



## The phenomenon of human trafficking along the Brenner route:

*secondary movements and the system of protection for  
Nigerian women in the city of Bozen*

*Michela Semprebon & Serena Caroselli*



**INSigHT**  
Building Capacity to  
Deal with  
Human Trafficking and  
Transit Routes in  
Nigeria, Italy, Sweden

# The phenomenon of human trafficking along the Brenner route:

*secondary movements and the system of protection for  
Nigerian women in the city of Bozen*

*Michela Semprebon & Serena Caroselli*

Publication prepared by the SSIIM UNESCO Chair of the University Iuav of Venice as part of the activities of the INSigHT Action (Building capacity to deal with human trafficking and transit routes in Nigeria, Italy and Sweden).

SSIIM UNESCO Chair, University Iuav of Venice, July 2021

ISBN 9788831241410



**INSigHT**  
Building Capacity to  
Deal with  
Human Trafficking and  
Transit Routes in  
Nigeria, Italy, Sweden

Authors: Michela Semprebon, Coordinator of the INSigHT Research Team; Serena Caroselli, Researcher in the INSigHT Research Team. The research was coordinated by Michela Semprebon; the interviews were organised by Serena Caroselli and carried out by her and Michela Semprebon. Serena Caroselli wrote the first version of this e-book and Michela Semprebon integrated and revised it, with the exception of chapters 1,2,3,7 and 8, which were co-written by both authors.

UNESCO Chair SSIIM, University Iuav of Venice

Palazzo Tron, Santa Croce 197, Venice

<http://www.unescochair-iuav.it/>

All rights reserved. No part of the text or graphics in this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or use of storage storage and retrieval systems, without the permission of the copyright owners.

Suggested citation: Semprebon M. and Caroselli S. (2021) *"The phenomenon of human trafficking along the Brenner route: secondary movements and the system of protection for Nigerian women in the city of Bozen"*, Venice: SSIIM UNESCO Chair, University Iuav of Venice.

This document has been produced with the financial support of the European Union, commissioned by ICMPD through the Migration Partnership Facility Framework. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of Iuav and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union and the one of ICMPD.

Layout: Association 2050

Translation from Italian into English by: Clara Pope

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	4
Acknowledgements.....	7
List of acronyms .....	8
Terms used in the text .....	9
Executive Summary.....	11
Recommendations .....	14
Recommendations for Italian Institutions .....	14
Recommendations for European Institutions .....	17
Recommendations for Bodies and Institutions in Bozen (and other border towns) .....	18
Recommendations for Researchers.....	19
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Chapter 1.....</b>	<b>22</b>
The e-book and the INSigHT Action .....	22
Methodology.....	23
<b>Chapter 2.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Migration and human trafficking from Nigeria to Europe.....</b>	<b>25</b>
Nigeria as an important country of origin .....	25
Destination countries .....	26
Recent trends in migration and trafficking from Nigeria to Europe and Italy .....	27
<i>Main countries of destination and origin .....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Developments in air and land routes.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Asylum applications .....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Profile of persons trafficked for sexual exploitation .....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Crossings across the Brenner border between Italy and Austria .....</i>	<i>33</i>
The foreign population resident in Alto Adige.....	34
<i>Data on the reception system in Alto Adige from 2016 to date.....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>The 'invisible' foreign population in Alto Adige .....</i>	<i>35</i>
The Alto Adige border region.....	35
<b>Chapter 3.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>The Italian normative framework on human trafficking .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Art. 18 Legislative Decree 286/1998.....	37
The Italian National Action Plan against trafficking and the serious exploitation of human beings .....	40
The intersection between the anti-trafficking and international protection systems .....	41
When is a trafficked person entitled to international protection?.....	41
Reception facilities.....	42

The effects of Decree Law 113/2018 on victims of trafficking and asylum seekers.....	43
<b>The normative framework for the protection of children and unaccompanied minors .....</b>	<b>45</b>
General principles .....	45
EU Legislation .....	45
International and EU legislation on the protection of children and unaccompanied minor victims of trafficking .....	46
The Italian normative framework on the protection of children and unaccompanied minors.....	48
<b>Chapter 4.....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>The Alba Anti-trafficking Project and the reception system in the Autonomous Province of Bozen 50</b>	
The reception system in the Autonomous Province of Bozen .....	50
Access to services for autonomous arrivals.....	52
The history of the Alba Project .....	53
The Alba Project: funding and coordination.....	54
The structure of the Alba Project.....	56
The area of outreach, identification and emersione - Volontarius Association .....	58
<i>The outreach phase</i> .....	58
<i>Outreach methodology</i> .....	59
<i>Indoor sexual exploitation</i> .....	60
<i>Labour exploitation</i> .....	60
<i>The phenomenon of begging</i> .....	61
<i>The phase of identification and emersione</i> .....	61
The reception area - La Strada Der Weg.....	63
The inclusion area - CONSIG .....	65
The Alba Project and Covid-19.....	66
<b>Chapter 5.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Gender-based violence and the importance of the intersectional perspective.....</b>	<b>68</b>
Gender and generations: Nigerian mothers.....	70
Women, mothers, victims of trafficking .....	71
The (poor) intersection between the asylum system, the anti-trafficking system and the social services system in the Autonomous Province of Bozen.....	74
Mothers with children: the case of Beauty.....	76
<b>Chapter 6.....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Unaccompanied foreign minors and foreign minors who are victims of trafficking and serious exploitation .....</b>	<b>79</b>
Taking charge of unaccompanied foreign minors .....	81
<b>Chapter 7.....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Secondary movements, mobility and trafficking.....</b>	<b>82</b>
Secondary movements, mobility and trafficking in the Bozen/Brenner area .....	82

The Dublin Regulation and victims of trafficking.....	84
Informal readmission at Brenner: Faith's case .....	86
Joy's constant mobility.....	87
<b>Chapter 8.....</b>	<b>88</b>
Conclusions .....	88
Bibliography .....	92
Appendix .....	98
List of interviews .....	98

## Acknowledgements

The INSigHT Research Team wishes to thank all the people who contributed to this publication. We thank the Alba Project and the Autonomous Province of Bozen for authorizing the interviews and providing the data. We owe special thanks to Ermira Kola, to the Associazione Binario 1, to Elisa Crivellaro, Federica della Pria, Francesca De Angelis, the Fondazione Alexander Langer, the Antenne Migration project, Nadja Schuster, Marina Della Rocca and the feminist network in Bozen for having continuously shared their reflections on the transformations of the context and the phenomenon of migration and trafficking in Bozen and at the Brenner border. A special thank you goes to the migrant families, to the mothers and women who arrived in Trentino-Alto Adige through the Brenner route, for having agreed to be interviewed, thus contributing considerably to the understanding of the phenomenon under analysis in this publication. Last but not least, we would like to thank Giovanna Marconi, Project Manager of the INSigHT Action and Coordinator of the SSIIM UNESCO Chair for her invaluable support throughout the research and in particular during the pandemic.

## List of acronyms

**CAS:** Centro di Accoglienza Straordinaria (Centre for Extraordinary Reception)

**CONSIS:** Consorzio Sociale (Social Consortium)

**CRAIS:** Coordinamento Strutture Socio-Pedagogiche per Minori in Alto Adige (Coordination of Socio-Pedagogic Facilities for Minors in Alto Adige)

**CPR:** Centro di Permanenza per Rimpatri (Detention Centre for Repatriation)

**DPO:** Dipartimento Pari Opportunità della Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri del Governo Italiano (Department of Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Government)

**IPAI:** Istituto Provinciale per l'assistenza all'infanzia (Provincial Institute for Childcare)

**KOK:** Rete della repubblica Federale Tedesca per l'antitratta (Antitrafficking network of the Federal Republic of Germany)

**OIM/IOM:** Organizzazione Internazionale per le Migrazioni (International Organization for Migration)

**SIPROIMI:** Sistema di protezione per titolari di protezione internazionale e per minori stranieri non accompagnati (System of protection for holders of international protection and for foreign unaccompanied minors)

**SIS:** Servizio di Integrazione Sociale (Social Integration Service)

**SPRAR:** Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati (System of protection for asylum seekers and refugees)

**UE/EU:** Unione Europea (European Union)

**UNHCR:** Alto Commissariato delle Nazioni Unite per i Rifugiati (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)



## Terms used in the text

**Migrant:** In the global context, a person who is outside the territory of the State of which they are nationals or citizens and who has resided in a foreign country for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate<sup>1</sup>.

**Unaccompanied minor:** a person who arrives on the territory of an EU Member unaccompanied by the adult responsible for them by law or by the practice of the EU Member State concerned, and for as long as they are not effectively taken into the care of such a person; or - who is left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of the EU Member State<sup>2</sup>.

**Trafficking of human beings:** The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or reception of persons, including the exchange or transfer of control over those 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 includes, as a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, including begging, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the exploitation of criminal activities, or the removal of organs. A position of vulnerability means a situation in which the person concerned has no real or acceptable alternative but to submit to the abuse involved (art. 2 Directive 2011/36/UE) <sup>3</sup>.

**Secondary movements:** the movement of migrants, included refugees and asylum seekers, who for various reasons move from the country in which they first arrived to another to seek international protection or permanent settlement.

**Begging:** Art. 2(3) of Directive 2011/36/EU (Trafficking Directive) states that exploitation includes, as a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, including begging, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the exploitation of criminal activities, or the removal of organs<sup>4</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Definition reported in the EMN Glossary. Link: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/docs/interactive\\_glossary\\_6.0\\_final\\_version.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/docs/interactive_glossary_6.0_final_version.pdf). Ultimo accesso/last access: 10/03/2021. Sources: Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, supra note 4, art. 24(2); art. 2(l) Directive 2011/95/EU.

<sup>2</sup> Definition reported in the EMN Glossary Link: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/docs/interactive\\_glossary\\_6.0\\_final\\_version.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/docs/interactive_glossary_6.0_final_version.pdf). Ultimo accesso/last access: 10/03/2021. Source: UN, Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration; art. 2(b) and (f) Regulation (EC) 862/2007.

<sup>3</sup> Definition reported in the EMN Glossary. Link: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/docs/interactive\\_glossary\\_6.0\\_final\\_version.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/docs/interactive_glossary_6.0_final_version.pdf). Ultimo accesso/last access: 10/03/2021.

<sup>4</sup> References in the EMN Glossary. Link: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/docs/interactive\\_glossary\\_6.0\\_final\\_version.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/docs/interactive_glossary_6.0_final_version.pdf). Ultimo accesso/last access: 10/03/2021.

The ILO (2004) defines begging as *“a range of activities whereby an individual asks a stranger for money on the basis of being poor or needing charitable donations for health or religious reasons”*<sup>5</sup>.

**Exploitation:** the act of taking advantage of something or someone, in particular the act of taking unjust advantage of another for one’s own benefit (e.g. sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs). Art. 2(3) of Directive 2011/36/EU (Trafficking Directive) states that exploitation includes, as a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, including begging, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the exploitation of criminal activities, or the removal of organs<sup>6</sup>.

**Smuggling:** the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the irregular entry of a person into a (UN) Member State of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident<sup>7</sup>.

---

<sup>5</sup> ILO (2004) *A rapid assessment of bonded labour in domestic work and begging in Pakistan*, ILO Working Paper 22. Geneva: ILO. Link: [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms\\_082030.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_082030.pdf). Ultimo accesso/last access: 30/11/2020.

<sup>6</sup> Definition reported in the EMN Glossary. Link: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/docs/interactive\\_glossary\\_6.0\\_final\\_version.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/docs/interactive_glossary_6.0_final_version.pdf) Ultimo accesso/last access: 10/03/2021. Source: OIM Glossary, 2 edition, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Definition reported in the EMN Glossary. Link: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/docs/interactive\\_glossary\\_6.0\\_final\\_version.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/docs/interactive_glossary_6.0_final_version.pdf) Ultimo accesso/last access: 10/03/2021. Source: art. 3 of the UN Protocol against trafficking.

## Executive Summary

This work is part of a series of 5 publications produced in the framework of the INSigHT Action, aimed at strengthening the capacity of key anti-trafficking actors to address the phenomenon of human trafficking and secondary movements in Nigeria, Italy and Sweden, with a particular focus on trafficked women and girls.<sup>8</sup> In particular, this e-book is dedicated to the topic of intra-European secondary movements and the mobility of trafficked and seriously exploited migrants in the area between the Italian-Austrian border of Brenner and the city of Bozen. Specific attention is paid to this geographical and political context, as it is a strategic place of transit to northern Europe and return to Italy, for migrants involved in the phenomenon of serious – sexual and labour – exploitation through the extensive Nigerian network of human trafficking.

The importance of this geographical area has also been highlighted in previous works, both in reports and ethnographic studies. The Brenner Pass is described as a border with distinctive control mechanisms, generated by transnational agreements with Austria and Germany, which have had an impact – which has often been negative – on migrants passing through the territory of the Municipality of Bozen and has created problems for the reception system.

In this territory, reception policies are managed by the Autonomous Province of Bozen, which has different rules to other Italian regions. It is for this reason that they deserve particular attention. They also require our attention because Bozen functions both as a transit area and as a sort of "internal border".

The INSigHT research aimed to explore the context for the reception of migrants in the city with a particular focus on the Alba Anti-trafficking Project and the activities and actions put in place in order to protect people who are victims of trafficking and serious exploitation. The field research and interviews, which we carried out with local actors in February 2020, built upon previous intensive ethnographic work carried out by Serena Caroselli from 2017 to 2019. Her work highlighted the need to deepen the knowledge of the local reception system, especially with regard to migrant women who were victims of trafficking. On the one hand, the system experienced an increasing arrival of migrants due to its proximity to the Brenner border. On the other hand, it has been governed by very selective criteria for migrants' access to the reception system, running the risk of not being able to guarantee adequate protection, especially for the most vulnerable, in particular, women and minors.

The main questions guiding this work are: How are the reception policies of the Autonomous Province of Bozen interconnected with the Alba Anti-trafficking Project? Do migrant victims of trafficking and serious exploitation manage to access protection programmes and how? What measures are implemented by the institutions and the Alba project to prevent and combat trafficking? How do secondary movements within Europe emerge in this geographical area and what consequences do they have on the lives of victims and potential victims of trafficking?

The literature on trafficking and border areas highlights the insufficient attention paid to the mobility and dispersion of victims, especially women and minors, across the European space, often as a result of rapid and ineffective identification mechanisms and inadequate protection interventions. The

---

<sup>8</sup> For more information visit: <https://www.insightproject.net/> Last accessed on: 20/12/2020.

transnational and intersectional perspective, which is attentive to the mobility of migrants and migrant women, and to the multiple dimensions that characterise their experience (gender, age, violence suffered, etc.) is used in this e-book to explore these issues and to better understand the processes of categorisation of migrant subjects that underlie the reception practices implemented by local institutions, often in contradiction with the objective of protection. At the Brenner Pass, for example, there is an assistance project for vulnerable people attempting to cross the border. This project is currently run by the Red Cross and focuses on providing basic necessities (mainly accommodation for one or two nights), but is not equipped to conduct risk assessments and interviews to identify and protect people who are victims or potential victims of trafficking. People perceived as vulnerable are invited to go to the city of Bozen, but are not accompanied there. Potential victims, on the other hand, as well as all migrants who arrive in the territory autonomously (returning from Austria or trying to reach it, often informally) are referred to the asylum seeker reception system, with considerable challenges in terms of referral and identification. Only once they have accessed the reception system can they possibly access the anti-trafficking system, through various procedures that require extensive time and movements and that in many cases have prevented access to adequate protection. When they do manage to access services, the responsibility is devolved to the city of Bozen alone. Over the years, this has led to the growing presence of asylum seekers and victims of trafficking on the territory, in a system that has struggled to absorb and manage the requests for reception, despite the availability of economic resources - deriving not only from the Italian Department of Equal Opportunities (which provides specific funding, as it does for other anti-trafficking projects) but also from substantial resources provided by the Autonomous Province of Bozen.

It is worth noting that the number of arrivals in the city of Bozen, especially of Nigerian women, has been recently decreasing, compared to the peak recorded in 2017. On the other hand, secondary movements have been increasing, also in the broader Italian territory. Migrants have been repeatedly crossing internal European borders. This implies that there is an urgent need for all anti-trafficking projects, including the Alba project in Bozen, to strengthen the capacities of the outreach, crisis and evaluation units, in order to facilitate the identification of victims and potential victims and thus offer assistance to those who interface with the project but also to those who fall within the asylum seeker reception system. In other words, it is more necessary than ever to put into place mechanisms that favour the implementation of an integrated referral mechanism between the multiple reception and protection systems: the anti-trafficking system, the asylum/reception system and the welfare system for women and minors. Most importantly, it is necessary to ensure early identification of those who are trapped in exploitation networks.

As professionals of the Alba project report, some women - already seen by the evaluation unit in the past years - have returned to Bozen and are now detailing elements of their experiences that are useful for the evaluation interviews and the identification of indicators of trafficking. This is definitely positive. Further research is needed to understand why the first contact did not lead to their cases being taken up by the authorities and the effects on them of long waits and delays, considering these women's experiences and the multiple forms of coercion and violence they have suffered. This is even more the case with women who, later on in their lives, return to the Alba offices with dependent children (and therefore with the added complexities of motherhood) and in debt (with the traffickers), a debt that is often still unpaid and that materially and symbolically structures their

existence, as well as with experiences characterised by the stratification of various traumas.

Many Nigerian women who are victims of trafficking who are pregnant and/or have dependent children have recently arrived in the territory of Bozen, a phenomenon that has also been reported in other Italian regions, such as the neighbouring Veneto region. These are all people who, after a prolonged period of time in the reception system - or after having been excluded from it - have dispersed to other cities in Italy and Europe, have been sucked back into exploitation networks and who then return to Italy (or try to move to other Member States), as a result of a negative response to their asylum application or the impossibility of accessing services. This target group requires an additional effort by anti-trafficking projects and local institutions to ensure adequate protection (i.e. protection through the integration of special interventions for women, mothers, minors, and people with psychological vulnerabilities).

Other challenges in meeting the needs of people who are victims of trafficking and serious exploitation are related to the methods for accessing reception systems, complex regularisation procedures and the fragmentation between the various interventions. These are all factors that have contributed to the creation of large pockets of marginality among people considered "inadmissible". This is in addition to people who have been exploited - sexually and in other informal economies - who remain invisible to the authorities and are constantly forced to use exploitation networks to move within the territory and across the border, which therefore continue to control and exploit them. In turn, the continuous mobility that is generated by border controls and the functioning of the system of reception in Bozen largely characterises their lives and prevents them from escaping exploitation. It also hinders their social, labour and housing inclusion, thus putting in jeopardy the efforts implemented by the Alba project in the first place.

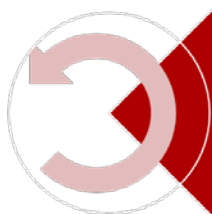
Our fieldwork shows that the existence and functioning of the border as a mechanism of control is crucial in interpreting the phenomenon of trafficking and serious exploitation. We recommend relevant actors, including, most importantly, cross-border institutions, to rethink the logic of border management and the methods for accessing protection systems. We also recommend a rethinking of the referral system, including making it more child- and woman-friendly.

The analysis of the management and control of migrant mobility across the Brenner border, and of the broader European policies related to it, together with the analysis of the local system of protection for people victims of trafficking, highlights the delicate and complex intertwining of the asylum system and the anti-trafficking system and calls for better integration between interventions and the strengthening of multi-agency work.

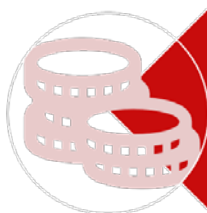
Fostering an effective protection system means avoiding new movements of dispersion within the Italian territory and across the wider European area, preventing the invisibility of the victims and therefore further forms of re-victimisation and re-trafficking. Within this complex framework, the economic, health and social crisis linked to the Covid-19 pandemic should also be considered, which has added to an already weak framework of interventions for trafficking victims. Protection and reception need to be rethought in the face of the longer timeframes that is now required for inclusion support (linked, for example, to the increasing difficulties in accessing housing and work and to the restrictions linked to the pandemic) and in relation to new dynamics in the recruitment of trafficked people in various areas of exploitation.

## Recommendations

### *Recommendations for Italian Institutions*



Immediately update the National Anti-Trafficking Plan, taking into account: the multiple and increasingly interlinked forms of exploitation associated with trafficking and serious exploitation (this includes sexual exploitation, and also labour exploitation, forced involvement in criminal activities, such as begging, etc.); the changing dynamics of the phenomenon (including the increasing forms of online recruitment); and the new challenges associated with the protection of victims and of particularly vulnerable persons (including, for instance, pregnant single mothers and/or mothers with children who are minors);



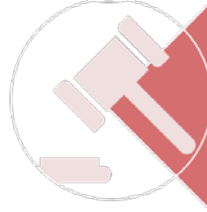
Provide, within the framework of the National Anti-Trafficking Plan, flexible funding for: the integration of the anti-trafficking system with the asylum system and other complex systems (that deal with minors, mothers with children, people with serious psychological and substance abuse problems, etc.); follow-up activities with the service-users of social protection programmes, in order to oversee their inclusion pathways and to support them in the face of specific obstacles (discrimination, access to housing, employment, etc.) And risks (primarily that of re-trafficking); psychological support services for the service-users of social protection projects; the strengthening of the referral system and of multi-agency work;



Commission an independent evaluation of the implementation of the National Anti-Trafficking Plan (2016-2018), with a focus on the outcomes of social protection programmes, especially with regard to the inclusion of beneficiaries, and paying particular attention to border territories;



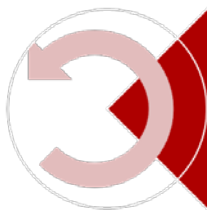
Re-establish the Tavolo di Coordinamento Nazionale Antitrattra (Round Table of the National Anti-trafficking Network) to foster effective and continuous cooperation between anti-trafficking projects, institutions and all relevant actors, also involving "border systems";



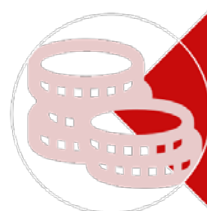
Promote the establishment of regional ombudspersons for victims of trafficking and serious exploitation, working closely with the ombudspersons for childhood and adolescence;



Organise national awareness-raising activities for the local population, but also for teachers, lecturers and child specialists, with the aim of preventing the phenomena of trafficking and re-trafficking, in particular among minors;



Ensure trafficked persons have access to the residence permit for social protection, not only through the "judicial channel" (if they cooperate in investigations) but also through the "social channel", as provided for by Art. 18 of Legislative Decree 286/1998, and consider extending its timeframes; guarantee effective access to the right of asylum for asylum seekers and asylum seekers who are victims of trafficking, both adults and minors; and guarantee effective access to legal information for all trafficked persons;



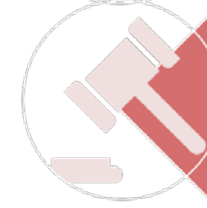
Organise nationwide refresher training courses related to the trafficking of human beings for all of those involved in anti-trafficking and also for Cultural-Linguistic Mediators (encouraging their involvement in anti-trafficking projects); as well as courses aimed at promoting a multi-agency approach at local, regional and national levels and at fostering the full and proper implementation of the referral system, involving anti-trafficking professionals, social workers, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, judges, Territorial Commissions, Labour Inspectorates, as well as child specialists and health workers;



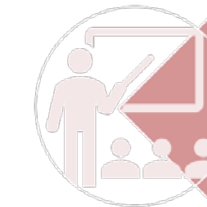
Continue training and fostering the updating of voluntary legal guardians, in particular on the challenges associated with verifying young people's age and the early identification of trafficking victims, especially young people who are the both offenders and victims of crimes, by spreading awareness of paragraph 6 of Art. 18 of Law 286/1998;



Promote "proseguo amministrativo" (that is to say the continuation of the protection programmes for unaccompanied minors and unaccompanied child victims of trafficking, who reach the age of majority, as suggested by Law 47/2017;



Increase the reception capacity in border contexts, paying particular attention to the needs of the most vulnerable, such as women, single mothers and minors;

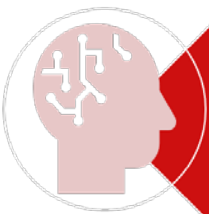


Promote training courses throughout the country for law enforcement agencies, prosecutors and judges to facilitate in-depth investigations into trafficking, starting from the recognition of indicators of trafficking, also including the adequate involvement of victims (albeit limited in order to avoid forms of re-victimisation and prolonged exposure to risks);





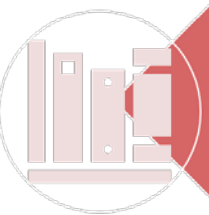
Continue developing and strengthening forms of transnational cooperation with Nigeria, and with other third countries, as regards investigations and prosecutions (following the example of Italy: secondment of an official from the Ministry of the Interior to the Embassy in Abuja, Nigeria and collaboration in Italy with a Nigerian magistrate);



Establish a system for the effective identification and protection of trafficked persons in European border areas, under secure conditions and using adequate timeframes, aimed at facilitating victims to come forward, also through the definition of multi-agency procedures;



Introduce legal migration channels, taking into account the “push factors” and the continuing risks of trafficking and re-trafficking also for people who return to Nigeria, as well as to other third countries;



Promote the construction and management of a database on the trafficking of human beings, also in cooperation with researchers, with statistics on criminal investigations, prosecutions and outcomes, as well as, starting from the work of the Anti-trafficking Helpline, an updated database on the profiles of people who are trafficked and seriously exploited (not only for the purposes of prostitution) and on the outcomes, in terms of inclusion, of social protection projects;



Ensure funding for independent research activities on trafficking and the continuing evolution of the phenomenon, including intra-European movements, the various forms of exploitation (sexual exploitation both indoors and outdoors, labour exploitation, begging, and exploitation in illegal economies, etc.) And the various connections with organised crime.<sup>a</sup> italiana ad Abuja.



## Recommendations for European Institutions



Consider the following issues related to the proposals put forward by the new Migration Pact: to consider victims of trafficking as a vulnerable target group; to improve the Dublin system, in particular with regard to the rights of unaccompanied minors; to homogenize minimum reception standards in EU countries; to continue the fight against human trafficking, primarily by ensuring the availability of channels for regular migration, instead of investing in return measures that lead to high risks of re-trafficking; to improve the identification system in border areas, with full respect for human rights and with special attention to the needs of trafficked and potentially trafficked persons;



Relaunch and promote the Civil Society Platform Against Trafficking, which can be an invaluable tool for fostering cooperation between Member States, in particular on the following issues: the functioning of the anti-trafficking and asylum systems, secondary movements and the Dublin system;



Continue encouraging and supporting transnational cooperation but also cooperation within the EU, through initiatives such as the Migration Partnership Framework;

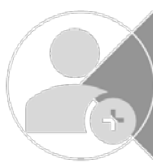


Provide funding to: improve reception capacity, especially in the 'border systems' and with a particular focus on unaccompanied minors and single mothers who are victims of trafficking; systematically train all relevant authorities on the functioning of the referral system, also through the implementation of an effective European referral system;



Secure funding to conduct independent research on: trafficking and the continuing evolution of the phenomenon, including internal movements; the various forms of exploitation (sexual exploitation both indoors and outdoors, labour exploitation, begging, and exploitation in illegal economies, etc.); and the various connections with organised crime; and secure funding to map the exploitation networks operating in Europe.

## *Recommendations for Bodies and Institutions in Bozen (and other border towns)*



Promote greater cooperation among local authority offices dealing with women, minors and victims of trafficking and serious exploitation, but also greater cooperation with health services, the Questura, that deals with regularisation procedures, and Territorial Commissions, that examine asylum applications, also through the promotion of dedicated protocols;



Provide reception facilities for vulnerable people, paying particular attention to women and minors who are asylum seekers and potential victims of trafficking and serious exploitation, and ensure they have effective access to these facilities;



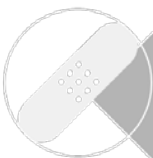
Ensure the regular monitoring of protection activities for victims and potential victims of trafficking and serious exploitation in order to ensure minimum standards of protection; implement follow-up measures to accompany beneficiaries in the post-reception process (access to housing, employment, etc.);



Promote training and refresher courses for all those involved in anti-trafficking, in particular regarding identification, referral, new trends and developments in trafficking;



Invest in the role of Cultural-Linguistic Mediators and other specialised figures, such as anthropologists, in the various services/activities dedicated to trafficked persons, including legal and psychological support activities;



Ensure increasing cooperation with socio-legal professionals at all stages of the protection programme, in order to promote improved shared awareness among all professionals of the rights and challenges associated with the regularisation process, so as to guarantee all service-users effective legal support;



Promote the implementation of an identification system for victims of trafficking in border areas;



Develop formal collaborations with the Dublin Unit through the definition of specific protocols;



Implement multi-agency work with police forces, institutions and anti-trafficking professionals from neighbouring Member States through the establishment of a working group;

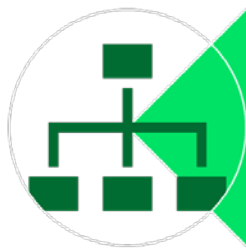
## *Recommendations for Researchers*



Conduct independent research on trafficking and the continuous evolution of the phenomenon, including: internal movements, the various forms of exploitation (sexual exploitation both indoors and outdoors, labour exploitation, begging, and exploitation in illegal economies, etc.) And the various connections with organised crime, the role of Nigerian churches in relation to the fight against trafficking; besides conducting research aimed at mapping exploitation networks in Europe;



Carry out multidisciplinary research through the use of innovative methodologies, linking the multiple dimensions of exploitation within the trafficking phenomenon, with a special focus on the role of criminal organisations in Italy and beyond;



Promote cooperation between universities and anti-trafficking projects in order to encourage continual updates in relation to changes in the factors related to trafficking and serious exploitation and to contribute, through the analysis produced by research, to reflexivity in and constant improvement of interventions by anti-trafficking projects;



Develop multi-sited research in the countries of origin, transit and destination of trafficked persons.

## Introduction

The phenomenon of trafficking is characterised not only by transnational movements, but also by secondary movements, that is movements by migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who move from the country where they first arrived to seek protection elsewhere. This publication focuses on the analysis of these movements, as well as on the services in place for migrants and victims of trafficking, particularly women and minors, who are the subjects of these movements. From our point of view, this analysis is crucial for understanding the reasons for the continuous mobility of migrants in the wider European area and the effects it has on their lives.

The Bozen-Brenner area, within the Autonomous Province of Bozen and the Autonomous Region of Trentino-Alto Adige is the specific context of our analysis. It is of particular interest both for the way it is configured, compared to other Italian borders, and for its historical roots. It is especially interesting for the INSigHT Action due to its belonging to the wider Triveneto territory, which includes the region of Trentino-Alto Adige, but also the regions of Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia. Triveneto is characterised by various borders: besides the Brenner border with Austria in Trentino, Friuli borders Slovenia and Austria, and Veneto, in particular Verona, is part of the "Brenner route", one of the routes taken by migrants to reach the Brenner Pass or return to Italy, which coincides with the Bologna (Emilia-Romagna) - Innsbruck (Austria) - Munich (Germany) railway line.

Our work is based on qualitative research carried out in 2020, which built upon intensive ethnographic work by Serena Caroselli completed in 2019. The research carried out for the INSigHT Action project benefited from Serena Caroselli's familiarity with the specific context of Bozen/Brenner and has continuity with the transformations in migration trends from 2015 onwards.

The increasing tightening of European asylum policies has had negative effects on those involved in trafficking and serious exploitation and even more on their mobility across European borders. The Brenner Pass, especially since 2017, has increasingly become a border characterised by systematic readmissions of potential victims of trafficking. In principle, formal readmissions respect protocols between neighbouring countries (e.g. procedures to send migrants, through the border police, to the nearest police station to arrange for appropriate assistance). However, readmissions are often informal. This means that people are only given instructions to go to the city of Bozen. As a result, many people are dispersed throughout the area, and get lost, running the heavy risk of increasing exposure to forms of coercion and violence, especially for the most vulnerable, in particular women and unaccompanied foreign minors who are victims of trafficking.

In this constantly evolving scenario, the Alba project has become the main reference point, both in the city of Bozen, which has become a sort of "internal border", as we will explain, and in the Brenner area, where the border with Austria is located. Alba's long-term experience has allowed for the creation of a solid network of services in the area. However, it seems to have crystallised into certain modes of intervention that struggle to respond to the phenomenon of trafficking and the rapidity of the changes that characterise it, suggesting that its approach should be revisited.

Bozen is characterized by its strategic position in relation to the Brenner border and the peculiarities of the political-administrative context of the Autonomous Province of Bozen, which also has considerable economic resources that, if well used, could make the intervention network in Alto

Adige a model for prevention and protection from exploitation, serving as an example for other reception contexts in border areas.

This e-book will be structured as follows. The first chapter presents the INSigHT project and the research methodology. The second presents a statistical overview of migratory movements from Nigeria to Europe and Italy, giving an overview of the specific territory of Alto Adige, in particular in relation to the arrival of migrants and trafficked persons. The third chapter provides a framework of the national legislation on trafficking. The fourth is dedicated to the Alba Anti-trafficking Project in Bozen, its history and structure, and highlights its strengths and weaknesses, especially with regard to the protection and assistance of Nigerian women who are victims of trafficking and serious exploitation. The following chapters address some transversal themes. The fifth chapter is dedicated to gender-based violence, providing analysis of the intertwining of gender and generational dimensions, using a case study to raise the issue of an emerging theme in the Bozen/Brenner area, as well as in the wider Italian territory: that of mothers seeking asylum. This category of subjects will be explored in the context studied and in relation to the presence and impact of exploitation networks in their lives. The chapter also examines the (poor) integration between the asylum system, the anti-trafficking system and the welfare system, highlighting the negative impacts on beneficiaries, especially women who are victims of trafficking. The sixth chapter offers a brief reflection on unaccompanied foreign minors who are victims of exploitation in Alto Adige. The seventh is dedicated to the phenomenon of secondary movements, with reference to developments in the Bozen/Brenner area. The eighth chapter closes this e-book with some concluding notes.

## Chapter 1

### The e-book and the INSigHT Action

This publication is part of the INSigHT Action, which aims to build the capacity of those involved to address the issue of trafficking of human beings and secondary routes in Nigeria, Italy and Sweden, with a particular focus on Nigerian women and girls involved in prostitution and young Nigerian men involved in begging.

The main objective of this e-book is to explore the Bozen/Brenner border context as an area of interest as it is affected by the arrivals of asylum seekers from both southern Italy (towards northern Europe) and northern Europe (towards Italy). The location near the border has a decisive influence on the movements of migrants who arrive in the territory seeking legal and social protection. The Brenner border is in fact crossed by complex forms of mobility, including those informally organised by trafficking networks for the purposes of the serious exploitation of women, men and minors, who arrive in Europe and claim the right to asylum. Because of the peculiarity of the area studied, bordering the Brenner Pass and part of the Triveneto (which includes Trentino-Alto Adige, Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Veneto and is the geographical focus of the INSigHT Action's research in Italy), but also because of the large number of Nigerian migrants involved in sexual and labour exploitation, we believe it is essential to analyse how the policies of the Autonomous Province of Bozen, subject to a certain administrative autonomy with respect to other Italian regions, respond to the phenomenon of trafficking.

The research work presented here aims to specifically answer the following questions:

- how are the reception policies of the Autonomous Province of Bozen interlinked with the Alba Anti-trafficking Project?
- Do migrant victims of trafficking and serious exploitation manage to access protection programmes and how?
- What measures to prevent and combat trafficking are implemented by the institutions and the Alba Project?
- How do intra-European secondary movements become evident in this geographical area and what consequences do they have on the lives of people who are victims and potential victims of trafficking?

## Methodology

The research work carried out by the INSigHT project began in November 2019 and was structured as the continuation of research started in November 2017 by Serena Caroselli. The prior knowledge of the context allowed for immediate and continuous contact with stakeholders and people in the area. In February 2020, 11 semi-structured interviews were organised with all the main actors directly involved in the protection of women asylum seekers who are victims and potential victims of trafficking. The interviews aimed to more deeply explore the topic and dynamics of secondary movements, as well as the services that are offered to meet the needs of women.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed using the Express Scribe software. The analysis was done with manual coding by thematic categories of interest. All interviewees gave their signed consent before participating in the interviews. We had no feedback on the request for an interview with the police (Bozen *Squadra Mobile*<sup>9</sup> and the Bozen Local Police). We sent requests for civic access to data, relating to controls, border crossings, formal and informal readmissions, to the National Police, the Railway Police and the Brenner Border Police. Partial data on checks and formal readmissions were shared; no data on informal readmissions was received.

As mentioned above, the research work was facilitated by a previous knowledge of the context. It built upon the experiences of Michela Semprebon, as independent researcher and volunteer activist in the *Antenne Migranti* Project<sup>10</sup>, that dealt with the monitoring of the transit of migrants on the Verona-Brenner route, in the period 2016-2019, (see for example Semprebon and Pelacani, 2020) and on the feminist ethnography carried out by Serena Caroselli, as part of her doctoral studies (see for example Caroselli, 2020). Her PhD focused on the experience of women asylum seekers in the European asylum system, the reception system in Alto Adige and the consequent forms of forced mobility. The ethnography started in November 2017 and ended in March 2019 and included a 16-month period of participant observation and 36 interviews (20 in-depth interviews with women asylum seekers in transit along the Brenner route and 16 semi-structured interviews with associations involved in reception, anti-trafficking professionals and institutions in the Autonomous Province of Bozen)<sup>11</sup>.

As part of the INSigHT research, we also requested access to the following materials: reports produced by the Alba Project for the Verona Territorial Commission in relation to the referral of trafficked women; documentation related to the appeals produced by lawyers following the rejection of asylum applications by trafficked women. Contrary to our initial objective, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown imposed in the period March-May 2020, it was not possible to interview

---

<sup>9</sup> The *Squadra Mobile* is a specific department/section of the National Police. It operates in each *Questura*. It conducts investigations either under its own initiative or as delegated by the Judiciary Authority.

<sup>10</sup> This project, with a focus on monitoring the transit of migrants along the Brenner route, ran from 2016 to 2019. It was coordinated by the Bozen Langer Foundation and managed in collaboration with a network of volunteers and activists from Verona, Trento and Bozen. More information is available on the Foundation's website: <https://www.meltingpot.org/Bozen-Presentazione-di-Antenne-Migranti-monitoraggio.html#.YAHInhbSJEZ> Last accessed: 15/01/2021. On the Langer Foundation's website you can also find the reports produced by the project: <https://www.alexanderlanger.org/it/948/4090> Last accessed on: 15/01/2021.

<sup>11</sup> The field observation stage was active and continuous in the places experienced by women asylum seekers and victims of trafficking and saw the researcher involved in accompanying them to the *Questura*, hospitals, temporary housing, reception centres, Bozen and Brenner railway stations, informal camps, places of prostitution, trafficking and exploitation, and the railway lines between the Brenner Pass and the Austrian city of Innsbruck.

women who were beneficiaries of anti-trafficking services on the territory, nor to resume contact, except by telephone, with some of the women interviewed during the PhD. For this reason, we have also used 8 interviews (5 carried out with institutions and services in Bozen, 3 with women asylum seekers) and other ethnographic material collected by Serena Caroselli as part of her PhD. Finally, we collected quantitative data related to migratory movements and the beneficiaries of reception projects, for the period 2017-2020, drawn up by: the Ministry of the Interior, National Ombudsperson for Childhood and Adolescence, The Autonomous Province of Bozen, *Volontarius* Association, The Red Cross, the Alba Project and the Anti-trafficking Helpline; ASGI (Associazione Studi Giuridici per l'Immigrazione (Association For Juridical Studies on Immigration) and *Antenne Migranti*, which we will return to below.



## Chapter 2

### Migration and human trafficking from Nigeria to Europe

#### *Nigeria as an important country of origin*

As reported in the Frontex (2018) report, after uninterrupted movements, there was a peak in the number of arrivals of Nigerian women in Italy and Spain, in the period 2015-2017. According to the European Commission (2018), in the period 2015-2016, Nigeria was the non-European country with the highest number of citizens registered as trafficked in the EU, with a total of 2094 people. It was followed by Albania, Vietnam, China and Eritrea (Table 1). In addition, Nigeria - together with Niger, Chad and Cameroon - was recorded as the main country of departure and destination of persons transiting through the monitoring points established by IOM, in May 2019 (Table 2).

2015		2016	
<i>Citizenship of those registered as victims of trafficking</i>	<i>Number of Registered victims</i>	<i>Citizenship of registered victims of trafficking</i>	<i>Number of Registered victims</i>
Nigeria	842	Nigeria	1242
Albania	648	Albania	749
Viet Nam	537	Viet Nam	562
China	202	China	537
Eritrea	158	Afghanistan	134
India	123	Eritrea	129
Morocco	99	India	126
Philippines	89	Pakistan	126
Sudan	84	Morocco	119
*	79	Philippines	118
Total (Top 10)	2861	Total (Top 10)	3842
Others (Non- EU, outside top 10)	1543	Others (Non- EU, outside top 10)	2126
Unknown	249	Unknown	256
Total Non-EU	4404	Total Non-EU	5968

TABLE 1: TOP NON-EU CITIZENSHIP OF REGISTERED VICTIMS (SOURCE: EC, 2018: 90)

Country of origin	%	Variation
Nigeria	63	+2
Niger	36	-2
Chad	1	-
Cameroon	<1	-

TABLE 2: TOP NON-EU CITIZENSHIP OF REGISTERED VICTIMS (SOURCE: IOM NIGERIA, 2019, 1)

## Destination countries

According to data from 2018 provided by the European Commission (Table 3), almost half (1012 out of 2084) of Nigerian trafficked citizens who arrived in the EU were registered in Italy. However, in the same year, the number of migrants arriving in Italy, by sea or land, decreased, amounting to -5% compared to the previous year (Table 4) and the Nigerian nationality was no longer among the top five of third-country citizens.

Member States	N of Nigerian Registered Victims	Female							Male						
		Total	0 to 11	12 to 17	Children	18 to 24	25 +	Adults	Total	0 to 11	12 to 17	Children	18 to 24	25 +	Adults
EU 28	2084	1483	0	30	161	174	193	1272	66	0	3	3	12	22	63
Belgium	34	33	0	6	6	20	7	27	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Denmark	134	131	0	4	4	52	75	127	3	0	1	1	0	2	2
Germany	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ireland	23	23	0	2	2	7	14	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greece	19	19	0	0	0	0	0	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spain	54	54	0	2	2	28	24	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Italy	1012	965	0	0	130	0	0	855	27	0	0	0	0	0	27
Luxembourg	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Netherlands	90	61	0	6	6	11	44	55	29	0	2	2	7	20	27
Austria	50	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Portugal	15	12	0	0	0	0	10	11	3	0	0	0	3	0	3
Finland	33	31	0	0	1	0	0	30	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
UK	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE 3: REGISTERED VICTIMS OF NIGERIAN CITIZENSHIP BY AGE AND GENDER (2015-2016) (SOURCE: EC, 2018, 96)

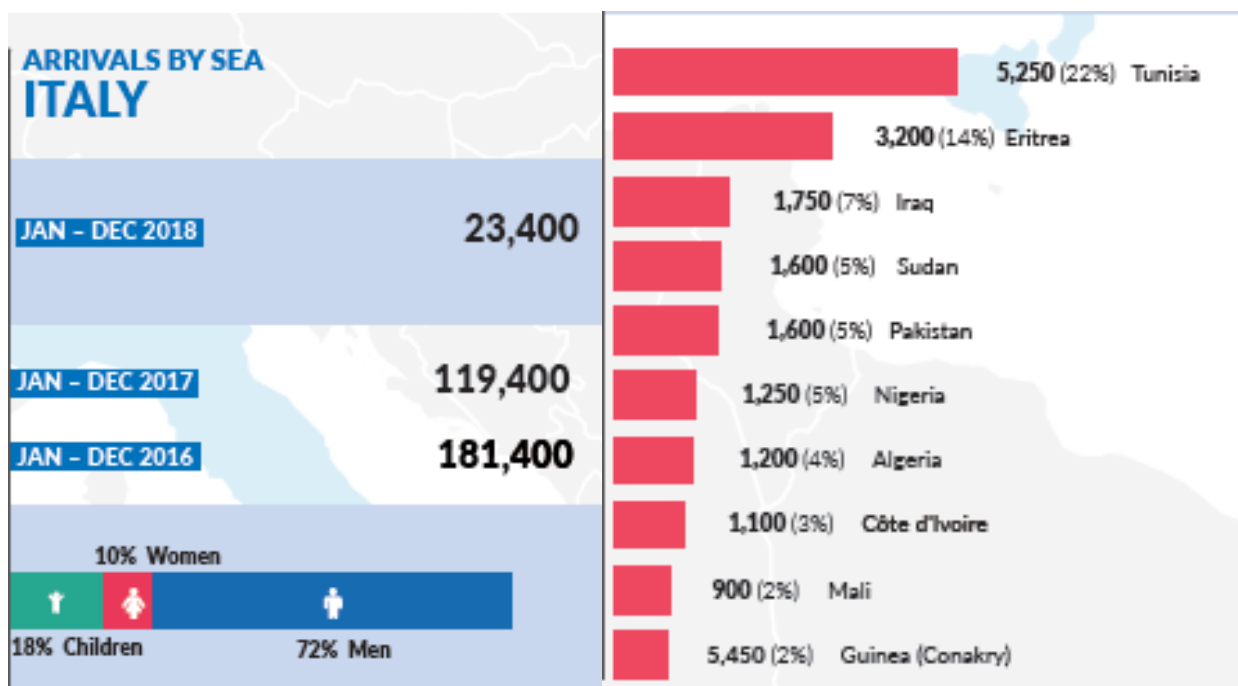


TABLE 4: ARRIVALS BY SEA TO ITALY IN 2018 (SOURCE: UNHCR, LINK: [HTTPS://RELIEFWEB.INT/SITES/RELIEFWEB.INT/FILES/RESOURCES/68006.PDF](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/68006.pdf))

It should be pointed out that the number of people who set off on a journey from Nigeria to Europe remains largely unknown. The data is partial and unreliable. Moreover, there is only partial evidence that migration from Nigeria to Europe is decreasing. There is a strong possibility that it is instead undergoing changes in its dynamics and routes that render it more invisible. The fact that the European Commission does not include data on internal transfers and secondary movements in its report should not be underestimated.

For its part, the IOM (2017) suggested that transportation through transit destination countries (mainly Italy, Spain, France and Germany, but also Sweden, Belgium, Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland) should be examined more carefully. In line with this, the second EU report on the evolution of the trafficking of human beings (2018a) showed that internal trafficking, within the territory of the Member States, is on the rise. This clearly indicates the need to address the phenomenon in its transnational and intra-European dimension.

### *Recent trends in migration and trafficking from Nigeria to Europe and Italy*

The European Commission's most recent report (2020) shows that trafficking of human beings has not weakened. On the contrary, it has evolved, with changing and increasingly complex forms of interconnected exploitation.

### Main countries of destination and origin

With reference to the EU-27, in the period 2017-2018, 14,145 persons were registered as victims of trafficking. Italy has the second highest number of victims, with France, the Netherlands, Germany and Romania coming after. As regards their countries of origin, 49% are EU nationals and one third (34%) are registered in a Member State. Much like in 2015-2016, the main nationality of non-European victims is Nigerian (3,112).

### Developments in air and land routes

Confirming the trends of previous years, Frontex (2020) reports that most detections of counterfeit documents, in 2019, were reported on air routes. Italian airports were the most affected by this phenomenon. The vast majority of people with counterfeit visas were identified in Italy upon arrival from Casablanca, an increase of 114% compared to 2018. People with counterfeit documents were mainly from sub-Saharan countries, including Nigeria (Table 5). Many Italian airports experienced a significant increase in attempts to travel within the EU/Schengen area with counterfeit documents.

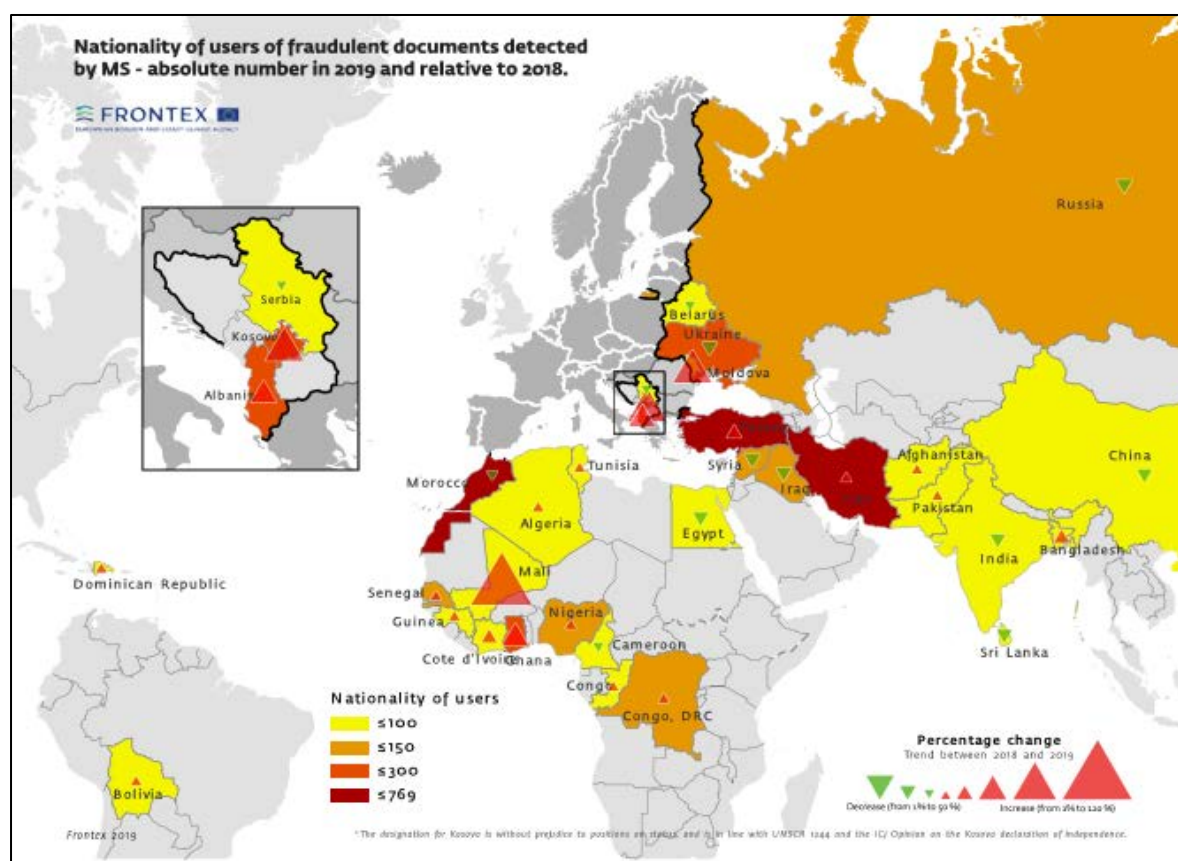


TABLE 5: NATIONALITY OF USERS OF FRAUDULENT DOCUMENTS DETECTED BY MEMBER STATES – ABSOLUTE NUMBER IN 2019 AND RELATIVE TO 2018 (SOURCE: FRONTEX, 2020, 29)

Regarding those arriving by air, according to the 2019 data, 11 people of Nigerian nationality were not admitted to Italy upon arrival at Rome Fiumicino and 1 at the Venice airport.<sup>12</sup>

There are limited reports (but also detections) related to border crossing points. There was also a significant increase in secondary movements within the EU/Schengen area, as shown by the - not very detailed - evidence of such movements (38% more than in 2018). Secondary movements by sea also increased in 2019 and will remain a central focus for EU institutions (Frontex, 2020).

In 2017, 23,543 passive readmissions were carried out at the borders of Northern Italy, including 648 readmissions of Nigerians with a regular residence permit in Italy. 27 passive readmissions were accepted in the Veneto Region (from Venice to Treviso). In the territory of Bozen, the passive readmissions proposed by the authorities at the five borders with Austria (Brenner, Malles Venosta, Prato alla Drava, San Candido, Forcella di Fleres) totalled 1484. Only 555, less than half, were carried out.<sup>13</sup>

Regarding arrivals on the southern Italian coast, a total of 181,436 people was recorded in 2016, falling to 119,369 in 2017, and down to 23,292 in 2018, rising again to 34,134 in 2020. Nigerian was the leading nationality in 2017, with a total of 18,153 people; in 2018 it was sixth (1,250), after Tunisia (5,181), Eritrea, Iraq, Sudan and Pakistan; in 2019 and 2020 it did not figure among the top ten nationalities<sup>14</sup> (Tables 6-7).

Nigeria	18.153
Guinea	9.693
Costa d'Avorio	9.504
Bangladesh	8.995
Mali	7.114
Eritrea	6.953
Sudan	6.172
Tunisia	6.092
Senegal	5.994
Marocco	5.928
altre*	34.712

TABLE 6: NATIONALITY DECLARED UPON ARRIVAL AT SOUTHERN ITALIAN SHORES (JAN. - DEC. - 2017)

\* THE DATA COULD INCLUDE MIGRANTS WHO HAD NOT YET BEEN IDENTIFIED.

<sup>12</sup> Data shared by ASGI (Associazioni Studi Giuridici sull'Immigrazione), after a direct request to the airport authorities.

<sup>13</sup> Data taken from the Statistical Dossier of 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and processed by the Chamber of Deputies, Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on the reception, identification and expulsion system, as well as on the conditions of detention of migrants and on the public resources used.

<sup>14</sup> Data taken from the Ministry of Interior's Daily Dashboard: 31/12/2017, 31/12/2018, 31/12/2019, 28/12/2020. Link: <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/statistica/cruscotto-statistico-giornaliero>  
Last accessed: 12/12/2020.

Tunisia	12.873
Bangladesh	4.141
Costa d'Avorio	1.950
Algeria	1.458
Pakistan	1.400
Egitto	1.263
Sudan	1.125
Marocco	1.030
Afghanistan	1.009
Iran	989
altre*	6.916

TABLE 7: NATIONALITY UPON ARRIVAL AT SOUTHERN ITALIAN SHORES (JAN – DEC. 2020) (SOURCE: CRUSCOTTO GIORNALIERO MINISTERO DELL'INTERNO 28/12/2020)

\* THE DATA COULD INCLUDE MIGRANTS WHO HAD NOT YET BEEN IDENTIFIED.

\*\* THE DATA REFERS TO ARRIVALS BY 8AM OF THE DAY INDICATED IN THE TABLE.

Following changes in border policies and bilateral agreements between Italy and Libya, there has been a decrease in the number of arrivals on Italian shores. However, this does not mean that there are fewer trafficked persons in Italy, neither with respect to adults or minors. It is possible that they are unable to access the asylum system upon arrival in Italy.

There is also important data concerning the entrance of Nigerian nationals into the CPRs (Centri di Permanenza per Rimpatri - Detention Centres for Repatriation). In April 2020, 113 Nigerians (25 women and 88 men) were detained in Italian CPRs. To these must be added another 39 Nigerians who were subsequently repatriated<sup>15</sup>.

Finally, it should be specified that Italy has carried out an increasing number of forced repatriations to Nigeria over the years. The destination airport is always Lagos and the departure airport is mainly Rome Fiumicino. In 2016, out of a total of 5,817 persons repatriated, 151 were of Nigerian nationality. In subsequent years, the total number of Nigerians repatriated was 279 in 2017, 189 in 2018, peaking at 348 in 2019.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Data provided by the National Ombudsperson for the Rights of Persons Detained or Deprived of their Liberty. Report on the monitoring of forced repatriation operations of foreign nationals. Report to Parliament 2020.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

### *Asylum applications*

In relation to migratory movements and trajectories, it is also worth looking at data on asylum applications. In 2017, 23,057 Nigerians applied for asylum in Italy. 5% were granted refugee status, 2% subsidiary protection, 20% humanitarian protection. 69% of the applications were rejected, while four per cent of the applications were not assessed because the asylum seekers could not be traced. As regards unaccompanied minors, 953 asylum seekers were registered in the same year: 11% were granted refugee status, 1% subsidiary protection, 67% humanitarian protection, 20% had their applications rejected and 1% could not be traced<sup>17</sup>.

It is important to emphasise that in 2019, 715,000 applications for international protection from third-country nationals were filed in the EU/Schengen territory (13% more than in 2018). In the same year, 9% of all asylum applications were resubmitted, following a negative decision on a previous application. This phenomenon particularly concerns citizens of Serbia, Russia and Moldova, but also Sri Lanka, Senegal and Nigeria.

### *Profile of persons trafficked for sexual exploitation*

In the 27 Member States, more than 46% of the persons registered as victims of trafficking were trafficked for sexual exploitation, which is the main form of exploitation today. Also, the main reason for the trafficking of non-Europeans was for sexual exploitation (41%), with a significant group trafficked for labour exploitation (22%) or for other forms of exploitation (24%). Among the top five non-European nationalities of people trafficked for sexual exploitation, Nigeria still ranks first (68%) (Table 8).

Nearly three quarters (72%) of all registered victims were women, including both women and girls. 23% were men (Table 9).

Age is a relevant variable: children accounted for 22% of the registered victims (Table 10) and almost three quarters were EU nationals. Most of the minors (64%) were trafficked for sexual exploitation and the vast majority (78%) were girls.

---

<sup>17</sup> Data taken from the Statistical Dossier of 27th October 2017, and processed by the Chamber of Deputies.

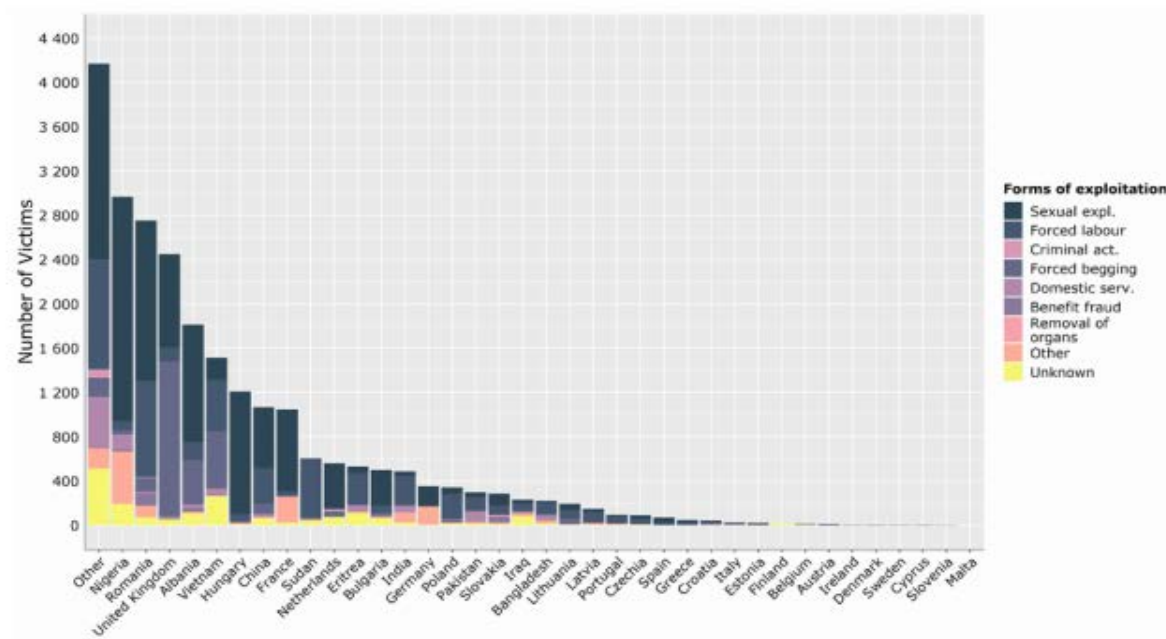


TABLE 8: VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN EU BY CITIZENSHIP AND TYPOLOGY OF EXPLOITATION (SOURCE: EC, 2020)

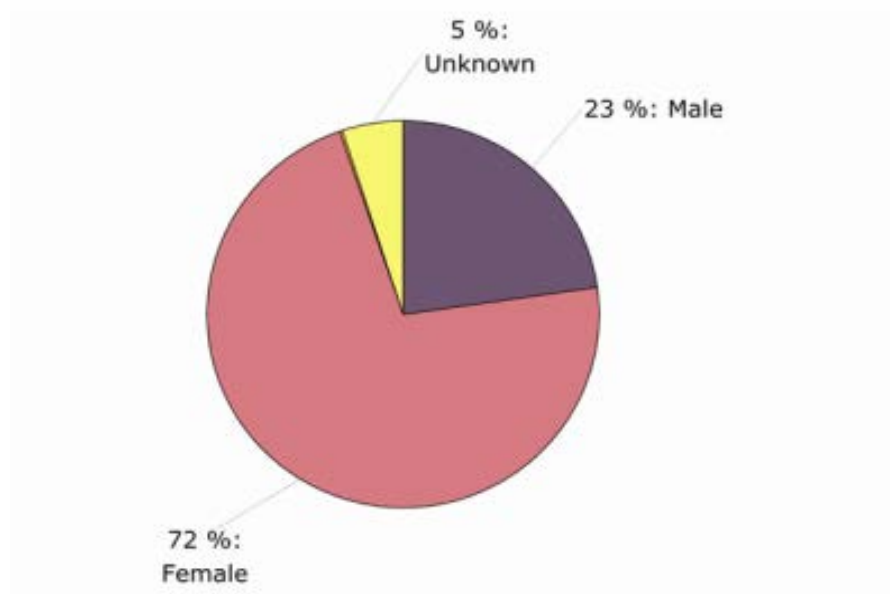


TABLE 9: VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN EU-27 BY SEX (SOURCE: EC, 2020)



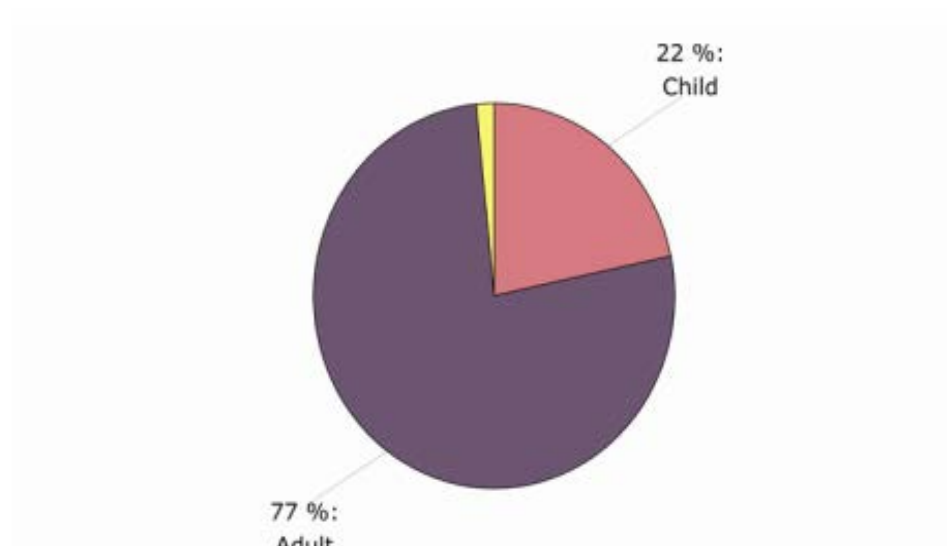


TABLE 10: VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN THE EU-27 BY AGE (SOURCE: EC, 2020)

### *Crossings across the Brenner border between Italy and Austria*

Since 2014, the Brenner border, as well as other northern Italian borders (Ventimiglia - Como Chiasso, but also borders with Slovenia), has been affected by a high number of migrant transits. The main nationalities registered at the Brenner Pass were Syrian and Eritrean, rejected at the Italian-Austrian border by the Austrian Police and the Italian Border Police (Weissensteiner, 2015: 38).

According to the *Antenne Migranti* and ASGI Report (2017), in 2017, the Brenner border had fewer migrants crossing with the aim of reaching Austria and northern Europe, due to the tightening of border policies between Italy and Europe, as will be explained below. The number of people intercepted in 2016 amounted to 5,966, while in May 2017, 2,699 people who entered Tyrol irregularly were intercepted by Austrian law enforcement agencies. According to data provided by the Tyrolean police, arrivals on trains from Italy were reduced by 75% (*Antenne Migranti* and ASGI, 2017). In February 2020, the Red Cross team working at Brenner reported that there were on average at least 150 people who attempted to cross the Brenner border every month (interview, Red Cross Brenner Coordinator and Professional, 19/02/2020). Since March 2020, due to the measures related to the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, train patrols were temporarily suspended (as emerged from access to the files requested of the border police) and there is no sufficient data available that would allow a clear picture of the number of migrants in this border area, which therefore remains largely unknown. As far as adult and minor victims and potential victims of trafficking are concerned, there is no quantitative data, as we will explain below, despite the fact that the Regional Ombudsperson for Childhood and Adolescence has expressed concern about this border area, suggesting that punctual monitoring be carried out.

### *The foreign population resident in Alto Adige*

According to 2019 data, more than 30% of the foreigners residing in Alto Adige (15,751 persons) were resident in the province of Bozen. 60.3% (31,061 foreigners) established their residency in one of the seven municipalities of Alto Adige with more than 10,000 inhabitants. 16 municipalities have a higher incidence of foreigners than the provincial average (9.7%); in most municipalities, the incidence remains below average. Citizens of foreign origin come from 138 different countries, mostly from non-European countries (30%), and in particular Asia (20%) and Africa (14%), and others. In this context, the resident Nigerian population is 775 people (of which 65.4% are male) with a variation of 38.6% on the previous year.<sup>18</sup>

### *Data on the reception system in Alto Adige from 2016 to date*

According to data from the Ministry of the Interior, Trentino-Alto Adige- Suedtirolo receives only 2% of migrants received nationwide (*Antenne Migranti* and ASGI, 2017). In 2016, there were 1,071 people who landed in Italy and were received in the territory of the Province of Bozen. Further 453 people arrived in the area autonomously and, as we will see, were excluded from the quota system used for the “redistribution” of migrants by the Italian Ministry of Interior.

In 2017, Trentino-Alto Adige accounted for 1.73% of the admissions to the reception system at national level, with 2.16 people received per 1,000 inhabitants, and a total of 2,296 people distributed between the provinces of Trento (1,115) and Bozen (1,181) (*Antenne Migranti* and ASGI, 2017).

At the end of May 2017, according to the Province of Bozen, there were 1,630 people who, following their arrival in Italy were transferred to and received in the province, compared to the 1,940 foreseen by the national distribution plan (according to which each province should receive a percentage of migrants proportional to the resident population), with an increase of 20 people in mid-June. Comparing data on arrivals in the country, from January to May 2017, with the data on arrivals in the province in the same period, shows that a mere 0.6% of the total number of people who landed in Italy were transferred to Bozen (*Antenne Migranti* and ASGI, 2017).

Of the 1,650 persons accommodated in the reception centres in Bozen, 147 were excluded from the quotas of the national plan. 50% of these people, defined as “out of quota”, were families, including single mothers with children; the other half were single men, in particular Afghans, Pakistanis and Moroccans. Different forms of reception are still provided for these people, as explained below.

With regard to the migrant population seeking asylum, in Bozen in January 2020 there were 260 Nigerian nationals (out of a total of 803) in the reception system, of which 22% were women. Although lower than the previous year (1,260 in 2019), this number is comparable with other years, meaning there is a fairly stable female presence (interview, Director of the Department of Social Policies - Office for the Elderly and Social Policies, Autonomous Province of Bozen, 18/02/2020).

---

<sup>18</sup> Link: <https://www.tuttitalia.it/trentino-alto-adige/provincia-autonoma-di-Bozen/statistiche/cittadini-stranieri/nigeria/>  
Last accessed on: 12/03/2021.

### *The 'invisible' foreign population in Alto Adige<sup>19</sup>*

Homelessness is very present in the city of Bozen and is also linked to the mechanism of admission into the reception system, which we will explain later. Homeless people are housed in emergency facilities. In 2019 they amounted to a total of about 450 people, of whom 80 were on the waiting list – with waits of up to two months – and so had to sleep in makeshift solutions on the streets (*Antenne Migranti*, 2020). The legal statuses of those in conditions of "housing emergency" were heterogeneous: "overstayers" (34%), refugees (18%), those with residence permits or other documents (46%) and those who were undocumented (2%). Of these, 45% were more stable in the territory (i.e. present for about a year), 55% are in transit or had been on the territory for a shorter period of time.

No specific data is available regarding: the number of women in reception facilities and among the "out of quota" group (interview, Director of the Department of Social Policies – Office for the Elderly and Social Policies, Autonomous Province of Bozen, 18/02/2020); women who are not admitted to emergency facilities due to a lack of places, as was found in February 2020 (interview, Director of Refugee Counselling Service, *Caritas*, 20/02/2020); crossings at the Brenner border (interview, Red Cross Brenner Coordinator and Professional, 19/02/2020). This lack of data suggests that there is probably a segment of the population that remains invisible to services.

Not even the presence of unaccompanied foreign minors is properly tracked by local institutions, despite the fact that in 2019 the Ombudsperson for Childhood and Adolescence expressed concern about this matter in relation to the entire regional territory, with particular reference to the Autonomous Province of Bozen and the border crossings affected by the movement of minors who are exploited or who escape border controls (including the following locations: Prato alla Drava, San Candido, Resia Pass, Brenner towards Austria and Tubre towards Switzerland).

Furthermore, it has been pointed out that in this area of northern Italy, the movement towards European countries has been reversed, starting from 2018, with a progressive increase in arrivals from northern Europe to Italy. These movements are mostly associated with unaccompanied foreign minors who autonomously return to Italy - the state of first entry - after the failure of their migration plan to make an initial crossing of Italy's northern borders.

### *The Alto Adige border region<sup>20</sup>*

As explained above, the context being analyzed is affected by mobility across the Brenner border between Italy and Austria and by migration management mechanisms that have a strong influence on the policies of the Autonomous Province of Bozen in Alto Adige. This region, unlike most other Italian regions<sup>21</sup>, obtained its Second Autonomy Statute in 1972. In this context, for decades, the processes of coexistence between the inhabitants of the region have been defined through ethno-linguistic

---

<sup>19</sup> Excerpt taken from Caroselli (2020).

<sup>20</sup> Excerpt taken from Caroselli (2020).

<sup>21</sup> And like a few others: Sicily, Sardinia, Valle d'Aosta and Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

forms of belonging, according to a system of "ethnic proportionality"<sup>22</sup>.

The measures implemented by the statute defined the perpetuation of historical divisions based on linguistic distinctions, social boundaries and separation between groups. Thus, the administrative and social apparatus has been traversed by a tendency to separate and differentiate rather than unite (Zinn, 2018). This is also reflected in the reception of migrants. Alto Adigean institutions responded to the internal transformations in society brought about by the conspicuous arrival of foreigners by creating boundaries or obstacles to accessing social rights. Migrants have become, in imagination and reality, symbolically and physically "external" to the social and identitarian boundaries of Alto Adige (Sciortino, 2012). Their request to be admitted into the space of the Autonomous Region is therefore situated in a social fabric that has, in its historical roots and institutional structures, the legacy of a historical process of differentiation.

The census, which was carried out in 1981 and which obliged families to identify themselves as belonging to different language groups (German, Italian, Ladin) - according to the provisions of the autonomy statute -, had the purpose of differentiating access to building and housing subsidies or employment in the workplace. The society in Alto Adige has been defining its contours through asymmetrical relationships since then.

The widening of divisions continues to function as an "antidote to external threats", which become more evident at the Brenner border. The control of mobility at the border makes the Brenner Pass a space of connection, redistribution and differentiation, which is combined with the borders created as far as access to rights and services in the city of Bozen is concerned, a "grey zone" directly connected to the mechanisms at play at the border.

The blocking of external mobility (from Italy to other EU countries and vice versa), the implementation of internal mobility within Italian cities, and the restructuring of secondary movements from Northern Europe intersect with local provincial regulations. Migrant people, who are considered a threat to the well-being of the society (Koshravi, 2019), are faced with immobility generated by the construction of the Brenner border and of the city of Bozen itself. On the one hand, certain forms of control have been consolidated - through the continuous presence of law enforcement officers, systematic patrols of the motorway junction, controls on passenger and goods trains along the Verona/Munich axis - which allow the border to shift and be restructured in other places and institutions, such as the *Questura*<sup>23</sup> in Bozen and the reception centres. On the other hand, instruments of hierarchization of access to protection are created that bring about differences in terms of rights for subjects defined as "in transit" who are subjected to differential exclusion-inclusion schemes (Gargiulo, 2017; see also Semprebon and Pelacani, 2020).

---

<sup>22</sup> This census system that considers "belonging" to one of the three linguistic areas German, Italian and Ladin, operates through proportional quotas, for example in the recruitment of administrative positions or for the allocation of housing units.

<sup>23</sup> The *Questura* is an office of the Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza (Department for Public Safety), with provincial competence, and it responds to the Ministry of the Interior. Its main duty is associated with ensuring public order and public safety and it carries out activities to prevent crimes. It also exercises administrative functions associated with the issuance of passports and of residence permits for immigrants. The *Questore* is the Head of the *Questura*.

## Chapter 3

### The Italian normative framework on human trafficking

The Italian legislation on human trafficking and serious exploitation consists of a number of laws and policy documents:

- **Art. 18 of Legislative Decree 286/1998** “Testo unico delle disposizioni concernenti la disciplina dell’immigrazione e norme sulla condizione dello straniero” (Unique Text with provisions relating to immigration and norms on the condition of foreigners)<sup>24</sup>;
- **Law 228/2003** “Misure contro la tratta di persone” (Measures against the trafficking of human beings)<sup>25</sup>;
- **Legislative Decree 24/2014** “Attuazione della direttiva 2011/36/UE, relativa alla prevenzione e alla repressione della tratta di esseri umani e alla protezione delle vittime, che sostituisce la decisione quadro 2002/629/GAI. (Transposition of EU Directive 2011/36)<sup>26</sup>;
- **Piano nazionale d’azione contro la tratta e il grave sfruttamento 2016/2018** (National Action Plan against human trafficking and the serious exploitation of human beings)<sup>27</sup>.

#### **Art. 18 Legislative Decree 286/1998**

Art. 18 states that “*when, in the course of police operations, investigations or criminal proceedings relevant to either of the offences under article 3 of Law 75 of 20 February 1958 or under article 380 of the Italian Code of Criminal Procedure, or in the course of welfare services provided by local authorities, cases of coercion or serious exploitation are found with respect to a foreigner and his/her safety is seriously endangered as a result of his/her attempts to escape the pressures exerted by an organisation involved in either of the said offences or as a result of statements made during the pre-trial investigations or the trial, the Questore, also upon request by the Attorney General of the Republic, or upon the latter favourable opinion, shall deliver a special residence permit to allow the foreigner to break free of the violence and the subjection to the criminal organisation and to participate in a programme of assistance and social inclusion*”.

It gives people who are victims and potential victims of trafficking the right to be issued a residence permit “for social protection” and the right to access a social and labour inclusion program, not only whereby people report their exploiters to the police (*judicial procedure*), but also if they do not do so

<sup>24</sup> Available at: <https://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/deleghe/98286dl.htm> Last access: 20/12/2020.

<sup>25</sup> Available at: <https://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/03228l.htm> Last access: 10/12/2020.

<sup>26</sup> Available at: <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2014/03/13/14G00035/sg> Last access: 19/09/2020.

<sup>27</sup> Available at: <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Piano-nazionale-di-azione-contro-la-tratta-e-il-grave-sfruttamento-2016-2018.pdf> Last access: 12/12/2020.

and yet have been identified as victims of trafficking and exploitation (*social procedure*)<sup>28</sup> by competent stakeholders registered in the section 2 list of associations and entities (including stakeholders conducting assistance and social protection interventions in the field of anti-trafficking), as defined by **Decree 394/1999 of the Italian President of the Republic**, later modified to **Decree 334/2004 of the Italian President of the Republic**.

Upon entry into the inclusion program, the association or entity that takes up the case of the service-users can apply for a residence permit and it is the *Questore* who is responsible for deciding whether to authorise it<sup>29</sup>.

These two procedures — social and juridical — are not necessarily mutually exclusive. A beneficiary can follow the social procedure, thus obtaining a residence permit without reporting to the police, and access the inclusion program, or can follow the juridical procedure, thus reporting to the police to then obtain a residence permit and access the inclusion program. There are also cases in which the beneficiary follows the social procedure to then move on to the judicial one.

Although art. 18 has positively influenced international legislation, including impacts on the Palermo Protocol and on the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, and the United States legislation, it has been criticized on the following grounds. First, the validity of the art. 18 residence permit is very limited, it lasts only six months, although it is renewable. The permit can be converted to a work permit or a study permit, but conversion to the former is dependent on finding a job and the Italian socio-economic context is very fragile – even more now with the on-going

---

<sup>28</sup> Within the framework of the Italian legislation on immigration, the first provision for a residence permit for people who are victims of trafficking or serious exploitation was made by Decree Law 447/1996, which modified art. 3 of Decree Law 416/1989 and was later converted to Law 39/1990. Law 39/1990 provided for the *Questore* to issue a special residence permit to non-EU citizens if, during the course of a criminal proceeding associated with any crime indicated in art. 3 of Law 75/1958 (concerning the abolition of the normative regulation of prostitution and the fight against exploitation) or any of the crimes indicated in art. 380 of the Italian Penal Code (including the exploitation of prostitution), citizen are exposed to a serious danger as a result of their collaboration during investigation or the penal proceeding - provided their contribution was exceptionally important to identify and prosecute offenders. This residence permit expired after one year, unless procedural or security issues required otherwise and it was intended as a form of “reward” for people victims of trafficking who collaborated in investigations (Nicodemi and Bonetti, 2009). Moreover, this law provided that neither expulsion orders nor a hypothetical criminal conviction or previously served by a person victim of trafficking would represent an obstacle to the issuance of the residence permit (For more information see: Decree Law 47/1996 “Urgent provision relating to immigration policy and the regular entry and stay on the national territory of citizens of non-EU countries). Available at: <https://www.isfol.it/sistema-documentale/banche-dati/normative/archivio/12689> Last access: 10/12/2020; Decree Law 30 December 1989 416 “Urgent measures on political asylum, entry and residence for third country nationals and regularisation of third country nationals and stateless people who are already on the State territory”; Conversion into law, with changes to Decree Law 30 September 1989, 426, with provision on political asylum, entry and stay of non-EU citizens and the regularisation of third country citizens and stateless people who are already present in the Italian territory. Available at: <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1990/02/28/090G0075/sg> Last access: 10/12/2020; Law 20 February 1958, 75 “Abolition of the normative regulation of prostitution and the fight against exploitation of prostitution”. Available at: [https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/serie\\_generale/caricaDettaglioAtto/originario?atto.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=1958-03-04&atto.codiceRedazionale=058U0075&elenco30giorni=false](https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/serie_generale/caricaDettaglioAtto/originario?atto.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=1958-03-04&atto.codiceRedazionale=058U0075&elenco30giorni=false) Last access: 10/12/2020).

<sup>29</sup> It must be reported that, according to art. 32 of Legislative Decree 25/08, paragraph 3-bis, any officer of any Territorial Commission, that is to say the authorities responsible for the examination of asylum applications, shall forward relevant documentation to the *Questore* if, during an interview with an asylum seeker, they found any well-founded element suggesting that the interviewed asylum seeker is a victim of one of the crimes indicated in articles 600 and 601 of the Penal Code, so that the *Questore* can decide whether to issue a residence permit for humanitarian reasons (for more information: Legislative Decree 28 January 2008, 25 “Implementation of Directive 2005/85/EC with provisions on procedures implemented by EU Member States for the recognition and withdrawal of the status of refugee”. Available at: <https://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/deleghe/08025dl.htm>. Last access: 21/12/2020).

pandemic –, not only in terms of limited employment opportunities but also of frequent episodes of racism (De Masi, 2014). Second, art. 18 has been interpreted and implemented in an increasingly restrictive way. Various stakeholders have testified that the *Questura*, throughout the country, tend to provide authorisation for the juridical procedure - and only in very rare cases for the social procedure - only upon receiving the favourable opinion for the issuance of a permit by the Public Prosecutor in charge of an investigation resulting from a victim's report.

**Law 228/2003** modified articles 600, 601 and 602 of the Italian Criminal Code with the aim of establishing serious and effective punishments to fight new forms of slavery. Art. 13 provided for the establishment of an Emergency and First Aid program for people who are victims of trafficking and serious exploitation, which was complementary to the programs introduced by art. 18 of Legislative Decree 286/1998.

In order for a person to access the program, it is not necessary for her/him to be currently in a situation of danger, nor is it necessary that the exploitation has already been experienced. If all requirements are met, the person who enters an art. 13 program could also be accepted, at a later stage, in an art. 18 program, which offers a much more articulated form of protection.

It should be added that according to **art. 32 of Legislative Decree 25/08, paragraph 3-bis**, the Territorial Commission, who is responsible for examining asylum applications, shall forward relevant documentation to the *Questore* if during an interview well-founded elements emerge and suggest that the asylum seeker has been a victim of one of the crimes referred to in articles 600 and 601 of the Criminal Code, so that the *Questore* can decide on the issuance of a residence permit for humanitarian reasons.

**Legislative Decree 24/2014** transposed **EU Directive 2011/36/EU** on the protection of victims of trafficking and the fight against human trafficking. This decree introduced the requirement of individual assessment in light of specific situations of vulnerability, including particularly the situation of: children, unaccompanied minors, elderly people, people with disabilities, women, particularly during pregnancy, lone parents with minor children, people with mental health problems, people who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical, sexual or gender-based violence. Additionally, art. 10 called for the identification of measures of coordination among competent institutional actors, a very ambitious and yet crucial objective aiming to overcome the fragmented approach adopted for the assistance and protection of vulnerable people while favouring mechanisms of collaboration with other systems of protection<sup>30</sup>.

---

<sup>30</sup> Respectively: Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati (System of protection for asylum seekers and refugees); Sistema di protezione per titolari di protezione internazionale e per minori stranieri non accompagnati (System of protection for holders of international protection and for foreign unaccompanied minors); Sistema di Accoglienza e Integrazione (System of Reception and Integration).

## *The Italian National Action Plan against trafficking and the serious exploitation of human beings*

Pursuant to **art. 9 of Legislative Decree 24/2014**, the Italian Government adopted the National Action Plan against trafficking and the serious exploitation of human beings covering the period 2016-2018. It aimed to define a multi-year intervention strategy to prevent and combat the phenomenon of trafficking and serious exploitation, as well as to raise awareness and favour social prevention and the *emersione*<sup>31</sup> and social inclusion of victims. The Plan identified the Department of Equal Opportunities as the body responsible for coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of relevant anti-trafficking policies and interventions. At the moment, the new plan is awaiting approval.

There are five priorities along which the plan is articulated, in line with the priorities of the **EU Strategy towards the eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016**:

- 1 identifying, protecting and assisting victims of trafficking,
- 2 stepping up the prevention of human trafficking,
- 3 improving outcomes regarding the prosecution of traffickers,
- 4 improving coordination and cooperation among key stakeholders,
- 5 increasing knowledge on emerging issues and trends related to all forms of trafficking in human beings and providing an effective response.

The plan encouraged the adoption of a gender-sensitive approach<sup>32</sup> and with attention to transnationality and inter-regionality. It also encouraged working towards the interconnection and integration of policies, and the creation and/or strengthening and management of networks with relevant stakeholders that operate in the field of anti-trafficking.

The implementation of the plan resulted, thanks to resources made available by the Department of Equal Opportunities, in the launch of 21 anti-trafficking projects, relating to each of the Italian regions (with the exception of the Lombardy Region that launched two projects).

Generally speaking, the plan has the merit of providing a national strategy for fighting human trafficking and has provided a useful tool for the definition and implementation of anti-trafficking projects. It remains to be seen whether the new Plan will fully take up the challenge of addressing the newly emerging phenomena of exploitation as well as the on-going challenges in the field of anti-trafficking.

---

<sup>31</sup> The term “emersione” is used to refer to phases in which a person first comes into a contact with the anti-trafficking system to ask for help.

<sup>32</sup> Directive 2011/36/EU was the first to adopt a gender-based approach to the trafficking of human beings, recognising that women and men, girls and boys are trafficked in different circumstances and need gender-sensitive forms of assistance and support. Moreover, the EU Anti-Trafficking Strategy identified violence against women and gender inequality as root causes of trafficking and outlined a number of measures to address the gender dimension.



### *The intersection between the anti-trafficking and international protection systems*

People who are victims of trafficking have right not only to an art. 18 residence permit but also to apply for international protection. Until recently, these two systems were unconnected, although the first UNHCR guidelines on International Protection, dating back to 2006, stated explicitly that some victims or potential victims of trafficking may fall within the definition of refugee contained in the Geneva Convention and may therefore be eligible for international protection. Recently, new guidelines have been published by the UNHCR that take into consideration the most recent evolution of the phenomenon of trafficking.

#### *When is a trafficked person entitled to international protection?*

The UNHCR has stressed that belonging to a gendered group can be associated with forms of discrimination and take the form of abuse, harassment, violence (UNHCR, 2017). A similar interpretation also emerges from international legislation and is explicitly reflected in the Istanbul Convention, ratified and implemented by Italy through **Law 77/2013**<sup>33</sup>. In line with this interpretation, people should be granted refugee status where there is a "well-founded fear of being persecuted" related to at least one of the grounds covered by the Geneva Convention, which also includes that of gender. The 1951 Convention refers to "well-founded fear", not certainty. At the same time, it is clear that this fear must be related to the specific situation of the asylum seeker. As far as trafficked asylum seekers are concerned, cases in which they have expressed fear about the possible return to their country of origin are not uncommon.

Victims and potential victims of human trafficking were not explicitly mentioned in the list of vulnerable people indicated by the EU Directives (**Qualification Directive 2004/83/EC**, **Procedures Directive 2005/85/EC**, **Reception Directive 2003/9/EC**). Following the recasting of all three Directives, victims of trafficking have been explicitly included in the list reported in both the Qualification and the Reception Directive. Upon transposition, Italy has addressed the need for the harmonisation of the Anti-trafficking and the International Protection Systems. An important change was introduced for example with the coming into force of **Legislative Decree 142/2015**<sup>34</sup> transposing the **EU Directives 2013/32/EU** and **2013/33/EU**. Art. 17 is particularly important as it refers to victims of trafficking as vulnerable people.

In recent years, an increasing intertwining of the anti-trafficking and international protection systems has become more and more evident, to the point that, in 2016, the UNHCR and the National

---

<sup>33</sup> Legge 27 giugno 2013, 77 "Ratifica ed esecuzione della Convenzione del Consiglio d'Europa sulla prevenzione e la lotta contro la violenza nei confronti delle donne e la violenza domestica". (Law 27 June 2013, 77 "Ratification and implementation of the Convention of the Council of Europe on prevention and the fight against violence against women and domestic violence"). Available at: <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2013/07/01/13G00122/sg> Last access: 12/12/2020.

<sup>34</sup> Decreto Legislativo 18 Agosto 2015, 142 "Attuazione della direttiva 2013/33/UE recante norme relative all'accoglienza dei richiedenti protezione internazionale, nonché della direttiva 2013/32/UE, recante procedure comuni ai fini del riconoscimento e della revoca dello status di protezione internazionale" (Legislative Decree 18 August 2015, 142 "Implementation of Directive 2013/33/EU with provision on the reception of asylum seekers and Directive 2013/32/EU with provision for the recognition and revocation and of the status of international protection"). Available at: <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2015/09/15/15G00158/sg> Last access: 12/12/2020.

Commission for Asylum<sup>35</sup> published specific guidelines, targeting in particular, but not only, Territorial Commissions, on the referral and identification of people who are victims of trafficking, especially during the international protection procedure. The National Anti-Trafficking Action Plan also took up this aspect, but not in detail. Importantly, the guidelines suggest that Territorial Commissions suspend the interview and refer asylum seekers to the nearest anti-trafficking agency, when there are indicators of trafficking.

### *Reception facilities*

Although differences apply across facilities, protected facilities for people who are victims of trafficking normally share the following features: professionals require beneficiaries not to disclose the housing address to any external person, not to use their phone for an initial period of time (often a minimum one month) and they exercise more control over beneficiaries' daily life, with respect to asylum seeker reception facilities. On the one hand, these rules are aimed at protecting beneficiaries from exploiters and criminal networks who could reach them or threaten them; on the other, they are often perceived as too strict, thus pushing potential beneficiaries to refuse entry into a protection program.

**Legislative Decree 24/2014** set out the ambitious and yet important objective of overcoming a fragmented and sectorial approach to assistance and reception by inaugurating new methodologies that would also facilitate referral mechanisms between the various protection systems that up to then had been functioning as parallel systems. The anti-trafficking system consists of interventions carried out by public and private social bodies that implement programmes of *emersione*, assistance and social inclusion, based on the provision of art. 18, and grant reception in dedicated facilities accordingly. As explained in more detail in Sempredon and Pelacani (2020), the international protection system in Italy has been characterised by a double-track reception system, an ordinary and an extraordinary track.

The origins of the ordinary system can be traced back to the National Asylum Plan that was institutionalised by **Law 89/2002** under the name of SPRAR. In 2011, a second system was set up to cope with an increasing flow of migrants, associated mostly with the Arab Spring movements. Extraordinary Reception Centres (CAS) were established, under the responsibility of the Civil Protection Department, as a temporary solution addressing the limited accommodation capacity of the ordinary system. Over time, this solution was consolidated and eventually institutionalized in 2014. It is now Prefectures<sup>36</sup> that are responsible for CAS (*Centri di Accoglienza Straordinaria* - Centre for Extraordinary Reception) and particularly for the public tender procedure required

---

<sup>35</sup> Commissione Nazionale Asilo (National Commission for Asylum): it operates within the Department for civil liberties and immigration and it is the referent body for the Italian system of international protection. It coordinates and orients Territorial Commissions that examine asylum applications.

<sup>36</sup> Prefettura(e): it is a peripheral body of the Ministry of Interior, with representative functions at the provincial and metropolitan levels. Their main task is to ensure the coordination of administrative activities of State peripheral bodies. Their tasks include also granting order and public safety, for example through the organisation and coordination of provincial meetings for public order and safety. Furthermore, they carry out activities in relation to migration and asylum seeker reception. In particular, since 2011, they have been responsible for the publication of public tenders to outsource the management of CAS reception facilities.

to outsource the management of reception facilities. As defined by **Legislative Decree 142/2015**, asylum seekers are accommodated in SPRAR centres and, when available places are insufficient, in CAS, according to a system of progressive quotas, based on a proportional percentage of each region's inhabitants and of the resources provided by the national fund for social policy<sup>37</sup>.

The SPRAR consists in a network of reception projects, mostly managed by social cooperatives, that provide "integrated" reception services aimed at favouring beneficiaries' autonomy (room and board, health assistance, but also language-cultural mediation, multicultural activities, support for job seeking, legal assistance). The CAS are also generally managed by social cooperatives, but normally with lower minimum standards of services with respect to SPRAR facilities. Accordingly, a few authors have highlighted the existence of inhomogeneous standards of reception facilities across the country and different typologies of facilities (Marchetti, 2016; Bolzoni et al., 2015).

Going back to the aim of coordination between the two systems, the goal of an effective referral mechanism should be that of favouring, where adequate, the transfer of beneficiaries from one reception circuit to another: this should include both transfers from the SPRAR/SIPROMI to art. 18 protected facilities, if beneficiaries are in situations of contingent danger, and vice versa if there is not contingent danger and it seems ideal for beneficiaries to move to a different facility which is less strict but still grants high standards of reception.

### *The effects of Decree Law 113/2018 on victims of trafficking and asylum seekers*

**Decree Law 113/2018**, later converted into **Law 132/2018**<sup>38</sup> - reconfigured a significant part of the Italian immigration legislation and has had negative impacts on people of migrant origins and victims of trafficking, including:

- the abrogation of humanitarian protection<sup>39</sup>;
- the increased investment - both in terms of resources allocated and of rationalisation of management - in detention and repatriation;

---

<sup>37</sup> More details on the quota system are included in the "Intesa tra il Governo, le Regioni e gli Enti locali sul piano nazionale per fronteggiare il flusso straordinario di cittadini extracomunitari, adulti, famiglie e minori stranieri non accompagnati (National Agreement between the Italian Government, Regional Authorities and Local Authorities to deal with the exceptional flows of non-European citizens, adults, families and unaccompanied minors) Available at: <http://www.prefettura.it/FILES/AllegatiPag/1247/Accordo%20Conferenza%20Unificata.pdf> Last access: 03/07/2018.

<sup>38</sup> Conversione in legge, con modificazioni, del decreto-legge 4 ottobre 2018, n. 113, recante disposizioni urgenti in materia di protezione internazionale e immigrazione, sicurezza pubblica, nonché misure per la funzionalità del Ministero dell'interno e l'organizzazione e il funzionamento dell'Agenzia Nazionale per l'amministrazione e la destinazione dei beni sequestrati e confiscati alla criminalità organizzata. Delega al Governo in materia di riordino dei ruoli e delle carriere del personale delle Forze di polizia e delle Forze armate (Conversion into Law, with changes, of Decree Law 4 October 2018, 113, with urgent provision on international protection and immigration, public safety, and measures for the organisation of the Ministry of Interior and the organisation and functioning of the National Agency for the administration and the provision of assets seized and confiscated from organized crime. Available at: <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2018/12/03/18G00161/sg> Last access: 12/12/2020.

<sup>39</sup> The humanitarian protection is a form of non-EU harmonised national (rather than international) protection nowadays normally replaced by subsidiary protection, except in some EU Member States.

- the extended detention in hotspots and the creation of new border procedures with less effective referral mechanisms;
- new rules to prevent repeated, although legitimated, requests for protection;
- the re-organisation of the reception system, with the abolition of the SPRAR and the creation of the SIPROIMI (System of Protection for the Holders of International Protection and Unaccompanied Minors), which differs from the SPRAR as it provides access to refugees, holders of subsidiary protection and unaccompanied minors only, while asylum seekers, whom could also include potential victims of trafficking, are destined to lower standard CAS facilities.

The exclusion of asylum seekers and holders of humanitarian protection from SIPROIMI runs counter to the clear provision of the Qualification and Reception Directives that insists on providing adequate accommodation particularly to people with specific needs and vulnerabilities.

The recent changes to Law 113/2018, approved on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020, with **Decree Law 130/2020**, the so-called Decree Law Lamorgese, have introduced further changes by stating, among other things, that asylum seekers can access the new SIPROIMI facilities.

## The normative framework for the protection of children and unaccompanied minors<sup>40</sup>

### *General principles*

The **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** (1989), ratified by Italy with **Law 176/1991**<sup>41</sup>, provided for the following principles:

- right of non-discrimination (art. 2)
- best interest of the child (art. 3)
- right to life (art. 6)
- right to participation and to be heard (12)

The **UN Committee on the Rights of the Child** has been publishing General Comments on Conventions that represent an integral relevant part of the international normative framework. In particular, **General Comment 12** (2009) asserts the right of the child to be heard and **General Comment 14** (2009) asserts the right to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration in all actions or decisions that concern him or her.

### *EU Legislation*

The **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU** (2009) guarantees the protection of the rights of the child by the EU Institutions and by EU countries (art. 24, art. 31, etc.).

**Directive 2011/95/EU** (on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted) states that:

- the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration (18);

---

<sup>40</sup> The sections on General Principles and EU Legislation have been compiled following the self-funded attendance of one of the authors to the Intensive Training Course “International protection and rights of minors in the European Union”, Jean Monnet Module MARS (Nov. 2020 – Jan. 2021), organised by Sant’Anna Scuola Universitaria Superiore, with the financial support of the EU Erasmus+ Program. In particular, the sections draw from the following lectures: Babicka K., International Commission of Jurists “Access to justice for migrant children. Definitions and guiding principles”; Zelvenska J., ECRE “The Common EU Asylum System: standard for the qualification of beneficiaries of intern protection, procedures and reception of asylum applicants”; Papageorgopoulos S., Legal Officer - EDAL Coordinator “The CEAS implementation and reforms now”.

<sup>41</sup> Legge 27 Maggio 1991, 176 “Ratifica ed esecuzione della convenzione sui diritti del fanciullo” (Law 27 May 1991, 176 “Ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child”. Available at: <https://www.camera.it/bicamerali/infanzia/leggi/l176.htm> Last access: 22/12/2020.

- when the applicant [for international protection] is an unaccompanied minor, the availability of appropriate care and custodial arrangements, which are in the best interest of the unaccompanied minor, should form part of the assessment as to whether that protection is effectively available (27); it is necessary, when assessing applications from minors for international protection, that Member States should have regard to child-specific forms of persecution (28).

**Directive 2013/32/EU** (on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection) provides for children:

- to make an international protection application on their own (art. 7);
- the right to a personal interview in a child-appropriate manner (art. 14 and 15);
- various guarantees, including appointment of a representative to represent and assist him/her (art. 25).

**Directive 2013/33/EU** (on standards for the reception of applicants for international protection) introduced a specific article (23) on minors, stressing the principle of the best interest and the need for vulnerability assessments to take into consideration specific factors, such as opportunities for family reunion, well-being and social development, safety and security, with particular attention to human trafficking; and a specific article (24) on unaccompanied minors providing for Member States to appoint a representative to assist the minor as soon as possible.

Generally speaking, some challenges have been identified in the Common European Asylum System including in particular some lack of clarity and ambiguities that have led to: differences in transpositions and hence in the implementation of principles (for example the term “representative”, instead of legal guardian, has been translated differently and this can undermine their actual role, as defined by international law); and the lack of specific indications and guidance on best interest assessment. Some issues are being addressed under the 2016 Asylum and Migration Pact. It remains to be seen whether effective changes will be introduced.

### ***International and EU legislation on the protection of children and unaccompanied minor victims of trafficking***

The main norms regulating the protection of children and unaccompanied children who are victims of trafficking include:

- the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (1989), acknowledging the importance of adopting all measures to prevent the abduction, sale or trafficking of children, for whatever purpose and in any form whatsoever;
- the **Palermo Protocol** (2000) that defines and addresses the trafficking of children;

- the **Treaty of the Functioning of the EU** (1957), establishing that the EU shall develop measures combating trafficking in persons, in particular women and children (art. 79);
- **Directive 2011/36/EU** explicitly referring to the higher risk of trafficking for children;
- the **EU Strategy towards the eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016**, referring repeatedly to children and their specific rights, as does the new recently published **2021-2025 Strategy**<sup>42</sup>.

---

<sup>42</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/pdf/14042021\\_eu\\_strategy\\_on\\_combatting\\_trafficking\\_in\\_human\\_beings\\_2021-2025\\_com-2021-171-1\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/pdf/14042021_eu_strategy_on_combatting_trafficking_in_human_beings_2021-2025_com-2021-171-1_en.pdf) Last access: 01/06/2021.

### *The Italian normative framework on the protection of children and unaccompanied minors*

The **Italian Constitution** states, in art. 10, that the Italian legal system conforms to the generally recognised principles of international law. Hence, it also conforms to the principles stated in the Convention for the Rights of the Child.

The **Italian Civil Code** (titles X and XI) specifically refers to the protection of minors.

**Legislative Decree 286/1998** provides for:

- the issuance of a residence permit in associations with a situation of trafficking and serious exploitation (art. 18), as mentioned above;
- the principle of non-refoulement for minors (art. 19)
- consideration of the best interest of minors in all decisions regarding them (art. 28)

**Legislative Decree 142/2015** stresses that priority should be given to the best interest of the child, while underlining the right to participate and to be heard, the right to an adequate risk assessment, assistance in adequate reception facilities with trained professionals, as well as adequate psychological assistance (art. 18), the provision of information on their rights and on procedures, the appointment of a legal guardian and the support of a mediator (art. 19).

More recently, **Law 47/2017**<sup>43</sup>, the so-called Zampa Law, was passed, resulting from more than three years of advocacy work by Save the Children and various NGOs. The Law focuses on the protection of unaccompanied foreign minors<sup>44</sup>. The Zampa Law has filled significant gaps. It introduced provisions on age assessment procedures, by encouraging a multidisciplinary approach by expert professionals, with the support of a cultural-linguistic mediator.

It also improved provisions with regard to the legal status of non-asylum seeking unaccompanied minors and ensured minors' swifter access to the asylum procedure, even without a guardian.

Further provisions include the following: simplification of the procedures for the issuance of a residence permit "for minors" and for employment or study when they turn 18; creation of a list of "volunteer guardians" by the Juvenile Courts, to be selected and appropriately trained by the Regional Ombudsperson for Childhood and Adolescence; prohibition of refoulement at the border; support for "assisted and voluntary return"; provision of adequate legal assistance; support towards the age of majority and beyond; etc.

In spite of positive steps forward in the normative framework, some concerns remain relating to the actual implementation of the law. First of all, no implementation decree has been approved to date,

---

<sup>43</sup> Legge 7 Aprile 2017, 47 "Disposizioni in materia di misure di protezione dei minori stranieri non accompagnati" (Law 7 April 2017, 47 "Provisions for the protection of unaccompanied foreign minors". Available at: <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2017/04/21/17G00062/sg> Last access: 12/12/2020.

<sup>44</sup> Rozzi E. (2017) The new Italian law on unaccompanied minors: a model for the EU? Available at: <https://eumigrationlawblog.eu/the-new-italian-law-on-unaccompanied-minors-a-model-for-the-eu/> Last access: 12/12/2020.



hence some provisions are still short of detailed implementation procedures. Second, while the law has encouraged the establishment of a unique reception system with homogenous minimum standards, achievements are limited<sup>45</sup>.

The law provides for the SPRAR to have a sufficient capacity for reception but no changes have been introduced to address the obstacles that limit the actual capacity; SPRAR facilities must respect minimum standards, but discriminatory standards are still evident (i.e. SPRAR versus CAS, as explained above); no adequate and fair mechanisms have been introduced for the distribution of minors across Italian regions and as a result the responsibility for minors is concentrated in some regions, particularly in the south.

A positive step forward was made a few years after the passing of the Zampa Law with the Circular Letter signed by the Italian Ministry of Interior, on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019. It promoted the activation, as set out in art. 13 of Law 47/17, of the continued assistance and reception of minors, by means of “*prosieguo amministrativo*”, that is to say the continuation of the protection programmes for unaccompanied minors following the achievement of the age of majority and up to the age of 21. Yet, again, no specific provision has been made in economic terms, with the result that the costs will again fall onto municipalities, which is a delicate issue, even more so at the time of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

---

<sup>45</sup> Available at: [http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/circolare\\_post\\_decreto\\_sicurezza\\_dicembre\\_2018\\_v\\_18\\_dic.pdf](http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/circolare_post_decreto_sicurezza_dicembre_2018_v_18_dic.pdf) Last access: 10/08/2020.

## Chapter 4

### The Alba Anti-trafficking Project and the reception system in the Autonomous Province of Bozen

#### *The reception system in the Autonomous Province of Bozen*

As described above, since 2014 and throughout 2015 and part of 2016, the province of Bozen has been affected by the huge number of migrants in transit across the Brenner border.

There is a close connection between European border control policies, the tightening of Italian migration policies and the choices of the Autonomous Province of Bozen in the face of migratory pressure, which didn't correspond, and still do not correspond, to an adequate reception approach, as we will explain below. The responses of local institutions to the arrivals of people who reach the territory autonomously reflect the publicly declared desire to make Alto Adige "unattractive" to migrants (*Antenne Migranti* ASGI, 2017).

In the rest of Italy, the Prefecture manages the reception of migrants, while in Bozen it is the Province, in agreement with the Government Commissariat. In Bozen, there are two "parallel" modes of reception: one for people who arrived in Italy and were then transferred by the Ministry of the Interior, according to the quota distribution system to a given territory. In the past, the lack of adequate facilities meant that, depending on the number of arrivals, places were freed up in the large centres for new arrivals (by moving those already in the centres elsewhere). These new arrivals were often still affected by the journey, lacking medical assistance and allocated places in these facilities on a "temporary" basis (*Antenne Migranti* and ASGI, 2017). The other mode of reception is that given to people who arrive in Bozen autonomously: since 2016, if recognised as "vulnerable" they have been accommodated in temporary hotel facilities; for those not considered vulnerable, the only chance of staying in the city has been to ask to be put on the long waiting list for the "Cold Emergency Night Shelter" (night dormitories).

In September 2016, the institutions of the Autonomous Province of Bozen adopted a circular that regulated access to the reception of migrants, creating differential categories for admission to the reception system. The Circular of 27/06/2016, the so-called Critelli Circular (named after its signatory), established strict rules for the selection of those entitled to reception and entry into the quota system provided by the Autonomous Province of Bozen.

The peculiarity of the administrative apparatus, linked to the context of autonomy, affected two important aspects: the first is the absence of transparent information on the tender procedure in relation to the assignment of reception services. In fact, in the city of Bozen there are only two associations that were successful in applying for the tender, the *Volontarius* Association together with the *River Equipe* cooperative, and *Caritas*. This means that others do not have the opportunity to

compete for tenders in the reception of migrants. The second aspect is related to the quota system, which provides for the reception of a limited number of migrants through the channels of the Ministry of the Interior, and an "ordinary quota" for the Province, later reabsorbed into the ministerial quota, thus decreasing the reception capacities of the Bozen system. This quota, as we will explain later, has been excluding the most vulnerable people from forms of reception, thus reproducing forms of marginalisation (Degli Uberti, 2019: 3).

Contrary to the rest of Italy, the fact that there was no ordinary protection system for asylum seekers (formerly the SPRAR, now the SIPROIMI) in the city of Bozen, precluded the possibility of some migrants to undertake social inclusion paths aimed at work and housing autonomy. Forms of temporary reception have prevailed, as per the provisions of the Critelli Circular, whose application has given rise, and continues to give rise, to illegitimate exclusionary practices.

The official narrative of the Autonomous Province reaffirms the principle that the arrival of "out of quota" migrants undermine the capacity of the local reception system. As a result of this narrative, access to reception is regulated by temporary provisions, through selective reception criteria, creating differential and preferential channels for different categories of migrants, despite the fact that they are all entitled to reception. The Circular excludes from reception the asylum seekers who attempt to transit along the Brenner route, arriving by land via the Balkan route for example, who thus remain stranded in Bozen, and in particular:

- migrants who have been granted refugee status or humanitarian protection and are trying to reach northern Europe;
- migrants readmitted to Italy in accordance with the Dublin Regulation or arriving in Italy to reapply for asylum - after one or more of their applications have been rejected in other European countries;
- migrants with a pending asylum application in Italy who have escaped from reception centres in southern Italy, usually due to unsustainable living conditions, and who travel north to an alternative location, hoping to gain access to decent services.

Recently, the Critelli Circular was declared illegitimate, due to its violation of Article 1 of Legislative Decree 142/2015, concerning the arrangements for the reception of asylum seekers. In the meantime, there have been further changes in the reception system for migrants who are vulnerable and potential victims of trafficking and exploitation. In addition, measures have been implemented in the city against marginalised people, which have further aggravated their precarious condition on the territory: evictions by police from places where people find "night shelter", mainly along rivers and under bridges. In 2019, around 70 people were evicted from these places and the municipal administration justified the eviction as part of the maintenance of green spaces, but in fact it caused displacements, an increase in perceived insecurity by these people and heightened exposure to harsh winter temperatures. Moreover, the municipal administration introduced the urban DASPO<sup>46</sup>, which fines people for loitering in areas of interest, tourist sites and areas designated for the holding of fairs and markets, and an anti-harassment public order that prevent people from loitering and begging outside supermarkets and churches.

---

<sup>46</sup> The DASPO was introduced, in the field of sport, by Law 401/1989. It provides that the *Questore* can prohibit a person from entering places where sporting activities take place, following an arrest in *flagrante delicto* for an offence committed during or on the occasion of sporting events. Link: <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:1989-12-13:401> Last accessed on: 20/03/2021.

### *Access to services for autonomous arrivals<sup>47</sup>*

If a migrant arrives in Bozen (after being rejected or readmitted at the Brenner Pass and sent to the *Questura* in Bozen<sup>48</sup>; intercepted on a train and made to get off; or arrived via the Balkan route or the Trieste and North-East border territories), their first contact should be with the *Volontarius* Association. This association has set up an info point in the street in front of the station. Volunteers carry out an assessment of people's conditions of vulnerability and their legal situation. If a situation of vulnerability is found, the person is sent to the SIS office (Social Integration Service) of the Municipality of Bozen, which organises an appointment for a more in-depth vulnerability assessment interview.

Following the assessment, the Refugee Counselling Service, an office run by *Caritas*<sup>49</sup> for the assistance and reception of migrants, offers information, provides support in filling out the C3 form (pre-asylum application form) and issues a canteen card, which guarantees access to a shower service. They should also provide an institutional channel for the rapid placement of people with serious health problems<sup>50</sup> in the appropriate facilities.

In January 2017, the *Rifugio* was set up, which provided accommodation for vulnerable people. It was an attempt by the *Binario 1* Association to experiment with a more effective reception system, also for those excluded from protection through the Critelli Circular. The project had many positive effects on the lives of the people it hosted, many of whom were able to engage in a process of social inclusion, find a job and move towards housing autonomy (Project *Schutzhutte B1 Rifugio* Report 2018/2019<sup>51</sup>). But the project was discontinued in March 2019, due to lack of funding.

In Bozen, the problem of differential access to reception persists, including difficulties of access for victims and potential victims of trafficking and serious exploitation to the asylum system, with these distinctions:

- single women and single men are only entitled to access the “Cold Emergency Night Shelter” list;
- until May 2018, pregnant women or family units were placed temporarily in hotel facilities; since May 2018 they have been transferred to large reception centres on the outskirts of the city;
- childless couples are separated and put on the Cold Emergency Night Shelter list;<sup>52</sup>
- people with serious health problems, regardless of their nationality, gender or legal position, in most cases have no preferential access to health protection, which in the case of men means they

---

<sup>47</sup> Excerpt from Caroselli (2020).

<sup>48</sup> The paper issued by the border police requires you to report to the *Questura* within three days.

<sup>49</sup> Caritas is an Italian catholic faith-based organization.

<sup>50</sup> Despite the importance of this service, during the research (2017-2019) there were many episodes in which, despite themselves, professionals declined or did not persist in obtaining answers, places or protection for the people who came to them. Since July 2017, there has been a “health” section in the Ex-Lemayer centre for sick people outside of the reception system.

<sup>51</sup> *Schutzhutte B1 Rifugio* Report 2018/2019. Link: <https://www.binario1bz.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ital-report31-1.pdf> Last accessed on: 30/12/2020.

<sup>52</sup> While for women it was more urgent to find overnight accommodation, and 99% of them were given it, for the men the street was the preferred route due to the lack of places in the container facility which had ten places each.

risk remaining on the streets<sup>53</sup> despite possible vulnerable situations and weather conditions (very harsh in the winter).

Some of the consequences of the structuring of the reception system are:

- discretionary use of the "vulnerable" category with a negative impact on effective access to care and exclusion from the protection system;
- shifting the category of asylum seeker to that of homeless person;
- precariousness of the right to remain on the territory;
- violation of the right to apply for asylum and to access the national health service;
- inability to exercise rights to work, housing, and therefore to get official residency, which are fundamental aspects for accessing social and health services.

The research undertaken, in particular the in depth ethnographic study from 2017 to 2019, during which various people with difficulties in accessing services in Bozen were accompanied to the relevant office, showed how the mechanisms described give rise to the dispersion of people across the territory, particularly for people who are victims and potential victims of trafficking, and thus especially vulnerable subjects. They have not been granted the right to protection and have found themselves in a perennial state of legal precariousness that has to be continuously renegotiated in what has become an existential condition of circular mobility and lack of opportunities for inclusion.

### *The history of the Alba Project*

The Alba Anti-trafficking Project of the Autonomous Province of Bozen was established in 2003 in the wake of Law 228/2003 and specifically Article 13. Previously, in 2002, a Triveneto Coordination Table had been set up in Alto Adige, which included Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige and Friuli-Venezia Giulia, in the wake of Law 286/98 and Art. 18.

The body responsible for the project was the Province's Family Women and Youth Office. It initiated the coordination of the project and the construction of a network of services in relation to gender issues and violence. The office aimed at raising awareness in public debate on the theme of sex work, exploitation, trafficking and gender violence.

The Alba Project was created with the aim of identifying people who are victims of trafficking and serious exploitation; of offering reception and support, in order to promote socio-economic and housing autonomy, also through the assessment of individual skills, language and professional training, internships, etc. (interview, Alba Project Reception area Coordinator, 17/02/2020). The Alba Project was created in response to the national legal framework concerning the protection of

---

<sup>53</sup> Most of the men who lived in the park at Bozen station, and those who arrived during the research period, suffered from heart disease, during the winter they had pneumonia, in some cases TB, mental health problems and joint problems. In no case was a solution found.

trafficked persons and to the specific needs that emerged on the territory. It was meant to respond to the health and shelter needs of these people, but also to raise public awareness on the issue of sexual exploitation, following the first arrivals of women coming from the Balkan area (interview, *La Strada* Director, 04/05/2020). The phenomenon of prostitution had become visible in the province. Before that it was considered taboo, and therefore had to be addressed, also within the broader issue of trafficking, which also called into question the ethics and sexual practices of the local clients (interview, *La Strada* Director, 04/05/2020).

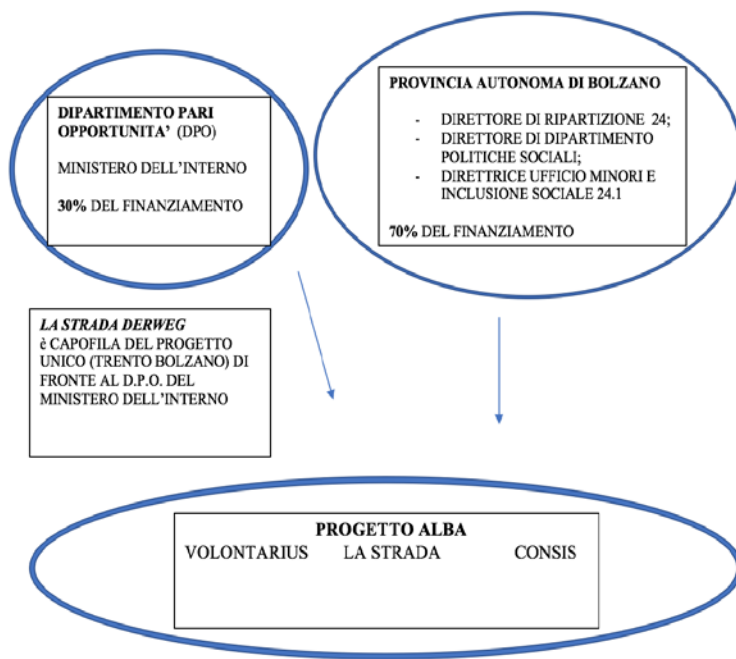
In 2003, the focus on equal opportunities and gender issues provided an opportunity for the Municipality of Bozen to create an anti-violence network, which immediately related to the anti-trafficking project. The two projects grew alongside one another, through constant dialogue and through the sharing of the human resources employed in the services (social services, Anti-Violence Centre in Bozen, *Donne Nissà* Association for migrant women, Municipality of Bozen, Alba Project).

In 2016, with the transformation of the phenomenon of trafficking and the increasing arrival of women victims of trafficking seeking asylum, the Province embarked on a process of creating a system of organisational links between the areas that dealt with asylum seekers and minors (respectively the Offices for the Elderly and Social Policies; Office for Minors and Social Inclusion; Office for the Elderly and Social Policies). Thus, a collaboration between offices with distinct competences but similar targets was initiated, which also led to the restructuring of the working methodology and the reformulation of the Alba Project in 2017, as we will explain below.

### ***The Alba Project: funding and coordination***

Since 2011, the Alba Project has been funded through the dedicated funding stream of the Department of Equal Opportunities, together with the Trento anti-trafficking project. The lead partner is the Trentino-Alto Adige Region. Before 2011, the project was entirely funded by the Autonomous Province of Bozen, with the exception of the inclusion area.

The funding currently amounts to 400,000 euros, for about 18 months, which is not sufficient, according to the Head of the Office for Minors and Social Inclusion of the Autonomous Province of Bozen (interview, 20/02/2020). For this reason, the Province provides its own funding for the three project areas, which we will discuss below. The funding was originally shared, with the contribution by the Province being 70% of the total received by the three entities, both in terms of economic resources and in terms of the reception facilities (ibid.) (Chart 1).



GRAPH 1: DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDING OF THE ALBA PROJECT (SOURCE: ALBA PROJECT)

The application for ministerial funding was made as a single project (Bozen and Trento) and was led by the *La Strada Der Weg* Association which coordinated the whole project at a territorial level. This formal coordination corresponds to many extremely fluid relationships consolidated in twenty years of network building, both in the intervention phases and in relation to the DPO. The coordinator does not manage the implementation of the two projects for Bozen and Trento (interview, *La Strada* Director, 04/05/2020), but is only engaged in general coordination.

The project has developed in relation to the participation of public entities. In the construction phase, the Province was very involved in the organisational and decision-making aspects, but over time this has changed. At present, it is an institutional partner (since the project has to be presented with an institutional partner) and plays a role in supporting the activities carried out. The bodies that implement the project therefore have a high level of autonomy. They are asked to report quarterly on their progress to the Province, but the latter does not have a guiding role from an operational point of view (interview, Head of the Office for Minors and Social Inclusion, Autonomous Province of Bozen, 20/02/2020). The Province follows the DPO's guidelines, intervening with policy questions on the issue of trafficking and exploitation, whereby any relevant event related to project is reported in the local news (gender violence, particularly concerned sex workers, etc.). For instance, in 2018, some funding was provided for a research on sex-work clients in Alto Adige, in response to a period in which public opinion and the local news were very focused on this theme, as the phenomenon had become very visible in the area.

### *The structure of the Alba Project*

Since its establishment, the Alba Project has consisted of three areas of intervention under three different organisations:

- outreach and *emersione* area - *Volontarius* Association;
- reception area (lasting 18 - 24 months) - *La Strada Der Weg*;
- inclusion area (literacy, training, job placement) - *CONSIS* (Social Consortium).

According to the procedure, it is the Alba Project that files the request to the appropriate office for the opening of a reception facility, which in turn reports to the Head of the office who then makes a decision on the matter (interview, Head of the Office for Minors and Social Inclusion, Autonomous Province of Bozen, 20/02/2020).

Since 2018, there is no single person that takes the role of case manager. Cases are discussed and managed by a multidisciplinary team composed of the Director of Alba and three area coordinators, one for each intervention area. The figure of the case manager is therefore not embodied in a single person, as is the case in other anti-trafficking projects, such as in Veneto, but by a team. Furthermore, two or three times a year, the Alba Project organises a round tables between the anti-trafficking professionals in Trento and Bozen, although communication between the various areas in both territories is constant and continuous.

An important collaboration was initiated in 2016 between the CAS facilities in the Province and the Province. As we will explain later, in February 2020, a new protocol was signed between these entities to consolidate collaboration in order to foster integration between the asylum system and anti-trafficking projects.

At a provincial level, the Alba Project collaborates with: the Anti-Violence Centre, in relation to domestic violence suffered by migrant and Italian women; the *Questura* for the issuing of residence permits; the *Carabinieri*<sup>54</sup> and the *Guardia di Finanza*<sup>55</sup>, with regard to the issue of labour exploitation; the SIS and the CAS and SPRAR/SIPROIMI reception facilities.

At a supra-provincial level, other collaborations have been developed with: the National Anti-trafficking Platform and projects on the Italian territory; the Anti-trafficking Helpline and the KOK Project (Anti-trafficking Network of the Federal Republic of Germany)<sup>56</sup> in Berlin (Germany), for which the Alba Project is the referent in Italy, on behalf of the Anti-trafficking Helpline, in order to foster dialogue and share good practice as well as to network in relation to the management of “Dublin

---

<sup>54</sup> The Carabinieri Corps is an Italian law enforcement agency, together with Polizia di Stato and Guardia di Finanza. They primarily have domestic policing duties. As Guardia di Finanza. and differently from Polizia di Stato, Carabinieri are a military agency and respond to the Ministry of Defence. Yet, there are some overlaps in the roles of Carabinieri and Polizia di Stato and both manage an emergency number

<sup>55</sup> The Guardia di Finanza Corps is an Italian law enforcement agency who responds to the Ministry of Economy and Finance, although it is a Military Agency. It carries out duties relating to economic and financial crimes. Additionally, it also patrols Italy's territorial waters.

<sup>56</sup> Antitrafficking Network of the Federal Republic of Germany, “*Pflege und Gleichstellung, Bundesweiter Koordinierungskreis gegen Menschenhandel e. V.*” (KOK).



cases”.

According to the Director of *La Strada* (interview, 04/05/2020), the strengths of the Alba Project are the following:

- the professionals, who, in addition to specific training, have strong motivations driven by the vision and values that underpin intervention based on the promotion of rights;
- the history of the project and its increasing knowledge of the phenomenon of trafficking;
- the complementarity between the project partners;
- the availability of resources (Alto Adige is well-provided with services and resources in comparison to other areas in Italy);
- the quality of the project’s network at a local, national and international level;
- spirit of the project: wanting to go "beyond work", in order to learn on a personal and professional level.

Challenges have been also pointed out, including logistical difficulties, since the relevant anti-trafficking professionals are located in different sites and sometimes communication is not easy, depending also on differences in personal working styles. Another critical aspect is the amount of data to be processed and of administrative tasks to be carried out to draft the report required by the Province and the DPO to obtain the funding.

In addition to the logistical challenges, the ethnographic work and the interviews conducted with migrant women between 2017 and 2019 highlighted a number of other issues related to the way in which the *emersione* professionals carry out interviews with potential victims of trafficking. Some of the indicators they use are out-dated and they not always take into account the evolution of the phenomenon of trafficking, which has resulted in the strong risk of failing to identify victims. A further critical aspect concerns linguistic-cultural mediation: there is a lack of mediators in the project area teams. The Autonomous Province has not invested in this professional role, instead contracting the service to external cooperatives (interview, *La Strada* Director, 04/05/2020). This implies that mediators are involved ad hoc, only in specific services and for a limited number of hours, and therefore they do not have a continuous role within the project. As mediators collaborate with different cooperatives, moreover, the approach of each mediator is different and there is no coordination in terms of methodologies used, with the result that the entry of people into the reception system can be slowed down and made less effective (interview, Director of the Department of Social Policies – Office for the Elderly and Social Policies, Autonomous Province of Bozen, 18/02/2020). Added to this is the fact that, in the last twenty years, only two professional mediation trainings have been organised, and they only concerned the following areas: school, justice and health (ibidem).

The greatest challenges facing the Alba Project are related to its adaptation to the evolution of the phenomenon of trafficking and serious exploitation, in order to be able to adequately respond to the changes (interview, *La Strada* Director, 04/05/2020).

### *The area of outreach, identification and emersione - Volontarius Association*

Since 2003, this area of intervention has been under the responsibility of the *Volontarius* Association and consisted of a contact person and a team of 5 people (including the coordinator), who work in both the outreach and *emersione* phases. Currently the unit is supported by 9 volunteers and one trainee (2019 Final Report and 2020 Planning Report). The mediator is not part of the team and is only involved on call, as explained in the previous paragraph.

#### *The outreach phase*

The outreach phase is carried out by the Outreach Unit, and involves monitoring and mapping the phenomenon of prostitution, contacting victims and potential victims of trafficking who are on the street and accompanying them to medical consultations and organising interviews aimed at bringing to light conditions of exploitation. In addition to working with the Alba Project, the *Volontarius* Association is responsible for various interventions associated with outreach work, including interventions related to severe marginality which include the management of the Cold Emergency Night Shelters in Bozen:

- info point for asylum seekers;
- some CAS reception facilities in the province;
- assistance project for people in transit at the Brenner Pass (until 2019).

The association also runs a flat for "high autonomy" care, which consists in accompanying foreign people with vulnerabilities through projects aimed at individual support outside of the reception facility (which, as explained, are often unsuitable places for some beneficiaries, due to their rigid rules).

As far as outreach activities are concerned, the Outreach Unit operates in the city of Bozen, and in particular in the areas of the city centre where prostitution, drug dealing and begging are concentrated, and in the industrial area where there is only the phenomenon of prostitution. One of the objectives of 2020 was to organise outreach work in other areas of the province as well, but the pandemic made this difficult. It should be noted that since the price of sex work is higher in Alto Adige than in the rest of Italy, with sexual services, irrespective of nationality, fluctuating at around fifty euros, as the Head of the Outreach Unit says, there is a lot of "commuting" of sex workers from other cities such as Verona and Padova. This suggests the need for close collaboration with outreach units in other cities in the Triveneto area. Some collaboration has been on-going but to date, only with meetings once a year.

The outreach activities are organised twice a week: one on Fridays, from 9pm to 1am, including monitoring and contacts with sex workers and one focused on monitoring only that varies from week to week. Once a month, the Outreach Unit dedicates the outreach activity to the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, in collaboration with the private association PRO POSITIVE, which has set up a mobile clinic and also provides information and prevention activities on sexually transmitted

infections, including the distribution of condoms.

The constant presence of the *Squadra Mobile* and the familiarity of the Local Police with sex workers have led to a decrease in violence by clients over the years. Following a few incidents in 2011, and the murder of an Albanian girl by a client, law enforcement officers increased their controls and more closely monitored the situation.

### *Outreach methodology*

The outreach team goes out in a camper van. The professionals provide the women they meet with tea, sweets and condoms - the latter only at the explicit request of the women. The contact takes place outside of the camper van, although in cold winter weather the sex workers are allowed to get into the car together with the professionals for a break. Unlike the Outreach Unit in Trento, the Alba Project's Outreach Unit aims at mapping the presence of sex workers in the streets and at making direct contact, while less focus is on harm reduction: in Trento the distribution of condoms is central, in Bozen this element is marginal to the work. There is no mediator on the street. Since, as already explained, the issue of mediation in Alto Adige is a problem for all services, in the past the professionals who spoke the language also ended up taking on the role of language facilitators with the Colombian and Albanian girls. But this issue remains a major problem.

The teams in Bozen and Trento alternate once a month to monitor the presence of sex workers. The number of people contacted by the Outreach Unit has been decreasing over the years. According to data compiled by the *Volontarius* Association, from 2016 to 2019, the average was 28 people with the average age being between 21 and 40 years. In terms of nationalities, in 2018-2019, Nigerian women accounted for 30% of the total, followed by Romanian women (25%), Colombian women (12%), Albanian women (11%) and Italian women (8%). The total number of Nigerian women contacted during the same period was 935. Based on data provided by Alba (see Caroselli, 2020), the total numbers of outreach contacts, in the period 2016-2019 were respectively: 176 (2016), 153 (2017), 169 (2018), 130 (2019) (Table 11).

Nationality	2016	2017	2018	2019
Albanian	17	18	19	14
Brazilian	3	4	4	7
Bulgarian	2	2	2	2
Chinese				1
Colombian	19	15	20	16
Italian	10	11	14	8
<b>Nigerian</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>25</b>
Romanian	45	29	42	42

TABLE 11: PRESENCE OF PEOPLE OF VARIOUS NATIONALITY IN THE STREETS IN BOZEN, FOR THE PERIOD 2016-2019 (SOURCE: ALBA PROJECT)

The specific Nigerian target group includes migrant women who have been in Italy for many years and young girls who have recently arrived as asylum seekers, who reside in other Italian territories, especially in Veneto (2018 Alba Project Final Report and 2019 Planning Report).

### *Indoor sexual exploitation*

With regard to indoor exploitation - prostitution in flats and massage parlours – it has for some years been concentrated in large cities. In recent years, the number of advertisements for people working in flats has generally increased. It concerns Latin American and Chinese women, Latin American trans women and trans women from Eastern Europe. While it does not seem to include Nigerian women, it is known locally that there are flats where Nigerian girls offer sexual services. This aspect was also confirmed by reception workers and some Nigerian women interviewed (interview, Beauty, Nigerian woman, 20/11/2018).

The work of mapping online ads is not part of the work of the Outreach Unit - as it is for many other outreach units in Italy - but the Unit conducted a pilot study, in 2019, which showed a concentration of indoor prostitution in small villages near the Brenner border, suggesting the need to engage in continuous mapping (2019-2020 Planning Report). However, we were provided no evidence nor information on this either through interviews or ethnographic work.

### *Labour exploitation*

With regard to the phenomenon of labour exploitation in Alto Adige, cooperation with law enforcement officers and various trade unions has been set up. During the year 2020, actions were implemented to promote the bringing to light of labour exploitation, through participation in the "FARM" project (the AMIF funding stream – Asylum and Migration and Integration Fund), with the University of Verona, involving the two provinces of Bozen and Trento and a network of local services and institutions. The project is aimed at the creation of a conscious supply chain in the agricultural sector, including monitoring, detection, awareness raising and training for local actors. The project also includes a strong partnership with the University of Verona as project leader, universities of Triveneto for action-research and some regional services that deal with the phenomenon in different ways. These activities are also part of the GRISP group (Tavolo di Lavoro sulla Salute - Health Working Group GRISP), in which the Director of the Bozen Psychological Service, the Psychiatric Service and the *Caritas* Refugee Counselling Service take part. The accumulated know-how will then be shared within the FARM project, which aims to test various actions at the regional level. The construction and consolidation of the network also led to the organisation of a meeting with the *Guardia di Finanza*, as a result of which four victims of labour exploitation had their cases taken up by the authorities.

In seventeen years of the Alba Project, only six people have come forward to the authorities for labour exploitation, which suggests that efforts in this direction should be increased. In fact, in Alto Adige, the numbers of men involved in labour exploitation is estimated to be higher than that of women and concerns sectors such as agriculture and construction that remain insufficiently explored.

### *The phenomenon of begging*

The phenomenon of begging in Bozen is characterized by “commuting”. People move around in different areas and, in 2019, the *Volontarius* mobile unit experimented with daytime outreach activities. The cities of Bozen, Merano, Bressanone, the Bassa Atesina (Laives, Egna, Ora, San Michele) and the Lana area were monitored. Begging takes place around supermarkets, churches and the streets of the city centre. As explained above, in the city of Bozen the urban DASPO measure and an anti-harassment public order have been active since September 2019. We believe that special attention should be paid to monitoring the impact of these instruments on marginalised people and victims and potential victims of trafficking, both men and women. Those involved in begging are largely men, but also women, including pregnant Nigerian women. In 2018, there were 122 Nigerian beggars (106 men and 16 women), while Romanians included 45 men and 31 women (76 in total). In 2019, 82 people were counted in the streets: Romanians (42), Nigerians (29), Italians (4) Eastern Europeans (1) and Afghans (1). While the Romanians remain in one place, the Nigerians tend to move from Verona, Trento and neighbouring countries to Bozen. Many of them are guests in reception facilities for asylum seekers, others are undocumented, are in the process of appeal or have a residence permit for humanitarian reasons (2019-2020 Alba Project Planning Report).

### *The phase of identification and emersione*

This phase is always the responsibility of the *Volontarius* Association and the team that makes up the Outreach Unit. It involves conducting interviews to identify victims and potential victims of trafficking. Interviews are set up on the basis of a referral system, with referrals from the following bodies: the outreach units; the info point (which assesses the vulnerability of asylum seekers and contacts the Alba team if indicators of trafficking are detected); the Territorial Commission of Verona; the CAS and SPRAR/SIPROIMI facilities; SIS; the Anti-Violence Centre; law enforcement agencies and the Labour Inspectorate.

The interviews are structured in a series of meetings (a minimum of 3) aimed at gathering and verifying the person's migration history and route. The information collected is sometimes verified, as far as trafficking and exploitation are concerned, with the help of the Bozen *Squadra Mobile*, which monitors movements in the streets and can therefore confirm the possible presence of the women whom they met in evaluation interviews. If the persons contacted express the willingness to enter the social protection project offered by Alba, the methods of intervention are presented and discussed in the multidisciplinary team (interview, Alba Project Outreach and *Emersione* area Coordinator, 20/02/2020). When a person is identified as a victim of trafficking, they are transferred to an escape shelter for a couple of months; if the person does not come forward as a victim of trafficking, they are referred to the social services to assess the possibility of accessing other forms of support.

The number of people coming forward as victims of trafficking to the outreach teams has been very low, about one or two women per year (ibidem); the number of potential victims of trafficking among asylum seekers is arguably much higher, but the number of people coming forward as victims of trafficking was also very low among this group of people, as we will see later. For this reason, Alba set up a series of protocols with the reception facilities and the Territorial Commission. Moreover, since

*Volontarius* is the outreach and *emersione* agency for the Alba Project, but also the contact for the info point, it has built an informal channel for internal reporting of cases of "suspected victims of trafficking" encountered at the info point (ibidem).

The evaluation interviews are generally structured as follows: first, interview to familiarise with the person and their story; second, in-depth interview; third, interview with feedback, which involves reading the story collected from the person and finalising the assessment (interview, Alba Project Outreach and *Emersione* area Coordinator, 20/02/2020). The indicators that Alba uses in the interviews are those indicated by the UNHCR. The identification process accords with the application of the Palermo Protocol and the definition it provides of the phenomenon of trafficking. This is the guiding indicator for the assessments, which also include the interviewer's intuition and the beneficiary's willingness to self-identify as a victim (ibidem). This last aspect raises our concern, as also emerged from some interviews conducted with Nigerian women asylum seekers who were trafficked and did not access the protection programme, who rarely self-identify as victims (interview, Beauty, Nigerian woman, 20/11/2018). However, failure to self-identify as a victim was a reason for exclusion from the protection pathway (ibidem).

During the interview, the coordinator of the *Emersione* Area explained that most of the referrals are made by the Territorial Commission. What emerges from the data is that, in 2018, 57% of the total number of referrals concerned people coming from other territories and arriving in Bozen autonomously. Arrivals regard no longer only people heading for the Brenner border but also people returning from northern European countries. Despite the decrease in the number of arrivals on the southern coast of Italy, the last two years have seen women who are already known to the Alba Project returning to Bozen and self-identifying as victims of trafficking. Some, after a period of time spent on the Italian territory under exploitation, they decide to explicitly declare the exploitation they have suffered.

In 2019, 378 interviews were organised with a total of 97 people. The interviews revealed multi-faceted profiles, in which multiple forms of vulnerability intertwine, making in-depth and targeted intervention increasingly necessary. In the same year, the Alba Project also received a referral from the FILCAMS-CGIL trade union<sup>57</sup>, concerning irregular contracts for some workers in the agricultural sector, which led to a investigation by the *Guardia di Finanza*. This operation involved 18 Pakistani men, with whom interviews were conducted that led to the bringing to light of various vulnerabilities and to four people having their cases taken up by the authorities. This episode made it possible to develop a collaboration with the CGIL trade union and the *Guardia di Finanza* and to deepen our knowledge of the phenomenon.

In the context of the Alba Project's work with *emersione*, it seems more difficult to identify indicators of trafficking in some groups of people, as it also emerged from the interviews conducted with Nigerian women. These categories include, for example, "Dublin cases", people informally readmitted to Italy via the Brenner border, as there is no formal system for identifying victims of trafficking. In addition to these cases, some women, mainly from Latin America, who are victims of domestic violence, have been referred by the Anti-Violence Centres and were eventually identified as victims of

---

<sup>57</sup> Federazione italiana dei lavoratori del commercio turismo e servizi - Confederazione generale italiana del lavoro (Italian Federation of workers in the sectors of commerce, tourism and tertiary services – General Italian confederation of work)

trafficking.

With regard to cases of re-trafficking, it was explained that the stories of people who are "in transit" are mostly of this nature, but that the project cannot accept people where there is no "on-going exploitation" and that exploitation is assumed to be no longer an issue whereby the person has returned to Italy after long periods of time (interview, Alba Project Outreach and *Emersione* area Coordinator, 20/02/2020). We suggest this is not necessarily the case, as the interviews conducted with the women demonstrated. On the contrary, their experiences evidence not only on-going exploitation, but show that continuous prolonged exploitation has led to the stratification of traumas.

### *The reception area - La Strada Der Weg*

The reception phase of the Alba Project offers three different types of care for victims and potential victims of trafficking, whether minors or adults:

- emergency reception - initial assistance (food, accommodation, clothing, health needs, STP/ENI card<sup>58</sup> and screening). The facilities are located outside the city, in centres managed by *Caritas*, where the presence of 24-hour religious personnel guarantees accompaniment in the process;
- residential accommodation in socio-pedagogical structures, with 5 part-time professionals, 1 coordinator and 1 supervisor (as well as 6 volunteers for about 300 hours);
- reception in autonomous houses chosen by the beneficiaries, or in reception facilities.

After the conclusion of the residential project, the situation of the beneficiary can be followed up for about six months through monitoring.

Reception within the Alba Project was set up for trafficked people specifically, as provided for in Art. 18 and Art.18bis. When the person is identified as a victim and they request help from the authorities, different paths are taken according to the necessity of protecting that person from a critical situation (such as exploitation or violence). This protection is immediate for those at risk. In the case of a plan to enter the reception system, the person has to admit that they have a problem and confirm they want to break free of the exploitative network. According to the coordinator of the reception area, the person has to be aware of their situation in order to be eligible to be transferred to an escape shelter (where the person has no access to the phone, and cannot leave unless accompanied) (interview, 17/02/2020).

At the escape shelter, an assessment period of at least two weeks takes place, during which the person continues with the interviews, in order to explore whether they have the requirements and are willing to enter the protection programme. As in the other phases of the Alba Project, the mediator is not a part of the team, but is only involved on call (ibid.). A limited number of hours is available for mediation and the use of English is therefore preferred, if possible, as professionals are

---

<sup>58</sup> STP/ENI clinics provide healthcare services to citizens who cannot access the National Health Service and who hold an STP card (*Stranieri Temporaneamente Presenti* - Temporarily Present Foreigner) for third country nationals or ENI card for EU citizens.

normally sufficiently fluent in it. From our point of view, however, the presence of a mediator would represent a valuable resource to promote *emersione* and support, as highlighted in other anti-trafficking projects, for example in Veneto, where the figure of the Cultural-Linguistic Mediator is fully integrated into the team work in all phases of the protection programme.

If the person joins the project, they must sign a contract to agree on specific rules of cohabitation and a specific project timetable, as well as agree to a rent deposit, which is then credited to the person as soon as they have their own income.

In 2020, the following facilities were available: 4 reception flats (14 places), 3 in Bozen; 2 emergency reception flats with a protected address outside the city (5 places); 1 “high autonomy” flat with 4 places (managed by *Volontarius*). The latter involves reintegration through the CONSIS Social Consortium, which, through the training and language services it offers, intercepts people in the area who are potentially entitled to have their cases taken up by the authorities.

The data collected speak of a 54% decrease in the number of emergency reception contracts in 2018, compared to 2017, a year in which the area saw a very high number of asylum seekers arrivals. In 2018, there were 10 emergency admissions, of which 9 were for women of Nigerian nationality (2 did not meet the requirements to access the programme, 6 were received in a residential project). The total number of people in care, in 2018, was 19, of which 13 had been there from 2017. Of these 19, 17 were of Nigerian nationality. In 2018, only 3 projects were completed. Considering the high number of Nigerian women arriving in the city of Bozen since 2017, as also highlighted during the ethnography, the number of people who entered the programme appears low.

According to the data provided by the Province, in February 2020, the following people were under protection: 1 in emergency care (pre-housing or escape shelter); 14 in flats (of which 5 in the final phase of the project); 2 with the formula of “territorial care”, in collaboration with other local services; 4 in the monitoring phase (follow up); 3 in a “high autonomy” flat managed by *Volontarius*.

These admissions are not new, but are associated with people who have been in the project for more than a year. The average, considering those who enter and leave the project, is 20 people in total. It must be emphasised that mothers with children are not accepted and when women say they are pregnant they are referred to other services (interview, Head of the Office for Minors and Social Inclusion, Autonomous Province of Bozen, 20/02/2020).

Project times depend on individualised projects. In recent years, the inclusion area has intervened from the outset to promote the right to linguistic and work autonomy, with activities that include the following macro-objectives:

- creating social networks and facilitating inclusion;
- empowerment and awareness of rights;
- management of daily life, money, health, knowledge of services on the territory;
- Italian courses;



- self-care through specialised services, knowledge of local culture and citizenship related issue;
- achievement of housing autonomy;
- preparation for court hearings in the case of an appeal against the rejection of an asylum application;
- social and labour inclusion (2018 *La Strada* Final Report).

The last phase of reception, the so-called phase of "*sgancio*" (literally "unhook"), involves support in getting into work and achieving housing autonomy. In the city of Bozen, a serious problem has emerged in terms of discrimination in relation to rent access (2018-2019 Project *Schutzhutte B1 Rifugio* Report), also concerning people who manage to get their employment contract renewed and who can therefore give greater guarantees of solvency.

One possible channel of access to housing is through subsidised housing, but this is insufficient to guarantee housing stability outside the follow-up period. There are very few channels for post-reception:

- workers' house run by *Caritas* - time-based residential formulas (housing for women in double rooms that make it difficult to achieve autonomy);
- Kolping House hotel (religious facility) - with waiting lists of more than three years;
- Ipes public housing – access to which requires an employment contract;
- flats for people of the same nationality, provided by the employer;
- the SIPROIMI system, formerly known as SPRAR.

In this scenario, the system of economic assistance provided during the reception in the Alba Project must be emphasised (410 euros per month for the entire duration of the programme), as it risks creating forms of dependency. In fact, it is difficult to guarantee the maintenance of the same standard of living, since, after they leave the programme, women are often faced with various structural obstacles: lack of subsidies, difficulty in accessing work and housing - despite the fact that there are many jobs available in Alto Adige. The duration of the reception process, which in recent years has lasted up to three years, signals a short-circuit in the system, in which people could potentially achieve more autonomy than in other regions, but the conditions and mechanisms of inclusion in Alto Adige make this goal very difficult to achieve.

### ***The inclusion area - CONSIG***

This area, which is the responsibility of CONSIG, includes the provision of services such as attendance to an Italian language course, training and job placement. The objective of the inclusion area is to support beneficiaries in building their own social networks and to familiarise with employment opportunities in Trentino-Alto Adige. Planned activities include:

- skills assessment and advice about local services, to support the person in the construction of a social and professional inclusion project;
- job training, with the aim of providing information on available employment opportunities and the functioning of the job market (types of contracts, labour rights, workers' duties), and of providing support with looking for work (CVs, cover letters, support with job interviews through role play, knowledge of job search channels);
- language, IT and vocational training, both for individuals and in groups, also drawing on existing training workshops in the area;
- job placement and mentoring;
- setting up of internships/traineeships, with the aim of on-site training in order to verify beneficiaries' abilities and difficulties;
- Skills audit and evaluation of internship experiences, with the aim of self-assessment of one's internship experience, the skills learnt and the training and project activity.

Although there is no mediator embedded in the team, CONSIG includes a professional involved in "liaison and operational planning", who has linguistic and intercultural skills. The role includes facilitating linguistic communication, finding or organising language, computer and vocational training courses, providing useful information on how to register for courses, guaranteeing, where necessary, support for beneficiaries and participating in the operational team for constant updates.

From March 2019 to May 2020, 39 contracts were given in the following sectors: cleaning, laundry, warehouse, catering (fixed-term, part-time or full-time), of which three were permanent jobs in the cleaning and catering sector (Final report to DPO 3/2018 - March 2019 - May 2020). Furthermore, in the year 2016, CONSIG provided language and job training services for 13 recipients; in 2017 it provided services for 21 recipients; in 2018 for 18; and in 2019 for 21 asylum seekers.

Unlike the rest of the Italian territory, the obstacle to inclusion is not primarily getting a job (a good local network allows the absorption of the migrant population, given the ample supply of work and salaries above the national average), but having access to housing. The issue of housing is very complex, and housing autonomy is achieved in very few cases, resulting in longer periods of time in the reception system and the need for support from lay and religious associations to meet housing needs.

### ***The Alba Project and Covid-19***

The pandemic shook up the priorities of the Alba Project. The economic system was the first to falter. Then the funding system. The new National Anti-Trafficking Action Plan has not yet been approved.

The Province, during the 2020 lock-down, from March to May 2020, blocked placements in reception facilities and the Alba Project evaluated only two "cases", including one associated with a woman of

Nigerian origin. Both had their cases taken up and were eventually admitted into a facility. The other women accommodated in Bozen were not allowed to carry out any kind of activity and medical accompaniments were suspended. Language training activities were suspended, as well as internships and work contracts in the tourism and hotel industry. On the other hand, on-the-job training activities continued, in digital mode (Final report to the DPO 3/2018 - March 2019 - May 2020). The outreach activities focused almost exclusively on online health education on how to prevent infection. The awareness of the economic difficulties experienced by some beneficiaries was reflected in the delivery of food packages, despite the interruption of outreach and monitoring activities. However, the Alba Project Director explained how the lock-down period was useful for getting to know some of the women better by telephone.

## Chapter 5

### Gender-based violence and the importance of the intersectional perspective

Over the years, research has paid increasing attention to the issue of gender-based violence and the way it intersects with multiple levels of identity and vulnerability that characterise the experience of migrants, in particular women, who are asylum seekers and victims of trafficking and severe sexual and labour exploitation.

In this work it is necessary to first consider how the "humanitarian regime" represents women and in particular the women we have dealt with in our research. The definition of sexual humanitarianism proposed by Nicola Mai (2014) is useful for highlighting how women (migrants and victims of trafficking) have been considered the deserving beneficiaries of "salvific" interventions (at least regarding the former, through media spectacularisation). Insofar as they are identified and described as victims and vulnerable, they have often appeared as privileged subjects and deserving of help, based on a hierarchisation of vulnerability, closely associated with sexual and gender categories.

The humanitarian regime works alongside a system of inclusion and recognition in host countries, which are sometimes contradictory and closely dependent on the rules of the asylum system, with its many evolutions, often accompanied by criminalising, victimising and passive representations of migrants, in particular women migrants (Pinelli, 2011; 2019). The subject of this publication, Nigerian women who are victims and potential victims of trafficking, are therefore located within an ambiguous set of power relations, which makes access to effective protection complex.

Well before Mai's (2016, 2016a) work, which has the merit of having focused on the gender dimension in migration, other authors had advanced critiques of humanitarian governance. The work of Didier Fassin (2008) is very important, which argues that there is a growing overlap between what he calls "humanitarian governance" - characterised by the deployment of moral sentiments towards poor and deserving people - and political responsibility towards individuals and their well-being, an expression of "securitarian governance". In his analysis, the "humanitarianisation" that has characterised the reception of asylum seekers has created a new relationship between the "polis" and the "camp" (as asylum seekers define reception centres): since these humanitarian regimes defend the integrity of the polis, they have introduced the form of the "camp" in order to "contain" undesirables who are not admitted into the spaces of citizens, but only into the spaces of those receiving aid.

Another useful perspective for reading the experience of Nigerian women is the intersectional approach that takes its cue from the work of Kimberly Crenshaw (1994), based on the claims and criticisms made by black feminism in relation to the hegemony of white and Western feminism. This perspective invites scholars to engage in an analysis that can account for the intersection between the variables of ethnicity, gender and class, all of which are fundamental to understanding the multiple levels of discrimination experienced by individuals and especially by women.

The debate within feminism and the social sciences (Anthias Yuvas-Duval, 1992; 2012, Dorlin, 2005; Ribeiro Crossacz, 2013) has shown that this perspective has the advantage of not being static and of avoiding the crystallization of categories. The Nigerian women who are the focus of this publication are victims or potential victims of trafficking, they are black women and migrants, who come from a country that is characterised by forms of patriarchy, they come from poor social classes and disadvantaged families, they are young, of childbearing age, have experienced very severe trauma, and violence marks the entire course of their experience. All these elements are crucial for understanding their history and journey and therefore need to be considered and incorporated into care and support practices and programmes to ensure there is a real impact on their lives.

The life trajectories of these women are located at the intersection of heterogeneous axes of oppression that they have experienced at different stages of their migratory journey and more generally in their life experience in countries of origin, transit and destination. Gender, ethnicity, class and sexuality are inextricably linked to a system of symbolic, structural and political aspects of violence. These dimensions intersect and determine women's choice within certain structures and from their own positionality. Some sociological analyses show that the protective capacity of some services is insufficient to prevent exposure to human trafficking and a relapse into exploitation both during and after going through the reception system (Serughetti, 2017; Abbatecola, 2018).

The intersectional perspective provides valuable insights for re-considering the experience of women asylum seekers who are victims of trafficking, also taking into account the characteristics of trafficking itself and of the asylum system, which create a field of forces and processes that seek to simplify the experience of violence experienced by women through the forced application of pre-packaged, isolated categories that, according to professionals, simplify experiences but prevent women from fully expressing their needs and aspirations.

The dimension of explicit and structural violence is considered by some scholars as an experiential continuum (Scheper Huges, Burgois, 2004; Freedman, 2015; 2016) both on a temporal and geographical axis. In particular, added to the experience of explicit violence experienced in countries of origin and transit, is a structural violence (Farmer, 2006) linked to legal and social admissibility in the social fabric of host countries such as Italy. Closely connected to the theme of violence is that of a social order that seems to produce increasingly unjust ways of distributing suffering and which fails to effectively protect subjects entitled to legal and social protection (see Nicodemi, 2017; Santoro, 2018).

The intersectional perspective is useful for considering the various forms of violence experienced by women in their migratory journey, where explicit and structural forms of violence are not separable but intrinsically connected (Speed, 2014; 2016): we are talking about domestic violence, violence experienced in countries of origin with respect to social, cultural and political models, including racist and sexist forms of discrimination that are traceable in the social models of the host and transit societies.

Drawing from the field of legal studies and feminism (Simone and Boiano, 2018), some Italian scholars have disarticulated the concept of violence against women and the related categories of 'vulnerability' and 'victim'. These are operational categories present in the asylum system, taken up as part of their identity by women themselves, in order to obtain international protection, making them

'deserving of a right'. The law is not yet effective in identifying what violence is and what indicators can identify it, nor is it yet effective in protecting all women from systematic forms of violence. Violence can be the result of discrimination experienced in the private and domestic, but also in the social and political, spheres (Boiano, 2014, 2017; Rigo, 2016). The category of gender legally structures 'a social subset' of recognisable women (Rigo, 2016).

### ***Gender and generations: Nigerian mothers***

Since 2016, as the number of landings on Italian shores increased, so did the number of arrivals of women, mainly of Nigerian nationality. Most (69%) have had their asylum applications rejected, very few have obtained refugee status (639 - 5%), some have been granted international protection (265 - 2%), almost a quarter have been granted humanitarian protection (2,740 - 20%), and 4% were untraceable. This percentage also includes women who arrived in the territory of Bozen after being rejected at the Brenner border or after having been forced by their exploiters to reach Trentino-Alto Adige.

Throughout 2017, the city of Bozen recorded a substantial number of migrant arrivals. The main component was women of Nigerian nationality, who were pregnant or had dependent children. The fact that numerous women were pregnant drew public and political attention - in some cases these pregnancies were the result of violence suffered in transit countries, in others the result of relationships associated with sexual exploitation by clients or co-nationals. The Province responded by temporarily placing them in hotel facilities. Until May 2018, these women experienced severe marginalisation with respect to access to services while waiting for placement in facilities for asylum seekers. In May 2018, they were transferred to some CAS centres in the city, which are huge informal complexes for women and families in transit, poorly suited to the needs of the target group and with the risk of exposure to the exploitation network. The fieldwork in fact highlighted how reception centres, and not just those in Bozen, are not completely impermeable to traffickers and exploiters, as confirmed by the then referent of one of these centres, who explained the difficulty of monitoring entrances and movements (also with surveillance cameras) (interview, Head of Ex-Lemayer *Volontarius* Association, Manager, 06/02/2019).

Mothers who arrived in Bozen came up against the quota system, which classified them as 'inadmissible' to the asylum system. As a result, some women made false claims in order to gain assistance. The local reception practices also exacerbated their vulnerability and hindered their access to adequate reception facilities (see also Degli Uberti, 2019) and protection (Caroselli, 2020). The experience of the many Nigerian women who arrive in Bozen is thus characterised by a multiplicity of types of violence (non-recognition as vulnerable persons, being labelled as victims, lack of access to reception facilities and services), the traumatic consequences of which further hinder the possibility of breaking free from coercion and exploitation. The dimension of motherhood and generational ties, which is dense with meanings that are often misunderstood by institutions, also recalls Taliani's (2019) reflection whereby "*deciding to keep alive a child born in the migratory situation [...] giving birth to him/her in a precarious world, means entering into a problematic social relationship*" (17). (17) "*In fact, these pledge-children are a guarantee of infinite sustenance for the relatives, and for the mother a mortgage: the obligation to find constant earnings that can only be achieved by remaining on the margins of a hidden economy*" (26).

The paradox of a parcelled-out system like the one in Bozen, with limited collaboration between the anti-trafficking system, the local welfare system and the reception system for asylum seekers, has meant the protection of these women is incomplete and ineffective. For them, the future revolves around a condition of endless debt, which fills their lives and their self-narrative with a tension between forms of dependence on the system of meanings and the subjects that belong to it - for example, the complex family relationships between women of different generations - and a strong desire for autonomy from them.

Ethnographic work has repeatedly shown how the practice of supporting migrant women in their first experiences of motherhood is, at times, violent (see also Pinelli, 2011; Taliani, 2019). For example, during hospitalisation for childbirth, the approaches and cultural prejudices of some health workers put pressure on mothers, both with regard to breastfeeding and the care of new-borns, causing great frustration and a growing sense of inadequacy in parenting.

The issue of migrant mothers is very important, and various anti-trafficking projects in Italy are addressing and will continue to address it, emphasizing the need for adequate integrated interventions that include all the services on the territory. The National Anti-Trafficking Action Plan (2016-2018) does not provide protected flats for mothers, nor does it explicit that their cases should be taken up by anti-trafficking projects, since minors, like pregnant women, as particularly vulnerable subjects, are normally in the charge of the local authority. The clear risk associated with this fragmentation of the welfare system is that mothers do not receive adequate assistance. The research carried out in 2017 clearly shows that many Nigerian mothers experienced a condition of institutional abandonment, with the exception of the relationship built with voluntary associations, which in turn have attempted to fill the gaps in institutional interventions.

### ***Women, mothers, victims of trafficking***

The women's trajectories were also characterised and influenced by the controls implemented at the Brenner Pass, which instead of contributing to combatting human trafficking, contributed to confining these women to the city of Bozen, exposing them to the risk of exploitation. While the experience of pregnancy has to some extent protected women who arrived in Bozen from exposure to exploitation, in a temporally defined "break", it has not protected them from exclusion from services (Caroselli, 2020). The anti-trafficking project delegated their protection to other services, as it did not have adequate tools to address women's needs in terms of legal protection, reception and *emersione*. While the responsibility for inadequate protection is not attributable to any of the protection systems in isolation (anti-trafficking, asylum, welfare, etc.), we believe that the development of integrated projects, involving collaboration between the three systems, is necessary and increasingly urgent, in order to avoid the risks of re-victimisation and re-trafficking, as shown by the story of Beauty (see textbox).

These women, whether pregnant or with new-born babies, were initially housed in hotels, in shared rooms that did not guarantee sufficient privacy, especially during delicate periods such as maternity. The emergency nature of this type of assistance and the failure of the anti-trafficking system to take up their cases also exposed them to forms of marginality and invisibility, with the risk of encouraging trafficking networks and exploitation mechanisms.

Beauty's story, like that of Joy, also recounts the possible role of men, which should be analysed from the perspective of gender relations: in some cases, relationships are affectionate and monogamous; in others, they grow out of forms of control within a context of exploitation and can create even stronger bonds of dependence within the exploitation network.

Our interviews with professionals clearly illustrated how the fragmentation of services and the lack of integrated collaboration have led to inadequate protection (if not exclusion from protection), as well as constant mobility between northern Italian cities. This was the case, for example, of a Nigerian mother who, after being subjected to various pressures in Bozen, where she was housed in a large centre on the outskirts of the city, was transferred by the exploitation network to the city of Bologna, where she returned to prostitution and where she still lives with her daughter (Caroselli, 2020).

The reception of mothers with children is managed through two main channels: through the Alba Project's agreement with the IPAI (Provincial Institute for Childcare), a provincial institute for mothers in difficulty (which has 24-hour facilities, with professional staff, midwives, social workers, educators and an in-house nursery<sup>59</sup>); and through the SIS social worker who deals with women and minors, who is in constant contact with the Alba team and who carries out an initial screening among families and single or pregnant women, after being alerted by the info point.<sup>60</sup>

If the SIS encounters a woman it suspects of being a victim of trafficking or violence, it sends a report to the Alba Project or the Anti-Violence Centre. As explained by the professionals, there are numerous cases of mothers with children being forced into marriage, mainly of Moroccan and Tunisian nationality.

In 2019, SIS took up the cases of:

- 10 families, Iraqi Kurds with (two or more) dependent children - in addition to the 55 families in care and accommodated in the facilities mentioned above;
- 4 Nigerian households;
- some single pregnant women from other parts of Italy.

Beneficiaries were offered the following services: support in accessing benefits; accompaniment to the *Questura* for regularisation; the formulation of a social, work and housing plan for each individual; orientation towards specific psychological and health services; school insertion (interview, Case Manager for Families and Women, SIS, 18/02/2020).

The link between the Alba Project and IPAI does not include assistance to women without a residence permit, such as those who are "out of quota". For them, SIS activates the following facilities (map 1): Conte Forni Cold Emergency Night Shelter (28 places); Centro Ex Lemayer for vulnerable women in transit (110 places); *Centro Einaudi* for women with regular residence permits (30 places). Upon

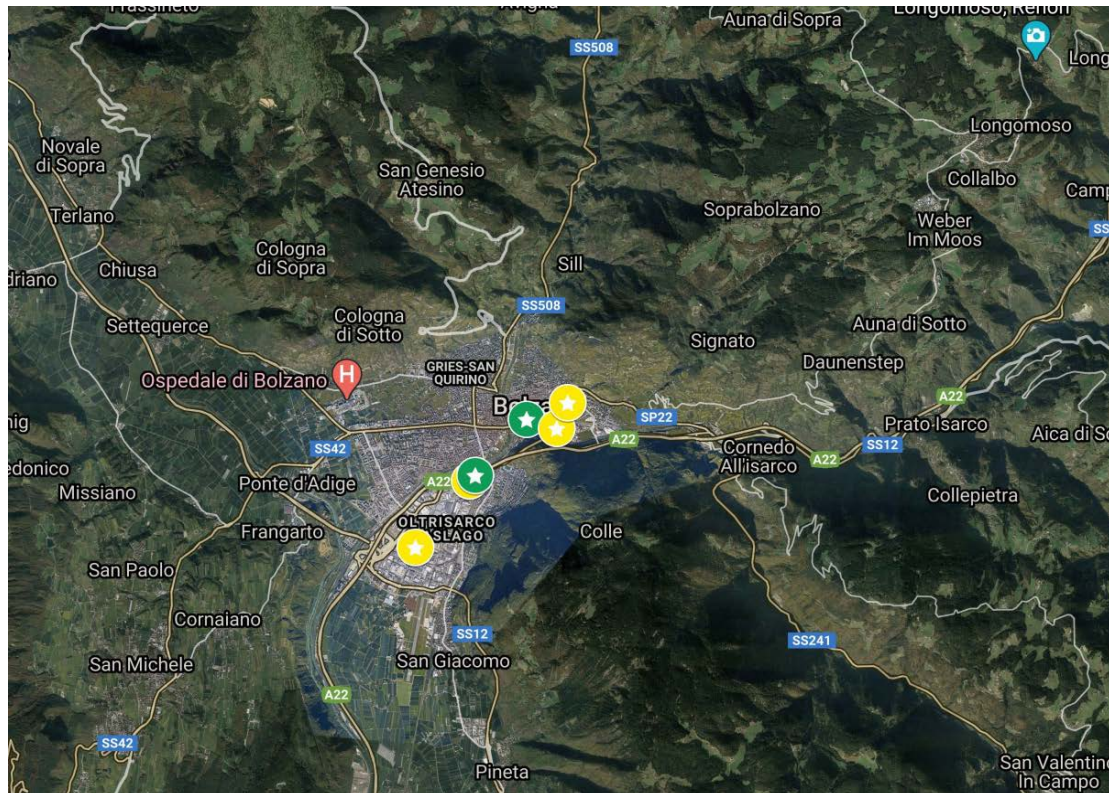
---

<sup>59</sup> *La Strada* also has a project for young mothers who have gone through the Alba project and have achieved a sufficient degree of autonomy but still require support after being in the IPAI facilities.

<sup>60</sup> In the case of families, if the family has its residency elsewhere, it is invited to return to its territory of residency; if the family has no residency, it is supported in the regularisation and reception process, it carries out interviews with the social services which, in February 2020, had few new arrivals, but many entries and few places in the structures (interview, Case manager for Families and Women, SIS 18/02/2020).



obtaining their residence permits, women should be moved to other facilities more suitable to their needs, but at the moment this is not possible due to lack of places (ibidem).



MAP 1: FACILITIES FOR WOMEN IN THE CITY OF BOZEN (YELLOW: FACILITIES FOR WOMEN WITHOUT A REGULAR RESIDENCE PERMIT; GREEN: FACILITIES FOR WOMEN WITH A REGULAR RESIDENCE PERMIT)

- ★ Ex Lemayer
- ★ Casa Margareth Caritas
- ★ Einaudi
- ★ Casa Migrantes
- ★ Gorio
- ★ Conteforni

There are specific facilities for women but places are limited and are made available where there are specific requirements (map 1):

- Container Gorio is accessible to women and families without a regular residence permit;
- Casa Margareth is accessible to single women with a regular residence permit;
- Casa Migrantes is accessible to women with a family unit and a residence permit who are moving towards being autonomous.

There are many critical issues related to the care of this category of women. They relate both to individual aspects and to the limits of the network of local services: on the one hand, voluntary choice versus the instrumentality of pregnancy for access to social services; on the other hand, the fact that pregnancy can represent a "break" from exploitation that requires protection. From the legal point of view, a particularly critical aspect concerns the issue of residence permits for art. 18bis, linked to

domestic violence. To date, in Bozen, a residence permit for art. 18bis has never been issued, despite attempts by the Anti-Violence Centres (interview, Alba Project Reception area Coordinator, 17/02/2020). The judicial authorities and the *Questura* have preferred to issue residence permits for family reasons, which bind women to the legal status of their husband, who is often the agent of the violence in the first place.

***The (poor) intersection between the asylum system, the anti-trafficking system and the social services system in the Autonomous Province of Bozen<sup>61</sup>***

As described above, the poor integration between the reception system, based on the quota system, which excludes some subjects considered "inadmissible", through labelling processes (on this see Zetter, 1991), the anti-trafficking system and the social services system, has in some cases contributed to the exclusion of potential beneficiaries from adequate forms of protection.

As far as women are concerned, the labels of victim reproduced in the discourses of the professionals orientate aid practices and take shape through moralising discourses on the one hand and disqualifying discourses on the other. Various contradictions arise from the different expectations of the services, focused on the need to clearly identify victims and establish the urgency (or not) of responding to their needs. Contradictions derive also from the women who oscillate between future desires and aspirations which are often difficult to communicate and share, and dependence on the exploitation network (Caroselli, 2020). As we have explained, many women do not self-identify as victims of trafficking or are resistant to do so (also due to the conditioning of the exploitative network) and often appear as not credible in front of the Territorial Commissions, precisely because of the stories they are forced to tell.

In the intersection between the asylum and reception system and the anti-trafficking system, the dimension of time plays a fundamental role, as Serughetti explains: "*The little time available and the absence of appropriate places to establish a relationship of trust with humanitarian workers and professionals, the women's satisfaction at having arrived at their destination, the strong determination to achieve economic well-being that will allow them to send money home, the partial ignorance of the significance of the debt they will have to repay, their psychological subjugation towards the exploiters, and last but not least the fear of retaliation against the family of origin are all elements that hinder the bringing to light of trafficking situations on arrival and in their initial reception*" (2017: 77).

It was useful to observe the way in which the services organise the protection system, as it shows on the one hand, the willingness to adapt services to the needs of the service-users, and on the other hand, the evident difficulty in achieving this, not only in terms of social but also legal protection. Since 2016, with the increasing arrival in Alto Adige of women asylum seekers who are victims of trafficking, a progressive dismantling of the right to asylum has been observed, with increasing difficulties for women in using this channel of regularisation and in obtaining an Art. 18 permit. The Bozen *Questura* was not in favour of double applications (i.e. residence permits for asylum applications and for social protection), despite the fact that the legislation allows this and clearly encourages maximum

---

<sup>61</sup> This section is based on the work of Caroselli (2020).

protection for women (interview, Director of the Alba Project, 17/02/2020). On the other hand, the double request is understandable in light of the fact that: the residence permit as provided by art. 18 has a limited duration and therefore provides more limited guarantees; the asylum procedure takes a long time and dealing with the Territorial Commission is a complex process. Thus, a short-circuit has been created that has debased the value of the residence permit as provided for by art. 18 and that has seen, since 2015, the blocking of many authorisations to issue the permit, as a result of the fact that many women did not give up their asylum applications (interview, Alba Project Director, 17/02/2020). This has had a negative impact on women, who have found themselves in increasingly precarious situations, not only with respect to reception, with temporary housing situations that are inadequate to their needs, but also with respect to access to social protection and anti-trafficking programmes (with limited access to assessment interviews with the anti-trafficking agency), as well as to the regularisation procedure (Caroselli, 2020), which - it should be remembered - is fundamental to ensuring the effective inclusion of asylum seekers and victims of trafficking.

In order to address the issue of the necessary integration between systems, from 2016 to 2020, the Autonomous Province of Bozen created a procedure of connection between the two offices that deal with women asylum seekers and potential victims of trafficking: the Office for Minors and Social Inclusion (partner in the Alba Project and responsible for the three project areas) and the Office for the Elderly and Social Policies (which finances and coordinates facilities for asylum seekers) (interview, Director of the Department of Social Policies - Office for the Elderly and Social Policies, Autonomous Province of Bozen, 18/02/2020). Moreover, in 2016, the Alba Project provided a "concrete cases" form to asylum seekers' facilities, which contains indicators (general, verbal and non-verbal conduct, environmental, physical and mental health indicators) useful for the identification and referral of potential victims of trafficking. Another important step concerned the signing, in February 2018, of a referral protocol between the Alba Project and the Verona Territorial Commission (responsible for the territory of Trento and Bozen).

The signing of the protocol and the sharing of the "concrete cases" form have contributed to: favouring the early identification of trafficked persons by the reception facilities (which are not very well equipped with respect to the anti-trafficking legislation); improving cooperation with the outreach units in referring potential victims outside the reception facilities; developing tools to prevent and counteract sexual but also labour exploitation; improving cooperation with the Territorial Commissions, especially in view of the increasing number of referrals by the Commissions themselves (Table 12).

Year	Referrals to Alba by Territorial Commissions
2016	7
2017	2
2018	19
2019	38

TABLE 12: NUMBER OF REFERRALS BY THE TERRITORIAL COMMISSION OF VERONA TO THE ALBA PROJECT (SOURCE: ALBA PROJECT, REPORT 2019-2020) 2020)

\* THE DATA IS ENTIRELY RELATED TO WOMEN OF NIGERIAN NATIONALITY – WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ONE MALIAN.



### *Mothers with children: the case of Beauty*

Beauty is a Nigerian girl who arrived in Bozen in November 2017, after being stopped on the train along the Bozen-Brenner line by the police patrolling the trains.

She was a few months pregnant and had a residence permit as an asylum seeker issued by the Foggia Questura.

Beauty had been a guest in a reception centre in Apulia, which she had to leave once she obtained a residence permit as an asylum seeker. In Foggia, she was exploited by a madam as a prostitute and was then destined for Germany. When the madam made her leave for the north, Beauty did not know that she was pregnant - with a client. She found out after arriving in Bozen.

In Bozen, she came into contact with the info point and was eventually put in touch with the Alba Project. After several interviews, the emersione team decided that Beauty should not be admitted to the protection programme and entrusted her to the social services who placed her in a hotel.

Beauty gave birth in Bozen, supported by a group of volunteers. After the birth she was transferred to a SAC centre on the outskirts of the city.

The mixed gender conditions made her increasingly weak and afraid. She began to express her difficulty and discomfort, as well as the hardship of raising her child in a CAS facility, also because of exposure to the many people who enter the centre and control the Nigerian women. Beauty talked about her experience in the hope that it will be of help to other women. She explained that many women in the centre have been and are being blackmailed.

While Beauty's son is growing up, the woman declares her fears of being forced into prostitution now that she can leave her son with other women. She explains that she does not feel safe in the centre where she is housed, together with 120 other people, mainly of Nigerian nationality.

After 8 months in this facility, thanks to the support of a legal professional, Beauty was granted refugee status (as a victim of trafficking - despite the lack of such an assessment by the Alba Project). She agrees to be transferred to a SIPROIMI centre, which is better suited to her situation, albeit in another region of Italy.

Currently, Beauty is housed in a SIPROIMI reception centre where, with the help of the centre's professionals, she attends Italian language courses and an internship for work integration. Her son has also been taken in with her. Beauty says she has found her partner, who knows that Beauty's pregnancy is connected to her exploitation in prostitution. The man recognised the paternity of the child and moved to the city where Beauty and the child have been hosted. He is currently unemployed, but together with the centre's workers he is embarking on a path of inclusion to help build family stability.

In 2018, the referrals to the Alba Project came from the following: professionals in CAS facilities; professionals in facilities for vulnerable migrants in transit and homeless people; SIS; the info point; the *Caritas* Refugee Counselling Service; law enforcement; the Anti-Violence Centre; and private entities.

In reference to Nigerian women, reports to the Alba Project by CAS facilities, SIS and Anti-Violence Centres, have fluctuated over the years (Table 13). The number of referrals from private organisations and shelters was higher than those from the Territorial Commission, indicating a greater attention to trafficking and higher numbers of people victims of trafficking in the territory. However, the number of referrals corresponds to very few protection programmes activated by the Alba Project, mainly due to the lack of available places. This suggests that the project will have to put in place new strategies to expand its reception capacity, as well as move towards an increasingly careful assessment of the needs expressed by beneficiaries.

Year	Referrals by CAS – SIS – Anti-Violence Centre to Alba
2016	56
2017	95
2018	56
2019	77*

TABLE 13: NUMBER OF REFERRAL BY CAS, THE SIS, THE ANTI-VIOLENCE CENTRE TO THE ALBA PROJECT (SOURCE: ALBA PROJECT REPORT 2019-2020)

\*37 NIGERIAN WOMEN, 21 PAKISTANI, 3 BRASILIAN, 2 IVORIAN, 2 MOROCCAN, OTHER (VENEZUELAN, SUDAN, PERUVIAN)

We suggest that the Alba Project should carefully reconsider another aspect, namely the way in which the assessment and identification interviews are carried out. Only 30% of the women referred by the Territorial Commission were identified as victims of trafficking by the assessment team (interview, Alba Project Outreach and *Emersione* area Coordinator, 20/02/2020). The Area Manager explained that many of the women who were referred to them did not fall into the category of victims of trafficking, as at the time of the interview they no longer appeared to be in a situation of blackmail and coercion and it was therefore assumed that their prostitution was linked to a personal choice, a habit or to economic concerns. At the same time, they explained that the number of potential victims of trafficking is definitely higher than the number of victims identified, because not all of them are in a situation of exploitation and it is difficult to prove whether they are still paying a debt.

Since 2020, the Alba Project has embarked on a prolonged assessment process to allow women to contribute sufficient elements for identification and, ideally, to also report the crime to the police in order to further the fight against trafficking. This choice was made after the team noticed the return of women who had already been seen in 2017, who were re-admitted to services not as victims of trafficking but as vulnerable.

During the interviews, increasingly multifaceted profiles emerged, in which multiple forms of vulnerability intertwine, making detailed responses and an increasing interaction with local services necessary (2018 Final Report and 2019 Planning Report). We therefore believe it is essential that the

Alba Project invests more resources in ensuring that the interviews are as effective as possible and increasingly adequate to fully understanding the people interviewed and their needs, even in the absence of their self-identification as victims. Ethnographic research has shown very clearly how processes of exploitation are long and complex. It is very difficult to accurately verify that women have actually left the exploitative circuit. Often, they remain trapped or find themselves trapped again because of prolonged precariousness that forces them to resort to the network again in the absence of alternatives. Considering a return to prostitution as a fully free choice is very dangerous and misleading, especially when women often find themselves without real alternatives for inclusion. It should also be considered that, even if the women manage to pay off their debt, it is by no means certain that a real possibility of freeing themselves from the network will open up for them, since the ties with the network itself can take different forms, for example, as explained above, through emotional relationships with partners (whether or not they are members of the network), which in turn create a condition of dependence, also from an emotional point of view.

The Alba Project should definitely aim to consolidate its collaboration with the Territorial Commission of Verona, as well as with the networks of lawyers with whom it has been working for years in appeals (in relation to the refusal of asylum applications), involving them more in the women's cases, in order to promote procedures that are as protective as possible (interview, Lawyer, ASGI, Bozen, 21/02/2020). Our research also showed the need for reflection on the activation of new facilities dedicated to reception and *pre-emersione*, in order to guarantee women enough time to choose whether or not to enter a protection project and to understand its rules and functioning. This is clearly necessary given the still significant number of women, especially Nigerian women, in the CAS facilities (22% in February 2020) and the important, though not quantifiable, number of "out of quota" women.



## Chapter 6

### Unaccompanied foreign minors and foreign minors who are victims of trafficking and serious exploitation

Unaccompanied foreign minors in the Autonomous Province of Bozen, as in the rest of the Italian territory, are under the responsibility of the Municipality and in particular of the SIS, but also of the Autonomous Province. At the end of the 1990s, a provincial coordination was activated, which is still carried out by CRAIS<sup>62</sup> (Coordination of Socio-Pedagogic Facilities for Minors in Alto Adige), in order to favour collaboration between the territorial communities (territorial social services managing facilities for minors).

In 2000, the presence of unaccompanied foreign minors on the streets drew the attention of the institutions. In 2001, the Province put in place a reception procedure consisting of first reception, second reception, and assisted reception in conditions of high autonomy (interview, Case Manager for Minors, SIS and *Volontarius* Association, Referent person for unaccompanied minors of the Autonomous Province of Bozen, 18/02/2020). Initially, the Provincial Plan of first reception included places (for 6 months).

As the number of arrivals in Italy increased in 2011, coinciding with the so-called Arab Sprigs, the number of transits at the Brenner Pass also increased, especially in the period 2014-2016, with many minors arriving from southern Italy. Many escaped controls and were therefore not identified as minors. In 2016, two dedicated first reception centres were opened. Many of the minors were transferred through the ministerial channel. About eighteen minors were assisted in the same year, mostly Somalis and Eritreans - while between 2000 and 2014 most minors were of Albanian and Kosovar origin and, more rarely, Moroccan or Tunisian. Almost all of them continued their journey to northern Europe soon after entering the shelter. Now the movements are generally reversed, from the north of Europe to Italy, and mainly concern minors from Albania and Kosovo.

Currently, SIS has 70 minors and young adults in its care. Those found on the territory of Bozen and its province mainly concern: Bengali minors involved in trafficking - who often abandon their plans to reach other cities; minors involved in drug dealing, often of Moroccan, Tunisian and Algerian nationality; minors who are perpetrators and victims of crime, but not recognised as victims (interview, Head of the Office for Minors and Social Inclusion, Autonomous Province of Bozen, 20/02/2020), coming from the Maghreb.

The places for unaccompanied foreign young boys in Bozen are (map 2):

- 16 places at the Conte Forni facility (since 2016 there are also 4 places outside of the province for minors in transit);
- 12 places in 3 reception centres in Bozen;

---

<sup>62</sup> For more information see this site: [www.crais.it](http://www.crais.it) Last accessed on: 30/12/2020.

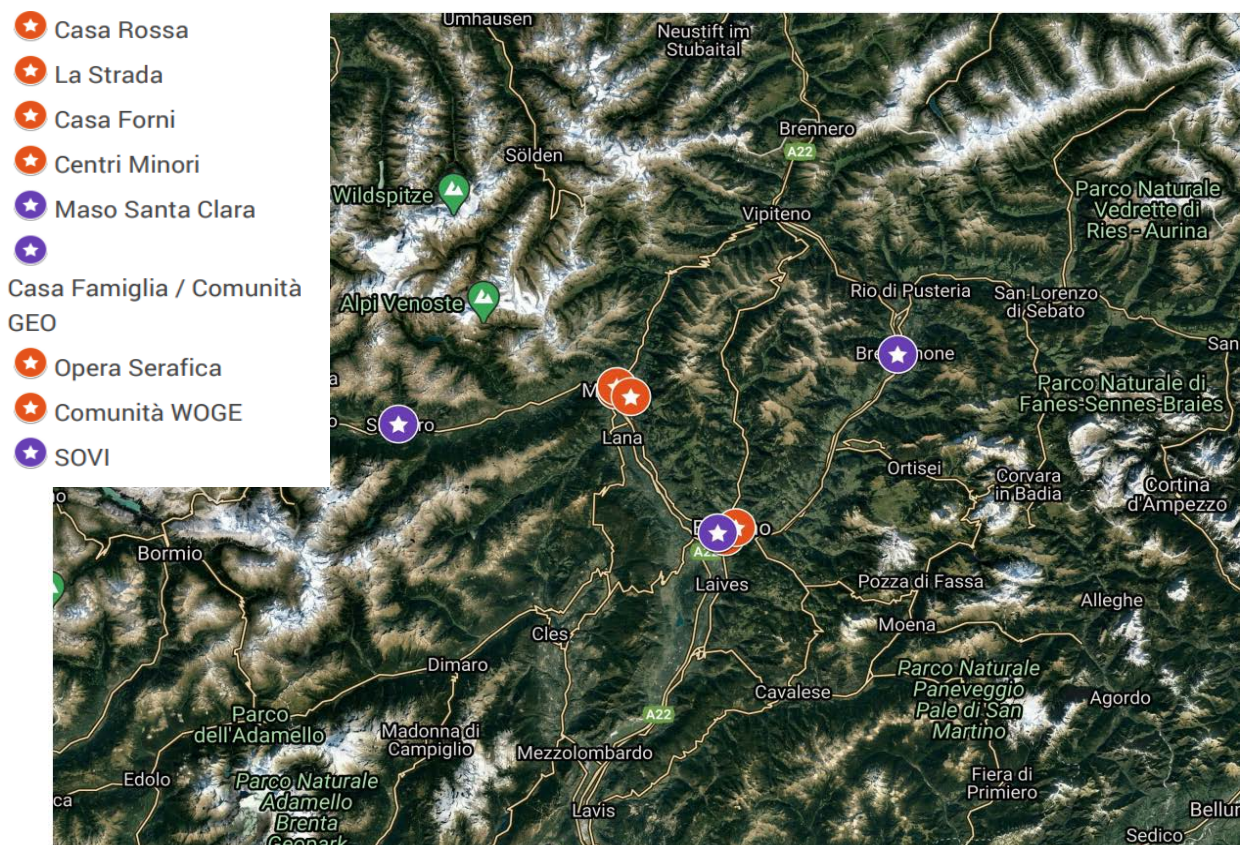
- 12 places in Casa Rossa;
- 16 places at the former Lemayer (later closed, with the opening of 15 places in Merano, in the province).

As far as young girls are concerned, they are generally placed directly in socio-pedagogical facilities, without involving emergency structures, as is the case for underage males (Map 2):

Maso Santa Clara, *La Strada* Bozen - integrated socio-pedagogical community;

- Kinderdörf, Bressanone, Merano;
- Sovi in the Vinschgau Valley.

Since 2017, however, few underage girls have arrived, only 8 in total: 1 Tunisian girl who was pregnant, 4 Somalis (of whom 3 have moved away), 2 Nigerian girls who were pregnant and 1 Nigerian girl recognised as a refugee. It should be noted that for minors who are trafficking victims, Alba has created a protocol with the SIS to manage their reception, which is organised on a case-by-case basis given that there are insufficient places (interview, Alba Project Director, 17/02/2020).



MAP 2: FACILITIES FOR UNACCOMPANIED MINORS IN BOZEN (RED: FOR MALES; PURPLE: FOR FEMALES)



### *Taking charge of unaccompanied foreign minors*

The minor may arrive at the SIS autonomously or following a police referral, if they are stopped by border police or other law enforcement agencies. A protocol has been defined according to which law enforcement agencies that come into contact with a minor have to activate the protection network. It often happened that SIS received referrals from the border police at San Candido, but the reported minors almost never arrived at SIS (interview, Case manager for Minors, SIS, 18/02/2020).

Within three days, the social service organises an interview, during which a Cultural-Linguistic Mediator also intervenes, with the following objectives: understanding the minor's migration path; explaining how life in the reception facility works; providing legal information; providing support for school attendance; gathering information for the preparation of a report to be sent to the Juvenile Court, which appoints a guardian to represent the minor, usually within a month and a half. Subsequently, monitoring interviews are organised on a monthly basis, also in the care facilities.

A positive aspect of the care of minors in the Province of Bozen is the use of "*prosiegua amministrativo*", that is to say the reception of new adults up to the age of 21, a practice set up even before the approval of Law Zampa 47/2017, which promoted its use. Paradoxically, following the approval of the Zampa Law, it has become increasingly difficult for social services to obtain authorisation for continuation, due to the tight timeframe between minors' access to services and their turning 18, and the tendency to believe that if they arrive close to the age of majority they do it instrumentally to obtain an advantage in terms of support (interview, Case manager for Minors, SIS, 18/02/2020). For this reason, the continuation is often authorised for only 6 months, with the obligation for the beneficiary to engage in a process of inclusion, thus becoming a "reward" mechanism, linked to the perception (obviously discretionary) of a real motivation on the part of the minor.

Other challenges that emerged with respect to taking up their cases included in particular: the absence of cultural-linguistic mediation support; the limited role of the psychological service that has been set up, not as part of an accompaniment process, but only in the case of TSO admissions (compulsory health treatment - activated when a person is subjected to medical treatment against their will). Unlike for the Court of Trento, for the Court of Bozen the appointment of a guardian is not a normal practice - often leaving responsibility for the minor to the head of social services alone. However, there have been improvements and appointments of guardians are now more frequent (interview, Head of SIS Minors, 18/02/2020). The Head of the Office for Minors suggests that appointment procedures are now regular and timely (email, Head of the Office for Minors and Social Inclusion of the Autonomous Province of Bozen, 17/11/2020), which is in line with what was suggested by some professionals in the area in February 2020.

## Chapter 7

### Secondary movements, mobility and trafficking<sup>63</sup>

European border controls and migration management have not led to the elimination or reduction of movements of people and it is unlikely that these measures will be effective in this respect. They have, however, contributed to making migration progressively riskier, forcing people into constant circular mobility (Tazzioli, 2017). People seeking international protection are forced to continuously move within European borders, as a result of the 'Dublin' procedures and informal readmissions, in a perpetual wait for regularisation and the possibility of permanent residence (Caroselli, 2020). This constant mobility is the consequence of restrictive policies, characterised by border controls, the absence of effective referral and protection mechanisms, a complex Dublin regulation that does not always protect people (Sommaruga, 2018) and unequal inclusion possibilities for different categories of migrants.

Secondary movements are often invisible to institutions, so the experience of trafficked women, whose mobility depends on exploitation and control networks, is therefore even more risky, especially where there is no rapid identification system, as in the case of European borders, of which the Brenner Pass is an example (interview, Red Cross Brenner Coordinator and Professional, 19/02/2020). This calls into question the effectiveness of the current approach of migration policies, which on the one hand encourage returns, and on the other hand provide temporary solutions, while migrants demand the right to mobility to continue on their migration journey (Könönen, 2018). The tightening of European asylum policies has created more and more obstacles and difficulties in the trajectories of individuals (Papastergoadis, 1999; Fontanari, 2017), and these include secondary movements, as well as the interruption of inclusion programmes and the continuous suspension of expectations and plans (Caroselli, 2020). Movement is embedded in the experience of migrants, but it is also a cognitive and existential experience (Griffith et al., 2013; Radu, 2010) which, in the case of trafficked women, makes it even more complex to escape exploitation, even with (spatial) mobility, in order to move towards self-determination (Caroselli, 2020).

### *Secondary movements, mobility and trafficking in the Bozen/Brenner area*<sup>64</sup>

Following the creation of the Schengen area, in 1998, the Italian and Austrian institutions took steps to remove the 'symbolic' and 'material' Brenner border, which, however, never abandoned its coercive function, re-established through trilateral Italy-Germany-Austria agreements, which created a system of 'mobile controls'. These agreements, inspired by Articles 25 et seq. of the Schengen Borders Code, underlie mechanisms that paradoxically contribute to secondary movements from northern to southern Europe and vice versa.

---

<sup>63</sup> Excerpt from Semprebon and Caroselli (in press), integrated with ethnographic material and interviews.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid

These agreements allowed Member States to temporarily re-introduce controls at the Brenner border for reasons of public safety and to avert serious risks to internal security. Three agreements were signed in 1997 (entry and readmission of migrants), 2014 (controls on Euro City trains heading to Munich), 2017 (controls on goods trains with the aim of identifying and stopping migrants attempting to cross the border) (*Antenne Migranti* and ASGI, 2017). In practice, these agreements aim to reduce intra-European migratory pressure and combat irregular migration, but they have not prevented the movement of people, instead just making travel longer and riskier.

While migrants arriving on the coasts of southern Italy enter the reception system through the ordinary reception system, as explained above, migrants arriving by land may face significant obstacles in accessing any form of reception and protection: if they express their willingness to apply for asylum, the formalisation of the application may take a long time and entry into the reception system may take even longer (see e.g. NAGA, 2018) or possibly be denied. As specified in Legislative Decree 142/2015, the right to reception in Italy is granted only to asylum seekers without means of subsistence and for asylum seekers for whom Italy is responsible under the Dublin III Regulation. Some categories of migrants therefore remain excluded from reception or risk being excluded. These include migrants in transit, as well as migrants readmitted to Italy following a deportation procedure linked to the Dublin Regulation.

Due to its geographical and strategic location - along the Brenner railway line and being the last major city before the Brenner Pass - the city of Bozen is, as explained, also a transit area. It has become a sort of 'internal hotspot', following the controls carried out at Brenner and Bozen, which have forced migrants, stopped on trains, at the station or at the border, to return to Bozen. Currently, about 150 people cross the border each month in both directions (interview, Red Cross Brenner Coordinator and Professional, 19/02/2020), corresponding to the average number of crossings in recent years – for instance, in the end of June 2017 a total of 146 people crossed (*Antenne Migranti* and ASGI, 2017). Their nationalities have not changed much either. As confirmed by the border police records, people of Nigerian and Niger nationality are the most prevalent. The trend involves Nigerian, Afghan and Pakistani people and a decreasing number of Nigerian women (interview, Head of the *Caritas* Refugee Counselling Service, 20/02/2020). *Caritas* data shows that autonomous arrivals are declining. At the moment, they mainly include women returning from Germany (10% of arrivals in Bozen), with informal readmissions - a relatively recent phenomenon. One of the main challenges for them on their journeys is the non-acceptance of their asylum applications by the Bozen *Questura*, which asks for them to be submitted in the Italian city where they were first submitted.

About 80% are asylum seekers at the appeal stage. Their movements are not always visible; they often escape detection. The most invisible are migrant women, especially Nigerian women who are victims of trafficking, as in the case of Faith (box). None of these movements are counted in the statistics, so they remain largely unknown - as is the case with the movements by car from Trieste (the border with Slovenia) of people crossing the Balkan route.

Since 2015, border crossings in northern Italy have been characterised by a certain 'fluidity': migrants are not always subject to police checks on the Austrian side of the border, and are often left free to move south to reach Italy. Controls in the opposite direction were much more systematic, and many migrants were stopped and asked to take the train back south. A similar attitude has been reported by police controlling trains passing through Bozen station, with the likely result that migrants return

to Trento, the first major city south of Bozen, although according to *Antenne Migranti* volunteers this has not happened since November 2017 (fieldwork note, 20/08/2018).

Many of the migrants who tried to reach northern Europe were stopped and stranded in the Brenner/Bozen area, following informal readmissions to Italy carried out by the Italian border police at the request of the Austrian border police. In 2015, there were at least 100 people who were stopped and blocked every day in Bozen, after police patrols on trains. According to the Director of *Caritas*, currently 10% of the migrants stopped are women, mostly of Nigerian nationality, returning to Italy due to the Dublin procedure (after arriving in Italy in 2014-2015), or women arriving from Latin America - a more recent trend (interview, 20/02/2020). *Caritas* estimates that only 3% of migrants arriving in Bozen are granted some form of international protection, in line with the outcomes of asylum applications throughout Italy. Many of these people find themselves in a sort of limbo, waiting to access the asylum procedure or to continue their journey. As a result, the number of people in the city of Bozen who are "stuck" within the cumbersome reception system has multiplied. They are often homeless and forced to wait for long periods of time, even if they are in extremely precarious circumstances.

Asylum seekers who arrived autonomously in Bozen were treated as "second-class citizens", compared to migrants who arrived by sea on the southern Italian coast, creating a new category of exclusion (Degli Uberti, 2019) - and the same is true of migrants who crossed other land borders (arriving for example via the Balkan route). The categorisation process that has informed local practices has in fact prevented access to the right to reception and asylum and requires a deep rethinking in order to overcome an approach characterised by criteria of 'merit' (see Zetter, 2007; Manocchi, 2014) that have nothing to do with the legal principle of 'right', which underpins the asylum and reception system. In this system of substantial institutional neglect, women are particularly at risk, especially when subjected to networks of traffickers (Caroselli, 2020).

### *The Dublin Regulation and victims of trafficking*

In recent years, Italy has experienced an increase in incoming Dublin procedures: in 2018, it recorded 42,911 decisions (Eurostat, 2019<sup>65</sup>), compared to 26,627, in 2017. Assessment deadlines often expired, due to significant delays in the procedure, with the result that many migrants were not readmitted to their first country of arrival. In the first months of 2019, more asylum seekers were transferred to Italy under the Dublin procedure than arrived by sea.<sup>66</sup> Of these, most came from Switzerland, Germany, Austria and Sweden and the main airport used for transfers was Rome's Fiumicino airport.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>65</sup> Data available on Eurostat website: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Dublin\\_statistics\\_on\\_countries\\_responsible\\_for\\_asylum\\_application](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Dublin_statistics_on_countries_responsible_for_asylum_application) Last accessed on: 10/01/2021

<sup>66</sup> Data available here: [www.infomigrants.net/en/post/17242/eu-member-states-ask-italy-to-take-back-46-000-migrants](http://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/17242/eu-member-states-ask-italy-to-take-back-46-000-migrants) Last accessed on: 30/01/2020.

<sup>67</sup> National Ombudsperson for the Rights of Persons Detained or Deprived of their Liberty Report to Parliament 2020. <https://www.garantenazionaleprivatiliberta.it/gnpl/resources/cms/documents/c11fcf360be0e8a21d6afea885d93b6a.pdf> Last accessed: 30/12/2020.

The Dublin III Regulation states that the Member State responsible for an asylum application is the state where the asylum seeker was first registered in the EURODAC database after entering Europe. It also states that the asylum seeker must return to this state. If they are a victim of trafficking, EU law clearly states that the asylum seeker must not be transferred, where there is a possibility of destitution and lack of adequate health care. As far as trafficked persons are concerned, since they are recognised as vulnerable, it is stated that any transfer should only take place after due consideration of the obligation to provide all necessary guarantees of protection, adequate standards of reception and appropriate treatment in order to avoid repatriation and re-trafficking. To prevent this, an effective referral system must be put in place, including through the exchange of information between the Dublin system units of the different Member States, but this does not always happen.

If the person is considered a presumed victim of trafficking and decides to enter a protection programme, but cannot be placed in the territory where she arrives for security/protection reasons (presence of the criminal network in that territory, special needs as a mother with a child, lack of places for reception, etc.), she can be transferred to an anti-trafficking project in another Italian territory, through a network procedure activated by the Anti-trafficking Helpline (interview, Anti-trafficking Helpline Coordinator, 03/06/2020). As explained above, in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Bozen, the Alba Project is the contact point for communication with the German anti-trafficking organisation, KOK, playing a "bridging" role (interview, *La Strada* Director, 04/05/2020).

In cases in which the trafficked person is not transferred as a result of the Dublin procedure, as has often happened due to delays in the procedure, there is a risk of return. In the case of Sweden, for example, trafficked persons are granted a residence permit if they agree to cooperate with the judicial authorities in criminal proceedings against traffickers. However, once the cooperation is over, they are expected to return via the assisted voluntary return procedure - often without adequate risk assessment. In this regard, severe negative impacts, including re-trafficking, have been reported, as exemplified by Joy's case (see textbox).



### *Informal readmission at Brenner: Faith's case*

On 6th December 2017, Faith, a Nigerian woman, in her eighth month of pregnancy, arrived at the Brenner North Track on a train from Austria. She was with a group of eight people, including many women, holding a readmission paper from Austria and a deportation order from Germany.

The Brenner border police stopped the group and put them back on the train to Innsbruck. The group was dropped off at Gries station and taken to the police station. It turned out that the group had travelled in a goods train from Verona to Munich and was intercepted in Rosenheim. Germany deported them and Austria prevented them from staying on the territory by giving them a 14-day period in which to exit the country.

Two days later, Faith was in Bozen. Austrian police escorted her to the roundabout marking the border between Italy and Austria. Her money and mobile phone were taken from her as bail for attempting to cross the border.

The Bozen Questura issued a residence permit for health reasons with an expiry date at the end of the pregnancy.

For a few weeks, Faith stayed in a hotel room looked after by the volunteers of SOS Bozen (a voluntary association that no longer exists). The Caritas Refugee Counselling Service took up Faith's case and discovered that the Questura was not pursuing the asylum application procedure. At the same time, in view of her accounts of her journey, the Alba Project arranged an assessment interview.

For a few months Faith's asylum application remained suspended and it was later discovered that, as she was already an asylum seeker in Italy, in 2015, she had to submit a reiterated application (which is normally submitted if new elements relevant to the asylum claim have arisen).

The first interview with the Alba Project took place after seven months. In the meantime, she was living in a hotel, waiting for a residence permit (as her asylum application was blocked in order to reconsider her credibility). She stayed in the hotel until May 2018 and was then transferred to a centre on the outskirts of Bozen, far from the services of the city centre.

The asylum application was processed and the Territorial Commission set the hearing a year and a half later and then interrupted it, as provided for by the referral system, sending her to the Alba Project for an in-depth interview regarding indicators of trafficking. This is because the assessment team had not previously identified indicators of trafficking in the first interview and had not proposed for her to be admitted to the programme, as she was a mother with a child (which is not a target group for the anti-trafficking project). Faith could not even access the IPAI facilities for women with children because she did not have a residence permit.

Following the second evaluation interview with the Alba Project (after which the professional sends a report to the Territorial Commission), the Territorial Commission recognises Faith's humanitarian protection, but does not give her asylum status, despite the evident elements of trafficking and exposure to risk in her country of origin and in Italy. Faith was transferred to a CAS facility outside Bozen.

At the time of writing, Faith had completed the reception programme, did not have a job and had no source of income with which to raise her daughter. Her reception had been extended due to the pandemic but soon she will have to leave the facility and be autonomous, which is very difficult given that she is still unemployed and cannot find a job due to the need to care for her daughter and the lack of material support, as well as the difficulties related to the pandemic and the economic crisis.



### *Joy's constant mobility*

In 1996, Joy, a Nigerian girl, was still a minor. She was trafficked from Nigeria to Europe at the age of 15. She arrived in Europe by plane on a false visa, accompanied by her madam and a man. She incurred a debt of \$50,000.

On her journey as a trafficked person she had to pass through Portugal, Spain, France and Italy. In Italy she lived in Turin, in Porta Palazzo, in a connection-house where she worked as a prostitute, under the charge of her madam, who often beat her and stole all the money she needed to repay her debt.

In 1999, Joy met a man who she fell in love with and with whom she became pregnant. The man promised to free her from the madam and marry her. They fled to Spain where her baby girl was born in 2001. The man later broke his promise of marriage but recognized the child. He started a relationship with another woman, with whom he started blackmailing Joy, forcing her into prostitution as a reward for saving her from the madam.

In 2001, Joy decided to run away and return to Italy to join a friend in Catania, who helped her with the child while she continued to work as a prostitute to pay off the debt and support her daughter.

In 2002, she moved to Rome with the help of a friend who took care of her child while she worked. On her friend's advice she entrusted her daughter to an Italian family in Naples who offered to take care of her daughter for money. For many years, Joy worked as a prostitute in Rome and then travelled to Naples to find her daughter and take money to the Italian family.

In 2006, she was intercepted without documents by the Italian police and taken to a CPR where she was detained for three months. After her release, because she was vulnerable, she decided to return her daughter to Nigeria and with the help of her friend she made her travel with a false visa. The child was placed in the care of her grandmother in Nigeria and Joy was forced to go to Sweden to work as a prostitute.

In Sweden Joy remained invisible to institutions until 2015. Exhausted by her condition, she applied for asylum. Her application was rejected and she was deported back to Nigeria.

In Nigeria, she was imprisoned and then freed by an uncle (who still blackmails her for money). In Nigeria she discovered that her mother had been killed and her daughter taken to Europe.

Joy took on a new debt and travelled again from Nigeria through Niger and Libya to Italy, where she applied for asylum. She was stopped by the police on the train from Bologna to Munich and sent to Bozen as an asylum seeker.

At the Questura in Bozen she applied for asylum and reported her daughter missing. She found out that she was in a centre for unaccompanied foreign minors in Alto Adige. Reassured by the news about her daughter, she decided to ask the volunteers of the Binario 1 Association for help. She had an initial interview with the Alba Project, but they did not find any useful indicators and closed the case, claiming that Joy was no longer a victim of trafficking because her story was very long and she had definitely repaid the debt.

Thanks to the support of volunteers, Joy entered the Binario 1 shelter, went through the regularization process – asylum application, hearing at the Territorial Commission – and obtained a residence permit. She carried on looking for a house and job.

Now forty years old, Joy works as a home care worker, looking after an elderly woman. She has her own home, but many health problems. She has had several abortions which she attributes to the juju ritual and the unpaid debt. In December 2018, Joy embarked on a process of filing an appeal with the ECHR (European Court of Human Rights) with the support of a lawyer and a network of volunteers, to denounce the failure of the Member States she transited through (Italy, France and Sweden), the violence she has suffered from the system and hopes for compensation and the end of a process that is destined not to end as long as debt is continually used as blackmail and perceived as an explanation for a person's failures and personal and family problems. She still receives threatening phone calls from her uncle and other network figures claiming she has to pay back the money. She is struggling to reconnect with her daughter, she has not returned to the street to work but her health condition worsened during the pandemic when she lost her job and started to again become detached from her daughter and the social network she had built up.



## Chapter 8

### Conclusions

After a peak in 2017, arrivals of asylum seekers in the city of Bozen, especially women, and more specifically Nigerian women, decreased. At the same time, there has been an increase, as in the rest of the Italian territory, of so-called secondary movements, which see migrants crossing internal European borders several times.

This e-book has focused on the context of Bozen/Brenner, in the Trentino-Alto Adige Region, on the border between Italy and Austria. It is a very particular context, because it is an area of transit towards Northern Europe and an area of return towards Italy, but also because Bozen, due to its proximity to the Brenner border and the way migration is controlled and managed in this area, has gradually become a sort of "internal border". In particular, we analysed the anti-trafficking system and the asylum system in Bozen, especially with regard to the objective of protecting women asylum seekers and victims of trafficking. We also looked into the experiences and violence suffered by some women and children. A specific section was dedicated to secondary movements, a more recent but increasingly relevant phenomenon, which is destined to change the approach of anti-trafficking agencies and of all of the agencies and institutions involved, directly or indirectly, in the anti-trafficking system or in the protection of its target groups. Both the academic and the non-academic literature has repeatedly pointed out the lack of sufficient reflection on the dynamics of the mobility and dispersion of trafficked persons, especially women and minors, within the European space, which are often closely linked to rapid (or almost non-existent) and ineffective identification mechanisms and inadequate protection interventions, especially in border areas.

The research showed that the controls, as operated at the Brenner Pass, had a negative impact on migrants transiting through this area and the territory of the Municipality of Bozen, and placed a strain on the reception system in the city of Bozen, which received the majority of arrivals. There has been little cooperation between the anti-trafficking and asylum systems in Bozen and the cross-border system, with the result that many migrants, including the most vulnerable, including women and child asylum seekers who have been trafficked, have dispersed across the Trentino territory or across the wider Italian or European territory over the border.

This mobility, which we have described as constant mobility, is also the result of extremely selective processes of access to reception established by the Province of Bozen, associated with the "labelling" of migrants as "admissible" or not and consequently as "protectable" or not. This process has excluded many individuals from protection, going against the efforts made by asylum and anti-trafficking systems to ensure adequate protection and services.

A specific analysis of the work carried out by the Alba anti-trafficking Project, in collaboration with local institutions, both through a series of interviews with the professionals and through the intense ethnographic work carried out by Serena Caroselli, reveals the work of the project over the last 20 years. Positive steps forward have been taken, such as the definition of a protocol with the Territorial



Commission of Verona and collaborations with the asylum system and the local welfare system. However, there is still a long way to go, in a context that has to deal not only with the constant evolution of the trafficking phenomenon, but also with the proximity of the Brenner border. First of all, we believe it is necessary to overcome the fragmentation of interventions, which are mostly structured according to a model that, as we have described, is highly selective and, at times, discriminatory (see for example the Critelli Circular). It is necessary to rethink protection in an integrated way, in order to be able to respond to the needs of the beneficiaries in the most effective way possible, considering the multiple intersectional dimensions that particularly characterize the trajectories of women who are victims of trafficking (gender, age, violence, etc.).

Although the attention paid to women who have arrived in Bozen has increased, it is still insufficient to support them in achieving the objectives of protection and, above all, to ensure a definitive exit from the circuits of (sexual and labour) exploitation, and real and sustainable access to work and housing, which also require support for motherhood and childcare, with time frames that respect individual biographies.

Many Nigerian women who are victims of trafficking and who are pregnant and/or have dependent children have arrived in the territory of Bozen in recent years, a phenomenon that has also been reported in other Italian regions, such as the neighbouring region of Veneto. As we have explained, these are all people who, after a period of prolonged stay in the reception system - or exclusion from it - dispersed to other cities in Italy and Europe, and were sucked back into the network of exploitation, which offered support where institutions failed to provide adequate protection. Women without residence permits (often waiting to proceed with their asylum applications, blocked due to long and cumbersome procedures) or who were not immediately identified as victims of trafficking, due to a still deficient identification system, were excluded from reception. Yet all these women are extremely vulnerable people, who, according to both Italian and European legislation, must be protected both by the anti-trafficking system and the asylum system.

The ethnographic work carried out by Serena Caroselli speaks of the difficulty for many women, not only Nigerian women, of accessing services, ranging from reception to legal assistance and the no less important psychological support, considering that their experiences are full of stratified traumas. A clear challenge lies also in the scarce use of mediators in the Bozen territory, a professional figure that is fundamental for adequate support, as shown by the experience of many anti-trafficking projects, but also in the wider asylum system in Italy. The investment by the Municipality and the Province of Bozen in cultural mediation has so far been limited, with the service essentially contracted out to a local cooperative. To date, a systematic approach has not been defined, and mediators are only used on call, without a shared approach or integration with local services. In other words, although compared to other Italian municipalities the Municipality of Bozen has extensive services and resources at its disposal, it seems to have adopted a predominantly emergency management approach, which is still struggling to structure itself within a consolidated operational model, drawing on the valuable experience gained over the last two decades.

There are emergency conditions in the various reception centres, including those that house women and mothers with children. There is an emergency approach to protection, which is fragmented and not well integrated. The regularisation process is also suited to an emergency: the use of Article 18 and the residence permit for social protection is limited and many obstacles remain in making asylum

applications. All this has led many women to move from Bozen to other territories, in Italy or in neighbouring Member States, especially Germany and the Nordic countries, but also Spain and France, with the support of the exploitation network, in the absence of real alternatives for inclusion and after long waiting times in conditions of institutional abandonment.

As explained by the evaluation team, the Alba project has recently re-encountered some women, already seen in previous evaluation interviews (in 2017-2018). This is a very positive element, because it suggests that, despite their often tortuous journeys, these women have found the strength to ask for help again. Some doubts remain as to the reasons for their lack of protection following the first contact. We believe it is important to investigate this aspect because it has a negative impact on women's experiences and we need to fully understand the effects of their time spent waiting to access services. These women are victims of trafficking, trapped in a system of debt that structures their lives, both materially and symbolically, and who suffer from stratified traumas that make it even more difficult to escape from the circuits of exploitation and coercion, which feed their dependence.

These are very complex stories, in which women rarely self-identify as victims and in which many details are distorted (often out of fear). This suggests the need for renewed attention by the outreach and assessment unit professionals and for continuous updating and training in order to facilitate the earliest possible identifications of victims of trafficking. In light of this, the Alba Project could rethink and renew its planning, serving as a model for other anti-trafficking projects, especially in border areas, and could experiment with new approaches to protection and new methodologies to counteract trafficking, in particular by addressing the increasingly evident phenomenon of secondary movements and ensuring that women asylum seekers who are victims of trafficking are adequately protected, so that they do not have to rely on exploitation again. In doing so, the Alba Project could also improve the approach to the protection of unaccompanied foreign minors.

As we have explained, many of the women who arrived in Bozen more recently are mothers with children. However, protection does not only concern their children, but also other minors in the territory of Bozen. As suggested by the Regional Ombudsperson for Childhood and Adolescence, there are still gaps in protection, especially with regard to the time needed to appoint guardians, although this has improved in the last year.

Within the framework we have described, the economic, health and social crisis linked to the Covid-19 pandemic must obviously be taken into account, all the more so because it is inserted within an already weak framework for the protection of trafficking victims. It is therefore fundamental for the Alba Project to engage in creating integrated interventions, which can enhance the anti-trafficking, asylum and local welfare systems and make them communicate in the best possible way, taking into account the many fragilities of the respective target groups. Undoubtedly more time is needed to take up people's cases and support them towards autonomy given the difficulties in accessing housing in the Bozen area, but also the growing difficulties (albeit fewer than in other areas) in the labour market as a result of the pandemic. This will only be possible through programmes that are able to effectively address the issue of reconciling childcare and work time, to allow women to bring up their children and at the same time acquire social and economic autonomy, including through the development of support networks that allow them to leave the network of exploitation for good and at the same time free themselves from institutional assistance. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of ever-closer cooperation between the various systems and of careful multi-agency work

that also involves collaboration with law enforcement agencies and cross-border institutions.

With a view to networking, we suggest that the Alba Project and the Province of Bozen enhance and consolidate existing supra-local collaborations, and in particular their collaboration with the German anti-trafficking project KOK and with the Anti-Trafficking Coordination of Triveneto, which will broaden the perspective on the phenomenon of trafficking beyond local borders and foster continuous exchange and updating on current developments, especially with regard to secondary movements. We thus believe it is fundamental to also ensure regular cooperation with the Dublin Unit. Finally, in view of the continuous evolution of the trafficking phenomenon, we strongly suggest the continuous monitoring of forms of labour exploitation and begging, in which both men and women are involved. This means not only monitoring people's presence on the streets and their living conditions, but also the impact that the urban DASPO and anti-begging ordinance measures are having on this population, who are already strongly impacted by the pandemic.

## Bibliography

Abbatecola E. (2018) *Trans-migrazioni. Lavoro, sfruttamento e violenza di genere nei mercati globali del sesso*, Rosenberg & Sellier, Torino.

Andrijasevic R., Mai N. (2016) Trafficking (in) Representation: Understanding the recurring appeal of Victimhood and Slavery in Neoliberal Times. *Anti-trafficking Review*, 7: 1-10.

Antenne Migranti and ASGI (2017) Lungo la rotta del Brennero. Rapporto di monitoraggio sulla situazione dei migranti a Bozen e al Brennero. Link: [https://www.meltingpot.org/IMG/pdf/report\\_di\\_monitoraggio\\_su\\_brennero\\_e\\_Bozen.pdf](https://www.meltingpot.org/IMG/pdf/report_di_monitoraggio_su_brennero_e_Bozen.pdf) Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2020.

Antenne Migranti (2020) *(Un) welcome to Sudtirolo*, Quattro Pezzi Facili. Link: [https://www.meltingpot.org/IMG/pdf/dossier\\_web.pdf](https://www.meltingpot.org/IMG/pdf/dossier_web.pdf) Ultimo accesso/Last access dicembre 2020 Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2020.

Anthias F., Yuval-Davis N. (1992) *Racialised boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and Class and the Anti-Racist Struggle*, Routledge, London.

Anthias F. (2012) Transnational mobilities, migration research and intersectionality. *Nordic Journal of migration research*, 2(2): 102-110.

Autorità Garante per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza (2019) Documento di Studio e Proposta. I movimenti dei MISNA alle frontiere settentrionali. Link: <https://www.garanteinfanzia.org/sites/default/files/movimenti-minori-stranieri-frontiere-settentrionali.pdf> Ultimo accesso/Last access dicembre 2020 Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2020.

Be Free (2016) *Inter/Rotte. Storie di tratta, percorsi di resistenza*. Link: [https://www.befreecooperativa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/INTERROTTE\\_befree.pdf](https://www.befreecooperativa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/INTERROTTE_befree.pdf). Ultimo accesso/Last access: 09/03/2021.

Benasso S. (2018) *Indagine conoscitiva sul fenomeno della tratta e dello sfruttamento della prostituzione in Provincia di Bozen*. Documento interno fornito dal progetto Alba, Bozen.

Boiano I. (2014) Il riconoscimento dello status di rifugiato e le persecuzioni sulla base del genere. In F. Biondi Dal Monte (a cura di) *Diritto di asilo e protezione internazionale*. Pisa University Press, Pisa, p.137-154.

Boiano I. (2017) *Rifugiate queste sconosciute*. Link: <http://www.ingenere.it/articoli/rifugiate-questesconosciute>. Ultimo accesso/Last access: 09/03/2021.

Caroselli S. (2020) *Percorsi attraverso i confini: un'etnografia delle esperienze delle donne richiedenti protezione internazionale e asilo tra Bozen e il Brennero*. Tesi di Dottorato in Scienze Sociali, curriculum Relazioni e Processi Interculturali, DISFOR, Università Degli Studi di Genova.

European Commission (2018) Data Collection on Human Trafficking in the EU. Link: <https://bit.ly/2msM72d> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 23/09/2019.

European Commission (2018a) 2<sup>nd</sup> Report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings. Link: <https://bit.ly/3lIbXle> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 04/12/2020.

European Commission (2020) Data Collection on Human Trafficking in the EU. Link: <https://bit.ly/3ojCtJO> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 04/12/2020.

Crenshaw K. W. (1994) Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. In K. Crenshaw et al. (a cura di) *Critical Race Theory*, New Press, New York, p.357-383.

De Genova N., Tazzioli M. (eds.)<sup>[1]</sup><sub>SEP</sub> (2016) *Europe/Crisis: New Keywords of «the Crisis» in and of «Europe»*, Near Futures Online.

Degli Uberti S. (2019) Borders within. An Ethnographic Take on the Reception Policies of Asylum Seekers in Alto Adige/ Alto Adige. *Archivio Antropologico Mediterraneo*, 21(2): 1-21.

De Masi Q. (2014) Trattate male. Sogni e paure delle più belle del reame. In Bastianetto L., Chiola V. (disegni di) *Trattate male. Sogni e paure delle più belle del reame*, Round Robin Editrice, Roma, p. 113.

Denaro C. (2016) Agency, resistance and (forced) mobilities. The case of Syrian refugees in transit through Italy. *Remhu: Revista Interdisciplinar da Mobilidade Humana*, 24(47): 77-96.

Dorlin E. (2005) De l'usage épistémologique et politique des catégories de sexe et race dans les études sur le genre. *Cahiers du Genre*, 39: 85-106.

EU Commission (2018) *Data Collection on Human Trafficking in the EU*. Link: <https://bit.ly/2msM72d> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 24/12/2020.

Farmer P. (2006) Sofferenza e violenza strutturale. Diritti sociali ed economici nell'era globale. In I. Quaranta (a cura di) *Antropologia medica. I testi fondamentali*, Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano, p. 265-302.

Fassin, D. (2008), Compassion and Repression: The Moral Economy of Immigration Policies in France, *Cultural Anthropology*, 20 (3): 362-387.<sup>[1]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>

Fernandez L., Olson, J. (2011) To live, love and work anywhere you please: Critical exchange on Arizona and the struggle for locomotion. *Contemporary Political Theory*, 10: 415-417.

Fontanari E. (2017) Afterword. An ethnographic gaze on power and refugees. *Etnografia e ricerca qualitativa*, 1: 143-155.

Freedman J. (2015) *Gendering the International Asylum and Refugee Debate*, (2nd ed.), Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Freedman J. (2016) Engendering Security at the Borders of Europe: Women Migrants and the Mediterranean 'Crisis'. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 30 (1): 1-15.

Frontex (2018) Risk Analysis. Link:

[https://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk\\_Analysis/Risk\\_Analysis/Risk\\_Analysis\\_for\\_2018.pdf](https://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Risk_Analysis/Risk_Analysis_for_2018.pdf) Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/09/2019.

Garante Nazionale dei diritti delle persone detenute o private della libertà personale (2020) Relazione al Parlamento. Link:

<https://www.garantenazionaleprivatiliberta.it/gnpl/resources/cms/documents/c11fcf360be0e8a21d6afea885d93b6a.pdf> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2020.

Garante Nazionale dei diritti delle persone detenute o private della libertà personale (2018) Rapporto sul monitoraggio dell'operazione congiunta per il rimpatrio forzato di cittadini nigeriani organizzata dall'Italia e coordinata da Frontex (19 gennaio 2018). Link:

<https://www.garantenazionaleprivatiliberta.it/gnpl/resources/cms/documents/2b5c4e2a5d8c78b5938abf3aabd69de1.pdf> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2020.

Gargiulo E. (2017) The limits of local citizenship: Administrative borders within the Italian municipalities. *Citizenship Studies*, 21(3): 327–343.

Giammarinaro M. G. (2002) Atti del Convegno STOP TRATTA, Bologna, 23/24 maggio 2002, p. 40.

Gjergji I. (2013) *Circolari amministrative e immigrazione*, Franco Angeli, Milano.

Griffiths M.B., Rogers A., Anderson B. (2013) *Migration, time and temporalities: review and prospect*. COMPAS Research Resources Paper.

IOM (2017) Human Trafficking through the Central Mediterranean Route: data, stories and information collected by the International Organisation for Migration. Rome Link:

<https://bit.ly/2m4GEhU> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 23/09/2019.

IOM (2019) *Flow Monitoring Report (Nigeria)*. Link: <https://bit.ly/2mwPZiT> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/09/2019.

Khosravi S. (2019) *Io sono Confine*. Elèuthera, Milano.

Könönen, J. (2018) Differential inclusion of non-citizens in a universalistic welfare state. *Citizenship Studies*, 22(1), 53-69.

La Rocca S. (2008) Il reato di tratta di persone nell'ordinamento giuridico italiano, dal Codice Rocco alla legge 228 del 2003. In Carchedi F. e Tola V. (a cura di) *All'aperto e al chiuso. Prostituzione e tratta: I nuovi dati del fenomeno, i servizi sociali, le normative di riferimento* op.cit., p. 355. Ediesse, Roma.

- Mai N. (2016) Too much suffering: Understanding the interplay between migration, bounded exploitation and trafficking through Nigerian sex worker experiences. *Sociological Research Online*, 21(4): 13.
- Mai N. (2016a) Assembling Samira: Understanding Sexual Humanitarianism through Experimental Filmmaking. *AntiAtlas Journal*, 1.
- Mancini D. (2008) *Traffico di migranti e tratta di persone. Tutela dei diritti umani e azioni di contrasto*, Franco Angeli, Milano.
- Manocchi M. (2014) Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati: processi di etichettamento e pratiche di resistenza. *Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia*, (2) 384-409.
- Mezzadra S., Neilson B. (2014) *Confini e frontiere. La moltiplicazione del lavoro nel mondo globale*, Il Mulino, Bologna.
- Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali (2020) *Report mensile MISNA in Italia*. Link: <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita/immigrazione/focus-on/minori-stranieri/Documents/Report-MSNA-mese-maggio-2020.pdf> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2020.
- Ministero dell'Interno (2017) *Cruscotto giornaliero gennaio - dicembre 2017*. Link : <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/statistica/cruscotto-statistico-giornaliero> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2018.
- Ministero dell'Interno (2020) *Cruscotto giornaliero gennaio - dicembre 2020*. Link: <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/statistica/cruscotto-statistico-giornaliero> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2018.
- NAGA (2018) *(Stra)ordinaria accoglienza. Indagine sul sistema di accoglienza dei richiedenti asilo a Milano e provincia*. Link: [http://www.naga.it/tl\\_files/naga/comunicati/\(Stra\)ordinaria%20accoglienza.pdf](http://www.naga.it/tl_files/naga/comunicati/(Stra)ordinaria%20accoglienza.pdf). Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2018.
- Nicodemi F., Bonetti P. (a cura di) (2009) *Misure di protezione sociale. Scheda Pratica*, Associazione per gli Studi giuridici sull'immigrazione (ASGI). Link: [http://old.asgi.it/home\\_asgi.php%3Fn=documenti&id=1073&l=it.html](http://old.asgi.it/home_asgi.php%3Fn=documenti&id=1073&l=it.html) Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2018.
- Papastergoadis N. (1999) *The Turbulence of Migration. Globalization, Deterritorialization and Hybridity*, Polity Press, Oxford.
- Pinelli B. (2011) *Donne come le altre. Soggettività, relazioni e vita nelle migrazioni delle donne verso l'Italia*, Edit Press, Firenze - Catania.
- Pinelli B. (2019) *Migranti e Rifugiate. Antropologia, genere e politica*, Edizioni libreria Cortina, Milano.

- Radu C. (2010) Beyond border-‘dwelling’: Temporalizing the border-space through events, *Anthropological Theory*, 10(4): 409–433.
- Ribeiro Corossacz V. (2013) L’intersezione di razzismo e sessismo. Strumenti teorici per un’analisi della violenza maschile contro le donne nel discorso pubblico sulle migrazioni. *Antropologia*, 15: 109-129.
- Rigo E. (2016) Donne Attraverso il Mediterraneo. Una prospettiva di genere sulla protezione internazionale. *Politeia*, XXXII, 124: 82-94.
- Santoro E. (2018) Asilo e Tratta: il tango delle protezioni. *Questione Giustizia*, 2: 235-144.
- Save The Children (2019) *Piccoli Schiavi Invisibili, Rapporto sui minori vittime di tratta e grave sfruttamento*. Link: <https://www.savethechildren.it/cosa-facciamo/pubblicazioni/piccoli-schiavi-invisibili-2019> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2020.
- Scheper-Huges N., Burgois P. (2004) Introduction: Making sense of Violence. In N. Scheper-Huges and P. Burgois (a cura di) *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, Blackwell, Oxford, p.1-27.
- Schutzhutte B1 Rifugio Report 2018/2019. Link: <https://www.binario1bz.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ital-report31-1.pdf> Ultimo accesso/Last access dicembre 2020. Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/04/ 2019.
- Sciortino G. (2012) Ethnicity, Race, Nationhood, Foreignness, and Many Interactions. In J.C. Alexander, R.N. Jacobs, P. Smith (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, p.365 - 389.
- Semprebon M., Caroselli S. (in press) Seekers and holders of international protection in Bozen. Arrival, transit and reception within an internal border area. In F. Della Puppa, G. Sanò (a cura di) *Stucked and exploited. Refugees and asylum seekers in Italy between exclusion, discrimination and struggles*.
- Semprebon M., Pelacani G. (2020) Dispersal and reception in Northern Italy: comparing systems along the Brenner route. In B. Glorious B., J. Doomernik (eds.) *Geographies of Asylum in Europe and the Role of European Localities*, IMISCOE Book Series, p. 15-44.
- Serughetti G. (2017) Richiedenti asilo e vittime di tratta: le donne fra vulnerabilità e resilienza. In C. Marchetti, B. Pinelli (a cura di) *Confini d’Europa. Modelli di Controllo e inclusione informali*, Edizioni Libreria Cortina, Milano.
- Simone A., Boiano I. (a cura di) (2018) *Femminismo ed esperienza giuridica. Pratiche argomentazione, interpretazione*, Edizioni Efestò, Roma.
- Sommaruga I., Ammirati A. (a cura di) (2018) Il Diritto di Restare: il regolamento Dublino, i volti, le storie e le possibili buone pratiche. *I quaderni della Diaconia*, n.10. Link: [https://www.diaconiavalde.org/csd/documenti/documenti\\_pagine/Quaderno\\_diaconia\\_10\\_completo.pdf](https://www.diaconiavalde.org/csd/documenti/documenti_pagine/Quaderno_diaconia_10_completo.pdf) Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/01/2020.



Speed S. (2016) State of violence: Indigenous women migrants in the era of neoliberal multicriminalism, *Critique of Anthropology*, pp.1-22.

Speed S. (2014) *A Dreadful Mosaic: Rethinking Gender Violence through the Lives of Indigenous Women Migrants*. Working Paper, Gendered Perspectives in International Development. Center For Gender in Global Context, Michigan State University, East Lansing.

Taliani S. (2019) *Il tempo della disobbedienza. Per un'antropologia della parentela nella migrazione*, Ombre Corte, Verona.

TEMVI *Trafficked and exploited minors between vulnerability and illegality. Rapporto di progetto*. Università di Padova, Dipartimento Diritti Umani (2016). Link: <https://unipd-centrodirittiumani.it/en/news/Available-online-the-Final-Reports-of-the-TEMVI-Project-dedicated-to-situations-of-severe-exploitation-and-trafficking-of-minors-involved-in-criminal-activities/4111> Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/12/2020.

UNHCR (2017) L'identificazione delle vittime di tratta tra i richiedenti protezione internazionale e procedure di referral. Linee Guida per le Commissioni Territoriali per il riconoscimento della protezione Internazionale. Link: [https://www.unhcr.org/it/wp-content/uploads/sites/97/2021/01/Linee-Guida-per-le-Commissioni-Territoriali\\_identificazione-vittime-di-tratta.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/it/wp-content/uploads/sites/97/2021/01/Linee-Guida-per-le-Commissioni-Territoriali_identificazione-vittime-di-tratta.pdf) Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/11/2020.

UNHCR (2021) L'identificazione delle vittime di tratta tra i richiedenti protezione internazionale e procedure di referral. Linee Guida per le Commissioni Territoriali per il riconoscimento della protezione Internazionale. Link: [https://www.unhcr.org/it/wp-content/uploads/sites/97/2021/01/Linee-Guida-per-le-Commissioni-Territoriali\\_identificazione-vittime-di-tratta.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/it/wp-content/uploads/sites/97/2021/01/Linee-Guida-per-le-Commissioni-Territoriali_identificazione-vittime-di-tratta.pdf) Ultimo accesso/Last access: 01/01/2021.

Zetter R. (1991) Labelling refugees: Forming and transforming a Bureaucratic identity. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 4 (1): 39-62.

Zetter R. (2009) La securitizzazione e le politiche europee in materia di asilo e rifugiati. *Mondi Migranti*, 3: 7-25.

Zinn D. (2018) *Migrants as metaphor. Institution and integration in Alto Adige's divided society*. CISU, Roma.

Weissensteiner M. (2015) Expert Translations of Torture and Trauma: A Multisited Ethnography. In Zinn D., Tauber E. (2015) *The public value of anthropology: Engaging Critical Social Issues Through Ethnography*, Bu Press, Bozen University Press, p. 143-172

## Appendix

### *List of interviews*

Name, surname, organisation	Date, place
Alberto Dal Negro (male), Alba Project Director Arianna Barbagallo (female), Alba Project Reception area Coordinator	17.02.2020 Bozen
Brigitte Waldner (female), Director of the Department of Social Policies – Office for the Elderly and Social Policies, The Autonomous Province of Bozen Nadja Schuster (female), Administrative Inspector of the Department of Social Policies – Office for the Elderly and Social Policies, The Autonomous Province of Bozen	18.02.2020 Bozen
Cinzia Scorrano (female), Case manager for Families and Women, SIS (Social Integration Service), Bozen	18.02.2020 Bozen
Sabine Obwexer (female), Case manager for Minors, SIS (Social Integration Service), Bozen Simone Bracalente (male), <i>Volontarius</i> Association, Referent person for unaccompanied minors of the Autonomous Province of Bozen	18.02.2020 Bozen
Andrea Tremolada (male), Red Cross Brenner Coordinator Marica Evangelista (female), Red Cross Brenner Professional	19.02.2020 Brenner
Luigi Gallo (male), Director of Refugee Counselling Service, <i>Caritas</i> , Bozen	20.02.2020 Bozen
Maria Teresa Ceccarelli (female), Office for Minors and Social Inclusion, Autonomous Province of Bozen	20.02.2020 Bozen
Francesca De Angelis (female), Lawyer, ASGI Bozen	21.02.2020 Bozen
Gina Quiroz (female), Alba Project Outreach and <i>Emersione</i> area Coordinator	21.02.2020 Bozen
Marina Bruccoleri (female), <i>La Strada Director</i> (ex Alba Project Director)	04.05.2020 Online zoom
Gianfranco della Valle (male), Anti-trafficking Helpline Coordinator	03.06.2020 Online zoom

Luigi Gallo (male), Director of Refugee Counseling Service, <i>Caritas</i> , Bozen	03.09.2018 Bozen
Gina Quiroz (female), Alba Project Outreach and <i>Emersione</i> area Coordinator	18.09.2018 Bozen
Davide Monti (male), <i>Volontarius</i> Association Homelessness Area Coordinator	15.09.2018 Bozen
Ermira Kola (female), <i>Antenne Migranti</i> Project Volunteer	06.10.2018 Bozen
Elisa Crivellaro (female), Head of Ex-Lemayer, <i>Volontarius</i> Association	06.02.2019 Bozen
Faith, Nigerian woman	29.06.2018 - Bozen 19.11.2018 - Bozen
Beauty, Nigerian woman	20.11.2018 - Bozen 16.02.2019 Bozen
Joy, Nigerian woman	8.12.2019 - Bozen



**INSIGHT**  
Building Capacity to  
Deal with  
Human Trafficking and  
Transit Routes in  
Nigeria, Italy, Sweden

