



2018 Country Report for Italy

Key points for EASPD members

I. Employment and Labour Market Policy

- Labour market conditions continue to improve.
- Italy has a very high overall employment rate.
- Long-term and youth unemployment remain very high.
- Long-term and youth unemployment decline but both remain among the highest in the EU.
- New tax incentives to support youth employment on permanent contracts have been introduced for 2018.
- Regarding the Europe 2020 Strategy, limited progress has been made in meeting the targets on employment rate.
- The implementation of the active labour market policies (ALMPs) reform is delayed.

II. Education Policy

- Wide regional disparities persist in educational attainment despite an overall improvement in the quality of schooling.
- The implementation of the school reform *La buona scuola* is broadly on track, but some measures have not been fully implemented.
- The new recruitment and training system for secondary school teachers is now in place and is expected to improve quality.
- Although steadily declining, Italy's early school leaving rate remains above the EU average (13.8 % versus 10.7 % in 2016) and is particularly high among foreign-born students (30 %, compared with the EU average of 19.7 %).
- Despite these challenges and an already underfunded education system, the share of public expenditure in education continued its downward trend.
- Italian graduates earn less than their European counterparts and take longer to find a job.

III. Social Policy

- Italy's health outcomes are generally above the EU average and the healthcare system appears cost-effective



- The high proportion of the population with self-reported unmet needs for medical care continues to be a challenge.
- Access to healthcare is more dependent on income than in most EU countries.
- E-health systems and information systems in support of performance assessment are being implemented.
- Italy has a lower ratio of nurses per doctor compared to most EU countries (1.5 versus EU average of 2.3).
- Public health expenditure is still below the EU average.
- A parallel public/private system pushes patients to resort to private healthcare, partly because of long waiting times in the public system, especially in the southern regions.
- Equal access to healthcare is compromised by regional differences in the quality and organisation of healthcare, including the level of co-payments for specialists.
- Social expenditure for people with disabilities is high but shows only mixed results.
- The main instrument to support people with disabilities is the 'Companion Allowance', a non-contributory and non-means tested cash transfer.

IV. Anything else?

- Regarding the Europe 2020 Strategy, limited progress has been made in meeting the targets on poverty and social exclusion.
- Italy has a high and increasing risk of poverty or social exclusion. In response, the design of a new permanent scheme to tackle poverty represents a major breakthrough, which could also help reinforce so far understaffed social services.
- Italy has a high and increasing income inequality.
- Italy has a very high gender employment gap, low overall employment rate.
- The female employment rate is still the second lowest in the EU and there are considerable regional disparities.
- The proportion of women participating in the labour market remains in fact one of the lowest in the EU. The main reasons include the difficulty of reconciling work with family care due to the limited availability of affordable childcare and long-term care services, low take-up of parental leave by men.
- In the absence of an integrated strategy to support women and families, the low number of women in jobs or seeking work remains a key concern.
- The limited availability of quality care services for the elderly and for people with disabilities may heavily weigh on female employment.



Additional Information

- European Commission: 2018 Country Report for [Italy](#)
- EASPD [Activities on the European Semester](#)

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