

CHAPTER 2

Providing VET in a lifelong learning perspective

2.1. National Education and Vocational Training System Framework

The actors involved in the governance of the Italian education and vocational training system³ are the following:

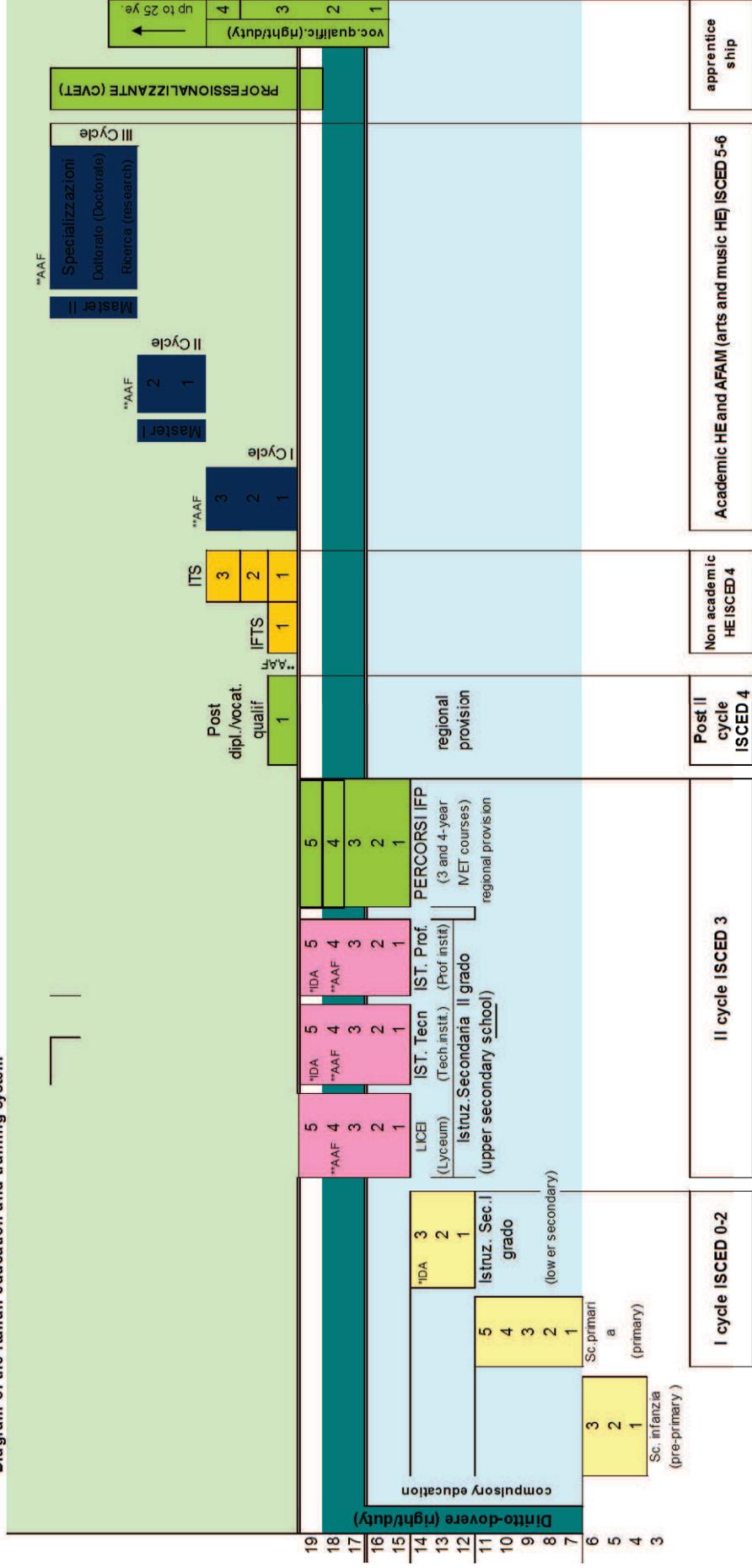
- the Ministry of Education, University and Research that is responsible for setting the minimum public service performance levels (*Livelli Essenziali delle prestazioni – LEP*) for the education system;
- the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies that is responsible for setting the minimum public service performance levels (*Livelli Essenziali delle prestazioni – LEP*) for the vocational training system;
- the Regions and Autonomous Provinces that are the administrations in charge of planning, organising and supplying VET;
- the social partners that contribute to designing and organising active labour policies and particularly VET policies.

Compulsory education lasts 10 years (i.e. up to 16 years of age) and includes the whole first education cycle and the first two years of the second (either upper secondary schools or three/four-year vocational training courses). Everyone has the ‘right/duty’ (*diritto/dovere*) to pursue education and training for at least 12 years in the national school system, or until a three or four-year vocational qualification is obtained within the IVET system before reaching 18 years of age⁴.

3 Primo rapporto italiano di referenziazione delle qualificazioni al quadro europeo EQF (*First Italian Report on the referencing of the national qualifications to the EQF*), June 2012, <http://bw5.cilea.it/bw5ne2/opac.aspx?WEB=ISFL&IDS=18746>.

4 Law 53/2003, ‘Delega al Governo per la definizione delle norme generali sull’istruzione e dei livelli essenziali delle prestazioni in materia di istruzione e formazione professionale’ – ‘Delegating the Government to Establish General Regulations Regarding Education and the Minimum Service Performance Levels for Education and Vocational Training’.

Diagram of the Italian education and training system



- IDA: Istruzione degli Adulti Adult education
- ITS: Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore Higher technical education and training
- IFTS: Istituti Tecnici Superiori Higher technical institutes

At present, the national education and training system includes the following⁵:

- *scuola dell'infanzia* (pre-primary school): not compulsory, lasts 3 years and is for children aged 3 to 6 (ISCED 0);
- first cycle of education (8 years): includes *scuola primaria* (primary school – ISCED 1) that lasts 5 years and is attended by children aged 6 to 11 and *scuola secondaria di I grado* (lower secondary school – ISCED 2) that lasts 3 years and is attended by children aged 11 to 14. At the end of the third year pupils sit a state exam and if successful are awarded a lower secondary school diploma;
- second cycle of education comprising two different pathways (ISCED 3):
 - upper secondary school: falls under the responsibility of the State, lasts 5 years and caters for students aged 14 to 19. This level of education is provided by *lyceums*, technical institutes and vocational institutes which have been recently reformed (2010). On completion of the 5-year path students sit an exam and if successful are awarded an upper secondary school diploma;
 - three and four year education and vocational training courses (*percorsi triennali e quadriennali di Istruzione e Formazione professionale – IFP*): organised by the Regions, they cater for students who have completed their first cycle of education. A vocational certificate is awarded on the completion of three-year vocational courses and a vocational diploma is awarded on the completion of four-year courses.
- post-diploma/post-vocational qualification courses: regional courses⁶ (400-600 hours) generally co-financed by the European Social Fund. On completion, a regional vocational certificate commonly referred to as a 'second level qualification' is awarded. In particular, they cater for young unemployed people, migrants and disabled people holding a three or four-year vocational training qualification or an upper secondary school diploma. Although they are provided on the whole national territory, the professional profiles and skills that can be acquired through them vary depending on the specific employment and skills needs of the Regions;
- post-secondary non-tertiary education comprising two different training paths (ISCED 4):
 - higher technical education and training pathways (*percorsi di Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore – IFTS*) on the completion of which a higher technician certificate is awarded;
 - courses provided by Higher Technical Institutes (ITS courses - *Istituti Tecnici Superiori*) on the completion of which a higher technician diploma is awarded.

5 At present, EQF levels for the qualifications awarded by the various pathways cannot be indicated as the referencing process is still underway.

6 No ISCED levels are indicated as the courses do not lead to national qualifications.

Both paths are open to young people holding a school diploma. IFTS courses can also be accessed following the validation of the students' previously acquired skills.

- higher education (ISCED 5 and 6) comprises academic and non-academic higher education courses (i.e. those provided by the *Alta Formazione Artistica e Musicale* – AFAM - Higher Artistic and Musical Training). The higher education system is divided into State and non-State institutions which cater for students holding a secondary school diploma. Courses lead to 1st and 2nd cycle qualifications:

- three-year courses lead to a *laurea (degree, 1st cycle)*;
- two-year courses lead to a *laurea specialistica/magistrale (specialization degree, 2nd cycle)*. The second cycle also includes a *Master universitario di primo livello (first-level university Master)* lasting at least one year.

The 3rd cycle includes *Research Doctorate* courses, *Specialization* courses (*Corsi di specializzazione*) and *Masters universitario di secondo livello (second-level master degrees)*. University and AFAM courses have a similar structure.

There are three recently reformed types of apprenticeship (2011) in Italy:

- 'Apprenticeships leading to a qualification and a professional diploma' (ISCED 3) that last three or four years, cater for 15-25 year olds and lead to a certificate or a vocational diploma. This type of apprenticeship allows young people to complete compulsory education and to fulfil the right/duty to education and training;
- 'Professional apprenticeships' that cater for 18-29 year olds, cannot last more than 6 years and lead to a regional qualification⁷;
- 'Higher education and research apprenticeships' that cater for 18-29 year olds, enable apprentices to obtain upper secondary school (ISCED 3), IFTS/ITS (ISCED 4) and university (ISCED 5-6) qualifications.

IDA (*Istruzione degli Adulti* – Adult Education) courses are provided by Centres for Adult Education (*Centri per l'Istruzione degli Adulti, CPIA*) based in lower and upper secondary schools. They lead to a first cycle education leaving certificate (primary and lower secondary education - ISCED 1 and 2), enable students to gain the certification required to complete compulsory education and to obtain an upper secondary school leaving certificate (ISCED 3). They also provide functional literacy courses for migrants.

Although less important than state-funded vocational courses, students can also attend private courses organised by private agencies and no-profit organisations which they have to pay for themselves.

7 Compare note 3.

2.2. Government-regulated VET provision

2.2.1. Three and four-year education and vocational training courses

Three and four-year education and vocational training courses fall under the Regions' responsibility and provide training for 14-17 year old students. They enable young people to complete compulsory education and to fulfil the right/duty to education and training by gaining a vocational qualification in either 'education-oriented' paths in schools or 'training-oriented' courses organised by accredited training agencies.⁸ The courses provide basic common education and lead to a vocational qualification recognised at national level (certificate after a three-year course; diploma after a four-year course).

Over the last few years, the increased cooperation between the State, the Regions and the Provinces has made the education system more flexible enabling students to switch to different pathways and from the education to the vocational training system (and vice-versa) to prevent school drop-out.

A series of documents, revised from 2004 to date and issued by the State-Regions Conference, have introduced a number of important systemic elements: a) a set of training standards for basic skills to be developed in three and four-year VET courses (2011); b) a set of minimum standards (valid at national level) for technical and vocational skills in relation to the professional profiles included in the National Qualifications Index (*Repertorio nazionale delle qualifiche*, 2011); c) intermediate and final certifications (valid at national level) that enable students to switch from the education system to VET pathways (2011).

After attaining a three-year vocational qualification students can access a further specialisation year within the same system, as well as the third or fourth year in the upper secondary education system (usually at technical and vocational institutes). A first level vocational qualification also enables students to enrol in second-level vocational training courses, as well as to apply for a Professional Apprenticeship (for over 18s). In addition, it gives access to higher technical education and training (IFTS) courses provided the skills previously acquired are verified, and in the near future, in accordance with an Agreement signed in 2010, to both academic and non-academic higher education provided students attend a fifth supplementary year. Three/four-year courses are financed by the Regions through Ministry of Labour funds or their own financial resources. They are open to students under 15 years of age who have completed the first cycle of education, while students coming from other pathways have to be under 18. The duration of the courses (including activities at the schools/training agencies and internships in enterprises) varies depending on the geographical area but is approximately 1 000 hours per year, with a total of 3 000 hours over the three years.

Training providers develop study programmes on the basis of specific duties and skills pertinent to the professional profile in question. The modules provided are generally aimed at developing basic, transversal and technical-vocational skills. Vocational learning objectives

⁸ The quality criteria and specific requirements to carry out interventions are established by law and State-regions agreement.

are usually planned in accordance with the technical-professional standards set for the 22 three-year vocational qualifications and 21 four-year vocational diplomas⁹ related to the previously mentioned national framework for the educational and training pathways.

At this level of education, on-the-job training activities (particularly internships) play a key role, both from a practical and a professional point of view and are carried out under the supervision of two tutors, one from the training institution and one from the enterprise.

Teaching methods vary and may range from traditional class teaching to simulations, role plays, cooperative learning, etc. In particular, active teaching methods are recommended in order to facilitate learning processes and meet learners' needs to acquire academic and technical/professional skills through practice. In fact, internships and workshops are highly appreciated by learners. The scheme below provides data regarding three and four-year vocational training courses¹⁰:

In the school year 2010-11, 179,000 young people enrolled in three-year vocational training courses (7.9% of the 14-17 year old population). About two-thirds of these chose a course run by a training agency. In the last 5 years the number of enrolled students increased by 60,000 persons, in the last three years by 26,000 and in the last year by 14,000.
In the school year 2010-11, 4452 young people enrolled in four-year vocational training courses. At present these are not evenly provided across the national territory.
In the school year 2009/2010, about 40% of first-year enrolments were 14 year olds. The others were older because they enrolled in vocational courses following a one or two-year unsuccessful experience in the school system.
In the school year 2010/2011, 15% of the enrolled students were foreigners.
The students who acquired a qualification after completing a three year IVET course in 2010 were mainly distributed in 6 professional profiles in the following areas: wellness, food, electric systems, mechanic systems, administration, and motor vehicles.
78% of the students who completed an IVET course in the school year 2010 were from the North of Italy.
During the 2009/2010 period the courses were founded with about 950 million euro particularly from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and the Regions.

Scheme 1.1: Overview of three and four-year vocational training course

⁹ In accordance with the Agreement of July 2011 the areas in which the 22 3-year operator qualifications can be gained are: clothing, footwear, chemical production, building, electric systems, electronic systems, graphics, thermal-hydraulic systems, artworks, woodworking, pleasure craft building and maintenance, motor vehicle repair, mechanic systems, wellness, catering, tourism and hospitality, administration, retailing, logistics, agri-food processing, agriculture and maritime services. Under the same Agreement the areas in which the 21 4-year technician diplomas can be gained are: building, electric systems, electronic systems, graphics, arts, woodworking, motor vehicle repair, automation systems operation and maintenance, industrial automation, beauty treatments, waiting and bar services, business services, commercial sales, retailing, agriculture, tourism, sports and leisure entertainment, clothing, hairdressing, cookery, thermal systems, tourism and hospitality and agri-food processing.

¹⁰ Compare note 6

2.2.2. Post-Secondary higher technical training system

The post-secondary higher technical training system was recently reformed by the Italian Prime Minister's Decree (2008) which contained guidelines for both the reorganisation of the higher technical education and training system (*Sistema di istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore* – IFTS) and the establishment of higher technical institutes (*Istituti tecnici superiori* – ITS). As a result, there are now two separate channels within the same system. The reform started with the Territorial Plans for the 2007-2009 period and the main strategic objectives are to:

- provide a wider and better organised range of training pathways leading to a higher technical specialisation aimed at both young people and adults to meet the demand for higher technicians at different levels in the private and the public sector, particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises and the sectors most affected by technological innovation and market internationalisation;
- strengthen the cooperation with the territory, the labour market, the scientific and technological research centres and the education and training system within vocational/technical clusters (*Poli tecnico-professionali*);
- support active labour policies, particularly those aimed at fostering young people's transition to work, and promote closer integration with the continuing training system with a view to fostering lifelong learning.

The learning paths are designed and organised to ensure a flexible and modularised offer for young people, working-age and employed adults. In addition the courses' organisation ensures that the following minimum standards are met:

- the teaching organisation for each semester includes both theoretical and practical workshop activities;
- internships in enterprises and traineeships can also be undertaken abroad and cover at least 30% of the total duration of the course;
- 50% of the teachers are to be recruited from the world of work and professions;
- pathways are organised in modules and capitalised units enabling students to gain skills that can be easily recognised by prospective employers as significant components of specific professional profiles while also being easily identified as expected outcomes of the training pathways.

IFTS pathways are planned by the Regions and designed and managed by a) at least four training organisations (school, vocational training, university and the world of work) that associate through a formal act to establish – depending on the choices made by the various Regions – a Temporary Association of Purpose (*Associazione temporanea di scopo* - ATS), Temporary Enterprise Association (*Associazione temporanea di imprese* - ATI) or a Consortium, or b) organised by IFTS Clusters (made up of several different actors officially recognised by the regional administrations in accordance with the State-Regions Agreement dated 25th November 2004).

As of September 2012, IFTS pathways still refer to the technical/professional skills of the 49 higher technicians' profiles set at national level, or to those established on the basis of specific regional needs within the framework of experimental projects approved by the Regions. Besides these, the courses should provide students with basic and transversal skills (language, science, technology, law, economic, organisation, communication and human relations). They usually last 2 semesters (800/1 000 hours in total) and lead to a Higher Technical Specialisation Certificate (EQF level IV) valid both at national and European level. In addition, they enable students to gain training credits valid in the university system as well as to undertake 'High apprenticeships' (see chapter 2.2.4 The apprenticeship system).

Target groups of IFTS courses include young people and adults, both employed and unemployed, holding an upper secondary education diploma or a professional technician diploma gained at the end of a four-year regional vocational course (see chapter 2.1). In addition, access is granted to the students admitted to the fifth year of *lyceums*, as well as to those who do not have a secondary diploma, provided the skills they have previously acquired in education, VET or work are recognised.

From 2007 to today 519 courses were planned that meet the new standards. The vast majority of courses were held in the North, a lower number in the centre of Italy and only 56 in the South (Table 2.2).

Geographic area	2007-2009 (800/1 000 hours)	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	Total
North	37	98	78	57	50	320
Centre	0	88	27	28	0	143
South	0	14	0	0	42	56
Total	37	200	105	85	92	519

Table 2.2: Time sequence distribution of IFTS pathways per geographic area

Source: Indire database - September 2011

ITS (*Istituti Tecnici Superiori* - Higher Technical Institutes) are joint foundations formed of the following:

- a technical/professional upper secondary institute, state or *paritario* school (i.e. non-state schools that on request have been granted equal status in the national education system), located in the same Province as the foundation;
- a training organisation accredited by the Region for higher training located in the same Province as the foundation;
- an enterprise belonging to the productive sector covered by the Higher Technical Institute;
- a university department or some other organisation that is part of the scientific and technological research system;
- a local body.

The Higher Technician Diploma (EQF level 5) awarded by ITS courses covers one of the technological areas specified for each national reference profile. These areas have been further specified by an Inter-ministerial Decree (2011) as shown in the scheme 2 below:

ITS technological areas	Subsections
Energy efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Energy supply and Production ▪ High-efficiency plants and processes
Sustainable transport Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transportation of people and goods ▪ Production and maintenance of transport vehicles and/or related facilities ▪ Management of transportation information technologies and logistic facilities
New life technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Industrial and environmental biotechnologies ▪ Production of instruments and diagnostic and bio-medical devices
New technologies for typical Italian products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Food and agriculture ▪ House systems ▪ Mechanical systems ▪ Clothes and fashion ▪ Business services
Innovative technologies for cultural resources and activities - tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of cultural heritage ▪ The conservation and upgrading of buildings and sites of cultural interest and ensuring safety
ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Methods and technologies for software systems development ▪ Knowledge information organisation ▪ Architectures and infrastructures for communication systems

Scheme 2: ITS Technological areas and specific subsections

Foundations are allowed to further subdivide the national profiles in accordance with the specific skills and technological applications required by the territory. ITS courses last 4 semesters and include a total of 1 800/2 000 hours (in the case of the profiles for which specific agreements with the regulated professions have been made, a longer duration is allowed provided they do not exceed six semesters). They are only open to young people and adults holding an upper secondary education diploma. As of September 2012, 62 Foundations have been formally established and 77 courses were launched between September and December 2011. The Foundations are now in the process of running the second year of the programmed courses, while also running a new round of first year courses. Although precise figures regarding the students are still unavailable, according to a first estimation over 1 500 people were involved.

The system reform, still on-going, will be strengthened with the adoption of the 'Guidelines for Coordinating and Promoting the VET Offer' (*Linee guida per il coordinamento e la promozione dell'offerta di istruzione e formazione tecnico-professionale*). In particular, they are expected to reduce the distance between the productive sectors and training,

promote complementarity both among the training organisations included in the networks and between these and the enterprises, get enterprises more directly involved in pin-pointing training needs as well as in the design and implementation of the training paths, promote learning in practical contexts (first and foremost apprenticeships), and use both private and public resources to foster integration between the technical training, enterprise and research systems.

In addition, as part of the reform, a number of Technical/Professional networks (poles) have been set up with a view to establishing a functional connection between training organisations and enterprises to provide opportunities for situational learning in shared public and private laboratories that are already operational.

The reform also impacts on IFTSs. In the future these will refer to a national index of specialisations (not to professional profiles as of now) for which the outcomes will be revised in relation to the newly established pathway standards. By the end of this year, therefore, the new tertiary technical/professional system will have been further integrated and organised so it can effectively satisfy the demand from enterprises for post-secondary specialised technicians.

2.2.3. Adult education

In 2009 the Ministry of Education introduced a 'Draft regulation for the reorganisation of teaching in adult education centres' (*Schema di Regolamento recante norme per la ridefinizione dell'assetto organizzativo didattico dei Centri d'istruzione per gli adulti*). The document contains provisions for the establishment of training pathways leading to lower and upper secondary education qualifications and to ensure that the low-skilled are given priority access to the educational offer. The Regulation has not yet been approved and is currently under discussion in Parliament.

In the school year 2009/10, 1 336 institutes were surveyed in the annual monitoring report on adult education edited by ANSAS¹¹. Of these, 505 (37.80%), were institutes coordinating local centers for lifelong learning known as 'Permanent territorial centers' (*Centri Territoriali Permanenti - CTP*), 773 were institutes in the upper secondary education system providing evening courses (57.86%), and 34 were registered as schools in correctional institutions (2.54%). Of the 529 CTPs surveyed by the research, 118 had set up one or more schools in prisons (173 as a whole on the national territory). The CTPs also offered 111 personalised pathways (21% of the total) which enabled students to access evening courses run by upper secondary schools.

The Annual Monitoring Report 2009/2010 also collected information regarding the financial resources used by CTPs and evening schools in addition to Ministry of Education funding. Out of the 1 336 institutions, 1 204 (87%) said they used additional funding. The survey found that for 74% of the Adult Education Institutes (CTPs + evening schools) the

¹¹ ANSAS (2010), Rapporto di sintesi del Monitoraggio Nazionale dell'Istruzione degli Adulti, a.s. 2009-2010 (Synthesis Report of the National Monitoring Survey on Adult Education, school year 2009-10).

most important additional financial resource came from enrolment fees (although often very low). More specifically, 87% of CTPs said they had benefited from funding from sources other than the Ministry of Education (the Region, Local Authorities and the European Social Fund). The percentage breakdown is as follows: 59.55% benefited from enrolment fees; 37.05% from funding from the Region; 34.22% from funding from the local authorities; 31.19% from the European Social Fund; 5.48% from companies and/or associations and the remaining 11.53% from other sources.

In the school year 2009/10 18 692 courses were provided in all. Of these 4 584 were compulsory education courses; 3 965 were Italian and social integration courses for migrants speaking other languages, and 10 143 short modular courses on functional competences, literacy and numeracy. Out of the 4 584 compulsory education courses, 2 351 were at primary school level (51.29%) and 2 233 at lower secondary school level in preparation for the state exam (48.71%). Overall, 453 037 people enrolled in adult education: 96 957 in the first cycle of education (21.40%); 78 537 in Italian courses for foreigners (17.34%); 192 140 in short modular literacy courses (42.41%); and 85 403 in personalised pathways to obtain an upper secondary education qualification and/or certificate (18.85%).

As regards the typology of the providers, 95% of users (342 370 adults) attended courses offered at CTPs and evening schools, the remaining 5% (equivalent to 16 759 adults) attended courses at correctional institutions. Of these 16 759 students 13 917 attended courses provided by local CTPs in prison institutions, while the remaining 2 842 attended evening courses provided by local schools to obtain an upper secondary education qualification or certificate.

As regards the students' origin, 59% of those who attended adult education courses were Italian (212 502), while the remaining 41% were migrants (146 627). With regard to gender, the data analysis shows that 53% of the students were women, i.e. around 189 684 women against 169 445 men.

2.2.4. The apprenticeship system

As part of the reform of vocational training, particularly amongst the interventions aimed at relaunching the training pathways in which school and work periods are combined, apprenticeships have been given a strategic role by the training policies and are considered a major tool to help young people access the labour market. Apprenticeships are open-ended contracts with a specific training purpose. They include both on-the-job and classroom training.

The apprenticeship system has been recently reformed by the 'Consolidated Act on Apprenticeships' (Legislative Decree n. 167/2011), that was approved on October 25th 2011 and entered into force on April 25th 2012. The new Law amends and reorganises the previous legislation on apprenticeships, particularly by introducing some new features in the three types of contract available in the country:

- the 'Apprenticeship leading to a qualification and a professional diploma' (*Apprendistato per la qualifica ed il diploma professionale*), aimed at young people aged 15 to 25, enables apprentices to complete compulsory education or to acquire a professional qualification or diploma after three or four years of training (ISCED level 3). It is regulated by the Regions and Autonomous Provinces that through a specific agreement signed at the State/Regions Conference established 21 operator profiles for three-year courses and 21 technician profiles for four-year courses drawing on the 'National Index of Qualifications' (*Repertorio nazionale delle qualifiche*) already used in education and vocational training pathways. Training activities, provided both in and outside the enterprises, last a minimum of 400 hours per year; further training at enterprises can be agreed on through collective bargaining;
- the 'Professional apprenticeship' (*Apprendistato professionalizzante e di mestiere*), aimed at young people aged 18 to 29, enables apprentices to gain a professional qualification on completion of a three-year training pathway (five in the case of the artisan sector). Training is divided in two areas: basic training (120 hours over a three-year period) that is regulated by the Regions and Autonomous Provinces and is provided by VET agencies; and professionalising training that is provided directly by the companies in accordance with the provisions established by collective bargaining agreements;
- the 'Higher education and research apprenticeship' (*Apprendistato di alta formazione e Ricerca*) enables apprentices to gain secondary (ISCED 3) or tertiary level diplomas (ISCED 4 or 5) from the education system or a doctorate degree (ISCED 6). The qualifications acquired also enable students to continue their studies within the education system, as well as to pursue the traineeships required to access the regulated professions. The Regions and Autonomous Provinces, in agreement with the social partners and public institutions, decide how to organise the training, also in relation to the education system curricula, and decide the duration of the contracts.

In accordance with the new Law, apprenticeship contracts have also been extended to the workers registered in the so-called 'mobility lists' to enable them to qualify or re-qualify and to those working in the public sector. Over the last few years the number of apprenticeship contracts has dropped. The latest available data refer to apprentices hired under the previous regulations. In the first half of 2011 160 916 apprentices were employed; the most substantial drop was seen in the manufacturing, transport and communications sectors.

2.2.5. Teachers' and trainers' profiles

Teachers and trainers have very different features in Italy as teachers' professional profile is much more clearly defined and regulated than that of trainers as far as training, recruitment, duties and skills are concerned. In addition, when it comes to the actual teaching part of their activities, teachers can be mainly defined as 'content experts', whereas trainers are 'process experts' who depending on the situation can play a variety of roles (e.g. tutors,

learning facilitators, group leaders, coaches, etc.). In fact, trainers are mainly required to support the learning process by guiding and motivating trainees, to strengthen the link between training and work and to update trainees' working skills.

- **IVET teachers** are employed by the Ministry of Education and work mainly in State vocational schools although some of them also work in Higher Technical Institutes (*Istituti tecnici superiori*);
- **CVET teachers** work mostly in centres for adult education (*Centri per l'istruzione degli adulti* - CPIA) and are mainly employed by the Ministry of Education;
- **IVET trainers** mainly work in vocational training centres managed directly by the regional/provincial/municipal authorities as well as in private vocational training centres accredited by the Regions;
- **CVET trainers** work mainly in enterprises but also in public and private vocational training centres. Public centres can be managed directly by the local authorities or accredited by the Regions.

Table 2.4: General features of VET teachers and trainers

FEATURES	TEACHERS	IVET TRAINERS	CVET TRAINERS
PLACE OF WORK	State vocational schools Higher technical education and training institutes/Higher technical institutes Centres for adult education	Public and private vocational training centres Higher technical education and training institutes/Higher technical institutes	Public and private vocational training centres Enterprises
ROLE	Provide face to face learning activities to develop basic skills in languages, mathematics, social/historical and scientific/technological areas. Develop higher skills in specific industry and services sectors as well key competences. Develop key competences for citizenship and lifelong learning (learning to learn, planning, communicating, collaborating, acting autonomously, problem	Provide face to face learning activities (cultural, humanities, scientific, technical and practical subjects) with a special focus on professional practice. Coordinate training projects for disadvantaged people (e.g. drop-outs). Organise training projects in collaboration with employment services and enterprises. Provide guidance and counselling regarding	Provide face to face and blended learning activities in the areas of corporate organization and management, languages, marketing, accounting, ICT, etc., to develop higher technical and organizational skills and increase the competitiveness of the productive system. Actively participate in enterprises' innovation processes. Improve people's professional skills and

	solving, establishing relationships, acquiring and interpreting information).	vocational training. Provide professional support for alternate training and apprenticeship periods. Promote the establishment of integrated networks between education/training, employment and social assistance services.	employability. Facilitate face to face and blended learning activities for individuals and groups. Help people (including the disadvantaged) to make choices and strengthen their professional identity. Provide guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment. Support work-based learning and promote entrepreneurship.
TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT	Mainly State employees with open-ended or fixed-term contracts	Mainly private employees with open-ended, fixed-term and atypical contracts	Mainly private employees with open-ended, fixed-term and atypical contracts
TYPE OF RECRUITMENT	State exam	Direct: recruitment and selection are not regulated by law	Direct: recruitment and selection are not regulated by law
PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS	Specific subject degree	Degree or high school diploma and professional experience	Degree or high school diploma and professional experience
PRE-SERVICE TRAINING	Five-year academic degree followed by an Active Traineeship (<i>Tirocinio formativo attivo</i> – TFA) in schools	Currently not compulsory	Currently not compulsory
IN-SERVICE TRAINING	Not compulsory	Not compulsory	Not compulsory

2.2.5.1. VET teachers' training

VET teachers' pre-service training is strictly regulated by the Ministry of Education. Universities provide teachers' initial training on behalf of the Ministry and in collaboration with the schools. Up to the recent education system reform (Laws n. 244/2007 and n.133/2008)¹², the minimum requirements for obtaining a teaching contract (whether open-ended or fixed term) were an academic degree and a teaching qualification that could be gained either by sitting a state exam or attending a postgraduate course for teaching in secondary education (*Scuola di Specializzazione per l'Insegnamento Secondario - SSIS*). However, the reform has completely reshaped VET teachers' pre-service training and recruitment procedures. As a result, SSSs have been closed and the minimum requirement to access the teaching profession is now a five-year academic degree (with restricted access) in a selected subject followed by a one-year traineeship (*Tirocinio Formativo Attivo – TFA - Active Teaching Traineeship*) in schools. This includes face to face learning, workshop activities and practical work experience¹³ in schools under the supervision of a teacher (tutor). The aim is to cover both content and methodological/didactic aspects within a specific learning environment. During and at the end of the traineeship students are required to take theoretical and practical tests. The procedure through which they will be assigned a permanent teaching position on completion of the training path has not yet been clarified. More general, according to the reform, pre-service training of VET teachers should be aimed at strengthening their knowledge of mathematics, natural and physical sciences, as well as at improving their teaching, psychological, pedagogical, organisational and social skills. Special attention is also given to improving their languages and digital skills in compliance with the European recommendations. Teachers who wish to teach disabled people must attend a specific course of studies in formal education.

VET teachers' in-service training is not compulsory and not regulated by law but it is considered an individual right under the National Collective Work Agreement. Some training activities for VET teachers are provided by universities (Master courses) and public or private vocational training centres (specialisation courses). In addition, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the National Agency for the Development of School Autonomy (*Agenzia nazionale per lo sviluppo dell'autonomia scolastica - ANSAS*¹⁴ formerly *Indire*), promotes and

12 Law n. 244/2007, 'Disposizioni per la formulazione del bilancio annuale e pluriennale dello Stato' (Provisions for setting the annual and multiannual Italian state budget), article 2, section 411 and 412 'Disposizioni in materia di organizzazione scolastica' (Provisions for school organisation and planning); Law n.133/2008, 'Disposizioni urgenti per lo sviluppo economico, la semplificazione, la competitività, la stabilizzazione della finanza pubblica e la perequazione tributaria' (Urgent provisions to foster economic development, simplification, competitiveness, public finance stabilisation and tax equalisation), art. 64 'Disposizioni in materia di organizzazione scolastica' (Provisions for school organisation and planning).

13 Practical work in schools lasts 475 hours, 75 of which dedicated to developing skills for teaching disabled students.

14 ANSAS was established by Legislative Decree n. 258/99, 'Riordino del Centro europeo dell'educazione, della biblioteca di documentazione pedagogica e trasformazione in Fondazione del museo nazionale della scienza e della tecnica "Leonardo da Vinci" (Reorganising the European Centre of Education and the Library for Pedagogical Documentation and transforming the "Leonardo da Vinci National Museum of Science and Technology into a Foundation). A public institution with administrative, financial and accounting autonomy, it operates at national level under the supervision of the Ministry of Education.

organises updating or training courses for teachers in ICT. Among these, the most remarkable initiative is the FORTIC project¹⁵ within the framework of the National Training Plan for Computer and Technology Skills of School Personnel (*Piano Nazionale di Formazione sulle Competenze Informatiche e Tecnologiche del Personale della Scuola*). Its aim is to train teachers to effectively use ICT in daily teaching activities. The project includes both classroom-based and distance-learning activities and promotes new forms of interaction and cooperation.

2.2.5.2. IVET trainers' training

Trainers' pre-service training is not regulated at national level; there is no nationally recognised register of trainers nor formal recruitment procedures, except for public training centres for which a public examination is sometimes required. As regards access requirements to the training profession, the National Collective Work Contract only sets minimum requirements: a degree or a upper secondary school diploma plus professional experience. In addition, it establishes that – regardless of the role played in the different training contexts (tutor, counsellor, trainer coordinator, etc.) - trainers should regularly participate in professional updating programmes either within or outside the institutions at which they work. At local level, the Regions and Provinces regulate the matter autonomously and some of them have drawn up a list of authorised training providers.

In the last few years, the revision of the accreditation system of training and guidance providers has triggered an important reform process in which human resources have been recognised as a key factor for improving the quality of the training system¹⁶. Within this framework, each Region and Autonomous Province established its own standards for trainers' training with a view to ensuring high quality public VET services. In particular, most of them chose to adopt stricter quality standards for the professional skills of the human resources. In this case, the quality of the training is ensured by the presence of qualified professionals. Private VET centres regulate the matter of trainers' training autonomously and do not have to respect specific laws. In the last few years, a specific university degree course for trainers has been set up (*Scienze della formazione professionale* - Vocational Training Sciences), although most of the trainers have academic degrees in various subjects (i.e. sociology, psychology, economics, foreign languages, etc.) and prior work experience is generally considered more important. According to a survey carried out by ISFOL in 2011, 63% of the trainers who work in VET training pathways have a university degree, around 30% a high school diploma and only 7% a qualification certificate (see figure 2.1). This confirms that training providers consider human resources and their training a key factor to improve the quality of their services.

15 See 'Piano nazionale di formazione degli insegnanti sulle Tecnologie dell'Informazione e della Comunicazione (For TIC)' (National teachers' training plan for ICT – FOR TIC), promoted by the Ministry of Education and INDIRE <http://puntoeduri.indire.it/fortic/>

16 Decree of the Ministry of Labour, n. 166/2001, 'Accreditamento delle sedi formative e delle sedi orientative' ("Provisions for Accrediting VET and Guidance Providers"); State-Regions Agreement 'Nuovo sistema di accreditamento' (The new accreditation system) implemented by the Ministry of Labour and approved in March 2008 by the State-Regions Conference.

Trainers' in-service training varies greatly and participation is discretionary. Activities are mainly promoted by the regional authorities and funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). However, in-service training is not widely spread across Italy and varies from Region to Region (e.g. in-service training services tend to be more structured in the Northern and Central Regions). The providers mainly belong to the private sector. In the 2008-2010 period, an important blended training initiative¹⁷ was implemented to update and increase the knowledge and skills of trainers who work in public vocational training centres and do not have a university degree but a qualification. This was promoted and implemented by ISFOL together with the Ministry of Labour, the universities, the social partners and a number of training institutions accredited by the universities that offer the 'Vocational Training Sciences' degree course. The most remarkable aspect of the project is that students can gain training credits (consequently shortening the university training course) by getting their prior working experience recognised on the basis of the European Qualifications Framework.

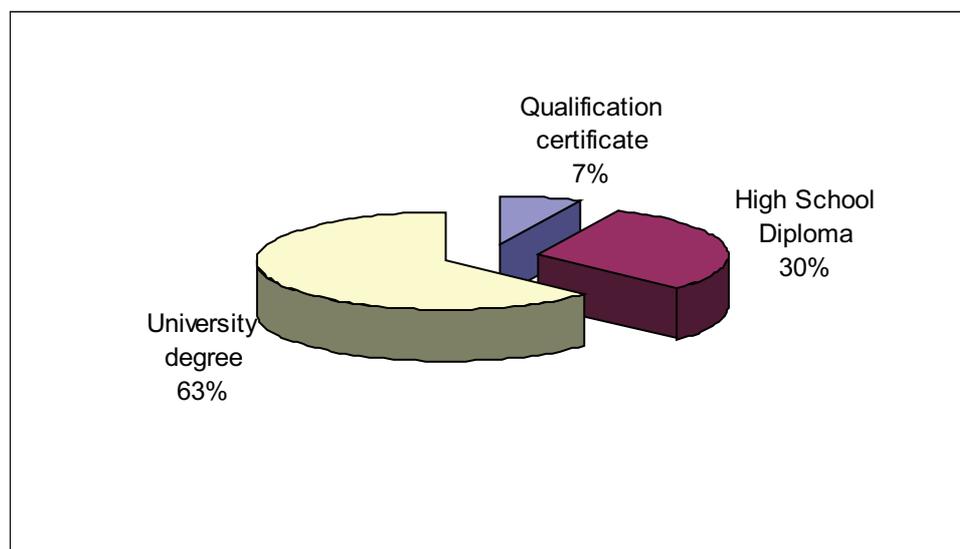


Figure 2.1: Educational qualifications of trainers working in the VET system
 Source: ISFOL data, 2011

2.2.5.3. CVET trainers' training

In Italy there are no legal obligations nor structured pathways¹⁸ for the pre-service training of CVET trainers which is entirely left to the professionals' will, particularly because these are often freelance or occasional trainers (for instance, professionals or middle/top managers temporarily assigned to specialised technical or vocational training). The training supply is determined by the free market and the most important providers are public and private training bodies and consortia, consultancy firms, professional associations, universities, social partners, Chambers of Commerce and some business schools. Also in the

¹⁷ See Elearning Isfol, <http://elearning.isfol.it>

¹⁸ Structured trainers training pathways have been set up only for some particular sectors (e.g. health and safety at work, health care, etc.) for which also specific guidelines have been issued.

case of in-service training, CVET trainers can choose from a wide range of activities and participation occurs on a voluntary basis. Financial resources are mainly provided by the ESF and more recently by Joint Inter-Professional Funds for Continuing Training (*Fondi paritetici interprofessionali*)¹⁹. Training is mainly designed to enhance the skills required by technological innovation and market globalisation; foster the recognition of formal, non-formal and informal learning and establish reliable standards for the validation procedures; and adjust training interventions to local needs. Some Regions offer individual training vouchers to trainers who wish to attend specialised training courses. Large enterprises or public administration departments with permanent internal training services usually contribute to funding these activities or invest directly in the continuing training of trainers. Special incentives to encourage continuing training are given to specific sectors (e.g. medical and nursing staff in the health-care sector).

2.2.6. VET provision quality assurance

The accreditation of training institutions is to date the main tool for selecting the organisations that wish to provide training services, and consequently the main instrument available to the Regions and Autonomous Provinces, which are the only institutional bodies responsible for ensuring the quality of publicly funded training. The present, new accreditation model is due to a national agreement among the State and the Regions²⁰ that took place in 2008. The national accreditation system comprises five criteria that provide specific indications on the basis of which the Regional administrations can model their own territorial accreditation instruments:

Criterion A – Infrastructure and logistics resources;

Criterion B – Economic and financial dependability;

Criterion C – Management skills and professional resources;

Criterion D – Efficacy and efficiency;

Criterion E – Connections with the territory.

While at national level a new accreditation model was adopted, at EU level the European Parliament and the Council issued a Recommendation for the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQARF)²¹.

19 These funds are managed by the social partners and supervised by the Ministry of Labour.

20 'Accordo tra il Ministro dell'istruzione, dell'università e della ricerca, il Ministro del lavoro e delle politiche sociali, le Regioni e le Province Autonome di Trento e Bolzano, per la definizione di standard minimi del nuovo sistema di accreditamento delle strutture formative per la qualità dei servizi' (Agreement signed by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the Regions and Trento and Bolzano Autonomous Provinces to establish minimum standards for the new accreditation system of training providers and ensure service quality).

21 EQARF – Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 for the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (2009/C 155/01)

By comparing the Italian accreditation criteria and EQARF indicators it emerges that in general, the Italian version employs many of the 10 indicators provided by the EQARF Recommendation.

ISFOL, as the Ministry of Labour's research institute, has been closely involved in carrying out research and constantly monitoring the volume of training providers accredited by the Regions. Thanks to the information collected, it is interesting to observe how the number of accredited training providers has remained substantially stable over the past few years. The introduction of a national accreditation model (Ministerial Decree 166/2001) has made it possible to gradually select the training organisations and to enhance the quality of the vocational training system as a whole. The State/Regions Agreement signed in 2008 has further consolidated the position of the training providers. As a result, despite the establishment of more stringent requirements, the volume of the accredited training offer has remained stable, except in a few Regions where different regulatory approaches were adopted. In 2011 ISFOL undertook a survey on a sample of 1 000 accredited organisations to examine the quality procedures they adopted to foster the development of skills in the line with the market of labour needs²². The analysis of the data (see Figure 2.2) shows that the majority of the accredited providers (34%) belong to the third sector (non-profit, social cooperatives and associations), 26% is made up of enterprises, while training bodies, i.e. the organisations traditionally responsible for providing training services, only account for about 20% of the total.

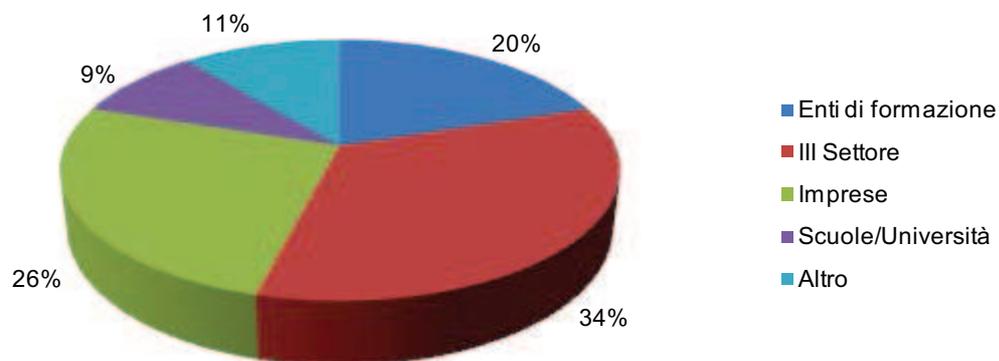


Figure 2.2: Legal status of the accredited training providers (percentage values)

Source : ISFOL data, 2011

Legend: 20%: VET providers; 34%: Third Sector; 26%: Enterprises; 9%: Schools; Universities; 11%: Other

²² 'Indagine campionaria sul presidio dell'efficacia ed efficienza dei servizi formativi da parte delle strutture formative accreditate' (Sample Survey on Efficacy and Efficiency Management of Training Services by Accredited Training Providers) started in 2011 and is included in the ISFOL Activity Plan for 2012.

In fact, over the last few years a wide range of subjects belonging to different productive and social sectors have been attracted to the training system, including third sector and for-profit organisations (both enterprises and bilateral bodies). The changes in the composition of the accredited training offer have certainly contributed to renovating the training system, while the closer involvement of enterprises and their representative organisations ensure that the training services supplied can best meet the labour market needs.

As regards more specifically the use of monitoring and evaluation procedures, these are widely and sometimes even systematically used by the surveyed training organisations, as shown in table 2.5.

PROCEDURES	%
On-entry assessment of students' knowledge	80%
On-going learning assessment	83%
Intervention rearrangements on the basis of students' actual knowledge	78%
Courses monitoring	87%
Corrective actions adopted on the basis of the monitoring results	80%
Final learning assessment through structured tests	87%
Final learning assessment through tests taken at the workplace	65%
Drop-outs detection	83%

Table 2.5: *Implementation of monitoring and assessment procedures by the accredited organisations (% value)*

Source: ISFOL data, 2011

The widespread adoption of specific procedures (e.g. learning assessments, corrective actions undertaken on the basis of the monitoring results etc.) shows that the accredited training organisations are paying increasing attention to the users and their needs by closely monitoring the learning process and seeking to provide them with labour-relevant skills. This is confirmed by the fact that a remarkable share of the surveyed training organisations (about 80%) also provides guidance services that include both standard actions (information provision, introductory interviews and skills assessments etc.) and personalised interventions aimed at identifying difficulties and adopting support measures. In addition, as regards post-training support measures, about 70% of the training organisations provide help for work transfer as part of their ordinary services and 73% carry out follow-up actions by checking employment results. The promotion of training pathways increasingly targeted at people's needs and aimed at enhancing users' human capital appears to be now a well-established principle among accredited training providers.

This is confirmed by the data on the skills needs analysis carried out by the organisations: about 80% of them monitor the needs of the territory in which they operate, for instance by examining enterprises' professional needs or designing their programmes on the basis of the analysis produced by the institutional actors (the Regions, Provinces and

Municipalities). From what has been said so far, it is evident that the organisations' management skills have been strengthened and specific strategies have been adopted to enhance users' skills and bring the training services more in line with the training market needs.

2.3. Other types of training

2.3.1. Continuing VET training

The Italian CVT system has been supported by relevant legislation since the 1990s. The European Social Fund (ESF) played for a long time a major role in this development. In particular, it is worth to mention:

1. Law 236/93 establishes that the Ministry of Labour (with the support of the social partners and the Regions) finances in-company training, teachers' training, system actions, sectoral and territorial plans promoted by the social partners, as well as training on request of workers who apply to the regional authorities. The implementation of this Law has been an important step for the development of continuing training by extending funding to a range of training activities, including training addressed to enterprises, plans targeted at individuals through training vouchers and sectoral and territorial plans promoted by the social partners and systemic actions. In 2010, the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Policies issued the last decree concerning the reallocation of resources provided for under the Law to support training initiatives aimed at enterprise employees and more generally to boost the system's competitiveness. In all, 150 million euro were given to the Regions and Autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bolzano, 30% of which were used to fund re-qualification interventions aimed at employees receiving redundancy pay (*Cassa Integrazione Guadagni - CIG*);
2. Law 53/00 provides for the funding of CVT vouchers for employees by financing training leave, in accordance with the regulation on working hours. It recognises workers' right to lifelong learning by granting specific leave for training activities. These can be chosen independently by the workers or arranged by the companies. The vouchers are assigned by the Regions according to funding allocated by the State. The Law also establishes that enterprises that are given funds taken from the national budget can also access other financial resources through the European Social Fund and the Joint Inter-Professional Funds' continuing training.
3. Law 388/00: Joint Inter-Professional Funds (JIF - *Fondi paritetici interprofessionali*) are promoted by the social partners who finance training plans at company, sectoral and territorial level, individual training programs and system activities, such as training needs surveys. Companies may choose whether to join these new inter-professional funds or not. If so, they must request INPS (*Istituto nazionale per la*

previdenza sociale – National Institute for Social Security) to pass the levy of 0.3% onto the fund they have joined. If not, the payments remain at INPS. In this case the resources are used by the Ministry of Labour in financing CVT under 1) and 2).

In these frameworks, the main actors are the Ministry of Labour, which sets the goals of CVT according to Laws 236 and 53, and the Regions which have the general responsibility in managing most training activities, financing spending by selecting the appropriate local-level target and reporting to government. The Ministry of Labour and the Regions co-operate in goal setting with the social partners, who promote IJFs at intersectoral level. The social partners play an important role in promoting company-level training plans (single companies or group of companies) to be financed by either Regions or IJFs.

The enterprises' potential demand for continuing training has increased in comparison with the previous years: 33.5% of enterprises provided training courses for their employees in 2010, compared to 32.1% in 2009 and 25.7% in 2008. Following the introduction of support instruments for CVT (including Joint Inter-Professional Funds), the demand for continuing training has increased. However, training is still largely dependent on enterprises' needs and training initiatives are therefore unevenly distributed across the country and the different production sectors. Also the recent anti-crisis measures adopted by the Government contributed to expanding CVT provision as Joint Inter-Professional Funds can be used to finance targeted training plans. In fact, besides income support measures aimed at temporarily suspended or laid-off workers, the Government adopted a range of active labour policy measures, including compulsory short and medium-length training programmes that should enable people to recover transversal and basic skills (including languages and ICT). In addition, the adults who have a previous VET background can access the IFTS system (the higher technical education and training system). These initiatives offer a range of pathways which provide young people and adults (both employed and unemployed) with sound cultural training as well as extensive technical and vocational training.

The Joint Inter-Professional Funds for continuing training are managed by both employers and the social partners to foster enterprises' development and boost their competitiveness. Each of these Funds is promoted by a specific private sectors (e.g: banks, commerce and distribution, different industrial sectors), and is managed by both social actors (employers and the social partners). These are jointly responsible for planning and organising the access of their employees to the training benefits, according to the rules established in agreement with the Ministry of Labour and the Regional Authorities. There are currently 22 funds; these are joined by 55.8% of all private enterprises (721 000 companies in all) and provide training for 66% of their employees (about 7 800 000). Micro-enterprises (with less than 10 employees) count for 83% of all joining enterprises. Despite the economic crisis, in the 2010-2011 period, participation in the funds increased thanks to 165 000 new subscriptions. In addition, from January 2010 to June 2011, over 19 400 training plans were approved for a total of 95 million training hours aimed at around 1 911 000 participants belonging to more than 61 000 enterprises. The total cost of the plans was around 910 million euro, mostly allocated for enterprise-targeted initiatives. Enterprises made a significant contribution, covering globally 37% of the total cost (the rest being paid as referred

above), with a peak of over 48% for plans aimed at individuals. Almost 22% of the plans had a cost ranging from 20 000 to 50 000 euro. However, a significant number of training initiatives did not exceed 20 000 euro (over 27%).

2.3.2. Training provided by employers

In the last few years Italian enterprises have become more inclined to invest in human capital. As a result, the training market, particularly its private non-State-regulated sector, has expanded both in terms of demand and supply. Although the levels are still lower than in most European countries, the regular increase indicates a positive trend. Enterprises with at least 10 employees that offered training opportunities to their workers grew from 32.2% in 2005 (Eurostat, CVTS) to 45.1% in 2009 (ISFOL, INDACO/CVTS²³). As regards the economic sectors, the highest increase occurred in construction, in finance and insurance and in the other business and personal services sectors (Table 2.6). The growing trend is also confirmed by other indicators, including the participation rate: between 2005 and 2009 this increased by 4.4 percentage points (from 28.8% to 33.2%), indicating that 2.8 million workers were involved in training activities, especially in construction and industry (Table 2.7). However, together with the participation rate, the gender gap also increased (from +4.1% to +6.1% over the four years).

23 The “Survey on Knowledge in Enterprises” (Indagine sulla Conoscenza nelle imprese – INDACO/CVTS) is carried out by ISFOL in collaboration with the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT). It produces indicators harmonised with the Eurostat “Continuing Vocational Training Survey” (CVTS) but unlike this it also collects information regarding micro-enterprises (6-9 employees).

Economic sectors	Enterprises providing courses and other training activities	Enterprises providing courses and other training activities
Sectors with the highest percentage of enterprises providing training activities		
Finance and Insurance	93.3	72.6
Energy supply, water supply etc.	68.6	69.4
Construction	61.5	36.7
Other services for businesses and the public	64.8	44.4
Sectors with the lowest percentage of enterprises providing training activities		
Accommodation and catering services	15.8	14.0
Storage and transportation	31.3	35.6
Manufacturing	39.6	28.1
Commerce	42.7	32.3
Total	45.1	32.2

Table 2.6: Enterprises with 10 employees or more that provided training in the 2005–2009 period by economic sector (percentage values)

Source: ISFOL, INDACO (Survey on Knowledge in Enterprises – Indagine sulla conoscenza nelle imprese), 2009. Eurostat CVTS, 2005.

Economic sectors	Size class				Total
	10 - 19	20-49	50-249	250 or	
<i>Industry in the narrow sense</i>	13.5	20.1	32.5	48.2	31.2
<i>Construction</i>	32.3	36.2	36.6	70.4	37.2
<i>Commerce</i>	15.5	17.2	31.9	51.0	31.0
<i>Services</i>	16.8	20.6	41.3	42.8	35.5
Total for the year 2009	17.9	21.8	35.4	46.2	33.2
Total for the year 2005	9.2	13.6	23.5	49.6	28.8

Table 2.7: Participants in training courses out of the total number of employees, by size class and economic sector (percentage out of the total number of employees)

Source: ISFOL, INDACO (Survey on Knowledge in Enterprises – Indagine sulla conoscenza nelle imprese), 2009. Eurostat CVTS, 2005.

Overall, about 60 million training hours were provided by enterprises for their employees, or about 21 course hours for each employee at an average cost of 59.4 euro per hour. Service enterprises provided 25.4 course hours for each participant, while the provision supplied by other sectors was lower, the lowest being that of construction (16.2 hours per participant) (Table 2.8).

Economic sectors	Size class				Total
	10 - 19	20-49	50-249	250 and over	
<i>Industry in the narrow sense</i>	20.2	20.1	16.7	18.5	18.4
<i>Construction</i>	16.8	16.5	16.5	13.9	16.2
<i>Commerce</i>	19.4	29.0	20.9	17.5	19.7
<i>Services</i>	27.9	27.3	27.4	24.1	25.4
Total for the year 2009	21.0	22.2	21.1	20.8	21.1
Total for the year 2005	26.0	24.0	24.9	25.8	25.5

Table 2.8: Average number of course hours per participant

Source: ISFOL, INDACO (Survey on Knowledge in Enterprises – Indagine sulla conoscenza nelle imprese), 2009. Eurostat CVTS, 2005.

Enterprises provided training for an overall cost of 3 537 million euro. Each course hour cost 58.3 euro on average, but the cost increased proportionally to the company workforce going from 57.6 euro for smaller enterprises to 58.6 euro for larger ones (Table 2.9).

Economic sectors	Size class				Total
	10 - 19	20-49	50-249	250 and over	
<i>Industry in the narrow sense</i>	59.4	60.7	62.9	59.0	60.4
<i>Construction</i>	51.3	55.8	61.0	52.5	54.6
<i>Commerce</i>	69.8	59.7	57.4	56.5	59.0
<i>Services</i>	55.2	53.9	54.8	59.0	57.2
Total for the year 2009	57.6	57.7	58.3	58.6	58.3
Total for the year 2005	65.1	62.9	60.3	57.9	59.2

Table 2.9: Average cost per course hour (in euro)

Source: ISFOL, INDACO (Survey on Knowledge in Enterprises – Indagine sulla conoscenza nelle imprese), 2009. Eurostat CVTS, 2005.

2.3.3. Training programmes and providers

The increase in CVT provision did not only affect enterprises that provide traditional classroom-based courses but also those that offer alternative learning activities. The majority of these training programmes dealt with environmental protection, labour safety and other content mandated by law. Less common were training initiatives aimed at developing personal skills or at training workers in the use of production techniques and technologies. Other topics, such as accounting and high finance, personal services, transportation, office or secretarial professions, were far less covered.

The providers vary and belong to both the public and the private sector. A particularly significant role is played by consulting and/or training organisations, while enterprise representative organisations and Chambers of Commerce make a minor (albeit not negligible) contribution. Also machinery and software providers, as well as other enterprises and public sector training organisations, play a significant role, while school and university institutions are less active. The Survey on Knowledge in Enterprises also highlights that over the next few years there will be a wider gap in technical than in social skills. In fact, the most required skills are those necessary to use production techniques and technologies and to manage client relations, while there is not much demand for written/oral communication and numeracy and literacy.

2.3.4. Adults' demand for non-formal and informal learning

Useful information about this issue is provided by the Survey on adults' attitudes towards training (*Indagine sui comportamenti formativi degli adulti* - INDACO-Adulti²⁴) that analyses adults' (people aged 18-64) learning activities,²⁵ separated into formal, non-formal and informal²⁶ categories, both in and outside the workplace.

According to the survey carried out in 2011, the levels of adults' participation in training during the 12 months prior to the interviews were 26.9% for non-formal learning and 75.2% for informal activities. However, adult participation – whether in formal or informal learning activities - decreases considerably in the older age groups. An even larger generation gap (24 percentage points) was detected for informal activities: youth participation was 87.3% while that of elderly people 63.1%, with almost 12 percentage points' difference on average (Table 2.10).

24 The survey is included in the National Statistical System (SISTAN)'s programme for the collection of statistical data at national level since 2003.

25 The INDACO-Adulti survey focuses on adults consistently with the AES survey and with a view to analysing more in detail (in comparison to LFS) qualitative and quantitative information regarding participation in training in this section of the population. The 2011 edition involved 16 500 people and focused particularly on the employed (both private enterprise and public sector employees as well as independent workers), unemployed and inactive. The aim was to acquire information regarding people's training and learning needs, their economic investments in training, access gaps due to socio-demographic, cultural and professional reasons and the features of the training activities undertaken on the basis of the interviewees' own statements.

26 Learning categories and activities were established by taking into account Eurostat's *Classification of Learning Activities* (CLA, 2006). The INDACO survey experimentally applied the classification at national level. This is also being employed in the AES national edition currently under way.

Age class	Non-formal learning	Informal learning
18-24	31.3	87.3
25-34	34.3	82.8
35-44	28.3	76.4
45-54	25.5	71.4
55-64	16.2	63.1
Average	26.9	75.2

Table 2.10: *Participation in training activities for 18-64 year olds by age class. 2011, %*

Source: ISFOL (INDACO), Indagine sui comportamenti formativi degli adulti (Survey on adults' attitudes towards training); year 2011.

Another factor strongly influencing participation is the employment condition. In the case of non-formal learning activities undertaken by employed people a generation gap was detected in particular among independent workers and - in a narrow rate - among public sector employees (Table 2.11).

Age class	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Independent workers	Total
18-24	32.0	28.1	36,2	32.3
25-34	37.2	49.9	40.0	38.5
35-44	31.8	56.7	29.9	34.2
45-54	29.6	47.5	24.5	32.6
55-64	25.3	43.8	16.5	27.5
Total	32.4	48.9	28.1	33.9

Table 2.11: *Participation in non-formal learning for the employed aged 18-64, by work type and age class. 2011, %*

Source: ISFOL (INDACO), Indagine sui comportamenti formativi degli adulti (Survey on adults' attitudes towards training); year 2011.

Within the private employees' category, the classification into different levels of staff highlights very unequal levels of participation: non-formal participation rates were almost double the average for managerial staff (both middle and top) and almost half of the average for unskilled workers.