

Rimini: new illegal immigration is coming from Caucasus

Operation "Chechen Tourist" has resulted in 17 people being charged with criminal conspiracy and aiding illegal immigration. Three were arrested and the other 14 reported to the judicial authority, which issued international letters rogatory for some of the subjects.

The investigations, which were initiated by the Border Police in Rimini in late 2012, shed light on an international organisation specialising in illegal immigration of Caucasians.

Some families with several minor children, from Chechnya, Dagestan, Ossetia, and Ingushetia, arouse the suspect of the investigators. In fact, after entering Italy with a tourist visa at Rimini airport, they became untraceable.

Once in Italy, they destroyed their documents and changed their identity, and were accommodated in hotels of the area, waiting for the criminal organization to arrange their transfer to Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Norway, Sweden and France, where they applied for asylum as refugees.

The Russia-based criminal organisation, which had an associate residing in Rimini, acted as a real travel agency. From wiretap evidence it emerged that they urged illegal immigrants to contact them as soon as possible in order to get the tickets to their countries of destination at a lower price. Foreigners intending to settle in Europe illegally paid sums of 40,000 to 50,000 rubles, or approximately 1,500 euros each.

The investigations also involved shadowing the people abroad to monitor their modes of transport, the routes followed, their final destination, thus getting a clear picture of the organization and its abettors.

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