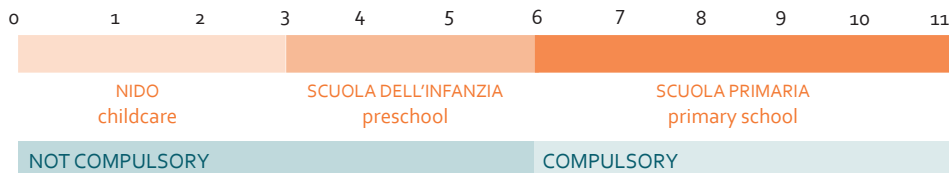
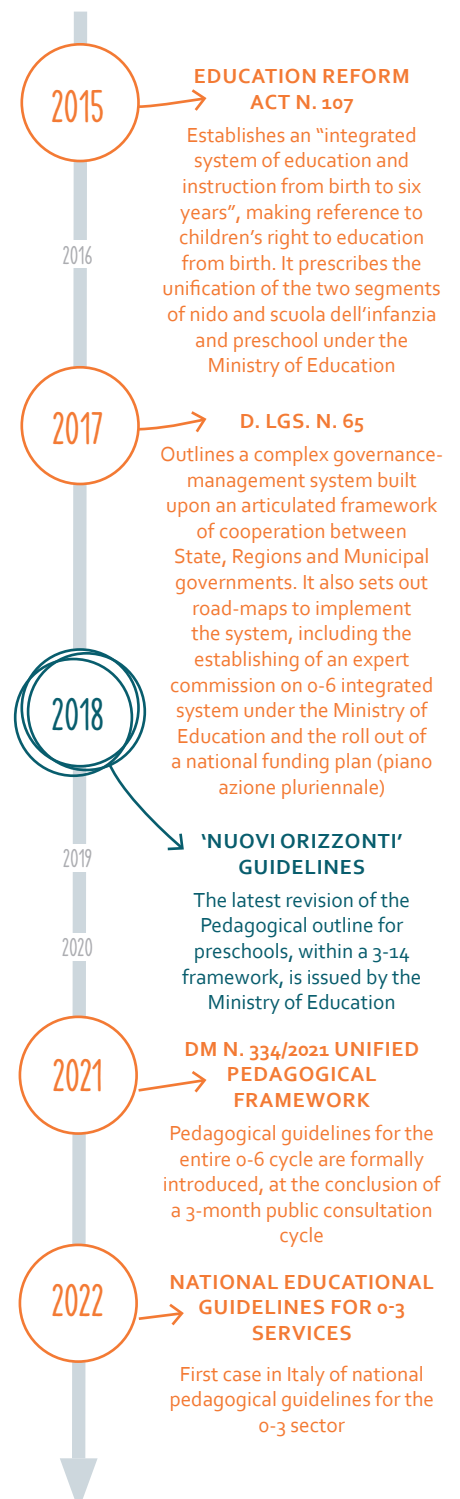


ITALY

STRUCTURE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND PRIMARY EDUCATION



TIMELINE OF RECENT POLICY MEASURES



CHILDCARE



ATTENDANCE

In 2019 **CHILDCARE SERVICES** were attended by 26.9% of the under 3s. The percentage increases with age. Quite low for toddlers under 12 months, it increases to 22% of those in the 12-24 age group, and to 46,8% of children older than 24 months.



PROVISION

Municipalities provide directly more than 50% of places. Most places in private provision are subsidized by local governments on the basis of specific agreements and quality requirements. A further 4-6% of places are offered by unsubsidized private providers.



PERSONNEL

Childcare services are operated by educators. Children/educator ratio is set by regional legislation. Each service is sustained by a pedagogical coordinator who supports educators' reflection on their practice, promote their relationships with children's parents, build links between services in the area.



STRONG IMBALANCES AND POLICY DISPARITIES IN PARTICIPATION AND PROVISION BETWEEN NORTHERN/CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN REGIONS SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED

PRESCHOOL



ATTENDANCE

Scuola dell'infanzia is attended by 90% of 3 year-olds, 94% of 4 y.o. and 86% of 5 y.o. (many enter primary school before turning 6). 62% are enrolled in state-maintained preschools, almost 1/3 attend private settings (mostly operated by a Catholic preschool network) and 9 to 10% municipal schools.



FINANCE

Personnel costs in state-maintained preschools are covered by the national government whereas expenditures for buildings, canteen and transports are covered by local governments. Non-state preschools complying with national quality guidelines benefit from a partial financial support from the national government.



PERSONNEL

Two (or 3) teachers share the responsibility of 20 to 29 children for three years (from age 3 to age 6), although actual co-presence is rarely achieved in State-maintained settings. Preschools run by local governments and the Catholic preschool network (FISM) also employ a pedagogical coordinator.



Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



ITALY: 5 CURRENT ISSUES FACING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

1. OVERCOMING PERSONNEL QUALIFICATION GAP

CURRENT MISALIGNMENT IN PRE-SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

B.A. IN EARLY CHILDHOOD ED. FOR EDUCATORS IN THE 0-3 SEGMENT
M.A. IN PRIMARY ED. SCIENCES FOR TEACHERS IN THE 3-6 SEGMENT

RISK: SCHOOLIFICATION OF ECEC

INCREASING ALIGNMENT OF THE PRE-SERVICE TRAINING ROUTE FOR PRE-PRIMARY STAFF WITH THAT FOLLOWED BY PRIMARY TEACHERS POSES A THREAT TO THE PEDAGOGICAL CULTURE UPON WHICH ITALIAN ECEC HAS BEEN BUILT OVER THE LAST 40 YEARS.

TO DO: DEVISE AND IMPLEMENT A MORE COHERENT AND UNIFIED APPROACH TO PRE-SERVICE TRAINING FOR ALL ECEC STAFF

2. CREATING INTEGRATED IN-SERVICE TRAINING ROUTES

INTEGRATED PATHWAYS OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ARE A STRATEGIC LEVER TOWARDS:

IMPROVED EXCHANGE OF REFLECTIONS AND PRACTICES
BETTER PEDAGOGICAL CONTINUITY ACROSS ECEC SEGMENTS

KEY OBSTACLE: TEACHERS IN STATE-MAINTAINED PRESCHOOLS ARE EMPLOYED UNDER A NATIONAL COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT THAT DOES NOT LEND ITSELF EASILY TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF INTEGRATED IN-SERVICE TRAINING MODELS

TO DO: CROSS-SECTOR DISCUSSION WITH TRADE UNIONS MUST BE INITIATED

3. REORGANISATION OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

NEW TASKS TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

EXPANSION AND MONITORING OF 0-3 SETTINGS ACROSS THE COUNTRY
NEW FINANCIAL COMMITMENT
PROVISION OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING
REGULATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN 0-3 AND 3-6 SERVICES

ALREADY IN EXISTENCE

PLANNED BUT NOT YET OPERATIONAL

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS:

(A) EXPERT COMMISSION WITH CONSULTING AND ADVISORY TASKS

(B) PEDAGOGICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE INTEGRATED SYSTEM FROM 0 TO 6

(C) NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE 0-3 SECTOR

(D) NATIONAL REGISTRY FOR ALL 0-3 SERVICES ALONG THE MODEL OF 3-6 SECTOR

4. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE 0-6 CENTRES (POLI PER 'L'INFANZIA')

INTERGRATED AREAS WITH 0-3 SETTINGS AND PRESCHOOL (IN THE SAME BUILDING OR NEARBY) WILL FACILITATE:

SHARING STAFF AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES
ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES
PROMOTING CONTINUITY AT THE LEVEL OF ACCESS

POTENTIAL BARRIER: LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES

THE FINANCIAL ALLOCATION FUND FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INTEGRATED SYSTEM IS LIKELY TO REPRESENT A SPECIAL, ON-TIME FINANCING EFFORT

PAVING AN ALTERNATIVE ROUTE:

INVESTING IN EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY STARTING FROM EXISTING PROVISION, BY

SUSTAINING INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION AND JOINT PLANNING OF TRANSITIONS

0-6 PEDAGOGICAL GUIDELINES BECOME A KEY TOOL FOR LOCAL EXPERIMENTATIONS.

5. LOCAL PLATFORMS FOR PEDAGOGICAL COORDINATION

PEDAGOGICAL TEAM TO BE COMPOSED BY:

PEDAGOGICAL COORDINATORS IN 0-3 ECEC SERVICES (BOTH MUNICIPAL AND PRIVATE)
PROFESSIONALS IN MIDDLE-MANAGEMENT ROLES WITHIN STATE-MAINTAINED 3-6 PROVISION

IN PURSUIT OF

PROMOTING COOPERATION AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING PRACTICES
FACILITATE PLANNING OF INTERGRATED IN-SERVICE TRAINING INITIATIVES
DEVELOPMENT OF A SHARED PEDAGOGICAL VISION

MAIN BARRIER: NO PEDAGOGICAL COORDINATORS IN STATE-RUN PRESCHOOLS

CURRENTLY ONLY MUNICIPAL AND PRIVATE PROVIDERS ARE REPRESENTED IN LOCAL COORDINATION PLATFORMS

EXPERIMENTAL MODELS: (A) EXPERIENCED PRESCHOOL TEACHERS IN STATE-MAINTAINED PROVISION ARE ASSIGNED SPECIAL COORDINATION TASKS

(B) MUNICIPAL PEDAGOGICAL COORDINATORS REACHING OUT TO STATE-MAINTAINED PRESCHOOL.

(C) IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOCUSED ON PEDAGOGICAL LEADERSHIP TARGETED TO MIDDLE-MANAGEMENT FIGURES IN STATE-MAINTAINED PRESCHOOL