

GENDER INEQUALITY

EDUCATION

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EDUCATION

“The process of teaching or learning, especially in a school or college, or the knowledge that you get from this, or the organizations such as schools where this process happens.”

CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY

Education 2030 agenda: gender equality requires an approach that ‘ensures that girls and boys, women and men not only gain access to and complete education cycles, but are empowered equally in and through education.’

16 million girls will never set foot in a classroom and women account for **two-thirds** of the 750 million adults without basic literacy skills.

More than **two-thirds of countries** have reached gender parity in enrolment in primary education.

Countries that have not reached parity: Africa, the Middle East and South Asia.

EDUCATION: OBSTACLES

SOURCES: UNESCO and
UNICEF DATA

Many obstacles that stand in the way of women and girls fully exercising their right to participate in, complete and benefit from education:

- Poverty
- Geographical isolation
- Minority status
- Disability
- Early marriage and pregnancy
- Gender-based violence
- Traditional attitudes about the status and role of women

Degree subjects tend to be divided along **gender lines**: men dominate maths, science, engineering and business, while more women study health, education, arts and social sciences.

2018 **Programme for International Student Assessment** (PISA): girls performed better than boys in reading literacy. In contrast, boys performed better than girls in mathematics in about 80 percent of participating countries.

GENDER INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION, ITALY

SOURCE: Irene Biemmi, Gender in schools and culture: taking stock of education in Italy, Gender and education, 2015

- When politicians discuss **Italy's position** in terms of achieving equality between men and women, the educational system is rarely called into question or mentioned because school is seen as an environment in which equality has been achieved.
- Today, most Italian women receive a **high level of education** and work to contribute to the household income.
- In Italian school there are measures and policies against bullying in generally, but not specifically against bullying towards girls, or against verbal abuse or sexual harassment. **No measure** is in place to make parents more aware of the gender issues affecting their children.

GENDER INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION, ITALY

- According to the latest **ISTAT** report on education levels during 2019, Italy has a greater number of female graduates (**22.4%**) than men (**16.8%**).
- Together with Spain, Italy is among the major European countries where the level of **female education** is significantly higher than that of men.
- Females choices of study fields, at upper secondary and tertiary level, follow often **traditional stereotypes** about male and female jobs and cut off girls from some more promising or innovatory professions in scientific and technical sectors.

SOURCES: "Gender differences in educational outcomes: a study on the measures taken and the current situation in Europe", 2009;
web24.news

ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT EXAMPLE

ACADEMIC RANK	SEX	SEX	FEMINILIZATION RATE	FEMINILIZATION RATE 2000
	MAN	WOMEN		
PERMANENT POSITIONS				
FULL PROFESSOR	29,4	14,1	22,1	15,4
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR	36,8	36,7	37,1	27,7
RESEARCHER	24,8	38,5	47,9	41,7
TEMPORARY POSITIONS				
TENURE RESEARCHERS	3,2	3,5	39,8	N/A
NON-TENURE RESEARCHER	5,5	6,7	42,1	N/A
MORATTI RESEARCHER	0,30	0,5	48,5	N/A
N	34,009	20,118	37,2	30

The table shows the composition by sex of the Italian academic staff in 2016.

There are strong differences in men and women's presence in academia. First, men's distribution amongst the different academic ranks is more equal than women's. Second, female academics are still in a minority; women are only **37.2%** of the whole university staff.

SOURCE : *Gender inequalities in italian academia. 2017*

GENDER INEQUALITY IN ITALIAN UNIVERSITY

Gender inequality in **Italian university** is due to a combination of factors:

- Gender discrimination.
- The delayed entry of women in the university career.
- The cultural and structural obstacles that women face when entering a world that is mainly dominated by men.
- Lack of specific policy interventions to support women's careers.

SOURCE: Bianco, Maria Luisa. Donne al lavoro: cinque itinerari fra le diseguaglianze di genere, 1997



LEGAL FRAMEWORK

SOURCE: European Institute
for Gender Equality

- **Law 183/2010:** the *Unique Guarantee Committee (CUG) for Equal Opportunities in Public Administrations for workers' wellbeing and against discriminations*. The law leaves to public administrations and universities the task of drafting internal regulations and identify a Confidential Advisor who is in charge of listening to the employees who feel “mobbed” or (sexually) harassed and find the solutions.
- **Legislative Decree No. 198:** the *National Code of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men* sets the obligation for Public Administrations (and therefore Universities) to adopt a Positive Action Plan (PAP). The plan lasts three years and must assure the removal of all obstacles hindering equal opportunities at work between men and women.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- **Law 240/2010:** the *General Reform of University Education* sets two important aims in terms of equal opportunities:
 - 1) It calls for **gender balance** on the board of trustees of research institutions. However, the law does not specify targets and the respect of gender balance is limited to a generic “declaration of intent”.
 - 2) It extends the **maternity leave** to post-doc researchers. Each year the Government provides a specific budget of **3,5 million Euro** through the annual act setting the Ordinary Financial Funds (Fondo di finanziamento ordinario - FFO) for public Universities. Research institutions enjoy the right to autonomously provide additional benefits to women researchers.

KEY ACTORS

MIUR

Ministry of Education, University and Research

It's the key research policy actor and funding agency in Italy at state level.

It aimed at identifying concrete actions to better integrate the gender dimension in policies, programmes and research projects.

National Network of University Committees for Equal Opportunities

It gathers Universities' Committees for the protection of gender equality for workers' wellbeing and against discriminations and other Equal Opportunities bodies in Italian Universities.

DPO

Department for Equal Opportunities of the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers

It's in charge of the guidance, proposal and coordination of regulatory and administrative initiatives in all the fields relating to the planning and implementation of equal opportunity policies.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

- **2011, Memorandum of Understanding** between the MIUR and DPO.

It aimed to promote equal *opportunities in science* by devising for the first time in Italy a national strategy aimed at increasing the participation of women and girls in science and technology education, training, research and employment. It remained unapplied.

- **2013, National Research Programme (PNR).**

It represents the main Government's document for R&D planning and it is coordinated by MIUR. It recommends to ensure a gender-balanced representation of the *peer-review* selection panels, and invites research institutions to promote equal opportunities and to include a *gender dimension in research*. Moreover, the programme foresees a specific budget of 1 million Euro to foster equal opportunities in scientific careers. It has never been allocated and the PNR has not been approved yet.

UNIVERSITY OF FERRARA

- The University of Ferrara has a renowned **Gender Budget**, considered as an example to be transferred/adopted by all Public Administrations.
- The **Gender Report** of the University of Ferrara (Italy) is an action implemented by the CUG and the CPO since 2011. It was firstly introduced by the first PAP of the university. Its first and most important part monitors the participation of women in the organisation and all decision-making bodies. The Gender Report is considered a **milestone** in the Italian academic system and is written in cooperation with the **MIUR** and for the first time it has produced longitudinal data on the presence of women inside a university.



MARIA MONTESSORI

SOURCE: Association
Montessori Internationale

- Maria Montessori (1870 - 1952), one of Italy's first **female physicians**, has given her name to one of the world's most well known **education methods**.
- At that time, Italy held conservative values about women's roles, thus she was considered as a **true pioneer**, rejecting, since she was very young, many social norms associated with gender roles in her time.
- After the family moved to Rome, Montessori attended classes at a **boys' technical institute**, where she further developed her aptitude for math and her interest in science with the ambition of becoming an engineer.
- At the end, she began medical school at the **Sapienza University of Rome**, but was strongly discouraged from attending because of her gender.

MARIA MONTESSORI



- At that time, it was **deemed inappropriate** for women and men to be in the same room in the presence of a naked dead body, so Montessori did her cadaver dissections when her classes were over, **alone**. She also was excluded from some lessons and forced to catch up by studying at night alone in the **morgue**.
- Montessori graduated with high honors in 1896 becoming the **first female doctor** in Italy.

SOCIAL NETWORK AND MEDIA

- Social media has proved to be a **powerful vehicle** for bringing women's rights issues to the attention of a **wider public**.
- The explosion of social media and use by women of new technologies represents **important opportunities** to bring gender equality and women's rights issues to the forefront of media attention.
- Around the world, girls are taking to digital platforms to **speak out** also on gender inequality in education.



"sports social media" by Sean MacEntee is licensed under CC BY 2.0

MARYAM AND NIVAAL

SOURCE: Assembly.Malala.org



- After visiting a school in **Pakistan**, Maryam and Nivaal learned that many Pakistani girls can't complete their education because of **poverty** and **discrimination**. These stories inspired the duo to begin advocating for girls' education.
- Through their non-profit, The World With MNR, their YouTube channel and **social media platform**, they are using advocacy, storytelling and development to take action and inspire others to do the same.

PROJECTS AND CAMPAIGNS

SOURCE: LIDC-Global
Campaigns Gender
Equality in Education

TRACING TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVITY

- This project investigated these issues by **speaking to activists** and civil society groups in two countries: **India** and the **UK**. The project identified and interviewed activists and organisations concerned with gender and education.
- There are some significant differences in perceptions of the Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**): most groups in the UK had limited awareness of it; instead, awareness was higher in India and many groups were keen for greater engagement.
- Both countries struggled to gain cut through their messages '**get girls into school**' of the agenda about the economic benefits of getting girls into school.

PROJECTS AND CAMPAIGNS

SOURCE:British
Council org.tr

ETCEP: Promoting Gender Equality in Education

- It was funded by the **European Union** and the **Government of Turkey** in **2014**.
- This was the **first campaign** on gender equality ever to be carried out in schools. These campaigns contributed to increased **awareness** about gender equality in education.
- The project **website and social media** communication campaign were very active and became channels of continuous communication (the project website had been **visited 144,550** times). Awareness was also raised through the use of broadcasts and billboards.
- The campaigns have had a **positive impact**: the activities were carried out with excitement and enthusiasm.

“I learned that there is discrimination in proverbs. Women and men are the two parts of society; the rights and responsibilities of one cannot be above those of the other.”

Student of ETCEP