

SOCIAL FLIGHT ONE – THE WINGS OF FREEDOM THE FIRST AIRPLANE BUILT IN PRISON

By Xi Fang

Social Flight One, the first airplane in the world built in a prison, has been installed in the KIP Pavilion at Expo 2015 on July 12, 2015.

It has been presented at Expo 2015 through an official inauguration with its creators and the representatives of *Mediterraneo Sociale*, a consortium company based in Naples, member of the International Network of Social Economy (RES-INT).

The airplane is realized within the framework of the project *Wings of Freedom*, managed by *Mediterraneo Sociale* and supported by the Campania Region.

Most part of the aircraft has been produced in the carpentry of the Prison *Icatt - Istituto a Custodia Attenuata per il Trattamento delle Tossicodipendenze* in Lauro di Nola (Avellino, Italy). Only the last phase, the assembly, has been realized at an external workshop. Its body is entirely made of wood, while the connecting elements of the structure and the carriage are made from steel.

In compliance with the latest safety regulations, the aircraft is equipped with a new type of parachute capable of ensuring the entire plane. Equipped with an eco-friendly engine of 1200 cc with respect to fuel consumption and emissions, the aircraft has a flight range of 1400 km and it is able to land on a 200-meter long airstrip.

The craft can be built on average in three/four months at the cost of about 80,000 euros (comparable to that of a mid-class SUV). For this reason, this kind of aircrafts has high demand among private customers. However, as the dream carried by its name, Social Flight One is created for social use: to monitor forests, archaeological zones and areas at risk of fire, to promote social tourism, offering people the emotion of flying.

The *Wings of Freedom* Cooperative, creator of the prototype of Social Flight One, which has a pilot and a mechanic designer among its staff, intends to launch an entire production chain of this kind of vehicle. With the support of *Mediterraneo Sociale*, a parcel of land and a hangar near the local area used for civil aviation have already been purchased. The next aircrafts will be built in prison workshops and in the hangar which will also be



prepared to serve as a maintenance workshop for other private planes.

The project creator Beppe Battaglia underlines that Social Flight One is the first airplane in the world built not for escaping but for rehabilitating. With this aircraft, inmates can fly over the boundary walls of the prison to build their lives outside the walls with dignity.

The Social Flight One is an absolute innovation for the world of prisons, where work, even when permitted, is usually disqualified, disqualifying, repetitive, dangerously close to exploitation and unable to provide a creative motivation. The project, instead, is based on the principle that social reintegration would be possible only if incarcerated people return to imagine their life out of the prison. Bringing decent and qualifying work in the prisons means being dedicated to rooting out potentialities and undeveloped resources and realizing dreams.

Mediterraneo Sociale is a consortium that includes more than 120 workers, over 1,000 users and about 40 complex units in the Campania Region. It has been identifying a network of companies and local governments interested in turning Social Flight One into a permanent workshop and a new paradigm of social enterprise.

Social Flight One has become famous in Italy where several prisons have showed a great interest. With the support of the Lombardia Region and the Bollate prison, for example, the project has been acknowledged and may be practiced in this prison near the Expo site.

In the garden of the KIP Pavilion now the Social Flight One aircraft built in a prison symbolize that to feed the planet and to build *Attractive territories for a sustainable world*, it is necessary, first of all, to promote freedom and rights for all people.

To know more

https://www.facebook.com/MediterraneoSociale/photos_stream

<http://www.cittasociale.eu/>

<https://it-it.facebook.com/MediterraneoSociale?fref=nf>

<http://www.expo2015.org/en/news/all-news/sunday-july-12-at-the-kip-pavilion--the-international-school-presented-the-first-airplane-in-history-made-entirely-in-prison>

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<http://sociale.corriere.it/ad-expo-atterra-il-social-flight-one/>



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