

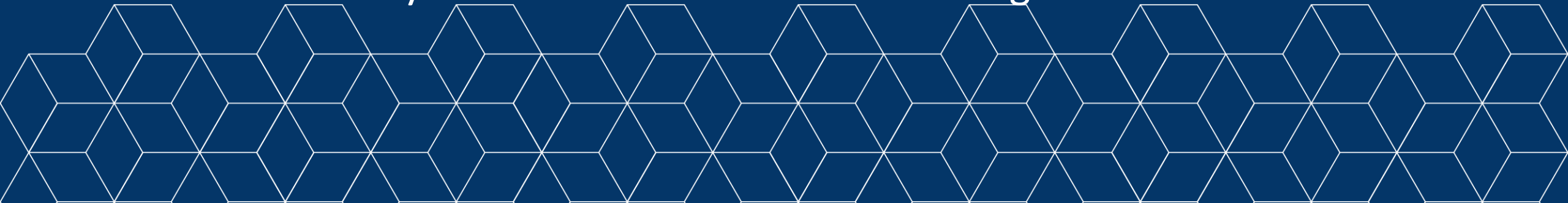


# ETF FORUM FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET: ANNUAL MEETING

Turin, 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2024

Setting the scene for the upcoming site visit: national  
QA framework in Italy

by Concetta Fonzo and Laura Evangelista



# COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Compulsory education covers primary and lower secondary education and the first two years of the second cycle of education

Students can complete compulsory education in State schools, in “paritarie” schools or, subject to certain conditions, in private and home education

The two compulsory years of the second cycle can be attended either at general and vocational upper secondary schools or within the regional vocational education and training system

Compulsory education starts at six years of age and lasts for 10 years until the age of 16

Everyone has a right and duty (diritto/dovere) to receive education and training for at least 12 years within the education system or until students have obtained a three-year vocational qualification by the age of 18



# PRIMARY EDUCATION - FIRST CYCLE OF EDUCATION

The first cycle of education is compulsory and is made up of **primary and lower secondary education**

Primary education (*scuola primaria*) starts at 6 years of age and lasts 5 years

Lower secondary education (*scuola secondaria di I grado*) starts at 11 years of age and lasts 3 years

Within the first cycle, students pass from primary to lower secondary education without exams

At the end of the first cycle, students sit for a final exam that, if successfully passed, allows to progress directly to the second cycle of education



# SECONDARY EDUCATION - SECOND CYCLE OF EDUCATION

The first two years of the second cycle of education are compulsory. The second cycle of education starts at the **age of 14** and offers **two different pathways**

the **upper secondary school education**

the **regional educational and vocational training** (*Istruzione e formazione professionale*, so-called *leFP*)

Upper secondary school education (*scuola secondaria di II grado*) offers general (*liceo*), technical (*istituto tecnico*) and vocational (*istituto professionale*) programmes.

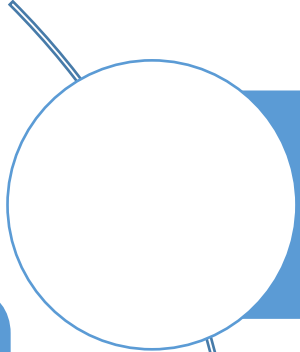
Courses last 5 years. At the end of the upper secondary school education, students who successfully pass the final exam, receive a diploma that gives them access to tertiary education.

Regional vocational training offers three or four-year courses organised by accredited training agencies or by upper secondary schools. At the end of regional courses, learners receive a qualification that gives them access to second-level regional vocational courses or, under certain conditions, to courses at Higher technological institutes (*Istituti tecnologici superiori* – ITS Academies)

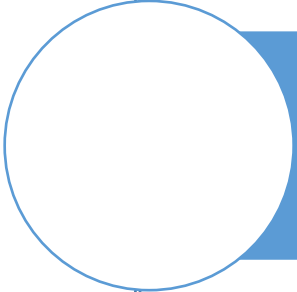


# SECONDARY EDUCATION (1)

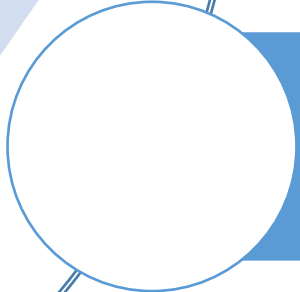
Upper secondary education offers general, technical and vocational education. The overall length of studies at upper secondary level is 5 years (from 14 to 19 years of age)



General upper secondary education aims at preparing students to higher-level studies and to the labour market by providing them with adequate knowledge and competences, as well as cultural and methodological instruments for developing their own life skills



Technical institutes offer technical education and have the general objective of providing students with a strong scientific and technological background in the economic and technological professional sectors



Vocational institutes offer vocational education and provide students with a strong technical and vocational background in the sectors of services, industry and handicraft

General, technical and vocational paths give access to tertiary education



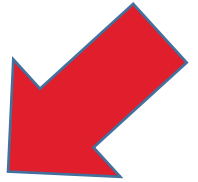
# SECONDARY EDUCATION (3)

Regional vocational education and training (the so-called leFP) is organised into three and four-year courses for those who have completed the first cycle of education and wish to complete their compulsory education in the vocational training system or receive a three-year qualification

→ Courses can be organised by both local training agencies and by vocational upper secondary schools in partnership with training agencies. In the latter case schools follow regional guidelines

→ Courses foresee the release of intermediate certifications with the recognition of credits, which enable students to shift to other training or education pathways (e.g. school or apprenticeship pathways)

Regional vocational education and training qualifications are listed and described in a National Repertory that is established at central level in agreement with the Regions

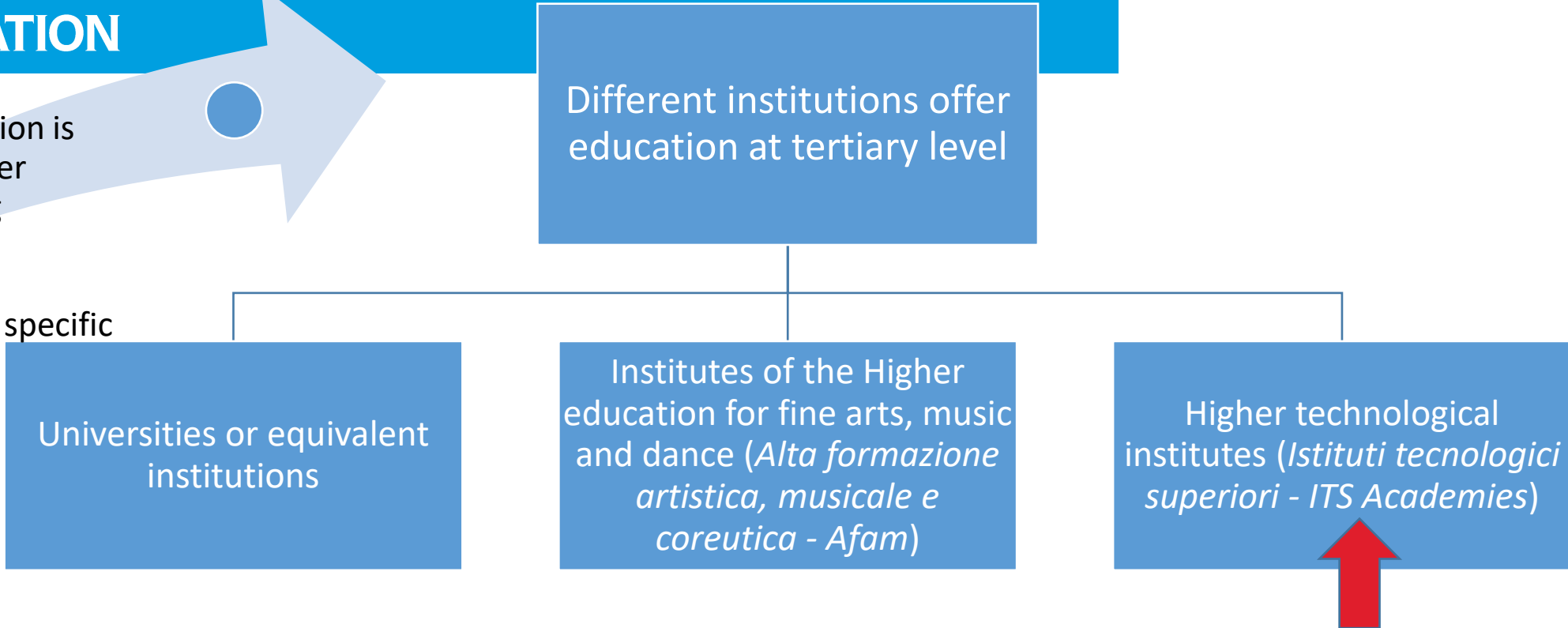


Compared to pathways in mainstream education, these courses are shorter (3 or 4 years), make more use of laboratories and of periods of work experiences and aim for faster access to the labour market



# TERTIARY EDUCATION

Access to tertiary education is for students with an upper secondary school leaving diploma. The Ministry of education and individual institutions establish the specific conditions for admission



Courses at ITSs are accessible also to students who have attended a four-year regional vocational course followed by an additional one-year course in the Higher technical education and training (IFTTS)



# POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION

The post-secondary non-tertiary level, offers the following options:

→ the Higher technical education and training (*Istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore - IFTS*) regulated by National Authorities through guidelines and managed by the Regions

→ the vocational training provided by the Regions





# GOVERNANCE OF THE EDUCATION AND VET SYSTEM (1)

The Italian education system is organised according to the principles of **subsidiarity** and of **autonomy** of institutions

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of University and Research are responsible for the general administration of education at national level for their relevant fields

The Ministry of Education has decentralised offices (*Uffici scolastici regionali - USRs*) that guarantee the application of general provisions and the respect of the minimum performance requirements and of standards in each Region

The State has exclusive legislative competences on the general organisation of the education system (e.g., minimum standards of education, school staff, quality assurance, State financial resources)



## GOVERNANCE OF THE EDUCATION AND VET SYSTEM (2)

→ Regions have joint responsibility with the State in some sectors of the education system (e.g. the organization of ECEC (0-3), the school calendar, the distribution of schools in their territory, the right to study at higher level).

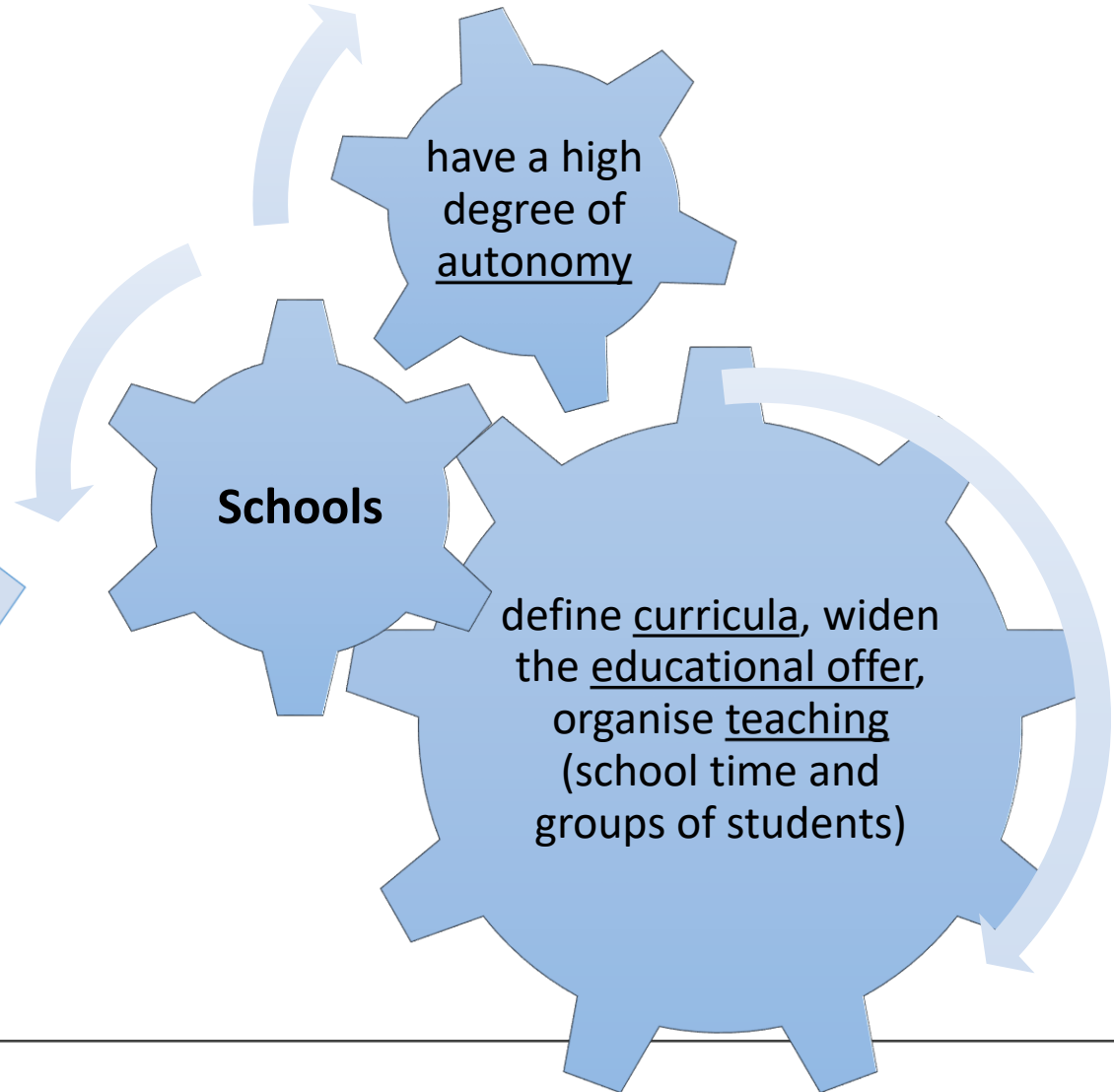
→ Regions have exclusive legislative competence in the organisation of the regional vocational education and training system.

Local authorities (as for e.g., the Municipalities) organise the offer at local level (e.g., maintenance of premises, merging or establishment of schools, transport of pupils) from ECEC to upper secondary education.



# GOVERNANCE OF THE EDUCATION AND VET SYSTEM (3)

Every three years, schools draw up their own “**three-year educational offer plan**” (*Piano triennale dell'offerta formativa* - PTOF).



# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN SCHOOL EDUCATION (1)

The National Evaluation System  
(*Sistema nazionale di valutazione – SNV*) has several goals/objectives

to help schools in monitoring efficiency and efficacy indicators of their educational offers and undertaking improvement, in order to foster their autonomy

to provide school administration with useful information to address education policies and to plan support actions for schools

to promote transparency and social accountability

to create the conditions to be able to evaluate school managers



# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN SCHOOL EDUCATION (2)

In the National Evaluation System, internal and external evaluation are part of the same procedure that consists of four phases that take place over a period of 3 years, as foreseen by the current national legislation that established the SNV (DPR 80/2013)

The 4 phases of the evaluation include

1. internal self-evaluation
2. external evaluation
3. improvement actions
4. dissemination of results and public accountability

The internal evaluation is the first step of the system. At school level, the School manager and the Internal evaluation team are responsible for drawing up the self-evaluation report

The external evaluation is carried out by the External evaluation teams (*Nuclei esterni di valutazione – NEV*) that are made up by an inspector, who is a technical manager of the Ministry, and two experts selected by the Invalsi, one from and one external to the school



Beside the national evaluation system procedures, the School manager organizes the school activities according to criteria of educational efficiency and efficacy and is responsible for the results of his/her activity. The Teachers' assembly plans and verifies the didactic activities.



# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET (1)

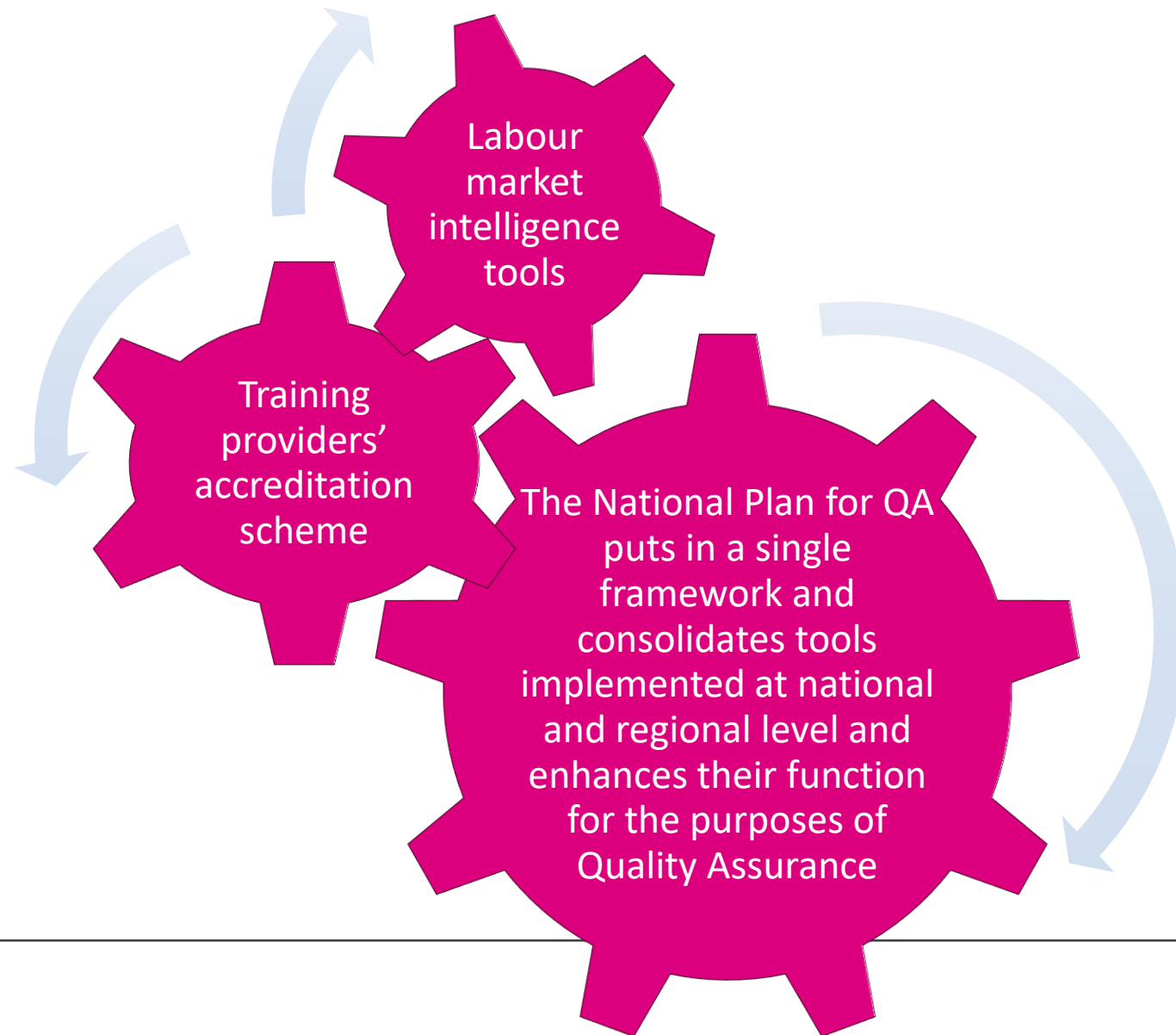
The EQAVET Recommendation of 2009 was a fundamental point of reference for Italy for the implementation of a national quality assurance system: the Recommendation advised national and regional authorities on the operational perspective needed to strengthen the vocational education system

The availability of a European Reference Framework with descriptors and indicators made it possible to reflect on the Italian quality assurance system

Identifying a National Plan for Quality Assurance, defined in 2012 and revised in 2017, between national authorities and Regions



# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET (2)



# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET (3)

**Training providers' accreditation scheme** verifies ex-ante the matching of established requirements for providing vocational training courses funded by the Regions, and then monitors and evaluates the results of the services provided. The scheme is designed to promote highly selective VET systems in terms of the structural, organisational and educational capacities that providers possess. It includes a maintenance mechanism that ensures periodic checks are carried out

**Labour market intelligence tools**, such as the "Information system on Occupations" and "Excelsior". Both projects, financed by the Ministry of Labour, collect information by the companies on skills needs development, hiring forecasts, anticipations of changes in occupations and their tasks and skill contents, and outline future economic and employment scenarios for each business sector

**The National Repertory of Regional Qualifications** gathers all the qualifications issued by the Regions. The qualifications listed in the Repertory are based on "units of competences" referred to as learning outcomes. The National Repertory of Regional Qualifications is a main tool within the national certification system, which also ensures the possibility of recognising and validating the competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts

**Monitoring and evaluation activities**, such as: national annual reports on all vocational education and training activities and reports for individual education sectors (1eFP, dual model programmes, apprenticeships); collection and analysis of physical and financial data and qualitative information on activities implemented by the Regions; surveys on education and employment outcomes of graduates; initiatives for the experimentation of Peer Reviews conducted at national and regional levels





# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET (4)

**PLANNING** reflects a strategic vision shared by relevant stakeholders and includes goals/objectives and actions

The Regions prepare multi-year programmes and annual plans for VET. The regional plans are devised on the basis of the analysis of the local needs, considering also information and results resulting from the national labour market intelligence tools

The planning process generally involves a broad social and institutional partnership of relevant stakeholders

The information policy provides for the collection at a national level of data on training courses funded by the Regions through annual monitoring reports on the various vocational training programmes

Roles and guidelines for the recognition, validation and certification of competences are defined at a national level. The Regions define the relevant implementing regulations and progressively set up the system at a local level.

Vocational qualification descriptions are competence-based; they are included in a National Repertory of all academic and vocational qualifications

The Plan assumes the QA cycle defined by EQAVET (planning, implementation, evaluation, review) as a reference tool. For each phase, it specifies the roles and tasks of the institutions, in charge for overseeing the different programmes



# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET (5)

IMPLEMENTATION plans are drawn up as per planning guidelines and include explicit principles

Regional implementation plans consist of all training pathways and providers which succeed in public procedures using regional guidelines for allocating financial resources

Regional regulations define the standards for learning delivery and assessment of the learning outcomes, validation and certification of qualifications and competences of the various funded programmes

Some implementation plans include measures to support the training of teachers and trainers in various areas of learning, including digital skills

A National Quality Assurance Plan has been devised and includes guidelines and quality standards at VET provider level to promote continuous improvement and self-regulation. The implementation of the Plan at a local level rests on the implementation rules defined by the Regions, mainly through the accreditation



# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET (6)

An **EVALUATION** of outcomes and processes is carried out, annually at the national level and periodically in some Regions

The accreditation process states the need for internal and external evaluation of training processes. Regional regulations define methods and indicators to be adopted

At the national level, INAPP carries out an annual data survey, for monitoring the quality of VET provision, measuring development and identifying areas for improvement

Some Regions carry out periodic self-assessments and evaluation studies.  
At a national level, data on the education and employment outcomes of graduates are collected annually

Most regional accreditation systems include outcome indicators to measure the performance of VET providers and assess their effectiveness in terms of job placement of graduates



# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET (7)

## REVIEW

Reviews are carried out periodically on the basis of the results of surveys and studies,  
as well as through annual national monitoring

Information on the outcomes of the evaluations is made publicly available



# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET (8)

Quality assurance in the regional vocational education and training system is promoted by the National Reference Point established in 2006 within the EQAVET Framework (EU Recommendation, 2009 and 2020).

The Reference point is located at the National Institute for the Analysis of Public Policies (Inapp, Istituto nazionale per l'analisi delle politiche pubbliche), based in Rome

Inapp is a public research institute working in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, the Regions, Social Partners and other stakeholders.

The Reference Point has a National Board made up by the Ministries (Labour and Education), the Regions, Social Partners and representatives of VET organisations/providers of the regional vocational education and training system



THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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