



PROJECT NAME: EXPANDING BEQUAL BENCHMARKING TOOL AND COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (BEQUAL +)

Work Package 2: Initial Study

Short Country Study: ITALY

1. Research method and data gathering tools

Review of:

- existing documents and studies related to VET systems in importing countries;
- existing quality assurance arrangements regulations, national qualification frameworks, reports, studies, assessments, etc.;
- good practices and VET institutions reports
- comparative studies of different research organizations and international institutions related to quality assurance in VET (e.g. CEDEFOP, European commission, EQAVET Network, etc.)
- results from related LLP projects
- 2. Please, describe the basic characteristics of VET system in the respective countries?

Vocational Education and Training System

Background:

- According to art. 117 of the Constitution of the Italian Republic, in Italy the Autonomous Regions have the responsibility for vocational training, meanwhile the State through the Ministry of Education, University and Research is responsible for education. As to the school education the state and the Regions have concurrent legislative competence: the State establishes the general principles (duration and type of courses, exams and certifications, legal value of the securities, learning objectives, credits), the Regions manage the practical organization on territory.
- The Legislative Decree of 2005 (Decree No. 76/05) has introduced compulsory training up to 18 years, or up to obtain a qualification.
- The National Law 296/2006 introduced compulsory education for at least 10 years.

In Tuscany compulsory education it performs only within the school system with a frequency of 10 years of school.

It means, that after finishing 8 years of school, it is compulsory for all to continue studying in secondary schools.

The aim is to add knowledge and skills of the two years' study before deciding to:

- continue with school curriculum and to get a diploma or at least a professional qualification of the third year (for those who are enrolled in a vocational school)
- attend a 2 years training course, at the end of which it is possible to get an European qualification of the I level,
- exit form the school and to search for a job within a contract of apprenticeship exercising the right and duty of the education and training.

The second round of Education and Training consists of: the system of high secondary education and the system of vocational education and training, namely:

- 1. HIGH SCHOOL (Compulsory education: 10 years school, up to 16 years of age):
- Lyceums
- Technical Institutes

- PROFESSIONAL Institutes
- 2. VOCATIONAL TRAINING (Acquitted compulsory education. Two-year course with final qualification).
- 3. APPRENTICESHIP for the fulfilment of the right-duty to education and training (dlg 276/03 article 48) Acquitted compulsory education. Agreement aimed at obtaining a vocational qualification (NB: Connected to the work L.183/2010, in force since 11.25.2010).

After obtaining diploma of secondary education one can continue study at:

4. University: Bachelor (3 years) + Master Degree (2 years) + Ph.D. (3 years).

Reform of high schools and reorganization of the Technical and Professional Institutes

In recent years in Italy the significant changes in the educational school system were introduced. The 2010-2011 school year saw the launch of the reform of the second cycle of education. Some regulations have been adopted for the new systems of high schools, technical colleges and vocational schools, of which respectively the DPR No. 89/2010, n. 88/2010 and n. 87/2010.

The main elements of the reform were:

- the reorganization and reduction in the fields of study
- Reducing of the time frames (less hours per week, hours of 60 minutes and subsequent restructuring of hours by discipline)

LYCEUMS

The reform recognises 6 high schools:

- Art High School (divided into 6 areas: visual arts architecture and environment design audiovisual and multimedia graphics set design)
- Classical High School (with the reform the teaching of a foreign language for the entire five-year period is introduced)
- Scientific Lyceum (with the option Scientific Technology)
- Linguistic Lyceum (with study of 3 foreign languages)
- Choral and music Lyceum (divided to two classes: music and sing)
- School of Human Sciences (replaces the socio-psycho-educational high school. Schools can activate an optional economic class)

NEW TECHNICAL Alternates

The reorganization of technical education previews 2 sectors and 11 departments.

In the <u>economic sector</u>, 2 departments were inserted:

- administrative, finance, marketing
- tourism.

In the <u>technology sector</u> 9 departments have been defined:

- mechanical, mechatronics and energy
- transport and logistics

- electronic and electrical engineering
- IT and telecommunications
- graphics and communication
- · chemical, biotechnology materials
- fashion industry
- · agricultural and agro-industry
- construction, environment and territory.

NEW PROFESSIONAL Institutes

2 areas are previewed according to the reorganization.

Professional institutions of <u>services</u> with the following departments:

- services for agriculture and rural tangle
- maintenance services and technical assistance
- health and social services
- services for the food and wine 'hospitality
- commercial services.

Professional institutes of industry:

Industrial production

Mission: To provide a teaching related to the implementation and customization of technologies. The study in vocational schools will be divided into 2 two-year periods and 1 fifth year (the third and the forth years are separated in individual annuities in order to facilitate the change between different systems of education and training. At the end of the 5th year students take the test of maturity and get the diploma of vocational education, which is also useful for the continuation of studies at any university.

Among the strengths of the New High Secondary Education System there is a closer link with the University and Higher Education, the world of work (internships, apprenticeships, school-work) and with the territory (with the presence in technical and scientific committees, representatives of the business community in the area).

The Regional system of supplementary subsidiary offer

From school year 2011-2012 students enrolled in the first year of the five-year studies of Professional Institutes and students enrolled in the second year of courses in subrogation can acquire also the titles of professional qualification at the end of the third year of study.

The courses last three years, for a total of 1800 hours. The qualifications that can be achieved are included in the Regional Directory of Professionals related to the national reference figures. Each Institute seeks the activation pathways of VET correlated with the training diploma course that is already activated.

Provincial drop out training initiatives

The opportunity to attend a two-year course is provided to young people who have completed compulsory education and left the school system, what allows them to achieve a regional qualification of the second level.

To register for courses one must be sixteen years old, having completed his secondary school and has

attended at least ten years of school. He/she must present himself at the Centre for Employment of his residence and contact the Compulsory Training Tutor, who will provide all the information about routes and funding support to identify the training that responds to the interests and characteristics of the student.

IDENTITY OF THE ROUTE OF EDUCATION

Lyceum: The high school courses provide students with the cultural and methodological tools for a deeper understanding of reality. Acquire appropriate skills to continue their higher studies and employment.

Technical institutes: solid cultural foundation of scientific technology, built through the study and methodologies in relation to the exercise of professions and the university.

Professional institutes: are characterized by a solid foundation of general education and technical training, which allows one to develop, in an operational dimension, knowledge and skills necessary to meet the training needs of the productive sector, for a rapid integration into the world of work.

Professional Education - 32 hours

- Only of FIVE-YEAR duration
- two years of the sector + an option chosen in the 3rd year
- provides expertise and operational capacity in specific areas of the field

Regional Vocational Training (VET) (30h)

The courses can be provided by:

- Vocational Training Centres (VTCs)
- Professional Institutes (public and private)

Regional Vocational Training (VET)

- provides for a three-year course of study, which ends with an examination of national value
- there is also a possibility to follow the study in fourth year
- provides expertise and operational capabilities
- the recent reforms have introduced a more basic cultural training
- can move education

Continuous Professional Training:

In Italy under the continuing professional education the following is considered:

- training addressed to adults who were excluded from the labour market (unemployed) and/or who wish to retrain for a new or a better integration. The CPD is part of the concept of lifelong learning.
- training that agreed between the Social Parts, defined in an individual/sectorial training plan, and transformed into educational projects financed by the Inter-professional Funds for the Continuing Education.
 - 3. Please, provide brief description of legal framework: How is the issue (of quality assurance) addressed in the law? What are the mandatory requirements, if any?

The methods of evaluation of educational institutions are essentially of two types: internal and external.

The internal evaluation of schools is regulated by the List of Academic Services (Carta dei Servizi Scolastici -CSS) (DPCM/1995) and the Regulation on autonomy (DPR 275/1999), which encourage self-evaluation. The CSS identifies three main areas of quality (teaching, administrative, environmental), defining for each area the indicators of quality, specifies the methods of self-evaluation of services (detection of elements through feedback-questionnaires for parents, staff and students).

As to the external evaluation of schools, the law 176/2007 entrusts the INVALSI (National Institute for Evaluation of the Education System), as an institution responsible for the national evaluation of the Education and Training system (established by the Law Act n.53/2003), the task of fulfilment of all necessary surveys to evaluate the added value realised by schools. The control on administrative and accounting, however, is entrusted to the Board of Auditors.

The education system, at national level, is rated INVALSI (reformed with Decree No. 286 of 2004) through the National Service of Education and Training evaluation. The levels of comprehension achieved by students are analyzed through surveys carrying out annually by INVALSI. The Ministry of Education, University and Research has established the one-year and three-year action plans relating to assessment activities to be carried out by INVALSI starting from school year 2008/2009.

At university level, the major changes that occurred in the system and, in particular, the expansion of teaching autonomy and the new curriculum model, leaded to a redefinition of the institutional bodies for evaluation in higher education. In fact, the Law 370 of 19 October 1999 outlined the new architecture of evaluation system, defining the role and functions of two bodies, one (evaluation unit) already existed inside of each university, and the other (Mational Committee for evaluation of the university system - CNVSU) newly created and external to the university system. The non-university higher education (AFAM), elevated on the level of University system with the Act No. 508 of 21 December 1999, is evaluated by the same body responsible for quality assurance in higher education.

Furthermore, the Law no.240 of 30 December 2010 establishes the rules for the organization of universities, recruitment of academic staff, and delegates the Government to encourage quality and the efficiency of the university system.

Accreditation of training

The new system of "Accreditation of national structures for the quality of services", endorsed in 'Understanding State-Regions of 20 March 2008 published in Official Gazette .118 and January 3, 2009

The accreditation of training institutions aims to provide users with the quality of educational services and to ensure public administrations on the reliability of the actuators' management. With the accreditation, public administrations (Regions and Autonomous Provinces) recognize a potential subject's ability to propose and manage operations, after having ascertained the existence of the requirements according to predefined standards identified by the Ministry of Labour in consultation with the State -Regions.

The accreditation of training centres initiated with the Decree of the Ministry of Labour no. 166 of May 26, 2001 (revised in 2007), implemented by the regions, which, according to the art. 117, paragraph 3 of the Constitution, applied independently and often very differently the general criteria for accreditation of training centres. In some regions the accreditation of personnel serving in various roles in the implementation of training activities funded with public resources is also requested, what is an important guarantee given in terms of the quality of provided courses.

The list of relevant legislation at regional level for VET:

Regional Law No.32 of July 26, 2002

Consolidated laws of the Region of Tuscany in education, instruction, guidance, vocational training and employment

Del.G.R. 2007 n. 968

Revision of the regional system for accreditation and approval directive for the accreditation of bodies carrying out training activities.

Del.G.R. 2011 n. 1179

Procedures for the design, management and reporting of the training activities; ex art. 17 L.R. 32/2002.

Del.G.R. 532/2009

Regulations for the implementation of the regional system of skills.

4. Please, provide brief overview of the existing profiles of teachers/trainers: What is the typology or classification in the profession, if any? Are there any official profiles (e.g. by degree of education, experience, etc.)?

Profiles of teachers/trainers

1. Support Teacher

The support teacher helps the students with learning difficulties related to physical, sensory, cognitive or behavioural problems. In particular, helps the students during school activities. He performs the activities as an employee of a public or private school.

2. Secondary school teacher

The secondary school teacher is specialized in teaching one or more subject to young people (12-18 years). SST fulfils the activities as an employee of public or private schools.

Its activities may include: preparing lectures and tutorials, carrying out the lectures and conducting individual or small-group training to facilitate learning process; performing oral or written queries; correcting written tests, reporting on a special register the every day work done in class and grades awarded to students, meeting the students' parents regularly and reporting the results obtained by the students, participating in meetings with the head-teacher and all the teachers and giving the

summary evaluations of each student.

3. University lecturer

The university professor is specialised in teaching and research in specific fields. UL carries out his activity as an employee or contractor of public or private universities.

To become a university lecturer a degree and a subsequent period of further study and research is required. To become permanent employees of public universities one must pass a public competition. The skills in teaching, reporting, planning, analysis and reasoning, expressive skills, leadership, decision-making autonomy are also required.

The categories of UL are:

- ordinary professor (or first level's professor)
- associated professor (or professor of the second level)
- professors by contract
- university researcher with attribution, in case of getting one or more curricular courses, of the title of aggregated professor for the academic year in which he takes these courses.
- researcher for a fixed period
- co-worker or a mother tongue language expert

Each teacher pertains to a scientific field. The fields are aggregated in different areas (currently fourteen).

4. Professor VT

Vocational training is a parallel way of studies in respect of to school education, carried out by training agencies under the control of regions and provinces. The training courses are generally addressed to young and adult employed and unemployed people and give practical training. The teacher of training courses is specialized in teaching for such courses. He fulfils his activities as an employee or consultant for training agencies.

The requirements to carry out this profession are the following: a university degree or a long working experience in the field of teaching. (Italian Association of Trainers http://www.aifonline.it/).

The Ministerial Decree (Ministry of Education, University and Research) of 10 September 2010, n. 249 "Definition of the discipline of the requirements and procedures of the initial training of teachers of kindergarten, primary and secondary school of first and second level, according to the Article 2, paragraph 416, of the Law of December 24, 2007, Nr. 244 "introduces the new rules and changes radically the initial training of teachers. The new Regulation on initial teacher training is developed, in particular, on four major issues:

- One year internship to tie theory to practice. The Internship should be done directly in schools carrying out the "job" of teaching, because teaching is not just theoretical but also practical issue;
- The number of new teachers will be decided according to the real need. No more unrestricted access to the profession is allowed that in the past created job insecurity;
- An immediate entry into the role of a teacher will be provided to young specialists;
- More English (B2 level)and technology skills are requested. Specialist Degrees will be necessary to get enabling in teaching for each class. A better preparation for the integration of disabled people is previewed.

With the new system to teach in secondary school of the I and the II grade will be necessary:

- to have a magistrate degree and one year of Internship;
- there will be a rigorous selection process for acceding to magistrate degree. The number of places will be programmed according to the needs of the national education system (public schools and equal institutions);
- one year of internship training must include 475 hours of active training at school (of which at least 75 hours should be dedicated to teaching disable students) under the guidance of a mentor teacher;
- regarding the SSIS (Specialization School for Secondary School Teachers), the repetition of the teaching discipline will be avoid, so it will focus on internship, laboratories and didactic methods.

From SSIS to active Internship training: it goes from knowledge to knowledge to teach
The SSIS will be closed and replaced by the Active Internship Training with the duration of one year.
The possibility to deepen the learning experiences in the field will be provided during the Internship.

Internships: how and where to do it. The number determined in accordance with the needs of teachers

This Regulation gave full recognition to the national education system (formed by state schools and equal institutions) as regarding the involvement in internships, as regarding the calculation of the needs of teaching staff. The possibility of internships in education and vocational training centres is also taken into consideration.

In addition, the regional education offices (REO) will organize and update the registers of accredited schools; which will get the permission to host the internship, according to the specific criteria established by the Ministry. The REO will also control and verify the internship. Until the establishment of registers, the universities are free to choose the schools, in consultation with the USR that maintain supervision.

Education support teachers

It is expected that training of teachers for support is under the competence of the universities.

Specialization paths CLIL

There are specialized courses for CLIL (secondary school teaching position to a non-language subject in foreign language).

Legal status

Teachers in state schools have rights and duties guaranteed by laws and employment contracts. Free access to the teaching is even guaranteed by the Constitution and it is intended as educational autonomy and freedom of cultural expression, directed to promote, through an open exchange of cultural positions, the full formation of the personality of the students.

The legal status of the teaching staff has its legislative source in the Consolidation Act (Testo Unico) of April 16, 1994, n. 297 and in the employment contracts of the school.

5. Please, provide assessment of transparency of teachers' qualifications – is there any (public) access to information on teachers' qualification, experience, skills, etc., particularly in the public schools?

There is no public access to the information that regards teachers' qualification, experience, etc. On the contrary, all such data is under protection of the Law of privacy.

6. Please, describe the existing approaches for quality assurance of VET in your country: Instruments, measures, indicators, criteria for employment as VET, regular tests, others?

The quality systems, adopting a perspective related to "control" of the assessment, can be classified into three distinct approaches, which refer to different epistemological options and modes of use: hetero-evaluation, self-evaluation and mixed approach.

ISO 9001-2000, the system of accreditation of training bodies (DM 166/2001) and the Model of accreditation ASFOR - take part of the hetero-evaluation systems.

The system of indicators OECD-CERI, the CIPP Model, Model Self-Assessment Institute (Trento), the model evaluation of the Shares (ENAIP), the model for self-assessment Isfol structures of schools and training 34 - fall in the systems of self-assessment.

Finally, we can classify as mixed systems: the EFQM excellence and the Model Campus (CRUI).

All training institutions with offices located in Tuscany, public or private willing to organize and deliver training activities financed with public resources, and / or recognized under Article. 17 of the L.R.T. 32/2002, and / or wishing to provide training to individuals who benefit from state funding under the individual program (vouchers, coupons, etc.) - are required to get Accreditation.

In 2007, after the review of Ministerial Decree 166/2001, the process of accreditation was simplified through the adoption of the concept of "Minimal requirement" as a necessary and sufficient condition for accreditation. There were identified 9 minimal requirements fer VET institutions, divided into 4 criteria relating to:

- organizational and administrative structure
- logistics
- relations
- performance

A part of the content of the requirement itself, for each of the minimal requirements the following parameters were also identified:

- a. types of minimal evidences (documentation, or other evidences that demonstrate the conformity to requirement);
- b. minimal procedures of documental verification (the manner in which the evidences produced by the institution are checked by the administration through the documentation);
- c. minimal procedures of direct verification (the manner in which the evidences produced are verified by the administration through direct assessment);
- d. the minimal requirements for the maintenance (the obligations of the institution and relevant checks from the side of administration to demonstrate and verify the minimal requirement maintenance).

The following table lists the minimum requirements, articulated in the four criteria.

Criterion	Minimal Requirement
I. organizational structure and administrative	I.1 Nature and statutory purpose of the institution I.2 Economical and financial situation of the institute I.3 Minimal requirements concerning the used professional resources I.4 Organization of the processes of design, implementation and evaluation of services
II. logistics	II.1 Availability and adequacy of local furniture equipment
III. relations	III.1 System of relations on the territory
IV. performance	IV.1 Level of design efficiency IV.2 Level of neglect IV.3 Level of training success

Control system

The control system consists of:

a) periodic checks on the desk related to:

- self-certification,
- requirements of efficiency / effectiveness,
- activities reported and verified in the previous year,
- the maintenance of quality certification and the proper maintenance of accreditation requirements;
- b) verification regarding the proper management of training activities (Text coordinated by DGR n. 401/2008, Decree n. 1013/2008 and Decree n. 910/2009 32);
- c) on-site audits on a random or "targeted" if necessary by decision of the Regional Administration, which can be effected even without prior notice to the institution.

If not already owned at the time of accreditation, training organizations shall acquire, within one year from the date of publication of Decree of the accreditation system a system for quality management in accordance with ISO 9001 and later versions, or EFQM.

7. What is the progress of the country in the transition from Common Quality Assurance Framework to European Quality Assurance Framework for VET?

Italy was among the first European countries to build its own national Reference Point for the quality assurance in VET. In 2006 the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education and the IX Commission of the Regions and Autonomous Provinces' Conference entrusted the Isfol to establish the national reference point.

In line with the proposal of the European Recommendation, the Italian Reference Point has the following objectives:

- inform national key stakeholders about the activities of the European Network for Quality Assurance in VET (ENQAVET);
- provide active support for the development of the European Network program;
- promote practical steps to strengthen the use of methodologies of assurance and development of quality in education and training, for example through the development of manuals and other tools of technical and methodological support;
- develop among stakeholders the awareness of benefits arising from the use of tools and development of quality assurance;
- coordinate the organization of national activities in relation to participation of Italy in the European Network for Quality.

In Italy the Reference Point intends, in particular, to organise a board for dialogue, discussion and dissemination of practices and initiatives for quality assurance. In fact, nationwide we detect a lot of initiatives and contributions in improving the quality of VET, but these are mainly isolated actions and therefore their impact is limited, what led to the great heterogeneity of the quality levels achieved at local level by individual schools and training centres. The indication of the Recommendation is an opportunity to bring the national initiatives to "a system".

The European Recommendation on quality assurance of education and training requires that each State establishes a national plan that should take as a reference the model and the instruments proposed by the Recommendation.

The Italian Reference Point carried out a series of preparatory meetings with Ministries in order to jointly develop the plan, aimed to improve the systems of quality assurance at national level and to make best use of the EQUAVET. The Italian National Plan for quality assurance in Education and Training was completed in June 2011.

The Italian Reference Point is also undertaken to prepare, by June 2012, a Report on the preparation and implementation of National Plan for submission to the European Network for Quality Assurance in VET.

8. Please, identify the major mismatches, shortages and gaps in quality assurance for VET.

Only the Accreditation proves to be a rather weak quality system, which is not enough to trigger a deep cultural and organizational change processes.

In lifelong learning education there is no effective control for the quality of courses' programs.

In general there are no specific regulations aimed to identify the professional resources to be used in lifelong learning education (such as, for example, the minimal criteria of gualification).

These are some indicators that reveal the presence of a poor management culture in organizations of

vocational training, a weak orientation towards research of new tools that could improve training processes, resources and results.

9. Please, list issues to be taken into consideration when adapting the project products

The national regulatory framework and institutional articulation of the skills in vocational training must be taken into account, as by the Reform of Title V of the Constitution (December 2001) the education and training were assigned directly to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Regions. Thus, there is a plurality of subjects contributing at various levels in quality assurance, namely: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the Regions and the social partners, as subjects of regulatory system, as well as training providers, both as autonomous bodies and as the actuators of national and regional.

As for the reference area of the Ministry of Labour and the Regions, the new national accreditation system should be taken into consideration and should be further implemented in accordance with the directions of the European Recommendation.

Regarding the area of jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, new regulations of the technical colleges and professional institutions, enacted as part of the reform of the secondary education, which make explicit reference to the indicators for the assessment and self-evaluation of institutions as defined in the European Recommendation, should be taken into account.

Another piece of scenery that touches the issue of quality assurance and that may be taken into account is the monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes of vocational training, as in terms of learning outcomes and competencies actually acquired at the end of the study, as regarding the insertion in working life.

10. Lifelong learning practices among VET teachers/trainers – are there any legal (or guild) requirements for an "upgrade" of VET qualification?

According to the CCNL (National Collective Labour Contract), the courses for "upgrade" the qualifications are not mandatory for teachers; this is a right but not an obligation (Article 64/1: "The participation in training and updating is a right for staff as functional for the full realization and development of their professionalism").

However, these courses are often deliberated by the Council of teachers of schools.

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