

Background Information: Higher Education System in Italy



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Higher Education System in Italy

I. General Characteristics

Population	
Total population (1.1.2013) (million) ¹	59.69
Population density (2013) (persons per square kilometre) ²	199.4
Population Structure (2013) (share of total population %) ³	
0-14 years	14.0
15-24 years	9.9
25-49 years	35.3
50-64 years	19.7
65 years and older	21.2
GDP	
GDP per capita in PPS (2013), EU 28 = 100 ⁴	99
GDP year-on-year growth rate (2013) ⁵	-1.7
Education (2012) (All levels) ⁶	
Enrolment	
Total (ISCED 0-6)	11,102,500
Tertiary Level of Education (ISCED 5-6)	1,925,930
Tertiary Education	
Population aged 25-64 years with tertiary education (2012) (%) ⁷	16.0
Population aged 30 – 34 years with tertiary education (2012) (%) ⁷	22.0
Public expenditure on tertiary education (percentage of GDP) (2011) ⁸	0.8

¹ European Commission. (2013). *Eurostat Compact Guides: Basic Figures on the EU, Winter 2013/2014 Edition*. Luxembourg: Publications office of the European Union.

² Eurostat. (2013). *Population density*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00003&plugin=0>

³ Eurostat (2013). *People by age group*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tps00010&language=en>

⁴ Eurostat. (2013). *GDP per capita in PPS*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=teco0114>

⁵ Eurostat. (2013). *Real GDP growth rate*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=teco0115>

⁶ Eurostat (2014). *Students by ISCED level, age and sex*. Retrieved from http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_en1rtl&lang=en

⁷ OECD. (2014). *Education at a glance 2014: OECD Indicators*, pp. 44. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/edu/Education-at-a-Glance-2014.pdf>

⁸ OECD. (2014). *Education at a glance 2014: OECD Indicators*, pp. 232. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/edu/Education-at-a-Glance-2014.pdf>

2. Types of Higher Education Institutions⁹

The following types of institutions offer higher education in Italy: universities, arts and music higher education institutions (*alta formazione artistica e musicale - AFAM*), and higher technical institutes (*istruzione tecnica superiore - ITS*).

University education is provided by state universities and non-state universities (11 of which are online universities). Universities are autonomous bodies; they adopt their own statutes, establish their own governing bodies as well as their teaching and research structures.

AFAM institutions include the following: academies of fine arts, higher schools of design (*ISIA - istituti superiori per le industrie artistiche*), music conservatories and recognised music institutes, the national academy of drama, and the national dance academy.

Higher technical institutions are a part of the Italian higher education system since 2011-2012. These institutions were set up to meet the demands of the new high-level skills and competences relevant to the technical and technological sectors of the labour market.

A number of specialised institutions offer tertiary education in specific fields. Higher schools for language mediators (*scuole superiori per mediatori linguistici - SSML*) and specialisation institutes or schools in psychotherapy (*scuole di specializzazione in psicoterapia*) issue qualifications equivalent to those awarded by universities. Further institutions issue qualifications recognised within the education system but refer to national authorities other than the Ministry of Education, University and Research. Among others there are: *Scuola nazionale di cinema; Fondazione per la conservazione e il restauro dei beni librari; scuole di archivistica, paleografia e diplomatica; accademie militari; istituti superiori di scienze religiose.*

3. Study Structure

Universities issue the following qualifications, corresponding to the Bologna Process structure:

- *laurea*, corresponding to a first-cycle qualification (Bachelor), issued at the end of a three-year study programme (180 ECTS credits);
- *laurea magistrale*, corresponding to a second-cycle qualification (Master), issued at the end of a two-year study programme (120 ECTS credits) or to a 5-6-year single study programme (*laurea magistrale a ciclo unico*, 300-360 ECTS credits);
- *dottorato di ricerca*, corresponding to a third-cycle qualification (Doctoral), issued at the end of a minimum three-year study programme.

In addition, universities may organise courses leading to the following qualifications outside the three-cycle structure:

⁹ MIUR - University: <http://www.universitaly.it/index.php/>

INDIRE - ITS: <http://www.indire.it/its/>

CIMEA - Italian HE system: <http://www.cimea.it/default.aspx?IDC=135>

Eurydice: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Italy:Higher_Education

ENIC-NARIC - Italy: http://www.enic-naric.net/italy.aspx#anco7_26.

- First-level university Master (*master universitario di primo livello*); courses are addressed to holders of a *laurea* and lead to a second-cycle qualification.
- Specialisation Diploma (*diploma di specializzazione*) and second-level university Master (*master universitario di secondo livello*); courses are addressed to holders of a *laurea magistrale* and lead to a third-cycle qualification.

AFAM institutions issue the following qualifications, corresponding to the Bologna Process structure:

- First-level academic Diploma (*diploma accademico di primo livello*), corresponding to a first-cycle qualification, issued at the end of a three-year study programme (180 ECTS credits);
- Second-level academic Diploma (*diploma accademico di secondo livello*), corresponding to a second-cycle qualification, issued at the end of a two-year study programme (120 ECTS credits);
- Research academic Diploma (*diploma accademico di formazione alla ricerca*), corresponding to a third-cycle qualification, issued at the end of a minimum three-year study programme.

In addition, AFAM institutions may organise courses leading to the acquisition of the following qualifications outside the three-cycle structure:

- Specialisation academic diploma I (*diploma accademico di specializzazione I*), and in-depth diploma or Master I (*diploma di perfezionamento o Master I*); courses are addressed to holders of a first-level academic Diploma and lead to a second-cycle qualification;
- Specialisation academic Diploma II (*diploma accademico di specializzazione II*), and in-depth Diploma or Master II (*diploma di perfezionamento o Master II*); courses are addressed to holders of a second-level academic diploma and lead to a third level qualification.

All qualifications are described in the QTI - Italian qualification framework of higher education¹⁰. ITS offer short-cycle non-university courses for the holders of an upper secondary education qualification. Courses generally last four semesters and lead to the qualification of 'Higher Technician' (*diploma di tecnico superiore*).

¹⁰ Quadro italiano dei titoli - <http://www.quadrodeititoli.it/Index.aspx?IDL=2>

4. Admission Requirements^{11 12 13}

The entry requirement to Italian higher education includes the upper secondary school leaving diploma or an equivalent qualification completed abroad. In addition, universities may also require some initial preparation and may conduct tests to assess applicants' knowledge. Prospective higher education students can take tests after completing their preparatory training. Test results do not disqualify candidates from entering higher education but determine additional specific training requirements to be fulfilled in the first year of higher education. Conservatories, officially recognised music institutes, and the National dance academy may accept highly gifted students without the upper secondary school leaving diploma.

Admission to Master programmes requires a relevant Bachelor degree. Access to third-cycle programmes requires passing a public competition. Access to this exam requires a second cycle qualification or equivalent qualification obtained abroad.

5. Enrolment Levels

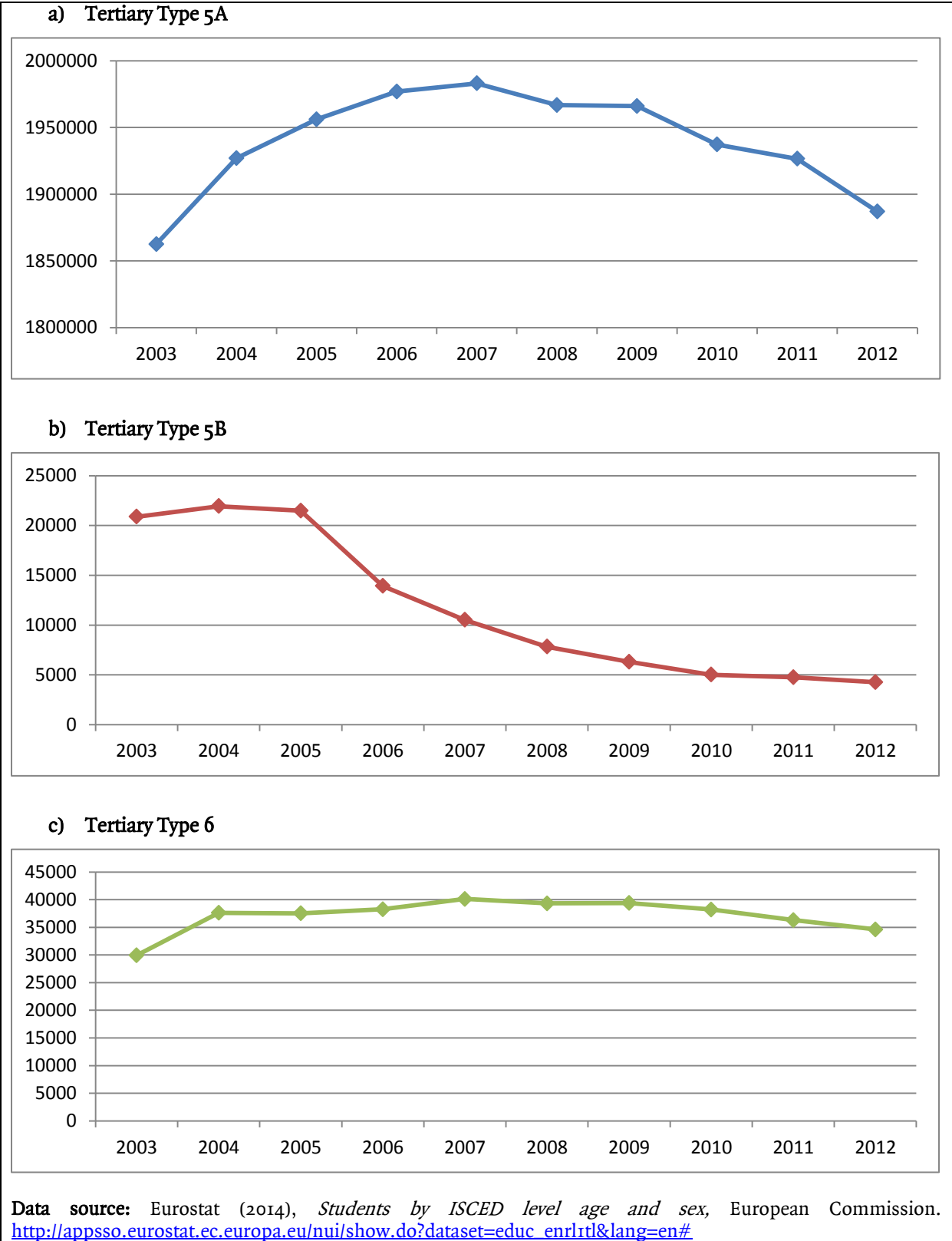
Figure 1 shows trends in enrolment levels (ISCED 5, 5B and 6, ISCED 97) in Italy between 2003 and 2012. The enrolment levels in Tertiary Type 5A increased between 2003 and 2007 and decreased thereafter. The number of students enrolled in Tertiary Type 5B has decreased considerably in the ten years whereas Tertiary Type 6 enrolments have remained stable between 2003 and 2012.

¹¹ Eurydice. (2014). *Bachelor*. Retrieved from <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Italy:Bachelor>

¹² Eurydice. (2014). *Second cycle programmes*. Retrieved from https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Italy:Second_Cycle_Programmes

¹³ Eurydice. (2014). *Third cycle (PhD) programmes*. Retrieved from https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Italy:Third_Cycle_%28PhD%29_Programmes

Figure 1: Trends in Enrolment



6. Registration and/or Tuition Fees

Higher education institutions establish their own tuition fees. The amount of fees paid by individual students depends on the type of institution in which they study, the programme they follow, economic conditions, academic performance, special needs, and further individual special conditions. The average total amount of fees and contribution student pay is about 1,300 Euro/year¹⁴.

7. Financial Support for Students¹⁵

In Italy, financial support for students in tertiary education is provided by the regional agencies for student welfare. The main tasks of these institutions are to: distribute scholarships, fellowships, and other kinds of targeted financial aids; provide services for lodging and food; provide further services like, e.g., sports, transports, or study facilities. Further financial support may be granted by higher education institutions through their budgets. Furthermore, students can apply for inter-governmental fellowships or those offered by private bodies.

8. Note on the Italian data provided for EUROSTUDENT V

Data refer to all first- and second-cycle university students; non-university students (i.e. AFAM and ITS students) as well as international students are not included in the survey.

This report is based on the following sources:

Centre for the Academic Promotion and Orientation of Study in Italy. (2014). *Uni Italia*. Retrieved from <http://www.uni-italia.it/en/>

Eurydice. (2013). *Overview Italy*. Retrieved from

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Italy:Redirect>

Study in Italy (2010). *Fees and Costs*. Retrieved from <http://www.study-in-italy.it/index.html>

¹⁴ Eurydice. (2013). *National student fee and support systems 2013/2014*. Retrieved from

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/facts_and_figures/fees_support.pdf.

¹⁵ Eurydice. (2014). Higher education funding. Retrieved from

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Italy:Higher_Education_Funding