

KEY QUESTION

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What are Italy's strategic priorities for development?

Focus on tackling root causes of migration, particularly in Africa

Strategic priorities of Italy's development cooperation are spelled out in the three-year Programming Guidelines and Directions ('linee guida programmazione triennale'), developed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI). The MAECI is still in the process of drafting new guidelines for the period 2016 to 2018.

Italy has recently overhauled its development cooperation system (see section three 'Who are the main actors in Italy's development cooperation?'). In 2014, the parliament approved the first major reform of its development cooperation since 1987. As part of the reform, Italy established its first-ever development agency, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS). The agency started operating in January 2016. AICS's budget is set to gradually increase over the coming years, from €292 million in 2016 to €532 million in 2018. AICS outlines five thematic areas on which it will focus its bilateral cooperation: 1) economic development and opportunities; 2) human development (including health and education); 3) environment and use of natural resources; 4) rural development and food security; 5) emergency and fragile states.

Due to its position on the frontline of the refugee crisis, Italy places an increasing focus on tackling the root causes of migration, particularly from Africa to Europe. To this end, Italy plans to put the areas promoting food security and nutrition, health, and women's empowerment at the forefront of its G7 agenda in 2017. At the European level, Italy pushes for a 'Migration Compact', a plan that aims to strengthen cooperation with countries of transit and of origin to tackle root causes of displacement.

Leadership in agriculture and food security; large amounts of bilateral funding dedicated to hosting refugees

In the past two years, rising costs for hosting refugees drove a significant increase in Italy's bilateral ODA: costs rose from US\$260 million in 2012 to US\$1.2 billion in 2015, when they represented 52% of Italy's bilateral ODA. Other priority sectors for bilateral ODA include govern-

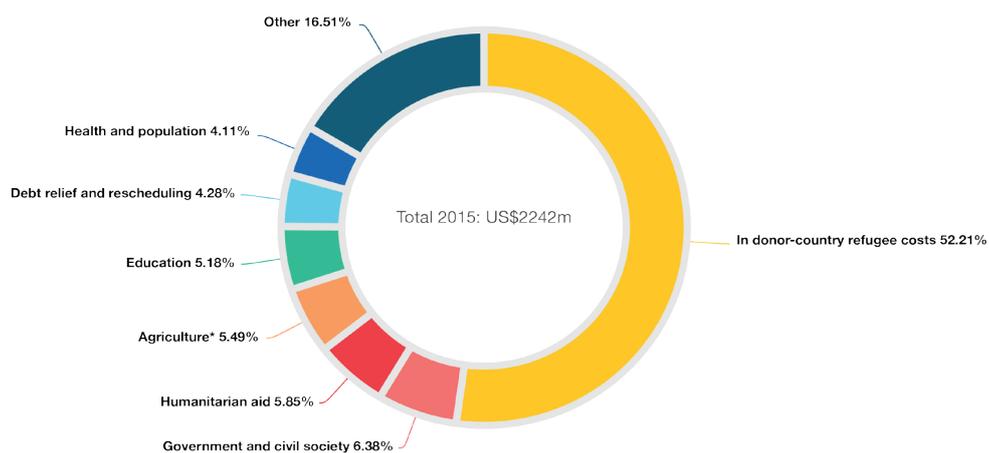
Italy's development priorities:

- **Migration:** Tackling root causes of displacement, particularly from Africa, will be a key priority of Italy's G7 presidency in 2017; focus on food security and nutrition, health, and women's empowerment.
- **Agriculture, food security and nutrition:** Italy has shown international leadership, e.g. through EXPO 2015 in Milan, maintains close relationships with the UN's Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

ment and civil society, humanitarian aid, education, agriculture, and health. These will likely continue to be in focus.

However, Italian priorities for development are also well reflected within its multilateral contributions, which make up more than half of Italy's overall ODA (54% in 2015). The multilateral share is particularly high for agriculture and rural development, which in 2015 received US\$245 million in the form of multilateral funding, or 67% of total agricultural ODA. Italy has shown international leadership on agriculture and the related areas of nutrition and food security, most recently during the EXPO 2015 in Milan, entitled 'Feeding the Planet, Energy for life'. These areas are also expected to feature prominently during its G7 presidency in 2017. The Italian government is likely to launch a new initiative focused on food security and nutrition during the G7 presidency; this is likely to be presented during the high-level meeting on nutrition in November 2017.

ITALY'S BILATERAL ODA BY SECTOR



Source: OECD CRS. *Includes agriculture, forestry, fishing, and rural development.