



# National Report on Needs Analysis Italy

March 2013

Effebi Association



## **COUNTRY SCORECARD: ITALY**

I. Who is responsible for assessment, validation and recognition of the learning outcomes in the financial services sector?

In Italy, according to the National Plan for Quality Assurance (March 2012) in education and training, the responsibility is shared as follows:

- a. Central (state) level: establishes general rules and fundamental principle for education and training
- b. Regional level: legal responsibility and autonomy in the field of education and training
- c. There are differences between regions and, in some cases, also between education institutions due to the local autonomy.

At the moment, there is no sectoral body officially in charged with the responsibility for assessment, validation and recognition of the learning outcomes.

Universities apply the regular HEI evaluation methodology and tools, based on the Ministry of Education 'accreditation'.

VET providers have their own evaluation methodologies and instruments that, if the provider is publicly accredited by the Region, it should be in line with regional trans-sectoral rules.

II. How are stakeholders involved in the decision making process in your country?

For the designing of the National Plan for Quality Assurance the following stakeholders have been involved:

- Ministry of Labour and Social Politics
- Ministry of Education, University and Research
- ISFOL (Institute for professional development of employees)
- National Reference Point for EQAVET
- Regions

Quality Development Roadmap for Training in the Financial Services Sector –  
QUADRO

Project Number: 526749-LLP-1-2012-1-PT-LEONARDO-LMP

- Social partners

For the concrete implementation of this Plan, also other stakeholders will be involved: employers' associations, sectoral bodies (representing employers, employees and education & training).

III. Who is responsible for the accreditation of VET providers?

Based on the shared responsibility between the State and the Regions, the last ones are in charged of the accreditation of VET providers, for all sectors.

IV. Are professional bodies (banking associations, professional organizations such as auditors, accountants, managers, internal auditors, etc.) involved in accreditation of training providers in the financial services sector?

At the moment professional bodies can be involved in the consultation phases regarding the definition of accreditation criteria and procedures. After the accreditation system is in place, the only responsible is the Region, for all sectors.

V. Is the curriculum based on professional standards and/or frameworks, if any?

In 2011 the National Institute for Statistics published the 'Classification of Occupations' Catalogue, updated according to the International Standard Classification of Occupations - Isco08. It includes a classification of occupations mainly for statistical and administrative use. This classification has no impact of the regulations regarding occupations and doesn't restrict the possible diversity of professional occupations. Therefore, there is no obligation for VET providers to base the training curriculum on this catalogue.

In December 2012 ABI (Italian Banks Association) available the 'Certification Manual for Sectoral Qualifications, in line with EQF provisions'. It includes the 'Library of sectoral qualifications', which are described in terms of knowledge, skills and autonomy, with recommendations regarding the EQF level. This Manual represents a first step for defining sectoral professional standards that will be considered as reference point for the development of training curriculum within the sector.

Quality Development Roadmap for Training in the Financial Services Sector –  
QUADRO

Project Number: 526749-LLP-1-2012-1-PT-LEONARDO-LMP

VI. Is curriculum based on National Qualification Framework? (if yes, how?)

Italy still didn't officially publish the NQF Referencing Report, although this Report is elaborated and is being discussed with the EC. The Report refers both to formal qualifications and to professional ones, although the second ones are mainly the responsibility of Regions and thus, it is still an open topic at national level.

In this context, sectoral VET providers can only base the professional training curriculum on Regional rules and not on a National Qualifications Framework in place.

VII. Is a credits system (ECTS, ECVET or other) in place?

Universities apply the ECTS credit system for their formal qualifications and, according to the Law 240/2010, non formal and informal learning can be recognised as maximum 12 ECTS for acquiring university qualifications. This is one of the first steps for integrating ECTS system with ECVET provisions, and it is expected that the harmonisation of this law with the Law 92/2012 (regarding the development strategies for the labour market) will bring a stronger integration of the two systems.

There is no centralised evidence on a systemic application of the ECVET system by VET providers who offer professional training programmes. ISFOL collected various experiences, from different sectors, but these represent mainly a bottom-up approach. No national policy is in place yet and thus, VET providers apply ECVET on individual basis, with no specific framework and/or quality controls.

VIII. What is the proportion of theory and practice (knowledge and competencies) in the training curriculum within the sector?

There is no official data on this topic at the moment, and the training offered is very diverse from this point of view, the trend is to develop training programmes which are more and more focused on practical issues and labour market needs. Considering the description of the sectoral professional occupations, VET providers will have to keep a fair balance between 'theory and practice' in order to provide learners knowledge, but also skills and competences for acquiring the desired qualification.

- IX. Which formal qualification(s) is needed for being employed as a “teacher / trainer”?

Since there is a regional governance in place, the requested qualifications for being recognised as a teacher and/or a trainers are being established at regional level. In the public service (teachers) the formal qualifications is managed by the State/Regions. Concerning the trainers the qualifications might be different from one region to another, because there are no specific provisions at sectoral level, in particular for trainers.

- X. What kind of institutions are in charge of education and training accreditation of teachers/trainers?

Isfol (Institute for professional development of employees) is the accreditation authority for the Regions which are accrediting VET providers, teachers and trainers delivering education and training on the territory.

- XI. Is education and training of teachers/trainers based on standards or frameworks?

The standards / frameworks applied in relation to the education and training of the teachers/trainers are being established by Regions. When it comes to teachers/trainers involved in education systems, Regions are quite interested in establishing such standards, although the experiences are different. It is not the same for teachers/trainers involved exclusively in vocation/professional training.

- XII. What is the proportion of “technical” or “pedagogical” subjects in the education & training programmes for teachers/trainers?

The teachers/trainers education and training is, as already stated, established at Regional level. Therefore also the training topics are decided regionally.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICE IN ORGANISATIONS

### Introduction

The participants at the needs analysis are offering training in the financial sector. All three are private sector companies with a sectoral alignment (banking sector) providing vocational training programmes mainly to employees from their group. They are linked to Higher Education Institutions, but their activity is focused mainly on professional development of the bank employees.

Two of the respondents estimated in 0.6 – 0.7 percentage of turnover (revenue) invested in training of trainers and teachers by their organization. The third one indicated 0.4 %.

The participants indicated the usage of both internal and external training for the professional development of their personnel, both on pedagogical (e.g. andragogy, class management, training design) and professional matters (e.g. credits, insurances, compliance, managerial competencies).

Questionnaires were answered by the following organisations:

1. BANCA POPOLARE DI VICENZA SCPA – Training department of the Group (BPVI)
2. GRUPPO CREDITO VALTELLINESE - Training department of the Group (CREVAL)
3. GRUPPO BNL BNP PARIBAS – Training department of the Group (BNL)

The number of participants per institute over last three years is shown in the table below:

	2011	2012	2013
BANCA POPOLARE DI VICENZA SCPA (Day/trainee)	34.698	34.700	34.700
GRUPPO CREDITO VALTELLINESE	4102	3780	3750
BNL PARIBAS	6589	5875	5590

Legal notice: *With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union.*

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication / communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein*

Quality Development Roadmap for Training in the Financial Services Sector –

QUADRO

Project Number: 526749-LLP-1-2012-1-PT-LEONARDO-LMP

The total turnover of each institute (if information is available):

	Turn over
BANCA POPOLARE DI VICENZA SCPA	€ 850.000
GRUPPO CREDITO VALTELLINESE	€ 1.000.000
BNL BNP PARIBAS	€ 1.700.000

The organisations indicated the following fields where the trainings occurred:

Fields of training	BPVI	CREVAL	BNL
· Languages	YES	YES	YES
· Sales and marketing	YES	YES	YES
· Banking	YES	YES	YES
· Insurance	YES	YES	YES
· Personal skills/development	YES	YES	YES
· ICT	YES	YES	YES
· Engineering, manufacturing, construction and transport	NO	NO	NO
· Environmental protection and occupational health and safety	YES	YES	YES
· Other training subjects	YES	YES	YES

The answers show that all three participants have very similar training programmes and that topics related to 'engineering, manufacturing, construction and transport' are not included in their activities, which is mainly explained by their sectoral focus.

Importance of quality assurance (B1)

Two out of three respondents declared that Quality Assurance is very important for their organisation, while one respondent has a neutral position on this topic.

Internal quality assurance systems B2

Quality Development Roadmap for Training in the Financial Services Sector –  
QUADRO

Project Number: 526749-LLP-1-2012-1-PT-LEONARDO-LMP

Two out of three organisations nominated ISO as quality assurance system applied, while one organisation didn't nominate any.

Role of EQAVET B3

Just one organisation declared to know the EQAVET. Another respondent answered neutral when asked if he knew about EQAVET and the third one answered NO. Therefore, the awareness on EQAVET is quite limited for the VET providers operating in the banking sector.

PDCA – cycle B4

	BPVI	CREVAL	BNL
Planning	Very Strong	Very strong	Very strong
Do(Implementation)	Strong	Very strong	Very strong
Check (Assessment and evaluation)	Strong	Very strong	Strong
Act (Review and Change)	Medium	Very strong	Strong

One organisation didn't answer this question. The other two declared they cover 'very strong' the first two steps: 'Plan' and 'Do', while 'Check' and 'Review' are being covered 'very strong' by one organisation and 'strong' by the other one.

Conclusion

Although generally all organisations participants at the analysis appreciate as (very) important the Quality Assurance system, there is a heterogeneous approach to this topic. Some of them are already implementing ISO, some of them have some limited information about EQAVET, but none of them apply fully the PDCA cycle, recommended by the EQARF Recommendation. Therefore, it is interesting and challenging to address this complex state of art, which implies: raising awareness on EQAVET and EQARF provisions and convincing sectoral VET providers about the benefits of the Quality Assurance for the VET programmes.

## **RELEVANT EQAVET INDICATORS IMPLEMENTED FOR THE FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR**

### Introduction

The EQAVET includes 4 different steps in the Quality Assurance cycle (PDCA) and 10 different indicators that are relevant for the quality of the process of training (input, process, output, outcome). Following is shown to what extent the relevant indicators are applied by the surveyed institutions in Italy already.

### Relevance of quality assurance systems for VET providers (1a vs B1,B2)

Two out of three respondents declared that Quality Assurance is very important for their organisation, while one respondent has a neutral position on this topic. Some of the respondents are applying ISO as QA system at the moment and all of them cover all four QA steps (PDCA).

But, an explicit alignment of internal quality assurance systems in the context of the EQAVET is not done yet.

### Investment in training of teachers and trainers (2a vs A3)

The three respondents provided different percentage information regarding the investments in training of teachers and trainers (from 0.4 to 0.7%).

### Participation rate in VET programmes (3 vs A8)

The requirements of the banking specific labour market will be covered by the topics offered by the VET providers and help to promote an adequate working ability of the employees. In addition to the fields of languages, sales, banking, insurance and personnel there are also other areas of knowledge offered by some of the respondents.

### Utilisation of acquired skills at the workplace (6b vs B5 II)

All respondents are implementing full and/or partial follow-up analysis with the participants at the training activities. This analysis is being done through tests,

questionnaires and interviews with participants and is being conducted by trainers and managers.

Mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market (9a vs B6)

All the respondents are involved in continuous needs analysis and identification of new needed training topics. It is quite common to organise discussions and interviews with experts and apply focused questionnaires in order to receive their opinions on the type of skills and competencies required in the near future, according to the sectoral labour market envisaged changes.

Schemes used to promote better access to VET (10a vs B7)

One participant underlined the use of Company intranet and internal tutoring / coaching and the other two respondents declared they don't apply any schemes to promote better access (for a particular group of students with lack of professional knowledge) to VET in the banking and financial services sector.

Conclusion

The strengths points in the implementation of EQARF provisions are: the follow up programmes, the anticipation of skills needs for the designing of appropriated training programmes, the coverage of various topics in training (linked to the labour market needs).

The week points that could be identified are related to the overall awareness and implementation of EQARF Recommendation and promoting better access to VET. The investments in teacher/trainer training cannot be evaluated at this stage, since no respondent provided information in this regard.

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE CRITERIA FOR SELECTED VET PROGRAMME**

### Introduction

This section includes information regarding the criteria for the development of quality assurance systems in the participant organisation. Moreover it provides information regarding the learning process, the students' assessment and training programmes evaluation and follow-up measures.

### Input Factors contributing to Quality of VET C1.1-C1.12

One respondent didn't provide any answers to these questions. Therefore, the analysis is based on the information provided by two respondents.

Internationalisation is not very much considered in the organisations' VET programmes. Just one participant provided an indication regarding the share of work-place related / practice oriented training in your VET programs (BNL - 20%), which is supported by practical exams and case studies. No organisation uses EQF descriptors to ensure comparability of certificates and degrees within the EU. Both respondents offer both standard and customised training programs.

The proportion between internal and external staff is between 25-30% (internal) and 75 – 70% (external).

Regarding the pedagogical and professional qualifications requested to trainers, both respondents indicated: 'Graduate degree'.

### Quality Assurance of the Teaching and Learning Process C1.13-C1.15

The share of multi-media tools/training hours used in the training programs varies between 25 to 30%. The main assistance given to trainers is classroom observation and in one case also periodical interventions on the concrete role.

Quality Development Roadmap for Training in the Financial Services Sector –  
QUADRO

Project Number: 526749-LLP-1-2012-1-PT-LEONARDO-LMP

The motivating methods used by trainees are the following:

	BPVI	CREVAL	BNL
Target agreements	X	X	X
Informing trainees about tasks, responsibilities and expectations	X	X	X
Acting as a role model	X	-	X
Giving credit to trainees	X	X	-
Providing appropriate conditions for learning	X	X	-
Promoting individual development	-	X	X
Giving feedback	-	X	X
Others: .....	-	-	-

Quality Assurance concerning the Output of your VET programs C1.16-C1.17

The main types of students' assessment and examination used are written and oral exams, presentation of seminar paper, written questionnaire and certificate of participation.

The teaching activity is being mostly evaluated through 'Evaluation of every trainer after completion of a module' and the 'General evaluation of the module'.

Quality Assurance concerning the Outcome of your VET programs C1.18-C1.24

None of the respondent organisation has a Responsible for Quality Assurance. None of the respondents provided information regarding the time spent for quality management issues per month in their organisation.

Two out of three respondents indicated 'survey after graduation' as evaluation tool after the implementation of the training programme.

Legal notice: With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union. This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication / communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

One respondent declared it has a follow-up survey installed, while another respondent declared it doesn't have such as survey. The third respondent didn't provide an answer to this question.

Only one organisation declared to receive feedback from the banks/financial organisations on the usability of their certificates.

One organization declared that the deficits in the VET process are being corrected through the standards process (PDCA).

### Conclusion

Internationalisation and EQF are still not priorities for the sectoral VET providers, which are offering already a wide range of standard and/or customised training programmes. The main qualification requested from Trainers is the Graduate degree, the participant organisations didn't indicate any professional qualification.

The respondent organisations are implementing complex and diverse motivational tools for their students. In this regard, the three organisations nominated all the proposed motivating instruments.

All respondents have quite similar assessment and evaluation approaches both for students and for the teaching process.

None of the organisations has a Responsible for the Quality Assurance, but some of them apply different evaluations systems and tools, and follow-up systems in place.

## **USE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE INSTRUMENTS**

### Introduction

This section includes information regarding the QA instruments used by the organisations participating at the needs analysis. Although none of them provided concrete models of evaluation tools, all of them gave some information about their experience in the field.

### Use of quality assurance instruments D1-D4

Respondents declared to know most of the proposed QA instruments, but the most applied seem to be: Staff appraisal Interviews, Officially declared mission statement and Partnership contracts with cooperating banks / financial services institutions. Also the other proposed instruments are being applied by some organisations, but not by all the three.

### Conclusion

The respondents are aware of a wide range of QA instruments and are also applying many of them within their internal VET programmes. It is interesting to notice that none of the organisations has Partnership contracts with VET Institutes. This could give an indication of low level of mobility in training at sectoral level.

## **SUMMARY**

The banking VET system in Italy is of high standards, imposed mainly by market complexity and skills requirements. With a low level of awareness regarding the EQARF, the VET providers still need to adopt important measures in order to align to the EQARF recommendations and provisions. Some of these are already partially implemented, but quite rarely and individually, without being part of a Framework.

This situation is not very surprising considering that a lot still needs to be done at national level for QA in vocational training. At the moment Regions are responsible of this process, but this is still not fully coordinated at national level and is not completely monitored and evaluated. Moreover, this approach can lead a heterogeneous application of EQARF and thus, to confusion and lack of trust from the stakeholders.

There are many similarities and also differences regarding the organisation's experiences related to QA criteria, instruments, and assessment and evaluation tools. Although they didn't provide any concrete QA instrument, the QUADRO Partnership can use the information provided in order to identify and/or create the appropriate tools, addressing their concrete needs in the field.

Although the EQAVET framework is not widely known, organisations are making rather strong use of the PDCA-cycle for quality assurance. Nevertheless, there is room for improvement in certain steps of the cycle.

Another important finding of this analysis is the need to 'open' the sectoral VET system to European experiences and good practices. This could give some very useful inputs and could practically support the EQARF implementation at sectoral level.

Given this situation, the organisations expressed high interested in the results of the QUADRO-project, in concrete instruments and tools supporting their efforts for better quality.