

VET in Italy

Vocational education and training (VET) is characterised by multilevel governance with broad involvement of national, regional and local stakeholders. Ministries of education and labour lay down general rules and common principles for the system. Regions and autonomous provinces are in charge of VET programmes and most apprenticeship-type schemes.

Compulsory education lasts 10 years, up to age 16. At age 14 learners make a choice between general education and VET. They have the 'right/duty' (*diritto/dovere*) to stay in education until age 18 to accomplish 12 years of education and/or vocational qualification.

At upper secondary level, the following VET programmes are offered:

- five-year programmes (EQF level 4) at technical schools (*istituti tecnici*) leading to technical education diplomas; at vocational schools (*istituti professionali*) they lead to professional education diplomas. Programmes combine general education and VET, and can also be delivered in the form of alternance training. Graduates have access to higher education;
- three-year programmes (*istruzione e formazione professionale*, leFP) leading to a vocational qualification (*attestato di qualifica di operatore professionale*, EQF level 3);
- four-year programmes leading to a technician professional diploma (*diploma professionale di tecnico*, EQF level 4).

All upper secondary education programmes are school based, but could be also delivered as apprenticeships (Type 1).

There is permeability across VET programmes and also with the general education system.

On completion of a three-year vocational qualification, it is possible to attend one additional year leading to a four-year vocational diploma; this allows enrolling in the fifth year of the State education system and sitting the State exam for a general, technical or professional education diploma.

At post-secondary level, VET is offered as higher technical education for graduates of five-year upper secondary programmes or four-year leFP programmes who passed entrance exams:

- higher technical education and training courses (*istruzione e formazione tecnica*

superiore, IFTS): one year post-secondary non-academic programmes leading to a high technical specialisation certificate (*certificato di specializzazione tecnica superiore*, EQF level 4);

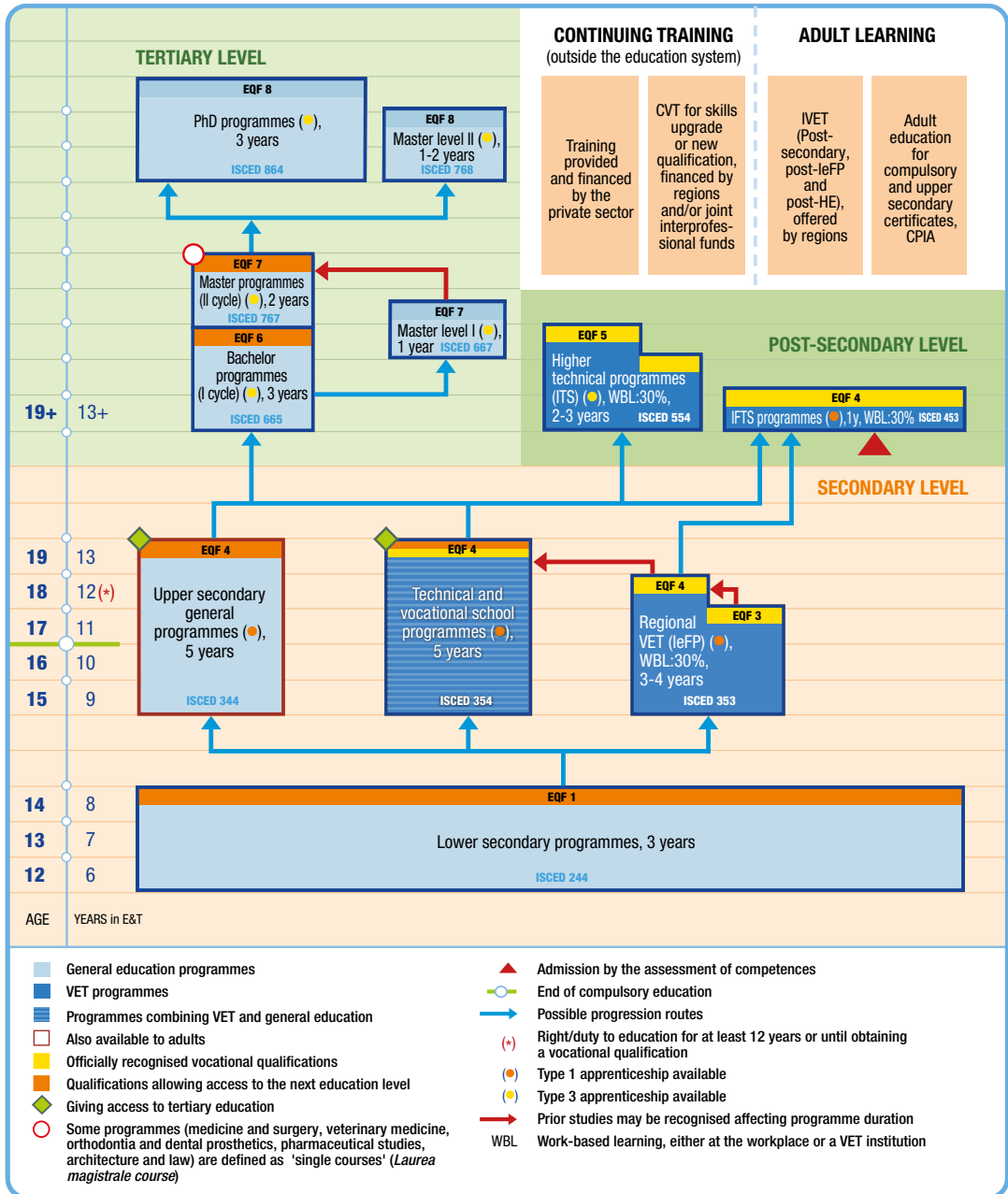
- higher technical institute programmes (*istituti tecnici superiori*; ITS): two- to three-year post-secondary non-academic programmes which lead to a high-level technical diploma (*diploma di tecnico superiore*, EQF level 5).

These courses are organised by foundations that represent schools, universities, training centres, enterprises and local bodies.

Apprenticeship is available at all levels and programmes and is always defined as an open-ended employment contract. Type 1 apprenticeship is offered for all programmes at upper secondary level and the IFTS programme. Type 3 apprenticeship (higher training/education apprenticeship) is offered in ITS programmes and all tertiary education level programmes leading to university degrees, HTI diplomas, and doctoral degrees corresponding to the tertiary level. Type 2 apprenticeship does not correspond to any education level, diploma or qualification, but leads to occupational qualifications recognised by the relevant national sectoral collective agreements applied in the hiring company. Type 1 and Type 3 apprenticeships are associated with a formal education and training programme, while Type 2 is not.

VET for adults is offered by a range of different public and private providers. It includes programmes leading to upper secondary VET qualifications to ensure progression opportunities for the low-skilled; these are provided by provincial centres for adult education (*centri provinciali per l'istruzione degli adulti*, CPIA) under the remit of the education ministry.

Continuing vocational training (CVT) to meet enterprise, sectoral and regional needs is supported by joint inter-professional funds managed by the social partners.



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

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