



“LA CITTÀ **POSSIBILE** – *Initiatives for Roma population*” has been managed by 6 organisations on behalf of the City of Turin (Directorate for Social Policy and Relations with Health Care Departments – Directorate of Social Services – Foreigners and Nomads Service).

The NGOs and not-for-profit organisations involved in the Temporary Association of Enterprises (TAE) that managed the project are:

- Cooperativa Animazione Valdocco
- AIZO Associazione Italiana Zingari Oggi
- Italian Red Cross-Provincial Committee of Turin
- Cooperativa Stranaidea
- Cooperativa Liberitutti
- Associazione Terra del Fuoco.

The project has been funded by the Ministry of Interior within the “Nomads Emergency”, involving the main Italian metropolitan areas since 2009; it began on December 2013 and finished on December 2015 and has been coordinated and monitored by Turin’s Prefecture.

The aim of the project was to implement efficient and effective methods to help the integration process of about 1.300 ROMA people living in the authorized and non-authorized areas within Turin’s territory.

AREAS AND BENEFICIARIES DEFINED IN THE CALL:

5 Roma camps: 2 authorized (Germagnano and Caselle Airport) and 3 not authorized (spontaneous Germagnano, Lungo Stura Lazio, Corso Tazzoli)

Approximately 1800 estimated persons - 1300 beneficiaries estimated in the Call. For the major part (800 subjects corresponding at about 250 family units, the majority coming from Romania), actions were pointed to realize social integration and housing within the local community in the territory of the Municipality of Turin, in other areas of the Piedmont Region as well as in Romania – There’s been accompanying activities to voluntary repatriations managed jointly with associations operating in Romania.

All the families involved in the project have signed a “*Surfacing Pact*”, a contract establishing mutual commitments between the family and the professional operator responsible on behalf of the Municipality of Turin for supporting the family throughout the project lifespan.



Signing this Pact the families have been committed to:

- Avoid any illegal behaviour
- send their children to school
- take care of their weak members
- attend the project activities (courses, training, job placements, actions required for administrative regularisation)
- contribute to the expenses
- deconstruct their shack placed in the non authorized area they come from.

Throughout the entire span of the project each family has been supported and assisted by two social operators who take care of all the activities necessary to accomplish the integration process (employment, administrative regularisation procedures, access to services and facilities) and which were constantly engaged in the mediation of relations with the various actors of the local context the family units are involved with.

The Surfacing Pact services were personalized on each single family and in each single Pact, and may include:

Residential housing allocation

To families that fulfill proper requirements has been given rented flats found on the local housing market. In this first step the associations of the TAE stipulated the lease contracts with the owners, whilst monitoring the integration process and supporting a progressive full autonomy of the family unit in the management of the house and of all the related contractual aspects. At the end of the contract has been evaluated, jointly with the owner, the opportunity of stipulating the lease contract directly with the family housed within the project.

Housing inclusion

Temporary housing solutions with shared facilities such as laundry, concierge, etc. Night surveillance guarantees an intermediate step of protection that allows the beneficiaries to develop the conditions, along with the support of the operators of the project, to fit at a later stage in allocations providing for a higher level of autonomy .

Construction yard of self-construction and self-recovery

The Dado (a building in Settimo Torinese) has been renewed with contribute of families who lately has began renters: the idea was that families can settle down in a context that is appropriate to their peculiar needs and sustainable in the medium and long term.

Residence/temporary solutions

The situations of subjects with specific and serious social and health fragility has been included in project, even with emergency procedures, in allocations that provide significant services of protection and assistance. The Surfacing Pact should provide for



detailed work on knowledge of solidarity networks that can be activated in order to support the fragile subjects housed in the residence.

Assisted voluntary repatriation

The project has sustained the process of integration in the country of origin through providing a first contribution as goods and/or services. In Romania has been built a large and rich relational network with associations located in different areas, associations available to plan and realize social integration activities in partnership with La Città Possibile .

Furthermore, the project has provided logistical services necessary for managing the designated locations and services required for managing waste disposal in the areas of deconstruction of the shacks, it realized different initiatives for social support (training and job placement, schooling, regularisation support) useful for implementing effective pathways for social integration and citizenship.

People at the Closing Date of the Project (4/12/2015) were included in 35 different sites in Turin and the province (Settimo Torinese, San Mauro Torinese, Pinerolo, Beinasco), 8 families were already headquartered in a lease for an apartment (today they are 21); 22 families were accommodated in a low cost housing that could have become stable dwellings in the face of an increase credible of the incomes of the nucleus (today they are 18);

49 families were protected in temporary housing contexts that people needed to increase their skills and tackle more cohesion paths social (today they are 15); other 4 families have found an autonomous placement through the Lo.Ca.Re Agency, and for 14 families the Emergency Pact was active in Romania, led by the Romanian Associations partner.

The **Emersion Pact** is a contract used for beneficiaries leaving the areas, and it is a tool that dignity (rights and duties) to the contractors: the head of household and the social worker responsible for accompanying. Give dignity through a contract: a useful move.

The contract has consistently been a part of the negotiation of problems, of crisis: formal reporting pathways have led to continued re-inflammation.

This space of dignity in negotiation, time and attention in the relationship "To make the contract", interrupted 178 times the emergency flow of the "Lungo Stura Lazio" slum. In any way compressed, often insufficient, but it was the bacterium that disturbed the eruptions and massaging of the liberation of the territory with the listening, the personalization, negotiation, engagement, the assumption of common rules, the commitment to be there.

The Emergency Pact has made it possible to make the responsibility of the parties, especially in the crisis. During the Project we realized 9 expulsions, for serious non-fulfillment of the Emergency Pact: for 9 of these, the termination of the contract and exit from the facilities was carried out by the former beneficiaries in a way that is absolutely



correct, accurate and respectful of allocations. "We had a pact, we have not been able to stay under the conditions that we have signed up, it is right to leave. "

On the subject of **research and job placement**, there was a dedicated staff who took care of all aspects of preparation and job placement, a starting from pre-work training courses, CV writing and questions work, up to the search for resources and the care of matching work placements and job placement, in close coordination with the Employment Service Center Province of Turin.

33 training sessions were started and realized, and at the closure of Project 15 beneficiaries had a contract of employment (today they are still 12); the involvement of the workforce involved a profound activity of selection, because we only involved companies and organizations with whom a serious possibility of job placement could be contemplated at the end internship. Over the 150 companies surveyed, we have activated 33 training sessions with 11 subjects (social enterprises, restaurants, green enterprises, transport and logistics). We started two small family businesses in Romania (a tire repairer and a farm).

In the second year we decided to activate considerable resources for the job accessory: if this accessory job investment was due to increase the profitability of the families in the face of the difficulty of turning on training traineeships with hiring hope, was however functional to encourage the insertion of families into territorial contexts by supporting a often communal work that made it possible to attend positive social spaces close to home places.

A very complex, socially crucial, risky and challenging project. Exchanging (responsibility and resources, rights and duties), adapting continuously, take risks together to do their job: social cooperatives and associations have the DNA appropriate to these challenges.

We are used to not taking any defeat for granted before speaking, negotiated, understood people eyes in the eyes; and when we got there, risks and dangers, though heavy, are faced, often overcome.

With these ingredients we have completed the task, and for these same reasons - having learned something from mistakes made - we are ready to restart to help overcome other Roma camps.

Intervention during the first project meeting in Romania (12-14 October 2017):

The Project "**The Possible City - Initiatives in Support of the ROM Population**" was made from 4/12/2013 to 3/12/2015 by a Temporary Enterprise Grouping made of Valdocco Social Cooperative (leader), AIZO Association - Italian Gypsy Association Today, the Italian Red Cross - Provincial Committee of Turin, Stranaidea Social Cooperative, Liberi Tutti Social Cooperative and Terra del Fuoco Association. The Grouping was able to count on an initial network of partnership that had 19 Turin and Romanian associations and associations, which a Project term have become 27.

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The City of Turin entrusted the Service through a public call (PA 83/2013) and has overseen and coordinated the implementation of the Project through the Foreigners and Gipsy's Office of the Social Services and Relations with Healthcare Companies of the City of Turin Political Central Direction. Other 5 Turin City Councils have been actively involved in the operational network: Public Works, Municipal Police, Environment, Urban Planning, Private Building.

We participated in the Public Call, which had enormous complexity: 1300 people in 5 camps, (600 of them certainly from accompanying exit from Lungo Stura Lazio camp in Torino town).

For various reasons the work has been focused on the spontaneous settlement of Lungo Stura Lazio Roma camp: at the project closure the slums of Lungo Stura Lazio no longer exists and the overcoming has occurred with a contained level of social conflict. The area no longer has the Lungo Stura Lazio camp within itself, and hundreds of children no longer live between mouses and garbage on the banks of the river Stura.

In Lungo Stura Lazio in Turin (a slum called Plaz, populated up to the first months of 2014 by nearly 1,000 people: the largest slums in Italy) we offered protection and opportunities to people and families who left the slums, establishing with us the "Surfacing Pact". In all, 643 people, who have deconstructed 173 cabins on about 320 in attendance.

Today the majority of the families that signed the Pact continue their integration path in Italy or Romania.

The "Possible City" project specifically puts into practice two good practices:

- The "**Surfacing Pact**"
- Pair of tutors as support for each family unit so that they can meet the requirements of the project.

The tool and the data from which the project was launched was the census made by the Foreigners and Nomad Office of the City of Turin 9 months earlier.

The Surfacing Pact process:

- Approach to the camp with families and invitation to come to the Office to get information about who we are and what we do.
- First interview in the office, explanation of what we can offer and what we ask (times and modes)
- Second interview to stipulate the personal Surfacing pact with each family unit: co-responsibility between the tutors and the family on the points of the pact with the double signature.

Surfacing Pact points concerning the family unit:

- legality
- regularization of missing documents



- schooling of minor children
- respect of the pact, but also the possibility of modifying the pact in line with the tutors

Surfacing Pact points for the project and tutors:

- proper housing research at the family unit
- look for work for at least one component of the family
- formative/training proposals for the family components
- social secretarial activities (support and accompanying on various issues that have emerged)

We consider the Pact as a good practice because allows the actors involved to know outgoing what are the tasks of both parties, makes what is said and signed real, and requires mutual commitment to respect what is stated. The cutoff must be flexible and editable on the points shared by both parties.

BENEFIT:

- The Pact allows actors involved not to go out of the way with what has been agreed together because it is an accompaniment to emigration from the camp and not to an obligation.

CRITICAL ASPECTS:

- Only one component of each family unit signed the Pact and not all the adults: risk that not all components respect what they signed.
- The Pact must be stipulated after a deepen knowledge of each family and the real needs of the people - we did not have the time like in previous projects to deepen questions and needs that accompanies the family in all the social nuances necessary until the pact can be respected.

TUTOR (second good practice) as a social guide and not as the person who replaces the person. It's not only one accompaniment just because the issues are so many to be tackled with just one operator. Additionally, the "couple" of tutors allows the family unit to always have a reference point where necessary for project-related issues.

If the families perceive the role of tutor as the operators with whom they deal together, it becomes much easier to bring both sides to the goals set.

Continuous comparison between tutors allows for an on-going comparison on emerging issues and the possibility for the families to have an up-to-date and accessible reference.

People at the closing date of the Project (4/12/2015) were placed in 35 different sites in Turin and the province:

22 families were placed in low-cost housing

49 families were protected in transitional housing that people needed to increase their skills.

On the thrust of research and job placement, there was a dedicated staff working on all aspects of preparation and job placement, starting from pre-employment training, CVs and job applications, to research resources and for matching work placements and job placements, in close coordination with the Employment Center of the Province of Turin. Over the 150 companies surveyed, we have activated 33 internships and on-the-job trainings with 11 subjects (social enterprises, restaurants, green companies, transport and logistics) and at the closure of the Project 15 beneficiaries had a contract of employment.

We started two small family businesses in Romania (a rubberizer and a farm).

In the second year of project we decided to activate considerable resources for accessory work: 3500 hours of accessory work for 25 beneficiaries in 15 territorial realities.

While on the one hand this investment in labor-related work was due to increase the profitability of the families in the face of the difficulty of initiating traineeship training with hiring hopes, it was still functional to favor the inclusion of the families in the territorial contexts by supporting a job at often a community that made possible a positive attendance of social spaces close to home places.

CRITICAL ISSUES:

There are many critical aspects that emerged both in the project:

- the census on the basis of which we set the job was done about 9 months before the actual start of the project, and it was not sufficiently reliable.
- the lack of communication to citizens on the progress and the issues we have faced and known has caused misunderstandings and also conflicts with some parts of society.
- It has not been possible for us to work to get families out of the authorized camps, who also had the requisites and capabilities, for the problem of targeting the beneficiaries to be taken over by the Commission that they had to deal with.
- Time:

In projects like this, it is necessary to foresee the right times, 2 years may not be enough, it would have been necessary a while before to know the families and calibrate the right interventions and later to monitor and help in change situations (illnesses, loss of work etc.), this lack created the conditions for returning to other spontaneous camps, with a failing experience that further weighs families.

Not to mention that the disappearance of the tutors at the end of the project, for example from the authorized camp of Germagnano, gave the impression that the slums had been "abandoned" by the institutions, and this led in a short time to the occupation by unauthorized Roma of the regular Roma houses.

But the major criticism in our opinion is that unfortunately politics, the administration at various levels, the cooperatives, the associations and the Roma community, they did not move all in the same direction, without unity of intent; such a large and articulated project hardly achieves all the goals.

Conclusions:



It should be noted and emphasized that with the Roma people can and must work the same way as it would work with any social group in high difficulty. You do not have to fall into the trap that working with Roma communities means working with a "different" ethnicity or even worse thinking of working with "different" people. These are people in social, housing and cultural difficulties just as with the other groups that are addressing a SOCIAL WELFARE of a state. Just because they have always been seen as "different" over the years have produced ad hoc projects, emergency interventions, and the non-continuity of good practices. All this has resulted in a huge amount of energy, knowledge and professionalism by operators without ever triggering a real change for the local community, that would have the full interest in dealing with the issue deeply in search of feasible solutions, to put in place and stop once and for all to address the issue as an emergency.

To succeed in this business it is necessary that politics, institutions, the third sector and the Roma communities work to go in the same direction for the success of any project. Without this effort, as it has demonstrated the project "The Possible City", any initiative will solve the real problems, but or it will only move them to another place or it will be only a temporary solution.