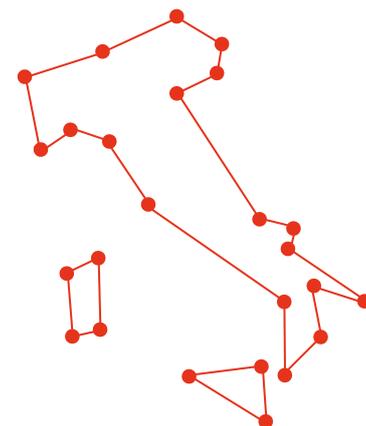


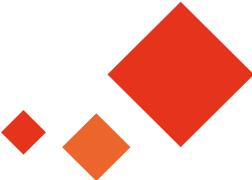


COUNTRY MONITOR



ITALY

Country Monitoring Report 2018



Italy has a well-developed participatory attitude from schools that partake in national and European initiatives to promote civic and citizenship education. However, this field needs to be improved through a systematic approach as those initiatives are launched in a very fragmented way. Furthermore, the need to have civic and citizenship education as a specific subject and the initial teacher training are lacking, despite the autonomy given for schools and teachers to choose how to implement citizenship objectives. For the validation of NFIL, a clear and comprehensive framework is needed along with an increase in public investment in education and culture for building democratic and responsible citizens in Italy.



1. Ensuring that people acquire civic and intercultural competences

In Italy civic and citizenship education is defined by law as a key objective of education, but there is no systematic approach to its implementation, which happens at school level. It is often taught as a cross-curricular theme and also as integrated into other subjects such as history and geography or socio-historical disciplines. In 2015, the “good school” law reform (*La Buona Scuola*) advocated a more whole school approach in this field¹. The law provides principles, objectives and guidelines, assigns objectives to schools and underlines their role to promote the acquisition of social, civic and intercultural competences at all education levels from primary to school-based IVET. According to our members, the question of effective teaching does not seem to change in this field, as long as teachers remain without initial training for that and the teaching activity is not established in an autonomous way.

As one of the priorities of the 2014-2020 National Operational Programme for the Structural Funds 2014-2020, the Italian Ministry of Education in 2017 made available 120 million euros to primary and secondary schools for projects aimed at strengthening students’ transversal, social and civic competences, through environmental education, economic citizenship and civic education such as the focus on active citizenship and participation. Despite the European Social Fund (ESF) supporting teaching citizenship in schools and the many good initiatives stemming from projects, our members have noted that these initiatives do not systematically cover all schools and all students, leaving some behind. Furthermore, our members have stressed the need to have more separate and visible subjects, aimed at specializing citizenship education and teachers through specific trainings.

CASE STUDY

Auser’s cultural input with Free Age universities

L’Associazione per l’invecchiamento attivo (Auser) is an Italian association promoted by Spi - Cgil: the federation of retired people from the major Italian trade union. Auser was born in 1989 with the aim to promote elderly active participation through social and civil voluntary service, self organisation of services, activities for young people and workers in general, active citizenship. It has 1.000 offices and 190.000 members, among them 60.000 active volunteers. Auser manages Third Age Universities, also called ‘Free Age Universities’, as universities first aimed for the elderly and now for young men and women to promote lifelong learning, integration and gender equity, with other 215.000 members participating each year to Auser’s cultural activities across Italy. Furthermore, these universities work with other Auser’s organisations involved in volunteering and active citizenship events, giving the possibility for students to get practical help (i.e.: mobility, company at home or in nursing homes, delivering hot meals and medications, etc.) while also being involved with some cultural activity to bring forward skills and competences. On the other side, this link between these two different “kind” of structures allows to meet people interested in cultural activities and to invite them to participate also in volunteering and social activities.

According to our members, CSOs are highly engaged into the promotion of inclusive education, while some mechanisms are put in place in formal education to ensure inclusiveness is safeguarded, such as the Italian law which guarantees a specialized and trained teacher for every student with disabilities². Our member organisation Auser is at the forefront when it comes to inclusion,

1. https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/et-monitor-report-2018-italy_en.pdf
2. <https://www.european-agency.org/country-information/italy/legislation-and-policy>

intercultural dialogue and whole school approach models in education, as it implemented a project called “Let’s build community stories together” (Costruiamo insieme nuove storie di comunità) in 2013³. The project involved middle school students and their schools, neighborhoods, local community and their cities in a context of increased multiculturalism and diversity. With the help of volunteers, students were able to interview their own ‘colleagues’, their teachers, but also the elderly living in their neighborhoods in order to (re)build the history of their communities, transformations, and to address potentialities, risks, weaknesses and so on. The choice of the place in which they lived was inspired by choosing and focusing on something that linked mixed groups of Italian and foreign students instead of other aspect that separated them.



(source: <http://www.auser.it/>)

Validation of NFIL

In Italy regions have long experience in managing non-formal and informal learning, as in the case for vocational and educational training. Since 2018, the national framework was completed and provides the link between skills-setting standards at the regional level and with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), as certifications of qualifications obtained in Italy must make references to the corresponding EQF. However, the late implementation of the national legal framework means that a various number of experiences and practices have been constructed at the local, regional and sectoral level.

According to our members, there are a number of issues that remains persistent, such as the lack of a clear regulatory framework on validation due to the very late implementation of the national one, along with a lack of proper mandates for organisations responsible for validation to build up integrated databases or release annual data, and the fragmented offer of validation opportunities.

In terms of public and CSOs partnerships, our members have highlighted the need to increase transectorial partnerships involving private online companies as well in projects involving combatting fake news and hate speech. For instance, the association Charter of Rome founded in 2011, which was set to implement the ethical protocol for factual information on immigration issues, signed by the National Council of the Order of Journalists (CNOG) and the National Federation of the Italian Press (FNSI), in order to become a stable point of reference for media, institutions all those who work daily on the themes of the Charter⁴.

Furthermore, our member organisation AUSER pointed at the agreement set after 2016 by public institutions and the National Association of Bank Foundations (ACRI) to constitute a social enterprise called “*Con I Bambini*”, aimed at managing the national Fund against juvenile educational poverty (the Fund was constituted after a 2015 law on this issue). It released some calls that put together NGOs, schools, institutions and private actors to realise activities in this field.



(source: <https://www.conibambini.org/>)

3. <http://www1.auser.it/cosa-facciamo/progetti/progetti-nazionali/>
 4. <http://admin.ifj.org/assets/docs/068/223/47dfc44-3c9f7df.pdf>

Recommendations

- Develop a systematic approach to national and European initiatives aimed at promoting civic and citizenship education
- Have civic and citizenship education as a specific subject along with initial teacher training
- Have a clear and comprehensive framework for the validation of non-formal and informal learning
- Increase trans-sectorial partnerships involving public, private stakeholders as well as NGOs and CSOs



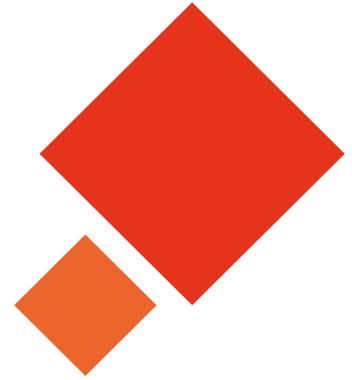
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solidar FOUNDATION

Rue de Pascale 4-6
1040 Brussels
Belgium
T +32 2 500 10 20
F +32 2 500 10 30

Twitter: @SOLIDAR_EU
Facebook: SOLIDAR
www.solidar.org
solidar@solidar.org



This Monitor is a contribution to further examine the relationship between citizenship and lifelong learning experiences and policy outcomes in and outside of the classroom in various European countries. Mapping the different approaches that SOLIDAR Foundation members have taken in promoting EU values in relation to citizenship education and lifelong learning for greater democratic participation of citizens, the outcomes will be disseminated towards European and national policy-makers and offers an array of best practices to collect, use and transfer among networks. The SOLIDAR Education and Lifelong Learning Forum will further work on the topic and develop a long term sustainable advocacy strategy for CSOs towards national and EU-wide authorities to influence the debate and revision of national curricula and education systems.

Through its member and partner organizations, SOLIDAR Foundation engages citizens in EU decision making processes, empowers people through lifelong learning and VET, and voices their concerns to the EU institutions by carrying out active lobbying, project management and coordination, policy monitoring, research and awareness-raising.

Author: Sara Gharsalli
Editor: Lucie Susova

With contributions from SOLIDAR
Foundation member [AUSER](#) & partners



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