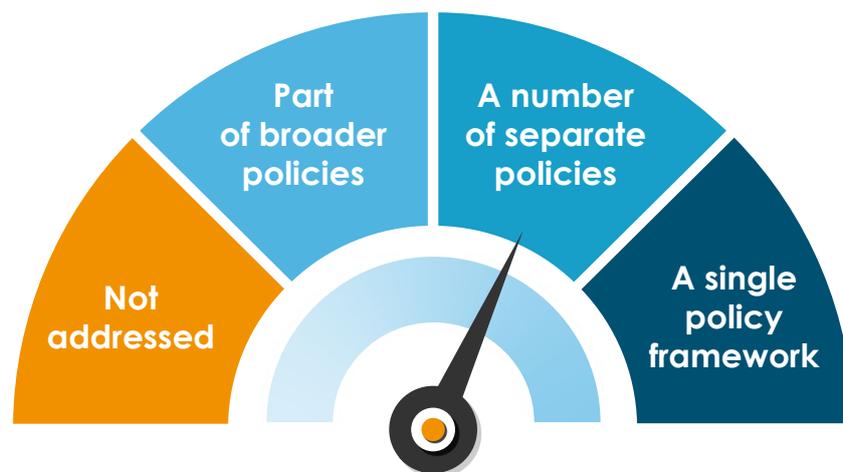# Italy

The Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy Map is a tool used to compare and exchange knowledge on policy making and implementation in EU Member States on the themes and recommendations of the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children (or BIK Strategy) first set out by the European Commission in May 2012. The third BIK Policy Map report (2020) examines the implementation of the BIK Strategy in 30 European countries, including all EU Member States, Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom.

For each country in the BIK Policy Map study, we outline findings for Policy frameworks, Policy making and Policy implementation, and conclude by providing a selection of good practices.

Download the full BIK Policy Map report from the Better Internet for Kids website.

1. Policy frameworks

Policy frameworks refer to the organising principles and long-term goals for policies, guidelines, decisions and other statements made at the national level in the course of putting into practice the BIK Strategy.

In Italy, the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children has featured in national policy debates on the subject of children's use of the internet. This topic is covered in a number of separate policies, principally through laws and regulations which address the four different pillars of the BIK Strategy.

Pillar 1: High-quality content online for children and young people

- The protection of minors in the world of communication (La tutela dei minori nel mondo della comunicazione) covered three main themes 1) Information and minors; 2) Minors and radio and television communication; 3) Minors and the web. The document focuses on two specific areas which are particularly complex and delicate, that is radio and television communication and the internet. Issues of the regulatory

sources, consent in the digital environment: perception and awareness between adults and teenagers; privacy, fight against online child pornography; protection of personal data and personal identity with particular reference to minors, were discussed and highlighted.

- Media and minors White Paper 2.0, 2018. This is the revised edition of the White Paper *Media e minors*, the original idea of which was to develop reflection on the interventions and guaranteed measures most suitable for defining an approach to protection conceptually coordinated and suited to the new digital communication context.

Pillar 2: Stepping up awareness and empowerment

- The National Plan for Digital Education (Piano Nazionale Scuola Digitale – PNSD) 2015, is a policy launched by the Ministry of Education, University and Research for setting up a comprehensive innovation strategy across Italy's school system and bringing it into the digital age. It is one of the pillars of La Buona Scuola school reform (Law 107/2015), a vision for concrete action reflecting the government's response to the most significant challenges for innovation in the public administration system. Innovation in the school system and digital education opportunities are key drivers of this vision.

- Digital citizenship education (G.U. 21.08.2019, n. 195) is designed to help educators and other interested adults understand the online world and how to deal with emerging issues. It builds on the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture and the achievements of the longstanding Education for Democratic Citizenship programme, and complements the Internet Literacy Handbook as part of a coherent approach to educating citizens for the society of the future.

- E-policy for schools: training and resources for teachers on safety, cybersecurity and digital literacy in education.

Pillar 3: Creating a safer environment for children online

- Law 29 May 2017, n. 71, provisions for the prevention and fight against cyberbullying.

- Legislative decree n. 101 of 10 August 2018, concerning the provisions for the adaptation of the national legislation to the Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

- Reform of the legislative provisions on the protection of minors in the cinema and audiovisual sector, in accordance with article 33 of the law of 14 November 2016, n. 220.

Pillar 4: Legislation and law enforcement against child sexual abuse and exploitation

- Law n. 269 of 3 August 1998, Provisions against the exploitation of child prostitution, pornography, and sex tourism as new forms of slavery.

- Law n. 46 of 11 March 2002, Ratification and implementation of the Optional protocols to the convention on the rights of the child, regarding the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography as well as child involvement in armed conflicts.

- Law n. 172 of 1 October 2012 ratifying the Lanzarote Convention.

2. Policy making

Policy making refers to the general process by which policies are developed within each country, including how coordination and oversight is managed; the extent to which the policy agenda is informed by an evidence base; and whether there are arrangements for young people to be involved in the policy process.

2.1 How are policies coordinated?

In Italy, more than one ministry, agency or body is responsible for coordinating policies addressing the BIK Strategy with one to three ministries involved in the process.

- The Ministry of Education coordinates educational issues related to the use of the Internet.

- The Ministry of Interior coordinates fighting against illegal material on the internet.

- The Ministry of Economic Development regulates and supports electronic communications.

2.2 Who is primarily in charge of policy coordination?

Responsibility for coordination of BIK-related policies varies by each respective pillar of the BIK Strategy.

- The Ministry of Education has the main responsibility for Pillar 1: High-quality content online for children and young people, Pillar 2: Stepping up awareness and empowerment, and Pillar 3: Tools and regulation for an online safe environment.

- Under Pillar 4: Legislation and law enforcement against child sexual abuse and exploitation, the Ministry of Interior has primary responsibility for policy coordination.

Inter-departmental communication mechanisms include the two interinstitutional roundtables; the first one is specifically addressed to cyberbullying issues and the second one focuses on issues of internet usage for children and young people.

2.3 Data collection in the last three years

Data collection to support policy making related to the BIK Strategy includes national and regional surveys with quantitative data specifically focused on children's use of the internet; quantitative data on some topics of children's use of the internet collected as part of a broader survey; and qualitative research specifically focused on children's use of the internet. Examples include:

- Research promoted by Regional Committees for Communications Lombardia, Lazio and Campania, Web reputation and online behaviour of adolescents in Italy, a joint research between La Sapienza University and LUMSA of Rome, the Federico II University of Naples and the Catholic University of Milan, on the initiative of the Corecom of Lazio, Campania and Lombardy. The study, carried out in 2017 in the three regions, aimed at investigating the online experience of Italian adolescents and online behaviour practiced daily on social media.

- Safer Internet Centre survey – A web survey by the University of Florence, La Sapienza University and Skuola.net on a sample of 5,185 young people, of which 77 per cent belong to the 2nd grade secondary school, and 23 per cent belong to the 1st grade secondary school.

- Media and minors 2.0 White Paper 2018 – AGCOM.

- Perception of cyberbullying in adolescence: A brief evaluation among Italian students conducted in Italian schools investigating the perception of cyberbullying in a sample of 600 Italian adolescents (11–14 years old). The study aims to investigate the cognition and the personal perception of youths about cyberbullying and its consequences, and to promote educational interventions within and outside the context of school.

- Research promoted by Regional Committee for Communications Lazio in collaboration with two universities (Sapienza University of Rome and LUMSA University of Rome).

- Save the Children Italy conducted a study on how young people use digital environments to exercise their active citizenship. The study took place from December 2019 to January 2020, and included an online questionnaire with 23 multiple choice questions of 1,650 children and young people aged 14 to 19 years old. The study also organised four focus groups of 40 students aged 14 to 18 in two secondary schools in Rome.

With regard to evaluation, the data from research about cyberbullying and web reputation has been discussed in public initiatives (presentations, meetings, conferences, debates) organised by actors of the institutional world and civil society committed to ensuring the protection and the empowerment of the children and adolescents on the web, for example:

- Presentation on Media and minors 2.0 White Paper (Chamber of Deputies, 16 January 2018).

- [Presentation on Web reputation and risky online behaviour research](#) (Chamber of Deputies, 15 November 2017).

- [Presentation on Cyberbullying and media education in Lazio](#) – Investigation knowledge and training meetings (Representation in Italy of European Commission, 27 November 2018).

In regard to new policy developments, with Law n. 71/2017, a precise definition of cyberbullying has been introduced in the Italian law system for the first time. The Italian legislator focused its attention more on education than on repression.

2.4 Involvement of young people in policy making

The involvement of young people in policy making is described as one whereby young people's interests are considered directly (for example, through analysis of existing surveys and data collections). Relevant organisations involved in supporting youth participation in policy making include:

- Regular consultation meetings with young people organised by the [Ministry of Education](#).

- The [Italian Authority for Children and Adolescents](#) has promoted the effective realisation of the child's best interest through the creation of a 'network' with institutions, associations and operators involved in the protection and promotion of the rights of children and adolescents, through the many activities for consultation, including a youth panel.

3. Policy implementation

Policy implementation refers to the involvement of the relevant stakeholders in the delivery of initiatives and the spread of activities as envisaged under each of the four pillars of the BIK Strategy.

Pillar 1: High-quality content online for children and young people

Activities under Pillar 1 are led by government ministries. NGOs and civil society organisations have a complementary role. Examples include:

- The Italian Data Protection Authority, the Italian Communications Regulatory Authority, and the Italian Authority for Children and Adolescents are public independent authorities which have leading roles on specific topics.

- The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Economic Development have leading roles on related topics.

- NGOs and other expert groups are important in terms of advisory and implementation roles.

Summary of Pillar 1 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
Initiatives to stimulate the production and visibility of quality content for children	☐	☑	☐
Initiatives to encourage children's creativity and to promote positive use of the internet	☐	☑	☐
Initiatives to implement standards for quality online content for children	☐	☑	☐
Other relevant activity (please specify)	☐	☐	☐

Pillar 2: Stepping up awareness and empowerment

Activities under Pillar 2 are led by government ministries. NGOs and civil society organisations have a complementary role. Examples include:

- The Italian Data Protection Authority promotes user's knowledge and awareness in relation to the risks related to processing of personal data and personal data protection rights, particularly when involved with minors (art. 57, par. 2, GDPR).

- The Italian Safer Internet Centre promotes campaigns and awareness activities at schools. The Ministry of Education provides guidelines and e-policy for schools. Starting from 2019, the e-policy process promoted by the Safer Internet Centre has been extended to all grades of schools, students and parents.

- The Ministry of Education has been increasing the budget available related to the implementation of Better Internet for Kids (BIK) policies for all schools on the national territory, as well as for the Italian Safer Internet Centre.

- In July 2017, the Italian Parliament adopted a new law (n. 71/2017 Provisions for the protection of minors for the prevention and contrast of the cyberbullying phenomenon) that allows minors to ask for removal of content. If the request is not satisfied, the Data Protection Authority canbe contacted and will respond to the complaint within 48 hours.

- In January 2018, an agreement between the Italian Data Protection Authority and the Postal Police was signed with the purpose of strengthening the system of protection of minors, according to Law n. 71/2017.

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Summary of Pillar 2 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
"Teaching online safety in schools"			
Strategies to include teaching online safety in schools	☐	☑	☐
Activities to reinforce informal education about online safety	☐	☑	☐
Activities to provide for online safety policies in schools	☑	☐	☐
Activities to ensure adequate teacher training in online safety	☐	☑	☐
Activities to support public-private partnerships in online safety	☐	☑	☐
"Digital and media literacy activities"			
Activities to support young people's technical skills required to use online media content and services	☑	☐	☐
Activities to encourage critical thinking around media industries and evaluating content for truthfulness, reliability	☐	☑	☐
Activities that encourage interaction, engagement and participation in the economic, social, creative, cultural aspects of society through online media	☑	☐	☐
Activities that promote democratic participation and fundamental rights on the internet	☑	☐	☐
Activities that challenge radicalisation and hate speech online	☐	☑	☐
"Scaling up awareness activities and youth participation"			
National support for public awareness-raising campaigns	☐	☑	☐
Involvement of children when developing national campaigns	☐	☑	☐
Involvement of children when developing legislation with an impact on their online activities	☑	☐	☐
Activities or initiatives to match the Commission's support for the national Youth Panels	☐	☑	☐

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Industry funding and technical support for NGOs and education providers	☐	☑	☐
Industry dissemination of awareness material either online or at the point of sale	☑	☐	☐
"Simple and robust reporting tools for users"			
Mechanisms for reporting content and contacts that may be harmful for children such as cyberbullying or grooming	☐	☑	☐
Initiatives to facilitate cooperation between helplines and law enforcement	☐	☑	☐
Initiatives to monitor the effective functioning of reporting mechanisms at a national level	☐	☑	☐

Pillar 3: Creating a safe environment for children online

Activities under Pillar 3 are led by government ministries. NGOs and civil society organisations have a complementary role. The government, together with independent authorities, coordinates institutions, civil society organisations and industries with the aim of creating a safe online environment for children and young people. Relevant policy developments include:

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): On 6 November 2017, Law n. 163 on the Delegation to the Government for the Implementation of European Law was published in the Official Journal No 259. The Law contains the delegation to the Government to prepare, within 12 months, legislative decrees on the implementation of, among other legislation, the GDPR.

    o On 21 March 2018, the Council of Ministers approved a preliminary legislative decree which adapted the national legislation to the GDPR.

    o 3. Article 6 of the decree set the age of digital consent for children at 14 years. Notably, Article 2 of the updated and final version of the decree provides that the processing of children's personal data shall be lawful where the child is at least 16 years old. The legislation was adopted on 10 August 2018 and changed the child age of consent for digital services, following the opinion of the Italian Data Protection Authority.

    o As awareness-raising activities, the Ministry of Education implemented a guide for schools and parents to explain the GDPR.

- The Italian Communications Regulatory Authority's Resolution n. 108/19/CONS regulates certification for parental control tools (see the Media and minors 2.0 White Paper). The Ministry of Education regularly meets industries to stimulate the improvement and development of new instruments to help parents and families in general.

- Audiovisual works for the web and videogames cannot be provided to the public without the previous classification by the Italian Communications Regulatory Authority Regulation. Appropriate guidelines provide practical tools for rating audiovisual works for the web and videogames in different age groups based on the different thematic areas of content descriptors. Regulation criteria adopted by the Italian Communications Regulatory Authority: age classes, content descriptors, icons (iconographic symbols), age group pictograms, content descriptors icons. As for videogames, the Italian Communications Regulatory Authority's Regulation established compliance criteria between the Italian Communications Regulatory Authority and the Pan European Game Information (PEGI) classification system. Italian Communications Regulatory Authority monitors compliance with provisions of the Regulation and applies the penalties provided for by Legislative Decree n. 177/2005, art. 35.

- The Institute of Advertising Self-Discipline sets the quality standards for commercial communication which is honest, truthful and correct to protect consumers and fair competition between businesses. This is implemented with a self regulation code to which the main operators in the sector comply.

Summary of Pillar 3 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
"Age-appropriate privacy settings"			
Activities to ensure the implementation of EU legislation	☐	☑	☐
Self-regulatory measures by industry about age-appropriate privacy settings	☐	☑	☐
Awareness-raising activities regarding age-appropriate privacy settings	☐	☑	☐
"Wider availability and use of parental controls"			
Activities to promote the availability of parental control tools	☐	☑	☐
Tests and certification for parental control tools	☑	☐	☐
Efforts to support industry implementation of parental control tools	☐	☑	☐
"Wider use of age rating and content classification"			
Activities to promote the adoption of age rating and content classification among relevant stakeholders	☐	☑	☐

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A complaints process for the effective functioning of such systems	☐	☑	☐
"Online advertising and overspending"			
Activities at the national level to ensure that legislation regarding online profiling and behavioural advertising is observed	☐	☐	☐
Support industry in developing codes of conduct regarding inappropriate advertising	☐	☑	☐
Monitor implementation of codes of conduct at the national level	☐	☑	☐

Pillar 4: Fighting against child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation

Activities under Pillar 4 are led by government ministries. Public agencies have a complementary role.

Hotlines are legally not allowed to view, assess and classify any child abuse material in Italy. Under Law 38/2006, the National Centre for the Fight against Online Child Pornography (Ministry of Interior - Police) was established and is responsible for combating online child sexual abuse. They act as the focal point for receiving, analysing and investigating reported information from industry, NGOs or the general public.

Summary of Pillar 4 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
Increased resources for law enforcement bodies that fight against child abuse material online	☐	☑	☐
Effective safeguards in place to ensure democratic accountability in the use of investigative tools to combat child sexual abuse	☐	☐	☑
Activities to support the functioning and visibility of hotlines at the national level	☐	☑	☐
Activities to support the improvement of cooperation between hotlines and industry for taking down child abuse material	☐	☑	☐

4. Good practices

The following are three selected examples of good practices in supporting children's use of the internet in Italy:

e-policy process
The e-policy process at school which supports schools in promoting digital skills and encouraging positive and responsible use of digital media for both students and adults involved in the educational process (teachers and parents).

Guidelines for standard quality of activity at school
The guidelines give minimum rules to comply with in order to access schools and carry out awareness and education activities.

Public-private partnership
Over the past three years, the joint work between public institutions, local authorities and private profit and non-profit organisations has grown regularly and has made dialogue increasingly effective.