



# YOUTH CRIMINALITY



# The issue in Italy

In order to have a detailed view of the phenomenon of juvenile criminality in Italy, an analysis of the official data defining the issue in Italy, may be useful. An element that undoubtedly arouses concern is the increase of over 50% of youngsters of eighteen years old reported in recent years.

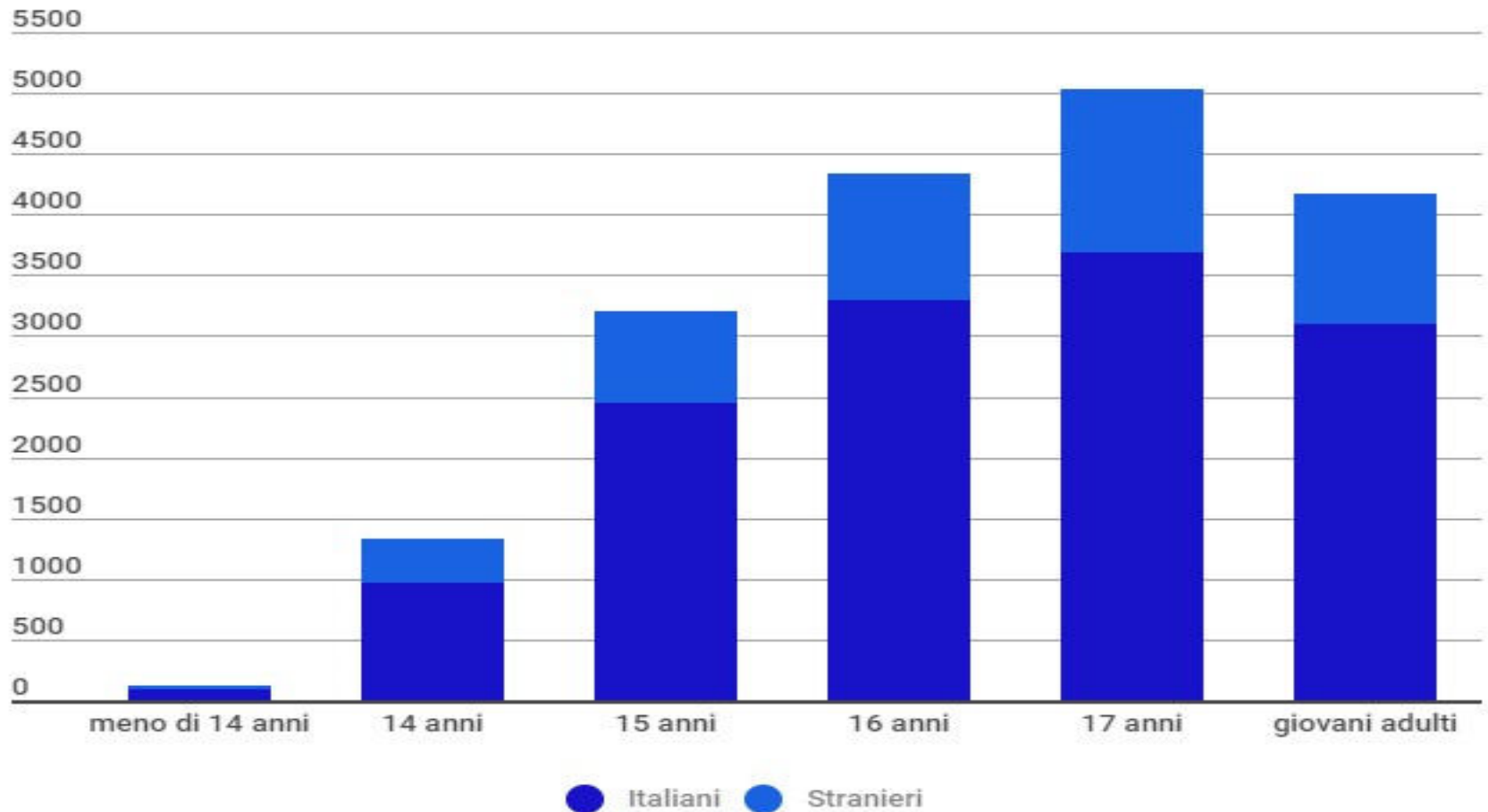


# 42.732 minors were reported:

- 13,540 for burglary
- 4,115 for drugs
- 3,628 for voluntary personal injuries
- 2,896 for receiving stolen goods
- 2,500 for robbery
- 630 for sexual assault
- 65 for voluntary homicide



# In 2016 more than 18,000 minors were registered in Juvenile Facilities

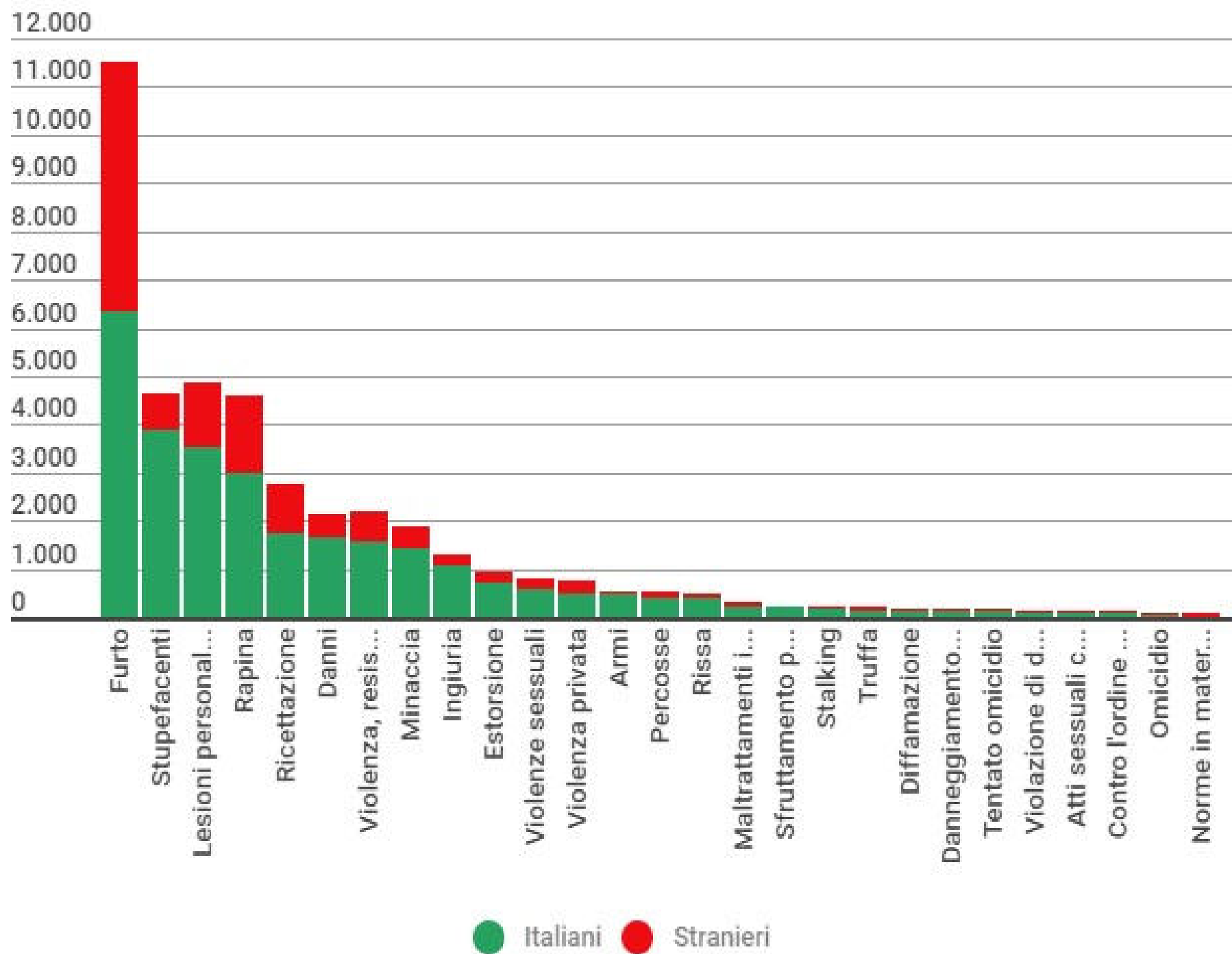


- The Ministry of Justice shows negative data about minors breaking the law. The graphic above displays the age of minors **breaking the law. Under 15 years old, they are entrusted to** Social Services.
- Italians are 13,400 (74.72% of the total). The other 4.600 are foreigners.
- The first crimes are made between 16 and 17 years old. The number of the youngest people (14 years old) breaking the law are 129, 32 of them are foreigners.
- 5.000 17-years-old are put in rehabilitation centres. The decision is taken by the Ministry of Justice. The 16-years-old are 4,168.
- The “young adults”, i.e. 18-years-old, are more than 4.000.



# Where are foreigners from?

- In 2016, African minors, condemned in Italy were 1,615. The second major group, condemned in Italy, were made by Romanian people: 939. The third one was made by Moroccan people: more than 700; while the fourth is made by Albanian people: 508. Brazilian and Ecuadorian people condemned are 318.
- In total, there are 44,462 crimes made by minors. The next graphic shows the number of Italian minors committing crimes in green, while the foreigners are shown in red. 22,300 crimes are made against property, while 12,300 crimes are made against people. The third category of recorded crimes are made against public safety, like trafficking and damages.
- Thefts are the most frequent cause of condemn: 11,515 cases. The injury cases are 5000. The drug trafficking is the third crime and the robbery is the fourth one, about 4500

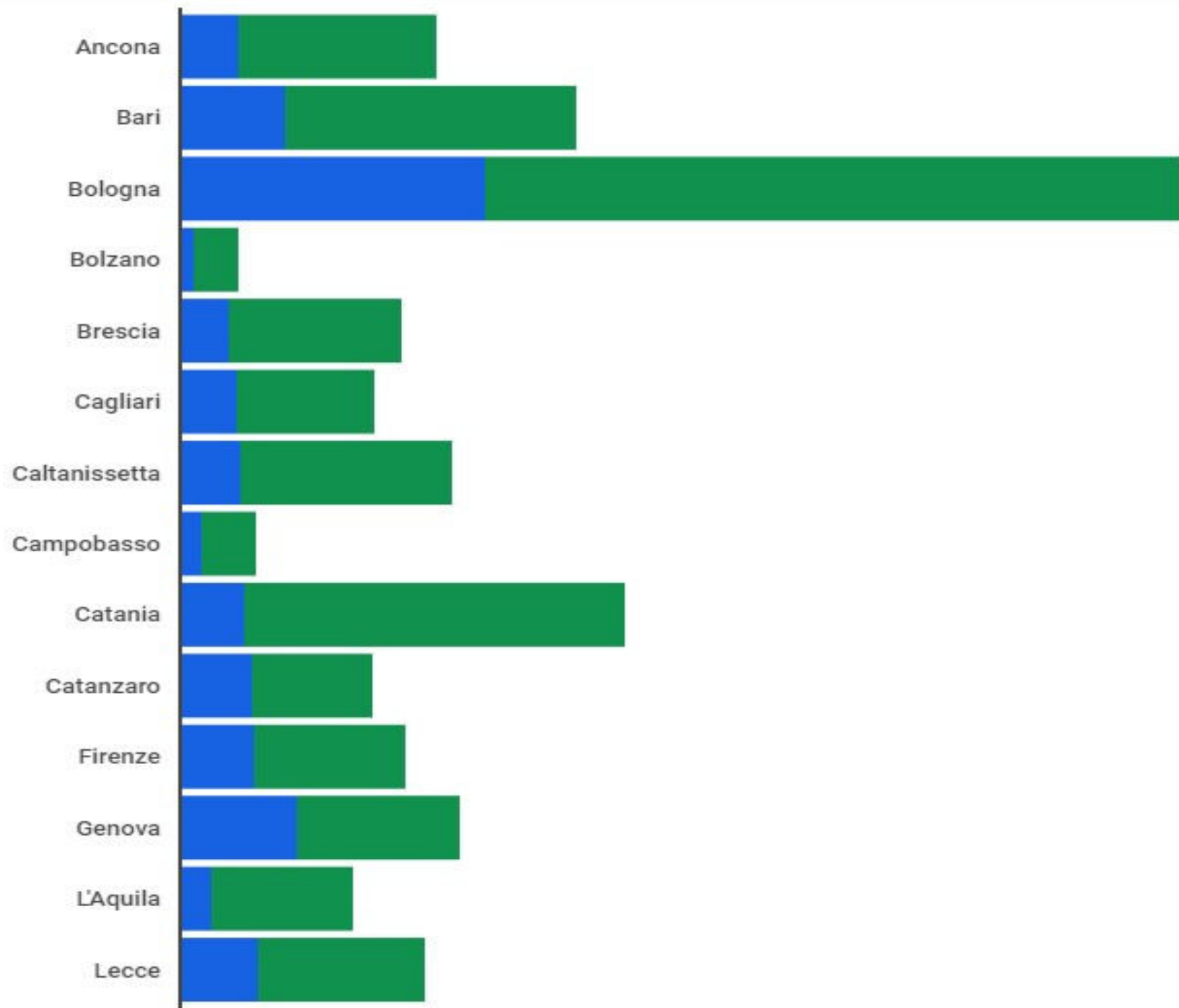


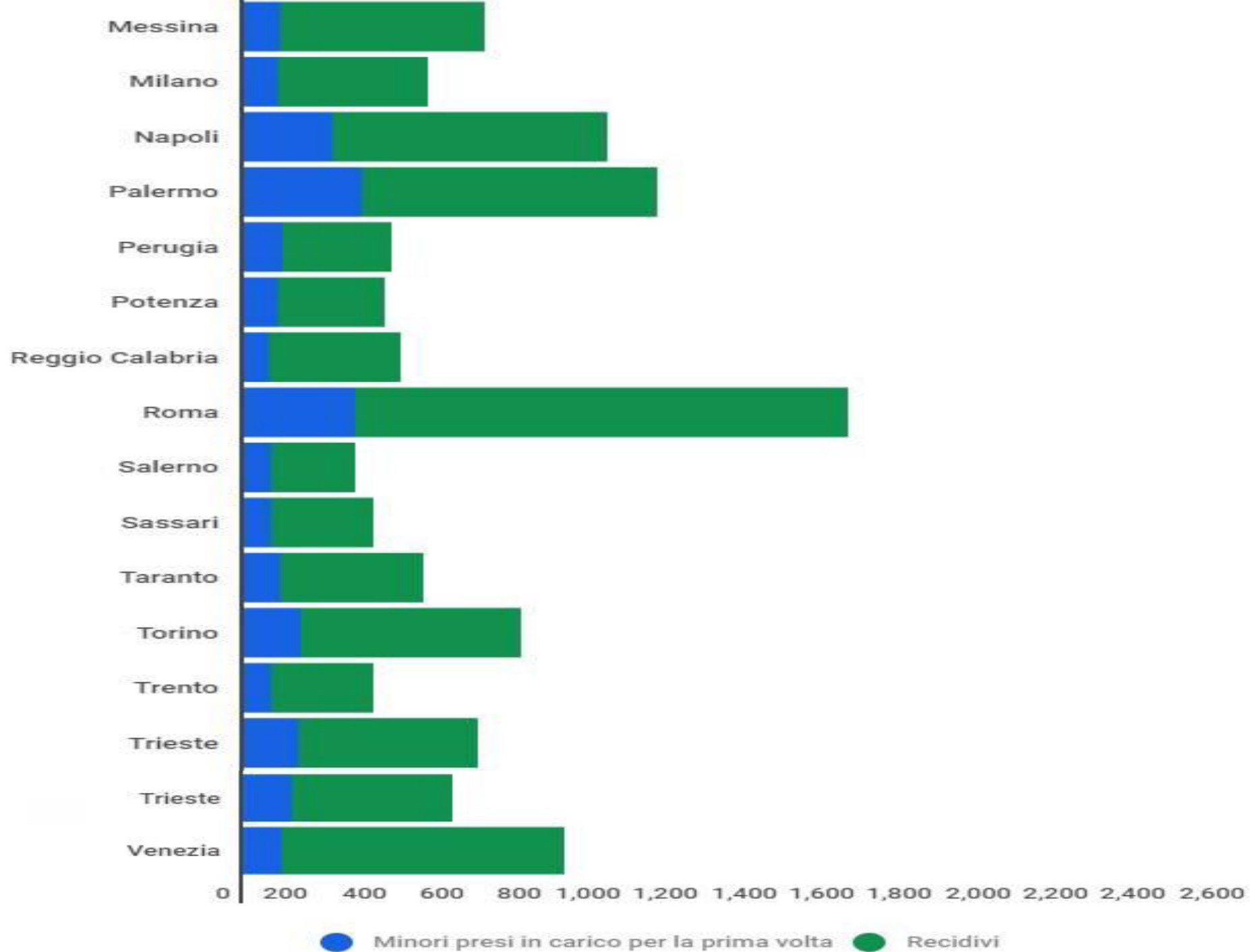


# N° of crimes committed in the different Italian cities

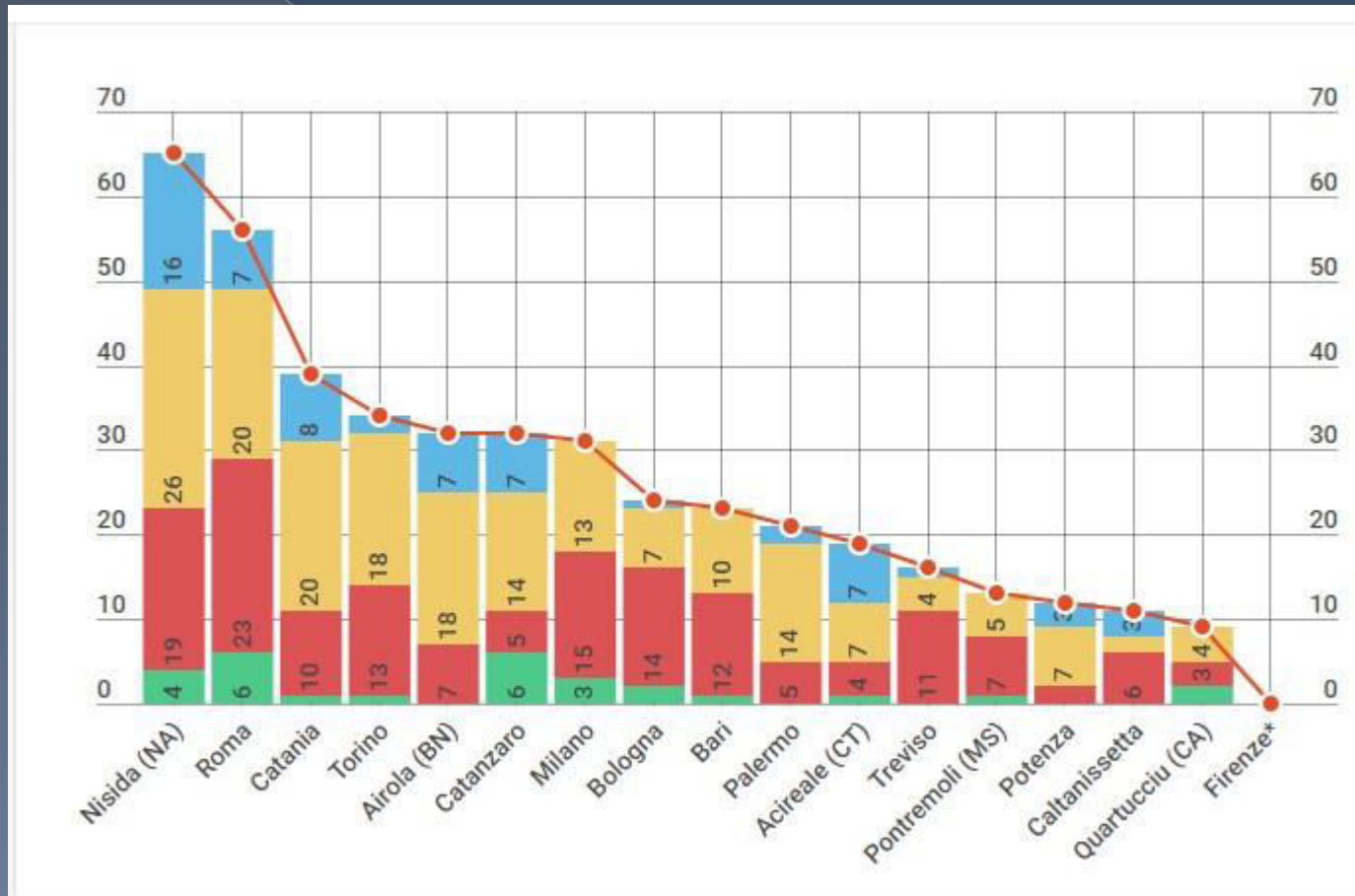
- The next graphic displays, in the blue colour, the number of minors condemned for the first time, while the ones in green are repeated offenders. It also displays the number of crimes committed by minors in the different Italian cities. Most cases are in Bologna (2,600), Rome (1,384) and Catania (1,118).  
10,526 are repeated offenders







# Naples has the highest number of minor criminals



# In Naples, there are 65 prisoners, one above two is immigrant or foreigner

- In 2017, in the Italian prisons there were 437 minors and young people. The city with the highest number of minor criminals is Naples, followed by Rome and Catania.
- This graphic represents, in decreasing order, 17 Italian jails for minors, distributed in different Italian cities. At first place there is the jail of Nisida, near Naples: including 65 young people, until 15 December 2017. At second place, there is Roma (56) and then Catania (39), Torino (34) and Airola, near Benevento, which registers 32 very young prisoners, and Catanzaro as well. Florence closes the classification with no prisoners, but this is only a temporary status: the jail for minors in Florence, has opened some days before the last update of these data.

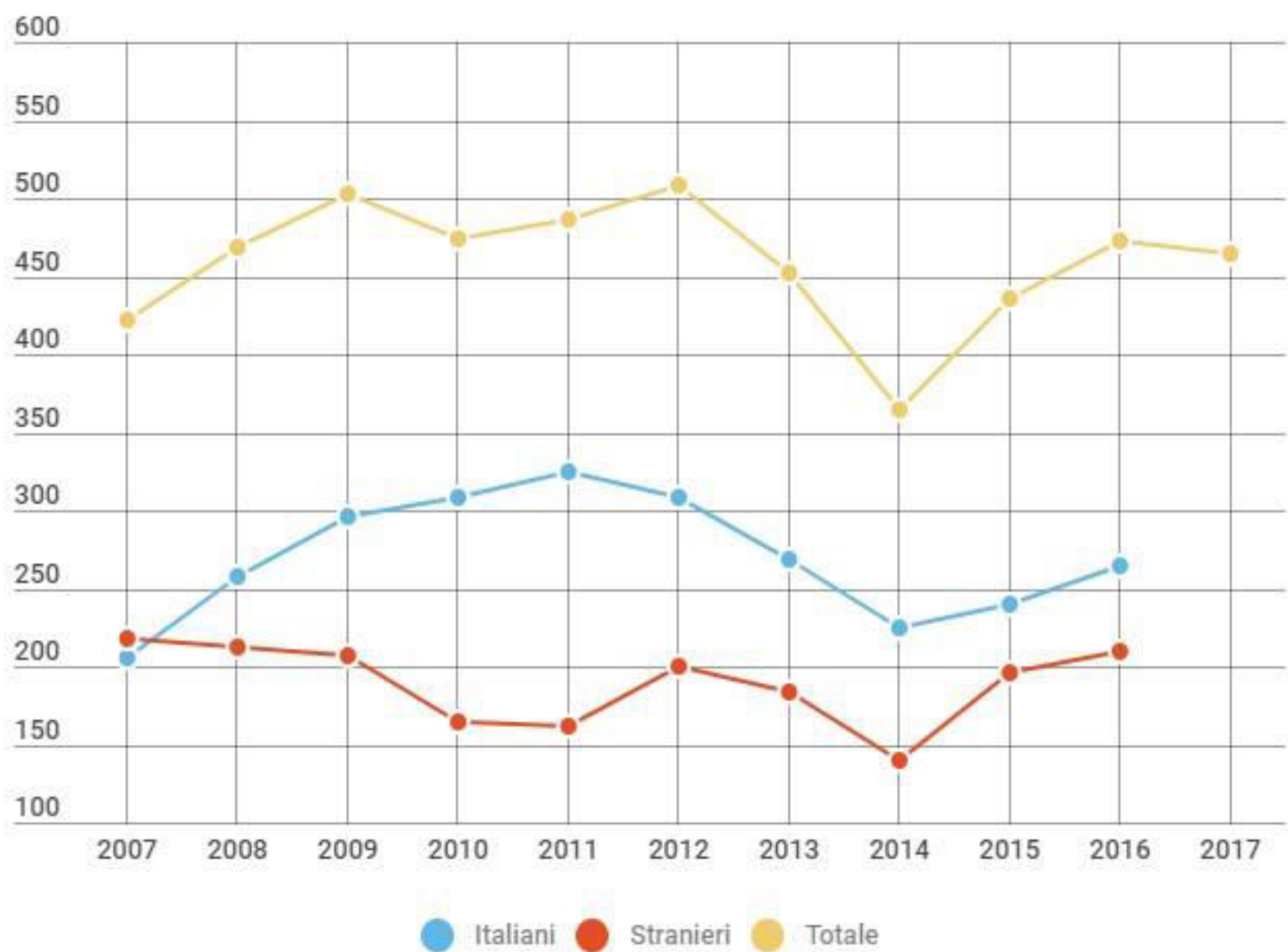
# The 43% are between 18 and 20 years old

- Among 437 prisoners, at the end of 2017, about 189 people were between 18 and 20 years old: 64 prisoners were between 21 and 24 years old; 28 prisoners were under 15; 156 were between 16 and 17 years old.



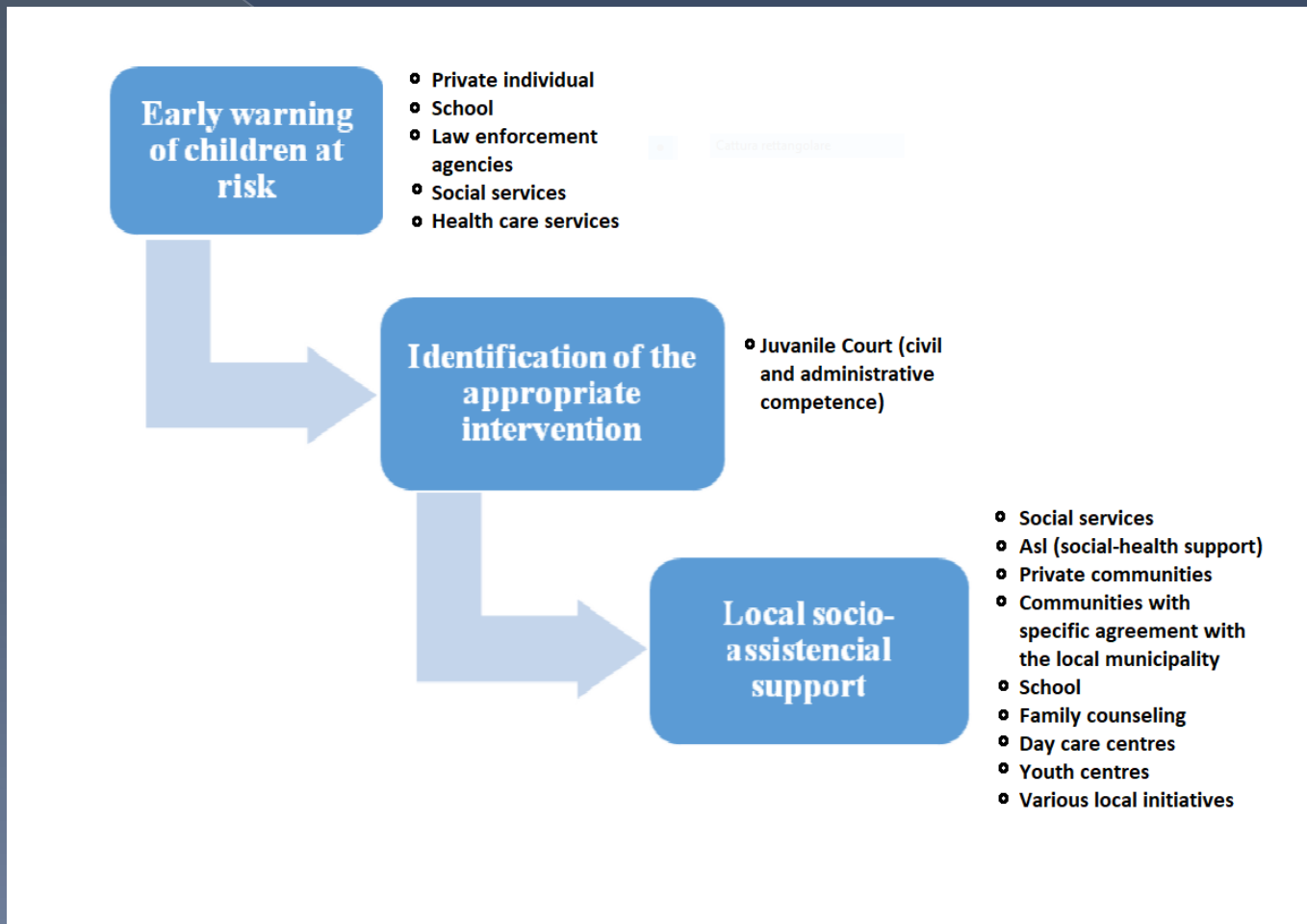
# 47% of minors involved in crimes are immigrants

- At the end of 2017, 0.6% of minors, in jails, were women. The last graphic shows how the number of Italian and foreign prisoners in jails have been changing during the years.
- In 2007 the number of Italian and foreign prisoners were almost equal: 205 Italians and 218 foreigners. At the end of 2017, Italian prisoners were 231, while foreigners were 206.





# How the Italian system works with children at risk



- In 2013, minors, handled by youth social services, were 20,213. In the same year there were 2,020 admissions in the juvenile classification homes: 1,894 in the residential communities, 1,201 in the juvenile detention centers.



- Minors in charge to youth social services increased from 2010 and 2011 (+9.8%). In 2013, the growth was 10,1% compared to 2010 and +13,4% compared to 2008. The increase is also due to a longer length in the care center.



- In 2013, 3.456 juveniles were placed by the judge under supervision status according to a program laid out by the Juvenile justice services. An increase by 85% was registered with reference to 2003.



# Bullying and cyberbullying in Italy

- As concerns bullying and cyberbullying in Italy, the phenomenon has greatly increased: *Telefono Azzurro* data revealed that in just the last two years the percentage of this wrongdoing has doubled. According to “Observing Teenagers”, a survey carried out by *Telefono Azzurro* and *DoxaKids* on over 1500 Italian students between the ages of 11 and 19, 35% of the kids admitted to having been involved in bullying, or having been a victim of it.
- Other research reveals that among the most diffused practices of cyberbullying, the following stand out: violent and vulgar messages, vilification, identity theft, the exclusion of victims from online friend groups.





- Now what happens if we turn our gaze to the larger European context? Yet again, results cause great consternation. According to the reports of OCSE (Organization For Economic Cooperation and Development), Italy is recorded to have the lowest number of juvenile bullying. In fact, as low as 5% of Italian teenagers complain about being victims of this type of abuse. Only one European country proves to have better statistics, namely, Switzerland at 4%. On the opposite end of the spectrum is Austria, where statistics regarding juvenile violence appear most concerning. In general, 11% is the average for juvenile violence in European and North American countries is also 11%.



# Central and Northern European countries are in a worse situation

- Recorded on good authority, Italy juvenile criminality has undergone a sharp incline, which is undeniably based as much on statistics of government bodies data as on the Attorney General's report. And yet, Italy, in fact, ranks the second lowest among European countries for child crime rate. Certainly, it would be helpful if our analysis - comparing juvenile criminality in Europe - was systematically and constantly updated, but, as it was correctly pointed out, the comparison is difficult in view of the gaping differences between sources of national information. What is clear, in any case, is that juvenile delinquency regarding Central and Northern European countries arouses the greatest alarm (in the following order: Germany, France, England). Italy, on the other hand, fortunately occupies one of the last places within the embarrassing classification.



Thank you all for your attention



# REPORT YOUTH CRIMINALITY





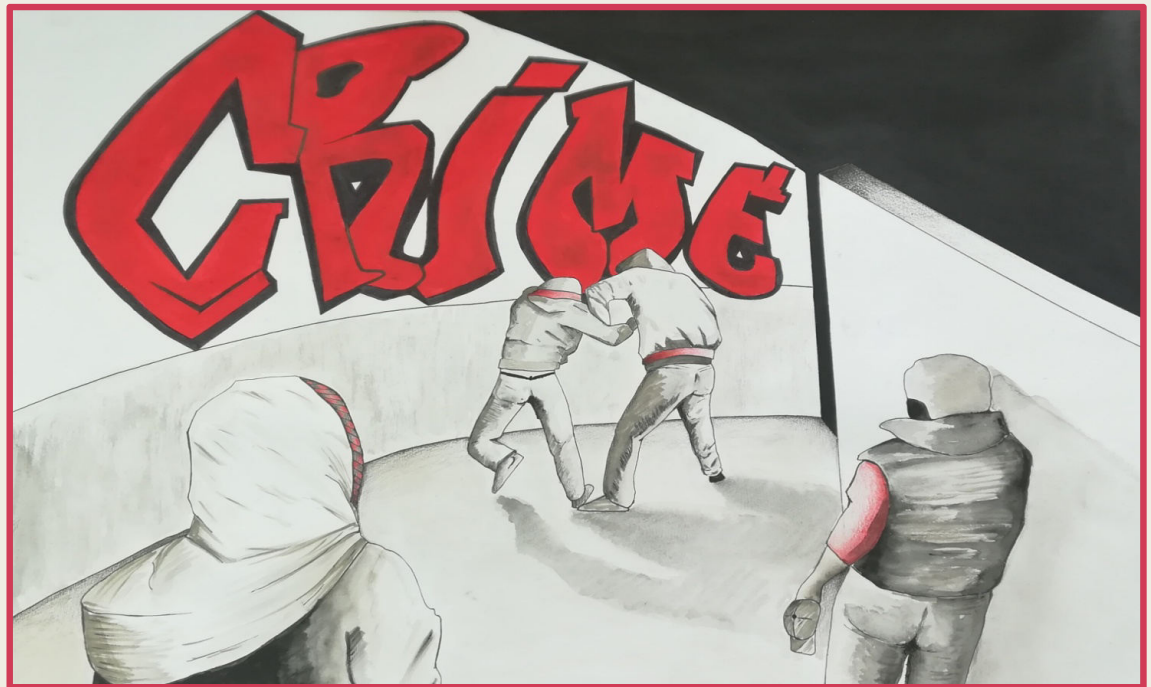
The decree D.P.R. 448/1988, regulations on the criminal proceeding, involving children, introduced new criminal law procedures specifically addressing children and different from the ones provided for adults. A peculiarity of the Italian system is the presence of a dedicate juvenile court ('Tribunale per i Minorenni'), established in 1934 with administrative, civil and criminal jurisdiction. At first, it was composed by two magistrates and one male expert in children's issues, being health, social worker, psychologist, criminologist with proven expertise on children's issues. In 1956, these professionals became two and the law established that they have to be a female and a male. Since then, two magistrates and two professional experts compose the Court.

For the first time, law D.P.R. 448/1988 put the child offender into a key position in all the phases of his/her own proceeding. The Justice System intends not only to ascertain the individual responsibilities for the occurred offence, but to protect the child and provide him/her with an individualized programme of rehabilitation and reintegration, keeping into account his/her specific needs and resources at the same time the guiding principle of the Italian juvenile justice system is that it is 'child-centred'. The child is the focus of any intervention, and the main and constant objective of the proceeding is his/her reintegration in the family/community and his/her development without interruptions. Among others, the juvenile justice system builds mainly upon the principle of the minimum harmfulness of the proceeding and the residual use of detention.

Beginning the investigation, data shows an important development: in addition to social marginalization, which has its roots in disadvantaged conditions, affective-relational marginalization is rapidly increasing, and particularly within middle/upper class families. Thus, the , Italian Department for Juvenile Justice calls this new phenomenon "the malaise of wellbeing". In addition to this, criminal activity of "deprived" youth also persists, that is, those who reside in the peripheries or ghetto zones. There's also the situation of so called "juvenile mafia, which includes non-labile boys (under the age of 14) used as labourers of organized crime.

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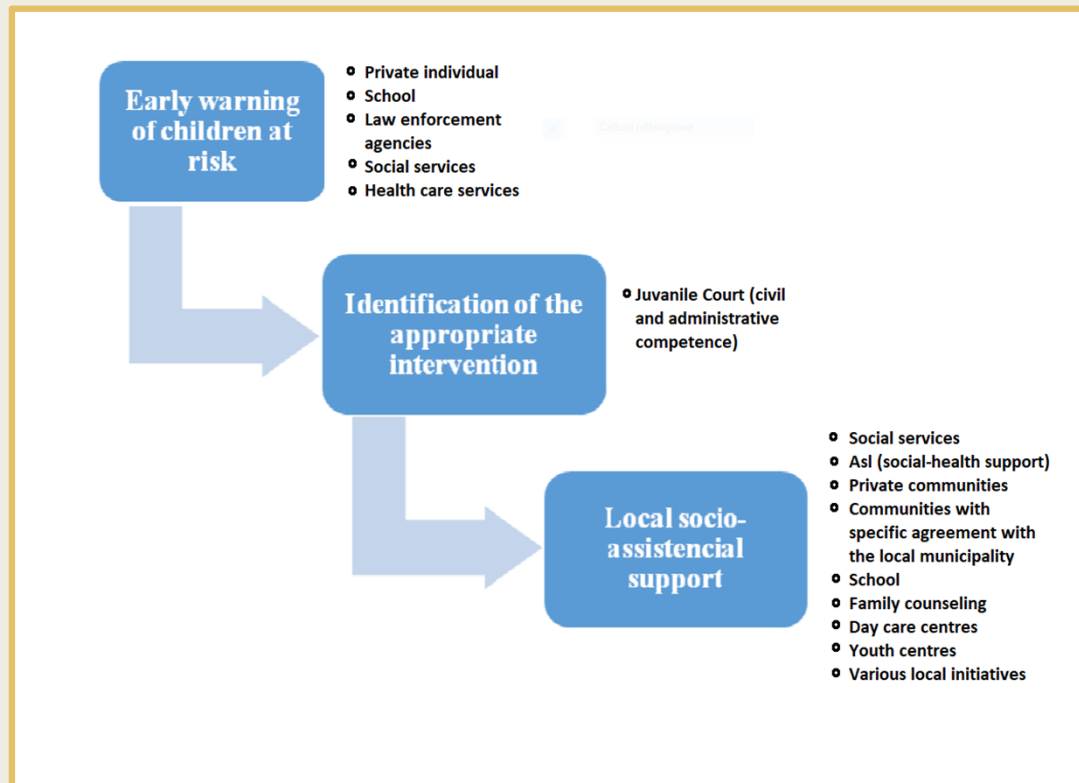
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## How does the child protection system work in Italy?

The law 285/1997 provided the inter-institutional system. The three main entities that in Italy compose the child protection system, are the Welfare (social services, health care, schools/education, educational communities, foster care institutions, ...), Family and Justice, which should work strongly interconnected.

### Child protection cycle and actors involved



A widespread presence of youth centres, associations, foundations, organizations, which provide children and adolescents with various recreational proposals, characterizes the Italian territory. They vary greatly from a geographic area to another, and their presence and activities depend very much on the local municipality that promotes and finances them. For this reason, also the budget allocated for such activities vary regionally and locally, with a higher expenditure registered in Northern Italy in comparison with Southern Italy, consistently with the data on public money and resources allocated for social services in these two macro-regions.





# CAUSES

Italy is historically characterised by significant differences among regions and macro-areas, such as North, Centre and South, in regards to many aspects, including the characteristics of the juvenile delinquency. The 2008 financial crisis has had considerably negative socio-economic consequences. According to the National Statistics Institute, between 2011 and 2012, 24,9% of the families lives in conditions of economic disadvantage with a strong concentration in Southern Italy where these families are the 41% of resident families (17.2% in the North-west, 13.5% North-East, 21.6 Centre). The worst situation is registered in Sicily (49,3%) and in Calabria (39%). In line with this data, 58% of children aged 14 in Italy in 2013 declared to be unsatisfied of their economic situation. In the North, the percentage of satisfied children is higher (about 46%) than in the Centre (41.3) and the South (30.9), with the least satisfied in Sicily. In our nation, specially, in the south part of Italy, we fight against a big criminal problem called Mafia, which seems to attract some teenagers. They choose crime, violence and oppression as a life choice, as an ideal model of existence, because they are attracted by the desire of making money quickly, by having power, by a high lifestyle, which is often imposed by a nihilistic and consumerist society, based on appearance.

**Society related causes** might be:

- social exclusion, unemployment
- in the case of immigrant families: poor integration to the dominant culture, which is often aggravated by poor language skills, due to segregating housing policies and insufficient integration instruction by the society.

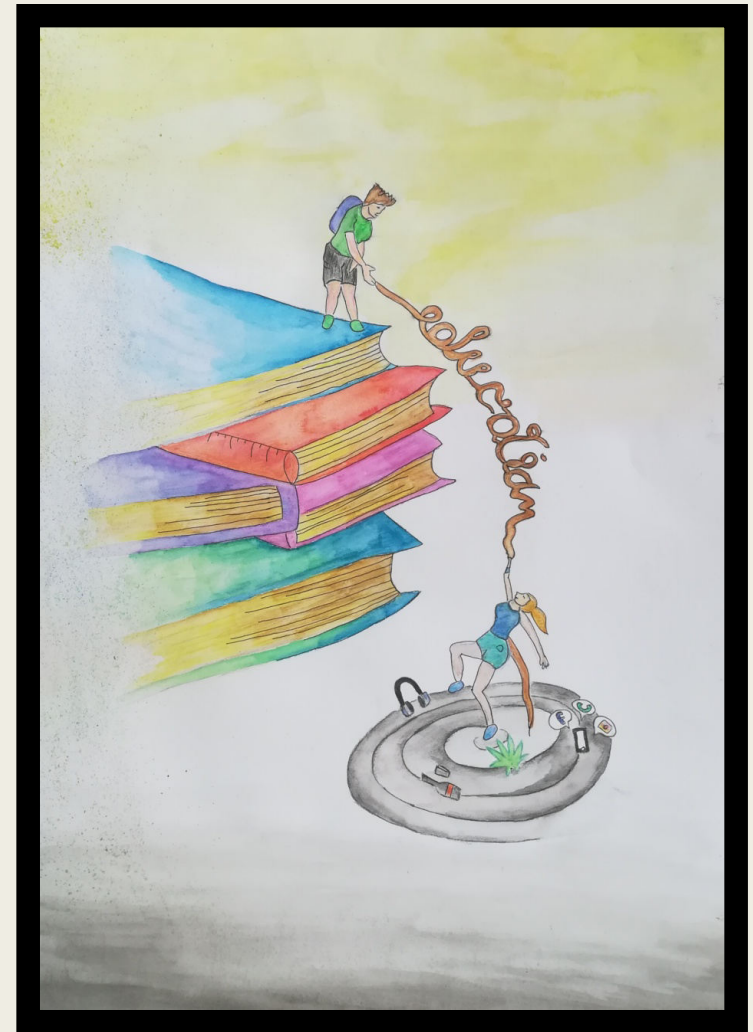
**Family based causes** could consist of:

- parental neglect caused by alcoholism, drugs, lack of interest or lack of time due to some other reason, as career promotion and efforts to achieve a higher standard of living;
- dropping out of school and the educational system, remaining unskilled with no profession.

These are some of the risk factors, in spite of which, many young people become law-abiding citizens.

**Other risk factors** that increase the chances of young people committing crimes are:

- Peer group pressure
- Peer involvement in problem behaviour
- Parental criminality
- Poor parental discipline and supervision
- Low family income
- Social isolation
- Family conflict
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Mental illness
- Troubled home life
- Disruptive behaviour such as aggression, hyperactive, bullying
- School disorganisation
- School exclusion
- Early involvement in problem behaviour
- Availability of drugs



## Prevention & Early Intervention

Juvenile crime prevention in Italy is the result of joint actions of all the actors involved in the care and protection system, starting from the families, going into the schools, health care system, social services, youth centres, sport clubs, and so on and so forth.

Early prevention strategies consist of programs of social inclusion, with families and schools, educative and recreational activities, with a particular attention given to sportive activities. These programs need to go together with sensitization campaigns for children on legality culture, mediation, conflict resolution, ethics and issues related to drugs. On the other side, families, schools and the entire local communities need awareness campaigning on all these issues, including the importance of early prevention itself, which is too often delegated to 'others'. Typically, juvenile delinquency follows a trajectory similar to that of normal adolescent development. In other words, children and youth tend to follow a path toward delinquent and criminal behaviour rather than engaging randomly. Research has shown that there are two types of delinquents, those in whom the onset of severe antisocial behaviour begins in early childhood, and those in whom this onset coincides with entry into adolescence. In either case, these developmental paths give families, communities, and systems the opportunity to intervene and prevent the onset of antisocial behaviours and justice system involvement. Small things can keep their heads above the water level: a nice neighbour or grandparent, a good teacher, some special talent they happen to have. A nice research result shows a strong correlation between low juvenile delinquency and a daily shared family, showing the importance of family togetherness.

The juvenile delinquency has recently received considerable attention from the mass media and politics. The prevention of delinquency, therefore, is the fundamental resource in all efforts to prevent young people being involved in criminal matters, or other antisocial activities. Increasingly, governments are recognizing the importance of allocating resources to the prevention of delinquency, but as it is increasingly difficult to provide the resources necessary for good prevention, humanitarian organizations are insisting on international cooperation for the prevention of juvenile delinquency. With the development of criminology and the study of the correlation between numerous factors, prevention efforts will be far-reaching; prevention services will include activities such as education and treatment against drug abuse, family counselling, youth supervision, moral support and sheltered housing.

The Italian panorama is rich of a great variety of instruments and projects aimed at preventing children and youths from committing delinquent acts and diverting them from a criminal path, in particular working on social exclusion, school dropout, bullying, children development, education and health.

Both early and secondary prevention are devolved to all the public and private actors who operate in the juvenile justice, care and protection systems. However, as there is not a centralized intervention, the way in which activities from the perspective of delinquency prevention are implemented, changes regionally and locally. Regions and the other local entities in Italy have been given different forms of autonomy: legislative, administrative, and financial. Italy is also characterized by historical differences between three macro-areas: North, Centre and South, with particular distance between North and South on many aspects. These differences are recurrent also in the actual efficacy of the systems and programs aimed at preventing children from delinquency.

# Solutions

National attention is also devoted to children victims of abuse and domestic violence: evidence shows that the majority of offenders suffered from violence during their childhood/adolescence, so intervening promptly on abused victims is also considered a delinquency early prevention strategy.

The family should have a positive attitude towards life and towards society. Parents and elder siblings should show children positive values, norms and standards of society, in this way, the children will be able to show the right behaviour to the society. Family is the role model of every child and a model behaviour by the parents and siblings can give motivation to the child to behave positively. Government should support families that have poor economic status so that they can improve their financial condition. Parents should also teach children the importance of respecting laws, the consequences of breaking laws, that government has made for public safety and betterment. Parents should make sure that they observe equality of rights, justice and condemn discrimination.



## Solution peer -group influence ... ‘a comitiva

Peer group influence is very strong on teens. Parents should meet their children's friends. They should create a healthy and friendly relationship with their children. In this way children feel free to share anything and everything with their parents.

## What is already existing

A very promising project and good practice in this direction comes from Sicily, In particular, the context of implementation of this project is Catania, historically characterized by a strong presence of mafia: **Invisible City Foundation – Life School ‘Falcone-Borsellino’**

The ‘Invisible City Foundation’ (‘Fondazione Città Invisibile’) established in 2009 and developed various music schools for children in the city of Catania and around the province. They offer free trainings on instruments and free studying material for children to learn how to play and to perform within one of the three orchestra resulted from this project. The name of the project, ‘Invisible City’, refers to the often invisible disadvantages of many children and youths in particularly marginalised contexts, and to the quite ‘invisible’ method used to support them and divert them from an even more marginalised and often deviant path: an educational method which aims at the empowerment of every and each individual. The mission of the Foundation has been, to give support and offer a positive and valuable alternative to children and youths at risk, through education to culture and legality, and through individual empowerment. In doing so, the project involves professional with various backgrounds: music teachers, life-coaching experts, poets, theatre actors and journalists. Children and youths at risk who enter in contact with the school are reported by the authorities, social services or any other public or private individual or entity and are introduced to the music training. The training has a practical approach, where teachers first try to communicate the emotional participation and beauty of music in itself and of playing all together, respecting each other voice/sound and timing, through a sharing experience and a strong effort to boost each child’s self-esteem. Group music classes are always preceded by life-coach sessions on legality and social cohesion, and by interventions aimed at stimulating children’s life skills, such as concentration, memory, creativity, book and writing therapy sessions and various classes, in order to promote a sharing and collaboration perspective among the children and youths involved.



## **The objectives to achieve are:**

- Self-esteem improvement
- Rules' compliance and culture of legality
- Ability to build positive relationships with the others

## **Solutions**

The other promising practice identified in the child protection system in Rome, in particular the centre of the city, is 'Civico Zero' a Save the Children Italy project. The project addresses migrant boys and girls (and their families when present) in disadvantaged situations, juveniles within the justice system, at risk of trafficking, abuse and commit crime, to improve their life conditions and their rights. Beneficiaries have been children around the age of 12 to 18 years old, with a specific attention to migrant and unaccompanied children, reported by the Court or by social services as being at risk, or gone spontaneously into the day care centre.

**Outreach and street education:** this method consists of reaching children and youths directly in the streets where they spend most of their time, especially the ones at-risk and coming from disadvantaged families and contexts, children and youths involved in prostitution, criminal activities and begging. Once they have built the first contact with the operators, they will have the possibility to benefit from the informative and educational services, and recreational activities implemented directly in the streets.

A Mobile Unit – daytime and night-time – provides them with help, street education and orientation, to monitor and reduce the risk;

**Penal/criminal area:** children and youths in the First care centres for pre-trial detention measures, in the juvenile facilities or in social services' custody. Various activities are put in place: daytime interventions, social mediation with the families and the communities, peer education, entertainment, linguistic and cultural mediation, legal counselling.

**Social and family mediation:** mediation is a way of solving conflict, with the intervention of a third impartial actor who intervenes between the ones directly involved, in order to find a satisfying solution for both parties. It can be applied in any context, and social and family mediation aims at supporting children and youths who live in particularly disadvantaged families (economic support, psychosocial assistance, ...), and at supporting their social integration. This method is in fact very effective with migrants and unaccompanied children.



## **Interventions to prevent school dropouts:**

this category comprises all the interventions aimed at improving learning conditions, working on children and teachers' motivation, developing scholastic orientation and professional practical trainings, enhancing and ameliorating the educational proposal for children and youths, investing more resources in both human resources (teachers and their trainings) and structures.

The Ministry of Public Education, University and Research established a collaboration with the Ministry for the Youth Policies and Sportive Activities for drafting and implementing projects on scholastic sportive activities

The aim is to involve children into physical activities according to their specific needs, age and development, teaching the sport values.

Together with this Directive, the 30th January 2007 the 'Guidelines on innovative projects for physical and sportive activities in areas at risk' allocated a budget of 900.000 euro. The aim of this budget was to finance projects that use sport to rehabilitate and re-educate children and adolescents "at risk", teaching how to build relationships, how to play in team and to live competition in a healthy way. For this reason, the national scholastic system in Italy offers the activity of the 'Sportive Scholastic Games' (Giochi Sportivi Studenteschi, GSS). Children and youths are encouraged to choose among some disciplines the one they are more suitable for, and the school provides them with the structures and after-hours classes. GSS. promote the inclusion of marginalized and at-risk children, integrating the sportive activities with other educative and training proposals.

Nevertheless, given the little offer on a national level of coordination on this matter, the General Comment of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 18.03.2013 n.17 on art.31 of the CRC, states that in Italy the right to play is not thoroughly granted, despite a strong commitment from institutions and third sector.

Another interesting project is "Let's paint the city' in Veneto: any youth who wants to participate to the contest, youths from schools together with youths reported by the authorities and young artists.

**Why:** promoting young writers' creativity in the appropriate locations, training youths to respect others' property and improving the conditions of some degraded areas of the city



**How:** contest with prizes for artistic projects and ideas aimed to upgrade some degraded areas and/or structures. Some well-known artists and writers participate also as trainers for peer-education.

### **In conclusion there must be:**

- focus on categories of particularly vulnerable children;
- attention to fundamental principles of non-discrimination and children participation;
- implementation of comprehensive programme and differentiation of the activities proposed;
- sustainability of the project is deemed extremely important over all, with continuation of a single project over the years, with the same methodology to testify its success formula.

