Leaving no one behind: Italy’s approach and priorities

Italy is planning to make a specific commitment to leaving no one behind in its development co-operation policy. It addresses the issue at present through its focus on poverty reduction in its Three-year Development Co-operation Programming and Policy Planning Document, which gives emphasis to the poorest, most vulnerable and furthest behind in all developing countries whether least developed or middle income.

For Italy, social and economic inequalities within and among countries are the main obstacle to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It prioritises fighting discrimination and marginalisation of the poorest, most vulnerable and furthest behind – especially youth, children, women and girls, and persons with disability.

Italy mainstreams disability in its programming. It has guidelines on disability and development and an action plan for including people with disability in the development process. Its evidence base for official development assistance decision making includes indicators of poverty and fragility. To identify areas and groups most in need it conducts analysis and ad hoc surveys, relying when possible on the national plans, data and information provided by partner countries. A key challenge for Italy is to design the right methodologies to identify the most marginalised groups and to measure results from a leave no one behind perspective.

Financial flows from Italy to developing countries

Figure 28.1. Net resource flows to developing countries, 2006-16, Italy

![Figure 28.1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933794191)

Figure 28.2. Net ODA: Trends in volume and as a share of GNI, 2006-17, Italy

![Figure 28.2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933794210)

P: preliminary data.

Italy’s performance against commitments for effective development co-operation

| 2016 | 60.4% | 52.9% | 58.9% | 95 |
| Baseline | - | 32.9% | 38.4% | 95.1 |
| Trend | - | ⇑ | ⇑ | = |

Note: Please refer to Annex B for details on the indicators. Data on untied ODA, retrospective statistics and publishing to the IATI have been updated according to the latest information available.

StatLink [http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933797744](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933797744)
Italy’s official development assistance

In 2017, Italy provided USD 5.7 billion in net ODA (preliminary data), which represented 0.29% of gross national income (GNI) and a 10.2% increase in real terms from 2016 due to increased in-donor refugee costs as well as a rise in its bilateral grants for developing countries. In line with Italy’s commitment to scale up its aid, official development assistance (ODA) has increased both in terms of volume and as a percentage of GNI over the last three years and it is set to achieve 0.3% of GNI by 2020. At the same time, Italy, like other EU member countries, committed in 2015 to provide 0.7% of GNI as ODA by 2030. In 2017, in-donor refugee costs were USD 1.8 billion and represented 31.4% of Italy’s total net ODA, compared to 32.7% in 2016. Italy’s share of untied ODA (excluding administrative costs and in-donor refugee costs) was 95% in 2016 (it was 95.1% in 2015), while the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) average was 81.2%. The grant element of total ODA was 99.9% in 2016. Loans amounted to 1.4% of net ODA.

In 2016, 48.3% of ODA was provided bilaterally. Italy allocated 51.7% of total ODA as core contributions to multilateral organisations. In addition, it channeled 10.1% of its bilateral ODA for specific projects implemented by multilateral organisations (multi-bi/non-core contributions).

In 2016, 9.9% of bilateral ODA was programmed with partner countries. Italy’s share of country programmable aid was low compared with the DAC country average (46.8%) in 2016. Project-type interventions accounted for 59% of this aid. Sixty-seven per cent of bilateral ODA was allocated to refugees in donor country.

In 2016, USD 192.7 million of bilateral ODA was channelled to and through civil society organisations (CSOs). Between 2015 and 2016, Italy’s aid channelled to and through CSOs decreased as a share of bilateral ODA (from 10.7% in 2015 to 7.7% in 2016).

Figure 28.3. ODA composition in 2010-16 and distribution of multilateral ODA in 2016, Italy

Figure 28.4. Composition of bilateral ODA, 2016, gross disbursements, Italy

StatLink 2 http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933794229

Figure 28.5. Gross bilateral ODA disbursements to and through CSOs by type of CSO, 2010-16, Italy

StatLink 2 http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933794267

Figure 28.6. Gross bilateral ODA disbursements to and through CSOs by type of CSO, 2010-16, Italy
In 2016, bilateral ODA mainly focused on sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. USD 312.8 million was allocated to sub-Saharan Africa and USD 110.7 million to the Middle East.

Figure 28.6. Share of bilateral ODA by region, 2016, gross disbursements, Italy

Note: Seventy-two per cent of bilateral ODA allocated was unspecified by region in 2016. This share is not represented on the map.

In 2016, 14.7% of bilateral ODA went to Italy’s top 10 recipients. Italy has 20 priority countries; 6 of them feature on the list of its top 10 recipients. Its support to fragile contexts reached USD 408 million in 2016 (16% of gross bilateral ODA). Support to fragile contexts was distributed between debt relief (34%), contributions to pooled funds (36%) and project-type interventions (27%).

Figure 28.7. Bilateral ODA to top recipients, 2016, gross disbursements, Italy

In 2016, 12.5% of bilateral ODA was allocated to least developed countries (LDCs), amounting to USD 312.6 million. Aid to the LDCs as a share of bilateral ODA has decreased since 2015 (when it stood at 15.8%). The 2016 DAC country average was 21.9%. The LDCs received the highest share of bilateral ODA, noting that 74.4% was unallocated by income group. At 0.05% of GNI in 2016, total ODA to the LDCs was below the UN target of 0.15% of GNI.

Figure 28.8. Bilateral ODA by income group, 2010-16, gross disbursements, Italy
In 2016, 14.6%, or USD 372.9 million, of bilateral ODA was allocated to social infrastructure and services, with a strong focus on education (USD 99.2 million) and government and civil society (USD 86.3 million). Humanitarian aid amounted to USD 191 million. In 2016, Italy committed USD 75.8 million (10.9% of bilateral allocable aid) to promote aid for trade and to improve developing countries’ trade performance and integration into the world economy.

**Figure 28.9. Share of gross bilateral ODA by sector, 2015-16, commitments, Italy**

USD 240.1 million of Italy’s bilateral ODA supported gender equality. In 2016, 38.5% of Italian bilateral allocable aid had gender equality and women’s empowerment as a principal or significant objective, an increase compared with 32.5% in 2015. The DAC country average was 36.5% in 2016.

**Figure 28.10. Share of bilateral allocable ODA in support of gender equality by sector, 2016, commitments, Italy**

USD 235.3 million of bilateral ODA supported the environment in 2016. In 2016, 33.8% of Italian bilateral allocable aid supported the environment and 11.9% (USD 82.6 million) focused particularly on climate change, compared with respective DAC country averages of 33% and 25.7%.

**Figure 28.11. Bilateral allocable ODA in support of global and local environment objectives, 2010-16, commitments, Italy**

Note to reader: Annex B provides “Methodological notes on the profiles of Development Assistance Committee members”.