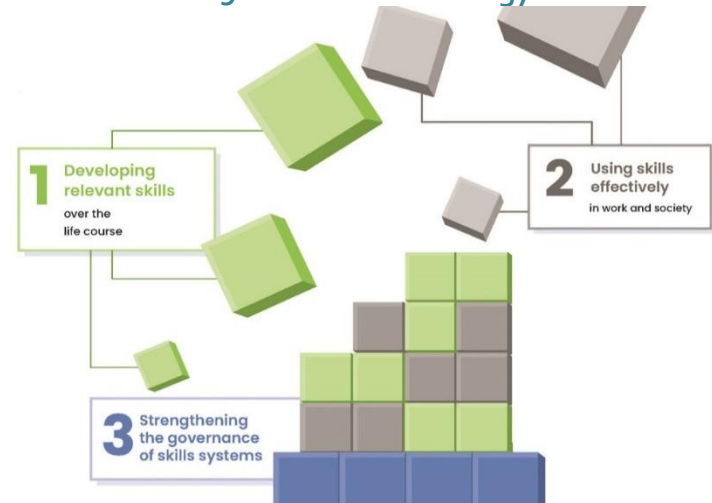




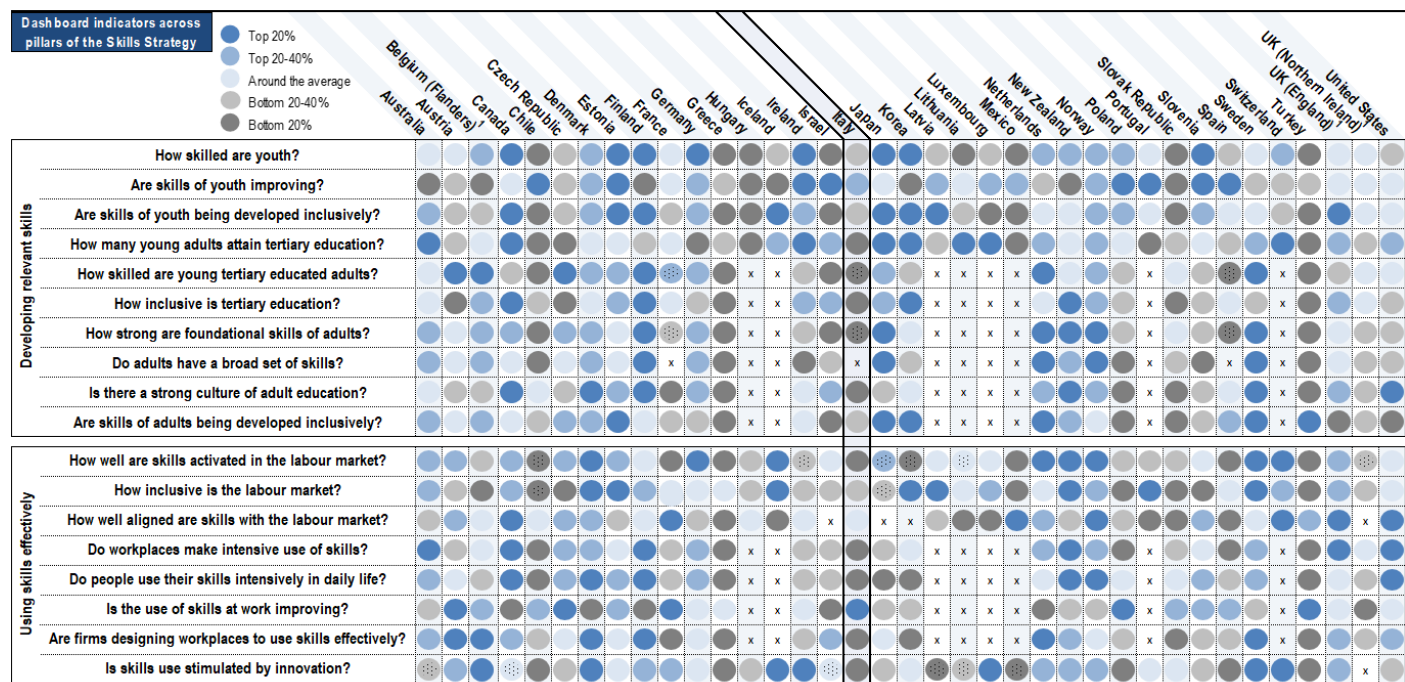
2019 OECD Skills Strategy: Italy

Since its launch in 2012, the OECD Skills Strategy has provided countries with a strategic and comprehensive approach to assessing their skills challenges and opportunities. The 2019 OECD Skills Strategy incorporates lessons learned from applying the OECD Skills Strategy framework in eleven countries, including new evidence about the implications of so-called megatrends, such as globalisation, digitalisation, population ageing or migration. It also accounts for new evidence about skills policies that work under the proper governance arrangements, including effective co-ordination and accountability mechanisms, efficient funding from different sources and information systems. This document describes the key findings for Italy.

The 2019 OECD Skills Strategy



OECD Skills Strategy Dashboard: summary indicators of skills performance



Notes: Indicators are selected, aggregated and normalised in a way to ensure that a higher value and being among the “Top 20%” reflects better performance. Colours in the dashboard represent the quintile position of the country in the ranking, with dark grey indicating performance at the bottom, and dark blue indicating performance at the top of the ranking. The “x” indicates insufficient or no available data for the underlying indicators, and dotted circles indicate missing data for at least one underlying indicator. Only OECD sources have been used (see OECD (2019) for overview).

1. For Belgium (Flanders), United Kingdom (England and Northern Ireland), a combination of regional (PISA and PIAAC) and national data have been used. Note on Israel: The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and are under the responsibility of relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

Italy’s skills performance

The Skills Strategy Dashboard provides a snapshot of Italy’s comparative skills performance. Italy has made good progress in developing the skills of youth. Average PISA scores for 15 year-olds in reading, maths and science improved, and Italy was one of only three countries participating in PISA where the proportion of low performing students in mathematics shrunk and the

proportion of high-performers grew. Moreover, the share of tertiary graduates has increased in the recent decade. Despite these positive trends, Italy faces significant skills challenges. Italian students perform on par with students in other OECD countries in mathematics, but below average in reading and science. The average skills outcomes of tertiary graduates and adults are low, placing Italy in the bottom

20% among OECD countries. The level of tertiary attainment, although increasing, is still one of the lowest among OECD countries. Tertiary graduates have significantly lower proficiency in literacy and numeracy skills than in other OECD countries. Italy also ranks in the bottom 20% for the strength of its adult learning culture: participation remains well below many other OECD countries, with comparatively low interest in learning in adulthood and high barriers to participation. Strengthening the culture of adult education, and improving the inclusiveness of skills development, which is also lower than in many other OECD countries, could contribute to the higher skills proficiency among adults.

Italy could also improve skills activation and the inclusiveness of the labour market. The employment rate, while at a record high, remains one of the lowest among OECD countries, with large regional disparities. Labour force participation rates have increased recently but are well below the OECD average, with large differences between men and women. Moreover, despite improvement, the share of youth not in employment education of training (NEET) is still higher than in most OECD countries.

Lastly, more could be done to improve the intensity of skills use. Adults in Italy use their skills in workplaces and in daily

life much less frequently than in other OECD countries. Similarly, Italy performs poorly in the adoption of high-performance workplace practices and ranks in the bottom 20% in the strength of its innovation system, which are crucial to stimulate the use of skills.

Italy has taken important steps to address many of these challenges. For example, the Ministry of Education has set up a network of lifelong learning bodies, which is expected to lead to the design of a National Plan for Skills for the adult population. The 2019 budget has allocated EUR 1 billion to the reform of public employment services, including to increase staffing by 125% and invest in processes. Finally, the Italian Ministry of Economic Development has launched the *Industria 4.0 National Plan*, a strategy that aims to boost innovation, competitiveness and the development of skills towards the fourth industrial revolution.

Still, Italy could benefit from a renewal of its strategic vision for the future to ensure that all of its people have the skills to respond to the challenges and opportunities of a complex and rapidly changing world. A whole-of government approach is needed to achieve this aim.

Key recommendations for improving the performance of countries' skills system

Developing relevant skills over the life course: Making skills systems responsive

- Making each stage of learning a foundation for success in the next
- Enabling policies to support learning in adulthood
- Supporting teachers to become lifelong learners
- Financing adult learning
- Harnessing the power of technology as a tool for learning

Using skills effectively in work and society: Making the most of everyone's potential

- Make full use of everyone's skills
- Making the most of migrants' skills
- Activating skills to build more inclusive and cohesive societies
- Making intensive use of skills in work
- Aligning skills with the needs of the economy and society
- Aligning skills policies with industrial and innovation policies

Strengthening the governance of skills systems: Tackling increased complexity

- Promoting co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration across the whole of government
- Engaging stakeholders throughout the policy cycle
- Building integrated information systems
- Aligning and co-ordinating financing arrangements

Further reading

OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Strategy 2019: Skills to shape a better future*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [//doi.org/10.1787/9789264313835-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264313835-en).

OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Outlook 2019: Thriving in a Digital World*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/df80bc12-en>.

OECD (2019), *OECD Economic Surveys: Italy 2019*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/369ec0f2-en>.

OECD (forthcoming), *Strengthening the Governance of Skills Systems*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

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