

Project

ComNetNEET "Community Networking for Integration of Young People in NEET Situation"



NEETS*in*ACTION

State of the art: good practices of social inclusion (through work based learning strategies) targeted at young people in Italy



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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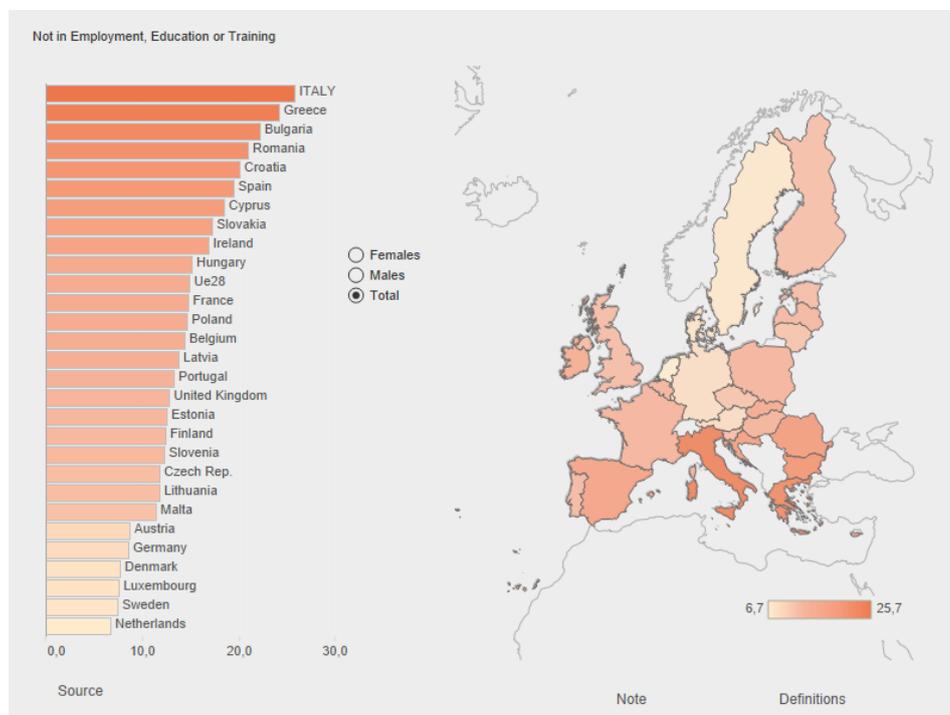
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1. Describe the actual situation of NEETs in your country: how big is the problem?

In Italy, the conditions of youth on the labour market have continuously worsened since 2008. The number of unemployed young people started to increase even before the crisis, and the youth unemployment rate in 2015 peaked at 42.7% for those aged 15–24, with a slight recovery in 2016 (40.3%).

In addition to more traditional unemployment statistics, Italy has the highest percentage of “Neets” in Europe. Nearly one in four youth (ages 15-29) in Italy are neither in employment, education, or training – the highest value in the OECD area preceded only by Turkey (Figure 1).



Source: OECD (2017), Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (indicator), <https://data.oecd.org/youthinac/youth-not-in-employment-education-or-training-neet.htm>

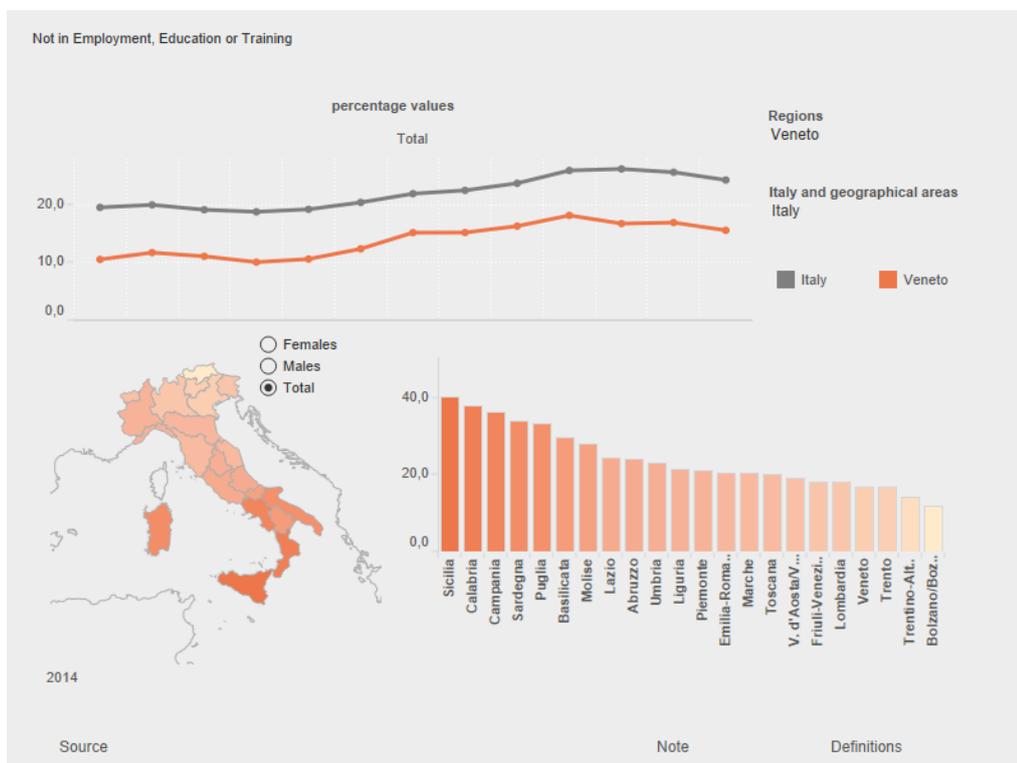
Italian National Statistical Agency (ISTAT) (2017), <http://noi-italia.istat.it>

In the last three years, the number of Neets in Italy have declined by 286,000, falling to around 2.2 million in 2016 from about 2.4 million in 2013. But it remains the country with the highest percentage of Neets. Even if the severe peak of 2014 (26.2%)



is more distant, 24.3% of under-30s still fall in the Neet category, compared to an EU average of 14.2% and 8.8% in Germany.

National figures hide an even more worrisome picture when looking at variations among regions (between the North, with a rate of 16.9% and the South, where the percentage is more than double, at 34.2%) For instance, NEET rates are as high as 40% in certain southern regions (e.g. Calabria; Sicilia).



Source: OECD (2017), Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (indicator), <https://data.oecd.org/youthinac/youth-not-in-employment-education-or-training-neet.htm>

Italian National Statistical Agency (ISTAT) (2017), <http://noi-italia.istat.it>

One main distinction to be made among NEETs regards their employment status. In 2016, 42.5% of NEETs were unemployed and actively searching for a job (mostly men), 32.4% were part of the potential workforce (inactive persons who would like to work, seeking employment or not), 25.1% were inactive individuals not searching and

not available for work (mostly women)¹. These youth are particularly hard to reach, because they rarely register with the public employment services, and many of them are discouraged.

The composition of the NEET population according to their educational attainment shows that 38.5% do not have an upper secondary qualification, 10.8% are higher educated individuals, while the largest share (50.7%) is made up of individuals with an upper secondary qualification. Nevertheless, education still holds a protective value against unemployment in the Italian labour market, given the fact that the crisis affected the less educated more seriously (Istat 2016). The high number of young people without an upper secondary qualification (577,000) reflects the critical issue of the large share of school dropouts. In 2016, Italy still had an above average share of early school leavers.

Among those who have been NEETs in the past 4 years in Italy, over 64% remain NEET for a year or more, the highest value for OECD countries for which data is available (OECD, 2016c).

The time needed to get 50% of the youth population into work after school leaving is equal to 5.9 years in Italy – longer than any OECD countries and most developing countries for which data is available.

1.1. How are NEETs distributed territorially?

The provincial distribution of NEETs shows a greater intensity of the phenomenon in Southern Italy. The provinces with the highest rate of NEETs, over 40%, are Caltanissetta (44.92%), Crotona (44.69%) and Palermo (40.39%); all the provinces of the South are those with rates that vary between 30% and 40%.

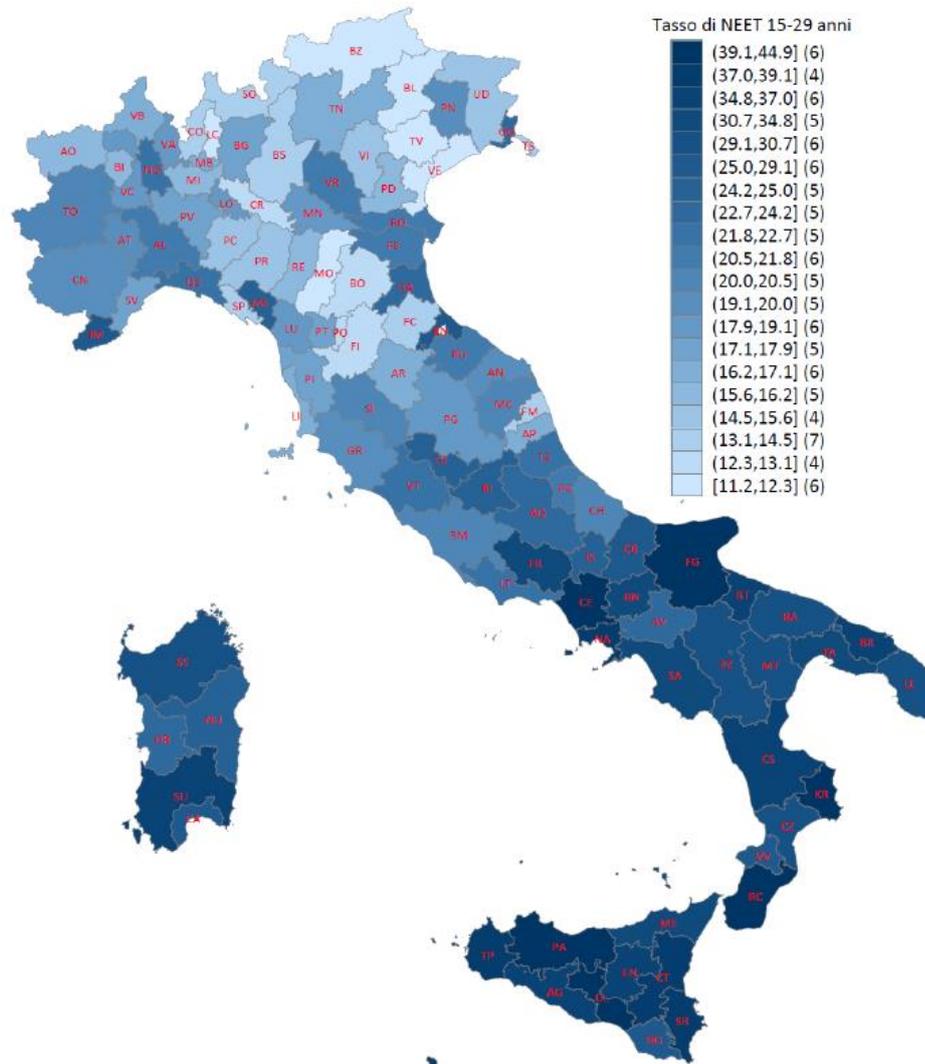
The provinces of the Center with the highest NEET rate are Frosinone (31.13%) and Rieti (24.80%), while in the North stand Imperia (26.25%) and Rimini (25.37%).

On the other hand, the provinces with the lowest incidence of young people who do not study and do not work are all in the North, in particular: Venice (11.20%), Treviso (11.55%), Belluno (11.59%), Modena (11.88%) and Lecco (11.95%).

¹ This point recalls the persistent relevance of the traditional male breadwinner model in Italian society and in its welfare system (Ferrera 1996). This plays a major role in hindering women's participation in the labour market, especially in southern regions (Ascoli and Pavolini 2015).



NEET rate (15-29) per province – Year 2017



Source: elaboration Direzione SAS - Anpal Servizi on RCFL Istat microdata



2. Main groups/typology of youth affected

Unlike other countries, in Italy the NEET condition is largely due to inactivity rather than unemployment, reflecting an alarming situation of demoralization of the Italian young people that are facing the difficulty of finding a job. It is however necessary to distinguish between age groups: in general, and in particular for Italy, the problem of youth inactivity concerns especially young people over 20 years old. This happens because most 15-19 year-olds are still in secondary education.

It is interesting to notice that, among NEETs, people actively seeking for jobs comprise a larger share in the 25-29 group than in the 15-19 group, suggesting a problem of transition from tertiary education to the labour market more than a personal choice.

In particular, in the 15-19 year group, only 0.9% of the Italian NEET have some type of disease or disability (i.e., compared to the 2% in UK) and most of these subjects (2.4%) think either that no work is available or that it is not easy to get; in the 15-24 years group these percentages increase to 4.5%.

The largest proportion of NEETs is made up by the long-term unemployed (26.3% compared to the EU average of 23.1%). The second largest group is “other NEETs”, with 15.1% considerably above the EU average of 11.8. This group is closely followed by NEETs due to family responsibilities, with 15% considerably below the EU average of 20.3%, and the short-term unemployed. With 14.8% of short-term unemployed NEETs this group is more than 10 p.p. below the EU average of 25.5%.

The group of discouraged workers is however more than twice as large in Italy (14.1% compared to 5.9% at EU level). Similarly, with 11.1% Italy has considerably more re-entrants into education or the labour market than the EU average (6.4%). Lastly, in particular, in the 15-19 year group, only 0.9% of the Italian NEET have some type of disease or disability (i.e., compared to the 2% in UK) and most of these subjects (2.4%) think either that no work is available or that it is not easy to get; in the 15-24 years group these percentages increase to 4.5%.



3. Risk factors contributing to drop-out deprivation, social exclusion, etc.

Advanced statistical analysis confirmed that in comparison to married women, their male counterparts had a significantly lower probability of becoming NEET. Yet, being a male, married and having a child also significantly increase the risk of belonging to the NEET group. Similarly this risk increases with age and young people with secondary or tertiary education had a significantly lower risk of becoming NEET than those with primary education².

Additional Italian data is available thanks to the research conducted by the ISTAT on typical NEET habits³. When compared to their peers, the NEET adolescents spend most of time sleeping and doing other physiological activities such as eating and bathing. Even though these NEET should have more free time for themselves, compared to their peers, they make use of it in a significantly different way: they do not enjoy, as much, going to cinemas, theatres, museums and exhibitions. Furthermore, they read less newspapers and, in spite of common belief, they make less use of personal computers and internet.

Especially, unemployed males behave as their employed peers; this conduct probably reflects the utility that the web and newspapers may have in searching a job.

In particular, 47.3% of young employed people read books. This figure rises up to 66.7% among students, but decreases to 41.3% among the unemployed and drops to 26.1% among inactive NEET. These latter participate less in social activities such as voluntary associations, political parties or other associations (11.2%) and this percentage further decreases among women who have family and children (3.7%).

Finally, the exclusion from training courses and working associates is related to lower levels of family relationship satisfaction. In particular, it has been observed that, among the inactive NEET, there is a low level of satisfaction with regards to relationship with friends (especially among women) and fitness (especially among men). The NEET, however, report similar peer levels of leisure time satisfaction, particularly among men.

There is, nonetheless, a certain degree of disadvantage observed: the NEET, especially those with lower education, show less cultural interest, lower social participation rates and less satisfaction for their lifestyle.

² Eurofound (2016), Exploring the diversity of NEETs, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg)

³ Giovannini E. Rapporto annuale Istat: La situazione del Paese nel 2016. Roma: Istituto Nazionale di Statistica ISTAT 2016



Generally, long-term unemployment brings further difficulties, such as psychological changes that can work against likelihood of future chances of employment or training.

Reduced self-esteem, feelings of self value, and expectations of success all decrease the likelihood of a successful outcome in job-seeking, or may reduce the motivation to seek work at all.

According to ISTAT report, in fact, the NEET condition could force these adolescents into a process of cultural depauperation and social devitalisation, which will continue to grow as the NEET condition lasts over time. The more one remains unemployed or out of the training system, the harder it is to reintegrate oneself; therefore, permanence in the NEET state is a risk indicator of social exclusion

Risk factors that contribute to the NEET condition can be either environmental or individual.

Considering environmental risk factors, two of the most important risk factors could be a low social-economical Status and the family situation.

ISTAT data, however, reminds us that among adolescent NEET who live with at least one parent, one-third belonged to medium-high social classes. Therefore, the NEET condition did not concern only the lower social classes, but can also be related to subjects with higher educational qualifications.

In Italy, the social status of NEET is lower than that of students and employees. In fact, just over 50% of the NEET who live with their parents belong to the working class, while students or young employees of the same age group come from different social classes.

The NEET in most cases live with one parent; this occurs in the South of Italy for more than three to four NEET. The proportion of those who live in a household where no member works exceeds 25%.



4. Overview of the general education and employment system relevant for the target group of the project

The central government in Italy is exclusively responsible for laying down general rules on education and employment and determining the minimum standards to be guaranteed throughout the country.

The Regions and autonomous provinces have concurrent legislative powers in the fields of education and employment (and therefore on apprenticeships, with regard to the employment relationships) and exclusive powers in the field of vocational education and training and apprenticeship training.

Under the Italian Constitution, schools have a degree of didactic, organisational and research/experimentation/development autonomy.

National law rules (Law 53/2003 and Legislative Decree 76/2005) establish the right/duty of all citizens to education and training for at least 12 years, or until the attainment of a 3-year professional qualification within the age of 18. This right/duty includes a compulsory education period of 10 years (from 6 to 16 years of age), consisting of 8 years of primary and lower secondary education and the first 2 years of upper secondary education (DM 139/2007).

Upon completion of the first 8 years of primary and lower secondary education, the last 2 years of compulsory education (from 14 to 16 years of age) may be completed at either an upper secondary school run by the State (licei, i.e. upper secondary schools specializing in humanities, science etc., as well as technical and professional schools), or in vocational education and training paths organised by the regions (Law 133/2008).

The last compulsory education year (corresponding to the 10th year, at about 15 years of age) may also be completed in an apprenticeship programme (Law 183/2010 and Legislative Decree 167/2011 Consolidation Act on Apprenticeship).

Recent reforms have tackled VET and school system, focusing on the relationship between schools and companies by intervening in the regulation of two institutions: apprenticeships and alternance schemes.

The aim of such reforms is to support young people in the school-to-work transition, in order to enhance employability by overcoming their lack of experience.



Indeed, the mismatch between qualifications and demand is one of the main struggles behind high NEET rates in Italy.

An attempt to tackle the mismatch between qualifications and labour demand is the establishment, through the recent reform of the Italian education system (Law 107/2015), of compulsory alternative schemes that integrate in-company training periods into formal upper secondary education (European Commission 2014).

At the regional level, agreements were signed to promote experimental alternative projects in the IeFP. This compulsory alternance is to be intended as an instrument to link the education system and the labour market, connecting schools and companies through traineeships.

Apprenticeship contracts were modified by the decrees of law 183/2014 reforming the Italian labour market in 2014–15 (the so-called 'Jobs Act').

The apprenticeship contract is differentiated into three contractual forms and defined as an openended term work contract.

The three forms widely differ in the ways in which training and work are integrated:

- training apprenticeships (levels I and III) allow young people to gain an educational qualification at secondary or tertiary level, by combining school attendance and work experience;
- a professionalizing apprenticeship (level II) brings a professional qualification as defined by collective bargaining and is shaped around on-the-job training activities with off-firm training provided by the regions. This contractual form does not provide a specific educational qualification.

A new tertiary-level technical institution, called ITS (Istituti Tecnici Superiori) was introduced in 2008. Such institutions offer courses lasting two years that are strongly linked with the local skills demand and have a prevalent practical content.

Following the national framework evolutions with regard to both apprenticeship and internship contracts, many Italian Regions have deployed their own actions and legal measures paying great attention to issues such as learning on the job and work experiences activation in order to improve young people employability on the medium-long term.

As for the 2014 and until the 2016, many efforts are in place for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.



Financial resources have been allocated by the national level to Regions, performing the role of intermediary bodies in order to support young people up to 29 years old to return to the educational/training system or to engage in a work experience, with the general aim to increase the employability of the beneficiaries.

5. Overview of the institutional framework

In Italy in recent years there has been an intense legislative and regulatory activity on labour market front with the aim of fostering new and better employment and social inclusion, with a welfare-to-work approach. This action must necessarily be analysed within the framework of the great change that Constitutional Law 3/2001, has brought in Title V of the Italian Constitution. Title V gives equal powers to State, Regions, Provinces and Municipalities, in the interests of a multi-level governance, for formulating and managing policies with a general impact. With this new division of competences, the matters in which the State has exclusive legislative powers and those in which State and Regions have a concurrent regulatory power are clearly identified.

It is also specified that the Regions have legislative powers on every matter not expressly reserved for State legislation, therefore the reform gives them exclusive legislative competence in some essential matters such as safety, labour, health, education and vocational training, with the aim of fostering the “respect” of particular local situations.

The extensive autonomy which the Regions and the afore said Authorities enjoy – also making it difficult to reconstruct a national framework of measures implemented in Italy in matters for which the State is not responsible (or has “concurrent” responsibility) – has however induced the legislator to specify a series of tools for guaranteeing an essential national unity and the presence, nationwide, of services meeting citizens’ fundamental needs. This means protecting the Essential Service Performance Levels (ESPL) and particularly in the area of civil and social rights

The State is therefore responsible for defining the guidelines to follow in specifying the minimum level expected; the Region and other autonomous bodies (Provinces, Municipalities, educational establishments, etc.) are instead responsible for providing specific services for citizens.



6. “General philosophy” of current approaches to mitigate the problem

As to the main recent labour market policies and the more specific measures and provisions for fostering the labour market inclusion of citizens adopted by individual Regions and local authorities, over the last two decades the legislator and Italian government’s efforts have been focused on constructing a welfare-to-work model that will make citizens increasingly proactive. This has prompted a significant process of redefinition and rationalization of labour policies.

An initial important labour reform in 2003 - carried out with the aim of modernizing the market and increasing employment by combining flexibility with security – introduced changes in labour relations, reviewing existing types of contract (such as apprenticeships, part-time work and collaborations), and creating new ones (job-on-call, job sharing, supplementary work), specifying new mechanisms when both entering and leaving the labour market.

The labour-market reform intends to encourage an inclusive and dynamic labour market in view of increasing employment, especially for women and the young; reducing the times of school to work transition and from unemployment to employment; fostering the growth of productivity also by supporting employability; defining a more universalist system of protections.

The reform highlights the need for an intervention aimed at strengthening the participation of women in the labour market still too limited compared to that of men, especially in the south and among the less educated groups.

In line with the European Union’s indications and with the intention of fostering active citizenship, the reform also aims to strengthen a subsidiarity system, both vertically (between State and citizen) and horizontally (between public and private institutions, private individuals, enterprises and active citizenship networks), for promoting lifelong learning pathways and the certification of acquired competences.

A growing attention is also being paid to the guidance function, prompting an agreement between the Government, the Regions and Local Authorities on the definition of a national lifelong guidance system , considered an important means for promoting a lifelong learning strategy, an intervention for preventing and combating drop-outs from education, supporting individuals in making aware choices, and an



action for better matching the demand and supply of competences with the aim of improving training success and employability.

7. Involvement of stakeholders (social partners, state agencies, NGO)

Stakeholders' networking and interagency processes to support NEETs are not so frequent in Italy. The reform of the labour market (Jobs Act) redefined, through Legislative Decree 150/2015, the laws on employment services and active labour market policies, as well as initiatives promoting employment and employability.

The initiatives had foreseen a strategic and integrated national dialogue between education/training and labour sectors, as well as public and private services, for better coordination at all levels. They aimed at identifying new ways for all services to cooperate, becoming more efficient and effective for more and different users. This decree created the National Agency for Active Labour Policies (ANPAL, Agenzia Nazionale per le Politiche Attive del Lavoro). Its aim is to coordinate the national network of services for employment policies, comprising the main national stakeholders: the relevant regional structures, employment agencies, interprofessional funds for continuous training, Inapp, Chambers of Commerce, INPS and INAIL.

ANPAL, in cooperation with the ministries of labour and education and the regions, is in charge of creating and implementing a unified information system of employment policies, with various existing, or under construction, information systems such as social safety nets, job mandatory communications, employment services, vocational training, national register of students in schools, and undergraduate and graduate students at university. An electronic file will be created for each worker based on the information in the unified information system. This file will contain all the information related to education and training programmes attended by the worker, job periods and the use of income support tools.

Within a multi-level governance system that will be set up from national to local level, ANPAL is the key national actor supporting the development of skills and qualifications for job searching and/or for continuation in further learning pathways.

The national agency will develop training and information tools and methods for both intermediary bodies (PES operators, schools and training centres, universities, companies) and final users (citizens, students and workers).



8. What are, according to the discussion in science and civil society in your country, the main strengths/weaknesses/opportunities of these policies? What are the main proposals of relevant groups to change these policies?

The possibility of adapting the regional training offers to the demands of professionalism originated from the territory, represent a point of strength in the possibility of reintegrating young people into the training or working path. In this perspective, the training proposed by the Higher Technical Institutes (*Istituti Tecnici Superiori ITS*) as a specific post-secondary education and training path, represents one of the flagship initiatives of the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR). It is carried out in a wide joint effort with local and regional authorities, education and training institutions and private enterprises, aimed at ensuring the adaptability of the education system so as to provide valuable knowledge and sound skills.

The higher technical institutes are mixed public-private institutions: they are autonomous bodies established under private law and aim at providing a service of public utility, in a dynamic governance process among public and private sector.

With the aim of sharing the technical and scientific culture and to systematically support the economic development and competitiveness of the Italian production system, ITS courses are implemented with a strong focus on local needs, individualised training routes and the promotion of the participation of employed adults. At the same time, they respond to the European certification standards.

Moreover, according to the recent reform of the apprenticeship contract, with the introduction of a “High Apprenticeship”, participants to ITS courses will also have the opportunity to obtain a higher education qualification.

At the end of the courses promoted by the higher technical institutes, a final certification is obtained following a final assessment of the competences acquired carried out by examination boards made up of representatives of the training provider (e.g. school, university, vocational training) and experts coming from the labour market.

The possibility to be included in an apprenticeship scheme represents a further useful tool for young people to acquire or further deepen the skills to be then applied in a complete and autonomous way in the working contexts.



The novelty of the type of scheme and its structure is widely used by companies, and targets young people between 18 and 29 (even 17 year-olds can obtain one if that have a professional qualification) and delivering a training programme tailored to the job-specific requirements.

Nevertheless, coherently with its statutory definition, companies consider apprenticeship (Type 1 according to the recent reform) as a standard open-ended employment contract. Therefore, it is generally understood as a contractual option for recruitment rather than a training investment, even with a view to possible recruitment. The definition and nature of this type of apprenticeship as a standard open-ended contract seems to obscure its primary purpose: to deliver alternative learning pathways for obtaining a qualification from formal education.

The heterogeneity of the NEETs groups makes the definition of strategies suitable to reduce the phenomenon more complex: the characteristics that allow to identify defined groups bring out the importance of studying ad-hoc projects in order to obtain results that facilitate the integration into the working context.

The measures undertaken with the various projects have to take into consideration which variables can affect the concrete possibilities of the reintegration of young people: young women with children and young people with a lower educational qualification will have different limitations to the reintegration in the the world of work, as well as long-term unemployed.

9. Relevant good practices to intervene in the problematic situation on a community level

Among nation-wide initiatives, the **ANMA (acronyms referring to apprenticeship and craft jobs) Programme** is explicitly targeted to young people, of which the Programme supports training on the job and job placement. The ANMA Programme, promoted by the Italian Ministry of Labour and implemented by its technical agency (Italia Lavoro) with the European Social Fund's financial contribution, pursues three lines of action. First of all, it aims at promoting the use of the apprenticeship contract for people aged 15-29 supporting with a financial contribution (between 4.700 and 5.500 Euros) enterprises hiring young people either unemployed or underemployed (with regard to the income) in the previous 6 months.



The second instrument concerns the support of traineeship experiences within craft enterprises working in typical Italian production industries; this experimental measure provides a 250 Euros monthly support for the craft enterprise hosting the young intern, who perceives, in turn, a 500 Euros monthly fellowship.

As for smaller scale programmes, the **Veneto Region** has implemented, with the European Union support, the pilot project “**INIZIATIVA GIOVANI**” targeted to up to 25 years old NEETs. The project, carried out in the Treviso Province, consists of a number of activities such as:

- schools and companies visits (10 visits involving 15-17 years old people and 20 involving 18-24 years old people);
- 2-week traineeship for 12 young people aged 15-17;
- 4-month work experiences matched with personal guidance and training for 25 young people aged 18-24;
- a self entrepreneurship course targeted to 12 adults up to 24 willing to develop a business project.

Project “FUORI SCUOLA” Paths for the recovery of early school leaving, funded by the European Social Fund – **Veneto Region** in the framework of the Regional Directive 1255 of 01/08/2016.

The initiative is aimed at young people between the ages of 15 and 17 identified by the Regional Register of Students, among those who, following a report, are in charge of the Provincial Employment Centers.

The innovative paths proposed are tailored-made and modulated on the following opportunities:

- 1) Basic training module -375 hours - which allows young people to acquire and complete the 10 years of compulsory education. The activities include lectures and distance self-training to develop linguistic, informatics, mathematics, active and transversal citizenship skills. The hours can be modulated on the basis of recognizable credits.
- 2) Professionalising workshop - 80 hours - with practical tests of "Digital Manufacturing" for the creation of an artefact with hand drawing techniques and



3D CAD software, also realizing prototypes in various materials. The activities are carried out by Fondazione Centro Produttività Veneto

3) Artistic / Creative Workshops - 50 hours - to realize theatrical activities to develop expression skills. There will also be a "Orienteering" activity to further promote the development of social and personal abilities.

Participation is free and provides for the recognition of attendance to individual activities with participation certificates.

Young people who have not reached ten years of schooling and who wish to have recognized attendance for the purpose of fulfilling the educational obligation, must participate in at least 75% of the complete course (form, professional laboratory and creative workshop) .

Beneficiaries also have the opportunity to benefit from a specialist listening and vocational guidance service with experts.

The initiative is promoted by the Province of Vicenza, in partnership with CPIA (Provincial Center for Adult Education in Vicenza), CPV and in collaboration with the Municipalities of Vicenza, Chiampo, Lonigo, Romano d'Ezzelino, Tezze sul Brenta , with ULSS n. 6 Vicenza, UIL Vicenza, UST CISL Vicenza, CGIL, Confasal-Fe.N.A.L-Di.C.C.A.P, Confartigianato Vicenza, Northeast Casartigiani Business Association Vicenza, Confindustria Vicenza, Upper Secondary Vocational Institute "G.B. GARBIN".

ACTIVE NE(E)T PROJECT is one of the 17 winning projects of the experimental call targetign NEETs financed by the Tuscany Region as part of the Giovanisì project (www.giovanisi.it).

The project is promoted by Zefiro Società Cooperativa Sociale in partnership with Caritas Diocesana Lucca, City of Lucca, Women and Work Cooperative, Association 21, Volunteering and Participation Foundation, The Screen, CNV, Cooperative Il Cappello, Cooperativa Odissea.

Active Ne(e)t is an experimental project to be carried out within the province of Lucca, which envisages the setting up of an innovative and replicable method of interception of NEETs based on territorial network actions, informal interventions in the places of young people (push), attractive actions linked to a different way of doing training, aggregation, work (pull).



Starting from the analysis of needs, expressed or unexpressed, the project involves the (re) activation of adult girls and boys up to 30 years, through listening, orientation and participation actions that lead them to access the network for employment services and from there, through individualized paths to internship experiences, training courses, to work, even in an autonomous form, both in Italy and abroad.

Actions of research intervention on the territories and viral actions on the net, through commercials and use of social networks, will constitute the initial levers that will allow operators to talk about Neet and meet young people who wish to re-activate study, training or job search paths.

NEETwork project started in 2015 in partnership with Fondazione Adecco, Istituto Toniolo, CGM - Mestieri Lombardia and in collaboration with **Regione Lombardia**.

The NEETwork Project wants to contribute to the activation of those young people aged 18 to 24, with a qualification not higher than the lower secondary school, unemployed for at least 6 months, who for various reasons have early abandoned their studies and find themselves excluded from the labor market because they lack adequate qualifications or professional experience.

Fondazione Cariplo, in partnership with CGM-Mestieri Lombardia, Istituto Toniolo and Adecco Foundation, believes that the alliance with third sector organizations is an essential element in the realization of this project and has asked non-profit organizations in Lombardy to work together to offer 1.000 young people a concrete opportunity, providing a re-motivational experience through a 4-6 month paid internship in their own realities with the aim of reintegrating them into the labor market starting from non-profit companies

NEET @ WORK is a project funded by **Veneto Regional Government** and promoted by "Cesare Pollini" Music Conservatory of Padova, Audio Innova, "Pietro d'Abano" Upper Secondary for Tourism and Catering, Talent Lab.

The general objective of NEET @ WORK is to foster the process of social inclusion and welfare in the personal growth of young people, through interventions aimed at stimulating the creative dimension and the capacity for innovation. This implies experimentation with new technologies, the promotion of specific training in the



cultural sector, the implementation of skills regarding the use of current and widely accessible tools with intrinsic characteristics of multidisciplinary, adaptability and transferability.

By positively influencing personal potential, active citizenship and the consolidation of the relationships that gravitate around the youth universe, these elements can effectively promote the self-entrepreneurship of young people.

Specific objectives of the project are the improvement of the ability of young people to plan their future, experimentation with new forms of communication and cultural production, the development of skills to foster the professional use of new technologies in the artistic-cultural sphere, the reinforcement the sense of belonging to the community and the territory, the cooperation and exchange of experiences of young people within the activated social and cultural network.

The foundation of the project consists of a complete theatrical production of stage music: the creation of multimedia support (DVD) including a large documentary apparatus is integrated into a series of professionalising workshops open to young people between 15 and 29 years.

The entire production material is stored in a repository accessible to the participants and enhanced on the project site, where the original developments generated individually in the final phase are also present: portfolio and self-promotional initiatives are integrated into the final presentation of the results, which takes place in the form of multimedia show. The final event is linked to a competition.

10. Outreach strategies to harder to reach groups within the target group

The first challenge met by organizations engaged in supporting NEETs is the identification and the involvement of young disadvantaged people in an activation programme aimed at increasing their employability.

The “catchment” obstacle is mainly due to discouragement and lack of motivation: for instance, many young people leave the school with poor, if any, practical experience, are unaware of the economic and labour environment and unable to identify an appropriate path to pursue a qualification while, in the meantime, they do not trust the employment services and rely on informal networks in order to get a first job contact; many young mother are bound to leave the labour market once they



have a child because of the uncommon attendance of childcare services among babies under 3 years old.

These examples are particularly true with respect to early school leavers with lower education level, whose social and cultural background is one of broad distance from the labour market.

Crucial in the work with these people would be an early guidance and information offered by the education system with regard to subsequent education opportunities, practical training programmes and work experiences, as well as the improvement of the school-work connections.

Besides a very early first contact with students at risk of dropping-out, the counselling and orienting role of the employment services should be enhanced in order to have more people trusting them and motivated to register and then to participate.

11. Bottlenecks for effective intervention and main recommendations given in the literature to improve conditions for community based approaches and work based learning approaches

Youth disadvantage in the Italian labour market, and therefore the complex composition of the NEET population, has a close relationship with policy measures aimed at school-to-work transition.

Schools are poorly related to the labour market because companies and social partners are only marginally involved in vocational education. Weak institutional linkages between the school system and labour market are not able to effectively structure the bridge between education and employment many young people risk getting lost in long transitions, often experiencing persistent youth unemployment or precariat, with dramatic figures in the regions of southern Italy.

The implementation of the reform appears, however, extremely difficult, especially in regions that do not have a solid tradition of collaboration between the school system and economic actors, and for generalist and academic- oriented education.

Close collaboration among the actors is needed, but schools and firms are often not adequately equipped or willing to bear the organizational burden of project design, implementation and monitoring of the external training activities of the pupils.



At present, the Italian apprenticeship system is characterized by being highly firm-specific and scarcely integrated with the education system. In addition, it often resembles a form of cheap labour, given the declining role of the off-firm training component and the lack of quality-assuring mechanisms for on-the-job training.

The economic incentives for companies also appear to be potentially weak.

Even for those who are highly educated (e.g. University degree), the transition to employment presents a risk of exclusion. The reasons for this lie in the institutional structure of higher education in Italy and in the lacking synergies between this sector and a low-qualified labour market.

The involvement of firms and other economic actors in the Italian education and vocational training system is generally low. This is due to the prevalence of small and medium-sized firms in the economic system, as the reduced dimension hinders their active involvement in training activities.

Furthermore:

- not much is invested in the system of employment services that should be strengthened to improve the match between jobseekers and employers;
- the incentives for the creation of start-ups and employment incentives to individuals are also very low;
- public and/or affordable childcare services supporting mothers willing to work are very scarce;
- a compulsory efficient career guidance programs targeting vulnerable people (low qualified, migrants, disabled, women, etc) is lacking;
- services designed to quickly reintegrate early school leavers into learning and work are poorly developed. Career guidance has to be part of community-based services and part of schools' strategies to detect and assist young people who leave school early or with no qualification.



12. State of the art of work-based approaches of integration on a didactical/methodological level (typical curricula/measures/formats)

Recent governments have introduced a number of policy reforms of its labour market (2014 Jobs Act), education system (2015 Good School Act) and innovation system (2015 National Plan for Digital Schools and Industry 4.0 National Plan 2017-2020).

The “Good School Act” contains several measures aimed at improving skills outcomes, enhancing school management practices, recognising the important role of teachers, and smoothing students’ transition from school to work.

One important component of the reform, the *Alternanza Scuola Lavoro (ASL)*, introduces a set of measures making traineeships compulsory in the last three years of upper secondary education, as well as a prerequisite for student admission to secondary school leaving examinations. These measures strengthen incentives for education providers and the world of work to co-operate, but their effective implementation requires reinforcing trust and dialogue between these actors.

The 2015 Good School Act gives more autonomy to schools and introduces merit-based bonuses for teachers while strengthening the accountability of school principals and making teachers’ professional development compulsory, structural and permanent. In order to achieve this goal, funding for professional development at national, school and individual level has been increased.

In addition, Italy has introduced compulsory work-based learning programmes in the regional system of upper secondary-level vocational educational training, called *Istruzione e Formazione Professionale (IeFP)*, to reduce student drop-out rates and to offer students opportunities to acquire professional skills that are required in the labour market.

Recent revisions to the regulations governing apprenticeship contracts, including the possibility to obtain a formal certification of skills acquired during the apprenticeship, also have the potential to strengthen the linkages between firms and students. The impact of these new efforts will need to be carefully monitored as support measures for firms and education providers to adopt apprentices in Italy have traditionally been weak.



13. Describe the overall PRINCIPLES of your national best practice(s) on grabbing, orienting, stabilising and inserting.

The three projects presenting characteristics of particular relevance for the work and / or training reintegration of young people are the following:

The **Project “FUORI SCUOLA Pathways for the reduction of early school leaving”** is a project that addresses young people identified through the regional databases, thus favoring the identification of all cases of school dropouts.

The possibility of having an initial interview with an operator assessing with the NEET the most suitable pathway, allows the personalization of the activities, within a programmed series of paths and workshops.

The orientation meetings are scheduled, at the request of the participants, also throughout the project; this allows constant support and taking charge of the individual, which is constantly monitored. Young people can thus better understand their areas of interest and the characteristics and qualities that can make them stand out better in their work.

The heterogeneity of the activities, both by type (lessons and workshops) and by topics (teaching materials and creative laboratories) makes it possible to develop work-related and soft skills, so as to provide those tools that are fundamental for job placement.

The certification that is issued at the end of the programme, for those who have participated in at least 70% of the activities (for each of the modules), represents a sure strong point in the application, which therefore positively influences the selection process.

NEETwork project allows young people to be inserted in a professional context, developing the technical and transversal skills that the world of work requires, facilitating the inclusion in a social context different from their own.



Having no qualification, the main requirement for being included in the project, allows the involvement of young people who, without formal or recognized professional training, would be able to reintegrate themselves into the working world with greater difficulty: this criterion facilitates hence the social inclusion in the working world.

During the 4 or 6 month-internship, the beneficiary can understand what are the aspects of interest for the activity performed thus being able to obtain information with respect to the actual professional interests.

The constant support of the company and educational tutor is highlighted since the presentation of the project, to underline how the joint support and project design and implementation of the programme are fundamental aspects for the successful completion of the placement.

The provision of an internship to each participant for the activities performed becomes a useful element to enhance the activity and allow to have a support for one's own income and therefore to search for an employment at the end of the internship.

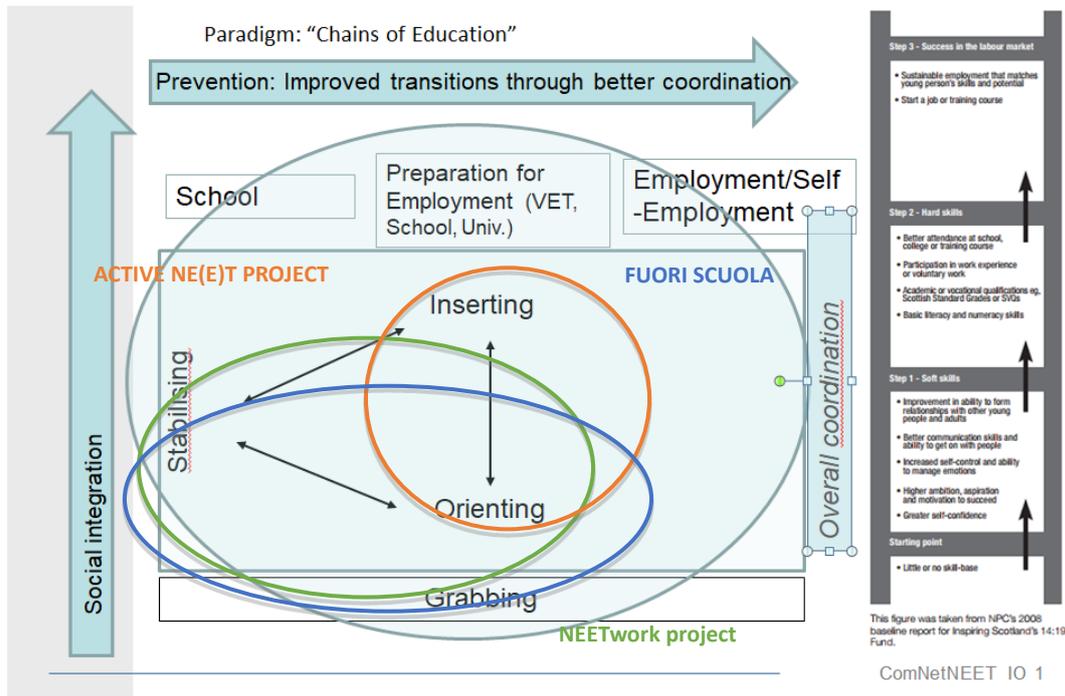
ACTIVE NE(E)T project allows young people to be easily reached, in particular for the approach and style of communication characterised by a dynamic language, common to young people, and exploiting the channels that they use commonly.

The activities therefore aim to focus on the ability to be visible and approachable by young people, so as to be able to propose tailored-made orientation, training and internship programmes.

The centrality of the social inclusion that the active research activities allow to obtain is included in the proposal and information to young people of all the possibilities present in the territory dealing with services for reintegration.



NEETS*in*ACTION



Project

ComNetNEET "Community Networking for Integration of Young People in NEET Situation"

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NOTA STATISTICA n.1/18 - Luglio 2018 A cura della Direzione Studi e Analisi Statistica di Anpal Servizi I NEET in Italia La distanza dal mercato del lavoro ed il rapporto con i Servizi Pubblici per l'Impiego

