

Programma integra: social inclusion activities **for migrants, refugees and unaccompanied** **minors.**

Programma integra is an integrated social cooperative founded in 2005 and dealing with innovative projects for social inclusion of migrants and refugees. Its activities relate to encourage paths of sustainable and durable autonomy and contribute to the welfare and development of the Community.

Programma integra strives to achieve its goals carrying out social inclusion programs, promoting cooperation, knowledge and innovation among social professionals, promoting the involvement of the Community in the challenge of integration and providing support to institutions in high impact projects.

Our beneficiaries are vulnerable migrants, asylum seeker and beneficiaries of international protection and unaccompanied minors. We provide them a range of services such as social and legal counseling, job counseling, vocational training courses and Italian language courses, intercultural mediation initiatives, social mediation services in the field of housing and support to entrepreneurship.

A team of social professionals carries out such interventions through a modular and integrated approach. They identify an individually tailored set of services helping each beneficiary reaching his social and economic autonomy.

As for social professionals, we offer refresher and training courses, provide information services through a web platform, organize seminars and workshops and carry out activities of research and exchange of best practices.

We also carry out information and awareness-raising actions aimed at citizens and economic players of the area.

Programma integra provides technical assistance to the local authorities in planning, managing, monitoring and reporting of innovative interventions of social inclusion for migrants and refugees.

Our values are the centrality of individuals, as listening and recognition of the other, quality in the management of interventions through teamwork, constant monitoring and evaluation of processes, innovation through research and experimentation, and equal opportunities for a more equitable and inclusive society.

As for our activities especially dedicated to minors, we are currently working on the project Together, funded by Fondazione Cariplo, Compagnia di San Paolo, Fondazione con il Sud, Enel Cuore,

Fondazione CRT, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Cuneo, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Padova e Rovigo, Fondazione Peppino Vismara and Fondazione Monte dei Paschi di Siena.

The initiative aims to promote both the autonomy and inclusion of young migrants in full compliance with the respect of children's rights. Our purpose is to create a new culture of reception, providing both the minors and the hosting society with instruments for integration.

Both in Italy and in Europe, the number of children and youth on the move without a parent, relative or guardian has been growing steeply, particularly since 2011.

As a European country, Italy is interested too by the phenomenon, with number growing exponentially: they were 5,959 in 2011 and soared to 17,373 in 2016 (data of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies).

They are mostly male (93%), and 92% of them are aged between 15 and 17 years; they come from Egypt (16%), Gambia (13%), Albania (9%), Nigeria and Eritrea (8%).

They are among the most vulnerable and endangered migrants. A shocking data is the one regarding those who go missing: 6,561 minors at year end 2016 in Italy, and 10,000 children are missing after their arrival in Europe, according to Europol.

The Italian context has been changed since when the law No. 47 of 7 April 2017 has been published in the Gazzetta Ufficiale: the law provided, among other news, new regulation on identification and ascertainment of the minor's age, an integrated reception system and a national informative system and Social record. It also introduced a new kind of guardian for unaccompanied minors: the voluntary legal guardians and new regulations about the asylum procedure.

Anyway, there is still way to go: the law is not consistently applied on the whole territory: for example, in Rome, children who declare they are underage, are still send to the Military hospital in order to ascertain their age, while the new law states differently. The law is quite the opposite applied in Southern Italy: a child who states he is 16 is automatically believed.

The lack of homogeneity is certainly a weakness in the implementation of policies on minors in Italy.

As for the strengths, it certainly come from the children, who are, and keeps being, a consistent force of the system: they demonstrate resilience, the will to get in the game, will to learn and to improve their skills.

In addition, the companies we work with have been demonstrating their openness and a culture of inclusion. They include people in the job place, facing the challenges and gathering the opportunities. They see refugees, minors and migrants in general, as they really are not just vulnerable people but people full of strength, resilience, capabilities and competencies valuable for the work place.