

The integration of disabled students in public and private primary and lower secondary schools

School Year 2016-2017

Istat released the results of the survey on students with disabilities in primary and lower secondary schools (public and private) for the 2016-2017 school year.

The goal of the survey was to examine the resources and tools that have been adopted by single school centers to facilitate the integration of students with disabilities. The survey response rate was 88%, 22.885 schools have filled the questionnaire.

During SY 2016-2017, almost 160 thousand disabled students were enrolled in compulsory education: more than 90 thousand in primary school and about 69 thousand in lower secondary school.

About 4% of the disabled students in primary school had vision-related disabilities, about 4.7% had hearing difficulties and about 12.5% had problems related to mobility. The learning and attention-deficit problems affected 17.9% and 17.8% of disabled students in primary school and 24.3% and 16.7% of disabled students in lower secondary school. Regional differences were evident for these type of problems, the prevalence was always higher in the South regions (Table 1).

The difficulties that characterized students with disabilities in lower secondary school were similar to those found in primary school. Visual and hearing difficulties were experienced by 4.5% and 4%, respectively, of students with disability, while 10.4% were faced with mobility problems.

The scholastic environment remained fairly inaccessible and the number of schools equipped to overcome architectural barriers appeared to be too low (Table 2).

In terms of learning ability, the key professional figures were the curricular teacher and the learning-support teacher, who provided mutual support in the development of communications, relations and socialization. Other professional figures included the personal assistant¹ with the specific assignment of assisting disabled students.

In SY 2016-2017, the MIUR data indicated more than 88 thousand learning-support teachers for both scholastic orders of public schools combined. More than 80% of the learning support teachers provided didactic support, about 14% provided support in the treatment of behavioral problems, while there was a percentage of teacher that provided support in the activity of daily living in place of others professional figures such as the personal assistant (about 3% of student in primary and in lower secondary schools).

¹ Cultural education assistants are employees of the Municipality or Cooperative and collaborate actively to promote the integration of dependent minors, supporting their integration with the class and helping them eat and use the restrooms.

Table 1. Disabled students categorized by problem type, division and scholastic order. School Year 2016-2017
(percentage values)

| Type of problem | Primary school | | | | Lower secondary school | | | |
|---|----------------|--------|-------------------|-------|------------------------|--------|-------------------|-------|
| | North | Centre | South and Islands | Italy | North | Centre | South and Islands | Italy |
| Blindness | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 0.8 |
| Partial blindness | 3.7 | 4.7 | 2.8 | 3.6 | 4.6 | 3.4 | 2.8 | 3.7 |
| Acute deafness | 1.4 | 2.4 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 1.0 | 1.6 |
| Partial deafness | 2.5 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 3.0 | 2.4 |
| Problems related to mobility | 13.0 | 11.8 | 12.1 | 12.5 | 10.5 | 9.0 | 11.0 | 10.4 |
| Learning specific disorder | 15.0 | 19.3 | 20.7 | 17.9 | 23.3 | 24.9 | 25.2 | 24.3 |
| Language specific disorder | 25.2 | 22.4 | 21.0 | 23.2 | 15.2 | 12.0 | 15.1 | 14.5 |
| General development disturbance | 26.3 | 25.6 | 24.8 | 25.6 | 20.0 | 23.7 | 22.9 | 21.7 |
| Intellectual disability | 43.8 | 36.5 | 44.4 | 42.6 | 48.9 | 47.0 | 50.6 | 49.2 |
| Attention deficit and behavioural disorders | 15.5 | 20.1 | 19.5 | 17.8 | 15.7 | 18.2 | 17.1 | 16.7 |
| Emotional relational disturbances | 17.6 | 15.7 | 15.2 | 16.4 | 16.0 | 17.0 | 17.1 | 16.6 |
| Other type of problem | 24.1 | 21.8 | 20.8 | 22.5 | 19.4 | 19.9 | 18.1 | 19.0 |

Note: The sum of each percentage column is greater than 100 because a single disabled student can have more than one type of problem.

Table 2. Schools with regulation architectural features by school year, architectural feature, scholastic order and region. School Year 2016-2017 (for 100 schools in the same region)

| REGIONS | Primary school | | | | Lower secondary school | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| | Accessible stairs | Accessible hygienic services | Tactile maps and tactile trails | Accessible external and internal access | Accessible stairs | Accessible hygienic services | Tactile maps and tactile trails | Accessible external and internal access |
| Piemonte | 81.5 | 78.1 | 23.7 | 43.5 | 82.8 | 79.2 | 23.7 | 45.0 |
| Valle d'Aosta-Vallée d'Aoste | 85.7 | 82.1 | 20.2 | 60.7 | 90.5 | 85.7 | 28.6 | 57.1 |
| Lombardia | 82.9 | 85.4 | 26.6 | 50.1 | 86.3 | 87.7 | 28.7 | 51.8 |
| Trentino-Alto Adige | 89.6 | 81.4 | 27.2 | 58.4 | 90.8 | 86.7 | 29.5 | 52.6 |
| P.A. Bolzano-Bözen | 93.3 | 82.0 | 25.1 | 55.4 | 97.7 | 90.9 | 36.4 | 53.4 |
| P. A. Trento | 84.2 | 80.5 | 30.3 | 62.9 | 83.5 | 82.4 | 22.4 | 51.8 |
| Veneto | 77.8 | 81.9 | 25.6 | 48.3 | 85.9 | 83.4 | 26.4 | 48.7 |
| Friuli-Venezia Giulia | 78.6 | 79.6 | 27.9 | 57.4 | 85.7 | 82.1 | 26.8 | 63.7 |
| Liguria | 78.6 | 65.7 | 29.7 | 41.5 | 86.6 | 72.1 | 27.4 | 42.3 |
| Emilia-Romagna | 79.7 | 85.3 | 29.4 | 52.1 | 84.7 | 86.4 | 30.1 | 50.9 |
| Toscana | 73.7 | 78.6 | 20.3 | 48.3 | 84.1 | 81.2 | 20.4 | 47.2 |
| Umbria | 77.3 | 80.3 | 30.1 | 48.2 | 83.1 | 87.1 | 30.6 | 51.6 |
| Marche | 80.0 | 71.9 | 17.1 | 41.1 | 82.5 | 73.1 | 15.8 | 37.2 |
| Lazio | 72.4 | 70.6 | 15.1 | 34.0 | 78.4 | 74.5 | 16.8 | 35.0 |
| Abruzzo | 73.3 | 71.9 | 18.1 | 40.1 | 81.9 | 71.7 | 15.9 | 40.3 |
| Molise | 64.3 | 70.5 | 13.2 | 32.6 | 76.6 | 77.9 | 14.3 | 32.5 |
| Campania | 72.8 | 62.1 | 14.1 | 40.0 | 82.4 | 69.4 | 14.4 | 42.7 |
| Puglia | 85.2 | 77.7 | 18.9 | 44.1 | 88.3 | 81.4 | 16.6 | 47.1 |
| Basilicata | 87.6 | 71.8 | 16.3 | 38.1 | 90.8 | 75.2 | 14.2 | 40.4 |
| Calabria | 60.7 | 63.0 | 12.3 | 35.1 | 76.8 | 66.4 | 13.4 | 39.3 |
| Sicilia | 72.7 | 71.9 | 16.0 | 39.8 | 85.1 | 79.3 | 19.1 | 42.6 |
| Sardegna | 73.8 | 81.3 | 16.5 | 43.1 | 75.3 | 80.8 | 12.8 | 42.7 |
| Italy | 77.0 | 75.7 | 21.0 | 44.4 | 83.6 | 79.2 | 21.4 | 45.3 |

For more details please refer to the Italian version

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