

Statement of ECNAIS Annual conference on

Modern soft skills in value based school programmes.

The independent schools' response to the challenge of improving the social and economic future of young people.

Rome, 20 - 22 April 2017

The attention to soft skills from the Italian independent schools' sector is the evidence of how autonomy is able to promote an educational system matching students' human and cultural needs. Therefore ECNAIS is very keen to widen room for actual school autonomy and freedom of school choice and to show that independent schools are able to contribute to social and economic development in Italy and Europe.

In Rome independent schools from fourteen countries discussed how to develop a most suitable response to the modern demands of young people for their social and economic future through the inclusion of soft skills in their value based school programmes.

The most frequently mentioned soft skills are problem solving, creativity, cooperation with others and ict competence. Empathy is mentioned as the social skill most needed to become competent to act as a responsible and active citizen.

It's necessary that independent schools, which are in many European countries suffering from a lack of sufficient governmental support like in Italy, be faithful to their entrepreneurial and innovative nature, keenly focused on the added value they want and can offer to their parents and students.

The conference is a starting point for independent schools to work in a network on the further implementation of soft skills.