

Innovative strategies for the prevention of re-offending

Study visit in Turin – 15/16 May 2008

Report

Within the Project “Innovative strategies for the Prevention of Re-offending” several study visits have been planned in order to facilitate a share of best practices among partners and develop a common background for the development of the pilot project for the second phase of the project.

The second study visit of the Project has been organized in May 2008 in Turin where the partner organization S.R.F. Società Ricerca e Formazione organized meetings with public authorities, a judge, a representative of the Police, a local Association and a day of visits in the local prison “Lorusso and Cutugno”.

Thursday 15 May 2008

9:00 SRF Office, Via Pietro Micca 17; Ibrahim Osmani, SRF President

Explanation of the Programme of the visit, role of speakers and content of foreseen talks. Mr Osmani also introduces some aspects of the current situation and debate on criminality in Italy, such as the strong presence of immigrants and the partial amnesty of July 2006, which set free around 26.700 inmates corresponding to 44% of all inmates. Regarding the security policies, in Italy both Provinces and Regions have competences in this sector. The Regions, through local inter-sector agreements on Security (Patti territoriali per la sicurezza) may finance local police forces with local funds. The funding will be allocated on projects and not simply transferred to police departments. At provincial level, the operative responsible person for security in the Police is the Questore (Head of Police), while a political role is played by the Prefetto (a charge that does not have an exact correspondence in the British system). The mayor will be responsible in those towns where the two above mentioned figures are not present. There is also a local municipal police that depends on the mayor and deals mainly with issues such as traffic and commercial activities.

Regarding the presence of immigrants in the prisons, they represent about one third of total number of inmates, that is approximately 60.000. In northern Italy the percentage is even higher (55-60%) while in the South it is much lower. This is due to the fact than in the Southern area the crime is a monopoly of local mafia. We can also note a kind of specialisation of crimes among the different migrant’s communities: Morocco people for instance traffic with drugs, human trafficking for sexual exploitation is more common among Albanians (the crime of minors’ enslavement has been introduced by the Prodi Government in 2007), while Romanian criminals tend to deal with prostitution and credit cards cloning. A big debate has started about the idea of the government of introducing a crime for the condition of undocumented migration. According to the current law if an undocumented migrant has received order of expulsion and he does not comply with the sentence he can be sentenced up to 3 years. A big part of the current problematic situation is linked with the perception of the migratory phenomenon. For instance out of a presence of immigrants in the Province of Cuneo, about 2000 are criminals: a rate that is similar to the Italian population. Therefore the people’s fear of criminality is higher than the actual situation: it is more a matter of perception than of reality.

SRF implemented several projects in the field of illegal immigration and reinsertion in normal life. One was financed by the EC and realized some training courses for immigrants while they were serving the sentence in the local prison. Once they were released and went back in their own country (Morocco and Albania) they were welcomed by the project's personnel who helped them to finalize part of the vocational training and to find a job. This was possible through the grants for social and working integration and micro-credit.

11:00 Short internal work session of the Project: discussion of researches and activities to come.

11:30 Municipality of Turin, meeting with Ilda Curti, Head of Department for Integration Policies

The Director talked about the experience of the so called "Toxic Park", a green area on the Stura river in the suburbs of Turin. It has traditionally been an industrial area, that has now lost its function and is quite marginalized and did not have the resources for projects and rehabilitation. Two years ago the Olympic games have represented an opportunity that the Municipality used to implement lots of initiatives in the town, while at the same time lots of criminal activities were pushed behind. In the area around the Stura at that time the drug problem was very hard: there were around 200 drug sellers in the street 24 hours per day, while the inhabitants were very weak and could do little to stem the phenomenon. So the Municipality decided to intervene and the Department of Integration Policies and the one for Police joint their forces, with the clear perception that a short term approach would have not been enough. So they invested in the renewal of the green area in order to transform it in a proper park, giving to it a new function for the local urban area. They also worked to change the public opinion about the neighbourhood by replacing the "label" of toxic park with another name "Oxigen". The core of the project was represented by the many cultural and leisure activities organized with the aim to transform the green area in a resource for the town; so music festival, dances, exhibitions, popular entertainment for families and similar events took place. They also worked in collaboration with the management board of a local commercial and shopping centre, that was directly touched by the marginalization of the area. As a result over 50.000 people visited the park and the lesson learnt was that culture can be a very good instrument to regenerate a place. Of course the phenomenon has not disappeared completely but it has been strongly reduced and the response of inhabitants has been good and supportive. The next phase will be the physical rehabilitation that will start in October 2008, but the preparatory work at social level was very important.

Beppe Borgogno, Head of Department for Personnel, Organization and Municipal Police

The Director stated explaining how in the last months the debate on security has strongly intensified and the impression of many observers is that it is well grounded only in part while on another side it looks manipulated in order to obtain consensus (there have been recently the political elections in Italy). One issue has been the level of power of the mayors that some wish to be reinforced in order to be able to contrast criminality. According to Mr. Borgogno the way to allow mayors to implement positive measures is to enable them to intervene in the field of social integration, while the debate has been more focused on their powers on police. The result could be that some measures of security policies are implemented but with a short term approach and little real results at the end, not influencing the quality of life of local citizens. For instance there will be the possibility

of the mayor to issue municipal ordinances but the risk is that each town develops its own different criminal code.

Regarding the local police, in complex towns such as Turin the tasks of the local police tend to overlap with those of the other police forces (such as Carabinieri) and it is therefore necessary to coordinate in order to give the best of one's speciality. 400 policemen out of 18.000 of the Turin policemen deal with issues such as fines, road security, gipsy camps, community issues. In complex realities like Turin it is more and more difficult to understand what represents a need for everybody, and not for single persons or for single groups of people.

Another issue is that today while planning a new building or new infrastructures or new services, the aspect concerning security must be taken into consideration from the very beginning so to include security measures in the very project.

It is necessary to think about security in advance and plan interventions with this prospective and it would be necessary to modify and amend the current legislation, that is rather backward.

Regarding the centrality of the issue of municipal policies on security, there is the strong need of coordination, while the focus is mainly on how to gain consensus of the public opinion, and those who lose the most are the citizens. Therefore the collaboration among the two departments of the municipality of Turin is very important and has shown positive results.

14:00 Transfer to the Tribunal building via bus n. 55, Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, 130

15:00 Meeting with judge Marco Bouchard, Public Prosecutor: presentation of the Italian legislative system with regards to the prevention of re-offending; projects and best practices. See attached slides.

16:15 Ferdinando Frachlich, representative of SIULP trade union of the police forces; introduction to the situation of criminality at local level and of strategies of prevention adopted by police; best practices.

In general prevention is implemented by the police through the presence and protection on the territory, that is the police stations, the headquarters and the police posts. Currently there are several changes taking place in the police structure in Italy, but one big transformation has been represented by the introduction of the Community Police. Such a concept was born in the '60s in the USA and was then adopted and applied in Europe from the '80s, starting from France. Today in Italy there are 5000 community policemen divided in about 800 towns and the town of Turin represents one of the cases of excellence in this sense.

Another instrument adopted by local police for prevention is the possibility to make a denounce at home: who is unable to reach the nearest police station, can ask for a flying squat to call at his/her house and collect the denounce.

Several initiatives are put into place and are important for prevention because such activities try to brake the relation between criminal and ex-offender, who often commit a new crime for the lack of alternatives. Regarding re-offending a comparative study has shown that 19% of ex-inmates who accessed alternative measures commits another crime, against 64% of those who did not benefit of such possibility.

Concerning the situation of security in Italy, data show a constant declining trend but the perception of the public opinion goes in the opposite direction, with a constant growing perception of insecurity of today's society.

Turin has adopted an inter-institutional agreement pact on security with other municipal public bodies and has involved 400 policemen in its implementation, trained ad hoc for

this programme. It has shown to be an excellent tool for prevention of crime in general and of re-offending in particular. With this point of view it would be even more desirable a coordination and a rationalization of the use of resources, of police as well of other public bodies.

In 2010 it is foreseen according to EU regulation that all police forces will be demilitarized.

See also attached slides.

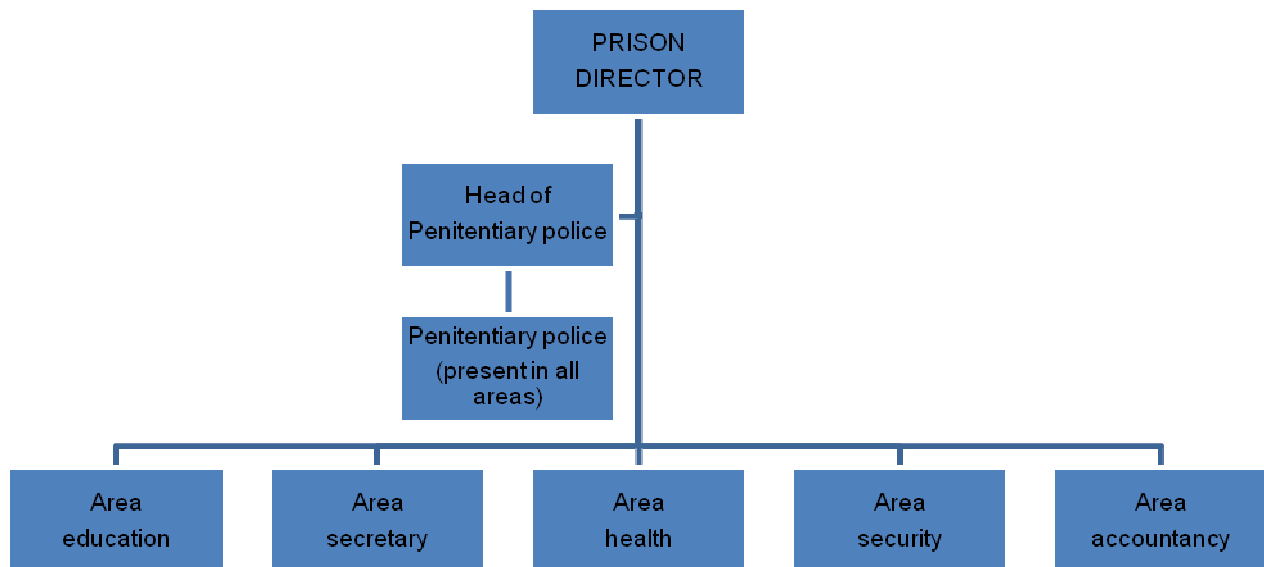
Friday 16 May 2008

Visit at the penitentiary “Lorusso e Cutugno”, Pianezza street n. 300 – 10151 Torino

Director Claudia Clementi.

Today the penitentiary hosts 1320 in-mates but soon the maximum capacity of 1400 people will be reached. The mandate of the penitentiary, according to the Italian law, is based on two principles: treatment and security, the first including all operators of the prison (including penitentiary police) and the latter includes only the penitentiary police.

Organizational chart of the prison:



In the institute are present all categories of inmates foreseen by the judiciary system (even with life-long sentences and “collaboratori di giustizia”: offenders who decided to collaborate with justice, or offenders who committed crimes particularly unpopular), even if formally this is a kind of penitentiary, “casa circondariale” that should host only offenders waiting for their sentence and offenders condemned up to 5 years. Out of the total number of presences, 60% are non-EU citizens, mainly coming from Maghreb region and east Europe. 30% have problems of drug-addiction. In the structures the inmates are divided according to the sentence. There are many sections and activities in the prison including one female area with 17 women and 6 children, since they can live with their mother up to an age of 3 years.

In term of personnel there are 7 educators and other external collaborators. Activities are designed on the basis of the needs of the inmates. So called attention groups pay attention to the most vulnerable inmates, trying to identify possible cases of self-injury and suicide.

There is a handbook for new inmates with all instructions about the prison and its activities and services.

Regarding prevention of re-offending there is a team working with sex-offenders who help them to work on themselves and tackle the problem reason of their crime.

Each inmate should develop a project of re-socialization that becomes a project of life, reported by assistants and educators in a specific format the Surveillance Tribunal with the aim to access to the alternative measures.

Some inmates may start an occupation and a proper job.

School director:

The school (a middle school) operating inside the institute is an external school with the mandate also to implement courses in the prison. In 1995 they reached approximately 200 inmates while today they involve around 1200 people, that is almost all of the penitentiary population.

They have a normal curriculum of 3 years and a “Welcome Project” and a team of 14 teachers.

A general problem in Italy is the very high turnover of inmates (around 8000 people passed in this prison last year). So they developed the Progetto Accoglienza “Welcome Project” for those who stay for a limited period of time (it is described in the attached document). It lasts 1 month, starts 6 times per year and can involve up to 80 inmates at a time. The main aim is to lessen tensions.

- Antonio Pappalardo, Director of the Center for Juvenile Justice of Turin: presentation of strategies and best practices in the prevention of re-offending (www.cgmtorino.it),

There are three books that describe quite well the current situation on criminality in Italy: *Gomorra* by Saviano, *Homo consumens* by Bauman and *The disquieting guest: nihilism and youth* by Galimberti. They picture quite well problems of our society such as the loss of values that has a very strong impact on the young generations.

There is also the issue related to the presence of young foreigners, especially coming from non-EU countries.

In Italy however there are not consolidated paths followed in facing such problems, the way he saw in the Netherlands in a recent study-visit. In such countries there is a high level of pragmatism in tackling social problems. For instance they found out that allowing families to unite has the consequence of lowering criminality among foreigners. So they adopted such a policy.

Regarding juvenile justice in Italy, the specific code of this branch of justice has been adopted in 1988. its fundamental principles are based on the Constitution: education of children and youth is prior to the obligation of the State to punish the crime. So the judge, when deciding about cases of young people between 14 and 18 years old, considers at the same time the enquiry of the attorney and the report prepared by the social assistant. The integration between the Territory Social Services and the Judicial Social Services has proved to be effective in facilitating the reintegration of the youth in the social life. The Centre of Juvenile Justice coordinates 3 services on the territory: the Criminal Juvenile Institute, the Centre of First Reception and the Office of Juvenile Social Services. When a young person between 14 and 18 years is arrested, there are 4 alternatives: prescriptions, permanence at home, educational community, juvenile prison. The activities are: school, vocational training, leisure, cultural and sport activities.

One critical aspect of the juvenile justice in Italy is represented by the rather long period of time between the arrest and the process, which is very long (1-2 years) especially in consideration of the age of the offender. In these circumstances the young person develops the feeling they are unpunishable and they can easily get away with it the sentence and the punishment.

In the town of Genoa a pilot project has been launched to intervene in such a context. The social services take care and follow the young offenders in the above mentioned period of time and develop with them a program and a relation that will be very useful at the moment of the trial: they

develop together a project for the social rehabilitation of the young person. Unfortunately there is no systematized collection of data on the fallout of the project but the operators tell about a strong reduction of crimes committed but the young people involved in the project and followed by the operators. The participation in the programme is voluntary only until a certain extent: the project is identified in agreement with the young offender, but the alternative is to follow the normal path of justice that sometimes includes the prison.

On the basis of the project, in any moment the tribunal can suspend the trial and they can assign the youth in probation (affidamento in prova al servizio sociale). If the objectives are reached, the crime is extinguished otherwise the trial will resume again.

The problem with the non-EU national youth is that they lack of the social and family context in order to access to the possibility to follow the path with the project, as alternative to the community and the prison.

Visits to the following workshops and vocational training centres:

- “Extraliberi”, workshop for silk-screen printing,
- “Punto e a Capo” joiner's workshop
- **plumber's** workshop
- Pausa Caffé, coffee roasting laboratory.

16:30 Visit to the association “Gruppo Abele”; meeting with Fabrizio Giorcelli and Paola Lassandro and presentation of the activities and best practices of the association (www.gruppoabele.it/Index.aspx?idmenu=762)

The association started its work 40 years ago working with the most marginalized and vulnerable people in the streets. At that time they dealt mainly with migrants from southern Italy; today the phenomenon concerns mostly foreign migrants, especially non-EU citizens.

The 3 main sectors of intervention are:

- ✓ Reception
- ✓ Culture
- ✓ Employment

Paola Lassandro, responsible for the sector “employment”.

After many years of experience they are more and more convinced of the importance of work in order to solve problems of marginalization and risk of crime.

Her section is responsible for the development of projects of career counselling and training for disadvantaged people, with the aim of finding them a job. At this purpose collaborate a network of 9 social cooperatives.

The Italian law n. 381 of 1991 defines the role of the social cooperative association (“Cooperative sociali”) and the kind of people (disadvantaged people) who can benefit of such programs. This profile includes offenders or ex-offenders released since not more than 6 month. Thanks to this law they were able to find a job for about 500 people in the 9 associations of the network. 98 out of them are ex-offenders. The activities of the consortium-network include a phase in which the association and the “client” get to know each other (and this is especially true for the offenders: it can happen in their premises, in the prison before relies and in the offices of the social services - UEPE).

Anyway the “sportello lavoro” (info point for employment) is open to any unemployed person. The aim is to contact all actors both of public and private sectors, to mobilise resources in trying to solve the problems of ex-offenders and their families: they are mainly problems of social relations,

housing and economic problems. Bringing all local actors together it is more possible to identify responses to such problems: find a place to sleep, have money for the food, and other emergencies such as medicines.

In Italy the above mentioned law defined also which is the typology of associations that can access the funds: associations of “A” type are those that are finalized to provide social services for the whole citizenship, the “B” type associations are those seeking to guarantee the social inclusion – through a permanent job – of disadvantaged people (drug-addicts, disabled, ex-offenders, and so on).

In this last cases, there is a first phase of internship monitored by a tutor, who is a pivotal figure of the entire program, with the role to mediate between the person and the company. Often at the beginning in fact they are very much far away from each other and the first period is delicate and crucial. In general such a period lasts 6 months and generally (9 times out of 10) it is successful and leads to a permanent contract.

Basically the lesson learned after many years of work with social work for the inclusion of marginalized people and ex-offenders in particular, is that the possibility to have a job makes the difference in their life and in the solution of the problem. It does not only bring money – which would not be enough alone – but also gives the possibility to build a social network and a personal identity inserted in the local and daily social context. Also house is very important.

The consortium “*Abele-lavoro*” (Abele-work) has created an association with the finality to create supports services for the employee of the cooperatives with the following aims:

- find a house
- get a micro credit (in cooperation with the bank “*Banca Etica*”)
- follow aspects of the process of socialization in order to avoid the condition of isolation of ex-offenders.

About financial resources for all this, they have an office for project planning that every day monitors calls for proposal of public entities (local authorities, foundations, in part also Europe). The yearly budget for the section of the Association dedicated to employment is about 700.000€ with 10 employees.

The info point registers about 1.500 people that pass by yearly, out of them 258 where ex-offenders. About 200 people are followed in a more structured way. They have a pre-selection (ex-offenders are pointed out by the prison personnel) and finally 95 people find a job in one of the 9 cooperatives.

They also have a database of about 120 companies.

Another project they have is the so called “House of conflicts”: it is a info point that offers services of mediation and alternative ways to manage a conflict. They have been active in the last 10 years. Their work is near to the so called “reparative” justice, in which the attention is focused on both sides involved in the conflict: the offender and the victim. In fact normally the victim does not want to meet the offender any more. A big deal of attention is dedicated to the victim in order to repair to the offence that was committed. In fact in these cases there are two ways to prevent crimes: one is to bring victim and offender together to speak and find a compromise in the situation; the other one is that society pays attention to the victim. On such principles they bases the two kinds of projects and intervention they carry out. In the first case they try to work with victim and offender in order to prepare their meeting, that is a reparative meeting. In the second case the project is focused on the victim in order that s/he suffers a second offence: to be forgotten by society. The victims are notified by the tribunal and are contacted to join the centre for a first talk. There they receive support, counselling and also juridical guidance. If the victim require it, they can also receive psychological support. There are two aspects worth mentioning in this project: the first is the total liberty for the victim to join the project. The second are the different level of support and care provided and offered to the victims.

The project works when the victim realized they have several choices and possibilities ahead, and the recognition of emotions is also very important. Out of the 200 people that arrived in the centre, more than 80 decided to join the program of support.