

# COUNTRY FACTSHEET ITALY

D2.1 State of the Art Report

| Country Factsheet:   | Italy   |
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| <p><b>Framework (figures, diagrams or rubrics):</b> If there are diagrams or rubrics setting out transversal competences, please include them here, and provide the source</p> |   |
| <p><b>Situation in Italy</b></p>   | <p>In Italy, the necessity to provide actions finalized to the recognition of formative credits and the certification of the non-formal and informal learnings acquired has been introduced by the law <b>92/2012, art. 4 c. 55</b> in 2012. The following legislative decree <b>D.Lgs 13/2013</b> states that the Republic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● promotes lifelong learning as a personal right.</li> <li>● Guarantees the recognition, the transparency and the exploitation of such learning, however acquired, to everybody.</li> <li>● Defines the general norms and the essential levels of performance to obtain certification. The formal recognition is due to the Regions that are responsible of the process of certification.</li> <li>● Provides a National System of Competences' Certification (SNCC).</li> </ul> <p>The common reference framework for the operation of the services of identification, validation and certification of competences has been set in the <b>Ministerial Decree of the Ministry of Labor, together with the Ministry of Education, of the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2015</b>, which aims to achieve the following objectives:</p> <p>a) to promote the transparency of learning and the coherence of training to the needs of companies and professions in order to facilitate the matching of labor supply and demand and to increase the productivity and competitiveness of the production system;</p> <p>b) to broaden the use of qualifications at National and European level in order to facilitate geographical and professional mobility, also with a view to internationalization of companies and professions.</p> <p>It also specifies the minimum standards for 2 key processes, operationally defined as follows:</p> <p>a. the "identification and validation process", intended as a service provided by a body entitled in accordance with the National Decree – <b>D.Lgs 13/2013</b> and aimed at the recognition of the competences acquired by the person through a mapping and verification of formal learning evidences, even in the event of interruption of the training, non-formal and informal learning. The <b>“Support document for the identification of acquired competences”</b> (art. 6) has to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Personal information;</li> <li>● Competences to be validated;</li> <li>● Working experiences and formal, non-formal and informal learning relevant to the competences identified in step b).</li> </ul> <p>b. the "skills certification procedure", understood as a service aimed at issuing a <b>"Certificate"</b> relating to the competences acquired by the person in formal contexts or validated as acquired in non-formal or informal contexts. The «Certificate» is a third-party certificate, an officially recognized certification.</p> <p>In 2018, the <b>National Qualification Framework (NQF)</b> has been set up so as to reference the Italian national qualifications to the EQF, ensuring their comparability</p> |

and reciprocal connections, and at the same time representing the appropriate tool to describe and classify all the qualifications released within the National System of Competences Certification (formally set up in 2013 with the Decree n.13, but effectively put into force in January 2021 with the with the Interministerial Decree “Provisions for the adoption of guidelines for the interoperability of public bodies entitled in the national skills certification system”).

In Italy, the process of competences’ certification is exclusively referred to the competences that lead to qualifications included and described in the National/Regional repertoires of Qualifications. So far, this means that the transversal competences are not considered a per se relevant object of the VNFIL process, although they are somehow mentioned in the NQF. So as to ensure coherence and continuity with the EQF, the overall structure of the Italian NQF is developed through a common reference table, including the 8 levels foreseen in the EQF, detailed in terms of learning outcomes corresponding to the increasing level of capacity and complexity. According to the EQF, the learning outcomes are the reference element for describing the competences based on three dimensions: knowledge, ability, autonomy and responsibility (as a unique dimension). The descriptors detail what an individual should be able to do, with a certain level of autonomy and responsibility in relation to the acquisition of a specific qualification. Since transversal competences cannot be formally validated and certified per se, because they are not described as an autonomous set of competences, until now, there isn’t a legal Framework in Italy that allows the identification, validation and certification process for transversal competences, but only as a sub-descriptor of general and technical competences.

### Conceptual approaches and specific national /regional policies promoting transversal competences in validation and guidance processes:

#### **National Strategic Plan of Adults competences**

As regards to the adult population, the "**National Strategic Plan of Adults competences**" of 2021 has as its main objectives the creation of a strengthened coordination infrastructure between the various national policies and measures in this sector and the definition of new lines of action for the first three years of the implementation period.

The Plan is built starting from the centrality of 3 guiding principles:

- 1. Universality of policies, selectivity of aid and centrality of the person.** This means that the interventions of the Plan aim at the progressive construction of a stable and permanent system of services accessible to all;
- 2. Subsidiarity of governance, concentration of resources and diversification and proximity of services.** The interventions of the Plan are the result of the institutional partnership method and promote integrated networks as a model of organization and delivery of services;
- 3. Gradualism, progressiveness and incrementalism in the development of systems and services.** It aims to promote a bottom-up approach that starts from the enhancement of current experiences to promote both territorial mainstreaming and progressive connection and coordination through a unitary and shared strategy.



**Users (Providers and beneficiaries) and uses (purposes) of validation of transversal competences**

**1**  
**What type of organizations/initiatives/projects offer VNFIL for transversal competences and at which stages of guidance and validation processes?**

The National Qualification Framework defines *abilities* as a cognitive component that entail the capacity to apply knowledge and know how to fulfill tasks, and recall transversal skills:

- Cognitive, which allow a correct interpretation and integration of the reality;
- Of social interactions, linked to interacting with other individuals;
- Of activation, in relation to the capacity of facing and solving problems

Currently, assessment of transversal skills has been experimented mainly within the formal scholastic path. With the **Law 107/2015**, a new approach to teaching, aimed at all students of the second two years and the last year of upper secondary schools, obligatorily provides for **guidance pathways, called "Pathways for transversal skills and guidance" (PCTO)**.

These pathways happen in the form of courses, which integrate education, training and work systems through a productive collaboration between the different areas, with the aim of creating a place dedicated to learning where pupils are able to concretely learn how to approach the world of work in the targeted economic sectors, in a responsible and autonomous way. The courses are intended to provide young people, in addition to basic knowledge, with the skills necessary to enter the labor market, alternating "traditional" study hours with classroom training hours and hours spent within companies, to guarantee them experience "in the field" and overcome the "training" gap between the world of work and the academic world in terms of skills and preparation.

Opening the world of school to the outside world allows more generally to transform the concept of learning into permanent activity (lifelong learning, opportunities for growth and work throughout the lifespan), giving equal dignity to school education and the experience of work.

At the beginning of 2022, a law proposal has been approved, aiming at introducing the recognition of "non cognitive competences" (also known as soft or life skills) in the Italian public school system through a three-year experimentation. The experimentation will happen in schools at all levels – from ECEC to adult learning centers – and teachers will be train in parallel.

It is worth to mention the MASTER Erasmus+ project carried out in the Umbria Region, which aims at introducing low-skilled adults to training and educational opportunities that can improve their situation in the labor market, by developing their self-assessment skills and their personal, social and learning competence [PSL]. The piloting foreseen by the MASTER project is intended as a part of the guidance process for allowing the user to gain specific information about strengths and competences to be improved with reference to PSL, and its functional to the identification stage of the VNFIL process. The piloting has been provided in cooperation with Public Employment Services (PES) and social enterprises dealing with active labor policies. The first experimentation of the self-assessment process involved 40 adults (13 women, 27 men), low skilled, long-term unemployed.

**2**

In the framework of the experimentation conducted in Umbria Region through the MASTER project, the practitioners have been involved in Peer Learning



**How are practitioners made aware of the focus on validation of transversal competences?**

Activities about PSL, then in building the testing procedure and in adapting and selecting the tools for self-assessment for each users. In the framework of the MASTER self-assessment, they shared a common online procedure for administering the tools, they administrate the tools and they constantly share a feedback about the testing implementation and results. The cooperation between a private adult learning organization and the Public Employment Services represented the application of the subsidiarity principle to a practical case, on the basis of a bottom-up approach.

**3 Do practitioners have access to training and guidelines on the use of frameworks and tools setting out transversal competences?**

Since the validation process cannot be applied to transversal competences per se, the guidelines for practitioners refer to validation of specific job related competences in correspondence with the National Atlas (Atlante del Lavoro e delle Qualificazioni).

Each Italian Region developed its own training path for validation practitioners. Differences among the Validation systems in place in the Italian Regions are mainly ascribed to how professionals are trained and certified as well as to practical aspects on how the identification and validation systems are implemented, evaluated and digitized.

Here are the examples from Umbria and Tuscany – Regions involved by the TRANSVAL-EU project – and Piedmont, which, in 2019, was awarded the first prize in the category “Policy” within the third edition of the “Biennale on VPL” held in Berlin.

In Umbria Region, **2 Units of Competences** are in force:

- "To exercise the accompaniment and support to competences identification and prior learning transparency, according to the Decree of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015, also for the purpose of the recognition of the training credits in the Umbria Region".
- "To exercise the planning and implementation of validation activities according to the Decree of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015, also for the purpose of recognition of training credits in the Umbria Region".

The training programme planned and implemented by ARPAL Umbria has been designed according to the 2 Unit of Competences, above mentioned, so as to certify at the end of the training and the related exams, the mentioned competences.

Only individuals with one of the following pre-requisites, can access the training:

- educational diploma or a qualification at least equal to level 4 EQF, accompanied by professional experience - documented through contracts of work in compliance with the legislation in force at the time of the service - relating to one or more of the following roles: career guidance, job supply-demand matching, selection of personnel, selection of participants in formal and non-formal learning paths, evaluation of learning, developed for at least five years, even if not continuous in last ten;
- three-year, or specialist/master's degree in psychological, sociological and pedagogical disciplines, accompanied by professional experience, in the terms of which the previous paragraph, developed for at least one year, even if not continuous, in the last five;



- academic courses in the context of degree or master courses provided by public universities on the transparency and validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

The training and the related exams are the basic requirements for IVC practitioners to be enrolled in the open public list of Practitioners authorized to execute the functions overseeing the provision of identification and validation services, recognition of training credits and certification of skills. The training courses are voluntary and they do not represent either an obligation or a right to access the certification sessions.

In Tuscany, the Tuscany Regional Employment Agency (ARTI) promotes agreements with the Regional Scholastic Office, so that the Provincial Centers for Adult Education (CPIA) support, also from a logistical point of view, the Employment Centers (CPI) in the provision of services.

For the implementation of the services of identification, validation and certification of skills, the following professional roles are envisaged, which implement the national functions identified by the Legislative Decree 30 June 2015:

- Expert in the Identification and Transparency of Skills (EITC) who performs the "Function of accompaniment and support in the identification and transparency of skills".
- Responsible for the process of identification and validation of competences (RIV), who supervises and is responsible for the identification, validation and certification of competences.
- Expert in Evaluation of Learning and Skills (EVAC), who is the technical-methodological manager and carries out the "Planning and implementation of evaluation activities".
- Professional Sector Expert (ESP), who represents the technical-professional referent of specific Professional Figures as described in the Regional Directory of Professional Figures, and who covers the function of implementation of the assessment activities for the aspects of curricular and professional content.

Regione Piemonte provides operators with specific training in order to create a **Register of Experts** responsible for the whole process, also by setting out the phases of the validation process (identification, validation and certification) and determining standards for intermediate and final certification.

These are the two competence profiles and the related training:

**Expert responsible of the certification process (Esperto in Tecniche di Certificazione).** The Expert has the main role in the process and is registered in the official regional register. The training is programmed directly by regional officers and concerns the following elements:

- European, National and Regional regulations framework.
- Regional regulations, actors, procedures, instruments on validation services.
- Case study, focus group and simulations on validation.

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| <p><b>4</b><br/>How are employers engaged in validation of transversal competences as stakeholders and users (e.g., in helping to define relevant transversal competences).</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final exam. Passing the exam is a condition for being registered in the official register and authorized to the computer system and release certifications.</li> </ul> <p><b>Operator trained on certification (Operatore Adeguatamente Formato).</b> The operator has the role of keeping relations and direct contact with the citizens supporting them in the collection of evidences and in the compositions of all the experiences. The core elements of the training are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing the Regional repertory of professional profiles and competences;</li> <li>• Management of computer system instruments to track the services and its outputs;</li> <li>• Tailor made solutions for the citizens' expectations.</li> </ul> <p>In the case of PCTO, the training courses are implemented by the schools on the basis of special agreements with companies, chambers of commerce, social enterprises that are willing to host the students for this learning period. In this way, employers are sensitized to the topic of identifying and assessing transversal competences, through an assessment moment at the end of the experience.</p> |
| <p><b>5</b><br/>How are educators/trainers engaged in validation of transversal competences as stakeholders e.g. in helping to define relevant transversal competences or in supporting learners to develop these competences)?</p> | <p>In the case of PCTO, the educational institution, with the collaboration of the external tutors designated by the host / company, evaluates the path taken and certifies the skills acquired by the students during the course (the internal teacher-tutor is responsible for preparing what is necessary for a complete and accurate assessment). This means that it isn't upon teachers alone to carry out this kind of path. Nevertheless, one or more teachers from the scholastic institutions are dedicated to the "Pathways for transversal skills and guidance": He/She is the connecting point for the activities envisaged in the learning pathway. He/She prepares the material needed by the pupils' tutors for the evaluation of the courses, monitors the regular implementation of the activities. Furthermore, as mentioned above, thanks to the new experimentation to be started in 2022 in the Italian public school system, teachers will be trained on the identification and assessment of the so-called non-cognitive competences</p>  |
| <p><b>6</b><br/>How are learners engaged in VNFIL processes that include the validation of transversal competences (e.g. self-assessment, peer assessment)?</p>   | <p>In the case of PCTO, the skills acquired constitute credits and at the end of the course, certificates of attendance, certificates of skills and credits are issued. The guidelines detail all the documents required to assess the skills and issue the related credits and certificates.</p>  |
| <p><b>7</b><br/>General awareness: Are there national campaigns to promote VNFIL</p>  | <p>At national level, activities are carried out on a Regional basis.</p>  |



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| <p><b>service? How and where people can find information on this service?</b></p> | <p>In the specificity of Regione Piemonte, the Region is currently investing in validation with a new measure in order to increase the target group and to spread knowledge of these services to more stakeholders.</p> |
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| <p><b>Quality Assurance</b></p>   |  |
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| <p><b>Are quality assurance arrangements focused on the VNFIL process (and supporting the implementation of relevant national strategies) in place? Is a specific organization in charge of conducting quality assurance?</b></p> | <p>In Italy, the Quality Assurance system is based on a general framework established at National level through 2015 Interministerial Decree defining the operative framework for validation, and implemented accordingly by each Validation body at Regional level. This framework aimed at ensuring system reliability as it asks the entitled public bodies to ensure the adoption of mechanisms, to define criteria, thresholds and methods of verification, monitoring and control able to guarantee the services' coherence with the National Decree.</p> <p>In January <b>2021</b>, with the <b>Interministerial Decree of the 5th of January "Provisions for the adoption of guidelines for the interoperability of public bodies entitled in the national skills certification system"</b>, the National System for the Competences' certification entered into force (following what established with the D.Lgs 13/2013), defining minimum standards and expected conformity.</p> <p>The guidelines bring together and systematize different operational provisions mainly aimed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) identifying indicators, thresholds and methods of checking, evaluating and assessing minimum standards, for both professionals and the overall service level of performance, also with the aim to establish essential performance levels and services guarantee;</li> <li>b) defining criteria for the Implementation of the National repertoire of Education and Vocational training qualifications and professional qualifications as for the Legislative Decree 13/2013 art. 8, also in light of the European education and Vocational education and Training credits and for its periodic updating, to be done at least every three years.</li> <li>c) progressive implementation and functional connection of the unique informative backbone as for the national Law 92/2012 art. 4 c. 51 which development will ensure the interoperability among National and local data centers, allowing the diffusion, monitoring, evaluation and tracking of validated learning and of the issued certificates. Furthermore, the Regional VNFIL systems foresee the creation of a Regional Register of practitioners, that have undergone the training for validation practitioners and are certified to deliver the practice to users. Through this tool, it is ensured that the quality of the service is maintained coherently with the regional and national provisions.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>How are validity and reliability of assessments ensured?</b></p>  | <p>At Regional level, the VNFIL process foresees the creation of a Certification Commission that completes the practice and issues the certification of competences for the user. The certification commissions are perfect bodies and operate in compliance with the principles of third party, independence and objectivity of the evaluation process. The commissions are composed of three members:</p>  |



**Are there any evaluations on the use of competence frameworks you have identified? On their impact?**

- the President, expressed by the Region and drawn from a special list of resources authorized for this purpose;
- two commissioners taken from the open public list, for the professional economic sector object to which the qualification subject to certification refers, qualified to exercise the function "Provision of evaluation activities for aspects of curricular and professional content";
- a professional qualified to perform the function "Planning and carrying out assessment activities", with methodological support functions and recording secretary, without voting rights.

The commissioners are identified through a public draw, according to the principle of rotation, without prejudice to the right of renunciation for objective impediment. The appointment of the Commissions and the administrative management of the procedure, including the release and preservation of the qualifications issued, is under the responsibility of the Region.

The National Qualification Framework is continuously monitored by INAPP and by a national commission that includes ANPAL (National Agency for Active Labor Policy), MIUR (Ministry for Education, University and Research) and Regional Administrations. This aims to have a continuous update on the National Atlas.