

National Statement of Commitment on promoting equal, inclusive and sustainable economic and social development through a transformation of education

The Italian government, and in particular the Ministry of Education, has set up a bottom – up process of national consultations focussing on *why, what and how rethinking education* in order to fully achieve the Italian vision of equitable, inclusive and sustainable economic and social development, while ensuring the wellbeing and a good quality of life of the population.

As a general outcome of this national dialogue, we reaffirm the validity of the equitable and inclusive character of the Italian education system and recognise the global dimension and the role of education in the solution to current crisis and rising inequalities. At the same time, we acknowledge that the new challenges and the obstacles that have prevented progress towards the achievement of SDG 4 call for a transformation of education, in order to support people, societies and economies.

In order to recover from the impact of Covid-19 on education but also to get ready for the future, we intend to give an answer to the call of the Italian educational community and national stakeholders to help every learner to take advantage of educational opportunities and fully develop one's own potential, in line with the Agenda 2030 Education targets. That means implementing policies reducing territorial and social inequalities in order to offering the same high-quality education throughout the national territory and supporting disadvantaged groups, included students with disabilities, migrants and refugees. It also means having a learner-centred focus, giving value to each students' characteristics through a personalisation of learning pathways and guidance activities, fostering the acquisition not only of competences for a changing society and economy, but also competences for life in a lifelong learning perspective.

We are also ready to address the call to ensure that schools are not only healthy and hospitable but also places where students can feel safe from violence, bullying and cyberbullying. Places where they can feel free to develop all their potential and health and wellbeing, even during emergencies.

Aware that a transformation of the education system towards a more inclusive, fair and quality school could be achieved only through a whole-of-government approach but also through the mobilisation of main stakeholders, we will continue implementing participated programming processes, involving not only central and local authorities but also students, parents, teachers and the whole local communities, adopting a whole-school and whole-of-society approach, connecting the local to the national level and vice versa. This way, the different perspectives will become a common heritage and the identification of the economic, social and organisational roadblocks and the measures to overcome them would be more effective.

In order to pick up the call of the national and international community to transform education, we affirm the following commitments:

We reaffirm our commitment to Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and, particularly, of Sustainable Development Goal 4, which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities to all”. According to our national legislative framework, starting from our Constitution, **we commit** to ensuring the universal

participation of each girl and boy present in the country to the learning activities at school, leaving no one behind, particularly students with disabilities, migrants and refugees, in order to attain high educational achievement regardless of one's own personal characteristics and fragilities and relying on one's own abilities.

We commit to empowering all learners to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to face and drive the challenges of more sustainable and digital societies and economies, also through the discipline of civic education and the School ReGeneration Plan, reinforcing digital education, education for sustainable development and global citizenship education.

We engage in exploiting new innovative pedagogical approaches and more flexible, tailored educational pathways that support learners at risk of disadvantage to attain high level of education and actively engage in educational opportunities throughout their life.

Taking into account the lessons learnt during the pandemic, **we pledge** to using the opportunity of our National Resilience and Recovery Plan to leverage the investments towards a bold transformation of our education system.

Strengthening our policies towards an equitable, inclusive and quality education, **we commit** to reinforcing our fight to inequalities, that has intensified with the pandemic, starting from measures to overcome learning losses to medium-longer term interventions towards an equal distribution of the educational offer both as regards infrastructure and innovative environments and the promotion of adequate competences.

In particular, **we commit** to reducing territorial competence gaps, to prevent early school leaving and promote educational success, including through the use of digital tools and counselling and active educational guidance. **We also commit** to fostering the acquisition of new competences and new languages, not only digital language but also plurilingualism.

Taking into account its proven efficacy in fostering cognitive development and future educational and career success, **we commit** to going on expanding the access to early childhood services in every region, with a special effort on Southern Italy, and progressively reach universal access to pre-primary education.

We recognize the strategic role played by teachers in ensuring educational continuity and supporting transformative education inspired by the principles of equity, inclusion and ecological and digital transition and **we commit** fostering competent educational action, by providing teachers with a broader initial and continuous in-service training that enhances disciplinary knowledge and encourages the application of inclusive and innovative teaching methodologies.

We also commit reinforcing our accountability processes, in particular accountability for gender equality in education and in all other policies, carried out through annual gender budget reports, and the annual report on Fair and Sustainable Wellbeing, attached to the State Budget.

We are aware that reimagining and transforming our education system will need financial and human resources and great capacity building. To achieve our goals, **we commit** to build on lessons learnt and good transformative practices experimented during the crisis and to exploit the full potential of local, national and international stakeholders, through local and regional educational pacts.