

Schoolnet Report – ITALY

What is a Schoolnet?

A schoolnet is a virtual network that offers educational on-line tools. The Italian schoolnetwork is INDIRE which offers training through an integrated on-line learning environment which is used by teachers, students, etc. Founded on a model of blended e-learning in connection with online activities it offers structured training courses and advanced technologies.

Schoolnets and policy

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are present in all areas of our life: at home, at the workplace, in spare time activities as well as in the way we communicate with friends and relatives. New technologies have entered the field of schools all over Europe. In the traditional educational sector many shifts are carried out concerning the role and the functions of the involved institutions and subjects.

To carry on this development, it was necessary to create a net of connections within Europe, which acts as a meeting point and makes it possible to benefit from more experienced institutions in the EU and to change traditional subjects into interdisciplinary subjects by means of educational use of ICT. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn, to share experiences, to discuss and to notice the own voice.

Who are Schoolnets designed for?

The European schoolnet website is dedicated to schools, to headteachers, to educational experts, to educational decision makers and to European pupils. The site proposes innovative approaches concerning the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Primarily the object is to connect institutions and people involved in the educational process and furthermore to promote the development and the renewal of educational European systems.

What do Schoolnets contain?

The offered services are:

- Training: Teachers are to be motivated to use an integrated environment for on-line learning.
- Searching and documentation: Practical and theoretical search in fields of communication, education and languages.
- A national documentation system for educational search results and for experiences in didactic innovation whereas there has been established a comprehensive information source compared with other educational systems in Europe. Furthermore topics are addressed to course instruction and Advanced Technical Training (IFTS).
- Function of an on-line archive and resource centre useful for educators
- International relationships
- Think-tank for theory and information for the support of teachers

Who is involved?

eSchoolnet is a site for European teachers. The site consists of several sections and offers many services which are provided to teachers: Information of latest developments concerning the use of educational technologies, access to educational contents, information and news concerning instructions of every European part, practical examples, on-line communities and numerous opportunities to contact colleagues (online chats and forums), specific FAQs concerning the national, educational systems; approaching the learning resources from several European countries.

The School Managers Centre (SMC) offers a collection of on-line resources and is a contact point for European educational opinion leaders. It demands the need to create a net of professionals that provides support and the need for information and arguments regarding to the change of approaches in school management. The SMC Centre is an on-line environment for discussing and sharing considerations of pedagogy related to the development of ICT. It is also a platform where practical innovations are highlighted and it offers also the opportunity of a discussion board for teachers and school leaders.

Insight is an on-line environment that offers information, examples and a space for topics suggested by advisers, researchers, experts and professionals of education, e-learning and new technologies. Insight offers a complete and exhaustive picture of the instructions occurred through the ICT and offers information, news and analysis from experts of the mentioned field to disposition. Primary objectives are to increase the quality of learning in schools, to offer concrete information and examples

concerning the development of methods and policy of ICT-based learning. Insight offers a complete series of national relationships to political institutions and promotes the educational use of ICT in and the research and analysis related to e-learning in several European countries.

Zap is the portal of the European schoolnet provided for pupils. There are three sections: Zap for children, Zap for teenagers and the Zap communities.

What research has been done about Schoolnets?

In 2004 a research has been carried out in order to analyse the computerization rate of schools in the last years. The results preview a comparison in computer science structures of schools in different countries, which are based on 35 indicators, subdivided in 5 sub categories:

- Context
- Structures and organisation
- Equipment
- Teachers
- Processes

Schoolnet in Schools

Schoolnetworks have the educational task to collect, elaborate, valorisate and to spread information and to produce educational documentations to support didactic innovations and autonomy. It supports the development and the dissemination of information technologies and furthermore the documentation and communication in schools. Schoolnetworks are useful tools for schools, in fact they use it

- to inform
- to inquire
- to search
- to plan

Financial aspects of Schoolnets

To fulfill tasks Schoolnets are funded by

- Legal contributions from the state
- Eventual unregularly contributions from the state
- Eventual contributions and allocations from different subject areas and from private/public Italian or foreign companies.
- Eventual other incomes, deriving from activities that are coherent with their aims

Organisational aspects of Schoolnets

The schoolnetwork is promoted by the National Institute of Documentation for the Innovation and Educational Research (INDIRE) and by its students, teachers, leaders and schools. Vocational training is up to date concerning the innovations in the educational field.

Examples of Schoolnet

www.indire.it is a partner of the European Schoolnet.

[http://etwinning.indire.it/](http://etwinning.indire.it) The Italian national eTwinning unit is a vital tool to manage a project within an European dimension in order to develop virtual twinning between schools.

<http://www.istruzione.it/> is a site of the Ministry of the instruction, researchers and universities.

<http://www.invalsi.it/> is the site of a research organisation.

<http://puntoeduri.indire.it/> is an environment in that user can communicate and share didactic and working experiences.

Use of ICT in schools

The Italian education is in a phase of rapid changes. The reform or shifting has been realized with help of innovative techniques like ICT. If we do not pay enough attention on the development of computer science technologies in education, we will find ourself on the last place in the European context. The MIT highlights that the computer / pupils ratio was 1:28 in 2001 and 1: 10,9 in 2004.

The Eurydice report of 2004 evidences that the IT rate in Italian schools has been developed clearly better than other European schools. The same report attributes Italy one computer per 10,9 students, which is quite good towards the average European ratio.

Why should we have Schoolnets?

New educational technologies have entered the field of schools all over Europe. In the traditional educational sector many shiftings are carried out concerning the role and the functions of involved institutions and subjects.

There is a requirement for an interface to new technologies that makes the innovate use more effectively in order to support needs, educational or not, concerning what happens inside of schools and in the society as a whole.

To support all needs it is necessary to create a net of connections on an European level in order to act as a meeting point and to exchange educational experiences which have been made in countries of the European Union.