COESIONE ITALIA 21-27
GIOVANI, DONNE E LAVORO

Cofinanziato dall'Unione europea

MINISTERO del LAVORO e delle POLITICHE SOCIALI

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THE ATLAS OF WORK AND QUALIFICATIONS AND THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF SKILLS CERTIFICATION IN ITALY: TERRITORIAL DYNAMICS.

Advancing research on adult learning. Using and innovating quantitative approaches to support effective policies

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INAPP
ISTITUTO NAZIONALE PER L'ANALISI DELLE POLITICHE PUBBLICHE

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OVERVIEW OF THE ATLAS OF WORK AND QUALIFICATIONS DEVICE

Why the Atlas matters?

People learn continuously:

- **in schools and universities;**
- **in vocational education and training;**
- **at work;**
- **through volunteering;**
- **through social participation;**
- **through everyday experience.**

The challenge is to build systems capable of recognizing all forms of learning and transforming them into evidence that can be used by individuals, employers, training providers, and policymakers.

This is precisely the broader context in which the Italian Atlas of Work and Qualifications was developed

OVERVIEW OF THE ATLAS OF WORK AND QUALIFICATIONS DEVICE

Two different main contents of the Atlas of Work and Qualifications

Atlas of work is a device which describes the contents of work with a narrative language, it is a model of universal representation of work contents, aimed at indicating processes, activities, objectives, outputs typical of a work context, based on the description of the activities commonly carried out in work/organizational contexts.

Atlas and Qualifications hosts the National Framework of Education and Training Qualifications, which represents the reference framework in Italy for the certification of skills

It is a tool that gives the possibility of linking any type of qualification to the expected results by the Area of activity

OVERVIEW OF THE ATLAS OF WORK AND QUALIFICATIONS DEVICE

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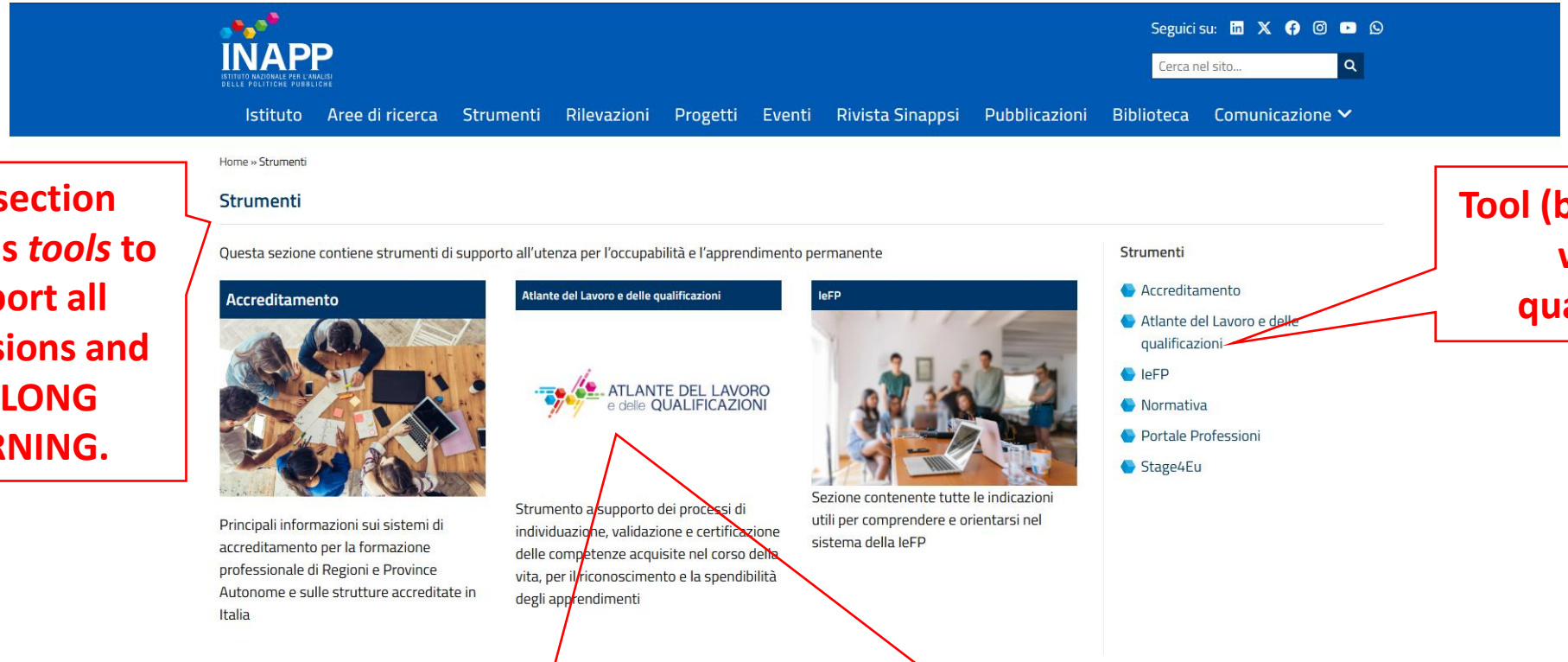
Atlas of work is also a website collocated on Homepage INAPP:



This section contains *tools* to support all professions and LIFELONG LEARNING.

Tool (by list): Atlas of work and qualifications:

Tool (by blocks) to support the processes of identification, validation and certification of skills acquired over the course of life, for the recognition and usability of learning

ATLAS OF WORK AND QUALIFICATIONS DEVICE

Theoretical references

We refer to the sociological concept of “work processes”.

In the literature there are different definitions of process but in general they all conceive it as a set/flow of activities strictly interdependent with each other which, using a certain number of different resources (people, technologies, structures), transform, adding value, certain input elements (raw materials, information, procedures, etc.) into output elements, (goods, services, information).

For the operational description of the processes, Atlas is inspired by the value chain model (Porter 1988): the overall value of a process can in turn be divided into intermediate value increments which together support the achievement of the final result that characterizes the process. On these intermediate values were identified "smaller" elements of the process, from a dimensional point of view: the sequences of process and the areas of activities (ADA). ADA are represented as groupings of individual activities organized according to a logical/chronological sequence and an operational, or managerial, content aimed at obtaining a specific result that one wants to achieve.

The purpose is reconstructing the production cycles of goods and services characterizing one specific economical-professional sector.

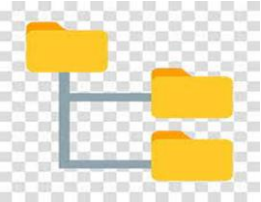
Method choices

The activities are described regardless of who is called upon to carry them out (professions, roles, figures, etc.) and how and with what resources they are carried out (skills, knowledge, etc.).

Skills, knowledge, are components or contents of the qualifications and the professions

The question in not: “who performs this task” but rather “what is being done”

CURRENT STRUCTURE OF THE SITE NAVIGATION TREE: SEP, PROCESSES, SEQUENCES AND ACTIVITY AREAS



SEP
The structure of the economic-professional sectors (SEP) is given by the intersection of two codes of the classifications adopted by ISTAT relating to economic activities (ATECO 2025) and professions (Classification of Professions 2021)

Work processes
Each of the 24 SEPs is divided into work processes according to a logic aimed at analytically reconstructing the production cycles of goods and services characterizing the SEP

Process sequences
Work processes are divided into process sequences, each containing specific Activity Areas (ADA)

Areas of Activity (ADA)
The "ADA" is the main information unit of the Atlas, it contains the description of the individual activities which, carried out according to a specific sequence and/or simultaneity, allow a specific result/output to be achieved. In the ADA you can find references to the statistical codes of ISTAT classifications

ATLAS OF WORK AND QUALIFICATIONS DEVICE

ADA.23.01.03 (ex ADA.19.13.31) - Preparazione degli alimenti e allestimento piatti

ATTIVITÀ

- Controllo delle materie prime
- Preparazione preliminare delle materie prime
- Conservazione di materie prime

RISULTATI ATTESI

RA1: Preparare le materie prime, nel rispetto dei tempi assegnati e sulla base del piano di lavoro ricevuto, selezionando, pulendo e lavorando gli alimenti e provvedendo, ove necessario, alla conservazione degli stessi

SCHEDA DI CASO

Casi esemplificativi e risorse a supporto della valutazione

The "ER"- EXPECTED RESULTS profile the methods of execution of the activity itself, both by defining an output in terms of product/service, characterized by its properties, and by defining the expected performance in the creation of the product/service"

«Case technical data sheet» codifies operational contents recognized by the world of work and professions, suitable for the exercise of a profession or for carrying out a production process or part of it.
Each case file is structured in dimensions, i.e. categories characterizing activities and degree of complexity of the learning objectives. Every dimension has EXAMPLE CASES.
It is accompanied by a framework of physical and technical resources to support the evaluation.
The elaboration process is conducted in collaboration with an expert in reconstruction and analysis of the work processes

«Case technical data sheets» contain frameworks for evaluation and STANDARDs OF THE EVALUATION
for example,
1. Performance test:
2. Technical interview relating to the application logic followed for the realization of the practical test, plus possible development alternatives

ATLAS SECTORS

24 Economic-professional Sectors: main branches of the classification tree *by blocks* and *by list*

1. Agriculture, forestry and fishing
2. Food production
3. Wood and furniture
4. Paper and paper products
5. TCF (Textiles Clothing Footwear) and fashion
6. Chemistry
7. Extracting gas, oil, coal, minerals and stone working
8. Glass, ceramics and building materials
9. Building
10. Mechanics, production and maintenance of machines, plant engineering
11. Transport and logistics
12. Commercial distribution services
13. Financial and insurance services
14. Digital services
15. Telecommunications and post services
16. Services of public utilities
17. Printing and publishing
18. Education and vocational training services
19. Health and social services
20. Services for person
21. Facilities for recreation and sports
22. Cultural and entertainment services
23. Tourist services
24. Common area: organizational processes for the management and support of the production of goods and services

Why is this relevant for Adult learning?

Work Atlas performs several functions:

It supports:

- lifelong learning policies;
- active labour market policies;
- vocational guidance;
- training design;
- skills assessment;
- identification, validation, and certification of competences.

It provides a common language through which learning outcomes can be recognized regardless of where learning occurred.

This is particularly important for adults whose competences have often been acquired outside formal educational pathways.

The National System of Skills Certification in Italy (SNCC): the most important regulatory references

LAW (Legge 92/12)	Recognizes the right to lifelong learning Establishes the National Skills Certification System Requires subsequent acts to define general standards and essential performance levels
Legislative decree (D.Lgs 13/2013)	Defines the main concepts Introduces and defines the Public Authorities and Authorized Bodies Explains the minimum process, certification, and system standards Establishes the National Repertory of Education and Training Qualifications and Professional Qualifications
Interministerial decree (D.I 30/06/2015)	Specifies the operational guidelines for minimum standards. Outlines the operational framework for the national recognition of regional qualifications and related skills, within the National Repertoire of Education and Training Qualifications and Professional Qualifications, establishing the National Framework of Regional Qualifications. Defines the technical specifications for public bodies responsible for the qualifications and their functions within the scope of skills identification, validation, and certification services.
Interministerial decree D.I. 08/01/2018	Establishes the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as a tool for describing and classifying the qualifications awarded. The NQF represents the national framework for referencing Italian qualifications to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).
Interministerial decree D. I. 05/01/2021	Establishes the Guidelines for the interoperability of public bodies, defines the technical specifications for public bodies and the related functions in the context of the services of identification and validation and certification of skills
Ministerial decree (MLPS – Decreto Ministeriale 9 luglio 2024	Represents the discipline of the services for the identification, validation and certification of skills relating to the qualifications held by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies

LEGISLATIVE DECREE 13/2013: WHAT IT ENSHRINES

The National Framework constitutes the unitary reference framework for the certification of competences.

The National Framework consists of all the repertoires of education and training qualifications, including those of vocational education and training, and of professional qualifications, including those of the repertoire referred to in Article 6, paragraph 3, of the Consolidated Law on Apprenticeship, referred to in Legislative Decree No. 167 of 14 September 2011, codified at national level, regional or autonomous province, publicly recognized and meeting the following minimum standards:

a) identification of the public body owner;

b) identification of the qualifications and related skills that make up the repertoire;

c) referencing of qualifications, where applicable, to the statistical codes of reference for economic activities (ATECO) and the nomenclature and classification of professional units (CP ISTAT), in compliance with the rules of the STA system

GUIDELINES (DECREE OF 5 JANUARY 2021)

They represent the provision that makes the national system of certification of skills operational as established by Legislative Decree 13 of 2013. In paragraph 2.2 Technical specifications of the National Directory (p. 29) the following provisions:

2.2 Technical specifications of the National Framework

Qualifications and skills are included in the Atlas of Work and Qualifications according to the following criterion: qualifications are associated with the ADAs and expected results through a comparative analysis between the competency contents described in the individual qualifications and the descriptions of the expected results contained in the ADAs. In cases where the qualification is descriptive in terms of content that makes it difficult to unambiguously approximate an ADA, referencing takes place according to the principle of prevalence, attributing to the qualification the ADA or ADAs where the association between the activities and skills described in the qualification is stronger.

The Atlas of Work and Qualifications, through the Classification of Economic and Professional Sectors, correlates, where possible, the skills of qualifications to work activities with the sole purpose of promoting transparency, recognition, marketability and portability of qualifications and skills in a perspective of employability and lifelong learning.

A key principle is that all learning contexts have equal dignity.

Repertorio Nazionale delle Qualificazioni

National Repertory of Qualifications

LE QUALIFICAZIONI NEL REPERTORIO NAZIONALE		
116	58	5079
SECONDO CICLO DI ISTRUZIONE E FORMAZIONE	ISTRUZIONE E FORMAZIONE TERZIARIA	FORMAZIONE REGIONALE PROFESSIONALE E IFTS

The qualifications contained in the **National Repertory** are organized into three sections:

- Second cycle of education and training, which contains qualifications from general education and training and from **Vocational Education and Training (VET: Vocational Education and Training IeFP (Three-year courses + Four-year courses)**
- Tertiary education and training, which contains qualifications from universities, higher education in art, music, and dance (AFAM), and higher technical training (ITS Academy).
- Regional professional training and IFTS, which contains qualifications from regional training, the **National Framework of Regional Qualifications** (QNQR), and **higher technical education and training** (IFTS).

Objectives of the National Skills Certification System

The National Skills Certification System — established in 2013 and fully operational in 2021 with the adoption of the Guidelines for the Interoperability of Public Bodies — aims to promote the growth and valorization of the entire cultural and professional heritage acquired by individuals throughout their life, studies, and work through the recognition of skills acquired in any way and through training credits.

The System recognizes equal dignity to all learning contexts, whether formal, non-formal, or informal, which are given equal public recognition value based on a unified certification system. The Identification, Validation, and Certification (IVC) services for skills acquired in any way are based on the explicit request of the individual and offer all citizens the guarantee of the principles of simplicity, accessibility, transparency, objectivity, traceability, confidentiality of the service, methodological correctness, completeness, equity, and non-discrimination.

National Skills Certification System: organization

The National Skills Certification System (SNCC) was established in 2013 to promote the transparency, usability, and portability of skills acquired in all learning contexts—formal, non-formal, and informal—at the national and European levels.

The entire implementation process of the System is the result of intense interinstitutional collaboration between the central and regional administrations involved and is based on the reorganization, into a single framework, of a series of legal institutions, such as certifications resulting from formal learning paths, at all levels and geographically, and the Identification, Validation, and Certification of Skills (IVC) acquired in non-formal or informal learning contexts.

It is managed by the responsible public bodies, namely Ministries with responsibility for labor, education, higher education, inclusion, economic development, Regions, and Autonomous Provinces.

Each owner body is responsible for regulating IVC services and its own qualification repertoire and is responsible for ensuring communication between the information registration systems and the certifications issued to users and all other owner bodies.

Vali.Co: Validation of competencies

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Percorso Vali.Co

Per approfondire le metodologie relative al processo di erogazione dei servizi di IVC

Accedi al percorso formativo Vali.Co

Consulta la mappa

Per approfondire lo stato di attuazione del SNCC nelle Regione e Province Autonome

Consult the Italian MAP: For each Region we find informations (how and where) for citizens who want to access the services of IVC: Individuation, Validation and Certification.
In Italy we have a system with specific State-Region agreements

VALI.CO or Validation of competencies, this is a program in 7 lessons, divided into 31 teaching units. It is a program aimed at operators and professionals in the education, training, employment and social inclusion services system, engaged in activities within the National Skills Certification System.

PHASES OF IVC

WELCOME step: users potentially interested in enhancing their acquired skills in relation to the profiles/objectives included in a Region's Repertoire of Training Standards are informed by a trained operator about the purposes and characteristics of the process, the outputs, and the implementation timelines. If the individual intends to use the service, they sign a formal membership request (Service Agreement) and a privacy release.

The IDENTIFICATION phase: aims to reconstruct the significant experiences gained by the user and translate them into skills, knowledge, and abilities, and demonstrate them through evidence.

The VALIDATION phase: the objective of this phase is to assess the user's possession of the skills acquired, through an analysis of the evidence carried out on the basis of specific criteria, the administration of an interview and, where appropriate, supplementary tests.

The CERTIFICATION phase: the procedure involves an exam administered by an Evaluation Committee appointed in compliance with regional regulations. This committee is a third-party body, independent of the certified individual and the institution that provided the training program.

ITALIAN TERRITORIAL DYNAMICS

Monitoring Italian territorial dynamics, 19 Regions and 2 autonomous provinces: Data Collection and Dataset Construction (2018-2021)

It represents the first national quantitative assessment of the implementation of the National System for the Certification of Competences across Italian Regions and Autonomous Provinces.

Methodology of the Research

The quantitative data from the first SNCC monitoring report refers to 17 Regions/Public Administrations.
The administrations participating in the data collection are:

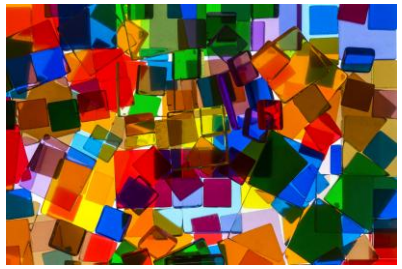
- 15 Regions: Lombardy, Piedmont, Tuscany, Lazio, Emilia-Romagna, Sicily, Puglia, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Umbria, Marche, Basilicata, Sardinia, Liguria, and Valle d'Aosta;
- 2 Autonomous Provinces: Trento Public Administration and Bolzano Public Administration.

The survey involved 17 regional and provincial administrations.
The data collected cover the period 2018–2021 and were organized into a single national database

Between 2018 and 2021 participating regions issued 1,009,889 certifications and attestation documents

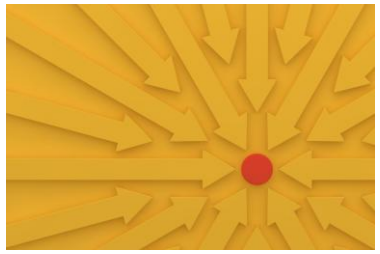
ITALIAN TERRITORIAL DYNAMICS

Points of attention and critical issues identified



- The administrations highlighted the complexity of producing quantitative data relating to certificates issued following the identified processes in digital format and in a timely manner. Nonetheless, there is progress in the implementation of digital archiving systems, both in regions currently updating their systems and in those starting to build their own digital archives.

- A portion of the administrations noted the lack of computerized databases for data relating to certifications (first, second, and third parties) issued as part of training and/or IVC services. This aspect did not facilitate the compilation of the processes, and for some variables, it was not possible to find the required data because it was only present in paper records.



- Within the scope of the activities of the “Skills Certification Group (GCC)”, great attention has been paid to this aspect, emphasizing the opportunity to validate and stabilize the identified information in order to internalize the paths at the local level and thus simplify and standardize the data collection procedure for future editions.

ITALIAN TERRITORIAL DYNAMICS

Variable name	Variable description
Path	Type of training pathway surveyed (IeFP, IFTS, regional training, or IVC)
Year	Survey reference year: 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021
Region and Autonomous Province	Region/Autonomous Province surveyed
Name of the qualification	Name of the qualification awarded
Name of the competence	Name of the certified competence
EQF level	EQF level of the qualification/competence surveyed
Economic-professional sector (SEP)	SEP (Economic-Professional Sector) of the qualification/competence surveyed
Area of activity (ADA)	ADA (Professional Activity Area) of the qualification/competence surveyed
Type of document issued	Number of certificates/attestations/transparency documents issued
Gender	Number of certificates/attestations/transparency documents issued for the acquisition of a qualification or competence, by gender
Citizenship	Number of certificates/attestations/transparency documents issued for the acquisition of a qualification or competence, by citizenship
Age	Number of certificates/attestations/transparency documents issued for the acquisition of a qualification or competence, by gender and age. Six age groups are considered: 15–17, 18–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, and 55+ years
Type of body authorized to issue certificates/attestations/transparency documents	Number of certificates/attestations/transparency documents issued for the acquisition of a qualification or competence, by gender, issued by: accredited training bodies, accredited employment service providers, CPIA, schools, universities, AFAM institutions, ITS Foundations, companies, Chambers of Commerce (CCIAA), or other bodies
Employment status	Number of certificates/attestations/transparency documents issued for the acquisition of a qualification or competence to individuals who were employed, inactive, or unemployed at the start of the pathway

Data set variables

Challenges identified

The monitoring activity identified several critical issues:

- **Data quality remains uneven across regions,**

We encountered:

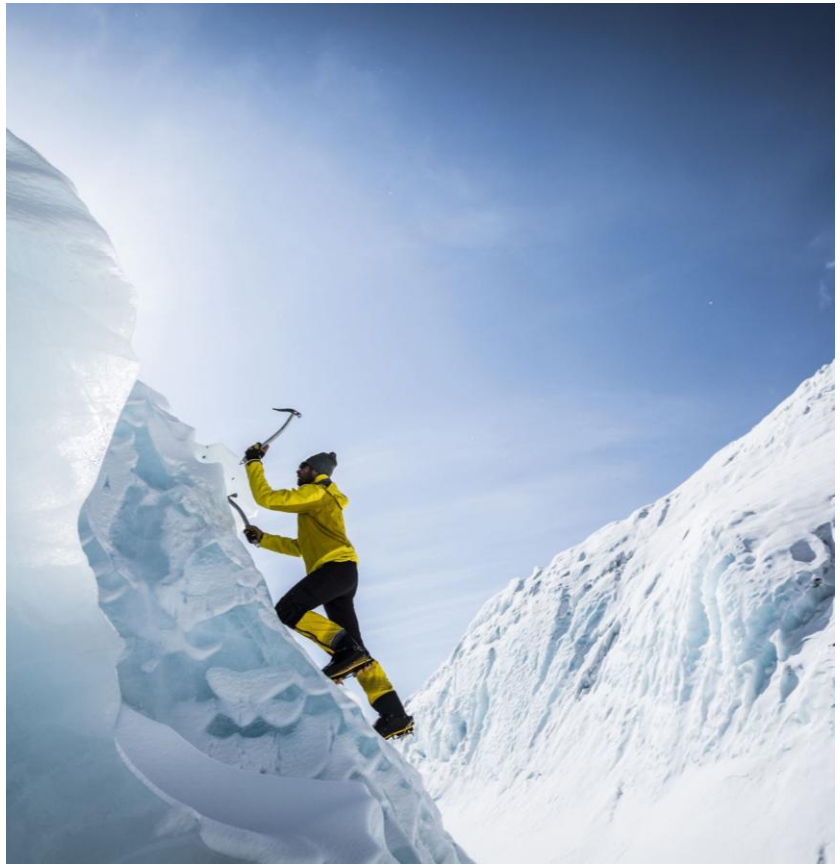
- differences in digitalization levels;
- incomplete information;
- varying archiving procedures;
- difficulties in mapping qualifications to Economic-Professional Sectors and Areas of Activity.

- **interoperability remains a major challenge,**

  - National monitoring requires information systems capable of communicating effectively with one another.
  - Progress has been made, but significant work remains necessary.

- **the implementation of validation services remains highly heterogeneous.**

  - Access to services may vary significantly depending on the region in which a citizen resides.



Policy Implications and conclusions

What do these findings mean for policy?

Some implications:

- The Italian certification system has reached a level of maturity that makes large-scale quantitative monitoring possible.

The future challenge is no longer simply increasing the number of certifications.
Rather, it is strengthening the capacity to recognize competences acquired outside formal educational settings.
The future success of the system depends on its ability to fully recognize learning acquired through work experience, social participation, and everyday life.

- Without comparable data, it becomes difficult to evaluate effectiveness and measure progress.

Better interoperability and shared data infrastructures are essential for evidence-based policymaking.
The Italian National Skills Certification System is now a concrete and operational reality, supported by an extensive institutional infrastructure and by the Atlas of Work and Qualifications.

Significant territorial differences remain, highlighting the need for continued investment in governance, digitalization, and interoperability.

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