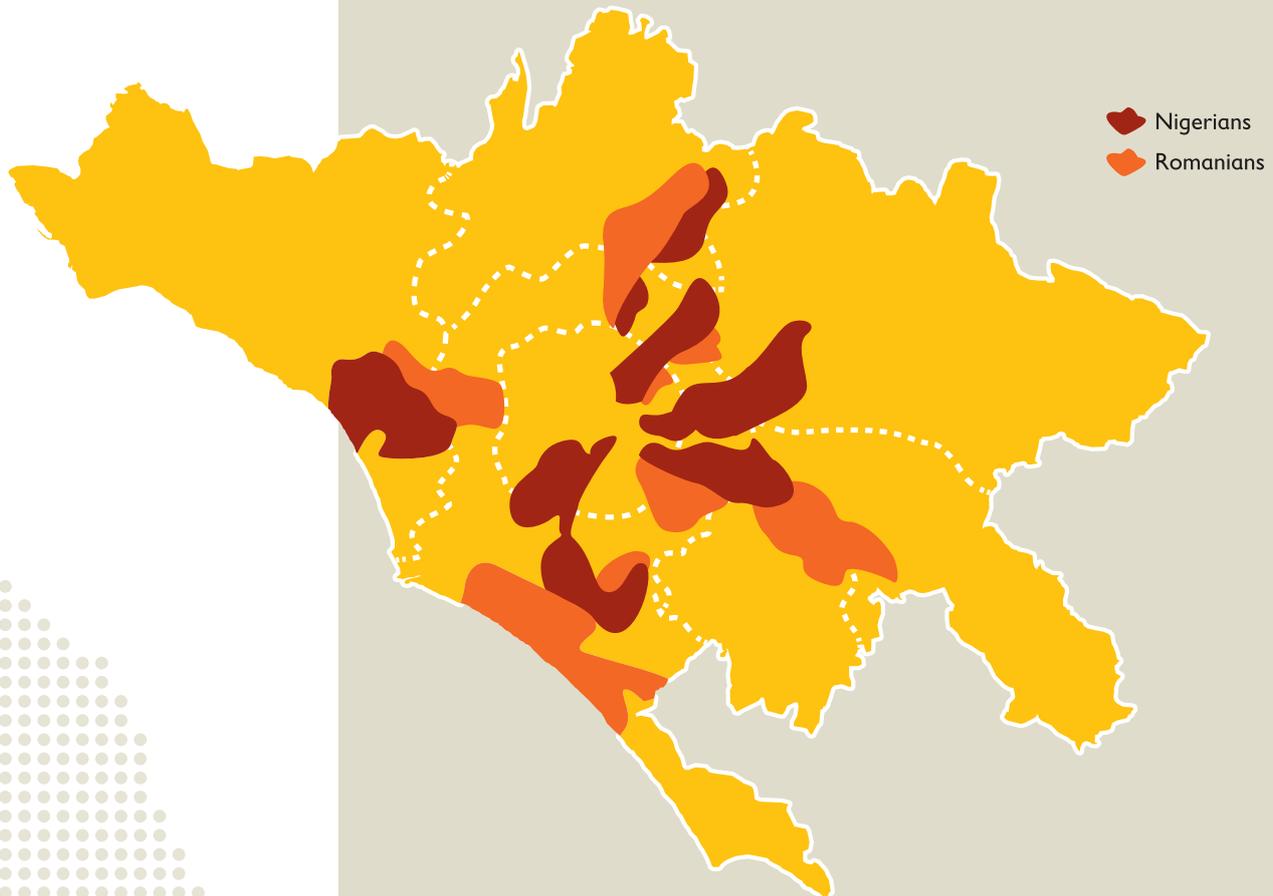
These are nationalities that confirm the presence on the streets of Nigerian and Romanian minors already observed the year before when, out of a total of 110 presumed minors contacted, 57% were Nigerian and 43% Romanian. Confirming the trend observed at national level, the presence of very young girls, aged about 14, was noted in Rome too¹⁶⁰.

Management of the situation by Roma Capitale, historically assigned to the Roxane Project¹⁶¹, has definitely been complicated by the recent evolutions

of the phenomenon, including the growing territorial movement and the generational turn-over of the victims on the streets, registered also towards Frosinone and in the Pontine area, as well as at national level.

As observed by the operators of CivicoZero, the frequent transferrals that the girls are forced to make by their exploiters do not facilitate the continuity and importance of the relationship between minors and operators.

The mapping of child trafficking in Rome provided by CivicoZero



In addition to this, the dramatic lowering of the average age of the girls makes them easier to manipulate and also makes it easier to discredit the social workers.

However, in the face of these dynamics, for the first quarter of 2017, the operators at CivicoZero have observed a growing number of girls who try to get away from the criminal organisations, letting themselves be stopped by the police or escapes from their exploiters. This phenomenon could be partly related to the conspicuous number of girls managed by the criminal organisations, which is probably more than they can cope with. In this sense, the criminal network could have been expanded with a drop in control over the girls which, at least occasionally, becomes less widespread and suffocating due to the large numbers of victims that the smugglers find themselves having to manage.

Potentially, these new dynamics form a particularly favourable moment for the anti-trafficking circuit operating in Rome and the entry of the victims into the protection programme to be developed in the city.

Between 2015 and 2016, growing evidence confirmed the exposure of minors

transiting to situations of potential exploitation and abuse also in Rome. Many of these unaccompanied children come from Eritrea, one of the countries for which, in compliance with recent EU provisions, relocation is applicable¹⁶², a system which envisages the safe transferral to EU countries for people in evident need of international protection and belonging to nationalities with a protection recognition rate of at least 75% on the basis of Eurostat data¹⁶³.

These people, after applying for asylum on the country of arrival, can be transferred to the country of relocation for examination of the application for international protection.

Over a year later, however, the relocation programme for unaccompanied children is finding hard to take off properly.

In this context, in Rome, from 30 January 2017, the operators of CivicoZero are monitoring 12 Eritrean children who have applied for relocation. The procedure rests on the experimentation of a multi-agency operation, which envisages the involvement of specific players in certain specific passages, as shown in the diagram presented below.



Photo: Jonathan Hyams / Save the Children

Notes

- ⁴¹ See Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior, Department of Public Security - Central Administration of Immigration and Border Police. Summary for Nationality of Disembarked People.
- ⁴² See Ministry of Employment and Social Policies, Report Mensile Minori Stranieri Non Accompagnati in Italy. Figures at 31 May 2017, available at <http://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita/immigrazione/focus-on/minori-foreign/Documents/Report-MSNA-mese-maggio2017-31052017.pdf>
- ⁴³ See http://migration.iom.int/docs/Analysis_Flow_Monitoring_and_Human_Trafficking_Surveys_in_the_Mediterranean_and_Beyond_26_April_2017.pdf
- ⁴⁴ See IOM, 2016. Rapporto sulle vittime di tratta nell'ambito dei flussi migratori misti in arrivo via mare aprile 2014 - ottobre 2015, available at <http://www.italy.iom.int/sites/default/files/news-documents/RapportoAntitratta.pdf>
- ⁴⁵ Ditmore, Melissa Hope, ed. 2006. Encyclopedia of Prostitution and Sex Work: AN. Vol. 1. Greenwood publishing group, p.535.
- ⁴⁶ L'Espresso, Nollywood arriva in Italia e racconta i migranti senza reticenze, <http://espresso.repubblica.it/attualita/2016/07/22/news/nollywood-arriva-in-Italia-e-racconta-i-migranti-senza-reticenze-1.278172>
- ⁴⁷ See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPutU_uio4Q&t=2777s
- ⁴⁸ Since 2014, the Nigerian economy growth rate has plummeted, from 6.3% to 2.7% in 2015, and to a worrying -1.7% in 2016. See <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>
- ⁴⁹ See European Commission, 2015. Study on high risk groups for trafficking in human beings, Final report, available at https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/study_on_children_as_high_risk_groups_of_trafficking_in_human_beings_0.pdf
- ⁵⁰ Story collected by Save the Children's Vie d'Uscita project in 2017.
- ⁵¹ See IOM, 2016. Rapporto sulle vittime di tratta nell'ambito dei flussi migratori misti in arrivo via mare aprile 2014 - ottobre 2015, available at <http://www.italy.iom.int/sites/default/files/news-documents/RapportoAntitratta.pdf>
- ⁵² A sort of local witchdoctor.
- ⁵³ Story collected by Save the Children's Vie d'Uscita project in 2017.
- ⁵⁴ See UNODC, 2016. Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, available at https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2016_Global_Report_on_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf
- ⁵⁵ OM, Rapporto sulle vittime di tratta nell'ambito dei flussi migratori misti in arrivo via mare aprile 2014 - ottobre 2015; BeFree, Dossier sull'esperienza di Sostegno a Donne Nigeriane Trattenute presso il C.I.E. di Ponte Galeria e Trafficate attraverso la Libya Richiesta di Ampliamento dell'applicabilità Dell' Art. 18 D.To Leg.Vo 25 Luglio 1998 n. 28.
- ⁵⁶ Befree 2016. Inter/Rotte: storie di tratta, percorsi di resistenze.
- ⁵⁷ Story collected by Save the Children's Vie d'Uscita project in 2017.
- ⁵⁸ Public Prosecutor's Office at the Court of Palermo District Anti-Mafia Directorate, N. 18496/2015 /DDA R.G. notizie di reato - mod.21.
- ⁵⁹ Declaration by a victim published by a Nigerian newspaper, reporting the tariffs for exploitation applied in connection houses: sex costs 1,000 Naira (about €3), three hours with a victim cost 3,000 Naira (about €9), while a whole night costs 6.000 Naira (about €17).
- ⁶⁰ Story collected by Save the Children's Vie d'Uscita project in 2017.



- ⁶¹. Be Free 2016. Inter/Rotte: storie di tratta, percorsi di resistenze.
- ⁶². Save the Children datasheet, Child Safeguarding Policy CSP, 2016; CivicoZero Focus group Rome 31 March 2017.
- ⁶³. This figure was reported by the various partners of the Vie d'Uscita project and the operators of Save the Children working at the Southern Border. In particular, as revealed by a Save the Children CSP, in Calabria various cases of young Nigerian girls who it is thought might work as prostitutes or be encouraged to work as prostitutes by adults presumably of Nigerian nationality have been reported. In this case, Save the Children reported the matter to the IOM and, in a specific case indicated in the Calabria segment, contacted the relative Police Department.
- ⁶⁴. Story collected by Save the Children's Vie d'Uscita project in 2017.
- ⁶⁵. As highlighted by various operators of the Vie di Uscita project, at the moment, the Italian reception system is experiencing difficulty in defending child victims of trafficking, effectively using the devices offered by Art. 18. Frequently, the victims who decide not to report their exploiter are not even recognised as children and are consequently sent to ordinary structures. In other cases, the victims who tend not to comply with the standards imposed by Art. 18 are directed according to the request for humanitarian protection. The dysfunctions of the protection system reserved for the victims of trafficking and the ability of the criminal networks to use the ordinary protection system in their favour make children even more vulnerable and facilitate their exploitation.
- ⁶⁶. Coordination of Vie d'Uscita project, 6 December 2016; CivicoZero Rome Focus group 31 March 2017.
- ⁶⁷. CivicoZero Milan Focus group, Vie d'Uscita project, 6 April 2017.
- ⁶⁸. CivicoZero datasheet, 4-10 March 2016.
- ⁶⁹. CivicoZero Milan datasheet, 22-28 October 2016.
- ⁷⁰. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017; CivicoZero Milan Focus group, 6 April 2017.
- ⁷¹. Story collected by Save the Children's Vie d'Uscita project in 2017.
- ⁷². Coordination meeting, Vie d'Uscita, 27 April 2017.
- ⁷³. Paola Degani and Claudia Pividori, 2016. TEMVI: Minori e vittime di tratta tra vulnerabilità e illegalità, in http://www.ingenerere.it/sites/default/files/ricerche/temvi_report_it_web.pdf
- ⁷⁴. European Commission, Country Report Romania, 2017. Accompanying the Document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Central Bank and the Eurogroup, 2017 European Semester: Assessment of progress on structural reforms, prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, and results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) n. 1176/2011.
- ⁷⁵. Burtini, D, 2015. "Female Emigration. From rural Romania to the Adriatic Coast: women on their journey between opportunity and social vulnerability. The Italian Syndrome". *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Geographia*, 60(2).
- ⁷⁶. See http://www.ingenerere.it/sites/default/files/ricerche/temvi_report_it_web.pdf
- ⁷⁷. Vie d'Uscita project Final Report, 2016.
- ⁷⁸. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.



Photo: Jonathan Hyams / Save the Children

79. Save the Children, 2016, Vie d'Uscita project Final Report.
80. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
81. Save the Children, 2016, Vie d'Uscita project Final Report.
82. See Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior, Department of Public Security - Central Administration of Immigration and Border Police. Summary for Nationality of Disembarked People.
83. E. Ambrosetti, E.R. Petrillo, "On the Far Side of Crisis: Moving Beyond a Security-Based Migration Approach in the EU", in *Escaping the Escape. Towards Solutions for the Migrant Crisis*, Bertelsman Stiftung, 2017, pp. 15-33.
84. EASO, 2016. Country of Origin Information Report Eritrea National service and illegal exit, available at https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/COI-%20Eritrea-Dec2016_LR.pdf
85. In compliance with Article 11 of proclamation 24/1992, a valid travel document (passport) is required, along with a valid exit visa and an international health certificate. Individuals must also cross the border at a specific checkpoint (article 10).
86. Furthermore, for those eligible for compulsory military service, failure to return to perform such military service within a useful age can result in detention until the age of 50 and loss of the right to work and own land.
87. See UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, Report of the detailed findings of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea. A/HRC/29/ CRP.1, 5 June 2015, pp. 298-299, quoted by EASO, Country of Origin Information Report Eritrea National service and illegal exit, November 2016, available at https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/COI-%20Eritrea-Dec2016_LR.pdf
88. See UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, Report of the detailed findings of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea – A/HRC/32/ CPR.1, 8 June 2016, pp. 30-31, available at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/ColEritrea/A_HRC_32_CRP.1_read-only.pdf
89. See UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, Report of the detailed findings of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea – A/HRC/32/ CPR.1, 8 June 2016, pp. 30-31, available at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/ColEritrea/A_HRC_32_CRP.1_read-only.pdf
90. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
91. See http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/eritrea_res-667aad12-dd70-11e6-add6-00271042e8d9_%28Enciclopedia-Italiana%29/
92. See UNDESA, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/least-developed-country-category-eritrea.html>
93. See http://migration.iom.int/docs/Q1_2017_statistical_Overview.pdf
94. See the map supplied by UNHCR, http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/EthiopiaFactSheetJan2015_map.pdf
95. See <https://www.odi.org/opinion/10401-eritrean-refugees-ethiopia>
96. In 2016, UNHCR reported expulsions of Eritreans from Sudan due to illegal entry into the country, UNHCR Press Release, 2 June 2016, UNHCR Concerned by expulsions from Sudan.
97. CivicoZero datasheet, 24 - 30 September 2016.



- ⁹⁸. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, January 2016.
- ⁹⁹. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, February 2017.
- ¹⁰⁰. See United Nations Security Council, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to SC resolution 1916 (2010), 18 July 2011, p. 118; S/2013/440, United Nations Security Council, Report on Eritrea of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to SC resolution 2060 (2012), 25 July 2013, p. 35-37, in United Nations Office in Drugs and Crime, Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, 2016, available at http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2016_Global_Report_on_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf
- ¹⁰¹. United Nations Office in Drugs and Crime, 2016. Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, available at <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/data-andanalysis/glotip.html>
- ¹⁰². United Nations Office in Drugs and Crime, 2016. Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, available at <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/data-andanalysis/glotip.html>
- ¹⁰³. United Nations Office in Drugs and Crime, 2016. Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, available at <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/data-andanalysis/glotip.html>
- ¹⁰⁴. UNICEF, 2017. Un Viaggio Fatale per i Bambini. La Rotta Migratoria del Mediterraneo centrale, available at http://www.cestim.it/argomenti/24minori/2017-02-28-Unicef-Un_viaggio_fatale_per_i_bambini.pdf
- ¹⁰⁵. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, 4 – 10 March 2017.
- ¹⁰⁶. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
- ¹⁰⁷. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, 3 - 9 September 2016.
- ¹⁰⁸. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, 7 - 13 January 2016.
- ¹⁰⁹. UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 2017. “Libya Detention Centres: Detention Centres in which UNHCR and Partners are carrying out activities”.
- ¹¹⁰. Unicef 2017. Un viaggio fatale per i bambini, available at http://www.unicef.it/Allegati/Un_viaggio_fatale_per_i_bambini.pdf
- ¹¹¹. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, 3 - 9 September 2016.
- ¹¹². CivicoZero Rome datasheet, 2 - 8 July 2016.
- ¹¹³. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, 4 - 10 March 2017.
- ¹¹⁴. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, 11 - 17 March 2017.
- ¹¹⁵. Giovannetti, M. 2016. VI rapporto Anci. I comuni e le politiche di accoglienza dei minori stranieri non accompagnati. Un’analisi longitudinale a guida dei percorsi futuri.
- ¹¹⁶. See Ministry of Employment and Social Policies, monthly report on unaccompanied children in Italy, data 31st of May 2017, available at <http://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita/immigrazione/focus-on/minori-foreign/Documents/Report-MSNA-mese-maggio2017-31052017.pdf>
- ¹¹⁷. See N. Sigona, J. Allsop, Mind the gap: why are unaccompanied children disappearing in their thousands? 2016, available at <https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/nando-sigona-and-jennifer-allsop/mind-gap-why-are-unaccompanied-children-disappearing-in-thous>
- ¹¹⁸. E. Ambrosetti, E. R. Petrillo, “Rotte e profili dei minori stranieri non accompagnati che transitano o si fermano a Roma”, in Centro Studi



Photo: Simon Edmunds / Save the Children

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- ¹¹⁹. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
- ¹²⁰. See District Directorate of Catania - operation "TOKHLA" - criminal procedure no. 14093/14 R.G.N.R. mod.21. In National Directorate of Anti-mafia and Counter-terrorism 2016, available at <http://www.publicpolicy.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Relazione-Franco-Roberti-Dna.pdf>
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- ¹²⁵. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
- ¹²⁶. See Massarenti J., Welcome to the Hub Sammartini, available at <http://www.vita.it/it/story/2017/03/13/welcome-to-the-hubsammartini-ni/121/>
- ¹²⁷. CivicoZero Milan Focus group, 6 April 2017.
- ¹²⁸. See <http://www.vita.it/it/article/2017/05/10/hub-sammartini-addio-ora-e-un-centro-daccoglienza-per-rifugiati/143311/>
- ¹²⁹. CivicoZero Rome datasheet.
- ¹³⁰. See Open Migration, Dove Vanno gli Eritrei in Europa? Available at <http://openmigration.org/analisi/5-cose-da-sapere-sui-rifugiati-e-ri-trei/>
- ¹³¹. See No Tratta, Vittime di Tratta e Richiedenti / Titolari Protezione Internazionale, 2014, available at http://www.nostratta.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/NO_TRATTA_Report_Victims_Richiedenti_Cittalia_DEF_DEF1.pdf
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- ¹³³. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
- ¹³⁴. Independent, Bangladesh Is Now The Single Biggest Country Of Origin For Refugees On Boats As New Route To Europe Emerges, 5 May 2017, available at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugee-crisis-migrants-bangladesh-libya-italy-numbers-smuggling-dhaka-dubai-turkey-detained-a7713911.html>
- ¹³⁵. See Ministry of Employment and Social Policies, Report Mensile Minori Stranieri Non Accompagnati in Italia. Data 31 May 2017, available at <http://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita/immigrazione/focus-on/minori-foreign/Documents/Report-MSNA-mese-maggio2017-31052017.pdf>
- ¹³⁶. See National Directorate of Anti-Mafia, Relazione annuale sulle attività svolte dal Procuratore nazionale e dalla Direzione nazionale antimafia e antiterrorismo nonché sulle dinamiche e strategie della criminalità organizzata di tipo mafioso nel periodo 1° luglio 2014 - 30 giugno 2015, febbraio 2016, p. 373, available at <http://www.publicpolicy.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Relazione-Franco-Roberti-Dna.pdf>



- ¹³⁷. See Save the Children, *Children Come First - Intervento in Frontiera, Dossier I Minori Migranti in Arrivo via Mare, Ottobre Dicembre 2016*. Available at <https://www.savethechildren.it/sites/default/files/files/uploads/pubblicazioni/children-come-first-intervento-frontiera.pdf>
- ¹³⁸. CivicoZero Milan datasheet, 17 - 23 September 2016.
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- ¹⁴⁰. Paola Degani and Claudia Pividori, 2016. TEMVI: Minori e Vittime di Tratta tra Vulnerabilità e Illegalità.
- ¹⁴¹. Paola Degani and Claudia Pividori, 2016. TEMVI: Minori e Vittime di Tratta tra Vulnerabilità e Illegalità.
- ¹⁴². Cittalia, Gruppo Abele, *On the Road, 2014. Vittime di Tratta e Richiedenti/Titolari Protezione Internazionale*, http://www.notratta.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/NO_TRATTA_Report_Victims_Richiedenti_Cittalia_DEF_DEF1.pdf
- ¹⁴³. These ports are about 800 nautical miles from Italy. In 2016 and in the early months of 2017, most of the boats full of migrants were intercepted and rescued at sea. Subsequently, the rescue boats took the migrants to various Italian ports, including Augusta, Pozzallo, Reggio Calabria, Catania, Palermo, Messina, Lampedusa and Trapani.
- ¹⁴⁴. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
- ¹⁴⁵. E. Ambrosetti, E. R. Petrillo, "Rotte e profili dei minori stranieri non accompagnati che transitano o si fermano a Roma", in *Centro Studi e Ricerche Idos, Istituto di Studi Politici "S. Pio V", Osservatorio Romano sulle Migrazioni. Dodicesimo Rapporto*, G. Demaio (edited by), Edizioni IDOS, Roma, 2017, pp. 191-197.
- ¹⁴⁶. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
- ¹⁴⁷. The case has been reported to the pertinent Public Prosecutor's office.
- ¹⁴⁸. In the provision, the Judge for Preliminary Investigations writes: "In the present case it is clear from the expressions used by the investigated, aimed at removing a category of subjects not belonging to the so-called "country", therefore extracomunitari ("you are shit shit, you have to go from there, you no longer have to come to the country") and in light of the same futile motives of the action show the existence of racial and ethnic background discrimination being all the victims foreigners"; <http://www.informasicilia.it/2016/08/24/aggressione-san-cono-accusati-ai-domiciliari/#.WT6d9mjyh9A>, e <https://www.avvenire.it/attualita/pagine/tre-ragazzi-e-giziani-picchiati-a-catania->
- ¹⁴⁹. The figure excludes guests of the Parco Roja reception centre for adult migrants run by the Italian Red Cross.
- ¹⁵⁰. For transiting minors, the stay in Ventimiglia often lasts just a few days. This is why the taking charge by the local social services for minors who intend staying in Italy is inconsistent with their ambitions to move on.
- ¹⁵¹. Social Policies Department of the Municipality of Ventimiglia, Determination no. 509 on: "Procedimento ad evidenza pubblica per la manifestazione d'interesse da parte di soggetti terzi ad entrare nell'elenco di strutture accreditate dal Comune di Ventimiglia per fornire accoglienza a minorenni stranieri non accompagnati, 22 May 2017, available at http://ventimiglia.trasparenza-valutazione-merito.it/web/trasparenza/storico-atti?p_p_id=jcitygovalbopubblicazioni_WAR_jcitygovalbiportlet&p_p_lifecycle=2&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_resource_id=downloadAllegato&p_p_cacheability=cacheLevelPage&p_p_col_id=column-1&p_p_col_count=1&jcitygovalbopubblicazioni_WAR_jcitygovalbiportlet_id=5138953&jcitygovalbopubblicazioni_WAR_jcitygovalbiportlet_downloadSigne



Photo: Ahmad Baroudi / Save the Children

d=true&_jcitygovalbopubblicazioni_WAR_jcitygovalbiportlet_action=mostraDettaglio&_jcitygovalbopubblicazioni_WAR_jcitygovalbiportlet_fromAction=recuperaDettaglio

^{152.} At the time of writing, 26 June 2017, upon request of the mayor of Ventimiglia, the area around the mouth of the River Roja has been cleared. The cleared minors included twenty youngsters from Sudan. After the clearance of the Italian red Cross camp, originally destined for adults, it was opened to unaccompanied children.

^{153.} See <http://video.repubblica.it/edizione/genova/ventimiglia-delia-la-barista-dei-migranti/252997/253192>

^{154.} From 9 September 2016 until April, there were seven deaths (in seven months). These were caused by falling from the motorway supports, being hit by trucks or by trains travelling through tunnels, or being electrocuted on the roofs of train carriages.

^{155.} See https://terredeshommes.it/download/Report_Finale_FARO_2016.pdf

^{156.} See <http://questure.poliziadistato.it/it/Imperia/articolo/5730dda61fea4156409903>

^{157.} See <http://www.mensilepoliziadistato.it/category/immigrazione/>

^{158.} Specifically, Save the Children has reported the cases to the pertinent Prefect's Office.



¹⁵⁹. Save the Children datasheet, Child Safeguarding Policy CSP, 2016.

¹⁶⁰. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2016.

¹⁶¹. As regards the specific target, the victims of trafficking, the Municipality of Rome support the Roxanne service which carried out prevention activities and provides advice for all those on the streets (women, men, trans), also offering support and rehabilitation for the victims of trafficking. The services guarantees contact, via street units all over the city, aimed at providing information and healthcare, knowledge of the phenomenon, referral activities and identification of potential victims of exploitation; a day desk offering advice and help, also of a legal nature, aimed at promoting escape from the exploitation circuits; reception structures; literacy courses, discovery and identification of skills, job advice and apprenticeships; collaboration the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) for protected repatriation, if specifically requested; prevention and creation of awareness in schools.

¹⁶². Decisions of the Council of Europe on relocation 2015/1523 dated 14/09/2015 and 2015/1601 dated 22/09/2015.

¹⁶³. According to European Regulations, nationalities "in clear need of protection" are Eritreans, Syrians, Yemenites and Iraqis.



CHAPTER 4

Foto: Suzanne Lee per Save The Children

4.1 The critical issues of the quantitative framework

Trafficking in human beings is a crime perpetuated by a demand sustained by constantly reinvested profits. Organisation and analysis of evidence relating to offenders, exploiters and all those who profit from trafficking and the exploitation of minors carried out by Save the Children within the scope of the projects pursued in Italy, confirms the growth of this criminal sector. The information is confirmed also by the estimates of the European Commission, which has indicated trafficking as the second source of income at global level for criminal organisations, after drug trafficking, with a turnover of 32 billion dollars¹⁶⁴.

THE CRIMINAL BUSINESS OF THOSE WHO PROFIT FROM TRAFFICKING

GLOBALLY

32 BILLIONS
Turnover

Second source of globally revenue for criminal organizations.



IN EUROPE

2010-2012 (Eurostat data)

12,760
supposed traffickers

6,642 males
3,187 females
1,017 kind not available

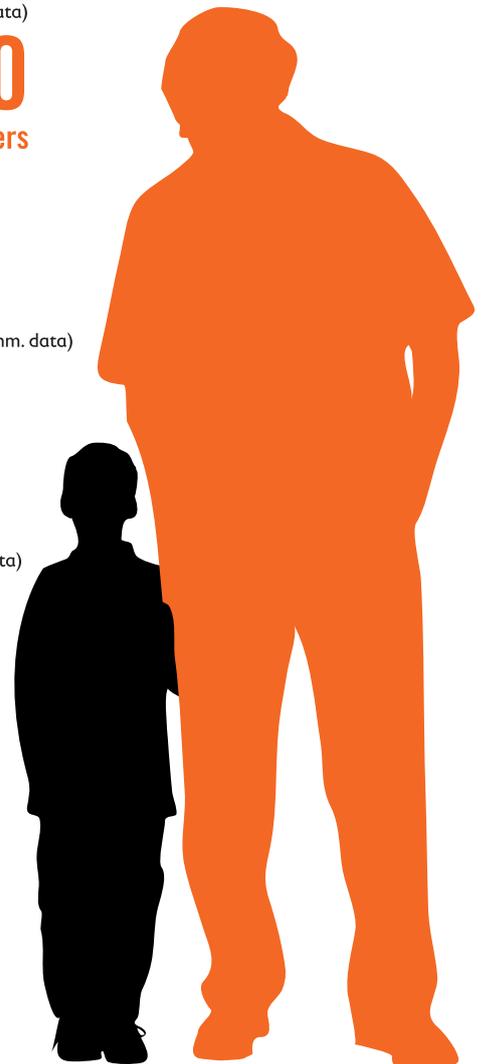
2013-2014 (Europ. Comm. data)

15,846
TRAFFICKING VICTIMS
2,375 children

2014-2015 (Europol data)

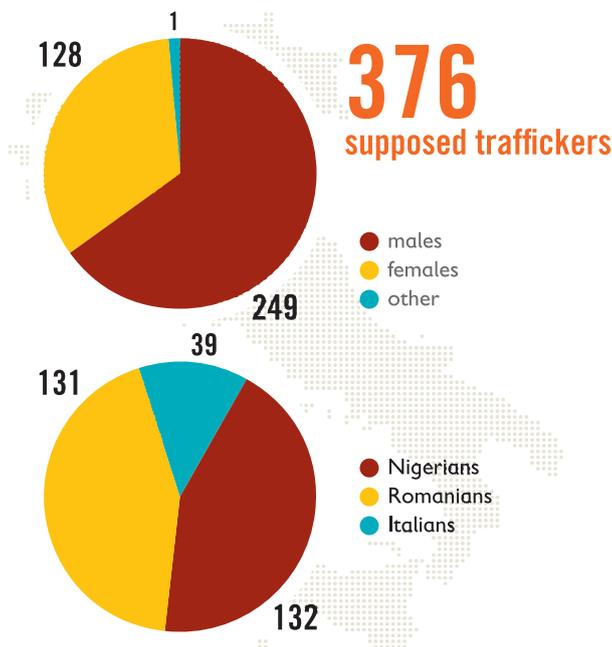
8,037
suspects for crimes related to trafficking

7,500
VICTIMS



IN ITALY

2010-2012



However, quantitatively mapping the underground universe of exploiters and abusers who profit from child trafficking is a complex operation for two main reasons.

The first concerns the transnational dimension which complicates the identification of the various branches of the criminal exploitation chain.

The second is the fact that the data and statistics on the phenomenon are so fragmented. At European level, the latest data is related to 2016 and refers to the two previous years, when Europol registered 8.037 suspects for crimes linked to trafficking and 7.500 victims¹⁶⁵. During the same years, the trafficking of minors was identified among the strongest climbing trends in the whole of the EU.

The latest data released by the European Commission¹⁶⁶, relating to 2013-2014, show that of the 15.846 victims of trafficking censured between 2013 and 2014 in the EU, 2.375 were minors.

This data, however, besides being evidently underestimated, does not shed light on the profiles of the victims or on the criminal profiles of the offenders.

In addition, differences in the data registration process and misalignments between the national juridical definitions, make a detailed recognition of the phenomenon in Europe and Italy impossible, particularly with regard to minors.

As far as Europe is concerned, Eurostat has drawn up data which, while regarding the period between 2010 and 2012, offers an idea of the typical profile of the criminal subjects that revolve around minors who are victims of trafficking and exploitation.

During the three-year period, 12.760 presumed smugglers were registered in Europe, 6.642 of whom were men and 3.187 women (no details were available on the gender of the remaining 1.017).

For the same period, 376 presumed smugglers were registered in Italy, 249 of whom were men and 128 women (1 unknown).

Of the 376 in total, 132 smugglers were Nigerian, 131 Romanian and 39 Italian. Within the report, there are filters that provide evidence of the data on the basis of the type of crime.

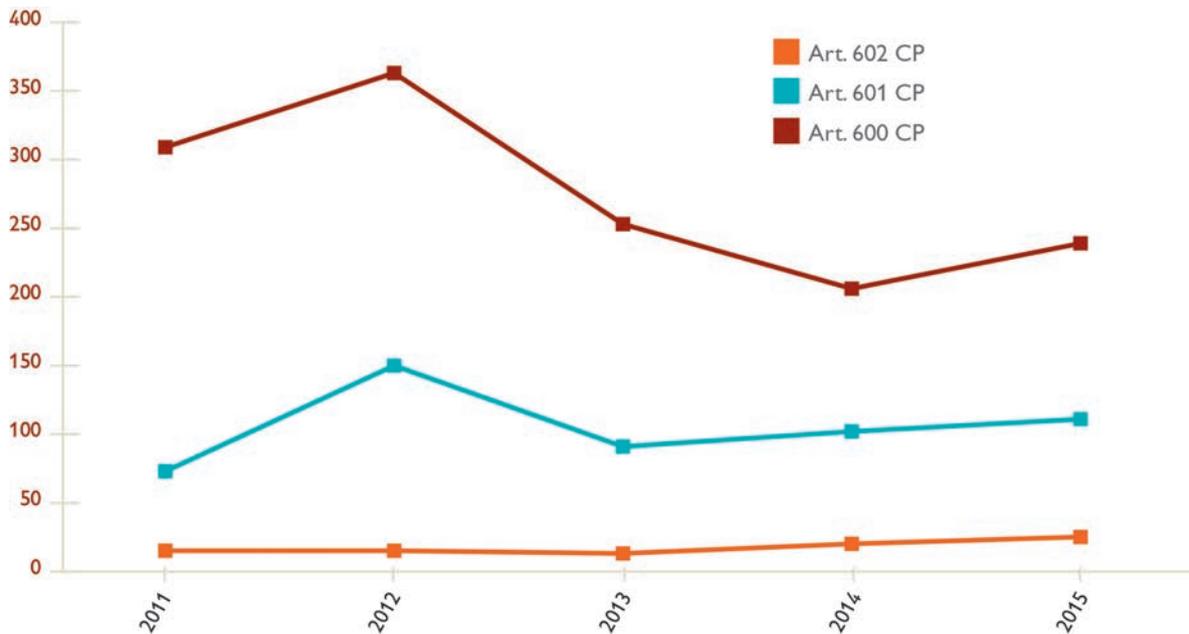
However, in relation to the 187 cases for which the form of exploitation is known, it is estimated that 67% of the smugglers were pursued for sexual exploitation, while the remaining 33% fall within the category of “other forms” of exploitation¹⁶⁷.

The problems caused by the fragmentation of data and analysis, inconsistency of the data collected by various agencies and the failure by the institutions to share everything, make it just as difficult to outline the same profile at national level, as they do not allow a clear understanding of just who the offenders are and what their business models in Italy are.

For Italy, the Ministry of the Interior¹⁶⁸ set up a five-year analysis (2011-2015) which allowed the drawing up of a statistic trend of the adults reported and/or arrested for crimes pursuant to articles 600, 601 and 602 of the criminal code: about 73% were incriminated pursuant to Art. 600 of the criminal code (reduction and maintenance in slavery), 23% pursuant to Art. 601 of the criminal code (trafficking of persons) and the remaining 4% pursuant to Art. 602 of the criminal code (buying and selling slaves).

The national groups reported are always the same four: Italians, Albanians, Romanians and Nigerians. In 2015, the reports pursuant to art. 600 criminal code identified 70 Romanian offenders, 42 Italians, 39 Nigerians and 34 Albanians, out of a total of 207; through reports pursuant to art. 601, 46 Nigerian smugglers, 27 Romanians, 17 Albanians and 7 Italians, out of a total 99, were identified; lastly,

People arrested for crimes linked to trafficking



Source: Ministry of the Interior

CHAPTER 4

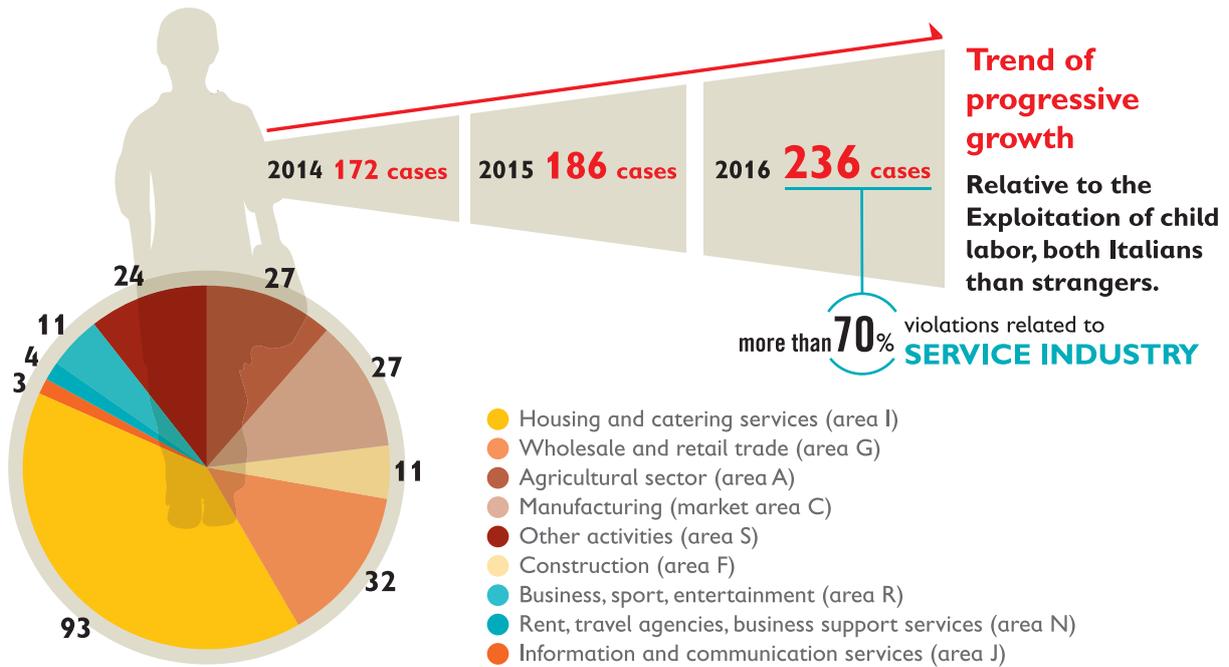
reports pursuant to art. 602 identified 10 Nigerians, 5 Italians, 1 Albanian and 1 Romanian out of a total of 18.

Also at national level, as regards the profiles of minor offenders, the Ministry of Justice¹⁶⁹ has drawn up a forecast updated to 15 March 2017 which, while not being filtered according to type of crime, provides a rather clear idea of the nationality of minors involved in exploitation of prostitution or in drug dealing activities. The Ministry of Justice has registered 14.920 children taken into charge, of whom 1.476 in the first quarter of 2017. As regards nationality, 10.990 are Italian (9.823 boys and 1.167 girls), while 3.939 are foreign (3.390 boys and 540 girls). Among the foreigners, 1.551 children are from Africa (1.478 boys and 73 girls), particularly Egypt (210), Gambia (115), Morocco (645), Nigeria (72), Senegal (110) and Tunisia (186). The main nationality is still Romanian however with 747 children from Romania, 531 of whom boys and 156 girls (among the girls, this is the biggest share). As regards age, about 27.5% of the children are 17 (4.198, with 2.936 Italians and 1.170 foreigners), followed by 24,8% 16-year-olds (3,689, with 2.804 Italians and 885 foreigners), 17,2% are 15 (2.559, with 1.921 Italians and 638 foreigners) and 7,6% are 14 (1.135, with 824 Italians and 311 foreigners)¹⁷⁰. Important, yet circumscribed information, was offered by the opening reports released by the Courts of Appeal of some of the cities most affected by trafficking. Specifically, with regard to 2016, the Court of Appeal of Palermo reported a growth in terms of the number of reports of reduction into slavery pursuant to art. 600, from three to six, but above all for trafficking in people, pursuant to art. 601: a total of 17 cases were registered, compared to six in the previous year¹⁷¹.

A similar trend was registered at Catania Court of Appeal¹⁷², which reported an increase in both phenomena: while there was a rise in the number of reports of reduction into slavery from three to eight, the number of reports of trafficking in human beings shot up from 1 case to 48.

As regards the exploitation of child labour, both Italian and foreign, in 2016, the National Labour Inspectorate¹⁷³ ascertained a progressive growth trend, from 172 cases in 2014, to 187 in 2015 and 236 in 2016, and generally, over 70% of the breaches were related to the service sector.

The sectors of the exploitation



Source: National Labor Inspectorate

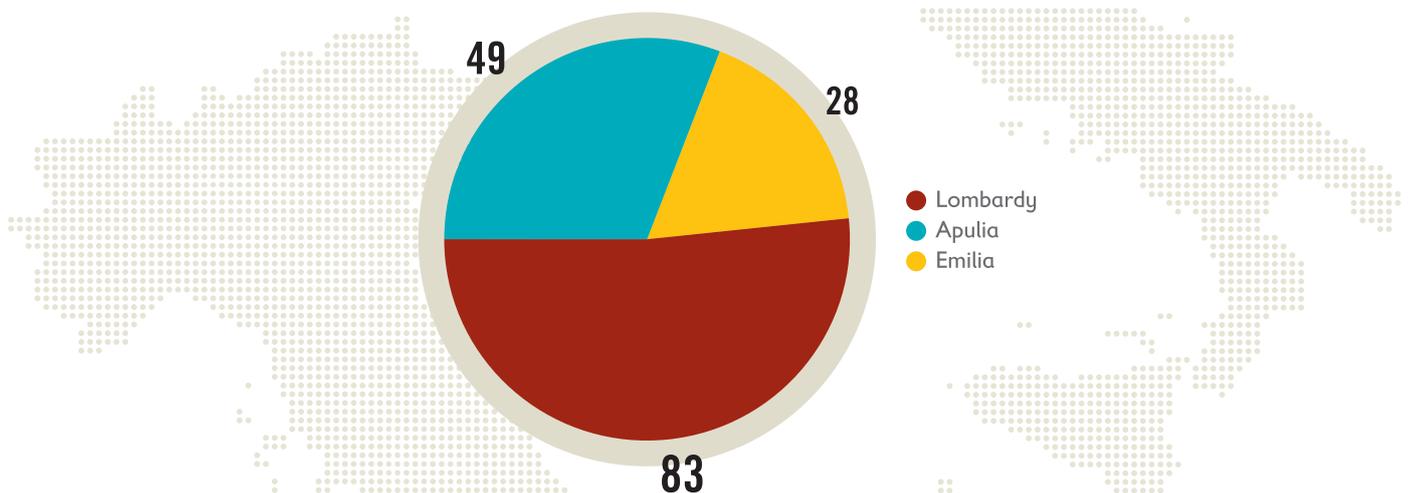
CHAPTER 4

In 2016, 93 breaches concerned Italian and foreign minors, involved in food and accommodation services (area I), followed by 32 breaches by minors who worked in wholesale and retail trade (area G), 27 in the farming sector (area A) and 27 in manufacturing activities (area C), while a further 24 took part in other activities (area S). The remaining breaches concern minors employed in construction (11, area F), artistic, sporting, entertainment and leisure activities (11, area R), in the sector of rental, travel agencies and business services (4, area N), and in services for information and communication (3, area J)¹⁷⁴.

The exploitation of minors takes place from north to south in Italy, without distinction.

According to figures for 2016, the rise in breaches has been reported in Lombardy (83), in Apulia (49) and in Emilia Romagna (28). However, in the last three years, Lombardy has been confirmed as the Region with the highest number of breaches, passing from 48 in 2014, to 68 in 2015, and 83 in 2016¹⁷⁵.

Regions with the greatest number of children exploitation reporting



Source: National Labor Inspectorate

KEY NUMBERS ON OFFENDERS AND EXPLOITERS PROFILE

In Europe **8.037** suspected people¹⁷⁶

(Europol Data
2013-2014)

In Italy **324** denounced and/or arrested persons¹⁷⁷
for crimes related to reduction or
maintenance of slavery or servitude
in 2015

- 207 purs. Art. 600 Crim. Code (only in 2015)
- 99 purs. Art. 601 Crim. Code (only in 2015)
- 18 purs. Art. 602 Crim. Code

Offender's profile

Gender and age¹⁷⁸ **2 out of 3** men
35 years on average

Nationalities¹⁷⁹ **30%** Romania
(Mol Data 2015) **29%** Nigeria
16% Albania
16% Italy
9% Bulgaria, Serbia, China, Morocco

CHAPTER 4

The action of Save the Children in the field has highlighted that, in addition to trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, many minors are victims of other forms of exploitation, including trafficking for the purposes of forced begging or forced marriage. In Italy, and in the rest of Europe, various cases of multiple forms of exploitation have emerged, in which the victims of trafficking for labour or sexual exploitation are forcibly involved in criminal activities.

4.2 Those who profit from the trafficking and exploitation of children

The stories of child victims of trafficking and exploitation in Italy, collected by Save the Children confirm an extremely varied picture of the forms of exploitation suffered by the victims as well as of the criminal and organisational profiles of those who profit from them. These criminal “production chains” develop thanks to the existence of a large number of Italian clients who feed the chain of labour and sexual exploitation of the victims. To allow the organic systemisation of the profiles of the various parties who profit from trafficking, whether they are members or organised crime or otherwise, Save the Children has used the stories told by the young victims to draw up an example of the main profiles that operate at individual and organised level along the entire illegal chain of trafficking and labour exploitation.

4.2.1 The transnational criminal model: from Nigeria to Italy

Among the African criminal structures, one of the most pervasive in Italy is that from Nigeria, made up of different independent cells located throughout Italy and in other European or non-European countries that connect with one another in the management of the business¹⁸⁰. These are groups with transnational vocation that operate at different territorial levels, maintaining a stable link with the country of origin. This type of criminal organisation presents elastic, flexible networks with an ability to adapt quickly, characterised by ethnic or family ties¹⁸¹. Evidence gathered by Save the Children and other organisations working in the fight against trafficking lead us to believe that the Nigerian criminal trafficking chain can be summarized as follows:

THE CRIMINAL CHAIN

From Nigeria to Europe:
who profits from
trafficking and
exploitation of girls.

KEY PHASES OF TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL CHAIN:

1. Recruiting in Nigeria.
2. Transport and concentration of children in Libya.
3. Sale of victims to Ghanaian and Libyan criminals.
4. Acquisition of victims from Libya by the mamans active in Italy.
5. Arrival in Italy, insertion into the reception facilities.
6. Interception by maman's lieutenants in the reception centers.
7. Induction to escape from the structures and subsequent disappearance of the girl.
8. Transfer to the cities of exploitation.

#BOGA #TROLLEYMAN

Nigerian citizens who operate for the transfer of the victims from **Nigeria** to **Niger**. Here, they sell trafficked girls to Arab criminal groups who transport them into **Libya** and segregate these girls in the connection houses.

#CONTROLLERS #LIEUTENANTS

Figures active when the victims arrive in Italy in the places of disembarkation and first reception. They inform traffickers about the arrival of the girls and teach victims how to deal with the national identification system and entrance to the reception center.

Many controllers are often themselves victims, who carry out these tasks in exchange for a reduction of their debt.

#RECRUITERS

Belonging to parental network of victims, recruit girls in **Nigeria** and organize their transfer to **Libya**.

#BROTHER #MAMAN

Active in **Italy**. They buy the victims detained and exploited in the connection houses and organize their travel to Italy and **Europe**.

#ACCOMPLICES

Working in the Italian territory for the "sorting" of girls and their management at work places.

MUMMY INQUEST¹⁸²

The report of a Nigerian victim of child trafficking, intercepted during a police check along the SS. 417 Catania – Gela road, triggered the investigation into a Nigerian criminal group operating at transnational level in the recruitment and exploitation of young Nigerians. The girl told them that she had left Nigeria, after running up a debt of tens of thousands of euro with a madam known as Mummy. According to her statement, the journey took place under the control of a *boga* who was responsible for the transferral to Libya, where the girl said she spent several weeks watched over constantly by armed guards. In August 2015, the girl arrived in Italy on a dingy. Upon arrival, she was placed in a community in Northern Italy and, thanks to intervention by people operating in various parts of the country, picked up and accompanied to the city of Catania, where her madam was waiting for her; this new madam was the daughter of the Nigerian *Mummy* who had subjected her to the *JuJu* ritual, and she put her into the street prostitution circuit. The investigations carried out by the Police allowed verification of the existence of a transnational criminal association based in Catania, with operating cells active in the recruitment of victims in Nigeria, and in facilitating transit through Libya, and also in exploitation in Italy, in Catania, Genoa and Rome. Thanks to the network of partnerships active along the transnational route, from the central nucleus of Catania it was possible to control and monitor the victims' journey from Nigeria to Libya and from Libya to Italy, maintaining constant contact with other Nigerians or Libyans responsible for the various phases and providing for the disbursement of cash, as and when necessary to accelerate the boat trip to Italy. Once in Italy, the victims were localised by the organisation through lieutenants, who *picked them up* from the structures where they had been placed by the Italian authorities and taken to their respective exploiters.

OPERATION BROKEN CHAIN¹⁸³

In June 2016, the declarations made by Joy, a Nigerian minor who landed in Pozzallo in May 2016, triggered operation “Broken Chains”, an investigation by the Police in Ragusa, carried out in collaboration with the Flying Squad of Padua and coordinated by the DDA of the Public Prosecutor's office of Catania. It ended up with the arrest of six Nigerian citizens, three of whom with serious accusations for criminal conspiracy aimed at several counts of trafficking in Nigerians, including children, and one with serious accusations of trafficking in human beings to the detriment of a young Nigerian girl. The investigations and the conversations recorded by the Police allowed them to understand that Tripoli and the surrounding area represent an area of concentration where migrants are stopped by Libyan smugglers and subjected to every form of bullying, from lack of assistance to beatings and sexual violence, while waiting for the negotiations on the price to be completed and making the payment required by the smugglers working in Italy.

OPERATION “SKIN TRADE”¹⁸⁴

In October 2016, the Police Department in Catania applied an order for the taking into custody of 15 people considered responsible for criminal conspiracy aimed at trafficking in people and exploitation of prostitution. The investigations outlined two criminal organisations, one based in Catania and the other in Licodia Eubea (CT), with connections near Naples and Caserta, the aim of which was to recruit, transport, introduce and exploit in Italy young Nigerian women, including minors. The journey began at the bus station in Benin city, where the girls were picked up by travelling companions known as trolleys in permanent contact with the various parties operating in the criminal chain and responsible for taking the girls to Tripoli. Upon arriving in Italy, the victims were sold: after an apprenticeship to teach them how to behave, what to wear, etc., the girls were assigned a precise spot on the street, where the cycle of exploitation began.

According to the findings of the Direzione Investigativa Antimafia (Mafia Investigation Department), the illegal proceeds are usually transferred to Nigeria, through couriers or money-transfer channels and/or Hawala, where they are widely used to fund other illegal activities. However, there are also cases of reuse of profits within the country, mainly for business activities.

4.2.1.1 Maman and mini-maman: the criminal career

The stories told to Save the Children confirm that the figure of the *maman* can cover numerous roles and functions, operating as recruiter, organiser, exploiter and also head of operating units at different levels of the organisation. She can also collect the takings from the illegal activities and invest them¹⁸⁵. The *maman* is a key figure thanks, mainly to the ambiguity of the role that she takes on in the relationship with the victim: on one hand, she exploits her, forcing her to pay to entire sum agreed at all cost, and under the threat of the voodoo ritual; on the other, she often represents the only point of cultural contact in a foreign social context which the victim is unfamiliar with and where she doesn't even understand the language. It is by leveraging this role as fiend and partner that the *maman* can more easily maintain a dominant role of the girl exploited on the streets, who, by virtue of the *maman's* dominant position within the criminal hierarchy, can also develop a relationship of esteem with regard to her exploiter. In this sense, the *maman* is not merely the "collector" of sums of money earned by the victims, but also the "holder of their subjection"¹⁸⁶ as has emerged from recent investigative evidence:



"(...) The organisation, with operations based in Catania, Genoa and Rome, was directed and promoted by Madame Jennifer, who directly handled relations with the partner smugglers in Nigeria and Libya, monitored the victims' journey across Africa as far as the Libyan coast, and paid the necessary amounts of money to complete the journey to Italy"¹⁸⁷.

In the relationship between victim and *maman*, the fact that the latter can herself have been a victim of trafficking in the past makes the link between the two even more ambiguous, in that the girl exploited on the streets could see the career of her *maman* in the trafficking chain as a valid possibility of economic independence and success¹⁸⁸. Often in the case of trafficking of young Nigerians, especially during the exploitation phase, the victim is involved in criminally important activities as perpetrator of the crime. Those who begin to play an active role in the trafficking business on behalf of their exploiters can gain an independent role in time, launching their own trafficking in people, reinvesting the money earned in the criminal enterprise¹⁸⁹: in this way, the young victims become mini-*maman* as time goes by, controlling and managing girls on the streets for the same organisations that exploited them.

From the stories told, the transformation begins with an exploitation which has given the girl no valid career opportunities in alternative to prostitution, which she ends up seeing as her only form of redemption:



"Prudence left Nigeria due to the severe economic conditions endured by her family. In Libya, she was put to work as a prostitute in a Connection House, where she was raped and became pregnant. She arrived in Italy in June 2015. She was sent to an emergency accommodation structure in Northern Italy, from which she escaped after applying for international protection. She finally arrived in Central Italy, where she was put to work as a prostitute, supervised closely by an older woman, an intermediary for the madam. The exploitation implemented against Prudence was constant and very violent: she lived with her madam and had no chance of moving away from her control. In addition to the debt of € 25,000, she had to meet constant demands for money: € 1,000 to be

accompanied to the operators, € 100 to buy a pregnancy test, € 100 to buy medicines, as well as a never-ending series of bills and receipts to be reimbursed. One night, on the street, the operators found her, suffering due to a burn on her hand. She had burned herself with a piece of incandescent plastic which was literally stuck to the back of her hand. The girl was visibly tired and worn out from working. She has a tendency to cut herself off from the Nigerian network and doesn't go to church or spend time with the Nigerian community. Prudence has gradually become aware that it is impossible to escape the will of the woman controlling her, who has, however, begun to loosen her grip and, having decided to bring her own children into Italy, sent her away, finding her somewhere to live in a neighbouring town. Prudence continues to pay her debt, working every night in every possible condition. She is also paying her family's debts with a Nigerian bank, which is threatening to take away the family home. Sometime after the event, some girls on the street told the operators that, despite still being trapped by debt, Prudence had organised their arrival in Italy to work on the streets. Prudence has become a mini-madam”.



“Several cases of young Nigerian girls have been reported in which it is presumed that they may be working as prostitutes or being encouraged into prostitution by adults, presumably of Nigerian nationality. In particular, a Nigerian minor, who subsequently declared that she was an adult, has been suspected of pushing other Nigerian girls onto the street, putting them in touch with Nigerians who have been living in Italy for a long time”¹⁹⁰.

The evolution of the former victim's status in the criminal chain of trafficking also involves the psychological nature of the former victim.

As reported by the operators of the Vie d'Uscita project, the girls completely change their attitude towards the situation that they are experiencing: the younger or newly arrived girls live in a catatonic, remissive and fearful state. Within the space of one or two months, some of them dramatically transform their behaviour and their presence on the street, in that the generational changeover brings in new arrivals all the time and favours a sort of upgrade of the girls who, on the strength of the experience gained on the streets, become *mentors and/or controllers* of the new arrivals. This hierarchical promotion takes place quickly and simultaneously with the arrival of the new girls. All this, however, has a huge psychological cost: from a condition of evident and disruptive suffering, they progress to a discomfort that becomes more pervasive. Via these mechanisms, the younger girls undergo the asphyxiating control of the older or more experienced girls, both at work and at home and in their private lives¹⁹¹.

The different attitude, also at psychological level, that the young women take on during the long time spent on the streets has also been observed by the operators of Marche and Abruzzo: children and 18-year-olds who are new to life on the streets are often afraid.

They have to learn quickly how to approach work and clients to earn money quicker and more easily. This condition alienates them from reality and subjects them totally to the criminal procedure.

Very often the girls complain of psychosomatic disturbances, such as tummy ache or general unwellness, asking to be taken to see a doctor¹⁹².

The condition of slavery for Nigerian minors is a certainty that allows the system to regenerate itself.



Photo: Tom Pilston / Save the Children

4.2.1.2 The black-man

During the process that leads Nigerian girls to become victims of trafficking, a relevant role is played by the *black man*. These men present themselves to the young victims as points of reference or logistic support during the journey or during the recruitment phase in the countries of origin and transit. As emerges from the stories, during movements from one territory to another, a girl can come into contact with a man met by chance, or through her network of acquaintances, who offers to find her somewhere to live or even to let her stay in his home, subsequently forcing her into prostitution to repay the expenses, or directing her or selling her to someone else who will force her into prostitution.

“During the journey, the girl comes into contact with a man who suggests she travel with him to Libya. He becomes her boyfriend and he encourages her to go to Italy, where she’s taken to a CAS in Calabria with other girls involved in the trafficking system. Then she ends up on the streets with the others”¹⁹³.

Often, the so-called black men work on mandate to the mamans, gravitating around the girls and pretending to be sentimentally involved with them, with the aim of dominating them and making a profit: the ambiguity of their role, both as

and boyfriends, amplifies the range of manipulation¹⁹⁴.

They too help keep the victim beholden to the maman, encouraging her to pay off all her debt while turning her into a pawn in prostitution¹⁹⁵. In this way, the girls who is a victim of trafficking finds herself surrounded on all sides by a socio-relational situation in which trafficking and exploitation are considered merely as business.



“Mary set off from Nigeria after being made a false promise of legal work from which she would have made money to help her family at home. The journey took place under the strict control of various connection men and armed men who took her to Libya, where, after a time of detention in a connection house, she got on a boat bound for Italy. After arriving in Italy, Mary was placed in a structure in Northern Italy, where she was traced by the smuggler who had organised the journey and who obliged her to become prostitute. The girl, aware that it was impossible to escape exploitation on the street, decided to go to the Police”¹⁹⁶.

4.2.2 The transnational criminal model: from Romania to Italy

In the trafficking of Romanian girls for sexual exploitation, right from the recruitment phase, a central role is taken on by the so-called *boyfriend*, who is often much older than the recruited minor. These men push the victims to perform illegal activities in the country of origin or encourage them to abandon the family if the latter is against the relationship.



“Aneta was contacted by the street unit: besides being very young, she showed a suffered and fearful attitude. She asked the operators for help because she was pregnant but said that it would be very hard to convince her boyfriend to let her see a doctor on a regular basis.

Aneta had been in Italy for two months and was working on the streets.

Before coming here, Aneta worked at a bar, where she met her future boyfriend, who proposed that they elope.

Aneta left family, school and work. Two weeks after their arrival, the boy's attitude suddenly changed: he began showing frequent signs of irritation, which degenerated into blackmail and physical and psychological violence, which Aneta justified by the economic difficulties they were facing. Due to her deep gratitude, Aneta said that she was willing to do anything to help him. So, the boy proposed that she do what the other girls did, deciding to go to work on the streets as an act of unconditional love. Aneta began taking home several hundred euros a day, but the man's attitude didn't improve: his expectations became higher and higher and the episodes of violence increased.

Aneta was soon engulfed by a deep sense of anguish and the desire to go back home, to her family and her studies, but she knew she had no independence.

The girl now feels trapped and doesn't know how to escape from the situation she's living in: *I know he's using me. He won't stop until he finds fresh meat to exploit*¹⁹⁷.

In the cases of recruitment by a man who takes on the role of boyfriend, exploitation is mainly sexual and is legitimised by the sentimental connection with the victim; this link makes it impossible for her to clearly perceive the state of constriction and submission in which she lives, not realising, for example, that the influence exercised by her partner, who gets to the point where he controls her constantly through constant phone calls, turning up unexpectedly while she's working, and threatening and abusing her.

Due to the sentimental relationship, the girl is led to believe that she is making her own decision to work on the streets and is acting in her own interest, while in actual fact she is also being involved as a pawn in the exploitation circuits.

In this process, the victim ends up recruiting other Romanian girls, often friends and relatives, as well described in the story below:

“In general, the girl seems completely immersed in the vortex of exploitation that sentences her to slavery through devious tricks and connections: the relationship with her boyfriend and exploiter, the departure from the gypsy camp, the new house and the new girl to watch over. All elements that seem to relegate her to a state of exploitation and prostitution in a way that is almost permanent, to which she is resigned”¹⁹⁸.

Within the scope of the exploitation of Romanian women, there is a hierarchy that develops between the girls on the street, similar to that already found among the Nigerians, so some of the girls start playing a role of *inspector* in relation to the other victims. In cases in which these mechanisms are activated, the girls' apparent freedom of movement does not correspond to real freedom. Instead, it becomes an index of the presence of a network capable of continuing to control the victim even from a distance, without direct supervision.

4.2.2.1 Exploitation by family and friends in trafficking for the purpose of forced marriage

Particularly in the case of girls from Eastern Europe belonging to the Rom group of gypsies, the relationship of subordination to the exploiter-boyfriend can also be created with relatives or friends (e.g.: cousins or sisters). In these cases, the force of manipulation is even stronger due to the young age and profound state of vulnerability of the victim, who is often still a child dependant on the family unit in terms of affection and also at material and economic level. In this context, the practice of early marriage becomes a reason for trafficking. Through marriage contracts, girls are sold by their family to that of the groom in exchange for the payment of an agreed sum of money. The girl becomes the property of the groom's family and is forced to carry out illegal activities, or to beg, until the sum paid for her has been offset. This condition of entrenched slavery is represented below:

“The Sentence has confirmed the reliability of the girl who has been offended and her declarations with regard to her miserable living conditions; they revealed that, after being sold by her father to the accused as a wife for his son, she was forced to go out begging every day and could not go home unless she had collected at least 30 euros, otherwise she would be beaten with fists, belt or sticks, even when she was pregnant, and that this had been going on for about a year”¹⁹⁹.

In situations like the one above, the girl is exploited twice: both by the family of origin and by the new family.

4.3 Passing figures: facilitators, smugglers, boatmen and abusers

In the stories of foreign minors who have come to Italy alone and with no parental references, there are always people who prepare the logistics for travelling or who facilitate their continuation. These figures can work independently or within structured criminal groups. These facilitators are often those who determine the process of introduction of the children into the circuits



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of exploitation and forced labour. Certain elements common to the different types of child mobility analysed in chapter three help outline a profile of the parties that facilitate illegal child mobility to Italy.

4.3.1 The facilitator and the smuggler

Facilitators and smugglers are often figures met within the scope of the informal networks of the smuggling of persons and, more generally, in the same communities of origin of the child who intends to undertake the journey. In the stories told to Save the Children, these figures can also occupy a leading role within the local communities, being the managers of the logistics of the journey to Europe and procurers of socially legitimised informal *travel agencies*. In some cases, the facilitators of trafficking are contacted and activated by the relatives of the children or by people they know. Sometimes, they are recruited by people who go from house to house, explaining the travel procedures. The children can be intercepted by adults who convince them to leave, promising them easy earnings and cash gifts directly from the reception facilities. Egyptian and Bengalese minors exploited through these networks have to repay a debt to their smugglers after arriving in Italy or the country of destination. The need to honour the debt heavily conditions the life and actions of the children in the countries of destination, as they are aware that, if their family becomes insolvent, it will run into criminal difficulties, social pressure and even violence at the hands of the smugglers.

“Most of the Egyptian children in the Milan area had a close network of contacts with other Egyptians (relatives at some level, adults of reference from the same town). This network of acquaintances means that the children are included in a circuit at high risk of exploitation, working at markets or in restaurants”²⁰⁰.

The role of the facilitators, as highlighted in the box dedicated to the Ventimiglia border, is also very strong at the Northern border, where the vulnerability, precariousness and illegality of the migrants intending to cross the borders make them particularly appealing to the illegal market, because they can be exploited to feed various kinds of unlawful activities, to their own detriment. In Italy too, the facilitator is a recurring figure in the stories of transiting migrants. In this case, the facilitator is usually someone of the same nationality as the migrant who offers him logistic support in the transit country, helping him continue his journey. They are well-known and usually easily recognisable within the community of transiting migrants²⁰¹:

“He is clearly recognised by all the transiting migrants as a smuggler: he provides the mobile phones, makes the calls, collects the money, etc.”²⁰².

In Ventimiglia, but also in Como and at the Brenner Pass, it is a well-known fact, for example, that migrants can pay other people, who may either be Italian or migrants holding a legal permit to stay, to illegally cross the border into France, Switzerland and Austria, with the risk of being sent back to Italy by the police²⁰³.

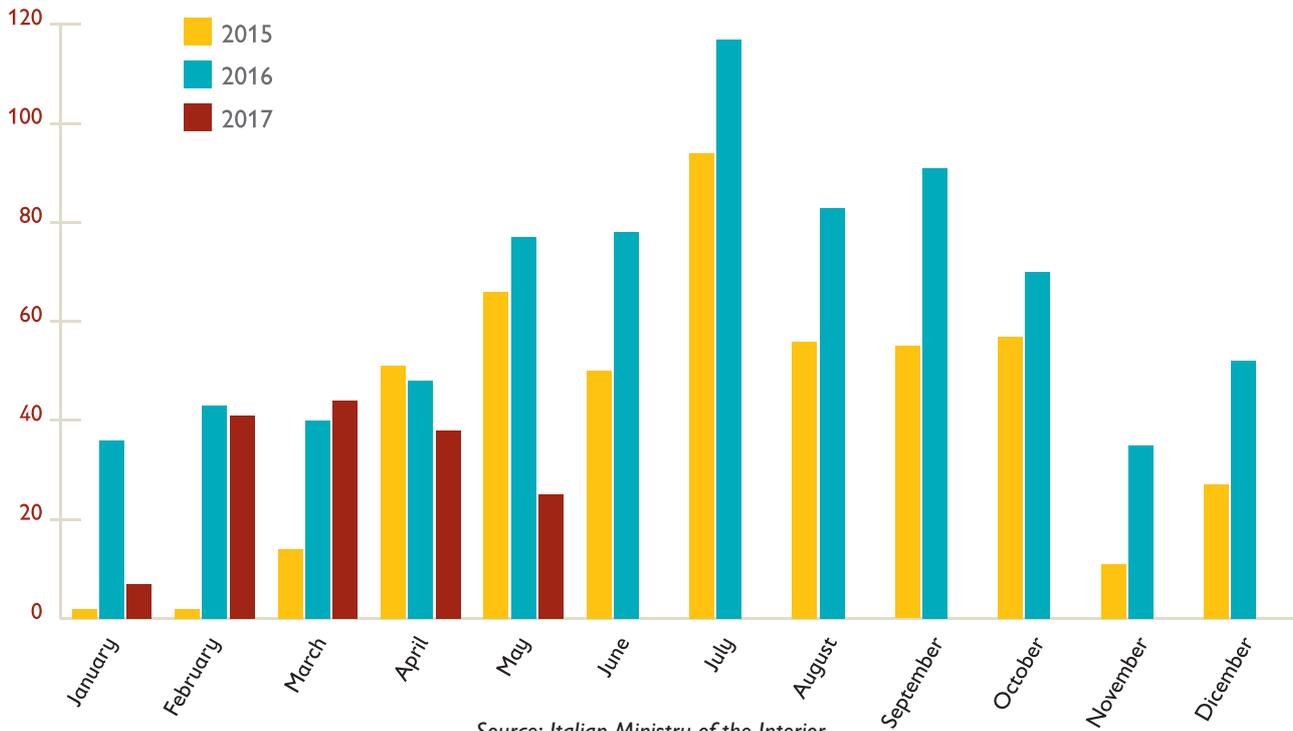
4.3.2 The boatman

Commonly known as “boatmen”, these are accomplices or assistants of the smugglers mine who skipper the boats, and are usually at the lowest level of the criminal hierarchy. According to the Ministry of the Interior²⁰⁴, in 2015,

515 boatmen were arrested, while in 2016, the number of arrests increased by 49% (770 boatmen were held), reflecting the 47% increase in the number of landings (which rose from 1.068 in 2015 to 1.580 in 2016).

Both in 2015 and 2016, the highest number of arrests took place in July (94 in 2015 and 117 in 2016), due to the peak in the “hot” period of landings, i.e.: in the months between May and September, which accounted for over 60% of arrests in both years. In the early months of 2017 (May) on the other hand, against 365 landings registered, the number of boatmen arrested was 155, with a peak recorded in March (44 arrests).

Arrested boatmen



CHAPTER 4

However, the interceptions of the boatmen don't always affect the criminal trafficking system.

Traffickers, or those who occupy a place at the top of the organisation, tend to hold positions that do not expose them to the risks of the journey or to the risk of being intercepted by the police. These are the main reasons why, as proven by the investigations of some Courts, there has been an increase by traffickers in the use of minors as boatmen²⁰⁵. In these cases, young migrants take on the job of skippering the boat in exchange for a discount on the cost of the journey, or because they are forced to. This is the case, for example, of a recent court case involving migrants who declared that they had been forced, with physical violence and armed death threats, to skipper a watercraft²⁰⁶.

“ “ - From the story of a group of Eritrean girls - “The girls told us that the smugglers taught some of the migrants to skipper the dingy and the only instructions they were given before being made to sail were not to smoke on the boat and not to stand up otherwise they might overbalance. They didn't know how long they would be at sea and how they would be rescued”²⁰⁷.

“ “ “At the end of the identification operations, the Naval Operations Sector of Crotona, together with members of the Italian Police, ordered the arrest of four Egyptians who were part of an organisation dedicated to the trafficking of migrants to Italy, while a fifth, younger boatman, was reported and entrusted to the Red Cross”²⁰⁸.

4.3.3 The abusers

Unaccompanied foreign minors transiting through Italy, including those who are not directly included in the organised exploitation circuit, live in extremely precarious conditions, finding shelter on the streets and being systematically exposed to abuse and violence. In relation to the psycho-physical trauma suffered by the youngsters, the operators of Save the Children have registered cases of violence and abuse perpetrated by Italian men who take advantage of the neediness of the children, offering them things, a home and assistance in exchange for sex.

“A 17-year-old boy told us he had been solicited by an adult and taken to a hotel room, where he had been undressed and touched; we reported the case to the Police and emergency services for minor, telling them that the boy was vulnerable and asking for his placement”²⁰⁹.

“Another 17-year-old Egyptian minor arrived at the hub in Milan looking very shaken. After talking to him several times, it emerged that he had been solicited in Milan by a man aged about 35, with whom he had had sex”²¹⁰.

Abuse has also been reported in the centres which are supposed to defend and protect minors. In these cases, episodes of violence, including that of a physical nature, are due to conflicts regarding both minors and operators at the structure.

“The first two months of 2017 were characterised by the emersion and implementation of a new CSP - Child Safeguarding Policy, a preventive system for the defence of minors against abuse by adults in a position of trust, used by Save the Children in all of its activities. This intervention began with the report by an Egyptian minor who had escaped from a family community and gone to CivicoZero, asking to be placed in another structure. Specifically, the minor reported severe and repeated episodes of physical and psychological violence perpetrated by some people working at the structure, to the detriment of the children staying there”²¹¹.

RECRUITED AND CONTROLLED ONLINE: THE RISKS FOR VICTIMS IN THE AGE OF CYBER-TRAFFICKING

As reported by the European Commission “internet is increasingly used for the recruitment of victims and for advertising their services”²¹².

The evidence gathered by Save the Children confirms that internet, new technologies and mobile phones are playing an increasingly central role in the recruitment and control of the young victims. According to report in other EU States too²¹³, many victims of trafficking, particularly for sexual exploitation or forced labour, are recruited online. The recruiters have access to a large basin of potential victims through social networks and instant messaging systems. The web is a risk factor particularly for teenagers sexually exploited outside the trafficking circuit. Different Egyptian, Bengalese and Eritrean minors have reported being recruited online by offenders who offered them gifts and a few euros in exchange for sex.

Similarly, mobile phones are confirmed as a Central tool for the control of the victims. Both Nigerian and Romanian girls have told operators of Save the Children that they have been systematically controlled by phone texts and recurrent, insistent calls aimed at checking up on their movements and activities.

Reports to the outreach units of Save the Children have also pointed out that many children in emergency centres, where they are taken immediately after landing, usually receive mobile phones as a gift from others at the structure, also from their home country, or by parcel, with which they can be contacted and traced by the mamans who organise their escape from the structure and exploitation on the streets.





Photo: Ahmad Baroudi / Save the Children

Notes

^{164.} See European Commission, 2016. Human Trafficking in the EU – Slavery of new times, available at https://ec.europa.eu/antitrafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/infographic_on_human_trafficking_-_facts_and_figures_1.pdf

^{165.} See Europol, Situation Report, February 2016. Trafficking in Human Beings in the EU, available at http://ec.europa.eu/antitrafficking/sites/anti-trafficking/files/situational_report_trafficking_in_human_beings-europol.pdf

^{166.} See European Commission, Relazione 2016 sui progressi compiuti nella lotta alla tratta di esseri umani a norma dell'Articolo 20 della direttiva 2011/36/UE concernente la prevenzione e la repressione della tratta di esseri umani e la protezione delle vittime, available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52016DC0267&from=IT>

^{167.} See Eurostat, Trafficking in Human Beings, 2015, available at https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/eurostat_report_on_trafficking_in_human_beings_-_2015_edition.pdf

^{168.} See Ministry of the Interior, 2015. Relazione sull'attività delle forze di Polizia, sullo stato dell'ordine e della sicurezza pubblica e sulla criminalità organizzata, available at http://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/relazione_al_parlamento_anno_2015.pdf

^{169.} See Department of Juvenile and Community Justice, Office I of the Chief of Department of Statistics, Juvenile Justice Services, 15 marzo 2017, available at https://giustizia.it/resources/cms/documents/dgmc_quindicinale_15marzo2017.pdf

^{170.} See Department of Juvenile and Community Justice, Office I of the Chief of the Department of Statistics, Juvenile Justice Services, 15 marzo 2017, available at https://giustizia.it/resources/cms/documents/dgmc_quindicinale_15marzo2017.pdf

^{171.} See Palermo Court of Appeal, Relazione sull'Amministrazione della Giustizia nell'anno 2016 (periodo 1 luglio 2015 - 30 giugno 2016), available at http://www.giustizia.palermo.it/CorteAppello/documentazione/D_5584.pdf

^{172.} See Catania Court of Appeal, Relazione inaugurale 2017, Relazione sull'amministrazione della giustizia nel periodo 1 luglio 2015



- 30 giugno 2016, Assemblea Generale 28 gennaio 2017, available at http://www.giustizia.catania.it/allegatinews/A_13107.pdf

^{173.} See National Labor Inspectorate, Rapporto Annuale dell'Attività di Vigilanza in Materia di Lavoro e Legislazione Sociale 2014 e 2015, available at <http://www.lavoro.gov.it/Amministrazione-Trasparente/Altri-contenuti/Documents/Rapporto-annuale-2015.pdf> 2014 - <http://www.ispettorato.gov.it/it/studiestatistiche/Documents/Rapporti%20annuali/rapporto%20annuale%202016.pdf>

^{174.} See National Labor Inspectorate, Rapporto Annuale dell'attività di Vigilanza In Materia Di Lavoro e Legislazione Sociale Anno 2016, available at <https://www.ispettorato.gov.it/it-it/studiestatistiche/Documents/Rapporti%20annuali/Rapporto-annuale2016.pdf>

^{175.} Ibidem.

^{176.} See Europol, 2016. Situation Report Trafficking in Human Beings in the EU, available at http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/anti-trafficking/files/situational_report_trafficking_in_human_beings-europol.pdf

^{177.} See Ministry of the Interior, 2015. Relazione sull'attività delle forze di Polizia, sullo stato dell'ordine e della sicurezza pubblica e sulla criminalità organizzata, available at http://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/relazione_al_parlamento_anno_2015.pdf

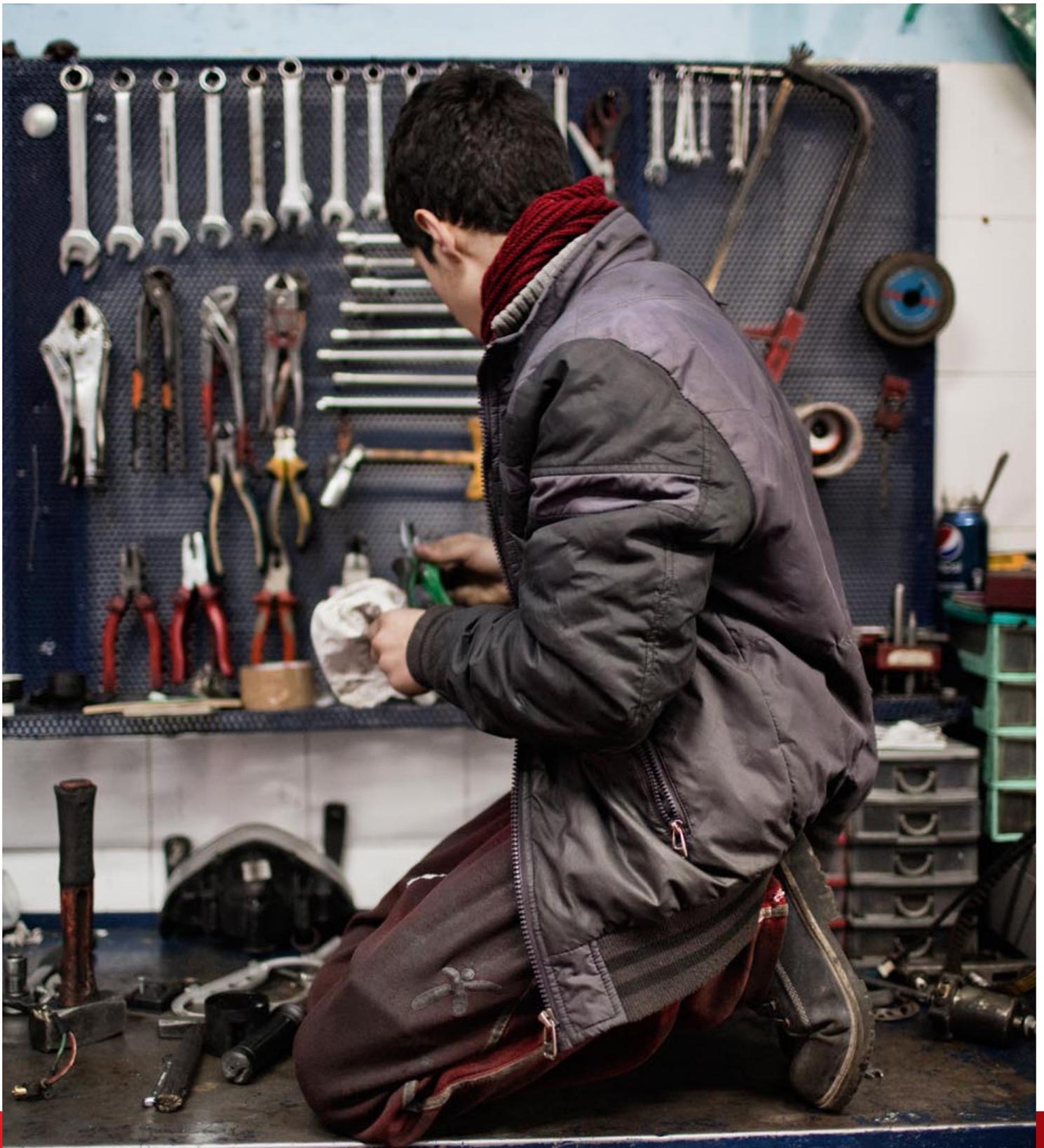
^{178.} See Ministry of Justice - General Directorate of Statistics and Organizational Analysis, available at https://webstat.giustizia.it/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx

^{179.} See Ministry of the Interior, 2015. Relazioni sull'attività delle forze di Polizia, sullo stato dell'ordine e della sicurezza pubblica e sulla criminalità organizzata, available at http://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/relazione_al_parlamento_anno_2015.pdf

^{180.} See National Directorate of Anti-Mafia, Relazione annuale sulle attività svolte dal Procuratore nazionale e dalla Direzione nazionale antimafia e antiterrorismo nonché sulle dinamiche e strategie della criminalità organizzata di tipo mafioso nel periodo 1° luglio 2014-30 giugno 2015, febbraio 2016., p. 373, available at <http://www.publicpolicy.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Relazione-Franco-Roberti-D-na.pdf>

181. Like the so-called confraternities, vast and ramified international criminal networks, organised in compliance with the clan model, within which the members intimidate and dominate other members and outsiders, practicing voodoo rituals, robberies and abductions.
182. Operation triggered by criminal procedur no. 18552/15 RGNR pending at the DDA of Catania, see <http://direzioneinvestigativaantimafia.interno.gov.it/semestrali/sem/2016/1sem2016.pdf> e <http://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/41778>, <http://www.cronacaoggiquotidiano.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Festa-della-Polizia-2016-1.pdf>
183. See Italian Police Department of Ragusa, operation Broken Chains, available at <http://questure.poliziadistato.it/it/Ragusa/articolo/125058889779d0056073470598>
184. See <http://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/1543581099f8a1d03597294820>. See anche <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W DenyPvvHT4>
185. Supreme Court of Cassation, Sentence no. 23590 of 7 June 2016.
186. Public Prosecutors Office at Palermo Court District Anti-Mafia Directorate, N. 18496/2015 /DDA R.G. notizie di reato - mod. 21.
187. On 17 March 2016, the Italian Police Department of Catania enforced a restricting order for investigation issued on 14 March 2016 by the local DDA for five persons of Nigerian origin, accused of the crime of aiding and abetting the trafficking of young Nigerians, including minors, DIA. 1st half 2016, Relazione del Ministro dell'Interno al Parlamento, Attività Svolta e Risultati Conseguiti dalla Direzione Investigativa Antimafia, available at <http://direzioneinvestigativaantimafia.interno.gov.it/semestrali/sem/2016/1sem2016.pdf>
188. See Europol, Situation Report Trafficking in Human Beings in the EU, February 2016, available at http://ec.europa.eu/antitrafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/situational_report_trafficking_in_human_beings_-_europol.pdf
189. OSCE, Analysing the Business Model of Trafficking in Human Beings to Better Prevent the Crime, Vienna, 2010. EASO. EASO Information on the countries of origin. Nigeria: trafficking of women for sexual purposes, 2015.
190. Save the Children datasheet, Child Safeguarding Policy CSP, 2016.
191. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
192. Final narrative datasheet of the Vie d'Uscita project, 2016.
193. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, 2016.
194. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
195. CivicoZero Rome Focus group, 31 March 2017.
196. See <http://questure.poliziadistato.it/it/Ragusa/articolo/125058889779d0056073470598>
197. CivicoZero, Rome, report on outreach activities, 2016.
198. Final narrative datasheet, CivicoZero Rome, 2016.
199. Supreme Court of Cassation, Sentence no. 23590 7 June 2016.
200. Narrative report CivicoZero Rome, February-March 2017.
201. WeWorld, Diritti confinati, Le Lampedusa del Nord: Ventimiglia e Como, WeWorld Reports, n. 1 "18 dicembre 2016 - Giornata internazionale dei migranti", available at <https://www.weworld.it/pubblicazioni/2016/Report-1-2016/files/assets/common/downloads/publication.pdf>
202. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, 2016.
203. WeWorld, Diritti confinati, Le Lampedusa del Nord: Ventimiglia e Como, WeWorld Reports, n. 1 "18 dicembre 2016 - Giornata internazionale dei migranti", available at <https://www.weworld.it/pubblicazioni/2016/Report-1-2016/files/assets/common/downloads/publication.pdf>
204. See Ministry of the Interior, Department of Public Security - Central Administration of Immigration and Borders Police.
205. See Catania Court of Appeal, Relazione sull'Amministrazione della Giustizia nel periodo 1° luglio 2015 – 30 giugno 2016, Assemblea Generale, 28 gennaio 2017, available at Catania Court of Appeal, Relazione sull'Amministrazione della Giustizia nel periodo 1° luglio 2015 - 30 giugno 2016, Assemblea Generale, 28 gennaio 2017.
206. See Sentence 4114/2016, available at [http://www.camerapenedipalermo.com/userfiles/file/sentenze/Merito\(PA\)_OMICIDIO_-_Stato_necessit%C3%A0_-_valutazione_prove_-_sussistenza_anche_in_caso_dubbio.pdf](http://www.camerapenedipalermo.com/userfiles/file/sentenze/Merito(PA)_OMICIDIO_-_Stato_necessit%C3%A0_-_valutazione_prove_-_sussistenza_anche_in_caso_dubbio.pdf)
207. CivicoZero Rome datasheet, 7 - 13 January 2016.
208. See National Antimafia Directorate, Annual Report on the activities of the National Prosecutor and the National Directorate anti-mafia and Counter-terrorism as well as on the dynamics and strategies of organized mafia-type crime in the period July 1st, 2014 - June 30, 2015, February 2016, p. 373, available at <http://www.publicpolicy.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Relazione-Franco-Roberti-D-na.pdf>
209. CivicoZero Milan datasheet, September 2016.
210. CivicoZero Milan datasheet, December 2016. In agreement with the minor who feared personally reporting his abuser, the operators of CivicoZero informed the competent Police Department of the facts, and the Department opened a file against unidentified parties. The investigation is ongoing.
211. CivicoZero Rome Report, January - February 2017.
212. European Commission, 2016. Human Trafficking in the EU - Slavery of new times, available at https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/infographic_on_human_trafficking_-_facts_and_figures_1.pdf
213. See European Commission, Relazione 2016 sui progressi compiuti nella lotta alla tratta di esseri umani a norma dell'Articolo 20 della direttiva 2011/36/UE concernente la prevenzione e la repressione della tratta di esseri umani e la protezione delle vittime. Available at <http://www.penalecontemporaneo.it/upload/1464218179Relazione%20Tratta%202016.pdf>





CHAPTER 5

Photo: Francesco Alesi / Save The Children

5.1 The main political and legislative innovations in relation to trafficking and severe exploitation between 2016 and 2017

The Italian system for protecting the victims of trafficking, operational since 2000, is coordinated and co-funded by the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of the Ministers.

With Legislative Decree no. 24 dated 4 March 2014, implementing Directive 36/2011 related to the prevention and repression of trafficking in human beings and the protection of victims, the D.E.O. was identified as the organisation appointed to coordinate, monitor and assess the policies for prevention, contrast and social protection of victims, assigning it a central role in the national policies in the sector dedicated to contrasting trafficking, both with regard to the direction and coordination of by social protection interventions and assistance to the victims, and with regard to the planning of financial resources aimed at activating assistance for and social integration of victims.

Between 2016 and 2017, various legislative interventions have launch the systemisation of government action with specific regard to programmes of emersion, assistance and social integration²¹⁴ also for child victims of trafficking and severe exploitation.

Noteworthy in this context was the implementation of the following acts:

- National Anti-Trafficking Plan 2016-2018 (PNA)²¹⁵.
- Decree of the Presidency of the Council of the Ministers - DPCM 16 May 2016 - “Definition of the consolidated programme of emersion, assistance and social integration in favour of foreigners and citizens pursuant to paragraph bis of Art. 18 of Legislative Decree 25 July 1998, no. 286, victims of the crimes envisaged by Articles 600 and 601 of the Criminal Code, or who fall within the situations envisaged by paragraph 1 of said Article 18”.
- Decree no. 234/2016 “Regulation for establishing the age of unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking, related to the implementation of Art. 4, par. 2 of Legislative Decree no. 24 dated 4 March 2014.
- Law 47/2017 “Provisions for measures to protect unaccompanied foreign minors” known as the Zampa law.

The issue of the National Anti-Trafficking Plan 2016-2018, awaited since 2011 and built also thanks to the contribution of many of the organisations involved in the sector, including Save the Children, represented an important step towards defining the Government strategy to contrast and prevent the crime of trafficking and to strengthen the tools for defending victims, according to the priorities identified by the *EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings (2012-2016)*²¹⁶.

Structured into four strategic areas of intervention (prevention, criminal procedure, protection and partnership) the PNA has defined, for the first time, a complete system of protection sensitive to the vulnerabilities expressed also by child victims of trafficking and severe exploitation, capable of guaranteeing interaction and multidisciplinary coordination in the sector.

Assimilating and implementing many of the recommendations supplied by Save the Children and by other private social organisations working in trafficking sector, the PNA particularly recognises and takes on the standard operating

procedures for the protection of minors, as well as the tools of identification, self-assessment of risks and awareness, encoded within the scope of two international projects promoted with other organisations²¹⁷.

The contents of the Plan include the provisions (subsequently strengthened by the provisions of Law L. 47/2017 referred to below) relating to the implementation of specific protective measures for child victims of trafficking, the identification of which must be based on guidelines aimed at correctly identifying the potential victims of trafficking in the various spheres in which this can happen, including that of procedure for the acknowledgement of international protection.

In addition, the plan envisages:

- the multidisciplinary formation of all the subjects who potentially enter into contact with the victims of trafficking, including the police, border guards, operators of the various reception centres, judges and legal operators;
- the introduction of a National Referral Mechanism aimed at creating a system of cooperation via which the government players fulfil the obligation to protect and promote the human rights of the victims of trafficking, coordinated with civil society;
- the constant update of the vulnerability ratios, to respond to the change phenomenology and profile of the victims.

Also in 2016, with the Decree dated 16 May/2016²¹⁸ of the President of the Council of Ministers, the regulations of the Consolidated Programme of emersion, assistance and social integration was formulated. This is a unique programme aimed at simplifying and strengthening the methods of protection and assistance of victims, all the actions envisaged by Art. 13 Law 228/2003 and Art. 18 of Legislative Decree 286/98, guaranteeing the victims of trafficking and exploitation adequate living conditions, food and healthcare during transit and, subsequently, the continuation of assistance and social integration. In this context, in 2016, thanks to a Fund of 14.5 million euro dedicated specifically to the implementation of the Consolidated Programme and to the protection of Victims, the D.E.O. created 18 territorial projects lasting 15 months²¹⁹.

Tender 1/2016, which funded the projects developed from the first of September 2016 to the 31 December 2017 did not envisage specific programmes of intervention for minors, but the contents of the tender indicated, by virtue of the unpredictability of the number of unaccompanied minors that arrive in Italy across the sea, that the projects had to envisage “activities of social protection, socio-sanitary, psychological and legal assistance, along various kinds of advisory activities, paying particular attention to the specificities of unaccompanied minors”²²⁰.

The provisions relating to the protection of child victims of trafficking were further strengthened in January 2017, with the implementation of Article 4, paragraph 2 of Legislative Decree 24/2014 which brought into force the Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers 10 November 2016, no. 234 “Regulation for establishing the age of unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking, related to the implementation of Art. 4, par. 2 of Legislative Decree no. 24 dated 4 March 2014”²²¹. In detail, DPCM no. 234/16 clarifies the procedures to be implemented to establish the age of child victims of trafficking and introduces some basic guarantees, envisaging that:

- only where there are founded doubts as to the age and the latter cannot be established through identifying documents (passport or other document allowing photographic recognition), the police can ask the defending judge to authorise the multidisciplinary procedure to ascertain the age;

- this ascertainment is carried out, with respect for the interests of the minor, by a multidisciplinary team at a public healthcare facility, identified by the judge, and takes place via an interview, an auxological check-up by a paediatrician, and a psychological or neuropsychiatric assessment, in the presence of a cultural mediator, taking into account the specificities relating to the ethnic and cultural origin of the child;
- the child must be adequately informed, with the aid of a cultural mediator, of the types of tests that are going to take place, their aims and the right to refuse;
- the conclusive report must indicate the attribution of the estimated age, specifying the margin of error that lies in the biological variability and in the methods used, along with the consequent minimum and maximum values of the age attributable;
- if, considering the margin of error, there is still doubt as to whether the person is a child or an adult, it is presumed that he/she is a child;
- the provision for the attribution of age implemented by the defending judge is served, with annexed translation, to the person concerned and to the tutor, and can be appealed against;
- awaiting the establishment of age, the person concerned must be considered as a child, to allow immediate access to assistance and protection”.

On 28 March 2017, with 375 votes in favour and 13 against, after almost four years, the Italian Parliament approved Law 47/2017²²² promoted by a group of members of parliament from various political parties, led by the honourable Sandra Zampa, and promoted strongly by the leading organisations for the defence of children’s rights, including Save the Children. The Law rearranges, updates and extends the standards of the treatment reserved for unaccompanied children entering Italy and introduces, with specific regard to the victims of trafficking, a specific Assistance Programme (pursuant to art. 17) aimed at guaranteeing targeted and effective protection.

Substantially innovating the provisions of Art. 13, par. 2, of Law 228/2003 (which set up the first Programme of Assistance for the victims of trafficking), Art. 17 of Law 47/2017 reinforces the defence of child victims of trafficking, drawing up a specific programme of assistance aimed at guaranteeing adequate conditions of reception and psycho-social, health and legal assistance, which can also be developed after reaching adulthood (paragraph 1). The laws relating to the child’s rights to be heard and to legal assistance, also with a view to receiving compensation for damage, pursuant to Articles 15 and 16 (paragraph 2), are also emphasised for child victims of trafficking. As regards compensation for damage, paragraph 3 authorises the spending of 154,080 euros a year, starting in 2017. In terms of financial coverage, it should be noted that Law 47/2017 has been approved as the Law for invariance of spending, meaning that it does not envisage dedicated or specific resources for the Law.

Therefore, the Law must be implemented within the context of the existing financial resources that have already been accrued for anti-trafficking programmes, also covering child victims of trafficking.

Also with regard to the protection of child victims of labour exploitation, between 2016 and 2017, important steps forward were made.

As regards illegal labour mediation, the approval of Law 199 of 2016 was particularly important, giving “Provisions to contrast illegal labour, the exploitation of labour in farming and the regulation of payment in the farming sector”²²³. Illegal labour mediation and the exploitation of labour were included among the crimes that can be prosecuted in the Criminal Code in 2011, with Article 603-bis, which punished intermediation with imprisonment of five to eight years and with fines between 1,000 and 2,000 euros for each labourer recruited. The identification of the crime however remained rather limited: it envisages the

identification of an organised intermediation activity, gave no definition of the term “intermediation”, and established a series of specifications which constituted exploitation. The new Law rewrites the crime, simplifying it with the elimination of certain specifications that complicated identification, and lists the existence of one or more of the following conditions as an index of exploitation:

1. repeated payment of amounts evidently non-compliant with the collective national or territorial agreements stipulated by the most representative trade unions at national level, or out of proportion with the quantity and quality of work performed;
2. repeated breach of laws relating to working hours, rest, weekly days off, compulsory leave, holidays;
3. breaches of the laws on safety and hygiene in the workplace;
4. subjection of the employee to working conditions, surveillance or housing conditions that are degrading.

Furthermore, as regards the defence of child victims of labour intermediaries, it introduces specific punishment, increasing the sentence by between a third and a half, in the event that one or more of the recruits are children below employable age. The innovations of the law also include extension of the provisions of the anti-trafficking fund to the victims of labour intermediaries.

5.2 The Anti-Trafficking National Fund and child victims

The legislative provisions that allocate financial resources in favour of child victims of trafficking fall within the general framework set up by the following acts:

- Legislative Decree 11 August 2003, no. 228 - “Measures against trafficking in persons”;
- Legislative Decree 25 July 1998, no. 286 “Consolidated law on provisions concerning the regulation of immigration and laws on the condition of foreigner nationals”;
- Legislative Decree 4 March 2014, no. 24 implementing directive 2011/36/UE, relating to the prevention and repression of trafficking in human beings and the protection of victims.

These regulatory interventions, besides outlining a framework of skills and responsibilities centralised at the Presidency of the Council of the Ministers, in coordination with the other competent central and local administrations for individual matters, are aimed at bringing out the peculiarities of the condition of the unaccompanied foreign child, both in general terms of assistance and reception, and with reference to the right to access to justice.

From a programmatic point of view, these provisions can also be applied to the National Plan of Action against smuggling and the severe exploitation of human beings 2016-2018 on the basis of which the Programme of Emersion, Assistance and Social Protection and the Relative Methods of Implementation and Financing regarding as much adult victims as children.

As regards funding, at national level, the allocation of resources in favour of the programme of emersion, assistance and social protection pursuant to Law 228/2003 was defined with stability laws for 2015, 2016 and 2017, which destined:

- with Stability Law 2015, for 2015, resources of 8 million euro (paragraph 184, Art. 1);
- with Stability Law 2016, for 2016/2017/2018, 3 million euro per annum (paragraph 417, Art.1);
- lastly, with the Stability Law for 2017²²⁴, a further 5 million euro to the Anti-Trafficking Fund for 2017²²⁵.

In the Preliminary Note to the Budget for 2017, in the “Equal Opportunities” Responsibility Centre, as part of the “Social protection for special categories” programme, in chapter 520 pursuant to Law 228/2003, 29.65 million euros were assigned. This is historically the highest sum ever paid for the funding of projects to protect victims in Italy and confirms the centrality assigned by the government in office to fighting trafficking and severe exploitation.

These resources were subsequently reduced by € 5,915,640.42 as a result of the negative financial statement requested by the Ministry of Economics and Finance to contain accruals for policies in compliance with Art. 7, paragraph 1, letter b) and paragraph 2 of Decree Law 6 July 2012, no. 95 “Urgent provisions for public spending with invariance of services to the public, converted into Law 7 August 2012, no. 135, with amendments, and Art. 1 paragraph 291 of Law 23 December 2014, no. 190 (Stability Law).

To date, the latest provision of € 23,734,359.58 covers not only the financing of the annual Consolidated Programme of Emersion, Assistance and Social Integration, but also other actions, including:

- the agreement with the Municipality of Venice for the management of the Anti-trafficking Freephone number, which also covers the activation of an additional experimental action for potential or presumed victims, who might emerge from those territories where there are no projects funded by tender 1/2016 of the Consolidated Programme of Emersion, Assistance and Social Integration;
- the activation of a planning proposal elaborated jointly with the European Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) with the aim of accomplishing a continuous training activity based on a multi-agency methodology which involves all the operators who, for different reasons, deal with the victims trafficking. The project envisages a simulated exercise which starts with the first notification of crime and continues through to the conclusive provisions;
- last, but not least, with the funds allocated to contract trafficking, the D.E.O. has planned the implementation of the national database on trafficking in human beings.

As regards the provision of funds dedicated specifically to child victims of trafficking and exploitation, Article 17 of Law 7 April 2017, no. 47, added to Article 13 of Legislative Decree 228 of 2003, creates a clause which requires, in the definition of the National Anti-Trafficking Plan, and consequently in the resources destined to its implementation, particular defence for unaccompanied foreign minors, drawing up a specific assistance programme which ensures adequate conditions of reception and psycho-social, health and legal assistance, envisaging long-term solutions, also into adulthood.

Moreover, Law no. 47/2017 authorises the spending of € 154,080 per annum from 2017, in order to provide adequate assistance to obtain compensation for damages in compliance with Art. 18 of Legislative Decree 18 August 2015 no. 142 for the implementation of directive 2013/33/UE, containing legislation relating to the reception of those seeking international protection, as well as directive 2013/32/UE, containing common procedures for the acknowledgement and withdrawal of the status of international protection.



Photo: Hannah Maule-Finch / Save the Children

To guarantee faster emersion, identification, assistance and protection for child victims of trafficking and labour exploitation and the full implementation of their rights, Save the Children Italy recommends:

1. That the Department for Equal Opportunities at the Presidency of the Council of the Ministers:

- implement and monitor the commitments envisaged by the new Plan of National Action against trafficking and severe exploitation of human beings, guaranteeing that the projects funded always offer services and protection interventions dedicated specifically to child victims of trafficking;
- define, with the aid of local authorities and defence associations, a system in which the services work together to take charge of the situation concerning minors and the anti-trafficking service;
- guarantee that the Consolidated Programme of Emersion, Assistance and Social Integration approved in 2016, the Freephone number and the “territorial operating units” always cover, and in all sectors, the needs of child victims of trafficking and exploitation. To this end, it is necessary to guarantee an adequate number of places and a joint intervention by institutions and private social operator to guarantee the immediate placement of the child, prompt removal from the place where he/she is located at the time of emersion, and defence of child victims even when they still haven’t developed the will to present an official report;
- envisage and coordinate a quantitative and qualitative national phenomenological and investigative inquiry to highlight the real dimensions of the trafficking and exploitation of minors, as the data supplied by the Italian government only reveals the part of the phenomenon that has already emerged;
- destine part of the amount allocated to the Consolidated Programme of Emersion, Assistance and Social Integration to funding a national public awareness campaign destined to the younger generations, on trafficking and severe exploitation of minors, to reveal and discourage the phenomenon and avoid collusion.

2. That the Regions and Autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bolzano, the Municipalities, Metropolitan Cities, Mountain Communities Unions of Mountain Communities, Unions of Municipalities and their Consortia, operating as parties for the proposal and implementation of Tender 2/2017 published by the Department for Equal Opportunities within the Scope of the Consolidated Programme of Emersion:

- guarantee the construction of operations aimed at assistance, focusing specifically on child victims of trafficking, which guarantee adequate conditions of reception and psycho-social, health and legal assistance, with continuation of protection also into adulthood, as envisaged by Art. 17 of Law 7 April 2017, no. 47 “Provisions for measures to protect unaccompanied foreign minors”.

3. That the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies:

- strongly fight labour exploitation, strengthen labour inspections, especially in those places afflicted by illegal labour mediation and severe forms of exploitation of child labour. Moreover, it is

required to integrate the Child Reporting System (SIM) set up with D.P.C.M. 535/1999 (Articles 2, letter i, and 5) and Legislative Decree 142/2015 (Art. 19, paragraph 5) to monitor and register the presence of unaccompanied children, with data broken down by age, gender, origin and type of exploitation coming from the SIRIT relating to the placement under protection of children who have emerged as victims of trafficking;

- additionally, it is also required to integrate of the Child Reporting System (SIM) set up with D.P.C.M. 535/1999 (Articles 2, letter i, and 5) and Legislative Decree 142/2015 (Art. 19, paragraph 5) to monitor and register the presence of unaccompanied children, and the relative social file of the child set up by Art. 9 of Law 47/2017, with data broken down by age, gender, origin and type of exploitation coming from the SIRIT relating to the placement under protection of children who have emerged as victims of trafficking.

4. That the Ministry of the Interior:

- integrate the Daily Statistic Dashboard with data broken down by gender, as well as data relating to minors identified, from the moment of landing, as potential victims of trafficking. This is necessary in order to plan their early assumption into the system, identifying the priorities and the main aims of intervention, to achieve the protection and assistance of victims and create a system of defence based on higher interest of the child, which strengthens the possibilities of getting them out of the exploitation circuit, monitors the places really available and dedicated to children, and also defends those minors who still haven't developed the will to present an official report against the exploiters;
- integrate the annual Reception Plan, envisaging - within the scope of the emergency reception structures - highly specialised structures that are capable of guaranteeing adequate acceptance and continuing support of migrant child victims of trafficking and severe exploitation.

5. That the Ministry of Justice:

- strengthen the collection and guarantee the sharing of statistics relating to offenders and criminals who profit from trafficking and exploitation of minors, allowing an annual update of the statistics relating to the files defined with the Sentence relating to crimes pursuant to art. 600, 601 and 602 of the Criminal Code, providing updated recognition of the profiles of the offenders and exploiters operating in the criminal sector of trafficking and exploitation.

6. That the Government:

- immediately issue the Decrees to implement Law 47/2017 and the relative resources assigned to guarantee the correct defence and assistance of child victims and potential victims of trafficking in compliance with that envisaged by Art.17 of the above-mentioned Law.

7. That the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator of the European Commission:

- strengthen, via actions and tangible indications, inter-institutional communication at EU level and between Member States, with specific regard to trafficking and severe exploitation of minors as to boost the knowledge of the problems emerging in relation to child trafficking, soliciting the activation and dissemination of an EU System for the collection and publication of data broken down by gender, age and member state.

8. That the European Commission:

- update the “EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings (2012-2016)” by providing dedicated interventions to analyse the growing phenomenon of victims recruited over the internet and via social networks - including recruitment with the help of intermediaries.



Photo: Mats Lignell / Save the Children

Notes

- ²¹⁴. As defined by paragraph 3bis of Art. 18 T.U. following the amendments introduced by Legislative Decree 24/14 implementing European Directive 2011/36).
- ²¹⁵. See National Plan of Action against trafficking and severe exploitation, Department for Equal Opportunities available at https://ec.europa.eu/antitrafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/eu_strategy_towards_the_eradication_of_trafficking_in_human_beings_2012-2016_1.pdf
- ²¹⁶. See National Plan of Action against trafficking and severe exploitation, Department for Equal Opportunities available at https://ec.europa.eu/antitrafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/eu_strategy_towards_the_eradication_of_trafficking_in_human_beings_2012-2016_1.pdf
- ²¹⁷. AGIRE - Austria, Greece, Italy, Romania - Act to strengthen the partnership between public and private organisations in identifying and supporting child victims of, and those at risk of, trafficking in Europe and PROTECTION FIRST - Early identification, protection and assistance of child victims and at risk of trafficking and exploitation.
- ²¹⁸. Decree of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers 16 May 2016 containing “Definition of the consolidated programme of emersion, assistance and social integration in favour of foreigners and citizens pursuant to paragraph bis of Art. 18 of Legislative Decree 25 July 1998, no. 286, victims of the crimes envisaged by Articles 600 and 601 of the Criminal Code, or who fall within the situations envisaged by paragraph 1 of said Article 18”, available at <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/media/2767/dpcm-16-maggio-2016.pdf>
- ²¹⁹. See <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/media/2641/decreto-approvaz-graduatoria.pdf>
- ²²⁰. See Department for Equal Opportunities Tender 1/2016, available at <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/media/2623/bando-trattaprogramma-unico.pdf>
- ²²¹. Decree no. 234 “Regulation for establishing the age of unaccompanied children, victims of trafficking, related to the implementation of Art. 4, par. 2 of Legislative Decree no. 24 dated 4 March 2014”, available at <http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2016/12/22/16G00248/sg>



²²². Law 47/2017, Provision on the matter of measures of the protection of unaccompanied foreign children, available at http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/stampa/serie_generale/originario

²²³. See http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/vediMenuHTML?atto.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=2016-11-03&atto.codiceRedazionale=16G00213&tipoSerie=serie_generale&tipoVigenza=originario

²²⁴. See Art. 1, par. 371 of Law no. 232/2016.

²²⁵. Operationally, these amounts fall under expenses for “Interventions” in two chapters of the budget of the Presidency of the Council of the Ministers, the management of which is entrusted to the Department for Equal Opportunities: Chap. 520 Fund for anti-trafficking measures pursuant to Article 12 of Law 228/2003. In addition to the resources allocated with the above-mentioned stability laws, from 2014, Chap. 520 contains the resources destined to the Fund pursuant to Article 18 of Legislative Decree 286/1998 as well as income from seizure ordered following sentencing or application of sentence by request of the parties for one of the offences envisaged by Articles 416, paragraph six, 600, 601, 602 and 603-bis of the Criminal Code, and income from seizure ordered, for the same offences, in compliance with Article 12-sexies of Decree-Law 8 June 1992, no. 306, for particular cases of seizure. In addition to the resources allocated with the above mentioned stability laws, Chap. 520 contains the resources destined to the Fund pursuant to Article 18 of Legislative Decree 286/1998 as well as income from seizure ordered following sentencing or application of sentence by request of the parties for one of the offences envisaged by Articles 416, clause six, 600, 601, 602 and 603-bis of the Criminal Code, and income from seizure ordered, for the same offences, in compliance with Article 12-sexies of Decree-Law 8 June 1992, no. 306, for particular cases of seizure.

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In Italy and around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm.

When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard.

We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach.

We do whatever it takes for children - every day and in times of crisis - transforming their lives and the future we share.



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