

TEEUP PROJECT

Survey Report

First Part

1 Definitions

1.1 Vocational training

The providers of vocational training services in Italy belong to both the public and the private sector. Extraordinary importance have the consulting and / or training firms that have organized, according to a study from 2008, 61.9% of external management hours. These are companies that provide training services to pay for almost all types of businesses. This is confirmed by the frequency with which the small firms (10-19 employees), in which external courses account for about 60% of the total training hours, rely to them a portion of their external training: 41.8 %. This percentage increases in proportion to the size of businesses to reach 76.4% in enterprises with 1,000 or more employees. Training companies are also responsible for high percentages of the hours of training courses in some areas of economic activity: 94.8% for post and telecommunications, 88.0% for the production and distribution of energy, gas and water, 82.5% for the insurance sector.

Much smaller is the role played by the suppliers of machinery and technology (including software) that offer training as an extra service connected to their products. Overall, in 2005 they offered 16.0% of the total hours of external training. Again, small firms (10-19 employees) who quickly need to acquire foreign operational machinery (22.2% of "external" training hours) make greater use of them. Among the various sectors of economic activity, the suppliers of machinery are the primary provider of training (44.6%) only for firms in the area of trade, maintenance and repair of motor vehicles. Very limited is the role played by other actors/organizers that include business associations, chambers of commerce and industry associations (7.4%), public bodies and the formation of regional centres for vocational training (6.2%), schools and public and private universities (5.6%) and unions (0.8%).

1.2 Migrants

Taking into consideration the situation in Italy, the migrant figure includes both European and non-European citizens who travel from their country to work temporarily or permanently in Italy. According to the most recent study of Istat (2007) foreign residents' presence, after an annual increase of about half a million, in early 2008 is almost 3,433,000, including EU citizens: 62.5% in the North (more than 2 million), 25.0% in Central (just under 1 million) and 12.5% in the South (almost half a million). The regions with the greatest number of foreign immigrants are Lombardia (815,000 residents and about 910,000 regular migrants) and Lazio (391,000, 423,000). In the 2008 statistical report on migration, Caritas and Migrantes describe a higher number of legally present immigrants,

which ranges between 3,800,000 and 4,000,000, out of a total population of 59,619,290, with an incidence of 6.7% (slightly above the EU average, which was 6.0% in 2006).

1.3 Mobile workers

According to a recent IDC survey (a company that deals with market research on new technologies), there are eight and a half million mobile workers in Italy. This category includes all those professionals from the world of consulting, finance and marketing, working on multiple locations, across multiple offices, with various customers or means of transport. Italy shares this trend with all other European countries, but only in Italy it is accompanied by another phenomenon which knows no parallel in other EU countries. There are many people moving from regions of Southern Italy to the North regions for work. The Centre-North emerges as an area characterized by high multi-direction mobility, a model very similar to that prevailing in highly industrialized countries, where a high internal mobility is associated with a consistent flow of incoming migrants from abroad and from the South. In the South, on the contrary, mobility on short and medium distances is much smaller and is confined mainly to the mobility of low-skilled workers within the same city or district. In 2007, employees with residence in the South working in Central or Northern regions were 150,000, in comparison to 2.3% of employees with residence in the South and on the Islands, a percentage substantially similar to that of 2006.

Second part

2 Policies of migration and localization of migrants

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 Local (non existent)

2.1.2 Regional : Emilia Romagna

Regional Law n. 5 24 March 2004: norms for social integration of immigrant foreign citizens.

Amendments of Regional Law 21 february 1990, n.14 and 12 march 2003, n.2.

The law is divided into:

- Chapter I: Principles, objectives and recipients;
- Chapter II: Institutional distribution of functions and regional planning of activities;

-Chapter III: Interventions targeted towards social participation, measures against discrimination, housing politics, social integration and health assistance;

-Chapter IV: Interventions in matters of accessing childhood educational services, rights to schooling, education, and professional training, job placement, integration and intercultural communication;

-Chapter V: Final provisions

2.1.3 National

-Law 40/1998 (Turco-Napolitano Law)

-Legislative Decree 286/1998: Consolidated Law of the measures on immigration and norms on the condition of foreign nationals;

-National law 189/2002 (Bossi-Fini Law) Modification of Legislation on Immigration and Asylum (Legislative Decree 286/1998 and Law n.40/1998).

Issues regulated:

1. Visas, temporary visas, residence contract;
2. Family reunification;
3. Dispositions against illegal immigration;
4. Expulsions;
5. TCN – Temporary detention Centres;
6. Incoming migration flow;
7. Immigration of EU citizens (Schengen Agreement).

-Law-decree n. 92/2008: measures in the field of public security.

-Legislative decree 8 January 2007, n.3 - Transposition of Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents:

Member States shall grant long-term resident status to third-country nationals who have resided legally and continuously within its territory for five years immediately prior to the submission of the relevant application.

-Legislative decree 8 January 2007, n.5 - Transposition of Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification which extends the immigration rights also on the refugees.

2.1.4 European

- Decision N. 166 of 2 October 1997 of the Administrative Commission of the European Communities on Social Security for Migrant Workers on the amending of forms E 106 and E 109

-Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin

-Agreement between the Government of the Italian Republic and the Government of the Republic of Tunisia of 5 July 2000 for the employment of seasonal workers

-Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications;

Council Directive 2005/71/EC of 12 October 2005 on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research

Regulation (EC) No **562/2006** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 establishing a Community Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code)

Regulation (EC) No 592/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71 on the application of social security schemes to employed persons, to self-employed persons and to members of their families moving within the Community

2.2 SME policy and obligations

Given the importance of SMEs in Italian economic reality, developing practices of social responsibility in this context is a key factor for developing a culture of responsibility and a sustainable economic model. SMEs often adopt good practices, but are "implicit" or not perceived as practices of social responsibility and for this little publicized because unconscious or non-structured and defined in an appropriate manner. For overcoming the impasse on the difficulties perceived by SMEs to adopt practices of responsibility, it is essential to keep in mind that the Corporate Social Responsibility-CSR - is a set of rigid principles, but each firm builds its own route, according to their needs and potential. Investments in CSR by SMEs can grow exponentially and become an important source of competitiveness for the structural characteristics of these organizations: a dimension which makes them permeable to change, a more immediate and personal approach to the employees, a close link

with the territory. Among the companies that have immigrant employees, 77% of them adopt means of support for them.

2.3 SME issues

According to the Migration Dossier Caritas 2008, the first foreign community in Italy, doubled in two years, is Romanian a one (625,000 residents and, according to the estimate of the Dossier, nearly 1 million regular migrants), followed by Albanians (402,000) and Moroccans (366,000), and a little above and slightly below 150 thousand are, respectively, the Ukrainian and Chinese communities. Percentage of Europeans has risen (52.0%), while the Africans have maintained their position (23.2%) and Asians (16.1%) and Americans (8.6%) lost at least one percent. An estimate of the *Dossier* showed that the tax revenue provided by immigrants in 2007 was 3 billion and 749 million euros, of which 3.1 billion for *Irpef* payments alone and the remaining amounts for various other items (additional *Irpef* regional *Ici*, land taxes and mortgage), among which the most significant are those for tax registry (137.5 million) and income tax business (254.5 million euros). These numbers are not surprising, taking into account that, according Unioncamere, immigrants contribute 9% to Gross Domestic Product. According to the estimate of the Dossier, Europeans constitute a half of foreign presence: in particular, those of Eastern Europe; from 2000 to 2006, this was increased by 14 percent, while Africa has lost 5 and Asia and America 2 each: all areas, however, significantly increased in number. Today, in short, out of every 10 foreigners, five are European immigrants, four are split between Africans and Asians and one is American. The 880 thousand immigrants from the EU-27 (25.9%) are almost equal to the other immigrants from the Balkans and other Eastern European countries (25.3%) and show a strong presence throughout Europe. As stated before, Romania (556,000 admissions, according to the estimate of the Dossier) nearly one-sixth of the total (15.1%) and ahead by almost five points in front of Morocco (387,000) and Albania (381,000). Just fewer than 200,000 are Ukraine (195,000) and the People's Republic of China (186000), both at 5%. The Philippines stood at 113,000, a figure which is not far from Moldova, Tunisia, India and Poland. There is another group of between 80,000 and 50,000: Serbia, Bangladesh, Peru, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Ecuador, Macedonia, Senegal, Pakistan and the United States. However, ranking stable residents, in which Albania overcomes Morocco and Romania differs. The national groups have their own distinct territorial vocation. For example, in Friuli Venezia Giulia, citizens of the countries of former Yugoslavia make up almost one quarter of the total (for geographic

proximity), and the Ecuadoreans form one fifth of foreigners in Italy (for the relations of the region with Latin America); Filipinos and Polish are very well represented in Lazio, and especially in Rome, which needs many employees with families and is also a particular attraction as the centre of Catholicism. For Emilia Romagna, the most relevant area is Eastern Europe, there is a continuing growth in demand of immigrants, especially for care and domestic services. However, the first country in terms of presence remains Morocco (the country with the oldest immigration in this region).

Immigration in Italy, apart from very small segments of working areas (the field of paramedical professions), has the characteristics of low skill professions migration. Immigrants are introduced in low-skilled contexts and tasks beyond their skills and education.

1) High-skilled workers are still a rare component in the Italian economic system, whose input is hampered by resistance of various nature, the lack of knowledge of our language and our insufficient need to deal with the intellectual exchanges that today overcome the national borders. Even when companies tried to hire engineers, computer scientists, researchers from countries outside the European Union, they have encountered, as we noted above, bureaucratic obstacles that almost always prevent them from obtaining the permits required. The only qualified job for which there is a significant importation is nursing care.

2) Seasonal labour: each year the quota of permits rises and government policy uses it as the main tool to respond to the needs of the production system. The entry of seasonal workers, however, responds only to certain types of questions: it has been used for several years with success, in the economic systems of the provinces of Trento and Bolzano, to meet the demands of recruiting labour for the collection of fruit (berries, grapes, apples), especially in the province of Trento, and hotel services, particularly in the province of Bolzano.

3) Labour force employed in executive operations in industry and business services: here is the main component of the immigrant workforce in recent years taken from the Lombardia production system. They replace Italian workers no longer available, and satisfy the requests of a system in which industry and services (warehouse management, cargo handling, transport, cleaning, etc..) still occupy a position of great importance. The frequency of atypical working hours is another factor against the Italian workers, but it is a secondary issue for newly arrived immigrant workers and family. Although there are often non-standard contracts, and this situation is even more common for immigrants than for Italians, these occupations often give rise to long-term placement, in which companies require stability and long-term commitment, having replaced the excessive mobility of Italian workers posted in the same areas.

4) Technical and specialized intermediate level occupations: they are a segment in which the current immigration responds only partially to the demands of business, despite the arrival in recent years of

workers, especially coming from Eastern Europe, in possession of experience and valuable technical skills. The methods, mostly spontaneous and informal, conforming between demand and supply of labour, have produced for the most part a downward connection between the parties, and this is not encouraging recognition and enhancement of professional skills. The complex procedures for the recognition of qualifications are an obstacle to the integration of immigrants into more skilled positions.

5) Care service and daily life support: in this segment the presence of immigrant women is a real and increasing need for the functioning of Italian society. Their importance for the Italian economy is indirect: relieving workers (men and women) of some duties related to the family and household, it makes it easier to participate in the labour market and reduce the risk of absence due to family reasons. Obviously, even this type of occupation, although related in part to specific needs (such as the presence in the family of an elderly member), or being conducted on very particular working time, may not be covered by seasonal immigration. Today immigrants are well included in the Italian labour market: their unemployment rate is just above 3 percent higher than the Italian one, but for males the difference is minimal while the unemployment rate among immigrant females is much higher than Italian. The most important reason is that those with children are unable to find work compatible with child care, and obviously they cannot count on family support in Italy. This is also why the employment rate for immigrant women is only slightly higher than that of Italy (49% vs. 45%), while for males the difference in favour of immigrants is enormous: 82% versus 69%; the young immigrants go seldom to high schools and old people retire from work at older age than Italians do (Reyneri 2006).

In reality, the contribution of immigrants is even higher if one adds over half a million immigrants without residence permits, which are almost all employed illegally. The growing presence of immigrant workers has also enabled a growing share of Italians to access the most qualified professional positions, enabling young people to enter the work force more educated. In fact, immigrants focus on manual jobs (nearly 78%) and particularly in the less-skilled ones (more than 34%), while Italians are more widely present in non-manual, more qualified tasks (over 36%). Among those who carry out very simple tasks, almost one in four is a citizen of a country outside the EU. On the other hand, as immigrants are concentrated in regions where the unemployment rate of the Italians is lower, the competition is quite low, but perhaps sufficient to prevent wage pressures that could arise because of the difficulty of replacing retirees with young people, for demographic reasons.

Third part

VET perspective and approach

3.1

The investment in vocational training for migrant workers is very low: not much Italians are involved in training (except for high and medium qualifications); the alternative is the practice of the “support by an expert”; more than the Italians they attend courses by Regions and training courses (English, science...) self-financed. The consequences of this situation are: a) firstly, the clear dominance of informal routes (through the network, especially ethnic, relatives, friends and acquaintances for 90.2% of unemployed immigrants) because the meeting of supply and demand of labour will determine conditions for an irregular employment relationship, resulting in a very high percentage of accidents at work, loss of legal presence, working specializations on an ethnic basis, with a stratification of the labour market also detrimental to the integration of Italians, in situations of extreme exploitation and risk of its use by criminal organizations; b) secondly, with the rigid confinement of immigrants working in under-skilled occupations without prospects for occupational mobility, a great waste of human capital. In fact, despite many discussions on the opportunities of a professional selection of the flows of immigrant workers, the highest employment rates are determined by longer permanence in Italy, more than by the level of education, which is even discriminatory to women.

Although foreign immigration in Emilia-Romagna is a very recent phenomenon, it is possible to distinguish three main phases. About twenty years ago we have the first entries of Egyptian workers in foundries and construction sectors in Reggio Emilia. The first phase of migration is that of the eighties, when the phenomenon is still very low: below the 30,000 people and 1% of the population. The countries of origin are those of North Africa and the immigrants are adult males. The second phase is the emergence of the nineties, when as a consequence of the political dissolution in Eastern Europe, there is a gradually increasing influx from the Balkans (Albania in particular). Immigration reaches 50,000 and the percentage of women comes close to 40% of the total. The third phase goes from the second half of the nineties to today, where the growth of the phenomenon exceed 10% per annum; migration also tends to stabilize as a result of family reunion, the percentage of women exceeds 46%, the presence of foreign children in schools grows. The areas of origin, in addition to Africa and Eastern Europe, are now also Asia and Latin America. In recent years, immigration in Emilia-Romagna has become a phenomenon of undoubted importance, which now affects all aspects of civil society.

It is very important to emphasize the positive experience of Emilia Romagna. According to the sixth report on the CNEL about the index of integration in 2009, in absolute terms, for the first time the Emilia Romagna becomes the Italian region with the highest potential for socio-occupational

integration of immigrants in Italy, overcoming Trentino Alto Adige (now 5th) and Veneto (now 7th), which had lead this index in 2003 and 2004. The primacy of this region is also confirmed by the index of attractiveness which, both in 2005 as in 2006, proves to be the best Italian region in attracting and retaining the greatest quota of immigrant population. The analysis of geographic area and country of origin allows some considerations. First, the percentage of immigrants from countries of the EU-15 (8642 amounted to 3.3%) is significantly decreasing, and if we add to these other European countries (Switzerland, Norway, etc ...) and North America, the presence of people from other developed countries, that generally is not added to what is normally defined outside immigration, comes to 4.5% of the total, while 95% of immigration is coming from developing countries (with strong migratory pressure).

One can distinguish five main areas of origin of extra-EU immigration. The first in order of importance (for the first time in 2002) is one of Eastern Europe with 88,757 admissions, 34.5% (the area showing the greatest growth). The sharp increase is due to the arrival of women employed as domestic and family assistants. The second is that of North Africa (or Arabic) from which we have 67,466 people (representing 25.1% of total immigrants). The third is that coming from Asia, with 45,893 people, equivalent to 17.8%. The fourth is that of sub-Saharan Africa with 26,319 admissions, 10.2%. The fifth is that of Latin America with 12,669 admissions, 4.9%. Among individual countries, the first nationality is still Morocco (46,408 = 18%), followed by Albania (35116 = 13.7%), third Tunisia (16,438 = 6.4%), fourth Romania (15394 = 6%), the fifth China (13,148 = 5.1%), sixth Ukraine (10337 = 4%). In recent years, arrivals have grown from the Indian subcontinent (Pakistan: 8101 residents = 3.1% and India 7381 residents = 2.9%, as well as Sri Lanka and Bangladesh) and other Eastern European countries as Moldova, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro.

At provincial level, Morocco is the largest nationality in four provinces (Bologna, Modena, Reggio Emilia and Ferrara), but the Albanians are well distributed and they are the first nationality in the other provinces. It could be interesting to recall some specific provincial situations. While in Bologna, the fourth is the Filipino community (half of the regional community), the fourth in Modena is the Ghanaian communities (half of the regional community), in Piacenza, the fourth is that of Ecuador (two thirds of the regional community composed by almost all women), in Reggio Emilia the third community is the Indian one (half of the regional community), in Rimini and Ravenna the fourth is from Senegal (half of the regional community), the Chinese group in Reggio Emilia is significantly larger than the more ancient group of Bologna, over 1,000 Turkishes live in Modena, 1800 citizens of Bangladesh live in Bologna.

Among the causes of residence permits, we see a sharp increase in permits for work reasons that varied from 60.2% to 68.4%, while permits for family reasons increased from 21.8% to 25.8% . Legalization, which dealt with legalizing illegal labour relations, has left a clear mark, and later on, it also caused for the families of former illegal immigrants to follow. However, the segregation of migrant workers at lower levels of the hierarchy of employment is not connected with a lack of education, since more than 35% declare to have a high school diploma, and almost 8% have a university degree. Thus, even among the most educated, only few are able to work in highly skilled jobs and the penalty compared to the Italians with the same level of education is truly enormous. Only one quarter of immigrants with university education are involved in intellectual or technical professions against almost 90% Italians, while over half conduct manual tasks (1% of Italians). Among immigrants with a high school diploma, 40% of males and over 53% of females perform low-skilled manual work compared to 14% of Italian men and 7% of Italian women. Low level employment of educated immigrants may be overestimated because of the tendency of immigrants to state educational levels higher than those actually achieved and the difficulties in classifying foreign education systems according to the Italian criteria. In addition, the penalization of educated immigrants may not be the result of discrimination against them, because many could have achieved diplomas in fields in little or nothing useful in the field of work required and many others may have a knowledge of Italian language insufficient to exploit the skills acquired. The non-recognition of qualifications is, in fact, a factor of discrimination particularly serious in the Italian case.

In Italy there is so far no effective policy to recruit highly skilled workers, although there is a quota provided when entering the country. The only significant exception is the nursing sector, where deficiencies of internal resources are evident and led to a cautious opening up to staff from abroad. Companies wishing to hire foreign technicians have often complained that there are insurmountable bureaucratic difficulties. The internal dynamics of immigrant population then explain a particular aspect of the integration of foreign workers in the employment market, the so-called "ethnic specializations," such that there is frequently a correlation between countries of origin and jobs. This phenomenon, widely present in all labour markets, is very visible in Italy, as a result of marked spontaneity of processes of matching between demand and supply of labour and the low incidence of institutional mediation. The social ties that fuel the spread of information on jobs available, the accompanying forms of patronage and support in job search, intervene to explain why immigrants of a certain origin are found in certain occupations. The functioning of these social networks is a strong production of stereotypes in the society and for the employers, such that the immigrants of a particular nationality are considered suitable to perform certain jobs and not others. Dynamic network and cognitive stereotypes, however, converge to produce a result not very desirable: brain wasting is the

waste of human capital. Surveys consistently show a clear gap between the educational levels of immigrants and their assigned tasks.

Looking at the levels of qualification, one can observe that about one third of immigrants is in the lower segments of the hierarchy of occupations (as opposed to 10% for total employment), with qualifications as unskilled constructors, staff family members, farm labourers, cleaning help, etc. It is interesting to note that just less than 40% is included in occupations that lead to a greater level of professionalism, defined as manual work involving a degree of technical and operational autonomy: carpenters, mechanics, installations conductors, electricians, etc. The figure is particularly interesting, because it seems to indicate at least the beginning of an advancement process of the usage of migrant workers. Especially industrial companies seem to have realized that it could obtain from their foreign employees more benefits than merely qualified executive. The biggest occupational groups are connected to the lower segments of the occupational structure: employees specialized in cleaning services (14,504), employees generically engaged in cleaning services (21,471) employees at loading / unloading goods (14,137), sales (10,656). Among the skilled occupations, there is a great demand for experts of processes, planning and quality (11,000 applications), as well as professional nurses (almost 3,000 applications). The survey indicates a number of specialized professions, for which companies reported difficulties in recruitment: welders, cutters, electricians, workers in the construction of tools etc.

3.2 Partnership and relationship

About the relationship between educators, businesses and the representation of workers is important to note the recent, but significant and fast-growing experience of *Interprofessional Funds*. The National Interprofessional Fund for continuing education are associations promoted by the organizations representing the social partners through specific Agreements concluded by unions of employers and workers which are most representative at the national level. Funds may be established for each of the sectors of industry, agriculture and service sectors. The Agreements may provide for the establishment of Funds for different sectors and, within them, the establishment of a special section for the training of managers. In 2003, with the establishment of the first ten Interprofessional Funds, provided by the Law 388 of 2000, companies are enabled to allocate the share of 0.30% of contributions paid to INPS (the "contribution required for the involuntary unemployment ") for training of their employees. Employers will be able to decide on transferring INPS contribution to one of the Interprofessional Funds, which will finance training activities for employees of member companies. Funds so far established and authorized, which are representative of a large part of the world of business and workers, are:

Fondo Artigianato Formazione – Fund for training in small businesses;

Fon.Coop - Fund for continuing education in co-operative enterprises;

Fondimpresa - Fund for continuing education;

Fondo Dirigenti PMI – Fund for the training of managers of small and medium industrial enterprises;

Fondo Formazione PMI – Fund for continuing education for small and medium enterprises;

FONDIR. – Fund for the training of managers of the service sector

FOR.TE. – Fund for the training of the service sector;

Fondirigenti – Fondirigenti Giuseppe Taliercio (Foundation for executive staff training in industry);

FON.TER. – Fund for the training of employees in enterprises of the tertiary sector: tourism sectors and distribution services

Fondoprofessioni – Provision for continuing education in Professional Studies

Fond.E.R. - Fund for the training of Religious Entities ;

Fon.Ar.Com. - Fund for continuing education in the tertiary sectors, industries and small and medium enterprises

For.Agri. - Fund for the continuing vocational training in agriculture;

Fondazienda – Fund for the training of executives and employees of trade, tourism and services sector and small and medium enterprise;

Fondo Banche Assicurazioni – Fund for the training in the areas of credit and insurance;

Formazienda -. Fund for continuing education in the area of trade, tourism, services, professions and small and medium enterprises

Interprofessional Funds can support educational plans on company, sectoral and territorial basis. The companies can decide to apply the plan to their employees on an individual or combined basis (between different companies). In addition to financing it, in whole or in part, the educational plans, with the modifications introduced by art. 48 of Law 289/02, the Interprofessional Funds will also finance individual training plans, as well as additional activities.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policies is due to perform, with an overseeing and monitoring role, also a strategic monitoring of the financed activities. Even the training of immigrants is beginning to become part of the action of the inter-professional funds. The contract of the construction industry assigned to Formedil, the task of addressing the problems related to language differences and cultural and social integration of immigrants working through: the rationalization and development of training in the countries of origin of migrant workers; the implementation of Italian language courses and

training at schools; the implementation of intercultural training programs aimed to improving communication between the various ethnic groups on the job.

3.3 Models

MODEL 3: Considering the increasing importance of inter-professional Funds, we can indicate the movement of the Italian model from model 2 (where the training institutions are the engine of the training) towards model 3 (where the social partners identify, through an exchange of information, training needs)

Fourt part

Training and SMEs

In the case of SMEs, the organizational structures are usually undersized, and leave little space for the formation and growth of staff; often in SMEs there is not a real human resource office: operational activities are managed by the Administration, which does not consider the activities more strategic and analytic.

The type of activities offered by trainers depends on the sector and the size of the company.

Here are some of the activities provided by training providers.

Among the subjects of the training courses, the distribution of the course hours underlines, with reference to the year 2005, the prevalence of the techniques and technologies of production (21.8% of the total course hours). Below, the accounting and business management (17.6% of the course hours) and the issues relating to the development of new personal skills and to the knowledge of working environment (15.6%). Less attention is given to courses on the environment, work safety and health protection (11.2%), sales course and marketing (9.7%), computer courses (9.3%) and those of foreign languages (8.4%). Only 6.4% of hours is allocated to the training on employment activities or on other specific issues.

In comparison with the 64 million of training hours available in 2005 in the Italian companies, about 39 million are related to "internal management courses", or vocational training courses organized and managed directly by the company, while the remaining 25 million to "external management courses", that is to vocational courses organized and managed by an external actor.

With regard to firms with continuing training, the most frequent instruments are "the external management courses" (71.4% of firms), followed by "internal management courses", organized by the companies themselves (39.8%). Among the other activities of lifelong learning, there is the

employees' participation to the course, conferences and seminars (36.9%), related more to the cultural enrichment of the employees rather than professional training. Another very frequent system is the so-called *training on the job*, (33.8%) and all the learning activities by job rotation support by an expert, or sharing of work experience (16.5%). These two methods usually involve a lower burden for the company because they imply an active role of the worker in training. He acquires new skills following the example of a specific trainer or of the group of colleagues who work alongside him. The acquisition of skills by the employees through self-training activities and training "at a distance", or the most technological training (6.0%), and participation in quality circles (5.8 %) is of less importance .

Other vocational training activities

The continuing training activities other than training courses (internal or external) include:

- a) planned periods of training, learning or practical experience through the use of the usual tools of work, place or situation in the workplace;
- b) learning by job rotation, guiding and sharing of work experience;
- c) participation to quality circles or groups of self-training, or participation to groups of employees who meet regularly to improve, through the exchange of experiences, their knowledge and organization of production;
- d) self-training through open and distance learning, correspondence courses or other methods of learning or training activities funded by the company, but who learns, decides places and times of learning;
- e) learning through the participation to courses, workshops, conferences, seminars, or the participation to cultural events without a defined educational purpose, but they represent an opportunity to acquire knowledge.

Qualifications of trainers

According to data of the Italian Trainers Association, vocational training in Italy has very different training schemes. There are no clearly defined pathways, and the majority of trainers in the activities, especially for older trainers, who do not have a degree.

Methods of financing training

Training activities are funded in different ways. The lifelong learning training is funded by the resources of the European Social Fund and by the national resources related to the Law 236/93 and the Law 53/00. Even if late in comparison to the other European Countries, the resources of *Fondi interprofessionali* are becoming increasingly important.