



**Italy**

**Overview of the  
Vocational Education and Training System**

**2008**

**eKnowVet – Thematic Overviews**



**CEDEFOP**

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**Abstract:**

This is an overview of the VET system in Italy. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General policy context - framework for the knowledge society
2. Policy development - objectives, frameworks, mechanisms, priorities
3. Institutional framework - provision of learning opportunities
4. Initial vocational education and training
5. Continuing vocational education and training for adults
6. Training VET teachers and trainers
7. Skills and competence development and innovative pedagogy
8. Accumulating, transferring and validating learning
9. Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment
10. Financing - investment in human resources
11. European and international dimensions, towards an open area of lifelong learning

This overview has been updated in 2008 and its reference year is 2007. The latest versions can be viewed from October 2009 onwards at:

[http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Information\\_resources/NationalVet/Thematic/](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Information_resources/NationalVet/Thematic/) where more detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can also be found.

**Keywords:**

training system; training policy, initial training, continuing vocational training, training of trainers, skill development, vocational guidance, recognition of competences, validation of non formal learning; financing of training

**Geographic term:**

Italy

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## 01 - GENERAL POLICY CONTEXT - FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

### 0101 - POLITICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL/ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Italy is a democratic Republic and has 20 Regions, 107 Provinces and 8.100 local authorities.

The State 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.

Italy is one of the six signatory countries of the 1957 'Treaty of Rome' Agreements which founded - among others - the EEC, and its European vocation has been confirmed with the signature of the various Treaties that have progressively led to the development of the present-day EU. Italy has also adopted the Euro as its currency.

Italy has a diversified industrial economy with roughly the same total and per capita output as France and the UK. This capitalistic economy remains divided into a developed industrial north, dominated by private companies, and a less-developed, welfare-dependent, agricultural south, with about 6,1% unemployment for 2007 in Italy. Most raw materials needed by industry and more than 75% of energy requirements are imported. Over the past decade, Italy has pursued a tight fiscal policy in order to meet the requirements of the Economic and Monetary Unions and has benefited from lower interest and inflation rates. Moreover, the current government has enacted numerous short-term reforms aimed at improving competitiveness and long-term growth. Italy has moved slowly, however, on implementing needed structural reforms, such as lightening the high tax burden and overhauling Italy's rigid labour market and over-generous pension system, because of the current economic slowdown and opposition from labour unions. But the leadership faces a severe economic constraint, following also the global trend of recession: the budget deficit still breaching the 3% EU ceiling. The economy experienced a very low growth in 2007, and unemployment remained at a high level.

## 0102 - POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

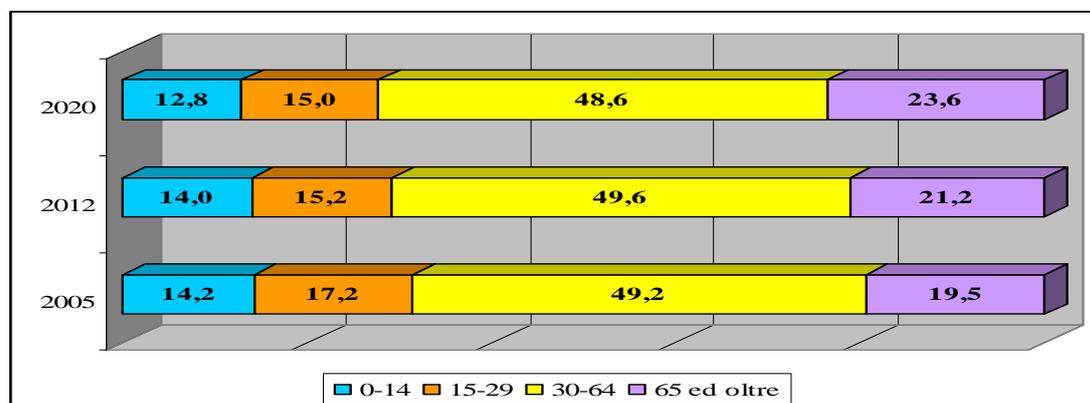
The National statistical office (ISTAT) data register a resident population, on 31st December 2007, of 59 619,290 inhabitants, distributed over an area of 301,328.45 km<sup>2</sup> with a density of about 198 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (one of the highest population density in all of Europe). The highest density is in North-western Italy, as two regions out of twenty (Lombardy and Piedmont) combined, contain one quarter of the Italian population.

GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS	AGE GROUPS (%) AND MEDIAN AGE (YEARS)			
	0-14	15-64	65 +	M. AGE
NORTH	13.3	65.6	21.1	44.
CENTRE	13.2	65.5	21.4	44.
SOUTH	15.8	66.8	17.4	40.6
ITALY	14.1	66	19.9	42.8

\*Source: ISTAT

## TRENDS AND EXPECTED DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENTS (2005-2020)

Figure 1: Resident population by age group on 1 January of each year (2005 and forecasts for 2012 and 2020, in %)



Source: ISFOL-"Training Systems" Area processing of ISTAT data

The demographic trends (average rate) of the population up to 2020 show an overall growth in the resident population up to 2012, mainly supplemented by immigrants; then, the trend is expected to reverse (in 2025 the estimated population will be 57,629,679). The group aged between 0-24, will constantly fall in the years considered, while the group aged between 25-59 is expected to fall after 2007. Finally, the group aged 60 and over will grow constantly up to 2025. The short-term gain of residents (up to 2012), considering the

negative balance of natural dynamics, is due to migration. Most relevant aspect of this demographic trend is the population ageing: age group 65+ will grow up to 20,3 millions by 2051, according to a recent prevision of Istat . Over 65, now representing the 19,9% of the overall population, will be the 33% in 2051. In the actual scenario, it is necessary to promote and implement adequate policies and programmes for active ageing, focusing on age management active labour market policies, including life-long education and training. The reduction of the demographic categories of reference involves a quantitative reduction of the number of young people involved in the school system and in initial vocational training activities. On the other hand, the number of the potential users of continuing vocational training activities continues to grow, due to the needs of the labour market - and in the broader sense - of lifelong learning. These dynamics - must be taken into account for structuring the training policies of the coming years, in order to determine the necessary structural requirements and to adjust the education and training system as a whole.

### 0103 - ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Table 1: Main Economic and Labour Market Indicators in Italy*	
INDICATORS	2007
Percentage of workers employed in agriculture	5.3
Percentage of workers employed in industry	28.1
Percentage of workers employed in services	66.6
Employment rate (15-64)***	58.7
Male employment rate (15-64) ***	70.7
Female employment rate(15-64***)	46.6
Unemployment rate (15-64) ***	6.1
Male unemployment rate (15-64***)	4.9
Female unemployment rate(15-64***)	7.9
Youth unemployment rate (from 15 to 24 years of age)	20.3
Public expenditure for education and training in relation to GDP (a)	(a) 4.5**
Public expenditure for education and training in relation to total public expenditure (b)	(b) 8.8**

\*Source: ISTAT

\*\*Data 2006

\*\*\* Employment and unemployment rates respectively decrease and increase if we consider age group over 65; for further comments please refer to Rapporto Isfol 2008, Roma, Isfol, 331 p.

Table 2: Employment and Unemployment rates by gender and geographical area (2007, in %)*			
		<b>EMPLOYMENT RATE</b>	<b>UNEMPLOYMENT RATE</b>
<b>GENDER</b>	<b>MEN</b>	70.7	4.9
	<b>WOMEN</b>	46.6	7.9
<b>TOTAL</b>		58.7	6.1
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS</b>	<b>NORTH EAST</b>	67.6	3.1
	<b>NORTH WEST</b>	66.0	3.8
	<b>CENTRE</b>	62.3	5.3
	<b>SOUTH</b>	46.5	11.0

\*Source: ISTAT

In 2007, according to the average annual data recorded by the Istat, the number of employed people accounted for 58.7% of the population aged over 15. This percentage rises to 70.7% if we consider the male employment rate, and remains at a lower level for the female population (46.6%). Reflecting a characteristic common to the economically developed countries, most of the employed labour force has been absorbed by the services sector (66.6%), while 28.1% are employed in industry, and another 5.3% in agriculture. The unemployment rate – which has been falling over recent years, reaching 7.0% in 2005 – seems to reverse its trend, decreasing over the last two years: 6.8 % in 2006 and 6.1 in 2007. Compared to the overall average value, the male unemployment rate is lower (4.9%). Female unemployment accounts for 7.9 % of the workforce, while the worst situation is recorded for young people aged under 25, as shown by the youth unemployment rate of 20.3%.

#### **0104 - EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION**

For over a decade, Italy has been involved in an intensive qualification process of its population and workforce. Above all with regard to the younger generations, the gap with the other economically advanced countries has been partly narrowed. However, this does not mean that the country has reached satisfactory educational levels for the population as a whole. In 2007, as shown in the table below (taking into account the population aged over 25) 48% of the Italians had at most a pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education, while those who attained an upper secondary and post-secondary non tertiary certification certificate accounted for 39% of the total. Finally, 14% attained a tertiary education qualification.

Table 1: Population aged to 25 to 64, by highest level of education attained, according ISCED* levels A (2007 in %)**	
<b>(ISCED LEVELS 0-2) PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION</b>	48.0
<b>(ISCED LEVELS 3-4) UPPER SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION</b>	39.0
<b>(ISCED LEVELS 5-6) TERTIARY EDUCATION</b>	14.0
<b>ISCED 5 AND ISCED 6 (FIRST STAGE AND SECONDARY STAGE OF TERTIARY EDUCATION)</b>	9.2

\* International standard classification of education

\*\*Source: Eurostat; EU Labour Force Survey; Date of extraction: 27/05/2008

Considering that the process of schooling has occurred with a delay compared to many other advanced countries, and that the younger generations involved are less numerous than the previous less qualified generations, the effects produced are more evident when analysing the educational levels of the population aged between 25-64, in which the percentage of holders of an upper secondary certificate rises to 51,3%\* for 2006 (provisional data Istat) and the university graduates to 14%.

Table 2: Early school leavers - Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training*						
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>ITALY</b>	24.3	23.5	22.3	21.9	20.8	19.3
<b>EU (27 COUNTRIES)</b>	17.1	16.6	15.9	15.5	15.2	14.8
<b>EU (25 COUNTRIES)</b>	16.6	16.1	15.4	15.1	15	14.5

\*Source of Data: Eurostat; EU Labour Force Survey; Date of extraction: 29 May 2008

Progress has also been recorded in dealing with early school leavers, as shown by the fall in the percentage of young people aged 18-24 who drop out of school with low levels of education. In the early 1990s, they represented 38% of the reference generation. In 2002, the rate fell to 24.3% and to 20,8 in 2006. For 2007, as shown in the table below, the percentage is 19,3%. Despite this positive and encouraging trend, Italian data keep on being under the EU average, presenting also important differences between regions, like Sicily or Sardinia where the percentage reaches 30%.

## 02 - POLICY DEVELOPMENT - OBJECTIVES, FRAMEWORKS, MECHANISMS, PRIORITIES

### 0201 - OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

As defined by the Framework Law on Vocational Training 1978, No. 845 of 21 December 1978, "The [Italian] Republic promotes the training and professional improvement of the citizen through Articles 3, 4, 35 and 38 of the Constitution, in order to make effective the right to work and to choose it freely, and to foster the growth of workers' personalities through the acquisition of a professional culture" (Art.1). Considered as an employability-measure instrument, vocational training aims "at fostering employment, production, and the evolution of work organisation in line with scientific and technological progress". According to this view, "vocational training initiatives are a public-interest service intended to ensure a system of training actions aimed at disseminating the theoretical and practical knowledge required so as to perform professional roles, and at focusing on the initial placement, training, retraining, specialisation, updating, and further training of workers, in a lifelong learning framework" (Art.2). This means that "vocational training initiatives address all citizens [...]. Moreover, the foreigners hosted in the country for work or training purposes are also eligible to participate in vocational training initiatives under the international agreements and the laws in force" (Art.2). Objectives and priorities for vocational training have been set in a White Paper on the Italian labour market (October 2001). The strategy outlined in the White Paper 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 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<sup>1</sup> for employment (NAP, 2002), 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. The main objectives which should be achieved by the educational system concern the following:

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<sup>1</sup> The NAP sets out the priorities for action to improve employment in Italy with reference to the European Employment Strategy.

- The reform of the education and training system with the introduction of the right-duty to training for at least 10 years;
- The strengthening of the school-work alternance and Higher Technical Training and Education (IFTTS);
- The development of the adult-education system in order to foster a higher level of basic skills.

In order to implement the government's development strategies, two reform laws have been approved in 2003: Law 53/03 reforming the education and training system (Moratti Law); Law 30/03 on the labour market and employment (Biagi Law) – please see 0301.

Concerning educational policies, at the current moment, the actual government who won the parliamentary elections on 13-14 April 2008, is discussing new reform proposals concerning the education system; on 29th of October 2008 the Parliament approved Law 133 (Gelmini Decree) entailing the re-instatement of the primary school single teacher. As things stand, Italian pupils have three teachers per class everyday, all day. The new law scraps this practice and substitutes the three tutors, with a main teacher flanked by a tutor for English and one for Religion. Moreover, the new government just started a debate concerning a revision of the university system, also following the main issues of the Bologna Declaration.

## 03 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK - PROVISION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

### 0301 - LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The right to «training and vocational improvement of workers» is expressly set by the Italian Constitution (1948); in defining the distribution of responsibilities between the State and the Regions, it assigns these latter with exclusive jurisdiction in the vocational training field. The State education system, however, has continued to provide vocationally-oriented schools in its Istituti professionali (State vocational schools), contributing to maintain a system made up of two segments:

- Vocational education, supplied within the educational system;
- Vocational training, under the responsibility of the Regional Authorities.

Framework Law 845/78 on Vocational training defines vocational training as an employability tool and unites both initial and continuing training in a single regulatory scheme. According to the framework law, the Regional Authorities are exclusively responsible for the programming process, and in such process are joined by the social and economic partners. Following the way opened by Framework Law 845/78, through the consolidation of the principle of 'concertation', these actors became more and more not just 'partners' but 'joint deciders'. 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 local and training bodies have consultancy and promotion functions. Following the guidelines established at national level, the Regional Authorities' tasks include the identification of medium- and long-term objectives through the analysis of training needs, activity-administrative management, monitoring and evaluation of the training-activities' efficiency and effectiveness. Thus, the Regional Authorities are exclusively responsible for both initial and continuing-vocational training, and, on occasions, this power is exercised by delegating or transferring a number of functions to the Provincial Authorities. The increasing empowerment of the Regions has been confirmed by the Constitutional Law 3/01 (which has revised Title V of the Second Part of the Italian Constitution); this Law has assigned the Regional Authorities with an exclusive responsibility regarding vocational education and training, in accordance with the constraints deriving from European rules and international agreements.

A first step towards recognition of training as a strategic resource for all people, in particular for young people, workers, and enterprises, is the approval of Law 236/93, which allowed to launch the structuring of a national continuing-training system. With the Labour Agreement signed by the Government and the Social Partners in September 1996, a real strategy of innovation of the system was envisaged. With specific reference to initial

vocational education and training, among the Agreement's objectives are worthy of note:

- the overall increase of the schooling level (quantitative and qualitative) by raising the compulsory schooling age and introducing the right to training;
- the consolidation of an integrated system for the certification and recognition of training credits;
- the definition of a system of permanent recognition of the quantity/quality of the training supply.

Consistent with the indications of the above Agreement, Law 196/97 has introduced:

- the identification of requirements for the "accreditation" of training providers to be entrusted with managing the activity; to the re-launching of apprenticeship training;
- the introduction of "guidance" and "training" practical work or experience;
- the definition of criteria for skill certification and the creation of a system for the credit recognition.

Afterwards, Law 144/99 on initial training introduced the institution of the so called obbligo formativo (compulsory training), i.e. the compulsory requirement to remain within one of the three strands of the education system (education, vocational training, apprenticeship) until the age of 18. This provision led to a reform of initial training. The law also introduced the new pathway of Higher Technical Education and Training (IFTTS). IFTTS pathways are conducted by specific consortiums representing the Schools, University, Vocational Training Centres and the world of work. Training activities can thus be provided within the schools, vocational training centres or university facilities forming part of the consortium. In any case, 30% of the total hours is assigned to work experience to be carried out within the enterprise.

At the same time, Law 388/00 (amended by Law 289/02), established the Fondi interprofessionali (joint multi-sectoral funds) supporting continuing training. 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. These multi-sectoral funds are managed by the social partners and supervised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Recently Law 53/03 (Moratti Law) set out the reform of the education and training system, while Law 30/03 (Biagi Law) and the following legislative decree 276/03, in the context of the general renewal involving the labour market, set out a reform of apprenticeship and introduced new and more flexible employment contracts.

The Moratti Law - Law 53/03 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. 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. To this end, the various segments are being reorganised and redefined, in order to ensure that all young people obtain at least a qualification, through the introduction of the *diritto-dovere all'istruzione e alla formazione professionale* before entering the labour market.

Nevertheless, a decree aimed at implementing the Moratti Reform (Legislative decree 76/05, setting general rules on *diritto-dovere*) reduced the years to 10, while education came back to be compulsory for students only until 14 years (Law 9/99, instead, had previously fixed the obligation to stay in the school system up to the age of 15). In December 2006, new legislation was introduced to further extend the duration of compulsory education, making provision for it to last 10 years, from age 6 to 16. In addition, it stipulates that the final two years of compulsory education (14- to 16-year-olds) must provide general rather than vocational education. A recent amendment of budget law 2007 (*legge Finanziaria*), contained in law 133/2008, has ratified that the right-duty to education and training should be completed at schools and in provisional pathways of VET<sup>2</sup>.

### **0302 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: IVET**

The vocational training system in Italy is historically arranged into two segments:

- Vocational training under the responsibility of the Regional Authorities;
- Vocational education provided in the educational system.

Until April 2008, overall responsibility for school education lied within the Ministry of Public Education (Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione), which is represented at local level by regional and provincial education offices, while overall responsibility for higher education and for scientific and technological research lied with the Ministry of University and Research (Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca). As a result of the parliamentary elections of April 2008 and of the installation of the new government, the Ministry of Education, University and Research (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca – MIUR), has been structured in only one Ministry.

The situation after the approval of the Constitutional Law 3/2001 is that: the State retains exclusive jurisdiction only over the “general regulations on education”, as well as the right to determine the “minimum levels of services”, i.e. the minimum common requisites with which the regional systems (included the VT ones) must comply, and to maintain relationships with the

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<sup>2</sup> Please, for a complete and integrate prospect of the current legislative framework of IVET in Italy, see *Rapporto Isfol 2008*, pp. 248-249.

European Union. The Regional Authorities, due to their exclusive jurisdiction, can now legislate independently on vocational training and not on the basis of principles defined by the central government. The three Trilateral Agreements signed in the 1990s (1993, 1996 and 1998) especially highlight the relevance of co-ordination in vocational training, and in employment policies in general; this co-ordination is considered as a basic instrument for the programming and definition of strategies for action. All the main legislation issued in 1990s originates from these agreements<sup>3</sup>.

To summarise this context, the following table lists the actors involved according to their institutional level and function.

Table 1: Institutional framework for Education and Vocational Training	
<b>MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY AND RESEARCH</b>	Definition of the general principles of the educational system Definition of university and research policies.
<b>MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY</b>	Definition and guarantee of the “essential levels of services” for the vocational training system.
<b>REGIONS AND AUTONOMOUS PROVINCES</b>	Exclusive jurisdiction for VT (definition and implementation of strategies).
<b>OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES (PROVINCES AND MUNICIPALITIES):</b>	Definition of plans for the implementation of VT strategies when delegated by the Regions.
<b>SOCIAL PARTNERS</b>	Management and programming of active employment policies, especially in the vocational training field. VT providers.

In particular, the role played by the Social Partners, can be summarised according the following levels:

Table 2: Roles and responsibilities of social partners by type of role		
	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF SOCIAL PARTNERS</b>	<b>TYPE OF ROLE (ADVISORY/DECISION-MAKING, DIRECT/INDIRECT)</b>
<b>NATIONAL LEVEL</b>	Definition of the institutional framework Fondi interprofessionali (joint multi-sectoral funds)	ADVISORY DIRECT
<b>REGIONAL LEVEL</b>	Definition of the institutional framework Fondi interprofessionali (joint multi-sectoral funds) Provision of learning opportunity	ADVISORY DIRECT INDIRECT
<b>ENTERPRISE LEVEL</b>	Definition of training activities Elaboration of training plans	ADVISORY DIRECT

<sup>3</sup> Starting from Law 236/93, which recognises the key role of co-ordination in the identification of needs, training periods and continuing-training actions, and Law 196/97 for the reform of the entire vocational training system to the introduction of compulsory education and the new pathway of higher technical education and training.

Furthermore, Schools, University, Vocational Training Centres and the world of work can build specific consortia in order to conduct IFTS (Higher Technical Education and Training) pathways. Training activities can thus be provided within the schools, vocational training centres or university facilities forming part of the consortium. In any case, 30% of the total hours is assigned to work experience to be carried out within the enterprise. In order to obtain public funding, the operational facilities of public and private bodies organising and conducting guidance and initial vocational training activities, financed with public resources, have to follow the “accreditation” procedures (Ministerial Decree 166/01). Accreditation, issued on the basis of three major forms of training (compulsory training, higher training and continuing training), is thus the compulsory requirement needed to be able to conduct formal training and guidance actions. In the years before the definition of the “accreditation” procedures, different facilities providing training or guidance activities already had obtained the ‘ISO 9000’ certification.

### **0303 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: CVET**

For the Institutional Framework related to CVET, see item 0302.

The CVT administrative structure is composed of: the Ministry of Labour - at national level; regional administrations, autonomous provinces and the Social partners - at regional level; provincial administrations - at local level.

With regard to the ESF and national Laws 236/93 and 53/00, the authorities having jurisdiction are: the Ministry of Labour, the regional administrations and autonomous provinces, as well as the provincial administrations where a delegation measure is applicable. With regard to Joint Multi Sectoral Funds, the system is managed by the social partners and supervised by the Ministry of Labour.

Continuing Vocational Education and Training in Italy consists of the following elements:

- lifelong learning activities for the acquisition of basic, general and pre-vocationally-oriented skills;
- lifelong learning activities for the enhancement of cultural background, and the attainment of skills for social life and active citizenship;
- continuing training activities for the updating and re-qualification of the workers' vocational skills.

These definitions don't have the status of recognition at a legal level. In recent years, a number of changes have been made to promote a coherent system for financing and managing continuing vocational education and training (CVET) and general adult education initiatives in Italy.

National resources for continuous vocational training amount to 105 million euro per year and are divided among 19 Regions and 2 Autonomous provinces of Bolzano and Trento, according the numbers of workers.

Resources are divided into two financing guidelines: the first is law 236/1993 (financing training plans and individual vouchers for workers of private enterprises); the second is law 53/2000, financing individual vouchers but also more complex projects, also involving public workers<sup>4</sup>.

With reference to the supply of continuing training, activities are carried out by a wide range of providers that may be summed up as follows:

- public and private enterprises and organisations, programming training activities for their employees;
- training bodies and agencies as well as accredited organisations (enti di formazione ed agenzie formative accreditate);
- joint bodies, trade associations (social partners);
- professional associations and professional registers;
- institutional organisms (universities, employment centres, etc);
- institutional bodies (universities, employment centres, etc).

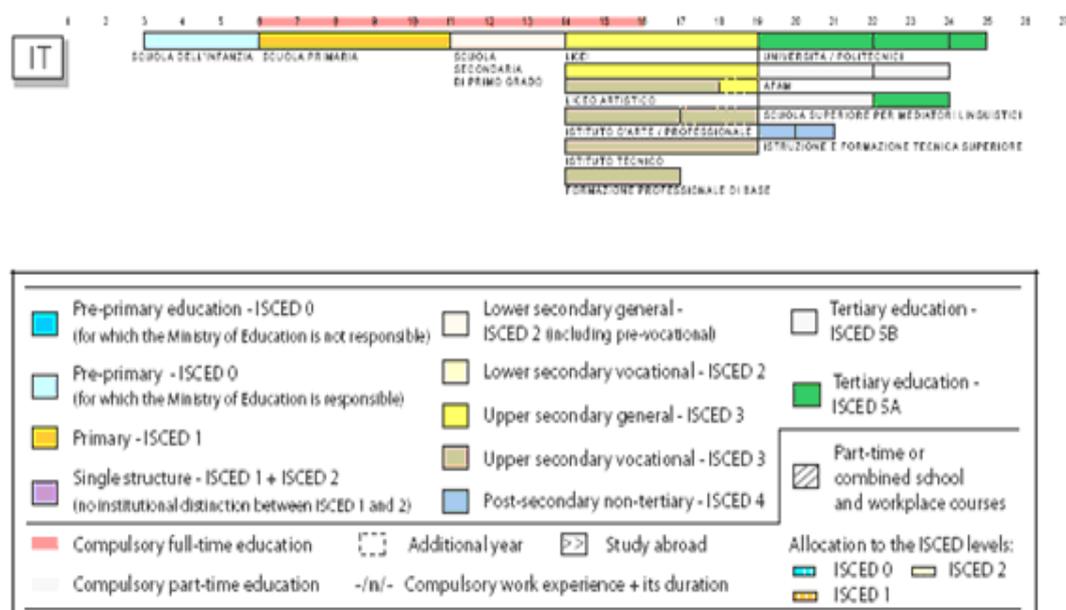
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<sup>4</sup> For an overview of legislative tools of the national system of continuous training in Italy, please see Rapporto Isfol 2008 (pp. 271-276).

## 04 - INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### 0401 - BACKGROUND TO THE IVET SYSTEM AND DIAGRAM

Figure 1: Current education system in Italy



Source: Eurydice.

Duration of compulsory education lasts for 10 years, from age 6 to 16. The final two years of compulsory education (14- to 16-year-olds) must provide general rather than vocational education (for legislation please see 0301).

After the *scuola dell'infanzia* (pre-primary school, three years), the system consists of two subsequent cycles. The first cycle is structured as primary school (five years) and lower secondary school (three years). The first starts at the age of 5,5 or 6 and has the purpose of ensuring the acquisition and the development of basic knowledge and abilities. The latter starts at 10,5 or 11 and terminates at the age of 13,5 or 14 (depending upon the starting age), ending with a State exam leaving a certificate (*Certificato di Licenza Media*), useful for the access to the second cycle. The Moratti Reform has organised the second cycle in two channels: 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; vocational education and training system, 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 pathways of *istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore* (IFTS - higher technical education

and training) (see 0406) 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. The partial completion of whichever pathway or part of pathway provides 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.

At the age of 15, students can decide to satisfy the *diritto-dovere* following a pathway to obtain diplomas and qualifications by school-work alternance (see 0403) or entering in *apprendistato* (apprenticeship) (see 0404).

The lasting of Lycées and Technical schools is 5 years; at the end students obtain the Diploma of upper secondary school, which pave for university entrance; the lasting of Schools of applied arts and Vocational schools is 3 years plus 2 optional years. At the end of 3 years pathways students obtain a *licenza di maestro d'arte* (Master of Arts licence) in the first case and a certificate of vocational qualification in the second. The certificate allows the access to 4th year of IVET system; at the end of this students obtain a diploma of vocational qualification recognised at national level and useful for entry the labour market. A further year of training aims to prepare students for the State Exam and obtain Diploma of upper secondary school.

#### **0402 - IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL**

Generally speaking IVET is not provided at this level. Lower secondary school, of a three-year duration, has only one education pathway common to all students aged between 11 and 14. The curricula include above all general subjects and have not work-based training. Students learn a second European foreign language and further study of ITCs. Admission is free and is subject to the attainment of a primary-school certificate. Legally recognised private lower-secondary schools are entitled to State subsidies and generally require parents to pay tuition fees. Following the schools' organisational and teaching autonomy provided by Legislative Decree 112/98, lessons can be spread over a period of 5 or 6 days per week, usually in the morning. It is also possible to modify both the duration of individual lessons and the weekly timetable depending on local needs and on teaching and educational programmes. On parental request, disabled children are entitled to a support teacher.

At the end of the three-year cycle, students are required to take a State examination in order to obtain a lower secondary school-leaving certificate (*Diploma di Licenza Media*) and have to continue their studies by enrolling in and attending upper secondary education (See 0403).

## 0403 - IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)

PROGRAMME	TOTAL	%
Upper secondary education general programmes	1,233,198	45.2
Upper secondary education vocational programmes	1,495,812	54.8
Upper secondary education total enrolment	2,729,010	100.0

\*Source: Ministry of Education [www.istruzione.it](http://www.istruzione.it)

At the end of the First cycle students of 14 (13,5) years enter in upper secondary education and they can choose between two channels: the school system or the VET system.

In the school system, the second cycle's completion entails for students to pass a State exam to obtain a Diploma of Upper Secondary school allowing access to University, advanced artistic, musical and dance training and to the Higher Technical Education and Training (IFTS, Istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore - see 0406).

In the VET system, IVET, for which the regional authorities are responsible, can be attended in Istituti professionali (Vocational schools) or in Vocational Centres and is organised in:

- four-year pathways leading to the diploma of vocational qualification, recognised at national and European level, useful for entry in labour market or to continue training into IFTS;
- three-year pathways – supplied by Vocational centres - leading to the award of a *certificato di qualifica professionale* (vocational qualification certificate) recognised nationally and within Europe.

Students who have reached the age of 15 can also choose to undertake the entire training 'till 18 years through a pathway based on school/work alternance. This kind of training can be followed both in the school system and in VET system and ensures that young people acquire basic skills but also competences useful in the labour market. The path is designed, implemented and evaluated under the responsibility of the school or training organisation and is the result of an agreement between school-training institutions, enterprises, chambers of commerce, public and private institutions. The duration of the training on the job may vary in relation to the level of education, the characteristics of the work activity, and the territory involved, from a minimum of 1 month to a maximum of 12 months. This limit may be extended to 24 months for disabled people.

In 2006-2007, the number of students registered to upper secondary school, has increased of 1.4% compared to 2005-2006, showing a prevalence of those registered to technical schools, even if it is increasing the number of those registered to Lycées, thus confirming a trend towards more “general” education, leading to a continuation in the university education<sup>5</sup>.

#### **0404 - APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING**

Young people aged 15 or more can enter the labour market via alternance methods such as *apprendistato* (apprenticeship), a contract which offers a combination of training and occupational experience. The maximum age limit for apprenticeship contracts is 24, 26 in the Southern part of Italy (Objective 1 of the European Social Fund - ESF); the age limit can be extended to 29 for craft apprentices and always has to be over two years for disabled young people. Contracts last from 18 months to four years. Enterprises in all sectors may use these types of contract. 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. Moreover 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 Theme 3, section 2) have to attend a supplementary module of 120 hours per year. Apprentices receive a salary equal to a percentage defined and set by collective labour agreements, of the salary of an employed worker with the same qualification. A new system for apprenticeship has been set up by Law 30/03 (Biagi Reform of the Labour Market) and the following legislative decree 276/03, but it needs to be regulated by Regions and Autonomous Provinces and by the collective agreements. So, for a long period both the former (as outlined above) and the new system will live together.

The following is a brief description of the three forms in which the apprenticeship contract is envisaged within the new system:

- apprenticeship for young people aged 15 to 18 who are subject to the *diritto-dovere all'istruzione e alla formazione professionale* (right-duty to education and training) and which has broader educational aims;
- a more strictly occupationally-based form of apprenticeship for young people aged 18 to 29; aimed at conferring an occupational qualification through on-the-job training and at acquiring basic, transverse and technical/occupational skills;
- apprenticeship for the acquisition of a secondary or university diploma or a higher qualification, also for young people aged from 18 to 29, regulated by local agreements among the Regions, the employers' and workers'

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<sup>5</sup> For the trends in upper secondary education, see Rapporto Isfol 2008 (pp. 220-222).

associations, the university or school or training centre involved according to the diploma that apprentices will acquire<sup>6</sup>.

The new model seems to give a wider role to social partners and bilateral bodies, thus including the definition of regulatory models of the labour market, in an optic of a cooperative “governance” of the system, as “strategic key for competitiveness and development”<sup>7</sup>.

#### **0405 - OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS**

There are no youth programmes or alternative pathways aimed at retaining young people in education and training up to a certain age, as the concept of *diritto-dovere all'istruzione e alla formazione professionale* (right-duty to participate in education and vocational training) for 12 years (from 6 to 18) introduced by the Reform ensures maintaining of young people in VET at least until they obtain an educational or training qualification (see 0401). Moreover *i Centri per l'impiego* - CPI (Employment centres), in charge for the retrieval of dropouts or young people at risk of exclusion from VET system, run tutoring, counselling and orientation actions, aimed to fight exclusion.

#### **0406 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL**

At the end of upper secondary education young people (18 years ) can decide to continue their education in VET. At this level there are two VET pathways:

- The regional VET courses of II level;
- The Higher Technical Education and Training (IFTS) pathways.

The regional VET courses level II, length 600 hours and lead to a regional qualification They are managed by the Regional Authorities and aim at providing students with specialised training. The curricula are based on vocational skills having a high theoretical, technical, technological and managerial content, also through practical exercises and on-the-job training periods.

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<sup>6</sup> For further details on the new apprenticeship, see: *Isfol, La transizione dall'apprendistato agli apprendistati. Rapporto Apprendistato 2004-05* (The transition from apprenticeship to apprenticeships. 2004-05 apprenticeship report), Roma, Isfol, 2006; see also: *Isfol, L'apprendistato fra regolamentazioni regionali e discipline contrattuali. Monitoraggio sul 2005-2006* (The apprenticeship between Regional rules and negotiation agreements. Monitoring over 2005-2006), Roma, Isfol, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Please, on the evolution of apprenticeship, consult *Rapporto Isfol 2008*, (pp. 265-270).

The Higher Technical Education and Training pathway has the objective of train senior technicians<sup>8</sup>. The training programmes are designed and managed by a consortium composed by at least four actors: school, VET organisation, university, enterprise. The IFTS pathways can be accessed by those possessing an upper secondary school-leaving certificate, or the admission to the 5th year IVET system or by those who, lacking it, possess certifiable skills acquired during previous education, training and work following the completion of compulsory-education. This pathway can be accessed by those possessing upper secondary vocational diploma.

Curricula, whose minimum standards have been set at a national level, aims, on the one hand, at strengthening the cultural knowledge and basic skills and, on the other hand, at providing people with in-depth transversal and technical-vocational skills (as envisaged by EU Level 4). The on-the-job training activity equals to 30% of the overall hours amount. Each training experience is certified in credits useful in further education/training or work pathways anywhere in the country. At the end of the IFTS pathway, students who successfully pass all the exams - aiming at assessing the skills they have acquired - obtain a final certificate of higher technical specialisation recognised at national level and issued by the Regional Authorities. In case of partial completion of the pathway, students are provided with an intermediate statement (*Dichiarazione Intermedia*) defining the skills acquired for the purpose of training-credit recognition by further education, training and work pathways.

#### **0407 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL**

Tertiary education is provided by various public and private institutions from the university sector and the non university sector.

**University sector** is made up by Universities (State or private legally recognised by the State), State polytechnics (Politecnici Statali), Higher education schools (Scuole Superiori), and different private institutions recognised by State. The university system provides: **Corso di Laurea** (university-degree course), of a three-year duration; **Corso di Laurea Specialistica** (specialist university-degree course) of a two-year duration, aiming at providing students with specialised knowledge and skills enabling them to practise specific professions requiring a higher qualification level.

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<sup>8</sup> As for Higher Technical Education and Training pathway, please consult Rapporto Isfol 2008, pp. 261-264.

Table 1: Scheme of the University System in Italy (Ministerial Decree 270/04)*			
<b>CORSI DI STUDIO DEGREE-COURSES</b>	<b>TITOLI ACCADEMICI DEGREES</b>	<b>CFU CREDITS EARNED</b>	<b>ANNI YEARS</b>
1° ciclo 1st cycle - undergraduate studies/students			
Corso di Laurea - CL Laurea degree course	Laurea-L 1st degree / Laurea degree	180	3
2° ciclo 2nd cycle - graduate studies/students			
Corso di Laurea Magistrale - CLM 2nd (Laurea) degree course	Laurea Magistrale - LM 2nd degree (Magistrale Degree)	120	2
Corso di Specializzazione di 1° livello-CS1 1st (level) Specialisation degree course	Diploma di Specializzazione di 1° livello -DS1 1st (level) Specialisation degree	120-180	2-3
Corso di Master Universitario di 1° livello- CMU1 1st (level) University Master degree course	Master Universitario di 1° livello MU1 1st (level) University Master degree	60+	1+
3° ciclo 3rd cycle - postgraduate studies/students			
Corso di Dottorato di Ricerca-CDR Research Doctorate programme	Dottorato di Ricerca-DR Research Doctorate degree		3+
Corso di Specializzazione di 2° livello-CS2 2nd (level) Specialisation degree course	Diploma di Specializzazione di 2° livello-DS2 2nd (level) Specialisation degree	60-300	1-5
Corso di Master Universitario di 2° livello- CMU2 2nd (level) University Master degree course	Master Universitario di 2° livello -MU2 2nd (level) University Master degree	60+	1+

\* Source: Crui – *Conferenza dei Rettori delle Università Italiane* (Conference Rectors Italian Universities)

Vocational education and training at tertiary level is carried out within public and private university institutions, which organise 'Level I and II' Master's courses, both lasting one year. For access to the 'Level I' Master's courses, it is necessary to hold a degree certificate (three-year course), while access to the 'Level II' Master's courses requires a specialist degree certificate (two years, following the three-year degree course). In both cases, it is however required to pass an admission interview.

As for trends in university courses enrolment, a good performance for 2007-2008 is represented by engineering–architecture degrees and economic-statistic degree; an important novelty in the academic year 2006-2007 is represented by "Laurea Magistrale" (five-year Master's Degree) and by the positive trend in the number of students involved in the first year<sup>9</sup>.

**Non university sector** includes institutions providing education and training for the practice of various professions. They can be State institutions or private foundations and are specialised in a specific fields like e.g. Arts, Design, Dance, Drama, and Restoration. They can set up and run 1st level programmes (for students with school leaving qualification and by a competitive entrance exam), or advanced and specialisation courses and master. The length of courses is different according to the level of course as well as the type of certification awarded (specialisation diplomas or statement of advanced specialised education and training).

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<sup>9</sup> For participation rates in university courses for the last year, please see *Rapporto Isfol*, pp. 223-226.

## 05 - CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS

In Italy, there are two systems that provide adult education. The first falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. The second, which provides continuing vocational training (Formazione Professionale Continua) for adult workers, is organised by the regional authorities. The general system of Adult Education is financially supported on the basis of resources allocated by the State, the Regions, and the local authorities; other funding can be provided by a number of public and private agencies, as well as by EU resources.

Continuing training activities in Italy are implemented by a variety of agencies and institutions. These can be basically summarized into three main categories: enterprises and organisations (public and private) which lay on training activities for their own staff, consortia of companies, etc.; training agencies and bodies (accredited or otherwise), consultancy firms, bilateral bodies and other agencies, i.e. the social partners, industrial trade associations operating in categories or sectors; institutional-type bodies (universities, job centers, permanent territorial centers, schools, etc).

### 0501 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Lifelong learning in Italy is "disseminated" through the education, training and labour systems, and therefore the institutional jurisdiction in the programming, management and evaluation of the actions regarding lifelong learning is highly specialised. The reference context of lifelong learning (systems of education, training and labour) has been recently affected by wide-ranging reform processes. An important milestone in this process, has been the definition of a national-level legislative pathway supporting the continuing training, with the issue of Law 236/93, and the start of the European Social Fund 'Objective 4'. In particular, Ministry of Labour provisions implementing Law 236 consider as continuing-training activities those addressed to employed or unemployed adults, in which workers may choose to participate, or those organised by enterprises in order to adapt or improve expertise and skills linked to the technological and organisational innovation of the production processes.

In the September 1996 Labour Pact (*Patto per il Lavoro*), and in the December 1998 Social Pact for Development and Employment (*Patto Sociale per lo Sviluppo e l'Occupazione*), the Government and the Social Partners emphasised the key role to be played by lifelong learning, also with reference to the changes underway in the competitive sector enterprises and in the labour market. The Pact for Italy (*Patto per l'Italia*) signed in July 2002 confirms and supports this perspective, establishing that youth and adult education and training levels are to be increased. The agreement envisages a permanent human-resource enhancement, promoted by reforming the educational system, and streamlining co-ordination between public and private resources responsible for lifelong learning, as a result of negotiations and co-operation between the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education, the Regional and Provincial Authorities, and the Social Partners.

## 0502 - PUBLICLY PROMOTED CVET FOR ALL

CVT is provided through different instruments and resources:

### THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND (ESF):

In the 2000-2006 Programming, the ESF envisages that for all the Regions funds will be allocated for training actions and the organisational development of enterprises, with a special focus on SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises).

The programming period provides for the definition of a comprehensive action scenario in favour of employed workers: continuing-training actions co-funded by the ESF have been envisaged in various Operational Programme Strands and Measures. Most actions are focused on the measure pertaining to "development of the continuing training, flexible labour market, public and private enterprise competitiveness, with a special focus on SMEs" (Strand D of the CSF 'Objective 3').

The Complements to the Autonomous Regional and Provincial Authorities' Regional Operational Programmes (P.O.R. - Programmi Operativi Regionali) cite various types of actions: they range from traditional classroom-based training, to more flexible and tailor-made forms of training, to training vouchers, to the capitalisation and transfer of know-how from workers about to retire to new recruits. Tutoring actions, as well training actions tutoring weaker categories, or people at risk of production marginalisation have been envisaged. The beneficiaries on these actions are rather diversified as well. Several categories of beneficiaries exist: besides workers (employed, self-employed, atypical, returnees, elderly people, socially-useful-job and social-buffer beneficiaries, but also the members of co-operatives, and civil servants), there are enterprises and entrepreneurs, including company owners and managers; there follows non-profit organisations, linked to the social economy, training bodies (including trainers), employment centres, and last but not least the social and institutional partners, especially when involved in local-development actions through the instruments of negotiated programming.

### THE NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND RESOURCES FOR THE CVT:

#### **a. Adult Education Centres (*Centri territoriali permanenti*);**

The Ministry of Education Order No. 455 of 29 July 1997, *Educazione in età adulta - Istruzione e Formazione* set up the "Adult Education Centres (Centri Territoriali Permanenti - CTP), defined as "places for interpreting needs, designing, co-ordinating, activating and governing education and training initiatives [...], as well as for the collection and dissemination of documentation" aimed at establishing agreements, understandings and conventions with all the organisations, bodies and/or agencies providing adult-education initiatives, in order to favour their local affirmation. Under Article 5 of the Order, the activities of the Adult Education Centres are aimed not only at courses for the attainment of educational qualifications, but also for the

reception, listening and guidance, as well as the primary, functional and adult literacy, the learning of language skills, the development and consolidation of basic skills and know-how, the recovery and development of cultural and relational skills both suited to the activity of participation in social life, and to the return to training of persons in marginal conditions.

**b. Law 236/93;**

Law 236/93 established a fund for vocational training (available each year through a call of the Ministry of Labour for the Regions) which so far has funded not only in-company training actions, but also the experimentation of individual training pathways, and training plans negotiated at company, sectoral, and local level by the Social Partners.

**c. Law 53/00;**

**d. Joint Multi Sectoral Funds for Continuing Training (Fondi *Paritetici Interprofessionali per la Formazione Continua*)**, managed by the Social Partners, and organised at regional and local level. (See 0504).

**PARTICIPATION OF ADULT POPULATION TO CVET ACTIVITIES**

As showed in the table below (table 1) , the participation rate of adult population to cvet activities, was 6,3% in 2004, then decreased in 2005 to 5.8%, rising again in 2006 to 6.1%, till reaching 6.2 in 2007, showing also some gender differences with a female rate of 6.6% compared to the male one (5.9%).

Criticalities are well known, but still unsolved: few participation among aged groups, low scholarship level of adults, different public and private structures offering courses based on “explicit-demand”, lack of orientation tools for the population.

The age group (see table 2) more involved in lifelong learning activities is that of “young adults” aged 25-34, especially south regions presenting a higher participation rate (12.9%) compared to the national one (6.2%)<sup>10</sup>.

Table 1: Participation rates to Lifelong learning activities (2004- 2007, %)*			
2004	2005	2006	2007
6.3	5.8	6.1	6.2

Table 2: Participation rates to Lifelong learning activities for age group (2007, %)*					
	AGE GROUP 25-34	AGE GROUP 35-44	AGE GROUP 45-54	AGE GROUP 55-64	TOTAL
ITALY	12.9	5.3	4.2	2.1	6.2

Table 1 & 2 \*Source: Isfol based on Istat data – Labour forces

<sup>10</sup> Regarding adult participation in lifelong learning and participation rates per regions in Italy, see also Rapporto Isfol 2008, pp. 257-244.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

One of the most important ways to assure good quality CVET provision in Italy is the accreditation system for providers. All providers whether public or private must be accredited to deliver publicly-funded training and guidance (as legislated in Law 59/97). All regional and local authorities must follow the national criteria outlined in the legislation. In 2002, the legislation was extended to cover minimum standards for vocational qualifications as well as training structures. Accreditation is necessary for providers wanting to deliver the continuing training of workers employed and unemployed. To receive accreditation, the operational facilities of public or private providers must have: management and logistical capacities; teachers with appropriate vocational skills; proven record of effectiveness and efficiency; links with local groups and enterprises.

Accreditation is undertaken by the regional authorities and autonomous provincial authorities on the basis of on-site inspections and an evaluation of documentation. Checks are made on an annual basis to ensure that standards are maintained: accreditation can be removed if they are not.

### **0503 - TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHERS VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION IN THE LABOUR MARKET**

The reforms introduced in Italy in recent years for the labour market, the social security and the VET system involve an overall system oriented towards “Welfare to Work”. One of the main objectives of this system is to foster the integration (or reintegration) in the labour market for the unemployed, the weaker categories or those at risk of exclusion. The “Welfare to Work” strategy is based on a three-year planning (2003-2006) having the purpose of promoting policies for the integration or reintegration of job-seekers in the labour market, aimed at raising the overall employment rate and based on an effective and virtuous combination between employment policy (employment service, guidance and training) and income support for the unemployed. With regard to the activation and prevention of unemployment, the reform of the labour market (Law no. 30/2003 and subsequent Decrees of implementation) has the following aims:

- to foster the integration of women, young and older workers in the labour market, increasing the employment rate, developing a more efficient and transparent system for the labour supply and demand matching;
- to guarantee the rapid reintegration in the labour market of those who have lost their job;
- to define a solid training system for ‘lifelong’ support;
- to shift protection from the single job to the labour market.

The NAP (National Action Plan) provides for various actions aimed at promoting the integration of the disadvantaged and to combat their

discrimination. These actions regard the following social groups: older workers, disabled people, immigrants, women, drop-outs, ex-convicts and drug addicts.

## **MEASURES TO REDUCE THE UNEMPLOYMENT GAP BETWEEN NON-EU AND EU CITIZENS**

The immigrant workforce, involved mainly in sectors with low qualifications, has acquired a structural presence in the Italian economy. Despite this aspect, the active immigrant population evidences significant areas of unemployment, which make measures for vocational re-qualification particularly necessary. In this regard, the Government's policy is based on four guidelines: simplification of administrative procedures for occupational integration; ranking criteria for the matching between labour supply and demand; guidance, training and re-qualification of unemployed workers; training actions for foreign students; combating all forms of discrimination. Projects for the social integration of immigrant communities have also been started up. These initiatives include: services for language and cultural mediation in the school and health-care sectors and at police stations; assistance to the disadvantaged through the setting-up of centres for hospitality and nursing homes for individuals without a social support network, for the ill and the homeless, and the provision of opportunities for the reformation of juvenile convicts; information, consultancy, guidance and legal-assistance desks; agreements for the evaluation and certification of Italian language skills acquired by immigrants. As regards measures, for equal opportunities, the following measures are planned for this purpose:

- guidance activities, both continuing and tailor-made, through the creation of Women's Desks on the provincial level, in order to provide information, guidance and counselling on opportunities for jobs, training, practical work and technical assistance for setting up businesses;
- support and incentives to new businesses and self-employment;
- integrated actions for continuing training and permanent updating of women's skills, based on alternating in-company and individual training;
- introduction of specialised skills in the context of employment services for the social and occupational integration of women who are disadvantaged and at risk of social exclusion;
- targeted actions in favour of women who are victims of violence, trafficking and enforced prostitution;
- experimentation of innovative instruments for reconciling professional and family life;
- incentives for adopting organisational models and the use of flexible forms of work (telework, part-time, job rotation, job sharing and other types of employment integrated with training activities) in order to favour reconciliation;
- design and definition of quality trademarks to certify the application of innovative organisational solutions for gender issues;

- actions to support family management, through the development of infrastructures and the reinforcement of the network of social care services (crèches, family and corporate crèches, working-hour and time schedules, time banks, neighborhood services);
- development of replacement services for self-employed women such as temporary assignment of self-employed work and tutoring of specific professional profiles in periods of abstention from work;
- development of women's networks in associations, enterprises and the professions, to promote gender culture among women entrepreneurs and to foster the exchange of best practices;
- actions to foster the regularisation of illegal work.

The policies to prevent/combat school drop-out regard:

- the design of new places for aggregation;
- participation in events to disseminate a new culture of guidance and aimed at school personnel, students and families;
- the development of guidance actions against exclusion, dropping-out and other forms of discomfort through the integration of all the actors;
- the enhancement of the role of the family in projects and initiatives favouring the active participation of families;
- links between schools and other training systems;
- the promotion and implementation of volunteer initiatives in schools.

### **SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF CONVICTS SENTENCED TO PENALTIES OUTSIDE PRISON**

Work plays a primary role in the path for the social reintegration of convicts. This favours the process of social inclusion and the adoption of socially acceptable models of life. To this end, the following will be promoted:

- employment, guidance and business start-up for the post-prison future, thus stimulating the participation of the public, private and third sectors, with actions to provide incentives to occupational investment within the prison environment;
- actions to guarantee lifelong-learning pathways;
- initiatives for those in prison and those condemned to alternative sentences;
- knowledge of the occupational needs of this restricted category;
- a database to define the professional and occupational positions of convicts.

## 0504 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF ENTERPRISES OR SOCIAL PARTNERS

According to the most recent Excelsior survey carried out by Unioncamere (please see table below) Italian enterprises have nowadays more awareness of their fundamental role in training their employees, especially in the starting phase of their job. This fact confirms an existing gap between formal/school training and real vocational needs expressed by the productive system. There are still some difficulties related with the Italian production structure, characterised by a large number of small-sized enterprises, for which it is too expensive and often not useful to invest in training, which provides benefits that are deferred with respect to the immediate costs. As a result, the levels of training increase proportionally with the size of the enterprise, and only the large enterprises have a high tendency to provide training. As also enlightened by Isfol in its annual Report for 2008, results in our country confirm the strong correlation between the size of enterprise and the “willingness” to provide training; in fact, together with the size of enterprises, it also grows the percentage of training enterprises. The data available for the year 2007 reflect this feature; in fact, as shown in the table below, the chance of training for a person working in a company with 500 (or more) employees, is about of 5/1 in comparison to one working in a company with less than 10 employees.

Table 1: Percentage of enterprises (by size) which have provided training (calculated over the total amount of enterprise at the date of 31 Dec. 2007)*					
<b>SIZE OF ENTERPRISES (MEASURED BY NO. OF EMPLOYEES)</b>					
<b>AVERAGE %</b>	<b>1-9</b>	<b>10-49</b>	<b>50-249</b>	<b>250-499</b>	<b>500 AND MORE</b>
22,8	14,4	14,3	19,1	33,4	44,1

\*Source: Unioncamere, Report 2008

The average percentage shows that about a quarter of the Italian enterprises therefore provide training every year for their employees; this represents a relevant achievement, while also showing much lower rates compared to those in the countries of North and Central Europe. Despite these difficulties, on the whole, the tendency to train is increasing (see Table 2 below ), and encouraging signals are also appearing in both Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises and micro-enterprises. Here, the following factors are significantly important: the use of informal learning processes, together with traditional training courses; factors such as geographical proximity, the existence of enterprise networks (consortiums, industrial districts), the membership of trade associations.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>AVERAGE %</b>	17,5	24,7	22,4	20,0	18,8	19,8	22,8
<b>1-9 EMPLOYEES</b>	12,6	19,8	17,3	17,1	15,6	16,6	14,4
<b>10-49 EMPLOYEES</b>	38,5	45,3	37,8	26,4	26,6	27,5	14,3
<b>50-249 EMPLOYEES</b>	41,5	54,6	55,2	37,1	43,1	42,6	19,1
<b>&gt;=250 EMPLOYEES</b>	55,2	63,6	72,2	71,3	74,2	74,5	77,5

\*Source: Unioncamere, Report 2008

With respect to Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises, there are positive trends in the enterprises acting as training providers, also in the Southern Regions, despite some difficulties, in particular the inclusion of the professional objectives of the worker in training design. Beside the dissimilarity related to the company's size, it is to be mentioned that the distribution of the training-providing enterprises shows considerable differences also in terms of sector of activity.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>AVERAGE %</b>	18,9	17,5	24,7	22,4	20,0	18,8	19,8
<b>INDUSTRY</b>	20,2	19,3	24,6	22,0	16,2	16,1	15,3
<b>BUILDINGS</b>	14,6	13,6	19,6	15,6	17,3	16,0	18,5
<b>TRADE</b>	18,9	17,3	23,8	21,1	18,2	16,4	17,5
<b>OTHER SERVICES</b>	19,7	18,0	27,7	26,3	24,9	23,3	24,4

\*Source: Unioncamere

From the sectoral point of view, Industry keeps to be the sector showing the lower rates of training (rates also decreasing over the last three years). Buildings and Trade are under the average, too; nevertheless, these sectors seem raising over 2006. Among the "other services", which play the major part in providing training, a great portion is represented by the banking sector and by all those innovative activities focused on ICT new technologies. Two factors worthy of mention are related to gender and age; in the first case, despite the great participation of women employed in the public sector, some elements of gender discrimination clearly exist for women working for the private sector or for those self-employed. As regards the age, it is quite worrying the composition of the workers trained that shows a major concentration in the central categories of age (from 25 to 54 years), with a decrease for the over-55 and an hard falling down for the youngest workers. As regards the qualitative aspect of the training provided, some elements can be summarised: training courses are still the main procedure by which the

enterprises organise training activities, however there is a growing impact of non-structured or informal learning (training periods for personnel, participation in conferences and seminars, participation in exhibitions and fairs, etc).

A great novelty in the Italian system of continuing training has been set in 2003, when the Finance Law provided for the operational launch of Joint Multi Sectoral Funds. After a global funding experience, it is the first time that substantial public funds are entrusted to private actors who, in agreement with the Ministry and the Regional Authorities, are called upon to define a new system of rules regulating access to benefits, with unique features differing from those used so far in connection with the ESF and Law 236/93, in a general scenario in which the various public policy fields in favour of the continuing training of employed workers were developed and reconsidered. At the current moment the system of Joint Multi Sectoral Funds is articulated on 15 funds with a rate of the 42% of private enterprises and 56% of workers adhering to these Funds<sup>11</sup>. With reference to support for enterprises, the Ministry of Labour, by means of eight provisions implementing Law 236/93, funded hundreds of sectoral and local in-company training plans, i.e. those complex training initiatives aimed at establishing relations with specific local or sectoral development contexts, in which the social partners play a central role in planning, programming, and implementation of the action. This tool, which is expected to favour SMEs' access to continuing training, beginning from 2003 ought to represent the main policy field of the Joint Multi Sectoral Funds. Law 53/00, recognising the workers' right to lifelong learning, provides for the opportunity of using training leave for continuing-training purposes through workers' training projects which, based on contract agreements, provide for working-hour reduction; and training projects directly submitted by workers themselves. With regard to the adult education, in recent years, non-formal training has also observed a substantial growth, being provided by a number of public and private actors and by third-sector associations, obviously linked with the increase in the training-course demand from some sectors of the adult world. It is worthy to mention that mostly classroom or distance-learning courses are provided (in particular in major cities, but in also increasingly in smaller towns) by the popular universities, third-age universities, civic networks for cultural promotion (civic schools for adult education, municipal libraries, museums, etc.), agencies, bodies and social volunteer associations, often in agreement with the Regional or Local Authorities or project managers, and are financed with ESF resources. In many cases, the training opportunities are similar in contents and methods to those offered by the Adult Education Centres, and to those linked to 'continuing training on individual demand' (for example, courses in English and other foreign languages, Italian courses for foreigners, computer and multimedia courses). However, for the purposes of lifelong learning, the aim of these courses is above all to provide opportunities absolutely different from traditional school/training schemes and thus more "reassuring" and "free" for individuals who are diffident towards

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<sup>11</sup> For a complete overview of the different sectoral funds and make a comparison among the 15 sectoral funds, please see *Rapporto Isfol 2008*, pp. 286-290.

training. It may often occur that these pathways contribute to rebuild an interest and motivation for learning.

### **0505 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

Since 1973 employed workers can attend training courses as a result of a national labour agreement clause which provides workers with approximately 150 hours of leave. Initially the contracts stated that this number of hours was to be linked to needs of school recovery (for example to obtain a lower-education certificate), or to attend educational and university courses. Some agreement also include the opportunity of attending vocational training courses. More recently, financial incentives to the individual training of workers were experimented, by some Regional Authorities, through the introduction of voucher. The "voucher" tool partly translates into reality the workers' right to make an individual vocational training and updating choice. Vouchers are not training coupons that workers use to pay for training themselves. It is the cost that can be financed for each workers. The system of training supply through vouchers is on a "catalogue basis". Each Regional Authority (or provinces in those cases where this subject matter is decentralised) adopts its own system in creating the training catalogue, which contains the various types of vocational training supply available by the training bodies. This should assist workers in choosing a specific training pathway based on their own individual needs. Individual training measures for employees have been tested since 1999 by the regional authorities using vouchers.

The Regional authorities have assigned different economic value to the vouchers, ranging from up to 500 euro to up to around 1,300 euro, and they are issued by the regional or provincial authorities to training bodies in respect of each learner. If the cost of the training is less than the value of the voucher, some regional authorities will accept applications by a worker to participate in several courses on condition that the various activities form an organic training pathway (as, for example the region of *Emilia-Romagna* has decreed). Many Regional Authorities have gradually extended and diversified the target groups, which include not only workers employed by enterprises required to pay the contribution of 0,30%, but the following types of contract: - Workers with fixed-term and part-time contracts, - Partners of co-operatives receiving wages, - Workers in the wage supplementation fund or registered on mobility lists, - Workers with a mixed-cause contract (training/work and apprenticeship) as long as the course requested is additional with respect to the training activities considered compulsory by law. The main financial instrument to support the vouchers is Law 236/93. Since 1998, the Regional Authorities can reserve a quota of the resources assigned by Law 236/93 for continuing training in order to experiment training actions for workers "on individual application". This quota rises up to a maximum of 25% of the resources deriving from the 0.30% withholding contribution on the total wages paid by enterprises as an additional contribution for compulsory insurance against involuntary unemployment. In addition, training schemes for adults are provided by The "Permanent Territorial Centre for Adult Education" which have recently been instituted under the aegis of the Ministry of Education,

University and Research. Their objective is to identify and fulfil individual demand for vocational education and training. This is usually free of charge and mainly geared to remedial or first time acquisition of basic skills (languages, computer studies, Italian for foreigners, and so on) or to basic vocational training (pre-vocationally oriented training). They address young people and adults, employed or unemployed workers, without distinction.

## 06 - TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

### 0601 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN VET

Teachers, trainers and other learning facilitators in Italy are differently regulated. The tasks, functions and skills of IVET teachers and trainers are much more clearly defined than for CVET teachers and trainers.

PLACE OF WORK – JOB CONTEXT	MAIN PROFILES
<b>IVET</b>	
State Vocational Schools	Teacher (docente) • Teacher-tutor (docente tutor)
Vocational Training Centres	Trainer (formatore) • Trainer-tutor (formatore- tutor) • Coordinator
Apprenticeship	Trainer -tutor • Teacher-tutor • Company tutor (tutor d'impresa)
<b>CVET</b>	
Vocational Training Centres	Trainer • Tutor
Enterprises	Teacher • Company trainer • Coach, tutor, mentor, supervisor
Centri Territoriali Permanenti (Permanent Regional Centres for Adult Education)	Teacher
Employment services	Tutor

Recent reforms of the VET system (see Law 53/2003) and the labour market (see Law 30/2003) have had an impact on the teachers and trainers' role in Italy. The decentralisation of education and training to regional/provincial level and individual school, the reform of school curricula and the introduction of accreditation and quality-control (DM 166/2001) have all had an impact, mostly on teachers and trainers in IVET (as teachers and trainers in CVET generally are not regulated by the State). In particular, we can individuate the following main changes:

- decentralisation has meant that the management of teaching staff has been transferred from the central to the regional government level;
- increased autonomy for State vocational schools has enabled schools to manage their own teaching programmes and choice of teaching methods, to organise their own teaching times, class composition, partnerships with other schools, pedagogical innovations, etc;

- increased autonomy has extended to the management of in-service training including the introduction of updating teacher skills in information and communication technologies (ICT);
- balance recruitment policies in terms of numbers of teachers on fixed and open-term contracts.

## **0602 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET**

IVET Teachers work in State Vocational Schools are mainly employed by the Ministry of Education. They are normally involved in the classroom teaching of scientific, technical and general subjects. IVET teachers and trainers have different types of recruitment, career progress and contractual position (see the table below).

Table 1: General characteristics of IVET teachers and trainers and other main learning facilitators

CHARACTERISTICS	TEACHERS	TRAINERS	OTHER MAIN LEARNING FACILITATORS
PLACE OF WORK	State Vocational Schools	Vocational training centres (managed by regional/provincial/municipal authorities) and private vocational training centres accredited by regions	Vocational training centres (managed by regional/provincial/municipal authorities) and private vocational training centres accredited by regions - Enterprises
ROLE	Docente (Teacher) involved in classroom teaching of scientific, technical and general subjects	Formatore docente (Trainer) subdivided by type of teaching (cultural, scientific and technical/practical) or operational areas (pre-service training, higher training, training for disadvantaged people) - Coordinator (face-to-face or distance learning activities; projects for disadvantaged people; projects integrated with vocational education and/or employment services) -	Formatore-tutor (Trainers-tutor) subdivided by operational areas: a) animation and individual or collective b) learning facilitation, c) alternance training, d) job insertion for disadvantaged people - Company apprenticeship tutor
TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT	Teachers are State employee and may have open-ended or fixed-term contracts	Employee with open-ended, fixed-term and atypical contracts	Employee with open-ended, fixed-term and atypical contracts
FORMS OF BARGAINING	Collective bargaining on national and school level	Collective bargaining on national and regional level	Collective bargaining on national and regional level
SALARY RATE	Teachers are compensated under two headings: a) basic compensation: fixed and includes salary and a special integrating indemnity b) additional compensation: varies proportionally with additional tasks (i.e. coordination, guidance, etc. but not for more than 6 working hours) Open-ended contract teachers have a salary regulated by collective national agreement	Open-ended contract trainers have a salary regulated partly by the collective national agreement and partly by regional collective agreements (20%)	Salary varies with respect to the type of National Collective Labour Agreement
TYPES OF RECRUITMENT	State exam	Direct: recruitment and selection are without legal constraints	Direct: recruitment and selection are without legal constraints
PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS	Specific subject degree	Certificate (secondary education) or degree and professional experience	Certificate (secondary education) or degree and professional experience
PRE-SERVICE TRAINING	2 years after a university degree: new Law 53/2003 will standardise pre-service training of teachers and trainers	Not compulsory at the moment. The new Law 53/2003 will standardise pre-service training of teachers and trainers	Not compulsory
IN-SERVICE TRAINING	Not compulsory. Law 53/2003 makes provision for a new system of in-service training to ensure closer links between training, performance assessment and career progress.	Not compulsory. Law 53/2003 makes provision for a new system of in-service training to ensure closer links between training, performance assessment and career progress.	Not compulsory. Law 53/2003 makes provision for a new system of in-service training to ensure closer links between training, performance assessment and career progress.

## **PRE-SERVICE TRAINING FOR IVET TEACHERS**

A teaching certificate is necessary to qualify the teaching professions. Open-ended and fixed-term teachers are recruited exclusively through a State selection exam.

A laurea (university degree) has always been required to teach in both lower and upper secondary schools (for most subjects). Additionally, some form of post-graduate teaching certificate with practical work experience has also been required. According to 1990 legislation (implementation decrees of 1997), secondary-school teacher training is provided at Scuole di Specializzazione per l'Insegnamento Secondario (SSISs - Specialised Schools for Teaching in Secondary Education), which are managed by the universities, but have now been suspended, in view of new recruitments forms actually discussed by the government. The number of available teaching jobs is nationally planned according to schools requirements.

## **IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR IVET TEACHERS**

In-service training of teaching staff has been consolidated over the years as a result of initiatives from the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR), the Istituti Regionali di Ricerca Educativa (IRRE - Regional Institutes for Educational Research), the Istituto nazionale documentazione informazione e ricerca educativa (INDIRE - National Institutes for Educational Documentation and Innovation in Education Research) and individual schools. Law 53/2003 states that the management of in-service training for teachers is assigned to universities in collaboration with public and private research institutions, accredited and qualified organisations and teachers' professional associations.

## **PRE-SERVICE TRAINING FOR IVET TRAINERS AND OTHER LEARNING FACILITATORS**

IVET trainers have to be professionally accredited. To meet these requirements specialisation pathways will have to be created for pre-service training for IVET trainers. In addition, some regional authorities have started to introduce more in-service training pathways.

## **PRE-SERVICE TRAINING FOR TRAINER, TRAINER TUTOR AND COORDINATOR (MOSTLY IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRES)**

In regional vocational training centres, there are no particular procedures for recruiting trainers and other learning facilitators. Recruitment takes place through informal channels such as a response to job-offers by vocational training bodies, as former students, etc. Formal recruitment procedures are in the minority and take place mainly in public VET centres (e.g. by public examination). To become a vocational trainer, a formal educational

qualification is not binding; previous work experience is considered more relevant.

In terms of career progress, there are no formal mechanisms except for those training bodies which apply the National Collective Agreement for Vocational Training. This provides for:

- recognition of educational qualifications, such as degrees, research doctorates or other post-graduate specialisations;
- opportunities for career progress towards professional functions (generally from tutor or teacher towards specialised roles centred on design and coordination).

With regard to the assessment and quality monitoring, trainers (mostly within vocational training centres) attending university courses will obtain the qualifications as set forth by law: 3 year degree (laurea triennale), specialised degree, Level I or II master's degree and other specialised qualifications. Other non-university organisations award certificates of attendance which can be sometimes used for registering in university pathways and for meeting criteria within regional tools for the accreditation of training bodies.

## **IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR IVET TRAINERS AND OTHER LEARNING FACILITATORS**

In-service training activities for IVET trainers are various and participation is on a voluntary basis. Activities are mainly promoted by regional authorities and are supported by funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) in compliance with guidelines set forth in the Regional Operational Programmes (ROP 2000-2006) within Italy's Community Support Framework. In-service training is, however, not widely diffused throughout Italy, and varies according to region (e.g. there are more structured in-service training systems within Northern and Central regions). Private training providers also provided more in-service training. The in-service training of trainers has been mainly aimed at supporting: organisational restructuring of vocational training bodies (e.g. after the introduction of quality assurance and management systems); accreditation of training facilities (e.g. to introduce new roles and skills in the field of evaluation, tutoring, and guidance); reform of the employment services (specifically focusing on adult re-guidance and vocational re-qualification); use of new learning technologies (e-Learning); management of alternance and apprenticeship activities (particularly to strengthen or develop collaboration with enterprises); design and implementation of integrated actions for the development of lifelong learning, training and vocational counselling, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of training actions. In the past decade, the innovation of in-service training has also received considerable impulse from the European programmes (such as Leonardo) or from Community Initiatives (such as Adapt, Employment, Phare and Now and Equal).

## **IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR COMPANY APPRENTICESHIP TUTORS**

In-service training for company apprenticeship tutors hardly exists, as there is a reluctance from many enterprises (especially small) to participate in external training activities.

### **0603 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET**

The main difference between CVET trainers and teachers regards the relationship between the training methodology and contents. Teachers are mainly content experts (e.g. experts in language, marketing, accounting, ITC experts, etc.), while trainers are process experts (e.g., experts playing different roles such as tutors, learning facilitators, group leaders, coaches, etc.). The role of State CVET teachers is defined by National Collective Labour Agreement; the role of CVET trainers and other learning facilitators (tutor...) is defined by National Collective Agreement or has no formal definition. The professional profiles of CVET teachers and trainers have only recently been consolidated, since Italy does not yet have a definite institutional framework. Some general characteristics are outlined in the table below:

Table 1: General characteristics of CVET teachers, trainers and other learning facilitators

<b>CHARACTERISTICS</b>	<b>TEACHERS</b>	<b>TRAINERS</b>	<b>OTHER LEARNING FACILITATORS</b>
<b>PLACE OF WORK</b>	Centri territoriali di educazione permanente (CTPs - Permanent regional Centres for Adult Education) - Enterprises - Vocational training centres	Enterprises - Vocational training centres (managed by regional/provincial/municipal authorities) and private vocational training centres accredited by regions	Enterprises - Employment services
<b>ROLES</b>	CTP teacher - Content teacher	Trainer involved in teaching of technical or organizational subjects.	Tutor - Company trainer - Coach, tutor, mentor, supervisor
<b>TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT</b>	Above all open-ended contract	Above all fixed-term and atypical contract	Above all fixed-term contract
<b>SALARY RATES</b>	Equivalent to lower secondary school teachers	Equivalent to trainers in vocational training	Generally qualified workers and managers. They can have increases as "functional allowances"
<b>FORMS OF BARGAINING</b>	National, regional and school-level collective bargaining (the latter only for teachers employed by the Ministry of Education, University and Research). For all the others, consultancy or fixed-term contracts.	For employees of Vocational Training Bodies, bargaining. For all the others, consultancy or fixed-term contracts.	For employees of Vocational training Bodies: national and regional collective bargaining For employees of enterprises: national, trade and additional corporate collective bargaining
<b>TYPES OF RECRUITMENT</b>	State exam	Direct	Direct
<b>PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS</b>	Specific subject degree	Certificate (secondary education) or degree and professional experience	Certificate (secondary education) or degree and professional experience

## PRE-SERVICE TRAINING FOR CVET TEACHERS

There are few structured pathways or legal obligations for pre-service training for CVET teachers. Most practitioners have a professional status as freelance

or occasional trainer, i.e. a professional or middle/top manager temporarily assigned to specialised technical or vocational teaching.

There are two categories of CVET teachers:

- teachers working in Centri Territoriali Permanenti (Permanent Regional Centres for Adult Education);
- content teachers.

Table 2: Summary of pre-service training of CVET teachers				
TYPE	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	TRAINING PROVIDERS	COURSE STRUCTURE	QUALIFICATIONS /CERTIFICATES
<b>CONTENT TEACHER</b>	Certificate or degree according to specialised contents required and professional experience	Training centres, professional associations, consultancy firms, IT providers	Short-term training modules or courses	Certificato di frequenza (Certificate of attendance)
<b>TEACHER</b>	Degree and qualification in the subjects involved in the curricula provided by the Centri Territoriali Permanenti	Universities / actually on progress a new recruitment system	Academic courses, teaching practices and practical work in school.	Certificato di abilitazione all'insegnamento (National Teaching Certificate)

## TEACHERS WORKING IN CENTRI TERRITORIALI PERMANENTI

For teachers working in Centri Territoriali Permanenti (Permanent Regional Centres for Adult Education), pre-service training is regulated in a similar way as for IVET teachers. For content teachers, pre-service training is mainly non-systematic.

## CONTENT CVET TEACHERS

For content teachers, there is no predefined qualification level to practice this profession. For publicly funded courses, there are some pre-defined requirements, such as a degree and/or appropriate professional experience. For some technical content teachers (e.g. software applications) specific certification is required (generally issued by the software houses or authorised training agencies). Generally, participation in pre-service training has formal accreditation only in the case of the training provided by universities or authorised consortia for higher education.

In all the other cases, the *certificati di frequenza* (certificates of attendance) are issued, recognised on the market and by the enterprises according to the 'prestige' of the providers. Teachers in the *Centri Territoriali Permanenti* (CTPs - Permanent Regional Centres for Adult Education) must hold at least

a degree, a teaching qualification for subjects taught and the level of lower educational school teachers (lower secondary education). Teachers are selected on the basis of both teaching and professional experience.

## IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR CVET TEACHERS

### Teachers in *Centri Territoriali Permanenti* (Permanent Regional Centres for Adult Education)

In-service, continuing training is regulated in a similar way as for IVET teachers.

#### Content Cvet Teachers

For content teachers, in-service training is completely voluntary (as would be expected given the freelance nature of many within the profession). Numerous streams exist for the preparation of CVET teachers such as university Master courses and specialised courses. The latter includes:

- brief post-secondary training courses provided by the vocational training system;
- intensive courses provided by various business schools or training agencies, with their own particular structure, regulations and organisation. Among these organisations, an important role is played by technological suppliers (e.g. the software or hardware companies).

## PRE-SERVICE TRAINING FOR CVET TRAINERS AND OTHER FACILITATORS

The profession of CVET trainer is not legally regulated by recognised associations and/or State exams. Numerous streams exist for the preparation of CVET trainers such as university Master courses and specialised courses. The latter includes:

- brief post-secondary training courses provided by the vocational training system;
- Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore courses (IFTS - Higher Technical Education and Training);
- intensive courses provided by various higher non-university education institutions or training agencies, with their own particular regulations.

## **CVET TRAINERS WORKING OUTSIDE ENTERPRISES (TRAINERS, TUTORS, ETC.)**

For CVET trainers working outside enterprises (trainers, tutors, etc.), access to the profession implies specific requirements only for those involved in publicly funded training activities.

Participation in pre-service training activities has formal accreditation only for training provided by universities or authorised consortia as for IFTS (Higher Technical Education and Training) courses training. In most cases, only certificates of attendance are issued. Some regional authorities have nevertheless introduced procedures to certify skills and recognise training credits.

## **CVET IN-COMPANY TRAINERS**

For CVET in-company trainers, recruitment and selection take place at enterprise discretion. Generally, enterprises attribute more value to professional experience than to educational qualifications. This does not apply to trainers working in the public administration, where access is allowed only through specific public examinations.

## **IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR CVET TRAINERS (AND OTHER LEARNING FACILITATORS)**

### **Cvet Trainers Working Outside Enterprises (Trainers, Tutors, Etc.)**

The supply of in-service training is governed by the free market, although there is substantial public funding through support to continuing training of trainers working in training bodies and agencies, enterprises and public administration departments, as well as through the tool of individual training vouchers (with pilot programmes operating since 2001). The government has also introduced tax-relief measures (tax credit) to foster access to training.

The most important providers are training agencies and consultancy firms, professional associations, universities, training bodies and their consortia, social partners, public bodies such as regions and provinces, Chambers of Commerce, and some business schools. Special incentives to encourage continuing training are assigned to certain sectors (e.g. for trainers of medical and nursing staff in the health-care sector).

### **Cvet In-Company Trainers**

In-service training for CVET trainers is wholly voluntary and generally paid for by the trainers themselves. It usually involves self-training. Some organisations (e.g. large companies or public administration departments with permanent internal training services) can decide to participate or invest directly in the continuing training of trainers.

### 0701 - MECHANISMS FOR THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILL NEEDS

In Italy, the need of defining active education and training policies able to face the demand coming both from labour market has become stronger since the 1980s. The Observatories of the Labour Market (OLMs), being present both within Regions and Provinces, have been the first bodies in carrying out surveys in the field of skill needs' anticipation. Nevertheless, the main developments on the issue date later. In 1993, when – mainly depending on some important directives given by European Union's Recommendations and then adopted by the Italian legislation – a new period started with a great number of initiatives (both at a national and at a local level), up to the year 1996, when ad hoc surveys began to be started up in order to detect the skill needs. The Central Government's aim – to realize within the Pact on Labour of September 1996 – was to create the bases for a continuous and updated national survey system on the vocational and training needs; a functional instrument, which was able to support the Government in planning all those activities (and the related financial allocation) addressed to improve employment and employability. Such a system has been strongly improved during the last ESF planning period (2000-2006). Among the System Actions, the Ministry of Labour decided to build a "National system for permanent observation of the vocational needs": "permanent", because the needs speedily change and therefore the monitoring action has to be able to detect them just in time or even in advance, if possible; and "national", because skill and training needs have to be set within a common terminology, in a perspective of mobility involving the labour market as a whole, avoiding regional or any other kind of drawbacks and barriers.

With regard to the national level, in 2000, the Ministry of Labour instructed Isfol to arrange a proper observing system of vocational needs. The result is a network system, available on-line (<http://fabbisogni.isfol.it>) as an interface designed to provide a flow of information (qualitative, quantitative and estimates) on the training needs emerging from the economic system, in order to provide support to the training system for the identification and development of the aspects useful for planning the measures required to update the training supply. The link between the various types of information available is provided by the use of official classifications of economic activities (Ateco 91 national classification) and of the professions (Cpi 2001 national ISTAT classification).

The system's main purpose is to support the decision processes, by providing data and information to the following target groups:

1. Decision makers (to plan the education and training supply)

The System provides information on developments and changes which can be reasonably expected within the several economic sectors; moreover, it gives quantitative and qualitative information about:

- 1.1. immediate needs (requiring actions of feedback directly related to critical situations);

1.2. potential needs (requiring actions able to face and balance all those elements which are expected to cause changes within the professional systems)

1.3. expected needs (requiring anticipation actions based on the dimension of the stock regarding the professions searched within a specific period of time)

2. Education and training operators and practitioners (to develop the education and training supply)

The System provides reference information with regard to: the evolution of the labour market's contents; the development of skills and competences; guidance practitioners and operators (to guide towards education and training curricula and towards professional choices).

The System provides information about: features of the professions (specific activities; identification of resources and typical organizational contexts in which the activity is carried out; level of education, skills and competences required for the position, trends concerning likely professional changes), in order to allow people to enter, or to re-access the labour market also by choosing the most appropriate education and training pathways; description of the several profession and employment expectations at a medium and long term. The function of such a System – operating since 2003 – goes beyond the above mentioned usefulness; in fact, it constitutes a general resource to increase information and awareness among all the labour market stakeholders (institutional, economical and social ones) involved in the definition of the policies concerning the labour market and the vocational development of human resources.

## **0702 - BRIDGING PATHWAYS AND NEW EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

Between 1998 and 2003, several framework laws for reform regarding Education and the Universities aimed at the integration between systems have been proposed and largely implemented. In this context, we can say that all the pathways for the educational supply, especially the ones that have been most extensively overhauled or newly created (as in the case of Higher Technical Education and Training - IFTS), have developed innovative proposals for educational supply on the basis of the principles of lifelong learning, alternance between study and work, and integration. The IFTS channel plays a key role in this system. It consists of educational pathways aimed at training professional profiles at the post-secondary school level to respond to the demand from enterprises affected by technological innovation and the internationalisation of markets according to the priorities indicated by regional economic programming. The aim of these pathways is to enable young people and adults, whether employed or not, with more specific skills and more in-depth and targeted technical and vocational training. The conception of the IFTS system is based on an integrated education and training model that is flexible and tailor-made (aimed at young people and adults whether employed or not) by principles such as the module-based structure, learning by skills, and credits. This pathway is guided by a National Committee formed by the Ministry of Education and University, the Ministry of Labour, the Regional Authorities and the Social Partners. As regards the school-work alternance, an important and innovative education pathway is

constituted by the so called Advanced Apprenticeship, one of the three types of apprenticeship envisaged in the Legislative Decree No.276/03 (under Art. 50 as subsequently integrated by the Ministry of Labour Circular No. 40/2004 and by the more recent Circular No. 2/2006, which have clarified some important regulatory aspects and defined the field of application in detail). Traditionally, in needs analysis activities, national and local institutions manage labour-market and training policies through promotion, financing and implementation; Social Partners often play an active role in policymaking by conducting surveys. The whole process to establish a national system for vocational needs analysis is guided at the national level through a Steering Committee, established with a ministerial decree in 2004, which is composed of representatives of the Ministry of Labour, Regional Authorities, Social Partners, Unioncamere<sup>12</sup> and ISFOL. The national Steering Committee favours a sectoral approach to qualitative surveys. To date, the national-level surveys have been conducted by joint bodies using a variety of methods (annual quantitative analysis, simple survey, etc).

### **0703 - RENEWAL OF CURRICULA**

As regards curricula, the school education is focused on programmes set out by the Ministry of Education. The initial vocational training for young people under 18 years, which leads to a first level qualification, is traditionally based on approaches focused on competences. Vocational training, practised on the regional level, didn't allow (at least, up to 2004) formal connections among the several areas of the Country. Therefore, there were qualifications and curricula which could be also very different from Region to Region, unlike the school curricula, much more easy to renew and to up date.

Nevertheless, some new rules have been recently approved:

- The Agreement undertaken within the State-Regions Conference, on January 15th 2004, has set the minimal standards for the basic competences within the three-year experimental pathways;
- The Agreement undertaken within the State-Regions Conference, on October 5th 2006, has set the minimal training standards for the technical-vocational competences within the the three-year experimental pathways.

With these rules, some minimal standards are given to be respected all over the Country, even if Regions keep to maintain a certain autonomy in defining those specific competences so that vocational qualifications could be in line with the specific needs of the regional productive systems. Moreover almost all the present VET curricula (both managed at a national and regional level) are structured in basic, transversal and technical competences. The basic and transversal competences always include those defined by UE as Key Competences in the Recommendation n. 2006/962/CE.

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<sup>12</sup> *Unione italiana delle Camere di Commercio, Industrie Artigianato e Agricoltura* (Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture ).

As far as the methodology is concerned, the first standards to be implemented subsequently have been clustered into four areas: Linguistic; Scientific; Technological; Historical, social and economic. These standards, regarding the delicate segment of the compulsory education and training, are conceived not only with reference to the employability of individuals but also in order to guarantee the full rights of citizenship, starting from a cultural background of basic training.

## 08 - ACCUMULATING, TRANSFERRING AND VALIDATING LEARNING

### 0801 - ACCUMULATING, ACCREDITING AND VALIDATING FORMAL LEARNING

Vocational training in Italy mainly takes place in formalised contexts aimed at obtaining qualifications rather than competences. More specifically, the enormous formal and juridical value of educational qualifications linked to formal education paths and the fact that there is little or no tradition of brief or adult training, have created a situation in which it is difficult to make visible the social and cultural value of training in itself and of their related certification. The legal framework regulating formal learning – and, under some points of view, informal and non-formal learning, considering the overarching strategy undertaken by the Country (since the 1990's) in dealing with Education, VET and Labour market as strictly linked issues – is set by two main acts: Law 53/03 (Moratti Reform), reforming the education and training system, and the Law 30/03 (Biagi Reform), on the labour market and employment system, which are strictly connected.

The provisions adopted by Law 30/03 cover, in particular, the reform of the employment services, the reform of apprenticeship contracts, 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). As regards the recognition of work experience learning, this law and the subsequent Legislative Decree 276/03 for its implementation deeply modify the employment relations with a training content, such as apprenticeships.

### 0802 - ACCUMULATING, ACCREDITING AND VALIDATING NON-FORMAL/INFORMAL LEARNING

#### BACKGROUND

In Italy a formalised or institutionalised national validation system is still lacking; at present, nothing comparable to APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning) in the UK or to VAE (*Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience*) in France has been established, due to social, political and historical-cultural factors such as the relevant formal and legal value of educational qualifications obtained through formal education pathways and the traditional weakness of short-term and adult education and training.

An important step has been then the Agreement of February 2000 between State and Regions, and subsequent Decree No. 174/2001 issued by the Ministry of Labour which have provided key elements in the system of certification:

- focus on skills and competences certification and enhancement of individual experiences as training credits;

- start-up of a definition process of minimum skill-certification standards;
- definition of various certification devices (e.g. *the Libretto formativo del cittadino* (see next item “Mechanisms and devices”) in order to facilitate the recognition of formal, non-formal and informal learning credits as well as to standardise the validation procedures.

Over the last years, the question of learning validation has been put among the issues dealt in the context of the most recent reforms<sup>13</sup> concerning education, vocational training and labour (trying to focus on knowledge and competences whenever acquired). Please, find below a table illustrating and summarizing the main actors in policy development on accumulating, transferring and validating learning.

Table 1: The main actors in policy development on accumulating, transferring and validating learning		
RESPONSIBLE ACTORS	WHAT PEOPLE ALREADY HAVE	WHAT THEY WANT TO GET
Ministry of Education; Schools; Universities; Regions; VET and HE Agencies	formal qualifications	other formal qualifications
Schools; Universities; Regions; VET and HE Agencies	informal or non-formal learning	formal qualifications (access, decreased study time, partial qualifications or full qualifications)

Source: Isfol

## MECHANISMS AND DEVICES

There are few, effectively implemented institutional practices at National level even if all social and political stakeholders, irrespective of their institutional role (Ministries, Regions, Trade Unions, Employers Representatives, VET system providers, Universities, Youth Association and voluntary sector), actually agree regarding the need of validation of non formal learning through formalized recognition pathways or certification procedures. The only really implemented national and institutional practice so far seems to be the IFTS (Higher Technical Education and Training).

The IFTS system was created, according to its establishing law (Law 144/99) “to qualify and broaden the training supply for young people and adults, both employed and not-employed”, in the view of being promptly responding to the changing needs of local markets. Following these principles a concrete device

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<sup>13</sup> Law 53/03 (Moratti Reform), reforming the education and training system, and the Law 30/03 (Biagi Reform), on the labour market and employment system, which are strictly connected.

of validation of previous learning has been designed in IFTS through specific guidelines jointly approved by Government and Regions (1st August 2002). In such guidelines validation is meant to facilitate the access to IFTS pathways as well as the transfer from a system to another; furthermore, the planning of validation process is articulated into three sequential steps:

- guidance/counselling, aimed at allowing the active involvement of individuals in self-analysis and in the identification of their own specific training needs;
- assessment, aimed at collecting evidences of prior learning in a systematic way and at checking the acquisition of specific competences;
- certification/recognition, allowing the access (or crediting a bonus) to a specific training pathway.

Another good example is the National Civil Service: the national regulation (Law No. 64/2001) states that competences acquired through the social service can be recognised as credits towards vocational training pathways or valuable access requirements to regulated professions. As regards current requirements and experiments on the National, Regional and Community level, there is considerable focus on the Training Booklet<sup>14</sup>. This is mostly considered as a key tool to document the skills in whatever way they have been acquired by individuals and workers, and at the same time to foster the recognition of formal, non-formal and informal learning credits. Decree 276/03 provides for the creation of the training booklet, recalling the State-Regions Agreement signed in February 2000 and defining it as follows: “The citizen’s training booklet registers the skills acquired during apprenticeship training, training with work-entry contracts, specialised training and continuing training activities undertaken throughout the lifecycle and conducted by bodies accredited by the Regional Authorities, as well as the skills acquired in a non-formal and informal manner according to the guidelines of the European Union on Lifelong Learning, as long as these skills are recognised and certified”. The booklet is considered as being directly linked to the individuals, their personal learning pathway and career (lifelong learning) and their option/right to convert the whole of their experience into an identifiable and valuable resource.

The pilot phase regarding the implementation of the training booklet started in 2006 and ended at the end of 2007: in order to provide an on-line support to operators, there have been realized some useful supporting tools as methodological notes, slide-set, examples materials that are now available on line.

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<sup>14</sup> Please, on training booklet see *Rapporto Isfol 2008*, pp. 295-301. Moreover, for a wider overview of the “Training booklet” from its implementation to the pilot phase, see also G. Di Francesco, E. Perulli, *Il libretto formativo del cittadino. Dal decreto 2005 alla sperimentazione: materiali e supporti metodologici*, Roma, Isfol, 2007 (Temi & Strumenti).

## IMPACT OF POLICY

See the same issue under item 0801.

### 0803 - IMPACT OF EU POLICY COOPERATION

The Copenhagen Declaration (November 2002) stresses mutual cooperation among the various countries as a key factor in order to maximise the transparency and recognition of competences and qualifications as well as promote mobility and continuing vocational training. Regarding the recognition of competences and qualification, within the Biagi Reform of the Labour Market (e.g. Law No. 30/2003 and subsequent decrees) some steps forward have been taken, reformulating policies governing employment, reaffirming and enhancing the value of school/training/work alternance and the need to endow value and mutual recognition to competences regardless of how these have been acquired. In this context, the Training Portfolio (see item 0802) has been developed as a key instrument for documenting competences, however acquired by citizens/workers and, at the same time, for fostering the recognition of credits from formal, nonformal and informal learning. The Training Portfolio is currently (2006) being experimented within the Regions (with methods of application varying in the single Regions, but according to a common and shared work plan. In the long term, the Training Portfolio will be a key national instrument, providing the necessary link for dialogue with Europe and for the organisation, within a common framework, of the numerous instruments which have been experimented or adopted in various Regions and sectors. The Training Portfolio can be considered as the Italian version of Europass (see Item 0804), a portfolio of documents designed to facilitate the geographical and occupational mobility of European citizens by enhancing the resources of experience and the theoretical and practical knowledge acquired over time. Another key-factor on which national policies are trying to achieve high standards - following the indication given at the European level - is the quality of the VET system. From this point of view, the Ministry of Education and its structures have to: support the periodic assessment about both the VET national System's outcomes and the single scholastic institutions, by realizing studies, statistic analyses, assessment instruments, jointly defined with the INVALSI (which is the national institute in charge to evaluate the education systems); monitor the relation between costs and results of the education system, considering all its levels, both organizational and territorial; cooperate with the organisms facing the comparison among the VET systems existing in the different Countries, in order to monitor the convergence between the European goals and the performed national strategies, ensuring their coherence within the European dimension. Speaking of quality, it is also worth to mention the establishment of the Italian Reference Point for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training. In fact, in the context of the activities promoted by the European Network on Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (ENQA-VET), Isfol has been entrusted to host the National Reference Point for quality, which conducts the following tasks:

- to inform the main national stakeholders about the activities of the ENQA-VET;
- to provide active support for the development of the ENQA programme;
- to promote the application of methods to ensure and develop quality in vocational education and training, for example through the development of guides and other instruments to provide technical and methodological support;
- to raise awareness among the stakeholders of the benefits of quality assurance tools;
- to coordinate the organisation of national activities conducted in relation with participation in the ENQA. As also enlightened by Isfol, in its Annual Report 2008, the Italian government has already started institutional actions in order to define better conditions of titles recognition and competences valorisation acquired in a wider prospective of lifelong learning and workfare actions. As frame of this new phase, it is also worth to consider the recent Green book (Libro Verde) on the future of the social model arranged by the Ministry of Labour, where the individual is put at the centre of a system where the valorisation of the competences acquired is seen as a key element to promote and sustain the employability of working citizens<sup>15</sup>.

#### **0804 - FACILITATING EU MOBILITY**

The following are some of the relevant activities carried out in order to facilitate EU mobility.

#### **LEONARDO PROGRAMME**

At the end of the II Phase (2000-2006) of Leonardo<sup>16</sup>, it can be said that the impact of the programme on the national context is surely noticeable. More than 36.000 Italian citizens (for an overall expenditure exceeding 50 million euro) have been the beneficiaries of a scholarship to spend for a work experience (or, simply, a vocational enrichment) abroad. For the major part of the people participating, Leonardo has represented an exceptional opportunity to achieve qualifications, skills and competences otherwise not achievable. Moreover, they have had the possibility to relate themselves to other VET and labour systems, increasing their chances of personal and professional growth<sup>17</sup>. The experience gained within the first two Phases of the Programme will be the base to improve the effectiveness of Leonardo for the

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<sup>15</sup> Please, see Rapporto Isfol 2008, p. 51.

<sup>16</sup> Council Decision 1999/382/EC of 26 April 1999.

<sup>17</sup> Isfol, Rapporto 2006, Roma, Isfol, 2006.

next period, over which it will be included, as a sectoral arrangement, under the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) 2007-2013<sup>18</sup>. Among the five thematic groups established by the EC in the framework of Thematic Monitoring activities, Isfol – Institute for the Development of Workers' Training (as the Italian Leonardo da Vinci National Agency) is entrusted with the management of the Thematic Group on Transparency of qualifications, validation of non-formal and informal learning, credit transfer.

## NATIONAL EUROPASS CENTRE (NEC)

Established in 2004<sup>19</sup>, Europass is targeted to:

- European citizens who intend to work or study in a European country other than their country of origin, who have obtained an educational qualification abroad or gained job experience in different countries;
- Citizens who, though intending to remain in their own country of origin, wish to provide information on their competences acquired outside of formal training and not documented by educational qualifications and certificates;
- Employers willing to hire skilled personnel with the motivation to perform requested tasks;
- Schools and training structures in various European countries which, through the instruments contained in the portfolio, can obtain information useful for integrating individuals in the various training pathways.

In May 2005, the National Europass Centre (NEC) was established at Isfol (Institute for the Development of Workers' Training) in order to promote the application of the Europass and to guarantee access by all citizens to the possibilities available. With reference to the work plan submitted to the European Commission, the core tasks that the NEC is called upon to conduct basically concern the management of the Europass documents<sup>20</sup> and the

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<sup>18</sup> Decision No.1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006, establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning.

<sup>19</sup> By the Decision 2241/2004/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on a Single Community Framework for the Transparency of Qualifications and Competences.

<sup>20</sup> In fact, Europass is a portfolio of documents designed to facilitate the geographical and occupational mobility of European citizens by enhancing the resources of experience and the theoretical and practical knowledge acquired over time. Europass provides a "single framework" for the existing European transparency instruments which have been developed by the European institutions (and the Council of Europe and UNESCO) to promote the "legibility" of national certificates. Some of these instruments, such as the Europass Curriculum Vitae (CVE) and Europass Language Passport (PEL), are personal and purely descriptive documents. Others, like the

promotion of Europass, while the support tasks regard the development of a website and a national IT system and the cooperation with the guidance centres and other European NECs. According data provided by Isfol, the National Europass Centre, has issued from 2005 till 2007 around 12 000 Europass mobility, thus confirming the growing importance that this new tool (together with the Europass Certificate supplement and Europass Diploma supplement) has constantly acquiring<sup>21</sup>.

## **EURO-GUIDANCE ITALY - NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE FOR VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE**

The Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Public Education, in cooperation with the European Committee, have entrusted Isfol with the creation of a National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance (Centro Nazionale Risorse sull'Orientamento – CNRO). Established in Benevento (June 2003), the CNRO aim is to support the development of guidance in a European framework and to promote mobility within the countries of the European Union, disseminating useful information to people desiring to undertake a course of studies or work experience abroad, or to those who want to undertake a similar experience in Italy. It carries out its activity through the elaboration of informative materials on themes related to the opportunities of study, training and work at a national and transnational level. It disseminates information regarding services of guidance within the countries of the European Union and within new accession countries and experiments models. The Resource Centre is a member of the Euroguidance Network<sup>22</sup>, through which it interacts, for its activities, with the Resource Centres of all the other European countries. On the contrary, at a national level, it works through the coordination of the National Dissemination Network. The website “Studying and working in Europe” ([www.centrorisorse.org](http://www.centrorisorse.org)) is the main information tool of the Resource Centre. It offers, in structured paths, all the contents of the accomplished informative products, and it is addressed both to operators of the sector interested in the acquisition of information concerning Europe and to people intending to undertake a study or work experience abroad.

## **EURES ITALY**

EURES (European Employment Services) is a cooperation network to which the public employment services of the European Economic Space (EES) take part together with other stakeholders (regional, national and international;

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Diploma Supplement, Europass Mobility and the Certificate Supplement, are documents issued by awarding bodies that accredit training and are therefore official.

<sup>21</sup> Rapporto Isfol 2008, pp. 52-54.

<sup>22</sup> The European Network of Resource Centres gathers each Member State's identified centres which, in unison favour and promote the collection, production and distribution of information regarding education and training, mobility opportunities, qualifications and certificates, guidance systems in Europe.

sectoral and economic bodies; social partners), concerning and operating in the employment field. EURES in Italy is a service managed by the Ministry of Labour (DG Labour Market, Guidance and Training) which coordinates a national network of experts and consultants distributed over the whole Country; their main task is to provide information, guidance and support to all those persons interested in mobility, trying to match their needs with the needs of the enterprises offering employment at an international level.

Please, for any further information, see <http://europa.eu.int/eures>.

## 09 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR LEARNING, CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT

### 0901 - STRATEGY AND PROVISION

The Italian guidance system - as the VET system as a whole - is currently marked by a decentralisation process that is changing the traditional relational/power balance between central and regional/local government. Under the institutional decentralisation, new decision-making and management powers have been entrusted to the Regional Authorities and Local Bodies, with the dissemination of a culture based on the local integration and deep 'rooting' of actions.

Currently, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education have been implementing a policy for the co-ordination of guidance policies, trying to make them coherent within the new framework set out by the 2003 reforms ("*Moratti*" as regards the educational system, and "*Biagi*" as regards the Labour market). In particular, the Ministry of Labour has produced a technical-scientific document which provides the basis for the implementation of a national guidance system.

The specific institutional responsibilities can be classified as follows:

a) Services for educational guidance under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MIUR)

Educational guidance is an integral part of the educational process starting from the pre-primary school (Directive No. 487/97). In this perspective, information and guidance play an essential primary role in the process aimed at creating an education and training system as provided for by Law 53/2003 ('*Moratti*' Reform). Therefore, the new reform of the educational systems thus opens up further to guidance (Art. 3 Para. h). The Implementation Regulation 257/2000 states also that schools must ensure the implementation of initiatives designed for an educational and vocational guidance co-ordinated with those initiatives which may be undertaken by the Local Bodies so as to guarantee successful training for each student.

b) Services for vocational guidance under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour

The main objective of vocational guidance, related to the world of training and work, is the support to the occupational integration in the world of work and career reconversion/development also through continuing training activities. In particular, the guidance services provide information on the local production, the professional profiles and related training pathways, the labour market and its specific local aspects as well as on the changes currently under way. The Public Employment Services (SPIs - *Servizi Pubblici per l'Impiego*) play a remarkable role on the provincial level as a result of the Legislative Decree of 23 December 1997, No. 469, which besides the basic services (reception and management of administrative procedures) aims at: promoting the intermediation and the matching between labour and enterprises; preventing the unemployment; promoting the employability and the extension of participation in the labour market, and in particular, of female labour and other under-represented segments. The Employment Centres, which are the local

operational structures of the SPIs, disburse the following services: reception and guidance information; management of administrative procedures; guidance and counselling; promotion of the labour-market segments to support weak categories; matching of labour supply and demand. With regard to the general guidelines of services, two types of actions are particularly significant: calling the individuals with an ascertained status of unemployment to a guidance interview; formulating an opportunity for job insertion or a training/vocational retraining proposal.

In a context oriented towards the quality and functional status of the employment services, the guidance and training systems are also greatly involved. The State-Region Agreement of 18 February 2000 envisages the need to guarantee the quality and structuring of the activities provided by guidance structures (and those structures for vocational training and integrated training actions) on the basis of reference standards defined at the national level.

### OTHER PROVIDERS

Accreditation, managed by the Regional Authorities, involves those public and private structures receiving public funding to conduct training and guidance activities. With the perspective to implement this agreement, the Ministry of Labour issued the Ministerial Decree 166 of 25 May 2001 identifying the stakeholders involved, the context as well as the types of and criteria for accreditation. Furthermore, it is worthy to mention a variety of structures, promoted by the Local Bodies as well as by private and third sector organisations, which provide a targeted service mainly designed for the career guidance of both young people and adults. Among these structures, we can point out:

The Informagiovani centres, mainly promoted by the Municipal Authorities.

- These structures provide a wide range of information to young people;
- The guidance centres organised by the third-sector associations (in particular religious and trade-union associations) which interact with the other training centres, or directly with students, in career guidance for the unemployed, adults and disadvantaged categories. The main functions regard both information, support to choices, and technical assistance in relation to institutional and other actors for the programming and design of targeted guidance actions within the education and VT systems, and the linking and co-ordination activities with other structures;
- The CILO (Centres for Local Employment Initiatives) promoted by the Municipal Authorities and schools in order to provide information for young people; technical assistance for youth entrepreneurs; and positive actions for the weaker and marginal categories of the labour market.

In addition, the private agencies basically undertake individual or collective support actions. In some cases, these agencies operate under agreements with Public Bodies.

We should finally recall that the joint bodies, managed by the Social Partners and the corresponding trade associations, organise research studies on the development of vocational needs in order to provide indications to the training and guidance systems.

## **0902 - TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY**

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

Guidance for young people takes place:

- 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);
- 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.

In the case of adults, guidance is provided (although to an extent which is still partial) by the CPI (Public Employment Centers), 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).

## **0903 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL**

The types of staff and personnel employed in guidance and counselling activities greatly differ in terms of tasks and initial training, most depending upon the context in which the same activities take place.

## **GUIDANCE IN SCHOOLS**

Since 1990, school teachers have had the provision of guidance services integrated into their responsibilities and professional profiles. Some teachers are designated as guidance service coordinators which means they have to support their colleagues' guidance activities as well as establish links with local guidance services and other relevant bodies (e.g. local enterprises). Guidance activities are usually organised by these teachers in cooperation with external experts.

## GUIDANCE WITHIN THE REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM

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.

## GUIDANCE WITHIN EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The employment services usually re-train staff with experience in employment services or from the vocational training sector. A recent Isfol survey (Perspectives of development of a National System of Guidance - *Prospettive di sviluppo di un sistema nazionale di Orientamento, Roma, 2004*) has taken into account the situation and the state-of-the-art of the guidance services provided by the *Centri per l'Impiego* (CPIs, Employment Centres). With regard to the personnel involved, some profiles emerge in particular. The operator providing the users with first reception and information about the services available (in and out of the centre) is the figure mainly employed (95,7% of the cases observed), followed by a more specialised guidance counsellor (78,6%, with a major prevalence of psychologists acting as this figure) with competences of counselling about vocational choices. Among the staff employed in the front-office activities, the tutor (55,2%) seems to be the figure more concerned in supporting persons who are about to enter the labour market. Only in few cases, data entry operators (41,7%) - or other kind of operators supporting the services supply: documentalists (36%), database operators, and nets administrators (16,9%) - are employed in the CPIs. Lack of attention to quality evaluation of the services provided is also shown by the low percentage (15,2%) of professions employed in activities of evaluation and monitoring. One important policy debate in Italy regarding guidance personnel is whether or not they should have a clear professional profile. Definitions have been made of the body of knowledge, abilities, and skills associated with the activities of the counsellor (i.e. career counsellor, guidance counsellor), and their relationship to other professional profiles (employment service and job counsellors, demand/supply matchers, teachers), and possible training pathways. Post-graduate specialisation courses do exist and have been organised for counsellors usually for people with humanities degrees (especially in psychology). A Ministerial Decree (2001) on the accreditation of guidance structures also defines the necessary skills. Subsequent to this decree, more specific guidance activities have been defined, including: diagnosing individual guidance needs; designing appropriate actions for individual needs; providing and identifying the services needed; monitoring and evaluating the services provided; promoting coordination between guidance providers and other local bodies (enterprises, etc.); research to improve the services provided; co-ordination and management of guidance services; administration of guidance services<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> For a better and wider comprehension of the Italian system providers of job demand and supply, statistical data, local network for employment, guidance and counselling, please consult Rapporto Isfol 2008 (Section two "Labour", chapter 3 on "labour systems, territory, networks for employment").

## 10 - FINANCING - INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES

### 1001 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION CONCERNING FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING

VET policies are in a process of devolution of competences from the State to the Regions (and from resources from Regions to the Provinces), which are having a fundamental political and financial role as the constitution (as reformed in 2001) has conferred to them the governance of the vocational training system. Financing of training involves a series of subjects: EU, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, Regions, Local authorities, private companies, and other private bodies. EU contribution is mainly through ESF (16 billion euro for the 2000-2006 period with the national co-financing). Ministry of Labour is the central institution competent in vocational training but the constitutional reform of 2001 and the new national and regional legislation in application of the reform are devolving more and more competences in VET policies to the Regions, which can also delegate to operate the Provinces. Until now the Ministry of Labour has been the principal actor in financing Vocational training, while Ministry of Education provides and finances education in schools and vocational activities inside secondary schools. The major changes that have taken place in recent years in the management and disbursement of financing for initial and continuing vocational training are:

- the decision to grant school establishments legal personality and autonomy regarding the organisation of teaching and financial management, as part of an overall reform of the governance of the school system set in motion by Law 59/1997;
- the creation of the Fund for the Improvement and Enlargement of Training Supply and for Equalizing Measures (Law 440/1997);
- the drafting of a new model of apprenticeship (Law 196/1997), designed to strengthen the aspect relating to training outside the workplace;
- the attribution of new competences concerning upper secondary education to the provincial authorities as part of a broad devolutionary process, in which the administrative functions of central government are transferred to regional and local authorities (Legislative Decree 112/1998);
- the introduction of the compulsory requirement to attend training activities until the age of 18 (Law 144/1999), enactment of which will entail the disbursement by central government of additional financing to the regional authorities;
- the amendment of Article 117 of the Constitution (Constitutional Law 3/2001), vesting in the regional authorities the exclusive power to legislate on matters of education and vocational training, with the exclusion of the task of liaising with the European Union;

- the creation of the Joint Multi-sectoral Funds for Continuing Training (*Fondi Paritetici Interprofessionali per la Formazione Continua*) (Law 388/2000, amended by Law 289/2002), which modifies the framework of funding continuing training by introducing the direct management by the Social Partners, and affects the mechanisms for funding vocational training activities;
- the new guiding line of national tools for financing continuing training for Continuing Training (ESF, L. 236/93, L. 53/00), with the framework being revised as the Joint Multi-sectoral Funds for Continuing Training are introduced.

## **1002 - FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

IVET is mostly financed by the Ministry of Education, the Regions and the Provinces (competences for school buildings) and the total expenditure in 2002 was around EUR 5.000 million. In the case of state-run vocationally oriented streams in education (technical and vocational colleges) financing is basically provided out of funds belonging to the Ministry of Education, University and Research and the provincial authorities. The regional authorities also play a crucial role in this sector, particularly in the Centre and North of the country, by means of the European Social Fund. In fact they can finance specialisation courses that are part of the so-called “terza area” of two-year post-qualification study (4th and 5th years), as well as integrated school and vocational training and any integrated post-diploma/education and higher technical training courses. Moreover, the regional authorities can also use ESF to contribute to measures aimed at reducing school dropout rates, teacher training and refresher courses and other activities. Overall, therefore, apart from the regional authorities, the centres of responsibility for spending on vocational training are:

- nationally, the Ministry of Education, University and Research;
- regionally, the regional school boards, to which the Ministry of Education must transfer most of its budget allocations under the current reforms;
- locally, the administrative service centres, CSA (formerly, the provincial education offices) and the provincial authorities;
- technical and vocational colleges.

The provincial authorities are responsible for school buildings, including the payment of utility charges. To cut down on delays and simplify formalities, and to apply the principle of individual school autonomy, some provincial authorities have transferred to the schools themselves the funds needed to cover office and operating expenses (i.e. those of an administrative nature, not connected with teaching) and small-scale everyday maintenance work. In 2004 (data from Ministry of Education), the total public expenditure for education and vocational training was about EUR 65 billion (4.66 % of GDP). 78,5 % of this are for schools (IVET), and the State has contributed to that for 82%, Regions for 2.7% and local authorities for 16%.

Regional expenditure for vocational training has been in 2007 around EUR 2.5 billion; the expenditure for 2008 is foreseen at around 3,5 billion euro, mainly due to the provisions made by European Social Fund<sup>24</sup>.

As for apprenticeship, after the reform enacted by Law 196/1997, the system of relief from social security contributions is retained, but it only applies if the apprentice effectively takes part in training outside the workplace. As a result, there has been a gradual increase in regional funding for this type of training.

At the moment, the responsibilities for financing apprenticeship are shared as follows:

- the state grants relief from social security contributions to firms offering apprenticeship contracts and to apprentices, who pay a reduced rate;
- the regional authorities finance training courses outside the workplace introduced in 1997, partly using funds provided by the state and the European Social Fund. Recently Regions are starting to use also a part of their own funds. The regional authorities are responsible for vocational training, which they finance from the following sources: the Common Regional Fund, the Fund for Vocational Training and Access to the European Social Fund, the European Social Fund, funds disbursed by the state for specific activities.

### **1003 - FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING**

#### **PUBLICLY PROVIDED CVT AND ADULT LEARNING**

CVET represents 20% of the total regional expenditure for vocational training (in 2002, EUR 575.58 million). The regional authorities are responsible for continuing vocational training, and they are financed in their actions by the State and the ESF in the following ways:

- The European Social fund, which in the period 2000-2006 allocates funds for all Regional Operational Programmes for training projects and projects for company organisational development, prioritising SMEs, and training for the Public administration personnel;
- State transfers to the Common Regional Fund for regions with ordinary charters part of the revenue from social security contributions and regional taxes; these revenues are not destined exclusively for use in vocational training;
- A part of the financing of the Multi-sectoral Funds;

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<sup>24</sup> Rapporto Isfol 2008, Regional expenditure for vocational training, pp. 242-244.

- Law 53/2000 on training leave allows the funding of CVT vouchers for workers. It recognises the right of workers to lifelong learning by granting specific leave for training. The type of training can be chosen independently by the worker or arranged by the company. The vouchers are delivered by the Regions with the State financing: The Ministry of Labour has allocated for the first 4 years 60 million euros;
- Some Regions are experimenting the financement (within ESF OP, and funds of Law 236/1993) for individualised workers' training, as the workers since 1973 have the right to 150 hours' leave to take part in courses each year;
- The "Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education" have recently been instituted under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, University and Research. Their objective is to identify and fulfil individual demand for vocational education and training. This is usually free of charge and mainly geared to remedial or first time acquisition of basic skills (languages, computer studies, Italian for foreigners, and so on) or to basic vocational training (pre-vocationally oriented training). They address young people and adults, employed or unemployed workers, without distinction. The centres mainly operate with funding from the Ministry of Education, but they may also receive contributions from the local authorities.

## PRIVATE FUNDING FOR CVT

The private companies contribute to the funding of CVT:

- by the 0.30% of their wage bill to contribute to fund training activities;
- by the contribution (20%) to the total costs (direct and not, as labour cost) for CVT cofinanced by the ESF;
- by the organisation with own resources of training activities for their employees.

## 1004 - FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHER GROUPS EXCLUDED FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

Main financial resources for funding training for unemployed people and other groups excluded from the labour market are: the European Social fund, which in the period 2000-2006 allocates funds for all Regional Operational Programmes for training projects for unemployed and other groups excluded from the labour market; State transfers to the Common Regional Fund for regions with ordinary charters of part of the revenue from social security contributions and regional taxes; these revenues are not destined exclusively for use in vocational training. Regions and Provinces organise calls for proposal direct to VET institutions to organise training courses for unemployed.

SEE also 1002, as the same sources finance both IVET and training for unemployed people, in fact data concerning public expenditure for vocational training includes both type of training.

### **1005 - PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES: FROM FUNDING TO INVESTING IN HUMAN RESOURCES**

The Italian government investment policies to support the growth of human resources were initially illustrated in the White Paper on Labour Market in Italy (October 2001) that identified vocational training as one of the main instruments to foster the increase of the employment rate in Italy. Subsequently, a more accurate definition of the path being followed to achieve the objective has been described in the "Pact for Italy" (June 2002), thus highlighting the need for greater investment in the training of human resources as one of the key points for fostering social integration of the population and increasing the competitiveness of the Italian system (See Theme 2). In this context, the Government, with the approval of Law 53/03 (See chapter 02 and 04), has started up a general review of the entire framework of the national education and training system, in order to improve the employability and social integration of people by raising the cultural and professional level of young people and adults. In this regard, the law provides for a specific long-term financial plan to support the implementation of the reform, which includes funding to support adult education and Higher Technical Education and Training (IFTS).

## 11 - EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS, TOWARDS AN OPEN AREA OF LIFELONG LEARNING

### 1101 - NATIONAL STRATEGIES RELATED TO POLICY PRIORITIES, PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES AT EU LEVEL

National education and training strategies, in line with the European Employment Strategy, are set out in the *Patto per l'Italia* (see 0201) and in the National Action Plan (NAP) for employment. The priorities of the *Patto per l'Italia* are: activate update training for human resources, promote economic growth, step up employment and the ability to stay in the labour market, promote social inclusion. In particular, with regard to measures to deal with and prevent unemployment, the reform of the labour market aims - among other things – at defining a solid lifelong learning system, as stated in the NAP 2004.

Policies will mainly aim at securing an increase in investments in human resources, above all by the enterprises so as to try to achieve the parameter of 12.5% participation of the adult working-age population interested in lifelong learning activities.

### 1102 - IMPACT OF EUROPEANISATION/INTERNATIONALISATION ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Noticeable impact of Community policies on the national context can be seen in several fields:

- 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 (Grundtvig, Erasmus);
- systems innovation through transfers of results and best practices in the areas of methodology, models, training tools, teaching aids, etc;
- the creation of trans-national partnerships and networks entailing cooperation by European partners and involvement of the local, national and trans-national actors from the systems of education, vocational training and the working world.

Perhaps the most significant impact of Europeanisation regards the debate under way in Italy on the procedures for recognising the knowledge and skills acquired on a non-formal basis (e.g. using the training booklet).

As regards the various Lisbon benchmarks, Italy has promoted policies of “welfare to work” and developed actions to increase the value of the human capital.

The reforms introduced in Italy in recent years for the labour market, the social security and the Vocational Education and Training system involve an

overall system oriented towards “Welfare to Work”. One of the main objectives of this system is to foster the integration or reintegration in the labour market for the unemployed, the weaker categories or those at risk of exclusion. The “Welfare to Work” strategy for the period 2003-2006 has the purpose of promoting policies for the integration or reintegration of job-seekers in the labour market, aimed at raising the overall employment rate based on an effective and virtuous combination between employment policy (employment service, guidance and training) and income support for the unemployed. The instruments to achieve “Welfare to Work” policies are directed on the one hand at giving greater fluidity to the market, freeing it from excessive regulation, and on the other at reforming the income-support system, thus enhancing training actions and increasing personal responsibility. The progressive application of the Law 53/03 has involved Regions in several initiatives as the Citizen’s Training Portfolio. (see chapter 07 and 08).

The Europeanisation process has also had a positive impact on the process for the development, dissemination and use of new communications technologies (ICT) within the education and training sector. The growing focus on the development of e-learning by the Italian public institutions is evidenced by the expansion of the literacy courses in schools and universities (the so-called on-line universities have also been authorised), the fiscal incentives for the purchase of personal computers by the students, and the policy aimed at providing computer literacy courses for civil servants. The Lisbon process considers e-learning as the best investment for human capital. Until today it is still difficult to define the contribution and the effectiveness of the e-learning for lifelong learning as in Italy the use and the adoption of ICT is systematic only for the early adopter, social groups which have more financial possibilities and better competences to understand the potential of ICT. The influence of EU action can be seen also in the individual training initiatives, with the vouchers and the new inter regional project on “Individual Learning Account - *ILA– Carta prepagata di Credito Formativo Individuale*”. The project is carried out by 3 Regions (Tuscany, Piedmont, Umbria) to experiment the new initiative for unemployed people and/or free-lance workers acting as employees (*lavoratori atipici*). Ministry of Labour supports the experimentation of the ILA and the transfer of experiences. Investment in lifelong learning keeps to be fundamental as still in 2005 (data by OECD Statistics) 32% of work force has only the lower secondary level certificate and only 13% of the active population has a university degree. More, in CVT it has been observed that the majority of people involved are medium-high level professionals, so in the next future it will be necessary to involve in CVT less educated and qualified workers as in general these are the individual less interested and involved in participating in VET.

One of the main tools to promote and sustain VET policies in Europe is the new Cohesion Policy and its fundamental role in order to implement an effective strategy for growth and employment in Europe. The three dimensions of the cohesion policy (economic, social and territorial) allow to strengthen the competitiveness of all European regions, promoting economic growth and employment, requiring a better effort in the investment in human

capital ( and therefore an investment in education and training) as a pillar for development of the knowledge society, as affirmed in Lisbon<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> For further information on the impact of EU policies for growth and employment, please see Rapporto Isfol 2008, Section 1 "Europe".

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

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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>

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