

Italy - The Reform of Tertiary VET: Higher Technological Institutions – ITS Academies

Title of inspiring practice	The Reform of Tertiary VET: Higher Technological Institutions – ITS Academies (<i>“La Riforma della IFP Terziaria: Istituti Tecnologici Superiori – ITS Academy”</i>)
Geographical area	The practice has been implemented at national level, on the whole country.
Period of implementation	<p>The Reform has been approved by the Italian Parliament on 15 July 2022.</p> <p>On 25 August 2022, the Italian Ministry of Education had adopted the first Decree of the legislative reform.</p> <p>Further decrees will be needed to fully implement the reform.</p>
Rationale	The Reform of the Tertiary VET system in Italy is a virtuous example of how to give strategic priority to the education and training of highly skilled technicians in order to accompany the digital transition and the ecological transition, including sustainable mobility infrastructure.
Scope of the practice	Tertiary VET
Educational level	<p>The educational level regards post-upper secondary education.</p> <p>Higher technological institutes (ITS Academies) offer two- to three-year post-upper secondary educational pathways which lead to high-level technical diplomas, corresponding respectively to EQF level 5 and level 6.</p> <p>Moreover, ITS Academies can offer specific educational pathways to improve workers’ competences, including of those dismissed and given redundancy fund earnings, that could constitute micro-credentials or formative credits for the attainment of professional degrees.</p>
Introduction and context	<p>In order to support the economic development and competitiveness of the production system, the general objective of the reform is to strengthen and expand the offer of technicians with high technological and technical professional skills. The reform aims at gradually filling the gap between labour demand and supply, in relation to the technological areas considered strategic for the ecological and digital transition.</p> <p>The mission of ITS Academies includes the support to the dissemination of scientific and technological culture; the continuous guidance of young people towards technical professions; the professional development of teachers and trainers; the transition of young people into the labour market; the continuous training of highly skilled technical workers; the technological innovation of the production system, particularly SMEs.</p> <p>According to the reform, the requirements to create a new ITS Academy are to have at least one upper secondary school of the provincial territory, with a relevant educational offer; a training structure accredited by the Region; one or more companies using the technologies that will be part of the training pathway; a higher education institution or a research institution.</p> <p>The companies participating to the ITS Academy will generally appoint the legal representative of the Foundation.</p> <p>The main feature of these VET pathways concerns the provision of company internships or traineeships that must correspond to at least 35% of the total duration and that can also be carried out abroad and be supported by scholarships. Moreover, art. 4 of the reform provides a tax credit (tax reduction) of 30% for the enterprises that decide to invest in ITS Academies. Credit rises to 60% if it is disbursed in provinces where the unemployment rate is higher than the national average.</p> <p>Access to the ITS Academies is open to young people and adults holding a secondary school diploma or a four-year diploma of initial vocational education and training</p>

	<p>together with a qualification of technical education and training courses IFTS of at least 800 hours.</p> <p>ITS Academies are granted a stable financing of EUR 48.35 million, starting from 2022. The Higher Technological Education Fund will give priority to the establishment of training courses, the development of laboratories and technologically advanced infrastructure, guidance activities for young people and their families and scholarships.</p>
Key activities and outcomes	<p>The reform aims at supporting the innovation and sustainability of the economic and production system and at achieving the goal of strengthening the offer of workforce with the right skills. The reform ensures a greater investment in ITS Academies; a greater connection to local productive districts and Skills Intelligence; improved legal status of qualifications, allowing further education in tertiary pathways, according to a lifelong learning perspective.</p> <p>The first decree of the reform has regarded the annual funding of ITS Academies, that is, the establishment in the Budget of the Ministry of Education of a Fund for Higher Technological Education. The Fund covers both the allocation between the regions, in order to implement stable and timely pathways in line with current technological innovation processes, and the allocation for national system measures, including projects supporting the acquisition of professional and transversal skills for businesses technological innovation and monitoring and evaluation activities.</p> <p>Other key measures for the success of the reform include the identification of new technological pathway areas to facilitate the green and digital transition; the definition of criteria for final examinations; the table of correspondence of the qualifications obtained, the recognition of credits in tertiary education pathways and the vertical continuity in professional degrees pathways implemented by Higher Education Institutions.</p> <p>The government, in particular the Ministry of Education, reaffirmed the coordination of Tertiary VET, in collaboration with the Ministry for Universities and Research for the EQF level 6 pathways, and launched a consultation action of all stakeholders, represented in the ITS National Committee and the Sectoral and Territorial Coordination Networks. The adoption of this type of whole-of-government, multi-stakeholder approach, however, lengthens the implementation of the reform because it requires more time for a shared elaboration of implementing decrees.</p> <p>Currently, the professional profiles facilitating the green transition include two main technological areas.</p> <p>The first area is the 'Energy efficiency', which aims at training high-skilled technician for energy savings in sustainable buildings, high-skilled technician for energy supply and plant construction and high-skilled technician for the management of energy systems and certification of operation of energy plants.</p> <p>The second area is 'Sustainable mobility' which aims at training high-skilled technician for the mobility of persons and goods, high-skilled technician for the production and maintenance of means of transport and related infrastructure and high-skilled technician for info-mobility and logistics infrastructure.</p> <p>In order to support a more sustainable economy, the reform aims at widening the number of the technological areas of ITS Academies through the implementation of a decree identifying a series of areas that will have to refer to fields like the green or the digital transition.</p>
Contacts and sources	<p>Website: https://sistemait.it/</p> <p>Documents: https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2022/07/26/22G00108/sg</p>
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