

The “IT-Implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning” project –coordinated by Isfol under the mandate of the Italian Ministry for Employment and Social Policies and the Ministry for Education, University and Research, and funded 75% by the European Commission with €364,500 (Decision 2012-3853/001-001)– was designed to raise awareness on life-long learning among public and private stakeholders, social partners, businesses and third-sector operators. The project aims, above all, to promote and strengthen the five priorities in the European agenda for adult learning set out in the new Life-long Learning Agenda:

“(…)Life-long learning goes from before school to after retirement. Adult learning is a fundamental part of the life-long learning cycle and it covers the entire range of formal, non-formal and informal learning activities — both general and vocational —, undertaken by adults after leaving initial education and training. (...) Taking into account the specific circumstances within each Member State, and in accordance with national priorities, Member States are invited, where appropriate with the support of the Commission, to focus on those areas outlined below which are most relevant to their particular needs:

1. Making life-long learning and mobility a reality;
 2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
 3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through adult learning;
 4. Enhancing the creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environments;
 5. Improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult-learning sector”.
- (from the Council Resolution on a renewed agenda for adult learning - 2011/C 372/01)

In brief, the Italian project to promote and raise awareness on the objectives of the European Agenda – with regard to the priorities set out above – has consisted at national level in:

- an on-line communication campaign on adult learning
- a data base comprising a range of adult learning experiences;
- local animation activities, communication and promotion of networks through the organisation of focus groups and of three national conferences on: 1) Promoting and disseminating ICT in adult learning; 2) Adult learning and non-formal and informal forms of learning; 3) Adult learning for active citizenship and social equity;
- a report to the European Commission on the outcomes of these activities, also with a view to the 2014-2020 programming period.

Proficiency in Italian to obtain a long term EC residence permit

Information package for foreign citizens

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Proficiency in Italian

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Proficiency in Italian

Since December 2010 if you want to apply for a long term EC residence permit (once known as the “Long Stay Card”) you have to prove that you have a knowledge of the Italian language (at least at A2 level of the Common European Framework).

You can do this in any one of these ways:

- A. *With documents that you already have or that you can get a certified copy of (e.g. middle school or high school degree obtained in Italy, or certificate of enrolment in an Italian University).*
- B. *With an Italian language Certificate of Attendance (level A2 or higher) obtained at a course in a Centre for Adult Education (CTP/CPIA).*
- C. *With an official Certificate of Knowledge of the Italian Language (level A2 or higher) issued, after passing a Test, by one of the four Certifying Bodies (or by one of their officially approved partners) recognised by the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and by the Italian Ministry for Education, University and Research.*
- D. *With the “ministerial” Italian Language Test organised by the Prefecture (European level A2) especially for applicants for the long term EC residence permit.*

But if you are renewing a long term EC residence permit that you already have or asking for a copy of it, you do not need to prove your proficiency in Italian.

1. Valid document to prove proficiency in Italian (and so avoid the Test)

If you want to apply for a long term EC residence permit you can prove your knowledge of the Italian language if you are in one of the following situations:

- A. ***You graduated an Italian middle school or high school or Centre for Adult Education (CTP/CPIA):*** in this case you have to get a certified copy of your diploma from the school and put it together with all the other documents that you have to present with your application.
- B. ***You are attending a course in an Italian State University, or in an Italian private university entitled to grant academic degrees:*** you need a document that confirms your enrolment for the current academic year, presented together with all the other documents that you must present with your application.
- C. ***You are enrolled in a University master or PhD programme in Italy:*** you need to include a document confirming your enrolment for the current academic year with the rest of the documentation required.

If you are in one of these three situations, you do not have to take the Test, but you **must produce the relevant documents**. In other words, having a degree or attending University is not enough, you have to prove it with documents. And these documents must be included in your application for a long term EC residence permit.

2. The Italian Language Certificate issued by a CTP

Foreign citizens who apply for a long term EC residence permit can prove their knowledge of Italian if they have already attended a course in Italian at a Centre for Adult Education (CTP/CPIA) and gotten an Italian Language Certificate of Attendance, level A2 or higher.

You can find CTP/CPIAs in every Italian Region, more than one per region, where you can attend an Italian language course and earn the Certificate of Attendance. You can also find a list of all the Centres for Adult Education (CTP/CPIA), grouped by region, on the website "Rai EDU Italiano Il grande portale della lingua italiana" (a website dedicated to learners of Italian) at this address: <http://www.italiano.rai.it/categorie/centro-territoriale-permanente/517/1/default.aspx>

Foreign citizens who have attended a course in a CTP/CPIA do not need to take the Test, but they **do need to have the documents** that prove their situation. In other words, having attended the course is not enough, you have to prove it with the Certificate of Attendance, which you must include in your application for a long term EC residence permit.

The **cost** of the courses organised in CTP/CPIAs is **variable** but it is generally low. Some courses are completely free. If you want to apply for the long term EC residence permit you must plan this in advance and attend one of the courses offered by CTPs to obtain the Certificate of Attendance so that you can prove you know Italian. If you do so, you are exempted from the ministerial Test.

3. The official Italian language certificate issued by a recognised institution

If you want to apply for a long term EC residence permit you can prove your proficiency in Italian if you passed a test and obtained an official Italian language **Certificate** (level A2 or higher) issued by one of the four certifying bodies accredited by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and by the Ministry for Education, University and Research (or by a private institution approved by the Ministry):

- A. **CILS** - *Università per stranieri (University for foreigners) of Siena*
- B. **CELI** - *Università per stranieri (University for foreigners) of Perugia*
- C. **IT** - *University of Rome - Roma Tre*
- D. **PLIDA** - *Società Dante Alighieri (Dante Alighieri Institute)*

To obtain the Certificate you need to pass a test administered in similar ways by all the accredited institutions and in conformity with standards accepted by international organizations. The four national certifying bodies give the test at their premises or in different locations around Italy. Every certificate issued anywhere is valid to apply for the residence permit.

Note: The ITALIAN LANGUAGE CERTIFICATE is an official document accepted at European level and it is useful in many private and professional situations; to obtain the certificate you need to pass a complex test for a fee.

The CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE is issued after attending a course in a CTP/CPIA. Having the Certificate of Attendance is enough to apply for a long term EC residence permit but it has no official value for any other purpose.

In some Centres for Adult Education (CTP/CPIA) you can take a test to obtain the Certificate. For further information please contact the specific centre.

Some private language schools and some University Language Centres throughout Italy also offer the possibility of taking the test and getting the official Italian Language Certificate.

If you have a Certificate you do not need to take the test but you do need to have the documents that prove your situation. In this case you have to include the Certificate with your application for the long term EC residence permit.

The Test

The ministerial Test is one way you can demonstrate your knowledge of Italian.

If you are applying for a long term EC residence permit and cannot prove your knowledge of the Italian language in any other way, **you have to take and pass the Test**

(paragraph 3) so that you can apply for a residence permit.

However, taking the Test is not always mandatory.

1. Who does not have to take the Test?

A. *Children under 14 (because they cannot and must not present a separate application from their parents' application for the EC residence permit).*

B. *Holders of an official Italian Language Certificate (level A2 or higher) issued by one of the four certifying bodies accredited by the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and by the Italian Ministry for Education, University and Research (CILS University for foreigners of Siena; CELI University for foreigners of Perugia; IT University of Rome Roma Tre; PLIDA Dante Alighieri Institute).*

C. *Holders of a certificate of knowledge of the Italian language (level A2 or higher) issued after attending a course in Italian at a Centre for Adult Education (CTP/CPIA).*

D. *People with a middle school or high school diploma issued by an Italian school or by a Centre for Adult Education (CTP/CPIA).*

E. *People enrolled in courses at an Italian State University or at a Private University formally accredited by the Italian Ministry, or enrolled in a PhD or Master's programme in Italy.*

F. *People with serious and certified limitations to their language learning ability for reasons of age, medical condition or disability (in this case you must attach the certification issued by a public healthcare facility to the documentation for the residence permit application).*

G. People applying for renewal of the long term EC residence permit (because they do not have to prove their proficiency in Italian and so do not have to take the Test).

2. Who does have to take the Test?

Foreign citizens who **want to apply** for a long term EC residence permit have to take the Test if they cannot prove their knowledge of the **Italian language** in any other way (that is to say, if they are not in any of the situations mentioned in paragraph 1 or if they have not managed to obtain an Certificate of Attendance or an Italian Language Certificate).

3. Registering for the Test

If you want to apply for a long term EC residence permit and you decide to take the ministerial Test to prove your knowledge of the Italian language, you have to go to this website **<http://testitaliano.interno.it>** and fill out the application form for the Test by logging in to your private area (with an email and password).

You must provide a valid **email address** in the application form. The email address given in the application will be used to communicate with you and give you information on the date of the test.

In order to submit your online application form for the Test you must have with you your current residence permit, some ID (you will need to key in your ID number and residence data, and the address where you are currently living). A help-desk is available and you can contact it using the form as indicated on the website **<http://testitaliano.interno.it>**.

There are different sections of the form to fill out; to send in your application you must enter all the information required in the selectable spaces; the software will highlight the information that does not meet the requirements.

If everything is ok, **within 60 days** the Prefecture will tell you which Centre for Adult Education (CTP/CPIA) you have to go to for the Test and the date and the time of the Test. The Prefecture will send you the communication via email and via regular mail. For this reason it is important to give a valid email address when registering and check it regularly (at least once a week). It is also important that you can actually receive the letter sent via regular mail: you need to make sure that the name on the doorbell is the same as the one you indicated in your online Test application form (if not, fill out also the "domiciled at" field if your domicile is in another person's house).

In case of irregularities or failure to fulfil the requirements, the system automatically generates and sends you a communication indicating what requirements have not been met so that you can correct the information given.

Afterwards, you will have to follow the instructions written in the email and in the letter sent via regular mail and come to the designated CTP/CPIA in time to take the Test; bring with you the letter sent by the Prefecture and a valid ID.

Remember to bring a black or blue ink pen (ballpoint pen)! Also remember that you cannot bring your under-aged children with you because there is no *babysitting* service available.

4. Taking the Test

The Test will test your ability to understand simple situations regarding your everyday life, family, workplace, the city where you live and the like.

The Test is given in a common room of the CTP/CPIA and lasts 60 minutes. Every participant is given an envelope with everything necessary to answer the questions of the 3 parts of the test:

1. Listening comprehension: Listen and understand 2 short spoken texts of 2 minutes each (you will listen to the same text 2 times), and answer 5 questions on each spoken text. Time: about 25 minutes.
2. Reading comprehension: Read and understand 2 short written texts and answer 5 questions on each written text. Time: around 25 minutes.
3. Writing competence: Follow the instructions and reply to a postcard or to an email, or fill out an application/registration form. Time: around 10 minutes.

5. Passing the Test

You must achieve an overall score of at least 80% to pass the test. If you pass, your long term EC residence permit application proceeds automatically. The Test results are entered in the system by the competent Prefecture, which makes them available to the Police (Questura) through the web service for the necessary verifications involved to issue a long term EC residence permit.

You can access your Test results on the website <http://testitaliano.interno.it> by logging in with the same email address and password used for registration

If you failed the test:

You can take the test again, filling out a new online application form.

If you passed:

You can submit the application for a long term EC residence permit to the Police Station (Questura).

When you pass the Test, no Certificate of Attendance is issued. This means that you do not need to include any document in your application for the long term EC residence permit. The Test is the only case in which you do not need a hardcopy of a document to prove your knowledge of the Italian language (such as the Certificate of Attendance or an Official Italian Language Certificate). If you fail the test (or if you fail to enclose the documentation proving your knowledge of the Italian language) your application for a residence permit will be rejected.

6. Retaking the Test

If you failed, you can take the Test again. To do so, you must fill out a new online application form on the website <http://testitaliano.interno.it> by logging in with the same email and password used for the first registration.

If you fail to attend the Test session, you can submit a second application right away only if the cause of absence is justified and certified.

In case of inexcusable absence, you cannot submit a new application until 90 days after the date of the Test for which you did not show up.

Sources

Websites:

www.miur.it

www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it

<http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.interno.it/>

www.provincia.bologna.it

Legislative Reference

- Framework Agreement 11 November 2010 (on the Italian proficiency test as per Ministerial Decree 4 June 2010) between the Ministry for Education and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.
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- Ministry of Education: "Guidelines for literacy and Italian language learning programs planning".
- Consolidated text of provisions governing immigration and the status of aliens, as per Legislative Decree no. 286 of 25 July 1998, as subsequently amended with Decree Law no. 89 of 23 June 2011.
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