

VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM IN ITALY

INTRODUCTION

General Policy Context in Italy

Italy is a Parliamentary Republic headed by a President and a Parliament consisting of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, which exercise legislative power. In general, supreme legislative power is exercised by the Parliament. However, in exceptional cases, the Government may also exercise legislative power, issuing legislative decrees and decree-laws, following delegation from the Parliament or in cases of necessity or emergency. Executive power is in the hands of the Government.

For administrative purposes, Italy is divided into 20 autonomous territorial areas, known as Regions. Each of these has its own legislative, administrative and financial powers (legislative powers are conferred on the Regional Council, while the Regional Commission is the executive body). The regions are divided into provinces, each of which consists of a number of municipalities, each with their own main town or provincial capital. At both provincial and municipal levels, administration is in the hands of elected councils. The Regions may also legislate on certain matters specified by the Constitution. They may define the regulations which relate to national laws, and may delegate administrative authority to lesser local bodies. Local administrations are responsible for all questions concerning the organisation of services within their competence area.

Italian is the official language, although in some areas (Valle d'Aosta, Trentino-Alto Adige, Friuli Venezia Giulia) the use of local languages is officially authorised for official documents and for education. These areas have a special form of autonomy and are known as 'Special-Status Regions'.

The most widespread religion in Italy is Roman Catholicism although it is not a State religion.

As of the latest census carried out on 31 December 2008, the population of Italy was 60 045 068. The country covers an area of 301 336 square kilometres.

The basic principles relating to education are laid down in the Italian Constitution of 1948 and include: freedom of education; the State's duty to provide a network of educational establishments of every type and level, open to all without distinction; the right of private individuals to set up schools at no cost to the State; the right to education and basic vocational training for those unable to work and the disabled (Articles 34 and 33 of the Constitution). The application of the basic principles of the Constitution has inspired all subsequent legislation, which has particularly insisted on compulsory schooling, teacher training, allowing pupils to develop their full potential, integration of the disabled, vocational training and autonomy for educational establishments.

The main legislation which presently governs the Italian educational system is listed below:

- Consolidation Act of 16 April 1994 includes all main rules in force concerning public education; however, laws and decrees later approved have introduced several relevant changes, and therefore a revision of the document is expected;
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- Law no. 59 of 15 March 1997 and following Decree no. 275 of 8 March 1999 which, starting from school year 2000/01, have provided schools with didactic, organizational and research autonomy;
- Law no. 53 of 28 March 2003 for the reform of the education and training system; it redefined and broadened the concept of compulsory schooling and compulsory training, introducing the 'right-duty' to education and training (*diritto/dovere all'istruzione e formazione*) for at least 12 years from the age of 6 years. This 'right-duty' is fulfilled within the education system or until the pupil obtains a qualification within the vocational education and training system by the age of 18 years;
- Law no. 296 of 27 December 2006 (Financial law 2007) which establishes, amongst others and starting from the 2007/08 school year, the extension of compulsory education to ten years to be fulfilled by pupils either at school or through three-year vocational courses falling under the responsibility of the Regions, and extension to 16 years of age for access to the labour market;
- Law no. 1 of 1st January 2007 introducing a new procedure for the state exams organised at the end of upper secondary school level;
- Law no. 40 of 2 April 2007 which provides for the postponement of the reform of the second cycle in school year 2009/10;
- Law no. 133 of 6 August 2008 providing a range of interventions which will be implemented from school year 2009/10, aimed at revising the organisation and the didactic of the school system; and the full implementation of the three-year vocational education and training pathways for the fulfilment of compulsory education;
- Law no. 169 of 30 October 2008 containing urgent measures on education and university;
- DPR no. 17 of 20 January 2009: the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of University and Research has again been reorganized to come under one Ministry called Ministry of Education, University and Research (*Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca – MIUR*).

Organisation of the initial education and training system

The education system includes the following at present:

- *Scuola dell'infanzia* (non-compulsory) for children between 3 and 6 years of age, lasting 3 years;
- first cycle of education (length: 8 years), organised in primary education for children between 6 and 11 years of age, which lasts 5 years, and lower secondary school for children between 11 and 14 years of age, lasting 3 years;
- second cycle of education consisting of two different pathways: the first is upper secondary school, which falls under the responsibility of the State, lasts 5 years and is addressed to students from 15 to 19 years of age. This level of education is provided by *licei*, technical institutes, art institutes and

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vocational institutes. Vocational and art institutes also offer three-year courses. The second pathway is initial vocational training (three-year courses) for students who have completed the first cycle of education and is organised by the Regions;

- post-secondary non-tertiary education, within the higher technical education and training system (Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore – IFTS), offers higher technical education and training pathways and courses provided by Higher Technical Institutes (Istituti Tecnici Superiori – ITS);
- higher education sector consisting of university and non-university higher education. The higher education system is divided into State and non-State establishments.

Education is compulsory for 10 years (up to 16 years of age). It includes the first cycle of education and the first two years of the second cycle of education (upper secondary education). The last two years of compulsory education can be accomplished either at upper secondary schools or within the three-year vocational training courses run by the Regions. Compulsory education can be fulfilled both in state and *paritarie* schools. In addition, everyone has the ‘right/duty’ (*diritto/dovere*) to education and training for at least 12 years (in the school system) or up to the obtainment of a three-year vocational qualification (either at school or in the initial vocational training system) before reaching 18 years of age.

General administration at local level

The local administration is currently subdivided into two levels: provincial and municipal, with various responsibilities for school subjects and levels.

The Provincial School Office is designed simply as an internal wing of the *Uffici Scolastici Regionali* – USR (Regional School Offices). It therefore has no operational autonomy of its own, since, as a provincial administrative body, it is merely the body responsible for public education at Provincial level. There are no Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) peripheral offices at commune level.

The organisation of the MIUR provides a ‘peripheral’ organisation made up of the regional school offices (general management level). They are autonomous centres of administrative responsibility exercising residual state functions, not transferred to the Regions and schools, as well as the functions involved in relationships with the Regions and local bodies, University and training agencies.

The Regional Administration Departments (*Assessorati*) deal with education and training issues at regional level.

Furthermore, the Education Office of the Regional authorities is responsible for planning the integrated educational offer which includes general education and vocational training; school network planning, based on provincial plans; school calendar determination; funds destined to non-state schools. It is also responsible for vocational training.

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The regional competences therefore include the initiatives geared towards ensuring initial integration, including higher education technical-vocational training, advanced training, vocational retraining, continuing training, etc.

The main responsibilities of the Regions concerning education and vocational training can be delegated to Provinces and Communes on the basis of a trend which reserves functions of guidance, planning and monitoring to the Regions. As a result, this gives them fewer and fewer managing functions.

As for three-year vocational education and training courses, falling under the responsibilities of the Regions, the Institute for the development of professional training of workers (*Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori* – Isfol) is the reference body for research and monitoring activities, policies and guidance to Regions.

There is no administration for higher education at the regional level.

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The collaboration between State, Regions and Provinces has enhanced, in the last few years, the flexibility of our education system, through the possibility of passing from one pathway to the other and from the school and the vocational training systems with the aim of preventing school drop-out.

There are two systems that provide adult education. The first falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, University and Research. The second, which provides continuing vocational training for adult workers, falls under the responsibility of regional and local authorities, of social partners and of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Policies.

INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Vocational upper secondary education

As far as the organisation of the study plan is concerned, almost every upper secondary institute is divided into a first two-year course and a second three-year course. The two-year course is attended by students aged from 14 to 16 years, the three-year course by students aged from 16 to 19.

Generally, classes at upper secondary level should have not less than 25 and no more than 28 students in the first year, while in the following years the minimum is 20 students.

At this level of education, the total number of hours in lower secondary school is established on an annual basis. Timetables of upper secondary schools vary a lot depending on the number of subjects included in the study courses of the various institutes and the teaching hours devoted to each of these subjects.

During the initial two-year cycle, the curriculum of the technical colleges includes the following subjects, which are common to all specialisations: Italian, history, chemistry, geography, foreign language,

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mathematics, physics, natural sciences, biology, law and economics, physical education and religious education or alternative subject (optional).

The only difference concerns specific subjects corresponding to the branch chosen and the practical exercises belonging to each branch.

During the second cycle, which lasts three years, the general subjects are common to all specialisations. The other subjects vary according to the branch chosen. A considerable part of the curriculum is devoted to practical exercises in specialised fields.

Within the same class, the subjects are taught to all at the same level.

The teaching methods are adapted to the objectives specific to each specialised branch and to local economic and social requirements. An endeavour is made to encourage polyvalent professionalism, which will form the basis for any subsequent specialisation.

Practical activities must be provided to give students experience which will enable them to work with the production processes that are typical of the sector concerned.

There are many initiatives in connection with the branch of study in which they are organised, the socio-economic and cultural situation of the territory in which the school operates, the funds and infrastructure

that it can obtain not only from the Ministry but also from companies, associations of industrialists, small businesses, professionals, local banks, etc.

First-level initial vocational training

Vocational training falls under the Regions' responsibility and also through delegation and transfer of functions and tasks to the Provinces. The State remains nonetheless responsible for setting the essential minimum levels of provision.

Initial vocational training concerns training for 14-17 year-old students carried out by accredited training agencies and schools providing three-year education and training pathways (*Istruzione e Formazione Professionale – IeFP*) in accordance with the State-Regions Agreement of 19 June 2003. Such pathways should have at least a three-year duration, provide subjects and activities related to both general cultural education and vocational areas and lead to the attainment of a vocational qualification acknowledged at the national level and corresponding at least to the II European level (Decision of the Council 85/368/CEE), released by the Regions through accredited training organisations.

Initial training includes external training for underage apprentices (foreseen by the 'right-duty' to education and training) organised by the Regions and by the Provinces through short formative modules (120 annual hours dedicated to vocational training and 120 annual hours of basic competences).

As far as young people aged 14-17 are concerned, the regulation framework has been modified since year 1999, passing from compulsory schooling (Law no. 9/1999) and formative schooling (Law no. 144/1999), to

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'right/duty' (*diritto/dovere*) to education and training for at least 12 years (in the school system) or up to the obtainment of a three-year vocational qualification (either at school or in the initial vocational training system) before reaching 18 years of age.

The three-year pathways have been established at the national level to integrate accredited training agencies with schools. According to the type of courses provided (more education-oriented or more training-oriented), the responsibility of the course will be of the school or of the training agency. They are financed by the Regions through national funds allocated by the Ministry of Labour and by the Ministry of education, as well as through their own funds.

A qualification or a school certificate will be released.

Initial vocation training, including the external apprenticeship training, is provided by vocational training premises identified by the Regions, through the so called 'credit': the Regions recognise to a public or private entity the power to provide training supported through public funds. The only requirement for the external training of apprentices is to be over 16 years old.

However, the first structure of a national credit plan has been introduced in 2001. A decree established that all formative organisations which intend to carry out interventions using public funds should be accredited in the respect of specific requirements related to specific formative/guidance services.

As far as apprenticeship is concerned, the legislative framework is the law no. 30/2003 which introduced 3 types of apprenticeships among which is the apprenticeship for the fulfilment of the 'right-duty' to education and training, lasting three years. In this case, the formative activities are financed by the Ministry of Labour, through the annually allocated national financial resources and the regional funds.

As for the formative aspect of this measure, the regulation of the formative profiles for apprenticeship destined to minors is under the Regions' and Autonomous Provinces' responsibility, in accordance with the Ministry of labour and the Ministry of education, upon opinion of the social partners.

Enrolment to all formative pathways during the period of compulsory education (10 years)/'right-duty' to education (12 years) is free of charge.

The access requirements to the three-year vocational education and training pathways refer to the completion of lower secondary school. Enrolment in the first grade requires being less than 15 years of age. Access of young people coming from other pathways to the following grades (the so-called 'bridges') is extended to young people under 18 years of age.

The duration of the pathways, which foresee school attendance and stages in enterprises, is not the same everywhere in Italy, and is approximately 1 000 hours per year, with a total amount of 3 000 hours in the three years. For handicapped trainees, and more generally for trainees with specific needs, the regions also provide one-year and two-year vocational training pathways.

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All the three-year pathways provide stages, which are considered fundamental in the vocational training system. The stage duration is decided at regional level, and is done so in accordance with the related qualifications. The classes are generally composed of 20 trainees, even if the maximum limit changes by Region.

Second-level initial vocational training

Second-level vocational training activities are addressed at those who have obtained an upper secondary school leaving certificate or a first-level qualification in the three year vocational education and training courses. Second-level courses, offering a qualification and a specialisation in a profession of a specific area, foresee full time attendance in an accredited formative institute, which manages the courses, and a compulsory 'stage'.

Second-level vocational training also includes a professionalizing apprenticeship, which foresees external training (120 hours) or training which takes place in an enterprise; and apprenticeship training aimed at the acquisition of a higher level qualification; due to this combination of job/training, the apprenticeship is a 'mixed cause' labour contract. Regions are responsible for the external training.

Regions are also responsible for the establishment of the post-diploma courses/post-vocational qualification courses; they organise the courses by setting up a regional/provincial call and train professional profiles with a high specialization level to meet the needs of the local professional market. Regions release higher qualification diplomas or, in the case of short courses, an attendance certificate.

In most Regions, courses are financed through the European Social Fund, therefore they are offered free of charge.

Generally, admission foresees a numerus clausus limitation, as often demand is much higher than the number of available places. Selective procedures based on test or interviews are foreseen; sometimes additional specific requisites are also requested to access the course (for example, a specific upper secondary school certificate).

All information on courses and admission requirements can be obtained by the Education Office of the regional and provincial authorities responsible for the professional training, by the Regional agencies for labour, by the Territorial employment services and through guidance centres.

Generally, the bodies responsible for the organisation of courses publish a participation announcement on the national and local press to specify all the information related to the courses: admission requirements, documents needed for the enrolment, length, course programme, 'stages' in enterprises, attendance allowance, and professional profile acquired at the end of the course.

Foreign students living in the area, where the course is held, and having completed compulsory education in Italy or in the country of origin, also have access to the courses.

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These pathways last from 400 to 1200 hours. They are organised into short one-year cycles (400-600 hours); they only rarely last two years and have a high level of planning character related to the specific requirements of the local productive system. Generally, the total amount of hours is defined by the Regions, according to the professional profile to be acquired at the end of the course, and to the specific requirements of the local productive system.

The course programme is diversified at regional and local level, and it is defined by the institute/body managing the course. It can foresee blocks of weekly lessons or lessons distributed over several months to reach the total amount of hours required.

The 'stages' in enterprises constitute an important and compulsory part of the course; enterprises should principally adhere to the project and offer placements to course participants. Distance learning modules are also foreseen.

Generally, according to funds, a maximum number of participants (e.g. 20-23) is established, while a minimum of 12 participants is required to start a course.

Basic competences cover the Italian/foreign language competence area, the mathematical and technological competence area and the ICT competence area. The transversal competences generally refer to working in groups, problem solving, entrepreneurship and communication's abilities, which are fundamental for each professional profile. The professional competences refer to the knowledge/competences necessary to develop the profession related to the relevant profile.

Students obtain a vocational qualification certificate, which enables entry to the job market or an attendance certificate specifying the competences acquired. The assignment of a final mark is not always compulsory.

CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The notion of continuing vocational training confirmed in Italy includes all the training activities making up (or permitting) training courses for knowledge and competences which follow initial training and which are distinct from it. In recent years efforts have been intensified to consider continuing training as a fundamental component of lifelong learning policies, connected with learning as a strategy for developing a knowledge-based competitive economy, focusing on people as citizens and workers.

In Italy, continuing vocational training has been regulated through specific legislation starting from the early 90s. In the last decades legislation has further developed and this has led to new policies (Joint Professional Funds for continuing vocational training) managed by social partners. However, these policies apparently haven't been able to adequately answer the requests coming from the production and labour world. Different initiatives aimed at reforming the system and promoting the right to lifelong learning have been discussed for years.

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Legislation is based on three Agreements, signed in the 90s between the government and social partners:

- the tripartite agreement of 23 July 1993 on the cost of work which has among other things defined the institutional aspect of the continuing vocational training system and which has laid the basis for the launch of the national law 236/93;
- the tripartite agreement 25 September 1996, culminating in the Law 196/97 (so called 'Treu package'), which indicated the general objectives of the reform of the continuing vocational training system;
- the agreement of 22 December 1998, specifying the characteristics of the system.

Thanks to the ESF (European Social Fund) it was possible to realise the first intervention for the development of continuing training, in particular through Objective 4 (1994-1999 programming period). Based on the first results of ESF, in 1996 the Ministry of labour, together with the Regions and social partners, built the experimentation of the national policy on continuing training by using financial resources. Afterwards, law 144/1999 and law 53/2000 (the latter recognises the right to paid leave for training purposes) were introduced together with the Joint Interprofessional Funds for continuing training.

At present, different policies coexist: policies at national level for supporting continuing training, policies developed by social partners and policies acknowledging European trends. Within these policies, several experimentations have started up, however only law 53/2003 supports the right to lifelong learning by also foreseeing the leave for training purposes for workers.

The need to recognise the competences acquired in the work place is a theme that has been debated for years, but companies have paid it little attention. This, for example, is valid for the introduction of the 'citizen's training booklet' (The *Libretto Formativo* - September 2003) which is the worker's personal booklet which records the competences acquired during apprenticeship training, placement contract specialist training and the continuing training performed during working life and carried out by Region accredited agents as well as the competences acquired formally and informally according to the directions of the European Union regarding permanent apprenticeship, as long as they are recognised and certified.

Citizen's training booklet is a tool to report certifications of skills based on minimum homogeneity standards used throughout the national territory. The objective at the base of this process is to realise a national skills certification system based on identifying homogenous standards to read the various training courses. While respecting the subsidiarity principle this will provide transparency and transferability of skills in a national and European context.

Still, statistical surveys reveal that two out of three businesses that offer their employees training do not use an evaluation system. The most frequently used evaluation system is to verify that acquired competences are used at the work place, then to verify the improvement in operational services, tests to

verify the acquired competences, the individual exam/interview and balance/analysis of the competences. Only in a few cases the acquired competences are certified.

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Most of the funds for continuing training come from private sources, either companies or workers themselves. Public or social partners participation is limited and does not affect private choices, which rarely refer to groups of the same sector.

The national policy for supporting continuing training and the policy referring to the ESF fall under the responsibility of: Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (General Directorate for guidance and training policies), and for national coordination: Regional administrative authorities or delegated provincial administrative authorities. If applicable, implementation and coordination (financing included) is done at local level. However, an important role in the allocation of resources at sectoral and local level is also played by social partners.

The Joint Interprofessional Funds for continuing training, which are a sort of Sectoral Training Fund, are managed directly (and solely) by the social partners, and are supervised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, which is also responsible for the monitoring of initiatives. The Funds are set up as associations according to the Interconfederal agreement signed between the social partners.

The main instruments supporting continuing training currently operating in Italy are the following:

- 1 - the European Social Fund 2007-2013 (effective since 1994);
- 2 - national Law 236/93, which set up a fund for vocational training (effective since 1996);
- 3 - national Law 53/00 (effective since 2001);
- 4 - Interprofessional Equal Funds for continuing training, a kind of Sectoral Training Funds, managed directly by social partners, set up in 2001 and which became operative as of 2004.

As for the two national laws, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies allocates the resources among the Regions and the Autonomous Provinces and distributes the funds to them, and they in turn issue notices and invitations to tender.

Regarding resources made available by the Joint Interprofessional Funds, they themselves are responsible for directly issuing the notices and invitations to tender. The funds finance company, sectorial, territorial and individual training plans to benefit the member companies.

In Italy, the funds attributed to continuing training mainly derive from the obligatory contribution of enterprises to the INPS (national welfare institute). These financial resources are drawn from the annual yield of the contribution of 0.30 % of business's contributions to the INPS as contribution for obligatory insurance against involuntary unemployment.

Continuing training activities in Italy are implemented by a variety of agencies and institutions. These can generally be included into three main categories:

- companies and organisations (public and private) which lay on training activities for their own staff, consortia of companies, etc;

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- training agencies and bodies (accredited), consultancy firms, bilateral bodies and other agencies, i.e. the social partners, industrial trade associations operating in categories or sectors, consultancy firms linked to the industrial districts or to the local productive systems or to the territorial agreements, professional associations, professional bodies, technology supply companies, etc;
- institutional-type bodies (universities, job centres, permanent territorial centres, schools, etc.). The role of public universities has recently been implemented; they have indeed instituted a national network (promoted by ISFOL) composed of centres set-up for continuing education.

Generally, the intended recipients of continuing training interventions financed through support policies are employed workers. Specific criteria relative to other categories identified from time to time (free lance workers, semi subordinates in integration semi-subordinates, in layoff fund, over 50 year olds, small business employees, low-skilled employees etc.) are stipulated in the single proclamations and regional notices of the ESF, of the Law 236/93 and 53/00 as well as Interprofessional Funds.

In consequence of the present economic recession, some non structural interventions have been issued, with the aim of strengthening the social protection of persons employed by enterprises in financial crisis, also through mixed interventions (training and integration to the income).

At present it is necessary to use different available instruments to obtain different objectives and target groups which can be summarised as follows:

- The European Social Fund intended to sustain the adaptability of workers and processes for anticipating and managing change, mainly through providing training and organisational development interventions of companies, but with particular attention to creating equity type benefits directly for workers, prioritising SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises);
- In the first ten years of activity the national Law 236/93 financed company training interventions and could try individual training interventions and the training plans agreed by the social partners on a company, sectorial and territorial level. Since 2003, the Law 236/93 has undergone a revision of the standards for using financial resources. With the new implementing decrees the support for the bands of workers occupying 'weak' professional positions, generally not favoured by continuing training initiatives, tend to favour the targets of younger workers who are already sufficiently "educated";
- The national Law 53/00 recognises the general right to training throughout life and to this aim finances training leave connected with remodelling working timetables;
- The Interprofessional Equal Funds for continuing training acts directly in favour of the member companies promoting the updating of employees' competences and the organisational development in order to increase the companies' competitiveness.

As a rule there are no principles for time and place organisation. The available statistical data show that on average a worker participates in about 26 hours of training courses and that a large part of training activity is carried out within working contexts. Therefore it is during working time, and is mainly comprised of

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blended and informal procedures. One part of the training activities, especially financed activities, is carried out outside the work environment or partly within and partly outside working time.

The main business training themes (either financed by public resources or not) are the acquisition of new personal abilities, which are also aimed at better knowledge of the worker's own work context, business management, IT, production techniques and technologies, environmental themes, work health and safety.

Regarding training activities, the main theme in the last few years has been organisational innovation, followed by quality, technological innovation and safety in the work place and in the environment.

In Italy, the standards used for the assessment of the quality of the training system and the related quality assurance mechanisms are implemented through a special institute for the accreditation of training centres.

The accreditation of vocational training activities is granted according to the following three broad types:

- Compulsory training: this includes courses provided in the vocational training system and in the context of apprenticeships;
- Advanced training: this includes post-compulsory training, advanced technical instruction, high-level training for courses during and after university;
- Continuing training intended for persons who work in "Cassa Integrazione" schemes (*a sort of wages guarantee fund*) and mobility schemes, unemployed persons who require training in preparation for employment, and apprentices who have completed compulsory training.

To be accredited, the training centres of public or private bodies must provide certain guarantees based on the following criteria: managerial and logistics capacities; economic situation; vocational skills; levels of effectiveness and efficiency in previous activities; long-standing relations with the social and productive system in the area.

The accredited training centres must offer services to users of all kinds and must provide the following:

- information on training and job opportunities;
- guidance in the techniques and strategies involved in looking for work, the new forms of work available and the labour market;
- individualised guidance aimed at helping trainees discover their attitudes, interests and motivations with a view to defining their own career plan.

The Regions and the Autonomous Provinces are responsible for accreditation. They must carry out a preliminary investigation to assess the documentation produced. This investigation, which is carried out on site, involves assessing conformity and operability according to the set requirements.

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This procedure also involves an annual assessment to verify that the relevant requirements have been maintained. In the event of any unsatisfactory findings, the accreditation can be suspended or withdrawn.

There are no structured consultancy and guidance services for occupied adults, with the exception of any that may be provided by Job Centres (which offer guidance interviews and, sometimes, the updating of their competences) by structures provided in the industrial districts and in some cases, by companies. At

present, ISFOL (Institute for Vocational Education for Workers) is carrying out a census at national level on the existing guidance offered and is conducting an analysis of counselling demand.

Generally speaking there are not any specific regulations aimed at identifying the professional resources to be used for continuing training or to ensure the quality of training for the trainers involved in continuing training, as minimum qualification requirements.

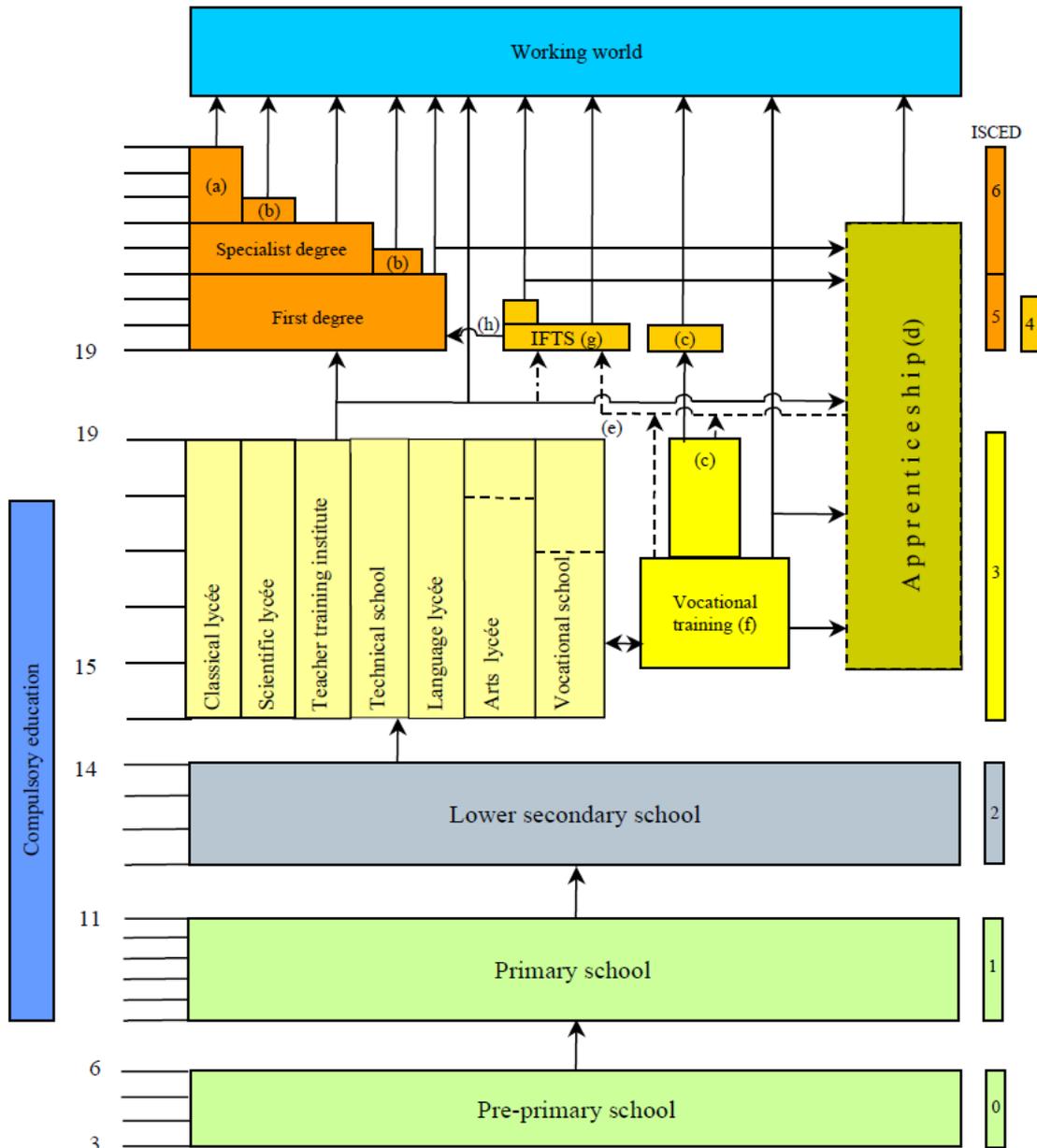
Law 236/93 has financed training courses for trainers (vocational retraining and re-skilling actions for workers in bodies operating under Law 40/87).

The bodies concerned by this financing facility are those which the Ministry of Labour, in the meaning of Law 40/87, provides contributions for the general administrative expenses relating to the needs for operational coordination at national level which are not covered by regional funds. This category includes private national bodies which operate in more than one region and which are set up by the national organisations for salaried workers, the self-employed, entrepreneurs, training and social associations or associations of companies and their consortia or bodies within the cooperative movement. These bodies must also apply the national contract for sectoral workers and publish the annual balance sheet for each centre, and they must not pursue profit-making aims.

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Annex

The Italian education and training system before the reform *



- * The system shown is still partly in force while waiting for the decrees enacting the reform (Law 53/03)
- (a) Postgraduate school / research doctorate
 - (b) Masters
 - (c) Regional post-qualification courses
 - (d) The length of apprenticeship is set by the employment contract; apprentices may be between 15 and 24, except in particular cases (see Section 4.4)
 - (e) Entrance possible after accreditation of prior learning
 - (f) Students obtaining the qualification are able to complete compulsory education prior to the age of 18
 - (g) IFTS – Higher technical education and training
 - (h) Entrance possible by recognition of credits

Source: ISFOL.