



## **A. Cooperation**

In 2019 Ventotene obtained the DIPLOMA D'EUROPA and spread the news everywhere and was recognized as a CITY of Culture 2019 of the Lazio Region, which is a way to decline the European policy that led to designating the cities of European culture, as Matera.

The strategic choice that the municipal administration has made with regard to twinning was therefore not to establish a privileged relationship with one or two European municipalities, but to establish itself as a partner for the municipalities of all European countries. In essence, Ventotene intended to be a symbolic place for Europe and for all European countries that find on it the reason for the constitution of Europe and the roots from which it was born.

On the basis of this choice, the Administration has also carried out an internal action to be up to the role it has intended to play and to constitute even today a coherent example of the application of European policies on the most significant issues: immigration, the environment, social issues, reception, interculturality, youth, training and education in Europe, the relationship with other countries in Asia and Africa.

It also intended to reread history with an approach that justifies the existence of Europe as an antidote to the war and deprivation of freedom that was its product and of which the Confino is the most concrete example. For this reason, it has woven a relationship with its neighboring territories (the Cassinate: territory around Cassino) where the sign of war is indelible and is witnessed not only by the destruction still visible in the many war cemeteries present.

This approach is intended to demonstrate that freedom cannot be suffocated for a long time and that punishments do not always suggest revenge, as suggested by the novel by the Count of Montecristo, but sometimes indicate how to prevent them from affecting other people unaware of the danger.

On the level of the role of exemplification of European policies, Ventotene has worked to activate:

### **1. A strong environmental policy**

Attention to the Marine Reserve has grown and funding has been obtained from the Ministry of the Environment to set up an environmental education structure that will be set up in the multipurpose room of the island.

The Migration Museum and Ornithological Observatory for the Ringing of Migratory Birds has been strengthened with regional funding in conjunction with the Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA).

A specific provision has been issued for the application of a Plastic Free policy.

A specific "environmental tax" has been issued for recreational craft stationed in the port of Ventotene.

Research was carried out to verify the quality of the marine flora and fauna in front of the coast to correct the desalination plant installed on the island.

An agreement has been made with to protect the birth of sea turtles

### **2. A political intelligence of the reception**

A Family House was welcomed on the island to help some women (mothers and daughters) to recover a critical past and to integrate with the island community.

More generally, the island was open to all those who wanted to come to the island to rediscover the roots from which Europe was born and to bring to Europe Ventotene and what it symbolizes.

In 2019 Ventotene hosted the administrators of the Italian municipalities of the ANCI Association who wanted to study Europe and discuss the role to be played (TRAINING CAMP ANCI and Lazio Region).

In the same year Ventotene joined the Association of Municipalities WELCOME through which Ventotene is taken as an example in all municipalities members as a symbol of Europe

### **3. A sensitive policy to intervene on social distress**

Considering that for most of the year on the island remain few inhabitants and often the sea conditions do not allow to reach the land, there are some cases of depression that sometimes lead to suicide.

In this case, research has been carried out with Democratic Psychiatry to understand the causes of this phenomenon, which is also present in many so-called "inland areas" of the country and, in particular, in the small islands of the world.

### **4. A very strong support action for European education and training**

Ventotene has invested a great deal in this area, working on two fronts: strengthening and preparing the municipal structure for its own training and developing agreements and collaborations with bodies, associations and organisations with the aim of bringing young people from all parts of Europe to the island (see Erasmus), but also with all those people who have significant roles in society (teachers, administrators, scholars, trade unionists, writers, journalists, etc.) who can play a role in taking Europe forward "from below" to make people understand the real reason for its existence.

On the first floor, the "Memorable Year Project", launched in May 2019, served both to train the young people of the island, but also to prepare the municipal structure.

On the second level the result achieved is demonstrated by the number of activities that have been carried out on the island.

The activities carried out in this regard are described below.

#### **1. Consolidation of the Europe Table**

The Europe Table was proposed in September 2017 and tested in September 2018. In 2019 it was structurally established. They are part of it:

- the European Federalist Movement,
- the Italian Council of the European Movement,
- the School of Europe,
- the Ventotene Association for Europe,
- the Association of European Studies,
- the Institute of Federalist Studies Altiero Spinelli,
- the Institute for Research on Training Intervention,
- the study centre on the Internment of Ventotene and Santo Stefano.



In the meeting of the Table held on 27 September 2019, as in the previous year, the general guidelines were outlined for developing an integrated action between the various actors on European Education valid in the coming years and in particular for 2020, but also such as to direct the new European Programming 2021-2027.

## 2. Enrichment of the historical heritage in order to make it more usable

Showing what happened in Ventotene during the period of the “Confino” and allowing the deepening of the motivations that led a group of people from different political backgrounds to write the famous “Manifesto” requires not only a thorough historical research, but also the use of appropriate means to make as tangible as possible the history lived, the characters who produced it, the social context in which it developed, until you relive the emotions of that situation.

Today this is possible with the technological means available.

For Ventotene this reconstruction is indispensable because for a certain period of history the population is as if it had wanted to forget the past in which it was itself both a jailer and a prisoner. The sheds that housed the confined people were demolished and replaced with a sports field (only a piece of the city walls remains bordered by the gravestones of famous men), the garages located along the path where they could walk the confined people has disappeared (only two remained hidden).

Therefore, action was taken on two fronts:

1. A specific space has been allocated to the Historical Archive for the Confino of Ventotene and Santo Stefano and its documentation on the history of the Confino and the Confined people has been increased. Regional funding has also acquired to bring some files present at the Cassino prison in Ventotene and the Convention of 27.01.2016 between the Municipality of Ventotene and a group of Italian Institutions and Universities interested in historical archives has been confirmed; this group includes:
  - a. ADIR *The Other Right*. Inter-university research centre on prison, deviance, marginality and migration governance
  - b. Ministry of Justice, Prison Administration Department
  - c. University of Milan
  - d. Regione Campania
  - e. The municipality of Salluzzo.



2. A further project has then been activated to make more "emotional" the combination of intentions, characters, cultures and passions that led to the writing of the Ventotene Manifesto "For a free and united Europe". In September, a theatre company was hosted on the island to stage the story of those who wrote the manifesto, in order to make a film that is now available to all those who travel to the island attracted by that story.



3. We are also working on the creation of a multimedia system that allows students and other visitors to the island to relive the life of the Confined people who built on the island the idea of Europe until the visit to the tomb of Altiero Spinelli who rests in the cemetery near the archaeological remains of the Villa where Julia, the daughter of Augustus, was segregated.



### 3. Preparation of the local community for reception

The work on the local community is quite challenging. The strategy of making the Island the symbol of Europe and a warning to flee the war and seek Peace, with the slogan: "Ventotene: Island of Peace Gate of Europe", developed with a program of "participatory planning" in 2016, is pursued with tenacity. It is partly hindered by political conflicts that animate the existing factions and partly by the culture oriented for more than seventy years on different issues, those of poverty and reconstruction and then of summer tourism.

During these years, from 2017 onwards, efforts have been made to involve the local community in the cultural initiatives promoted on the island and inspired by Europe and, conversely, we have asked those who intend to organize such events on the island to take into account how to involve the local community and help it to defend the European identity of the island.

During 2019, also thanks to the recognition of the Diploma of Europe in Ventotene, a path of active involvement was therefore activated. In particular, in September 2019, on the occasion of the presence on the island of the federalist seminar organized by the Institute of Federalist Studies Altiero Spinelli and the European Federalist Movement, many opportunities for entertainment were organized in the town square (Piazza Castello) with book presentations, debates on European education, music from different European countries, collective dinners under the banner of Europe.

Another action, the results of which will be seen in the longer term, is that carried out on the children of the island, from childhood to primary school.

For this part of the population, the City of Ventotene has activated the program called "the Memorable Year" with which they have taught English to children, have activated workshops to let them know more about the history that led to Europe and the characteristics of the territory that make it unique.

Next year we plan to carry out a comprehensive language training on all the islanders, starting with those who are already in direct contact with the public.



#### 4. Strengthening communication tools

In 2019, the island of Ventotene, also as a result of the recognition of the Diploma of Europe, consolidated its image synthetically represented by the slogan "Ventotene, Island of Peace - Gate of Europe". The municipal administration has in fact built a **new website** dedicated specifically to the history of the Confinio and the initiatives carried out and to be carried out on the island and carried out and to be carried out outside the island, but in collaboration with it. The website is located at <http://www.ventoteneisolamemorabile.it>

It is included in the institutional website <http://www.comune.ventotene.it>.

This responds to the need to represent in more detail the initiatives carried out on the island and by the island for the purposes of the European message inherent in the pages of the Manifesto "For a free and united Europe".

In fact, in it there is a module entirely dedicated to the Confinio and another dedicated to the initiatives carried out under the banner of Europe, all placed in a context that allows those who come to the island, to deepen their knowledge of the relationship between the Confinio and Europe, to enjoy the naturalistic and historical heritage that characterizes the Island of Ventotene.

Next to the website there is a **Facebook page** that allows you to quickly reach a variety of about the initiatives undertaken by the the name of the promotion of values and the Both instruments constitute a way, not only where the idea of Europe was configured, but establishing relationships with other the two tools make it possible to reach an interest communities and individuals who, in heritage existing, decide to organize a stay on insights.



Il grido dei giovani in piazza questa sera è stato: "Federazione Europea Subito!!!"



**5. Landing on the Continent to bring the idea of Europe, which Ventotene symbolizes, to the places that wanted to forget the atrocities of the war and the reasons that generated it**

While the action to attract people to the island and satisfy their desire to know the history of the birth of the idea of Europe has developed, in 2019 a further strategy was pursued, that of taking Ventotene, as the individual of Europe, off the island starting from the places of remembrance. We started with the area of Cassino and its surroundings and now we plan to continue intervening in other symbolic places in Italy and abroad.



In particular, also thanks to a small European funding granted by the Regional Council of the Lazio Region, it was possible for Ventotene to compose a concertation table with the presence of the University of Cassino and Southern Lazio, five High Schools of Cassino, the municipalities of Cassino and surroundings, the Europeanist Movements (MFE and CIME), the European Commission in Italy and local associations and launch an educational program that called **EVICAM (Europe to live and walk)** and that was implemented in the spring of 2019. Almost 500 young people, including high schools and universities, were involved.



Several working groups have been formed and the projects have been presented in the Aula Magna of the University in the presence of all the professors and presidents of the Europeanist Movements (Giorgio Anselmi and Pier Virgilio Dastoli, as well as the rector and mayor of Ventotene Gerardo Santomauro.

Among the projects, a particularly significant one was that of a group of young people from the Liceo artistico of Cassino who set to music the thoughts of Altero Spinelli as he left the island of Ventotene, once the Confinio was closed, after the end of the war.

The project has been awarded by the Italian Association of Trainers (AIF) and recognized as being of national importance. In October 2019, the Award was presented at the Congress of Innovation in the Italian Public Administration in Trento.



It was therefore another opportunity to talk about European education, but also to show with which METHODOLOGY to carry out effective training in this area.

The Methodology is that of *Formazione intervento*® a registered trademark and protected by the **Research Institute on Training Intervention** in Rome (IRIFI). With this Institute, the municipality of Ventotene signed an agreement on March 30, 2019.



On September 4th in Ventotene those same young people came to sing the song in the central square of



Ventotene under the Town Hall in front of the citizens present and the young people who were in Ventotene to follow the **Federalist Seminary**, where **Romano Prodi** and **Mario Monti** were present.

In September 2019, on the occasion of the **European Researchers' Night**, it was possible to bring together in Gaeta the schools that participated in the EVICAM Project that were able to follow using a Skype session the meeting of the TABLE EUROPE in Ventotene and be informed of all the training initiatives that the members of the table plan to implement in 2020.



**B. European events**

During the year, numerous events were organized to promote and spread the European idea, its values and also its difficulties in holding and organizing, also considering the political difficulties that have characterized the Italian Government and the same majority that guides it.

Two central appointments that are repeated every year are:

- The event of May 5, a date that is remembered and celebrated by making it coincide with the presence in Ventotene of European schools that are gathered on the island to attend the program organized by the School of Europe.



- The federalist seminar that is being held in Ventotene in the first week of September and that in 2019 was developed from 1 to 6 September. The 2019 edition is the thirty-eighth and is now a historic event where Italian and European students, teachers, witnesses, institutional representatives, men of culture, writers, academics, scholars, etc. meet on the island. Also this year the Seminar has gone very well, prominent people have intervened and Ventotene has taken care of the involvement of the community on the island (citizens and tourists) until the end of what is now an event not to be missed that is the dinner in Piazza Castello at the MENSA E, the European canteen of Spinelli properly prepared in the square and open to all guests of the island.



Alongside these two central events, many other initiatives have been organized, which we have listed in chronological order and which are represented in great detail on the municipal website and even more so on the sub-site "Ventotene - Memorable Island".

- Annex 1 - The School of Europe**
- Annex 2 - Festival for an Inclusive Europe and the Mediterranean**
- Annex 3 - Giuseppe Di Vittorio and anti-fascism**
- Annex 4 - Europa Festival**
- Annex 5 - The torch of Europe**
- Annex 6 - Which union for which Europe ?**
- Annex 7 - Which Parliament for the European Union ?**

- Annex 8 - Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies**
- Annex 9 - Natalonga for Europe**
- Annex 10 - Federalist Seminar**
- Annex 11 - Evenings in Europa Square**
- Annex 12 - Circular Economy**
- Annex 13 - Mayors for Europe**
- Annex 14 - ONE MEMORABLE YEAR - Island Laboratory of Europe (Primary students Formia-Ventotene)**

See Annex Initiatives

### C. European and international solidarity

The municipality of Ventotene has followed the issue of migration very closely and the current administration has also tried to represent the willingness of the island to host those migrants in need of asylum.

However, the municipality had to give up at the moment because of the reaction of some families on the island. Nevertheless, it began to host "family homes" both to testify to the values of hospitality that must increasingly characterize the island and to populate the territory and give way to the school to function, considering that the lack of pupils forces the school to close and families with small children to emigrate to Formia and its surroundings.

On a more general level, the municipality of Ventotene is activating a "Network of the Municipalities of the Confinio" to recover an overall history of the phenomenon linked to the deprivation of liberty by totalitarian regimes.

For these objectives, a relationship has already been established with the Tremiti Island (Puglia) and the Aeolian Islands (Sicily). In the course of 2020, the Network will be extended to all the other island and mountain localities where the intellectuals opposed to the fascist regime were confined, and then to some European cities, symbols of resistance to the regimes.

At the same time, contacts have already been made with Poland: Warsaw and the neighbouring municipalities through the Italian Embassy in Warsaw and through the Italian Committee abroad, with which there has already been a fruitful collaboration on the occasion of the "Made in Italy" project with the municipality of Santi Cosma e Damiano, with which Ventotene collaborates fruitfully.

With the municipalities to which we refer (Blonje, Leszno, Stare Babice, Terezin, etc.) a memorandum of understanding was stipulated in September 2015 with the municipalities of the territory where the Gustav Line passed (Cassino and neighboring municipalities) to define a program of cultural exchanges on resistance.



Ventotene plans to offer all of them the opportunity to visit the history of the Confinio in Ventotene and the historical archive where the memories about the writing of the Manifesto are kept. On the other hand, the exchange between the historical archives of Ventotene and Warsaw would be of great interest not only for the two countries (Italy and Poland), but also for the whole of Europe.

At the last meeting of the Board of Directors of the Institute of Federalist Studies Altiero Spinelli (December 13, 2019) it was decided to build the ALTIERO SPINELLI WAY from Ventotene to Brussels and develop all

those initiatives useful for accreditation by the Council of Europe. This will induce all the municipalities that have registered a presence and an activity connected to the Federalist Movement that he has formed to connect with each other and to prepare an appropriate way to represent the Historical WAY that has developed in parallel.

In particular Ventotene would like to design and promote a "Way" whose stages are constituted by the places where the founding fathers of the European Union lived and/or worked.

The first seven who believed in a common dream are: two Italians (Altiero Spinelli and Alcide De Gasperi), two French (Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman), a German (Konrad Adenauer), a Luxembourger (Joseph Beck) and a Belgian (Paul Henri Spaak).

To these can be added: Winston Churchill (United Kingdom), Walter Hallstein (Germany), Sicco Leendert Mansholt (Netherlands) and Jan Willem Beyen (Netherlands).

Ventotene intends to promote a "Way" between the cities where there is a trace of these characters. In some cases it is already possible to find "house/museum" dedicated to them (De Gasperi, Monnet, ecc.); in others there is only the memory of their presence, but it is possible to build an "ad hoc museum", as the Administration of the Municipality of Ventotene intends to do.

#### D. Membership in organizations of local authorities

Ventotene is a municipality that is part of the Province of Latina which is one of the provinces of Lazio. Together with these two bodies and the Europeanist Movements, it constitutes "the Institute of Federalist Studies "Altiero Spinelli". Together with the Lazio Region, the Province of Latina and the Federalist Movements (European Federalist Movement and the Italian Council of the European Movement). The institute was proposed by Altiero Spinelli to continue the work he had undertaken for the establishment of a federated Europe. The Institute's headquarters are in Ventotene.

This has made it possible to organize the federalist seminar for young Italians and Europeans on the island of Ventotene for the past 38 years.

Its participation in the Board of Directors of the Institute allows Ventotene to plan initiatives of national and European value and to be present in all those debates of European value that are developed in Italy and Europe. This also led to the decision to visit the European capitals and to meet the Heads of State to whom the Mayor Santomauro personally handed over the Ventotene Manifesto in a precious package. In 2018 the box was handed over to the French President and in 2019 it was handed over to President Mattarella. In 2020 it is expected to be handed over to the Polish President if the ongoing negotiations on the extension of the Memorandum of Understanding in place for the Municipalities of Cassinate also in Ventotene are concluded.

Through specific Conventions, Ventotene can also count on the contribution of each of the Associations that deal with Europe and whose representatives sit on the EUROPA TABLE established in 2018.

The Municipality of Ventotene has in fact already signed an agreement with:

- the School of Europe,
- the Italian Council of the European Movement,
- the European Federalist Movement,
- the Institute for Research on Training Intervention,
- the Cassino University for the EVICAM program
- the Erasmus program for the student in Cassino ,
- the "Sarzi Family" Foundation for Ernesto Rossi's puppets ([www.fondazionefamgliasarzi.it](http://www.fondazionefamgliasarzi.it))

And others are under evaluation



- Reggio Children for the education of children in childhood ([www.reggiocldren.it](http://www.reggiocldren.it)),
- United network for training students on the functioning of the European Parliament (1600 student in one year) ([www.unitednetwork.it](http://www.unitednetwork.it)).

In order to ensure that the promotion of the island also allows for an adequate response to the influx of European scholars, young people, officials and politicians to the island, two important initiatives are under way:

- renovation of hotels on the island, put up sometimes for auction, to increase reception capacity,
- the recovery of the Santo Stefano Prison so as to transform it partly into a historical museum and partly into a high level European School. In this regard, the Italian Government has allocated 70 million euros for the recovery of the structure and its transformation.

Finally, the Lazio Region, Regional Council, International Affairs Commission, proposed in November 2019 the promulgation of a law that makes the island of Ventotene "a symbol of Europe".

The proposal was accepted by the Regional Commission and will be promulgated shortly.

