

IN.C.I.P.I.T. AND ELEUTHERIA: ANALYSIS OF TWO EMERSON, ASSISTANCE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION PROJECTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN THE CALABRIA REGION

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1. Introduction

Trafficking in human beings is a transnational crime. According to the 2020 Global Report on Trafficking in Human Beings prepared by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in 2018, worldwide, about 50,000 human trafficking victims were detected, and about 750 in Italy (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020). However, given the hidden nature of this crime, the actual number of victims trafficked is underestimated. The prevention and repression of trafficking in human beings are a priority for the European Union in accordance with the protection of human rights, immigration policies, the safety of citizens and the enlargement of the Union. In this regard, between 2017 and 2018, more than 14,000 victims of trafficking were registered in the EU-27 Member States: over half of the registered victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation and 15% were trafficked for labour exploitation (European Commission, 2020a; 2020b; 2021). This crime carries with it enormous human, social and economic costs: in particular, in the EU-27, the cost of trafficking in human beings per victim is EUR 337,462 and a total of EUR 2.7 billion per year (European Commission, 2020c, p. 20). At national level, according to the official data given by the Department of Equal Opportunities at the Presidency of Ministers, in 2019, 2,033 victims were reported to the anti-trafficking system (Chamber of Deputies, 2020). The statistics relating to the cases of persons accused of / arrested throughout the Italian territory for crimes directly linked to the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings (Articles 600, 601, 602 of the Italian Criminal Code) reveal a prevalence of reports regarding the coercion to slavery or servitude and human trafficking, more numerous than those relating to the purchase and sale of slaves. On the other hand, there is a clear prevalence of people forced to slavery or servitude compared to those trafficked and purchased and sold as slaves. The most profitable markets where the victims of human trafficking are exploited are the sexual ones, begging and the labour market (mostly in the agricultural, construction, manufacturing and catering sectors) (Ministry of the Interior, 2021). Regarding the spread of the latter in the territories, Sicily, Calabria and Puglia, together with Veneto and Lombardy, are among the most affected regions of Italy (Santoro and Stoppioni, 2019). The phenomenon of human trafficking requires a

daily and constant commitment to the fight against it and support of the victims, whether regarding the labour exploitation, the most challenging aspects of “modern-day slavery” (Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, 2020a; 2020b), or other forms of it (European Commission, 2021). In Italy, among the numerous actions regarding this issue: the Action Plan against human trafficking and serious exploitation 2016-2018, the PON Legality 2014/2020 FESR-FSE 2014/2020, the anti-trafficking toll-free phone number, as well as local initiatives, within individual territories, also in light of the remodeling of the modalities that the health emergency from Covid-19 has imposed to all (Save the children, 2020; Council of Europe, 2021; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2021).

2. Materials and methods

Through this article we aim to contribute to the reflection on the dramatic phenomenon of human trafficking from a different point of view. As this is, as already noted, a very complex phenomenon of a very big relevance, it seemed interesting to approach the analysis of it by studying the actions implemented in order to fight it. Specifically, the Calabria Region has been chosen as the area of observation, as in 31/12/2019 it has been ranked as the thirteenth city in Italy according to the number of foreign residents in it (Idos-Confronti, 2020) and also affected by the problem (Candia and Garreffa, 2011; Carchedi and Galati, 2019; Zambelli *et al.*, 2021). Within the territory, over the years, among others, two projects have been carried out to fight the trafficking in human beings in the Calabrian territory, which have been financed as part of the protection and social integration programs (Article 18 of Legislative Decree No 286/98) and first aid (Article 13 of the Law No 228/03): Eleutheria (2011-2016) and In.C.I.P.I.T. - Calabria Initiative for the Identification, Protection and Social Inclusion of Trafficking Victims (2016-2021). The projects, financed by the Department of Equal Opportunities, by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and promoted by the Calabria Region in collaboration with the public sector or private social organizations, envisaged concrete measures in favor of the victims of severe exploitation, enslavement and human trafficking. In particular, the Eleutheria project aimed to achieve a series of objectives: identifying, reporting and putting under protection the victims of exploitation, through first contact activities, proactive actions for the emergence of potential victims of trafficking and/or exploitation and taking charge of the report; the identification, protection and first assistance, through prompt reception services, health assistance, legal advice, case assessment for the purpose of a preliminary identification of the assisted person as a victim of human trafficking and verification of the existence of the requirements necessary to get

social protection. The In.C.I.P.I.T. project, in addition to the aforementioned aims, moves towards the effective social inclusion of the victim of trafficking through integration policies, training courses or technical workshops. The logic underlying the activity starts from the awareness that the victim of trafficking must cease to be such in order to fit into the social context, achieving autonomy aimed at consolidating the processes of social and work inclusion and housing autonomy. It is therefore divided into phases: emergence, first assistance and second reception.

This work analyzes the project data, provided by the Immigration, New Marginality and Social Inclusion Sector – Anti-Discrimination Center and Civil Service of the Calabria Region, relating to the second initiative, In.C.I.P.I.T. Specifically, in the face of a multi-year project activity, the choice of the period to be taken into consideration was directed towards the last one for which the data are available, between 1 March 2019 and 31 May 2020. This is a time window deemed of interest also due to the pandemic in progress in the last quarter of observation, an event which, as already mentioned, has imposed a redefinition of times, places, and the ways in which project actions are implemented. The data that are being studied concern many aspects of the project action: to a preliminary description of some of the numerous activities implemented to ensure assistance and protection for people who have experienced trafficking, severe exploitation or who are in a risk situation, followed by the analysis of the users who benefited from it. In particular, in the context of activities aimed at the emergence of labour exploitation, the information assets are richer, to the point of allowing the description of the socio-demographic characteristics of the users (gender, origin) as well as the reflection on the working condition and possible existence of trafficking indicators.

3. In.C.I.P.I.T.: the project's data

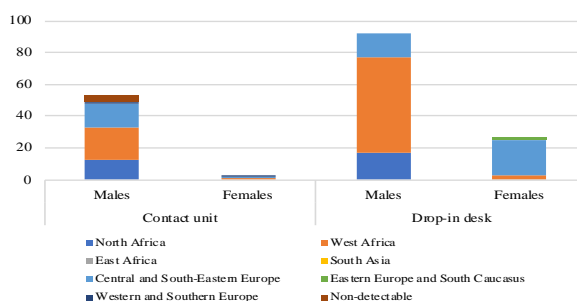
In.C.I.P.I.T. project, born in 2016 to offer an answer to the needs of prevention, emergence and contrast to the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings, concerning people of different nationalities exploited in different areas and often forced to live in conditions of subordination and slavery. The purpose of the In.C.I.P.I.T. is the fight against trafficking in human beings, the protection of victims involved both in phenomena of sexual exploitation and serious labour exploitation, begging and illegal economies and the subsequent social inclusion of the latter, through the construction of individualized paths of protection and socio-work reintegration.

3.1 Emergence

In.C.I.P.I.T. envisaged a series of interventions aimed at the emergence of forms of exploitation using a series of channels for the emergence of victims or potential victims: contact units and low-threshold services – drop-in desks –, the Territorial Commissions, the Court, the Extraordinary Reception Centers, SIPROIMI, the Trade Unions, etc. The emergence activities of the In.C.I.P.I.T. are structured by type of exploitation: sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and begging. Within the framework of actions aimed at victims or potential victims of sexual exploitation, the contact units operating in the areas affected by the phenomenon of sexual exploitation on the street have conducted territorial monitoring and promoted forms of emergence, using gradual contact techniques, and offering approaches to “liberation”. The activities were carried out both in inner-city contexts (historic centres and peripheral areas) and in suburban areas (long-distance roads outside inhabited centres). In particular, a team consisting of intercultural mediators, psychologists, social workers, educators, and support workers handled the delivery of comfort and harm reduction materials. The contribution of interviews with victims is fundamental, where possible, in order to understand their needs to provide advice, support or accompaniment to services (among others, the private social drop-in services enabling legal information in a broad sense). However, the health emergency that affected part of the project period resulted in an almost total absence of victims on the street, thus making the implementation of outdoor actions more difficult: hence, the use of telephone monitoring became an option. Even though this approach formula failed to reach all the people assisted on the street, it proved to be a valid contribution: 96 registered contacts were followed by direct interventions to meet the prevailing needs (purchase of foodstuffs, hygienic and sanitary materials, etc.). Moving on to the second form of exploitation, namely, the working one, the actions aimed at the emergence of the aforementioned were carried out in the plains of Sibari, Lamezia Terme and Gioia Tauro, three territories characterized by the presence of multiple types of crops and, therefore, by different ways through which trafficking, or labour exploitation is carried out. Specifically, through the outputs of the contact units, the work of the drop-in desks or the activities carried out in collaboration with the trade unions, it was possible to reach victims or potential victims of trafficking and / or labour exploitation. The Plain of Sibari is characterized by a large production of citrus fruits, rice, and oil in autumn and winter and from mid-May to the end of August for the production of peaches, apricots, plums. In these territories, the mobile and fixed contact units, namely the drop-in desks, operated. The mobile contact units have dealt with the monitoring of the phenomenon in the territory proceeding to approach the workers in the meeting places, providing telephone cards to contact in case of legal, health or work

problems. Further actions carried out: the supply of reflective harnesses in order to safeguard the safety of those who moved in the dark hours aboard bicycles; the supply of basic necessities and service orientation; the supply of masks and disinfectant gel due to the concomitant health emergency for Covid-19 in progress. The drop-in counter activities provided for the reception of workers by an operator for the construction of an individual project in order to provide social, legal and health support and orientation to local services. In order to underline the capillarity and importance of the service offered, it should be noted that most of the users of the counter went there independently or through word of mouth between acquaintances or compatriots. The description of the interventions implemented in the Plain of Sibari is accompanied, as a further cognitive element, by the quantification and reconstruction of user profiles (Figure 1). The mobile contact unit intercepted a total of 56 people (survey period 27.09.2019-31.05.2020): almost all men of working age, mostly from West Africa and Central and South-Eastern Europe (in particular from Romania). The female component is instead more represented among the contacts registered at the drop-in desk (survey period 18.09.2019-31.05.2020): 27 women, mostly from Central and South-Eastern Europe (especially from Romania), compared to 92 men coming mainly from West Africa (in particular from Nigeria and The Gambia).

Figure 1 – Forced labour in the Plain of Sibari: people reached by contact unit and by drop-in desk, by sex and Region (absolute values).

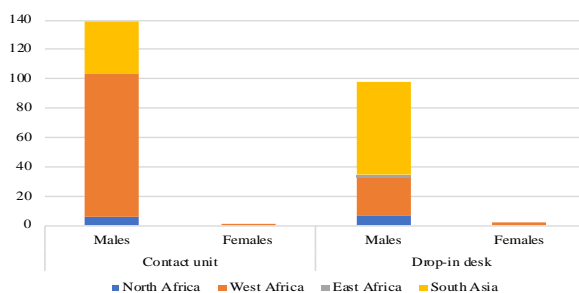


Source: own elaborations on In.C.I.P.I.T. project data.

The Plain of Lamezia Terme, characterized by an economy hinged on the agricultural and agro-food sector, constitutes an area of significant mobility in and out of workers. Within the territory, the contact unit carried out monitoring exits of labour exploitation, reaching the typical places of recruitment of the labour force or moving in the afternoon hours when workers stop working in the fields or warehouses. Similarly, to what was found for the Plain of Sibari, the unit carried out social, health and legal support actions also in order to create an essential trust relationship with the worker for the emergence of the phenomenon. Specifically,

among the activities carried out: the distribution of telephone cards as a contact and solicitation tool to report any legal, health or workplace problems; orientation towards drop-in desks; the supply of harnesses and reflective lights, work gloves, gels and masks; the offer of basic necessities or the reporting of services in charge of distributing them. Three branches were also actively involved in which the cognitive and orientation-information interviews took place, first in presence, then, following the closure in March, electronically. Among the activities, a peculiarity of a branch: the activation of an Italian language literacy course aimed at Bengalis was organized precisely in order to respond to a need expressed by some workers encountered. Regarding the type of user (survey period 01.03.2019-31.05.2020), the contact unit met a total of 140 people, including one woman, and at the desks 100 people were welcomed, 98 of whom were men (Figure 2). In line with the findings in the other territory, these are adults. However, by analysing the origin, new migratory paths of the subjects that started in the Indian sub-continent are outlined. Specifically, among the users of the contact unit, there are almost a hundred subjects from West Africa (The Gambia and Nigeria are the most represented countries of origin) and another significant share is made up of people from South Asia (Bangladesh and India). This new element is confirmed among users of drop-in desks: three out of five come from Bangladesh. The absence, among the contacts, of subjects from Eastern Europe and the small number of subjects from North Africa is not an indicator of their absence but rather derives from the difficulty in approaching the workers of those nationalities both because of the complex system of accompaniment in the workplace, and because of the absence of specific cultural mediators to cover these origins.

Figure 2 – *Forced labour in the Plain of Lamezia Terme: people reached by contact unit and by drop-in desk, by sex and Region (absolute values).*

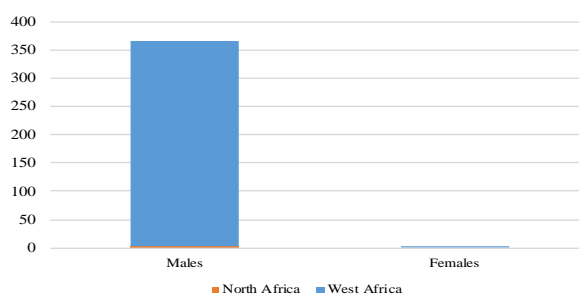


Source: own elaborations on In.C.I.P.I.T. project data.

The Plain of Gioia Tauro is the third area of action identified by the In.C.I.P.I.T. project for the emergence of labour exploitation. It is an area with an agricultural vocation that attracts thousands of workers, mostly seasonal, mainly employed in the

harvesting and processing of citrus fruits, olives and kiwis. The actions carried out by the contact unit – through the exits and the socio-legal assistance desk activities – included interviews to provide guidance information on the exploitation and opportunities offered by the project, as well as responses to the immediate needs expressed, with a view to establish a relationship of trust; personalized interviews to bring out needs and any indicators of exploitation; consultancy and administrative / legal support; accompaniment / access to the union for orientation, information and union services; accompaniment / access to public administrations, INPS, public health facilities, assistance bodies; distribution of personal protective equipment for work activities. The pandemic then entailed the launch of information activities, carried out by telephone, on the subject of: pandemic and anti-contagion measures to be taken; administrative and judicial procedures open and suspended due to the lockdown; assistance services and supply of basic necessities; income support tools made available by the government and local authorities. As part of the project aimed at the emergence of labour exploitation, through contact unit and desk, in the Plain of Gioia Tauro (survey period 01-03.2019-31.05.2020) 367 subjects were contacted most of whom were young people between 20 and 35 years old: 365 men coming mainly from sub-Saharan African countries, in particular from Mali, Senegal and Gambia and two women of Nigerian origin (Figure 3).

Figure 3 – *Forced labour in the Plain of Gioia Tauro: people reached by contact unit and desk, by sex and Region (absolute values).*



Source: own elaborations on In.C.I.P.I.T. project data.

Furthermore, as shown in Table 1 relating to trafficking and exploitation indicators, no trafficking situations have been detected in the Plain of Sibari, but indicators of labour exploitation have emerged. The latter were also tracked down in Gioia Tauro along with a case of trafficking. The number of victims of trafficking is more consistent in the Plain of Lamezia Terme (having involved men from Bangladesh and women from Nigeria) compared to about half of those who were

victims of labour exploitation¹. On the other hand, with regard to working conditions, in the Plain of Gioia Tauro the greater incidence, among contacts, of subjects without a work contract clearly emerges; the share of the latter, although lower, is by no means negligible in the other territories. It should also be noted that, among contract holders, it has not always been possible to investigate the actual regularity of the same with respect to labour and social security legislation.

Table 1 – *Contacts reached in the Plains of Sibari, Lamezia Terme and Gioia Tauro by trafficking and exploitation indicators and contractual working conditions (absolute values).*

	Sibari	Lamezia Terme	Gioia Tauro
<i>Trafficking and exploitation indicators</i>			
Potential victim of trafficking and/or labour exploitation	38	26	94
Victim of human trafficking	0	32	1
in Italy	0	3	1
in transit countries	0	21	0
both in Italy and in transit countries	0	8	0
Victim of labour exploitation	57	55	271
in Italy	57	49	271
in transit countries	0	0	0
both in Italy and in transit countries	0	6	0
Non-detectable	24	9	1
<i>Contractual working conditions</i>			
With work contract	45	42	104
Without work contract	50	29	224
Self-employment	0	2	0
Non-detectable	24	27	39

Source: *In.C.I.P.I.T. project data.*

Finally, the number of actions for the emergence of forms of exploitation is completed by the work of four contact units active on the Calabrian regional territory – Crotona, Reggio Calabria, Catanzaro, and Cosenza – against the phenomenon of begging. Specifically, both monitoring activities were carried out in order to understand the dynamics of the phenomenon, and direct contacts. In the latter case, the offer of comfort goods was an opportunity to approach the victim in order to establish a constructive and profitable dialogue for emergence. Also in this context, the restrictions linked to Covid-19 have imposed a reshaping of activities by resorting to telephone monitoring and the delivery of necessities. From the data

¹The sum of the people reached in the Plain of Lamezia Terme with regard to trafficking and exploitation indicators is more than 100 units as for someone it emerged more than one indicator.

relating to the more than 400 contacts reached, it is clear that adults are predominantly involved together with a marked characterization in terms of origin of the alleged victims: they are largely originating from West Africa, especially Nigeria. Furthermore, although it affects men to a greater extent, this form of exploitation also involves women. A further useful project data for the purpose of examining the phenomenon is the classification of the interventions carried out by the contact units by type of begging: if for women it was exclusively classic begging (for example, asking for money in the street, on public transport, in supermarkets), men are also engaged in auxiliary begging activities (namely, the request for money is accompanied by the provision of a service or the sale of a good).

3.2 Reception: first assistance, second reception and territorial care

The In.C.I.P.I.T. project manages structures with different reception intensities to respond to the needs and requirements of the different types of victims. The project is able to welcome women and men victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual and labour exploitation, pregnant women, mothers with children, unaccompanied foreign minors, women and men victims of labour exploitation, begging, exploitation in illegal economies, forced marriages, transsexuals. The programs aim to accompany the person in escaping from the condition of exploitation until his full inclusion in the socio-relational context of reference. The welcome provided by In.C.I.P.I.T. is differentiated on the following levels: prompt reception for immediate protection and help needs with the offer of places for the reception of women, including pregnant women and with minor children; first and second level residential reception for the initiation of first aid courses capable of allowing psycho-physical recovery and awareness of one's condition and adequately address the path of protection and social reintegration. In this context, participation in literacy, training and job start-up courses are guaranteed with the aim of achieving full economic and working autonomy. Furthermore, if the welcomed person requests it, repatriation to his country of origin is guaranteed. All the procedures necessary for regularization are activated and support is offered for the procedural process in the case of complaints against traffickers; residential accommodation in semi-autonomous apartments to support the achievement of social and work inclusion objectives and accompaniment when leaving protection projects; residential reception of unaccompanied foreign minors victims of trafficking, with the activation of the specific protection program aimed at them. The project data for the period in question show 59 people welcomed in residential mode, 25 males – mainly Bengali and Nigerians – and 34 females, almost all of Nigerian origin. In relation to age, there are 48 adults, 10 minors and 1 unaccompanied foreign minor.

4. Conclusions

The study conducted so far illustrates the tools through which the Calabria Region has achieved considerable results in terms of the emergence of the phenomenon of human trafficking and the forms of exploitation connected to it. In the context of a complex phenomenon to identify and equally difficult to quantify, the number of contacts reached constitutes a valuable contribution both in absolute and potential terms. In fact, the word-of-mouth about the success of one's experience and the benefit obtained through the sharing of one's needs and the formulation of requests for help are the start of a virtuous mechanism that could involve an increasing number of subjects. For example, the dissemination, among the workers contacted, of their rights as workers, both in terms of personal protection and in terms of working conditions, expresses the effectiveness of the project action and gives good hope regarding the opportunity that this awareness becomes customary. Moreover, the Calabria Region obtained the refinancing of the project from the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, thus being able to guarantee its continuity. In the light of what has previously been highlighted and for the future it would be important to reach an increasing number of contacts of different nationalities, for example through the greater involvement of specific intercultural mediators, thus ensuring the opportunity for increasingly widespread action. It would also be desirable to promote the awareness of the territory for a better integration of users in the social context. Long-term action and its monitoring through the analysis of project data, therefore, make it possible to examine the phenomenon and its transformations, to enhance good practices and to implement new contrast strategies that are able to take into account the changes imposed by the pandemic situation in the social context too, especially towards the most fragile subjects.

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SUMMARY

In.C.I.P.I.T. and Eleutheria: Analysis of Two Emersion, Assistance and Social Inclusion Projects in the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings in the Calabria Region

Trafficking in human beings is a transnational crime. This article aims to contribute to the reflection on the dramatic phenomenon of human trafficking from a different point of view, by studying the actions implemented in order to fight it. Specifically, within the territory of the Calabria Region, two projects, among others, have been carried out to fight the trafficking in human beings, which have been financed as part of the protection and social integration programs and first aid: Eleutheria (2011-2016) and In.C.I.P.I.T. (2016-2021). This work analyzes the project data, provided by the Immigration, New Marginality and Social Inclusion Sector - Anti-Discrimination Center and Civil Service of the Calabria Region, relating to the second initiative, In.C.I.P.I.T. The period under consideration is between 1 March 2019 and 31 May 2020. This is a time window deemed of interest also due to the pandemic in progress in the last quarter of observation, an event which has imposed a redefinition of times, places, and the ways in which project actions are implemented. The data concern many aspects of the project action: a preliminary description of some of the activities implemented to ensure assistance and protection for people who have experienced trafficking, followed by the analysis of the users who benefited from it.

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