

COSPE  
National Focal Point - Italy

## **Analytical Study on Education**

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## Executive Summary

Detailed quantitative data assembled every year by different Italian Ministries and research centres, allow us to have a fairly accurate picture concerning the education of pupils who are not Italian citizens (including aspects such as age, sex, country of origin, distribution in Italy according to the kind of school and geographic area). In paragraph 2.1 we try to give the useful elements to know the current situation and to foresee future developments (again from a quantitative point of view), on the basis of which we can define the context of these pupils and plan positive strategies of action. The most important sources in this field of research are the annual studies of the Ministry of Education, University and Research (M.I.U.R.), ISTAT, the yearly Caritas Dossier, which gives useful insight and some data by the Ministry of the Interior and birth registry offices.

In the last few years, M.I.U.R. has also started to collect and supply data concerning the school success of non-Italian pupils. In particular, the percentage of pupils who have been promoted is an important element, but there is an insufficient historical series of data to understand whether we are experiencing a positive trend or not. Moreover, we do not have any detailed data which is essential to systematically check how prejudice and discrimination can affect school inclusion, in terms of socialisation, and the possibility that each one has to reach the desired educational level. This is the case, for instance, of gypsy children against whom there are the most serious social prejudices, and who are considered the school dunces: very few reach the secondary school and many of them even drop out of compulsory schooling. On the other side, the pupils who are not Italian but come from other European Union member states (for instance German children who are numerous), are on a par with native children in terms of high standards. Lacking statistics on the success or failure at school of certain groups compared to others, it would be arbitrary to draw conclusions at a national level on this particular point (namely that more prejudice corresponds to greater malaise at school and this gives rise to a higher rate of failures and/or dropping out of school). Hence, we shall limit ourselves also in this case, in paragraph 2.2, to supplying quantitative data on the phenomenon of non-Italian pupils at different school levels, by referring to local experiences and research for more concrete examples of discriminatory phenomena.

In this research it has been pointed out that the aforementioned phenomena have been underestimated or even ignored both by the institutions dealing with the educational sector and research centres or even by non-profit making private organisations, which do not succeed very often in much more than a general denunciation or attacks of individual episodes. The fact of ignoring this phenomenon refers to occasional episodes, normal practices, acts by individuals, groups and institutions. Nevertheless, anyone working with small groups of non-EU pupils, has had to face the malaise of some of these pupils who suffer from a general feeling of marginalisation. Often, individual teachers and professionals such as cultural mediators and intercultural operators are witnesses of reports of real episodes of verbal and physical violence inside and outside the school, but there subsists a widespread trend to consider these episodes as “typical of boys”. In Chapter 5, in drawing the conclusions, we start by stressing this lack of data, starting from systematic activities of collecting and monitoring data through selected monitoring centres, so as to draw attention to this serious error of underestimation.

In the course of the present research, this lack of data has obliged us to resort to the method of showing in boxes some of the typical episodes obtained by different sources (cases supplied by public services, taken from newspaper articles, local research), useful as points to be studied. These boxes are in contrast with the analysis of the statistics examined or even inadequate to describe the complexity of the educational adjustment of non-EU children. A vast empirical experience in this field reveals a systematic presence of discriminatory phenomena against these children, not excluding any country, even if using different measures.

The teaching methods employed to assist the inclusion of non-Italian children and diffuse intercultural methodologies and values, are more extensive and qualitatively more interesting. The data collected by M.I.U.R. and other research carried out on its behalf are used in paragraph 2.3 to

highlight a growing positive attention to these values. However, in this field too there is a lack of an adequate qualitative control of the results – apart from the principles – and of a real stride forwards compared to that mentioned by Poletti back in 1992, warning us against “improvised and spontaneous practices and interventions, insufficiently proved by a systematic consideration capable of giving an epistemological depth and methodological importance. Progress has been achieved in recent years, but this conclusion has also been based more on a widespread perception than on an adequate qualitative monitoring carried out by those responsible for distributing the funds, starting from the Ministry of Education. In this present study, we have therefore referred to local researches, which enable us to highlight consolidated practice.

In chapter 3 we give an overview of the Italian legislation, which seems to be up to international standards, even if a poor monitoring of the application of regulations is the cause of numerous “derogations” applied locally and many episodes of dropping out and failure in schools. In this chapter too, alongside the description of the most important articles of the law for anti-discriminatory policies, we shall supply clear boxes specifying the applications.

Since the national statistics are based on a number of entrances into schools and on the failures, we cannot reveal two important aspects: the incapacity of numerous children to enter compulsory education (this seems to apply in particular to 13-15 year-olds, as they arrive from their respective countries) and the dropping out of schools in the course of the year, not depending on failures, but rather on a lack of motivation that was not statistically elicited. We shall speak about these two aspects in paragraph 4.2, basing ourselves on a research carried out by the Gandhi centre on behalf of the Municipality of Florence. On the one hand, this report brings to the fore the evident cases of discrimination (which does not seem to have been monitored in any other part of Italy, even if often denounced by operators in the sector). On the other hand, however, it shows how the close collaboration between local councils, schools and non-profit making private organisations with the full involvement of all the social players, can lead to the application of positive and problem-solving experiments.

Lastly, we considered it helpful to include useful tools for the interpretation of the study: in chapter 6 we have provided a glossary of the terms employed, indispensable as a common terminology of the subjects examined here which does not yet exist. Paragraph 7.1 shows the reference bibliography on which we have based our work and paragraph 7.2 gives the web sites to update and study in-depth what we are discussing here.

## **1. Introduction**

The aim of this study is to find the sources that can supply data on the condition of non-EU children attending (or having the right to attend) Italian schools (notwithstanding their status, that is, whether with residence permits or illegally) and on the forms of discrimination inflicted on them in schools and in Italian society.

With this aim in mind, in the course of the data collection, were taken into consideration the sources that could be used to give information on the fundamental stages of education of foreign children (enrolment in school; adequate performance, failures, delayed schooling; former schooling; recognition of the educational certificates in the countries of origin), or information facilitating inclusion into the school system (standard of schooling reached; consistency between studies performed and employment; exclusion) (Chapter 2).

As it was necessary to examine the Italian situation, we took into consideration, first of all, the sources which cover the entire national territory, but local sources were also included, since the phenomenon of exclusion in schools is not extensively studied and there are very few specific researches: therefore, an analysis of local phenomena was also useful to obtain a general comprehensive picture (Chapter 4).

On the basis of these national studies and on the field analysis carried out with the collaboration of local bodies and schools in Tuscany, we tried to describe the condition of non-Italian children examining the levels of integration in school structures and the working prospects and social adjustment of teenagers.

As the indicators are historically determined and have different meanings according to the pattern of integration employed, we carried out a preliminary investigation of the laws to understand the pattern (or better, the patterns) at the basis of the contemporary Italian situation (Chapter 3).

A subsequent stage of the study consisted of the continuation of the bibliographic research – whose results are reported in the conclusion of this study (Chapter 8) – which allows us to identify in what fields it is necessary to carry out other researches and initiatives to have a more accurate picture in the future of the situation of discrimination in Italian schools (Chapters 5 and 6).

The final part of the study aims at finding the existing tools, which are often unknown and unexploited, and those to employ to fight discrimination in school structures, both with the help of the legislation in force, often not applied, and diffusing in practice valid experiences already successfully employed (Chapter 6).

In Chapter 7 we thought it important to include a glossary of the terminology employed in this study in an attempt to harmonise as much as possible the data collected in the different researches analysed.

## **2. The national context of reference**

### **2.1 Overview of school inclusion of non-Italian pupils**

#### **2.1.1. The increase of non-Italian pupils in Italian schools**

The Information System of the Ministry of Education, University and Research (M.I.U.R.), through statistical records in Italian schools of all levels, collects and processes data concerning the school population every year, including information about the enrolments of non-Italian pupils. In the 90s data collection reflected an ever-increasing number of these pupils and the need to understand the phenomenon more thoroughly. Starting from an initial collection of useful information to supply a descriptive picture (number, sex, national origin), the range of variables considered was extended to include also information on the backwardness and success of non-Italian pupils in schools, compared to their Italian peers.

Some local statistical monitoring centres (Vicenza, Florence, Prato, the provinces of Lombardy) are interesting examples for a more extensive range of variables examined and the cross-examination of data proposed.

According to the data of the Ministry of Education, in the school year 2001/2002 non-Italian pupils numbered 181,767, coming from 186 countries and representing a percentage of 2.31% of the total student population. This is still a much lower average than the European one, even if a further increase is to be expected in the next few years (in table 8 are two estimates of trends, that are useful for planning efficient policies of inclusion). The gradual increase in recent years shows on the one hand the stability of migration and on the other the urgent need to plan resources and interventions, for the national and local governments.

Going back in time, we can see that in the school year 2000-2001 the pupils enrolled were about 140,000, corresponding to 2% of the total number of pupils, with an increase of about 20,000 units, i.e., more than half a percentage point compared to the preceding year. Indeed, in 1999/2000 Italian schools, from nurseries to secondary schools, state and state-sponsored, were attended by 119,679 non-Italian pupils. The percentage of foreigners amounted to 1.47% of the total.

There was a steady increase of the number of non-Italian pupils present in schools from the beginning of the 90s; nevertheless, until 1996-97 new entries in each school year did not show important variations, amounting to 5,000-7,000 units; in 1997-98 there was a first abrupt increase with 13,000 foreign pupils more compared to the preceding year; between 1998-99 and the following year the difference amounted to 35,000 pupils, with a total of 85,522 (1.09% of the total pupil population).

There are two main factors to explain this trend and the relative peaks, especially that recorded in 1999-2000. Firstly, the family reunions that have increased in the last five years especially after the regularisations in 1998-99; a second factor, also rapidly growing, is the number of children born in Italy to immigrant parents. To this, should also be added the recent increase of compulsory schooling to two years of high school.

#### **2.1.2 Increase of births to non-Italian parents**

According to Istat, the birth rate in Italy of children of immigrant citizens increased initially at a rate of 1,000 per year (7,000 in 1993, 8,028 in 1994, 9,061 in 1995, 10,820 in 1996) gradually rising to (13,569 in 1997, 16,901 in 1998, 21,186 in 1999). In 2000, out of 543,039 babies born in Italy, 25,916 were those of foreign couples. That means that – apart from their citizenship – a large number of children enrolled in the school year 2002/2003 in the first class of the primary school are actually born and brought up here and many of them have attended nursery school (see table 15

concerning the attendance of non-Italian pupils of different school levels). The large increase of children born to non-Italian couples in 1997 and later will affect more and more enrolments to the first class of the primary school.

As we shall see later, this factor together with the duration of their permanence in Italy and the attendance of Italian schools by children who have joined their families, require the recording of the level of competence in the Italian language of non-Italian children, separately from the numbers present.

Among foreigners in Italy, the birth rate has reached, already from 1999, higher levels than 2% throughout the North, whereas in the rest of the country it is about twice the average figure of the local population<sup>1</sup>. The highest figures are recorded in the North-East and the lowest in the South. The number of minors of the resident foreign population reflects this declining curve with similar values. The majority of reunions also occur in the Centre-North of Italy.

*Table. 1: Provinces with the highest birth rate among immigrant couples*

Reggio Emilia	2,7 %	Lodi	2,4 %
Modena	2,7 %	Parma	2,5 %
Como	2,6 %	Treviso	2,5 %
Mantova	2,6 %	Brescia	2,5 %
Vicenza	2,6 %	Cuneo	2,5 %
Cremona	2,4 %	Prato	2,0 %
Lecco	2,4 %		

*Source: Istat*

Out of 20 children born in Italy one is from a non-Italian couple (4.8% of the total): the rate rises to 7.3% in the North (1 child out of 14 born), 6.4% in the Centre (1 out of 16 born) going down to 1.2% in the South and 1.5% on the islands; exactly the opposite of the number born from local couples, higher in the South and lower in the Centre-North.

### **2.1.3 Distribution of non-Italian pupils over the different areas**

According to the figures supplied by the Ministry of the Interior, the minors resident on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2001 were only 70,291, less than a quarter of their actual presence. This is due to the fact that the residence permits are given individually to minors only if they enter the country to join their families or foster families, for adoption, health, tourism or for reasons of study or work (after the age of 14) or for asylum (if unaccompanied). In all other cases their names are included on the residence permits of one of their parents.

To get to know the actual number, therefore, it is necessary to refer to the figures of ISTAT – based on the municipal birth registries – which in 2001 recorded the presence of 277,976 non-Italian minors (for their distribution over different areas, see table 2).

It is interesting to see both the percentage of resident minors, as it is an indicator of stable non-Italian settlements and to see in what way it affects the total number of foreign residents.

<sup>1</sup> Blangiardo, G., ISMU (2002) *Settimo rapporto sulle migrazioni 2001*, Milano: Franco Angeli.

Table 2: area distribution of non-Italian children

Territorial Area	Estimate of the presence of children in 2001	Increase in 2001 compared with 2000	Percentage distribution of children in the various areas Year 2001	% rate of children out of the total of foreign residents (year 2001)
North West	115.533	17.110	35,4 %	21,6 %
North East	84.731	13.157	25,7 %	20,1 %
Centre	82.742	12.392	25,7 %	16,8 %
South	26.760	3.990	8,2 %	16,0 %
Islands	16.335	1.476	5,3 %	17,9 %

Source: data processed by Caritas –Statistical Dossier on Immigration based on Istat data

Even when examining statistics based on figures from birth registries, it is necessary to pay attention to possible bureaucratic errors: for example, children who have entered legally into Italy can become illegal (see box 1 below) or – on the other hand – many people with a legal residence permit are not recorded in the birth registry (for example because they have housing difficulties).

### Box No. 1

#### Example of bureaucratic contradiction

A Chinese woman applied to bring over her son. The visa for the child's entry was sent with great delays, that is two months before the expiry of his mother's residence permit. Therefore, the child was given a residence permit with the same expiry date as that of his mother, valid only for two months. To renew the residence permit of mother and son, the Police Station of Prato requested her family record, but the birth registry does not enter residents with permits of less than three months. This made it impossible for the mother to apply for a renewal of the child's residence permit.

Source: case reported to "Parlamondo" information service – Tuscany Region 2002

### 2.1.4 Presence of non-Italian minors in the territory and in schools

The different possible discrepancies from the national data are furthermore a confirmation of the scattering over the nation of non-Italian citizens: percentages of varying degrees from region to region, but also from province to province and in the main towns of the individual regions, or even in the municipalities between one district and another, and between schools.

The uneven distribution of foreign pupils in schools of the national territory is an accurate reflection of the local varieties of migration in Italy: the towns where the labour market is more open to foreign workers, become settlements with a growing presence of their families; therefore, especially in the municipalities of the Centre-North can be found large numbers of foreign pupils both in percentage terms and as total figures. Instead, in other centres, especially in the South and on the islands, places which serve as places of arrival and transit towards the North, or for seasonal work, the number of non-Italian pupils in schools is fairly limited.

Lombardy is the region with the highest number of non-Italian pupils, equal to about one quarter of the national total of foreign pupils (24.5%). The other regions which record the largest number of pupils are in order, Emilia-Romagna, Veneto, Latium, Tuscany and Piedmont; in these areas there is

a percentage varying from approximately 9 to 12 per cent. In each of the other regions it is around 5%.

A comparison between the percentage distribution of foreign students in the regions and that of the total number of immigrants living in each region, clearly explains the high concentration of families in the north. In Lombardy, for example, foreigners account for 21.3% of the national total, and their children enrolled in schools, as we have seen, 24.5%; this figure represents a foreign population consisting mainly of families with children, at least for people with legal residence permits. Vice versa Campania has a percentage of residents equal to 5% of the national total but only 1.1% of foreign pupils are enrolled in the schools; in the province of Naples, which occupies the fourth place among Italian provinces for the number of residential foreigners, non-Italian children enrolled in schools amount to less than 1000 units (see table 3, below).

*Table 3: Regional distribution in total values and as a percentage of non-Italian pupils in the school year 2001 – 2002*

	<b>Region</b>	<b>Non-Italian pupils (total value)</b>	<b>Regional percentage distribution</b>
1	Lombardia	44.949	24,73%
2	Veneto	22.901	12,60%
3	Emilia Romagna	22.814	12,55%
4	Piemonte	17.235	9,48%
5	Toscana	14.884	8,19%
6	Lazio	14.714	8,09%
7	Marche	7.961	4,38%
8	Liguria	6.339	3,49%
9	Umbria	4.836	2,66%
10	Puglia	4.719	2,60%
11	Sicilia	4.709	2,59%
12	Friuli Venezia Giulia	4.650	2,56%
13	Abruzzo	3.235	1,78%
14	Campania	2.293	1,26%
15	Calabria	1.904	1,05%
16	Sardegna	864	0,48%
17	Basilicata	422	0,23%
18	Molise	216	0,12%
	<i>National Total Amount</i>	<i>181.767</i>	<i>100,00%</i>

*Source: data reprocessed by Focal Point based on a M.I.U.R. research, non-Italian pupils - school year 2001/02; the system does not include Val d'Aosta and Trentino Alto Adige, therefore, they are not reported in this table, however, they are included in the corresponding national total amount*

Although accurate statistics on episodes of racial discrimination in schools do not exist, as we shall see, it is commonly believed, but not supported by empirical experiences or rare data available at a territorial level (see paragraph 4.1), that there is a tendency towards an increase of episodes of discrimination in areas where there are more foreign pupils than natives.

For this reason, and even more so for the fact that the percentages of non-Italian pupils on the total number of pupils influence teaching and the methods employed ad hoc, we are showing in table 4 the regions listed in a declining number of pupils.

It should be observed that this table, like all national statistics, only concerns non-Italian pupils and is therefore only referred to this study. Exclusion and discrimination, indeed, also affect those who have gained Italian citizenship and are no longer included in the statistics (this applies for example to many pupils, children of gypsy couples).

Table 4: Regional distribution in decreasing order of the percentage of non-Italian pupils in the school year 2001 – 2002

	<b>Region</b>	<b>Non-Italian pupils per 100 attendants</b>
1	Emilia Romagna	4,80
2	Umbria	4,31
3	Lombardia	3,80
4	Marche	3,80
5	Toscana	3,71
6	Veneto	3,66
7	Liguria	3,48
8	Friuli Venezia Giulia	3,41
9	Piemonte	3,21
10	Lazio	2,34
11	Abruzzo	1,62
12	Puglia	0,65
13	Calabria	0,55
14	Sicilia	0,53
15	Molise	0,44
16	Basilicata	0,40
17	Sardegna	0,34
18	Campania	0,30

Source: data reprocessed by Focal Point based on a M.I.U.R. research, “Non-Italian pupils - school year 2001/02”; the system does not include Val d’Aosta and Trentino Alto Adige, therefore, they are not reported in this table

If we examine these data, combining the presence of pupils in schools according to the areas (Table 5) and comparing these data with those in table 2 on the presence of children, we will have an indication of how many of them, already present in Italy, still have to be included into the school system, from which they are excluded due to their age or dropping out – voluntary or involuntary.

Table 5: Territorial area distribution in total values and as a percentage of non-Italian pupils in the school year 2001 – 2002

<b>Territorial Area</b>	<b>Non-Italian pupils (total value)</b>	<b>Area percentage distribution</b>	<b>Non-Italian pupils per 100 pupils</b>
North West	68.523	37,69%	3,60%
North East	52.487	28,88%	4,06%
Centre	42.395	23,32%	3,13%
South	12.789	7,04%	0,58%
Islands	5.573	3,07%	0,49%

Source: M.I.U.R., non-Italian pupils - school year 2001/02; the total amounts in this table also include Val d’Aosta and Trentino Alto Adige

Breaking down the regional data into the individual provinces, in Milan, Rome and Turin there is the highest number of foreign pupils in schools, as there is the highest number of non-Italian citizens as a whole. The pupils enrolled in Milan are 19,166, equal to 10% of all foreign pupils attending Italian schools.

Table 6: The first 21 provinces in Italy per number of non-Italian pupils, in decreasing order, according to the most representative citizenship and the percentage of pupils of the mostly represented state out of the total amount of foreigners  
School year 2001-2002

Province	Total amount of non-Italian pupils	Non-Italian pupils per 100 pupils	Citizens represented	Most represented citizenship	Percentage of the largest minority out of the total amount of non-Italian pupils
<b>Milan</b>	19.166	4,10	154	Philippines	9,65%
<b>Rome</b>	11.863	2,82	149	Romania	14,42%
<b>Torino</b>	7.640	2,74	123	Morocco	21,11%
<b>Brescia</b>	7.618	5,17	113	Morocco	17,49%
<b>Vicenza</b>	5.700	4,78	104	Yugoslavia (Serbia, Montenegro)	21,40%
<b>Treviso</b>	5.564	4,81	100	Morocco	20,15%
<b>Verona</b>	4.977	4,33	111	Morocco	24,65%
<b>Bologna</b>	4.882	5,13	111	Morocco	29,60%
<b>Florence</b>	4.754	5,48	102	China	24,97%
<b>Modena</b>	4.754	5,64	95	Morocco	33,51%
<b>Bergamo</b>	4.586	3,20	106	Morocco	28,46%
<b>Perugia</b>	4.079	4,75	104	Albania	26,35%
<b>Genova</b>	3.957	3,89	100	Ecuador	37,15%
<b>Reggio Emilia</b>	3.441	6,12	96	Morocco	24,53%
<b>Cuneo</b>	3.297	4,25	85	Albania	28,91%
<b>Padova</b>	3.232	2,76	101	Morocco	18,87%
<b>Varese</b>	2.980	2,60	100	Albania	21,31%
<b>Mantova</b>	2.651	5,91	81	Morocco	21,50%
<b>Parma</b>	2.518	5,19	100	Morocco	17,04%
<b>Ancona</b>	2.447	3,93	84	Albania	20,03%
<b>Bari</b>	2.292	0,80	74	Albania	62,35%

Source: data reprocessed by Focal Point based on a M.I.U.R. research, "Non-Italian pupils – school year 2001/02"; the system does not include Val d'Aosta and Trentino Alto Adige, therefore, they are not reported in this table

The geography of immigration to Italian schools allows us to find other territorial discrepancies; in cities like Rome, Milan, Turin, Prato, Florence, some districts and schools have a much higher percentage of non-Italian pupils than the local and national average, up to 20-30% of the total number of pupils; in some classes the majority of pupils come from foreign countries; in other districts and schools instead, the foreign pupils are very few or do not exist.

Foreign children come from a very large number of countries and their presence according to different nationalities can be found in the schools. In the classes of Milan and Rome we can find the largest variety of national citizens, 154 and 149 respectively.

Table 7: Most represented nationalities in Italian schools. School year 2001-2002

N°	Nationality	Total value	% out of the total amount of foreign pupils
1	Albania	25.050	17,0
2	Morocco	23.052	15,6
3	Ex-Yugoslavia	16.225	11,0
4	China	8.659	5,9
5	Romania	6.096	4,1
6	Peru	4.486	3,0

Source: Data processed by Caritas / Statistical Dossier on Immigration 2002 based on a M.I.U.R. research

The highest migration to Italy comes from non-EU European countries both for the school year 2001-02 and as a trend found also in preceding years. The flux from Albania is the highest followed by Romania, Yugoslavia (Serbia, Montenegro), Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Poland, etc..

For many immigrants of these countries, Italy is the country of final destination or transit towards more favourable settlements in Northern Europe. According to the distribution in the provinces Albanian citizenship – which as we have seen is the most highly represented in Italian schools – is the first nationality in 46 provinces out of 101, with a considerable territorial diffusion. Especially in Bari, Albanians represent more than 62% of all non-Italian pupils.

The relative geographic proximity is probably the cause of most of the migration from Africa, especially from Morocco, the second country of origin in total values also in schools, after Albania, whereas until the school year 1999-2000 it occupied the first place. According to the provincial distribution the Moroccan pupils are the highest in number in the schools of 35 provinces, especially, in many towns of the Central and Northern part of Italy. For example, in Modena they are more than 33% of all foreign pupils, in Bologna and Bergamo they are about 30%.

This is followed by the Asian pupils, particularly the Chinese, (that went from the third to the fourth place among the pupils present in Italian schools this year). In the provinces of Prato, Florence and Naples, the Chinese are respectively 50.0%, 24.9% and about 21% of non-Italian pupils. If we consider their numbers, we can see that there is a tendency of these families not to be scattered over the territory. Another important country of origin for numbers is that of the Philippines which occupies the first place in the province of Milan from 2000/2001.

The main Latin American countries of origin are respectively Peru, Ecuador (the most represented country in the province of Genoa) and Brazil. The percentage of Argentinians who are encouraged to emigrate to Italy seems limited: it can be surmised that this figure is influenced by the fact that usually emigrants of Italian origin regain their Italian citizenship, independently of the fact that pupils from this country can have linguistic and adjustment problems at school.

A new trend in Italian schools is the large presence of pupils from Yugoslavia and ex-Yugoslavia, who during the last year 2000-2001 occupied the third place. At the end of 1998<sup>2</sup> they had occupied the second place, together with the Albanians, (that year the record was held by the Moroccans).

<sup>2</sup> AA.VV. (2000), *Immigrazione. Dossier statistico 2000*, Roma: Anterem – Caritas

Yugoslav pupils (Serbia-Montenegro) are slightly more in number in the data collected by the Education Authorities of Trieste, Vicenza and Gorizia: 38.37%, 21.4% and 17.27% of all foreigners attending the local schools respectively. In Oristano, where the number of non-Italian pupils is very low (0.23%), Yugoslav pupils are 32.73% of the total number of foreign pupils. In Aquila, Macerata and Rieti the highest number is represented by the Macedonians (from 20 to 22%).

The analysis of the data on school inclusion is also useful to understand the changes going on in some local realities; for example, in 1999 the national group of Ecuador, which was only small until now, has become the most numerous in Genoa and in the school year 2001-2002 has reached 37.15% of the foreign pupils enrolled at school. Similarly, in the province of Milan, where usually Chinese pupils were the largest group and in 2000 accounted for 12% of the non-Italian pupils, they were exceeded by the Peruvians in 2001 and by the Filipinos in 2002.

One trend which is scarcely evident yet, but is becoming more visible in some urban centres is the subdivision of the territory into “ethnic zones”; for example, Prato – where in some schools the pupil population of non-Italian origin increased more than 100% between 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 – according to this figure, the two main nationalities represented are the Chinese and the Albanians, but there are some groups of schools where one or the other prevails.

The variety of the nationalities of the foreign students does not only refer to the country of origin; indeed, many other factors make the non-Italian school population a complex of subjects with different personal features and life experiences, which demand enormous efforts of understanding and solution from the school system.

The different types can be described as follows:

- second generation children born in Italy to two foreign parents;
- children who have come to Italy to join their families;
- children who have come to Italy alone or with their families as refugees;
- Roma and Sinti children, which do not appear if we only take into consideration the data concerning nationalities (they can be ex-Yugoslav, Rumanians, Macedonians, or even Italians).

Besides this variety of foreign students, we should also bear in mind the variability of numbers in time; in the course of the school year some of them move to other cities or even other countries, others arrive in Italy to join their families or as refugees; local data (often collected only empirically in each school) show a high mobility of pupils, following the mobility of their families in search of work and lodgings more suited to individual expectations, job opportunities and accommodation available or in ‘exceptional’ events such as immigration regularisation.

Rebound migrants are not monitored, but the experience of schools shows that this phenomenon is common in Apulia and Abruzzo, traditional ports of arrival especially for East European immigrants, but not only.

Besides, we should not underestimate one element that could alter the interpretation of national data: schools do not always supply Ministries with data collected in a uniform way. For example, there are those which do not mention children born in Italy, who attend schools from kindergarten. Instead, others even include on their lists children adopted by Italian families.

To conclude this paragraph, we are recording the trends of the increasing numbers of non-Italian pupils proposed by the Ministry of Education, which help to plan long-term policies to encourage the harmonious inclusions into our schools.

Table 8: Estimated trends of non-Italian school population

School year	Estimate 1	Estimate 2
2002/03	199.790	220.468
2003/04	219.770	267.139
2004/05	234.561	310.731
2005/06	246.042	349.716
2006/07	255.328	383.814
2007/08	263.087	413.237
2008/09	269.734	438.362
2009/10	275.541	459.605
2010/11	280.694	477.367
2011/12	285.325	492.019
2012/13	289.531	503.892
2012/14	293.382	513.287
2014/15	296.936	520.468
2015/16	300.236	525.672
2016/17	303.316	529.112

Source: M.I.U.R.

## 2.2 Overview of late schooling

On the schooling of foreign pupils there still exist very little data. There are no historical series with which we can make significant comparisons and formulate probable interpretations. The “Second Report on the Integration of Immigrants in Italy” dedicates paragraph 2.4 to the scanty existing data: for the school year 1998/1999 98.8% of the total number of pupils examined in primary schools have been promoted; if this figure is made to refer only to non-Italian children, the percentage of promotions goes down to 95.5%, in the lower secondary schools this gap grows wider: 94.8% of the pupils promoted, compared to 84% of only non-Italian pupils.

Table 9: Comparison between the total number of pupils and the number of Italian pupils in the school years 1999/2000 and 2000/2001

Type of school	Pupils passed per 100 examined			
	School year 1999/2000		School year 2000/2001	
	Total number of pupils	Non-Italian pupils	Total number of pupils	Non-Italian pupils
Primary school	98,92	95,99	98,93	96,64
Lower secondary school	95,55	86,20	96,07	88,42

Source: M.I.U.R. Information system, “Additional Data”

These figures are still higher if compared with those of other European countries. For example, if we examine the figure concerning late schooling compared between Italy, France and Belgium from 1995 to 2000, Italy seems to represent a much more positive situation, even if the arrival of foreign pupils in their schools is much more recent (table 10 and table 11).

Table 10: Late schooling of immigrant pupils in Italian schools and comparison with those in French and Belgian schools (years 1995-2000, % value)

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Belgium French Community</b>	<b>Belgium Flemish Community</b>
Pupils with regular attendance	55,7	36,1	52,8	58,7
Backward pupils among whom:	44,3	63,9	47,2	41,3
Pupils attending 1 year late	30,1	-	-	33,2
2 years late	10,5	-	-	7,1
3 years late	3,7	-	-	1,0
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Processed by CHIP – TSER European Commission from various sources, 2000

Table 11: Promotion rate between native pupils and foreign pupils, or having a foreign origin, in Italian, French and Belgian schools (years 1995-2000, % value)

	<b>Italy</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Belgium French Community</b>	<b>Belgium Flemish Community</b>
Native pupils	93.5	71.4	73.9	87.2
Foreign pupils	93.3	63.9	52.8	58.3

Source: Processed by CHIP – TSER European Commission from various sources, 2000

However, if we compare these figures, generally speaking positive, of the promotions and causes of individual school failures given by the heads of schools (table 12), we shall see that there exists a clear contradiction between the number of foreign pupils that finish higher education and even more between the limited number of pupils who have grown up in Italy and enrol at the university.

Table 12: Causes of failures at school between Italian and non-Italian pupils 2001

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Italian pupils</b>	<b>Non-Italian pupils</b>
School objectives not achieved	<b>57.6</b>	<b>47.9</b>
Lack of commitment of pupils	<b>54.6</b>	<b>24.4</b>
Lack of interest of families	<b>32.3</b>	<b>23.0</b>
Irregular attendance	<b>24.4</b>	<b>24.9</b>
Inadequate teaching methodologies	<b>9.7</b>	<b>24.0</b>
Insufficient integration	<b>4.3</b>	<b>18.2</b>

Source: M.I.U.R., “The transformation of the school in the multicultural society” – replies of the heads of 5,361 schools

We can easily guess that the incidence of failures caused by “unachieved school objectives” is not inferior between non-Italian pupils and their Italian companions: it is more likely that the figure be attributed to a differentiation of objectives, including long-term ones.

The fact that the pupils who are not committed to studying are less than half the Italian pupils, is probably due to similar reasons: the teachers do not keep a check and do not have the tools to evaluate correctly if the non-Italian speaking pupils fully exploit their capabilities, or if they keep a low profile to meet the lower expectations of their schools.

More consistent with the malaise frequently expressed by foreign pupils and parents are the percentages criticising the “inadequate teaching methods” and “insufficient integration even if they are probably underestimated (see the frequency of answers to bilingual questionnaires in box 2).

## Box no. 2

### Socialisation – data obtained from an experimental questionnaire

In the school year 1994/95, stimulated by teachers who had observed the difficulty of relations between foreign and native pupils in the schools of Prato and the neighbouring areas, we distributed 197 bilingual questionnaires for open answers from pupils of Chinese origin so as to obtain their preceding curricula, interests and difficulties.

On asking the question “do you have difficulties in making friends with Italian children?”, 17 pupils did not answer, 47 said they have no difficulties, 86 answered that they had a few and 48 that they had great difficulty.

Among the 86 who answered that they had a few and the 47 who had great difficulties the kind of difficulties were as follows: linguistic (28), “I feel different” (5), the so-called reasons that gave rise to these difficulties depended on other factors such as “they have things we don’t have and I don’t like it”, “they don’t have to work”, “we have different habits”, etc. .

Other answers blamed the Italians for their problems: “it’s difficult for me because I belong to another race”, “Italian children do not like the Chinese”, “some Italian children are not very friendly”, “they tease me”, “some are not very polite”...

Obviously, this question makes the interviewees uncomfortable, indeed, their answers have often been erased, changed or written in a different language from the one used to answer all the other questions (the choice of their mothertongue or of Italian was optional). Many did not specify their answer by writing “I don’t know” or not answering at all to the reasons of the difficulties they met.

In many cases, children with serious difficulties of integration, found by teachers, or even defined as “aggressive” or “very reserved” answered that they did not have any difficulties.

*Source: “Italian-Chinese questionnaire for schools – Teachers handbook”, op. cit. in the bibliography*

The data presented in the study “The transformation of schools in multicultural societies” are completely different. We shall examine the subject more thoroughly in paragraph 2.4. Foreign pupils are fairly satisfied (65%) or very satisfied (22.5%) with the teaching they receive and the interaction in the classroom. The reasons for their dissatisfaction were due to language difficulties (72,3% of the reasons given in the answers by 5,361 heads of schools).

We cannot only rely on the outcome of failures and promotions as indicators of the educational successes and failures, owing to the complexity of the variables concerning the programmes of integration adopted by individual schools (or even by individual teachers) on certain points which we are presenting merely as examples:

- different criteria of evaluation;
- different linguistic and didactic objectives;
- the tendency of some schools to keep the students who arrive in the middle of the school year in the same class the following year;

- many schools enroll children coming in the middle of the school year as “auditors”, so that they are not given any school reports at the end of their first year in Italy
- the tendency of some schools to put all foreign pupils in the first class (of the primary or lower secondary schools), independently of their age, to give them more time to get familiar with the language;

Moreover, as shown in the “Second Report on the Integration of Immigrants”<sup>3</sup>, in the numerous proposals on the analysis and experiments of the category of foreign pupils typical of the intercultural approach, we can observe an exaggeration of the cultural aspect rather than the social. The information obtained on the culture and countries of the immigrants, for example, seem to stress the ethnic, religious and national differences ignoring the differences of the social background and living conditions of the individual immigrants, factors which are at times decisive<sup>4</sup>.

These stereotypes (negative or positive) should lead us to be cautious when selecting indicators to measure the educational success and failures of foreign pupils.

Till the present time, the data obtained annually by the Ministry of Education refer in particular to the percentages of failures and late schooling (namely, the class attended is incompatible with the age of the pupil), often without mentioning the initial class at the time of arrival in Italy, or even in the case of a transfer from one town to another in Italy (for example, cases of children attending a certain class although their standard of the Italian language had not yet reached the level required to study the subjects of the curriculum, are not infrequent as they are placed to follow a certain curriculum and when moving to another town are put in a lower class, breaking all the rules and putting under pressure the self-esteem of the pupils affected, see box No. 3).

### **Box no. 3**

#### **“A case of being put back in a lower class”**

A pupil transferred in September 2001 from the Liceo Scientifico Livi of Prato, which he was attending with entrance to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, was refused an enrolment to all scientific high schools in the town of Padua, notwithstanding the authorisation of his last school and the personal attention of the headmistress of the former school.

In the end his application for enrolment was accepted by a professional school (to follow studies he was not interested in and which he accepted only because he had been rejected in other schools). After an entrance exam, in the presence of a linguistic mediator, the boy was put in the lower class, although he was already 16 years old and had already passed his lower secondary school certificate in China three years before.

His father appealed to the headmistress of the high school in Prato in an attempt to obtain the boy’s entrance to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the school and the headmistress supported his case, but unfortunately unsuccessfully to try and influence the policies of integration by the school in Padua. After a short spell, when the pupil revealed great difficulties of adjustment, he abandoned the course.

*Source: case reported to the Tuscany regional government’s project “Parlamondo”, 2001*

If we examine this figure basing ourselves only on the comparison of failures and delayed schooling of foreign pupils against natives, we run the risk of reducing the explanation of the phenomenon simply to their condition as immigrants. To understand the phenomenon more thoroughly, it would

<sup>3</sup> Commissione per le politiche di integrazione degli immigrati (2001), *Secondo Rapporto sull’integrazione degli immigrati in Italia*, para. 4.2, Bologna: Il Mulino

<sup>4</sup> See also Perotti, A., Prefazione in: Rizzi, F. (1992) *Educazione e società interculturale*, Brescia: La Scuola

be useful to extend the range of variables, by collecting data on social conditions, former schooling, the literacy and profession of parents in Italy and in the country of origin and other similar indicators<sup>5</sup>.

We can also apply these methods of analysis, already fully tested in studies on the dropping out of schools (which applied almost exclusively to natives in the past) to foreign minors. Using these same indicators would allow us to find out how many school failures are connected to migration and how many to native pupils and otherwise in similar social, cultural and family conditions.

There are studies that take into consideration both qualitative and quantitative aspects. For example, in a research carried out in Turin<sup>6</sup>, we see the differences of attitudes between parents according to their country of origin: according to this research Peruvian parents, on the one hand, give priority to a high standard of education for their children, whilst Chinese parents are contented with their children completing compulsory schooling. In this case too, we should thoroughly examine the parameters which had not probably been foreseen by the researchers at the beginning: similar research performed in Tuscany by Cospe in 1995<sup>7</sup> stresses the fact that for Chinese parents who have recently arrived in Italy a high standard of education is one of the mentioned priorities, or even one of the reasons that have led to the emigration of the family; whereas those who have been in Italy for several years have given up the idea of a high standard of education in favour of early employment in a successful economic activity. This qualitative change should be analysed by examining the more profound reasons: for example, one can imagine that the linguistic difficulties of the Chinese pupils are greater than those of Spanish speaking pupils, so that their parents consider a higher level of education more of a waste of time or even an impossible goal. For example, we could compare the data on the school success of children of a certain nationality who have emigrated to other countries with those placed in Italian schools to assess the influence of the school organisation of the hosting country or the second language.

For the purposes of this study, the most important data are probably those that concern:

- not placing foreign students immediately in their classes
- placing foreign pupils in classes unsuited to their age group
- not introducing courses for the learning of the second language
- not using intercultural methodologies
- not using linguistic-cultural mediators and other qualified staff to establish a good relationship with the family of the pupils
- dropping out of school during the school year
- not monitoring possible episodes of bullying, dependant on the pupils' foreign origins, racial discrimination, and the lack of respect for cultural, religious differences, etc.

Generally speaking, however, there is a lack of this kind of qualitative data except for a few local experiences and without a comparison with similar data on native pupils. In chapter 7 of this research, we shall therefore report recommendations so that monitoring centres can be set up without any further delay.

### **2.3 The presence of non-Italian pupils at different levels of the school**

The fact that foreign children are mainly put into lower classes on the one hand enables young native pupils to get used to a more peaceful co-existence in multicultural circles, but on the other it

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<sup>5</sup> See Formosa, S., Omodeo, M. (2001) *Questionario bilingue per le scuole*, Brescia: Vannini – Cospe, Collana Hibiscus

<sup>6</sup> CARPOS (1995) *Crescere altrove. Identità e diritti dei minorenni stranieri immigrati a Torino*, Torino: Fondazione G. Agnelli

<sup>7</sup> Mentioned in the introduction of the first edition of the Bilingual Questionnaire, quoted in the bibliography.

shows difficulties by the schools to absorb new applicants right up to the highest levels by pupils of different origins.

At a national level more than 6 non-Italian pupils out of 10 are enrolled in kindergartens or primary schools. The primary schools alone receive 42.5% of the foreign pupils present in Italy (an average which is higher in the South with 45.9%, with peaks of 50.9% in Campania and 48.7% in Calabria, even if the highest figure can be found in the province of Trento, with 58.1%).

Table 13: Pupils per type of school: distribution according to the area (school year 2000 – 2001)

	Nursery school	Primary	Lower Secondary school	Upper Secondary school	Total	Percentage of the school population
North West	39,3	36,8	37,5	35,0	37,3	2,9
North East	27,1	27,3	27,7	28,3	27,5	3,2
North	66,3	64,1	65,2	63,3	64,7	3,2
Centre	24,2	25,6	25,5	28,6	25,7	2,6
South	6,3	7,2	6,8	5,2	6,6	0,4
Islands	3,2	3,1	2,5	2,8	3,0	0,4
<b>ITALY</b>	<b>30.793</b>	<b>62.683</b>	<b>35.575</b>	<b>18.355</b>	<b>147.406</b>	<b>1,8</b>

Source: Processed by Caritas / Statistical Dossier on Immigration based on data of the Ministry of Education, University and Research

We have seen that the numbers of non-Italian pupils (and the relative incidence on the total number of pupils) decreases as we go from a lower level of education to a higher one, with higher values in compulsory schooling. This trend is still higher if we consider the numbers for each course (table 14).

The incidence in the first and second classes of primary schools should be emphasised, as they are often considered more suitable for children who have just arrived in Italy (and therefore they are also chosen for older children – see especially the case of the North-East).

Another figure which should be mentioned is that of the first class in the upper secondary school, which is attended by a large number of non-Italian pupils, partly due to the recent extension of compulsory schooling and partly to a large number of pupils repeating the first year of the course, considered didactically as the most critical. The increase of pupils of the upper secondary schools attending the last year of school seems to be connected to these factors and to a greater capacity of receiving them (school year 2000/2001: 18,355 pupils; school year 2001/2002: 24,063 pupils, with a growth of 31.1%).

Another noteworthy observation is the composition of this student population according to sex: out of 181,767 non-Italian pupils integrated into the Italian school system this year, 83,279 are usually girls. This figure corresponds to a percentage of 45.82% of the total number of foreigners, a slightly lower figure than the general number of girls compared to the entire school population (47.98%).

It should also be observed that also this year the percentage of foreign girls attending upper secondary schools is higher than the total number of girls attending this type of school (50.53% the former and 48.01% the latter).

Table 14: Pupils according to the type of school: distribution in each area (school year 2000 – 2001)

Source: Ministry of Education, University and Research

Type of school	Geographic Area					Total
	North-West	North-East	Centre	South	Islands	
Nursery school						
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,16</b>	<b>4,26</b>	<b>3,46</b>	<b>0,61</b>	<b>0,70</b>	2,62

Primary						
I Primary	5,43	6,18	4,70	1,01	0,90	3,65
II Primary	5,30	5,87	4,56	0,87	0,72	3,40
III Primary	4,94	5,59	4,37	0,81	0,65	3,17
IV Primary	4,53	4,97	4,08	0,79	0,63	2,90
V Primary	4,49	4,78	3,85	0,77	0,65	2,80
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,60</b>	<b>5,32</b>	<b>4,03</b>	<b>0,78</b>	<b>0,64</b>	<b>2,99</b>
Lower Secondary						
I Class	4,47	4,93	4,26	0,78	0,67	2,89
II Class	4,28	4,76	3,76	0,63	0,54	2,65
III Class	4,01	4,51	3,28	0,55	0,44	2,43
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,16</b>	<b>4,26</b>	<b>3,46</b>	<b>0,61</b>	<b>0,70</b>	<b>2,62</b>
Upper Secondary						
I class	2,92	3,76	2,78	0,55	0,29	1,96
II class	1,91	2,15	1,64	0,39	0,20	1,23
III class	1,40	1,79	1,34	0,33	0,15	0,98
IV class	0,91	1,21	0,89	0,29	0,14	0,68
V class	0,64	0,89	0,65	0,19	0,12	0,48
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,57</b>	<b>2,00</b>	<b>1,47</b>	<b>0,27</b>	<b>0,18</b>	<b>1,06</b>
<i>Italian school in total</i>	<i>3,60</i>	<i>4,06</i>	<i>3,13</i>	<i>0,58</i>	<i>0,49</i>	<i>2,31</i>

Source: M.I.U.R. Information system,

## 2.4 Overview of intercultural initiatives in schools

This paragraph refers especially to an important and innovative research carried out by the Ministry of Education “The transformation of schools into multicultural societies”, which involved 5,361 schools of all kinds and levels (equal to 68% of Italian school structures) situated in 27.3% of the North-West, 19.1% of the North-East, 24.0% of the Centre and 9.0% of the South and the islands.

In their solutions to teaching activities to establish a positive relationship with non-Italian pupils, the school directors have placed almost on the same level the social aspect and solidarity (64.9%) and the teaching methods of the different subjects (60.4%). This analysis refers especially to lower levels of schooling and to the South of Italy.

In one third of the schools taken into examination, the teachers took part in the intercultural activity with a lower number of participants in the South and a higher number in schools with a higher percentage of foreign students. In 95.3% of the cases, training and refresher courses focused on the general need of cultural education and in about one fourth of the cases teaching methods applied to individual subjects, management – administration – organisation – legal problems: in other words multicultural training was seen as a comprehensive ensemble of culture, orientations and methods. Participation was considered as entirely (7.5%) or fairly (75.7% of cases) satisfying.

The Training Opportunities Plan (P.O.F.) in 53.7% of the schools examined provides for initiatives of intercultural education in their yearly syllabus. This percentage seems negative in relation to those planned by the Ministry, in which all the schools should promote activities to enhance the intercultural values, regardless of the presence or absence of foreign pupils and their numbers (94% of the schools without foreign pupils have not implemented intercultural projects, just as 69.5% of schools which have up to 1% of foreign students).

To encourage the admission of foreign students, priority is above all given to the direct relationship with their families (84,8%), hence to formal meetings held before their introduction into the classroom (29.5%), and lastly to policies of increasing the awareness (29.5%).

Besides, according to this study, the integration following the initial phase of admission is seen as an appreciation of the different cultural models and not as an assimilation. With this outlook in mind, priority is given to informal opportunities of contact at parties and meetings, (67.5%), work groups (64.2%), entertainment (46.6%), an understanding of the different cultures (44.1%).

To carry out initiatives aiming at integration, the schools were assisted mainly by private non-profit organisations: voluntary (46%), cultural (42,8%), sports (17,9%), religious (15,1%), foreign associations (5,8%), whilst only 5.2% of local bodies contributed.

One interesting point in the answers given by the heads of schools, which contradicted the fears often raised during refresher courses and the planning sessions of the school boards, is that dealing with the attitude of Italian parents and pupils. According to those interviewed, 53.4% of Italian pupils and 41.4% of Italian parents are positive towards their foreign classmates (these percentages are higher in the primary schools in the south and generally where the proportion of foreign pupils are lower. The attitude of one third of Italian parents of pupils towards foreign pupils is dependant on the fact that “the school progress of their own children is not interfered with”, whereas one third is willing to accept even this possibility. 8.3% of parents consider that the school must deal with foreign pupils only when this does not involve any delays.

The negative attitude of Italian pupils (45% - 48%, with higher proportions in the North) derives from the following factors: a lack of familiarity with other cultures, fears and cultural prejudices, getting to know negative episodes from the newspapers. Only 12% are influenced by negative personal experiences or those of others.

From the study carried out by the Ministry one point emerged which seems to reconsider the negative role of press campaigns, which often highlight the ethnic origin of criminals, or alleged criminals, when giving news. What happens is that the cultural and social models typical of different ethnic groups only partly influence the process of integration, without being decisive.

The first element that influences integration depends on the number of foreign pupils: in 62.3% answers 2 or 3 students are not considered to affect the development of a normal teaching activity.

A high degree of integration is acknowledged respectively to pupils from EU, North America, East European and Latin American countries. In half the answers an adequate integration is also acknowledged in the other areas.

*Table 15: degree of integration for foreign students according to the countries of origin (2001)*

Integration	E.U.	North America	South America	Third Countries in Europe	North Africa	Subsahar. Africa	Asia
High	62,6	37,5	22,7	22,9	12,7	10,0	14,7
Adequate	22,0	34,3	53,0	58,1	56,7	49,1	48,4
Poor	0,3	2,2	4,8	5,9	13,3	16,1	13,5
None	0,6	2,2	1,2	0,3	1,0	2,2	2,3
Not found	14,5	23,8	18,3	12,8	16,4	22,6	21,0
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

*Source: Ministry of Education, University and Research, answers of the heads of 5,361 schools*

From the answers given we clearly see that besides the country of origin, the attitude with which the pupil relates to Italian culture also has an influence on integration. In two thirds of the answers are mentioned both their capacity for socialising, and of adapting; in half the answers are shown the common rules and values and the similar and harmonious habits and customs.

For 58.4% of the heads of schools, belonging to a different religion does not influence the process of integration, but for 38.6% Muslim religion does present difficulties. Briefly, the different colour of the skin and of the religion give rise to problems and the study of the Ministry to which we refer in this paragraph, confirms that not all schools give importance to intercultural approaches.

### 3. Legislation relative to the schooling of non-Italian pupils and for the dissemination of intercultural educational models

In Italy the first and foremost guarantee for entrance into schools and to take into consideration the cultural, linguistic, religious identities of each child, no matter where he/she comes from, is the Italian Constitution itself, especially article 3, which states: *“All citizens have the same social dignity and are equal before the law regardless of their sex, race, language, religion, political opinions, personal and social conditions.”*<sup>8</sup>

Further guarantees for the equal opportunity between children of ethnic minorities and those of natives are stated in article 3 of the UN Convention for Children’s Rights, which has a supranational value:

*“In all the decisions relative to the child, under the responsibility of public or private institutions of social welfare, law courts, administrative or legislative authorities, the superior interest of the child must prevail”.*<sup>9</sup>

Italy like many other countries, with the exception of Somalia and the U.S. has signed the law to ratify the international convention against all forms of racial discrimination.<sup>10</sup>

Ever since the need was felt to have more systematic tools, also legislative, to implement the constitutional principles, several regulations have been introduced, which represent today a precious resource which we shall list in a simple way as follows:

- Law No. 881, 1977, (ratification of the international Pact relative to the economic, social and cultural rights and to the Pact on civil and political rights) which establishes the obligation to guarantee the right to employment, physical and mental health, the assistance of children, an adequate living standard, education, and rejects discrimination based on race, colour, language, national origin, religion.<sup>11</sup>
- Ministerial Circular No. 301, of the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1989: “The inclusion of foreign pupils into compulsory schools: promotion and coordination of initiatives for the application of the right to study”.<sup>12</sup>
- Ministerial Circular No. 205, of the 26<sup>th</sup> July 1990: “Compulsory schooling and foreign pupils. Intercultural Education”.<sup>13</sup>
- Law No. 176 of the 27<sup>th</sup> May 1991, “Ratification for the application of the Convention for Children’s Rights, passed in New York on the 20<sup>th</sup> November 1989”.<sup>14</sup>
- Ruling of C.N.P.I. of the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1992: “Intercultural education in schools”.<sup>15</sup>
- Ruling of C.N.P.I. of the 24<sup>th</sup> March 1993: “Racism and anti-semitism today: the role of the school”.<sup>16</sup>
- Ministerial Circular No. 5, of the 12<sup>th</sup> January 1994: “Enrolment in schools of all kinds and levels of foreign pupils without residence permits”.<sup>17</sup>
- Ministerial Circular No. 73 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1994: “Intercultural dialogue and democratic co-existence: commitment to school projects”.<sup>18</sup>
- Ministerial Circular No. 255 of 1995

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.quirinale.it/costituzione/costituzione.htm> (29/01/03)

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm> (29/01/03)

<sup>10</sup> Law no. 654 13/10/75, <http://www.stranieriinitalia.it/razzismo/reale.html> (29/01/03)

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.giustizia.it/cassazione/leggi/1881\\_77.html](http://www.giustizia.it/cassazione/leggi/1881_77.html) (29/01/03)

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/norme/circolari/cm301\\_89.html](http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/norme/circolari/cm301_89.html) (29/01/03)

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/norme/circolari/cm205\\_90.html](http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/norme/circolari/cm205_90.html) (29/01/03)

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.ethnos.minori.it/leg\\_naz/conv\\_onu.htm](http://www.ethnos.minori.it/leg_naz/conv_onu.htm) (29/01/03)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.comune.bologna.it/iperbole/immigra/legge/scuola/92cnpi.htm> (29/01/03)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.comune.bologna.it/iperbole/immigra/legge/scuola/93cnpi.htm> (29/01/03)

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.comune.bologna.it/iperbole/immigra/legge/scuola/94cm5.htm> (29/01/03)

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/norme/circolari/cm073\\_94.html](http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/norme/circolari/cm073_94.html) (29/01/03)

- Studies and documents of the Annals of State Education, No. 71-95: Series “Intercultural education and foreign pupils”.
- Ministerial Decree No. 58 of the 8<sup>th</sup> February 1996: “The role of education and the school in present-day society – Programmes for teaching civics”.<sup>19</sup>
- Law No. 40 of the 6<sup>th</sup> March 1998: “Discipline on immigration and regulations on the conditions of foreigners”. (see article 36, reported here below, which is the most important for the subjects treated here).<sup>20</sup>
- Legislative Decree No. 286 of 25<sup>th</sup> July 1998: “Single Act on the Regulations concerning the discipline of immigration and norms on the conditions of foreigners” and subsequent “Modification of the norms on the subject of immigration and asylum”, approved by the Senate of the Republic on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2002.<sup>21</sup>
- Decree of the President of the Republic No. 158 of the 5<sup>th</sup> August 1998: “Approval of the plan relative to the policy on immigration and foreigners on the national territory, according to art. 3 of law No. 40 of the 6<sup>th</sup> March, 1998”.<sup>22</sup>
- Decree of the President of the Republic No. 394 of the 31<sup>st</sup> August 1999: “Regulations for the Application of the Single Act on the provisions concerning the discipline of immigration and norms on the conditions of foreigners”.<sup>23</sup>
- The so-called Bossi-Fini law.<sup>24</sup>

Clear references to intercultural education, to the respect of differences, to various approaches, in a vast framework of reference, can already be found in New Teaching Programmes for Primary schools, approved by Decree No. 104 of the President of the Republic on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 1985 and which entered into force in the school year 1987/88.<sup>25</sup>

### 3.1 From the Ministerial Circular No. 255 of 1995

According to the Ministerial Circular No. 255 of 1995, each school must apply the Charter of Services containing the fundamental principles of the Constitution. One of these is the “Principle of equality”:

*“No discrimination in the distribution of school services must be made on grounds of sex, race, ethnic group, language, religion, political opinions, psycho-physical and social-economic conditions”.*

It is useful to add that the presidential decrees No. 249 of 1998<sup>26</sup> and No. 275 of 1999<sup>27</sup> – which regulate the new system of teaching and organisation autonomy of the schools – establish that each school must adopt a Plan of Training Opportunities (or P.O.F.). This plan serves to clarify the fundamental principles on which the school is based, including therefore those regarding the inclusion in schools of foreign pupils and intercultural, linguistic interventions, and possibly of the maintenance of their mother tongue.

We shall refer to the creation of the Plans of Training Opportunities later in the study in the chapter dedicated to Recommendations (Chapter 6).

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.comune.bologna.it/iperbole/immigra/legge/scuola/96dm58.htm> (29/01/03)

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.parlamento.it/parlam/leggi/980401.htm> (29/01/03)

<sup>21</sup> [http://www.giustizia.it/cassazione/leggi/dlgs286\\_98.html](http://www.giustizia.it/cassazione/leggi/dlgs286_98.html) (29/01/03)

<sup>22</sup> [http://www.giurisprudenza.unimi.it/~olir/documenti/statali/italia/liberta\\_religiosa\\_coscienza/dpr\\_1998\\_08\\_05.htm](http://www.giurisprudenza.unimi.it/~olir/documenti/statali/italia/liberta_religiosa_coscienza/dpr_1998_08_05.htm) (29/01/03)

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.ac.infn.it/legale/39499.pdf> (29/01/03)

<sup>24</sup> Law no. 189 30/07/02, <http://www.parlamento.it/parlam/leggi/021891.htm> (29/01/03)

<sup>25</sup> [http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/norme/edfisica/dpr\\_104\\_85.html](http://www.edscuola.it/archivio/norme/edfisica/dpr_104_85.html) (29/01/03)

<sup>26</sup> [http://www.istruzione.it/argomenti/autonomia/documenti/dpr249\\_98.rtf](http://www.istruzione.it/argomenti/autonomia/documenti/dpr249_98.rtf) (29/01/03)

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.istruzione.it/argomenti/autonomia/documenti/regolamento.htm> (29/01/03)

### 3.2 From the Decree of the President of the Republic No. 394 of the 31st August 1999

For a general picture of school inclusion and the subsequent employment opportunities of foreign children, we are reporting an abstract of the articles referring to the Presidential Decree No. 394-31<sup>st</sup> August 1999.

*Regulations for the application of the single act on the provisions concerning the discipline of immigration and norms on the conditions of foreigners according to art. 1, para. 6, of the legislative decree of the 25<sup>th</sup> July 1998, No. 286.*

#### *PROVISIONS ON THE SUBJECT OF EDUCATION, THE RIGHT TO STUDY AND PROFESSIONS – Art. 45 (School enrolments).*

1. *Foreign minors present on the national territory have the right to education regardless of whether they have or not their residence permit, in exactly the same way as those applying to Italian citizens. They are subject to attending compulsory education according to the regulations in force. The enrolment of foreign minors in Italian schools of all kinds and levels is made in the same ways and conditions established for Italian minors. It can be requested in any period during the school year. Foreign minors without birth certificates or with illegal or incomplete documents can be enrolled with reservations.*
  2. *The enrolment with reservations does not affect their right to obtain the final qualification of the course of study of schools of all kinds and levels. Once the pupil's identity has been proved to comply with the law, the qualification will be given to him with the personal data supplied at the time of enrolment. Foreign minors having to attend compulsory education must be enrolled in the class corresponding to their age, unless the board of teachers decides that he or she must be enrolled in a different class, taking into account:*
    - a) *the educational background of the country of origin of the pupil, which can determine his enrolment into a class, just below or above that corresponding to his age group;*
    - b) *the assessment of the competence, skills and standards of preparation of the pupil;*
    - c) *the course of studies followed by the pupil in his country of origin;*
    - d) *the certificate of studies the pupil has obtained.*
  3. *The board of teachers makes proposals for the distribution of foreign pupils in the classes: the distribution is carried out trying to avoid the predominance of the presence of foreign pupils in their classes.*
  4. *The board of teachers, on the basis of the competence of individual foreign pupils, defines the necessity of adjusting teaching programmes; for this aim specific interventions can be adopted individually or for groups of pupils to facilitate the learning of the Italian language, using, where possible, the professional resources of the school. The consolidation of the knowledge and practice of the Italian language can be further achieved through the application of intensive courses of the Italian language on the basis of specific projects, also in the field of additional teaching activities to extend the training courses.*
  5. *The board of teachers can make proposals based on the criteria and methods for communication between the school and the families of foreign pupils. Wherever necessary, also through agreements with local bodies, the school can employ the assistance of qualified cultural mediators.*
- (...)
8. *The Ministry of Education, when issuing the directive on training refresher courses for inspectors, directors and teachers, can make provisions to apply national and local projects on the subject of intercultural education. These initiatives must take into account the specific situations of the schools and the communities of foreigners, aiming at encouraging their integration into the local community.*

### 3.3 Article 36 of law No. 40

The frame of reference for the intercultural activities is completed by article 36 of law No. 40/1998, probably the most important of the themes discussed here, which has not been changed by the so-called Bossi-Fini law approved in 2002. We are quoting it here for reference:

*The foreign minors present on the territory must attend compulsory schooling. The right to study is put into force by the implementation of special courses and initiatives for the learning of the Italian language.*

*The school system welcomes linguistic and cultural differences as a fundamental value of mutual respect, of tolerance and cultural exchange; with this aim it promotes and encourages initiatives to welcome and protect the original culture and the creation of common intercultural activities.*

*The initiatives and activities are realised on the basis of local needs and an integrated territorial plan in agreement with associations of foreigners in Italy and voluntary organisations.*

*The school promotes:*

*Welcoming foreign adults by activating literacy courses, valid cultural courses to obtain a certificate of compulsory education;*

*the creation of courses to supplement the studies sustained in the countries of origin;*

*the creation and application of Italian language courses;*

*the creation of professional training courses.*

*The regulations for application state:*

*the creation of training and refresher courses for teaching staff and the criteria for the adaptation of teaching programmes;*

*the criteria and methods of communication with foreign families also with the help of cultural mediators; the criteria for the enrolment and placing in classes of the foreign pupils, to distribute pupils in the classes and for the introduction of specific activities for language support.*

### 3.4 The right to citizenship

In recent years, profound changes have taken place in the legal approach to foreign minors – from being a subject devoid of specific rights to one having rights as the child of a legal worker, to the point of being recognized as a legal person being a minor. However, insurmountable obstacles remain for most of these children regarding the right to citizenship. The Law No. 91 of the 5<sup>th</sup> February 1992, “New regulations on citizenship”<sup>28</sup> – which we have not mentioned in the above list as it does not explicitly concern the education of children – has introduced several innovations (changes relative to the granting of citizenship to foreigners, possibilities also on the part of the mother to give her citizenship to her children, etc.), but in actual fact it maintains a trend based on the “blood rights” (*jus sanguinis*): the children of foreign couples are considered foreigners to all effects until they come of age. Paragraph 2 of art. 4 of this law states: “The foreigner born in Italy, who has legally and uninterruptedly lived here until he comes of age, becomes a citizen if he states that he wants to obtain Italian citizenship one year before the stated date”.

There is no automatic granting of Italian citizenship when coming of age, as the person must show that he/she has lived in Italy legally and uninterruptedly and must express his/her own desire before his/her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. This law determines that the children whose parents get them to spend a period of time with their relatives or in a school in the native land of their family loses the right of gaining the Italian citizenship. As we shall see in chapter 4, the parents are sometimes obliged to make this choice, because of difficulties of housing, work, or obtaining a place in school. Thus jeopardising this possibility for their children.

The “*jus soli*” is foreseen only for the children of unknown parents or stateless persons or who do not have the citizenship of their parents according to the law of the state to which they belong.

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.lomb.cgil.it/immigrazione/cittadinanza.htm> (29/01/03)

At the beginning of the 90s, this choice was also applied by other European countries, but today Italy is almost the only country to keep it. For a child born and brought up in Italy, child of immigrants who cannot or do not want to change their citizenship (hence a long and complicated procedure), this entails being necessarily “a foreigner”. If we bear in mind that a law preventing the expulsion of minors was only passed a few years ago (but minors can be expelled as soon as they come of age), we can imagine the confusion of identities to which they are subject. Frequently these children grow up disturbed, with a sense of being excluded, for they feel that in spite of their possibility of integration, society labels them as “non citizens”.

The only possibility that a foreign minor still has today of becoming an Italian citizen before the age of 18 is to obtain citizenship because one of the parents has obtained it and automatically gives him the right, as long as they live together (*iuris communicatio*).

### 3.5 Prospects after schooling

As we have seen, the legislation to guarantee the rights of entrance to pupils of ethnic minorities to schools is advanced and egalitarian, as a result of which the poor integration and failure in compulsory schooling are the responsibilities of bad organisation and laws that have not been applied.

Vice versa the same cannot be said about the laws which regulate the inclusion on the labour market of foreign youths, including those who have studied in Italy. Indeed, we should take into consideration the legislative aspects which underline the considerable difference of working opportunities of native adolescents and young people and their peers from non-EU countries. They contribute to determine among the latter a lack of motivation, or even none at all, towards completing courses of studies in high schools and universities, or even in lower secondary schools.

We can say that there are three motivations which encourage a person to study (or the family to spur him in this direction):

1. Scientific and cultural interests
2. The desire to have a certain professional career for which specific qualifications are required
3. The hope to obtain a higher degree of competitiveness in the labour market and a slightly “higher” social standing.

If we examine foreign pupils, we shall see that they are less encouraged to pursue these objectives:

- first of all, the difficulties of going from one kind of residence permit to another, e.g., the enormous difficulty of changing a study permit into a work permit. A student from a minority group who undertakes a course of universities study should necessarily have a residence permit for family reasons, or for work, otherwise he would not have the possibility once his studies have been concluded, to undertake the normal professional career for which he would be qualified. On the contrary, he would lose his right of having a residence permit, for any other kind of work, for family reasons, or to attend different study courses. Indeed, the change of a residence permit for study into a residence permit for employment is not allowed by Italian law (see box 4). Hence, if we consider that not all young people of non-Italian nationality can have a family permit, it seems obvious that the only solution is to have a work permit which involves a heavy job (a non-EU youth will have great difficulty in obtaining jobs compatible with his qualifications, even more so if without high qualifications, nor jobs which his Italian peers would obtain with the same educational qualifications), all of which goes against his commitment to his studies. Moreover, to obtain a work permit, he must show that he has a contract to guarantee his survival, hence a full-time job, and he could not simply dedicate himself to odd jobs like a native peer of his.

- To the paradox of not being able to convert the study permit into a work permit, to the improbability, or absurdity, of choosing a school course aiming at obtaining specific professional qualifications such as those for becoming an accountant or a lawyer, we can add the necessity of passing a final state examination and the enrolment to professional registers, in which the clerks often refuse to enrol non-Italian citizens (overtly breaking the law in force).
- For state employment in which there is an objective requirement of multilingual staff with intercultural competence (for example, as assistants in nursery schools and kindergartens or – more generally speaking – in teaching, or as state employees) only citizens of the member states of the European Union can be admitted, as long as it does not imply the direct or indirect exercise of public power<sup>29</sup>.
- Moreover, it is necessary to consider what young immigrants have as examples: most non-EU citizens who have had a working career with good results are those who have succeeded in creating an independent activity. However, they occupy the most humble sectors and technologically most backward areas of the service industry, building and to a certain degree in handcrafts. These are activities where it is more important to have good training, a spirit of entrepreneurship, risk and often sacrifice. The Chinese who succeed in opening their own laboratory or their own restaurants, the Egyptians who open bakeries or pizza houses, the Iranians who own textile shops, etc... are those that Italians consider as the model of success and integration of non-EU citizens, in the social economic fabric of the country. Why, then, should a young non-EU citizen aim at a high standard of training? Why should he worry about his own culture and schooling? He understands that what he can attain and the role he is destined for inside Italian society, certainly does not require a high standard of education, but rather a few skills which you can apparently learn easily “on the job”. You can certainly point out to him that there are laws that could help him reach a higher standard, and a different working career, but it is useful to remember the importance of the models that, in various ways, are imposed on youths, although the law provides for better models.
- To conclude this picture of the situation where a young non-Italian citizen has to make important choices for his life, for example, between 13 and 18 years of age, we are also examining some details which lead to real disadvantages compared with their Italian peers, and induce a tendency to abandon the idea of a higher and better education.

#### **Box no. 4**

##### **After nine years they sent me away...**

**By Mohamed Habboubi**

I was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1981 in Casablanca, of Moroccan nationality and I live in Bassano del Grappa in the province of Vicenza. I entered Italy for the first time on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 1992 with a visa to join my family. Until February 1999, I have always had a residence permit on the grounds of “family reunion”. When I came of age and had to renew my permit, my residence permit was changed by the Police Station of Vicenza from “family reunion” to one of “study” (as at that time I was studying and not working) according to the following regulations: legislative decree 286/98 art. 32, para. 1.

I finished my studies last year, at the I.T.I.S. “E. Fermi” of Bassano del Grappa, with a mark of 85/100 and I immediately began to work. Unfortunately, according to art. 14 para. 5 of the application regulations, to get a permit for working reasons, I had to put myself on the entrance quotas established every year. However, when I got my diploma on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2000, the quota had already been reached, and therefore at the time of renewal of my residence permit, 29<sup>th</sup> December 2000, my residence permit was suspended as it was not included in the entrance quotas, while waiting for the answer to the question I had sent to the Head of the

<sup>29</sup> Decree No. 165 of the 30th March 2001, “General regulations on work in public administration” art. 38, <http://gazzette.comune.jesi.it/2001/106/16.htm> (30/01/03)

Immigration Office, Dott. Eduardo Cozzo, at the Ministry of the Interior, asking for the possibility of having a work permit even if I had not been included in the entrance quotas. Unfortunately, the answer is negative and I am obliged to leave the national territory after nine years of residence, after having perfectly integrated, after having studied Italian, obliging me to abandon my family, to go to a country which I no longer belong to. Many foreigners, among whom my family, despair about the destinies of their children who are in exactly the same situation, and the only way of avoiding these regulations, to safeguard the family unity is that of making children leave the schools and start working early in life.

*Source: Letters to "L'Unità", Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2001*

The legislative aspects that influence the motivation to continue studies after compulsory schooling, as we have seen, are added to the initial disadvantages of these children, which can generally be translated into *late schooling* the main motivations of which are:

- placing in much lower classes than those to which the child should be assigned because of his age. It often occurs, indeed, that when they get to Italy, young non-EU children are put into much lower courses than that of their Italian peers, either for lack of competence by school organisations, incapable of recognising the certificate of study which the pupil has actually obtained in other countries, or due to the institutional lack of teachers who can fill in the possible gaps existing in the school system, by providing them with special support courses aiming at giving these students the same opportunities as their Italian peers.
- Linguistic difficulties that can often make learning more difficult for non-Italian speaking pupils, especially when there is a shortage of teachers, such as those we mentioned before.
- Adjustment difficulties and problems with their Italian peers, which are often due to disgraceful racist propaganda, now expanding and gaining momentum especially in suburban and deprived areas, where there is an incitement to xenophobic behaviour often ending in episodes where young foreigners are obliged to change schools; when after several transfers, a solution cannot be found, the situation leads to the human tragedy of leaving school, before the pupil has received a diploma (see box 5).

## **Box no. 5**

### **A crowd to greet the Indian boy who committed suicide**

The definition of a "minor with non-Italian citizenship" which we chose in this study to stress the discriminations to which children belonging to this category are subject or can be subjected to, does not fully represent the case history: we shall report further below some excerpts of an article published in the daily news of a Tuscan newspaper "La Nazione", the day after the funeral of a boy who committed suicide. The boy's name was Anthony. He had been adopted years before by a Florentine family and was therefore an Italian citizen like his sister, adopted together with him. The brother and sister of Indian origin had regularly attended the schools and spoke very good Italian, but they looked different and were, therefore, subject to isolation and frequent acts of discrimination by their school companions. After completing the third year of lower secondary school, the boy could no longer stand the situation and committed suicide leaving a letter to his adopted parents, in which he explained that he had delayed this step for so long only because of their affection.

The case aroused great discussion both at a local and national level and was one of the first occasions when the school had become aware (unfortunately only temporarily) of the fact that there was a great deal of bullying against children who looked different, independently of their status.

This did not change the fact that the press continued to define the two adopted children as "foreigners" in spite of their Italian nationality, implicitly encouraging the idea that their origin was more important than the place where they had grown up and even in spite of their family surroundings: "A crowd to take leave of the Indian boy who killed himself" was the headlines, and every time they mentioned him, they defined him "the

Indian boy”. Throughout the text of the article, the words of the last letter of the boy were questioned: “(...) there are lots of coloured school bags that announce the presence of school companions, where A. often felt he was different.” And the lesson which the press could draw from this suicide remained unheeded, for his little sister continues to be different and foreign: “Carlo and Daniela (the parents) and the little Indian sister listen deeply touched”.

*Source: La Nazione 5th April, 2002*

## 4. Problems and good local practices

### 4.1. The reliability of data and references to local experience

As we have seen, the quantitative data on the school enrolments of foreign minors and minors of foreign origin, on the percentages of school promotions, on the territorial composition, are exhaustively dealt with in the annual reports based on “Additional Surveys” carried out by the M.I.U.R. Information System<sup>30</sup>, to which we frequently refer in this research.

On analysing the composition of the origins of pupils with the proportions of immigrants area by area, we have cross-analysed the data of the M.I.U.R. with those processed by the Caritas Dossier on the sources of the Ministry of the Interior, but without being able to use the data relative to the school year 2001/02. This was due to the fact that the surveys carried out by the Ministry of Education are obtained at the end of the school year and not at the end of the solar year, as in the case of the data processed by Caritas. An important qualitative source which we refer to frequently is the “Second Report on the Integration of Immigrants in Italy”. For the general situation on the social-cultural background and the opportunities of school success, our main source was the “Programme for International Student Assessment – Pisa”<sup>31</sup>.

Unfortunately, very few statistics exist on the systematic or occasional phenomena of racial discrimination towards minors (by institutions, individuals, or groups), and these figures refer only to local areas. The literature on the subject almost exclusively reports the sensational episodes which obviously appeared on the press or in the case studies.

The data of national statistics on the school inclusion and the success of foreign students are few and far between, but nevertheless positive ones. In several parts of this study we have pointed out how the observation based on on-site experience – also extensive – contradict these figures. It can be presumed that this discrepancy depends on how the data was collected: for example, there are no national figures on dropping out of schools in the course of the year by foreign pupils, nor is there a comparison on the dropping-out rate of native pupils.

The percentages of promotions are exclusively based on the data of pupils who have the necessary requirements, which does not necessarily include all the pupils considered as “not admitted” (for example, because their knowledge of Italian is considered inadequate for assessment).

The high dropping-out rate in the last year of the lower secondary schools, caused mainly by the lack of confidence in obtaining the diploma, has not been estimated and is not included in the statistics of school failure.

Many pupils with non-Italian parents move to other cities or districts during the school year because of work and accommodation problems: reliable figures on the progress of pupils during their “rebound migration” moves do not exist. The rule according to which the school must supply a document, which declares the authorisation for the transfer of a pupil to another school, is frequently not observed in the case of foreign pupils. This is due both to the lack of information on the part of the families concerning this procedure and the neglect by the schools, which are probably convinced of their inability to do anything about the mobility of these pupils and the difficulty of communicating in a simple way with their families. The non-observance of this regulation on the transfers of pupils can cause a number of problems among which:

- periods when children do not attend school because there are no places,
- sometimes they abandon the school for good (especially teenagers approaching the age of 15),

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<sup>30</sup> Ministry of Education, University and Research, Service for Information Automation and Technological Innovation – Department for Educational Development – Department for Services in the Territory – EDS, Consultation Programming Service, *Non-Italian Pupils, school year 2001/02*, Rome, June 2002 and preceding years

<sup>31</sup> First Results from Pisa 2000 – Knowledge and Skills for Life, <http://www.pisa.oecd.org> (30/01/03)

- unforeseen events (such as being put in a lower class, as mentioned before, or promoted to a higher class as they cannot be assessed or owing to different inclusion policies; or else the pupil could also be accepted as if he had come directly from his native country instead of having attended another Italian school, and so on.)

#### **4.2. An example of good practices: ranging from a vast problem of non-admittance to enrolment for non-Italian pupils to a network collaboration of local bodies, schools, associations (Florence, District 5)**

The first part of the present research was dedicated to finding sources, to the analysis of the existing quantitative data and to an attempt to compare them to what had been observed on on-site observation.

Especially in the case of gypsy children, reports were frequently made to the information services by parents and social workers, who state that the secretariats of schools do not accept their enrolments. The most common reason mentioned is that the children do not have documents (this is also frequently the cause of parents not enrolling them, as they are not informed about the personal data protection act binding the school administrations). Often it is believed that the gypsy families have preserved their “nomadic” traditions, so that schools presume that they are there only temporarily. The school does not feel equipped to offer an adequate service for pupils in a situation of mobility. For children of refugee families from the Balkans, the phenomenon has often reached very vast proportions, as the schools presume that the families would go back to their own countries after a short while which has caused enormous delays in the enrolments of their children.

Also in the case of children of circus workers (coming from many different countries according to the specialisation of the artists and other workers) this problem is very common: apart from a few large circuses which have created private classes with teachers who travel with the circuses, the smaller and less equipped ones do not have the possibility of getting their children to attend the schools of the towns where the circuses stop. To a lesser degree, as the circuses stop for longer periods in regular places, this phenomenon affects also the children of workers of fun-fairs mainly Sinti gypsies. In this study we only wanted to give a few examples on the school enrolment of vast categories of children in compulsory schooling, to highlight the usefulness of examining the consistency, causes and responsibilities of these areas of dropping out of compulsory schools, in order to establish efficient policies of inclusion.

If we take into consideration the lack of presumed quantitative and qualitative data on the phenomenon of discrimination – especially the non-enrolment of children in schools – we have decided to carry out an on-site thorough investigation ourselves. This possibility was offered to us by a collaboration with the local bodies (Municipality of Florence, Department of Education and District 5 Council) and the schools of the neighbourhood, distinguished by the highest rate of residents with non-Italian citizenship in the municipality (mainly Chinese). The only indicator of discrimination examined was that of non-enrolment in schools of large numbers of foreign children. About 200 children who had remained without a school place in the neighbourhood examined in the school year 2002/03 do not appear in any of the national statistical surveys. The positive policy employed by the public and private bodies involved to find a stable solution in time to this problem is the core of the research as an example of good practice.

From the end of the 80s to the beginning of the 90s, the Education Authority of the times of the province of Florence (which then included Prato) had established that the schools of the area also accepted the enrolments of children to compulsory schooling even if they were not yet legal residents. At a national level this indication became a law only several years later. The willingness of the schools of Florence and Prato led to an increase of foreign citizens – especially Chinese – who were in Italy with their entire families, but illegally.

No doubt the school place was only one of the attractions to Florence and Prato - especially in the area of S. Donnino in the municipality of Campi Bisenzio - which easily lent itself to this kind of settlement as it was a natural area for small industries. In those years a large number of pupils of Chinese citizenship entered schools in the area: more than 50% of immigrants settled in the area of S. Donnino.

The social tension on the part of the local population against the large number of Chinese residents broke out in the middle of the 90s (there were also protest marches in front of the Chinese embassy in Rome by the Committee of S. Donnino, and the local Council of Campi Bisenzio had on its daily agenda the “problem of the Chinese immigrants” for almost seven years).

The local bodies, newly established Chinese associations, and the parish defined a strategy to reduce the number of Chinese workers in the municipality and began practices to favour the access to services (for example, it was one of the first municipalities at a national level to sign permanent working contracts with linguistic-cultural mediators for schools, the birth registry, health and social services. The number of Chinese adults, resident or domiciled in the area was drastically reduced as they were transferred in large numbers to neighbouring municipalities, but the number of pupils with this citizenship remained almost unchanged, because the schools of the area had won the favour of their families over a long period of time.

Following family reunions and births in Italy of children from couples of Chinese nationality, the number of Chinese pupils steadily increased also in the schools of neighbouring areas, especially in Brozzi-Peretola in District 5 of Florence and in the industrial area Osmannoro in the municipality of Sesto Fiorentino. The numbers of Chinese pupils in the two lower secondary schools and in the three primary schools of Peretola-Brozzi were almost as many as those in San Donnino. Some Italian parents took away their own children from the schools to transfer them to those in the city centre, with fewer foreign pupils. The school board of Circolo Didattico<sup>32</sup> in Brozzi decided not to admit more than five enrolments of foreign pupils per class, independently of their place of birth and the total number of the class, with the motivation of being able “to follow them better”.

This practice caused a reaction by the different organisations and the headmistress who got herself transferred soon after, after having denounced the teaching staff of the school as “racist” to the local press. Until the present day, though illegal, this rule is still applied in the planning of these schools and to the point that children born and brought up in Italy, after having attended the kindergarten connected to the primary school which applies this internal regulation, have to look for a place in the first class of the primary school in neighbouring areas or other districts of Florence. The number of foreign children coming to Italy to join their families, who do not find a place in the schools of the area, is even higher.

The limited number in the schools of Brozzi, the one with more foreign citizens, has determined and continues to determine:

- an unusual number of pupils commuting by bus to areas that are sometimes even 45 minutes from their homes
- an unnatural change in the percentages of schools in the areas around (for example, in the schools of the municipality of Campi – which is one hour by bus from District 5 – about 40% of the student population consists of Chinese children from Brozzi and the percentage in the area of S. Donnino is similar; in schools of the other neighbourhoods of District 5, the percentage of foreign children amounts to 38% of the student population, mainly coming from Brozzi and this phenomenon also refers to schools in the centre of Florence, along the bus routes),
- a large number of children who are not admitted to schools.

In the school year 1998/99 77 children and teenagers who were supposed to attend compulsory schooling were not admitted to schools, as recorded by “Di piazza in piazza” services for mutual information to the Chinese citizens of Florence, Campi Bisenzio, Sesto Fiorentino. In agreement with one of the headmasters, who placed at their disposal some schoolrooms, intensive Italian

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<sup>32</sup> Circolo Didattico is the administrative body responsible for a number of schools of different levels in a determined area. (Translator’s note)

language courses were offered with the collaboration of the local associations, in the hope that it was a transitional phase. In the following months, thanks to the informal collaboration of the associations and some willing headmasters, most of these children were integrated into classes – although there is no precise data on the subject – but the three above mentioned problems began to emerge.

The number of children who were commuting and those who were not accepted into schools continued to grow year after year, owing to the increase of factors that had caused it right from the beginning; in 1999 was added the regulation that schools should not accept more than 5 foreign pupils per class, which was also applied by the lower secondary school of Brozzi. At the beginning of the present school year (2002/03) a decision was taken by the municipality of Campi Bisenzio to apply a zoning rule to limit the increase of Chinese children coming from District 5, also to put pressure against the limited number of pupils accepted into the schools of Brozzi.

For years their families have sought emergency solutions by sending their children to live with relatives in other cities (mainly in Prato and Empoli, but also Milan and the cities of Emilia Romagna) or even by sending them to China (sometimes even children born in Italy who had never gone back to the birthplace of their parents), but continuing to try and enrol them in the schools of District 5.

At the beginning of September 2002, the municipality of Florence, Department of Education, gave the charge of coordinating the Gandhi<sup>33</sup> Centre for learning the Italian language to study the phenomenon, in the hopes of finding stable solutions in the course of time and to compensate the absence of solutions by the Ministry. The census led to the emergence of about 200 children trying to find a place in schools, all without Italian citizenship, resident or domiciled in District 5, mostly in the aforementioned area of Brozzi: about 50 of these children found a place in the first days of school and were not, therefore, included in the analysis which we later reported.

As part of the census, the staff of the Gandhi Centre gave the families a form to fill in also translated into the mother tongue of the families:

- the address of all the schools of the area where they had to tick the box with the negative answers
- the map of the area showing the schools
- an application for enrolment to present to the secretariats.

At the end of the month of September 177 children were reported as still not accepted by the schools, 139 still having to do compulsory schooling (see table 16).

*Table 16: foreign children looking for a place in school in District 5 in Florence – end of September 2002*

*Source: Centre for Italian language learning “Gandhi”, Census on pupils without a school, school year 2002/03*

<b>Year of birth</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>Corresponding class</b>	<b>Class where they have been enrolled</b>	<b>Compulsory</b>
1986	2	3 upper secondary	Two-year professional course	No
1887	8	2 upper secondary	1 in 3 <sup>rd</sup> class lower sec., the others in territorial centres for permanent education and in two-year professional course	No
1988	26	1 upper secondary	3rd lower secondary	Yes

<sup>33</sup> The Municipality of Florence has created in recent years 3 centres for learning the Italian language in the districts most affected by the presence of non-Italian speaking pupils, in agreement with some associations and cooperatives placing at the disposal of state schools bilingual and/or qualified staff to back the activity of regular teachers in the teaching of Italian as a second language.

1989	15	3 lower secondary	Partly in 2 <sup>nd</sup> and partly in 3rd lower sec.	Yes
1990	19	2 lower secondary		Yes
1991	17	1 lower secondary	1st lower sec. And 5th primary school	Yes
1992	15	5 primary	4 and 5 primary	Yes
1993	14	4 primary	3 and 4 primary	Yes
1994	13	3 primary school	3 primary school	Yes
1995	9	2 primary school	2 primary school	Yes
1996	11	1 primary school	1 primary school	Yes
1997	9	Nursery school	Nursery school	No
1998	11	Nursery school	Nursery school	No
1999	8	Nursery school	Nursery school	No
<b>Total amount</b>	<b>177</b>			
<b>Total in compulsory schooling age</b>	<b>139</b>			

The data was collected with different methods:

- 2 inclusive schools (the one that had imposed the limited number – consisting of a kindergarten, a primary school, and a lower secondary school – and a school consisting of a kindergarten, two primary schools, a lower secondary) have drawn up a “waiting list” already from the last school year and supplied information for coordination.
- Applications coming directly to the Gandhi Centre from parents whose children had not been admitted to several schools.
- Reports by school secretariats of schools which do not keep “waiting lists”.
- Reports by social workers.

The number of applications sent directly to the Centre was particularly high in the month of September, both because it was the beginning of the school year and that news had spread unofficially about the enrolment of the first 50 pupils, which led to the hopes of a rapid solution for everybody.

When there had emerged once again that there were no places available for anybody, the reports stopped coming in. This element makes one think that the number of pupils without places in school was much higher than reported.

*Table 17: Citizenship of the pupils in the waiting list*

*Source: Centre for Italian language learning “Gandhi”, Census on the pupils without a school, school year 2002/03*

N° of pupils in the waiting list	Citizenship	Born in Italy <sup>34</sup>
2	Peru	
1	Romania	
1	Kosovo	
4	Roma gypsies (unidentified country of origin)	3
131	People’s Rep. Of China	15
139	<b>TOTAL</b>	18

<sup>34</sup>For the waiting lists, some schools indicate the birthplace, others the citizenship, therefore the figure concerning births in Italy could be higher than what reported here.

Table 18: month of entry in the waiting list

Source: Centre for Italian language learning “Gandhi”, *Census on the pupils without a school, school year 2002/03*

Month of entry	N°	Month of entry	n°	Month of entry	n°
January '01	1	January '02	19	August '02	4
March '01	1	February '02	9	September '02	2
June '01	1	March '02	8	October '02	1
September '01	1	April '02	2	November '02	0
October '01	4	May '02	7	December '02	1
November '01	5	June '02	4		
December '01	6	July '02	4	Not surveyed	59

On the basis of this census, the municipality therefore invited the Management of the Gandhi Centre – consisting of all the headmasters of each district, the executives of the Department of Education, the District Council and the Board of Studies, together with the coordinators of the Italian language learning centres themselves – to find a solution to the problem.

The decision was made that the Gandhi Centre would have drawn up a map of the available places in the district, also in schools which were more decentralised from Brozzi, reprocessing the data supplied by the schools. The mapping, class by class, included: the total number of pupils, the number of non-Italian pupils, the number of disabled children (notwithstanding their citizenship). The maximum number of pupils per class in Italy is 25, and has gone up to 27 this year, which, however, goes down when there are disabled pupils.

The mapping has confirmed the paradox often denounced by the foreign families living in the area and the associations: in the schools of the area where there is a higher number of families with foreign citizenship, the percentages of non-Italian pupils in schools are very low; in schools in the neighbouring areas the percentages of non-Italian pupils are very high. The percentages of these pupils gradually decrease when we go further away from the area of residence, with higher peaks in the areas that can be reached with public transport, notwithstanding the distance. It was not possible to extend the mapping to the composition of the classrooms, showing the area of residence of non-Italian pupils in the schools of other districts in Florence also with a large number of pupils coming from the above-mentioned neighbourhoods.

In table 19 we can see the total values of the presence of non-Italian and Italian pupils in the schools of the districts examined.

Table 19: *Composition of classes in District 5 in Florence, before entering the pupils in the waiting lists*

Source: Centre for Italian language learning “Gandhi”, *Census on the pupils without a school, school year 2002/03*

Level of school	Class	Italian pupils	Non-Italian pupils	Total of pupils	Disabled pupils
Primary	1 <sup>st</sup> -31 classes	516	87	603	7
	2 <sup>nd</sup> -33 classes	559	99	658	9
	3 <sup>rd</sup> -31 classes	524	96	620	13
	4 <sup>th</sup> -33 classes	532	101	633	20
	5 <sup>th</sup> -36 classes	594	113	707	14
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>2725</i>	<i>496</i>	<i>3221</i>	
Lower secondary	1 <sup>st</sup> -33 classes	628	138	766	17
	2 <sup>nd</sup> -33 classes	587	109	696	12
	3 <sup>rd</sup> -32 classes	568	108	676	16

<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>Lower Secondary</i>	1783	355	2138	
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>Lower Secondary</i>				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>District 5</b>	<b>4508</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>5359</b>	

We see that the average number of pupils in each classroom in the district is around 20.4 with an average of 3.2 non-Italian pupils per class. These are values similar to those reported at a national level. Until now, some of the proposals made have not been completely implemented. These proposals involved the creation of “bridging classes” for pupils who have recently arrived from their countries of origin or even classes for single ethnic groups, similar to those created in nearby San Donnino and Prato (as in other Italian areas, the first of which in the lower secondary school “Mazzini” in Rome, also with pupils entirely of Chinese origin).

As we move further away from the more “popular” area of the neighbourhood, these values change enormously: in the aforementioned area of Brozzi, the classes are on average more numerous, but the non-Italian pupils are at the most 5 in each class, as established by the School Board for the primary school and a maximum of 7-8 for the lower secondary school, mostly already Italian speaking and integrated into the Italian school system. In the nearby neighbourhood of Peretola, also very “popular”, but distinguished by a lower number of immigrant families, there are a much higher number of non-Italian pupils in the classes, pupils who have often just arrived to join their families.

*Table 20: Composition of the classes in the neighbourhood with the highest number of non-Italian residents*  
*Source: Centre for Italian language learning “Gandhi”, Census on the pupils without a school, school year 2002/03*

Level of School	Class	Italian pupils	Non-Italian pupils	Total of pupils	Disabled pupils
Primary	1 - 3 sections	49	13	62	0
	2 - 2 sections	26	10	36	1
	3 - 2 sections	33	10	43	3
	4 - 2 sections	27	10	37	1
	5 - 3 sections	32	15	47	1
<i>Tot. Primary</i>		<i>167</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>225</i>	

*Table 21: Composition of the classes in the area near the one with the highest number of non- Italian residents*  
*Source: Centre for Italian language learning “Gandhi”, Census on the pupils without a school, school year 2002/03*

Level of school	Class	Italian pupils	Non-Italian pupils	Total of pupils	Disabled pupils
Primary	1 - 2 sections	20	12	32	0
	2 - 2 sections	26	13	39	0
	3 - 2 sections	21	15	36	0
	4 - 2 sections	25	13	38	0
	5 - 3 sections	29	13	42	1
<i>Tot. Primary</i>		<i>121</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>187</i>	

The mapping of the pupils in the classes of the entire district has led to the identification of 44 places in the primary schools, 25 in lower secondary schools still available in the month of December 2002, to which were added 14 places in District No. 4.

On this date, many families had already provided for the finding of alternative solutions for the enrolment of their children into schools: some had given them to relatives resident in the neighbouring municipalities (Empoli, Prato, Campi Bisenzio), but also in Milan and in municipalities of Emilia-Romagna, some went as far as sending them back to China whilst waiting to find a solution. Children still trying to find a class in compulsory schooling were 61, 26 of whom were around 13 years of age. In this way it was possible to find a place for most of them except 11 older children.

The distribution of pupils in the different schools of the area was facilitated thanks to the supply of a school bus by the Department of Education of the Municipality.

There does not seem to be a strategy based on the model of the old bussing systems, typical of the transport of pupils of immigrant families living in residential areas in other countries, that have been affected by immigration much earlier than Italy, but the risk exists that what is now a temporary solution can become a model “to avoid creating ghetto schools” in neighbourhoods with a larger immigrant population. Indeed, as we have already seen, this is the very reason that has driven the School Board of Brozzi to resort to the laws on the independence of schools to establish the limited number.

## **5. Conclusions**

### **5.1. Disclosure of the phenomenon through monitoring**

The general picture obtained by research on racial discrimination to the disadvantage of minors who are foreigners or of foreign origin, reveals two opposite realities: on the one hand, discrimination towards these minors is practically invisible, generally not denounced, except in rare and extreme cases. On the other hand, research in the field shows that discrimination against these children is a daily experience which involves almost everyone and that leaves a deep mark generating mutual mistrust.

Italian law on the protection of children against all forms of social exclusion and racial discrimination is adequate, complying with international standards; many activities both on a national and local level exist to prevent and fight against discrimination. Nevertheless, the laws are not applied - not even by schools – and the positive outcomes are unknown and confined to where and when they occur.

Clearly, the positive aspects must not be exploited to conceal the fact that racial discrimination to foreign minors or of foreign extraction in Italy is widespread both at an institutional and individual and group level. In this action institutions, private organisations, associations and individuals must be involved.

To break down the resistance met to deal with the subject of racial discrimination towards minors, it is necessary to go deeper into the problem, taking into account the theoretical, terminological and practical aspects. The solution of these problems by institutions is increasingly more urgent. It is also necessary to create the monitoring centre for discrimination also inside schools.

### **5.2 Dissemination of information on rights**

To allow service professionals, individual citizens and associations to dedicate themselves as a group or as individuals to reveal episodes of discrimination, it is important to make known the rights of foreign minors, the regulations relative to the possibility of denouncing episodes of discrimination and the procedures necessary to do so.

### **5.3 Improvement of access to the services**

Diffusing information on rights is indispensable, but not sufficient to guarantee real equal opportunities of access to the services (especially school services) and success. Schools should not be left alone in their attempt to achieve this goal: it is essential for the Ministry of Education to control that their own directives be applied generally and not arbitrarily throughout the national territory.

### **5.4 To promote the creation of a harmonious social context**

Most of the episodes of discrimination towards foreign minors examined are caused by a social background hostile to physical, cultural and linguistic differences. The monitoring activity mentioned in the former paragraphs, is indispensable, but has the limit of not preventing cases of discrimination, but only intervening after the events.

## **5.5 To encourage the participation of those directly involved**

A fundamental condition for the positive outcome of any policy and programme of intervention concerning minors is an active participation of those directly involved. This condition becomes even more urgent when these decisions have to be made for the future (in Italy or in their native land) of unaccompanied minors present in institutions, when they come of age.

## 6. Notes on the terminology employed

Minors of non-Italian citizenship (Minori con cittadinanza non italiana): we decided to use this term in conformity with the choice made in the document “Pupils with non-Italian citizenship” edited by the Ministry of Education, University and Research. This definition seems to us more correct as it reflects the chaos of identity in which these children live, underlining at the same time their legal status.

Immigrant minors (Minori immigrati): we decided not to use this term at all, even if it is frequently found in statistics and more generally in scientific papers, as on an average 48.9% of non-Italian minors resident here were born in Italy.

Foreign minors (Minori stranieri): generally speaking we preferred not to use this term, which is valid only in legal terms, as with the extension of their residence in Italy establishes a de facto bond also for children who were born abroad but are being raised in this country. Nevertheless, much data to which we refer uses this definition: when it was difficult to find out if this data included foreign children, even with Italian citizenship, we preferred to use the term foreign minors or of minors of foreign origin. In some cases we opted in favour of using the term foreign simply for stylistic reasons<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> In the translation of this text from Italian into English, for stylistic reasons the translators have simplified the expression “minors with non-Italian citizenship” by using the term “non-Italian minors”; the expression “foreign minors or minors of foreign origin” simply as “foreign minors” (translator’s note).

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## 7.2 Web sites

For a general picture on the statistical and normative aspects of the presence of foreign minors in Italy, we refer to:

<http://www.minwelfare.it/main/areaImmigrazione/Imm-Struttura.asp>.

<http://www.crin.org>

<http://www.minori.it>

<http://www.istat.it>

<http://www.giustizia.it> :

- Ufficio Centrale per la Giustizia Minorile, Servizio Statistica e Ricerca, Minori denunciati alle Procure della Repubblica presso i tribunali per i minorenni
- Ufficio Centrale per la Giustizia Minorile, Analisi Statistica dei flussi di utenza dei Centri di prima accoglienza, degli Istituti penali minorili, degli uffici di Servizio Sociale per minorenni delle Comunità ministeriali e convenzionate
- Ufficio Centrale per la Giustizia Minorile, Servizio Statistica e Ricerca, La sospensione del processo e messa alla prova. Analisi statistica

The ASGI web site, besides presenting a wide documentation of regulations in force, clearly and easily explained, allows an exchange among professionals, gives reliable answers to the daily problems of immigrants, supplies a large archive of information <http://www.stranieri.it>. The web site [www.stranieriinitalia.it](http://www.stranieriinitalia.it) also offers a synthesis of the regulations and the translation in different languages, data, useful news, including those from ANSA. For a view on the current activities of the European Commission against Racism, you can visit [www.coe.int/ecri](http://www.coe.int/ecri). The web site <http://www.provincia.torino.it/xatlante> of the Province of Turin offers a long series of links to other sites, as well as constantly updated useful information for people who work with immigrants.

We have frequently referred to the *Programme for International Student Assessment – PISA*, reported in the bibliography. Data can be found in: [www.pisa.oecd.org](http://www.pisa.oecd.org).

For the aspects related to intercultural didactics and school integration of foreign children, from a didactic-pedagogic point of view, you can find many archives of experiences on the web site of the *Biblioteca di documentazione Pedagogica* of Florence <http://www.bdp.it> (in particular [www.bdp.it/intercultural/index.php](http://www.bdp.it/intercultural/index.php)) and on those of *IRRE*, especially the Tuscan section, *Progetto Intercultura DIES (Didattica Interculturale Europea Sperimentale)*

<http://www.irre.toscana.it/irrsae/index.htm>.

A large archive of useful materials, such as information on the schools of many countries of the world, tools proposed for assessing the competences and skills of children and a bibliography dedicated to those who work with children from different countries, can be found on the web site of the “Cà Foscari” University of Venice: <http://helios.unive.it/progettoalias/index.html> .

A complete picture of useful hints for the creation of virtual communities enabling children in their own countries and in Italy to meet and maintain their own mother tongue and learn a second language can be found in [www.crocusproject.net](http://www.crocusproject.net).

For those who work with young foreign adults, the Rai Educational web site offers useful materials for distance learning, certification of the linguistic competences, reasoned bibliographies on intercultural education and Italian as a second language: [www.educational.rai.it/ioparloitaliano](http://www.educational.rai.it/ioparloitaliano) .