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Organic and conventional public food procurement for youth in Italy

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<i>Summary:</i> <p>This report describes the political organisation and policies about public organic procurement in Italy, especially within school catering, and how organic products are utilized in this sector. The report is produced within the project “innovative Public Organic food Procurement for Youth”, iPOPY, and is a revised version of a preliminary report published in the same report series in 2008.</p> <p>Organic and otherwise typical and certified food is supported by several Italian regions by regulations and guidelines demanding that municipalities must prioritize such food in their calls for tenders. This has contributed to make Italy a leading public consumer of organic food, serving about 1 million dishes of school food per day with at least some organic ingredients. In total, about 40% of the food consumed in Italian schools is organic, and 36% from otherwise certified agriculture (local speciality, integrated or fair trade). On full length school days, all pupils are served a warm meal with two dishes, commonly also a desert. The average payment is 3.86 Euro.</p> <p>Future challenges for the Italian school meals with their high share of organic food are to reduce the high amounts of food waste, partly incurred by the current system of food serving where all pupils get equal portions, served at a table. Further, non-food costs are a challenge, as they constitute 70 % of the total food costs. Means to ensure that municipalities and caterers follow the regional guidelines are also required, as well as support for the municipalities to design efficient calls for tenders. The communication about organic food in schools, e.g. as a part of the education, should be strengthened to increase the pupil’s understanding of the benefits of this farming practice for the environment.</p>			
<i>Sammendrag:</i> <p>Denne rapporten beskriver den politiske organiseringen og utdanningssystemet i Italia, som et grunnlag for å drøfte offentlige matserveringstilbud spesielt i skolesektoren, og hvordan økologisk mat er integrert i slike tilbud. Rapporten er et resultat av prosjektet ”Økologisk mat til ungdommen!” (iPOPY - innovative Public Organic food Procurement for Youth), og erstatter en tidligere versjon utgitt i samme</p>			

rapportserie i 2008.

Mange Italienske regioner har vedtatt lover eller forskrifter som støtter opp om økologisk mat og matvarer fra andre sertifiseringsordninger som integrert, lokalprodusert og fair trade, ved å kreve at kommunene skal etterspørre slike matvarer i sine anbudsutlysninger. Dette har bidratt til at Italia er ledende mht offentlig forbruk av økologisk mat. Om lag en million måltider per dag med en viss andel eller 100 % økologiske ingredienser serveres i italienske skoler og barnehager. Om lag 40 % av alle matvarer som konsumeres i skolemåltider er økologiske, og 36 % fra andre sertifiseringsordninger. På hele skoledager får alle elever et varmt måltid med to retter, gjerne også med en enkelt dessert eller frukt. Gjennomsnittlig betaling er 3.86 Euro (ca 31 NOK).

Framtidige utfordringer for italienske skolemåltider og den høye andelen av økologisk mat er å redusere svinn. Elevene blir som regel servert ved bordet, og når alle får like mye blir det mye mat til overs som kastes. Den største delen av kostnadene for skolemåltider, ca 70 %, er ikke direkte knyttet til maten, men til infrastruktur, transport, serveringspersonale osv. Det er behov for å redusere disse kostnadene. Det er også behov for virkemidler som kan sikre at kommuner og catering-selskap følger de offentlige påleggene om å tilby økologisk og andre typer sertifisert mat, og å assistere kommunene når de skal utforme anbudsdokumenter. Det er videre for lite fokus på at mye av skolematen faktisk er økologisk. Dette bør styrkes både ved matserveringen og i skolehverdagen ellers slik at elevene blir mer klar over de miljømessige fordelene med økologisk matproduksjon.

Godkjent /Approved

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2. Introduction: Organic agriculture in Italy and the market for organic products

Italy holds the first place in Europe and seventh place worldwide for the amount of organic farms with over 44000 producers¹. Italy is also second in Europe and eighth in the world with over 1 million hectares² of certified organic farmland corresponding to more than 9% of the agricultural land in Italy. The average organic farm (26 ha) is considerably larger than for conventional farms (5 ha). A few very large corporate organic farms raise the average size which otherwise would be smaller than the conventional average.

Looking at the market figures for 2007 reveals that Italy had an economic turnover of 1.6 billion Euros of overall organic sales, and organic goods represented a share of 1,5- 1,6% on the national food market³. Italian producers, especially those specializing in organic production, have a strong propensity towards export. Italy is a major exporter of Mediterranean products in the European Union. Unfortunately, there are no data collected on this. Anyway, many organic companies and wholesalers state in international fairs and meetings that more than 50% of their production is normally exported.

In Italy organic certification is undertaken through a system of approved private inspection bodies, authorised by the control authority for organic agriculture, the Ministry for Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF – Ministero delle Politiche Agricole Alimentari e Forestali). The ministry has set up a specific office for organic agriculture in the Economic & Rural Development Department, under the General Direction for Agri-food Development, Quality and Consumers Guardianship. Besides this office, another department of the Ministry, the Central Inspectorate for Quality Control of Agri-food Products (ICQ), is in charge of the guardianship towards the private certification bodies and institutional control over all operators in the agri-food sector, including therefore organic farmers, processors, canteens and retailers.

Since the EU Reg. 834/2007 came into force, according to article 27 (5,c) certification bodies can operate, in addition to the authorisation by the ministry, only after being accredited by ACCREDIA (formerly named Sincert), the non-profit organization legally recognized by the Italian Government as the national accreditation body for the conformity with the ISO65 (UNI CEI EN 45011)⁴.

Another main institutional body carrying out further surveillance on operators is the Agri-food Policy Carabinieri corps unit, as a specialised branch of armed forces controlling investigations, inspections and monitoring the absence of malpractice, violations and transgression of laws and regulations on the agri-food sector.

The backbone of organic product distribution in Italy are the over one thousand specialised shops⁵, whereas supermarkets have a more recent history in this sector. In 1993 a large-scale retailer, "NaturaSi"⁶, specific for organic food and other natural products, started its activity and in 2000 it opened new shops in Spain as well. In 1999 the supermarket chain "Esselunga"⁷ started selling its own

¹ Figures from "The World of Organic Agriculture: Statistics and Emerging Trends 2010" (page 24):

http://www.organic-world.net/fileadmin/documents_organicworld/yearbook/yearbook-2010/fibl-ifoam-2010-world-of-organic-presentation-biofach-www.pdf

² Figures from the Italian national report "Bio in cifre 2008" (page 6) by SINAB (National Organic Agriculture Information System – Sistema d'Informazione Nazionale sull'Agricoltura Biologica)

http://www.sinab.it/share/img_lib_files/732_bio_in_cifre_2008.pdf

³ These figures are given in the ISMEA-Nielsen research published on "Repubblica affari e finanza" issued on the 23rd of February 2009, page 14 in the article by Christian Benna titled "Alimentare, il bio è cresciuto e oggi vale 2.5 miliardi di euro" (Benna, 2009). The same figures can be found, with slightly different values on the graphs by biobank on the following webpage: <http://www.biobank.it/it/BIO-biobank.asp?act=ddc&id=342>

⁴ Accreditation regulations available on the following SINCERT webpage: <http://www.sincert.it/docs/26ORT-16rev02.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.biobank.it/it/BIO-biobank.asp?act=ddc&id=323>

⁶ http://www.naturasi.com/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=831

⁷ <http://www.esselunga.it/default.aspx?idPage=371>

brand of organic products, followed by another major supermarket chain, “Coop”⁸. In 2009 large-scale retailers with private organic brands count more than 300 food items (Coop, Esselunga, see Annex 3).



Courtesy of ProB.E.R.

In 2008 there were 791 school canteens⁹ using organic ingredients (both partially and fully) for their menus in Italy. As a consequence, over 1 million dishes (Biobank, 2009)¹⁰ containing at least some organic ingredients are served every day, especially in nursery schools, kindergartens and primary schools. There are various approaches and degrees of commitment: some schools propose a complete organic menu, some other just a small amount of organic products and others just one organic dish.

School meal is composed of 2 dishes at least; normally also side-dish and fresh fruit/desert/yogurt are served. In 45% of the cases a snack is provided during the morning¹¹. In most cases the snack (normally organic) is served for an educational issue: first of all the municipality involve the families and the children in order to convince them to avoid bringing to school a packaged industrial snack.

This is a very important choice, both on a market perspective for the development of this sector and in an educational point of view, as such practice educates children and sets an example for adults and for the community.

In terms of organic catering in Italy in 2009 were recorded also 1222¹² organic farms providing food and accommodation (“agriturismo”), and 404¹³ organic restaurants which use at least 70% organic ingredients: 228 are normal restaurants and 176 are holiday-farms which cater as restaurants too. Vegetarian cuisine prevails in the normal restaurants making organic food, whereas holiday-farm restaurants, due to the strong bond with the local territory, tend to cater for more typical and traditional dishes.

⁸ http://www.e-coop.it/portalWeb/guidaproductportal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=viewDocumentiFaro&documentoFaro=%2FCoopRepository%2FCOOP%2FCoopItalia%2Fdocumento%2Fdoc00000026354

⁹ <http://www.biobank.it/it/BIO-biobank.asp?act=ddc&id=325>

¹⁰ <http://www.biobank.it/it/BIO-biobank.asp?act=ddc&id=365>

¹¹ Data available in Italian on page 21-23 of the survey “eating out of home) on the following link:

<http://www.acu.it/progetti/mangiar/materiali/risultati%20indagine/Relazione%20ristorazione%20scolastica.pdf>

¹² <http://www.biobank.it/it/BIO-biobank.asp?act=ddc&id=354>

¹³ <http://www.biobank.it/it/BIO-biobank.asp?act=ddc&id=363>

3. National conditions

3.1 Political organisation and policies

Political organization

Italy has a political organization that divides the three main powers:

- o Legislative (belonging to the Parliament) but also the Regions can promulgate laws
- o Executive (managed by the Government)
- o Judiciary (belonging to the Judicial system)

For more details see Annex 4.

Administrative division

Italy is a long country, subdivided into 20 regions. Five of these regions have a special autonomous status that enables them to enact legislation on some of their local matters. It is further divided into 109 provinces and about 8.100 municipalities.

Regions

The Regions of Italy are the first-level administrative divisions of the state. Italy was granted a degree of regional autonomy in the 1948 constitution, which states that the constitution's role is: to recognize, protect and promote local autonomy, to ensure that services at the State level are as decentralized as possible, and to adapt the principles and laws establishing autonomy and decentralization.

However, five regions, Friuli-Venezia, Giulia, Sardinia, Sicily, Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, and the Aosta Valley have been granted a special status of autonomy to establish their own regional legislation on some specific local matters; based on cultural grounds, geographical location and on the presence of important ethnic minorities. The other 15 ordinary regions were effectively established only in the early 1970s.

Each region has an elected council and a Giunta Regionale (executive committee) headed by a directly elected president. The Giunta is responsible to the council and is required to resign if it fails to retain the council's confidence. A constitutional reform in 2001 widened the areas of responsibility of the Regions, in particular concerning legislative powers, and most state controls were abolished. After this reform, agriculture and tourism are matters ruled directly by the Regions. With respect to (organic) school meals, some Regions promulgate laws about the management of school and hospital canteens; other regions draw up guidelines on the same subjects. Each type of regulation provides rules on public procurement. Commonly, the main aim of these Regional laws is to promote organic and other quality foods, especially in public canteens such as schools, nurseries and paediatric hospitals.

Provinces

The regions are divided into provinces, which also have their own local elections. For each of the provinces, a prefect is appointed by and responds to the central government, which he/she locally represents. Provinces are an administrative division of intermediate level between municipalities (in Italian: *comune*, pl. *comuni*) and regions. A province is composed of many municipalities (except the municipality and the province of Aosta, which overlap with the regional government), and usually several provinces form a region.

Municipalities

In Italy, municipalities are the basic administrative unit of both provinces and regions. A municipality usually comprises a principal town or village, generally giving its name to the municipality (such a town is named “capoluogo”, “capital, head place”) and other outlying areas called “frazioni” (singular: frazione, abbreviated Fraz., literally “fraction”), each usually centred on a small town or village.

Municipalities provide several basic civil functions, among which, in relation with the present study, the registration AND organisation of school meal systems in nurseries, kindergartens primary and lower secondary schools.

Municipalities are headed by a mayor (sindaco) assisted by a council of aldermen, the Consiglio Comunale. As of the 2001 census, there were 8095 municipalities in Italy; they vary considerably in area (ranging from 0.1 to 1300km²) and population (between 33 people and up to 2.5 millions)¹⁴

The density of municipalities varies widely by province and region: the province of Bari, for example, has 1,564,000 inhabitants in 48 municipalities, or over 32,000 inhabitants per municipality; whereas the Aosta Valley has 121,000 inhabitants in 74 municipalities, or 1,630 inhabitants per municipality — roughly twenty times more communal units per inhabitant. There are inefficiencies at both ends of the scale, and there is concern about optimizing the size of the municipalities so they may best function in the modern world, but planners are hampered by the historical resonances of the municipalities, which often reach back many hundreds of years, or even a full millennium. While provinces and regions are creations of the central government, and subject to fairly frequent border changes, the natural cultural unit is indeed the municipality, — for many Italians, their hometown. In recent years especially, it has thus become quite rare for municipalities either to merge or to break apart.

The municipalities organise the meal-system (directly or indirectly) for nursery schools and kindergartens (1-3 and 3-5 years old), primary and lower secondary schools (6-10 and 11-13). Altogether, municipalities manage meals for 85% of all schools attended by children/students from 1 to 13 years. In private schools, meals are not provided by the municipalities.

Population

The latest population estimate from ISTAT (National Statistics Institute) shows 60,325,805 inhabitants in Italy in December 2009¹⁵. Italy has the fourth largest population in the European Union (after Germany, France and the United Kingdom), and the 22nd in the world. The gradual increase of population is mainly supplemented by immigrants; there is also an increase in life expectancy, which is currently 79 for men and 84 for women (ISTAT, 2009¹⁶). Despite population growth, Italy is rapidly aging. Though the Italian fertility rate is climbing gradually and in 2009 corresponds to 1.35 children per woman. The current figures for the aging trends, where almost one out of five Italian inhabitants is a pensioner, predict that the Italian population could shrink by a quarter by 2050.

Italy has the fifth highest population density in Europe with 196 persons per square kilometre. The highest density is in North-western Italy: one quarter of the Italian population is given just by the regions of Lombardy and Piedmont. The most densely populated area is the Milan metropolitan area, where about 7.4 million people live.

The literacy rate in Italy is 98% overall, and school is mandatory for children aged 6 to 18. Approximately two thirds of the population live in urban areas, which is much lower than other Western European nations. Hence, Italy is a country where rural contexts still hold a relatively strong position.

¹⁴Source: istat - <http://www.istat.it/strumenti/definizioni/comuni/>. For example, the municipality of Rome (Lazio) has an area of 1,285.30 km² and a population of 2,546,804, and is both the largest and the most populated municipality in Italy; Fiera di Primiero, in the province of Trento, is the smallest municipality by area, with only 0.10 km², and Morterone (province of Lecco) is the smallest by population, with only 33 inhabitants.

¹⁵ <http://demo.istat.it/bilmens2009gen/index.html>

¹⁶ http://demo.istat.it/altridati/indicatori/2009/Tab_5.pdf

3.2 School structure

The school system in Italy is organized in pre-school and then 3 cycles, as shown in table 1:

School type		Age	Notes
Pre-school	Nursery school	1-3	not mandatory ; mainly private or municipal
	Kindergarten	3-5	not mandatory ; state, municipal, private
1 st Cycle	Primary school	6-10	mandatory; mainly state (few private)
	Lower secondary school (middle school)	11-13	mandatory ; mainly state (few private)
2 nd Cycle	Upper secondary school (High school)	14-19 or 14-17	not mandatory ; mainly state (few private)
3 rd Cycle	University	19 onwards	not mandatory ; state or private

Table 1: Italian school system

3.2.1 Kindergarten (*Scuola dell'infanzia*), children aged 3 to 5

In 2007-2008 there were 1,655,386¹⁷ children enrolled in all kindergartens in Italy. The management may be public (provided by the State or by the Municipalities) or private.

Kindergartens' pedagogical, didactic and functional identity must be shared all over Italy, also in case the service is provided by a private organization.

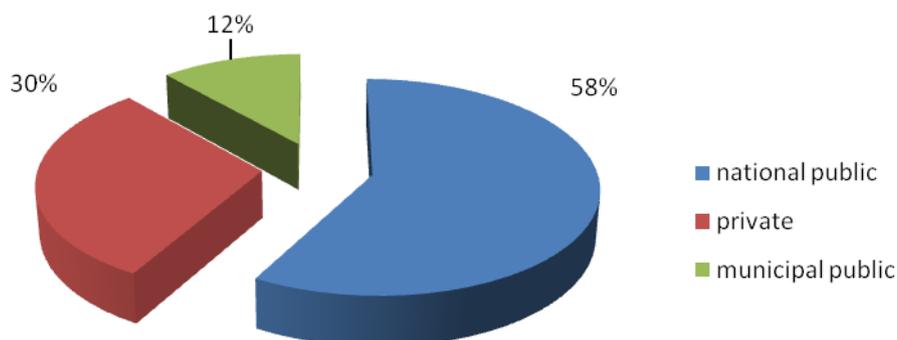


Figure 1: Distribution of children enrolled in the different types of kindergartens (2007-2008), in %

Kindergartens are open from September 1st to June 30th every year. Families can choose two different daily school-times:

1. "short" school-time (4 hours a day)
2. "long" school-time (8 hours a day)

¹⁷ Report "La scuola in cifre 2008" available on the following Webpage:
http://www.istruzione.it/web/ministero/index_pubblicazioni_09

Only 9 % of families choose the short school-time, whereas 91 % of children stay at school 8 hours per day for 10 months (about 200 days per year). The short school-time percentage is less than 5 % in the Northern regions, about 10 % in the Central and Southern regions, and near 25 % in the Islands.

In all nursery schools with the “long” time 1 meal and 1 snack per children every day are provided. It means that about 1.5 million children aged 3-5 eat at school every working day equalling about 300 million meals every year.¹⁸

3.2.2 Primary school (*Scuola elementare*), children aged 6 to 10

The primary school promotes the development of the personality of the children, respecting the personal diversities; its main aims are (Law 53/2003¹⁹):

- allowing the children to acquire and to develop basic knowledge and abilities up to the simple logical and critical learning
- promoting the learning of the expressive abilities in Italian language, and the basic learning of at least one language of the European Union (English is the first choice)
- putting the basis for the use of scientific methodologies in the study of the natural world, its phenomena and its laws
- exploiting the relational abilities
- educating the young citizens to the fundamental principles of the civil cohabitation



The attendance at the primary school (that lasts 5 years) is mandatory for all the Italian and foreign children who are 6 years old within August, 31th. The enrolment is optional for the children who will be 6 years old within April, 30th of the next year.



Courtesy of ProB.E.R.

The educational offer of all primary schools is worked out yearly by every single school in a document called POF (Piano dell’Offerta Formativa = Educational Offer Plan). The characterization of the educational objectives and of the activities connected to their attainment is translated in “learning units” that concur to the constitution of the so-called “personalized study plan”, respecting the natural differences between the single children.

The law establishes a total of 891 hours mandatory every year (Legislative Decree 59/2004 art. 7²⁰). The lessons in all primary schools begin in September and stop before June, 15th. During this period, 33 weeks of lessons are mandatory. In 2006-2007 there were 2,820,328 children enrolled in all primary schools in Italy. Primary schools are either state-run or private (less than 10 %).

Like the nursery school, in the primary school there are two different daily school-times:

1. regular time (from 27 to 30 hours a week) – 27 hours a week matches with the mandatory numbers of hours;
2. full time (from 33 to 40 hours a week).

Families can choose one of the two different daily school-times. By choosing the full time, they have to pay an additional fee due to the higher number of meals than the one provided in regular school-time.

¹⁸ Report “La scuola in cifre 2008” available on the following Webpage:
http://www.istruzione.it/web/ministero/index_publicazioni_09

¹⁹ <http://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/030531.htm>

²⁰ <http://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/deleghe/04059dl.htm>

The share of families choosing full time school is higher in Northern and Central regions (55%) than in Southern regions and in the Islands (40 %) ²¹.

In the first case (regular time) the children stay at school every morning and two afternoons per week, so they consume only 2 meals a week. In the second case (full time) the children stay at school every morning and every afternoon, so they consume 5 meals per week.

Total No. of pupils (year 2007/2008):	No. of Meals/week	No. of Meals/year
2.820.328		
Regular time: 2 meals per week chosen by 55% of pupils	3.100.000	102.000.000
Full time: 5 meals per week chosen by 45% of pupils	1.300.000	210.000.000
Total - average of 9,5 meals/week		312.000.000

Table 2: Meals provided in primary Schools per week and year ²²

3.2.3 Lower secondary school (*Scuola secondaria di primo grado / Scuola media inferiore*), children aged 11 to 13

The lower secondary school is finalized to increase in the students the independent abilities to learn and to develop social interaction. Its main aims are (Law 59/2004) ¹⁶:

- organizing and increasing the knowledge and the abilities of the students, in relation to the cultural tradition and the social, cultural and scientific evolution of the contemporary world, also through the learning and the deepening in the computer science technologies;
- developing step by step the competences and the abilities of choice related to the attitudes and vocations of the students;
- supplying suitable tools useful to the continuation of the studies and of the training activities;
- introducing the study of a second language of the European Union;
- helping the students to orient themselves to their own ways in the continuation of studies

The attendance at the lower secondary school (that lasts 3 years) is mandatory for all the Italian and foreign boys and girls who have concluded the primary school. The lower secondary school ends with a State examination (corresponding with the end of the first cycle). When passed, the students may be enrolled in an Upper Secondary school.

As in the primary school, the educational offer of all lower secondary schools is worked out yearly by every single school in a document called POF (Pianodell'Offerta Formativa = Educational Offer Plan). The characterization of the educational objectives and of the activities connected to their attainment is translated in "learning units" that concur to the constitution of the so-called "personalized study plan", respecting the natural differences between the single students.

The law establishes a total of 957 hours mandatory every year. The lessons in all lower secondary schools begin in September and stop before June, 15th. During this period, 33 weeks of lessons are mandatory. Like the primary school, in the lower secondary school there are two different daily school-times:

1. regular time (from 29 to 33 hours a week) – 29 hours a week matches with the mandatory numbers of hours;
2. full time (from 34 to 40 hours a week).

²¹ Report "La scuola in cifre 2008" available on the following Webpage:
http://www.istruzione.it/web/ministero/index_pubblicazioni_09

²² Report "La scuola in cifre 2008" available on the following Webpage:
http://www.istruzione.it/web/ministero/index_pubblicazioni_09

Families can choose one of the two different daily school-times. If choosing the full time, they have to pay an additional fee due to the higher number of meals than the one provided in regular school-time.

As opposed to the situation in the primary schools, the share of pupils choosing full time in the lower secondary schools is about the same in all Italian regions: 81 % choose the regular time; only 19 % the full time²³.

In the first case (regular time) pupils stay at school every morning and two afternoons, so they consume only 2 meals per week. In the second case (full time) the students stay at school every morning and afternoon, so they consume 5 meals per week.

In 2006-2007 there were 1.727.339 students enrolled in all lower secondary schools in Italy. Lower secondary schools may be state-run or private (less than 7 %).

Total No. of pupils (year 2007/2008):	No. of Meals/week	No. of Meals/year
1.727.339		
Regular time: 2 meals per week chosen by 81% of pupils	2.800.000	92.000.000
Full time: 2 meals per week chosen by 19% of pupils	600.000	54.000.000
Total - average of 4,4 meals/week		147.000.000

Table 3: Meals provided in Lower Secondary School²⁴

3.2.4 Upper secondary school (*Scuola secondaria di secondo grado = Scuola media superiore*), students aged 14 to 19

The upper secondary schools is differentiated into four educational directions:

- Lyceum (classical and scientific) duration: 5 years
- Art schools duration: 4 years
- Technical schools duration: 5 years
- Professional schools duration: 3 years + 2 years

At the end of high school studies, students must again pass a State examination (Esame di maturità) to achieve a diploma of legal value allowing the student University education. In professional schools, three years of general studies are followed by two years of specialization. Students must firstly pass an examination after the third year, so that they can achieve a professional qualification, and after the fifth year (Esame di maturità) as described above, allowing also these students to go to University.

In 2006-2007 there were 2,772,010 students enrolled in all upper secondary schools in Italy. Lower secondary schools may be state-run or private (less than 8%).

The law establishes a total of 200 days (33 weeks) mandatory every year. As for primary and lower secondary schools, the lessons in September and stop before June, 15th. Each type of upper secondary secondary school has a different number of lessons per week. Normally they don't exceed 36 hours per week. Students go to school for six days a week, and they have lunch after school.

Only few upper secondary schools provide warm meals through canteens. In most cases there are bars providing snacks, rolls, cold and hot beverages.

For more details see Annex 5.

²³ Report "La scuola in cifre 2008" available on the following Webpage:
http://www.istruzione.it/web/ministero/index_pubblicazioni_09

²⁴ Report "La scuola in cifre 2008" available on the following Webpage:
http://www.istruzione.it/web/ministero/index_pubblicazioni_09



Courtesy of ProB.E.R., Biobenessere project

3.2.5 University, students aged 19 onwards

Italian universities have a long history, beginning in medieval times with the establishment of the University of Salerno in the IX century, and the University of Bologna in 1088.

Nowadays, the vast majority of universities in Italy are public, and they are usually named after the city or region in which they are located and styled "Università degli studi di..." (University of Studies of..., after the Latin title of 'universitas studiorum').

There are also a small number of private-funded universities, accredited by the state and given the power to confer academic degrees. These include Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi, recognised as a school of excellence in economics, or the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, as an example of a number of universities backed by the Catholic Church.

Nowadays, Italian universities follow the guidelines of the Bologna Process, and the courses are usually divided into two: the "Laurea" (3 years, equivalent to a bachelor's degree) and the "Laurea Specialistica" (2 years, equivalent to a master's degree). However, it is worth noting that stopping at the BA level is widely viewed as a poor choice, and the majority of students still go for the "Laurea Specialistica", since they have to face job competition with older students who graduated before the Bologna Process and therefore followed a 5-year course of studies (Laurea Vecchio Ordinamento). Some courses have maintained preceding rules of "Laurea specialistica europea" or "Laurea specialistica a ciclo unico", with only one cycle of study of five years (Architecture, Pharmacy), except for medicine which requires six years of courses.

Switching to the guidelines of the Bologna Process has been a major source of distress both for students and faculties, and the new arrangements gave rise to a wide range of possibilities.

University system

The university system in Italy is closer to the system in United Kingdom than to the system in US. Students concentrate on one subject throughout their degree and sometimes universities may offer different undergraduate courses, each specializing in a different sector of the same subject. For example, in Psychology some courses are more geared toward Cognitive Psychology, others more toward Clinical Psychology, Social Psychology or perhaps Psychology of Work or Evolutionary Psychology.

A typical year in an Italian university is divided into two semesters. Courses last no more than a semester and examinations are held at the beginning of the academic year (September), the middle of the year (mid January to the end of February) and at the end of the year (mid May to mid July). Grades are expressed on a scale from 1 to 30, with 18 being the minimum required to pass an examination.

At the end of each "tier" (Laurea and Laurea Specialistica) there is a final exam, often requiring the exposition of a thesis or dissertation that can be based on original experimental work by the student, or on a review of academic literature. The final grade is determined by means of a weighted mean of the grades of the single courses, usually converted to a scale running from 1 to 110. The minimum grade to pass is 66. To this is added some points for the dissertation (ranging from 3-4 to 7-12). If the overall score (mean of examination grades plus dissertation points) is more than 110, then a degree "cum laude" can be awarded.

Normally Universities provide warm meals through canteens. Otherwise there are bars providing snacks, rolls, cold and hot beverages.

3.3 Regulatory framework (legislation, certification, economic instruments)

3.3.1 Legislations stages

- In Italy there are 3 levels of production of laws: At National level the central government makes laws about specific matters (of national exclusive competence), like justice, foreign affairs, and so on.
- At Regional level the regional governments make laws about specific matters (of regional exclusive competence), like agriculture and tourism.

The third possibility is the “concurrent legislation”: in this case both National and Regional levels agree about the laws in some matters, dividing their roles. The recent national and regional laws about catering system and promotion or quality and organic foods are indeed a “patchwork” of general rules and principles, generally without a sanction system (no actual penalties if municipalities don’t respect the law).

3.3.2 The role of the municipalities

Municipalities decide the real policy about the local public procurement, sometimes, but not always according to the indications of the national/regional laws.

In particular, the municipalities manage by themselves (using an internal structure) the catering service for school canteens, or source it out to private companies by a call for tenders.

In a few cases, the municipalities have created public companies in charge of managing school canteens. The most important example is Milano Ristorazione, providing 80.000 meals a day. Another option is companies having a 50% share of the capital being public and 50% being private. Bologna is one of these cases.

For more details, see Statistics in chapter 3.4.2.

Anyway, the role of the municipalities in POP policy is the major for the following reasons:

- In the case of self-management (internal structure) the POP policy is completely controlled by the municipalities
- In the case of outsourced service the POP policy is controlled by the municipalities with the contract conditions. The audits are periodically carried out in order to verify the compliance with the contract and with the feedback coming from the customer through the analysis of the complaints received and of the customer satisfaction reports
- In the case of public or public/private companies the guidelines about POP policy come from the municipalities
- In any case the municipalities manage the policy of price. They decide how much the families must pay for the meals and other elements, e.g.: whether that the families have to refund the total meal cost or only part of it. Normally the families pay according to their income. Low income families may pay less than 50% of the maximum price.

3.4 The evolution of public catering towards sustainability

There is a long tradition in Italy for school catering. Many municipalities, in particular in the Northern Regions, have provided meals to school children for a long time. The first experience of school canteens began more than 120 years ago, in some towns, especially in the Northern part of Italy²⁵.

3.4.1 A short history of POP in Italy

Before any EU support policies for organic production occurred (1995)²⁶, in the years of the organic pioneers, some interesting experiences took place, mainly in the region of Emilia Romagna. In 1987/88, the Consortium of organic Producer of Emilia-Romagna, “FederBio” and “Il Salto”, a cooperative of local organic farmers of Vignola (a rural town in the province of Modena), started to deliver fresh and processed organic products to some kindergartens and schools in Modena and Ravenna.



Courtesy of ProB.E.R.

Concurrently, another group of organic farmers (Cooperativa Agroecologica la Mustioloia) in Cesena/Forlì Province established a similar service. Comparable pioneer projects were initiated all over Italy, from Sicily to Piedmont and Friuli regions. Gradually, their range of products were complemented and adapted to direct marketing. In parallel, specialized organic shops were established, and the first experiences with organic products made by retailers (Coop and Conad).

The initial experiences with direct delivery to school kitchens gave rise to conferences, seminars and food education programs for parents, teachers and chefs, organized by local administrations (municipalities and provinces) or by parent groups in some schools of the Emilia Romagna region.

3.4.2 Some milestones in organic school catering in Italy

- 1986 The school canteens of Cesena began to introduce organic products, applying the concept of the Bio-Mediterranean diet. The idea was supported by paediatricians of the local Hospital.
- 1990s Lobby of the Italian organic movement at the local, regional and national level to promote organic farming in connection with food education
- 1999-2002 Regional and national laws about POP were issued:
 - Dec 1999: National financial law for 2000 (Extract of Article 59) “To ensure the promotion of organic agriculture and of quality agriculture, public institutions managing the school and hospital canteens, will include in the daily diets the use of organic, typical and traditional products. Public contracts will give pre-eminent value to the elements related to the quality of the supplied products”
 - Aug 2000: Regional law 15/2000 of Friuli-Venezia Giulia “Rules for the supplying of organic, typical and traditional products in the public canteens and for food educational programs”

²⁵ For example, according to the history of Milan Municipality, in 1879 public subsidis to La Scala theatre were given to the municipality schools due to economic crisis. A bibliography for the history of public catering in Italy is found on the following website: http://www.francoangeli.it/Ricerca/Scheda_Libro.asp?CodiceLibro=1573.21
Another Source: <http://www.storiadimilano.it/cron/dal1891al1900.htm>

²⁶ See annex 2 for further details

- Mar 2002: Regional law 6/2002 of Veneto “Rules about the consumption of food in pre-school and school canteens, in the hospital and in day-care institutions” – which states that organic products must be provided for all young consumers
 - Apr 2002: Regional law 3/2002 of Marche “Amendments to the Regional law 76/2007 – Rules for organic agriculture” – which introduces the supplying of organic foods in school
 - May 2002: Regional law 18/2002 of Basilicata “Dispositions about caution in food management, cultivation, breeding and trading of GMOs. Rules for the production and the supplying of organic, typical and traditional products in the public canteens
 - May 2002: Regional law 18/2002 of Toscana “Rules for the supplying of organic, typical and traditional products in the public canteens and for food educational programs in Tuscany region”
 - Nov 2002: Regional law 29/2002 of Emilia-Romagna “Rules for consumption orientation and food education for the qualification of the services of public catering”
 - Apr 2009, Regional Law 9/2009 of Lazio “Provisions on aware and quality feeding in catering services for children”
- 2001-2002 The project “The taste of quality at school” was carried out. The aim was to promote a high quality and sustainable catering system in school canteens. The project was funded by the municipalities of Genoa and Cesena and the public company “Milano Ristorazione” (described above), and coordinated by Roberto Spigarolo.
- 2004 Since the school year 2003-2004 the city of Rome decides to introduce some organic, typical and Fair Trade food in all the school meals (in total 140.000) every day.
- 2005-2006 A large survey called “Eating out of home”²⁷ was carried out in all the regions of Italy by ACU (Associazione Consumatori Utenti – Users Consumers Association). The survey involved more than 500 cooking centres out of which 185 were school canteens. More than 94% of the school canteens reported that they utilised organic products at least once per week. The average use was four times per week. Results are displayed in Table 4: 76% of all the products used in the school canteens came from a “controlled chain” (in Italian “filiera controllata”).
- 2006 Following the publication of the results of the survey “Eating out home”, the Italian National Organization for Standardization, UNI, decided to appoint a committee with the same name: “Eating out of home”, to develop voluntary standards and guidelines on public contracts regarding school catering.
- 2003-2007 More regions (Lombardy, Liguria and Lazio) produce guidelines for the management of school canteens where it was recommended to use organic products in the menus.
- 2007 Start of the committee appointed by UNI. The committee decided to design a voluntary standard on public procurement for canteens. Many municipalities, catering companies, producer associations and consumer associations are represented in the committee.
- 2007 The iPOPY project is initiated and the committee is utilised as the national user group of iPOPY in Italy.
- 2007 During the “School of Flavours” fair at Genoa the National Observatory of School Canteens was established. Also in this group, many municipalities, catering companies, producer and consumer associations take part. The first product from the Observatory was the “Guideline for Evaluation of Quality of School catering service”. The Observatory functions as a second national user group for iPOPY in Italy²⁸.

²⁷ <http://www.acu.it/progetti/mangiar/prmangia.html>

²⁸ More details in Italian available on : <http://www.conviviumquality.com/images/page2/Linea.pdf>



Courtesy of Convivium Quality

	Origin	Ratio
controlled chain	from organic agriculture	40%
	from sustainable agriculture	18%
	typical products (DOP, IGP)	14%
	from fair trade	4%
non-controlled chain	from conventional agriculture	24%

Table 4 - Share of products (% by weight) supplied in school canteens from various controlled supply chains ("Eating out of home" survey – 2006¹⁸)

3.4.3 The context in which school meals are discussed and organized

In the history of Italian school catering service three stages leading to the actual situation can be distinguished:

- During the stage of "food security" (until around 1970) the primary goal was to ensure enough food for all. In this period the school canteens had an important social role, and the quantity of food was more important than the quality.
- During the stage of "food safety" (1980s-1990s), the policies were focussed on hygienic and nutritional issues. In this period, the first menus aiming to fulfil healthy and nutritional recommendations were developed.
- During the stage of "food quality" (1990s onwards), the origin of the food and sustainable production methods became important. The request for quality food in public procurement for young people started to be considered as the key factor for the implementation of organic food in school canteens.

With respect to the present situation in Italy, there is no discussion about the need of providing meals to the children that stay at school all the day. It is a long tradition and about 3,4 million meals per day are served in public schools. Further, there is no discussion about the implementation of quality foods in school canteens at a political level. All National parties agree with this goal, and all recent Ministries of Agriculture and Food since the year 2000 have contributed to improve the consumption of typical food and promoted organic agriculture.

Most regions, especially in Northern Italy, have produced specific laws and/or guidelines to drive and encourage the development of a quality school catering system, focussed in particular to the procurement of organic and typical products. As a result, the municipalities (in particular in the northern and central Italy) introduce frequently organic and typical products in their menu and ask companies managing catering services to procure them.

Among organic producers, there is an increasing interest in the school catering market. In general, Italian families, consumers' associations and members of Canteen Commissions support the promotion

of organic foods in school canteens. This is one of the most important driver for the increasing of the procurement of organic foods in school canteens.

In Italy, the discussion about the school food system is currently focussed on the following problems:

- How to reduce the waste in school canteens. In many cases a waste of more than 40% is registered.
- How to reduce the non-food costs. Currently, the food cost is under 30% of the total meal cost, therefore non-food costs are really high. The consumer price level for the meals cannot be increased any further. Hence methods to reduce the costs of logistic and personnel are required. One option is to introduce self-service systems instead of the current “school restaurant” systems where the



Bread rolls left over from a school lunch in Milano, October 2008. Photo by Gun Roos, iPOPY

pupils are served. Further, cook-chill systems may increase the efficiency of school catering, but people are generally reluctant to this due to food quality. Short-chained deliverance systems could also decrease costs. It is advisable therefore to redirect public procurement towards local products, and create direct contacts between producers and catering buyers.

- How to control that Regional laws and/or guidelines are respected by municipalities and by the catering companies;
- How to help the municipalities to elaborate good contracts with the companies managing the catering service. A good example is “Sportellomensebio”²⁹, a public service managed by ProBER (Association of organic and biodynamic producers of Emilia-Romagna) and financed by Emilia-Romagna region. The aim of this organisation is to help municipalities (in particular the smallest ones) to write the contracts. The company offers an in-depth knowledge of the market for organic and typical products.

How to combine an increased consumption of organic and typical foods with educational programs directed to explain to the children/students and their parents the properties of the organic method and its benefits for the environment.

A significant challenge to these efforts is that the national policy on health issues does not include organic food. The Italian Ministry of Health does not openly support any connection between organic agriculture and health issues, the official reason being that there isn’t enough scientific evidence to prove such a correlation. This position has been steadily supported by governments of all political colours.

²⁹ www.sportellomensebio.it

4. Statistics

In Italy many bodies and authorities collect data about public catering. We have selected the most important information from the databases by FIPE (the Association of Catering Companies), Ministry of Education, Ministry of Food and Agricultural Policies, Ministry of Industrial Activities, Consumers' Associations.³⁰

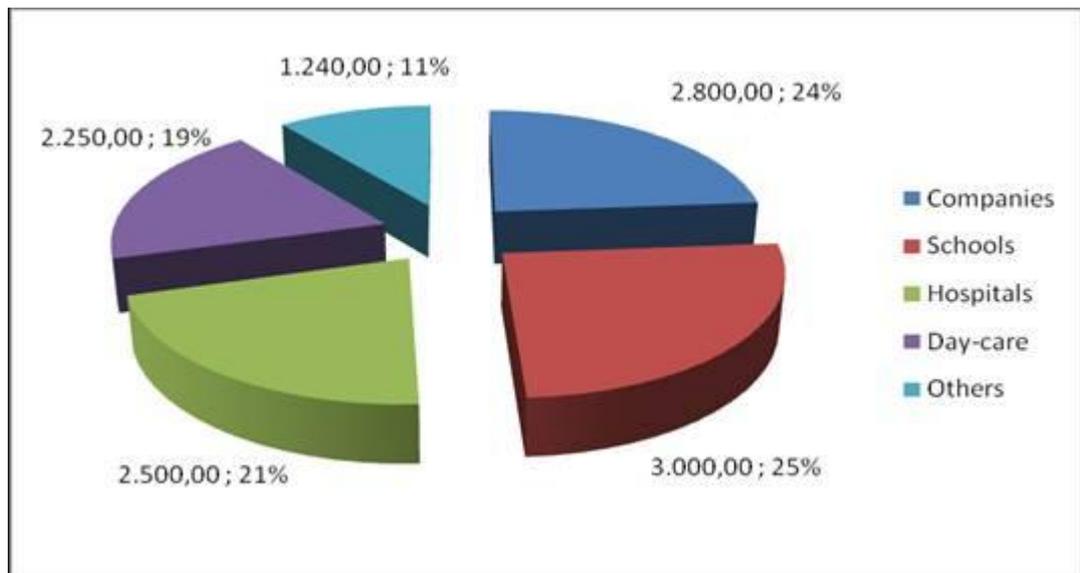


Figure 2: Market values of the main sectors of public catering (Values are in Millions €) Source: FIPE-ConfCommercio 2007 (data processed by iPOPY Italy group)³⁰

³⁰ <http://www.fipe.it/fipe/Centro-stu/Dati/Consumi/index.htm>

4.1 Share of organic products used in school canteens

The data provided in the following table and figures is available on the organic database website "Biobank"³¹

2008			
Catering company <i>Azienda di ristorazione</i>	meals/year <i>pasti/anno</i> <i>n.</i>	municipality <i>comuni</i> <i>n.</i>	organic food <i>cibo bio</i> <i>%</i>
Avenance Italia (Mi)	6.000.000	80	50
Camst (Bo)	23.000.000	429	64
Cir (Re)	26.100.000	345	65
Dussmann Service (Bg)	1.966.000	19	55
Ep (Na)	900.000	12	3
Eudania (Fi)	9.697.000	52	19
Euroristorazione (Vi)	2.143.000	53	30
Eutourist Serv-System (To)	4.460.000	12	30
Gemeaz Cusin Rist. (Mi)	13.473.000	101	37
Gruppo Onama (Mi)	13.000.000	88	28
Milano Ristorazione (Mi)	15.000.000	1	15
RR Puglia (Ba)	1.700.000	10	82
Serenissima Ristorazione (Vi)	20.000.000	130	15
Serist (Mi)	1.757.000	12	30
Sodexho Italia (Mi)	30.635.000	312	20
Vivenda (Rm)	14.500.000	51	23

Table 5: The share of organic food (% of total) provided in school canteens by the main 15 catering companies in Italy in 2008³²

Table 5 presents main catering companies operating in Italy and their amount of meals/year. In the two columns on the right side, the number of municipalities each company organises the school meal service in, and the percentage of organic food in each company is shown. The percentage of organic food depends more on the political will of the municipalities (expressed by the calls for tender) than by the choices of the catering companies.

³¹ <http://www.biobank.it/it/BIO-biobank.asp>

³² The location of the canteens is in brackets in the first columns. MI stands for Milan, BO Bologna, RE Reggio Emilia, NA Naples, FI Firenze, VI Vicenza, TO Torino, BG Bergamo, RM Roma BA Bari

4.2 Growth of the organic school canteen sector in Italy

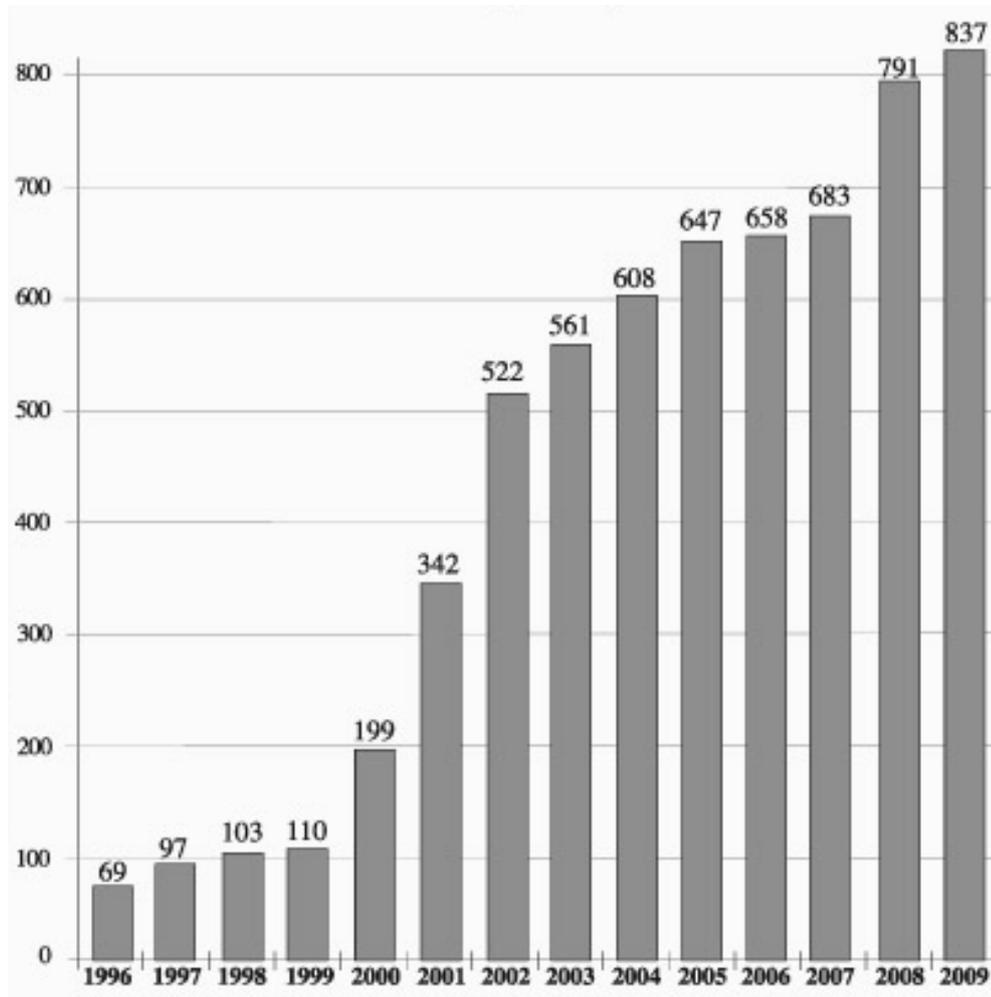


Figure 3: Number of organic school canteens - Italian trends '96-'08, source: Biobank

In figure 3 the Italian trends for school canteens show how the boom for organic canteens (year 2001 onwards) corresponds with the laying of the first regional laws.

70 % of all canteens utilising organic ingredients are located in northern Italy, 20 % in central Italy and 10 % in the south and Islands, calculated on a total of 791 organic canteens (2008 data)³³.

The reason for having such distribution is due to the fact that full-time canteens are mostly located in northern Italy, and regional laws concerning calls for tender for organic school food are mostly found in northern region (only Lazio, central Italy and Basilicata, in the south have this type of law).

³³ <http://www.biobank.it/it/BIO-biobank.asp?act=ddc&id=325>

Region/Regione	n.	%
PIEMONTE	95.562	9,3
VALLE D'AOSTA	900	0,1
LIGURIA	44.622	4,3
LOMBARDIA	232.932	22,6
TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE	13.233	1,3
VENETO	68.089	6,6
FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA	29.753	2,9
EMILIA-ROMAGNA	130.494	12,7
NORTH/NORD	615.585	59,8
TOSCANA	123.294	12,0
MARCHE	26.495	2,6
UMBRIA	5.285	0,5
LAZIO	175.212	17,0
CENTRE/CENTRO	330.286	32,1
ABRUZZO	13.085	1,3
MOLISE	500	0,0
CAMPANIA	36.630	3,6
PUGLIA	14.605	1,4
BASILICATA	6.732	0,7
CALABRIA	2.770	0,3
SOUTH/SUD	74.322	7,2
SICILIA	5.900	0,6
SARDEGNA	4.150	0,4
ISLANDS/ISOLE	10.050	1,0
ITALY/ITALIA	1.030.243	100,0

Table 6: Organic daily school meals in different Italian regions in 2009. Source: Biobank

Table 6 shows that in 2009 the largest amount of organic meals was served in Lombardia and Lazio. Lombardia is the leading region not because of a regional law (like Emilia Romagna) but due to single municipalities and their management. Lazio has a large amount as well but for a different reason: because Rome Municipality, where organic meals were introduced since 2003, represents by itself half of the population of Lazio.

4.3 Overview over meals provided in Italian schools

The Italian school catering sector provides every day 44 % of all school meals to primary school, 35 % to kindergartens and 21 % to lower secondary schools.

When values are calculated on annual basis the amount of nursery school meals increases to 40 % (primary schools 41 % and lower secondary 19 %) due to the fact that kindergartens have more school days per year than the other types of schools.



Courtesy of ProB.E.R.

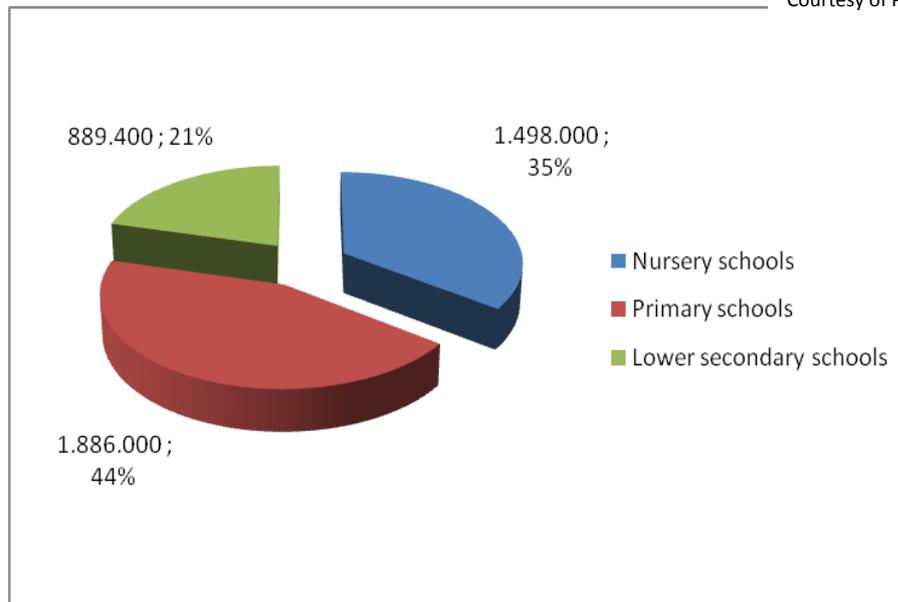


Figure 4: Amount and % distribution of meals provided every day in the different types of school (2007-2008)
Source: Ministry of Education (data processed by iPOPY Italy group)

4.4 Essential data on school catering system organization in Italy

The source of all this data is the survey “Eating out of home”, including school, hospital and day-care centres canteens. The study was carried out by ACU and co-financed by the Ministry of Productive Activities from January 2004 to April 2006. It was made in all Italian regions and involved directly over 500 cooking centres (of which 185 school canteens), project manager was Roberto Spigarolo³⁴.

4.4.1 Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics

In Italy, the areas belonging to NUTS 1 level are not governed or controlled by a specific national Entity. This division was only made with statistical aims. The NUTS 1 regions of Italy are to be considered like the States of Germany, as well as with Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the regions of England

Number	Name (Italian)	Corresponding Regions
1	North-West (<i>Nord-Ovest</i>)	Valle d'Aosta, Piemonte, Lombardia, Liguria
2	North-East (<i>Nord-Est</i>)	Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Veneto, Trentino Alto-Adige, Emilia-Romagna
3	Centre (<i>Centro</i>)	Toscana, Marche, Lazio, Umbria
4	South (<i>Sud</i>)	Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria
5	Islands (<i>Isole</i>)	Sicily, Sardinia



Table 7 Italian areas, corresponding regions and geographical location

³⁴ http://www.mangiosano.org/mfc/indagine_mangio.html

4.4.2 Catering service management in school canteens

The catering service in school canteens can be managed differently: *private companies* being contracted out by the competent state authority (e.g.: municipalities), *public companies* (municipality-owned companies which are more autonomous than *internal structures*), *internal structures* (municipality-owned and municipality-managed catering services) and *other cases* (e.g.: the municipality states the guidelines and the private company manages the service accordingly, or public-private companies where each component owns 50% of the company capital).

Type of school canteen management	North West (NW)	North East (NE)	Centre (CE)	South (SU)	Islands (IS)	Average
<i>Public companies</i>	45%	0%	7%	0%	5%	12%
<i>Internal structure</i>	3%	38%	5%	19%	5%	13%
<i>Private companies</i>	52%	50%	79%	81%	90%	70%
<i>Other cases</i>	0,00%	12%	9%	0%	0%	5%

Table 8: Actors managing school canteens in the 6 Italian areas

In Italy, the most spread type of catering service management is a contract between municipality and private companies (after a public call for tenders): this represents a percentage of 70%.



Courtesy of ProB.E.R.

Other types of catering service management follow with similar percentages: public companies and internal structures (in this case the municipalities manage directly the catering service).

Finally, there are other types of catering service management with a percentage of 5%. In this item are included fully private companies and public/private companies (in which the capital comes normally 50% from the public hand and 50% from the private companies).

Public companies are concentrated in the NW area (due especially to the case of Milano Ristorazione, which prepare and serve 80,000 meals a day for all schools of Milan), and *internal structures* mainly in the NE area. In other areas (CE, SU, IS) the *contract with private companies* is the prevailing choice.

4.4.3 Type of catering service

Meals are prepared, cooked and at times portioned in cooking centres whereas they are arranged (warmed up, defrosted, dressed, sometimes portioned) in the place where they are consumed, i.e. refectories.

Meals are arranged in the same place where they are consumed?	North West (NW)	North East (NE)	Centre (CE)	South (SU)	Islands (IS)	Average
YES (meals are not transported)	40%	27%	86%	31%	19%	48%
NO (meals are transported)	60%	73%	14%	69%	81%	52%

Table 9 Type of catering service with regard to transportation

In school catering the meals are usually prepared in a cooking centre and then transported. An exception is the case of the CE Area, due in particular to the case of Rome, where 150,000 meals are provided every day to all schools of the city from cooking centres located at the schools.

Analyzing the different types of schools, kindergartens normally have at-school cooking centers, whereas most (65%) primary and lower secondary schools transport their meals.

In the case of transportation, meals can be transported in two different ways:

- Warm: the meals are transported in specially provided thermal boxes ($t \geq 65^{\circ}\text{C}$), except the fresh foods (vegetables, fruit, bread, etc.). In this case the warm meals must be arranged in cooking centres located not too far from the refectories.
- Chilled (cook-chill system): the meals are arranged and then immediately chilled. When necessary, they are transported in vehicles equipped with a temperature control system ($t \leq 4^{\circ}\text{C}$); then they are heated in the school where they are consumed. In this case meals can be arranged in cooking centres located also far from the refectories.



Courtesy of ProB.E.R.

In Italian school canteens, only about 4% of meals are transported chilled. The cook-chill system is used in few cases in NE and in SU areas, and such system is slowly increasing.

Special meals are served to pupils suffering from particular diseases e.g. celiac disease, diabetes and to pupils from different countries and/or religion impacting their diet (Jewish, Muslims). The special meals represent about 5% of all meals provided in 2006, this figure is quickly increasing.

The situation in other types of public canteens also shows that meal transportation happens in the minority of cases: 57% of hospitals canteens and 87% of day-care institutions for elderly

people are provided with their own cooking centres.

4.4.4 Size of cooking centres

Cooking centre size	North West (NW)	North East (NE)	Centre (CE)	South (SU)	Islands (IS)	Average
<i>Number of meals arranged daily in a cooking centre (average)</i>	620	1026	383	370	485	561

Table 10 Cooking centres arrangement capacity in the school sector in different Italian regions

Cooking centres arrange about 560 meals each; in school catering the size of cooking centres is larger in northern regions, in particular in NE Area (where it is more than 82 % of the national average), and smaller in the central and southern regions, in particular in SU Area (where it is less than 66 % of the national average).

Hospital canteens present larger average sizes than school canteens, whereas day-care institutions are generally smaller (table 11)

Cooking centre size	Hospital canteens	Canteens run by day-care institutions for elder people
<i>Number of meals arranged daily in a cooking centre (average)</i>	850	370

Table 51: Cooking centers arrangement capacity in hospitals and day-care institutions, average number of meals



Courtesy of ProB.E.R.

4.4.5 Meal prices

The average meal price for the users in € is defined by the municipality according to the income of the single user. Low-income families pay a lesser amount for school meals than high-income.

Types of users	North West (NW)		North East (NE)		Centre (CE)		South (SU)		Islands (IS)		Average	
	SMC	MMC	SMC	MMC	SMC	MMC	SMC	MMC	SMC	MMC	SMC	MMC
Nursery-school (aged 1-3)	4,79	91,34	4,80	84,00	6,68	0,00	3,36	76,85	3,54	68,67	4,63	80,22
Kindergartens (aged 3-5)	4,71	93,41	3,58	65,67	2,43	43,51	2,92	70,62	3,41	64,92	3,41	67,63
Primary school (aged 6-11)	4,53	90,53	4,21	73,26	2,38	43,19	3,00	69,21	3,47	76,35	3,52	70,51
Lower sec.-sch. (aged 12-14)	4,55	84,14	3,97	54,14	3,74	45,36	3,71	79,25	3,36	59,60	3,87	64,50
Average max costs for users	4,65	89,86	4,14	69,27	3,81	44,02	3,25	73,98	3,45	67,39	3,86	70,71
Teachers	4,10	0,00	5,20	82,00	5,25	79,86	3,72	105,00	3,15	58,00	4,28	81,22
Other personnel	0,00	0,00	4,50	84,00	0,00	0,00	3,00	90,00	4,90	0,00	4,13	87,00

Table 12: Max Single Meal Cost (SMC) and Max Monthly Meal Cost (MMC), according to type of users and region (in €, taxes included)

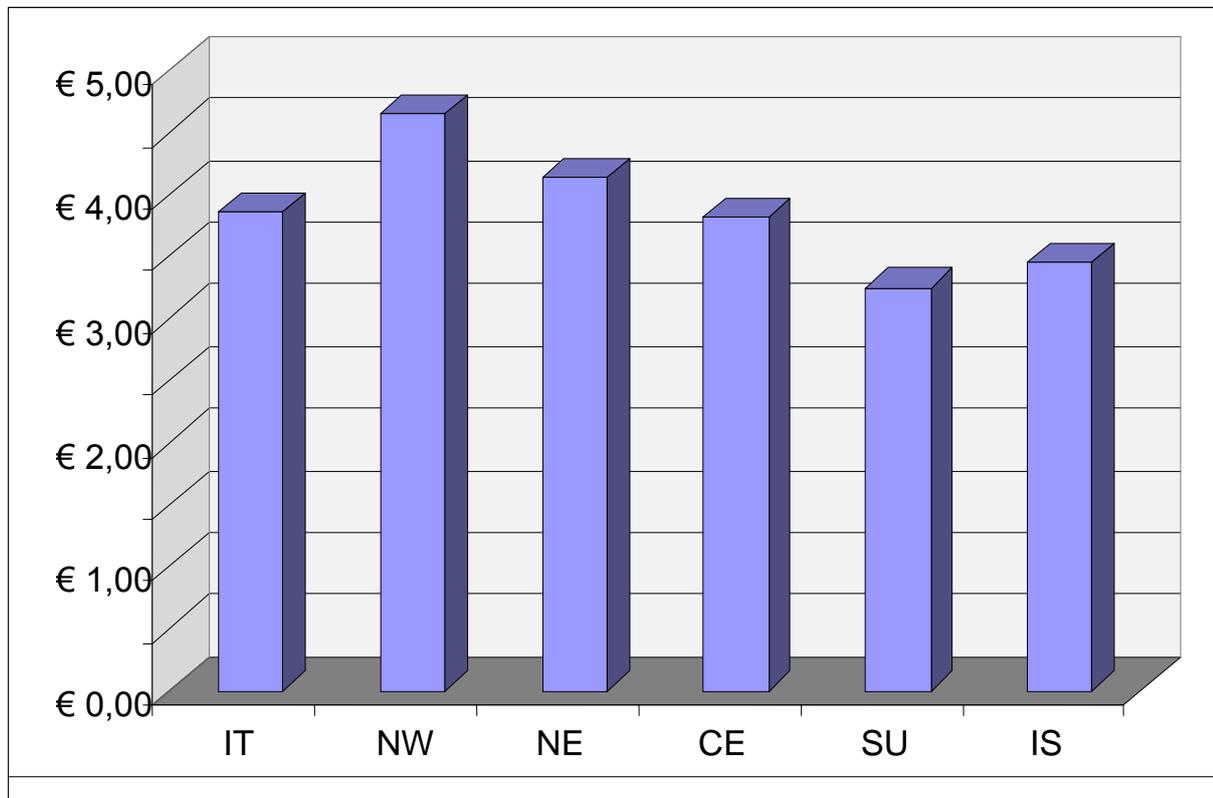


Figure 5: Average Max Meal Cost for users in different Italian areas, compared with the national average (IT).

Figure 5 and table 12 show that average of the maximum meal costs for the users are highest in the Northern regions. The cost-of-living gap between northern and southern Italy is the major cause for this

difference, another reason is the fact that full-time school is less present in southern Italy, resulting in a minor impact of school catering as well.

In other public canteens (table 13) the average maximum meal cost is higher because it is measured as “giornata alimentare” (all meals consumed in one day): breakfast, lunch and dinner. The meal cost, as well as all other hospital services, is paid by the state. In case it is a private hospital or day-care centre, meals are on patients’ charge.

	Hospital canteens		Canteens run by day-care institutions for elder people	
	Daily	Monthly	Daily	Monthly
<i>Average Max meal price in € all over Italy</i>	5,90	113,33	6,44	206,08

Table 13: The averages of max meal costs for the users in hospitals and day-care institutions

4.4.6 Meal costs for the companies

The average meal cost is defined by the result of the contract bidding, namely how much the municipality pays to the catering service to provide a single meal. It should not to be mixed up with the price paid by users (families, pupils), which is defined by the municipality according to the income of the single user: low-income families pay a lesser amount for school meals than high-income ones.

Analyzing the data regarding the meal costs, we found that the national average of meal cost is € 3.70, slightly lower than the average maximum price paid by users of the service.

Table 14 compares the data of average meal costs between different areas with the national average.

	North West (NW)	North East (NE)	Centre (CE)	South (SU)	Islands (IS)	Total
<i>Average meal cost for school catering companies, in €</i>	3,67	4,00	3,93	3,09	3,56	3,70

Table 14: The averages of meal costs for the companies in the school sector in different Italian regions

4.4.7 Presence of control bodies and customer satisfaction

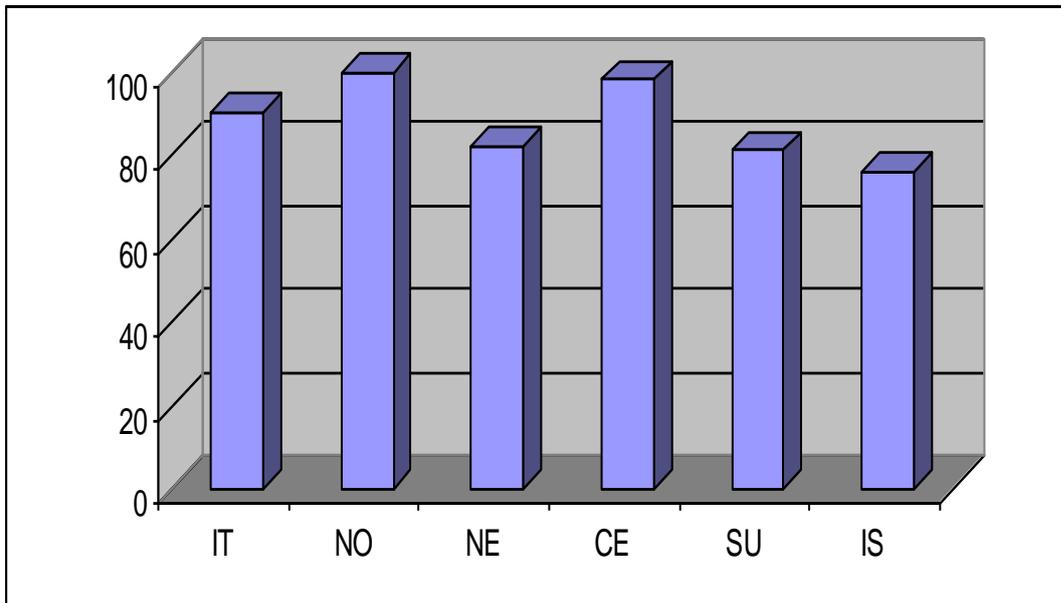


Figure 6: Presence of a control body (Canteen Commission) in different areas, compared to the national average (first column on the left), Italy, IT

Controlling units such as canteen commissions (Italian: Commissione mensa) are present in 90% of canteens - especially in north-west and central Italy. Parents are included in such control groups in 90% of cases, teachers 55%, and external advisors 32%.

Control groups, as responsible authorities and company evaluators, are in charge of customer satisfaction surveys. In 2006 data have been collected nationally giving a 78% general positive feedback on catering service satisfaction.



Courtesy of ProB.E.R.

4.4.8 Type of service

There are three types of catering service implemented in Italian schools. The most common is to-table-service where canteen operators serve directly the dishes to users' tables (83%). Follow self-service (14%), and free-flow (2%), both resulting quite rare. This suggest that the general cost of public catering is quite high due to the expenses of to-table-service.

4.4.9 Presence in the menu of quality and “controlled chain” products

Thanks to the last laws about school catering encompassing food quality the amount of conventional products decreased in favour of “quality” ones, i.e. organic products (see table 4 as well as table 15).

Types of product	North West (NW)		North East (NE)		Centre (CE)		South (SU)		Islands (IS)		Total	
	W%	WF	W%	WF	W%	WF	W%	WF	W%	WF	W%	WF
<i>From organic agriculture</i>	44%	4,7	56%	4,6	68%	4,9	25%	4,6	9 %	3,1	40 %	4,3
<i>From sustainable agriculture</i>	31%	4,7	7%	3,3	0%	0,0	30%	4,3	0 %	0,0	18 %	2,5
<i>Typical products (e.g.: PDO, PGI)</i>	18%	2,4	8%	3,0	7%	4,1	24%	5,0	11%	3,9	14%	3,7
<i>From fair trade</i>	2%	2,1	6%	2,3	4%	5,0	6 %	3,0	0 %	0,0	4 %	2,5

Table 15: Weight (% W) and weekly frequency (WF) of quality products in school catering menus

Types of product	Hospital canteens		Day-care institutions for elderly people	
	W%	WF	W%	WF
<i>From organic agriculture</i>	15 %	1,6	17 %	1,1
<i>From sustainable agriculture</i>	2 %	0,4	8 %	0,4
<i>Fypical products (e.g.: PDO, PGI)</i>	27 %	2,7	30 %	2,7
<i>From fair trade</i>	6 %	1,4	5 %	1,4

Table 16: Weight (% W) and weekly frequency (WF) of quality products in hospitals and day-care institutions catering menus

As to hospitals and day care institutions there have not been similar regional laws concerning food quality and therefore implementing organic food in canteens. The attention towards quality issues has focused on schools and it is now slowly spreading to hospitals and other institutions. Such delay is mainly due to the fact that in Italy, public authorities draw no links between organic and health, due to lack of sufficient scientific evidence. What has in fact pushed organic food in school canteens is the match between organic and quality, and quality aspects for hospital canteens have not yet been considered that far.

4.4.10 *Certifications obtained by companies managing catering services*

The 87% of all Italian catering companies are certified with ISO 9001:2000 (26% are certified also with ISO 14001 and/or other standards). In main part of public contract this certification is required as an essential requirement. This means that all companies are pushed to be certified by a market-competition dynamic.



Courtesy of ProB.E.R.

On the other hand, none of them in 2006 had any type of organic certification, even if most of them acquired, handled, prepared and served organic food. This is a critical point in course of revision.

The percentage of certified hospital catering companies (99% are ISO9001:2000 certified) and day-care institutions for elderly people (100% are ISO9001:2000 certified) is higher than the one for other public canteens because in such institutions certification is becoming gradually compulsory.

5. Concluding remarks

In Italy the current scenario, where children staying at school all day are provided with canteen meals, is settled: it's a long tradition and now 3.4 million meals a day are served in public schools. Unfortunately there is hardly any national debate about the implementation of quality foods in school canteens at a political level, but all national parties agree with this goal. Some regions have produced specific laws and/or guidelines to drive and encourage the development of a quality school catering system and single municipalities frequently introduce organic and typical products in their menu. The municipalities manage by themselves or contract out school canteens, they are therefore the responsible of the concrete policies.

The health point of view in Italy is not matched with organic food. In the policy of the Ministry of Health it is not legitimate to connect organic agriculture to healthy issues: the reason being lack of scientific evidence for this link.

Following local initiatives and increasing interest by families, consumers' associations and members of Canteen Commissions, increased use of organic products in the school catering market has been registered in the last years.

Understanding the potentials of the sector, there are a few areas which still need a thorough improvement plan. These areas concern the waste reduction in school canteens (current waste levels reach up to 40%), the non-food costs reduction (food costs are 30% of the total meal cost), the control system upon municipalities and catering companies in respect of regional laws/guidelines, the strategies to elaborate good contracts with companies managing the catering service and the educational programs which must accompany the increasing consumption of organic and typical foods.

The Italian POP presents in fact a structural weakness in terms of communication, preventing a real, well-spread perceived value of organic. The current scenario for food procurement for youth in Italy is that it is on a favorable ground, but on an uphill road as well: establishing durable synergies among public authorities on different scales (State-Ministries-Regions-Municipalities), catering companies and schools, is required in order not to sacrifice all efforts made this far.



6. References

6.1 Pictures

All photos in this report have been reproduced thanks to the permission of Gun Roos, from iPOPY group (http://www.sifo.no/page/Ansatte/Ansatte_alfabetisk/10037/48264.html)

Pro.B.E.R (<http://www.prober.it/index.php?op=5>
<http://www.bio-benessere.com/page.asp?id=11>)

and Convivium Quality (<http://www.conviviumquality.com/ConQuality.php>)

6.2 Literature & websites

Besides all personal comments and discussions, news and specification collected in the two National User Groups, the following websites and publications are mentioned in this work:

“The World of Organic Agriculture: Statistics and Emerging Trends 2010”, available on:
http://www.organic-world.net/fileadmin/documents_organicworld/yearbook/yearbook-2010/fibl-ifoam-2010-world-of-organic-presentation-biofach-www.pdf

Italian national report “Bio in cifre 2008” (page 6) by SINAB (National Organic Agriculture Information System – Sistema d’Informazione Nazionale sull’Agricoltura Biologica), available on:
http://www.sinab.it/share/img_lib_files/732_bio_in_cifre_2008.pdf

ISMEA-Nielsen research published on “Repubblica affari e finanza” issued on the 23rd of February 2009, page 14 in the article by Christian Benna titled “Alimentare, il bio è cresciuto e oggi vale 2.5 miliardi di euro”

Biobank databank, partially available in English on the following webpage:
<http://www.biobank.it/en/indexBIO.asp> and fully in Italian on <http://www.biobank.it/it/BIO-biobank.asp>

Accreditation regulations available on the following SINCERT (now Accredia) webpage:
<http://www.sincert.it/docs/260RT-16rev02.pdf>

Naturasi website: http://www.naturasi.com/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=831

Esselunga website: <http://www.esselunga.it/default.aspx?idPage=371>

Coop website: <http://www.e-coop.it/portalWeb/guidaprodcoop.portal?nfpb=true&pageLabel=viewDocumentiFaro&documentoFaro=%2FCoopRepository%2FCOOP%2FCoopItalia%2Fdocumento%2Fdoc00000026354>

Italian National Institute of Statistic, available in english: <http://www.istat.it/>

Report “La scuola in cifre 2008” by the Italian Ministry of Education, available on the followig Webpage:
http://www.istruzione.it/web/ministero/index_publicazioni_09

Index of all Italian laws (Italian Parliament's website), available on:
<http://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/030531.htm> and
http://www.mangiosano.org/mfc/indagine_mangio.html

Consumer-Users Association website, Eat out of home Survey webpages:
<http://www.acu.it/progetti/mangiar/prmangia.html>

Information desk for organic canteens in the Emilia Romagna region, website:
www.sportellomensebio.it

Italian Federation of Bars and Catering, english website: <http://www.fipe.it/fipe/Centro-stu/Dati/Consumi/index.htm>, survey about out of home meals (Italian): <http://www.fipe.it/fipe/Centro-stu/Dati/Consumi/index.htm>

The Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development is available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:277:0001:0040:EN:PDF>

Nomisma, Italian economic research institute, English website:
http://www.nomisma.it/index.php?id=4&L=1&no_cache=1, specific webpage regarding Italian Organic food Survey:
[http://www.nomisma.it/index.php?id=66&L=0&L=0&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=2258&cHash=bc6ec757d0](http://www.nomisma.it/index.php?id=66&L=0&L=0&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=2258&cHash=bc6ec757d0)

http://www.francoangeli.it/Ricerca/Scheda_Libro.asp?CodiceLibro=1573.21

<http://www.storiadimilano.it/cron/dal1891al1900.htm>

Annex 1: Geographical data about Italy

Map of Italian Regions and statistics on Population dated January, 1st 2007 (ISTAT - National Statistics Institute³⁵)

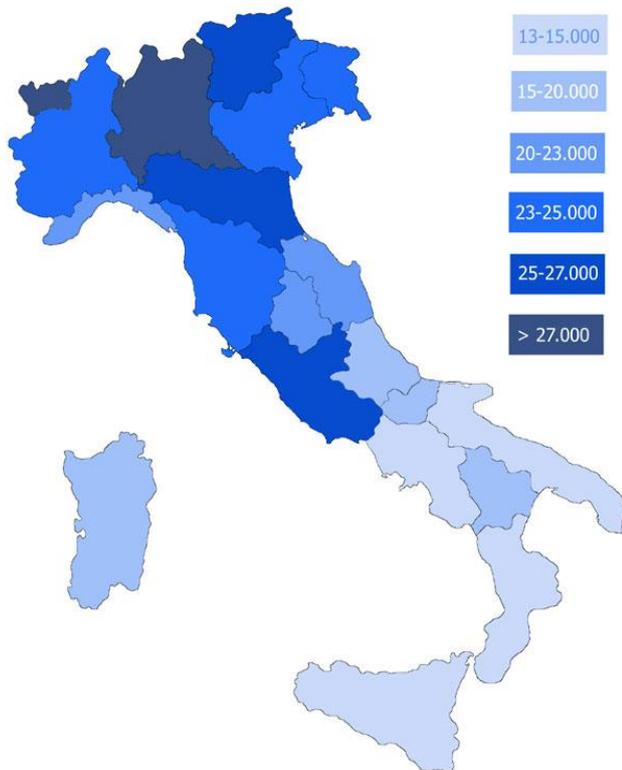


Regions	Capital	Population	Area (km ²)	Density (inhab /km ²)	Provinces	Municipalities (number)
Lombardia	Milano	9.545.441	23.861	400	Bergamo, Brescia, Como, Cremona, Lecco, Lodi, Mantova, Milano, Monza e Brianza, Pavia, Sondrio, Varese.	1.546
Campania	Napoli	5.790.187	13.592	426	Avellino, Benevento, Caserta, Napoli, Salerno.	551
Lazio	Roma	5.493.308	17.210	319	Frosinone, Latina, Rieti, Roma, Viterbo.	378
Sicilia	Palermo	5.016.861	25.701	195	Agrigento, Caltanissetta,	390

³⁵ http://en.istat.it/dati/db_siti/

					Catania, Enna, Messina, Palermo, Ragusa, Siracusa, Trapani.	
Veneto	Venezia	4.773.554	18.390	260	Belluno, Padova, Rovigo, Treviso, Venezia, Verona, Vicenza.	581
Piemonte	Torino	4.352.828	25.398	171	Alessandria, Asti, Biella, Cuneo, Novara, Torino, Verbano Cusio Ossola, Vercelli.	1.206
Emilia-Romagna	Bologna	4.223.264	22.122	191	Bologna, Ferrara, Forlì-Cesena, Modena, Parma, Piacenza, Ravenna, Reggio Emilia, Rimini.	341
Puglia	Bari	4.069.869	19.364	210	Bari, Barletta-Andria-Trani, Brindisi, Lecce, Foggia, Taranto.	258
Toscana	Firenze	3.638.211	22.990	158	Arezzo, Firenze, Grosseto, Livorno, Lucca, Massa-Carrara, Pisa, Pistoia, Prato, Siena.	287
Calabria	Catanzaro	1.998.052	15.083	132	Catanzaro, Cosenza, Crotona, Reggio Calabria, Vibo Valentia.	409
Sardegna	Cagliari	1.659.443	24.090	69	Cagliari, Carbonia-Iglesias, Medio Campidano, Nuoro, Ogliastra, Olbia-Tempio, Oristano, Sassari.	377
Liguria	Genova	1.607.878	5.421	297	Genova, Imperia, La Spezia, Savona.	235
Marche	Ancona	1.536.094	9.695	158	Ancona, Ascoli Piceno, Fermo, Macerata, Pesaro e Urbino.	246
Abruzzo	L'Aquila	1.309.797	10.793	121	Chieti, L'Aquila, Pescara, Teramo.	305
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	Trieste	1.212.602	7.712	157	Gorizia, Pordenone, Trieste, Udine.	219
Trentino-Alto Adige	Trento	994.703	13.599	73	Bolzano/Bozen, Trento.	339
Umbria	Perugia	872.967	8.454	103	Perugia, Terni.	92
Basilicata	Potenza	591.338	9.992	59	Matera, Potenza.	131
Molise	Campobasso	320.074	4.438	72	Campobasso, Isernia.	136
Valle d'Aosta	Aosta	124.812	3.266	38	Aosta	74
TOTAL ITALY		59.131.287	301.171	196		8.101

Incomes per capita in 2006 – source: data processed by Arianna on the basis of ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics)



(elaborazione Filo di Arianna su dati Istat)

Largest cities

Italian cities with a population of 300,000 or more ([ISTAT](#) data, December 2006):

Pos.	Municipality	Region	Prov.	Inhabitants
1	Rome	Lazio	RM	2,705,603
2	Milan	Lombardy	MI	1,303,437
3	Naples	Campania	NA	1,005,139
4	Turin	Piedmont	TO	975,139
5	Palermo	Sicily	PA	666,552
6	Genoa	Liguria	GE	615,686
7	Bologna	Emilia-Romagna	BO	373,026
8	Florence	Tuscany	FI	365,966
9	Bari	Apulia	BA	325,052
10	Catania	Sicily	CT	301,564

Metropolitan areas: According to the [OECD](#), these are the major Italian [metropolitan areas](#):

Metropolitan area	Inhabitants
Milan	7.4 million
Rome	3.8 million
Naples	3.1 million
Turin	2.4 million

Annex 2: Organic subsidy system in Italy

In Italy the subsidies for organic farming are regulated and managed by each region and autonomous provinces, as article 6(1) of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005³⁶ on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development appoints each member state to decide whether the most representative authorities should be defined on a national, regional or local scale in order to implement the supporting actions.

The financial support is defined by Council Regulation 1698/2005, acknowledged by every region and subsequently approved by the European Commission as the Rural Development Program 2007-2013 (in Italian: PSR – Programma di Sviluppo Rurale). The specifics on organic production are stated by measure no. 214 of the PSR and it varies therefore according to each of the 20 Italian regions (and even within each region there might be different areas corresponding to different subsidy categories), the type of crop and/or animal characterising the farm and the year of entrance in the organic system (in the first year the amount of money allocated is higher than the following ones).

³⁶ The Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005³⁶ on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development is available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:277:0001:0040:EN:PDF>

Annex 3: Organic Product Supermarket Brands evolution

Source: Nomisma 2009³⁷

YEAR 1999	YEAR 2000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESSELUNGA Esselunga Bio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARREFOUR ScelgoBio • CONAD Prodotti da A.B. • COOP Bio - Logici • PAM BioPiù
YEAR 2001 (*)	<u>YEARS 2002 – 08</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRAI Crai Bio • DESPAR Bio - Logico • BILLA Sì, naturalmente • SELEX Bio Selex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUCHAN AUCHAN Bio <p>(*) <i>Natura Sì</i></p>

³⁷ [http://www.nomisma.it/index.php?id=66&L=0&L=0&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=2258&cHash=bc6ec757d0](http://www.nomisma.it/index.php?id=66&L=0&L=0&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=2258&cHash=bc6ec757d0)

Annex 4: The Italian State Organisation

The 1948 Constitution of Italy established a bicameral parliament (Parlamento), consisting of a Chamber of Deputies (Camera dei Deputati) and a Senate (Senato della Repubblica), a separate judiciary, and an executive branch composed of a Council of Ministers (cabinet) (Consiglio dei ministri), headed by the Prime Minister (Presidente del consiglio dei ministri).

The President of the Italian Republic (Presidente della Repubblica) is elected for seven years by the parliament sitting jointly with a small number of regional delegates. The president nominates the prime minister, who proposes the other ministers (formally named by the president). The Council of Ministers must retain the support (fiducia) of both houses.

The houses of parliament are popularly and directly elected through a complex electoral system (latest amendment in 2005) which combines proportional representation with a majority prize for the largest coalition (Chamber). All Italian citizens above the age of 18 can vote. However, to vote for the senate, the voter must be at least 25 or older. The electoral system in the Senate is based upon regional representation. During the elections in 2008, the centre-right coalition, formed by Popolo della Libertà and Lega Nord parties won with a large majority.

The Chamber of Deputies has 630 members and the Senate 315 elected senators; in addition, the Senate includes former presidents and appointed senators for life (no more than five) by the President of the Republic according to special constitutional provisions.

A peculiarity of the Italian Parliament is the representation given to Italian citizens permanently living abroad (about 2.7 million people). Among the 630 Deputies and the 315 Senators there are respectively 12 and 6 elected in four distinct foreign constituencies.

Legislative bills may originate in either house and must be passed by a majority in both. The Italian judicial system is based on Roman law modified by the Napoleonic code and later statutes. The Constitutional Court of Italy (Corte Costituzionale) rules on the conformity of laws with the Constitution and is a post-World War II innovation.

The Politics of Italy take place in a framework of a parliamentary representative democratic republic, whereby the Prime Minister of Italy is the head of government, and of a pluriform multi-party system. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the two chambers of parliament. The Judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature. Italy has been a democratic republic since June 2nd, 1946, when the monarchy was abolished by popular referendum. The constitution was promulgated on January 1st, 1948. The government depends on confidence from each branch of the parliament, and has in turn the power to make decrees. Decrees have to be confirmed in the parliament, and "decree jam" has been a problem in the last years as governments try to reform the structure of the state using chiefly decrees instead of passing laws directly through the parliament.

The President of the Republic

As the head of state, the President of the Republic represents the unity of the nation and has many of the duties previously given to the king of Italy. The president serves as a sort of point of connection between the three branches of power: he is elected by the lawmakers, he appoints the executive, and is the president of the judiciary. The president is also the commander in chief of armed forces.

The President of the Republic is elected by an electoral college consisting of both houses of Parliament and 58 regional representatives for a seven-year term. To become elected, a wide majority is required that is progressively reduced from two-thirds to one-half plus one of the votes as the ballots progress. The only Presidents ever to be elected on the first ballot are Francesco Cossiga and Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. The President per 2010 is Giorgio Napolitano.

Usually, the President tries to stay out of the political debate, and to be an institutional guarantee for all those involved in the political process. The president can also reject openly anti-constitutional laws by refusing to sign them, since he/she acts as the guardian of the Constitution of Italy.

The President of the Council of Ministers (The Prime minister)

The President of the Republic appoints the President of the Council of Ministers (the Prime minister), who then proposes (the President actually submits them) the individual ministers of the respective ministries who together form the Council of Ministers (the cabinet), which in turn must receive a vote of confidence from both parliamentary chambers. The Prime minister, through the cabinet, effectively runs the government of Italy. The Prime minister by 2010 is Silvio Berlusconi.

The Parliament

Italy elects, on the national level, a Parliament consisting of two houses, the Chamber of Deputies (Camera dei Deputati) (630 members) and the Senate of the Republic (Senato della Repubblica) (315 elected members, plus a few senators for life). As of 15 May 2008, there are seven life senators (of which three are former Presidents). Both houses are elected for a maximum of five years, but both may be dissolved before the expiration of their normal term. Legislative bills may originate in either house and must be passed by a majority in both.

The Judicial system

The Italian judicial system is based on Roman law modified by the Napoleonic code and later statutes. It is based on an inquisitorial civil law system. Appeals are treated almost as new trials, and three degrees of trial are present.

There is only partial judicial review of legislation in the American sense. Judicial review exists under certain conditions in the Constitutional Court, which can reject anti-constitutional laws after scrutiny.

The Constitutional Court is composed of 15 judges one of which is the President of the Italian Constitutional Court elected from the court itself. One third of the judges are appointed by the President of the Italian Republic, one-third are elected by Parliament and one-third are elected by the ordinary and administrative supreme courts. The constitutional court, or Corte Costituzionale, passes on the constitutionality of laws, and is a post-World War II innovation. Its powers, volume, and frequency of decisions are not as extensive as those of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Italy has not accepted compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

Annex 5: The Organization of upper secondary school in Italy

Upper secondary schools in Italy last five years, the average student attends between 14 - 19. In 2009 the government approved a new law to restructure the system. The former hundreds of different specializations caused too much confusion, and was replaced by eight main types:

Liceo Classico (Classical Lyceum) will remain substantially unchanged, except for the fact that the students belonging to this specialization will take a foreign language for the entire five year duration.

Liceo Scientifico (Scientific Lyceum) includes, as an extra to the typical courses, a scientific technological track that will analyze in detail the domains of technology and applied sciences.

Liceo Linguistico (Linguistic Lyceums) includes the study of three foreign languages: starting from the third year, one subject (not a formal language course) will be taught in a foreign language, and the same will happen with a second subject starting in the fourth year.

Liceo Artistico (Artistic Lyceum) is further divided in some branches: Figurative arts focuses on themes such as the safekeeping and valorization of Italy's cultural treasures. Architecture, design and environment utilizes audio-visual communications for the actuation of cultural programs and research. Audio-visual, multimedia and set design helps students utilize the latest technologies to fully develop their artistic potential.

Liceo delle Scienze Umane (Human Sciences Lyceum) focuses on the main areas of human-centered sciences. This will replace the old Liceo Sociopedagogico (the former social and pedagogical Lyceum) with the possibility of enabling (upon the institute's choice) a socio-economic track.

Liceo Musicale e Coreutico (Music and Choral Lyceum) is potentially ancillary to conservatories and dance schools. At the end of these studies the students will have a great knowledge of the national and international musical domain accompanied by the historical and social contexts that inspired the works, which will be the matter of careful evaluations and appreciation.

Istituto Tecnico (Technical Institute), divided in 2 main types: **Economic** (with 2 different branches) and Technological (with 9 different branches); the number of branches was strongly reduced (from over 130 to only 11). This type of schools are mainly oriented toward technical subjects.

Istituto Professionale (Professional Institute) offers a form of secondary education oriented toward more practical subjects, enabling the students to start searching for a job as soon as they have completed their studies and is even more specific in terms of vocational course offerings than the "Istituto Tecnico."

Other significant news in Italian education includes the study of Latin as a mandatory subject in the Liceo Classico, Scientifico, Linguistico and Scienze Umane and it is optional for the other courses. Teaching one non-linguistic subject entirely in a foreign language during the fifth year of all the courses of study, increased hours for math, physics and sciences. Weekly instruction hours will increase to 27 for the first two years and 30 for the remaining three in the Lyceum. On the contrary it will be reduced in the Technical and Professional Institutes, passing from 36 hours per week on average to max 32 hours per week of the new school.

The independence of each high school will be increased, with flexibility in choosing the courses and weekly hours. High schools can start designing entirely new courses through the collaboration of expert consultants, paid from the school's budget which will also be linked only to that particular school.

Moreover it will be possible for the students to hold internships and real work experiences starting from the first two years of high school. This will shorten the gap between what students learn in school and what is required in the real world, possibly even leading to a job after graduation.



The iPOPY project

The aim of the project “innovative Public Organic food Procurement for Youth - iPOPY” (<http://www.ipopy.coreportal.org/>) is to study how increased consumption of organic food may be achieved by the implementation of strategies and instruments used for public procurement of organic food in serving outlets for young people. Supply chain management, procedures for certification of serving outlets, stakeholders' perceptions and participation as well as the potential of organic food in relation to health and obesity risks will be analysed. The research project is a co-operation between Norway, Denmark, Finland and Italy. German researchers also participate, funded by the Research Council of Norway. iPOPY is one of totally eight projects that were funded through a joint call of the ERA net CORE Organic I in November, 2006.

Project manager: Anne-Kristin Løes, Bioforsk Organic Food and Farming

Project partners:

Norway: Bioforsk Organic Food and Farming and SIFO, National Institute for Consumer Research

Germany: University of Applied Sciences, Münster and Center for Technology and Society, Technical University Berlin

Denmark: Aalborg University

Finland: University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute

Italy: State University of Milano and ProBER (Association of organic and biodynamic producers of Emilia Romagna)

iPOPY Publications:

All publications can be downloaded from the open digital archive Organic E-prints: www.orgprints.org. Search for the keyword iPOPY.