



# **Guide for international PhD candidates in Italy 2016/2017**

**ADI - ASSOCIAZIONE DOTTORANDI E DOTTORI DI RICERCA ITALIANI**



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PhD candidates, coordinated by ADI (Italian Association of PhD candidates and PhDs), have voluntarily written this guide for the benefit of new international students. We do not guarantee that all the information contained in this guide is applicable to your case. Please verify with your university or relevant institution. If you find any mistake in this guide, please contact us in order to improve it.

- Ⓡ ADI is the only association of PhD candidates at national level in Italy. Its main aim is to improve the working conditions of young researchers in Italy.

ADI: <http://www.dottorato.it/>

ADI is connected to the other European PhD associations through EURODOC

<http://eurodoc.net/>



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 There are different types of PhDs in terms of how they are financed

- with scholarship by public University;
- joint degree or co-tutoring;
- self-financed;
- with scholarship by *Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

## 1.2 The status of a PhD candidates in Italy

PhD candidates in Italy are considered as students at the highest level of their education. They may receive a PhD scholarship and may pay student fee to access the PhD programme. Those that do not receive a PhD scholarship may apply for normal students subsidies. These are provided in Italy by the regional agency for student benefits (see section 4) according to the economic income of the student's family.

- Ⓡ ADI is currently demanding a new status for the PhD candidates in Italy. They should be considered as early stage researchers (as defined by the European Charter for Researcher <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/rights/europeanCharter>). We demand a Work&Education contract, in which rights as a worker and as a student are both protected.





## 2. What you need to do before you arrive

### 2.1 Provide official translation of dissertation/thesis if it is not in English or Italian.

### 2.2 Visa

As a non-EU national you will need a long-term “D” type visa stamp in your passport in order to enter the country. If you are already living and studying in another EU country, you might still need this visa to complete different bureaucratic procedures in Italy in the context of your PhD programme and student life. The “D” type visa is provided by the Italian Embassy of your country of residence. You will need to make an appointment for visa application either through telephone or online, based on the specific requirements of the corresponding Italian Embassy.

The minimum documents the Italian Embassy might request for the visa application include:

- A completed form for long-term visa application (online or print version provided by the Italian Embassy);
- A valid passport, valid for 3 or 6 months after the expected date of visa expiration;
- One passport size photograph;
- Proof of acceptance to the graduate study programme in Italy;
- Air ticket/Booking/travel plan.

Non-EU nationals living and studying in another EU country should also provide:

- Proof of student status in the EU country (student certificate and/or grade certificate);
- Original and copy of your current “D” type visa and/or resident card.

Additional documents that the Italian Embassy might request to support your application include:

- Proof of economic means to finance your stay in Italy for the duration of the graduate study programme (approximate minimum of 450 euros/month) OR bank statement in case you are personally financing your studies;
- Proof of adequate housing;
- Proof of comprehensive health insurance;
- Declaration of value (*Dichiarazione di valore*) of your MSc. diploma.

In some countries, the “D” type visa is cost-free for the purpose of studying in Italy and the visa stamp can be obtained on the same day of application, provided all the documents required are

presented and correct. In other countries, there is a variable cost associated to the visa stamp and you will have to allow for approximately 2 weeks to obtain it. Check with the corresponding Italian Embassy on this issue and on the validity of these requirements and the existence of additional requirements to fulfill.

### 2.3 Declaration of Value (*Dichiarazione di valore*)

In several cases, as a requirement for a long-term “D” type visa application for a PhD programme in Italy, the Italian Embassy can request the Declaration of Value (*Dichiarazione di valore*) of the diploma of your Master’s degree. The university providing the PhD programme will also require this document to complete your student registration.

The Declaration of Value is requested in the closest Italian Consulate to the university where you undertook your Master’s degree. Note that the closest Consulate to the university might be in another country from the one where you obtained your Master’s degree. You can either make an appointment through telephone or online to personally present your request for a Declaration of Value, or send the request to the Consulate via registered mail. Both of these options might not be available in the Italian Consulate of your country. Check with the Consulate to see which options are available.

The documents the Italian Consulate might request to provide a Declaration of Value include:

- A certified/authenticated copy of your Master’s diploma(s) and transcripts OR if your Master’s programme has not yet issued the diploma, a temporary certificate of diploma provision along with the transcripts may also be used.
- Certified translations of each diploma or certificate, done by a sworn interpreter. A list of interpreters can be provided by the Italian Consulate.
- A letter declaring that you intent to use the Declaration of Value for the purpose of studying in Italy.
- A prepaid envelope with a return address, if the option to receive the Declaration of Value by mail is preferred.

The Declaration of Value is cost-free for the purpose of studying in Italy. However, there will be variable fees associated to the certified translations of the documents. Allow for 1 or 2 weeks to obtain the Declaration of Value, provided all the documents required are presented and correct. Check with the corresponding Italian Consulate the validity of the required documents and the existence of additional requirements to fulfill. Keep in mind that the Italian Consulate, where you apply for the Declaration of Value, and the Italian Embassy, where you apply for the “D” type visa, might not be located in the same city or country.

## 3. What you need to do when you arrive

After reporting your arrival to your University, you will need to undertake the following procedures. Check with the secretariat of the programme you are enrolled in for additional procedures to fulfill. Also, visit the International Relation Office or a similar institute in your university for further information.

### 3.1 Fiscal Code (*Codice Fiscale*)

As a PhD student in Italy you will need a Fiscal Code (*Codice Fiscale*) as your official identification for all fiscal purposes. It is important to apply as soon as possible for the *Codice Fiscale*, as it will be requested in every interaction with the public administration and in important personal transactions such as to obtain a mobile phone line or to open a bank account. The application for the *Codice Fiscale* is done at your local tax office (*Agenzia delle Entrate*). No previous appointment is needed for this application.

*Agenzia delle Entrate*: <http://www.agenziaentrate.gov.it/>

The following documents are required to apply for the *Codice Fiscale*:

- A completed form for *Codice Fiscale* application. (Form AA4/8, print version in different languages provided at the *Agenzia delle Entrate*);
- Original and copy of a valid passport with valid “D” type visa;
- A letter from your university declaring your participation in the PhD study programme in Italy, the duration of the programme and the included benefits.

The *Codice Fiscale* is cost-free. If the required/requested document are presented and correct, you will receive the *Codice Fiscale* on the same day of application. Check with the corresponding *Agenzia delle Entrate* for the validity of the required documents and the existence of additional requirements to fulfill.

### 3.2 Telephone

It is important to obtain an Italian telephone number right after obtaining the *Codice Fiscale*, as it will be requested in important personal transactions such as to open a bank account or to request your stay permit. To obtain a prepaid mobile phone line as a student in Italy you will need to present the following documents:

- *Codice Fiscale*;
- Original and copy of a valid passport;
- Address of stay in Italy.

Various telecommunication providers offer prepaid mobile phone lines in Italy. Several among them offer special telecommunication packages for young people under 30 years old. Check with fellow students or colleagues for recommendations on the most suitable providers and telecommunication packages. Check with the provider of your choice the validity of the aforementioned documents and the existence of additional requirements to fulfill.

### 3.3 Prepaid rechargeable card / bank account

If you have been assigned a monetary grant from an Italian institution, it is important to open an Italian bank account or another means of receiving payment as soon as possible in order to start receiving your grant money. The fastest option as a non-EU PhD student is to obtain a prepaid rechargeable card. To apply for this card you will need to present the following documents:

- *Codice Fiscale*;
- Italian telephone number;
- Original and copy of a valid passport (with valid “D” type visa if you are a Non-EU);
- A letter from your university declaring your participation in the PhD study programme in Italy.

Allow for approximately one week to obtain and activate the rechargeable card. This type of card is not a bank account. It is a prepaid card that works as a regular debit card, allowing you to pay for in-store and online transaction and to withdraw money from ATMs nationally and internationally. Additionally, it is associated with an IBAN number that will allow you to receive and transfer money in Italy and possibly abroad.

However, fees for most financial transactions using this prepaid rechargeable card are higher than those you would pay using a regular debit card associated to a bank account. This particularly applies for transactions with other financial institutions or transactions done abroad. Once you obtain an Italian stay or residence permit, you might consider opening a regular bank account if you often undertake this type of transactions.

Various financial institutions in Italy offer the possibility for foreigners either to apply for a prepaid rechargeable card or to open a bank account. Several among them offer preferential fees for young people under 30 years old. Check with your university for recommendations on the most suitable financial institutions. Check with the financial institution of your choice for guidance on the most suitable financial instruments for you and the specific requirements to apply for them.

If you possess a bank account outside of Italy and want to keep using that account, you should check with the bank for charges in using the account abroad.

Do not forget to submit your bank account number to the secretary of your programme as soon as you obtain it.

- Ⓡ It might happen that you will receive your first payment only after 2 months. Make sure that you have enough money to cover the first expenses if this might happen in your programme. Contact ADI if this happens. The association will help you make a formal request to the administration to solve the problem.

### 3.4 Stay permit (*Permesso di soggiorno*)

As a non-EU PhD student, you will need to apply for a stay permit (*Permesso di soggiorno*) within the first 8 working days after your arrival in Italy. The *Permesso di soggiorno* allows foreigners to remain in Italy for a period longer than 90 days under specified conditions and time limits. The application for the *Permesso di soggiorno* is done at the immigration office (*Ufficio Immigrazione*) through the local post office (*Poste Italiane*). A regular application for the *Permesso di soggiorno* will be valid for one year and will be subject to renewal.

To apply for the *Permesso di soggiorno*, you will need to pick up the forms (available in Italian only) at the *Poste Italiane*, and later send the filled application from the local *Poste Italiane* along with the following documents:

- Copy of a valid passport with valid “D” type visa;
- A letter from your university declaring your participation in the PhD study programme in Italy, the duration of the programme and the included benefits;
- Proof of comprehensive health insurance OR application for comprehensive health insurance during the upcoming 365 day period (forms included in the application package).

In some cases, your university might be able to provide advice on how to fill the application forms through the International Relation Office or similar institutes. They might also provide access directly to the forms.

The *Permesso di soggiorno* has a variable cost of approximately 110 euros. Health insurance has a variable cost of approximately 90 – 150 euros per year depending on the chosen system. Additional costs are required for revenue stamps and mailing. All costs should be paid on the day you mail the application, directly at the *Poste Italiane*.

On the same day you mail the application, you will be given the receipts of payment both for the stay permit and health insurance, a temporary stay permit embedded with a barcode and a date for your appointment at the local migration office (*Ufficio Immigrazione*). This appointment will take place approximately 2 to 3 weeks after mailing the application.

On the date of the appointment, your fingerprints will be taken and you will complete the registration for the *Permesso di soggiorno*. You will need to provide the following documentation:

- Valid passport with valid “D” type visa;
- Two passport size photographs;
- The proof of application for the *Permesso di soggiorno* and receipts of payment which you obtain from the *Poste Italiane*.

An additional fingerprinting might need to be done in the local police office (*Questura*). You will also sign an “Integration agreement” that will require you to obtain credits by participating in integration activities such as lectures on the Italian public system and Italian language classes during your stay in the country. You will receive further information on these two topics at the *Ufficio Immigrazione* on the day of the appointment. Check with the local *Ufficio Immigrazione* and *Poste Italiane* the validity of these requirements and the existence of additional requirements to fulfill.

Students from the EU do not need a *Permesso di soggiorno*. They do, however need to register with their local *Anagrafe* which is the equivalent of the Registry Office. For this, you will need:

- Original and copy of a valid passport;
- A letter from your university declaring your participation in the PhD study programme in Italy;
- *Codice Fiscale*.

### 3.5 Health insurance

There are two kinds of health insurance systems in Italy:

- The national health system, S.S.N. (*Servizio Sanitario Nazionale*), with a cost of 150 euro. You will get all the services which is also provided to Italian nationals OR
- A health insurance policy with a cost of 90 euros. It exclusively covers expenses during emergency treatment.

If you choose the first insurance, you will need to go to the nearest local health unit, ASL (*Azienda Sanitaria Locale*), for registration presenting the following documents:

- Original passport;
- *Codice Fiscale*;
- Receipts of payment obtained from the *Poste Italiane* for the stay permit;
- Receipt of health insurance;
- Address of residence (where you will receive the sanitary card which enables you get all health related services).

You will be provided with the address and working hours of your chosen personal doctor.

### 3.6 Italian identity card and residence

In order to apply for the Italian identity card, you need to take the residence certificate (a certificate which states that your residence is in Italy). This is, however, not very useful for the *Permesso di soggiorno*, but it is required to get an Italian identity card, and also for other purposes. For instance, if you need to apply for a visa to a non-EU country, the embassies ask for the residence certificate if you want to apply for the visa from Italy (not all countries ask for this requirement). Otherwise, you will have to go to the country where you hold the passport from to apply for the visa.

You can apply for the residence certificate by presenting yourself at the local municipality office with the following documents:

- A valid passport;
- 2 passport size photographs;
- The contract (which lasts one year at least) of your rented house in Italy or, if you are being hosted by an Italian resident, a written declaration by the host that you live in his premises.

Once you apply for the residence, the police will visit the address of the residence with which you have applied. However, you do not have to wait until the visit of the police to apply for the Italian identity card, and it is recommended not to since there is no guarantee with regard to the time of the visit. To facilitate the work of the police, we recommend to put a tag with your name on the bell and on the mailbox. Once you have the receipt of the application for residence, you can apply for the Italian identity card.

An Identity Card is a personal recognition document that is valid in Italy. Foreign Nationals who are resident in Italy can apply for an Identity Card by going to the Registry Office of the Municipality where they are resident. The necessary documents are:

- 3 recent and identical passport photographs;
- A valid passport;
- A valid residence permit.

In the case of the loss or theft of the ID card, as a foreign national, you must go to the Registry Office with:

- Statement made at the *Comando Provinciale dei Carabinieri* (Military Police) or at the *Questura* (State Police Headquarters);
- 3 recent and identical passport photographs;
- A valid residence permit.

In general, the identity card is valid for a period of 10 years and can be renewed. The application for renewal can be made in the 180 days prior to the expiry date. It is necessary to know that the identity card:

- Has the same duration as the residence permit;
- Is not valid abroad;
- Does not authorize the holder to remain in Italy without a residence permit or with an expired residence permit.

**R** ADI promotes the internationalization of Italian universities. For this, we demand that the universities cover the costs for visa and that the regional governments cover the costs for health insurance.





## 4. Regional agencies for student benefits

Each Region in Italy has a central agency offering services and benefits (scholarships, service grants, grants for disabled students, special canteen rates, etc.) for university students. To obtain these benefits as a foreign student living in Italy you have to submit specific documents concerning the economic situation of your family.

For a full list of the agencies, please visit:

<http://hubmiur.pubblica.istruzione.it/web/universita/diritto-allo-studio>

### 4.1 Different typologies of foreign applicants

Depending on the country where income and available assets of student's family are obtained, the appropriate documentation must be submitted to apply for the benefits, as indicated in the following paragraphs.

The requested documentation may be different for EU and non-EU students. For further and more detailed information, please contact your regional agency.

Students from the EU must provide a declaration valid only for the application (*Dichiarazione sostitutiva valida ai soli fini del concorso*).

For non-EU students, the documentation must be issued by authorities of the country in which the incomes have been produced, properties are owned, and movable assets are available. It must be translated and certified by the Italian diplomatic authorities in the country and the original version must be submitted.

If you are a non-EU students coming from a developing country, you need a certification issued by the Italian Representation in your country of origin attesting that your family does not have a high income and social status. This certification, in order to quantify the level of ISEEP and ISPEP indicators, is considered equivalent to 0 euro for both indicators.

To avail of the benefits, stateless or political refugee students must have their status attested through official documentation issued by:

- Civil Court for stateless students;
- Special Commission for the Stateless established by the Ministry of Interior.

## 4.2 Authentication and translation of documents issued abroad

Foreign citizens may submit documents from another country when they are authenticated and translated into Italian.

Signatures on documents written by foreign authorities that have to be submitted in Italy must be authenticated by the Italian diplomatic or consular delegations abroad.

Certificates or declarations issued by a competent authority of a foreign State must be translated and validated by the Italian consulate.

## 4.3 Service grant for students and PhD candidates

The Service Grant is addressed to students matching both merit and economic criteria.

The Service Grant usually provides:

- Free accommodation in a University residence or monthly accommodation grant;
- Free access to the University canteen (two meals per day);
- Public transportation grant for monthly tickets
- Special grant for didactic materials

For more information on Service Grant contact your regional agency.

## 4.4 Regional Tax

Students in Italy need to pay a tax called the Regional Tax. This tax contributes to the regional welfare programme for motivated students with economic difficulties. The payment procedure of the tax will be communicated to you by the university.

Students do not pay the Regional Tax if:

- They successfully applied for a Service Grant;
- They are already free from paying the University fees as disabled students.

## 5. INPS – Istituto Nazionale di Previdenza Sociale

No later than thirty days after the communication of admission to the PhD course, the PhD student is obliged to register himself at the “separate management” (*Gestione Separata*) of the National Institute of Social Security (INPS - *Istituto Nazionale di Previdenza Sociale*). This registration allows you to deposit a part of your PhD scholarship for pension purposes, as required by law. This registration can be done all by internet, through the INPS official website ([www.inps.it](http://www.inps.it)). You can be enrolled in *gestione separata* by receiving an online code (*PIN code*) from the INPS website (<http://www.inps.it/portale/default.aspx?iidServizio=251>).

You can receive a first piece of this code by SMS, after inserting some biographical information here: <https://serviziweb2.inps.it/RichiestaPin/jsp/menu.jsp?bi=32&link=I1+PIN+online>. After that, you will receive the last part of this code at your residential address in Italy by registered mail. You must first obtain residency in Italy before registering.

To register online you must:

1. Visit the INPS website and looking for this page “*Iscrizione Lavoratori Parasubordinati - Identificazione Utente*”;
2. Insert their FISCAL CODE (the PIN code is not a compulsory item);
3. Choose the option “*Collaborazione Coordinata e Continuativa*”;
4. Fill in the form with the information required;
5. Print a copy of the confirmation obtained automatically at the end of the registration process.

Some days after the online registration, you will receive a phone call from the INPS Office in order to verify the entered information. You can also register personally in any INPS Office.

In this case you have to:

1. Fill in the form “*Domanda di iscrizione alla Gestione Separata*”;
2. Deliver the form to the local INPS Office;
3. Deliver a copy of the receipt to the University PhD Office.

For this modality of registration, you will not receive any phone call from the INPS Office.

Finally, it is also possible to avail of this service by telephone by calling the free number 803 164.

- ④ PhD candidates pay social insurance, but they do not receive any subsidy if they are unemployed after graduation.  
In 2015, ADI started a national campaign to extend unemployment subsidy to PhD graduates and post-docs. This is currently ongoing:  
<https://www.facebook.com/Petizione-Dis-Coll-796010863807822/?fref=nf>

## 6. Living in Italy

### 6.1 Housing

Often in Italy students live in shared flats. Still, it is possible to rent a mini-apartment for one person or a couple. It is common to find apartments with mixed gender. However, it is possible to find an apartment with only males or females tenants.

You can find a room by looking at the advertisements that you can find at the entrances of libraries and canteens. You can also ask an agency, but you will have to pay a fee equivalent to 1 or 2 months rent.

In Italy is compulsory to sign a contract for renting a house. The main type of contract is the ordinary 4 years contract. This contract can be renewed for 4 more years. If you want to cancel the contract you need to inform the landlord 6 months in advance. In this contract the rent is agreed between the landlord and the tenant. The landlord can raise it every year within a certain limit imposed by the government.

In some University towns there might be the possibility to get a short-term student contract. This is a more flexible contract. Please, check your University International Relation Office.

Ordinary expenses (such as a broken lamp or the need for a new kitchen tool or fixing a household appliance) has to be paid by the tenant, while extraordinary expenses like a new washing machine or repairing damage to the building has to be paid by the owner.

When you sign a rent contract you will need to give a deposit of 2 – 3 months rent. The rent does not include extra charges such as electricity, water, heating, internet, etc. most of the time.

It is worth going to the International Relation Office at your university (if present) as they sometimes have information on housing. They can provide contact information of local house owners and also call them for you if you do not speak Italian.

If you stay for a short time or you do not like to live in a shared flat you can look for a private dormitory. Usually they are owned by the Church. They are often full and overpriced compared to shared flats.

- R** We strongly advise to rent a house only with a contract. You can find opportunities without a contract, but they are illegal.  
For any doubt or problem you can get info at  
*Unione Inquilini* (<http://www.unioneinquilini.it/>),  
SUNIA (<http://www.sunia.it/>),  
SICET (<http://www.sicet.it/>).

## 6.2 Learning Italian, other info

In some cases, Italian lessons may be organised for newly arrived foreign PhD students. The coordinator of your PhD programme should be contacted to determine if these are available to you. In some cases, the fee for the course is refunded by your institute of study. This information can be provided to you by the coordinator of your PhD programme. Free Italian lessons for immigrants are also offered by the *Scuola di lingua e cultura Italiana della Comunità di Sant'Egidio* – Comunità di Sant'Egidio (<http://www.santegidio.org/pageID/39/langID/it/Scuola-di-lingua-e-cultura-italiana.html>).

Lessons for beginners as well as for people with a more advanced level of Italian are offered. The lessons are free of charge. There are many other possibilities to learn Italian, through language schools and different type of associations.

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