

## **Study in Italy**

If you are planning to move to Italy or your son or daughter are willing to go to study in Italy, here are some useful information:

- [School system](#)
- [Types of schools](#)
- [International schools](#)
- [Official teaching language](#)
- [How to choose a school](#) and [enrolment](#)
- [School calendar](#)
- [Special needs education](#)

## School system in Italy

The school system in Italy is organised according to the subsidiary principle and to school autonomy. The State only provides guidance on general education issues, it sets the minimum standards to be guaranteed throughout the country and it defines the fundamental principles for the Regions to comply with, according to their competences which include vocational education and training. In compliance with State and/or Regions rules, schools are autonomous as for didactic, organisation and research and development activities.

The school system is organised as follows:

1. **Pre-primary school (scuola dell'infanzia)** for children between 3 and 5 years of age. This school programme is not compulsory.

Before pre-primary school, education and care for children aged 0-3 years are provided by **nursery schools (asili nido)** that are not however part of the educational system, meaning that they are outside the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR). They are run by municipalities or private organizations, according to general criteria defined by each region.

2. **First cycle of education** that spans over 8 years. It starts with 5 years **primary school (scuola primaria)**, for children between 6 and 11 years of age and it continues with 3 years **lower secondary school (scuola secondaria di I grado)** for children between 11 and 14 years of age.

At the end of the last year of lower secondary school, students write a [State examination](#).

For further information about curricula, number of subjects, weekly timetable and assessment criteria [click here](#)

3. **Second cycle of education** offering two different educational paths:
  - five years **upper secondary school (scuola secondaria di II grado)** for students from 14 to 19 years of age. Students can choose among [Licei \(lyceums\)](#), [istituti tecnici \(technical institutes\)](#) and [istituti professionali \(vocational institutes\)](#).
  - three and four-year [vocational training courses \(IFP\)](#) that are organized by the Regions.

At the end of the upper secondary school, students sit a [State examination](#).

4. **Post-secondary Non tertiary Education:** these are post-qualification and post-diploma vocational courses organized by the Regions and Higher technical institutes and training courses (IFTS – Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore).

Further information: [click here](#)

5. **Higher Education** is offered by Universities and by the High level Arts & Music Education System (AFAM – Alta Formazione Artistica Musicale e Coreutica). Higher Education is offered at first, second and third level (Bachelor, Honours and Phd).

Further information: [click here](#)

**BACK TO [Study in Italy](#)**

There are 6 types of **liceo**:

1. **Liceo scientifico** (science) that also offers a programme in applied sciences (scienze applicate);
2. **Liceo classico** (classical studies) where humanities, Latin and old Greek are learned;
3. **Liceo linguistico** (languages) where students study modern languages, Latin and Italian;
4. **Liceo Artistico** (art) that offers 6 specializations: arti figurative (figurative arts), architettura e ambiente (architecture and environment), design, audiovisivo e multimediale (audiovisual and multimedia), grafica (graphics), scenografia (scenic design);
5. **Liceo musicale e coreutico** (music and dance);
6. **Liceo delle scienze umane** (human sciences) that also offers a programme in social-economics.

Further information: [click here](#)

**BACK TO [Second cycle education](#)**

**Technical institutes** offers 2 economics-based programmes and 9 technology-based programmes.

Further information: [click here](#)

**BACK TO [Second cycle education](#)**

**Vocational Training courses (IFP)** offers 6 different programmes.

They are run by upper secondary vocational institutes and/or by vocational training agencies accredited with the Regions.

At the end of three years, students who successfully complete the qualification vocational-training course, qualify as “workers”.

At the end of four years, students who successfully complete the vocational-training course qualify as “technicians”.

Further information: [click here](#)

**BACK TO [Second cycle education](#)**

## **State examination – lower secondary school**

At the end of the last year of lower secondary school, students write a State examination over several days which consists of four written tests (Italian, Mathematics together with Science and Technology, two foreign languages - usually chosen amongst English, French, German or Spanish – which are part of the Curriculum) and also a national written test set by the National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education System (INValSI – Istituto Nazionale per la Valutazione del Sistema educativo di istruzione e di formazione).

After the written tests, students also do an oral test on all subjects studied during the last school year.

At the end of the State examination, each student receives a mark out of ten which represents the average of all written tests, the oral test and the mark obtained at the time of admission to examination.

**BACK TO [Second cycle education](#)**

## **State examination – upper secondary school**

At the end of the upper secondary school, students sit a State examination in front of a committee made up of three internal teachers, three external teachers and an external chairman.

The examination calendar is decided annually by the Ministry of Education.

During the course of a few days, students take three written tests: Italian, one of the key subject of their curriculum (e.g. Latin or Greek for the Liceo classico) and a multidisciplinary test on five of the subjects studied in the final year.

The contents of the first and second written test are selected by the Minister and sent to each school on the same day of the test.

After the written test, they also have an oral multidisciplinary test that covers the final school year's programme.

At the end of the examination each student receives a mark out of one hundred (a maximum of 15 points allocated to each written test, a maximum of 30 points for the oral test and a maximum of 25 points as a school credit).

The pass bench mark is 60/100.

Students who pass the examination receive a diploma and a certificate.

The diploma is the access title to Post-secondary Non Tertiary Education and Higher Education.

**BACK TO [Second cycle education](#)**

## **Types of schools**

Education in Italy is compulsory from 6 to 16 years of age: eight years of First Cycle Education (5 years of primary school and 3 years of lower secondary school) and the first two years either at [upper secondary school](#) level or through [vocational education and training courses](#).

Compulsory Education can be accomplished either in a State school or in a *paritaria* school and even, according to certain conditions, through home based schooling.

A *paritaria* school is a private school officially recognised by the Ministry of Education and authorized to issue legally accepted diplomas.

**BACK TO [Study in Italy](#)**

## **International schools**

There are many international schools in Italy such as the American, British, French or German schools.

To find out which international schools are officially recognised by the Italian Ministry of Education [click here](#)

**BACK TO [Study in Italy](#)**

### **Official Teaching languages**

Italian is the official language for school education, although in some Italian northern regions, where the majority of the population is German-speaking, German language is also in use.

**BACK TO [Study in Italy](#)**

### **How to choose a school**

As a general rule, the choice of the school is up to the children's parents, provided that the chosen school has enough available places according to admission criteria set out by each school.

Parents usually choose the school closest to their place of residence.

To find a school, either public or *paritaria* [click here](#)

To find which University courses are offered and where [click here](#)

**BACK TO [Study in Italy](#)**

## **School enrolment**

Click on the different level of schools listed below to find out information about enrolment:

- [Pre-primary](#)
- [Primary and upper secondary](#)

**BACK TO [Study in Italy](#)**

**Pre-primary.** Children turning 3, 4 or 5 by 31 December of their respective school year can normally enrol in the pre-primary school.

It might be also possible that a child turning 3 by 30 April of his\her respective year may be admitted to the pre-primary school at the parents' request and according to specific criteria set out by the School Council.

For information on how to choose a school [click here](#)

**BACK TO [School enrolment](#)**

**Primary and upper secondary.** Children turning six by 31 December of their relevant school year must enrol in primary school.

Enrolment in lower secondary school is compulsory at the end of the primary school.

Considering that education is compulsory for 10 years, students who have successfully finished the first cycle of education must enrol in an upper secondary school or in a vocational training course.

Parents can choose the school they want for their children. For further information on how to choose a school [click here](#)

Every year the Ministry of Education sets out the procedures for the enrolment process which can be done online using the platform prepared by the Ministry.

Parents submit the application to Upper Secondary school directly through the Lower Secondary school attended so far by their son/daughter.

**BACK TO [School enrolment](#)**

## **School calendar**

The calendar for nationwide school holidays is set out annually by the Ministry of Education.

Each Region then defines the start and the end of school classes, the school breaks around national or other holidays.

The school year starts on 1 September and ends on 31 August.

Students classes and activities usually start around the second week of September and end around the second week of June (pre-primary activities end on 30 June).

Universities set out their own Academic Year's calendar.

**BACK TO [Study in Italy](#)**

### **Special needs education**

Starting from 1971 special needs pupils attend regular classes in ordinary schools in order to be integrated with all other students.

To facilitate their integration there is a special teacher in support of classroom activities.

For further information [click here](#)

**BACK TO [Study in Italy](#)**