



Cap sur l'école inclusive
en Europe



Resource Sheet

The Italian model: the right direction to follow?

Section of the module/D

The educational model of the Italian school is judged in the world as the most advanced in terms of inclusive education. To achieve this, the Italian legislator has shown boldness and authority, facilitated in this by an Italian society that has always made a great place for family solidarity and intergenerational.

1/ Constitution-enshrined rights

The Italian Constitution of 1947, in its article 38 on social solidarity stipulates indeed: "every citizen unfit for work and deprived of means of living has the right to social assistance. Workers have the right to receive means adapted to their needs in the event of accident, illness, disability, old age, or involuntary unemployment. Invalid and disabled people have the right to education and to professional integration. "

2/ Laws and regulations that aimed at the full exercise of these rights

-1971: law on the taking into account of handicap

Article 28 of the law stipulates that "compulsory education shall be conducted for all children and adolescents, without distinction, in the normal classes of public schools". The term used at the time was "integration of pupils with disabilities in normal school"

-1975: Report of the FALCUCCI Commission on the problems of people with disabilities.

This document advocates the evolution of a "school for all" to a school adapted to each individual, by focusing on:

- Valorising everyone's potentialities;
- The development of new languages;
- The plurality of logico-abstract, sensory, motor, practical intelligences.

This report highlights the difficulty of the task, but sets out the principles of inclusive education as we understand it today.

-1977: Law 577/107 repealing special schools

At that time, in Italy, there was a strong movement of deinstitutionalization which led to the closure of insane asylums and special schools for students with disabilities which had been created from 1962 to accommodate these students and bring them closer to school for everyone. This law was probably fundamental because, indeed, inclusive education and school for all are the only solutions offered to those in charge of the education system.

The model of the specialized school has therefore disappeared, with the exception of the teaching of deaf-mutes whose education belongs more to the language of communication than to handicap caretaking.

The July law on schools provides for accompanying measures:

- the creation of socio-psychopedagogical services;
- the integration of students with disabilities up to Middle School;
- the presence of specialized teachers in class;
- the need for group work and the right to individualized education;
- the enrichment of the traditional school path,
- and finally the creation of "open classes".

In the terminology, we move from the concept of "school integration" of disabled people to their full and complete "inclusion" in the school system.

-1978: BASAGGLIA Law 180/78 reforming the psychiatric system

Inspired by psychiatrist Franco BASAGGLIA, this very voluntary and daring law begins the closing of psychiatric hospitals and their replacement by a range of services to the person, a service of treatment and rehabilitation of mental patients, the prevention of mental diseases and their complete treatment insured by services outside the hospital setting.

This law clearly aims at the socialization, at least relative, of the mentally insane. In this, it is consistent with the socialization objectives of "school for all".

-1987: a decision of the Italian Constitutional Court bans the concept of "irrecoverable" and indicates that school enrolment cannot be rejected.

The following principles are affirmed:

- without schooling there is regression;
- schooling is synonymous with social integration;
- isolation is negative.

-1992: Law 104/92 Article 12 on "Guaranteeing the right to education for pupils with disabilities" improves and organizes the reception of pupils with disabilities in ordinary classes.

This law provides:

- The identification of the handicapped pupil, documented by a functional diagnosis written by the operators of the health units.
- Writing a functional dynamic profile (containing the physical, psychic, social and emotional characteristics).
- Highlighting the capabilities possessed, the difficulties related to the disability situation as well as the ability to recover skills.
- The drafting of the Individualized Education Plan, the IEP, developed thanks to the collaboration of "curriculum" teachers, specialized teachers, health unit operators, the possible educational assistant and the family.

Thus, it is expected that the inclusion is also realized by:

- Coordinated programming of school services and health services, support, cultural, recreational, sports services;
- Program agreements signed by local communities and school bodies;
- The provision of the technical and didactic tools necessary for schools; but also through working groups on school integration in each provincial office.

- 1997: organic law granting autonomy to schools

This autonomy now allows schools:

- To carry on national and international projects
- To organize the school calendar.

- 2010: Law 170/2010

This law recognizes dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysorthography and dyscalculia as specific learning-related disorders, grouped under the term "DSA", which produce a significant limitation of activities of daily living, despite cognitive skills and in the absence of neurological diseases and sensory deficits.

-2012 : Direttiva Ministeriale (ministerial directive) relative to SEN (Special Educational Needs).

From the model called "ICF-WHO diagnosis", which considers the person as a whole in a bio-psycho-social perspective, one can identify SEN independently of exclusive typifications. In this sense, each student may have, on a continuous basis or during certain periods, special educational needs: either for physical, biological, physiological or even for psychological and social reasons, for which schools must offer an adequate and customized response.

3/ A voluntarist policy that crafted a coherent system

In order to achieve the objectives of inclusive education, the Italian legislator has taken coercive measures: Law 577 of 1977 now prohibits the very existence of special schools, which amounts to making the reception of disabled children in ordinary classes mandatory.

A brutal but effective decision since it forced the education system to adapt:

- Team work to draw up the diagnosis, assess the potential of the student, establish his Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Coordination between school and the municipality
- Presence of specialized class educators to serve all students.
- Financial and functional autonomy of schools

This leads to a coherent system, which certainly took several years to set up, but which tackles all the problems in a global way, compels the various actors to work together, and prepares the socialization of disabled people from school. The Italian legislator has taken into account both the ethical considerations of the Italian society, but also the economic aspect by optimizing the human resources of the school, and seeking the autonomy of the disabled whenever possible. .

The Italian model outpaced the recommendations of the 2006 UN convention on education.

The signatory states of the UN Convention on Disability can thus be inspired by it, notably by legislating:

- in a very precise way, so as not to leave room for interpretation, and for half-measures that still make it possible to separate students with disabilities.
- and in a global way in order to avoid the dispersion of human and financial means which is detrimental to efficiency and leads to mismanagement.