



Matching Practices for Secondary Schools – Italy

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Relevant country background

The Italian school system is governed by the central government that defines the schools' organization, the curriculum, and allocates funds to schools, primarily based on the number of students. Nonetheless schools have, since 2000, been granted some autonomy regarding the curriculum, the organization of the day, the material taught and extra-curriculum activities. They can do this also in collaboration with other schools, e.g., through school networks. The autonomy of organization is higher in the 5 regions that have a special autonomous status (Friuli Venezia Giulia, Sardinia, Sicily, Trentino-Alto Adige and Valle d'Aosta) and (in some cases) recognized languages other than Italian taught in schools.

School education is compulsory and free from age 6 to age 18. Some schools are publically funded, some are private and some are private but partly publically funded. Public school is free. Students enrolled in recognized private schools can get as much money back as what a student in public school costs the State by obtaining a fixed per-student amount voucher that is redeemed in the tax declaration. Primary school covers age 6 to 10. First-level secondary school covers age from 11 to 13, and it is organized in the same way as primary school. High school (Second level Secondary School) goes from age 14 to 18 and is organized at national level. Preschool for children aged 2.5 and above is also offered and publically funded, but it is not compulsory, and it is managed at the city hall level (*Comuni*).

This profile applies to enrollment in high schools, i.e. age 14 to 18.

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“Matching in Practice” is a research network that brings together the growing community of researchers in Europe working on the various aspects of assignment and matching in education and related labour markets.

These country profiles are part of a collective effort by network members to map matching practices across Europe

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Summary box

Organization of education	National
Stated objectives of enrolment policy	Every student has the right to a seat since secondary education is free and compulsory.
Who's in charge?	Each school governing body, but local authorities can serve as coordinators at a local level.
Admissions system in place since	2004, after that minor changes were introduced, but the enrollment policies have not been changed.
Available capacity	Each school's capacity is decided by Local Authorities, that try to match offer and demand of seats each year.
Timing of enrolment	The enrollment date is established each year by the Ministry of Education.
Information available to students prior to enrolment period	The curriculum of each school, the day schedule and the services that each school provides (canteen, gymnasium, and so on). No information on demand.
Restrictions on preference expression	One application per student to be sent to the school of first choice. Students can indicate up to 2 other schools in their application forms.
Matching procedure	Decentralized admissions. In case the first chosen school does not have a seat for the student, the principal forwards the demand to one of the other schools.
Priorities and quotas	The admission criteria are set by the school governing body.
Tie-breaking	Set by school governing body.

Description of current practices

Registration to high school is compulsory given that education is compulsory until the 18th birthday.

There are several types of high schools differentiated by subjects and activities. The main division is between the Liceo, the Istituto Tecnico and the Istituto Professionale. The "Liceo" refers to a form of upper secondary school oriented towards the study of basic subjects. Types of Liceo include the liceo classico, the liceo linguistico (that emphasizes modern languages), the liceo delle scienze umane (that emphasizes social and human sciences), the liceo scientifico (that emphasizes sciences), the liceo artistico (that emphasizes plastic arts) and the liceo musicale e coreutico (that emphasizes music and lyrical arts). The Istituto Tecnico (Technical Institute) is more oriented toward practical subjects, such as aeronautics, business administration, computer science and chemistry. The Istituto Professionale offers

vocational training and enables the students to start searching for a job as soon as they have completed their studies (sometimes sooner, as some schools offer a diploma after 3 years instead of 5).

Any kind of high school that lasts 5 years grants access to the final national exam, called Esame di Stato conclusivo del corso di studio di Istruzione Secondaria Superiore or Esame di Maturità. This exam takes place every year between June and July and grants access to University. While the education received in a Liceo, which involves a broad curriculum, is generally considered necessary to enter university, even Istituto Tecnico and Istituto Professionale students have access to it, provided they pass the entry tests which are mandatory in some faculties.

Students are asked to decide which type of school they want to attend, usually under the advice of their teachers from first-level secondary school. Since February 2012, it is possible to apply online for school admission via the website <http://cercalatuascuola.istruzione.it/cercalatuascuola/> which allows to compare the schools' characteristics and facilities. No information is provided regarding the number of seats available nor whether the school is typically over or under demanded. Students can only apply to ONE high school. Nonetheless, they can indicate up to other two schools that they are willing to attend on the application form. In case a student is not accepted because there are no available seats left, the school principal has to forward the student's application to one of the other two schools (no preference order).

Admissions criteria are set by the governing body of each school prior to the start of registrations. These rules are known to parents. Siblings often get priority, as well as children living within the catchment area of the school. There are no national-level guidelines for what constitute reasonable or desirable admission criteria. An example of admissions criteria at a school in Rome can be found here.

Furthermore, schools organize "Open Days" when parents and students can visit the school.

Performance

The lack of national guidelines on the admission criteria and on the tie-breaking rules makes a performance analysis difficult.

Recent policy change

The education system in Italy has gone through a lot of reforms recently. There were three reforms in the last 7 years, the last one being introduced in 2011 when online registrations were introduced. Most of them are minor changes, and they do not include reforms to the admission procedure.

Perceived issues

None

Existing data

School-level data are available since 2012:

http://archivio.pubblica.istruzione.it/scuola_in_chiaro/open_data/index.html

Legal texts

http://www.istruzione.it/web/istruzione/cm17_10

In particular:

- on the organizational autonomy of schools
<http://www.istruzione.it/web/istruzione/famiglie/autonomia-scolastica>
- on inscription/admissions http://www.istruzione.it/web/istruzione/cm4_10
- on online inscriptions: http://www.istruzione.it/web/istruzione/prot6865_11

MiP Country Profiles downloadable from matching-in-practice.eu

MiP Country Profile 1. Cantillon, Estelle (2011), [Matching practices for elementary schools – Belgium \(French-speaking region\)](#).

MiP Country Profile 2. Kübler, Dorothea (2011), [University admission practices – Germany](#).

MiP Country Profile 3. Irving, Rob (2011), [Matching practices for entry-labor markets – Scotland](#).

MiP Country Profile 4. Kiselgof, Sofya (2011), [Matching practices for universities – Ukraine](#).

MiP Country Profile 5. Biró, Péter (2011), [University admission practices – Hungary](#).

MiP Country Profile 6. Biró, Péter (2012), [Matching practices for secondary schools – Hungary](#).

MiP Country Profile 7. Chen, Li (2012), [University admission practices – UK](#).

MiP Country Profile 8. Chen, Li (2012), [University admission practices – Ireland](#).

MiP Country Profile 9 Cantillon, Estelle and Koen Declercq (2012), [University admission practices – Belgium](#).

MiP Country Profile 10. Chen, Li (2012), [Matching practices for elementary schools – Ireland](#).

MiP Country Profile 11. Chen, Li (2012), [Matching practices for secondary schools – Ireland](#).

MiP Country Profile 12. Manlove, David (2012), [Matching practices for primary and secondary schools – Scotland](#).

MiP Country Profile 13. Merlino, Luca Paolo and Antonio Nicoló (2012), [Matching practices for elementary schools – Italy](#).

MiP Country Profile 14. Merlino, Luca Paolo and Antonio Nicoló (2012), [Matching practices for secondary schools – Italy](#).

MiP Country Profile 15. Merlino, Luca Paolo and Antonio Nicoló (2012), [University admissions practices – Italy](#).

MiP Country Profile 16 Hiller, Victor and Olivier Tercieux (2013), [Matching practices in secondary schools – France](#).

MiP Country Profile 17 Calsamiglia, Caterina (2014), [Matching Practices for elementary and secondary Schools – Spain](#).

MiP Country Profile 18 Lauri, Triin, Kaire Põder, and André Veski (2014), [Matching practices for elementary schools – Estonia](#).

MiP Country Profile 19. Salonen, Mikko A.A. (2014), [Matching practices for secondary schools – Finland](#).

MiP Country Profile 20 Terrier, Camille (2014), [Matching practices for secondary public school teachers – France](#).

MiP Country Profile 21 Basteck, Christian, Katharina Huesmann, and Heinrich Nax (2015), [Matching practices for secondary schools – Germany](#)

MiP Country Profile 22 Cantillon, Estelle (2015), [Matching practices for secondary schools – Belgium \(French-speaking region\)](#).