



PROVINCIA AUTONOMA DI TRENTO



Regional dossier: Summary

Autonomous Province of Trento



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1. The national and provincial institutional framework

1.1 The Italian education system

In Italy, the education and training system is organized based on the principles of the subsidiarity and autonomy of the schools. The national government has exclusive legislative power over "general regulations on education", determining the basic performance levels that must be ensured throughout the country and the fundamental principles that regions must respect when exercising their authority. The regions have shared legislative power over education-related matters, and exclusive control over vocational education and training. The schools have autonomy regarding instruction, organization, research, experimentation and development.

The Italian education system¹ is currently organized as follows:

- **nursery school** for children aged 3 to 6 years old;
- **first cycle**, lasting for a total of 8 years, divided into:
 - elementary school (5 years) for children aged 6 to 11 years old;
 - lower secondary school (3 years) for students aged 11 to 14 years old;
- **second cycle**, consisting of:
 - upper secondary school (under national authority), lasting 5 years for students aged 14 to 19 years old. The general secondary schools (focusing on arts, humanities and sciences), technical schools and career training schools fall under this category;
 - three- and four-year vocational education and training programmes, under regional authority;
- **post-secondary school education and training**, which offers two different paths:
 - post-qualification and post-diploma programmes (lasting up to 1 year);
 - advanced technical education and training (1-year duration);
- **non-academic tertiary education** (two-year advanced technical institute programmes with the possibility of an additional year for certain fields);

¹See law 53/2003

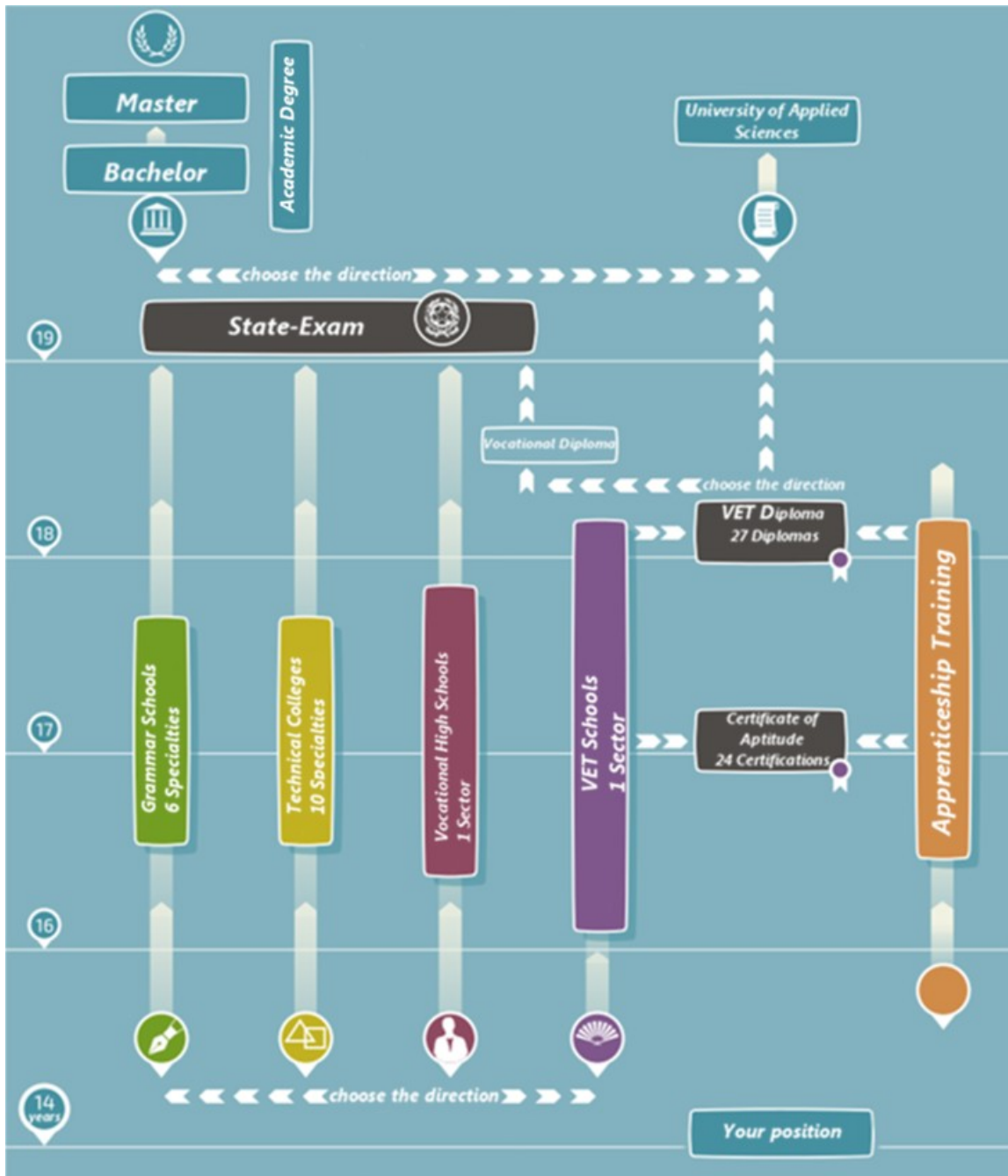


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- **higher education** offered by universities and art and music institutes. Higher education is organized into first, second and third cycles.

Structure of the education system in Trento



Source: Orientamenti. Una scelta sopra la media. (Orientation: an above-average choice) Department of Knowledge, Autonomous Province of Trento²

Compulsory education lasts 10 years (from 6 to 16 years old) and includes the 8 years of the first cycle and the first 2 years of the second cycle³. After completing the first cycle, the final 2

² See www.vivoscuola.it

³ See Ministerial Decree 139/2007.



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compulsory years (from 14 to 16 years of age) can be satisfied in an upper secondary school under national authority (general secondary schools, technical schools and career training schools) or in a vocational education and training programme under regional authority⁴.

Furthermore, all youths must respect the right/obligation of education and training for at least 12 years or, in any case, until a three-year occupational qualification has been obtained by the age of 18⁵.

Finally, youths who are 15 years old can satisfy the final year of compulsory education through an apprenticeship contract.

The compulsory education refers to enrolling in and attending the mandatory levels of education, which can be satisfied in:

- state schools or equivalent private schools, but also through home schooling and non-equivalent private schools, under certain conditions;
- vocational education and training programmes under regional authority (final 2 years) at training institutes run or accredited by the region.

At the conclusion of the compulsory education, if the school or training programme has not been completed, the student is awarded a certification that attests to having completed the compulsory education and specifies the skills acquired, which acts as a training credit for potential continuation of school or training in the future.

1.2 The education system in Trento

The Autonomous Province of Trento (hereinafter APT) enjoys a special statute of autonomy that distinguishes it from other Italian regions having an ordinary statute.

With reference to the national framework, the APT has primary authority over vocational training and shared authority over education and work.

With respect to lower and upper secondary education, there is a significant similarity between the national and provincial frameworks, while the Trento system has special features in terms of occupational education, vocational education and training (VET) and advanced occupational training (non-academic tertiary education). Specifically, the Trento system does not offer the national occupational education programme, with the exception of the healthcare and social services sector, because the other specializations are covered through technical education or vocational education and training (VET). Furthermore, it ensures continuity in the first two years with first cycle programmes and the unity of the entire second cycle, guaranteeing the educational equivalence of the different training programmes (upper secondary schools and vocational and educational training) within compulsory education.

The provincial VET programmes are divided into three sectors (agriculture and environment, industry and skilled trades, services), 12 specializations, 9 sections and 12 options, for a total of 24 occupational qualifications and 21 occupational diplomas recognized and applicable both

⁴ See law 133/2008.

⁵ See Law 53/2003 and Legislative Decree 76/2005.



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nationally and throughout the EU. The programmes leading to qualifications and diplomas are organized as follows:

- a two-year programme, followed by a third year to obtain the occupational qualification, and a fourth year to obtain the occupational diploma;
- a four-year programme divided into two two-year segments for specific programmes determined by the Provincial Council, obtaining an occupational diploma upon completion (no qualification available after third year).

The VET programmes make use of a range of methodologies and tools to promote a positive school-work transition, providing practical training in workshops and simulated businesses, school-year internships, alternating school-work and summer internships.

VET in the Province of Trento also enables those who have obtained the occupational diploma to take a specific state occupational education exam, after attending an appropriate one-year course. The course is one of several opportunities present in the province that offers a transition from VET to upper secondary school (primarily technical schools, but also general secondary schools) and integration of second cycle training institutes and schools.

Assistance measures are provided for the transition between the training institute and the new school for the different upper secondary school specializations, providing an important feature in terms of the "permeability" of second cycle programmes in the Trento education system.

Along with ensuring that VET students have the opportunity to access higher levels of education, an additional challenge for the Trento system is ensuring the stable, organized launch of apprenticeship programmes, beginning with programmes that lead to an occupational qualification or diploma and, in the future, also involve technical education programmes, using resources from the Youth Guarantee for their experimental launch.

1.2 Statistics on the education system in Trento

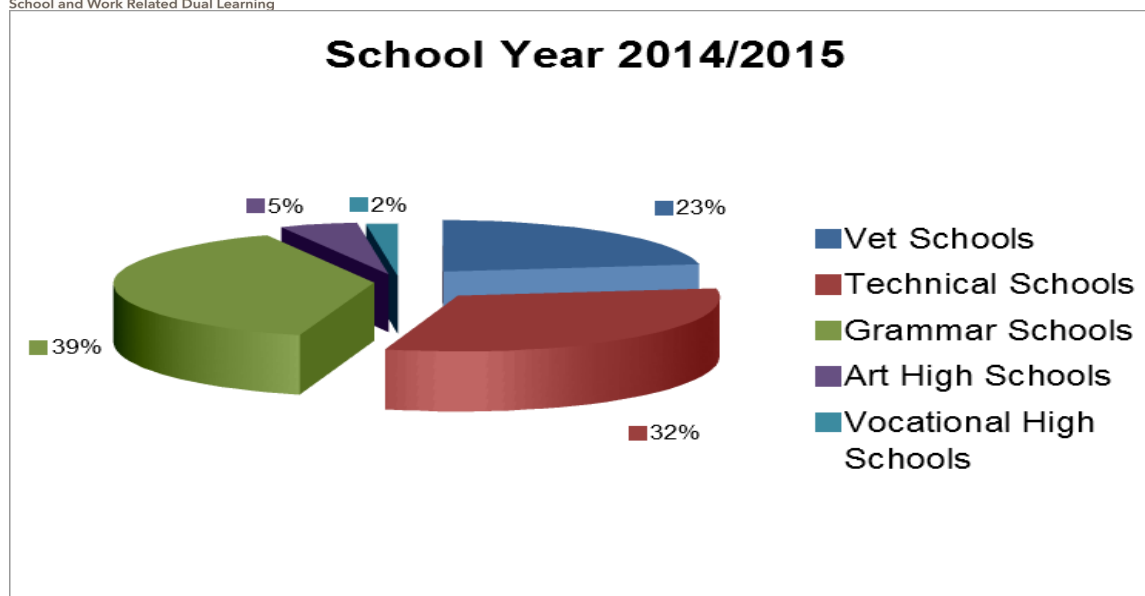
For the 2014/15 academic year, the percentage of second cycle system students in Trento enrolled in vocational education and training programmes was 23%, which was above the national average (see chart). 43% of the 26,000 students enrolled in an upper secondary school chose a general secondary school, 32% chose a technical institute and 2% chose an occupational institute. Specifically, the value of VET as a preferred channel for occupational training and overall personal development is confirmed by growth in terms of the expansion of training programmes offered (especially with respect to "vertical development" of the programmes, with more opportunities to obtain an occupational diploma after a fourth year), as well as the systematic increase in enrolment in recent years. In addition, the propensity of students who have received a qualification to pursue further training is currently equal to 56% with respect to enrolment in the fourth year of the VET programme, while it is about 10% for continuation in a second cycle education programme.

Enrolment distribution of second cycle students in Trento, 2014/15 academic year



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Source: *Anagrafe unica degli studenti della Provincia Autonoma di Trento (Vital statistics on students in the Autonomous Province of Trento)*, 1 September 2014

Enrolment and early school leavers

The Trento education system also demonstrates good performance in terms of the incidence of youths aged 18-24 years old who leave school without obtaining a second cycle qualification, known as early school leavers. Specifically, this group represents approximately one-tenth of the relevant population residing in the province, while the number ranges from approximately one-sixth to one-fifth in the rest of the country⁶.

Continuation on to universities

With respect to continuation on to universities, since 2004 there has been a gradual decline in the number of students who embark on this path – between 2003 and 2012, the percentage has dropped by 11.3%, decreasing from 69.5% to 58.2%⁷.

Presence of foreign students

The number of students with non-Italian citizenship present in the Trento school system in the 2014/15 academic year showed a slight decrease of 0.54% with respect to the previous year. There was a parallel decline of 0.43% in the number of Italian students enrolled. The largest drop in foreign student enrolment occurred in VET programmes, decreasing 6.03%⁸.

In absolute numbers, there were 10,516 foreign students enrolled in the 2014/15 school year, representing 12.14% of the total. It should be noted that almost 60% of the foreign students in the Trento school system were born in Italy⁹.

Presence of special needs students

⁶ Source: Italian National Statistics Institute website

⁷ *Rapporto sulla Situazione Economica e Sociale del Trentino (Report on the Economic and Social Situation of Trento)*, 2014 edition, Autonomous Province of Trento, edited by FBK-IRVAPP, Trento 30 October 2014.

⁸ Data from *Anagrafe unica degli studenti della Provincia Autonoma di Trento (Vital statistics on students in the Autonomous Province of Trento)*, 1 September 2014.

⁹ *Ibid.*



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Students with special educational needs represented, as of 1 September 2014, 3% of the entire school population, for a total of 2,604 students. The number has increased slightly in the past two years¹⁰.

The Trento education system is characterized by a high degree of inclusiveness in the different school programmes.

1.3 Apprenticeships in Italy

In Italy, an apprenticeship is defined as an open-ended work contract for youths between 15 and 29 years of age (and includes three types, described below, level I, II and III) that is used to promote youths entering the labour force. Occupational training is an integral part of the contract. The contract and training plan must be signed by both the employer and the apprentice. If the youth is a minor, the contract and training plan must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. In the apprenticeship, the employer must provide training to obtain or re-obtain a qualification. The apprenticeship contract offers several concessions, in terms of tax reductions and incentives. Compensation for the apprentice is based on the number of hours worked.

Regulations on apprenticeships were recently modified with Legislative Decree No. 81 of 15 June 2015, in the implementation of Law No. 183 of 10 December 2014, known as the "Jobs Act"¹¹, which significantly reformed apprenticeships.

There are three types of apprenticeship contracts that differ in terms of purpose, target groups and regulations:

- apprenticeships leading to an occupational qualification or diploma;
- vocational apprenticeships;
- advanced training and research apprenticeships.

The changes concern the definition of an apprenticeship, which is viewed as an "open-ended contract intended for training and employment", as well as significant modifications to the internal organization of the three types of apprenticeships. The purpose of the first type was expanded to enable students to obtain not only the three-year qualification or occupational diploma for the regional vocational education and training programmes, but also the upper secondary school diploma and the advanced technical specialization certificate.

Third level apprenticeships pertain to non-academic third-party training (advanced technical diploma from an advanced technical institute), university training (specialization, bachelor's, master's degrees and PhD programmes), research and residencies for access to professional associations. The vocational apprenticeships (level II) remained largely unchanged.

Level I and III apprenticeships have a strong training component (for this reason they are often called "*training apprenticeships*") and are structured to enable integration into a dual learning system that combines training and work. The training institute is responsible for producing the training plan, with the collaboration of the business. Collective bargaining governs the establishment of the contract (but not the duration), wrongful dismissal and termination of the contract, elements that are all defined in the regulation.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Law 10th december 2014, n. 183.



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Training during apprenticeships is under the authority of the regions and autonomous provinces, which with the reform must conform to the national standards¹².

1.4 Other forms of work based learning provided for in Italy

In addition to apprenticeships, there are other forms of work based learning: alternating school-work and internships.

Alternating school-work¹³ is an innovative educational model that can be used in upper secondary school and vocational education and training programmes. It entails alternating periods of classroom learning with periods of learning in work environments. The target group is students who are at least 15 years old.

The alternating school-work programme is managed by a school or training institute and involves, in addition to classroom training, a period of learning through work experience at a host facility (a business or public or private organization, including non-profits). The learning at host businesses can take the form of company tours, project work and school-year internships.

School-year internships play a leading role among alternating school-work options, as after the reform they became compulsory for formal education and training programmes. The purpose, however, is not to directly promote job placement, but rather to enhance and integrate the learning and training process through direct experience in the work world.

School-year internships are promoted by training institutes to benefit students, and the training content must be consistent with the scholastic or training programme.

Initiating a school-year internship requires an agreement between the school and host organization, as well as an attached training plan, which must be agreed to and signed by three parties: the school, the host organization and the student (and, in the case of a minor, a parent or legal guardian). The training project must indicate the rights and obligations of the parties involved, the training content of the experience and the methods used (duration, period, location, etc.).

School-year internships have a variable duration and are almost always preceded by a period of classroom training and orientation with the participation of outside experts. During the internship, the student, with the support of a school trainer and host facility trainer, has the opportunity to learn about a business from the inside, directly observing work activities and processes and acquiring technical-occupational skills.

While at the company, the student is covered by Inail insurance against work-related injuries and third-party civil liability.

Internships

Internships, together with apprenticeships, are the primary work placement tool for youths, providing a bridge between the school world and work world.

The forms of internships provided for are:

- summer internships;
- extra-curricular internships.

Summer internships

¹² See Inter-ministerial Decree 12 October 2015. Defining training standards for apprenticeships and general criteria for conducting apprenticeship programmes, in implementation of Article 46, paragraph 1, of Legislative Decree 15 June 2015, No. 81.

¹³ It was set up with the art. 4 of the Law 53/2003 and regulated by the [Legislative Decree 77/2005](#).



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Summer internships, like school-year internships, are intended for adolescents and youths who are enrolled in a school, accredited training body or university.

In contrast to school-year internships, summer internships have the following characteristics:

- maximum duration of 3 months;
- not included in the study plan and optional;
- take place between the end of the school or academic year and the beginning of the subsequent year;
- provide compensation.

As with school-year internships, summer internships require an agreement between the promoting facility and host facility, as well as a training plan, agreed to and signed by the promoter, the business and the student.

Extra-curricular internships

Extra-curricular internships are not part of a study or training programme and are intended for the unemployed and youths who have finished their education or training. Their purpose is to facilitate the transition from school to work and promote entry into the labour market.

Regulations on extra-curricular internships are under the exclusive authority of the regions and autonomous provinces within their territories, following the minimum standards defined in State-Regions Agreements¹⁴.

2. The socio-economic context and the labour market¹⁵

The Province of Trento is located in North-eastern Italy and is predominantly mountainous. Only 9% of the land is used for agriculture and 18% is covered by urban centres. Almost 50% of the population is located in urban areas that are gradually expanding, while the mountain areas are experiencing depopulation.

Demographic changes in recent years have highlighted phenomena that include a decrease in birth rate, a rise in immigration, an increase in the average life span and an ageing population. The demographic situation is less problematic than in other regions, however, thanks to an above average birth rate.

Foreigners comprised a total of 9.5% of the population in Trento in 2013.

The region's per capita gross domestic product at current prices is higher than the Italian average by more than 15% and is in line with the North-east.

Despite the unfavourable economic situation and uncertainty regarding the national and provincial financial framework, Trento has suffered less from the economic downturn than other areas. The broad measures taken by local authorities have certainly contributed to this achievement. The production system features production sectors and niches that are characterized by high quality and considerable innovation.

Currently there is slight growth in the labour force and the employed, while the unemployed and jobless are declining. Certain groups are suffering, however: youths and men over 50 years of age.

¹⁴ Agreement between the Government, the Regions and Autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bolzano, on the document "Guidelines on Internships". January 24th, 2013.

¹⁵ APT Statistical Service (2014), *Conoscere il Trentino (Overview of Trento)*, Trento November 2014 and APT Statistical Service.



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In 2013, the employment rate for people aged 20 to 64 was 70.5% and the unemployment rate reached 6.6%, slightly less than the national average.

Overall, Trento enjoys a high level of economic prosperity, a well-developed welfare system, and high-quality environmental resources, biodiversity and historical-cultural heritage.

With respect to the area of training, there is significant investment in research and development, with centres of scientific excellence, research institutes and universities.

The province has a high level of education (98.7% attended secondary school). The quality of second cycle education is also high (Trento schools in national and PISA surveys obtain ratings above the Italian average in terms of performance and equity) and there is a high rate of continuation on to the university system (63.1% pursue higher education, although this rate has steadily decreased since 2004). In addition, Trento has a smaller number of NEET (not in education, employment or training) youths than the rest of the country (11%).

3. The connection between career training and the dual learning system

The APT has been engaged for some time in measures to foster and promote relationships between schools, career training and work, directly involving business associations and businesses and developing dual learning models.

School-year internships and alternating school-work training

The connection with the work world is particularly evident in VET, which has worked to ensure an adequate degree of "pertinence" with respect to qualifications needed in the labour market, while also maintaining a necessary and essential emphasis on educational and cultural aspects, which is crucial for educating youths, aged 14 to 18.

The provincial economic system, employer associations, unions, and businesses promote and recognize the value of the VET system in Trento. The connections with employer associations, unions and businesses are structural elements required for planning and carrying out training programmes, creating school-year internships in the third year and alternating school-work training in the fourth year of the VET programmes.

Specifically, the school-year internship in the third year has objectives that include observing, applying and putting into practice the skills acquired through training in a work situation. In particular, it aims to:

- confirm the skills, tasks and abilities required for the occupational qualification of the student's programme;
- encourage awareness of the student's occupational interests and abilities;
- develop orientation skills, with the objective of formulating and carrying out a study/work project.

The alternating school-work training that takes place during the fourth school year provides structured experience in a work environment and acts to "balance" the training learned in a school setting with training learned in a business setting.



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The training institute is responsible for the programme, and the legal status of the youth is that of a student enrolled in the VET programme.

In parallel, a few significant alternating school-work programmes were initiated for technical education (technology specialization) and general secondary school education (economic-social option of humanities programme).

Summer internships

Another important aspect in the provincial strategy to foster the transition from school to the work world is the development of summer internship opportunities promoted by second cycle schools and training institutes.

Provincial resolution No. 736 of 19 May 2014 defines the criteria and methods for conducting summer internships, the agreement and the training plan with the associated declaration of skills. Student compensation for the internship (minimum 70 euro/week or 300 euro/month) is 100% the responsibility of the host company.

3.1 Evolution of VET towards a dual learning model for apprenticeships

Further development of work based learning models and the school-work transition became a legislative objective for the period 2013-2018 and resulted in an initial school-work guideline released by the Provincial council on 30 May 2014.

The guideline defines initial approaches to support the existing VET programmes offered by training institutes, as well as new dual learning apprenticeship programmes (which must become equally stable and structured) provided by the same training institutes, using resources from the Youth Guarantee for their experimental launch.

This new proposal primarily targets youths aged 15 to 25 years old who drop out of training programmes without obtaining a final qualification or who are more talented for practical subjects, but without a qualification would have a difficult time entering the labour market.

The apprenticeship leading to a diploma or qualification does not replace, but rather supplements the full-time programmes.

At the provincial level, on 8 February 2013, three protocols were signed between the APT and social partners that define the durations and responsibilities regarding:

- apprenticeships leading to an occupational qualification or diploma;
- vocational apprenticeships;
- advanced training and research apprenticeships.

With respect to this situation, the guidelines for the development of the school-training-work supply line tasked the Department of Knowledge with the creation of an overall apprenticeship proposal leading to the occupational qualification and diploma, while requiring the training institutes to devise the programmes. Regulation of this new apprenticeship tool necessitated integration of the protocol with the social partners, signed on 27 August 2014, and adoption of appropriate guidelines by the Provincial Council.

Following a specific announcement, projects were approved for type C apprenticeship programmes leading to an occupational qualification or diploma.

The requirements for participation in the programme are:



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- the youths cannot be enrolled in a school programme or training, or have a work contract. They must enrol in programme C through the Youth Guarantee portal and have an interview at the Province of Trento Employment Centre.
- the companies that are willing to hire youths through an apprenticeship contract must notify the training institutions offering the training opportunity.

Currently there are 40 youths who have taken advantage of this programme and 10 who have opted for an apprenticeship programme in the industrial and skilled trade sector.

4. Standards of the learning process

The guidelines adopted in February 2015 by the Provincial Council¹⁶ defined the system for training institutes to use in planning and implementing apprenticeship programmes leading to an occupational qualification or diploma.

General objectives of the programme

The objective of the programme is to ensure the participants acquire cultural, basic and transversal skills that are useful throughout their entire lives (in “lifelong learning” perspective), as well as general and specific occupational skills, which are learned in a work and training context, and obtain a formal occupational qualification and/or diploma.

The purpose of the apprenticeship training is to:

- create a connection between practical and theoretical knowledge with work based learning models;
- promote an attitude of awareness of one's role in an organization and an improved ability to transfer tasks and duties to different contexts.

The apprenticeship training programme is identified among the provincial training opportunities that distinguish the occupational qualification/diploma and the training institute or network of training institutes.

The structure of the programme

The duration of the programmes is 3 years to obtain an occupational qualification and 4 years to obtain an occupational diploma. The instruction lasts 460 hours/year and is divided into:

- 200 hours for developing basic skills (language, maths, science, technology, history, social studies and economics) based on the provincial curricula for VET programmes;
- 260 hours for developing occupational technical skills based on the provincial curricula for VET programmes;
- 100 hours of training at a business.

The duration of the training may be reduced based on credits (cultural and occupational) recognized for previous school, training and work programmes, leading to fewer hours of training at the training institute or business. The evaluation of credits is performed by the training institute where the apprentice is enrolled.

The duration of the apprenticeship training for youths who already have an occupational qualification and would like to obtain an occupational diploma is 460 hours for one year, structured in the manner described above.

¹⁶ See resolution No. 98 of 02/02/2015



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The skills acquired based on the results achieved in the apprenticeship training programme (at the business and the training institute) are also recognized for the continuing studies and education programmes for adults.

The Individual Training Plan

The Individual Training Plan is a prerequisite for entering into an apprenticeship contract leading to an occupational qualification or diploma.

With respect to the training programme project, the training institute specifies the individual training plan for the apprentice. In order to ensure a high level of quality and consistency in the training-work programme, the plan is prepared by the training institute in agreement with the employer and signed by both parties. The training plan is attached to the apprentice's work contract and does not require verification of conformity from the province.

The apprentice's Individual Training Plan is created based on the job descriptions listed in the provincial index for qualifications and diplomas with reference to the tasks performed in the work context, using a format established by the province. It is prepared by the school trainer, who is recognized by the training institute as the contact for the apprenticeship, in agreement with the business trainer, who is responsible for training the young apprentice in the work environment.

5. The role of the different parties in conducting the apprenticeship leading to a qualification or diploma

The parties involved, at different levels, in the process of conducting the apprenticeship leading to a qualification or diploma are the province, the social partners, the Provincial Planning Committee for Training Activities, the business associations, the businesses and the training institutes.

Specifically:

- the province, with systems that oversee education, define regulations, direction, guidelines and resources;
- the province, with systems that oversee labour (employment agency, employment office, employment services), manages the actions and measures of labour policy, joining with education to foster the school-work transition at the end of school and training programmes;
- the social partners, institutionally represented by the Provincial Employment Commission, play a planning and consulting role with respect to direction and government decisions;
- the Provincial Planning Committee for Training Activities promoted and financed by the Autonomous Province of Trento, established with resolution No. 1155 of 14/07/2014, expresses an opinion on the contents of the occupational training programme and training offer;
- the business associations and businesses actively participate in identifying needs, planning, and conducting and evaluating the training processes;
- the training institutes conduct the programmes and are responsible for the results of the training actions.

With the protocol signed by the social partners on 27 August 2014, the training institute has full authority for conducting the apprenticeship leading to a qualification or diploma.

The apprenticeship contract represents a close partnership between the business and school, enabling businesses to find youths who have skills that are increasingly suited to their needs and schools to systematically connect with the businesses' development prospects.



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Another important role is played in the training activities that are guaranteed in the training process, with each apprentice being assured training by both the school and the business.

The school trainer ensures individual support, guidance, assistance and direction in developing learning throughout the entire training programme, with the opportunity to adopt suitable learning strategies and methods based on the specific mixed programme (conducted at the business and school).

The business trainer fosters the apprentice's entry into the work setting and the transfer of skills necessary for performing job activities, and also supports and assists in the on-the-job training programme, ensuring integration with classroom training.

6. Monitoring and evaluation system for apprenticeships

The planned evaluation system regards:

- the evaluation of learning during the apprenticeship training programme;
- the final evaluation with an exam to obtain the occupational qualification or diploma;
- measures to support and monitor programmes.

The evaluation of learning during the apprenticeship training programme

During the apprenticeship training programme, the skills/abilities/knowledge acquired during the classroom training and on-the-job training are systematically evaluated. The apprentice is supervised by a school trainer contact who, in addition to formulating the individual training plan, supports the apprentice in the classroom training and assists the business trainer with activities to evaluate the skills/abilities/knowledge acquired in the work and training activities performed at the business.

With respect to training at the training institute, the instructor for the training unit is responsible for evaluations.

With respect to the training at the business, the skills acquired are evaluated by the business trainer, who shares responsibility for the evaluation with the instructor from the apprentice's training institute.

The evaluation tools and methods are those used for full-time VET programmes (see personal sheet, portfolio, business log, journal, etc.), adapted for the apprenticeship programme.

The evaluation of the learning results, based on the classroom and business evaluations, is the responsibility of the training institute where the apprentice is enrolled.

The evaluation for admission to the final exam

The training institute, at the conclusion of the apprenticeship programme leading to a qualification or diploma, evaluates the learning results against the skills/abilities/knowledge specified in the individual training plan as necessary for admission to the exam for the occupational qualification and/or diploma.

The apprentice is admitted to the exam as an in-house candidate, as if he/she were a student who had attended a corresponding 3- or 4-year VET programme.

The evaluation for admission to the exam is expressed in hundredths and ranges from a minimum of 30 points to a maximum of 55 points.



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The final exam

After admission, the apprentice participates in the final exam, following the established format and method for obtaining a formal occupational qualification and/or diploma. The exam verifies that the apprentice has gained the occupational skills/abilities/knowledge specified in the job description, which corresponds to the anticipated position upon leaving the VET programme. For apprenticeship programmes, it is possible to also establish appropriate exam sessions.

The exam is passed with a minimum score of 60/100.

After passing the exam for the qualification or diploma, the apprentice obtains a certificate as a qualified worker and/or occupational diploma as a technician.

In the event the apprentice is not admitted to or does not pass the final exam in the terms established by the Individual Training Plan, the employer can continue training under the apprenticeship until the qualification and/or diploma is obtained.

In any case, participation in the apprenticeship programme leading to qualification is valid for the fulfilment of the right and obligation.

Support and monitoring measures for the apprenticeship programmes leading to an occupational qualification and/or diploma

The apprenticeship programmes leading to an occupational qualification and/or diploma are subject to:

- verification and evaluation by the training institute;
- monitoring and evaluation by the provincial system responsible for education.

The implementation of apprenticeship programmes leading to an occupational qualification or diploma requires support and monitoring measures within the system, to evaluate and improve the current programme and at the conclusion of each year, following a research-action approach that the APT is preparing.

7. Achieving the key skills required by the European framework

In this initial start-up stage, it is not possible to verify that the key skills have been achieved by the apprentices. It is useful, however, to point out observations on the results achieved by the Trento VET system in national and international tests.

The test of reference is the OECD PISA test (Programme for International Student Assessment) for the results reported by the Province of Trento.

In 2012¹⁷ 23% of Trento students were enrolled in VET. This number is high compared to the national average, but in line with the data for the North-east (24.1%) and the North-west (20.9%), which however also includes students enrolled in occupational education. It is only lower than the figure for the Province of Bolzano (34.0%), which also includes 15-year-olds enrolled in dual learning programmes.

The PISA data indicates that the maths and reading skills of the 15-year-old students in Trento who are enrolled in career training schools and provincial VET programmes are better than those of their age group living in other areas of the country, including the Province of Bolzano.

Maths and reading skills for 15-year-old students by geographic area of residence and type of secondary school. Year 2012. PISA scores

Linguistic skills

Mathematical skills

¹⁷ *Rapporto sulla Situazione Economica e Sociale del Trentino (Report on the Economic and Social Situation of Trento), 2014 edition, Autonomous Province of Trento, edited by FBK-IRVAPP, Trento 30 October 2014.*



| | General | Technical schools | VET schools ¹ | General secondary schools | Technical schools | VET schools ¹ |
|---------------------|---------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Province of Trento | 553 | 533 | 462 | 569 | 511 | 449 |
| Province of Bolzano | 541 | 534 | 449 | 550 | 509 | 437 |
| North-east | 556 | 531 | 435 | 569 | 517 | 426 |
| North-west | 542 | 509 | 442 | 557 | 499 | 448 |
| Central | 524 | 478 | 416 | 535 | 466 | 410 |
| South | 492 | 446 | 382 | 513 | 440 | 382 |
| Italy | 520 | 485 | 416 | 536 | 475 | 414 |

Source: FBK-IRVAPP calculations based on PISA 2012 data

¹ In the provinces of Trento and Bolzano, this category almost exclusively includes students enrolled in VET programmes.

In addition, overall data for science and computer skills are better.

Scores obtained by 15-year-old students in science skills (OECD PISA)

| Year | Trento | Alto Adige | North-east | Italy |
|------|--------|------------|------------|-------|
| 2006 | 521 | 526 | 520 | 475 |
| 2009 | 523 | 513 | 515 | 489 |
| 2012 | 533 | 519 | 524 | 494 |

Source: IPRASE calculations based on PISA data

People having high levels of computer skills – Total. People 16 years or older who have high levels of computer skills against all people 16 years or older * 100

| Year | Trento | Alto Adige | Italy |
|------|--------|------------|-------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Source: IPRASE calculations based on PISA data

The INVALSI 2014 (National Institute for the Educational Evaluation of Instruction) results also demonstrate¹⁸ the good performance of the Trento VET system compared to other regions that participated in the survey.

¹⁸ IPRASE calculations based on INVALSI data



The scores obtained by the provincial VET in Italian and mathematics were higher by approximately 8% for Italian (55.4 vs. 47.5) and almost 4% for mathematics (38.0 vs. 34.8) compared to other regions that took part in the survey, belonging to the North-east and North-west geographic areas.

8. The school-work transition, with specific reference to VET

A study conducted by the Research Institute for the Evaluation of Public Policies¹⁹ demonstrates that regular, compensated work experiences are quite common for students in the second cycle during the course of studies, which combine with internships and alternating school-work during the year. With the partial exception of students from general secondary schools, it can be said that, on average, slightly more than half of students have had at least a summer work experience.

| <i>Programme type</i> | <i>Percentage of students with at least one work experience in the programme</i> |
|----------------------------|--|
| Occupational qualification | 45.3 |
| Occupational diploma | 65.1 |
| General secondary schools | 37.3 |
| Technical schools | 50.0 |
| Career training schools | 55.4 |

Source: FBK-IRVAPP calculations based on AISL 2012 data

Research demonstrates that these experiences accelerate entry into the first job and reduce the risks of subsequent unemployment. It therefore seems plausible that adequate governing of the processes of alternating, or even combining, school and work streamlines the transition from school to work.

9. Employment success of the second cycle studies

An initial consideration, highlighted in the same research, is the general tendency of Trento youth who have completed upper secondary school or VET to find their first job quite quickly. This is particularly true for youths who finish VET programmes.

The subjects of this analysis were youths who received a qualification or diploma from a VET programme or upper secondary school in 2010 and 2011 ranging in age from 18 to 22 years old. Within 18 months of finishing school, the youths with the longest employment history were from VET programmes, with 10 months for those who received a diploma, and 7 months for those who received a qualification. The youths who finished secondary school were employed for slightly more than one-third of the 18 months following the state exam.

With respect to the employment success of youths who received a qualification or diploma from a VET programme, within the 18 months after obtaining the qualification or diploma, based on the data from the Labour Market Observatory, VET offers good employment prospects. Despite the current economic situation, which has changed the employment opportunities for youths leaving this system, recent surveys on employment success 18 months after receiving the qualification show an employment rate of 62% (of total active). Of these, six out of ten are employed in the field they studied. During the same time period, the percentage of youths with a diploma who were employed was 78.9%, with 71% working in the field they studied.

¹⁹ *Rapporto sulla Situazione Economica e Sociale del Trentino (Report on the Economic and Social Situation of Trento)*, 2014 edition, Autonomous Province of Trento, edited by FBK-IRVAPP, Trento 30 October 2014



10. Costs and benefits

Compensation for training

In the new national regulations on training apprenticeships, which will also affect the province, external training is not compensated, while internal training is compensated at 10% of the contractual hourly compensation.

Hiring incentives for training apprenticeships

The new regulations eliminate: the payment by employers in the event the apprentice is fired, payments of "ASPI" tax for artisan firms, and the 0.30% tax for continuing education. In addition, the tax rate is decreased from 10% to 5% for businesses with more than nine employees.

11. Overview of special financing for the dual learning system

As previously mentioned, the start-up phase for the apprenticeship programmes leading to a qualification or diploma occurred through path C of the Youth Guarantee²⁰.

Financing for each activity depends on the number of enrolled students and number of hours actually attended. There are two methods for approving financing based on whether the training activities were for groups or individuals.

For the training part, the maximum approved cost per participant in the reporting cannot exceed a maximum value of 7,000.00 euro/year per participant. That amount will be reimbursed if the student attended the required 460 hours/year and obtained an occupational qualification or occupational diploma.

For individual training activities, a cost per hour of training equal to 14.00 euro/hour for each actual hour of training conducted up to a maximum of 460 hours will be approved. The provider of the training activities, in the case of individual programmes, can place the apprentice in established training modules if the content is relevant to the programme specified in the Individual Training Plan (with no possibility of obtaining double financing). The minimum implementation parameter for instruction is equal to 70% of the training hours to take place.

In any case, the financing thus determined will be disbursed only after the apprentice has completed the planned training course and obtained the occupational qualification or occupational diploma.

12. Skills of the trainers and instructors

The launch of new programmes is supported by teachers and business experts already present in the VET system, who have been involved in alternating school-work and other forms of work based learning, as well as joint planning and evaluation with businesses in the fourth year.

²⁰ Implementation Plan for Youth Employment (*Piano di attuazione per l'occupazione giovanile*), approved by the Provincial Council with Resolution of the Provincial Council no. 807 of May 26, 2014.



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In the future training activities, including joint activities, are needed for school and business trainers to develop their different responsibilities and qualitatively improve the results of the training process of apprenticeship programmes.

13. Ways to promote the appeal of dual learning systems and directions to take

To introduce the dual learning system in Trento VET, the following are required:

- close collaboration between unions, industrial associations and the provincial administration to ensure the feasibility of achieving qualitative standards for training and final exams;
- the establishment of incentives for businesses to hire apprentice-students and take charge of their on-the-job training;
- the commitment of businesses to support training, including small businesses;
- verification of the other facilitated hiring methods to ensure they do not displace the apprenticeship leading to a qualification;
- the establishment of activation times that are compatible with the start of the work and training relationship in the training institutes;
- targeted promotion to businesses and youths and forms of guidance beginning with the first year of VET;
- the creation of a strong partnership between potential businesses and training institutes, where the latter play a leading role in matching students with companies;
- the launch of a partnership to define the training content to integrate training at the business with classroom training, beginning with the experience that had been gained by the training institutes in implementing alternating school-work in the fourth year.

Of course, action is also needed in the following areas:

- the willingness of companies to hire young apprentices aiming to obtain a qualification or diploma and invest in on-the-job training;
- the creation of better conditions to make these programmes more appealing to youths, their families and the businesses;
- cultural initiatives to foster a culture of work, which should not oppose a culture of knowledge.

14. Anticipated results: strengths and weaknesses



SWORD

School and Work Related Dual Learning

The general expectation in Trento, based partially on the experiences of other countries, is that the introduction of a dual learning apprenticeship for obtaining the three-year qualification and four-year diploma can:

- facilitate entry into the labour market for youths in possession of a formal qualification;
- contribute to a reduction in dropping out after completion of compulsory education, expanding options for youths.

Specifically, the potential strengths for the new dual learning system in Trento involve the players in the system itself, or rather the youths, businesses and provincial administration.

It offers youths the opportunity to:

- become familiar with the business world through a real work relationship;
- develop transversal technical and operational skills outside of the school setting and test their abilities and aptitudes;
- facilitate and reduce the time required for entry into the labour market;
- have income during training;
- obtain a formal qualification while working that is identical to the one received for full-time programmes.

It provides businesses with the opportunity to:

- train the youth based on the needs of the business;
- reduce hiring costs;
- acquire new, up-to-date skills (e.g. computer, language, etc.) that are taught in school and can have a positive effect on the company.

It enables the public administration to:

- swiftly adapt the training options based on market demands;
- actively involve employer associations and labour unions;
- generally reduce the public cost of occupational training over time, compared to a full-time programme.

The weaknesses may basically be connected with:

- the difficulty of finding businesses to hire all the potential youths interested in pursuing an apprenticeship;
- the risk of reduced opportunity, over the medium-long term, for vertical mobility and career growth with more advanced qualifications (from the occupational qualification to the diploma, and on to advanced training and university).



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