

HALF-YEAR REPORT OF THE DIA 2ND HALF OF 2022

ABSTRACT

In accordance with the previous reports, in the second half of 2022 mafia-type organized crime groups still prefer to limit their use of violence or blatant acts, except for some violent episodes in the areas of Naples and Apulia, opting for the silent and more cost-effective infiltration of the business sector. In line with the past, on the one hand there are the ever-present and more visible crimes, such as drug trafficking, extorsions, exploitation of prostitution and illegal labour, and on the other hand there are those profit-bearing crimes that people consider less alarming and threatening, but whose proceeds are placed on the markets, altering their proper dynamics. They are the “satellite crimes” (waste trafficking, overstated invoices, frauds, false tax credits claims and evasion of welfare and social contributions), which are often charged with the aggravating circumstances *ex art. 416 bis 1 c.p.* Investigations in these fields – preventive activities and counteraction – are more difficult and complex since it is easy to disguise the crime of criminal conspiracy and the subjective element of the criminal liability. Moreover, besides being less visible, the fight against such “economic-financial” crimes is also more demanding considering that, as mentioned above, they are apparently less alarming at the social level and the interests of criminal organizations often overlap with those of some social players.

The investigative data gathered confirm that mafia-type crime groups are constantly adapting to the new contexts, improving their interpersonal skills, replacing violence, which is more and more marginal, with strategies of silent infiltration, corruption and intimidation.

Nowadays, *mafias* prefer to focus their attention on business and entrepreneurship, taking advantage of the huge capitals accumulated through the conventional illicit activities. Developing such “*Modi operandi*”, they try to strengthen their membership and gain consensus, benefiting from the economic distress of some areas, keeping pace with the most advantaged investment strategies and exploiting the opportunities offered by the EU and national public funds (*Recovery Fund* and NRRP). Focusing its attention on the evolution and transformation of mafia-type crime groups, the Half-Year Report, as usual, gives an overview of the criminal framework, making use of charts outlining the main organized crime groups, which according to the investigations concluded by the DIA and the law enforcement agencies are still active, and giving an account of the important information reported in the orders requesting the dissolution of local government authorities.

Moreover, it is worth stressing that the threshold of surveillance of the allocation of public funding must be increased, overcoming the idea that organized crime groups are confined within narrow domestic borders.

In order to enhance counteraction, synergies and best practices, it is indispensable to have a thorough and shared knowledge of the criminal phenomenon, at least at the European level, involving all the players of the international law enforcement and judicial cooperation. It is worldwide known that organized crime groups are resilient and able to quickly take advantage of the technological and economic-financial changes at the global level, exploiting any opportunity for profit and remarkably increasing their speculative trading. It is thus necessary to adapt the technological instruments used by law enforcement agencies to the new challenges posed by the fight against organized crime, to increase the ability to penetrate the metaverse, encrypted communications, the web in general (both the *internet* and the *dark web*) and the other less known digital sectors since mafias are able to steadily

regenerate using high-tech equipment and highly skilled technicians. It is fundamental to keep pace with the technological transformations and try to be one step ahead because organized crime groups make a larger and larger use of the web and the metaverse. Based on such considerations, the Half-Year Report has a specific *FOCUS* on encrypted communications platforms.

In the second half of 2022, the situation of **organized crime in Calabria** is reportedly almost the same if compared to the previous half-year. As far as its structure is concerned, the ‘*Ndrangheta* has still a unitary structure, governed by a high-ranking body called “*provincia*” or “*crimine*”, which is above the “*mandamenti*”. Such *mandamenti* involve 3 geographical macroareas (*mandamento centro*, *mandamento jonico* and *mandamento tirrenico*), where the *locali* and the ‘*ndrine* operate, as it was also confirmed by the well-known trial “Crimine”.

However, the data stemming from the investigations carried out in the period under study highlighted some aspects worth of interest and their in-depth analysis might outline the potential evolutions of the ‘*Ndrangheta* crime groups in the relevant contexts.

Outside their region of origin, besides remarkably infiltrating the main economic and productive sectors, the patterns followed by the Calabrian *cosche* duplicate those of mafia, which are focused on the traditional sense of identity, with “outposts”, headed by the *Crimine* as a single high-ranking body. The *Crimine* is in charge of adopting and enforcing the main strategies, of settling disputes and creating or abolishing new *locali*. Indeed, the investigations closed have so far identified 46 *locali* in Northern Italy, 25 of which in Lombardy, 16 in Piedmont, 3 in Liguria, 1 in Veneto, 1 in Valle d’Aosta and 1 in Trentino Alto Adige. More recently, the investigations have revealed that in Emilia Romagna too the ‘*Ndrangheta* is rather aggressive.

Narcotics is still the primary criminal sector of the ‘*Ndrangheta*. As far as the drug trade is concerned, the Calabrian ‘*ndrine* have long been recognized at the world level as the most important players, since they are considered to be reliable, creditworthy and able to manage a complex and trustworthy logistics network to be used for the transoceanic transportation of the drug loads from South America to Europe. In recent years, also some areas of Western Africa, in particular the Ivory Coast, Guinea-Bissau and Ghana, have increasingly been used by the *cosche* of the ‘*Ndrangheta* as a strategic drug trafficking hub.

The Calabrian *cosche* continue to control, manage and provide security in forest areas, as well as to be involved in the sale and buy of plots of land, requesting protection money. The security service is an illegal practice, which has already emerged from previous investigations.

Considering its closely-knit structure, its “military” skills and its deep roots in the area, the ‘*Ndrangheta* ranks first in the criminal scenario, also outside its traditional areas of influence, with links in almost all the Italian regions (Lazio, Piedmont, Valle D’Aosta, Liguria, Lombardy, Trentino Alto Adige, Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Emilia Romagna, Tuscany, Marche, Umbria, the Abruzzi and Sardinia). Its ramifications go beyond national borders, affecting many European countries (Spain, France, United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Slovak Republic, Albania and Romania), Australia and America (Canada, USA, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Australia, Turkey and Ecuador).

As a whole, the trend of the **mafia-type phenomenon in Sicily** has not remarkably changed if compared to the previous six months. Reportedly, *cosa nostra* has still the control over the territory in a social-economic environment, which can easily be infiltrated by mafia. Despite harsh counteraction, *cosa nostra* is reportedly still capable of adapting and renewing in order to pursue its

illicit purposes. Its branches operate in almost all the island with consolidated projections in other Italian regions and overseas, through their well-established family members.

As far as *cosa nostra* in the area of Palermo is concerned, as in the case of mafia groups operating in the Western and Eastern provinces of Sicily, the prolonged absence of an authoritative and recognized *leadership* is reportedly encouraging the rise of new members with mafia family ties as leading figures of *mandamenti* and *famiglie*. However, the senior *men of honours*, who have recently been released from prison are reportedly trying to gain ground again within their groups.

In Sicily there are also both native and foreign mafia groups, which can coexist with *cosa nostra* thanks to their multifaced relations and the ever-changing balance of powers. Agrigento is the operational area of the *stidda* and of other mafia-type groups, such as the *paracchi* and the *famigghiedde*. The Province of Catania and, more generally, Eastern Sicily, are the operational areas of important mafia *famiglie* linked to *cosa nostra* at the organizational, operational and criminal levels. In these areas there are also other mafia-type crime groups, which are not linked to *cosa nostra*. Their structure is like that of the *famiglie* in Catania. Although they act like gangs, they are, in some cases, even able to adapt to and be in line with the districts where they operate. Moreover, the mafia-type organized crime groups in Catania are able to expand their sphere of influence in the surrounding areas. Indeed, also the provinces of Siracusa and Ragusa are under the influence of *cosa nostra* of Catania and, to a lesser extent, of the *stidda* of Gela.

In the second half of 2022, the Sicilian organized crime reportedly continues to “attract” the new generations, involving not only the direct descendants of the mafia *famiglie* but also, and above all, trying to widen its audience so to recruit the criminal manpower needed.

The well-consolidated “under-the-radar” approach of the Sicilian mafia-type organized crime groups implies a minimal use of violence so not to raise social alarm and simultaneously ensure a “smooth” economic growth through the acquisition of higher and new positions of power.

In the period under study, drug trafficking, extorsions, infiltration in public administration, in the legal economy, online gaming and betting are the major areas of interest of Sicilian mafias. In particular, online gaming and betting are used as unusual instruments to control the area, also in view of the laundering the illicitly gained money.

Drug trafficking allows *cosa nostra* to develop business relations, enter into strategic alliances and cooperate with mafia-type organized crime groups, such as the *ndrangheta* and the *camorra*, in order to buy huge quantities on a vast scale. The investigations closed in the period under study highlighted that, as far as cocaine supply is concerned, *cosa nostra* continues to be the main negotiation channel, mainly for the Calabrian *cosche*. However, it cannot be ruled out that *cosa nostra* may slowly reopen the former flows with the suppliers of the American continent and be again the historical international player in the drug trafficking field. With reference to the street drug sale, organized crime groups are reportedly looking for pushers among the young people living in the most deprived urban areas.

Outside the region, the Sicilian organized crime groups aim above all at infiltrating the economy (with reference to their presence in Lazio, Piedmont, Liguria, Lombardy, Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Emilia Romagna, Marche and Tuscany), committing fiscal frauds and money laundering activities. Spain, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Romania, Malta, Canada and the USA are the most affected foreign countries.

Mafia-type crime in Campania, usually referred to as *camorra*, is responsible for a series of heterogeneous and complex crimes, whose features are closely linked to the multifaced historical, economic and social factors characterizing the area.

In Campania there are historical well-structured mafia-type organized crime groups with criminal and business objectives going beyond the traditional areas of origin. Besides them, there are minor family-structured crime groups, whose main identity factor is the area where they try to establish their criminal *leadership*, using violence if needed.

In the six months under study, the counteractivity against organized crime groups in Campania through judicial and anti-mafia preventive activities, allowed to curb the phenomenon, above all its most violent actions.

Based on the analysis of the judicial and anti-mafia administrative measures, the region is at present characterized by a series of camorra-type crime groups, which differ greatly based on their relevant area of jurisdiction.

The provinces of Naples and Caserta have still the highest rate of mafia-type presence, with large camorra cartels and well-structured crime groups managing all illicit activities. They have slowly turned into “mafia enterprises”, being competitive and very attractive also in the different sectors of legal economy. As a result, the most developed clans increasingly try to delocalize their economic activities also in foreign countries. In this way, they can launder their money and reinvest their proceeds, transferring their wealth to safer and more profitable geographical areas.

At the lower level, there are minor *groups*, which are controlled by higher-level organizations or are often used to carry out the conventional illegal activities (drug trafficking, extortion, usury), which have a greater impact on the social perception of insecurity. Another insidious threat is posed by the most deceitful and sophisticated strategies adopted by the most advanced camorra crime groups, with the aim of infiltrating the legal economy and the financial sector, also making use of collusive practises and corruption. The huge illicit profits of camorra organizations mostly come from drug trafficking. As soon as such profits are reinvested in the legal economy, they irremediably affect the normal market conditions and alter free enterprise, allowing to dominate or even to have the monopoly on whole economic sectors.

They often pervasively interfere in the affairs of the local government authorities in the Campania region so to influence the decision-making process with the aim of infiltrating another primary criminal sector: public tenders. Thanks to their relations with some members of the local governments and enterprises, the clans succeed in obtaining public procurements, both directly, in favour of companies linked to them, and indirectly through subcontracts.

Outside Campania, mafia-type crime groups are mainly involved in drug trafficking and money laundering. In particular, they operate in Lazio, Piedmont, Liguria, Lombardy, Trentino Alto Adige, Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Emilia Romagna, Tuscany, Umbria, the Abruzzi, Molise and Sardinia. Abroad, the most affected foreign countries are in Europe: Spain, France, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Romania, Belgium and Czech Republic, while outside Europe mention must be made of the USA, the People’s Republic of China and the Arab Emirates.

Mafia-type organized crime in Apulia continues to be parcelled out and dynamic. It is made up of a constellation of clans and groups, with fluctuating balance of power and changing alliances, with the purpose to gain the control over increasingly complex and structured business activities.

Indeed, although the criminal organizations in the region continue to have somehow the military control over the area, they are now apparently trying to develop a well-targeted and advanced mafia business model.

The data in the Reports on the Administration of Justice, which were submitted at the Opening of the Legal Year 2023 at the Courts of Appeal in Bari and Lecce, confirm the upward trend of Apulian mafias, making the usual distinction between *mafie foggiane*, *camorra barese* and *sacra corona unita* (mafias in the area of Foggia, Camorra in Bari and Sacra Corona Unita).

The analysis and the investigations carried out in the six months under study document that, although mafia-type organized crime groups have a polymorphous structure, they are capable of maintaining strategic alliances and agreements in order to pursue their common illicit and highly profitable needs.

Mafia infiltration in the economic and business sectors is fuelled by the remarkable flow of the illicit money coming from drug trafficking, also at the international level, and by the huge extortion-generated revenue, an offence, which is now enjoying new birth. Through massive intimidation, Apulian crime groups are infiltrating enterprises and businesses. Such organized crime groups interact with the historical mafias, for example, the clans in the province of Barletta Andria Trani (BAT), which appear to be in contact not only with the crime groups in the area of Daunia and Bari but also with those in Calabria and Campania.

The *mafia foggiana* (with its four branches: *società foggiana*, *mafia garganica*, *malavita cerignolana* and *mafia dell'Alto Tavoliere*) is in line with this approach. It is developing new and more consolidated organizational structures following shared criminal models, with the aim of increasing its operating space and being more flexible in many sectors: the socio-economic, financial, political-administrative sectors.

The *camorra barese* too has outstanding business spirit, preferring more profitable sectors, such as drug trafficking, tobacco smuggling, online gaming and betting, but also the traditional crimes, such as extortion and usury, which besides being lucrative, allow to keep the area under control.

The most recent analyses of the criminal situation in Taranto, known as the *Citta dei due mari* (the city of the two seas) document that mafia-type groups are still vigorous and pervasive, dominating the area.

Outside their region, Apulian organized crime groups focus their attention mainly on drug trafficking and the so-called "crime commuting", with the purpose of committing predatory crimes. They operate in Lazio, Lombardy, Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, the Abruzzi and Molise. However, they are also linked with foreign countries, particularly Albania, as to the drug supply by sea, but also Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Romania, Malta and the USA.

In **Basilicata**, the different geographical and economic features between the areas facing the sea - which are highly agricultural and touristic- and the inland areas - with different urban characteristics - generate distinct crime context. In the province of Matera and, specifically, along the Ionic coast, there are reportedly organized crime groups from Calabria and Apulia, while in the Province of Potenza there are reportedly groups linked to the *camorra* and the *'Ndrangheta*.

The info-investigative outcome in the six months under study confirm that in both provinces of Lucania, clan-structured and family-based organized crime groups are prevailing. They maintain a stable balance although the groups are fragmented and there is not an agreed top-ranking body.

As in the case of similar and more advanced national crime groups, the criminal organizations in Lucania appear to be capable of regenerating notwithstanding the incisive counteraction by the local law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities. This leads to new alliances or unusual forms of cooperation, in view of more profitable activities, first of all drug trafficking, which continues to be very lucrative and a growth generator for the newly-born crime groups.

Ethnic-based organized crime groups have long been a stable and well-consolidated component of the whole national criminal scenario. Law enforcement investigations document that also in the period under study, foreign crime syndicates have great capacity for manoeuvre and action despite counteraction.

The criminal scenario, as shown by the most significant crimes committed in the six months under study, has not changed if compared to the investigative data acquired over the time. Although, as it comes out from several court decisions, foreign organized crime groups have their own mafia-style modus operandi, more and more investigative data show that there is an interaction between Italian and multiethnic groups. The ethnic-based criminal organizations operate throughout Italy with different modus operandi and organizational patterns.

Albanian crime groups are highly dangerous and have a major impact on illegal activities, in particular drug and illegal arm trafficking. They are well structured and are supported by strong membership ties, which are often encouraged because of family links. Moreover, they are well equipped and can rely on subgroups for the commission of crimes. Such subgroups, which are capable of moving throughout the country, are entrusted with specific tasks under the control of contact persons located in Italy or abroad. Indeed, Albanian crime groups are among the most complex and multifaceted foreign crime groups both in Italy and in other European countries, including France, Germany and Switzerland. They are increasingly monitored by the law enforcement authorities of such countries because they are concerned about the escalation of violence and crimes in the areas where they are present.

In this respect, the Half-Year Report contains a specific *FOCUS* on Albanian crime abroad. It comes out that Albanian crime groups are well-organized also at the international level and they are able to enter into dialogue directly with South American cartels to import, from the traditional producer countries, huge quantities of cocaine, which are destined for the cells of the Albanian nationals operating in the main Italian marketplaces. In this regard, the anti-drug activity carried out in the different Italian regions has highlighted operational synergies between Albanian and Italian organized crime groups.

In this respect, the Report contains a specific *FOCUS* on Albanian crime abroad. Albanian organizations haven proven to be well organised also at the international level, besides being able to directly interact with South-American *cartels* with the aim to import huge quantities of cocaine from traditional drug-producing countries for supplying the cells of Albanian nationals operating in the main Italian marketplaces. In this context. Anti-drug activities conducted in a number of Italian regions, showed that the *Albanian criminal organizations* operate together with the *native groups*.

Nigerian criminal groups duplicate on the European continent the models established in Nigeria following the criminal involvement of the university brotherhoods (so-called *cults*), differently named as “*Eye*”, “*Black Axe*”, “*Viking*”, “*Maphite*”, which settled down in almost all the areas of Italy and are more or less active. The criminal activities of the different groups are manifold: exploitation of prostitution, trafficking in human beings, illegal immigration, drug trafficking, IT scams and money-laundering.

Nigerian organizations reply the typical features of native groups, such as the capillary control of the territory, the law of silence, the subjugation of the victims and the strict associative bond. The high organizational level and the dangerousness of the Nigerian syndicates are linked to their mafia feature, as also recognized at the judicial level. This ethnic-based criminal organization has a “*multilevel*” structure. Some affiliates just act as manpower. The Nigerian mafia, like the Albanian one, in several investigations, showed a structure similar to the ‘*ndrangheta*’ as the different criminal groups have autonomy of action at the local level but, nevertheless, must comply with the strategic orders of the mother group.

Chinese syndicates in Italy are hierarchically structured, mainly based on family relationships and solidarity. They are “closed” groups, therefore they are impenetrable to external contamination or cooperation. In fact, it is rare that they have operational agreements with Italian criminal organizations or that they set up small multi-ethnic groups. Chinese criminal groups are engaged in extorsions and robberies to the detriment of their fellow countrymen, exploitation of prostitution, financial offences, besides the illegal activities of *money transfers*, as well as possession and sale of *methamphetamines*, which is a de facto monopoly of *Chinese pushers*. This peculiar criminal conduct mainly targets the Chinese community and is carried out in a silent way, without giving rise to sensational demonstrations. For this specific feature Chinese criminal groups represent a very dangerous form of ethnic-based crime, being extremely difficult to combat also because they are impermeable towards the outside, they are very mobile and it is difficult to find reliable interpreters of the different dialects.

In Italy the Romanian criminal organizations show two distinct forms: on the one hand, there are less structured groups, whose affiliates commit predatory offences, specifically petty offences that amplify the perception of insecurity in the population; on the other hand, there are more complex and articulated groups, similar to the local mafia organizations. Reportedly, Romanian criminal organizations operate in the field of illicit brokerage and the exploitation of workers (so-called “*caporalato*”), sometimes in agreement with Italian subjects. Furthermore, there is also the involvement of Romanian criminals, with secondary roles, in multiethnic groups engaged in drug trafficking and drug street sale.

South-American organized crime mainly operates in different regions of northern Italy and, to a lesser extent, also in Latium. These are groups that in addition to committing crimes against property and exploiting prostitution cooperate with other foreign or Italian syndicates in the management of the drug trafficking from Latin America. Specifically, with regard to drug trafficking, in particular cocaine, the importation reportedly takes place on air and sea routes that use stopovers in order to circumvent police and customs controls.

Balkan criminal groups and crime groups of former USSR have highlighted over time the tendency for crimes against property, drug and arms trafficking, the facilitation of illegal immigration, the exploitation of prostitution, smuggling and copper theft.

Also North-African criminal syndicates, mainly from the Maghreb area, today tend to be sedentary and are rooted in various areas of the national territory. Being strongly integrated into the urban socio-criminal tissue, they sometimes also manage segments of the transnational drug trafficking.

The criminal organizations made up of subjects from the countries of the Middle East and Southeast Asia are mainly active in facilitating illegal immigration, in the exploitation of undeclared work and in drug trafficking, often perpetrated together with the exploitation of prostitution. Reportedly, sometimes they are multi-ethnic syndicates (those from South-East Asia are mainly Indian and

Pakistani) that act in cooperation with criminal groups from the Balkan area, as well as with Turkish and Greek groups.

The analytical framework on the evolution of mafia groups calls for a fight against organised crime, which pays great attention to countering illegal profits by means of a judicial action and **asset-related preventive measures**.

The range of the preventive measures carried out in the second half of 2022 depicts the strategic priority given to the countering of mafia assets by the Direzione Investigativa Antimafia, whose activities were mainly focused on the organized crime infiltration into the Italian economy.

In the period under study, in Italy, 9 proposals for the application of preventive measures were submitted to the competent Courts, 5 of which were signed jointly with the Judicial authority of the province concerned. In addition, 4 information reports, proposing preventive measures, were submitted by proxy to the requesting Public Prosecutor's Office.

Moreover, mention must be made of the important countermeasure represented by the application, ex art. 34 of D.Lgs. 159/2011, of the "*judicial administration*". Its increasing use allowed, also in the second half of 2022, to issue 3 proposals (1 of which to the competent Courts and 2 as an information report filed with the authorising Prosecutor), as well as the application ex novo of 2 measures which affected, respectively, a construction company and a consortium of companies, in addition to the extension of 1 measure already adopted against a shipping company.

With regard to seizure and confiscation measures arising from past and/or current proposals, the following tables summarise the results achieved in the second half of 2022 compared to those relating to the previous half-year:

SEIZURES 2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of assets
<i>The DIA Director on his own initiative</i>	30,552,335.11
<i>Judicial Authority following the DIA checks</i>	450,000.00
TOTAL	31,002,335.11

SEIZURES 1st Semester 2022	
	Value of assets
TOTAL	92,854,991.64

CONFISCATIONS 2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of assets
<i>The DIA Director on his own initiative</i>	3,839,000.00
<i>Judicial Authority following the DIA checks</i>	177,622,000.00
TOTAL	181,461,000.00

CONFISCATIONS 1st Semester 2022	
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	Value of assets
TOTAL	43,404, 081.75

The following table shows more in detail the number of seizures/confiscations carried out in the 2nd semester 2022, subdivided into single mafia groups.

‘NDRANGHETA

SEIZURES 2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of Assets
<i>The DIA Director</i>	750,000.00
<i>Judicial authority following the DIA checks</i>	0.00
TOTAL	750,000.00

CONFISCATIONS 2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of assets
<i>The DIA Director</i>	0.00
<i>Judicial authority following the DIA checks</i>	177,622,000.00
TOTAL	177,622,000.00

COSA NOSTRA

SEIZURES 2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of assets
<i>The DIA Director</i>	786,567.83
<i>Judicial authority following the DIA checks</i>	450,000.00
TOTAL	1,236,567.83

CONFISCATIONS 2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of assets
<i>The DIA Director</i>	1,150,000.00
<i>Judicial authority following the DIA checks</i>	0.00
TOTAL	1,150,000.00

CAMORRA

SEIZURES 2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of assets
<i>The DIA Director</i>	6,459,038.28
<i>Judicial authority following the DIA checks</i>	0.00

TOTAL	6,459,038.28
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CONFISCATIONS 2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of assets
<i>The DIA Director</i>	<i>1,200,000.00</i>
<i>Judicial authority following the DIA checks</i>	<i>0,00</i>
TOTAL	1,200,000.00

APULIAN AND LUCANIAN ORGANIZED CRIME

SEIZURES 2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of assets
<i>The DIA Director</i>	<i>50,000.00</i>
<i>Judicial authority following the DIA checks</i>	<i>0.00</i>
	50,000.00

OTHER ITALIAN CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS

SEIZURES	
2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of assets
<i>The DIA Director</i>	22,506,729.00
<i>Judicial authority following the DIA checks</i>	0.00
TOTAL	22,506,729,00

CONFISCATIONS	
2nd Semester 2022	
Upon proposal	Value of assets
<i>The DIA Director</i>	1,489,000.00
<i>Judicial authority following the DIA checks</i>	0.00
TOTAL	1,489,000.00

The accumulation of huge financial resources, as proceeds from the different criminal activities committed by the syndicates, need to be subsequently "cleaned". To meet this need, mafias are constantly looking for increasingly sophisticated solutions in order to avoid to trace back the real owner of the illicitly gained assets. It is therefore necessary to identify the future lines of action of the mafias, focusing on their ability to **infiltrate the economy**.

In the period under study, the DIA continued to control, through its Central Observatory on Public Procurement (O.C.A.P.) and its peripheral offices, the information gathered during access operations and monitoring of public works. The DIA developed a complex analysis, which also examined the access to guaranteed loans and non-repayable grants, the data on the granting of the above-mentioned benefits and on individuals having grounds for exclusion, always in order to neutralize the aforementioned criminal infiltrations.

The DIA monitoring activity in the six months under study concerned, inter alia, the structure of the companies involved in the execution of public works, in order to identify possible elements of infiltration, as well as targeted investigations, both regarding the direct works in progress, and the multiple connected activities. Among these, mention must be made of the *access to the construction sites* organized by the Prefectures with the aim of ascertaining, on the spot, anomalies concerning the labour force and the executing procedures.

In the semester under study, in this sector, **684** monitoring activities were completed against 684 companies, as shown below, subdivided into geographical areas.

AREA	II SEMESTER 2022	
	COMPANIES	PERSONS
North	105	2.779
Central	49	385
South	530	4.137
Abroad	0	0
TOTAL	684	7.321

The counteraction against the economic-financial power of organized crime conducted by the DIA is also reflected in the **national system preventing the use of the financial apparatus for the purpose of money laundering of the illicitly gained criminal assets**, outlined by Legislative Decree no. 231 of 21 November 2007. In fact, the DIA supervises the integrity of the financial system, drawing targeted investigative clues, so to start judicial investigations and preventive activities, which may be conducted on its own initiative or by proxy of the Judicial authority, for the purpose of detecting and recovering illicit assets. Besides, the DIA has the task to fight against particularly serious crimes committed by criminal and mafia-type organizations.

Suspicious transaction reports (STRs) are the main investigative tool used by the DIA to prevent money-laundering. In recent years, this tool has experienced exponential growth, as also confirmed in the semester under examination.

The following operational activities are supported by the timely use of the IT application, the so-called "EL.I.O.S. - *Processing Investigative Suspicious Operations*". The DIA staff of the head office and of the peripheral offices may consult this instrument in order to check the information. Moreover, this application allows the DIA to process in a short time the huge number of reports received by the *Financial Intelligence Unit for Italy (FIU.)*, in order to preliminarily and immediately select cases, which might be linked to organised crime and shall, ex lege, be reported to the *National Anti-Mafia and Anti-Terrorism Prosecutor (PNA)*.

In this framework, the constant exchange of information with the above-mentioned Judicial Authority regarding the extensive flows of documents will be further processed on the basis of the results stemming from the databases of the *National Anti-Mafia and Anti-Terrorism Directorate*. Thus, the PNA can coordinate ongoing investigations conducted by the competent *Anti-Mafia District Directorates*. This means that, the PNA, in cases of specific interest, may perform the power of exclusive initiative, according to art. 371-*bis* of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Some changes made in recent years to the national legislation on the prevention of money laundering, summed up by D. Lgs. 21 November 2007, no. 231, have had greater impact on investigations. These include those related to the strengthening of the role of the DNA that has led to further information exchanges between that Directorate and the main Authorities concerned, including the DIA.

In the second half of 2022, the STRs, analysed by the DIA as a whole were **80,249**, an increase of **15%** compared to 2021 and of **33%** compared to 2020. With regard to the 80,249 STRs analysed, the corresponding persons reported were 836,536 (of which 518,805 natural persons). Against these persons, the DIA carried out further checks.

Among the operational tools used by the DIA, in the specific sector of preventive investigations, those which might highlight mafia infiltration into the Italian economic sector are particularly important. This phenomenon is characterized by the direct or indirect inclusion of the mafia into corporate bodies, by managing and controlling institutions and companies or by the illicit use of banking and financial channels.

The preventive activities conducted by the DIA, on an *inter-institutional level*, are characterized by the participation in the activities of the *Committee of Financial Security (C.S.F.)*, which was established for the purposes of countering international terrorism and was subsequently extended to include money laundering and the activities of countries that threaten international peace and security.

Moreover, the DIA contributed to the numerous decisions taken by the C.S.F. and, even earlier, by the related network of experts, used by the Committee in order to analyse and coordinate the issues

on the agenda, to collect the information supporting the works as well as to tackle the further issues requested by the Committee.

In this regard, in relation to the different requests made to the C.S.F. for granting the authorisations to transfer funds, to issue guarantees or to exempt from freezing economic resources, the DIA contribution made it possible to examine the position of **64** natural persons and **212** legal persons was examined.

With particular regard to international cooperation, the DIA provides an important support in terms of investigations and information as to the processing of the reports coming from foreign Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) through the *Italian Financial Information Unit*.

In the semester under study, the DIA activity developed **880** reports linked to foreign FIUs, comprising 182 information exchange requests and 698 information reports, with a subsequent data analysis and monitoring activity involving about **3,000** natural persons and **2,500** reported legal persons.

It is now known that criminal organisations, including foreign criminal organisations, increasingly try to cross national borders, thus posing a serious and growing threat to the security of the states, their economies and the very rights of citizens. These Italian and foreign criminal organizations constantly operate beyond the national borders. It is therefore essential to achieve a deep and shared knowledge of the criminal phenomenon so to support all law enforcement activities, to enhance those synergies and those "*best practices*" acquired so far. At least at the European level, it is important to involve all the players of the international law enforcement and judicial cooperation. Moreover, the analytical data of EUROPOL and the main Law Enforcement Agencies widely acknowledge the resilience of organised crime and its remarkable ability to benefit from all technological and economic-financial changes on a global scale. They are capable of exploiting any profit-bearing opportunity in order to increase their speculative trading. For some time now, crime has been moving e-money faster and faster, even in new digital environments, the same where Non-Fungible Token (*NFT*) are exchanged. Therefore, investigators must achieve new and more modern skills in these increasingly advanced and complex *technological universes*. It is indispensable to know them in detail, to be updated on the changes and to exploit them adequately, above all, to foresee possible further developments and to intercept, with ample advance, the illicit flows in order to neutralize them.

At the beginning of **September 2022**, the "*6th Global Conference on Criminal Finances and Cryptocurrencies*", was hosted by EUROPOL in Den Haag, with the participation of cryptocurrency experts, qualified investigators and other law enforcement representatives from all over the world.

The aim was to increase the capabilities of all relevant institutional actors to successfully investigate and prosecute virtual asset-based money laundering and other crypto-enabled crimes, as well as to manage the related risks to citizens, companies and national/global financial systems. The conference helped to create a network of practitioners and experts who can collectively establish best practices and provide assistance and recommendations in this fast-evolving field.

In the framework of LEAs cooperation, also at the international level, emphasis must be placed on the crucial Project establishing the "*@ON Antimafia Operational Network*", which was conceived and promoted by the DIA, being also the *Project Leader*. Up to the semester under study, 34 LEAs representing 29 countries have joined the Network. In the referenced period, the Network supported the Investigative Units of the Member States in 112 investigations, and financed 424 operational

missions supporting 1446 investigators leading to the arrest of 556 persons, including 6 fugitives, besides seizing approx. 151 million euros, drugs and firearms.

Given the above, now mafia-type organizations, due to their persistence and complexity, settled down all over Italy and even abroad, spreading from their regions of origin, i.e., wherever they saw a possibility of pursuing their illicit affairs, entering the legal circuits, polluting the economic-financial markets.

It is now widely acknowledged that all criminal organizations perform a perverse economic and social function, especially in the context of significant "welfare" where the absence of work or services generate urgent needs in the population.

Nevertheless, the mafias are not only fed by the *general consensus* they also embody the deviant "culture" based on the systematic exercise of intimidation and even violence, confusing rights and favours, transforming the citizens in mere "clientes", with the usual and never-changing aim of gaining huge and personal profits with absolute disregard of and disinterest in the terrible effects of their criminal actions.

The penetration of all the economic fields by criminal organizations, their relationships with polluted sectors of politics or unfaithful representatives of public administration, constitute an obstacle to the development of a specific area and to the civil progress of its population. This means that the mafias represent a constant and high risk because they deeply undermine the dignity of the individuals and the shared collective rules, the basis of democracy, the market, the civil and peaceful coexistence.

It is therefore unthinkable to defeat criminal organisations, which are increasingly global and more and more connected with the world financial circuit, exclusively taking counteraction and entrusting the law enforcement and the judiciary authorities with their fight. It is necessary to raise social awareness of the high risk of the mafia model, which, instead of appearing as a potential and attractive model of behaviour, must be considered in itself a primitive oppression of one over the other and, as such, it must be firmly disapproved, rejected and condemned, as the late Judge Paolo Emanuele BORSELLINO had to say several times: *"Indeed, the fight against the mafia... must not simply be a detached act of repression, but a cultural and moral movement, including a religious one, involving everyone, in order to experience the beauty of the fresh scent of freedom that refuses the stench of moral compromise, indifference, contiguity and, therefore, complicity"[...] "The commitment against the mafia, cannot afford any pause, the risk is to find themselves immediately at the starting point"*.