

EUROPEAN AGENCY STATISTICS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

**Italy 2016/2017
data background information**



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

How the official decision of special educational needs (SEN) in the country relates to the agreed EASIE operational definition

Operational definition

“An official decision leads to a child/learner being recognised as eligible for additional educational support to meet their learning needs.”

Criteria for an official decision of SEN

- There has been an educational assessment procedure involving a multi-disciplinary team
- The multi-disciplinary team includes members from within and external to the child's/learner's (pre)school
- There is a legal document which describes the support the child/learner is eligible to receive and which is used as the basis for planning
- The official decision is subject to a formal, regular review process

Educational assessment procedure in the country

Italy has an integrated system of interventions and social services. It states that families, along with municipalities and social services, agree upon an individualised life project for their children aimed at full integration ‘within the family and social life’. Law 104/1992 and Law 328/2000 state that local authorities, local health services, social services, schools and families make framework agreements for the integration of all services necessary for the full inclusion of learners with disabilities, according to their potential and aimed at their educational, social and future work life.

Functional diagnosis (in case of disability)

The functional diagnosis, aimed at the recovery of the child/learner with disabilities, takes special account of their potential in the following aspects:

- Cognitive: degree of development attained and capacity to integrate competences
- Affective-relational: self-esteem and relationships with others
- Linguistic: understanding, production and alternative languages
- Sensorial: type and degree of disability with particular reference to sight, hearing and touch
- Motor-praxis: gross and fine motor skills
- Neuropsychological: memory, attention and organisation in time and space
- Personal and social autonomy.



How the multi-disciplinary team is comprised in the country

Each school has two operative Working Groups for Inclusion at different levels.

Operational Working Group for Inclusion

For each learner with a disability, there is an inter-professional work group, called Working Group for Inclusion (GLHO). It comprises the head teacher or their delegate, a representative of the class council, one or more curricular teachers or support teachers, psycho-social and health workers involved in the case, and the learner's parents. The municipality's personal autonomy and communication assistants, school staff and any other professional involved in the learner's inclusion may also participate in the meetings. The group meets on predetermined dates according to the agreed schedule and shall:

- draw up the dynamic functional profile (PDF);
- draw up the individual education plan;
- assess the possibility of school retention for the learner;
- assess the possibility of renouncing the support teaching time;
- support and encourage the transition process between school levels and orientation.

School Working Group for Inclusion

At school level, there is a Working Group for Inclusion. It comprises the head teacher or their representative, teachers' representatives from each department, support teachers, parents' representatives, school staff, the municipality representative in charge of inclusion and a representative from the local health authority.

The legal document used in the country to outline the support that the child/learner is eligible to receive

Dynamic functional profile (PDF) (for children/learners with disabilities)

The PDF indicates the child's/learner's physical, psychological, social and emotional characteristics. It emphasises both their learning difficulties and the possibilities of recovery, and the personal skills that must be supported, solicited and gradually strengthened and developed in compliance with the individual's cultural choices. The PDF is prepared after the functional diagnosis (see above). It indicates as a priority, after an initial period of school placement, the expected level of development that the learner with special needs should reach in the short term (six months) and the medium term (two years).

The PDF must include:

- a functional description of the learner in relation to the difficulties encountered in the various sectors of activity;
- an analysis of the learner's potential development in the short and medium term, derived from examining the following parameters:



- cognitive: potentialities in relation to the level of development, the problem-solving strategies used according to the age group, the cognitive style and the ability to use different skills in an integrated way;
- affective-relational: potentialities in relation to the area of 'self', relationships with others, motives and attitudes towards learning;
- communicational: potentialities in relation to different interaction modes, prevailing contents and privileged means;
- language: potentialities in relation to understanding oral language, verbal production, communicative use of verbal language, use of verbal thought and use of alternative or additional languages;
- sensorial: potentialities related to visual, auditory and tactile functions;
- motor-praxis: potentialities in relation to gross motor skills, fine motor skills, simple and complex praxis and internalised motor programming capabilities;
- neuropsychological: potential mnesic capacity, intellectual capacity and the organisation of space and time;
- autonomy: potentialities in relation to individual and social autonomy;
- learning: potentialities in relation to age (reading, writing, mathematics and so on).

How the document is used as the basis for planning in the country

The documents provided to the committee (teachers and psychologists) that works within the school are tools on which the personalised learning action is based.

The formal, regular review process in the country

The functional diagnosis is usually reviewed at least during the transition period between pre-primary, primary and lower-secondary school, and during upper-secondary school. The PDF is updated at the end of pre-primary, primary and lower-secondary school, and during upper-secondary school.

Proxy indicator for the 80% benchmark used for the country's data collection

The EASIE work uses an 80% benchmark of inclusive education. This is defined as:

“An inclusive setting refers to education where the child/learner with SEN follows education in mainstream classes alongside their mainstream peers for most – 80% or more – of the school week.”

Proxy indicator used

Placement in a mainstream class implies over 80% or more.



Details on what the country proxy is

The Ministry of Education collects data on learners with SEN through a census statistical survey of all the public and private Italian schools in the 20 Italian regions. Only the data for Bolzano province (one of the two provinces in Trentino-Alto Adige) is missing. Therefore, for Bolzano province, the data on learners with SEN is integrated with data provided by the National Institute of Statistics (Istat). Istat collected data on learners with SEN through a sample survey of primary and lower-secondary schools.

Overall, the data on learners with SEN accounts for over 98% of learners with SEN in the Italian school system.

Why this proxy was used

It is the best way to account for Italian learners with SEN.

Difficulties in using the proxy

As specified above, the data accounts for over 98% of Italian learners with SEN. In addition, when data is missing, it is estimated based on the previous data provided by the same schools.

Specific country issues in applying the proxy indicator

None.

Detailed description of what ‘out of formal education’ means within the country

The 2011 International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) defines ‘formal education’ as follows:

“[...] education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organizations and recognised private bodies and, – in their totality – constitute the formal education system of a country. Formal education programmes are thus recognised as such by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities, e.g. any other institution in cooperation with the national or sub-national educational authorities. Formal education consists mostly of initial education [...] Vocational education, special needs education and some parts of adult education are often recognised as being part of the formal education system. Qualifications from formal education are by definition recognised and, therefore, are within the scope of ISCED. Institutionalised education occurs when an organization provides structured educational arrangements, such as student-teacher relationships and/or interactions, that are specially designed for education and learning.”

(United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011, *International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 2011*, p. 11).

Do the country definitions of formal, non-formal and informal education differ from the ISCED definitions?

No, Italy uses the same definitions as ISCED.



How specific cases – such as home-educated children/learners – are considered

In Italy's national school system, home education is considered formal education. However, the children registered as home-educated are probably just a part of all the children who are really home-educated. Some of them are neither controlled nor registered by the Ministry of Education.

Children/learners who are considered out of formal education (meaning those not in formal education as defined by ISCED)

Children/learners who are considered out of formal education are those not involved in any kind of education, whether institutionalised, intentional or planned through public organisations or recognised private bodies.

How the population of children/learners who are out of formal education is defined

Some of them are in non-formal education and others in informal education.

Provision of data on private sector education

The data collection covers all sectors of education, including numbers for the child/learner population in the private sector.

Private sector education in the country

Private schools are founded only by private sectors, such as parents, associations, charities, etc. The school management selects and pays the school staff. All kinds of schools must follow the national guidelines on education and they are periodically visited by Ministerial supervisors.

Child/learner population counted for each relevant question

The data provided by the Ministry of Education refers specifically to public schools and to private publicly-subsidised schools. In Italy, there are three types of schools: public schools, private publicly-subsidised schools (*scuole paritarie*) and private schools. In fact, Article 33 of the Italian Constitution lays down two basic principles:

- The State shall provide a State-school system accessible to all young people.
- Organisations and private individuals are entitled to set up schools and colleges with no additional costs to the State.

Furthermore, private publicly-subsidised schools (*scuole paritarie*) can issue certificates with the same legal value as qualifications from State schools of the same type and level. Such schools are free to choose their own cultural orientation and educational teaching approach. Non-profit-making schools benefit from special tax relief. The national education system comprises public schools and private publicly-subsidised schools. Therefore, national data refers only to them.



Specific issues with providing data on private sector education and how these have been overcome in the data collection

There are two types of private education: education in private publicly-subsidised schools (*scuole private paritarie*) and education in private schools (*scuole private non paritarie*). Data for both has been collected, but the latter type are not obliged to send data to the Ministry of Education. Therefore, data collection for them is not always complete.

ISCED level age ranges

The following are the most common (pre)school entrance ages and (pre)school leaving ages for the different ISCED levels:

- Age range in the country at ISCED level 02 (pre-primary): 3 to 5
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 1: 6 to 10
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 2: 11 to 13
- Age range in the country at ISCED level 3: 14 to 18