Developments in vocational education and training policy in 2015–19

ITALY

Cedefop monitoring and analysis of VET policies

Cedefop monitoring of vocational education and training policies and systems

Progress towards the medium-term deliverables of the Riga conclusions

Country chapter

ITALY

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Introduction

In June 2015, the ministers in charge of vocational education and training in the EU Member States, the candidate countries and the European Economic Area countries, convened in Riga, agreed on objectives for vocational education and training (VET) policies for 2015-20 ([1]).

Cedefop has been entrusted with monitoring the countries' policies implemented towards reaching these objectives.

This country chapter is part of the monitoring process. It was drafted based on input from the national ReferNet team. It presents an overview of the major policy developments that have taken place in the country in 2015-19, in the areas covered by the Riga medium-term deliverables (MTDs).

The country chapter is structured as follows:

(a) the introductory section Aspects of vocational education and training context in 2015 briefly sketches the VET context in the country in 2015, highlighting selected figures and major policy initiatives that were just being adopted or started at that time. This introductory section is targeted at setting a baseline to put in perspective the policy choices and developments that have taken place since the beginning of the Riga cycle;

(b) five thematic chapters then follow, devoted to the five respective MTDs outlined in the Riga conclusions. Each thematic chapter also begins with a 2015 baseline, more specifically addressing the MTD-related topics. The baseline is followed by the presentation of the major policy developments in the MTD since 2015;

(c) the country chapter ends with a conclusion summarising the main lines of the 2015-19 policy developments and highlighting possible priorities for the future.

This country chapter is part of the information which the European Commission used to prepare the European Semester exercises ([2]) in 2017-19. It also informs the work of Cedefop and the European Training Foundation (ETF) in preparing a joint monitoring report on the implementation of the Riga conclusions.

([1]) *Riga conclusions 2015 on a new set of medium-term deliverables in the field of VET for the period 2015-2020, as a result of the review of short-term deliverables defined in the 2010 Bruges communiqué:*
https://www.izm.gov.lv/images/RigaConclusions_2015.pdf

([2]) European Semester: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester_en

Both the joint report and the country chapter are aimed at informing the work of EU Member States' Directors General for Vocational Training (DGVTs) and Advisory Committee for Vocational Training (ACVT) on taking stock of the outcomes of the Riga conclusions and preparing the next steps for the EU VET policy for the next few years.

Aspects of vocational education and training context in 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, the proportion of upper secondary students enrolled in vocational education and training (VET) programmes in Italy was above the EU average: 59.4% compared to 48.9% in the EU in 2013 (European Commission, 2015a); 56.1% in 2014 compared to 48% in the EU (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 73); 56% in 2015 compared to 47% in the EU ([3]). However, the employment rate of recent upper secondary graduates was low: 38.3% in 2014 (European Commission, 2015a) and 40.7% in 2015 (European Commission, 2015a) compared to 70.8% and 74.1% respectively in the EU ([4]).

Adult participation in lifelong learning was below the EU average: 8% in 2014 (European Commission, 2015a) and 7.3% in 2015 compared to 10.7% in the EU on average in both years (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 73) (Table 1) ([5]). According to the 2010 and 2015 CVTS surveys, 56% of employers reported to having provided training in 2010 (compared to the EU average of 66%); they were 60% in 2015 (73% in the EU on average). In 2010, 36% of employees attended CVT courses (38% in the EU on average). However, they were 46% in 2015, above the EU average of 41%.

VET in the country faced the challenge of promoting and expanding work-based training and updating the apprenticeship system ([6]). In 2015-16, school reform (European Commission, 2015a) introduced compulsory school-work exchange program in the last three years of upper secondary education, i.e. at least 400 hours per student in vocational education (200 hours in general education) and in 2015 labour reform introduced new forms of labour contracts, specifically of apprenticeship.

([3]) Eurostat, data for 2015.

([4]) 48.4% in 2017, compared to 74.1% in the EU. See the European Commission's *Education and training monitor 2018*, Italy, p.5.

([5]) 8.3% in 2016 and 7.9% in 2017, compared to 10.8% and 10.9% in the EU. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Adult_learning_statistics

([6]) Eurostat, data for 2017.

Table 1. **Framework data: score on VET indicators in Italy and in the EU: 2010-15**

Indicator label	2010		2015 (*)			Trend in 2011-15 (per year)		
	IT ᶠ	EU ᶠ	Yr	IT ᶠ	EU ᶠ	Range	IT	EU
Access, attractiveness and flexibility								
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	A	A	'14	56.1 ᵇ	48.0 ᵇ E1	'13-'14	▪ -3.3	▪ -0.9
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET	A	A	'14	0.0 ᶻ	34.0 ᵇ E2	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ 0.1
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET			'14	90.7	69.2 E3			
Employees participating in CVT courses (%)	36.0	38.0 ᵉ	'10	36.0	38.0 ᵉ			
Employees participating in on-the-job training (%)	11.0	20.0 ᵉ	'10	11.0	20.0 ᵉ			
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	6.2		'15	7.3	10.7 ᵇ	'13-'15	↗ 0.5	— 0.0
Enterprises providing training (%)	56.0	66.0 ᵉ	'10	56.0	66.0 ᵉ			
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	A	A	'14	44.1 ᵇ	42.7 ᵇ E1	'13-'14	▪ -4.7	▪ -1.0
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	21.0	25.0 ᵉ	'10	21.0	25.0 ᵉ			
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)			'15	27.9 ᵇ	33.0 ᵇ	'14-'15	▪ 0.4	▪ -0.3
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	3.0	5.3	'15	4.6	6.9	'10-'15	↗ 0.4	↗ 0.4
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	1.3		'15	2.0 ᶜ	4.3 ᵇ ᶜ	'13-'15	↗ 0.3	↘ -0.1
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	6.3		'15	5.3	9.5 ᵇ	'13-'15	↗ 0.1	↘ -0.4
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)	17.8 ᴮ	9.5 ᵉ ᴮ	'11	17.8	9.5 ᵉ			
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)	69.9 ᴮ	80.2 ᵉ ᴮ	'11	69.9	80.2 ᵉ			
Skill development and labour market relevance								
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)			'13	ᵇ	0.56 ᵇ E4			
IVET public expenditure per student (1 000 PPS units)			'13	ᵇ	6.4 ᵇ E5			
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	0.4	0.8 ᵉ	'10	0.4	0.8 ᵉ			
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET			'14	1.5 ᵇ	1.0 ᵇ E6	'13-'14	▪ 0.1	▪ 0.0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	A	A	'14	ᵇ	30.0 ᵇ E7			
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates			'14	0.5	9.3 E8	'13-'14	▪ 0.1	▪ 0.4
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)	31.9	41.5 E9	'12	33.4	41.6 E9	'10-'12	▪ 0.8	▪ 0.0
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20- to 34-year-olds)			'15	63.1 ᵇ	77.2 ᵇ	'14-'15	▪ 0.4	▪ 0.3
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)			'15	8.2 ᵇ	5.3 ᵇ	'14-'15	▪ 2.2	▪ -1.0
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over low-educated)			'15	15.3 ᵇ	23.7 ᵇ	'14-'15	▪ -0.7	▪ -0.1
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)			'15	84.9	83.7			

Indicator label	2010		2015 (*)			Trend in 2011-15 (per year)		
	IT [f]	EU [f]	Yr	IT [f]	EU [f]	Range	IT	EU
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	62.3	55.2	'15	65.0	57.3	'10-'15	▪ 0.5	▪ 0.4
Overall transitions and labour market trends								
Early leavers from education and training (%)	18.6	13.9	'15	14.7 [C]	11.0 [C]	'10-'15	↘ -0.8	↘ -0.6
30- to 34-year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	19.9	33.8	'15	25.3 [C]	38.7 [C]	'10-'15	↗ 1.1	↗ 1.0
NEET rate for 18- to 24-year-olds (%)	24.1	16.6	'15	27.9	15.8	'10-'15	↗ 0.9	↘ -0.1
Unemployment rate for 20- to 34-year-olds (%)	14.6	13.1	'15	22.0	12.9	'10-'15	↗ 1.9	↗ 0.1
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)	57.8	77.4	'15	48.5 [C]	76.9 [C]	'10-'15	↘ -2.6	↘ -0.2
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	44.9	27.3	'15	40.1 [C]	23.5 [C]	'10-'15	↘ -1.0	↘ -0.8
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds (%)	61.0	68.6	'15	60.5	70.0	'10-'15	↘ -0.2	↗ 0.3
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	49.9	53.4	'15	49.4 [C]	52.6 [C]	'10-'15	↘ -0.2	↘ -0.2
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2020 (% of total)			'16	73.5 [D]	82.8 [D]			

(*) The data in this column are the data available in 2016. Where 2015 data were not available, data from previous years were used.([A]) UOE (UNESCO OECD Eurostat) back reconstruction of 2010 values based on ISCED (international standard classification of education) 2011 not yet available.

([B]) AES (adult education survey) 2011, used as proxy for 2010 baseline.

([C]) 2014 b flags in Eurostat online tables ignored on the basis of other relevant Eurostat metadata.

([D]) Forecast made in 2016.

([E1]) Based on 28 countries; partial information for NL.

([E2]) Based on 25 countries (missing: ES, PL, RO); partial information for NL.

([E3]) Based on 27 countries (missing: NL); partial information for EL, IT.

([E4]) Based on 19 countries (missing: BE, DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT, SK).

([E5]) Based on 21 countries (missing: DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT).

([E6]) Partial information for NL.

([E7]) Based on 25 countries (missing: HR, IT, UK).

([E8]) Based on 23 countries (missing: BE, IE, FR, CY, UK).

([E9]) Based on 22 countries (missing: DE, IE, EL, NL, SI, UK).

([b]) Break after 2010, therefore baseline data not included.

([u]) Eurostat: 'low reliability'.

([z]) Eurostat: 'not applicable'.

([e]) Eurostat: 'estimated'.

NB: Definitions in the indicators table differ from those used in national legislation.

EU refers to EU-28, unless otherwise specified. Arrows ↗ or ↘ signal a positive or negative trend based on more than two data points and of magnitude 0.1 per year or more. Trends based on more than two data points but of smaller magnitude are indicated by →; trends based on two points only are marked ▪. Trends are estimated by means of regression models.

Source: Cedefop, 2017a, p. 73.

CHAPTER 1.
MTD 1 – All forms of work-based learning with special attention to apprenticeships

1.1.   Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, the general framework for VET was designed by the Labour and Education ministries, in cooperation with Regions and autonomous provinces ([7]). The State-Regions Conference was in charge of defining the minimum set of education and training standards valid for all regions countrywide.

Apprenticeship ([8]) was in place. It implied a work contract and comprised both on-the-job and classroom training ([9]). Apprenticeship had been high in the VET policy agenda in the preceding decades; nevertheless, it had been mostly used to recruit cheap labour.

Social partners had an advisory role on VET and were mostly involved in shaping and regulating professional apprenticeships in terms of contents, occupations concerned, quality of the workplace training offered and certification processes (Cedefop, 2014a).

Regional upper secondary VET programmes (IeFP), combining learning at the workplace and in a VET institution, were in place, designed and organised by the Regions according to their needs. These modular programmes addressed learners aged 14 wishing to obtain a nationally recognised EQF level 3 vocational certificate in three years, or an EQF level 4 nationally recognised (Cedefop, 2014b) VET diploma in four years. Those enrolled in three-year programmes could also enrol in an additional specialisation year to get the VET diploma.

At post-secondary level, all VET courses included internships / traineeships in companies accounting for 30% of the total duration of programmes ([10]). Programmes provided theoretical, technical and managerial skills and offered

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([7])   While technical and vocational programmes offered in school-based setting were under the Ministry of Education's remit, see Cedefop (2014). *Spotlight on VET Italy*. Luxembourg. Publications Office: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/8078

([8])   Legislative Decree No 81/2015.

([9])   See also Cedefop (2014a).

([10])   IFTS (*istruzione e formazione tecnica superior*) EQF level 4 programmes accessible to young people and adults, ITS (istituti tecnici superiori) EQF level 5 programmes and Post-IeFP and other programmes and courses offering regional qualifications.

higher level training in professional areas considered strategic for the country's development (Cedefop, 2014a). Two different training pathways were in place: higher technical education and training (IFTS) and higher technical education (ITS), each with its own specific characteristics.

The IFTS aimed to train technical specialists capable of satisfying the demand of both the public and private sectors for specialist labour. It targeted employed and unemployed young people and adults who, holding an upper-secondary school diploma or an IeFP diploma, intended to continue their specialisation paths before looking for a job or, if already in job, before getting back to work.

The higher technical education pathway (ITS) was established in 2008 [11] and revised in 2013 by an Inter-Ministerial Decree that defined its structure and position within the Italian education system. The responsibility for this pathway lied with the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR), whilst the monitoring of courses was carried out by INDIRE, the National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research.

In 2015, the School Reform [12] offered young IeFP graduates the possibility to access the higher technical education system by following an IFTS pathway. In this regard, IFTS pathways became a fifth year, functional to those young IeFP graduates intending to continue their specialisation path and access higher technical education, which thus became the highest level of the long chain.

Also in 2015, the Apprenticeship Reform [13] reinforced the integration between training systems. It allowed employers to conclude three/four-year apprenticeship contracts with young people aged 15-25 years, with a possibility to extend the contract by one year so as to enable the apprentice to obtain an IFTS specialisation.

Lastly, the State-Regions Agreement dated 20 January 2016 reinforced the link between the IFTS and ITS training chains, promoting the consolidation of the common and technical skills of IFTS pathways as a gateway towards the ITS system. At the same time, the agreement acknowledged the right of ITS Foundations to develop their own higher technical training pathways. The agreement thus ensures the coherence of both chains in terms of the skills and competences gained.

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[11] Prime Ministerial Decree of 25 January 2008

[12] Law 107/2015.

[13] Included in Legislative Decree 81/2015.

1.2.   Policy priorities for 2016-20

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area ([14]) are to:

(a) integrate training and employment of young people within a dual system by reinforcing those apprenticeships linked with the education and training system, and particularly within initial vocational education and training (IVET) pathways;

(b) reinforce apprenticeship for higher training/education and research;

(c) introduce elements of flexibility to simplify legislation and boost the attractiveness of apprenticeship among enterprises;

(d) set up a specific pedagogical methodology aimed at reinforcing the school-work exchange programme;

(e) further integrate education and training;

(f) promote the assessment of education and training processes and results through the implementation of the National plan for quality of education and training.

1.3.   Main actions taken in 2015-19

1.3.1.   The 2015 reform of the apprenticeship system

Apprenticeship regulations were entirely reformed in 2015 ([15]). Following the reform, apprenticeship has been defined as a job contract structured in three different schemes:

(a) type 1 – apprenticeship for young people aged 15 to 25 enrolled in three- or four-year school-based programmes. Type 1 leads to formal qualifications (VET diploma, upper secondary school diploma), higher technical specialisation (IFTS), and entry to vocational tertiary education;

(b) type 2 – vocational apprenticeship, for young people aged 18 to 29, which is enterprise-based. It is targeted at young people but also adult workers who have been made redundant. It has a training component, though is marginal: a maximum 120 hours in three years, to be carried out inside or outside the company. No qualification from the formal education system is awarded upon completion, but the apprentice can become a skilled worker by acquiring a contractual qualification defined and recognised by collective labour agreements;

([14]) According to a survey by Cedefop among Directors General for VET (DGVTs) in early 2016.

([15]) Legislative Decree No 81/2015

(c) type 3 – higher education and research apprenticeship, for young people aged 18-29, which leads to a university degree or fulfils requirements for carrying out research or compulsory traineeship to access liberal professions.

The reform aimed to boost apprenticeship (the changes mainly affected the first and third type; apprenticeships leading to formal qualifications), improve the on-the job-training component, reduce early school-leaving, support the transition from the education system to the job market. It also supported the development of a dual system in Italy. A national pilot for a dual system, (*Support, development and reinforcement of the dual system within vocational education and training*) ([16]) had been launched in the training year 2015/16, based on a State-Region agreement dated 24 September 2015. Dual VET includes learners enrolled in three/four-year regional vocational programmes (IeFP), IFTS students and apprentices (Table 2).

Table 2. **Number of learners enrolled in the dual experimental programme in 2016 and 2017**

Pathways	2016		2017		Variations 2016/17
IeFP	18 670	87.7%	18 752	79.0%	+0.4%
IFTS	1 103	5.2%	1 673	7.1%	+51.7%
Apprenticeship	1 524	7.2%	3 306	13.9%	116.9%
Total	**21 297**	**100%**	**23 731**	**100%**	**+11.4%**

Source: INAPP elaboration based on Regional data.

The Ministerial Decree of 12 October 2015 specified the framework components for apprenticeship contracts: the duties and responsibilities of the signatory parties, the employer's requirements, the training standards, the apprentice's rights and obligations, the tasks assigned to the company and workplace tutor and to the tutor at the training institution, skills assessment and certification modalities. The duration of apprenticeship contracts varies from a minimum of six months to a maximum linked to the period required to achieve the qualification and tasks assigned in the contract. Simplification and flexibility have been introduced for operating apprenticeships, such as through individualised training plans, and making remuneration proportional to the effective number of hours spent on the job. Financial incentives were also introduced in the form of a

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([16]) *Azioni di accompagnamento, sviluppo e rafforzamento del sistema duale nell'ambito dell'Istruzione e Formazione Professionale.*

total social security exemption. A 2016 decree ([17]) introduced the possibility to extend Type 1 apprenticeship for one year, if the apprentice did not obtain the qualification or the diploma by the planned date (Cedefop, 2017d).

The budget allocated to support the implementation of the dual system increased from EUR 87 million in 2015 to EUR 125 million in 2019 ([18]).

1.3.2. Compulsory school-work exchange programme in upper secondary education

On 13 July 2015, the Italian government adopted a reform ([19]) of the national education system called *La buona scuola* (The good school) (Cedefop ReferNet Italy, 2016), emphasising alternance between classroom work and periods of workplace training. The main objective is to boost school-to-work transition by increasing employment opportunities and guidance for students. The reform has made it compulsory for all students attending the last three years of upper secondary school to take part in a school-work exchange scheme for at least 200 hours in general education schools (lyceums) and 400 hours in technical and vocational schools. The reform (and operational guidelines for upper secondary schools issued by the Ministry of education in 2015) provides definitions and rules for school-work alternance. According to the provisions, practical training may take place in an enterprise, or through a virtual training enterprise, or through apprenticeship. Host institutions that have training capacity are listed on a National alternance repository held by chambers of commerce. The training pathway starts with the programming of school-work exchange programme activities, followed by the implementation of the training programme, with assistance of a training tutor. Final assessment and certification of competences then take place.

The reform calls for improving the coordination of work-based training in the education system and greater cooperation between schools and local communities.

Budget Law 2019 has renamed the *School-work exchange programme* as *Guidance and transversal skills pathways* and has reviewed the total duration of courses. In general education schools (lyceums), the duration is not less than 90 hours (instead of 200 hours previously) in total for the last three years. For technical and vocational schools, the total duration is not less than 150 hours and 210 hours respectively (instead of 400 hours previously).

([17]) Legislative Decree No 185/2016 of 24 September 2016.

([18]) Directorial Decree No 2/2018 of the Ministry of Labour and Labour Policies, allocating EUR 125 million to develop a range of vocational diplomas and EUR 15 million to develop the apprenticeship system.

([19]) Law No 107/2015 of 13 July 2015.

1.3.3. Involving employers to support work-based training and apprenticeship (Industry 4.0)

1.3.3.1. *Cooperation agreement with industry*

From 2015 to 2017, a number of protocol agreements ([20]) were signed between the Ministry of Education and different industry organisations ([21]): these included the General Confederation of Italian Industry (Confindustria), the National Association of industrial Companies' Executives (Federmanager), the Federation of Italian Associations of Hotels and Tourism (Federalberghi), and the Bank of Italy (Banca d'Italia). The agreements concern a cooperation framework aiming particularly to support the implementation of school-work exchange projects.

1.3.3.2. *Incentives for companies involved in dual training*

Law 145/2018 confirmed financial incentives which already existed in Law 205/2017. To aid recruitment of young people on a permanent contract in the same company where they were on alternance or on types 1 or 3 apprenticeship, companies are entitled to total social security exemption for the first three years.

([20]) *Rafforzare il rapporto tra scuola e mondo del lavoro* (*Strengthening the relationship between school and the labour market*).

([21]) There are more or less 100 agreements at national level and 150 agreements at regional level.

MTD 2 – Quality assurance mechanisms in line with EQAVET and continuous information and feedback loops to IVET and CVET

2.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, ISFOL (now INAPP) was the quality assurance national reference point (EQAVET NRP). It had been appointed in 2006. A quality assurance framework for VET had been formally approved in 2012 and partially implemented in 2015. It was consistent with the EQAVET recommendation and applied to initial vocational education and training (IVET), continuing vocational education and training (CVET) and related work-based learning. School evaluation (including VET schools) was based on periodic surveys of student learning outcomes, and was centrally managed. VET schools were required – in compliance with the national evaluation system – to prepare a self-assessment report following a national template and guidelines. In addition, Regions and Autonomous Provinces had set out standards which had to be met by all training bodies accessing public funding. Those standards referred to a common framework agreed at national level by all Regions and by the State. Accredited VET providers were registered in a national database.

All providers, whether public or private, had to be accredited to deliver publicly funded training and guidance. The accreditation process was carried out by the Regions and the Autonomous Provinces in accordance with national criteria outlined in legislation.

Several data collection initiatives were being carried out. By 2015, a national statistical system on VET had been set up and was expected to be further developed through a European Social Fund (ESF) project (2014-20) carried out by ANPAL (the National Agency for Active Employment Policies). A national VET monitoring report was in place to survey the employability of VET graduates.

In the area of skills needs anticipation, there were a number of forecasting mechanisms in place, both at national and regional levels. The National Integrated Information System of Professions, implemented by ISFOL (now INAPP), included a national survey of occupational profiles and an audit of skills needs. Further, the Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce (Unioncamere) used to run the Excelsior survey, a multi-sectoral forecast instrument of labour market needs, first implemented in 1997 and conducted on a nationally representative

sample of approximately 100 000 Italian firms. Surveys of employers and other forms of stakeholders' consultation at regional level helped to identify labour market and training needs (EEPO, 2014). However, the diversity of labour markets' characteristics across the Italian territory made it difficult to design national strategies in terms of aligning educational provisions to labour market needs. Training providers did not have clear guidance and/or obligations from national legislation on linking their activities to labour market needs. Therefore, their strategies were driven by local factors such as regional policy frameworks and local labour markets.

2.2. Quality assurance in line with EQAVET in 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this matter is to revise, update and carry out the national approach for quality of education and training.
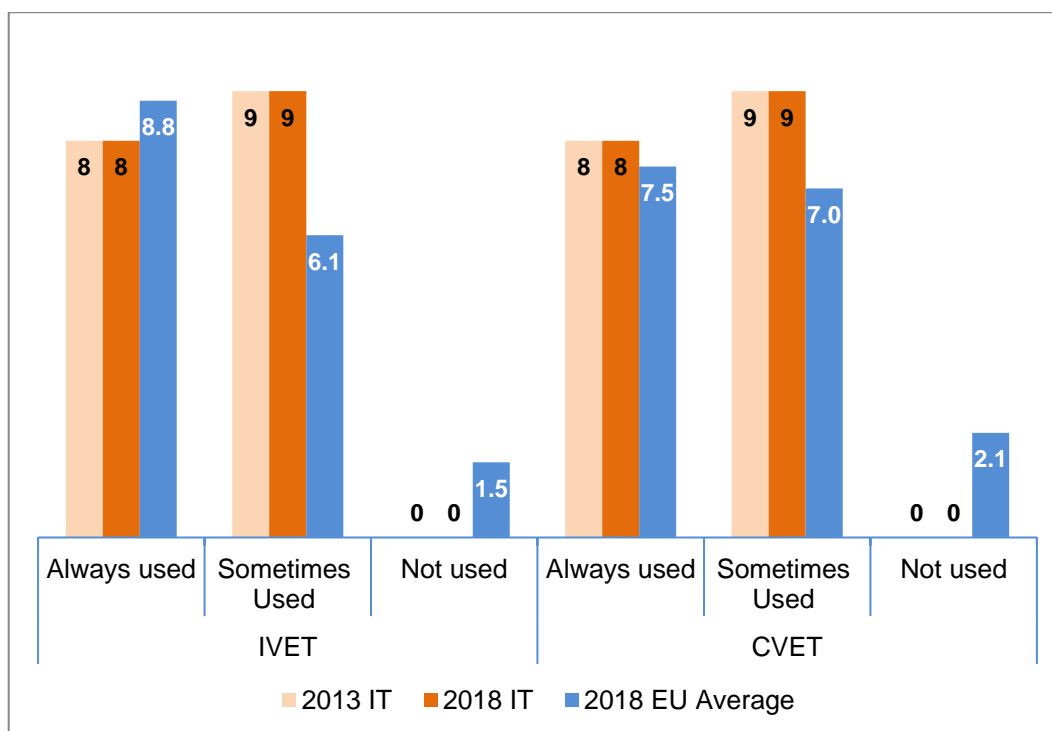
During the reporting period, the national accreditation system is being reviewed in line with the Legislative Decree No 150/2015.

The EQAVET NRP used European and national funding to support updating the national approach to VET quality assurance. It also developed instruments and tools to promote a quality assurance culture in national and regional bodies responsible for VET, as well as in teachers, trainers and learners, particularly for self-assessment and peer-review. Closer cooperation with social partners for the revision of the national approach has been achieved under the umbrella of the EQAVET NRP and the supervision of the Ministry of Labour. The National plan for quality of education and training was revised in 2017 and was approved by the State-Regions Conference on 21 December 2017. The plan is a framework within which territorial declinations are allowed, in compliance with the autonomy of regions. It aims to reduce and prevent training failure and dropout through the continuous improvement of the training supply as well as the promotion of a quality culture.

In 2019, the Ministry of Labour is working to revise the national accreditation system, taking into account the indicators suggested by the EQAVET recommendation, with the aim of updating the State-Regions Agreement signed in 2008 for defining the minimum standards of the accreditation system for the quality of services from training providers.

The situation in IVET concerning the use of the EQAVET indicators to monitor the VET system (Figure 1) has remained unchanged compared to 2013. Italy was below the EU average in IVET and above in CVET in 2018. All EQAVET indicators are used (mostly sometimes) and are part of the national accreditation system for providers applying for public funds.

Figure 1.   **Use of EQAVET indicators**

Comparison between the accreditation tools of regions and autonomous provinces and EQAVET indicators shows that some indicators are similar. However, convergence could be improved in trainer training (number of beneficiaries addressed and assigned resources); collection of data on placements and enterprise satisfaction; and procedures for needs analysis. There is also room for progress for regional information system in collecting data on vocational training from training providers on drop-out rates, completion rates, (coherent) placement rates and trainees from vulnerable categories.

2.3.   Continuous information and feedback loops in initial VET and continuing VET in 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this matter are to:

(a)   develop a systemic information mechanism providing data on vocational training pathways, both in IVET and CVET, focusing on individual workers, where data on education and training pathways are systematically registered;

(b) carry out systematic national level monitoring of vocational training and its different pathways, possibly reviewing IVET resource allocation mechanisms;

(c) increase quality through the establishment of feedback loops to adapt VET provision;

(d) improve employment opportunities for low-skilled adults.

In the reporting period, several stakeholders are working on setting up an information system that will register all training pathways (both IVET and CVET) delivered and financed with public resources.

With regard to employment opportunities for low-skilled adults, the work done in the reporting period was summarised in the *Report on the implementation of the Council recommendation 'Upskilling pathways: new opportunities for adults'* in Italy. The report presents a starting point to define the Italian position, based on the choice to deal with every low-skilled person in general, instead of selecting only special categories.

The inter-institutional board for lifelong learning, established within the State-Regions Conference in 2014, decided to design a National guarantee plan for adult competences.

MTD 3 – Access to VET and qualifications for all through more flexible/permeable systems, guidance and validation of non-formal and informal learning

3.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, Italy was faced with the overall challenge of integrating different elements of its complex context in more coherent frameworks.

Career guidance was a responsibility of regional authorities. It was mainly provided by:

(a) public employment services (*centri per l'impiego*) to job seekers, workers interested in career change, young people aged 16 who had completed compulsory education, etc.;

(b) municipal vocational guidance centres; and

(c) information centres (*Informagiovani*) which provided young people with information on VET (Cedefop, 2014c).

Educational guidance was available at educational institutions. In 2012, a decision ([22]) had been taken to establish a national lifelong guidance system that would integrate the national, regional and local systems ([23]). Strengthening guidance in dual education was also being considered ([24]).

The country had been working on creating a more coherent national qualifications system. The system was governed by multiple national and regional authorities in charge of designing and awarding qualifications. It was also based on multiple legislations. A *National repertory of education, training and professional qualifications* was being developed since 2013 ([25]). The national repertory was the single framework for the certification of competences. It

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([22]) Joint conference agreement 252/CU of 20 December 2012.

([23]) Law 92/2012 on Labour Market Reform. See Cedefop (2014c).p. 50.

([24]) This started in 2015/16.

([25]) Legislative Decree No 13/2013. *Definition of general rules and basic level of performance for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning and minimum service standards of the national system of competences certification.* http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2013/02/15/13G00043/sg;jsessionid=QtVQDnVh W+1EjOvvz7l8GA__.ntc-as1-guri2b

included only qualifications referenced to the EQF. An operational framework for the recognition of regional qualifications and related skills at national level (national framework of regional qualifications – QNQR) was introduced in 2015 by inter-ministerial decree (Cedefop, 2017b). It included a mechanism of mutual recognition among the regional qualifications and procedures for the identification/validation of non-formal and informal learning, and the certification of competences.

3.2.   Policy priorities for 2016-20

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area is to set up a national system for the certification of competences to increase the recognition and transparency of qualifications, and to improve skills in line with the strategy for an integrated education and training system of dual learning.

3.3.   Main actions taken in 2015-19

3.3.1.   The revision of vocational school pathways

With the Legislative Decree No 61 of 13 April 2017 ([26]), the Italian Government has started a review of vocational education pathways. Changes include:

(a)   redefinition of educational pathways;
(b)   individualisation of learning pathways;
(c)   strengthening teaching laboratories;
(d)   promotion of learning-oriented teaching fostering the acquisition of transversal competences and work-based learning;

([26]) The implementation of the decree requires the publication of six statutes of which three have already been approved and published:

(a) a regulation, foreseen in Art. 3, Paragraph 3;
(b) a decree on the connections between Vocational Education and Regional IVET and on subsidiarity foreseen in Art. 7, Paragraph 1;
(c) an agreement signed by the State and the Regions on the phases foreseen in Art. 8, Paragraph 2;
(d) a decree defining the model of certification of competences, with a reference to the learning units foreseen in Art. 5, Paragraph 1, Letter g;
(e) decree establishing the national network of vocational schools and defining the criteria and the organisational modalities;
(f) a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Education, University and Research, the Regions and the Autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bolzano, for the definition of the general criteria for the implementation of the annual courses ending with the State exam for students who acquire the vocational qualification at the end of the four-year IVET pathway.

(e) educational planning based on learning units;

(f) flexibility of pathways;

(g) promotion of a greater connection of education institutions with the territories and the labour market.

Eleven sectoral pathways are identified (three of them new):

(a) agriculture, rural development, promotion of local products and management of forestry and mountain resources;

(b) commercial fishing and fish production (new profile);

(c) industry and craft for the made in Italy products;

(d) maintenance and technical assistance;

(e) water management and environmental rehabilitation (new profile);

(f) commercial services;

(g) oenogastronomy and hospitality services;

(h) cultural and entertainment services (new profile);

(i) health and welfare services;

(j) auxiliary health professions: dental technician;

(k) auxiliary health professions: optician.

These pathways can be adapted taking on board local needs, in line with the priorities defined by the regions. Resources are allocated to:

(a) strengthen the teaching staff (EUR 47 million starting from the school year 2018/19);

(b) guiding schools in the reform implementation (EUR 1.3 million starting from the school year 2017/18);

(c) strengthening school laboratories (EUR 80 million as part of the European regional development fund for technical and professional schools).

A national network of professional schools has been established to promote coordination between schools, regional vocational centres and the labour market with the objective of:

(a) promoting innovation and connection with the world of work for the regular updating of educational pathways;

(b) strengthening the support actions for school-to-work transitions;

(c) expanding and supporting the dual system and apprenticeships.

3.3.2. National qualifications framework

In 2012, self-certification of the higher education framework to the QF-EHEA ([27]) was completed. The first Italian referencing report was presented to the EQF advisory group in May 2013. A national repertory of education and training

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([27]) Qualifications frameworks in the European higher education area (QF-EHEA).

qualifications and professional qualifications has been developed since 2013 [28]. In June 2015, an inter-ministerial decree introduced an operational framework for the recognition of regional qualifications and related skills competences at national level (National framework of regional qualifications, QNQR). In 2016, a technical proposal for a comprehensive national qualifications framework was elaborated.

The Interministerial Decree of 8 January 2018 established the national qualification framework and defined a clear common set of descriptors (in terms of knowledge, skills and autonomy/responsibility) for the eight levels of qualifications.

Following the decree, the first meeting of the technical group was held in May 2018, bringing together all the actors involved (Ministries of Labour and Education; Regions) and supervised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

In October 2018, the *National guidelines for the certification of skills* were submitted to the technical group with the aim of setting the minimum requirements for the certification of formally acquired skills and the validation of informally and non-formally acquired ones. The guidelines will complement the implementation of Legislative Decree No 13/2013, supporting the national lifelong learning system, which is part of the Italian strategy for the individual right to lifelong learning. The national guidelines for the certification of skills are to be approved by a State-Regions Agreement by the end of 2019.

An *Atlas of professions and qualifications* was developed, collecting all the qualifications (with corresponding EQF level) included in the *Lifelong learning system national inventory* (whether from school, university, national and regional VET pathways at the different levels, apprenticeship and VET pathways under the responsibility of regions).

In March 2018 an updated version of the atlas was agreed and approved with the aim of achieving a universal description for various qualifications, in order to monitor and evaluate how the market is moving within an extremely dynamic socioeconomic context.

3.3.3. ECVET ([29])

The State-Regions Agreement of January 2015 defined indicators and procedures to certify competences at regional level and to develop a credit

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[28] Legislative Decree No 13/2013. *Definition of general rules and basic level of performance for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning and minimum service standards of the national system of competences certification.* https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2013/02/15/13G00043/sg

[29] Source: The ECVET users' group members.

system for IVET and CVET compatible with ECVET. The *Erasmus+* National Agency INAPP has, for many years, been strongly promoting the use of ECVET principles and tools within *Erasmus+* transnational mobility experiences. The Law No 107/2015 *La buona scuola* (The good school) recognises work-based learning carried out abroad. Surveys carried out by the *Erasmus+* National Agency INAPP together with the national team of ECVET experts revealed a growing interest in testing some steps of ECVET process within mobility experiences; the aim was increasing quality in VET mobility and facilitating the recognition of the learning outcomes achieved abroad, thus helping learners to capitalise on mobility experiences, even short-term ones. The *Guidelines for the certification of competences,* currently under approval (Section 3.3.2), are expected to support further ECVET developments.

3.3.4. Validation ([30])

Stakeholders reached an agreement on an operational common framework for the national recognition of regional qualifications and related skills in 2015. The agreement was endorsed by an interministerial decree signed in June by the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education ([31]). Mutual recognition of regional qualifications and standard procedures (including the issue of final certificates) are established by the operational framework. The rules are already being applied: in 2015-16, within the *Youth guarantee* programme, a sample of volunteers in the civil service had their competences validated. The main challenge at this stage is to ensure the sustainability of the new validation practices. To that end, requalifying practitioners (counsellors and assessors), and strengthening the capacity of the education system to develop validation tools, are a priority. The *Guidelines for the certification of competences*, currently under approval (Section 3.3.2), are expected to support further validation developments.

([30]) Source: Cedefop, 2017b; Perulli, E. (2016).

([31]) Interministerial Decree of 30 June 2015 of the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Education, defining the operational common framework for national recognition of regional qualifications and related skills.

CHAPTER 4.
MTD 4 – Key competences in both IVET and CVET

4.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, key competences were mainly addressed in the lower and upper secondary cycle (lyceum, technical and vocational schools) of the national education and training system and VET system (IeFP).

There was an explicit reference about the development of key competences in the Ministerial Decree No 139/2007, which was still in 2015 the basic rule on key competences. Subsequent legislation had further developed the basic principles of key competences:

(a) the Legislative Decree No 13/2013 developed the national system for the certification of competences (Section 3.3.2);

(b) the Law No 107/2015 *La buona scuola* on the reform of the national education system focused on key competences content and methodology for both general education and T-VET (Technical and vocational education and training);

(c) the 2015 Jobs Act ([32]) about the new apprenticeship system identified new categories of key competences.

The Ministerial Decree No 139/2007 stated that compulsory education offers language skills, mathematical skills, scientific-technological skills, and history and social skills. This encompassed eight key competences: learning to learn; planning; communication; collaborating and participating; acting independently and responsibly; problem solving; identifying connections and relationships; acquiring and interpreting information. These competences were evaluated and certified at the end of the second year of VET programmes.

The 2015 reform (*Buona scuola)* aimed to increase specific skills such as: language (English) and communication skills through the development of content and language integrated learning; literacy and the Italian language for foreign learners; mathematical-logical and scientific skills; digital skills, ICT, computational thinking, critical and conscious use of social networks and media; musical and artistic skills; entrepreneurial skills; citizenship skills, legal and economic knowledge; healthy lifestyles and environmental awareness.

([32]) Legislative Decree No 81/2015.

Apprenticeship in upper secondary education covered the competences mentioned in the Ministerial Decree No 139/2007. Skills upgrade apprenticeship (for young people aged 18-29) covered the following basic and transversal competences: workplace relationships and communication; corporate organisation and economy; company and workers' rights and duties; safety, security and health in the workplace; language and computer competences.

A recent survey ([33]) showed that, compared with general education graduates, those who completed VET programmes felt they had a stronger sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and weaker (ranged by priority):

    (a) cultural awareness;
    (b) ability to think critically;
    (c) foreign language speaking;
    (d) mathematical skills (Figure 2).

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[33] Cedefop (2017). *Cedefop European public opinion survey on vocational education and training.* Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop research paper; No 62.
http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/264585

Figure 2.   **Self-evaluation of acquired skills in general education and VET in 2016**
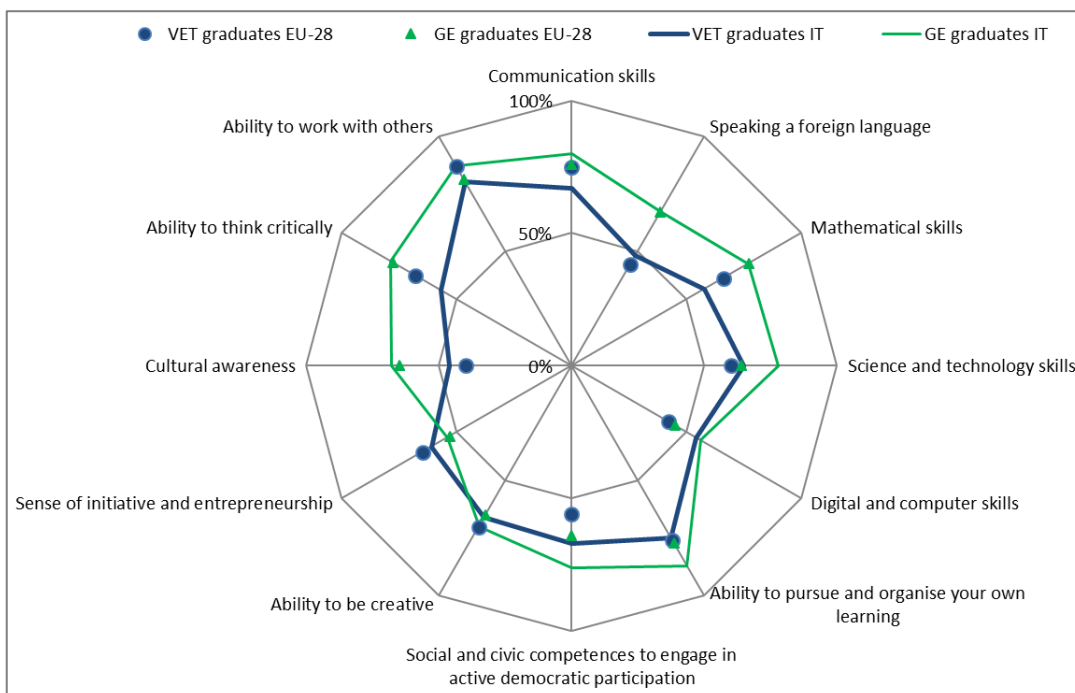
NB: GE stands for general education.
Respondents who attended upper secondary education. Interviewees were asked in summer 2016 about their overall experience in upper secondary education. Aggregated data do not take account of different types and sectors of VET and age groups of respondents.
Source: Cedefop, 2017c.

The context of key competences in 2015 was mainly characterised by an increasing share of young low achievers in reading and science and a decreasing share in maths compared with 2012 (Figure 3). The share of low achievers in Italy was slightly higher than in the EU on average, where the trend was similar.

Figure 3.   **Share of 15-year-olds with low achievement in reading, maths and science**
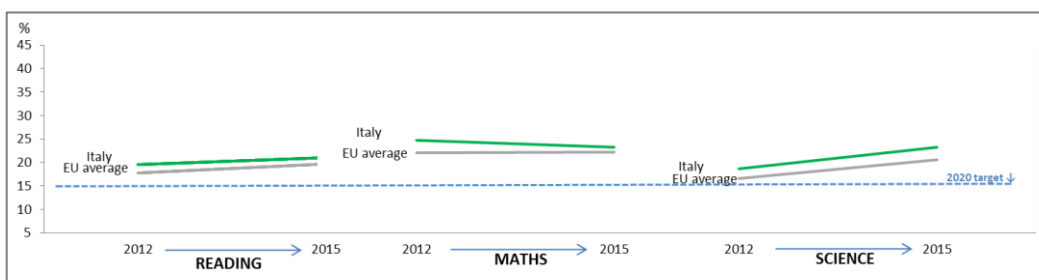
NB: Low achievement means failing level 2 on the PISA (programme for international student assessment) scale.
Source: OECD, 2014; OECD, 2016.

As VET enrolled 56% of all upper secondary learners in the country (^{34}), this trend was likely to be reflected in the key competences trained for in VET programmes.

4.2. Key competences addressed in the reporting period

Table 3 outlines the key competences in initial and continuing VET that were addressed in the reporting period. A description of policies is provided in the following sections.

Table 3.   **Key competences addressed in 2015-19**

	IVET	CVET
Country language(s) and literacy		
Foreign languages		
Digital competence	YES	YES
Maths		
Science		
Technology		
Social and civic competences		
Learning to learn		
Financial literacy		
Entrepreneurship competence	YES	
Cultural awareness and expression		
Key competences as a package	YES	

NB: The list derives from the 2006 EU key competences framework for lifelong learning; it has been restructured and expanded with additional competences that can be considered key.
Source: Cedefop based on ReferNet input.

4.3. Key competences in initial VET

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area are to:
(a) increase learner competence levels, including key competences, with priority given to:
   (i)   language and communication skills;
   (ii) mathematical-logical and scientific skills;

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(^{34}) Calculated from Eurostat, data for 2015.

(iii)   music, art, media and social media skills;

(iv)   active and democratic citizenship skills;

(v)   development of legal and economic knowledge, and of socially responsible behaviour in relation to culture, the environment and respect of the law;

(vi)   entrepreneurship skills;

(vii)   image literacy in the arts, media and web communication;

(viii)   digital skills, ICT, critical use of social media, particularly in relation to VET, and the world of work;

(ix)   literacy and Italian language for migrant or foreign learners;

(b)   develop a national plan for digital schools to increase the digital skills of learners.

Law No 107/2015 *La buona scuola* aimed at strengthening key competences through measures including the creation of a digital identity for learners to record and map the competences acquired in the different settings. Each learner is assigned a personal profile on the student portal ([35]) developed by the Ministry of Education to enable, inter alia, access to comprehensive information on the learner curriculum.

A national strategy for competences/skills has been launched based on the education (*Buona scuola*) ([36]) and labour (Jobs Act) reforms. The reforms aim to improve the competences of young people and adults, including NEETs, and to provide new competences for the (long-term) unemployed and employees. The strategy also links skills with the labour market demand. As a result of the national strategy for competences/skills, cognitive and professional competences (including basic skills) have been promoted through the apprenticeship and alternance systems.

In 2017, subordinate regulations to the *Good school* reform created a national model for the evaluation and the certification of key competences at the first level of secondary education. This decision followed the results of a national experiment, started in 2014-15, involving around 3 000 education institutions.

The Ministry of Education, University and Research adopted in 2016 the National plan of digital education (PNSD) for the development of digital competences. The plan coordinates the projects and resources of the Ministry of Education, other ministries and government offices, regions and municipalities on the topics of digital education and digital innovation. A pillar of the *Good school* reform, it is also meant to create a process connecting education institutions to

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([35])   https://iostudio.pubblica.istruzione.it/

([36])   Law No 107/2015 on the reform of the national education system: *La buona scuola* (*The good school).*

the challenges of lifelong and life-wide learning, in formal, informal and non-formal contexts. The plan starts from an innovative idea of school, perceived as an open learning space (and not just a physical space), a platform allowing all the students to develop competences for their life. Technologies become daily, ordinary commodities to the service of school activities, not only education and training activities but also organisational activities, connecting schools to their environments and wider communities. The educational objectives remain the same: developing students' competences, focusing on their learning outcomes and the active role they will play in society as persons, citizens and professionals. Objectives, contents and modalities are updated as necessary to tackle the challenges of the digital age. School staff also have to be involved and prepared to address methodological and didactic challenges (teachers) and organisational challenges (school leaders and the administrative staff) [37].

In March 2018, the Ministry of Education, University and Research adopted the Syllabus for entrepreneurial learning. The syllabus contains suggestions for introductory topics to support curricular initiatives on entrepreneurship education in upper secondary school. These include: the ability to turn ideas into action; creativity, innovation and risk-taking; planning and managing projects; seizing opportunities which can lead to establishing or contributing to social or commercial activity; realisation of entrepreneurial autonomous activity. Based on a definition of entrepreneurship education [38], and depending on the type of study they intend to develop, schools can plan their own curricula by choosing from the content described in the syllabus.

4.4. Key competences in continuing VET

In December 2017, within the framework of the National plan industry 4.0 [39], the Ministry of Economic Development, after consultation with the social partners, proposed to focus companies' investment in continuing training on a few specific topics, mainly related to digitalisation and information technology, and to the introduction of new machinery.

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[37] The approach is aligned to that highlighted by the High Level Conference of the European Commission of December 2014, many reports of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation of the OECD, the *New vision for education report* of the World Economic Forum, and the report *Education for the XXI century* of the think tank Ambrosetti.

[38] http://innovation-clusters.icee-eu.eu/Media/Files/Download-the-Comparative-Analysis-of-National-Strategies-HERE

[39] Training tax credit Industry 4.0.

The 2018 Budget Law (^{40}) provides for a tax credit for staff training expenses incurred by enterprises active in the sector of technologies identified by the National industry 4.0 plan.

Companies that invested in training activities in 2018 are entitled to a tax credit. Eligible training contents are those targeted to the acquisition or consolidation of knowledge in the technologies covered by the plan: big data and data analysis; cloud and fog computing; cyber security; visualisation systems and augmented reality; advanced and collaborative robotics; man-machine interface; and the internet of things (^{41}).

The tax credit corresponds to 40% of the staff costs related to training periods, up to a maximum yearly amount of EUR 300 000 per enterprise for training activities identified through sectoral or territorial collective agreements. The application rules were set by the Ministerial Decree of 4 May 2018 (^{42}). A funding of EUR 250 million was approved for 2019 for this measure. The 2019 Budget Law (^{43}) extends the measure to 2020, with expenditure of EUR 250 million covering 50% of the costs incurred by small enterprises, 40% of the costs incurred by medium enterprises and 30% of the costs of large companies, within the specified maximum yearly ceiling of EUR 300 000.

(^{40}) Law No 205/2017, *Bilancio di previsione dello Stato per l'anno finanziario 2018 e bilancio pluriennale per il triennio 2018-2020*.

(^{41}) 2018 Budget Law: http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2017/12/29/17G00222/sg

(^{42}) Ministry of Economic Development Decree of 4 May 2018, *Disposizioni applicative del credito d'imposta per le spese di formazione del personale dipendente nel settore delle tecnologie previste dal Piano Nazionale Industria 4.0*.

(^{43}) Law No 145/2018, *Bilancio di previsione dello Stato per l'anno finanziario 2019 e bilancio pluriennale per il triennio 2019-2021.*

CHAPTER 5.

MTD 5 – Systematic initial and continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers

5.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, three main groups of teachers and trainers were at play in VET programmes:

(a) teachers (content experts in languages, math, social/historical and scientific/technological areas);
(b) school-based trainers (process experts in cultural, humanities, scientific, technical and practical subjects; also supporting alternance training and apprenticeship schemes);
(c) in-company trainers (nationally referred to as apprenticeship tutors or practical training instructors)

5.1.1. Access to VET school teaching: entry requirements and initial training

The minimum requirement for accessing the teaching profession was a five-year bachelor degree in specific teaching subjects (maths, chemistry, foreign languages), followed by a one-year traineeship (Active teaching traineeship, TFA) at a school ([44]). TFA courses were managed by private and state universities in cooperation with schools. Access to TFA was subject to passing an admission test. TFA courses lasted 1 500 hours and led to an EQF7 certification. At the end of this training pathway, learners had to pass a state exam in order to be admitted to state schools.

Initial training for school-based VET trainers was not regulated by the State and there was no nationally recognised register of trainers or formal recruitment procedures. VET trainers were mainly considered as 'process experts' (as opposed to VET teachers defined as 'content experts') and were mostly required to support the learning process by guiding and motivating learners, strengthening the link between training and work, and updating learners' vocational skills. The National collective work contract had set as a requirement that VET trainers

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([44]) Decrees 249/2010 and 487/2014.

possess a university degree or a secondary education diploma along with work experience in the relevant sector.

5.1.2. In-company trainers: entry requirements and initial training

The implementation of apprenticeship required the presence of in-company apprenticeship tutors who would support the apprentice throughout the entire training process. Legislative Decree 81/2015 and Interministerial Decree of 12 October 2015, concerning training standards in apprenticeship, also introduced the role of the school-based trainer. The apprenticeship tutor was responsible for workplace learning related matters, whereas the school-based trainer was the reference point regarding training courses outside of the company.

5.1.3. VET school teachers and school-based trainers: main lines for CPD

Even before the reporting period, the National collective labour agreement obligated all teachers to participate regularly in professional refresher programmes, either within or outside the institutions where they were working. At least 24 hours of training per year was requested. Teachers were entitled to traineeship opportunities to acquire career management and professional skills to support learner access to the labour market. Regional projects which promoted technological innovation in learning environments and developing digital skills of teachers were also available.

School-based trainer in-service training was neither formalised nor widespread. Activities were mainly promoted by regional authorities. Providers were mostly public and private training bodies and consortia, consultancy firms, professional associations, universities, social partners, Chambers of Commerce and some business schools. Trainer training was mainly designed to enhance the skills required by technological innovation and market globalisation; foster the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and establish reliable standards for the validation procedures; adjust training interventions to local needs; create local, national and international networks; and develop relationships between training systems and the labour market via traineeship experiences.

5.2. Initial training for teaching/ training staff in VET schools 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area is to develop a new strategy and set up new programmes for teacher training and professional development, to improve the quality of VET and the success of learners on VET pathways by improving the professional skills of teachers.

An April 2017 legislative decree of the Council of Ministers on the revision of VET defined new criteria for the recruitment of school teachers. Applicants have

to be university graduates and must pass exams that take place twice a year. Estimation of the number of job openings will be based on the needs of each school. Successful candidates will attend a three-year training course in work-based learning and will receive wages after the first year of training.

At regional level, within the framework of the State-Regions Agreement of 22 January 2015, each region and autonomous province is responsible for setting its own standards for teacher training to ensure high quality VET services financed by public funds.

5.3. Initial training for trainers in enterprises 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area, as set by the Director General for Vocational Education and Training (DGVT), are two-fold:

(a) recognition of the role of, and tasks implemented by, apprenticeship tutors in enterprises within apprenticeship pathways;

(b) support apprenticeship tutors or practical training instructors in enterprises as an accompanying measure to the implementation of a dual system in IVET (only regional vocational training pathways, IeFP) to ease the transition from vocational training to the labour market.

Legislation on apprenticeship ([45]) refers to the role and tasks of apprenticeship tutors and teaching staff. An apprenticeship tutor is required to ensure (in cooperation with the school-based trainer) training success for young people. The tutor is entrusted with the tasks of supporting the apprentice's integration in the company, providing assistance to the learner-worker during the internal training course, and facilitating the acquisition of the skills needed for work.

Tutoring tasks were trialled within the framework of the national project for piloting alternance in regional VET: defining the individual training plan; supporting and monitoring apprentices in correctly implementing their learning path; checking the correct integration between training carried out inside and outside of the enterprise; supporting the deployment of the knowledge acquired in training within the work environment; transferring the essential competences for the implementation of working activities; and supplying useful elements to the training body to assess the apprentice and the effectiveness of training processes.

([45]) Ministerial Implementation Decree of 12 October 2015 of the Legislative Decree No 81/2015.

5.4. CPD for teaching/training staff in VET schools 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area, as set by the Director General for Vocational Education and Training, is to increase the skills of teachers involved in planning, programming, managing and evaluating school-work alternance pathways.

For many years, permanent training for VET teachers was considered an individual right under the National collective labour agreement. It is now regulated by the *Good school* reform (Law 107/2015). This law 'establishes that teachers' in-service training is continuing; this law provides incentives to support continuous teacher training and systematic need analysis mechanisms. Teachers' in-service training must be in line with the school plan and with the Ministry of Education priorities. Training must also involve all open-ended contract teachers'.

As part of the *Good school* law, the priority areas for teacher training in the 2016-19 three-year plan have been established as:
(a) organisational and didactic autonomy;
(b) competence-based learning, methodological innovation and basic skills;
(c) digital skills and new learning environments;
(d) foreign language skills;
(e) inclusion and disability;
(f) social cohesion and prevention of general youth unrest;
(g) integration, citizenship and global citizenship skills;
(h) school and work;
(i) evaluation and development, involving the entire school community.

Within this framework, training and professional development initiatives are organised by the school, or by a network of schools, also taking on board the needs of teachers and schools.

As further support to the professional development of teachers, Law No 107/2015 has also established a teachers' training card, an electronic voucher to the value of EUR 500 per school year for each teacher from 2015 onwards. The card can be used to purchase books, digital tools, and to pay for training courses and cultural events.

Statistical overview: 2019 update

Table 4 updates the figures that were provided in Table 1. Although Table 1 may contain data for 2015, these are not systematically repeated here. In some cases, not repeating is due to breaks in time series, which prevent comparability. In other cases, values differ due to methodological changes.

Table 4.   **Score on VET indicators in Italy and in the EU: 2015, last available year and recent change**

Indicator label	2015				Last available year					Recent change		
	IT	f	EU	f	Yr	IT	f	EU	f	Range	IT	EU
Access, attractiveness and flexibility												
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	55.8		47.3	ce	'17	55.3		47.8	ce	'15-'17	-0.5	0.5
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET		z	28.3	ce	'17		z	27.9	ce	'15-'17		-0.5
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET	89.8		68.1	ce	'17	89.7		68.6	ce	'15-'17	-0.1	0.4
Workers participating in CVT courses (%)	45.9		40.8		'15	45.9		40.8				
Workers participating in on-the-job training (%)	15		34		'15	15		34				
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	7.3		10.7		'18	8.1		11.1		'15-'18	0.8	0.4
Enterprises providing training (%)	60.2		72.6		'15	60.2		72.6				
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	43.7		42	ce	'17	43.1		42.7	ce	'15-'17	-0.5	0.7
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	28.4		30		'15	28.4		30				
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)	27.9		33		'18	29.2		33		'15-'18	1.3	0
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	4.6		6.9		'18	5.5		7.3		'15-'18	0.9	0.4
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	2		4.3		'18	2		4.3		'15-'18		0
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	5.3		9.5		'18	5		10.7		'15-'18	-0.3	1.2
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)					'16	15.2		11.4				
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)					'16	75.4		79.4				

Indicator label	2015				Last available year					Recent change		
	IT	f	EU	f	Yr	IT	f	EU	f	Range	IT	EU
Skill development and labour market relevance												
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)		d	0.5	ce	'16		d	0.5	ce	'15-'16		0
IVET public expenditure per student (1000 PPS units)		d	7.1	ce	'16		d	7.4	ce	'15-'16		0.3
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	0.5		0.9		'15	0.5		0.9				
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET	1.4		1	ce	'17	1.4		1	ce	'15-'17		0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	22.5		29.2	ce	'17	37.1	d	29.1	ce	'15-'17	14.7	0
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates	0.8				'17	1.1		14.3	b ce	'15-'17	0.3	
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)					'16	37.7		37.7				
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 year-olds)	63.1		77.2		'18	66		80.5		'15-'18	2.9	3.3
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)	8.2		5.4		'18	10.5		6.6		'15-'18	2.3	1.2
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over low-educated)	15.3		23.7		'18	16.9		23.3		'15-'18	1.6	-0.4
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)	84.9		83.7		'15	84.9		83.7				
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	64.9		57		'15	64.9		57				
Overall transitions and labour market trends												
Early leavers from education and training (%)	14.7		11		'18	14.5		10.6		'15-'18	-0.2	-0.4
30-34 year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	25.3		38.7		'18	27.8		40.7		'15-'18	2.5	2
NEET rate for 18-24 year-olds (%)	27.9		15.8		'18	24.9		13.7		'15-'18	-3	-2.1
Unemployment rate for 20-34 year-olds (%)	22		12.9		'18	18.8		9.4		'15-'18	-3.2	-3.5
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)	48.3		75.9		'18	56.4		80.6		'15-'18	8.1	4.7
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	40.1		23.5		'18	38.3		21.9		'15-'18	-1.8	-1.6
Employment rate for 20-64 year-olds (%)	60.5		70		'18	63		73.1		'15-'18	2.5	3.1
Employment rate for 20-64 year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	49.4		52.6		'18	51.7		56.1		'15-'18	2.3	3.5
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2030 (% of total)					'18	82.3	D	85.8	D			

EU refers to EU-28, unless otherwise specified.
(D) Forecast made in 2018.
(ce) Cedefop estimate based on available country data.
(b) Eurostat: 'break in time series'.

(u) Eurostat: 'low reliability'.
(z) Eurostat: 'not applicable'.
(e) Eurostat: 'estimated'.
(d) Eurostat: 'definition differs'.

Source: Cedefop (2020).

In 2017, 55.3% of all upper secondary students in Italy were enrolled in IVET. This percentage is 7.5 points above the EU average. It appears that the percentage of upper secondary students in IVET is lower by 0.5 points compared to the situation in the country in 2015.

In 2018, 8.1% of the adults participated in lifelong learning activities, which is slightly higher (0.8 points more) than in 2015. The EU average is 11.1%.

In 2018, the employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 years old) was 66%. However, it appears that the employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 years old) is higher by 2.9 points compared to the situation in the country in 2015. The EU average is 80.5%.

Conclusion

In 2015-16, Italy has taken significant steps to reform its apprenticeship system and introduce compulsory alternance in upper secondary education, including VET. The country has taken initiatives to secure employer involvement in work-based learning through agreements and incentives. Measures have been adopted to improve quality assurance mechanisms and the information system which guides the development of initial and continuing VET. A more integrated national approach to the quality of education and training, coherent with the EQAVET framework, was prepared. Significant progress has been made towards a national qualifications framework, further implementing ECVET and developing a national common approach to validation. A national strategy was launched to support the development of key competences in initial VET. Legislative measures and pilots were also being implemented to support the initial and continuing training of VET school teachers and school-based trainers.

In 2017, the National plan for quality in education and training was revised ([46]). A decree establishing a national qualifications framework was prepared and was finally approved in January 2018 ([47]). Tax credits were introduced to support enterprises that train for qualifications in the areas covered by the Industry 4.0 plan ([48]). In 2018, an updated version of the *Atlas of professions and qualifications* was approved. Work on *Guidelines for the certification of competences* and accreditation of training providers was carried out.

In 2018, a Syllabus for entrepreneurial learning was adopted (Section 4.3*).*

The actions carried out show that the main lines of the Riga conclusions and the country's policy priorities for 2016-20 are being addressed. Yet, information available to Cedefop at the time suggests issues which could benefit from further consideration: providing groups in need (people with disabilities, the low-qualified, migrants) with additional opportunities for training, in particular through developing upskilling pathways if needed; structuring the initial training and continuing professional development of in-company trainers; and using the EQAVET indicators more systematically to monitor IVET development.

([46]) See Section 2.2.

([47]) See Section 3.3.2.

([48]) See Section 4.4.

Acronyms

AES	adult education survey
Confindustria	General Confederation of Italian Industry
CPD	continuing professional development
CVET	continuing vocational education and training
DBQc	national qualifications database
DESI	dual system education Italy
DGVT	Director General for Vocational Education and Training
ECVET	European credit system for vocational education and training
EQAVET	European quality assurance in vocational education and training
EQF	European qualifications framework
ESF	European Social Fund
Eurostat	statistical office of the European Union
GDP	gross domestic product
GE	general education
IeFP	regional vocational training pathways
IFTS	higher technical education and training system
INAPP	*Istituto Nazionale per l'Analisi delle Politiche Pubbliche* National Institute for the Analysis of Public Policies
ISCED	international standard classification of education
ISFOL	*Istituto per lo Sviluppo della Formazione Professionale dei Lavoratori* Institute for the Development of Vocational Training for Workers
ITS	higher technical education
IVET	initial vocational education and training
MIUR	Ministry of Education
NCP	national coordination point
NQF	national qualifications framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
NEET	not in education, employment, or training
PISA	programme for international student assessment
PPS	purchasing power standards
PTOF	three-year educational plan
QANRP	quality assurance national reference point
QF-EHEA	qualifications frameworks in the European higher education area
QNQR	national framework of regional qualifications
STEM	science, technology, engineering and math programmes
T-TEP	technical education programme
UOE	UNESCO OECD Eurostat
VET	vocational education and training

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