

Italy: Overview

The education system in Italy is organised according to the subsidiary principle and autonomy of schools. The [State](#) has exclusive competence on general issues on education, on minimum standards to be guaranteed throughout the country and on the fundamental principles that [Regions](#) should comply with within their competences. Regions share their competences with the State on education issues while they have exclusive competence on vocational education and training. [Schools](#) are autonomous as for didactic, organisation and research and development activities.

[ECEC](#) for children aged less than 3 years is managed at local level and it is not part of the education system. ECEC for children aged from 3 to 6 years is part of the education system and it is not compulsory.

[Compulsory education](#) lasts for 10 years (from 6 to 16 years of age). It covers 5 years of primary school, 3 years of lower secondary school and the first two years of upper secondary school. Compulsory education can be accomplished also by attending three and four-year courses offered within the regional vocational education and training system. The upper secondary level of education has a duration of 5 years and it is offered in both general and vocational pathways.

[Higher education](#) is offered by both universities and the High level arts and music education system. This level of education is organized, according to the Bologna Process, in a three-year first cycle followed by a two-year second cycle.

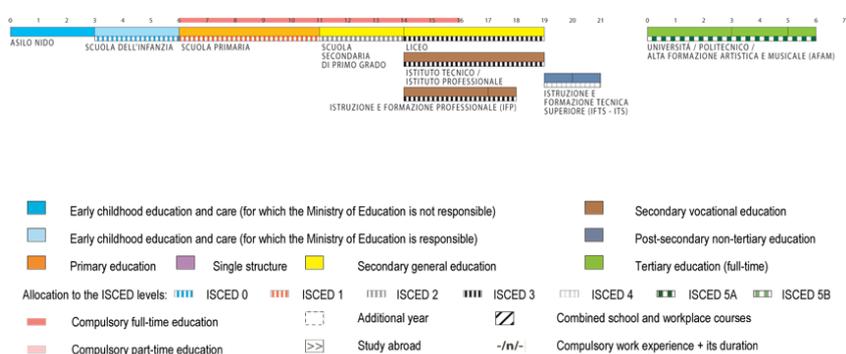
For further information, please consult the introduction article of [Organisation and Governance](#), and of each educational level: [Early Childhood Education and Care](#), [Primary Education](#), [Secondary and Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education](#), [Higher Education](#) and [Adult Education and Training](#).

For a brief description of other main topics regarding the national education system, please read the introduction article of [Funding in Education](#), [Teachers and Education Staff](#), [Management and Other Education Staff](#), [Educational Support and Guidance](#), [Quality Assurance](#), [Mobility and Internationalisation](#).

For information on recently adopted or planned reforms and policy measures, please consult topic [Ongoing Reforms and Policy Developments](#).

While Eurypedia provides comprehensive and comparable information on the Italian education system, further information may also be found on the website of the Ministry of education, university and research ([Miur](#)), the National Institute for documentation, innovation and research in education ([Indire](#)), the National institute for the evaluation of the education system ([Invalsi](#)) and the Institute for the development of professional training of workers ([Isfol](#)).

Structure of the national education system 2012/13



source: Eurypedia

Common European Reference Tools Provided by the Eurydice Network

- [National Student Fee and Support Systems](#)
 - [Organisation of the Academic Year in Higher Education](#)
 - [Organisation of School Time in Europe](#) (Primary and general secondary education)
 - [Recommended Annual Taught Time](#) in Full-Time Compulsory Education in Europe (Presented by grades/stages for full time compulsory education as well as by subject and country.)
 - [Teachers and School Heads Salaries and Allowances in Europe](#) (Salaries and allowances of teachers and school heads at pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education levels.)
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