

Italy

Demographics for Italy

Population:	58,103,033 (July 2005 est.)
GDP (by PPP method):	US\$1.609 trillion
Currency (inc code):	Euro (EUR)
Language(s):	Italian (official), German, French, Slovene
Internet country code:	.it

Introduction

The Italian Education System is undergoing a process of reform. The new legislation relating to kindergarten and the first module of the Italian education system (from six to 14 years of age) is already in force, as well as that relating to the implementation of the Bologna Declaration for the University System. The reform of the second module (from 14 to 19 years of age), however, is still under discussion.

So the present structure of the Italian Education System can be summarized as follows.

Pre-education

Pre-education is not compulsory. Parents have the option to send children to a kindergarten (scuola dell'infanzia) for between one and three years.

First module of formal education

The first module is compulsory. It lasts eight years and it includes five years of primary school, (scuola primaria), and three years of lower secondary school, (scuola superiore di I grado) ending with a state exam.

Upper secondary education

Upper secondary schooling is broken down as follows:

- There are five-year programs in secondary schools with different specialties: classics, sciences, art, music, etc. (liceo classico, liceo scientifico, liceo artistico, liceo musicale, etc.), or within technical secondary schools (istituti tecnici). Classical secondary school provides programs with emphasis on the humanities, but with scientific subjects taught in the last two years. Scientific secondary school provides more specialised preparation in scientific subjects. The liceo linguistico focuses on the study of foreign languages together with the corresponding literature and civilisation.
- Vocational education can last five years and is provided by istituti tecnici, industriali, professionali with a broader preparation that includes also some humanities, languages, economics, law, etc. or it can take the form of shorter, three-year classes focused on professional, craft and trade skills such as electronics, fashion, textile, arts and crafts, etc.

At the end of the fifth year the student must take a state exam.

At the culmination of the five-year programs students are eligible to apply to university, but completing a three-year program does not allow students to progress to university.

Higher education

After 13 years of study, the students can attend either a university or an Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore (IFTS), for programs of higher vocational education and training. IFTS courses are generally taken by students with a vocational education.

University system (including Polytechnic Universities)

In accordance with the Bologna Declaration Italy has adopted a system essentially based on two main cycles, with the establishment of a system of credits. The degrees that can be achieved are the following:

- Laurea, equivalent to Bachelor, a three-year program.
- Laurea Magistrale, equivalent to Master of Science, a two-year program after the Laurea.
- Diploma di Specializzazione, (specialization degree), a two-year program after the Laurea.
- Diploma do Dottorato , equivalent to a PhD, a three-year program after the Laurea.
- Magistrale.

- Diploma di Master Universitario di 1° Livello (1st Level Specialized Master), taken one year after the Laurea.
- Diploma di Master Universitario di 2° Livello (2nd Level Specialized Master), taken one year after the Laurea Magistrale.

In Italy, for the Academic Year 2003/2004, there were[1]:

- 72 universities (of which: 58 State universities and 14 non-State universities); 55 of these universities deliver a Laurea in Economics and/or management.
- Three higher schools (scuole superiori).
- Two universities for foreigners.
- Four e-learning universities.

These institutions differ from one another by the subjects they teach, the structure they have and the relative emphasis on research or teaching within them.

State universities (università statali)

State universities are public entities endowed with scientific, teaching, managerial, financial and book-keeping autonomy; they have full legal capacity in matters of both public and private law. Their major tasks are scientific research and higher education. Owing to the principle of university autonomy, each university may draw up its own statutes and regulations, issued by rectoral decrees. As they implement the reforms of 1999, all universities have adopted their autonomous statutes which define the organs for institutional governance, and teaching and research structures.

Non-state universities (università non statali, legalmente riconosciute)

Non-state universities may be recognized by a decree of the Minister of Education. Legal recognition takes place after an evaluation process concerning the university statute, its organization model, budget, etc. The degrees awarded by non-state universities that have been legally recognized by the state have the same legal value as those of state universities.

Non-state universities have to comply with the same general principles and criteria as defined by the national university legislation for state institutions. The differences between state and non-state universities concern funding and governance.

Technical universities (politecnici)

In the Italian system those universities are named “politecnici” (technical universities) that concentrate exclusively on the fields of engineering and architecture. They adopt the same institutional model as the state universities.

Universities for foreigners (università per stranieri)

Universities for foreigners are state institutions specialized in teaching and research for the development and diffusion of the Italian language, literature and culture.

Higher schools (scuole superiori)

Higher schools regulated by special legislation are institutions specialized in postgraduate university studies and scientific research. They offer third cycle programs (research Doctorates).

“Telematic” universities (università telematiche)

Telematic universities are non-state universities specialized in e-learning. Those with legal recognition provide distance learning programs accredited by the state.

The programs delivered across all academic disciplines (philosophy, political sciences, humanities, medicine, management, etc.) include:

- 3,526 courses for the Laurea (Bachelor).
- 1,605 courses for the Laurea Magistrale (Master of Science).

In the academic year 2003/2004 there were:

- 1,805,910 total number of students enrolled at universities, of which 231,815 (12.8 percent) were in the field of economics and/or management.
- 336,724 new entries to universities, of which 45,141 (13.4 percent) in the field of economics and/or management.
- 234,672 people graduating, of which 56 percent were women; 15.2 percent of the total number graduated in economics and/or management.
- 37,617 graduates enrolled in a PhD program.
- 6,351 PhDs.
- 23,309 students enrolled in a Specialized Master Program (12,971 in the 1st level program and 10,338 in the 2nd level program), of which 12.8 percent in the field of economics and/or management.

IFTS (programs of higher vocational education and training)

These programs are meant for young people and adults holding a school leaving qualification who, whether employed or unemployed, wish to specialize for a quick transition to, or for re-qualification in, the labor market. IFTS programs last from two to four semesters (1,200 to 2,400 hours), and give those who graduate from them professional qualifications with good employment prospects. They are jointly designed and run by universities, centers for

post-secondary vocational education and training, upper secondary schools and businesses, often gathered in consortia.

Management education

Management education in Italy is provided by a wide range of organizations: university and non-university based schools of management, associations, business schools, educational centers, consortia, foundations, institutions, etc. Corporations sometimes provide training to employees through business units called “corporate universities”.

The most important organizations belong to Associazione per la Formazione alla Direzione Aziendale (ASFOR), the Italian Association for Management Education Development.

ASFOR was established in 1971 to foster the development of an ongoing management education system in Italy, so to provide “real world” education instead of the more traditional “theory-based” university education. Today it has 69 member institutions, all actively operating in the field of management training and/or supporting its development. In addition, there are 28 Master’s Programs accredited by ASFOR.

SDA Bocconi School of Management is the only Italian school accredited internationally as it holds both the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) and the Association of MBAs (AMBA) accreditations. It is also the only Italian school to be ranked in the various international rankings.

Professor Elio Borgonovi and Mr Andrea Gasparri
Bocconi University School of Management, SDA Bocconi

Note

1. “La Scuola in cifre” and “L’Università in cifre” – Italian Ministry for Education, University and Research – July 2005, and other sources.

