CILD | Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights

NARRATIVE LAB RESOURCES

Building support for the School Child Reform in Italy

A Messaging Guide

Narrative Lab Change the Narrative, Change the World

Building support for the School Child

A Messaging Guide

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Introduction: About this guide

Who is this guide for?

This guide is a tool for campaigners who want to promote support among public audiences for reform of Italy's 1992 Citizenship Law. The particular reform with which this guide is concerned is a proposal to allow for the acquisition of citizenship by non-citizen children born in Italy, or children who arrived in Italy under the age of 12, who have attended school regularly for at least five years. This will be referred to as the 'School Child Reform'.

This reform was introduced to and under consideration by the Italian parliament in 2022[1]. However, since the far-right coalition took power after elections in the same year, no progress has been made, nor is it expected, given opposition voiced by the governing coalition parties and their attempts to slow the legislative process before they entered power[2].

The guide is designed to assist campaigners to build support among the public for the School Child Reform, which would make it more likely to be adopted after a change of government.

What's in the guide?

This guide is divided into four parts. First, it sets out the current rules governing access to citizenship and their impact on children and young adults. Second, it identifies the target audience for the campaign and summarises research on their attitudes. Third, the guide reviews the messaging used in the past by campaigners to promote reform of the law governing access to citizenship to identify where this might be ineffective or counterproductive. Fourth, it proposes alternative messaging that is more likely to be persuasive.

1 https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/italy-new-attempts-reform-citizenship-law_en ; https://www.ilpost.it/2022/03/10/ius-scholae-testo-base-approvato-commissione/ .

2 https://lavialibera.it/it-schede-1111-governo_meloni_migrazione_integrazione_cittadinanza. https://www.ilpost.it/2023/04/12/quanti-sono-studenti-stranieri-italia/.

What are the limitations of this guide?

To be sure messages are persuasive, it is important to have insights into the target audience and how they think about the topic and to test candidate messages with them. This guide has not benefited from in-depth public opinion research on the topic of the School Child Reform. Nor has it been informed by message testing. The author has taken into account unpublished research by CILD based on interviews with various stakeholders as well as published research on Italian attitudes towards migration and towards granting children of foreign national citizenship based on birth in Italy. The guide uses these insights to make sensible assumptions about how the target audience thinks about the School Child Reform.

While the guide has not benefited from message testing, it draws heavily on the lessons learnt from successful campaigns and message testing on similar topics. This includes the work of Anat Shenker-Osorio of ASO Communications on various human rights and social justice causes and related projects, such as We Make The Future and insights of other organisations researching public opinion on analogous questions, such as More In Common and the Frameworks Institute. Much of the advice in this guide uses or adapts messages tested by these organisations in the USA. We recommend that campaigners regard the guide as a point of departure for their messaging. That is, when communicating with the public, campaigners should try out messaging in the guide to see what works well and with which audiences. Should budget become available, it is recommended that campaigners carry out research to confirm whether this guide's assumptions about their target audience's attitudes towards the School Child Reform are accurate and use a recognised methodology to test messaging.

A further practical limitation of this guide is that its advice on messaging is limited to how campaigners speak or write about the topic. When running a campaign, campaigners will need to capture this messaging in a broader range of audio-visual materials to engage their audiences. This includes deciding on which messengers to use, the tone of their communications, and how to express their message using images, symbols and video. We recommend campaigners do two things. First, take Liberties' online course 'Foundations of Persuasive Progressive Messaging', where these issues are covered in modules 6 and 7. Second, work with creatives who are familiar with social justice causes and give them a sufficiently detailed brief, including audience insights, your chosen messengers, tone, and campaign messages.

Finally, campaigners should take into account that direct translation of suggested messages in this guide from English to Italian might end up sounding unnatural. Native speakers should exercise some discretion in finding equivalents in their own language that sound better when they translate messaging in the guide.

I: How the current citizenship law affects children and young people

The 1992 Citizenship Law makes it deliberately difficult for people not born to or descended from Italian citizens to acquire citizenship, and since its creation has been reformed to make the process of acquiring citizenship even harder. Under the original law, a non-national may acquire citizenship if they can show that they have been legally resident in Italy for an uninterrupted period of ten years, unless they fall into certain exceptions. For example, the number of years of residence required is shorter for non-nationals who marry Italian citizens (two years) or for those granted asylum (five years). For the most part, children who were born in Italy to non-national parents or non-nationals who arrived in Italy as children tend to fall under the rules that require uninterrupted residence for a period of ten years.
Subsequent reforms created an additional requirement that their income in the three years preceding their application be above a particular threshold, introduced (and later increased) fees for the application, and doubled the length of time allowed to the state to process an application from two to four years[3].

These rules are designed to make it difficult for non-nationals without Italian ancestry to acquire citizenship by imposing requirements that are, in practice, more difficult to fulfil for people with a migration background.

For example, people often have legitimate reasons to return to their country of origin for extended periods such as to provide care to sick family members. But such a visit would be likely to count as an interruption of the required 10 year period of continuous residence. Similarly, applicants might encounter difficulties renewing a residence permit on time because of the demands imposed by working or bringing up children without an existing social or family network, such as being able to take time off work for appointments with the municipality. Such a lapse is also likely to count as an interruption of the 10 year continuous residence requirement. Further, people with a migration background are less likely to understand their rights and obligations because of language barriers and lack of a social network to act as a source of information, which means they are more likely to be unaware of the requirement to register with the local municipality or re-register when moving cities.

People with a migration background are also more likely to have difficulty accessing better paid and more secure jobs, resulting in a lower and more precarious income. Together with prejudicial attitudes towards people who migrate, this means that they are more likely to have to resort to renting accommodation from less scrupulous

3 https://www.infomigrants.net/fr/post/23030/four-years-necessary-to-respond-to-citizenship-requestsitalian-immigration-prefect-says;

landlords who overfill their properties and forbid tenants from registering with the municipality. Insecure jobs and lower income also make it harder for people with a migration background to satisfy the income requirement.

Apart from making the process difficult for adult applicants, the current rules are particularly cruel towards their children because their ability to become a citizen is tied to their parents' status, rather than to their factual ties to Italian society and culture.

Subject to narrow exceptions like statelessness or adoption, the only way that non-citizen children under 18 can become citizens is if their parents acquire citizenship while they are still a minor. Given the four-year time-frame afforded to the government to process citizenship applications and the ten-year residence requirement, anyone who arrives in Italy with a child of four or above, even if they can satisfy the other requirements, is unlikely to be able to acquire citizenship in time to pass it on to their children before they reach 18.

If the parents do not acquire citizenship before their child reaches 18, then that child must wait at least until they are 18 to become a citizen. If the child was born in Italy, they may apply for citizenship within a year of becoming 18 years old, if they have been lawfully resident continuously until their 18th birthday. For children not born in Italy and whose parents don't become citizens before they reach 18, they fall under the same requirements as adults.

In each of these three scenarios, the child's access to citizenship is either tied to whether their parents can fulfil the citizenship law's requirements or to whether they themselves can satisfy the requirements once they become 18. As noted above, it is difficult for non-national parents to fulfil both the continuous residence and the income requirements. In the third scenario, when the child becomes an adult and is subject to the same requirements as their parents, they face further difficulties. The immediate years after one's 18th birthday is when young people would hope to go to university, making it unlikely that they will satisfy the income requirement, and making it harder for them to keep up with registration requirements if they are moving residence when going to study elsewhere and renting accommodation. If they hope to fulfil the ten-year continuous legal residence requirement, they would also be obliged to turn down opportunities to study, train or work abroad.

What tangible harms do the current rules cause children and young people?

Practically speaking, there aren't many tangible differences between Italian children who have citizenship and those who don't (as long as they are legally resident). They are equally entitled to go to school, access health care, and other services, though, depending on their nationality, they may encounter restrictions on whether they can travel outside Italy, for example, on school trips. From a messaging perspective, this creates a challenge. It can be potentially harder to persuade an audience why access to citizenship matters for children, if it doesn't deliver tangible rights.

However, there are less concrete harms that children suffer. They will encounter frequent occasions where their lack of citizenship is reaffirmed, such as having to register or reregister residence permits, being unable to join their peers on school trips outside the country, knowing that they are at risk of being sent to a country with which they have little connection if their parents are deported and knowing that they are excluded from certain paths and activities once they reach 18. Deportation can occur on minor grounds, such as failing to renew a residence permit on time, committing a minor crime or moving address without informing the authorities.

This means children grow up with a lack of a feeling of belonging or welcome, a sense of rejection, a feeling of precarity, insecurity and instability and the knowledge that once they become adults, they will be denied rights that would allow them to fulfil their potential, realise their dreams and contribute fully to society. This is the opposite of the healthy, nurturing environment that most people would agree that children need.

The tangible harms caused by denial of citizenship become more apparent once children become young adults, since non-citizens cannot vote, contribute their talents and skills to public service by working as a civil servant, or take extended stays outside Italy for study, training or work opportunities (without interrupting the ten-year continuous residence requirement).

The harm this situation causes Italian society will be addressed in section three in the review of campaigners' existing messaging practices.

II: The target audience(s)

This section will set out campaigners' target audiences, their attitudes on migration and citizenship, and what implications this has for new campaign narratives.

a. Who do campaigners want to target?

Societies divide into at least three groups on social justice issues. One group can be referred to as Supporters: these are people who are predisposed to endorsing progressive attitudes and tend to support things like human rights, social justice, economic fairness and environmental action. At the other end of the scale can be found Opponents: these are people who are predisposed to endorsing authoritarian attitudes and tend to favour limiting human rights, maintaining social and economic hierarchies and continued exploitation of the environment. People among your Supporters or Opponents are unlikely to change their minds. Having said this, it's still important to mobilise your Supporters so that they can spread your message.

The third group can be referred to as Persuadables, and are sometimes known as the 'moveable / conflicted / anxious middle'. Persuadables are characterised by the conflicted views that they hold on a topic (some favourable, some unfavourable) as well as their ability to be swayed over to one side by appropriately tailored messaging. Persuadables exist on a spectrum, with one end closer to the position of Supporters and the other closer to Opponents.

Campaigners have determined that they have two target audiences: Supporters and Persuadables who are closest to their Supporters. For now, the guide will distinguish between Close Persuadables and Distant Persuadables. The aim of a campaign would be to mobilise Supporters to spread messages capable of shifting Persuadables over to their side.

As noted, we do not have research that would allow us to segment the Italian population into Supporters, Persuadables and Opponents on the School Child Reform. Instead we will draw on existing research on public attitudes towards migration and birth citizenship in Italy, in particular research from More In Common.

Research on attitudes towards migration in Italy suggests that it is possible to identify Supporters, Persuadables and Opponents according to their political attitudes. It found that those with left-wing views tend to be more favourable, those on the right tend to be unfavourable, and those with centre, centre-left and centre-right views

are more likely to be uncertain of their opinion (which would make them part of the Persuadables)[4]. CILD's own interview research also supports the idea that opinions on access to citizenship have become tribal. That is, people who vote for left-wing parties are likely to support reform of citizenship rules because this is the position of their political tribe, and likewise for people voting for right-wing parties.

More In Common's research, which breaks the public into seven segments, confirms the relationship between political attitudes and attitudes towards migration. However, this research also points out that the link isn't as strong as in other countries. According to this research, it is likely that the Supporter group is made up of Italian Cosmopolitans (12% of the population) who are most likely to hold left or centre-left views and Catholic Humanitarians (16% of the population) and tend to vote for traditional centre-left and centreright parties.

In contrast, Opponents are made up of two segments who are hostile and non-persuadable on migration (Cultural Defenders, who make up 17% of the population and Hostile Nationalists who make up 7% of the population) tend to identify as centre right, right or far right in their views.

Image taken from More In Common, 'Attitudes towards national identity, immigration and Refugees in Italy', 2018.

4 Quadrelli, F., 'Fear and hopes in a time of growing nationalism: Italians' attitudes to an open society', dpart & OSEPI, February 2019, 9; Donnaloja, V. & Vink, M., 'Like parent, like child: how attitudes towards immigrants spill over to the political inclusion of their children', June 2023 and EUI, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, 'Italians support citizenship for migrants' children (ius soli), conditionally', July 2022.

Persuadables are made up of three segments. The largest segment, Disengaged Moderates who make up 19% of the population and are closest on the spectrum to the Italian Cosmopolitans and Catholic Humanitarians, identify more as politically centre, centre-left or centre-right. The other two movable-middle groups who are closer to the Unreachable Opponents. These are the Left Behind, who make up 17% of the population and Security Concerned, who make up 12% of the population. They tend to have centre-right and far right political views.

This guide suggests that for the purpose of this particular topic, campaigners should treat Disengaged Moderates as Close Persuadables, and the Left Behind and the Security Concerned all as Distant Persuadables. At the same time, it could make sense to target both Close and Distant Persuadables on the question of the School Child Reform. The reason for this is that research on Italian attitudes on birth citizenship (ius soli) suggests much greater support across the whole of Italian society. That is, there is support for granting citizenship to children of foreign nationals in Italy even among Distant Persuadables and parts of the Opponents.[5] This research will be discussed further in the next section. But if this is the case, then it is also likely that campaigners could win support from Distant Persuadables even though they would be harder to persuade on other questions around migration. If campaigners lack resources to engage both groups, we suggest prioritising Close Persuadables as those are easiest to win over.

The above considerations could mean that public opinion on the School Child Reform is not as politically tribally-linked as CILD's research suggests. Section IV of the guide will suggest wording capable of dissolving the sway of partisan loyalties.

Campaigners should note that, depending on who they wish to target, More In Common's research contains more detailed profiles of each group including demographic factors such as age, employment status, education level and degree of religiosity, as well as information about media consumption habits. Campaigners can consult these profiles when developing communications materials in order to create content in formats consumed by these audiences and over channels that they use.

Supporters	Close Persuadables	Distant Persuadables	Opponents
Italian Cosmopolitans Catholic Humanitarians	Disengaged Moderates	Left Behind Security Concerned	Cultural Defenders Hostile Nationalists

5 Donnaloja, V. & Vink, M., 'Like parent, like child: how attitudes towards immigrants spill over to the political inclusion of their children', June 2023 and EUI, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, 'Italians support citizenship for migrants' children (ius soli), conditionally', July 2022.

b. How do your audiences think about access to citizenship?

Apart from research conducted by CILD with stakeholders, we have very little information about how Supporters and Close and Distant Persuadables think about the School Child Reform. But it is possible to make reasonable assumptions using insights into how Italians think about migration and birth citizenship.

Knowing how your audience thinks about your issue allows you to develop messaging that is more likely to shift their attitudes. For example, if you know that your audience is sceptical of the School Child Reform because they believe that it is aimed at granting citizenship to new arrivals, rather than to children who grew up in Italy, this tells you that some of your communications materials should be dedicated to dissolving this inaccurate stereotype and replacing it with a more accurate picture. Similarly, knowing how your audience thinks also reveals what kind of messaging from your opponent could weaken their support for you, and allows you to prepare responses in advance.

This section will set out what ways of thinking that prevail among Supporters and Close and Distant Persuadables. Where possible, we will signal which attitudes belong to which of the three segments of the moveable middle.

I. How do your Supporters think?

Research on attitudes towards birth citizenship in Italy suggests that 25% of Italians would support a right to citizenship for any child born in Italy without any conditions, such as the legal status of their parents or the length of time their parents have been in the country. We refer to this as birth citizenship. This 25% is made up mainly of left-wing voters, and is likely to correspond to More In Common's segment of Italian Cosmopolitans and include a large proportion of Catholic Humanitarians.

As well as what seems to be unconditional support for birth citizenship, both Italian Cosmopolitans and Catholic Humanitarians recognise that Italy is a divided country, but do not believe that immigration is to blame for this. And neither group believes that Italian identity is disappearing.

More In Common's research suggests that Italian Cosmopolitans are probably on the same page in their thinking about migration as campaigners themselves. This group believes that immigration is good for the country's economic and cultural life, and they are most likely to see people who migrate as 'people like me'. In other words, they are

highly empathic, do not consider people who migrate as threatening and want the same treatment for them as they expect for themselves.

Catholic Humanitarians' think slightly differently. They are more driven to care about people who migrate through a sense of compassion derived from religious duty and they are particularly concerned about unaccompanied refugee minors.

While Italian Cosmopolitans are optimistic about the economy and their own prospects, Catholic Humanitarians are worried about social and economic inequalities, the availability of care for the elderly and unemployment levels. They also care about people who are part of their local neighbourhood and are concerned about preserving Italy's Catholic heritage.

Both Italian Cosmopolitans and Catholic Humanitarians are more likely to believe that people who migrate make efforts to integrate into Italian society. It is not clear if either of these Supporter groups is aware of how current citizenship rules are deliberately designed to make it difficult for children of foreign-born parents to become citizens.

Implications of this for messaging

Italian Cosmopolitans probably don't require any special considerations in terms of how we message towards them, beyond following standard good messaging practices, discussed later. For Catholic Humanitarians, it could make sense for campaigners to see if religious figures can engage this audience rather than campaigners themselves - or to assign this audience to a coalition member that has a religious profile. This is in part because Catholic Humanitarians derive their compassion and care towards people who migrate based on religious duty. But referring to religious duty in your messaging risks turning off Italian Cosmopolitans (and Disengaged Moderates) who are not religious or practice faiths other than Catholicism.

Messaging that could speak to Italian Cosmopolitans as well as Catholic Humanitarians could include stimulating empathy (which Catholic Humanitarians seem to lack) as well as emphasising how beneficiaries of the reform are already integrated into our communities (which engages Catholic Humanitarians' sense of care towards people in their neighbourhoods). Emphasising how integrated Italians denied citizenship already are could also serve to address the concern of Catholic Humanitarians that Italy should preserve its Catholic identity and solidify the tendency of both them and Italian Cosmopolitans that people who migrate make efforts to integrate.

This guide uses 'Italians denied citizenship', rather than 'Italians without citizenship'. This is because the word 'denied' transmits the idea that someone (the current government, because it will not reform the rules) is actively refusing citizenship to certain Italians. Whereas 'without' is more passive and doesn't prompt your audience to think that someone is to blame for this.

Italian Cosmopolitans and Catholic Humanitarians both recognise that the country is divided, but don't blame migration. This means that they would probably be receptive to messaging that explains how certain politicians are using migration in order to divide Italian society. While Italian Cosmopolitans tend to be optimistic in their outlook on the economy, Catholic Humanitarians are concerned about unemployment, care for older people and economic inequalities. Because of this, messaging could also connect these concerns with the far-right's deliberate tactics to divide Italy as a distraction from political failures to solve economic and social problems.

II. How do Persuadables think?

As noted, research suggests 25% of Italians are in favour of birth citizenship without imposing any conditions on parents. The same research suggests that only 10% of Italians are against - under any circumstances - children of foreign nationals acquiring citizenship by being born in Italy. This means that even parts of the Opponents (Cultural Defenders and Hostile Nationalists) are supportive of birth citizenship under certain conditions.

The same research found that the remaining 65% of Italians would support citizenship for children of foreign nationals born in Italy where their parents satisfy certain conditions. This 65% is likely to include both Close and Distant Persuadables (Disengaged Moderates, the Left Behind, the Security Concerned), as well as some Opponents (Cultural Defenders and Hostile Nationalists).

Researchers found that a majority of this 65%, including a majority of right-wing voters, agreed with birth citizenship when parents fulfilled the following three criteria. First, that they are resident legally. Second, that they have been in Italy for at least five years. Third, that at least one parent is employed. This is likely to include Close Persuadables and most of the Distant Persuadables. Unfortunately, the researchers don't give a percentage of people who support birth citizenship based on these three criteria alone.

They also found that even higher numbers of right-wing voters would add their support for birth citizenship where the parents have family and friends who are Italian and who support the Italian football team over their country of origin team, speak excellent Italian, and that they favoured non-Muslim migrants. This group of people who require these more demanding conditions are likely to include some Distant Persuadables and some Opponents.

In addition to research into attitudes on birth citizenship, the More In Common research gives us additional insights into the Persuadables' views on migration more generally.

As noted, Close Persuadables (Disengaged Moderates) are closest to our Supporters. They're unsure if immigration is good or bad for the country and they are not politically engaged, feeling like politicians don't care about them. But they tend to empathise with migrants, especially young migrants whom they see as like them - just trying to improve their lives. They do not believe that migrants have made it harder for Italians to find work or that they are given priority over Italians when it comes to benefits, housing and services. They see Italy as divided and are worried about rising racism and discrimination. They aren't worried about protecting Italy's Catholic heritage. They do think that Italy should adhere to its traditional values of solidarity and compassion. They also think that there's no need to be born and raised in Italy in order to have Italian identity. Rather, it's possible to absorb Italian identity by integrating and embracing the culture. This suggests that Close Persuadables should be relatively easy to convince that beneficiaries of the School Child Reform deserve this fairer process to acquire citizenship.

The Distant Persuadables (Left Behind and Security Concerned groups) think of migrants as a threatening out-group. The Left Behind see migration as an economic threat: migrants make it harder to find work, are a drain on the welfare state, that most refugees are in reality economic migrants and that people like them have difficulty succeeding in Italy. They also have a more restrictive view of Italian identity, according to which they doubt whether someone who is not born and raised in Italy can adopt Italian values and ways of thinking. Having said this, given the beneficiaries of the School Child Reform, this attitude might not be problematic for this particular campaign.

For the Security Concerned migrants are a security threat, posing a risk of crime and terrorism. They also think that the Italian economy is doing badly. Both groups think immigration is dividing the country, threatens Italian identity and want to protect its Catholic heritage. Furthermore, a lot of the Security Concerned seem to have had 'negative' contact with migrants because they live near refugee registration centres.

Both Close Persuadables (the Disengaged Moderates) and one of the Distant Persuadable groups (the Security Concerned) are fairly evenly split on whether migrants make an effort to integrate while the other Distant Persuadable group (the Left Behind) strongly disagree. Close Persuadables blame Italian institutions for administrative difficulties migrants have to integrate, while the Security Concerned blame migrants for not making enough effort to overcome administrative obstacles. It is not clear if Close Persuadables recognise that Italian institutions are pursuing a deliberate policy to make it difficult for children of foreign-born parents to acquire citizenship or whether this is just a more general idea that institutions are dysfunctional.

More In Common's research also suggests that Distant Persuadables tend to think that migration has had a negative impact on the economy, is costing the welfare state and draining resources that 'could be spent on Italians' and that migrants make it more difficult for Italians to get jobs.

On the positive side, the Left Behind do agree with a right of asylum in principle, while the Security Concerned are worried about increasing racism and discrimination. Neither segment think that unaccompanied children should be sent back to their country of origin.

Implications of this for messaging

The findings of the research on birth citizenship aren't entirely applicable to the School Child Reform because the researchers were asking different questions. In the research on attitudes about birth citizenship respondents were being asked to consider the parents and their deservedness and connection to Italy. Whereas the School Child Reform is focused much more on the child who has grown up in Italy. The School Child Reform is considered to be less controversial than birth citizenship, and it probably pushes considerations about deservedness based on legality of stay or income to the background because these things are beyond the control of a child. The More In Common research also shows that even Distant Persuadables have compassion towards children because they oppose returning unaccompanied minors (unlike Opponents).

All this suggests that attitudes towards the School Child Ref are likely to be much more positive across Persuadables than attitudes on migration generally. Based on these considerations, it seems highly likely that Close Persuadables - if they do not already support the School Child Reform - can be persuaded to do so. It is also likely that Distant Persuadables would support the School Child Reform though they are probably more vulnerable to arguments from Opponents.

For Close Persuadables, it is likely that messaging that emphasises the similarities they share with young Italians denied citizenship in terms of their aspirations for building a

life would help to cement the empathy they feel. For Distant Persuadables it could also be important to emphasise how the current rules expose children to being sent back to their parents' country of origin with which they have no or very little connection.

Close and Distant Persuadables recognise that Italy is divided, but Distant Persuadables blame this on migration. As noted in relation to messaging for our Supporters, it would be important to explain that the division is caused by certain political parties for their own gain. This would probably be convincing to Close Persuadables and gives Distant Persuadables a way to change their perspective while acknowledging their fears. This might be more convincing to the Security Concerned who are worried about increasing racism and discrimination. Existing legislation could be portrayed as creating an artificial and damaging division between Italians.

Distant Persuadables are likely to be vulnerable to messaging - including misinformation - from Opponents that links the reform to their fears about migration more generally. For example, the argument that the School Child Reform is a backdoor to citizenship for parents in Italy who are trying to game the system, such as entering illegally to give birth, or who are unemployed or otherwise fail to satisfy the current naturalisation requirements for adults. Or the argument that children who grow up in Italy are not Italian enough and will further erode Italian culture because of the influences of their parents, their home country culture or religion - especially Islam. Or the argument that the reform will create greater competition for jobs and public resources, and / or encourage further migration.

Because of this, it's important to dissolve the negative stereotype that links the School Child Reform to recently arriving migrants and replace it with a frame of Italian children denied citizenship by cruel and extremist politicians for political gain, and to underline that young Italians denied citizenship are already part of our communities as colleagues, class-mates and neighbours, as well as emphasising how young Italians denied citizenship want to contribute / are already contributing to society and explaining how the existing rules are deliberately designed to make it difficult for them to become citizens.

III: Current messaging and messaging practices

This section will review the main messaging and messaging practices used by campaigners in the recent past to push for reform of citizenship rules. The aim of this section is to highlight to campaigners which of their current messages and practices are positive and which are likely to be ineffective or counterproductive. This review is based on consideration of both what is known about effective messaging in general, as well as how your target audiences think about the topic. The guide will try to focus on campaigners' messaging as it relates to the current reform, but sometimes it is not possible to separate this from your messaging on access to citizenship reform more generally.

Campaigners' current messaging

Based on a review of communications products from campaigners, current messaging could be summarised as follows:

The current law is out of date a) because it was created to preserve population numbers at a time of high emigration. To do this it linked citizenship to Italian heritage to make it easier for Italians or their descendants to return. But today Italy is a country of migration where many new people come to Italy. Instead of welcoming them, our rules make it very difficult for them to become citizens.

The current law is out of date b) because it links citizenship to Italian ancestry. But today there are many people who are Italian but to whom we deny citizenship because their parents come from other countries.

The current law is unfair because people who grow up here have more connection to Italy than people from abroad with only Italian ancestry.

The current law is harmful to Italians without citizenship who are denied citizenship because the process of getting citizenship is long, complicated and has very strict criteria. This makes it difficult for people to meet the criteria and during the time they are waiting they are deprived of certain rights, they lose certain opportunities, and they have to live in uncertainty and feel like they don't belong.

The current law is harmful to Italy because it's a waste of our resources to fund education, health care and other things for children who grow up here and then deny them citizenship which limits how much they can contribute and may drive them to leave permanently to other countries.

We want a reform that protects children who are born here or come here as children and grow up here.

But every time we try to reform the law it gets turned into a political football by the far-right who scaremonger that changing the law would make it easier for migrants to come and take jobs, resources, change our traditions and culture and bring crime.

The following table provides a summary of the rest of this section for campaigners to refer back to easily. The following table provides a summary of the rest of this section for campaigners to refer back to easily.

Current messaging	What to do with it?
The law is out of date because it was designed to maintain the population when Italy was a country of emigration and now Italy is a country of immigration.	De-prioritise this argument because most people won't see how this has any tangible effects on their lives, unless you relate it to growing the economy, which will be counter-productive when used in campaigning.
The law is out of date because it conditions citizenship on Italian ancestry, which means it excludes Italians from citizenship if their parents were born somewhere else.	Integrate this argument into new campaign messaging. Section IV will explain further.

Current messaging	What to do with it?
The law is unfair because Italians denied citizenship who grew up in Italy are more Italian than people who grew up in other countries but have Italian ancestry.	Drop this argument because it nudges people to think in either / or terms about who is more Italian and reaffirms your Opponent's message that there is competition between people who migrate and 'real' Italians.
The current rules are harmful for Italy because migration is good for the economy, we should get a return on our investment in Italian non-citizens who grew up here, and we should avoid a brain drain.	These arguments in their current form should be restricted to advocacy towards politicians and not be used in campaigning towards the public. Reframe these arguments to work in future campaign messaging towards the public. Section IV will explain further.
The current rules are harmful for Italians denied citizenship because of the stringent conditions & difficult process, the uncertainty and lack of belonging, and the rights and opportunities people are deprived of while they're waiting.	The different types of harm need untangling and allocating to relevant parts of new campaign messaging. Some are relevant to showing that there is a deliberate effort to exclude certain people from citizenship, some are relevant to showing that the current situation conflicts with what your audience wants.
Personal storytelling about and by Italians denied citizenship.	Campaigners should continue to tell these stories but integrate them with a campaign narrative that shows the audience the scale of the problem, shows how the problem affects the audience and point out who is causing the problem and why, and how to solve it. Campaigners should also integrate other messengers and story-tellers such as colleagues, neighbours, friends and teachers talking about why they support the School Child Reform.

Current messaging	What to do with it?
Pedagogical-type messaging.	Campaigners can still develop this kind of educational material for journalists, policy-makers and Supporters who want to get into further detail, but it should not be at the forefront of their campaign messaging.
Jargon (e.g. ius soli, sanguinis, culturae, scholae / human / fundamental / civil and political rights / inclusion / diversity).	Campaigners should drop the use of technical terms and jargon for communications towards the public, including towards the media and use understandable terms.
Negating your opponents' frames (e.g. 'we are not asking for privileges').	Campaigners should avoid directly contradicting the arguments of their opponents and either reframe and / or use a truth sandwich.

a. The law is out of date

This argument is used by campaigners in two ways.

First, campaigners sometimes explain that the current law is outdated because it was designed to prevent population decline at a time when many Italians were emigrating by making it easy for their descendants to return and reclaim citizenship. Campaigners argue that this makes no sense today, because the people migrating to Italy do not have Italian ancestry and are therefore excluded. In essence, it's implied that if the purpose of the citizenship law is to maintain Italy's population, the country should welcome new migrants who are here, rather than trying to attract back emigrants who aren't returning.

The guide suggests that this argument is not very useful to campaigners for a couple of reasons. First, of itself, it's unlikely that your audience will see why maintaining population levels benefits them. So campaigners would need to relate the goal of maintaining the population to some other concern that their audience has. Population decline can mean a negative impact on the economy and, assuming it's people of working age who are emigrating, a negative impact on funding care for the retired

population. This means that arguing that the current law is outdated because it prevents Italy from addressing population decline could be connected to more everyday issues by arguing that migration is good for the economy. However, the guide advises against using this argument and will elaborate on why, below.

A second way in which campaigners seem to use the 'out of date' argument is to say that the current legislation effectively defines citizenship according to a perceived Italian - presumably white - ethnicity, whereas, Italian society is now in reality more diverse in its ethnic make-up, and the law should be updated to acknowledge this. Campaigners usually add to this that young people who have grown up, studied, and work here all or most of their lives are Italian in every way except on paper.

This messaging is positive insofar that it re-frames the concept of citizenship as attachment to and participation in a society rather than ethnicity. Put otherwise, it emphasises that what determines your identity is where you grow up rather than where your parents are from. By reframing citizenship in this way it may be possible to neutralise the concerns of some of your Supporters (Catholic Humanitarians) and of the Distant Persuadables who are concerned about Italy's (Catholic) identity. The guide suggests how to integrate this messaging into a future campaign narrative in Section IV.

b. Comparing deserving and undeserving citizens

Sometimes campaigners have made the argument that current citizenship rules are unfair because they make it easier for people with Italian ancestry (but little factual connection to the country) to acquire citizenship, while denying it to people who have lived all or most of their lives in Italy.

This guide recommends not using this as a main argument - not only for this campaign but for any campaign on reforming citizenship law. This argument risks nudging your audience to think about acquisition of citizenship in binary terms of who is more deserving, or who is more Italian. Your audience may feel like they're being asked to exclude people with Italian ancestry in favour of newcomers, which could trigger their concerns about loss of Italian identity and cultural heritage.

This argument probably also reinforces two ways of thinking promoted by your opponents. First, that Italians are being 'replaced' by outsiders. Second, it divides Italians into deserving and undeserving. This is counterproductive for campaigners who need to stimulate empathy and solidarity and make your audience understand that division is a tool used by your Opponents.

This is not to say that campaigners should not draw comparisons in your messaging. But rather, it's better to do this in a unifying way by underlining that Italian children denied citizenship are the same as their citizen peers, and should therefore be treated in the same way.

c. Economic arguments including return on investment and the brain drain

The media and politicians emphasise that it's important to judge policies according to whether they are good for 'the economy'. The constant emphasis on 'the economy' - or other issues like crime or migration - put these things at the top of the public's mind. And this is reflected back to us in surveys of public opinion, which can make campaigners think that these are the things that really matter to people. Because we think that people care about the economy, it can be tempting for campaigners to use the argument that migration is good for the economy.

Unfortunately, when we use this argument, there is a high risk that our audience ends up being less supportive of progressive causes. People's attitudes and opinions are in great part determined by the values they prioritise and the way they view the world. The language we use in our messages can trigger or suppress certain values and worldviews, which then has an impact on peoples' attitudes. Messages that bring to the top of people's minds ideas that our purpose in life is to serve the economy or improve or maintain their economic status, lead them to express more selfish and restrictive attitudes. They find acting in solidarity with others less important, place less importance on individual freedom and, consequently, become less supportive of human rights.

Put otherwise, when our opponents say that migration is bad for the economy, this argument can work to stimulate restrictive attitudes towards migration, in part because of the individualistic and status-oriented values and worldviews it activates. But if campaigners try to use the same argument towards their Supporters or Persuadables boost support for migration, it will backfire, precisely because of the values and worldviews it stimulates. Supporters will tend not to find the argument attractive because it does not reflect their worldview and values, and Persuadables will be pushed towards your Opponents' way of thinking.

The only exception to this is if campaigners are carrying out advocacy towards politicians who place priority on the economy. Using the economic argument in this context may be necessary because your advocacy targets are fixed in their priorities, and because you can make these arguments directly to politicians without broadcasting them to the public through a campaign.

This is not to say that we shouldn't talk about our audience's material concerns, such as being able to afford to support themselves and their families. On the contrary, campaigners should connect these concerns to School Child Reform. But we can do this without invoking the counter-productive economic argument. The guide will offer examples in Section IV.

Campaigners also use two related economic arguments. First the argument that Italy has invested in Italian non-citizens through public services like education and health, and by failing to offer them citizenship is unable to recoup this investment. And second, sometimes campaigners add that the denial of citizenship leads talented young people to leave to other EU countries with less restrictive citizenship laws. The guide suggests that these messages, as they are framed at the moment, could be counterproductive, for three reasons.

First, they base the deservedness of young Italian non-citizens on their ability to contribute economically. Although we should emphasise that these people want to contribute to society, we should avoid trying to frame this as a condition for them deserving citizenship. Second, it could backfire by reaffirming opposition messaging that Italian non-citizens are taking up resources that should be reserved for citizens. Third, the brain drain argument could be counterproductive for suggesting that if Italian non-citizens are prepared to leave Italy and acquire citizenship of another country, then they lack real commitment to Italy. This undermines campaigners' claim that beneficiaries of the reform are Italian and want to belong to Italy. Section IV will suggest slight reframes of these arguments that could be used for a campaign narrative.

d. Articulating the harms

The current rules cause harm on two levels. First, they cause harm to Italians denied citizenship, for example by making them feel insecure and unwelcome, depriving them of the chance to contribute to their communities, have a say over decisions that affect them, and blocking them from life-changing opportunities. Second, the rules cause harm to Italian society more broadly.

When talking about the harms caused to Italians denied citizenship, campaigners need to get their audience to recognise the fundamental unfairness of treating one group of people (young Italians denied citizenship) less favourably than another group (young Italians with citizenship), when the two are basically the same (Italians). This means that campaigners have to underline how all young people who are born in or grow up in Italy are all as Italian as each other, while highlighting the difference in treatment they receive (put otherwise, the harms they suffer because of the current citizenship rules).

Some past campaign materials published by the coalition portray two Italian young people (one with, one without citizenship) and state that they have access to all the same things, such as being able to travel or go to university, with the only difference being citizenship[6]. Campaigners are probably hoping their audience will therefore ask why it makes sense to deny citizenship to one of these people. And this is likely to be the reaction of most Supporters because they are predisposed to wanting to treat people equally. But it's likely that Persuadables will be left asking why citizenship is so important if in practice there's no difference in daily life. Put otherwise, Persuadables will probably just see that similar people are being treated similarly, if we don't spell out for them what harm the lack of citizenship brings. Campaigners could look to a referendum campaign by Operation Libero in Switzerland for inspiration if they wish to go down this route[7].

The way that campaigners express the harms Italians denied citizenship suffer could be improved. Campaigners refer to the strictness of the rules and the difficulty of the bureaucratic process as harms in themselves. But it would probably be better to frame these as evidence of a deliberate strategy to make it difficult to acquire citizenship, while pointing out that these rules and processes cause certain harms like putting people in a prolonged situation of uncertainty and insecurity, and making them feel like they do not belong.

Campaigners also refer to the harms that flow from not having citizenship. Sometimes these are articulated vaguely and / or with jargon. For example, saying that people are deprived of their 'civil and political rights' (instead of pointing to concrete examples like voting rights or access to public service jobs). This point is addressed below. Sometimes these harms are articulated in a way that could backfire. For example, saying that people cannot work for the civil service could play into your opponents' messaging that migrants are competing with Italians for desirable jobs. Or saying that school children cannot go on school trips abroad could generate resentment if your audience sees this as a luxury when many Italian families cannot afford to send their children on trips abroad.

The table below sets out the main harms that tend to be put forward by campaigners and suggests how these should be incorporated into future campaign messaging.

6 https://www.obiettivocittadinanza.it/.

7 https://www.operation-libero.ch/de/medien-mitteilungen/2017-01-20/schweizerinnen-und-schweizer-punkt. Readers will find examples of visual materials that emphasise the similarities between Swiss people with and without citizenship. Of course, this is only half the message. It needs to be completed by telling your audience what harm is suffered by non-citizens compared to citizens, which could be done in the same or in separate materials.

The harm as currently expressed
The current conditions (ten-year continuous legal residence requirement and three-year minimum income requirement) are difficult to meet for people with a migration background.
How to incorporate this into future campaign messaging
Rather than being presented as a harm in itself, this should be framed as evidence of a deliberate strategy to exclude Italians with foreign-born parents from citizenship. This should be explained as part of a broader strategy by the far-right to divide Italian society and spread fear and hatred. Campaigners may need to prepare materials that explain why the current conditions are particularly difficult for people with a migration background to fulfil for situations where they have time to communicate in more detail, for example in interviews. e.g. People who migrate are not always aware of the need to register and / or re-register a change of address because the Italian system differs from their home country. Their migration background means that they are often unable to access better paid jobs (due to lack of recognition of qualifications or prejudice from employers or lack of personal connections) which makes it harder to satisfy the three-year minimum income requirement and can also make it harder to rent stable accommodation from a landlord who allows them to register. The current rules mean that if they return to their home country e.g. to take care of an ill parent for a prolonged period, then they will fail the requirement for 'continuous' residence.

The harm as currently expressed
If a child turns 18 before the parents receive citizenship, they have to start their own application again from scratch, which causes further delays for a young person who wants to apply for citizenship.

How to incorporate this into future campaign messaging
As with the previous harm, this should be reframed not as a harm of itself, but rather as evidence of a deliberate strategy to exclude children of foreign-born parents. As with the previous harm, this should be reframed not as a harm of itself, but rather as evidence of a deliberate strategy to exclude children of foreign-born parents. Because the School Child Reform is partly about children, campaigners should emphasise how cruel it is to tie children's status to parents' when the rules are deliberately designed to make it difficult for parents and their adult children. Campaigners may need to prepare materials to expose how this rule doesn't really serve a legitimate purpose and is just designed to make it harder for young people to acquire citizenship. For example: • They're unlikely to be able to satisfy the three-year minimum income requirement if they are studying. • They can have administrative difficulties with registering a new residence when moving cities to go to university. • They can have problems getting documents required from the country of origin of their parents if they haven't lived there. • They have to wait up to four years for a decision from the state.

The harm as currently expressed
Making citizenship rules so restricting is fueling hatred and discrimination.
How to incorporate this into future campaign messaging
This harm is sometimes referred to by campaigners. New campaign messaging should include an explanation of how the far-right is fuelling division and hatred in society for strategic reasons, including by blocking reform of the citizenship law.

The harm as currently expressed
Feelings of insecurity or precarity for children, a lack of welcome or sense of belonging for children.
How to incorporate this into future campaign messaging
For school children there aren't many 'hard' differences between them and children with citizenship, since they seem to get access to the same public services like health care and education. However, the conditions imposed on their parents, in particular in relation to maintaining a valid residence permit, will create a feeling of insecurity for children who feel at risk of being sent to a country they have no connection to. Campaigners should highlight this. If there are situations where parents could end up without a valid residence permit for innocent mistakes that most Italians would forgive, this could also be highlighted. For example, could someone have their residence permit revoked for committing an innocuous offence like taking an apple from the tree of a neighbour that has grown into their property? Or for a parking fine? Or forgetting to pay for a coffee in a bar? Or for forgetting your transport pass on public transport? Or having a broken light on your car? Other conditions related to maintaining a valid residence permit or differential treatment at school, or growing up knowing one will not have certain rights on reaching adulthood should be highlighted to show that children grow up being effectively told that they do not belong and are not welcome. For example: • Having to miss school to report to a police station for renewal of a residence permit. • Knowing that you will not be able to train as a police officer or a teacher. • Knowing you will not be able to vote when you grow up.
The harm as currently expressed
Restrictions on travel abroad: school trips for children, or for extended stays for study or work for young adults.

How to incorporate this into future campaign messaging
On one hand, being excluded from activities like school trips is a strong example of how children denied citizenship get mistreated. But campaigners should be cautious with using this example because it could be that some in their audience can't afford to go on such school trips. This means they could find this kind of example antagonising as it would reaffirm the opposition narrative that people who migrate are competing for resources and taking jobs that should go to 'real' Italians. When it comes to young adults, the example of them not being able to spend extended periods abroad for study or work could make a good tangible example of harm caused by the current rules, since it's not uncommon for people to spend short periods of time abroad, e.g. on Erasmus or traineeships.
The harm as currently expressed
Exclusion from participating in sporting events to represent Italy abroad.
How to incorporate this into future campaign messaging
Campaigners should continue to keep these kinds of stories among the range of communications materials, but should be careful with focusing on this category of Italian denied citizenship disproportionately. This is because this situation is probably not an accurate representation of the 'average' situation. Focusing too much on these cases could end up making the audience favour special rules for those who contribute through sports to Italy, but not for others.
The harm as currently expressed
Exclusion from voting and access to civil service jobs.
How to incorporate this into future campaign messaging

Campaigners should be careful when talking about lack of access to civil service jobs because these jobs are coveted by most people and it could trigger your opponents' messaging that people who migrate are competing with 'real' Italians. Instead, it is better to express this in terms of Italians who want to contribute to their communities. To do this, use examples from jobs that are vocational, e.g. nursing, teaching, police, fire service, so that your audience isn't pushed into thinking about cushy office jobs in the administration.

Exclusion from voting can also be expressed in terms that more powerfully appeal to underlying values, such as the freedom to have a say over decisions that affect us, or having control over who represents us in government.

e. Taking a pedagogical approach

Sometimes campaigners' approach to messaging appears more pedagogical, and look like explainers. Certain materials focus on explaining to the audience the various types of rules that exist for acquiring citizenship and relating these to the various legal reforms that have been proposed to the citizenship law in recent years, such as explaining what 'ius soli' means.

Having this information available for journalists, or to inform Supporters who want to get into more detail is a good idea. But this pedagogical approach should not be at the forefront of your messaging. A pedagogical approach tends to give people facts and knowledge so that they can understand a topic in more detail, including the concepts and technical terms used. But it's not defining technical terms that makes people care about the issue. To make people care about the cause you're promoting, you need to explain what it delivers for your audience, people they care about or people they consider to be like them.

In the context of the current campaign that could mean, for example, rather than explaining what 'ius scholae' is, instead explaining how it delivers on the values that our audience has. So rather than saying 'ius scholae allows children who spend at least five years in school in Italy to become citizens', campaigners could try something like 'by recognising children who grow up Italian as citizens, we make sure that every child, no matter who their parents are, grows up feeling safe and welcome.'

Technical language and jargon

Using complicated language and jargon will put off most people outside your policy bubble. Researchers have found that using overly complicated language and technical terms towards the general public has a number of disadvantages: your audience is likely to judge you to be of low intelligence; be less interested in learning about your topic; consider themselves not to be competent in your issue and feel unqualified to take part in discussions on the topic; and be inclined to disagree with what you're saying. These findings held true even when experimenters provided readers with definitions of technical terms within the text. In contrast, when researchers presented participants with the same information but using more understandable terms, people were more likely to judge the author as intelligent, ended up feeling more knowledgeable on the topic, felt empowered to take part in discussions on the issue and were more likely to be persuaded by the point being made.

This guide suggests that campaigners abandon Latin terms to refer to different citizenship rules in favour of more understandable terms.

Instead of ius soli, try citizenship of the country where you're born or birth citizenship;
Instead of ius sanguinis, try citizenship inherited from your parents or inherited citizenship;
Instead of ius culturae, try citizenship of the country you grew up in;
Instead of ius scholae, try citizenship of the country you grew up and went to school in.

Similarly, campaigners sometimes use terms like 'inclusion' / 'inclusive society', 'diversity', 'fundamental' / 'human rights' / 'civil and political rights'. These terms are likely to be understood by some Supporters - probably Italian Cosmopolitans - but are less likely to be understood by Persuadables. Campaigners should try to break down what they mean in simpler and / or more precise terms for their audience.

For example, concepts like inclusion can be rephrased as something like 'all of us, no matter the colour of our skin or who we pray to, should have the

same chances to do well in life / get a job / to have a say over who governs us / contribute to our communities'.

Campaigners tend to talk about human rights in the context of the harm done to non-citizens, saying that their lack of citizenship means that they do not have access to certain rights. This seems to refer to the right to vote and the right to work for public services. This guide suggests that campaigners use terms like the following in this context:

'Italians denied citizenship are not allowed to...
have a say over decisions that affect them /
have a say over who governs them /
choose / decide who represents them in parliament
...because they aren't allowed to vote.'

'Italians denied citizenship are not allowed to contribute to their communities by becoming teachers, nurses or police officers.'

f. Storytelling

Some campaigners illustrate the unfairness of the current citizenship law through personal stories of individuals who are in the process / have gone through the process of applying for citizenship. Storytelling is an effective tool for making your message less abstract and more relatable for your audience. This guide encourages campaigners to continue to use it. However, campaigners are also encouraged to modify their approach.

The risk of storytelling is that the storyteller focuses only on the individual or small group they're talking about without including the broader picture such as: how many people are in a similar situation, what are the rules or systems that produced this problem, why are the rules like this and how can we change them? A consequence of storytelling that is only focused on the journey of the protagonist(s) is that although we might succeed in getting the audience to help that individual or small group, we don't change the way that the audience thinks about the issue in general to support changing the system.

A more effective way of approaching storytelling is to begin from your campaign narrative. The guide will suggest possible narratives in Section IV. Campaigners can then integrate the story or stories of individuals into the narrative to give life and colour to their narrative. Campaigners should also consider who they choose to tell their stories, as research and practice suggests that it is counter-productive to only use people from the marginalised group itself. See Section IV on the choice of messengers.

g. Negating your opponent's frame

Sometimes campaigners use messages that are simple negations of their opponent's messages. For example, their opponents argue that there's no need to change the rules because granting citizenship is just a formality and doesn't really alter an individual's situation. To which campaigners have replied 'it's not just a piece of paper / it's not just a bureaucratic or legal issue'. Similarly, opponents may argue that Italians denied citizenship are asking for 'privileges', to which campaigners reply 'we are not seeking privileges'.

Research shows that direct contradictions in fact end up reinforcing the original message because the brain is not good at processing negatives. This means that techniques like myth-busting or negation of your opponent's messages will backfire, at least when communicating to Persuadables, who do not firmly share campaigners' understanding of the issue.

It's important to remember this going into a new campaign because opponents of the School Child Reform will respond to your messaging with their own messages, including with misinformation, and campaigners will need to counter these effectively. Section IV will deal with how to respond to your opposition messaging.

h. What's not in your messaging that needs to be there

Currently, campaigners' messaging is missing certain elements that are necessary to make it compelling. Although you have pointed to the far-right deliberately conflating reform of citizenship rules with policy on migration in general, campaigners do not really explain why the far-right is opposed to reform. Campaigners also don't really offer their audience a vision of what the future would look like if their proposals are successful. Section IV will go into greater detail on these missing elements.

IV. Suggestions for new campaign messaging

This section will explain how to structure a persuasive narrative, how to use the narrative for campaign messaging, and offer campaigners suggestions for narratives to use in campaigning. We suggest that campaigners use the messaging suggested in this section both to talk to their Supporters and to Close and Distant Persuadables. This is because to create support for the School Child Reform among Persuadables, campaigners will need to equip their Supporters with messaging that can shift Persuadables so that they can spread it organically.

When this guide uses the term 'narrative' it refers to a type of message that contains certain steps, implemented in a certain order. This narrative structure and order has been found to be the most effective form of messaging in persuading an audience to care about your issue, share your understanding of the situation (that it is a problem and who is causing it and why), agree with your solution, believe that change is possible and take the action you request of them.

How to use the four-part narrative structure

Follow the four-part structure in full as often as you can. Some formats make it possible to use a full narrative, or allow you to add to the narrative with more detail, statistics, storytelling elements, or hooks for the media. For example, press releases, speeches, lines to take in an interview, or a video script.

Of course, it won't always be appropriate or possible to deliver the whole narrative in full every time. Sometimes you will be using communications formats with limited space. In this situation it's fine to use only part of your narrative. Choose which part of the narrative to focus on according to what you think your audience needs to hear the most. For example, if you think your audience doesn't understand why the problem is happening, you might choose to focus only on this. Or if you think your audience believes that change is too difficult, you might choose to emphasise past successes. Or if your audience is at risk of accepting a negative stereotype advanced by your opponents that the School Child Reform will be abused by undocumented new arrivals, you might choose to re-write your audience's frame of who will benefit from the reform with materials that emphasise how Italians denied citizenship are already part of our communities. Sometimes the format you have available only allows you to

summarise the essence of your narrative, such as when you develop a campaign slogan and image or hashtags.

Look at your campaign materials in the round and ask: are there enough products carrying the whole narrative for my audience to see it; do my other products either remind my audience of that overall message or help them understand it? And don't forget, you don't need to deliver all your message in text: you can represent elements of it through images and videos. For more inspiration you can consult Liberties' online course 'Foundations of Persuasive Progressive Messaging', modules six and seven or part three of Liberties' guide 'How to Message on Human Rights' on audio-visual materials.

a. What is a narrative?

A narrative contains these elements, in the following order.

1) Values

Begin your message by reminding your audience how the cause you're promoting helps to deliver something that they find important for themselves, for people they care about or people who they consider to be like them. In the context of the current campaign this requires campaigners to do two things:

First, to make a link between something that your audience finds important and your goal of passing the School Child Reform. For example, one option that this guide suggests is to remind your audience about the environment we want to offer to our children: that they should grow up in a welcoming and supportive environment where they can thrive and are prepared to contribute to the future success of the country in adulthood.

Second, to create empathy and connection between themselves and Italians denied citizenship. The object of this is to make your audience recognise that Italians denied citizenship are 'people like them' or 'people like people they care about'. If your audience considers Italians denied citizenship to fall into these categories, they are much more likely to want the same treatment for them as for themselves or people they

care about. You can do this partly in the first step of your narrative, e.g. by emphasising that we want the same treatment for all children regardless of the colour of their skin or where their parents were born. But you also create empathy and connection through communications materials that show that Italians denied citizenship are people like your audience or people your audience care about, and that they are already part of us and our communities.

2) Problem

Identify the harm that is caused by the current situation, both to Italians denied citizenship and to Italian society. The way you express this harm should show your audience that there is a conflict between the values that you set out in the first step and the current situation. You also need to point out who is responsible for this and why they are acting this way.

In the context of this campaign, we suggest campaigners should identify 'certain politicians' or 'extremist' politicians as the cause of the harm because they are blocking the School Child Reform. We would suggest trying to minimise the extent to which you identify an entire political party or the 'far-right' as the cause of the harm, because there's a risk you could alienate people who voted for these parties, but who are still potentially supportive of the School Child Reform. We suggest trying to remove the political tribalism around this reform by reminding your audience that this is a moral question, for example by characterising it as right vs wrong, not right vs left and reminding our audience that our views on how we should treat children are the same regardless of who we vote for.

The guide suggests that campaigners identify the reason that 'certain (extremist) politicians' are causing this harm is that this is part of a strategy to divide Italians by spreading hatred against marginalised groups to gain political support and / or distract voters from other problems they have created or failed to solve. Campaigners will be more familiar with what these problems are. For now, we have framed this in the narratives below in terms of politicians who instead of addressing people's real worries like the lack of funding for certain public services or low wages, they just scapegoat people who migrate and impose rules on them that punish their children. Making the link between resisting the School Child Reform and people's worries about their standard of living will help your audience recognise that attacks against the School Child Reform are also attacks against their own interests. This guide suggests highlighting that politicians who oppose the reform are outliers whose position does not reflect what most people want on this question.

The harm you choose to describe will depend on the first part of the narrative. If we stick with the above example, where we remind your audience that we should offer children a supportive environment so that they can thrive and contribute in adulthood, we might identify the harm as making children feel insecure and unwelcome, taking away opportunities for them to realise their dreams and excluding them from contributing to and having a say in their communities once they become adults.

3) Solution

Show your audience that there is a solution to bring the situation back in line with the values we started with in step 1. For this campaign, the solution is adopting the School Child Reform. The guide suggests that campaigners should emphasise that this is a pragmatic, common sense solution. Doing so will nudge your audience to see your position as reasonable, and help to underline that those who oppose the reform are being unreasonable.

Do not dedicate much time to explaining the legal or policy changes when talking to the public. By all means develop explainer materials for journalists or Supporters who want to go into more depth. Legal and policy details are also appropriate for advocacy, but it will make a public audience tune out. When talking to a public audience it is more important to give your audience a vision of what the world will look like when your solution is implemented. People need a vision to fight for, and that vision should correspond to the values that you set out in the step 1.

4) Call to action and recollection of past successes

By asking your audience to do something to show that they support your solution you help to build their attachment to your cause. Research shows that when people take action to support a cause it helps create a 'social identity' for them, which in turn makes them more likely to remain engaged and take further action in future. This is important if you're trying to expand your base of supporters to mobilise in future campaigns. A call to action can be something small like asking them to share or respond to your content.

You should also make your audience feel that change is possible. Research shows that even when you convince your audience to agree with you, they can still be reluctant to do the things you ask of them because they have a sense of fatalism and feel that 'nothing changes'. But giving them examples of times in the past when something in society was changed for the better by people coming together, you can help to overcome their scepticism. The example you give need not relate directly to the cause you are promoting. In practice this recollection of past successes might get mixed into the previous step, the solution. Below is an example of what this might look like:

'Just like we joined together to achieve paid parental leave / marriage equality / free pre-school day care / care for each other during the pandemic ... we can demand that our leaders... If you agree, share this content / talk to a neighbour / tell us why you care and include the campaign hashtag ...'

How should we refer to the School Child Reform's beneficiaries?

Campaigners currently refer to people who were born in or grew up in Italy and have foreign parents as 'de facto Italians' or 'Italians without citizenship'. The guide suggests that campaigners could try different terms to refer to the group.

'De facto' citizen is probably not easy for most people to understand, since the audience is supposed to infer that 'de facto' means not 'de jure', or at least that 'de facto' is less than an actual citizen.

'Italian without citizenship' is probably easier to understand, but makes the situation seem like it's nobody's fault. It implies that there is a phenomenon in society where some Italians don't have citizenship. This even leaves room for people to blame the individual without citizenship.

The guide suggests that campaigners find a phrase that captures the idea that these are people like your audience who are being unfairly denied something that should flow from being Italian. Campaigners will need to work out whether this works linguistically in Italian, but the guide suggests a term like 'Italians denied citizenship' or 'Italians deprived of citizenship'.

These terms ('de facto citizen', 'Italians without citizenship', 'Italians denied citizenship') can be useful to refer to beneficiaries of the reform when campaigners want to emphasise the harms they are talking about. But campaigners should also find a more positive term to use when talking about their vision of how things should be. For example, it may be better to refer to 'aspiring citizens' or 'Italians awaiting citizenship' because audiences tend to respond better to positive language. This could be something for campaigners to test with their audiences.

Campaigners could consider experimenting with different terms to see which perform better with their audiences. One way to do this would be A/B testing using identical posts with different hashtags and comparing how they perform. It could be that certain terms perform better with different audiences or at different phases of the campaign.

e.g. #ItaliansDeniedCitizenship; #AspiringCitizens; #FutureCitizens.

b. Suggestions for new campaign narratives

Below are two suggested narratives. Narrative A is more focused on how we should treat children just because this is what is right for children. Narrative B adds that the reason we should treat children in a particular way is also because we prepare them to contribute to the country. The narratives are stripped down to a core minimum of detail. In practice, campaigners will add extra detail and depth depending on the context in which they are communicating.

Narrative A

Whoever we vote for / whatever our party, most of us agree that every child deserves to pursue their dreams, no matter what they look like or where they are from.

But certain politicians are putting our children's futures at risk. They fail to fund the schools, hospitals and care homes or create the fairly-paid jobs we all need to thrive. And then they try to distract us by blaming hard times on people who come here and punishing their children. By refusing to create fair rules for children who grow up in Italy to become citizens, some of our politicians are depriving our kids of opportunities and making them grow up feeling scared and rejected.

This is a choice we don't need to keep making. Just like in the past when we [insert a past success], we can demand our leaders do the right thing for all our children. The School Child Reform is a common sense solution that makes all children who grow up in Italy feel welcome and supported so they can flourish by creating a fair roadmap to citizenship.

[Insert call to action].

Narrative B

Most of us agree that all children, no matter what they look like or where they are from, deserve to grow up feeling safe and welcome so they can pursue their dreams and contribute to our communities when they grow up.

But today certain politicians are putting our children's futures at risk and damaging our country. They fail to fund the schools, hospitals and care homes or create the fairly-paid jobs we all need to thrive. And then they try to distract us by blaming hard times on people who come here and punishing their children. By refusing to create fair rules for children who grow up in Italy to become citizens, some of our politicians are depriving our kids of the stability and opportunities they need to flourish and help our country.

Just like in the past when we [insert past success], we can decide to do things differently. This is not a question of right and left. It's a question of right and wrong. The School Child Reform is a common sense solution that protects all our children and improves our country by creating a fair roadmap to citizenship.

[Insert call to action].

The guide suggests that campaigners should experiment using Narrative A and Narrative B to see which works better with their target audiences. When using Narrative B, campaigners will probably want to elaborate on what they mean by 'contributing' to our communities and 'improving' our country. The guide suggests that campaigners avoid talking about the contribution to the economy or to culture in the way they have in the past for two reasons.

First, the guide has already explained why the economic argument for migration is counterproductive. Second, debates around migration have centred around whether people who migrate are good or bad for the economy and/or culture, and part of your Supporters and Persuadables either aren't sure or think that migrants have a negative impact on the economy or culture or both. Your opponents will try to conflate the School Child Reform with migration more generally in order to stimulate opposition. So it's better for campaigners to avoid using terms that will trigger this 'migration is good / bad for the economy and culture' pattern of thinking when promoting the School Child Reform.

Rather, when elaborating on what campaigners mean by 'contributing' the guide suggests campaigners talk about how people participate in their societies and communities. We're still talking about things you could characterise and economic or cultural, but doing it in a way that is less likely to make your audience slip into an old, unproductive debate. We suggest focusing on the small things in peoples' everyday life. That could include taking part in sports (not necessarily at an elite level), being a good neighbour, supporting their family members and friends, doing jobs that make a positive difference, including vocational jobs that they are excluded from such as teaching, nursing, the police and other valued public services. Campaigners should try to make these examples feel as normal as possible, rather than 'heroic' or 'noble' because otherwise they will not be believable to the audience and it creates the risk that the audience will feel threatened because they are competing with Italians denied citizenship. If possible, show Italians denied citizenship doing these things together with citizens. Campaigners should create the feeling in their audience that Italians denied citizenship match up to the way they (would like to) see themselves: trying to be a good person to others, building a future for themselves and taking part in daily life.

c. Parts of the narrative that will need extra attention

I. Creating an accurate frame of the beneficiaries of the School Child Reform

Campaigners should probably make an effort to create an accurate frame of who is the typical beneficiary of the School Child Reform, because opponents to the reform will probably promote negative stereotypes based on misinformation - in particular the idea that people who have just arrived in Italy without documentation can game the system by having a baby.

To put the right frame in your audience's mind campaigners should avoid directly contradicting or myth-busting the lies of their opponents. Instead campaigners should adopt two approaches. First, respond to lies with a truth sandwich format, as set out in the examples of how to respond to attacks. Second, pro-actively produce visual and audio-visual materials that underline that the beneficiaries of the School Child Reform are children and young people who are part of our societies, living, playing and working alongside people just like them. Campaigners should pay attention to the advice given in the textbox on their choice of messengers.

Messengers

Communicators should keep in mind that the messenger can be as important as the message. Your audience should perceive your messenger as warm, personable and authentic. The latter meaning that they have some competence or experience to speak on the issue and are not perceived as promoting a self-interested agenda. The messenger doesn't just include people who physically repeat your message, but also the people who you show in your visual materials.

Different messengers will be effective for different target audiences. To know for sure whether your messenger will be effective you need to research your audience. If you need to speak to different audiences you can choose to include a mix of messengers or work in coalition with other organisations, including from other sectors such as trade unions or business, and divide your target audiences among yourselves.

There is evidence that activists will not always be regarded as effective messengers by people outside their existing supporters because the public can have a negative view of activists as militant, angry, dictatorial, condescending and generally not very nice. Having said this, frontline aid workers like nurses, doctors and teachers, were found to be good messengers to talk about development aid.

The 'ordinary person' as a messenger.

Successive editions of the Edelman Trust Barometer suggest that audiences find 'a person like yourself' to be trusted messengers. This seems to be corroborated by campaigns that have used messengers whom their target audience identify as 'like me'. This means that if your target audience is people from the marginalised group itself, they may be more likely to regard people from their own group as an effective messenger. Conversely, it also means that when talking to the 'majority' population (who are likely to be among Supporters and Persuadables), you probably need to include messengers from the 'majority' population and not only people from the marginalised group in question. It seems that people from the 'majority' population may perceive people from marginalised groups as self-interested in advocating for a cause that benefits them.

This raises an ethical difficulty because usually one of the problems organisations promoting equality are trying to combat is the fact that people from marginalised

groups have been deprived of a voice in society. Using people from the majority population to carry a message concerning people from the marginalised group may well feel like perpetuating the marginalisation you wish to combat. Campaigns have tried to reconcile these concerns by: including messengers both from the marginalised group and the 'majority' population; by including visual materials that show people from the marginalised group together as part of a community with people from the 'majority' population in addition to focusing only on people from the marginalised group.

- For the purposes of this campaign, campaigners could consider, alongside storytelling by Italians denied citizenship themselves:

- Having school teachers emphasising the lack of difference between children and / or how they see pupils negatively affected by lack of citizenship / precarity;

- Classmates speaking about how they feel the same as their friends who are denied citizenship and want their friends to have the same rights and not to feel discriminated against, how it makes no sense that two children born in the same hospital who've lived all their life in Italy be denied / given citizenship just because of their parents, how they want their friends to be able to vote like them in a few years;

- Parents talking about how they want to make their children feel like they belong and are welcome and that this should be the same for all children regardless of where their parents come from;

- People from the police force, teaching unions, hospital administrations, talking about how important it is for their institutions to welcome talented Italians who have a passion for the job and want to make their country a better place to live, and that it makes no sense to stop people contributing just because of where their parents come from;

- Showing young Italians denied citizenship doing things together with and just like 'ordinary' Italians such as practising hobbies together, studying or working to underline how they are already part of our local communities.

II. Unpacking the harms of the current citizenship rules

It's likely that our target audiences don't really know how the current rules work and what makes them so unreasonable and unfair. Campaigners should prepare communications materials that unpack for people how unfair and unreasonable the current rules are and illustrate how they are designed to stop people becoming citizens.

We have seen that Close and Distant Persuadables mostly agree with birth citizenship under certain conditions, and that parts of them also either blame Italian institutions or migrants themselves for not being able to integrate successfully. The implications of this are that it's likely Persuadables do expect people to have to follow certain procedures and fulfil certain conditions to acquire citizenship, but they also probably expect that procedures should be fair and set people up to fail or undergo undue hardship.

This guide suggests that campaigners could use storytelling (and explainers for journalists and Supporters who wish to know more) to explain how the current rules are so unreasonable, such as how easy it is to interrupt one's residence for perfectly understandable reasons. We also note campaigners had a previous idea of developing a game for people to play that would get across how difficult it is for people to satisfy the conditions. In doing this, campaigners should follow the suggestions in 'Section II.d Articulating the Harms'.

Below is an example of how this could be articulated in the context of a debate or interview. This particular example focuses on the harm to the child or young person. It avoids giving an opinion on whether current citizenship rules for adults are appropriate because this widens the scope of the debate away from children, where there is more likely to be broader support. Instead, it focuses on how children are in effect being unfairly punished by rules that target adults.

Opponent: We have a fair process that places a reasonable requirement on people who want to become citizens to prove their commitment to the country and show that they will contribute or at least be able to support themselves. There's nothing wrong with the rules because they strike a balance between protecting Italian society while still allowing people who prove themselves to become citizens.

Response: We have a system that punishes children by making it deliberately difficult for their parents to become a citizen. What we're saying is, OK, as a country we can continue to discuss the conditions for adults. But in the meantime, do we have to be so cruel to the children who are born here or come here as young children and grow up as Italians?

The road to citizenship has been filled with obstacles to make it hard for parents to become citizens. Which means that even children born here - which is the vast majority - end up having to wait until they are 18 to start their own applications, which again takes several more years and then they face the same barriers as their parents. And while they're growing up, we're telling them that they don't belong and are not welcome, that they could be deported at any time if their parent forgets to pay a parking ticket to a country they don't know where they don't speak the language. That when they grow up they can't vote, can't travel or study abroad, can't represent Italy in sports, can't do that dream job of being a teacher or a nurse or a police officer.

That's not how most people want to treat children in this country. And we don't need to keep doing this. We want children to feel safe and welcome and help them thrive so they can contribute to their communities. We have a common sense solution that gives a fair roadmap to citizenship for children who grow up here. If you've grown up in Italy and gone to school here, you're Italian in every way. It makes no sense to punish them because their parents weren't born here.

d. Responding to attacks from opponents to the School Child Reform

As campaigners roll out their messaging it is inevitable that opponents to the School Child Reform will go on the attack. Campaigners should be prepared to respond to these attacks in a way that does not feed your opponents' messaging. This means campaigners should avoid straight-up contradictions, myth-busting or fact-checking because these involve repeating your opponents' arguments. This has the effect of reinforcing them in the minds of your audience - particularly Close and Distant Persuadables.

When responding to your opponents' arguments it is important to follow the same structure as a narrative, set out above. Depending on the context, campaigners may only need to go through steps 1 to 3. Begin by setting out how the cause you are promoting delivers something that your audience finds important. When explaining the problem, point out that your opponent is lying and explain why. Do not repeat the lie, just allude to it. Then point to your solution and explain how it delivers a vision of society that aligns with the values you started with. This is sometimes referred to as a 'truth sandwich' because it's a narrative specifically designed to dissolve your opponent's lies.

Responding to misinformation with a truth sandwich

1) Values: Set out how the cause you are promoting delivers something that your audience finds important. Use the values set out in one of the suggested narratives about the environment we should offer to children.

2) The problem: Point out that your opponent is lying and explain why. Do not repeat the lie, just allude to it.

3) The solution: Point to your solution and explain how it delivers a vision of society that aligns with the values you started with.

If you are in a situation where you are pressed on a particular point that risks repeating your opponent's messaging, answer the question quickly and then pivot back towards your main message.

Opponents to the reform are likely to use misinformation to deliberately confuse the audience by linking it to migration in general and saying that it is open to abuse. Below is an example of how to respond.

Attack: 'The School Child Reform will stop us from deporting illegal immigrants. They will step off the boat, give birth and after their child gets citizenship by going to school, they will use the right to family reunification to stay here.'

Response: Most of us believe we should give children the best start in life. This is a law that is true to our values. With this reform, we stop telling children who have spent all or most of their lives here that they don't belong, that they could suddenly be uprooted and sent to a country they don't know, that unlike their friends, they won't be able to vote or that they should forget about becoming a teacher or a nurse when they grow up. Certain politicians are spreading lies about the law because they want us to fear and blame people who migrate for the problems our leaders aren't solving. Only a despicable politician would want to punish children just to get votes. The School Child Reform is common sense solution that puts our values first, creates a fair roadmap to citizenship for children who grow up here, and gives all our kids the stable environment and opportunities they need to thrive and contribute to our country.

Currently, around one million children and young people find themselves denied citizenship. Campaigners need to find a way of talking about this number, while at the same time not scaring or overwhelming their audience. While campaigners might feel that the high number makes their argument even more compelling, there is also a risk that their audience will fear that granting citizenship to such a large number of people could have some serious and unforeseen negative consequence. Because of this it is important to get across that these are people who are already part of Italian society, and that the consequences can only be positive. Below is an example of how to respond.

Attack: 'The School Child Reform will suddenly add one million people to competitions for civil service jobs'.

Response: We deserve a common sense roadmap to citizenship for the children and young people who grow up Italian. The School Child Reform means we allow them to develop and use their talents whether that's as a teacher, a nurse or something else, to make our country better for everyone.

If possible add: At the moment, certain politicians are excluding some of our children just because of where their parents are from. They want to spread fear and blame to distract us from their failure to solve the problems we worry about like the cost of living crisis. We have the chance now to recognise the young people living in our communities, studying in our schools and universities or working alongside us for what they are: Italian, and allow them to contribute.

Opponents to the reform are also likely to try to tap into your audience's fears about a loss of Italian identity and, in particular ,a perceived threat from children and young people whose parents are muslim. The guide suggests that campaigners emphasise our shared humanity and how certain politicians use division as a strategy either to gain votes or distract from their own failure to solve social and economic problems.

Attack: 'The School Child Reform is a Trojan horse to destroy Italian culture. Children are shaped by their parents and their communities, especially when it comes to muslims. Five years of school isn't enough to turn someone into an Italian. Look at second and third generation muslims in France.'

Response: We deserve a common sense solution that respects our values, creates a fair roadmap to citizenship, and gives all our children the stable environment and opportunities they need to thrive and contribute to our country.

If possible add: That means recognising that children and young people who have grown up here, who study, go to school, live and work together with us are part of Italy. But today a handful of politicians attack and blame people who migrate to Italy to gain votes and to distract us from their failure to fix the problems we worry about. And they want us to tell these children that they don't belong and cannot have the

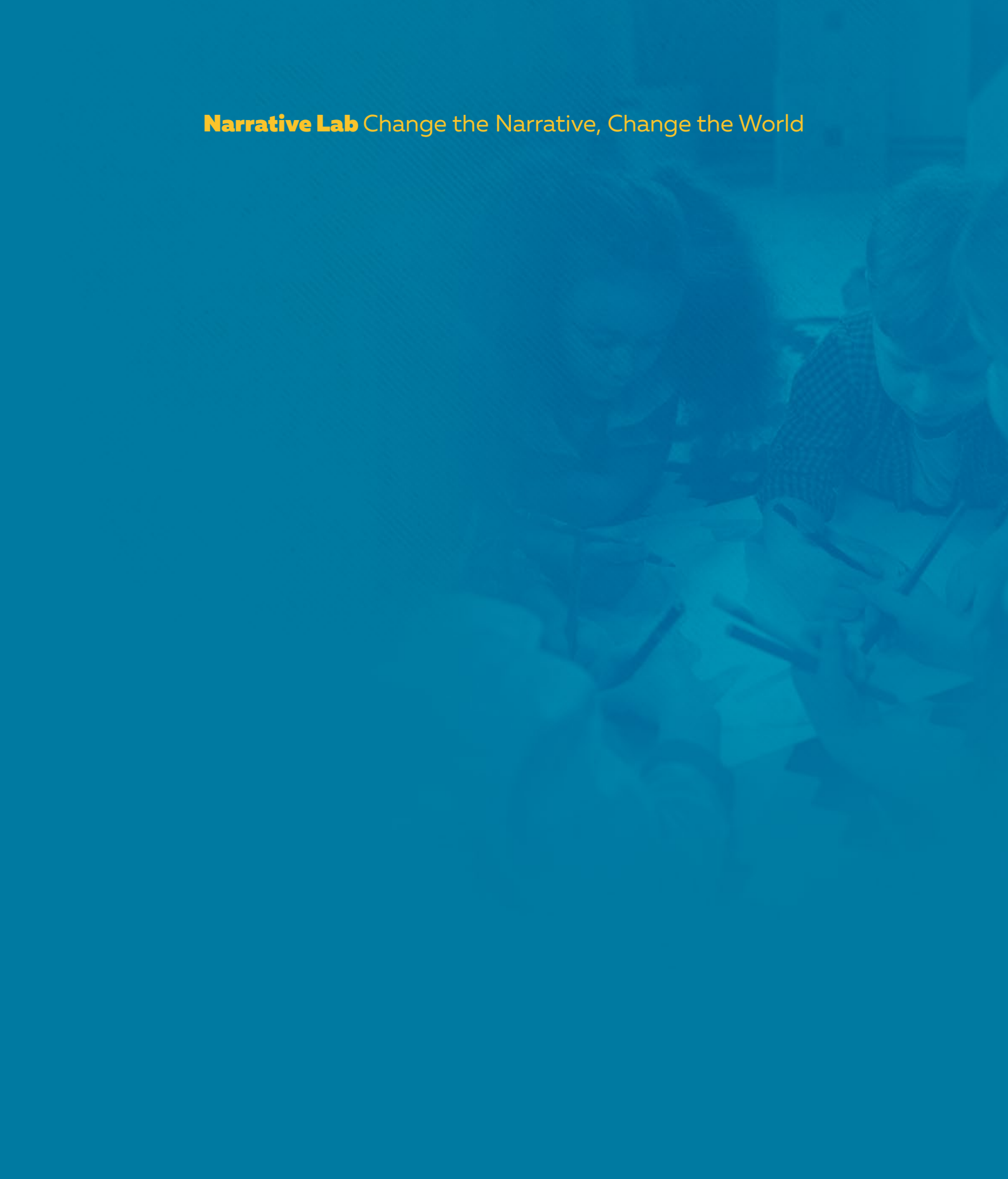
same opportunities or future just because of where their parent were born. Most of us believe that this is cruel, it's not how we want to treat our kids.

Opponents are also likely to use a 'slippery slope' argument, saying that this reform is just a first step towards opening Italy's borders. The guide suggests that campaigners

Attack: 'This isn't just about one million foreigners who will get citizenship. If we give citizenship away like this it's just going to encourage more people to come in the future, because they will believe that eventually they can benefit from the new rules.'

Response: We deserve a common sense roadmap to citizenship for children who are born or grow up here. One that respects our values and makes our country stronger. A few politicians want to turn something that is common sense into a way to divide and distract us - putting the blame on people who migrate, and punishing their children, instead of doing something to solve the problems people are really worried about like the state of our schools or the lack of jobs.

Narrative Lab Change the Narrative, Change the World



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