

## **ANTI-MAFIA INITIATIVES IN GERMANY**

*A first study investigating the various dimensions of German society in their engagement against Italian mafias*

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### **Abstract**

Current research suggests that the expansion of Italian mafia groups in Germany is taking place almost completely unnoticed, as neither the state and regional institutions, nor civil society and the media are giving sufficient attention to the issue. The purpose of the paper is to identify and map the numerous organizations and events that have taken place in recent years, in an attempt to analyse the dimension and the dynamics of the anti-mafia movement in Germany. Taken together, these results suggest that there are many individuals and groups that are doing something in the anti-mafia field, even if they are not always reaching an adequate level of efficacy.

**Keywords:** Germany, Anti-mafia movement, Mafia? Nein, Danke! e.V., Anti-mafia education, Journalism

### **Introduction**

Current research appears to validate the view that the expansion of Italian mafia groups in Germany is taking place almost completely unnoticed. Numerous studies and experts have indicated that neither the state and regional institutions, nor civil society and the media are giving sufficient attention to the issue. Folkloristic aspects of Italian mafia groups are cherished by the population, which retains a superficial and distorted image of criminal organizations. In this climate, mafia groups, especially from the Calabrian 'ndrangheta can, undisturbed, develop their businesses comprised of money laundering, smuggling, drugs and other criminal activities. In this context, it is particularly worthwhile to consider the initiatives existing in Germany to contrast this attitude. As there seems to be no other academic study on this topic, this research is the result of a first data collection related to the

presence of anti-mafia initiatives in Germany. The goal is to start identifying and mapping the numerous organizations and events that have taken place in recent years, in an attempt to analyse the dimension and the dynamics of the anti-mafia movement in Germany. This article wants to be a starting point for further analysis, without demanding completeness. The essay has been organised first with a methodological introduction, followed by seven thematic paragraphs describing the various dimensions of the anti-mafia initiatives. Some overall observations on the nature of the initiatives and their geographical distribution conclude the paper.

### **Methodology and sources**

The research tries to identify as many initiatives as possible that took place in Germany on topics related to mafia and anti-mafia, with the specific focus on Italian mafias. It is therefore important to specify that the data presented in this article regard exclusively the initiatives that either faced the topic of the Italian mafia and anti-mafia in Italy, or faced the problem of the Italian mafias in German territories and in non-traditional areas. Events focusing on other kind of mafias, as well as other initiatives against organised crime (OC) in general, could not be considered in this specific research. It is beyond the scope of this study to examine the whole range of criminal organisations active in Germany and the eventual social reactions they triggered<sup>1</sup>.

Data for this study were collected using different methods. The information about school and university activities were gathered first through a wide internet based research, which provided a general overview and the contacts of the people in charge of these projects in the universities. The online research was followed by an extensive e-mail campaign, with which the aforementioned contacted people were invited to provide information about anti-mafia initiatives in their organisations,

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<sup>1</sup> For a complete overview of the criminal organisations active in Germany, see the annual report of the German Federal Police available online: [www.bka.de/DE/AktuelleInformationen/aktuelleinformationen\\_node.html](http://www.bka.de/DE/AktuelleInformationen/aktuelleinformationen_node.html) [all links given in this article were checked and accessed on the 23/10/2017].

and were asked to forward the request to other potentially interested individuals. Concerning the contacts with schools, which are not easily traceable via internet, the support of the *ADI* – the association of Italian teachers in Germany – proved to be very effective. A number of written and oral interviews has also followed the first contacts. In particular, the Skype interview with Eva Klose provided useful insights in the development of the initiative *Gelebte Zivilcourage*, and the telephone interview with Dario Becci traced an overview of the activities in Mannheim<sup>2</sup>.

The paragraphs dedicated to civil society, art and culture, economic activities and state initiatives are the result of three years personal commitment of the author with the association *Mafia? Nein, Danke! e.V. (MND)* and it can be seen as a form of active participant observation<sup>3</sup>. The following pieces of information have been collected in countless informal interviews and conversations with the members of the association, in particular with Luigino Giustozzi (member of the board for many years), Laura Garavini (founding member of the initiative), Bernd Finger (former police chief, partner of *MND* from the beginning), Sandro Mattioli (current *MND* chairman) and with other volunteers and supporters of the association. Many data come from the internal archive of the association, both the hard-copy and the online ones, where information about history, events and other relevant documents are stored. Some of the external initiatives have been identified thanks to suggestions received after the e-mail campaign or directly with the internet-based research<sup>4</sup>. Special thanks go to all the people who dedicated some of their time to answer to the request of information.

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<sup>2</sup> The interviews followed the semi structured interview schemes as, among others, presented by Beth L. Leech, *Asking Questions: Techniques for Semi structured Interviews*, in "Political Science and Politics", Vol. 35, N. 4, 2002, pp. 665-668.

For a detailed study on the problematics related to telephone and Skype interviews, see: Paul Hanna, *Using internet technologies (such as Skype) as a research medium: a research note*, in "Qualitative Research", 2012, vol. 12(2), pp. 239-242 and also Amanda Holt, *Using the telephone for narrative interviewing: a research note*, in "Qualitative Research", 2010, vol. 10(1), pp. 113-121.

<sup>3</sup> For some reflections about the problematics related to participant observation in social movements, see: Philip Balsiger, Alexandre Lambelet, *Participant Observation*, in *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Research*, (ed.) Donatella della Porta, Oxford Scholarship Online, Oxford, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Some insights about the methodological problems related to collecting and archiving online data about social movements can be found in: Lorenzo Mosca, *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Online Research*, in *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Research*, (ed.) Donatella della Porta, Oxford Scholarship Online, Oxford, 2014.

The material used in the paragraph about journalism comes from numerous informal interviews and conversations had with Sandro Mattioli, and from the speeches of two direct protagonists Axel Hemmerling and Petra Reski in occasion of two conferences, one in Berlin and another in Hanover in 2017. Other information has been collected online through the blogs of the journalists and newspaper articles.

As suggested in the introduction, due to practical constraints, this paper cannot provide a comprehensive review of all the anti-mafia initiatives that took place in Germany.

## **The structure of anti-mafia initiatives in Germany**

For the purpose of organising the collected information, the initiatives will be presented in seven main categories. This may not always be representative, as it has been observed that some key people and organisations are involved in more than one activity sector. The categories were created in order to help to get a wider overview over the initiative's distribution but are neither exclusive nor exhaustive<sup>5</sup>.

## **Schools**

A growing body of literature has investigated the importance and the impact that anti-mafia education has on Italian youth and schools<sup>6</sup>. Over the past decades, an increasing amount of pedagogical material and structured approaches has been

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<sup>5</sup> The readers are invited to contact the author and inform about any activities, which were not included in this research.

<sup>6</sup> See the book: Umberto Santino, *Storia del Movimento Antimafia. Dalla lotta di classe all'impegno civile*, Editori Riuniti University Press, 2010 and also Nando dalla Chiesa, *La scelta Libera. Giovani nel movimento antimafia*, Edizioni Gruppo Abele, Torino, 2014.

In particular, the research institute CROSS at the University of Milan, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, University and Research, is doing a research aiming at tracing the development of the anti-mafia education at schools, in the years 1980-2013, more information on [www.cross.unimi.it](http://www.cross.unimi.it).

developing in this field. In many Italian schools, the topic is becoming part of the yearly planning, either with workshop held by external experts and volunteers or as part of the normal school programs taught by school teachers. The relevance of the students' participation in all level of education is nowadays widely recognised as one of the most effective ways to contrast the "mafia culture", and the intense work of thousands of engaged teachers and volunteers in these activities is among the best practices that the Italian anti-mafia movement can share<sup>7</sup>.

Considering the different historical and social background, the same dissemination in Germany cannot be expected. However, the conducted research shows that there are a number of significant experiences also in Germany, in specific related to the teaching of Italian language. In the course of the research process, the collection of large-scale information about school activities was hindered by the federal structure of education in Germany. This means that school programs, for all subjects, are differently defined in each federal state and there is no common database to consult. The support of the association of Italian teachers in Germany (*ADI - Associazione Docenti di Italiano in Germania*<sup>8</sup>) was therefore very useful, as it provided a number of useful contacts and information.

The first important outcome of the inquiry was to discover that anti-mafia topics are part of Italian language school programs in at least four counties, namely in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia and Hesse. This aspect becomes even more relevant if we consider that these are the most populated counties in Germany, where almost 60% of the German population lives<sup>9</sup>, and where the Italian mafias are especially settled.

The most significant example of anti-mafia in the school sector is represented by the initiative *Gelebte Zivilcourage* (Living Civil Courage), founded by a group of

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<sup>7</sup> Among the many interesting pedagogical Italian experiences could be named: Danilo Dolci, don Milani, Saveria Antiochia, Antonino Caponnetto, don Padre Puglisi, the organisation I Maestri di Strada. For more information see: Augusto Cavadi, *A scuola di antimafia*, Di Girolamo, 2007 and the already mentioned books of Umberto Santino and Nando dalla Chiesa.

<sup>8</sup> The website of the ADI is: [adi-germania.org](http://adi-germania.org)

<sup>9</sup> Source: Statista – Bevölkerung - Einwohnerzahl der Bundesländer in Deutschland am 31. Dezember 2015 (in 1.000).  
[de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/71085/umfrage/verteilung-der-einwohnerzahl-nach-bundeslaendern/](https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/71085/umfrage/verteilung-der-einwohnerzahl-nach-bundeslaendern/)

secondary school teachers of Italian language in the region Baden-Württemberg. One of their founders, Eva Klose, said in an interview that the ethic-pedagogic project was first triggered by the direct interest of students, who wanted to understand better the mafia phenomenon inspired by famous movies, above all “The Godfather”. The perception of the students was deeply shaped by media (mis)representation, and the teachers felt the need of tackling the topic with accuracy and reliable information, in order to let students understand newspapers and news reports. Their first event was the presentation in 2009, in the Stuttgart public library, of the book *Mafia. Von Paten, Pizzerien und falschen Priestern* by Petra Reski – who will be introduced later – which was joined by three hundred interested students. The high participation was followed by further engagement of the teachers, who organised a study trip to southern Italy to get to know the Italian anti-mafia movement. The organisation required two years and the trip took place in 2012. The small group of German teachers met a number of main figures of the Sicilian anti-mafia movement and got a first-hand experience on the activities carried out in Italy by teachers, activists, social cooperatives members which work on confiscated goods and experts. As Eva Klose suggested in the interview, they discovered the “other Italy”, the one that is not usually represented in the media. This experience led to the stable constitution of *Gelebte Zivilcourage*. In the past years, the group has been organising numerous events for students and for the public, and produced a collection of pedagogic material – a 157-pages pamphlet – distributed to all Italian teachers in Baden-Württemberg. They also plan to organise a new study trip to Southern Italy in 2018.

According to this information, it is interesting to note that *Gelebte Zivilcourage* offers a structured program on mafias and anti-mafia, while in most of the other cases, even when some thematic movies or books are part of the school program, there is a lack of continuity and deeper understanding of the complexity of the phenomena. Nevertheless, there has been in the last years an attempt to bring to German schools some messages from the Italian anti-mafia movement with single events. Many examples can be found in the city of Berlin, where the association *MND* – later analysed – brought numerous Italian guests to the primary and secondary bilingual

schools of the city. Another example is the *International Anti-mafia Caravan*, an Italian project first founded by the association *Arci* together with *Libera*, *Avviso Pubblico*<sup>10</sup>, and three labour unions, which travelled throughout Italy to share workshops on civil rights, active citizenship, legality, social justice, fight against mafias and corruption. In 2004, the project became international and in 2015-17 the caravan arrived in Germany with the support of the association *MND*, organising short meetings with the students of some schools around Munich, Berlin, Hamburg, Cologne, Dortmund, Dusseldorf and Frankfurt.

Besides the established and meaningful example of *Gelebte Zivilcourage*, the anti-mafia education in German schools is often left to individual teachers. With the inquiry emerged that some of them are particularly committed to this topic. For instance, the Oswald-Von-Nell-Breuning Schule, in the Rödermark region, thanks to the commitment of the Italian teacher Maurella Carbone started a cooperation with a secondary school of Palermo, Sicily. After a long preparation in class about the history of mafias and anti-mafia initiatives, the German class had the opportunity in 2013 to do a study visit in Sicily coordinated by the Italian anti-mafia network *Libera*. The students got in contact with the partner school and with many protagonists of the Sicilian anti-mafia movement, visiting confiscated lands, social cooperatives, and the places of memory in Palermo. The study visit had then various follow-ups, such as the presentation of the experience to other students and the translation from Italian to German of documentary subtitles. The experience has been described as very positive by the teacher, who noticed a real engagement of the students. The teacher is currently continuing these activities and in May 2017 a second study trip to Sicily took place.

A general tendency that emerges from the research findings is the continue increase of the anti-mafia activities in German schools in the last ten years. Until now, all the initiatives collected were directly connected to the teaching of Italian language, either as a second or third foreign language. Remarkably, not all activities are coordinated by teachers of Italian origins. This may suggest a further development

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<sup>10</sup> For more information about these three Italian associations, their websites are: [www.arci.it](http://www.arci.it); [www.libera.it](http://www.libera.it) ; [www.avvisopubblico.it](http://www.avvisopubblico.it).

of this field in the future years, even if closely related to the language learning; at least until new pedagogical materials on those issues will be produced in German language for German-speaking students and teachers.

## Universities

The past decades have seen the rapid development of OC subjects in many Italian universities. The great and increasing attention towards the problems of mafias, corruption and topics related have influenced the creation of dedicated university courses, specialisation courses and even a doctoral program<sup>11</sup>. At the same time, an ongoing study shows a parallel decreased interest in this research field within the German academy<sup>12</sup>. If we consider that the Italian mafia plays only a small role in the field of OC studies, it is easy to understand why it is complicated to identify research projects on the topic. Most of the collected material comes therefore from the foreign literature field, in specific from the Roman and Italian literature studies.

In these fields, mafias and anti-mafia related topics have a considerable impact, from both the cultural, historical and the pure literature point of view. Many university institutes include in their didactical programs, although not regularly, courses on authors such as Leonardo Sciascia<sup>13</sup> or wider literature approaches to the topic<sup>14</sup>, often in comparison with the literature on mafia of the United States. For example, the course offered at the University of Trier in 2014 by Prof. Dr. Schneider: *Mafia in Literatur und Film im interkulturellen Vergleich* (Mafia in literature and films in intercultural comparison). The class analysed the representation of mafia in Italian and American movies, TV series and novels. A similar case is the course *Mamma Leone und der Pate? Italienische, amerikanische und italo-amerikanische Literatur*

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<sup>11</sup> As an example, see the courses at the Statale University in Milan, the Univesity of Bologna, the University of Naples, the University of Turin, the University of Pisa, the Cattolica University of Milan and others.

<sup>12</sup> Prof. Klaus von Lampe and Susanne Knickmeier prepared a forthcoming paper about this issue.

<sup>13</sup> For example, the course *Raumkonstruktion und Kriminalroman: Leonardo Sciascias Il giorno della civetta* (Construction of space and criminal novel: Il giorno della civetta by Leonardo Sciascia) of 2016 by Prof. Dr. Kleinhans at the University of Würzburg.

<sup>14</sup> For example, the course *Mafia* by Prof. Tiller at the University of Dresden in 2016.

*und die Mafia* (Mamma Leone and the Godfather? Italian, American and Italian-American literature and the mafia) by Prof. Dr. Föcking and Prof. Dr. Rohr taught in 2015 at the University of Hamburg.

There are also a number of classes offered by lecturers of Italian origin, which usually focus only on the Italian aspects. This can be seen in the case of the course *Le mafie nel cinema italiano* (Mafias in the Italian cinema) of 2014 by Dr. Bisanti at the University of Bamberg, as well as the course *Die italienische Mafia: Mythos und Wirklichkeit* (The Italian mafia: myths and reality) by lecturer Sepe at the University of Potsdam in 2016, the set of lectures *Per ricordare Falcone e Borsellino a 20 anni dalla loro scomparsa* (In memory of Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino after 20 years from their decease) organised in 2012 by lecturer Barattelli and the *SpazioItalia* of the University of Tübingen, the course *Mafie e antimafia: percorsi di storia e letteratura* (Mafias and anti-mafia: history and literature paths) of lecturer Lenzi at the University of Mainz in 2012, and the course *“Guappi di carta”: Mafiosi e camorristi nella fionalizzazione letteraria del secondo Novecento* (“Paper Guappi”: mafia and camorra members in literary fictional representations in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) by Dr. Ubbidente at the Humboldt University of Berlin. In this regard, it is also worth mentioning the organisation – for three consecutive years (2014-2017) – of courses taught by the Italian sociologist and expert Prof. dalla Chiesa at the Humboldt University of Berlin. In partnership with the faculty of Italian studies, the courses concerned the expansion of the mafias and its dynamics in 2015, the representation of mafias in movies and literature in 2016, and in 2017 an anthology of best practices and information from the Italian anti-mafia movement.

In addition, another significant project is the conference *Italien im Wandel: Der Beitrag der Zivilgesellschaft zur Bekämpfung der Mafia in Italien und Europa* (Changing Italy: the contribution of civil society in the fight against the mafias in Italy and Europe) that took place in June 2012 at the University of Mainz. The conference was part of a wider project, funded by *Gutenberg Lehrkolleg*, organised by the Italian Department of the Faculty of Interpreters and Translators, which

aimed at training and raise awareness among teachers and students of the Department about these topics<sup>15</sup>.

The data collected have shown that there is a quite active academic community in the mafias and anti-mafia literature field. There are some cases in other faculties, for example courses that focus on the historical aspects of the Italian mafia. Two examples are *Strategies and Patterns of the Italian Mafia 1992-2006* by lecturer Picchi at the History and Cultural Sciences faculty of the Freie University of Berlin in 2009 and *Schattenwirtschaft, Klientelismus und Gewalt. Geschichte der italienischen Mafia* (Black economy, clientelism and violence. History of the Italian mafia) at the History faculty of the Humboldt University Berlin by Prof. Dr. Nützenadel. Other courses focus more on the economic features of Italian mafias. This is the case of the two courses by Prof. Dr. Bluhm at the Freie University of Berlin: *Mafia Market and State Failure* at the Political and Social Sciences faculty in 2012 and *Mafia, Märkte und Staat – eine wirtschaftssoziologische Perspektive* (Mafia, market and the State – a socioeconomic perspective).

Despite these examples, it emerges a lack of activities in the juridical and social sciences fields. One possible explanation refers to the difficulty of systematically research courses and seminars. There are 426 universities in the country<sup>16</sup>, their websites are complex and very heterogeneous and do not always allow research with keywords. Due to its specificity, a deeper individual inquiry has been conducted in the field of Italian studies, while the juridical and social faculties still need further investigation. As mentioned above, however, it is recently emerging the scarcity of research in OC fields in Germany and also these results would seem to suggest that Italian mafias are not drawing much attention, despite the interest and commitment of few individuals.

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<sup>15</sup> The website of the initiative: [www.fb06.uni-mainz.de/italienisch/307.php](http://www.fb06.uni-mainz.de/italienisch/307.php)

<sup>16</sup> Source: Statista (Anzahl der Hochschulen in Deutschland im Wintersemester 2016/2017 nach Hochschulart) <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/247238/umfrage/hochschulen-in-deutschland-nach-hochschulart>

### Civil society: the association Mafia? Nein, Danke! e.V.<sup>17</sup>

In the mafia murders that took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 2007 in the city of Duisburg, in occasion of the initiation ritual of a young man into an 'ndrangheta group, six men got shot in front of a pizzeria. As mentioned before, the event had great resonance in the German media, and the country realised that the presence of Italian mafias was undeniable<sup>18</sup>. The message that some media spread was, however, not only related to the single criminal event, but also prompted the idea that the Italian community, especially the gastronomic one, was filled with a collective "mafia culture", causing a general suspicion against that community. The insinuation caused a strong reaction in a group of restaurant owners in Berlin. Coordinated by the nowadays member of the Italian Parliament Laura Garavini, and taking example from the Sicilian anti protection money movement *Addiopizzo*<sup>19</sup>, the community of initially six restaurateurs founded the initiative *Mafia? Nein, Danke!* (MND) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 2007, just six days after the murder. The aim of the group was on one side to build a strong community able to protect itself against criminal threats; on the other side, to defend and to promote Italian culture as democratic culture opposed to the alleged "mafia culture".

The group immediately activated a partnership with the *Department for the Fight against Organised Crime* of the Berliner Criminal Police, led by Bernd Finger (Landeskriminalamt Berlin, Abteilung 4). On the 29<sup>th</sup> of October, the group, as representative of the civil society, and the police Department, in name of the President of the Berliner Police, signed a security agreement. The agreement stated the will of closely cooperating against any kind of OC threat and expressed a full support coming from the police for the Italian entrepreneurial community. The

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<sup>17</sup> More information about the history, events and activities of the association on the website: [www.mafianeindanke.de](http://www.mafianeindanke.de)

<sup>18</sup> The news was in all German newspaper on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 2007. The Zeit Online titled: *Mafia-Morde wie im Kino* ([www.zeit.de/online/2007/33/duisburg-mafia](http://www.zeit.de/online/2007/33/duisburg-mafia)), der Spiegel: *Killerkommando der Mafia schlägt in Duisburg zu* ([www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/sechsfachmord-killerkommando-der-mafia-schlaegt-in-duisburg-zu-a-500068.html](http://www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/sechsfachmord-killerkommando-der-mafia-schlaegt-in-duisburg-zu-a-500068.html)), the Frankfurter Allgemein *'ndrangheta auch in Deutschland stabil*

([www.faz.net/aktuell/gesellschaft/kriminalitaet/kalabresische-mafia-ndrangheta-auch-in-deutschland-stabil-15491.html](http://www.faz.net/aktuell/gesellschaft/kriminalitaet/kalabresische-mafia-ndrangheta-auch-in-deutschland-stabil-15491.html))

<sup>19</sup> Henry Partridge, *The determinants of and barriers to critical consumption: a study of Addiopizzo*, in "Modern Italy", Vol. 17, No.3, August 2012, pp. 343-363.

support was operationalised in a whistleblowing tool: a dedicated telephone hotline, also available in Italian language, where people could report violations and information in anonymity.

In December 2007, the security agreement proved to be very useful, as it helped to contrast a request of protection money. Some days before Christmas, several dozens of Italian restaurateurs in Berlin indeed received a letter clearly recalling the extortion method used by mafias in Italy. The already established initiative MND, together with the security agreement signed by the police, gave to 53 restaurant owners the necessary confidence to denounce the threat, after a shop and two cars got already set on fire. The cooperation between local police and civil society was very fruitful and led to the rapid arrest of the two offenders, who got then condemned in 2008 and 2009. The German Ministry of the Interior identified the security agreement and the initiative *MND* as best practices for the fight against OC, and mentioned them to the European *MDG – Multidisciplinary Group on Organised Crime* in April 2009<sup>20</sup>.

Already in September 2007, the members of *MND* organised a first festival, a week of diverse cultural events on the topic of mafia and anti-mafia. The event saw the participation of a wide Italian and German public, and numerous guests. The appointment became then a regular one over the years<sup>21</sup>.

In 2009, the initiative *MND* was registered as non-profit association. Its main goal was to increase the awareness in Germany about the risks related to OC and to promote an anti-mafia culture following the Italian example. In the first years, it pursued its goal by means of a wide range of cultural activities (events in schools, in theatres, movie and book presentations, public discussions...). More specifically, in 2009, the association established its two main yearly appointments, the *Fest of Legality* (traditionally held in autumn) and the event *Women and Mafia* (held in occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> of March). Under these two flags, the association organised dozens of events, bringing to Berlin some of the most relevant experts, journalists,

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<sup>20</sup> Arndt Sinn, *Organisierte Kriminalität 3.0*, Springer Verlag, Berlin-Heidelberg, 2016, p. 75.

<sup>21</sup> Elettra De Salvo, Laura Priori, Gherardo Ugolini, (a cura di), *Italo-Berliner. Gli italiani che cambiano la capitale tedesca*, Mimesis Edizioni, Milano, 2015.

writers, judges, activists, artists and lawyers of the Italian anti-mafia movement. The activities of the association were carried out on a solely voluntary basis, with particular commitment of the first chairman Luigi Cornaglia, the following chairwoman Bianca Negri (also creator of *Women and Mafia*), the supporter Verena Zoppei and the member of the board Luigino Giustozzi.

The structure of *MND* evolved towards the end of 2012, year that saw some big changes. First, the designation of a new chairman, the German-Italian journalist Sandro Mattioli. Second, and foremost, the accreditation of the association in the *European Voluntary Service* (EVS) programme. This provided the financial means to welcome in the association two full time volunteers for a period of 12 months every year, and gave new energies and continuity to increase the activities and set new goals. Since then, thanks to the active commitment of the EVS volunteers Gabriella and Sarah (2013-14), Giulia and Giulia (2014-15), Daria and Gisella (2015-16), and Valentina and Verdiana (2017), *MND* has organised more than two hundred events, among which book and movie presentations, round tables, school workshops, university lectures, and journalist's meetings.

Moreover, in the same period, *MND* started to participate to EU funded research projects, thanks to the membership in the international *FLARE* network. *FLARE* (*Freedom, Legality And Rights in Europe*) was a network of NGOs, promoted by the Italian network *Libera*, with the goals of creating a coordinated international mobilization against OC and right violations, of supporting a critical public opinion and of influencing European policy makers<sup>22</sup>. Together with *FLARE*, *MND* participated to three international projects. In 2012-2013 ECHO1 and ECHO2, under the coordination of Verena Zoppei, tackled the issue of money laundering in Germany. In 2013, the project TIE (Tackling Illegal Economies) about best practices in confiscation measures was a chance for the first two EVS volunteers, Gabriella and Sarah, to actively contribute to the organisation. After these projects and the dissolution of *FLARE*, *MND* continued the cooperation with the international anti-

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<sup>22</sup> Nando dalla Chiesa, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

mafia movement participating to the active working group of *Libera International*, and maintained strong ties to the administrative centre of *Libera*.

In 2015, the association became research partner of another European project, namely PCB (Private Corruption Barometer), led by the *eCrime* research centre in the law faculty of the University of Trento. The project was another milestone in the association's history, since it could then hire three part-time staff. The presence for two years of three further persons engaged also in research activities, provided *MND* with further opportunities: on one side the improvement of the existing "activism-based" activities, and on the other side the plunge into the research and practitioners' world.

Since 2014, the association issues a bilingual monthly newsletter that in three years grew up to ca. two thousand recipients. The newsletter collects the main news and events related to mafia groups and OC, with a specific focus on Germany. Under the coordination of Sandro Mattioli, it has been one of the main tasks for the *EVS* volunteers.

In the summer 2017, ten years after the Duisburg murders – and anniversary of its foundation, *MND* organised an international conference in Berlin: "Freedom and Security: how to deal with organised crime in Europe". Its aims: to raise awareness on a topic often hidden by more "urgent" issues such as migration and terrorism; to foster and reinforce the national and international network of actors engaged in the fight against OC; to foster an effective political action, in particular in view of the close German elections. With the support of the Italian Embassy and the *German European Movement*, the conference was held in the venues of the Italian Embassy in Berlin. The Italian and German Interior Ministers, de Maizière and Minniti, participated, together with a good number of other guests coming from the institutional, academic and journalistic fields.

Today, the association aims at contributing to the analysis and research on OC and mafia structures in Germany, with the purpose of supporting the development of national and local political action for the protection of the democratic culture.

In Germany, the case of *MND* has been certainly the most structured and significant one in the anti-mafia field so far, as it is the only one solely dedicated to this topic with a longer temporal continuity and a structured range of activities<sup>23</sup>.

However, *MND* is not the only organisation that in recent years has dealt with this theme. A remarkable number of cultural and informative initiatives have been organised in many German cities, often by Italian associations and individual activists. Some of these associations have organised events in cooperation with *MND*. This is the case of *Italia Altrove e.V.*<sup>24</sup> in Düsseldorf, *Kalabria calling* in Hamburg and *Rete Donne e.V.*<sup>25</sup> in many German cities. Another initiative is *Un'altra Italia* (Another Italy), a series of public events presenting the Italian anti-mafia movement promoted by the *Circolo Cento Fiori* in Munich, which took place in the years 2009-2014. Worth mentioning is the initiative *Kultur der Legalität* (Culture of Legality) by the association *Cultura21* in Cologne, active especially in 2012 with the 3-days festival *Mafia in Deutschland. Erscheinungsformen, Auswirkungen, Gegenstrategien* (Mafia in Germany. Manifestations, consequences and counterstrategies). An important role in spreading the Italian anti-mafia culture is played by the Italian Culture Institute and the *Società Dante Alighieri* associations, which are the most recognised promoters of Italian culture abroad. In many cities, they have been organising events on the topics of mafias and anti-mafia, often with the participation of Italian authors, experts or movie directors. For example, to name just one of many, in January 2017 the *Società Dante Alighieri* of Heidelberg<sup>26</sup> hosted the Sicilian author Augusto Cavadi, for an event in cooperation with the translation and interpretation school of the city.

Among the few German organisations organising activities related to the topics of mafias and anti-mafia, it is remarkable the work of *Eine Welt e.V. Leipzig*<sup>27</sup>. The association works as a sending organisation for young German people willing to do EVS volunteering at the Italian associations *Addiopizzo* and *Libera*, or to volunteer

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<sup>23</sup> Marcel Michels, *Antimafia-Bewegung und Soziale Arbeit. Wie Zivilgesellschaft und soziale Profession organisierte Kriminalität bekämpfen*, Springer VS, Wiesbaden, 2014.

<sup>24</sup> [www.italia-altrove.com](http://www.italia-altrove.com)

<sup>25</sup> The blog of the Berlin group: [retedonneberlino.wordpress.com](http://retedonneberlino.wordpress.com)

<sup>26</sup> [www.dante-heidelberg.de](http://www.dante-heidelberg.de)

<sup>27</sup> [einewelt-leipzig.de](http://einewelt-leipzig.de)

in the working camps on confiscated goods organised by Libera. It is also worth mentioning the association *Echolot - Projekte für demokratische Kultur, gegen Mafien e.V.*<sup>28</sup> whose mission is to promote research and cultural projects in the fields of human rights, democratic culture and social justice and who developed a project in 2014-15 for positing the application of the Italian social reuse of confiscated goods to the goods belonging to German neo-Nazi movements.

## State initiatives

Before proceeding to examine this category, it is important to mention again that this article takes into account exclusively the initiatives in Germany that are specifically dedicated to Italian mafia organisations. A consequence, especially for what concerns State initiatives, is that the activities identified in this research are only few. These data must be interpreted taking into consideration the daily work and commitment of the whole law enforcement personnel, together with the many professionals of the legal and political staff at all levels of responsibility.

The first dedicated initiative to the contrast of the Italian OC has already been mentioned before, it is the Security Agreement signed the 29<sup>th</sup> of August 2007 between the Police of the region Berlin and the initiative *MND*, that it was not yet registered as association, and was therefore represented by the organisation *UIM – Union der Italiener in der Welt* (Union of Italians in the world). The concrete follow-ups of the agreement included the creation of a special dedicated telephone number and the designation of a permanent reference person in the police staff that would also build trust relationships with possible witnesses and informants. In addition, it was improved the awareness of the patrolling police and the coordinator of the initiative, Bernd Finger, was often guest or even co-organizer of events with *MND*.

A similar initiative, that started some years later, is called *Gemeinsam schaffen wir es!* (Together we can!) and it is an initiative of the Judicial Police of the region Baden-

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<sup>28</sup> echolot-berlin.de

Württemberg in cooperation with a number of Italian partners. This project has established a central office where all citizens are invited to report relevant information related to mafia and OC threats and activities. The Italian-speaking people can report information in their native language, and the communication can be anonymised. To support this initiative, the police have also spread out a flyer with all relevant contact data and the explanation on why the cooperation with the public is so important for the police action efficacy. This case points out the special attention towards the phenomenon in the region Baden-Württemberg that is also one of the most affected regions for what concerns the Italian mafia activities and where a big community with Italian origins lives.

### **Economic activities**

The economic sector is one of the mostly affected by organised crime activities. The risks related to intimidations and infiltration on one hand, and to the unfair competitive advantage of criminal companies on the other, could result fatal for the economic liveliness of a territory<sup>29</sup>. As mentioned before, the reaction to protection money that led to MND has been the most relevant in Germany, and there is generally a limited attention toward the issue. In the MND case, however, the group of restaurant owners that joined the cause consisted of more than eighty people. One of them, vice-chairman of the association, is Pino Bianco, native of Basilicata, who owns a *Lucanian* restaurant and lives in Berlin since the 80s. Besides the restaurants joining MND, there are many single businesses, which openly declared their position against mafia groups. In some cases, the same choice to migrate to Germany was influenced by the presence of criminal groups in the place of origin. Another possibility to position themselves against mafias is to name the activity, often a restaurant or a cafeteria, after the symbols of the anti-mafia movement. This is the

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<sup>29</sup> To analyse the infiltration of Italian mafias in the German economy, see for example: Rocco Sciarrone, Luca Storti, *The territorial expansion of mafia-type organized crime. The case of the Italian mafia in Germany*, in "Crime Law Soc Change", vol. 61, 2014, pp. 37–60.

case of the Berliner wine-bar *Centopassi*, which recalls the famous hundred steps of Peppino Impastato.

It is worth to mention the participation, also very active, of places that host events about mafias and anti-mafia topics. In Berlin, for example, this is the case of the bookshop Mondolibro and the cinema Babylon, where the association MND organised many public events. Their choice of including these themes in their periodical planning plays a relevant part in raising awareness among the public.

It is interesting to note that even the organic and “mafia-free” products of *Libera Terra* and the certificated ethic products by *Addiopizzo*<sup>30</sup> are imported in Germany. This happens thanks to the commitment of the fair-trade centre of the region Rheinland<sup>31</sup>, which through the network of fair trade shops *Weltladen* and the website *Legal&Lecker*<sup>32</sup> distribute the products in Germany. The suggestion arrived by two Italian volunteers of the *Weltladen* in Mannheim, who persuaded the management of the centre to include the Italian products, despite they were not part of the typical fair trade business.

## Art and Culture

The role played by art expression, in all forms, has been proved to be pivotal in the shaping of public mental representations. When it comes to moving topics such as mafias and anti-mafia the influence of the artistic representation is even stronger, and it can either support the reinforcement of stereotypical images or, on the other hand, help the public to understand some deeper aspects of the phenomena

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<sup>30</sup> In Italy, the law concerning the social reuse of confiscated mafia assets led to the creation of social cooperatives, which work on confiscated lands and produce ethic, organic, mafia-free products. Here the information about the cooperatives of Libera Terra: [liberaterra.it](http://liberaterra.it), and here the regulations for the Addiopizzo certificate: [www.addiopizzo.org/index.php/pago-chi-non-paga/certificato-addiopizzo](http://www.addiopizzo.org/index.php/pago-chi-non-paga/certificato-addiopizzo)

<sup>31</sup> The website of the *Fair-Handelszentrum Rheinland*: [www.rfz-rheinland.de](http://www.rfz-rheinland.de)

<sup>32</sup> [www.legalundlecker.de](http://www.legalundlecker.de)

represented<sup>33</sup>. In Italy, in the last decades, the anti-mafia movement has developed countless projects to use the power of arts for contrasting stereotypes and mafia culture. This is not the case of Germany, where mafia stereotypes result very appealing to the general public, which often keeps a superficial knowledge of the historical development of mafia groups, and has no information about the current interests and activities of mafia organisations today. Nevertheless, some elements of the Italian anti-mafia culture and art arrived to Germany too, and in few cases, there have been original German initiatives.

The prevailing form of art that spread from Italy to Germany is certainly the motion picture one. Most of the best movies on these topics have been screened in many German cinemas and film festivals. An exhaustive mapping of all screenings is not possible, but for example the movie *I cento passi* (One Hundred Steps - released in 2000, directed by Marco Tullio Giordana) is included in the school programs of some counties and it is also among the suggested movies on the web-page of the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (The Federal Agency for Civic Education). Likewise, more recent movies have received attention and included in numerous film festival. By way of example, in the *Italienische Filmtage 2016* in the city of Würzburg, organised by the association *TIC - Circolo Culturale Italo-Tedesco Würzburg*, the movie "Lea", year 2015, also by Marco Tullio Giordana, has been screened. The same movie has also been shown in the film festival *Verso Sud - 22. Festival des italienischen Films*, in Frankfurt am Main, organised by the *German Film Institute (DIF)* and *Made in Italy*. In this festival were shown also the movies "Anime Nere" (about the 'ndrangheta) and "Suburra" (about the criminal network in the city of Rome).

Besides movies, there have been in recent years also some photo exhibitions. One took place in Hanover, in November 2009, organised by the *Italian Culture Institute of Wolfsburg* and the *Fachhochschule Hannover*. The exhibition titled *Vivere e morire a Palermo - Leben und Sterben in Palermo* and presented the photographs of Letizia

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<sup>33</sup> Some information on the representations of the mafias could be found in: Giovanni Lo Cascio, *L'immaginario mafioso. La rappresentazione sociale della mafia*, Dedalo, Bari, 1993 and Marco Santoro, *La voce del padrino. Mafia, cultura, politica*, Ombre Corte, Verona, 2007.

Battaglia, prominent Italian photographer who worked as a reporter in the city of Palermo in the years 1970-1994, when the violence of the mafia reached its peak<sup>34</sup>. Another example of photo exhibition was *TAT/ORT. (Un)heimliche Spuren der Mafia* (Site of crime. Uncanny/Secret traces of the mafia) of the Italian photographers Tommaso Bonaventura and Alessandro Imbriaco as well as the curator Fabio Severo that took place in Mannheim<sup>35</sup> in April 2014 and in Kaufbeuren in October 2015<sup>36</sup>.

Additionally, other types of exhibition were organised in Germany in recent years. Worth to mention is *Donne & Mafie – Frauen und Mafia*, organised in November 2013 in Freiburg by the Italian women organisation *Coordinamento Donne italiane di Francoforte*, supported by the *Italian Cultural Center of Freiburg* and the association *Kommunales Kino*. The exhibition presented the different roles that women have in mafia organisations<sup>37</sup>. Also the association *MND* organised some exhibitions, for example the one together with the organisation *CiFAR (Civil Forum for Asset Recovery)* in December 2016, named *Hunting the Stolen Billions* about public asset theft, OC, money laundering and tax havens<sup>38</sup>. In addition, *MND* organised also a short exhibition about Mafia Stereotypes in Germany in January 2017, in the *Landeszentrale für politische Bildung* of Berlin (the Berlin Agency for Civic Education).

To date, only few information about anti-mafia in theatres have been collected. There are data available on the theatre play *InCapaci*, by the author and director Michele Bia, which has been played in Wolfsburg in March 2014<sup>39</sup>. The performance is a tribute to the judges Falcone and Borsellino, and has been produced by the Italian *Teatroscalo* and *Skèné Produzioni Teatrali*. It has been played in Italian language. Conversely, the Opera *Falcone. Il tempo sospeso del volo* that has been

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<sup>34</sup> [www.pc-magazin.de/news/leben-und-sterben-in-palermo-fotoausstellung-von-letizia-battaglia-371188.html](http://www.pc-magazin.de/news/leben-und-sterben-in-palermo-fotoausstellung-von-letizia-battaglia-371188.html)

<sup>35</sup> [www.hermannlohss.de/node/218](http://www.hermannlohss.de/node/218)

<sup>36</sup> [montestella.de/tatort-unheimliche-spuren-der-mafia](http://montestella.de/tatort-unheimliche-spuren-der-mafia)

<sup>37</sup> [centroculturaleitaliano.de/?page\\_id=974](http://centroculturaleitaliano.de/?page_id=974)

<sup>38</sup> [cifar.eu/hunting-stolen-billions-exhibition](http://cifar.eu/hunting-stolen-billions-exhibition)

<sup>39</sup> *InCapaci – alla memoria di Giovanni Falcone e Paolo Borsellino*. WIR Magazin der IG Metall Wolfsburg. Ausgaben nr. 147, pag. 15, March 2014.

played in Berlin in April-May 2017, was completely in German language, as an arrangement of an Italian play by Nicola Sani in homage to Giovanni Falcone<sup>40</sup>.

From the events outlined, we can see that the activities in the art field often result strongly connected with the Italian experiences, bringing to Germany examples and performances that were created in Italy for the Italian public. It appears that the topic of mafias and anti-mafia still have not had a strong influence of the German artistic production.

## Journalism

The role played by journalism in the Italian anti-mafia movement is of primary importance, and it is also severely represented in the amount of journalists that receive intimidations<sup>41</sup>, that have been assaulted and in the worst cases lost their life due to their commitment in reporting about mafia members and activities<sup>42</sup>. As mentioned before, the situation in Germany has never reached such levels of violence or danger. Nevertheless, it is complicated to work as a reporter on these topics in Germany as well. The practical difficulties are related to information regulations and to the different legislative structure. In Germany, journalists are indeed not allowed to report publicly the names and information of investigated people after the tribunal condemnation, unless the person is a recognised public figure. This is a regulation for supporting the re-socialisation of the culprits whose

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<sup>40</sup> [www.staatsoper-berlin.de/de/veranstaltungen/falcone.10/?modus=archiv](http://www.staatsoper-berlin.de/de/veranstaltungen/falcone.10/?modus=archiv)

<sup>41</sup> Marco Sarti, *Sono più di duemila i giornalisti finiti nel mirino della mafia*, in "Linkiesta", 15/09/2015, [www.linkiesta.it/it/article/2015/08/05/sono-piu-di-duemila-i-giornalisti-finiti-nel-mirino-della-mafia/26949](http://www.linkiesta.it/it/article/2015/08/05/sono-piu-di-duemila-i-giornalisti-finiti-nel-mirino-della-mafia/26949)

<sup>42</sup> Roberto Salvatore Rossi, *Giornalisti antimafia. Il giornalismo siciliano e gli otto cronisti ammazzati dalla mafia*, in "Problemi dell'informazione", 2005, vol. 4, pp. 383-398. And also the article *Giornalisti uccisi dalla mafia. Quell'informazione che fa paura al potere*, published the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015 on Antimafiaduemila, which gives an overview of all journalists killed by mafia groups: [www.antimafiaduemila.com/dossier/giornalisti-uccisi-dalla-mafia.html](http://www.antimafiaduemila.com/dossier/giornalisti-uccisi-dalla-mafia.html)

For an overview about the current critical situation of the anti-mafia journalists in Italy, see the report *Relazione sullo stato dell'informazione e sulla condizione dei giornalisti minacciati dalle mafie* presented by Claudio Fava and approved by the Anti-mafia Commission of the Italian Parliament in August 2015, available here:

[www.camera.it/\\_dati/leg17/lavori/documentiparlamentari/IndiceETesti/023/006/INTERO.pdf](http://www.camera.it/_dati/leg17/lavori/documentiparlamentari/IndiceETesti/023/006/INTERO.pdf)

privacy is under protection, but hinders the work of the reporters and the right of the citizens to be aware of the criminal businesses. In addition, the lack of a “mafia member” definition and the related crime in the German penal code makes the same term *mafioso* impossible to use. Only people who have been sentenced in Italy for mafia related crimes can therefore be defined as *mafiosi* in Germany too. The ones, who are convicted in Germany for crimes such as money laundering or fraud, even if commonly known to belong to a mafia organisation, cannot be defined as such in newspapers and television. The risk is to be reported to the authorities for defamation. There have been a number of cases where German journalists had to go to trial with this accusation, and even if most of them were absolved, this still is a big obstacle for journalists in this field for many reasons. One is the personal and professional aspect, and the other is the economic problem of facing a trial, that can result very onerous especially for free-lance journalists.

All these aspects can contribute to the explanation of why there is a limited attention towards mafias themes in the German media. This sums up to the consideration that, in the case of crime news, the journalists appear to be more dependent on official sources of information for the production of news<sup>43</sup>. That means they have to rely on law enforcement agencies, which may have different priorities.

Despite these limitations, there are a specialised number of German journalists focusing on Italian mafias. One of the pioneers in this topic is the journalist Dagobert Lindlau, born in 1930, who already in 1969 reported about the Italian-American mafias in New Jersey<sup>44</sup>, in 1981 led a TV show *Die Bedrohung* (The Threat) about OC, which was criticized by politicians and law enforcement members. In particular, the author states that the chief of the police in Munich commented that not only that Lindlau’s news were not happening in Germany, but also that they could never ever happen there<sup>45</sup>. In 1987, Lindlau also published the bestseller book *Der Mob - Recherchen zum Organisierten Verbrechen* (The Mob – Studies on organised crime) and in 1988 he was quoted among the experts in the long report by the newspaper

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<sup>43</sup> Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, Brian, *Policing the crisis. Mugging, the state, and law and Order*, Macmillan Press LTD, Basingstoke, 1978.

<sup>44</sup> Dagobert Lindlau, *Flinte geladen*, in “Der Spiegel”, n. 36, 1969, p. 175.

<sup>45</sup> More information about the life of the journalist on [www.dagobert-lindlau.com](http://www.dagobert-lindlau.com)

*Der Spiegel* describing the increasing power of OC groups, especially related to the Italian mafias, in the German economy<sup>46</sup>. During his long career, he reported many times about Italian OC in Germany. Still in 2010, interviewed by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* about the murders of Duisburg, he commented about the stable and long lasting presence of the Calabrian 'ndrangheta in Germany, suggesting that the case of Duisburg would remain a rather isolated criminal case, as the mafias get increasingly closer to the "legal criminality" of property frauds, insurance frauds and money laundering and to new forms of business mafias<sup>47</sup>.

Another publicist and journalist who dedicated many years investigating the presence and activities of Italian mafias in Germany was Jürgen Roth, who with his book *Mafialand Deutschland*<sup>48</sup> depicted the whole infiltration structure of the 'ndrangheta and the Russian mafias in German politics and economy. Roth denounced many times also the fact that many politicians, policemen and publicists in Germany have kept hidden the extent to which the mafias organisations infiltrated many sectors of the economy<sup>49</sup>.

In addition to Roth, another journalist who put efforts in bringing to Germany information about the Italian mafias is the author Petra Reski, who already in 1994 published a book on the story of Rita Atria<sup>50</sup>. During the 90s and 2000s, Reski continued writing about the activities of Italian mafias both in Italy and Germany, but only after the Duisburg murders, the topic became more relevant for the media industry and she published the book *Mafia. Von Paten, Pizzerien und falschen Priestern* (Mafia. About Godfathers, Pizzerias and false Priests) in 2008<sup>51</sup>. In the book she illustrates the activities of some mafia members in Germany, using also

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<sup>46</sup> *Wir Kennen die Dunkelmänner alle*, in "Der Spiegel", n. 9, 1988, pp. 68-83.

<sup>47</sup> Barbara Vorsamer, *Die alten 'Dons' sind nicht mehr im Geschäft*, in "Süddeutsche Zeitung", 17/05/2010, [www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/interview-mit-dagobert-lindlau-die-alten-dons-sind-nicht-mehr-im-geschaeft-1.222997](http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/interview-mit-dagobert-lindlau-die-alten-dons-sind-nicht-mehr-im-geschaeft-1.222997)

<sup>48</sup> Jürgen Roth, *Mafialand Deutschland*, Eichborn Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 2009.

<sup>49</sup> Hauke Friederichs, *Mafiöses Deutschland. Die Mafia und Deutschland passen zusammen wie Spaghetti und Sauerkraut. Ein Irrtum. Jürgen Roth zeigt, wie aktiv Verbrecher aus Italien hier sind*, in "Zeit Online", 4/03/2009, [www.zeit.de/online/2009/10/mafia-roth](http://www.zeit.de/online/2009/10/mafia-roth)

<sup>50</sup> Petra Reski, *Rita Atria. Eine Frau gegen die Mafia*, Hoffmann und Campe, Hamburg, 1994.

The book is about Rita Atria, a witness in an important mafia trial who committed suicide in 1992, after the death of the prosecutor Paolo Borsellino, who was supporting her depositions and protecting her.

<sup>51</sup> Petra Reski, *Mafia. Von Paten, Pizzerien und falschen Priestern*, Droemer Verlag, Munich, 2008.

information from an internal report of the Federal Office of Criminal Investigations (Bundeskriminalamt). For this reason she was reported at least three times to the police for defamation by the same people who recognised themselves in the descriptions of the book. Petra Reski lost the trial and the book was re-distributed with many pages completely lined in black, and the editor had to pay 10.000 euros refund<sup>52</sup>. She also received subtle threats during the presentation of the book in the city of Erfurt, and she denounced that the power of the 'ndrangheta in some German places is stronger than in other Italian areas. In 2010 she published the book *Von Kamen nach Corleone: Die Mafia in Deutschland*<sup>53</sup> (From Kamen to Corleone: the Mafia in Germany), where she retraces the history of the mafia infiltration in Germany in the previous forty years. After that, facing the hurdles due to the topic of her books, decided to pause the investigative journalism and started publishing novels, which narrate stories that recall mafia-reality<sup>54</sup>.

Besides the more renowned journalists, there is also a “new generation” of investigative journalism that has to be mentioned. In particular, I refer to the group of journalists of the TV channel MDR (Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk) Axel Hemmerling, Ludwig Kendzia and Fabio Ghelli, to the free-lance journalist Sandro Mattioli and to the web portal of independent journalism *Correctiv*.

The group of MDR worked two years before producing the documentary *Provinz der Bosse - Mafia in Mitteldeutschland* (Province of the Bosses – Mafia in Central Germany) where they investigated the connection existing between the 'ndrangheta groups in the Calabrian town San Luca and the criminal activities carried out in central Germany. In particular, they identified the so-called *Erfurt Group*, which is in charge of part of the money laundering for the families of San Luca, and whose

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<sup>52</sup> After the censorship of part of the book, the publisher was convicted to pay 10.000 euros refund to the person whose image had been damaged by the book. The editor, after the completion of the German justice procedure, appealed to the European Court of Human Rights. The judgement, published the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2017, confirmed the decisions of the German tribunals, even if one of the European judges states her disapproval declaring that in a case of such public interest, there has not been proper balance between the applicant company's freedom of expression and the right to respect for the individual private life and reputation. The whole judgement can be found here: [https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{"itemid":\["001-177695"\]}](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{)

<sup>53</sup> Petra Reski, *Von Kamen nach Corleone: Die Mafia in Deutschland*, Hoffmann und Campe, Hamburg, 2010.

<sup>54</sup> More information on the author's blog: [www.petrareski.com](http://www.petrareski.com)

business arrives to the city of Leipzig. Hemmerling, Kendzia and Ghelli worked long at first with Facebook, which provided many information about personal relationships, restaurants and pubs of the group. The journalists eventually managed to find out that people from Erfurt had bought four restaurants in the city centre of Rome, and they therefore realised that some criminal investments were taking place. The 30-minutes documentary was broadcasted by MDR channel in November 2015 and caused the journalists a penal and a civil trial. In October 2016, a decision of the tribunal *Oberlandesgericht* of Dresden compelled the MDR to change part of the contents. In 2017 the journalists were again on trial, and were requested a repayment of 50.000 euros by the restaurant owner of Erfurt. This time, the trial absolved the journalists<sup>55</sup>.

The free-lance journalist Sandro Mattioli, who has already been mentioned before for being the chairman of the association *MND* in Berlin, has also been investigating and writing about Italian mafias for some years. In particular, in 2011 he published together with Andrea Palladino the book *Die Müllmafia: Das kriminelle Netzwerk in Europa*<sup>56</sup> (the Waste-mafia: the criminal network in Europe) where he describes the connection existing between the various criminal networks in Europe and Africa for the waste disposal. He also wrote a reportage disclosing the businesses behind the wind-park in the Calabrian town of Isola di Capo Rizzuto, which has been built with the financing of the German HSH Nordbank and has later been involved in a mafia-trial for belonging to a 'ndrangheta family. In the last years he dedicated his time to a number of other reportage about mafias, and also cured the production of a documentary on the channel ARTE about the mafia waste disposal networks, screened in October 2017<sup>57</sup>.

Last member of this “new generation” is the web portal *Correctiv*, which aims at reporting issues that are normally ignored by the mainstream medias. This include also the topic of mafias and Correctiv reports with regularity news from different

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<sup>55</sup> More information about the whole story on the MDR website: [www.mdr.de/thueringen/dossier-provinz-der-bosse-die-mafia-in-mitteldeutschland100.html](http://www.mdr.de/thueringen/dossier-provinz-der-bosse-die-mafia-in-mitteldeutschland100.html)

<sup>56</sup> Sandro Mattioli, Andrea Palladino, *Die Müllmafia: Das kriminelle Netzwerk in Europa*, F. A. Herbig, Munich, 2011.

<sup>57</sup> More details on the author's blog [sandromattioli.de](http://sandromattioli.de)

countries, especially from Italy, making them available to the German speaking public<sup>58</sup>.

## Conclusions

The purpose of the current study was to map the initiatives related to Italian mafias and anti-mafia that took place in Germany. Despite its exploratory nature, the results of this first inquiry show that there is a relevant number of activities, which has been categorised into seven groups.

The schools' data have presented many activities in the teaching of Italian language and shown that, beside numerous individually committed teachers, there is only one example of structured anti-mafia pedagogy project, called *Gelebte Zivilcourage*, in the region Baden-Württemberg. The paragraph dedicated to universities confirmed the tendency to include mafia and anti-mafia topics mostly in Italian studies, with a general lack of activities in other disciplines. Concerning civil society, one most relevant association, *Mafia? Nein, Danke!*, has been identified. The association has been active since 2007 in different fields, ranging from information to cultural activities. It often works as coordinating element between different components described in the research. The categories of State and Economic activities present only a few remarkable cases. The same could be claimed about the artistic environment, where most of the activities were designed in Italy and occasionally offered to the German public, often in the Italian language. The information collected about journalism depicts a more complex scenario, where reporting is severely hindered by German privacy protection laws. This limitation, in addition to the modest public attention towards organised crime issues, may explain the small amount of people working in this field.

Taken together, these results suggest that, although Germany is often blamed for general indifference, there are many individuals and groups that are doing

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<sup>58</sup> To see the news about mafias reported by *Correctiv*: [correctiv.org/recherchen/mafia](http://correctiv.org/recherchen/mafia).

something in the anti-mafia field. Often the initiatives come from the Italian community, and this has proved sometimes to limit the effectiveness of the message, especially when the language of communication is Italian. It is certainly of primary importance to engage the Italian citizens in Germany in this cause, but it is even more necessary to raise awareness among the German public and institutions. The example of the Italian anti-mafia movement can indeed provide competent guidance, but there is also a need to adapt the Italian proposals to the specific German context. For all these reasons, it is crucial that the various elements described in this paper improve their cooperation and networking, in order to merge the plentiful energies in an effective German anti-mafia movement.

Further work needs to be done to define a complete mapping of the Italian anti-mafia activities. Another possible area of future research would be to investigate which initiatives are taking place to contrast diverse type of organised crime activities.