INFIELD, tutti in campo!

Foto di Marcello Scopelliti
INFIELD, tutti in campo!

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Thousands each year the youth from the Punjab region of India that migrate to Europe, and Italy is one of the main destinations. The second biggest Indian community of Italy is located in the district of Latina (Lazio region, Centre of Italy), in a zone called “Agro Pontino” (once Pontine Marshes). The reason that leaded the first Indians to come in that specific area is strictly connected to the particular agricultural vocation of the Agro Pontino. Without their contribution, the agricultural sector, fundamental for the subsistence of the Agro Pontino economy, would be certainly in crisis with economic, work and social consequences for the territory.

Unfortunately, their strong presence in the agricultural sector does not match with the integration into the social life. ISTAT data, at December 31, 2012, report that in Italy the number of Indian immigrants residing nearly 130 000 units. some numbers
It is therefore necessary to activate on the territory a framework of services that aim to give to the Indian community the necessary tools able to increase their autonomy and to stimulate their integration into the social life while maintaining the right relationship with their traditions and origins.

**NUMBERS**

ISTAT datas, at December 31, 2012, report that the number of Indian immigrants residing in Italy nearly the 130,000 units.

The District of Latina, with the municipalities of Terracina, Sabaudia, Cisterna, Fondi, Aprilia e Pontinia guests the second biggest Indian community of Italy.

Currently, the Register Office of the Municipality of Pontinia recorded a total of 1,110 Indian citizens who, in percentage terms, represent almost 10% of the total population (14,839 inhabitants) and almost all of the immigrants registered.

Pontinia, established in 1935 in the heart of the Agro Pontino as part of the project which drained the Pontine Marshes and converted them to agriculture, in the 2015 turn on is 80th anniversary.

Since its birth, Pontinia represent a model of social integration within local population and migrants from all over Italy.

The goal that local institutions and citizens want to achieve is to integrate the Indian community which for years lives and work in the territory.

One of the most recognized and effective tools of cultural integration is the sport.

Pontinia is not exception to this rule and since always sport plays a key role in the life of the local community.

The 44 sporting associations and more than 1500 athletes show it clearly.
The strength of this sports movement has found voice through the recent establishment of the “Council of Sport”, which supports it and in which it is recognized.

The large number of practitioners the sports and the simultaneous need of space for practicing the sport activity, meets the need to integrate the apparent "desire of sports" of the Indian community.

In confirmation of this trend, since several years, every Sunday, a large number of Indian citizens, climb over the fence of the local high school for getting into the Handball pitch and playing Cricket.

An unsuitable space, the lack of external protections and the total absence of the security distances from the street makes the practice of Cricket a dangerous activity for players and passers.

In fact, the Handball pitch is totally inappropriate as:

- Its reduced dimensions, compare to the Cricket pitch’s minimum dimensions, makes the activity impracticable for the large numbers of practitioners;
- the Handball pitch is not made on the grass but entirely on a cement surface;
- It is placed nearby a busy street making dangerous the passing of drivers, motorists and passers;
- does not present any main access, forcing the practitioners to climb over the fence as the school is close in Sunday.

In this perspective, the Cricket is not seen as a moment of social integration but as an activity performed by a minority marginalized.

For this reason, the construction of a multifunctional Cricket pitch give the opportunity to the Indian community to preserve and foster their traditional sport activity and to the Italian community.

At the same time the Indian community has the opportunity to approach to the other sport activities practiced in Pontinia.
Objectives

- Create a regular Cricket pitch, multifunctional for other sports;
- Foster the social integration of the Indian community residing in the Agro Pontino;
- Preserve the Indian cultural identity and foster its diffusion among the second generations;
- Promote the spread of physical activity among the female Indian population;
- Create an aggregation center for Indians residing in Pontinia, residing in the neighbouring cities and for all the citizens;
- Enhance the Cricket practice;
- Foster the diffusion of the different sport activities among the Indian community;
- Extend and promote the sporting association activities over the ordinary period (September – June) with the establishment of Summer Camps able to create youth job opportunities;
- Requilify the popular quarter “Gescal” creating an aggregation center where youngsters and families can share moment of sport and cultural enrichment.
- Endorsement of the RIGHT OF PLAY for all.

Target group

- The Indian and Italian communities residing in the Municipality of Pontinia and the neighbouring towns;
- The sporting associations operating in the municipality.

Project partners description

Associazione GAP works on its territory, developing projects and innovative ideas to be proposed to the municipal administration with the aim of participating in provincial, regional, national and European call for proposals.

IlChinino is an association and famous local magazine working in the municipality of Pontinia. It also works on social promotion and information development.
Associazione PerCorsi is a No profit organization that helps hundreds of Indians citizens to acquire the Italian VISA through the organization of Italian language courses.

### Expected outcomes

- Construction of the multifunctional Cricket pitch
- Establishment of Pontinia Cricket Club
  
  **(Mission Complete! The last 6th of May has been established the Pontinia Cricket Club - ASD).**
- Organization of a Cricket district tournament **(Mission Complete! The last 28th of June has been organized the “I Federal Cricket Tournament - City of Pontinia” attended by ten “informal” cricket team from all the district of Latina).**
- Diffusion of the Cricket among the Italian community and the other foreign community residing in Pontinia **(Mission in progress! The INFIELD Project Board is waiting to start a cricket course in primary school and secondary lower school).**

### Foreseen project duration

| 1st January 2015 – 31 December 2016 |

### Project Partners

- Associazione Culturale “Percorsi” (Pontinia)
- Associazione G.A.P. : Generation, Activities, Projects (Pontinia)
- Associazione “il Chinino” (Pontinia)
- Council of Sport – Municipality of Pontinia

### Support Partners

- Municipality of Pontinia
- Embassy of India
- Italian Cricket Federation
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Site of the multifunctional Cricket pitch
Detail of the multifunctional Cricket pitch