

# Italy - country profile

**1 General background and who's who.** Library organisations active in the implementation of SDGs in Italian libraries are Rete delle Reti and the Italian Library Association (AIB, through its Observatory on sustainable development OBISS). Also active and in a position to file applications for awards and project management is the Fitzcarraldo Foundation — <https://www.fitzcarraldo.it/homepage.html>. AIB is a member of ASvIS, the Italian Organisation promoting SDGs in Italy.

Italy offers a non-homogeneous picture with a few libraries having reoriented operations to accommodate SDGs, thus acknowledging sustainable development as their core concept, and others that are still lagging behind and ignore latest developments.

Rete delle Reti-AIB managed to establish good links with Open Cohesion, the agency dealing with European Structural Funds in Italy.

**2 SDG priorities and policies in Italian libraries.** Rete delle Reti-AIB consider that SDGs should be implemented through:

- debates on SDGs with citizens,
- projects in co-creation with partners/citizens (digital inclusion; digital citizenship),
- green library objectives to be pursued within the library (such as energysaving infrastructure, waste management, SDG policy with staff).

In their action, Rete delle Reti-AIB have put emphasis on the following SDGs:

SDG 3. Good Health and Wellbeing: Better, more accessible health systems to increase life-expectancy,

SDG 4. Quality Education: Inclusive education to enable upward social mobility and end poverty,

SDG 5. Gender Equality: Education regardless of gender, advancement of equality laws, fairer representation of women,

SDG 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all,

SDG 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure: Generating employment and income through innovation,

SDG 10. Reduced Inequalities: Reducing income and other inequalities, within and between countries,

SDG 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities: Making cities safe, inclusive, resilient and sustainable,

SDG 12. Responsible Consumption and Production: Reversing current consumption trends and promoting a more sustainable future,

SDG 13. Climate Action: Regulating and reducing emissions and promoting renewable energy,

SDG 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development,

SDG 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss,

SDG 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions: Inclusive societies, strong institutions and equal access to justice.

### 3 SDG-oriented projects

- 1. Energy upgrading of the Geisser public library under PON METRO TORINO<sup>1</sup> (SDG 7, 10, 11).** The main objective of this initiative is to reduce the energy consumption of municipal buildings, among others the Geisser library, in order to reduce the CO2 emissions through an energy upgrading of the building. Apart from energy upgrading the goal is also to improve the comfort of the final users and to promote as much as possible the acquisition of innovative solutions. At the end of the intervention:
  - energy saving will be in the order of 20% less than current thermal and electrical consumption);
  - innovative solutions will be implemented to adapt to different situations and conditions of use of the library.
  
- 2. PON METRO BOLOGNA<sup>2</sup> (SDG 4, 5, 10, 11).** Within the framework of the European Structural and Investment Funds 2021-2027 several initiatives have been set in motion.
  - a)** City area school, which provide tailored courses where there are no teachers, but educating communities, no desks, but neighbourhoods, no pupils, but girls and boys. These schools are based on real community needs and aim at improving the well-being of citizens and combating social exclusion and educational poverty.
  - b)** Hamelin, a cultural association, has set up a course to train reading experts in a two-year course. The training is structured in two phases and foresees for the participants a compensation for the months in which they will be involved.
  - c)** Enhancement of the Salaborsa (Bologna City Library) with laboratories and multidisciplinary courses on research and experimentation in the field of reading, coding, robotics, fablab, digital literacy and information literacy courses, as well as orientation courses addressing STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Workshops are organised which offer a creative approach to digital and technology, thus encouraging original and critical paths of thought and imagination through coding and robotics.
  - d)** Equipping each library in the sector with RFID technology development of augmented reality software for immersive visit paths to historical buildings (Archiginnasio, Salaborsa, Casa Carducci); application of machine learning (ML) techniques for collection review and management; creation of a platform to support Customer Relationship Management (CRM), useful to improve strategies for listening and responding to users' requests and needs.
  - e)** Full implementation of the Faro Convention, where knowledge and use of cultural heritage are a human right and encourage the construction of a peaceful and democratic society.
  
- 3. DigEDUCATI<sup>3</sup> (SDG 4, 5, 10, 11).** A commitment to combating educational poverty by developing actions aimed at the problem of the digital divide in the 6-13 age group, through the "DigEducati" project, selected and financed by Impresa Sociale Con i Bambini as part of the Fund for combating educational poverty among minors with a contribution of € 1,250,000 and by Fondazione Cariplo with a further contribution of € 1,250,000.

Creation of widespread workshops in the city libraries where equipment, skills, experts and tutors will be made available, offering a creative approach to digital and technology that encourages original and critical paths of thought and imagination through coding and robotics.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.comune.torino.it/ponmetro/pon-metro-torinopresentazione>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.comune.bologna.it/ponmetro/pon-metrobologna>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.fondazionebergamo.it/news/parte-ilprogetto-digeducati>

- 4. Sapere digitale (Digital knowledge)<sup>4</sup> (SDG 4,5,10,11).** The project, supported by the Piedmont Region — Libraries Sector and by the Compagnia di San Paolo, I luoghi della Cultura 2019, aims to stimulate the crucial role that libraries can play in supporting digital civic education and the spread of an increasing awareness in the proper use of digital technology, first of all for teachers in local schools and as a spin-off for the entire citizenry.

It is a training course that is intended to be both an activation method and a research opportunity to take stock of the technological equipment and digital skills in the libraries (and schools) willing to be promoting an active role of libraries in digital civic education.

The libraries that apply for it adhere to the training pact and will be able to participate in the courses, which are free of charge, host a course, propose a topic or a project and start digital civic education initiatives, with the support of the project.

The project is open to all libraries in Piedmont, especially civic libraries, but school and university libraries and archives can join, too. Themes are: the stimulation of information skills in readers, Internet and the ongoing change, information education, media education, data and artificial intelligence and digital culture and creativity.

- 5. Smart-In — Community Library<sup>5</sup> (SDG 4, 5, 7, 10, 11).** Through the regional Smart-In strategy, the Apulia Region promotes the revival of Apulia's cultural heritage, enhancing it and improving its use. With this in mind, the Community Library issued a public bid aimed at supporting libraries of local authorities, schools and universities, projecting a positive impact on the community and expanding access to cultural resources available in Puglia. Projects for the qualification of libraries include the provision of suitable spaces and the acquisition of advanced equipment and technologies, with sustainable and innovative management models.

- 6. SKYLibrary, the largest Digital Corporate Library in Italy!<sup>6</sup> (SDG 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11).** CSBNO, has created for Sky Italia the SKYLibrary, a digital library dedicated to its employees and collaborators. It is based on the MLOL platform, the first and most important public digital library. The agreement enables the company to offer a vast catalogue of e-books, over 37,000 titles, continuously updated with the latest publications, from fiction to non-fiction, to fairy tales.; a true and complete library at the click of a button; A project that has been met with widespread approval and is destined to become increasingly popular... SKYLibrary is Cultural Welfare!

The pandemic crisis has not stopped the project, indeed it has been able to continue with great satisfaction thanks to the digital services, and especially thanks to the MLOL digital library, which has generated growing attention and interest from the business world. The digital corporate libraries managed in collaboration with the CSBNO in 2020 recorded over 1,400 e-book loans and 5,300 consultations, made by 1,733 users!

- 7. Things to do (Cosedafare)<sup>7</sup> (SDG 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11).** The Panizzi Library System in partnership with 7 different library systems located in Lombardy, which operate on a catchment area of about 3 mln inhabitants, and the Fondazione Cariplo, have committed themselves to realize the digital platform "Cosedafare", which allows to manage the educational opportunities and the cultural and leisure offers in a participatory way.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sapereditale.org>

<sup>5</sup> <https://por.regione.puglia.it/-/smart-in-community-library>

<sup>6</sup> <https://webopac.csbno.net/home/csbno-per-l-impresa/ilprogetto-csbno-per-l-impresa>

<sup>7</sup> <https://csbno.cosedafare.net>

CoseDaFare is above all a digital tool that helps the library as an information hub for the cultural policies of the entire community, facilitating opportunities for knowledge sharing and interpersonal relationships.

The information on the platform is available free of charge, accessible and organised in a website characterised by common elements for the partners, but customised locally.

Users can:

- consult a database of what is available in the reference territory concerning courses, events, museums, routes, tourist attractions;
- search for profiled and filtered information on the basis of personal interests;
- autonomously make bookings and payments;
- check the actual availability of spaces where leisure activities are carried out.

**8. Shake'n<sup>8</sup> (SDG 4, 5, 10).** People come together to exchange knowledge, in a neighbourly and supportive way. This is Shake'n, a project based on networks, relationships and community. The 'Shakers' are people eager to share their passions, skills and abilities and make them available to anyone looking for new stimuli to satisfy their curiosity, learn, discover and grow with others. The meetings take place online and are free of charge. Each meeting is facilitated by a librarian or librarian, who helps the dialogue and opens the door to all possible connections to the information resources of the CSBNO libraries. What is a Shaker doing? They share knowledge, skills and abilities, making them freely available to the community in one or more online meetings.

**9. NewsGuard and the Italian Digital Media Observatory (SDG 16, target 16.10).** PeopleNewsGuard is the Italian Digital Media Observatory, the consortium selected by the European Commission to combat disinformation in Italy. In the consortium, besides NewsGuard, there are Luiss University, the University of Rome Tor Vergata, RAI, the fact-checking organisation Pagella Politica, the research and consultancy company T6 Ecosystems and two leading organisations in the media and telecommunications sectors GEDI and TELECOM.

NewsGuard will contribute to the projects of the consortium, led by Luiss University, by providing data and analysis of the sites that publish news and information in Italy, with the aim of detecting, analysing and tackling the disinformation campaigns that spread across the national and European territory.

NewsGuard provides reliability ratings and fact sheets for thousands of news and information sites. NewsGuard analyses all news sites that account for 95 per cent of online engagement in the US, UK, Germany, France and Italy. The browser extension is available free of charge on Microsoft's Edge thanks to a partnership with Microsoft. Hundreds of public libraries around the world have free access to the NewsGuard browser extension, giving their users more context to the news they encounter online. Several libraries in Italy (e.g. Public Library Of Milano) are using NewsGuard devices.

**4 Funding sources and evaluation.** Normally support for SDG-related projects is generated from international organisations (European Commission, Structural Funds, etc), Ministries, City/Provincial/Regional Councils, National or international Foundations. Financial opportunities are normally offered by the Social Affairs departments of these organisations. Evaluation is carried out only in case of additional funding provided by external organisations, in relation to the criteria set up by the funding agency/institution.

<sup>8</sup> <https://webopac.csbno.net/home/shake-n>