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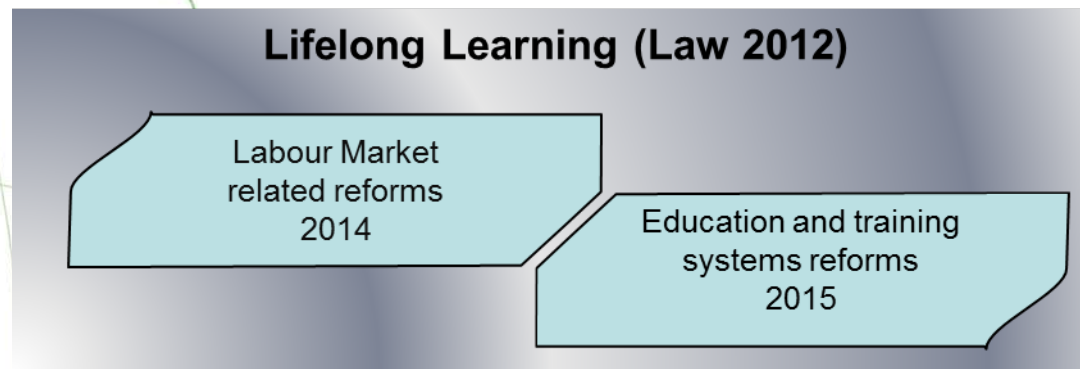
**A work-based experience:  
the school-work alternance in Italy**

*Manuela Bonacci*

## *The Reforming process*



As a result of the economic crisis (2008); the subsequent period of profound difficulties of the Italian labour market; followed by the numerous solicitations coming from EU; a reforming process started (in 2012), with the law establishing the right to Lifelong Learning and other legislative innovations, were issued during the years 2010-2015.



## *Lifelong learning strategy reform:*

Different steps of a national lifelong learning strategy, were gradually implemented, based on mechanisms of transparency, accumulation, validation and transfer of skills and competences acquired by the individual in different contexts.

Working contexts acquired a major role in the learning process at all level.

Experiences within companies and organizations provide students with the professional skills they need to perform an assigned task, regardless of the title of their qualification, with the aim to adapt individual skills to the needs and specificities of the global labour market.

**Learning through work**

Negotiation between  
personal and social  
dimension

Validation of competences  
during the Civil Service  
(within the Youth Guarantee)

School-work alternance

Theory and practice  
integration

**Work-based learning**

## The “Good School”

In 2015 the Law no. 107/2015 started a reforming process within the Education and Training system under the competency of the Ministry of education, at national level. The so called “Good School” intended to increase skills and competences necessary in a prospective of better inclusion in the future labour market.



The main innovations are oriented to :

- provide an offer more adequate to students' needs (personalization of learning pathways where possible) and able to guide them to the future Labour Market needs;
- introduce a plan to digitalize schools, involving the entire education system, allocating EUR 30 million to schools in 2015 to enhance competences and tools related to digital innovation;
- increase specific skills, connected to the key competences of the EU 2006 Recommendation;
- improve contents and methodologies;
- increment **school-work alternation approach** (the Italian dual system), now **mandatory in all upper secondary cycle of the Education and training system.**

## *The school-work alternance*

A period of learning in an organization/enterprise becomes mandatory for all students (16-19 year-old) in the last three years of the secondary education and training cycle.



It concerns:

200 hours in General Education schools (lyceum)

400 hours in Technical institutes

400 hours in Vocational institutes

which may be carried out also abroad.

This practice was quite widespread in technical and vocational institutes.

The extension to lyceum represents a deep innovation in the new education format compared to traditional school activities.

## *The school-work alternance approach*

With this practice, finally, the work-based learning enters in all schools, even in those pathways traditionally considered unsuitable with learning through working experiences (such as Lyceum).



This model goes beyond the division between knowledge-based learning and practical experiences.

The integration of theory and practice and of knowledge and experience is functional to specific tasks or occupations.

Work-based learning experiences are intended to support the transition from education-training system to labour market.

It is a cultural change in which schools and enterprises, despite their different roles, are obliged to interact with greater education and social co-responsibility to enhance students objectives towards sustainable and inclusive personal and professional growth.

## *Compatibility with ECVET*



The main points compatible with ECVET:

- **Part of the qualification** is designed to be done in a practice/working environment to stimulate student's own attitudes and creativity;
- Identification of **Units of learning outcomes** to be developed during the alternance
- The flexibility of the offer made by enterprises and organizations allows more **individualized pathways**;
- **Enrichment of competences through** experiences within an organization in order to develop entrepreneurial competency (understanding how to translate ideas into action) and several key competences (connected to the set of key competences defined in the European Recommendation 2006/962/EC ), such as creativity, innovation and risk management, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects to achieve goal;
- **Accumulation** of LOs during three years.

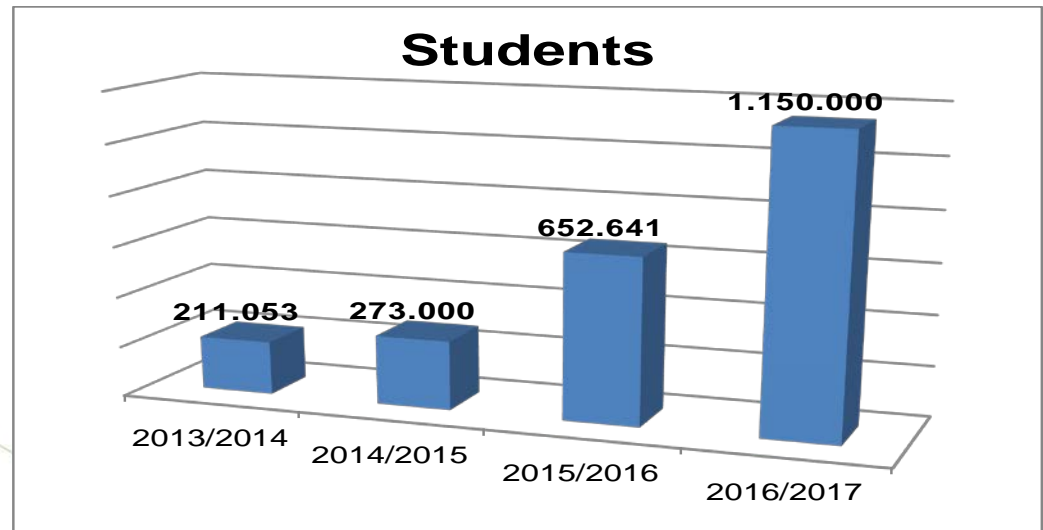
## The School-work alternance implementation

The first school year implementing the reform was 2015/2016.



Of these 652,641 students , 455.062 were from the 3° classes and 50% were from Lyceum.

The Ministry of Education objective is to involve :  
1.150.000 during the second mandatory year (2016/2017) and to involve 1,5 million regularly since 2017 onwards





## *The School-work alternance implementation data*

Data are quite encouraging:

- **87,4%** of the total schools has developed school-work alternance pathways in the year 2015/2016 against the 42% of the previous year (2014/2015);
- 90,6% of students of the third year (starting class being compulsory) participated in school-work alternance pathways;
- Regions where more students participated in school-work alternance experiences were: Lombardia (105.564), Campania (66.411), Lazio (64.265), Veneto (55.245) and Sicilia (53.554);
- Pathways ranged from 11.585 to 29.437 (+ 154%)
- Host organizations increased (+ 41%) and they are mostly enterprises (36.1%).
- Other pathways were developed in school or in simulated context, for example in libraries (12.4%), in Public Administrations (8.5%), non-profit organizations (7.6%) and the remaining percentage (35.4%) in professional firms, associations/orders and trade unions.

## Challenges



School-work alternation experiences are a powerful tool to motivate and stimulate young people to confront with the labour market, while they are still in their studying pathways. This practice may improve transition from the education system to the labour market.

School-work alternation is a shared path between the system of education-training and enterprises, it is fundamental to identify common goals and converging match between different expectations (labour market versus education and the other way round) and develop guidance mechanisms towards the validation of competences.

For young people to participate in a series of integrative, highly-formative experiences – during their learning pathways - can be an added value.

Thus implementing forms such as school-work alternation (Italian dual system), Youth Guarantee programme, traineeship experiences and apprenticeship contracts may support the future labour market.

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**Thank you for your attention**

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