

KEY QUESTIONS

the big six



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 for Italian Development Cooperation 2016-2018 ('linee guida programmazione triennale'), developed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI).

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 €415 million in 2017 and €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 put food security and nutrition, health, and women's empowerment at the forefront of its G7 agenda in 2017. The G7 Taormina Leaders' Communiqué agrees to strengthen dialogue and establish partnerships with African countries to improve socio-economic conditions and to reduce drivers of migration, highlighting the sectors agriculture, food security, and nutrition as crucial areas. 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

Italy's development priorities:

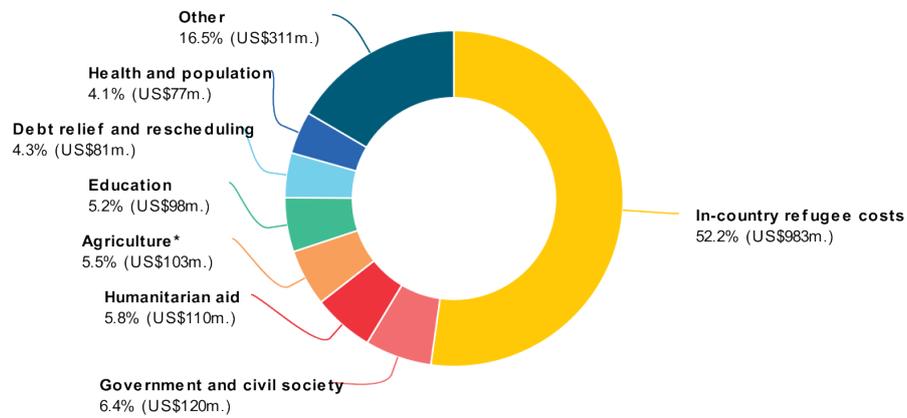
- **Migration:** Tackling root causes of displacement, particularly from Africa, will be a key priority of Italy's G7 presidency in 2017; focus on food security and nutrition, health, and women's empowerment.
- **Agriculture, food security and nutrition:** Italy has shown international leadership, e.g. 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).

In the past two years, a significant increase in Italy's bilateral ODA was driven by rising costs for hosting refugees. Bilateral ODA increased from US\$804 million in 2013 (43% covered refugee costs) to US\$1.9 billion in 2015 (52%). Other priority sectors for Italy's bilateral ODA include government 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\$206 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 also feature prominently during its G7 presidency in 2017. The G7 ministerial meeting on agriculture takes place in October 2017. The Italian government is also organizing a high-level G7 meeting on nutrition in November 2017. The Italian government is likely to launch a new initiative focused on food security and nutrition during the high-level meeting on nutrition in November 2017.

ITALY'S BILATERAL ODA BY SECTOR, 2015

Total 2015: US\$1 882 million



OECD CRS. *Includes agriculture, forestry, fishing, and rural development. In 2015 prices.