



Italy

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Education in Italy is compulsory from the ages of 6 to 16. In 2019 Italy announced that it would include sustainability and the climate crisis as compulsory subjects in their curriculum. This inclusion contributes to the country's attempts to meet the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Education policy making is shared between the national government which has responsibility for funding, school curricula, and quality control and the Regions responsible for education delivery, in particular for vocational education and training.

In 2015, Italy's parliament approved Law 107/2015, called *The Good School Reform (La Buona Scuola)*, which called for a broad-ranging school reform which aims to improve educational outcomes of their children and young people. This parliamentary law calls for improvements in the curriculum emphasising the introduction and enhancement of the teaching of certain subjects, including sustainable development. Measures included in the document address increasing individual school autonomy, hiring new teachers to meet shortages, and enhancing digital innovation and skills in schools.

Italy has also engaged with the EU-funded *National Operational Programme 2013-20 (Per la Scuola: competenze e ambienti per l'apprendimento)* and as a result have implemented measures to improve educational equity, quality, lifelong learning, links between school and work, and administrative and institutional capacity among other targets.

In 2019 Italy's Education Minister announced that Italian students will have one hour a week dedicated to themes including global heating and humans' influence on the planet with themes included in geography, civics, mathematics and physics.

The entire ministry is being changed to make sustainability and climate the centre of the education model...I want to make the Italian education system the first education system that puts the environment and society at the core of everything we learn in school.

Lorenzo Fioramati, Italian Education Minister

The decision announced by Lorenzo Fioramati, Italian Education Minister, makes Italy the first country in the world to make these specific subjects compulsory.

In order to meet the goal, the Italian government has engaged Environmental experts from Columbia and Oxford Universities to assist in the development of best practice and preparation of the new curriculum targets for each grade. Teacher training began in January 2020 and the full programme commenced in September 2020.

The new curriculum is delivered at all grade levels and is mandated to occur for a minimum of 33 hours of education about climate change and other relevant topics.

6-19-year-olds spend a minimum of one hour a week on topics such as ocean pollution, sustainable living and renewable resources.

The Ministry for Education has also supported the Senato & Ambiente (Senate & Environment) competition which recognises schools who have “aimed at making young people grasp the importance of the values of environmental sustainability. The award aims to promote the values of environmental protection and sustainability, to encourage young people to identify environmental challenges in their local context and to develop ways to meet these local challenges.

Schools entering the competition must:

- 1 Identify a local environmental issue
- 2 Conduct research
- 3 Study an analysis people’s attitudes to the issue (conduct a survey in the area and school)
- 3 Provide a report that demonstrates possible solutions to meet the issue.

“Climate change should be included in all school curricula and should play a central role in updated Nationally Determined Contributions”

Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change

The 2020/1 school year competition saw 12 schools win (by region) with just over 130 school entries. The 2021/22 school year saw 90 schools enter with 14 winning projects awarded. Topics ranged from ‘the right to breathe’, to ‘causes of the decline of bees in the Upper Tiber Valley’.

It is clear that the Italian government is committed to reaching Climate-neutral goals in line with the Paris Agreement and the European Green Deal.

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