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**Soft skills significance:
The technical path within the Italian NQF**

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Labour market challenges

The complexity of the global labour market
Previously unknown working tasks and processes
New professional profiles
Transformation and consequent instability of jobs
Qualification mismatch and skills mismatch
Obsolete/inadequate qualifications and/or skills and competences.



It is no longer sufficient to be exclusively specialized
➔ technical skills, **hard skills** or job-related skills

But it is crucial to develop those skills which support the individual in better addressing the needs and changes of individual's personal and professional life.

➔ transversal skills, **soft skills** non job-specific skills

Soft skills features

There are many definitions and classifications of this wide group of skills.

A skills set necessary to have a positive impact on daily life, to reach informed decisions, solve problems, and know-how to relate positively and constructively with others.



Mainly they refer to skills considered:

- **transferable** from one job to another or from one context/system to a different one
- **non-job specific** (compared to hard, job-related, technical skills);
- **transversal** / cross-sector (in terms of aptitudes and adaptability)
- key / **core** in relation to employability of individuals and competitiveness of enterprises;
- more intangible, difficult to quantify and measure;
- useful and recognized by the labour market.

Soft skills impact



Within the education and training system, soft skills are considered necessary to prepare students to better face their future working life and to be active citizens. Soft skills play a key role to improve relationship in learning/working contexts, to develop proactive attitudes, teamwork skills, and problem solving.

*School-work
alternation*



In working contexts soft skills are important to improve working scenarios by profiting of cognitive, social, emotional and relational ability as a predictive professional performance and translates it into positive and efficacious working actions.

For individuals soft skills may be key factors to solve problems. Ethics and tolerance allow individuals to manage the stress caused by dysfunctional relationships and to adopt behaviors that are appropriate to share norms and values. Relational skills increase the ability to work in a team and to cooperate in achieving goals, etc..



Soft skills – an Italian experience

The identification of this skills set is problematic for:

- the wide range of existing classifications, categorizations and taxonomies
- the selection of the most suitable and adequate or appropriate skills to cover national requirements

Within the development of the Italian National Qualification Framework (NQF) and the certification system we experienced the identification of “soft skills” .



A handwritten list of soft skills in blue ink, centered around the words 'soft' and 'skills'. The skills listed are:

- creativity
- communications skills
- initiative
- ambition
- willingness to learn
- helpfulness
- capacity for teamwork
- sociability
- determination

Descriptor: Skill

Descriptor: «SKILL»: explicit dimensions

EQF Recommendation (2008)	National system of competences certification (2013)
<p><i>“the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems.</i></p> <p><i>In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and/or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)”.</i></p>	<p><i>"ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems;</i></p> <p><i>to express the technical, application or relational to components for the exercise of the competence; they are cognitive (in relation to the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (including manual skill and the use of methods, materials, tools).</i></p>

Implicit dimensions

Wideness and specialization of skills	Complexity of the task/problem	Development of knowledge and creative solutions	Rules, tools, methods and materials (use/application)	Context/ field
basic skills, wide range of skills, advanced, specialized	simple task, routine problems, specific problems, ... unpredictable problems ...	Creative solutions to abstract problems Research/Innovation Extend existing knowledge ...	Using simple rules, Applying basic methods, tools material,	Work or study Different fields Specialized fields ...
	COGNITIVE		PRACTICAL	

Extension of the descriptor

Objectives

The mission of the national qualifications system is to identify groups of skills and competences which are typical of a wide range of occupational profiles and thus easily transferable from one job to another or from one context to a different one.

The qualifications system need to be able to support:

- individuals in their employability and
- enterprises in their competitiveness.

**INDUSTRY
ENTERPRISES**

INDIVIDUALS
(LEARNERS, WORKERS,
JOBSEEKER)



Satisfy Labour Market
demands to sustain
competitiveness

Provide appropriate
skills and competences
to improve
employability

Final considerations



- 78% of industries and services considered soft skills as important as job-related ones (in terms of job assumptions planned for 2015)
- Another 8% considered soft skills even more important.

In total the share regards the 86% of workforce recruitments.

Rising to 89% in the case of young people with a tertiary degree.

However, for young people to participate in a series of integrative, highly-formative experiences – during their learning pathways - can be an added value.

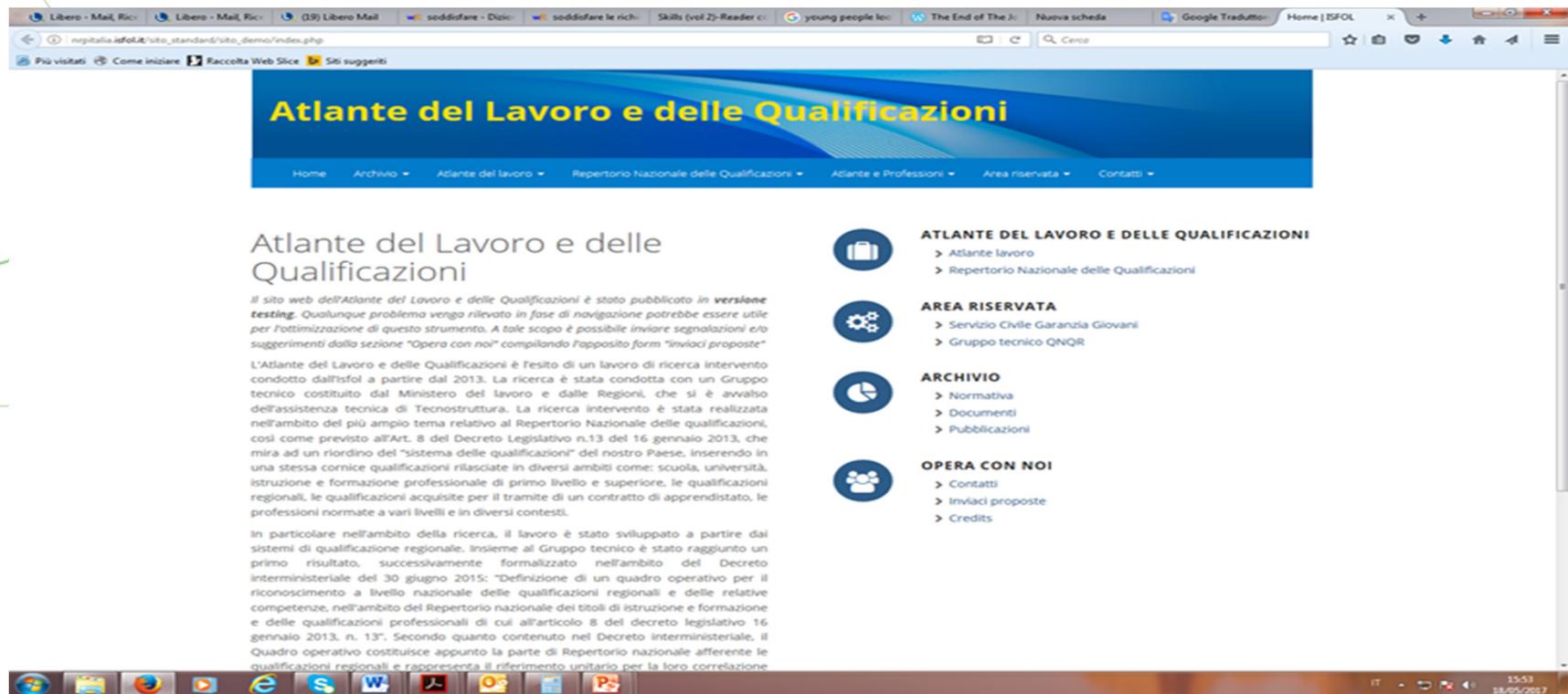
Thus implementing forms such as school-work alternation (Italian dual system), Youth Guarantee programme, traineeship experiences and apprenticeship contracts may support the future labour market.

Final information

The main reference point for the National Qualifications Framework is an online tool:

The **Atlas of labour and the repertory of qualifications** available on line

Web site: http://nrpitalia.isfol.it/sito_standard/sito_demo/index.php



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the website 'Atlante del Lavoro e delle Qualificazioni'. The page has a blue header with the title in yellow. Below the header is a navigation menu with items: Home, Archivio, Atlante del lavoro, Repertorio Nazionale delle Qualificazioni, Atlante e Professioni, Area riservata, and Contatti. The main content area features a large heading 'Atlante del Lavoro e delle Qualificazioni' followed by a paragraph of text and a list of services with icons:

- ATLANTE DEL LAVORO E DELLE QUALIFICAZIONI**
 - > Atlante lavoro
 - > Repertorio Nazionale delle Qualificazioni
- AREA RISERVATA**
 - > Servizio Civile Garanzia Giovani
 - > Gruppo tecnico QNQR
- ARCHIVIO**
 - > Normativa
 - > Documenti
 - > Pubblicazioni
- OPERA CON NOI**
 - > Contatti
 - > Inviaci proposte
 - > Credits

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Thank you for your attention

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A paper on these issues will be published

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