

Validation arrangements

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 ITALY

Timeline



ID number 28679

Background

The Law 92/2012 on the reform of the labour market defines for the first time in Italy the validation of non-formal and informal learning, as one of the key elements to ensure and implement lifelong learning in a comprehensive and systematic manner, establishing rules and regulatory requirements (standards) concerning the characteristics of the system and the stakeholders involved, ensuring transparency, usability and broad accessibility of validation/certification services (IVC).

Objectives

Establishment of the national system for validation of non-formal and informal learning and certification of competences, for lifelong learning.

Description

The Law 92/2012 on the reform of the labour market defines for the first time in Italy the validation of non-formal and informal learning, as one of the key elements to ensure and implement lifelong learning in a comprehensive and systematic manner, establishing rules and regulatory requirements (standards) concerning the characteristics of the system and the stakeholders involved, ensuring transparency, usability and broad accessibility of validation/certification services (IVC).

In recent years, the regions have progressively regulated the services of identification, validation and certification and, with different levels of implementation, of recognition of competences, aimed at valuing the individual's study, work and life experiences.

2015 Design

In 2015-16, under the Youth guarantee programme, a sample of volunteers involved in the civil service in 11 regions had their competences validated. The main challenge at this stage was to ensure the sustainability of validation practices.

2016 Design

The design of the system for the validation of prior learning continued.

2017 Design

The design of the system for the validation of prior learning continued.

2018 Design

In October 2018, guidelines for the interoperability of awarding bodies were presented to the National Technical Committee. The guidelines define the technical specifications for awarding bodies – education ministry (school and university qualifications), regions (for VET qualifications), economic development ministry, EU policies department (for regulated professions), labour ministry (for non- regulated professions) – and their functions in competence identification, validation and certification services (IVC). The guidelines represent the measure that makes the national system of certification of competences operational, as established by Legislative Decree No 13 of 16 January 2013.

2019 Design

In 2019, the National Technical Committee initiated a written procedure for the formal -and legal- approval of the final version of the guidelines for the interoperability of awarding bodies following specific steps (e.g. their presentation to the social partners, the approval by the State-regions conference and the subsequent issue of the inter-ministerial Decree which would ensure implementation at national level).

2020 Design

In 2020, the National Technical Committee continued the planned activities for the approval of the guidelines for the interoperability of awarding bodies of the national system of certification of competences.

The Regions and autonomous provinces progressively implemented the system of certification of competences at territorial level with specific regulatory acts and initiatives that launched the services.

2021 Implementation

On 5 January 2021, the labour ministry, in agreement with the education ministries, and the public administration, issued the Decree that makes operational the guidelines for the interoperability of awarding bodies of the national system of certification of competences. The guidelines were prepared in accordance with the Regions and autonomous provinces, following the Agreement reached in the Unified Conference on 5 November 2020. This legislative Act completes the architecture of the national system of the certification of competences and provides a common reference framework for awarding bodies:

- (a) minimum standards of the system;
- (b) essential performance levels;
- (c) criteria for the implementation and regular updating of the National repertory of educational and training qualifications and vocational qualifications;
- (d) progressive implementation of the unique information backbone through the interoperability of central and territorial databases for the workers' electronic booklet.

The Regions and autonomous provinces started refining the implementation of IVC at local level, with reference to the National guidelines (Decree by the labour ministry of 5 January 2021).

2022 Implementation

In 2022, the indications of the guidelines were incorporated into the procedures and practices of the skills certification systems of most Regions. In some territories, the network of entitled bodies was expanded to improve the provision of IVC. In many regions, a targeted service access procedure was activated for the recognition of prior learning in either formal, non-formal or informal settings of the target audiences of upskilling and reskilling programs and initiatives such as:

- (a) GOL - *Workers' Employability Guarantee*;
- (b) the *New Skills Fund*;
- (c) the *Youth Guarantee* and Civil Service;
- (d) for the recognition of learning outcomes achieved in continuing education activities (CVET) promoted by Interprofessional Funds.

2023 Implementation

In 2023, the Regions and autonomous provinces continued the implementation of IVC services.

In December 2023, Inapp published the First National Certification Competence System Monitoring Report which provides an overview of the implementation and effectiveness of Italy's National Skills Certification System. It includes data on certifications issued, types of competencies certified, and sectors involved. The report also highlights the importance of the validation process, which ensures that individuals' skills are accurately assessed and recognised against predefined standards.

2024 Implementation

In August 2024, the decree 'Regulation of Services for Identifying, Validating, and Certifying Skills Related to Qualifications under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies' was published by the labour ministry. The decree is in accordance with Legislative Decree No. 13 of January 16, 2013, and in implementation of the interministerial decree of January 5, 2021, titled: 'Provisions for the Adoption of Guidelines for the Interoperability of Public Bodies Holding the National Skills Certification System'.

The decree regulates the functions and defines the responsibilities of the labour ministry within the national certification competence system. It opens new opportunities for collaboration and synergy in corporate training between the regional professional training system and the economic and social partnership, highlighting the central role of Interprofessional Funds for Continuing Vocational Training and Bilateral Funds for Training and Income Integration. The funds are crucial for validation arrangements by supporting the identification, validation, and certification of skills acquired through training initiatives, ensuring formal recognition and meeting required standards. The decree promotes collaboration between regional training systems and economic and social partners, creating effective training programs and validation processes relevant to labour market needs.

Additionally, this provision governs the recognition of skills acquired in non-formal learning contexts such as universal civil service, apprenticeship contracts, internships promoted by the ministry, entrepreneurship and self-employment support programs, volunteering, and collective utility projects.

2025 Implementation

In 2025, the Regions and autonomous provinces continued the implementation of IVC services.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Labour and Social Policies
- Regions and autonomous provinces
- Ministry of Education and Merit
- Ministry of Education (until 2022)
- Ministry of Universities and Research
- Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (until 2019)

Target group

Learners

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
 Learners with migrant background, including refugees
 Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers
 Learners with disabilities
 Unemployed and jobseekers
 Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment
 Low-skilled/qualified persons
 Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

Education professionals

Teachers
 Trainers
 School leaders
 Adult educators
 Guidance practitioners

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies
 Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Comprehensive national qualification frameworks
 Learners' possibilities of accumulation, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired non-formally and informally

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Legislative Decree No 13/2013 Definition of general rules and basic level of performance for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning and minimum service standards of the national system of competences certification](#)

[Decree of the Ministry of Labour of 5 January 2021 - Provisions for the adoption of the Guidelines for the interoperability of entitling bodies of the National system of certification of competences](#)

[Decree of the Minister of Labour and Social Policies of July 9, 2024, Regulation of Services for Identifying, Validating, and Certifying Skills Related to Qualifications under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies -Official Gazette No. 185 of August](#)

[National Certification Competence System Monitoring Report](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

National framework of regional qualifications (QNQR)

In June 2015, an inter-ministerial Decree (signed by the education and labour ministries) introduced an operational framework for the recognition of regional qualifications and related skills competences at a national level (National framework of regional qualifications, QNQR).

 ITALY

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation

The Atlas of work and qualifications

In 2013, the Legislative Decree No 13 article 8 sets up the National repertory of education and training and professional qualifications.

 ITALY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

2025 Implementation**The Italian national qualifications framework (QNQ)**

A national strategy on lifelong learning has been defined, together with the implementation of legislative norms on the identification and validation of competences acquired in different contexts, through which the National system for the certification of competences has been launched.

 ITALY**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

SubsystemIVET CVET

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