



Implementation of Upskilling pathways recommendation in Italy

TCR in Italy: main findings of Survey Round 1

Claudio Maria Vitali – National Institute for the Analysis of Public Policies
c.vitali@inapp.org



FOURTH
POLICY LEARNING FORUM
on upskilling pathways

16
November
2022
Virtual event

A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE
#UpskillingPathways

 **CEDEFOP**
European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training


European Economic
and Social Committee

National approach to upskilling pathways

The **National strategic plan for the development of skills of the adult population** as *closest functional equivalent to a national approach to upskilling pathways*:

- a reference framework to design policies for LLL and adult learning;
- a strategic document supporting the 2021-2027 programming.

The principles of the Plan:

- universality of policies, selectivity of aid and user-centrality;
- subsidiarity of governance, concentration of resources;
- diversification, proximity of services;
- incrementality in the development of systems and services.

National strategic plan for the development of skills of the adult population

- Target population: low skilled adults **(29-64)**.
- **Three specific objectives:**
 1. to encourage adults' participation to upskilling and reskilling;
 2. to raise adults' basic skills (e.g. linguistic, digital and financial);
 3. to promote networking and coordination between relevant stakeholders also by strengthening and integrating education, training, employment, and social inclusion services.
- **Three lines of activity:**
 1. Outreach and guidance;
 2. Upskilling and reskilling;
 3. Matching skills supply and demand.



A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE

#UpSkillingPathways

The objective of the TCR - Italy

To analyse the capacity of the system and/or key actors and services to offer personalized and coordinated learning pathways for low skilled adults, according to the principle of personalisation and user-centrality

Areas of observation of the TCR:

- skills assessment and tailored learning offer;
- the approaches and distribution of outreach and guidance services for most vulnerable target groups;
- the involvement and capacitation of employers (in particular SMEs) to provide tailored training;
- the implementation and role of local multi-actor networks to support these processes.

Methodological approach for survey round 1 (Micro-level)

Sample established according to: geographical balance + sector/dimension balance
(for Companies)

Typologies of respondents and tools:

- (a) PES and Guidance Centers (Managers, Counsellors and Beneficiaries) → Individual Interviews
- (b) Universities → Individual Interviews
- (c) VET providers (Managers, Teachers and Learners) → Individual/group interviews + online survey
- (d) CPIA (Directors, Teachers and Learners) → Individual/group interviews + online survey
- (e) Unemployed people → Individual Interviews
- (f) Companies → Individual Interviews + online survey
- (g) Employees → Individual Interviews

Collected /analysed: 271 individuals surveyed /interviewed
(73 individual/group interviews + 198 surveyed).



A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE

#UpSkillingPathways

Results: Skills assessment and tailored learning offer - Strengths

“Personalization may not always be the most appropriate answer: in other words, the recognition of the centrality of the person does not necessarily imply the activation of an (individual) path created ad hoc; but it requires, instead, a taking care of any specific needs during the implementation of a learning process that takes place in groups and within the group.”

“Skill assessment is still far from the idea of a process or tool for adapting learning contents (to the individual needs and existing skills competences) and to make existing skills and competences visible, but more often it is associated with judgment and the idea of examination”

- Flexible and personalized pathways are **always** offered;
- learning offer is flexible and tailored to the individual (skills assessment);
- learning offer follows the analysis of the skills needs within the firm;
- tailored learning impacts positively on learning outcomes, especially in the case of unemployed and trainees.

A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE
#UpSkillinPathways

Results: Skills assessment and tailored learning offer - Weaknesses

- Personalization does not have a great impact on reducing the time needed to reach the learner's goal;
- **not always** personalized upskilling pathways ends with a certification of the acquired skills;
- assessment of prior learning in formal or non-formal contexts **can vary from more structured to very poorly structured forms**;
- the "exasperated" customization in the design phase may not represent an advantage in itself;
- participatory approach in the design of the learning offer is rarely adopted, in particular with reference to fragile users.



A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE
#UpSkillinPathways

Results: Outreach and guidance services – Main targets

"[...]if the person comes, he probably finds a variety of services and opportunities, but if he does not come, we do not look for him".

«The nature of outreach and guidance services is distinguished, defining guidance as "reactive" in cases where the service is provided "on request" by the user, and outreach as "proactive" in cases in which the operator (a counsellor, a teacher, an expert from employment or social services) tries to provide his services after having tracked down the beneficiary and convinced him to accept his offer of support».

Potential users of outreach and guidance services:

- low qualified adults (employed and unemployed);
- Migrants;
- disabled people;
- drug addicts;
- those in social /economic deprivation;
- those in complex social/family situations.



A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE
#UpSkillinPathways

Results: Outreach and guidance services – Strengths

- Mainly carried out at the local level – shared agreement on the effectiveness of local networks to reach vulnerable targets;
- digital channels are commonly and effectively used when reaching out to people living remote/disadvantaged geographical areas;
- for guidance activities, face-to-face meetings are preferred;
- outreach and guidance actors have the right skills to carry out their tasks.



A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE
#UpSkillinPathways

The approaches and distribution of outreach and guidance services - Weaknesses and areas for investment

- Outreach does not appear to be a responsibility attributed to a specific actor;
- digital channels are less effective for reaching out to adults with low level of digital skills or other vulnerable targets (for whom face to face setting is fundamental);
- capacity building:
 - investments in CVT of outreach and guidance actors;
 - investments in infrastructure modernization/adaptation (both logistics and technological);
 - additional financial resources to ensure continuity and reduce dependence on ad hoc funded projects.



A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE

#UpSkillingPathways

The involvement of employers to provide tailored training

- Personalized training seems to be a relatively **distant practice for companies**, for which **the advantages are still unclear**;
- involvement of low skilled employees **still seems very scarce**;
- skills assessment seems to be limited to onboarding for newly recruits;
- poorly structured methods for skill assessment;
- skills assessment processes rarely followed by validation or certification of previous skills;
- workers involved in tailored training are satisfied with the level of pathway customization;
- however, more than one employee highlighted some possible limitations:
 - risk of excessive specialization, difficult to use in other jobs;
 - lack of the group can hamper the effectiveness of learning processes.



A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE
#UpSkillinPathways

The territorial networks implementation - Strengths

"In a network, single actors must learn to read and recognize their position in the system, something that no one teaches..."

"The network works if there are system and/or external conditions that facilitate the achievement of the common goal"

"The idea that a network initiates replication processes and, often, self-feeding seems widespread."

- Networks at local level - involving training, education, guidance, employment and social services - **better respond** to the needs of the individuals in the different phases and transitions of their personal and working life;
- **Level of formalization** of stakeholders' relationships, roles and responsibilities **impacts positively**:
 - on the sustainability over time of the cooperation;
 - on the operational capability of their organizational architectures.

A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE
#UpSkillinPathways

The territorial networks implementation - Strengths

- Facilitate better understanding of the learning/training needs of potential learners;
- sharing information, experiences, practices, tools;
- activation of synergies and joint initiatives;
- pooling specialized skills and resources encouraging the emergence of innovation processes;
- networks as 'outreach facilitators'.

No shared agreement on the idea that co-design processes are more easily activated in a network context.

The territorial networks implementation - Weaknesses

- Governance of the network;
- lack of shared values among the network's members - lack of mutual trust;
- continuity: lack of strategic allocated and/or earmarked funding at all appropriate levels (including for capacity building) ensuring sustainability and efficiency over time;
- lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation impacting motivation;
- capacity:
 - large pool of potential users vs. few actors/practitioners – high level of turnover of staff directly involved in networks;
 - red tape;
 - inadequate tools for sharing, managing, and exchanging data;
 - fear of “competing bodies”.

Thank you

www.cedefop.europa.eu

Follow us on social media



FOURTH
POLICY LEARNING FORUM
on upskilling pathways

16
November
2022
Virtual event

**A VISION
FOR THE FUTURE**
#UpskillingPathways

