

Regional Outlook 2019

ITALY

Regional Development Policy in Italy



General policy approach

Consistent with Article 119 of the Italian Constitution, EU Structural Funds (and national co-financing) together with the Fund for Development and Cohesion (Fondo Sviluppo e Coesione) are part of a unitary planning approach to support regional development in all areas of the country and, in particular, in regions that are lagging behind. Overall, financial resources for the 2014-20 programming period amount to EUR 140.6 billion, of which EUR 44.6 billion is from European Structural and Investment Funds.

In the wake of the crisis, the EU funds played a stabilising role in ensuring a higher level of public investment, in particular in less developed regions. The operational programme “Metropolitan Cities 2014-20” seeks to improve the quality and efficiency of urban services and social inclusion. In addition, Italy’s Strategy for Inner Areas is an integrated policy tailored to different places with the aim of reducing demographic decline in many rural areas by improving the quality of essential services – education, health and mobility – and promoting new opportunities for economic activity and jobs.

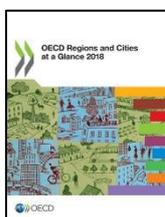
Within the framework of EU Cohesion Policy, Italy has always emphasised the importance of constructing infrastructure. Furthermore, indicator systems to monitor programme implementation, support policy-making processes and analyse policy results are important.

Recent policy changes

- Since 2013, Italy’s Agency for Territorial Cohesion has been providing technical support to central, regional and local administrations in the implementation of regional policy programmes and investment projects.
- In recent years, there has been significant investment in bolstering administrative capacity and in promoting the modernisation of the public administration to improve the effectiveness of public investment. New innovative instruments to strengthen administrative capacity have been introduced in the 2014-20 programming cycle for public administrations involved in the management of European Structural and Investment Fund programmes. Plans for administrative reinforcement (PRA) are operational strategies which set clear timelines for improvement in administrative processes and have been given high political priority.
- Several territorial reforms have taken effect, notably reforms of the provincial level along with the establishment of metropolitan cities. In 2016, the Italian government launched the Pacts for the South, with eight regions (Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Basilicata, Puglia, Calabria, Sicilia and Sardinia), seven metropolitan cities (Napoli, Bari, Reggio Calabria, Messina, Catania, Palermo and Cagliari) and the city of Taranto. These contractual agreements commit national and regional administrations to a common framework for interventions, identifying priorities, actions for implementation and responsibilities.
- The operational programme “Metropolitan Cities 2014-20” supports 14 cities focusing on 5 priorities: 1) a metropolitan digital agenda; 2) sustainability of public services and urban mobility; 3) services for social inclusion; 4) infrastructures for social inclusion; and 5) technical assistance.

Looking for statistical information to complement this?

Take a look at our publication Regions and Cities at a Glance:



<https://oe.cd/pub/2n9>

- Within Italy's Strategy for Inner Areas, 72 project areas have been selected across regions, covering 1 072 municipalities and 2 million inhabitants (3% of the total population and 17% of the national territory).

Institutional arrangements to prepare for global megatrends

All central administrations of the government have a long-term planning or strategic foresight unit. These units carry out strategic forecasting and policy projections on a regular basis, for example related to fiscal impacts. At the regional level, long-term analysis is regularly undertaken by public bodies, such as the Institute for Regional Economic Programming in Tuscany (IRPET). These activities support regional long-term planning.

Italy's Smart Specialisation Strategy represents the strategic framework for the design and implementation of research, technological development and innovation policies. The National Smart Specialisation Strategy (SNSI) identifies the long-term investment priorities that are shared with regions and important stakeholders. It ensures complementarity between national and subnational policies to reduce the risks of duplication and reinforce the impact of policies.

The SVIMEZ (Associazione per lo Sviluppo dell'Industria nel Mezzogiorno) is a private non-profit organisation whose main objective is to analyse the economy of Italy's southern regions, focusing on forward thinking and strategy development. The SVIMEZ has provided relevant technical and scientific contributions to central and local institutions.

OECD Regional Outlook 2019: Leveraging Megatrends for Cities and Rural Areas

The 2019 edition of the *OECD Regional Outlook* examines the regional dimensions of global megatrends and their implications for the well-being of people living in different places. It discusses how place-based policies, public investment and multi-level governance reforms can respond to these megatrends to revive productivity growth, reduce inequalities, improve quality of life and increase sustainability.

Consult the full publication and the other country profiles on line: <https://oe.cd/pub/2vq>.

