

PANORAMA

The vocational education and training system in Italy

Short description

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and training system in Italy
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ISFOL

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Foreword

This publication is part of a series featuring short descriptions of vocational training in different countries⁽¹⁾. The series belongs to Cedefop's traditional range of products introducing vocational training systems along with the Monographs and the Cedefop Info newsletter. At the same time, however, this publication marks the transition to a new information system at Cedefop.

eKnowVET, the new Cedefop database, will offer on-line information on initial and continuing vocational training in partner countries. The database is regularly updated by Cedefop's reference network (ReferNet). The standard entry format allows country-specific and multi-country searches covering eleven thematic areas in overview ('Thematic Overviews') and in detail. With each change in the Council presidency, key data on the relevant country are sifted from the 'Thematic Overviews' and published in the form of a short description – a snapshot of the country's system. This publication represents a new venture for both Cedefop and its partners. Reader feedback is most welcome.

Italy is a prime example of what it means to capture one moment in a constantly developing system. The lengthy monograph was being compiled at a time when reforms were being introduced. These reforms had to be incorporated into the text. Similarly, as this short description was going to press, considerable restructuring of the education and training system was imminent – the merger of the *sistema dell'istruzione* and the *sistema della formazione professionale*. Legislation establishing the right and the duty (*diritto-dovere*) to complete initial education and training is intended to guarantee all young people a training qualification before they enter the labour market. This will also involve pooling vocational training courses and improving their standing.

In such circumstances, accessing up-to-date, reliable information requires cooperation in all areas and between institutions. We therefore wish to thank ISFOL Director Antonio Francioni for his support, the *Ricerche sull'informazione e la documentazione* and *Sistemi formativi* units for coordinating the project and the *Formazione continua*, *Sperimentazione formativa* and *Metodologie per la formazione* staff for their contributions. We are particularly grateful to Marcella Milana from the *Sistemi formativi* department for her final editing of the text and for her close cooperation with the Cedefop team. We are also indebted to the Italian representatives on the Cedefop Management Board, Ms Aviana Bulgarelli and Mr Pietro Gelardi, for their comments on the manuscript. Finally we express our thanks to all the Cedefop colleagues who were involved in this project, especially Gundula Bock for her ongoing assistance in preparing the text.

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July 2003

⁽¹⁾ See also <http://www2.trainingvillage.gr/etv/vetsystems/report.asp>

Introduction

This publication was produced in the framework of Cedefop's Knowledge Management System (KMS), a system of information on vocational training which ongoing cooperation among the Member States involved in the ReferNet project (European network of reference and expertise in the field of vocational education and training) is helping to build up.

The aim is to provide a description of the vocational education and training system in Italy which, albeit in summary form, gives details of developments in recent years.

There have in practice been major changes as a result of the introduction of new segments (higher technical education and training, adult education), the strengthening of existing segments (apprenticeship) and the introduction of innovative practices into the system (certification and transparency) with the involvement of the social partners. This has moved the Italian system closer to the systems of the other Member States.

A key change came about in 1999 when it became compulsory for all young people to take part in education and training schemes up to the age of 18. This compulsory education and training was recently confirmed as the right/duty to participate in education and vocational training for at least 12 years.

The process of innovation was placed on a regulatory footing in the recently approved laws reforming education and training and the labour market.

The law reforming education and vocational training in particular offers an opportunity to unify the education and vocational training system which has traditionally been structured as two separate systems. The law reforming the labour market radically changes instruments and pathways in order to make it easier to find work.

When deciding on the content of this report, ISFOL drew on its work in recent years in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, the Regions, the social partners, the European Union and other organisations working to develop vocational training.

Drafting of the final text required detailed work to define terms and concepts which, although used throughout the Community, often have specific national meanings.

We would like to thank Cedefop for their considerable help with the preparation of this report.

Giorgio Allulli
Colombo Conti
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July 2003

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1. General policy context

1.1. Political and administrative structure

The Italian State has 20 Regions, 103 Provinces and 8100 local authorities. It has exclusive legislative powers over most of the main issues, including general rules on education and the setting of minimum service levels (Article 117 of the Constitution). Five Regions (Trentino-Alto Adige, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Valle d'Aosta, Sicily and Sardinia) have special status and are given greater autonomy under the Constitution in various areas including education. The Trentino-Alto Adige Region, moreover, has two autonomous provinces (Trento and Bolzano) which in turn have considerable autonomy over education and vocational training.

The Regions have 'exclusive' legislative powers over vocational education and training, apart from tasks connected with the European Union, and parallel legislative powers over general education, although the State is responsible for deciding the basic principles (Article 117, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Constitution).

Provinces and local authorities provide school buildings and infrastructure, and carry out tasks in the area of adult education and guidance, including the management of employment services. Steps are currently being taken to delegate the management of vocational training from the Regions to the Provinces.

1.2. Italy in figures

The XIVth General Census by the national statistical office (ISTAT) showed a resident population of 56 995 744 on 21 October 2001, with a high population density (189.1 inhabitants per km²). 44.9% of Italians live in the northern regions, 36% in the southern regions and 19.1% in the central regions. The birth rate is continuing to fall, more sharply in Italy's northern and central regions than in its southern regions. Forecasts bear out the gradual aging of the population, as in other EU Member States.

Italy and its Regions



Table 1: Resident population (1991, 1996 and 2001)

Year	Population	% change from previous year
1991	56 778 031	-1.7
1996	57 460 977	0.2
2001	56 995 744	-1.5

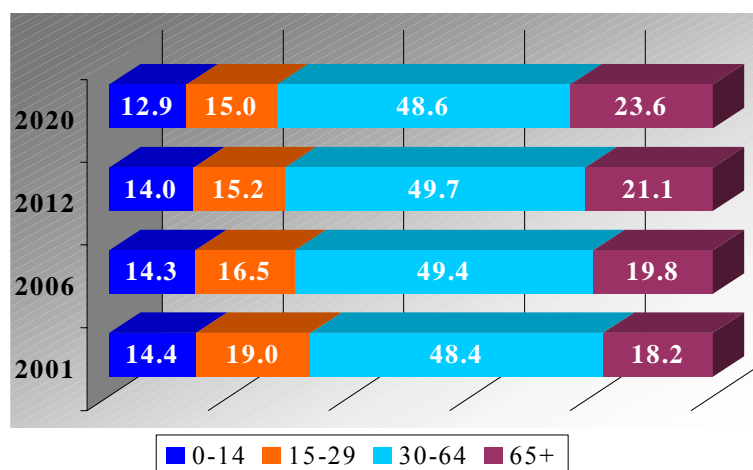
Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT data.

Table 2: Structure of the population in 2001
(by age group and geographical areas, in %)

Areas	Age groups		
	0-14	15-64	65 +
North	12.6	67.9	19.5
Centre	13.0	67.2	19.8
South	17.3	66.9	15.8
Italy	14.4	67.4	18.2

Source: ISTAT.

Figure 1: Resident population by age group on 1 January of each year
(2001 and forecasts for 2006, 2012 and 2020, in %)



Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT data.

Table 3 shows the increase in the number of foreign nationals resident in Italy in both absolute terms and as a percentage of the resident Italian population.

Table 3: Number of foreign nationals resident in Italy on 1 January (1997, 1999 and 2001)

Year	Population	% of Italian residents
1997	884 555	1.5
1999	1 116 394	1.9
2001	1 464 589	2.5

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT data.

As regards the economy, most employees work in the service sector (see Table 6). The overall employment rate is lower than the European average (see Table 4).

Table 4: Main economic indicators (1991, 1996 and 2001)

Indicators	1991	1996	2001
GDP at market prices (EUR billions)	744.0	982.4	1 216.7
Agriculture's share of GDP (in %)	3.9	3.2	2.7
Industry's share of GDP (in %)	37.9	29.2	27.7
Services' share of GDP (in %)	58.2	67.6	69.6
Inflation, index-linked to 1991 as the base year	100.0	124.9	138.3
Employment rate (in %)	52.8	51.0	54.6
Unemployment rate (in %)	7.2	12.1	9.5
Public expenditure on education and training as percentage of GDP	5.4	4.9	5.0

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT and MIUR data.

Table 5: Employment rates by gender and by geographical area (in 2001, in %)

	Areas		
	North	Centre	South
Total	62.6	57.3	43.1
Men	73.6	69.6	60.4
Women	51.5	45.1	26.1

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT data.

Table 6: Breakdown of employment by economic sector and geographical area (2001, in %)

Sector	Areas			
	North	Centre	South	Italy
Agriculture	3.6	3.8	9.2	5.2
Industry	37.3	28.5	24.2	31.8
Services	59.1	67.7	66.6	63.0

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT data.

The overall unemployment rate is much higher in the south than in the centre and north; it is also much higher among women and young people (aged under 25) (see national strategies and political priorities in Chapters 2 and 11).

Table 7: Unemployment rates by geographical area (2001, in %)

	Areas		
	North	Centre	South
Total	4.0	7.4	19.3
Men	2.7	5.4	9.0
Women	5.9	10.3	28.1
Young people (up to 25)	11.2	24.2	50.8

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT data.

Table 8: Distribution of population (15+) by educational level attained (1991, 1998 and 2001, in %)

ISCED levels ^(a)	1991	1998	2001
ISCED 1 at most (no qualification or primary certificate)	39.9	32.2	30.9
ISCED 2 (lower secondary certificate)	35.3	33.2	32.8
ISCED 3 (upper secondary certificate)	20.6	27.8	29.1
ISCED 5 (university qualification)	4.2	6.8	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) International standard classification of education

Qualifications at the ISCED 4 level are statistically insignificant at present

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT data.

2. Policy developments

The current government drew up the objectives and priorities for vocational training in a White Paper on the Italian labour market (October 2001). The strategy that the White Paper outlines sees vocational training as the main way of bringing about an increased employment rate which is predicted to reach 70% by 2010. Proposals to develop the training system in particular include encouragement for alternance training, which can help to remedy the problems and the length of the transition between school and work, and continuing training to safeguard and improve human resource qualifications.

These objectives were endorsed and fleshed out in the *Patto per l'Italia* (Pact for Italy) of July 2002, an agreement between the government and the main employers' and trade union organisations (apart from the *Confederazione generale italiana del lavoro* (CGIL – General Confederation of Italian Labour)). Building on the guidelines set out in the National Action Plan for employment (NAP, 2002) ⁽²⁾, the government undertakes, among other things, to give fresh impetus to research and innovation, to finance the reform of the education and training system and to support the development of the adult education system in which 700 000 people are set to take part in 2003.

In order to implement the government's development strategies, two reform laws have recently been approved:

- (a) Law 53/03 reforming the education and training system;
- (b) Law 30/03 on the labour market and employment.

Law 53/03 brings the two traditionally separate systems of education and vocational training under the same umbrella, recognising that they have the same goals: promoting the growth and advancement of persons and citizens. In the new system, young people completing lower secondary education can continue their education in *licei* (lycées) or in vocational education and training, which are considered to have equal status, while each having their own identity and specific objectives (see Chapter 4). The aim is to ensure that all young people obtain at least a diploma or qualification before entering the labour market.

The provisions adopted by Law 30/03 cover, in particular: the reform of the employment services, the reform of apprenticeship contracts (see Section 4.4), the replacement of *contratti di formazione e lavoro* (work/training contracts) by *contratti di inserimento* (integration contracts), the reform of part-time work and the introduction of new types of contract (for instance, work on call contracts, staff leasing contracts).

⁽²⁾ The NAP sets out the priorities for action to improve employment in Italy with reference to the European Employment Strategy.

3. The institutional framework

3.1. Administrative framework

The Constitution approved in 1948 gave the Regions powers over ‘vocational and craft education’. The State education system, however, has continued to provide vocationally-oriented courses in its *istituti professionali* (State vocational schools).

There have been many regulatory changes in the last ten years, including amendments to the text of the Constitution (Constitutional Law 3/02); under the new arrangements, the State retains exclusive power over ‘general rules on education’, sets minimum service levels and looks after relations with the European Union.

The Regions have exclusive powers over vocational education and training, but must abide by European law and international obligations; they have exclusive responsibility for planning. In performing their tasks, the Regions may delegate or transfer some tasks to the Provinces.

School and university education is the task of the *Ministero dell’Istruzione, dell’università e della ricerca* (MIUR – Ministry of Education, Universities and Research) which governs and steers public education, coordinates the work of the Regional Education Offices and is responsible for inspection tasks, the proper award of school and university qualifications of every type and level and their certification. Under recent regulations, schools and universities have gained greater autonomy and responsibility.

The *Ministero del Lavoro e delle politiche sociali* (MLPS – Ministry of Labour and Social Policy) governs and steers labour policies, within which vocational training occupies a key place as an ‘active policy’.

3.2. Legislative framework

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Laws 53/03 and 30/03 radically changed the education and vocational training system.

Law 30/03, in particular, radically reforms all the instruments linking the labour supply and demand and introduces new and more flexible employment contracts (see Section 4.4).

Previous important provisions include:

- (a) Law 388/00 (amended by Law 289/02), which led to the establishment of *Fondi interprofessionali* (multi-sectoral funds) for continuing training (see Chapters 5 and 10);
- (b) Law 53/00, which gave workers the right to take ‘training leave’ to realise training plans drawn up by workers themselves either individually or under collective agreements; in the latter case, provision is made for a reduction in working hours;
- (c) Law 144/99 on initial training, which introduced *l’obbligo formativo*, i.e. the obligation to attend one of the three strands of the education system (education, vocational training, apprenticeship) up to the age of 18. This provision led to a reform of initial training. The law also introduced the new strand of *istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore* (IFTS – higher technical education and training, see Section 4.3.3);
- (d) Law 196/97, which set out the requirements for the ‘accreditation’ of training providers authorised to manage training, gave fresh impetus to apprenticeship (see Section 4.4), introduced ‘work-based training’ schemes for those still in education and ‘work-based guidance’ schemes for those who have completed their education and promoted the establishment of a system of certification of skills and recognition of credits (see Chapters 7 and 8).
- (e) Law 236/93 on continuing training (see Chapter 5).

3.3. The role of the social partners

Framework Law 845/78 gave the social partners a major role to play in the vocational training system, recognising them as partners of the Regions for the planning of training, as well as potential providers of training schemes.

Thereafter, consolidation of the principle of ‘concertation’ meant that the social partners were not just ‘partners’ but ‘joint deciders’. The national inter-confederation agreements signed between 1985 and 1991 were significant here and paved the way for the establishment of many joint bodies, in particular the bilateral bodies which are playing an important part in promoting training activities. The trilateral agreements of 1993, 1996 and 1998 stressed the importance of concertation and recognised it as a basic instrument for planning and formulating action strategies.

The White Paper on the Italian labour market (2001) paved the way for new relations between the government and the social partners, with a shift away from ‘concertation’ towards ‘social dialogue’.

The social partners play a key role, which is set to become strategic, in continuing training, since, following the establishment of the *Fondi interprofessionali*, they have become planners of training (see Chapters 5 and 10).

4. The initial education and vocational training system

4.1. Reform of the education and training system

Law 53/03 (see Chapters 2 and 3) introduced the *diritto-dovere all'istruzione e alla formazione professionale* (*) (right/duty to participate in education and vocational training) in Italy for at least 12 years, subject to legal consequences. The *diritto-dovere* can in all cases be satisfied by obtaining a vocational qualification. This goes beyond the distinction, in force up to now, between the obligation to stay in the school system up to the age of 15 (compulsory education, Law 9/99) and the obligation to attend training up to the age of 18 (*obbligo formativo*, see Section 3.2).

Under the new arrangements, schooling includes *scuola dell'infanzia* (pre-primary school, three years) and two subsequent cycles. The first cycle is structured as *scuola primaria* (primary school, five years) and lower secondary school (three years). The second cycle includes two channels (see diagram of the Italian system following the reform):

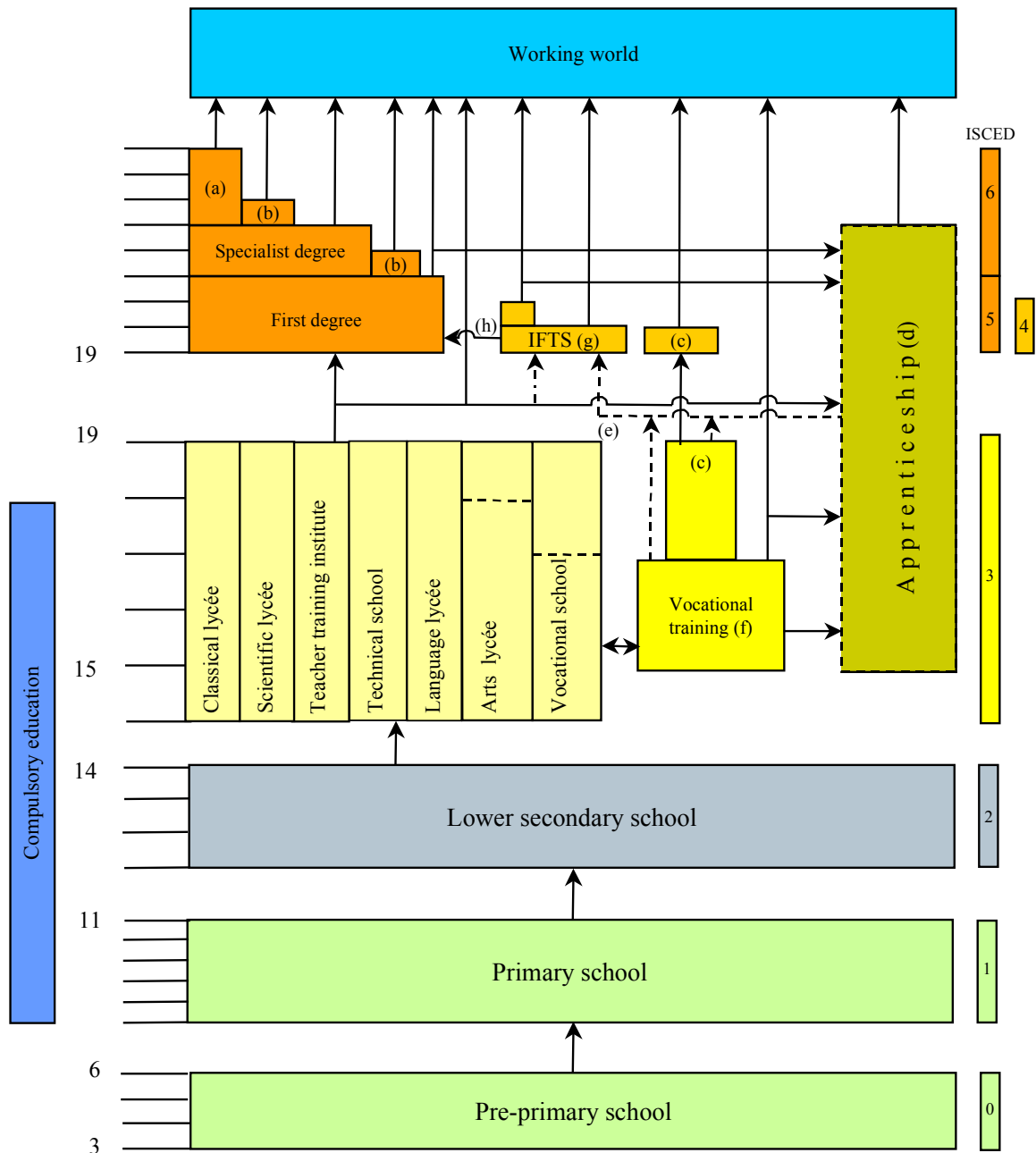
- (a) the *licei* (lycée) system, for which the State is responsible, lasting five years, at the end of which students take the State examination paving the way for university entrance;
- (b) vocational education and training, for which the regional authorities are responsible, lasting at least three years, and leading to the award of a *certificato di qualifica professionale* (vocational qualification certificate) recognised nationally and within Europe. The qualification can be used to enter the labour market or to enter post-qualification courses leading to the award of an upper secondary vocational diploma. This diploma is required for entry into *istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore* (IFTS – higher technical education and training) or, after attending a supplementary year, for entry into universities.

In both channels there are strong links with higher education, higher vocational training, and the world of work. Provision is also made for the recognition of certified credits which can be used to return to education after a break or to move between the various channels. It is also possible in practice to switch streams within *licei* and vocational education and training establishments and to move from one system to the other.

On reaching the age of 15, students can obtain diplomas and qualifications by school-work alternance or *apprendistato* (apprenticeship).

(*) Hereinafter as *diritto-dovere*.

The Italian education and training system before the reform *



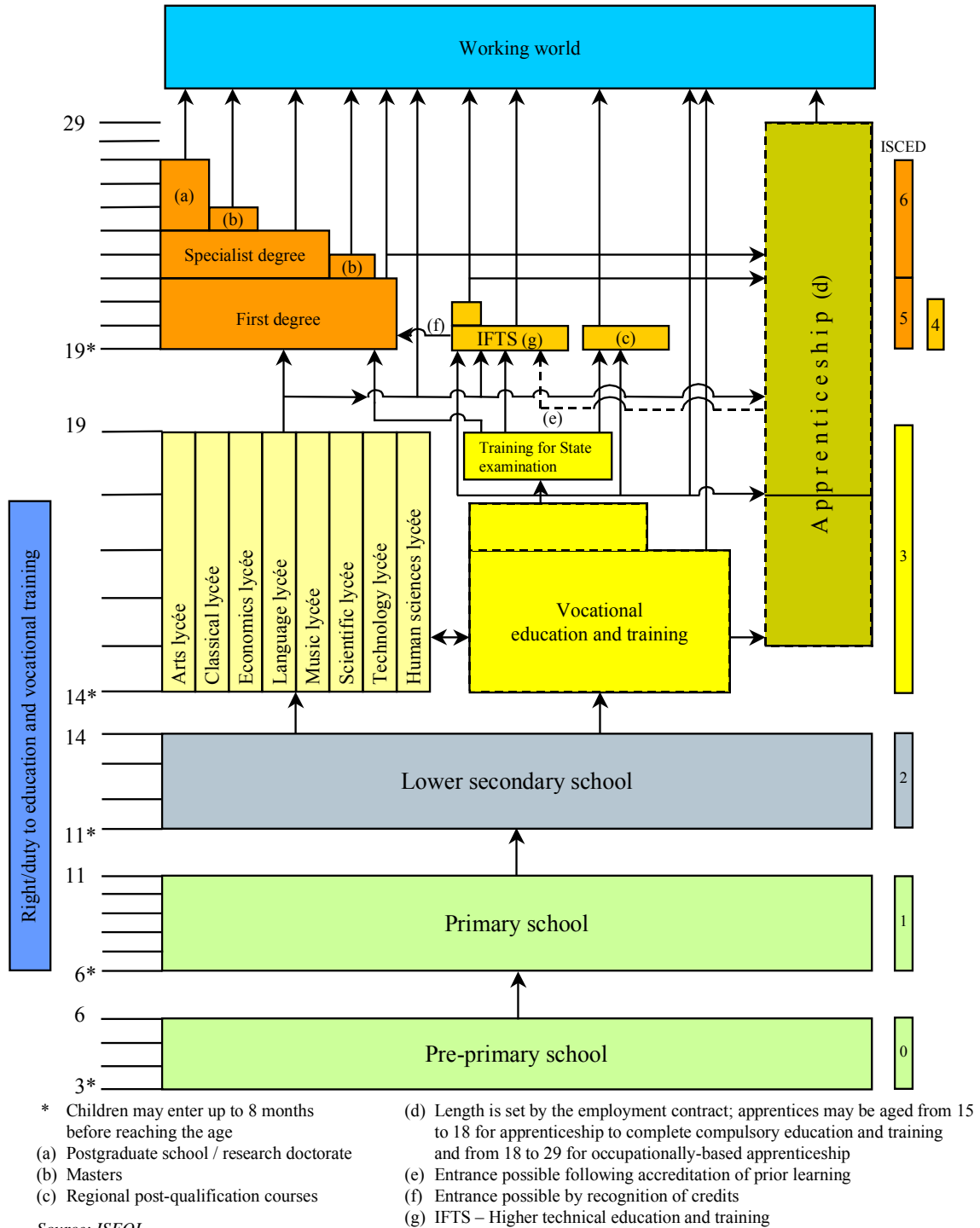
* The system shown is still partly in force while waiting for the decrees enacting the reform (Law 53/03)

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) Postgraduate school / research doctorate | (e) Entrance possible after accreditation of prior learning |
| (b) Masters | (f) Students obtaining the qualification are able to complete compulsory education prior to the age of 18 |
| (c) Regional post-qualification courses | (g) IFTTS – Higher technical education and training |
| (d) The length of apprenticeship is set by the employment contract; apprentices may be between 15 and 24, except in particular cases (see Section 4.4) | (h) Entrance possible by recognition of credits |

Source: ISFOL.

The Italian education and training system as reformed (2003)

“Delegation in respect of general education standards and minimum service levels in education and vocational training”



Law 30/03 (see Chapters 2 and 3) sets out a reform of apprenticeship, giving greater margins of freedom to the Regions to regulate training and to the social partners to run this training; a line is also drawn between a form of apprenticeship which is for young people aged between 15 and 18 and which has broader educational aims, a more strictly occupationally-based form of apprenticeship for young people aged 18 to 29, and one which is for the award of higher qualifications; the *contratto di formazione e lavoro* is replaced by the *contratto d'inserimento* under which an individual plan is drawn up to bring the worker's skills into line with the working context.

Three-year vocational education and training channels, which are among the main innovations introduced by the reform, will be tested during the 2003/04 school year.

4.2. General education

The structure of the education system prior to the enactment of the reform law will be described here since it will remain in force until the implementing decrees have been approved (see the diagram of the Italian education system prior to the reform).

The system is structured as: *scuola materna* (pre-primary school), three years, *scuola elementare* (primary school), five years, and *scuola media* (lower secondary school), three years. Disabled children, if their parents so request, are entitled to assistance from a special needs teacher.

Education pathways, which are the same for all children up to completion of lower secondary education, are differentiated on entry into upper secondary education which includes *licei*, five years, *istituti tecnici* (technical schools), five years, and *istituti professionali* (vocational schools), three years + 2, all of which are run by the State.

Pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education are free of charge if provided in State schools (payment of an enrolment and attendance fee is required only for upper secondary school), although fees are payable in the case of legally recognised non-State schools.

4.2.1. Pre-primary education

Pre-primary education at *scuola materna*, established by Law 44/68, is optional and for children aged 3 to 6.

4.2.2. Primary education

Primary education at *scuola elementare*, five years, is compulsory. Under the new arrangements, a foreign language and computing are to be taught and the State examination for the award of the primary certificate, previously in force, is abolished.

4.2.3. Lower secondary education

Lower secondary education at *scuola media*, three years, is a single-stream cycle which is compulsory. The new arrangements have introduced major changes such as the teaching of a second foreign language and computing and the introduction of a single State examination concluding the first education cycle (see Section 4.1.).

4.2.4. Upper secondary education

Upper secondary education includes classical lycées, scientific lycées, arts lycées, teacher training institutes, language lycées, schools of applied arts, technical schools and vocational schools. All the five-year streams pave the way for university entrance.

The *liceo classico* (classical lycée) and the *liceo scientifico* (scientific lycée), both five years, prepare students for post-secondary or university education following the award of the *diploma di maturità classica* or *scientifica* (upper secondary certificate in classics or sciences).

The *liceo linguistico* (language lycée), five years, provides particular education in the field of foreign languages. The *diploma di maturità linguistica* provides access to employment in the sectors of tourism, conferences, etc.

The *istituto magistrale* (teacher training institute), five years, which can be found in many experimental forms, educates students to work in the education and welfare fields. The *diploma di maturità magistrale* can be used to enter the working world.

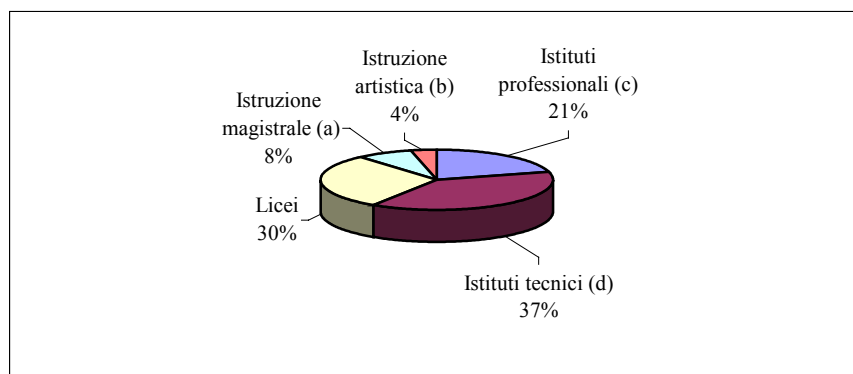
The *liceo artistico* (arts lycée), four years, offers general education in the arts and paves the way for entrance into the *Accademia di Belle Arti* (Academy of Fine Arts) or, following a supplementary year, university.

Istituti d'arte (schools of applied arts), three years, prepare students for work and production in artistic fields (paint decoration, ceramic arts, plastic decoration, etc.). Students passing *licenza di maestro d'arte* can enter the *Accademia di Belle Arti*. Students passing the *diploma di maestro d'arte applicata*, after attending a supplementary two years, can enter the working world or continue their education.

Istituti tecnici (technical schools) and *istituti professionali* (vocational schools) offer theoretical and practical instruction enabling students to carry on skilled trades in the various sectors of trade and industry (see Section 4.3.1).

The new arrangements make provision for the following *licei*: arts, classical, economic, language, music, scientific, technological, human sciences.

Figure 2: Distribution of students in upper secondary schools, by type of school (academic year 2000/01 (*), in %)



(*) Provisional data from MIUR

(a) Pre-primary and primary teacher training

(c) Technical schools

(b) Schools of applied arts and arts lycées

(d) Vocational schools

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of MIUR data.

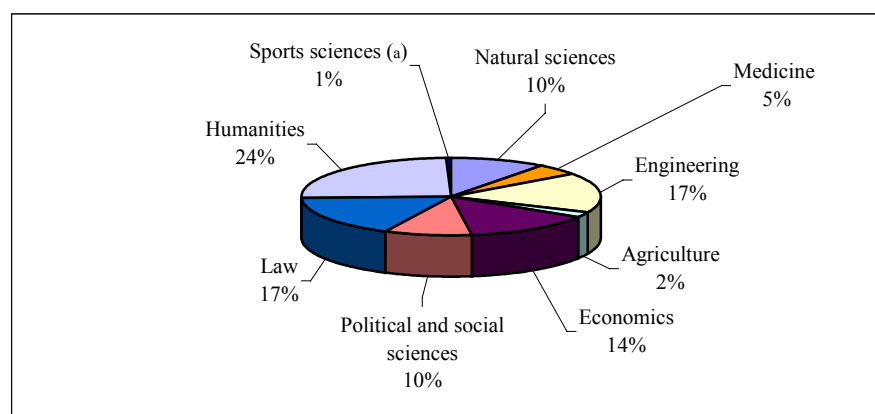
4.2.5. Tertiary education

University education is given in public and private institutions, ecclesiastical universities and faculties of theology. Following the reform of universities (Ministerial Decree 509/99) the following types of course are available:

- (a) *laurea* (first degree), three years, providing theoretical education, supplemented by vocational education enabling appropriate integration into the working world;
- (b) *laurea specialistica* (the specialist degree), two years, following the *laurea*, is intended to provide specialist skills and knowledge geared to the practice of occupations requiring high-level skills;
- (c) the *master*, one year, is a post-degree or specialist degree course providing knowledge and skills of a professional type at the technical and operational or design level;
- (d) *scuola di specializzazione* (the schools of applied postgraduate studies), minimum three years, offer applied postgraduate courses designed to train specialists in particular occupational sectors;
- (e) *dottorato di ricerca* (the research doctorate), three/four years, is the highest level of university education. A specialist degree is required for entry.

Non-university higher education (lasting from two to eight years) also includes various special-status colleges offering arts education, *Accademie militari* (military academies) and the *Istituto di Polizia* (Police Institute).

Figure 3: Students enrolled for courses by subject group (academic year 2001/02, in %)



(a) Degree course in motor sciences, formerly Istituto universitario di scienze motorie (ISEF – University institute of motor sciences)

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT and MIUR/MURST data.

4.3. Initial vocational training

4.3.1. Vocationally-oriented streams in education

Istruzione tecnica (technical education) is provided by State-run *istituti tecnici* (technical schools), five years, and leads to the award, following a State examination, of the *diploma di maturità tecnica* enabling students to carry on middle-level occupations in a whole range of sectors (agriculture, commerce, tourism, surveying, industry, naval); the certificate also allows university entrance or entry into post-secondary education.

Courses comprise a two-year and a three-year cycle. The curriculum includes subjects (Italian language, foreign language, mathematics, history, sciences, etc.) common to all the various specialisations and subjects specific to each specialisation.

Istruzione professionale (vocational education) is provided by State-run *istituti professionali* (vocational schools, e.g. in agriculture, industry and crafts, services sectors) and leads to the award of the *diploma di qualifica professionale*, three years. The diploma can be used to enter the working world, to continue on to the *corsi post-qualifica* (post-certificate courses), two years, run by *istituti professionali* or to attend the level II vocational training courses run by the Regions. The *corsi post-qualifica* lead to the award of the *diploma di maturità professionale* which can be used for university entrance or to attend regional advanced training courses and other post-secondary options. In the two-year *post-qualifica* course, the common general and sector- and option-specific subjects are supplemented by a vocationally-oriented module run by the Regions (300/450 hours per year) which leads to the *qualifica professionale* paving the way for entry into the working world or further advanced courses. A proportion of these hours is set aside for work experience in enterprise.

4.3.2. Initial vocational training

Students who have completed lower secondary education and do not intend to continue their education in the school system may obtain a vocational qualification in initial vocational training – also called level I training – run by the Regions and geared towards providing specific vocational skills of a theoretical and practical type (including practical work and experience in enterprise). Under the old system, students could attend courses after the age of 15. Courses had to last at least two years, had to be structured as certifiable cycles, and had to include reception, guidance and mentoring modules, work experience in enterprise and the possibility of a third year of specialisation at the end of which a *certificato di specializzazione* was awarded.

Under the new system, these courses are part of the vocational education and training channel (see Section 4.1), can start after the *licenza media* (lower secondary certificate) has been awarded and must last at least three years. Courses cover almost all sectors of the economy.

4.3.3. Higher vocational training

Formazione post-secondaria (post-secondary training), 6-12 months – also called level II training – is run by the Regions and aims to provide students with vocational skills having a high theoretical, technical, technological and management content, and includes practical work and experience in enterprise. Students generally enter after obtaining the upper secondary certificate. A *certificato di qualifica professionale* is awarded on completion.

Istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore (IFTS – higher technical education and training) is intended to train senior technicians to meet the demand from the public and private working world. Entrance requires an upper secondary certificate or certifiable skills acquired from previous education and training courses and from work. Attendance is free of charge and there are no age limits. Courses (lasting from 1200 to 2400 hours in total) include work experience in enterprise which accounts for at least 30% of these hours. On completion, students obtain a *certificato di specializzazione tecnica superiore* issued by the regional authorities and recognised nationally.

Under the new system, these courses are part of the vocational education and training channel (see Section 4.1).

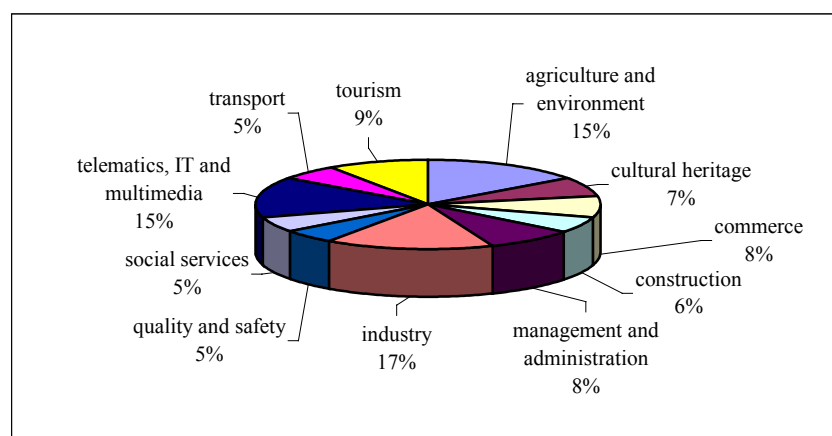
Table 9: Courses and student numbers in IFTS

	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/01
Courses	221	395	413
Students (a)	3 819	4 590	6 413

(a) Data provided by the course managers taking part in the survey

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi survey, various years.

Figure 4: Sectors covered by IFTS courses (academic year 1999/2000, in %)



Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi survey.

4.4. Apprenticeship and work/training contracts

Young people aged 15 or more can enter the labour market via alternance methods such as *apprendistato* (apprenticeship) and *contratti di formazione e lavoro* (work/training contracts), also called *contratti «a causa mista»* ('mixed' contracts). Enterprises in all sectors have used these two types of contract.

The *apprendistato* contract offers a wide-ranging combination of training and occupational experience. The enterprise provides on-the-job training by setting the apprentice to work alongside skilled employees and by appointing an enterprise tutor whose task is to link up on-the-job and off-the-job training.

Apprentices must attend training courses outside the workplace, which are free of charge, for a minimum of 120 paid hours per year. Apprentices subject to *obbligo formativo* (see Section 3.2) have to attend a supplementary module of 120 hours per year.

The content of this external training (Ministerial Decree of 8 April 1998) includes transversal, technical and scientific, and operational skills, which vary depending on the occupation. In some sectors, the training objectives of occupationally-based course contents have been laid down nationally (construction, heavy engineering, services, fabric/footwear, tourism).

The content of the supplementary module for apprentices subject to compulsory training, laid down nationally (Joint Ministerial Decree 152/01), includes language skills, mathematical skills, IT skills, vocational guidance and elements of active citizenship.

Under the old system, the maximum age limit for apprenticeship contracts was 24, 26 in Objective 1 and 2 areas ⁽³⁾ of the European Social Fund (ESF), could be extended to 29 for craft apprentices and always had to be over two years for disabled young people. Contracts lasted from 18 months to four years. Under the new system, *apprendistato* is split between:

- (a) a form of apprenticeship which is for young people aged 15 to 18 who are subject to the *diritto-dovere* and which has broader educational aims;
- (b) a more strictly occupationally-based form of apprenticeship for young people aged 18 to 29;
- (c) apprenticeship for the acquisition of a diploma leading to a secondary or university qualification.

The maximum length of contracts has been increased to six years.

Up to now, apprentices have received a salary equal to a percentage, set by collective labour agreements, of the salary of an employed worker with the same qualification. Under the new system, apprentices may be graded, in employment contracts, up to two contractual levels below that of an employed worker with the same qualification ⁽⁴⁾.

Young people with diplomas aged from 18 to 25 could be recruited under the *contratto di formazione e lavoro*. The age limit was raised to 29 for graduates and 32 in Objective 1 areas with an unemployment rate above the national average. Under the new system, this type of contract is merged with the *contratti di inserimento* (integration contracts).

Table 10: Number of apprenticeship and work/training contracts

	1991	1996	2001
<i>Apprendistato</i>	523 767	413 892	482 134
<i>Contratti di formazione e lavoro</i>	316 343	269 220	259 211

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of INPS and MLPS data.

⁽³⁾ For the period 2000-06, Community regional policy is focusing on three areas of action: Objective 1 is intended to promote economic recovery in regions whose development is lagging behind; Objective 2 is intended to support the economic and social rehabilitation of regions with structural problems; Objective 3 is intended to support the improvement and modernisation of education, training and employment policies and systems. The ESF is the financial instrument for all three objectives.

⁽⁴⁾ For further details, reference should be made to: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi. *La sfida dell'alternanza. Rapporto apprendistato 2002* [The challenge of alternance. 2002 apprenticeship report]. Rome: Franco Angeli, 2002.

4.5. Indicators of participation and success

Following the brief review of the initial education and vocational training system in Italy, the following table sets out some indicators of participation and success in education and training.

Table 11: Education indicators (in %)

	Academic year		
	1990/91	1997/98	2000/01
Lower secondary certificate holders per 100 in same age group (a)	99.0	98.2	98.8
Rate of transfer to upper secondary education (b)	85.9	92.9	100.0
Percentage in upper secondary education (c)	68.3	82.4	86.0
Percentage with <i>qualifica</i> (d)	11.2	12.1	12.6
Percentage with <i>maturità</i> (e)	51.7	72.5	72.7
Rate of transfer to university (f)	71.3	66.0	66.5
Percentage participation in vocational training (g)	21.0	18.4	25.4
University enrolments per 100 in same age group (h)	35.6	42.9	45.6
Percentage enrolled at university (i)	30.6	42.7	49.6
Percentage with university diploma (j)	n.a.	1.3	2.8
Percentage with <i>laurea</i> (k)	9.4	13.8	18.2
Percentage of <i>laureati</i> seven years after enrolment	n.a.	39.0	45.2

- (a) Certificate holders as a percentage of all young people aged 14
 (b) Percentage of those enrolling for the first year of upper secondary education calculated from those obtaining the *licenza media* in the previous academic year
 (c) Percentage of students attending calculated from all young people aged 14-18
 (d) Percentage of *istituti professionali* certificate holders calculated from the mean value of young people aged 16-17
 (e) Upper secondary certificate holders as a percentage of all young people aged 19
 (f) Percentage of students enrolling for the first year of university calculated from those obtaining the *diploma di maturità* in the previous academic year
 (g) Students enrolling for Level I and II courses as a percentage of all young jobseekers aged 15-24
 (h) Percentage of university enrolments calculated from the mean value of young people aged 19-21
 (i) Percentage of students enrolling calculated from all young people aged 19-23
 (j) Percentage of students obtaining university or SDFS (special purpose college) diplomas calculated from the mean value of young people aged 21-23
 (k) Percentage of graduates calculated from the mean value of the population aged 24-30

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT and MIUR data.

In the past Italy had school attendance rates which were somewhat below the European mean. It can be seen that, in the last ten years, school attendance and the productivity of the system have grown sharply at all levels, and in particular that:

- (a) upper secondary school attendance rates have increased from 68.3% to 86%;
 (b) the percentage of young people obtaining the upper secondary certificate has increased from 51.7% to 72.7%;
 (c) the percentage of students enrolling for university has increased from 30.6% to 49.6%;

(d) the percentage of graduates has increased from 9.4% to 18.2%.

The overall increase in the productivity rate of the university system, which was 45.2% in 2000/01, should also be noted.

Table 12 gives details of the geographical distribution of initial vocational training (see Sections 4.3.2 and 4.3.3) with respect to potential users. As can be seen, young people's participation in vocational training is more widespread in the north of Italy.

*Table 12: Young people trained as a proportion of all potential users
(by geographical area, in %)*

	North		Centre		South		Total	
	99/00	00/01	99/00	00/01	99/00	00/01	99/00	00/01
Young people (a)	57.2	64.8	21.9	26.8	9.2	14.4	20.6	25.4

(a) Ratio of young people attending level I and II courses to young jobseekers aged 15 to 24

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT and regional data.

5. Continuing training

5.1. General

Training for adults can be divided between:

- (a) lifelong education and training for the acquisition of initial, general and pre-occupational skills provided, in the ‘formal’ sector, in particular by the *Centri territoriali permanenti per l'educazione degli adulti* (CTPs – Permanent Regional Centres for Adult Education), run by the MIUR (Ministry of Education, Universities and Research, Ministerial Order 455/97);
- (b) continuing vocational training which includes all learning schemes following on from initial training and targeted at the vocational retraining and refresher training of adult workers.

MLPS (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy) measures, implementing Law 236/93, identify as continuing training schemes all those schemes targeted on adults, whether employed or unemployed, in which workers may take part, in some cases by choice. This includes schemes run by enterprises to improve or raise the occupational skills and knowledge required by technological and organisational innovation in the production process.

The support provided by Law 236/93 has made it possible to design a continuing training system by funding measures for the introduction of in-company training by enterprises, training for trainers, systems actions (*), testing of company, sectoral and regional training plans promoted by the social partners and testing of tailor-made training for individuals.

Laws 196/97 and 388/00 (amended by Law 289/02) added a key component to the system: the *Fondi interprofessionali*, managed by the social partners and supervised by the MLPS, to which employers pay a contribution of 0.30%. The funds, which finance enterprise, sectoral and regional training plans, supplement the work of the regional authorities in the continuing training system (see Chapters 3 and 10).

5.2. Delivery mechanisms and providers

Continuing training schemes for workers may be run by enterprises (public and private) designing training schemes for their own employees, training agencies, bilateral bodies, industry associations, professional associations, etc., and institutions such as universities and employment centres.

(*) See glossary.

While employee training in medium-sized and large enterprises is organised via training plans and provided in training facilities inside or outside the enterprise, skill and learning transfer methods of an unstructured and informal type tend to predominate in micro-enterprises and small enterprises.

The Continuing Vocational Training Survey (Istat-Eurostat CVTS2) showed that the percentage of Italian enterprises with 10 or more employees which ran training schemes increased from 15% to 24% between 1993 and 1999.

Overall, training schemes were run by 27% of enterprises with head offices in northern Italy, 22% in central Italy and 15% in southern Italy.

The rather modest propensity to training can be attributed, in Italy, to the predominance of small enterprises, since the figure for large enterprises is close to the European average.

In addition to continuing training for workers, training schemes for adults are provided by schools, vocational training centres, the CTPs, local authority facilities and universities. The 516 CTPs operating in the academic year 2000/01 in particular ran a total of 16 000 courses.

In the case of the informal supply, courses are run by people's universities, universities of the third age, open universities, etc., voluntary sector associations, recreational and cultural associations, cooperatives, non-governmental organisations, libraries, museums and theatres.

5.3. Access to learning opportunities and programmes

The regional and national Operational Programmes (OPs) of the ESF 2000-06 have a specific strand for continuing training [policy field D of the CSF Objective 3 ⁽⁵⁾].

The target groups of the wide range of schemes for which the measure provides are workers, enterprises and entrepreneurs, non-profit and social economy organisations, training agencies (including trainers), employment centres and social and institutional partners.

In the case of support for enterprises, hundreds of enterprise, sectoral and regional plans have been financed, i.e. training initiatives whose purpose is to forge links with particular regional or sectoral development situations in which the social partners play a key role. From 2003, the financing of training plans should be the main line of action of the *Fondi interprofessionali* (see Section 5.1).

⁽⁵⁾ The Community Support Framework (CSF) is an instrument used to plan the structural fund resources available for regions. It is decided by the Commission together with the Member State involved. The CSF sets out the objectives and priority areas of action, the type and length of measures and a financing plan. It is implemented through Regional Operational Programmes. For Objective 3, see note 3 (Section 4.4).

Under national reference agreements, employees may make use of an amount of hours to obtain initial qualifications or to attend refresher training.

Individual training measures for employees have been tested since 1999 using ‘vouchers’.

Law 53/00 offers the possibility of leave for training and continuing training on the basis of training plans submitted by workers either individually or under collective agreements; in the latter case, it is possible to reduce working hours.

As regards the Istat-Eurostat CVTS2 survey mentioned above, 1 952 000 ⁽⁶⁾ people took part in enterprise training schemes (72% men and 28% women) in 1999, equivalent to 26% of the employees of Italian enterprises with 10 or more employees.

The surveys of workers’ attitudes to training and training practices, conducted in 2001 and 2002 ⁽⁷⁾, showed, moreover, that, in the space of two years, 31.8% of employees and 42.6% of self-employed workers had taken part in training schemes.

In the 2000/01 academic year, 380 000 adults, predominantly Italian but with a substantial foreign contingent, attended the institutional supply provided by the CTPs.

⁽⁶⁾ The survey covered only employees in industry and services.

⁽⁷⁾ The sample surveys of workers run by ISFOL-Progetto formazione continua include: ‘Atteggiamenti e comportamenti dei lavoratori dipendenti di imprese private verso la formazione. Indagine ISFOL-Abacus 2001’ [The attitudes to training and training practices of employees of private enterprises. ISFOL-Abacus 2001 survey]; ‘Atteggiamenti e comportamenti dei lavoratori indipendenti verso la formazione. Indagine ISFOL-Abacus 2002’ [The attitudes to training and training practices of self-employed workers. ISFOL-Abacus survey 2002].

6. Training of teachers and trainers in vocational education and training

6.1. General

Vocational education and training teachers work in State-run *istituti tecnici e professionali* (see Section 4.3.1), often alongside ‘technical and practical’ laboratory assistants with support tasks, and in the CTPs.

Trainers work in public and accredited vocational training centres and in private enterprises for workers’ continuing training; in some cases they are employed by employment centres for guidance and work mentoring/integration (see Section 9.1).

At present, teachers and trainers have different methods of recruitment, career prospects and contractual status.

Entry into the teaching profession is regulated by national laws and is managed centrally by MIUR. Up to 2000, recruitment took place largely by public selection procedures (public competitions). Staff on fixed-term contracts entered via lists of successful candidates which school principals had to use. The requirement was a degree in the subject to be taught.

New entry methods were introduced in 2000 making it necessary to obtain the *post-laurea* (postgraduate) qualifying diploma awarded by the *Scuola di Specializzazione per l’Insegnamento Superiore* (SSIS – Postgraduate Teacher Training College) paving the way for subsequent inclusion in the list.

Under the new arrangements introduced by Law 53/03, recruitment takes place after attending a *laurea specialistica* (specialist degree) course, with limited entry, and practical training in schools. The qualification awarded by the university allows subsequent inclusion in the list.

There is no compulsory study curriculum or nationally recognised professional register for entry into the profession of trainer.

6.2. Training of teachers, trainers and other professionals in education and training establishments

At present, the initial (pre-service) training of **teachers** is the task of the SISS. In-service training, run by schools and universities, takes the form of refresher training and retraining in the relevant subject area, including training in methodology and skills in the new information and communication technologies (ICTs). Under the new arrangements, both initial and in-service training are the task of the universities working with public and private research organisations, accredited and qualified agencies and professional associations.

No statutory pathway exists for the initial training of **trainers** (including enterprise trainers). In-service training schemes are run largely by the regional authorities.

Distance learning has grown apace in recent years. Schemes of this type include the FaDol project, run by the MLPS, geared towards developing and upgrading the occupational skills of trainers and other workers in training centres (tutors, coordinators, designers, guidance workers, assessors, training needs analysts, etc.) using self-instruction methods, assisted by a tutor, and run via auxiliary services (virtual library, thematic forums, etc.).

Specific training measures for **school managers** to promote the development of school autonomy have recently been organised by the MIUR.

6.3. Training of enterprise tutors

Enterprise tutors, working in the context of apprenticeship (see Section 4.4), play a key part in ensuring the quality of on-the-job training. Their characteristics, tasks and competences are set out in Ministerial Decree 22/00 under which it is compulsory to attend training schemes organised by the regions for the purposes of launching external training schemes for apprentices.

7. Developing skills and competences

Modular training organisation and the certification of acquired skills have been receiving growing attention in Italy in recent years, in order to ensure that pathways are transparent and to enable competence transfers in a context of lifelong learning.

In parallel, the bilateral organisations representing employers and the chambers of commerce and trade unions have been undertaking detailed analyses of vocational skill needs since 1996 in order to pinpoint overall trends in occupational development that can be used to steer planning systems for the training supply, the labour market and collective bargaining.

The various partners in the education and training system have drawn up innovative proposals to streamline the training supply.

IFTS (higher technical education and training – see Section 4.3.3) is a significant example as it is based on an education/training model of an integrated type, which is flexible and personalised, using principles such as modularity, competence-based learning and credits. Following Regulation 436/00, competence standards have been drawn up for the part of curricula covering basic and transversal skills (currently being tested). Technical and occupational standards are now being drawn up.

The IFTS standards, organised as competence units along the lines of experience from other European countries (for instance the United Kingdom and Spain), are sets of certifiable skills that can be recognised as training credits and used to enter other pathways, under agreements between the various training agencies working together within the IFTS system.

Many regional and provincial authorities have enacted, in the framework of the ESF 2000-06 programme, major initiatives linked to the standardisation of training outputs, systems integration and competence certification.

8. Validation of learning, recognition and mobility

In Italy, formal qualifications (for instance *diploma, laurea, qualifica professionale*) have considerable legal and social value. There has been much discussion in recent years of ways of developing certification systems to recognise learning outside the formal system.

The agreement between the State, Regions and Local Authorities of February 2000 and Ministerial Decree 174/01 pinpoint some key components of the new certification system:

- (a) stress on competences in order to make training pathways transparent, build on individual experience and take training credits into account;
- (b) drawing up minimum competence standards;
- (c) devising instruments such as certificates, procedures to validate work experience and recognise prior knowledge and citizens' *libretti formativi* (training records);

In the case of IFTS, the *certificato di specializzazione tecnica superiore* (see Section 4.3.3) is a first national attempt to certify competences in a way which links the competences certified to training units or modules, and to the competences required for an occupational profile in the working world.

The entry accreditation system, based on similar pilot schemes in other European countries (for instance VAE⁽⁸⁾ in France or APL⁽⁹⁾ in the United Kingdom), has functions of: **support/guidance** so that individual training needs can be pinpointed in an informed way, **assessment** with the production of a personal dossier and **certification/recognition** by means of a formal document enabling entry into or the recognition of credits within a training pathway.

⁽⁸⁾ *Validation des acquis de l'expérience.*

⁽⁹⁾ Accreditation of prior learning.

9. Guidance and counselling

9.1. General

Guidance is provided by a range of regional and institutional services in Italy. Guidance is also used in vocational training as a measure to support training pathways.

The MIUR (Ministry of Education, Universities and Research) decides on guidance policies in respect of the education and training programmes offered in schools (from primary school onwards) and the services provided by local schools authorities and universities; the MLPS (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy), the Regions and the Provinces are responsible for all activities connected with vocational training and jobseeking at local level.

Under the current regulations, the *Servizi per l'impiego* (SPIs – employment services), through the local *Centri per l'impiego* (CPIs), are responsible for guidance work, as an active labour policy. They have tasks of information, guidance and monitoring of the pathways of young people in *obbligo formativo* (see Section 3.2).

9.2. Target groups and modes of delivery

Guidance is available for young people and adults, whether employed or unemployed.

Guidance for **young people** takes place:

- (a) in schools, as an educational process managed by teachers to help students to make informed choices, leading ultimately to the guidance counselling offered at the end of lower secondary education; this process is often supported by supplementary services (diagnostic interviews, information sessions, distribution of materials, etc.);
- (b) in vocational training centres, as an educational process to help students to make informed occupational choices; supplementary services are also used to help with this process.

In addition to the help available within education and training, young people can obtain guidance services at public *Informagiovani* centres run by the Regions, Provinces and local authorities and at private social-sector centres.

The CPIs offer information, guidance and tutoring services for young people aged 15 to 18.

In the case of **adults**, guidance is provided (although to an extent which is still partial) by the CPIs, in particular for the unemployed, and by the *Centri di orientamento al lavoro* (COLs – Work Guidance Centres) run by local authorities (information and guidance interviews).

Regions also run schemes to guide and train particular target groups (women returning to work, young people at risk, the disabled, immigrants, etc.).

9.3. Guidance and counselling personnel

Occupational profiles may vary widely in terms of tasks and training work in the various areas.

Schools require teachers of all subjects to educate their pupils to make informed choices. Some teachers also have a range of responsibilities in relation to particular activities and projects. Specific guidance activities are usually organised by these teachers in cooperation with outside experts.

Tutoring has been introduced into universities; expert staff (university centres and placement services) are also assisted in many cases by lecturers and administrative staff, especially for information activities.

Guidance and counselling in the vocational training system is often provided by trainers and tutors with particular professional skills acquired from experience in the field.

The employment services make use of retrained staff from the former placement offices, the vocational training system, the *Informagiovani* centres (under service contracts) and, to a lesser extent, dedicated public services normally set up by Provinces and Regions.

10. Funding: Investing in human resources

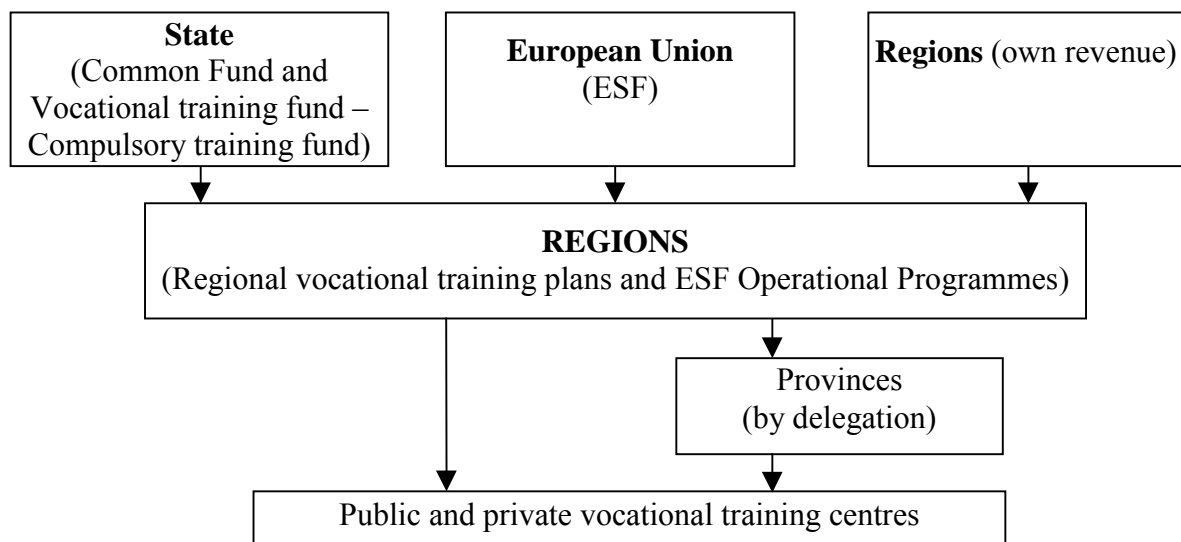
10.1. General overview and funding policies

In the case of **vocational education**, the MIUR bears the costs of salaries and refresher training of the teaching and management staff of vocational schools, the salaries of non-teaching staff and the costs of adult education schemes. Provinces finance all the operating and maintenance costs of schools (buildings, laboratories, etc.). In future, powers in this area will be transferred to the Regions.

In the case of **vocational training**, Regions manage their own funds and the finance allocated to them by the MLPS (for *obbligo formativo*, continuing training, etc.) and the ESF. The ESF is a particularly important source of funding for regionally-managed vocational training.

10.2. Funding of vocational education and training

Figure 5: *Financing flows for initial vocational education and training*



Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi.

To finance **vocationally-oriented education streams** (see Section 4.3.1):

- (a) the MIUR obtains its own funds under the general State budget. The amount of appropriations is set by the Ministry chiefly on the basis of the number of students and classes planned and, therefore, on the overall need for teachers. A further amount of funds is paid directly to schools, for the School Fund, which covers some costs connected with school operation;
- (b) the ESF finances school activities integrated with vocational training and the working world;
- (c) the Regions are involved in the area of the right to education, awarding study grants for school attendance to outstanding pupils or pupils facing hardships.

The Regions finance **vocational training** through:

- (a) the Regions' *Fondo comune* (Common Fund),
- (b) the vocational training and ESF access fund,
- (c) the ESF,
- (d) the funds appropriated by the State for special activities.

All the financial transfers made by the State to cover all the expenditure incurred by the Regions are paid into the *Fondo comune*. These funds are set as a fixed percentage of some tax revenue of the State and are distributed among the 15 ordinary-status Regions using appropriate parameters. The five special-status Regions are not funded, however, from the *Fondo comune* as they can levy taxes directly on their resident populations.

The *Fondo per la formazione professionale e l'accesso al FSE* is funded by the State and by 0.3% of the wage bill paid by enterprises; two thirds of this amount go into the national financing quota for activities for which ESF contributions are awarded. The mechanisms by which the State transfers funds to the Regions are set by the *Comitato interministeriale per la programmazione economica* (CIPE – Joint Ministerial Committee for Economic Planning) at the proposal of the MPLS and the Ministry of the Exchequer, in compliance with Community obligations.

The ESF finances regional training schemes on the basis of the regional authorities' Operational Programmes.

Further funds are paid by the State under particular laws such as Law 144/99 and Law 236/93 (see Chapters 3 and 5).

These resources are used to fund both initial regional training and training for the unemployed since, in formal terms, regionally-managed initial training is part and parcel of training for the unemployed.

Lastly, since a process of delegation/transfer of tasks to the Provinces is under way, those Regions which have enacted the delegation are deciding on the finance for each Province on the basis of agreed parameters, possibly retaining some amounts for regionally-based initiatives.

Table 13: Expenditure on vocational education and training

Year	Overall expenditure (EUR millions)	Expenditure per student	% GDP	% public expenditure
Expenditure on <i>istruzione professionale</i> (vocational education)				
1991	1 026	2 125	0.14	0.25
1996	2 010	4 007	0.21	0.39
2001	3 298	6 280	0.27	0.57
Expenditure on <i>istruzione tecnica</i> (technical education)				
1991	3 914	3 434	0.53	0.95
1996	3 889	3 991	0.40	0.75
2001	5 433	4 787	0.46	1.01
Expenditure on <i>formazione professionale</i> (vocational training)				
1991	1 766	(a)	0.24	0.43
1996	2 230	(a)	0.23	0.43
2001	2 736	(a)	0.22	0.47

(a) It has not been possible to calculate the expenditure per student because the various types of education have very different parameters.

Source: ISFOL-Area sistemi formativi processing of ISTAT and MIUR data.

There are two types of expenditure in the case of **apprenticeship**:

- (a) the State grants contribution relief to enterprises entering into apprenticeship contracts and to apprentices by reducing the percentage contributions that they are required to pay. This contribution relief leads to a reduction of State revenue; in 2001, this was estimated at EUR 989.50 million;
- (b) the Regions, making use of funds allocated by the State and the ESF as well, fund the training courses outside the workplace introduced in 1997. In 2001, the relative costs were EUR 105.85 million.

For the financing of **workers' continuing training** the main form of funding from public resources comes from Law 236/93, under whose enacting provisions a total of over EUR 690 million have been committed from 1996 to date (see Table 14). The ESF is a further source of funding.

Incentives for enterprises investing in training have also been introduced, in 2001-02, through the tax relief (Law 383/01, also called *Tremonti bis*) by which the State financial authorities reward enterprises investing in training for their employees.

A major innovation was introduced by the 2003 Finance Law, allowing the *Fondi interprofessionali* ⁽¹⁰⁾, administered by the social partners, to be set up.

⁽¹⁰⁾ For further details, see: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and ISFOL-Progetto formazione continua (2002). *La Formazione Continua in Italia. Rapporto 2001* [Continuing Training in Italy. 2001 Report], edited by F. Frigo. In: the Chamber of Deputies, Proceedings of XIVth Parliament.

Table 14: Finances appropriated for measures set out in Law 236/93, Article 9(3) and (3a) (in LIT billions (*))

Type of measure	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
Systems actions (1.A) (**)	80	20	30	-	-	130
Training of trainers/organisations Law 40/87 (1.B)	65	40	-	-	-	105
Enterprise training (1.C)	62	127	198	165	150	702
Training plans	-	-	-	50	50	100
Total	207	187	228	215	200	1 037

(*) EUR 1 = LIT 1 936.27

(**) See glossary.

Source: ISFOL-Progetto formazione continua.

10.3. Enterprise funding for continuing training

Micro-enterprises (1-9 employees) and small enterprises (10-49 employees) account for almost all national production. As in other Member States, the rate of participation in continuing training by employees of micro-enterprises and small enterprises is proportionally lower than in medium-sized and large enterprises, often as a result of internal organisational problems and the lack of economies of scale. In 1999, the total expenditure that enterprises incurred for continuing training schemes (in terms of both direct and indirect costs) was EUR 3 986 million, equal to 2.8% of their labour costs.

Expenditure broke down as follows: direct costs (tuition, enrolment, etc.) of training courses (40.8% of the total), pay of staff attending training courses (34.9%) and pay for in-house instructors (employed by the enterprise) working as trainers on a full-time or part-time basis (some 14%).

Public support for enterprises to promote investment in training, provided by the MLPS, the ESF and, in future, by the *Fondi interprofessionali*, offers financing for enterprise training initiatives, enterprise and sectoral and regional training plans and financing to promote the entrepreneurship under Law 236/93 and its subsequent enacting provisions.

11. European and international dimension

11.1. National strategies linked to European priorities, programmes and initiatives

National education and training strategies, in line with the European Employment Strategy, are set out in the National Action Plan (NAP) for employment and in the subsequent *Patto per l'Italia* (see Chapter 2).

The aim of the NAP for employment (2002) is to increase the employment rate, by highlighting the ways in which social inclusion and employability are interrelated with education and training; its action priorities include better general education and occupational qualification of young people and adults to make it easier for them to enter and stay in the labour market, reducing the current divide between the north and south of Italy.

In keeping with the NAP, the *Patto per l'Italia* considers the priority to be to upgrade human resources to promote economic growth, step up employment and the ability to stay in the labour market and promote social inclusion, closing the gap between those who are promoters of development and those who are excluded from such development.

A priority goal is the widespread acquisition of a higher level of basic skills and competences (languages, mathematics, technology, social skills) through lifelong education initiatives for adults able to satisfy the demand from 700 000 people from 2003 onwards. Making the most of human resources is a particular priority in the strategy to develop southern Italy and the government has undertaken to pay more attention to lifelong education initiatives for adults. The reforms of the education system and the labour market under way in 2003 are part and parcel of the current European scene.

11.2. Impact of Europeanisation/internationalisation on education and training

This is to be found chiefly in:

- (a) mobility and the measures taken to promote innovations (for instance recognition of qualifications and occupations, the European Europass system, the European curriculum vitae and Community programmes such as Leonardo da Vinci, Socrates, Erasmus);
- (b) systems innovation through transfers of results and best practices in the areas of methodology, models, training tools, teaching aids, etc.;
- (c) the creation of transnational partnerships and networks entailing cooperation by European partners and involvement of the local, national and transnational actors from the systems of education, vocational training and the working world in order to speed up and facilitate horizontal and vertical mainstreaming processes.

Annex 1: Abbreviations and acronyms

CGIL	Confederazione generale italiana del lavoro General Confederation of Italian Workers
CIPE	Comitato interministeriale per la programmazione economica Joint Ministerial Committee for Economic Planning
COL	Centro di orientamento al lavoro Work guidance centre
CPI	Centro per l'impiego Employment centre
CSF	Community Support Framework
CTP	Centro territoriale permanente Permanent regional centre
ECTS	European Community course credit transfer system
ESF	European Social Fund
Eurostat	Statistical Office of the European Communities
FaDol	Formazione a distanza on-line On-line distance training
GDP	Gross domestic product
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IFTS	Istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore Higher technical education and training
INPS	Istituto nazionale della previdenza sociale National social security institute
ISCED	International standard classification of education
ISEF	Istituto universitario di scienze motorie University institute of motor sciences
ISFOL	Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori Institute for the development of workers' vocational training

ISTAT	Istituto nazionale di statistica Italian Statistical Office
MIUR	Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca Ministry of Education, Universities and Research
MLPS	Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
MURST	Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca Scientifica e Tecnologica (merged with the former Ministry of Education in 2000 to become the MIUR) Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research
NAP	National action plan
SISS	Scuole universitarie di specializzazione per l'insegnamento superiore Postgraduate Teacher Training College

Annex 2: Glossary

Apprendistato (Apprenticeship): a type of employment contract (one of the ‘mixed’ contracts; see below). Under the contract, employers call on the work of apprentices, but at the same time are responsible for passing on the concepts and techniques that apprentices need to become skilled workers. Apprentices must attend training schemes (of a minimum of 240 hours per year under the age of 18 and 120 hours per year thereafter) provided by services outside the workplace. Apprenticeship is part of the vocational training system.

Azioni di sistema (Systems actions): actions promoted by the ESF to develop and improve vocational education and training systems.

Certificato di qualifica professionale (Vocational qualification certificate): certification awarded by Regions. It is awarded at the end of vocational training schemes, certifies that the competences required for a trade have been acquired and makes it possible to practise a specific trade. It is awarded after passing a final examination.

Certificato di specializzazione (Specialisation certificate): certification awarded by the Regions. It is awarded at the end of vocational training schemes for people already possessing a *certificato di qualifica professionale* (vocational qualification, see above). It is awarded after passing a final examination.

Competenze di base (Basic competences): are competences widely felt to be new ‘citizens’ rights’ in the labour market and society. They include competences common to all education and vocational training pathways and are designed both to supplement people’s training as individuals and as citizens and to qualify them to carry on an occupation.

Competenze tecnico-professionali (Technical and vocational skills): are those skills needed for the efficient performance of specific occupations in the various sectors and industries.

Competenze trasversali (Transversal skills): are those individual practices and functions which come into play when people have to interact with organisational environments and which are essential in achieving professional conduct where ‘knowledge’ is transformed into the effective performance of work.

Contratto «a causa mista» (‘Mixed’ contract): the term used to define those employment contracts under which employers have to provide workers, in return for the work that they provide, with both pay and appropriate occupational training, which may include attendance of particular training schemes.

Contratto di formazione e lavoro (Work/training contract): type of employment contract (one of the ‘mixed’ contracts; see above). Under this contract, employers have to provide young people not only with pay but with appropriate vocational training in return for the work that they provide.

Corsi post-qualifica (Post-qualification courses): training for people who have already obtained a *diploma di qualifica professionale* (vocational qualification) in which they can work towards the *diploma di maturità professionale* (upper secondary certificate in vocational studies) needed for university entrance, regional specialisation courses and other post-secondary options.

Credito formativo (Training credit): value attached to the competences acquired by attending a training segment (for instance a teaching module) or from individual experience (for instance work or voluntary work) that may be recognised for entry into a subsequent education or training pathway. The institution which the person is entering recognises the training credit, taking account of the features of the new pathway (for instance academic credits are recognised by universities nationally and/or between the universities of countries taking part in the European ECTS programme; training credits acquired in vocational training may be recognised in the case of people wishing to return to school pathways).

Diploma di maturità professionale (Upper secondary certificate in vocational studies): qualification awarded to people who have successfully passed a two-year post-qualification course at *istituti professionali di Stato* (State-run vocational schools). It can be used to enter the working world or to continue education at a post-secondary level.

Diploma di qualifica professionale (Vocational qualification diploma): qualification awarded to people who have successfully passed the three-year course run by *istituti professionali di Stato*. It can be used to enter the working world or to continue secondary education.

Diritto-dovere all'istruzione e alla formazione professionale (Right/duty to participate in education and vocational training): introduced in Italy by Law 53/03, it is compulsory for young people, subject to legal consequences, to attend education and vocational training for at least 12 years (which can be completed with the vocational qualification). It replaces the previous distinction between compulsory education, subject to legal consequences, in the school system to the age of 15 and compulsory training to the age of 18, not subject to legal consequences.

Fondi interprofessionali (Multi-sectoral funds): financed by a contribution of 0.30% of the wage bill paid by employers, these funds support company, sectoral and regional training plans, supplementing the regional authorities' work in the continuing training system. Set up by Law 388/00, the multi-sectoral funds are managed by the social partners and supervised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Fondo sociale europeo – FSE (European Social Fund – ESF): set up in 1960, this is the European Union's main instrument of social policy. It provides financial assistance for vocational training programmes and for job creation. The ESF also promotes equal opportunities, helping workers to adapt to changes in industry and production systems.

Formazione professionale (Vocational training): provides the basic knowledge and occupational skills needed to work in skilled occupations. Courses are run and managed by public and private facilities which are approved by the Regions to carry on this work. Apprenticeship is also part of the vocational training system.

Formazione professionale di base (o di I livello) (Initial – or level I – vocational training): training generally targeted at young people leaving lower secondary education and designed to help them to gain a foothold in the labour market.

Formazione professionale di II livello (Level II vocational training): training for people who have already acquired a medium-to-high-level qualification (for instance, vocational qualification certificates, upper secondary certificates, *laurea*) to help them to find work immediately in a particular labour market.

Istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore – IFTS (Higher technical education and training – IFTS): training for people who have acquired an upper secondary certificate or who possess certifiable competences acquired from previous education, training and work experience. It is designed to prepare senior technicians in order to meet the demand for skills from the public and private working worlds.

Istruzione professionale (Vocational education): provides the occupational competences needed to enter the working world in the form of the basic competences needed to continue on to secondary or university education or to enter civil society. It is currently administered by the MIUR. Following the reform of the Constitution, it will be transferred to the Regions.

Libretto formativo (Training record): used to document the competences that people acquire over time.

Piano d'azione nazionale (National Action Plan – NAP): document setting out the action priorities for the development of employment in Italy.

Unità capitalizzabile (Credit unit): set of independently significant (consistent) competences identifiable as the outcome expected at the end of a training segment.

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Decree of the Minister of Labour 174/01, *Certificazione delle competenze nel sistema della formazione professionale* [Skill certification in the vocational training system]

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Publications by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research:

<http://www.istruzione.it/mpi/pubblicazioni/2003/index03.shtml>

Databases and thematic data series of the Italian Statistical Office (ISTAT):

<http://www.istat.it/Banche-dat/index.htm>

Statistical data on vocational training by ISFOL: <http://www.isfol.it/>, path: → ricerche e progetti → sistemi formativi → sistema statistico della formazione professionale

Telematic archive of training locations by ISFOL: <http://www.isfol.it/>, path: → ricerche e progetti → sistemi formativi → archivio telematico delle sedi formative

Statistical data on higher technical education and training by ISFOL: <http://www.isfol.it/>, path: → ricerche e progetti → sistemi formativi → sportello telematico → formazione superiore non universitaria

The European Training Village, Cedefop's interactive website on vocational training in Europe: <http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/default.asp>

Eurydice, the information network on education in Europe: <http://www.eurydice.org/>

Annex 4: Principal organisations

Ministries

MIUR – Ministero dell’istruzione, dell’università e della ricerca
Viale Trastevere, 76/a
00153 Roma
Tel. (39-06) 584 91 – Fax (39-06) 58 49 59 57
Internet: <http://www.istruzione.it>

MLPS – Ministero del lavoro e delle politiche sociali
Via Veneto, 56
00187 Roma
Tel. (39-06) 48 16 11 – Fax (39-06) 322 23 58
Internet: <http://www.welfare.gov.it>

Public bodies

CENSIS – Fondazione centro studi investimenti sociali
Piazza di Novella, 2
00199 Roma
Tel. (39-06) .860 91 – Fax (39-06) 862 11 367
Internet: <http://www.censis.it>

CNEL – Consiglio nazionale dell'economia e del lavoro
Viale Lubin Davide, 2
00196 Roma
Tel. (39-06) 369 21 – Fax (39-06) 320 28 67
Internet: <http://www.cnel.it/>

FORMEZ – Centro di formazione e studi
Via Salaria, 229
00199 Roma
Tel. (39-06) 848 91 – Fax (39-06) 84 89 32 69
Interne: <http://www.formez.it/>

INDIRE – Istituto nazionale di documentazione per l’innovazione e la ricerca educativa
Via M. Buonarroti, 10
50122 Firenze
Tel. (39-055) 238 03 25 – Fax: (39-055) 238 05 15
Internet: <http://www.indire.it/>

INVALSI – Istituto nazionale per la valutazione del sistema dell'istruzione
Villa Falconieri
00044 Frascati (RM)
Tel. (39-06) 94 18 51 – Fax (39-06) 94 18 52 15
Internet: <http://www.invalsi.it/>

ISFOL – Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori
Via G.B. Morgagni, 33
00161 Roma
Tel. (39-06) 44 59 01 – Fax (39-06) 442 51 66 09
Internet: <http://www.isfol.it>

TECNOSTRUTTURA – Tecnostruttura delle regioni per il Fondo sociale europeo
Via Volturmo, 58
00185 Roma
Tel. (39-06) 49 27 05 01 – Fax (39-06) 492 70 51 08
Internet: <http://www.tecnostruttura.it/>

Social partners and bilateral bodies

CGIL – Confederazione generale italiana del lavoro
Corso Italia, 25
00198 Roma
Tel. (39-06) 847 61 – (39-06) 588 51 02 – Fax (39-06) 884 56 83
Internet: <http://www.cgil.it/>

CISL – Confederazione italiana sindacati lavoratori
Via Po, 21
00198 Roma
Tel. (39-06) 847 31 – Fax (39-06) 847 33 14
Internet: <http://www.cisl.it/>

CNA – Confederazione nazionale dell'artigianato
Via Guattani Giuseppe Antonio, 13
00161 Roma
Tel. (39-06) 44 24 95 02 – (39-06) 44 18 81 – Fax (39-06) 44 24 95 13
Internet: <http://www.cna.it/>

CONFAPI – Confederazione italiana piccola e media industria
Via della Colonna Antonina, 52
00186 Roma
Tel. (39-06) 69 01 51 – Fax (39-06) 679 14 88
Internet: <http://www.confapi.it>

CONFARTIGIANATO – Confederazione generale italiana dell'artigianato

Via di San Giovanni in Laterano, 152

00184 Roma

Tel. (39-06) 70 37 41 – Fax (39-06) 70 45 21 88

Internet: <http://www.confartigianato.it>

CONFCOMMERCIO – Confederazione generale italiana del commercio,
del turismo, dei servizi e delle PMI (piccole e medie imprese)

Piazza G. G. Belli, 2

00153 Roma

Tel. (39-06) 581 86 85 – (39-06) 581 89 82 – Fax (39-06) 581 28 80

Internet: <http://www.confcommercio.it>

CONFINDUSTRIA – Confederazione generale dell'industria italiana

Viale dell' Astronomia, 30

00144 Roma

Tel. (39-06) 97 74 92 55 – Fax (39-06) 97 74 92 56

Internet: <http://www.confindustria.it>

EBNA – Ente bilaterale nazionale artigianato

Viale Castro Pretorio, 25

00185 Roma

Tel. (39-06) 44 70 26 24 – Fax (39-06) 44 70 26 54

Internet: <http://www.ebna.it>

OBNF – Organismo bilaterale nazionale per la formazione

Viale Pasteur, 6

00144 Roma

Tel. (39-06) 591 31 81 – Fax (39-06) 54 22 93 43

Internet: <http://www.obnf.it>

UIL – Unione italiana del lavoro

Via Lucullo, 6

00187 Roma

Tel. (39-06) 475 31 – Fax (39-06) 475 32 08

Internet: <http://www.uil.it>

Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training)

The vocational education and training system in Italy: Short description

ISFOL

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2003 – VI, 50 pp. – 21 x 29.7 cm

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The Italian education and training system has been radically overhauled in recent years. Compulsory education and training has been introduced for all young people up to the age of 18, as well as the right/duty to education and training in order to ensure that young people are suitably equipped to enter the working world. A further stream has been introduced into higher non-university education: higher technical education and training. In apprenticeship, the links between job experience and training experience, inside and outside enterprises, have been strengthened and stepped up. The establishment of the permanent regional centres for adult education has given lifelong learning an important place in the 'formal' learning sector. Continuing training for employees is increasingly becoming an independent system for the refresher training, qualification and retraining of the labour force.

The vocational education and training system in Italy

Short description



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