

## **Indo-Italian Roadmap on Higher Education and Research**

*The Ministry for Universities and Research of the Italian Republic, and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of India (hereinafter: Sides), recognize their shared aspiration to deepen bilateral cooperation in higher education and research, and building upon existing bilateral frameworks, agree to adopt this Roadmap to guide structured collaboration.*

*This Roadmap reflects the shared goal of the Sides to strengthen academic cooperation, promote transparency of qualifications, enhance mobility and promote long-term institutional partnerships.*

*The Sides hereby jointly sign this Indo-Italian Roadmap on Higher Education and Research for an initial period of five years to guide and deepen bilateral cooperation.*

**A. Objective:** The Roadmap aims to strengthen Indo-Italian cooperation in higher education and research by enhancing transparency and comparability of academic qualifications, facilitating structured academic progression pathways, promoting mobility of students, faculty and researchers, strengthening institutional and research partnerships, and advancing cooperation in digital and flexible learning ecosystems.

### **B. Institutional Framework**

Italy and India share an expanding partnership in higher education and research, supported by institutional exchanges, collaborative research initiatives and academic dialogue.

- i. Article 5 of the Agreement on cultural cooperation between the Government of the Italian Republic and the Government of the Republic of India, done in New Delhi on July 12, 2004, and ratified in Italy by Law No. 66 of 18 March 2008;
- ii. Migration and Mobility Agreement between the Government of the Italian Republic and the Government of the Republic of India, done in Rome on November 2, 2023, which establishes structured pathways and institutional dialogue on mobility;
- iii. The 1<sup>st</sup> Joint Working Group (JWG) held in Rome from 26–28 June 2024 under the aegis of the Migration and Mobility Agreement underscored the need to strengthen cooperation in higher education, mutual recognition of qualifications and structured academic mobility;
- iv. The Italy-India Joint Strategic Action Plan 2025-2029 provides the overarching framework guiding cooperation in migration and mobility, higher education, research, culture and people-to-people exchanges. The Plan calls for enhanced mobility of students, researchers and academics; strengthened




collaboration between universities and higher education institutions; and deeper engagement in technical and vocational education.

### **C. Collaborative Academic and Research Models**

Both Sides recognise that effective cooperation in higher education and research is strengthened through structured, trust-based and interoperable collaborative models that enhance transparency, comparability and mobility while preserving institutional autonomy. These models are intended to promote an integrated framework combining academic collaboration, research partnerships, and digital credential interoperability while ensuring mutual benefit, reciprocity and balanced mobility flows. To this end, both Sides envisage the following tools:

#### **i) Academic Progression Pathways**

Both Sides reaffirm their will to strengthening mobility of students, faculty and researchers through enhanced institutional partnerships and structured academic engagement, and express their intention to encourage joint and dual degree programmes, twinning arrangements, credit transfer mechanisms and frameworks to support academic progression across comparable qualification cycles. Decisions relating to admission and credit recognition will continue to rest with the respective institutions, in accordance with their autonomy and applicable national regulations and shall not imply automatic recognition of qualifications.

#### **ii) Digital, Online and Flexible Learning Ecosystems**

Both Sides intend to promote cooperation in evaluation of accredited programmes incorporating approved online components subject to national accreditation systems and quality assurance frameworks.; micro-credentials and modular academic units aligned to recognised learning outcomes; and interoperable academic repositories and digital credential verification platforms to facilitate secure authentication and transparency

#### **iii) Research and Innovation Partnerships**

Both Sides reaffirm their intention to strengthen research partnerships through thematic research clusters, joint academic working groups, co-supervised doctoral and post-doctoral mobility, and participation of institutions in bilateral and multilateral research programmes, and further intend to leverage existing cooperation schemes and academic initiatives to expand collaboration in priority areas such as advanced computing, disaster management, resilient infrastructure, renewable technologies and design innovation. Collaboration in design and innovation ecosystems may also be encouraged through



engagement between relevant national initiatives and academic institutions of both countries.

#### **D. Way Forward**

##### **i) Establishment of Joint Technical Group (JTG)**

The Sides intend to constitute a Joint Technical Group under this Roadmap to oversee its implementation, identify priority initiatives, and facilitate coordination and technical consultations between relevant authorities.

##### **ii) Operational Steps for Implementation**

To ensure the objectives of this Roadmap are achieved, the following operational measures may be envisaged:

- a) The JTG may, by mutual consent, develop indicative correspondence tables of qualifications, including sub-degree, vocational, and professional qualifications.
- b) These correspondence tables will be indicative and non-binding, designed solely to enhance transparency in recognition decisions, while respecting the autonomy of higher education institutions (HEIs) in both countries to independently evaluate foreign degrees for academic purposes and shall not be used as a basis for automatic recognition or equivalence of qualifications
- c) Both Sides intend to actively encourage their respective HEIs to cooperate in good faith towards facilitating the objectives of this Roadmap, promoting stronger academic and research linkages between Italy and India.
- d) Specific initiatives and collaborative activities under this Roadmap may be jointly developed by both Sides.
- e) Progress under this Roadmap will be periodically reviewed and updated by mutual agreement to ensure that it remains forward-looking and mutually beneficial.

#### **E. Conclusion**

*Both Sides reaffirm to implement this roadmap in a forward-looking and mutually beneficial framework for advancing cooperation in higher education and research. Its implementation will deepen institutional partnerships, strengthen academic ecosystems, and contribute meaningfully to the long-term bilateral partnership between Italy and India.*

*Both Sides intend to implement this Roadmap, which will significantly deepen academic and scientific cooperation, strengthen institutional relations, and contribute meaningfully to the mobility and long term-partnership between Italy and India.*



This roadmap may be amended at any time by mutual written consent of both Sides.

Each Side may end cooperation under this Roadmap at any time. It should inform the other Side in writing of its intention to end this cooperation at least [six months] prior.

This Roadmap is not intended to and does not create any legally binding rights or obligations under international or domestic law.

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Signed at Rome on 20-05-2026 2026, in the English language.

  
*For the Ministry of Universities and  
Research of the Italian Republic*

  
*For the Ministry of Education  
of the Republic of India*