



**THE ITALIAN  
SCHOOL SYSTEM**



# ITALIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

**Preschool - Kindergarten**  
*Age 3-5*



**Primary – Elementary School**  
Age 6-11

**Middle School/ Junior High**  
Age 11-14

**High School**  
Age 14-19

**University**



## Preschool - Kindergarten

(*scuola dell'infanzia*)

Age 3-5



- The **Preschool** is the first stage of the education (children from three to five years) and training system. Attendance is not mandatory.

- Preschool/Kindergarten** contribute to primary childhood development in the areas of self sufficiency and language development which are further enhanced in Elementary school.

## Primary – Elementary School

(*scuola primaria o elementare*)

Age 6-11



- Primary school**, begins at age six and continues for five years, it is the first mandatory part of the Italian educational system
- Class sizes generally run about twenty five children per class with a minimum of ten students. In villages with not many people there are *pluriclassi*, or mixed-level classes, that have between six and twelve students.
- Schooling and textbooks are free.
- Students with special needs are integrated into mainstream education and specialist support is provided.



**Middle School/ Junior High**  
(*scuola secondaria di primo grado o media*)  
Age 11-14

- **Junior High** covers all the disciplines with the goal of the increased capacity of individual study and growth of organized social interaction, including reading and learning computer skills, increasing knowledge and skills keeping in mind social and cultural traditions and cultural and scientific evolution as they relate to modern times.
- This school progressively develops the ability and the competency of the students' skills; establishing expanded instruction and learning; including the introduction a second European language and helping to orient them for the next step in their education.
- Attendance in Middle School/ Junior High is mandatory for all Italian and resident children that have finished Elementary School. This first part of the student's education ends with a state exam, necessary to continue on high school.

## High School

(*scuola secondaria di secondo grado*)

Age 14-19

Since the school-year 2010-2011 a reform of High School system has reduced the number of subjects studies and introduced important changes in the curriculum of studies.

- A. Lyceums (Licei )
- B. Technical Schools (Istituti tecnici )
- C. Vocational Schools (Istituti professionali )

High school lasts five years and at the end students must pass the State exam to obtain their Diploma di Maturità and right of access to University.



## A. Lyceums (Licei)

Six different areas of studies may be chosen in High School or an option, that is a curriculum of studies different from the principal one:

- ❖ Liceo artistico (Fine Arts Studies) Figurative Arts, Architecture and Environment, Design, Audiovisual and Multimedia, Graphics, Scenic Design
- ❖ Liceo classico (Classical Studies)
- ❖ Liceo linguistico (Modern Language Studies)
- ❖ Liceo musicale e coreutico (Music and Choreutic studies)
- ❖ Liceo scientifico (Scientific and Applied Sciences)
- ❖ Liceo delle scienze umane (Liberal arts or socio-economic studies)



## **B. Technical Schools (Istituti tecnici)**

Technical school prepares students to work in agriculture, industry, commerce, administration and marketing.

In Italy there are about 76 technical schools, they are divided in two sections:

1. **Economics** with courses related to:
  - ❖ Administration, Finance and Marketing
  - ❖ Tourism;
2. **Technology** with courses related to:
  - ❖ Mechanics, energy
  - ❖ Transport and logistics
  - ❖ Electronics
  - ❖ Computing science and telecommunications
  - ❖ Graphics and communications
  - ❖ Chemistry and materials and biotechnology
  - ❖ Fashion
  - ❖ Agronomy, Food farming and processing
  - ❖ Building techniques, environment



## C. Vocational Schools (Istituti professionali)

These schools belong to the general system of education together with Lyceums and Technical schools. They last five years and are divided into two biennia and a fifth year, leading to a State exam and to a Diploma of Vocational schools useful to continue studies in Higher Education (University).

They offer two sections:

1. Section of services with four courses:

- ❖ Services for agriculture and rural development
- ❖ Socio-health services
- ❖ Services for wine, food and hotel management (IPSEOA)
- ❖ Commercial services;

2. Section for industry and craft with two courses:

- ❖ Industrial and artisan Production
- ❖ Maintenance and technical assistance.





## The New System of Vocational Education and Training (IeFP)

Vocational Schools (Istituti Professionali), according to the regional program, may activate four-year long Vocational Education and Training course through practical and project collaboration with accredited Institutions offering vocational training.

Vocational Schools use the number of hours belonging to their autonomy and flexibility, as stated by law to adapt curricula of studies useful to reach the skills set by the four-year long courses.

Such curricula tend to guarantee the instructive success for all students through the achievement of a regional degree at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> year and at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> as First and Second Level Qualification recognized at a national level.



# UNIVERSITY

<i>degree-courses</i>	<i>Degrees</i>	<i>credits earned</i>	<i>Years</i>
<i>1st cycle - undergraduate studies/students</i>			
Laurea degree course	1st degree / Laurea degree	180	3
<i>2nd cycle - graduate studies/students</i>			
2nd (Laurea) degree course	2nd degree (2nd Laurea)	120	2
1st (level) Specialisation degree course	1st (level) Specialisation degree	120-180	2-3
1st (level) University Master degree course	1st (level) University Master degree	60+	1+
<i>3rd cycle - postgraduate studies/students</i>			
Research Doctorate programme	Research Doctorate degree		3+
2nd (level) Specialisation degree course	2nd (level) Specialisation degree	60-300	1-5
2nd (level) University Master degree course	2nd (level) University Master degree	60+	1+

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