

Italy: ERM comparative analytical report on Recent Policy Developments related to those Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET)

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Observatory: EMCC | Topic: .
Published on: 06 Febbraio 2012.

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The interest for NEETs in Italy is recent and mostly connected with the effects of the current economic crisis. However, the problems related to young people have always been quite consistent in Italy as for social conditions and for the difficulties which young people have in entering the labour market. The various policy measures which were taken in the past were characterised by scant public financing, trade unions' weak incisiveness and, sometimes, a misuse by companies. In this regard, reference can be made to the controversies at times connected with job training contracts. More recently measures, having various levels of efficacy and which had never been taken in Italy before, have been implemented. This has been possible thanks to the funding coming from the European structural funds. The trade unions and entrepreneurs are also somehow starting to look at youth problems with a stronger proposal-making attitude. The governmental support is still scarce and employment active policies are still insufficiently spread and financed.

1. Introduction

1.1 What is the level of interest among the different stakeholders in your country (policy makers, the media, employers and trade unions) in the issue of NEETs? What are their reasons for having a high/low level of interest in the topic? (Expected length 100 words)

In Italy NEETs have just recently begun to be considered a specific category by media and in the sphere of scientific debate. This new attitude has been strongly pushed by the 2010 annual report by the Italian Institute of Statistics (Istituto italiano di statistica, Istat). This report was the first to talk about NEETs, speaking about youth problems as the previous reports did not tackle this topic. Media have therefore quoted the Istat report data, thus contributing to increase the public awareness of the peculiar and socially relevant youth category represented by NEETs. On the other hand, it is true that Italian policy makers, trade unions and entrepreneurs had previously started to deal with many groups of people who are included in NEET category without mentioning the NEET acronym, which has been started to be used only recently. Topics like youth unemployment, temporary employment, early school leaving, over qualification, young immigrants coming from depressed areas and disabilities have been present in policy making for a few years. Trade unions and entrepreneurs sometimes have made pressure about these issues and were often involved in planning the related public policies. However, the governmental investment, aimed at facing these problems, is not systematic and considerable, as the expense for youth employment improvement policies amounts to about 4% of the total expense destined to employment policies (source: Eurostat, 2009; Italian Government, 2011). Additionally, local related initiatives are delegated to local authorities – such as city, province and region administrations.

The Italian welfare is strongly based on family support. For this reason, many young people in difficulty turn to their families for help as the state poorly invests in resources aimed at helping the young entering the labour market. It is also true that trade unions have difficulty in representing NEET categories also because these groups are hardly reachable due to their structural dispersion. The three main Italian trade union confederations - the General Confederation of Italian Workers (Cgil), the Italian Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions (Cisl) and the Union of Italian Workers (Uil) – have proposed a category related to new employment types, temporary workers and unemployed people ([IT0901029Q](#)). However, the amount of members of these groups is lower than those of other categories. For instance, the percentage of members belonging to the group of unemployed people and new employment types within CGIL was 1,2% of the total members in 2010 (source: Cgil, 2011).

The labour market reforms in the late 1990s, that increased flexibility of starting contracts, as well as the crisis in recent years have surely affected youth social conditions. As a consequence, the trade union is increasingly trying to be an interlocutor both at local level - through agreements between local authorities, employment agencies and local trade unions - and at national level. In particular, we refer to the 2007 agreement which tried to intervene on the negative externalities coming from the so-called “atypical contracts” ([IT0610029I](#); [IT0609019I](#); [IT0707019I](#)). As shown in the table 1, the trade union's effort is more visible in the first two NEET subgroups and in the subgroup related to economically depressed areas - specifically the South of Italy, which is quite a traditional topic in national tripartite pacts besides youth unemployment. Said issues have been present in social pacts since the 1980s and later in territorial plans. The other subgroups indicated in chart 1 certainly include issues which trade unions push on, negotiate and develops action strategies for, but with lower visibility and acknowledgement. On the other hand, entrepreneurs' organisations have negotiated the main policies regarding support to youth employment and labour market flexibility. In this regard, they propose action strategies which refer to the struggle between educational qualification and enterprise requirements, also by means of ad hoc agreements with schools and universities. The problem of early school leavers is instead a mainly ministerial topic even though both entrepreneurs' organisations and trade unions give suggestions and discuss about it.

1.2 Using the following table, please identify which sub-groups of NEETs are of particular concern to the different stakeholders in your country. Please indicate the relative importance of each group to the different stakeholders; for each group please state whether they are felt to be of ‘significant concern’, ‘some concern’, or ‘no concern’ to the different stakeholders.

Table 1 – NEETs sub-groups

	Public/media debate e.g. the extent to which the issue is discussed within the news media	Mainstream Policy e.g. the range of policy documents tackling the issue, the amount of investment committed to tackling the problem	Employers e.g. the extent to which this issue is raised as a concern, e.g. through lobbying / pressure on the government, involvement in the design and/or implementation of relevant policies	Trade unions e.g. the extent to which this issue is raised as a concern, e.g. through lobbying / pressure on the government, involvement in the design and/or implementation of relevant policies
Young people who are unemployed	Significant concern	Some concern	Significant concern	Significant concern
Young people who are in 'precarious' or unsuitable employment (e.g. temporary contracts, forced self-employment, part-time work, or jobs which are not commensurate with their level of qualifications)	Significant concern	Some concern	Significant concern	Significant concern
Early school leavers – young people who have dropped out of education before obtaining an upper secondary level qualification	Some concern	Some concern	Some concern	Some concern
Young people with qualifications which do not meet labour market needs	No concern	Some concern	Some concern	Some concern
Teenage/ single parents	No concern	No concern	No concern	No concern
Migrants and minority groups	Significant concern	Some concern	Some concern	Some concern
Young people with disabilities	Some concern	Some concern	Some concern	Some concern
Young people from workless families	No concern	No concern	No concern	No concern
Young people from disadvantaged areas	Some concern	Some concern	Some concern	Significant concern

Young people with tertiary education who have been unsuccessful in accessing the labour market	Some concern	Some concern	Some concern	Some concern
Other (please specify):				

1.3 Are there any policy measures in your country targeted at those NEETs with tertiary education? If yes please describe these briefly (expected length 100 words).

In Italy there is no specific measure targeted at NEETS having tertiary qualifications. However, there are two types of measures which somehow tackle employment problems faced by graduates in Italy:

- Preventive measures taken by ministries and universities:
- Internship and curricular training – the 2011 university reform provides for the acknowledgement of school credits to students of the two degree levels who are doing internships or training while studying.
- Postgraduate internship or training. Various projects have been started in favour of these university placement services. In particular, a plan named FIXO Project, which is funded by the European Social Fund and by the Ministry of Employment and Social Policies, started three years ago. This project is aimed at integrating universities, enterprises, research, regional and National development policies in order to facilitate and systemize school to work transition.
- Guidance through university placement services but also through the aforesaid FIXO project, which is however being defined in connection with this aspect.
- Corrective measures – even though not specifically targeted at graduates:
- Third level apprenticeship (or high training apprenticeship). This is an employment contract aimed at the obtainment of educational qualification integrating education and of on-the- job experience. This measure is addressed to young people aged between 19 and 30. The concerned educational qualifications are high school diploma, degree, postgraduate qualifications including subsequent research doctorate, high technical qualification. This measure can be taken thanks to agreements between employers' associations, local institutions, trade union organisations, universities and training institutes (IT1102029). The duration of the contract depends on the educational qualification to be obtained. However, first data have shown that the agreements are predominantly spread in the North of Italy and poorly in the economically depressed areas in the South. Moreover, they are mainly related to postgraduate master courses, while they hardly refer to degrees and research doctorates (source: Rustico, 2001).
- Measures for youth entrepreneurship possibilities – a website of the Ministry of Youth and 21 front offices in some Italian universities aimed at supporting enterprise start-ups (source: Italian Government, 2011)

2. NEET Policies and Measures

2.1 Measures to tackle early school leaving

Preventive Measures to tackle early school leaving

2.1.1 Please provide a short overview of your country's approach to preventing early school leaving. Where does the focus of policies and measures to prevent early school leaving lie?

In Italy, the phenomenon of young people leaving school early is connected both with the economic depression in some southern areas and with early school leaving in the North, which is aimed at starting to work immediately. In 2009 the percentage of this phenomenon was 23% in the young living in the South and isles – in Campania, Puglia, Sicily and Sardinia about 1 young person out of 4 does not continue to study after junior high school - and 16.5% in the young in the Centre and in the North (source: Istat, 2010b). It is therefore clear that the territorial factor plays an important role in Italy and, for this reason, the main policies involve local institutions, especially regional ones. In any case, some structural reforms have been implemented since year 2000 on national scale. These reforms include the progressive increase in school obligation age, which was raised to age 15 in years 1999/2000 and to age 16 in 2007/2008, reforms of secondary high school level - which provided for the amendment of study courses - and university reforms - which introduced three-year and education-specialized degrees. As for regional administrations, Italy presented a national strategic plan for the 2007-2013 period, in accordance with the European Union's requirements. This plan is based on national operating programs (PON) which administer the European structural funds . It presents the interventional measures taken and to be taken in future by Italy in different sectors, including education and fight against early school leaving. This plan does not include only strategic synergies between Regions and Government. It also provides for a National operating plan named "La scuola per lo sviluppo 2000-2006" (School for development 2000-2006), which was started in addition to the already existing regional bodies taking care of professional training and integration with regional employment centres. Said plan was addressed to the Italian regions satisfying the requirements of the European definition of convergence target for economically depressed areas. The plan aimed at increasing – in those regions having the highest rates of early school leaving - the activity of the resource centres working against early school leaving and youth distress, which had already been established with the 1994-99 "Plurifondo" program. These centres were located in some secondary schools. They aimed to both create a network between schools and regions and implement teaching modalities able to motivate the most disadvantaged young people and supply them with guidance, meeting places and diversion. Currently there are similar programmes financed by European Funds: "Pon scuola 2007-2013". There are two programmes among this project: "Competenze per lo sviluppo" (Competences for development) and "Ambienti per l'apprendimento" (Settings for learning). As for the above mentioned programme, these two project aim to intervene in the Italian depressed regions.

2.1.2 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to prevent early school leaving in your country. Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

Table 2 - Early School Leaving: Preventive measures

Early School Leaving: Preventive measures	
Name of measure	<p>Description of the measure: aims and objectives</p> <p>Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local)</p> <p>Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral?</p> <p>How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)?</p> <p>Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs?</p> <p>Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?</p>
Measure 1:	<p>Increase in school obligation age. This is National measure funded by the state. In a certain sense, it can be considered a measure which is specifically addressed to NEETs since it aims to increase the educational level of the young, thus strengthening their position in the labour market. The social parties were consulted, but the measure was not the result of a plan. This measure is not exclusively addressed to those coming from a socially disadvantaged background, even though the economically depressed areas in Italy are those having the highest percentage of early school leavers.</p>

Measure 2:

Reforms of secondary schools (137 and 169 in 2008) and universities(509/1999). The reform of study courses was aimed at increasing integration between school and work. This was done by introducing curricula focused on learning skills which are directly connected with work in some schools offering less technical education, such as senior high schools. The university reform also aimed at improving connection between degree courses and economic demands. Additionally, it was also aimed at cutting time needed to obtain qualification, which was very long in Italy before the reform. Partially as a consequence, the reform also wanted to decrease dropout rates. These reforms were implemented on national scale and were funded by the central government. Also in this case, the government itself promoted these reforms, even though it consulted the social parties. These reforms were not designed for NEETs specifically, but, more generally, they aimed to increase connection between school and labour market.

Measure 3:

Resource centres (centri risorse) against early school leaving aimed to promote effective teaching modalities supporting youth distress and fighting youth criminality. These centres were part of the school structures. Many programs offered by these centres provide for recreational activities and are developed with other schools and institutions in the country – i.e. enterprises, attorneys' offices for children, police, local health authority and voluntary associations. They were targeted at some southern regions and the isles - Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Puglia, Sardinia and Sicily. This initiative was financed by the European social fund. It was planned by the government and it is surely included in the group of measures aimed at tackling youth issues which relate to NEETs, even though the relevant documentation does not make specific reference to the NEET category. This action was instead directly aimed to support young people living in areas of social difficulty at risk of youth deviance, i.e. youth criminality. The project is now over, but ministerial plans financed by the European social Fund still exist to monitor the school scenario, paying particular attention to depressed areas. Regional and provincial administrations work to create guidance and re-guidance front offices where psychological help is offered by specific professionals in those regions having lower rates of early school leavers, where the European structural funds are also lower.

2.1.3 Please provide a more detailed description of the preventive early school leaving measure which you think is the most effective measure in your country (this measure should be additional to those included in the table above). In addition to the questions raised in the table above, your description should include the details outlined below:

Resource centres (centri risorse) against early school leaving have been important since they aimed to integrate free time into teaching as well as to experiment teaching methods able to motivate young people coming from socially disadvantaged areas to study.

- When was it introduced and why? How long will it run for?

They were introduced in 1994 to take action in economically depressed areas characterized by strong youth social distress. The project was reinforced in the programme above mentioned "Scuola per lo sviluppo" which ended in 2008. Currently similar projects are still being financed by the European social fund in schools presenting their own projects.

- Is it a mainstream or pilot project?

It was a pilot project.

- What is the scale of the initiative and how much funding has been allocated to it?

About 4,000 initiatives were funded.

- Who runs the initiative (is it a public, private or third sector initiative)?

It was a public initiative, but was also financed by the European Structural Fund.

- What is the target group? How many young people benefit from it?

The students of secondary education schools in the South of Italy.

- What activities are involved?

Projects of didactic labs, art, music and sports, as well as tutoring and guidance.

- What are the success factors?

The presence of meeting points for students - who may be at risk of deviance in the South –and alternative didactic activities. However, two of the main problems were the difficulty in involving external public and private bodies and, in many cases, the scarceness of alternative didactic activities (source: Miur, 2007).

- Is there any formal evidence of its success (both quantitative and qualitative)?

In the regions involved in the project, the National Agency for the Development of School Independence (Agenzia nazionale per lo sviluppo dell'autonomia scolastica) noticed that early school leaving figures decreased by 3% on average, however being higher than the European Community target, which was a reduction to 10%. Out of 4 monitored regions, the rate decreased from 19,6% in 2006 to 16,2% in 2010 only in Calabria. This rate went closer than the others to the 10% target. The rates in the other regions are still higher than 20% (source: Calzone, 2011)

Reintegration measures to tackle early school leaving

2.1.4 Please provide a short overview of your country's approach to the reintegration of early school leavers. Where does the focus of policies and measures lie?

In Italy there are professionalising courses managed by the regional administrations that aim to reintegrate mainstream school leavers. Some regions – with high rates in northern Italy – additionally use the European social Fund financial backing to offer scholarships addressed to those wishing to train to increase their skills. Also adults can receive these funds. At national level programs combining education and work started to be introduced into mainstream secondary school courses starting from 2003 (a subsequent reform took place in 2005). Some of these programs consist of internships in companies, but also include didactic labs aimed at adapting learnt educational skills to actual working practices.

2.1.5 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to reintegrate early school leavers in your country. Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

Table 2 - Early School Leaving: reintegration measures

Name of measure	<p>Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local)</p> <p>Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral?</p> <p>How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)?</p> <p>Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs?</p> <p>Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?</p>
Measure 1:	<p>School and work alternation. This is a national measure which is also based on agreements between the social parties in the various sectors and territorial areas. They are mainly funded by local institutions (Chambers of Commerce, Regions, Provinces, Cities administrations) and by the Ministry of Education, University and Research. This measure surely has an impact on NEETs and it is designed for all secondary high school students and not specifically for those coming from a disadvantaged background.</p>
Measure 2:	<p>Training endowment. This is a regional measure. It is an individual financial bonus as incentive to training. For the time being, only few regions (northern regions specifically) are implementing it. It is financed by the European structural funds and it sometimes results from agreements between local social parties. It may be specifically targeted at NEETs, but it is also destined to adults. Additionally, it is not exclusively thought for young people coming from a disadvantaged background.</p>

2.1.6 Please provide a more detailed description of the reintegration early school leaving measure which you think is the most effective measure in your country (this measure should be additional to those included in the table above). In addition to the questions raised in the table above, your description should include the details outlined below:

School and work alternation is growing and is the type of integration which is now being monitored the most.

- When was it introduced and why? How long will it run for?

It started to be implemented in 2003 and then amended in 2005. It is aimed at increasing integration between school and work also in less technical schools such as senior high schools. It is currently running.

- Is it a mainstream or pilot project?

It is a mainstream project.

- What is the scale of the initiative and how much funding has been allocated to it?

71,561 students were involved in school and work alternation in 2009. Among them, the highest percentage (44%) were students coming from technical institutes and a good percentage (11%) came from senior high schools. These rates were higher than those in 2006, especially in relation to senior high schools (Source: Scuola Lavoro, 2001).

- Who runs the initiative (is it a public, private or third sector initiative)?

It is a public initiative.

- What is the target group? How many young people benefit from it?

The targets are secondary high schools students. 1 out of 4 schools implemented alternation projects in 2009 and 1 out of 27 students were involved (source: Scuola lavoro, 2011)

- What activities are involved?

In 2009 percentages of hours involved into School and work alternation programmes were: 64% - workplace internships; 27% - classroom lessons; 5% - guided visits in companies; 2% -lab activities.

- What are the success factors?

The implementation of alternative learning modalities and – mostly – the attempt to increase integration between enterprises and secondary schools, especially senior high schools. However, this initiative should still grow since it has not involved a large number of students.

- Is there any formal evidence of its success (both quantitative and qualitative)?

An important aspect of this initiative is that it mostly involved small enterprises – 56% of all participating enterprises were very small, having 9 employees at the most. This aspect surely shows the traditional integration between small enterprises and secondary schools, which has always been characterising the Italian economic system. However, a comparison between the total number of participating enterprises and the total amount of Italian companies highlights that only 0.7% of Italian enterprises took part in the initiative, according to the data shown by the Istat census of industry and services of 2001 (source: Scuola lavoro, 2011).

2.2 Measures to facilitate access to employment

Facilitating the transition from school to work

2.2.1 Please provide an overview of your country's approach to facilitating school to work transitions. Where does the focus of policies and measures to facilitate transitions lie?

In Italy, measures facilitating access to employment in schools and universities are mainly based on services within the institutes. They are mainly local specific projects which combine training, guidance and meetings with companies. Law 30/2003 – known as “Biagi Law” - and its implementing decrees gave universities the chance to offer placement and work guidance services (IT0307204F). Many universities which had already implemented guidance services, added specific placement initiatives to those already existing - internships and apprenticeships – and also started to organise events like career days, during which students and graduates meet companies.

2.2.2 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to facilitate school to work transitions in your country. Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

Table 4 - Access to employment: Measures to facilitate school to work transitions

Name of measure	<p>Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local)</p> <p>Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral?</p> <p>How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)?</p> <p>Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs?</p> <p>Is the measure specifically targeted at NEETs who already have a tertiary education?</p> <p>Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?</p>
Measure 1:	<p>Placement in high schools and universities. By “Placement” we mean the activities of mediation between demand and supply. These activities are developed by Schools and universities having relationships with companies, i.e. managing internships, but also supplying tutorships to students (to give them advice on how to move into the labour market). These are national measures, but not all universities and schools have implemented them due to their independence. They come from the placement service reorganisation which was started in 1997 (IT9707308F; IT9710312F) and amended in 2003 (“Biagi law”). Both laws are the implementation of tripartite social pacts. University and school placement services are mainly funded by the Italian government, but financing coming from local institutions – Regions, Provinces, Cities, Chambers of Commerce - is not excluded. These measures specifically impact on NEETs and on those of them holding tertiary educational qualifications. They are not specifically thought for young people coming from a disadvantaged social and economic background.</p>
Measure 2:	<p><u>Campus Mentis</u> project. This measure is at its second edition. It is fostered by the Ministry of Education, University and Research and by the Sapienza University in Rome. It is targeted at the most deserving 20.000 new graduates. The activities take place in various universities and last a few weeks. They mainly include:</p> <p>Work guidance;</p> <p>Career guidance;</p> <p>Business English (technical and economic English);</p> <p>Civics/Department courses/Safe driving;</p> <p>Draft of the Europass CV, which is the CV adopted by the European Commission.</p> <p>This measure was taken and funded by the Italian government and it is not sure whether if it is going to be taken again in the long run. This measure aims to retain the most qualified students, but is specifically targeted at graduates.</p>

2.2.3 Please provide a more detailed description of the school-to-work transition measure which you think is the most effective measure in your country (this measure should be additional to those included in the table above). In addition to the questions raised in the table above, your description should include the details outlined below:

Placement in high schools – for which information hardly exists – and universities.

- When was it introduced and why? How long will it run for?

It was introduced in 2003.

- Is it a mainstream or pilot project?

It is a mainstream project.

- What is the scale of the initiative and how much funding has been allocated to it?
- Who runs the initiative (is it a public, private or third sector initiative)?

It is public initiative sometimes involving intervention by local institutions or associations and private enterprises.

- What is the target group? How many young people benefit from it?

The targets are high school and university students, diploma holders and graduates. No data on the beneficiaries is available.

- What activities are involved?

In universities there are individual guidance services and announcement notice boards. Universities organise events like career days, internships, apprenticeships and have graduate databases which graduates can update. They also offer companies pre-selection services. Only few Italian universities - 5 out of 87- do not offer these services and organise internships only.

- What are the success factors?

The stronger connection between universities and companies. Placement services develop a network with companies and, for this reason, they at least guarantee students and graduates access to internships.

- Is there any formal evidence of its success (both quantitative and qualitative)?

About 23% of the students does a curricular internship in universities. This percentage is growing in comparison with the past, especially in the South and in the islands. Italian universities totally started 28,779 internships for graduates during 2008-09 academic year – about 4,000 more than the 24,859 internships in 2007-08 academic year. This corresponds to 5 internships each 100 graduates. However, this rate is better than the one of previous year, during which the number of internships each 100 graduates was slightly higher than 4 (source: Cnvsu, 2011).

Measures to foster employability

2.2.4 Please provide an overview of your country's approach to fostering employability among NEETs. Where does the focus of policies and measures lie?

Italy does not allocate much funding for policies supporting unemployed people and aimed at training for reintegration into the labour market. As a matter of fact, only 2% of the total expense for social protection policies is allocated for employability, while the European rate is 5.2% (source: Istat, 2010a). However, specific measures aimed at helping the young enter the labour market have been taken since the late 1990s. The so-called "Biagi law" reformed apprenticeship in 2003. The school and university reforms provided for more or less compulsory curricular internships. Requalification and professional training are delegated to and managed by the regional administrations. The Regions allocate individual funds called "endowments" for requalification and re-employment. This is done through the European Social Fund and by using ministerial funds resulting from dispensations of the typical social security cushions which are decided by annual financial laws. The beneficiaries will use these funds only if they undergo re-integration programs, which are managed and designed by acknowledged institutions – i.e. public and private employment agencies.

2.2.5 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to foster employability of NEETs in your country. Where possible you should

use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

Table 5 - Access to employment: Measures to foster employability (to include apprenticeships)

Access to employment: Measures to foster employability (to include apprenticeships).	
Name of measure	<p>Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local)</p> <p>Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral?</p> <p>How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)?</p> <p>Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs?</p> <p>Is the measure specifically targeted at NEETs who already have a tertiary education?</p> <p>Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?</p>
Measure 1:	<p>Apprenticeship. In Italy the 2003 labour market reform provided for 3 types of apprenticeship: (1) apprenticeship for the fulfilment of the education and training right and duty for young people aged 15 at least; (2) professionalizing apprenticeship, which is on the job training for young people aged between 18 and 29; (3) apprenticeship aimed at getting a diploma or for high training courses, which is named third level apprenticeship - as previously indicated - and is also targeted at young people aged between 18 and 29. This measure already existed in the past, but it was amended by the "Biagi reform", which was the result of a social pact between government, trade unions and employers' associations. Recently many agreements has been reached between government, social partners and regions (IT1102029I; IT1012019I). The most important result of these agreements is the reform of apprenticeship started in May 2011. The reform establishes that apprenticeship will become formally a permanent contract aimed to the youth employability. The role of social partners will be relevant as collective bargaining and interconfederal agreements will establish contractual and training terms. The "third level" apprenticeship regulation and the duration of apprenticeship for research activities, for the acquisition of a diploma or paths of higher education are given to the regions. In particular, regions will be in charge of the matters that relates to training, in accordance with territorial associations of employers and service work providers comparatively more representative at national level, universities, technical and professional institutions and other institutions having as its goal the promotion of entrepreneurial activities, employment, education, innovation and technology transfer. This reform is actually under discussion and amendment by the government, unions and regions (at the beginning of July 2011 the government and regions reached an agreement on this topic).</p> <p>The apprenticeship is funded by the state even though it also includes training projects financed by the European social fund. This measure may impact also on NEETs holding tertiary educational qualifications. It may also have an impact on young people coming from socially disadvantaged background even though there is no specific reference to them.</p>

Measure 2:

Curricular and non curricular internships for secondary high school students. As outlined above in detail, there are various forms of school and work alternation. As for universities, the 1999 reform and the placement reform connected with the “Biagi law” pushed the development of internships in companies or in institutions through which young people still in University school may get curricular credits. It also pushed postgraduate internships through job placement services of universities, also by means of the aforesaid FIXO project. Said project is financed also by the European social fund, which supplied universities with personnel and skills by means of operators of the Ministerial Employment Agency (Italia Lavoro). These initiatives are funded both by the Italian government and by the European social fund. Some local measures came from agreements between the social parties. They surely have an impact on NEETs, but they do not seem to be specifically targeted at young people coming from a disadvantaged background.

Measure 3:

Through the European social fund and ministerial financing – by means of the so-called derogation social security cushions - regional administrations can implement individual funds for requalification (IT0812029I; IT0907029Q). On local scale, these measures can be the result of agreements with the social parties. Only some Italian regions in the North have implemented the “endowment” system. In this regard, Lombardy and Veneto have been implementing this system for years. The aim of endowments is to let beneficiaries being unemployed or having difficulty in finding a job start guidance and requalification courses in acknowledged agencies. Also these measures may certainly impact on NEETs and support young people coming from a disadvantaged social and economic background.

2.2.6 Please provide a more detailed description of the measure which you think is the most effective measure in your country to foster the employability of NEETs (this measure should be additional to those included in the table above). In addition to the questions raised in the table above, your description should include the details outlined below:

The implementation of curricular and postgraduate internships and apprenticeships has been growing in universities during the decade. Many graduates are able to enter the labour market for the first time thanks to internships.

- When was it introduced and why? How long will it run for?

The University reform in 1999 and the labour market reform in 2003. These reforms were structural. They are undergoing amendments but will not be substituted for the time being.

- Is it a mainstream or pilot project?

It is a mainstream project.

- What is the scale of the initiative and how much funding has been allocated to it?

All universities have been implementing curricular internships and apprenticeships in the last five years. About 97% of universities have started postgraduate internships (source: Cnsvu, 2011). No aggregate data on the financing of these initiatives is available.

- Who runs the initiative (is it a public, private or third sector initiative)?

The initiative is part of ministerial and European projects as well as of the plans of each single university. Basically, it is a public initiative, but universities can receive private financing for their managing activities related to the graduates' curricula.

- What is the target group? How many young people benefit from it?

Curricular internships are targeted at students, while postgraduate internships are targeted at graduates. Data on actual participation in curricular internships is not very spread, while data on postgraduate internships which are handled by universities is not very systematic. The only available data are those related to Fixo project that ended in 2009. The percentage of graduates who started and completed the internships they had asked for was 36% – 39,450 graduates all over Italy (source: Spozio, 2009)

- What activities are involved?

Universities manage contacts with companies as well as implementation of internships and apprenticeships, being them curricular or not. Together with these activities, many universities monitor internship results through their placement services. This is done by means of evaluation questionnaires, which are given by universities to companies or institutes that hosted internship graduates - 90% of universities do so. The questionnaires are also given to students and graduates participating in internships – over 80% of universities do so (source: Cnsvu, 2011).

- What are the success factors?

The possibility that postgraduate internships turn into jobs having various degrees of stability.

- Is there any formal evidence of its success (both quantitative and qualitative)?

Data on the Fixo project showed that 11% of those who completed an internship reached employ stability (source: Spozio, 2009).

Removing practical and logistical barriers

2.2.7 Please provide an overview of your country's approach to removing practical and logistical barriers for NEETs. Where does the focus of policies and measures lie?

In Italy, disabilities and integration of young immigrants are generally managed by educational institutions – schools and universities - and by the third sector. On one hand, this is done by schools and universities through support teachers and differentiated learning programs – i.e. labs and integrating activities. On the other, initiatives are taken by social cooperatives, associations and local authorities, especially city administrations which, together with provincial ones, also supply measures for infancy assistance. Many initiatives promoted by the European Community support geographical mobility and are targeted at both young people entering the labour market and students.

2.2.8 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to remove practical and logistical barriers to employment for NEETs in your country. Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

Table 6 - Access to employment: Measures to remove practical and logistical barriers

Name of measure	<p>Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local)</p> <p>Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral?</p> <p>How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)?</p> <p>Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs?</p> <p>Is the measure specifically targeted at NEETs who already have a tertiary education?</p> <p>Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?</p>
Measure 1:	<p>School and people with disabilities. In Italy support teachers who help students with disabilities integrate and reach their learning objectives have been introduced into schools since the 1970s. Universities have offices aimed to support students with disabilities instead of the real shadows teachers working in secondary schools. Schools and universities are also supported by city administrations, social cooperatives and voluntary organisations. Funds for support and services in school institutions come from the government.</p>
Measure 2:	<p>Language courses by city administrations and local associations. Schools offer tailored labs and often rely on cultural mediators in order to foster linguistic and cultural integration of immigrants. City administrations and local associations play an important role since they organise Italian language courses for foreigners.</p>
Measure 3:	<p>Geographical mobility measures. Italy implements the main measures which are proposed by the European Commission in relation to geographical mobility of workers and students. "Erasmus" and "Socrates" programs are quite spread in universities and they are part of European network and initiatives. However, there are also specific programs which are targeted at Italian citizens. These programs are implemented by those regions being in the Italian border area – "Transalp" for the regions of Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta; "Euralp" for Friuli Venezia Giulia region; "Transtirolia" for Alto Adige region. These measures consist in regional agreements; funds can also come from agreements with local social parties. Except for the Erasmus and Socrates initiatives, which are especially targeted at young people, these initiatives relate to all the Italian population and are aimed at supporting workers' mobility.</p>

Employer incentives

2.2.9 Please provide an overview of your country's approach to incentivising employers to recruit young people (who are NEET). Where does the focus of policies and measures to incentivise employers lie? Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

In Italy employers are incentivised to recruit mostly young people at their first working experience, which are therefore the main target of these incentivising measures. Tax relief and possibility of facilitated placement have been spread for many years. They are aimed at helping integration of young people at their first working experience. In recent years the main novelties have been related to the introduction of financial aid aimed to partially support labour cost. National measures are sided by some specific initiatives taken by regional administrations also thanks to the support given by the European Social Fund. These initiatives include the aforesaid aid to young entrepreneurs which has been existing in Italy since the 1980s, even though it used to be more targeted at southern regions at that time.

2.2.10 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to incentivise employers in your country.

Table 7 - Access to employment: Employer incentives

Access to employment: Employer incentives	
Name of measure	<p>Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local)</p> <p>Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral?</p> <p>How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)?</p> <p>Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs?</p> <p>Is the measure specifically targeted at NEETs who already have a tertiary education?</p> <p>Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?</p>
Measure 1:	<p>Financial aid (EUR 5,000) to companies which recruit with permanent contracts young people with precarious employment aged less than 35 and having children. These measures are unilateral and are funded by the Italian government. In a certain sense, they can be seen specifically targeted at NEETs. Government co-financing (40%) to initiatives taken by private subjects proposing projects aimed at investing on talents of young people aged less than 35. Also this measure is funded by the government, which is going to invest EUR 100 million in the project. Also this measure can be considered, in a certain sense, specifically targeted at NEETs.</p>
Measure 2:	<p>Integration contract. It is not specifically thought for the young but it has been substituting the job training contract since 2003. The importance of this contract started to increase in 2006. The analysis of participation data in relation to occupational integration contracts – data were divided into categories for the period 2005-2006 – shows that the group of subjects interested in this type of relief was composed more of women than young people. The rate related to the young is however consistent even though young people do not benefit from any contributory relief, unless they fall within another incentivised group. It must be recalled that the salaries of young people, who have been recruited with integration contracts can be lower - up to two levels – than the salary level which is due according to the industry-wide agreements (source: Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2008)</p>
Measure 3:	<p>Start-up front offices in Italian universities and free consultancy through a ministerial website. This measure is aimed at helping young people starting an entrepreneurial activity through documents and tutorials on-line (i.e. the building of a business plan). It is not a financial support, but the consultancy is a useful activity to support young people initiatives: they could be impeded by the lack of information on procedures and duties. These measures are unilateral and funded by the government. In a certain sense, this initiative can be considered specifically targeted at NEETs.</p>

2.2.11 Please provide a more detailed description of the employer incentive which you think is the most effective measure in your country (this measure should be additional to those included in the table above). In addition to the questions raised in the table above, your description should include the details outlined below:

Some studies on the matter show that the most effective measure to stimulate young recruitment is the introduction of tax relief on labour cost (source: Ercoli and Guelfi, 2008). Aforementioned measures 1 and 3 related to enterprise incentives are recent and their impact cannot be assessed yet. Therefore, the analysis refers to the labour cost relief coming from incentives given to enterprises, which partially include measure 2 as well. The contributory relief connected with apprenticeship contracts is particularly interesting. As we saw, said contract was introduced in 2003 and related contributory aspects were reformed in 2007 and 2011, even if the last reform is still under definition ([IT0307204F](#); [IT0712029I](#); [IT1102029I](#)).

- When was it introduced and why? How long will it run for?

Incentives to enterprises through tax and contributory relief have been present in Italy for a long time with the aim of helping young people enter the labour market. The 2007 financial law brought changes to the apprenticeship discipline and provided for the elimination of the fixed contribution (less than EUR 3 per week), which had to be paid by the employer. Said contribution was replaced by another one corresponding to 10% of the taxable salary. Even though said changes occurred, apprenticeship is the only left incentivised contract which is specifically targeted at the young – after the end of the remaining effects of the training and employment contract (source: Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2008).

- Is it a mainstream or pilot project?

They are structural measures.

- What is the scale of the initiative and how much funding has been allocated to it?

In 2006 contributory relief connected with apprenticeship contracts amounted to EUR 1.9 billion, being slightly lower than the EUR 2.1 billion of 2005. Law Decree 276/2003 (implementation decree of “Biagi law”) had an immediate effect both on expense (+8% increase from 2003 to 2005) and on the number of contracts (+13.5% in the period from 2004 to 2005) - this was partially influenced by the increase in age limits up to 29 years of age. After Law Decree 276/2003 came into effect, there was a stasis in 2006. This was partially explained by implementation delay (regional regulations, collective contracting) and partly connected with the competition with other types of contracts such as integration contracts, which do not only refer to the young, project contracts etc. (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2008).

- Who runs the initiative (is it a public, private or third sector initiative)?

This is a public initiative.

- What is the target group? How many young people benefit from it?

The analysis of monthly data on participants in relation to annual average stock – from 2003 to 2006 – shows constant increase in apprenticeship. However, this increase did not balance the losses caused by the progressive disappearance of the employment training contract (contratto di formazione lavoro) ([IT0512304T](#)). Moreover, this measure is strongly influenced by the time of the year as apprentices increase in the months of July and August (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2008).

- What activities are involved?

On the job apprenticeship and training.

- What are the success factors?

It is a training contract and it implies a reduction in labour cost for enterprises.

- Is there any formal evidence of its success (both quantitative and qualitative)?

Factors influencing the success of training initiatives related to apprenticeship contracts are basically the following:

- Both parties of the apprenticeship contract may be stimulated to continue their cooperation after the end of the contract;
- Training certification and formal acknowledgement received by the apprentice during apprenticeship.

Point 1 is strictly connected with the fact that enterprises have the chance to recover the costs incurred for training. However, it must be said that in Italy there are no incentives aimed at keeping the young in enterprises (this is shown by the high turnover rate in apprenticeship contracts), even though enterprises issuing qualifications to apprentices keep on receiving facilitations for one year starting from certification date (source: Bozzoni, 2011).

3. Conclusion

The problems related to NEETs have started to be considered in Italy only in recent years, in connection with the global economic crisis. However - if compared to other European countries - Italy has always been characterised by the young's difficulties in entering the labour market and by the low education rates of its population. European actions have helped to increase the debate in Italy, but a stronger contribution was given by European funds. As I mentioned above, many measures aimed at tackling early school leaving, and some actions aimed at helping introduction in the labour market, have been possible thanks to European funding. Italy is also characterised by an unbalance between the high number of passive employment-related measures and the low number of active ones. Only recently, the state has been trying to increase the amount of active policies which can be more focused and effective to help young people enter the labour market ([IT0907029Q](#)). By the way, investment is lower than the European average. It is true that the NEET acronym started to be seen in literature and analyses only two years ago, but it is also true that the main stakeholders have always cared for the young's working and social issues. In particular, trade unions face some difficulties in representing the so-called "outsiders", but in recent years they have been supporting strikes and various campaigns sustaining precarious workers, who are mostly young people. Trade unions' action has played an important role also in relation to apprenticeship contracts and in putting pressure with the aim of stabilising precarious contracts. In the future, trade unions shall probably take more focused actions in monitoring these employment forms and internships as well. On the other hand, entrepreneurs have shown more interest in labour cost reduction than in professional training support up to now. In the future enterprises could look for resources aimed at stabilising the jobs of the most deserving young people who have acquired strategic skills after some years of precarious contracts with companies. They could also support training - including on the job training - more systematically through internships, which should become a vehicle for qualified young people to integrate in companies and not a simple way for companies to use easily replaceable labour at low cost or at no cost. It is also true that the government should invest more in incentives aimed at stabilising jobs, whose expense has been only 3.6% of the expense for employment policies in recent years (source: Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2008).

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