THE ITALIAN LIFELONG LEARNING SYSTEM

ADOPTED BY THE STATE-REGION CONFERENCE ON DECEMBER 20th, 2012

EXCERPTS FROM THE FIRST ITALIAN REFERENCING REPORT TO THE EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK - EQF
THE ITALIAN LIFELONG LEARNING SYSTEM

ADOPTED BY THE STATE-REGION CONFERENCE ON DECEMBER 20th, 2012

EXCERPTS FROM THE FIRST ITALIAN REFERENCING REPORT

TO THE EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK - EQF
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. The Education and Training system 5
   1.1 The structure and governance of the Education and Training system 5
   1.2 First cycle of education 6
   1.3 Second cycle of education 6
      1.3.1 Upper Secondary Education 6
      1.3.2 The Vocational Education and Training system 8
   1.4 Higher Technical Education and Training 8
   1.5 Tertiary Education 9
      1.5.1 University Higher Education 9
      1.5.2 Non-University Higher Education 11
   1.6 Initial vocational training: post-VET/post-Upper Secondary and post-Higher education 12
   1.7 Apprenticeship 12
   1.8 Adult education and training 13
   1.9 Continuous training 14
   1.10 Private training 14

2. The system of professions 15
   2.1 Regulated professions 15
   2.2 Non-regulated professions 16
1. The Education and Training system

1.1 The structure and governance of the Education and Training system

The Italian education and training system is divided into:

- Pre-primary school (ages 3 to 5), non-compulsory, lasting 3 years;
- First cycle of education, divided into Primary School (5 years) and Lower Secondary school (3 years);
- Second cycle of education, including Upper Secondary school (5 years) and Vocational Education and Training (IeFP - 3 or 4 years);
- Higher education, made up of University education, Higher Level Arts and Music Education (AFAM) and Higher Technical Education (ITS).

Full-time education is compulsory and free for 10 years for all children between usually 6 and 16. It includes the first cycle and two years in the second cycle. The current educational law provides that young people must accomplish their right/duty to education for at least 12 years or until they obtain a vocational qualification by the age of 18. Once completed compulsory schooling young people must go on with the second cycle of the education and training system.

The Italian training provision also offers the following opportunities:

- Higher Technical Education and Training (IFTS);
- Post-VET (IeFP), post-upper secondary and post-higher education initial vocational training;
- Apprenticeship\(^1\);
- Adult education;
- Continuous training;
- Private training.

As to the governance of the system:

- The State has exclusive competence for the definition of general provisions in the field of education\(^2\). The responsibility of the education system falls under the scope of action of the Ministry of Education and Research (MIUR) that operates at central level, while Regional and Provincial Education Offices (USR and UST) operate at the local level. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policies defines and guarantees the essential levels of performance of vocational training (IeFP);
- Regions have exclusive competence in the field of vocational training, often operated through the decentralization of functions and tasks to the Provinces\(^3\). In the field of vocational training, Regions define the training provision in cooperation with social partners.

---

1 With the exception of “Work-oriented apprenticeship”
2 Constitutional Law no. 3 of 2001.
3 The State is responsible for the determination of the essential levels of performance, which ensure the same civil and social rights to all citizens on the whole National territory.
1.2 First cycle of education

Compulsory education starts with the first cycle of education which is divided into two parts:

- Primary school, for children usually aged 6 and lasting 5 years. Primary school is divided into three didactic periods: one “one-year” period (the first class), and two “two-year” periods;
- Lower secondary school, for children usually aged 11 and lasting 3 years. It is divided into a two-year period and a third year, which serves as a vocational guidance and transition to the second cycle of education.

The first cycle of education can be delivered in public and private schools, the latter being either fully and non-fully recognized (respectively paritarie and non paritarie).4

At the end of the first cycle, around the age of 14, students are required to pass a school-leaving examination for the completion of the first cycle of education, leading to Diploma di licenza conclusiva del primo ciclo di istruzione (Lower secondary school leaving diploma).

1.3 Second cycle of education

The second cycle of education includes education pathways of various duration, divided into two main branches:

- Upper secondary education under the competence of the Ministry of Education;
- Vocational Education and Training under the competence of Regions.

In the second cycle of education, students fulfil the right/duty to education and training. After the first cycle of education, students attend two years of the second cycle of education and complete their 10-years compulsory education period. Moreover, from the age of 15 they can fulfil this obligation with an apprenticeship contract5 leading to the Attestato di qualifica di operatore professionale (Professional operator certificate) or Diploma professionale di tecnico (Professional technician diploma). The “right/duty to education and training” applies for 12 years, from 6 to 18 years of age. The right/duty to education and training is fulfilled in the education system (Upper secondary education), in the regional VET system or in apprenticeship programmes aimed at obtaining a VET qualification.

The flexibility of pathways is guaranteed, including the possibility to move within different systems and from education system to VET pathways/apprenticeship programmes, by special agreements between the State and Regions.

1.3.1 Upper Secondary Education

Students can attend Upper secondary education after successfully passing the school-leaving examination of the first cycle of education. Upper secondary education is made up of three education pathways. Each education pathway lasts 5 years:

- Licei (Lyceum);
- Technical schools;
- Vocational schools.

There are six types of licei: artistic, classical, linguistic, music and dance, scientific, human sciences; some of them are organised into specializations or options (Tab.1). The technical and vocational schools (Tables 2 and 3), as well, are organized in specializations6.

At the end of upper secondary education, students have to pass a State leaving examination. If they succeed, they are allowed to enrol in tertiary education or Higher Technical Education and Training pathways.

---

4 The “full recognition” (parità) depends on a series of conditions and guarantees the equivalence of the qualifications awarded. Non-fully recognized schools, however, allow young people to fulfil the right/duty to education and training; a certificate is awarded after successfully passing a leaving examination in public school or an officially-recognized school.
5 To be thorough, compulsory education could also be fulfilled through homeschooling (art. 1, 4, legislative decree No.76/2005).
6 Specializations of the technical and vocational institutes are further articulated as DD.PP.RR.15 March 2010, and DD.ll. 24 April 2012.
## The Education and Training System

**Tab. 1 Structure and Organization of Licei**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Licei (1 two-year period + 1 two-year period + 5th year)</th>
<th>Specializations/Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Artistic</strong></td>
<td>Starting from the second two-year period, the following specializations are available:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Figurative arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Architecture and environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Audiovisual and multimedia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Graphics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Stage design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classical</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linguistic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Music and dance</strong></td>
<td>Music specialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dance specialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scientific</strong></td>
<td>Option: Applied sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human sciences</strong></td>
<td>Option: Economic-social</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Regulation of Licei, as per Decree of the President of the Republic of March 15th 2010 (DPR no.89/2010)

**Tab. 2 Structure and Organization of Technical Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical Schools / Areas (1 two-year period + 1 two-year period + 5th year)</th>
<th>Specializations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economics</strong></td>
<td>1. Administration, finance and marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technologies</strong></td>
<td>1. Mechanics, mechatronics and energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Transportation and logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Electronics and electrical engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Informatics and telecommunications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Graphic and communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Chemistry, materials and biotechnologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Fashion system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Agriculture, Agrifood and agro-industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Construction environment and territory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Regulation of Technical Schools as per Decree of the President of the Republic of March 15th 2010 (DPR no.88/2010)

**Tab. 3 Structure and Organization of Vocational Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocational Schools / Areas 1 two-year period + 1 two-year period (1 year+1 year) + 5th year</th>
<th>Specializations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Services</strong></td>
<td>1. Services for agriculture and rural development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Socio-sanitary services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Tourist hospitality and Food and Beverage services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Commercial services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industry and Crafts</strong></td>
<td>1. Craft and manufacturing productions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Maintenance and technical assistance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Regulation of Professional Schools as per Decree of the President of the Republic of March 15th 2010 (DPR no.87/2010)
1.3.2 The Vocational Education and Training system

The VET system, which falls under the competence of Regions, is organized in the following pathways:

- three-year courses, for the award of a *Attestato di qualifica di operatore professionale* (Professional operator certificate);
- four-year courses, for the award of a *Diploma professionale di tecnico* (Professional technician diploma)

At the end of these courses, students obtain a qualification released under the regional system and acknowledged at national level. A National Register of qualifications awarded in the VET system was created in 2011. It is made up of two-level professional figures (Professional operator and Professional technician), that can be further subdivided into specializations and regional profiles. The qualifications included in the register are described in terms of LOs.

The training provision is designed by Regions and implemented by accredited training providers. Moreover, vocational schools can provide subsidiary, integrative and complementary training.

After obtaining a *Diploma professionale di tecnico* (Professional technician diploma), students can continue in the Higher Education and in the Higher Technical Education and Training system, after completing an additional year and after passing a State exam.

1.4 Higher Technical Education and Training

The Higher Technical Education and Training system is made up of:

- Courses organized by Higher Technical Institutes (ITS);
- Higher Technical Education and Training pathways (IFTS).

Higher Technical Institutes (ITS), established on the basis of Regional Territorial Plans, are specific types of participative foundations. The organizational standard states that founders of these institutes are: an upper secondary school, both technical or vocational, state or fully recognized; a training centre accredited by the Region for the purpose of higher training; an enterprise operating in the same production area as the higher technical school; a university department or another organization operating in the field of scientific and technological research; a local institution (municipality, province, mountain community, etc.).

Higher Technical Institutes (ITS) can be attended by young people and adults holding a *Diploma di istruzione secondaria superiore* (Upper secondary education diploma). ITS courses last 4 semesters for a total of 1800/2000 hours. At the end of ITS courses, a *Diploma di tecnico superiore* (Higher technical education diploma) is issued. These qualifications, awarded by the Ministry of Education, concern different technological areas (see relevant table) identified to meet the needs of the public and private labour market, in particular of small and medium-sized enterprises, and areas of high technological innovation and internationalization of market.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technological areas</th>
<th>Specializations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Energy efficiency</td>
<td>1.1 Energy production and supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 Highly-efficient and energy-saving processes and plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable mobility</td>
<td>2.1 Mobility of persons and goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 Production and maintenance of transportations and infrastructures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3 Management of info-mobility and logistic infrastructures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New technologies for life</td>
<td>3.1 Industrial and environmental biotechnologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2 Production of biomedical and diagnostic devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New technologies for “Made in Italy”</td>
<td>4.1 Food System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2 House system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.3 Mechanic system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.4 Fashion system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5 Services to enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative technologies for cultural</td>
<td>5.1 Fruition and optimization of the cultural heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heritage and activities - Tourism</td>
<td>5.2 Preservation, enhancement and security of cultural buildings and sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and Communication Technologies</td>
<td>6.1 Methods and technologies for software system development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.2 Organization and fruition on information and knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.3 Communication architectures and infrastructures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 Established with Law 144/99 amended by various legislative initiatives; in particular, L. 296/2006, art.1, par.631, and art.13 L. 40/2007 that merged into DPCM of January 25th 2008 that has reorganized IFTS and established ITS.
9 For special subjects, courses may take up to 6 semesters.
IFTS courses, programmed by Regions, have a specialising nature and are designed and managed by at least four training partners (a school, a vocational training centre, a university, an enterprise or another public or private centre) which formally cooperate.

IFTS courses can be attended by young people and adults with a Diploma di istruzione secondaria superiore (Upper secondary education diploma). IFTS courses last 2 semesters, for a maximum of 800/1000 hours. At the end of an IFTS course, a Certificato di specializzazione tecnica superiore (Higher technical specialization certificate) is awarded by Regions. The specialization fields include: Agriculture, Industry and Manufacturing (manufacturing products, ICT, construction), Tourism, Transportation, Public Services and private services of public interest, insurance and financial Services.

Both types of curricula - IFTS and ITS - are made up of units (Unità capitalizzabili, UC); this structure is consistent with the LOs approach. The differences between IFTS and ITS courses are summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IFTS courses</th>
<th>ITS courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training partners involved</strong></td>
<td><strong>Secondary education school of the Province where the foundation is based</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education school</td>
<td>Training centre accredited by the Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Centre</td>
<td>Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Scientific Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise</td>
<td>Local institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Admission requirements</strong></td>
<td><strong>Diploma di Istruzione secondaria superiore (Upper secondary education diploma)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma di istruzione secondaria superiore (Upper secondary education diploma)</td>
<td>for the assessment of competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or admission test for the assessment of competencies</td>
<td><strong>Economic Fields / Technological Areas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Industry and Manufacturing/Tourism/Transportation/Public services and private services of public social interest/Insurance and financial services</td>
<td>Energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, new technologies for life, new technologies for “Made in Italy”, innovative technologies for cultural heritage and activities, information and communication technologies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length of courses/specializations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Certificate awarded</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 semesters (800/1000 hours)</td>
<td><strong>Certificato di specializzazione tecnica superiore (Higher technical specialization certificate)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Certificate awarded</strong></td>
<td><strong>Diploma di tecnico superiore (Higher technical education diploma)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Certificato di specializzazione tecnica superiore (Higher technical specialization certificate)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Diploma di tecnico superiore (Higher technical education diploma)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 Tertiary Education

Tertiary Education is divided into University Higher Education pathways and non-University Higher Education pathways, which include the Alta Formazione Artistica e Musicale – AFAM (Higher Level Arts and Music Education).

The whole Higher Education in Italy is currently under reforms. These reforms are aimed at moving the Italian Higher Education system closer to the European model designed by the Bologna process (1999).

1.5.1 University Higher Education

The University system is based on the following main features:

- **Cycles**: Universities offer 3-cycle courses. The first cycle offers the Laurea (3-year Bachelor’s degrees); the second cycle offers the Laurea magistrale (2-year Master’s degrees); the third cycle offers specialization courses and Dottorato di ricerca (PhD) courses.
- **University qualifications**: Laurea – L (Bachelor’s degree), at the end of a 3-year first cycle course, during which students obtain 180 ECTS. A Laurea corresponds to the degree of “dottore”; Laurea magistrale LM (Master’s degree) at the end of a 2-year second cycle course, during which students obtain 120 ECTS credits. A Laurea magistrale corresponds to the degree of “dottore magistrale”;

---

10 IFTS courses are also open to: holders of a professional technician certificate; young people admitted to the 5th year of a Liceo; persons who do not have an upper secondary education qualification, but had their educational, training and vocational experiences validated.

11 Decree of October 22nd 2004, no. 270.
The Education and Training system

A Dottorato di ricerca (PhD), which lasts at least 3 years, corresponds to the degree of “Dottore di ricerca”.

- **Categories**: courses with shared objectives and training activities are grouped in categories\(^\text{12}\). The training contents of each course are defined by each university; however, all universities are required to include training activities defined at a national level. These conditions are established for each category. Qualifications of the same category have the same legal status.

- **University Credits**: university courses are based on credits. Each university credit corresponds to 25 study hours, including individual study. The average number of study hours for each student in one year corresponds conventionally to 60 credits.

Article 33 of the Italian Constitution acknowledges the right of universities and academies to have autonomous regulations, within the limits allowed by Law. Universities can be both public and private. Universities can provide higher specialization courses and activate specialization schools for given professions, in order to implement specific normative provisions.

University Education is organized as follows\(^\text{13}\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First cycle</th>
<th>Second cycle</th>
<th>Third cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laurea</strong> (three-year bachelor’s degree courses). A Diploma di istruzione secondaria superiore (Upper secondary education diploma) is required. This qualification must be obtained after 13 years of schooling and after successful leaving examinations. An equivalent foreign certification is also allowed.</td>
<td>A) <strong>Laurea specialistica/magistrale</strong> (Master’s degree). A Laurea or an equivalent foreign certification is required. The admission to <strong>Laurea specialistica/magistrale</strong> is subject to the specific requirements of Universities; courses last 2 years and students obtain 120 credits. A <strong>Laurea Magistrale</strong> can be obtained after the presentation of a research dissertation. The change of denomination from “Laurea specialistica” to “Laurea magistrale” was defined in 2004. Some courses (Medicine and Surgery, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry and Dental Prosthesis, Pharmacy, Architecture, Law) are defined <strong>Corsi di Laurea specialistica/magistrale a ciclo unico</strong>: (Combined bachelor’s and master’s degree): a Diploma di istruzione secondaria superiore (Upper secondary education diploma) or a comparable foreign certification is required; the admission is subject to the results of a selection test. Study courses last 5 years and students obtain 300 credits (6 years and 360 credits for Medicine and Surgery only). All <strong>Lauree magistrali/ specialistiche</strong> (Master’s degrees) entitle to access competitions for public employment, the labour market, regulated professions, <strong>Dottorato di Ricerca</strong> (PhD) courses and all other 3rd cycle courses.</td>
<td>A) <strong>Dottorato di ricerca</strong> (Research doctorate PhD). A <strong>Laurea specialistica/magistrale</strong> (Master’s degree) or an equivalent foreign certification and a successful admission test are required. PhD students are required to elaborate an original research thesis to discuss for the final examination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In order to obtain a <strong>Laurea</strong>, students must obtain 180 credits; a traineeship period and the discussion of a dissertation might be also required. A <strong>Laurea</strong> entitles to access competitions for public employment, the labour market, regulated professions and second-cycle university courses.</td>
<td>B) Postgraduate specialization courses, especially in the field of medical, clinical and surgery sciences. A <strong>Laurea specialistica/magistrale</strong> (or an equivalent foreign certification) is required; the length of a specialization course depends on the specialization field. The specialization diploma corresponds to the qualification of <strong>Specialista</strong> (Specialist)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) <strong>Master universitario di secondo livello</strong> (Second-level university master courses); these masters are aimed at scientific specialization training and higher continuous training. A <strong>Laurea specialistica/magistrale</strong> (Master’s degree) or an equivalent foreign certification is required. The length of study is at least one year (60 credits).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

12 A full and updated list of the categories of bachelor’s and master’s degrees is available in the National data bank at http://offf.miur.it.
1.5.2 Non-University Higher Education

Non-University Higher Education is set up by:
- Alta Formazione Artistica e Musicale (AFAM) - Higher Level Arts and Music Education;
- Institutes for Special Purposes.

AFAM offers 3-cycle education courses, based on the same model as Universities. The first cycle lasts 3 years; the second cycle lasts 2 years; the third cycle is focused on research training.

AFAM is organized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First cycle</th>
<th>Second cycle</th>
<th>Third cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma accademico di primo livello. (First-level academic diploma). Access requirements: a Diploma di istruzione secondaria superiore (Upper secondary education diploma) or an equivalent foreign certification; the admission is subject to an entry test aimed at verifying initial skills and knowledge, in compliance with didactic regulations, even at the end of preparatory training activities carried out in cooperation with secondary education schools. The maximum number of students allowed is defined by each institute. Courses last three years. In order to obtain a Diploma accademico di primo livello, students must obtain 180 credits. The Diploma entitles to access competitions for public employment, the labour market and second-cycle courses.</td>
<td>A) Diploma accademico di secondo livello (Second-level academic diploma). Access requirements: a Diploma accademico di primo livello (First-level academic diploma) or a Laurea (Bachelor’s degree) or an equivalent foreign certification; the admission is subject to specific requirements set out in didactic regulations. The maximum number of students allowed is defined by each institute. Courses last two years. In order to obtain a Diploma accademico di secondo livello, students must obtain 120 credits. B) Specialization courses (I): they provide highly-specialized competencies in specific fields; a Diploma accademico di primo livello (First-level academic diploma) is required. C) Postgraduate higher specialization courses or masters: they respond to the needs of specializations courses, refresher courses, vocational requalification courses and lifelong learning activities. A postgraduate higher specialization course gives at least 60 credits. A Diploma accademico di primo livello (First-level academic diploma) is required.</td>
<td>A) Diploma accademico di formazione alla ricerca (Research training academic diploma) courses. They are aimed at providing competencies for planning and implementing highly specialized research activities. B) Specialization courses (II): they provide highly-specialized competencies in specific fields; a Diploma accademico di secondo livello (Second-level academic diploma) is required. C) Postgraduate higher specialization courses or masters: they respond to the needs of specializations courses, refresher courses, vocational requalification courses and lifelong learning activities. A postgraduate higher specialization course gives at least 60 credits. A Diploma accademico di secondo livello (Second-level academic diploma) is required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for the University system, the AFAM system is based on Academic Credits (CFA).

The AFAM training provision is delivered by the following institutes:
- Accademie di belle arti (Academies of Fine Arts) providing courses in the field of visual arts, didactics of arts, design and applied arts;

15 Drawn from point 8 of the Diploma Supplement elaborated by MIUR (Ministry of Education, University and Research) for AFAM institutions: http://attiministeriali.miur.it/anno-2008/dicembre/nota-05122008.aspx
The Education and Training system

- **Accademia Nazionale di Arte Drammatica** (National Academy of Drama), providing training courses for actors and directors, and the **Accademia Nazionale di Danza** (National Academy of Dance), providing training in choral arts and specialization courses as soloists, choreographers or teachers;
- **Four Istituti Superiori per le Industrie Artistiche** (Higher Institutes for Artistic Industries), providing courses in industrial and graphic design; **Conservatori di Musica** (Music Conservatories), now **Istituti superiori di studi musicali e coreutici** (Higher Institutes of Music and Choir Studies), providing courses to play music instruments.

**Istituti a fini speciali** (Institutes for Special Purposes) provide vocational specializations in a wide range of fields, from restoration to cinematography and archives\(^\text{16}\); admission is allowed after the end of a second-cycle course of 5 years and after passing an entry test.

### 1.6 Initial vocational training: post-VET (IeFP) /post-Upper Secondary and post-Higher education

In addition to Vocational Education and Training courses, the competence of Regions and Autonomous Provinces in the field of vocational training extends to other training activities for young people and adults. With regard to initial training activities, people who have completed the training and education pathways are entitled to enrol in specific training courses after obtaining an Upper Secondary or a VET qualification. Post-Higher Education courses offer an opportunity for those who have completed a University course. Courses are generally attended by unemployed young people or unemployed adults who have concluded a previous work experience. Sometimes, initial training courses are exclusively addressed to weak groups in order to increase the level of work integration: migrants, gypsies, disabled, young people, etc.

Initial training initiatives are planned by Regions through open competitions, in order to meet the professional needs of the territory. Initial training courses aimed at providing a specialization in a given field, are made up of short cycles courses (400–600 hours); rarely, they last 2 years. In general, the completion of a traineeship is also required.

Full-time attendance at training courses is mandatory and free of charge.

At the end of an initial training course, a vocational certificate or a certificate of attendance are awarded after passing a final examination. Beside training courses aimed at obtaining a qualification, the regional training provision also offers specific activities aimed at developing competencies. These are shorter courses (20–40 hours), generally addressed to adults and closer to the regional continuous training provision. At the end of these courses, a certification of competence is awarded\(^\text{17}\).

#### 1.7 Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is a job contract aimed at training and employing young people.

According to the innovations introduced by the recent Unified Text on Apprenticeship\(^\text{18}\), there are three different types of apprenticeship aimed at different training objectives with different linkages with the education and training system:

a) **Apprenticeship** addressed to young people between 15 and 25 years of age; this type of apprenticeship lasts 3 years if aimed at acquiring an **Attestato di qualifica di operatore professionale** (Professional operator certificate) and 4 years if aimed at a **Diploma professionale di tecnico** (Professional technician diploma)\(^\text{19}\);
b) Work-oriented apprenticeship addressed to young people between the age of 18 and 29. Collective agreements define the duration of the contract, which cannot exceed 3 years (five years for crafts activities), professional standards and the provision of technical-vocational training. Regions rely on a range of activities aimed at the development of basic and transversal competencies, for a maximum of 120 hours over 3 years. At the end of a work-oriented apprenticeship, it is possible to obtain a regional qualification, a certification of competencies or the validation of a qualification for contractual purposes.

c) Higher Education and research apprenticeship addressed to people aged between 18 and 29, hired in all public or private sectors. It can be aimed at: obtaining a qualification (Upper secondary education diploma, IFTS/ITS certificates and University degrees, including PhD) and acquiring research experience, as well as accessing regulated professions.

**BOX 1 — Agreement on the Apprenticeship Certification System**

On April 19th 2012 a State-Regions Agreement defined the National Apprenticeship Certification System. This Agreement includes important reference to the EQF. In particular:
- a set of general definitions concerning LOs, formal, informal and non-formal learning pathways, the validation of learning, the certification of competencies;
- the definition of competencies as the smallest units for certification, defining a professional figure/profile, collected into codified lists based on the relevant EQF level and on a clear explanation of LOs;
- a framework for the certification of the competencies, through the identification, assessment and certification in accordance with CEDEFOP guidelines for the validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning;
- the inclusion of the relevant EQF level in final qualifications.

The agreement is particularly important for the evolution of the Italian system towards a National framework for certification; it is also important for the apprenticeship system, for which the certification of LOs has been among the weakest points of the system so far.

1.8 Adult education and training

Adult education is the set of pathways or education and training activities for the professional upgrading or functional literacy of people in adulthood and is aimed at the acquisition and/or development of competencies, also of cultural and social nature, related to their personal and professional profile.

Adult education is provided through the new Provincial Centres for Adult Education (CPIA) and evening classes in secondary education schools. They supply a different kind of service:
- CPIA usually offer general education courses for achieving a compulsory education certificate;
- Evening classes are mainly aimed to the attainment of a second cycle qualification.

CPIA are also committed to teaching Italian to foreigners, in compliance with recent regulations for residence permits. They are established by the Regional School Offices in first and second-cycle schools, which also provide for teachers; these centres can be linked to secondary centres based in libraries, hospitals, detention institutes, communities, etc.

With the above Regulation, the pathways of adult education are reorganized as follows: a) first level paths (two teaching periods) leading to the final qualification of the first cycle of education and to the Certificato delle competenze di base acquisite in esito all’assolvimento dell’obbligo di istruzione (Compulsory education certificate), acknowledging the acquisition of the related basic skills; b) second level pathways (three teaching periods) leading to the diploma di istruzione tecnica, professionale e di Licei artistici (Upper secondary education diploma – technical schools, professional schools and artistic Licei); c) literacy and Italian language learning pathways for adult foreigners, aimed at obtaining an Italian language proficiency certificate no lower than level A2 of the CEFR - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

In the framework of specific network agreements between the Provincial Centers for adult education (supplying first level pathways) and the schools that provide technical, professional and artistic education pathways (supplying second level pathways), dedicated Committees will be set up in order to ensure that the adults attending the courses receive adequate guidance services.

19 The State-Regions agreement of March 18th 2012 defines the minimum criteria for the length and structure of training pathways to be further regulated by Regions.
1.9 Continuous training

Continuous training provision, aimed at employed or unemployed people looking for a new job refers to a wide range of courses and includes both public and private-funded training initiatives.

With regard to the public system, continuous training is set up by:

a) Regions and Autonomous Provinces, elaborating strategies with their own resources, including ESF resources and funds allocated by the Ministry of Labour;

b) Social partners, mainly operating through Inter-professional Funds for Continuous Training, under the control of the Ministry of Labour. These Funds are based on a inter-confederal agreement between social partners. To date, there are twenty authorized Funds.

State-funded continuous training activities are provided by a range of actors and institutions that can be grouped into three main categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public and private enterprises and organizations</th>
<th>Training organizations and institutes</th>
<th>Institutional organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They plan training activities for their employees, consortia of enterprises, etc.</td>
<td>Accredited and non-accredited training agencies, bilateral organizations, other organizations linked to social partners, category or professional associations, professional directories, other associations</td>
<td>They include job centres, schools, Universities and university networks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, training activities aimed at employees shall also be considered. These initiatives are organized autonomously by the enterprise and funded with private funds exclusively, as shown in the following paragraph.

In general, there is no specific provision with regard to the organization of training activities, in terms of duration, organization and training locations. According to statistical data (Istat-CVTS3, Isfol INDACO-Imprese), each worker participates in about 26 training hours per year; most of the training is provided in workplaces, during working hours, especially through blended and informal learning. Part of the training is also carried out outside workplaces and outside working hours.

The topics addressed by in-house training (funded or non-funded by public resources) are aimed at the acquisition of new personal skills, with regard to better knowledge of the production context, enterprise management, informatics, production techniques and technologies, environment, work security and health protection.

With regard to continuous training outcomes, evaluation and certification practices carried out both by enterprises and institutions are very rare. Statistical analyses highlight that two out of three enterprises do not use any evaluation system. External training activities, provided outside production contexts and supported by State aids, generally lead to a certificate of participation. In a limited number of cases, a qualification is obtained; more often, the certification of one or two competencies following short training activities may be awarded.

1.10 Private training

Beside the Vocational Education and Training provision of the education system, the regional system and social partners, through inter-professional funds, a private training provision is available, provided without public resources and funded through the contributions of users. Sometimes, Regions release special authorizations to private training centres. In this case, the certificates awarded by private centres have the same status as regional certificates.

The multifaceted private training provision is provided by education/training organizations, such as private schools of languages or informatics, awarding international certifications against the payment of a fee, or private schools of aesthetics and fashion, that entitle to set up private centres and companies. In addition, there is a consistent private training provision in the third sector, provided by free Universities or Universities for the third age, voluntary associations, cultural associations, social cooperatives, NGOs (non-governmental associations), foundations. The same category also includes in-house training activities that are not funded through public funds. According to CVTS3 data, confirmed by the Isfol INDACO/CVTS survey, the percentage of enterprises that receive public resources for the organization of in-house training activities is about 8% in a year.

Isfol INDACO-Lavoratori survey stresses that the percentage of workers that contribute to covering the costs of training is about 7% of the total number of workers involved in training activities.
2. The System of professions

The system of professions falls under the jurisdiction of the State and the Regions, with shared responsibilities. The identification of professional figures, professional profiles and relevant training plans, the regulation of certificates needed to exercise a profession, as well as the setting up of new professional register fall under the competence of the State; Regions have the legislative competence with regard to the aspects that are not directly linked with fundamental principles.

The authorities allowed to release licenses to exercise regulated professions are the State, through Ministries and Provincial Labour Directorates, and the Regions. These certificates are licensed on the basis of constitutional provisions and specific Laws regulating each profession.

The organization of the Italian system of professions can be divided into:

- Intellectual and non-intellectual professions, with regard to training pathways, access to the profession, deontology and fees;
- Regulated professions and non-regulated professions.

Intellectual professions include:

- liberal professions, regulated and protected to defend public interests, requiring the registration into professional lists and the creation of professional Registers with control functions;
- professions regulated by Law, requiring to pass a State examination (teachers, etc.) and the registration into dedicated lists without the creation of a specific Register (for example: insurance assessors, insurance agents, etc.);
- professions that entail specific function or activities limited to the Public Administration, for which a specific qualification is required;
- non-regulated intellectual professions, represented by free associations, generated by the consistent restructuring and outsourcing processes of enterprises, the pervasiveness of technological development, the globalization of production and exchanges, the development of services aimed at satisfying cultural, leisure, assistance and care needs.

Non-intellectual regulated professions can be exercised on the basis of a specific qualification established by Law.

2.1 Regulated professions

Liberal professions

Professional registers are set up to ensure the performance of certain activities to persons who are eligible to perform them (art. 2229 of the Civil Code), and to entrust the State with the control on eligibility, in order to make sure that professionals have the technical and professional skills required to ensure good quality performance to the customer.

A practitioner, to carry out his/her activities, must be qualified to do his/her job. To achieve this qualification he/she shall pass a State exam and register to the relevant professional Register. This registration not only has the function of public information, but it also gives legal certainty to exercise a profession.

The rules regarding the discipline of registered professions are of public interest. There are some special Laws establishing the reserved matters and providing for professional Registers and their tasks. In the absence of registration to a professional Register, the intellectual

---

20 The system of professions is regulated by Title V of the Constitution, article 117. The framework Law to understand and design the tasks of the State and the Regions hasn’t been enacted yet, but there is a consolidated orientation of the Constitutional Court on that.

21 Definition drawn from the European Directive 2005/36/CE: “a professional activity or group of professional activities, access to which, the pursuit of which, or one of the modes of pursuit of which is subject, directly or indirectly, by virtue of legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions to the possession of specific professional qualifications; in particular, the use of a professional title limited by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions to holders of a given professional qualification shall constitute a mode of pursuit”. The Regulation does not concern the profession as a whole but the professional activity only. The same Directive 2005/36/CE, while defining a regulated profession, introduces the notion of activity or set of activity for which a given qualification is required.
work relationship does not arise legally, like the right to payment. In addition, the operator who has violated the rule, incurs in the crime of unauthorized practice.

The professions regulated by law, registered in a list
Some professions are practiced by professionals who, based on the fact that they meet certain requirements – such as, detection of a qualification or passing a special exam – are listed into a Register that enables them to exercise their profession. Among these professions are those:

- for which there is a list, called “register” or “role” by the legislator, which is held by a public authority for information only, i.e. to disclose to third parties the names of members;
- the practice of which by a non-member does not give rise to the crime of unauthorized practice, or to a contract of work which is null and void, but only to potential administrative fines. Included in this latter case is the register of agents and brokers;
- or other activities require the passing of a State examination (e.g. a statistician who wants to work at a government department, or a psychomotor therapist who wishes to work in public hospitals, or a teacher etc.). In this case the State exam ascertains the level of education of the examinee and does not regulate the practice of the profession.

Non-intellectual regulated professions
Non-intellectual regulated professions are regulated at central level by Ministries playing the role of competent authorities and, at a regional level, by the Regions and Municipalities.

Ministries are responsible for identifying the learning objectives, i.e. the main technical and practical subjects. Regions, in turn, are responsible for: a) providing training, b) carrying out the theoretical and practical examination for access to the qualification, and c) promoting training and retraining. Finally, Municipalities are charged with the task of issuing municipal regulations on how to carry out professional activities and open shops - these qualifications are necessary for any professional performance.

2.2 Non-regulated professions
Non-regulated intellectual professions are those for which a specific qualification is not required by Law and access is free. This applies to all those professional activities: practised by professionals, not included enrolled into voluntary registers: the regulated professions.

Non-regulated professionals are grouped in professional associations whose main goals are: a) to protect professions and clients from any improper and / or incorrect practice, and b) to promote them in the market. Membership in such associations is not compulsory. Although there is no provision on the recognition of professional associations or of the new professions, Legislative Decree 206/2007 – which transposed Directive 2005/36/EC in Italy – recognizes that professional associations would play an advisory role, should European training platforms be defined. In order to be considered representative, such associations must meet a number of requirements and undergo a preliminary investigation led by the Ministry of Justice in accordance with the Department for European Policies.

BOX 2 - The National Contact Point for professional recognition
Within the Department for European Affairs - Office of Internal Market and Competitiveness - the National Contact Point for professional recognition (NCP) provides all citizens with the information they require to understand the complex system of EU and National regulations, standards and principles governing the free movement of professionals in the European Union.

The NCP provides both citizens and contact points of the Member States with any information that may be relevant to the recognition of professional qualifications provided for in Directive 2005/36/EC. In addition, the NCP provides information on the National legislation regulating professions and their practice, including social legislation, and, if necessary, the rules of ethics. The NCP also cooperates with the contact points and the related competent authorities of the other Member States.

22 Article 26 of the aforementioned Decree states that should national service conferences be held for the definition of European training platforms for non-regulated professions, the competent authorities shall consult with the most representative professional associations at the National level.
23 Email of the Italian Contact Point: puntonazionale/contattoqualificheprofessionali@politicheeuropee.it. Web: www.politicheeuropee.it
The System of professions

**HER**

Research PhD

3rd Cycle

Work-oriented apprenticeship

Up to 25 years

1st cycle

IFTS (higher tech. educ. & train.)

University Higher Education & AFAM (Higher Level Arts and Music Education)

Apprenticeship

Continuous Training

Professions

**HER**

A. for VET pathways

Continuous training

Private training

Professions

* AE: Adult Education

**HER: Higher education & research apprenticeship programme
### The Italian Qualifications referenced to the EQF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF Level</th>
<th>Type of qualification</th>
<th>Competent authority</th>
<th>Relevant education/training pathway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Diploma di licenza conclusiva del primo ciclo di istruzione Lower secondary school leaving diploma</td>
<td>MIUR</td>
<td>Lower secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Certificato delle competenze di base acquisite in esito all’assolvimento dell’obbligo di istruzione Compulsory education certificate</td>
<td>MIUR or Regions, according to the type of education pathway</td>
<td>End of the first two-years: Licei, Technical schools, Vocational schools, three-year and four-year VET pathways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Attestato di qualifica di operatore professionale Professional operator certificate</td>
<td>Regions</td>
<td>Three-year VET pathways&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma professionale di tecnico Professional technician diploma</td>
<td>Regions</td>
<td>Four-year VET pathways&lt;sup&gt;25&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma liceale Upper secondary education diploma -Licei</td>
<td>MIUR</td>
<td>Five-year Upper secondary schools (licei) (Higher education and research apprenticeship programme)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Diploma di istruzione tecnica Upper secondary education diploma -Technical schools</td>
<td>MIUR</td>
<td>Five-year technical schools (Higher education and research apprenticeship programme)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma di istruzione professionale Upper secondary education diploma - Vocational schools</td>
<td>MIUR</td>
<td>Five-year vocational schools (Higher education and research apprenticeship programme)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificato di specializzazione tecnica superiore Higher technical specialization certificate</td>
<td>Regions</td>
<td>Higher Technical Education and Training pathways (IFTS) (Higher education and research apprenticeship programme)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diploma di tecnico superiore Higher technical education diploma</td>
<td>MIUR</td>
<td>Higher Technical Education pathways (ITS) (Higher education and research apprenticeship programme)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Laurea Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>MIUR</td>
<td>Three-year bachelor’s degree courses (180 credits - ECTS) (Higher education and research apprenticeship programme)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma accademico di primo livello First - level academic diploma</td>
<td>MIUR</td>
<td>Three-year courses (180 credits - ECTS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>24</sup> The qualification can also be achieved in vocational schools, as per agreement with Regions or in apprenticeship programmes (for young people over 15 y.o.).

<sup>25</sup> See previous footnote.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF Level</th>
<th>Type of qualification</th>
<th>Competent authority</th>
<th>Relevant education/training pathway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 7         | *Laurea Magistrale*  
Master's degree | MIUR                | Two-year master’s degree courses (120 credits - ECTS)  
(Higher education and research apprenticeship programme) |
| 7         | *Diploma accademico di secondo livello*  
Second-level academic diploma | MIUR                | Two-year courses (120 credits - ECTS) |
| 7         | *Master universitario di primo livello*  
First-level university master | MIUR                | Minimum one year courses (min. 60 credits - ECTS)  
(Higher education and research apprenticeship programme) |
| 8         | *Diploma accademico di specializzazione*  
Academic specialization Diploma (I) | MIUR                | Minimum two years courses (120 credits - ECTS) |
| 8         | *Diploma di perfezionamento o Master (I)*  
Higher specialization diploma or Master (I) | MIUR                | Minimum one year courses (min. 60 credits - ECTS) |
| 8         | *Dottorato di ricerca*  
Research Doctorate (PhD) | MIUR                | Three-year courses  
(Higher education and research apprenticeship programme) |
| 8         | *Diploma accademico di formazione alla ricerca*  
Academic Diploma for research training | MIUR                | Three-year courses |
| 8         | Diploma di specializzazione  
Specialization diploma | MIUR                | Minimum two years courses (120 credits - ECTS)  
(Higher education and research apprenticeship programme) |
| 8         | *Master universitario di secondo livello*  
Second-level university master | MIUR                | Minimum one year courses (min. 60 credits - ECTS)  
(Higher education and research apprenticeship programme) |
| 8         | *Diploma accademico di specializzazione(II)*  
Academic specialization diploma (II) | MIUR                | Minimum two years courses (120 credits - ECTS) |
| 8         | *Diploma di perfezionamento o Master (II)*  
Higher specialization diploma or Master (II) | MIUR                | Minimum one year courses (min. 60 credits - ECTS) |