

I libri del Fondo sociale europeo

**ISSN 1590-0002**

Isfol (Institute for the Development of Workers' Vocational Training), is a Public Research Institute set up by Presidential Decree No. 478 of 30 June 1973. Isfol operates in the development of training, guidance and employment policy systems, by conducting and promoting study and research activities as well as pilot projects, evaluation, consultancy, and technical assistance initiatives. Isfol also provides technical and scientific support to the State, Regional and Autonomous Provincial Authorities as well as to Local Authorities.

**Extraordinary Commissioner**  
*Sergio Trevisanato*

**General Director**  
*Antonio Francioni*

## I libri del Fse

**The Series**  
I libri del Fondo Sociale Europeo  
(The European Social Fund Books)  
collets the technical and scientific results  
attained within the Isfol Activity Plan  
for the ESF 2000–2006 programming concerning  
“OPERATIONAL PROJECTS: Actions for  
the Implementation of National Operational  
Programme, Ob. 3 ‘SYSTEM ACTIONS’” and  
National Operational Programme, Ob. 1,  
“TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SYSTEM ACTIONS  
(Measure II.1)”

**The Series**  
I libri del Fondo Sociale Europeo  
is edited by *Isabella Pitoni*,  
Project manager of the Isfol “Information  
and Publicity for the ESF” Project



UNIONE EUROPEA  
Fondo sociale europeo



**MINISTERO DEL LAVORO  
E DELLE POLITICHE SOCIALI**  
Ufficio Centrale per l'Orientamento e  
la Formazione Professionale dei Lavoratori

**ADULT EDUCATION**  
**Supply, demand and**  
**lifelong learning**  
**policies**

**Synthesis report**

This report is the synthesis of three studies carried out by *Isfol's Area Sistemi Formativi* ('Training Systems' Area), under the management of *Giorgio Allulli*.

The three research studies are part of the "Lifelong Learning" Action in the framework of the NOP Ob.3, Measure C.2, contracted to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, and the NOP Ob.1, Action II.1B, contracted to the Ministry for the Economy and Finance, under the management of *Anna D'Arcangelo*.

- "*La domanda sociale e i percorsi di formazione permanente*" (Social Demand and Lifelong Learning Pathways), co-ordinated by *Giorgio Allulli* and *Giovanna Spagnolo*. The field study was carried out by *Istituto Doxa (Vilma Scarpino)*;

- "*L'offerta di formazione permanente in Italia*" (The Supply of Lifelong Learning in Italy), co-ordinated by *Paola Nicoletti*. The field study was carried out in collaboration with 'Fondazione Censis' (*Claudia Donati*);

- "*Politiche regionali per la formazione permanente*" (Regional Lifelong Learning Policies), co-ordinated by *Anna D'Arcangelo* and *Marcella Milana*.

**The synthesis report is edited by:**

*Paola Nicoletti*, Introduction and Part II

*Giovanna Spagnolo*, Part I

*Marcella Milana*, Part III

*Anna D'Arcangelo*, Conclusions

Coordinator of the publishing programming and editing of the series *I libri del Fondo Sociale Europeo*:

*Aurelia Tirelli*

In collaboration with:

*Paola Piras*

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	9
<b>PART I • SOCIAL DEMAND AND LIFELONG LEARNING PATHWAYS</b>	<b>21</b>
1 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY	23
2 THE METHODOLOGICAL STRUCTURE	25
3 FORMAL LEARNING PATHWAYS	26
3.1 Dropping out from Education	32
3.2 Re-Entry in Training	35
4 NON-FORMAL LEARNING PATHWAYS	38
4.1 Out-of-School Training Activities	38
4.2 On-the-Job Training and Training Leave	38
4.3 Training for Personal Purposes	41
5 INFORMAL LEARNING PATHWAYS: PARTICIPATION IN ASSOCIATIONS AND CULTURAL BEHAVIOUR	45
5.1 Participation in Associations at School and Later	45
5.2 Cultural Activities and the Role of the Media	46
6 THE PROPENSITY TO LEARN	50
6.1 Preferences as to Subjects, Costs and Times	50
6.2 Obstacles to Participation	54
7 THE INTERNET AND E-LEARNING	56
8 KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE	61

<b>PART II • THE SUPPLY OF LIFELONG LEARNING IN ITALY</b>	<b>63</b>
1 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY	65
2 THE FIELD OF RESEARCH STUDY	66
3 THE METHODOLOGICAL STRUCTURE	69
3.1 The Questionnaire	69
3.2 The Observation Phase	70
4 THE MAIN FINDINGS	71
4.1 Local Training Providers	71
4.1.1 <i>Categories of Providers</i>	74
4.1.2 <i>Main Activities of Providers</i>	80
4.1.3 <i>A Long Tradition of Education and Training</i>	81
4.2 Training Centres and Programmes	82
4.2.1 <i>Education and Training Courses</i>	86
4.2.2 <i>Human Resources</i>	92
4.2.3 <i>Financing</i>	92
4.2.4 <i>Inter-Institutional Co-operation</i>	97
4.2.5 <i>Difficulties Implementing Training Programmes</i>	97
5 INNOVATORY INDICATIONS AND STRATEGIC CORNERSTONES	99
<b>PART III • REGIONAL POLICIES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING</b>	<b>101</b>
1 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY	103
2 EUROPEAN COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING	104
2.1 A Measure Dedicated to Lifelong Learning	104
2.2 Priority Lines of Action	105
2.3 The Target Groups	106
2.4 The Implementing Organisations	107
2.5 Financial Resources	108
2.6 Calls on 2000-2006 Financial Resources	108
2.7 The Activities Financed	109
3 IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT OF THE UNIFIED CONFERENCE OF STATE, REGIONS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF 2 MARCH 2000	111
3.1 An Agreement to Reorganise and Reinforce Lifelong Education for Adults	111
3.2 The System's Organisational Design	112
3.3 The Regional Committees: A Staggered Start	113

3.3.1	<i>The Regional Committees for Integration</i>	114
3.4	The Local Committees: A Sluggish Start	114
4	INDIVIDUAL CONTINUING TRAINING	116
4.1	The Context	116
4.2	Workers' Demand	117
4.3	The Voucher System	121
	<b>• CONCLUSIONS</b>	123
	<b>• REFERENCES</b>	133





# INTRODUCTION

In the context of Europe, education and training have come to play a crucially important role in recent years in the strategies for developing human resources.

The objective is to respond positively to the need to establish, or restore man's centrality in economic, social and even political life in the broad sense; in other words, to provide training as a condition for full and conscious expression of the rights of citizenship.

Lifelong learning thus responds to three imperative needs:

- The individual need for lifelong access to information and knowledge (the cultural dimension);
- The financial need to update vocational skills continuously at all levels, in the interest of both enterprises and workers (the economic dimension);
- The social need to respond positively to the risk of exclusion, privation and marginalisation (the social dimension).

The concept of lifelong learning is gradually acquiring central importance, both at EU level and in national policies, stemming from awareness that the essence of education and training is precisely the learning aspect.

Lifelong learning has been acknowledged as the key to fostering competitiveness and economic growth, active citizenship, social cohesion and the achievement of individuals' personal aspirations. It is also the guiding principle for attaining the common objectives of education policies.

As the many EU documents on the subject stress, the priority of lifelong learning is to remove the obstacles that prevent people gaining access to training and to the labour market or cause them career difficulties, within the more general aim of combating social exclusion and inequality. The objective is to ensure that everyone, regardless of age, can easily access training, exercise their rights of active citizenship and enter the labour market by acquiring and updating the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to play an active part in the new knowledge society, now undergoing economic, technological and social upheavals.

Apart from supporting people to gain the skills they need for their work, on a more general level lifelong learning can contribute to personal growth and development, with all its implications and individual aspirations, and is a decisive factor in fostering competitiveness and economic growth, as well as social cohesion.

The European Economic and Social Committee stated in its *Opinion<sup>1</sup> on the European Commission's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning<sup>2</sup>* that learning throughout life can be defined in terms of three fundamental principles: the principle of adaptability, the purpose of which is to give all citizens the possibility to acquire, review, enhance and complete their knowledge and skills; the principle of mobility, which allows individuals to move from work to education or training throughout their life and between different forms of education to continue their studies or between different levels of education; and the principle of globality, whereby "lifelong training is not confined to adult education but embraces and integrates all stages and all types of education and training".

In the Council of Europe's Resolution of June 2002<sup>3</sup> lifelong learning is defined as "any learning activity undertaken at various stages of life to improve knowledge, skills and abilities in a personal, civic, social and/or employment perspective". Consequently, "the principles underpinning lifelong learning should be the centrality of the learner ... and the quality of the learning". Moreover, the Council also stresses that lifelong learning (which covers the period stretching from pre-school to retirement) must incorporate the full range of methods of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

The notion of a process of continuing education that lasts the whole of an individual's lifetime has not merely helped to dismantle the traditional separation between the various stages of life in which learning takes place (from infancy to adolescence and on to adulthood and old age); it has also had the dual effect of, on the one hand, overcoming a traditional concept of school as being the only agency of education, the "seat" of "learning" *par excellence*, and, on the other, jettisoning an extremely rigid distinction between "general" basic pathways and "vocational" pathways, which has been the underlying "flaw" of many national education systems.

The present interest in the development of education and continuing training has deep roots stretching back to the debate that began at European and international level as early as the 1960s. It was in that year, at the Montreal World Conference on Adult Education, that the adjective "life-long" was first used to describe adult education, defined as a cornerstone of the fight against illiteracy.

Throughout the 1970s the two most important documents were the *Lengrand Report<sup>4</sup>* and the

---

1 The EESC's opinion on the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* is published in OJ C 311 07.11. 2001, p. 39 ff.

2 European Commission, *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, 30.10.2000 SEC (2000) 1832 DOC 0015120003.

3 The Council of Europe *Resolution on Lifelong Learning* of 27 June 2002 is published in OJ C 163 09.07.2002, p. 1 ff.

4 See P. Lengrand, *Introduction à l'éducation permanente*, UNESCO, Paris, 1970. The report, which was presented to UNESCO'S Education Commission, brought to light the "new" role that education, which was traditionally aimed only

*Faure Report, Apprendre à être*<sup>5</sup>. UNESCO used them to draw attention to the need to establish close relationships between the formal, non-formal and informal learning environments, thereby ensuring that everyone would have the “right” to lifelong learning.

By the second half of the 1990s that need had become the focal point of EU policy.

In 1995 the *White Paper on Teaching and Learning - Towards the Learning Society*<sup>6</sup> was published. It called for the integration of the Member States’ education, training and labour systems - even by resorting to a more articulated and flexible supply of training for adults - and placed special emphasis on the centrality of the individual in the learning process. In particular, the White Paper sought to enhance “the knowledge individuals acquire throughout their life”, in formal institutions as in informal ones.

In 1996 the *European Year of Lifelong Learning*<sup>7</sup> and in 1997 the European Commission’s Communication *Towards a Europe of Knowledge*<sup>8</sup> offered confirmation at European level of the EU’s strategy to foster lifelong learning for everyone by encouraging the pursuit of five priority objectives: encouraging the acquisition of new knowledge, bringing school and the business sector closer together, combating social exclusion, developing language proficiency and fostering investment in training. Above all, the European countries were made aware of the need to train people throughout their lifetime in order to promote the personal development and empowerment in social life of their citizens.

The 1997 Hamburg Declaration<sup>9</sup> adopted by the United Nations at the end of the *Fifth International Conference on Adult Education* also explicitly reaffirmed the importance of overcoming the existing barriers between formal, non-formal and informal education to spread the values of democracy and the “right to active citizenship”<sup>10</sup> and to fulfil the need for basic education for all by creating an integrated system of education and training.

In 2000, following the Feira and Lisbon European Councils, the European Union completed two fundamental phases in the creation of a “system” of lifelong learning.

---

at acquiring disciplinary knowledge and skills, would have to play to create the conditions for people to be able to acquire the ability to “learn to learn”.

5 See UNESCO (ed), *I documenti del Rapporto Faure. L'educazione in divenire*, Armando Editore, Rome, 1976.

6 European Commission, *Teaching and Learning - Towards the Learning Society*, Luxembourg, 1996, p. 1 ff.

7 The basic message it was hoped to impart, as a concrete measure to foster employability given the problems of marginalisation and social exclusion affecting large sections of the population (the elderly, the young, the unemployed, women, immigrants, and so on), can be summarised with the educational imperative “never stop learning”, and it greatly increased the amount of attention paid to non-formal and informal education processes.

8 The European Commission’s Communication is dated 12 November 1997, COM (1997) 563 final.

9 Unesco/Confintea, *Final Declaration of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Learning*, Hamburg, 14-18 July 1997.

10 Within this basic strategy special attention is paid to training activities whose priority is to target people traditionally regarded as “weak” because they are disadvantaged not only as regards access to education but also integration in the labour market. The focus is on using specific educational measures and equality of opportunity to foster the integration of women in society and the education of minority groups, while respecting in full the diversity of each.

First, the European Social Fund expressly dedicated a strand of action in the Community Support Framework 2000-2006 to lifelong learning (Strand C) with a specific measure (C.4 for Ob.3 and 3.8 for Ob.1) aiming to promote lifelong learning. The objective was to enable the adult population, regardless of employment status, to acquire an educational certificate, a vocational qualification or at least the skills needed to improve employability and engage in active citizenship.

In addition, the Commission of the European Communities published a *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, which centres on two interdependent and equally important themes:

- Promoting employability, principally through the acquisition, improvement and updating of the skills needed for job insertion in the Information Society;
- Promoting active citizenship to support people to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to participate fully in a more integrated and complex society, in the throes of economic, technological and social upheaval.

In order to achieve these two objectives the *Memorandum* identifies six key messages designed to:

- 1** Guarantee universal and continuing access to education and training so that everyone can gain and update the basic skills needed for active participation in the knowledge-based society;
- 2** Raise levels of investment in human resources and develop incentives on an individual scale;
- 3** Promote innovation in teaching and learning methods to encourage the changeover to training systems based on learners' needs, among other things by taking advantage of the opportunities provided by Information and Communication Technologies;
- 4** Improve the ways in which learning outcomes of training actions are evaluated, particularly in non-formal and informal learning;
- 5** Review the system of guidance to guarantee, through local services, that everyone can easily access good quality advice about education and training opportunities throughout their lives. Guidance is a service that should be continuously available to everyone, a measure that accompanies individuals throughout their life, and not something directed only at the weaker segments of the population;
- 6** Facilitate and foster the decentralisation of lifelong learning to offer increasingly easy access to training opportunities close to home by relying partly on the support of Information and Communication Technologies to facilitate distance learning.

Subsequently, the Communication of the European Commission on *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality*<sup>11</sup>, the fruit of consultation on the *Memorandum* that took place in all the countries of the European Union, indicated active citizenship, self-realisation,

---

<sup>11</sup> The Communication of the European Commission on *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality* was issued on 21.11.2001, COM (2001) 678 final.

employability and social inclusion as the four pillars for implementing lifelong learning at European level. Transversal to these strands, it highlighted the elements believed to be central to the development of a global strategy that would guarantee all European citizens the full right to participate actively in the knowledge society:

- 1 Working together to ensure constant access to high quality learning;
- 2 Creating a "learning culture" rooted in an understanding of the learning needs of citizens, based on better knowledge of emerging demand and greater attention to the needs of learners, as well as to the requirements of employers, especially those voiced by small and medium-sized enterprises;
- 3 Co-ordinating the various learning contexts (formal, non-formal and informal<sup>12</sup>) as well as the different systems (school, training, work) to give everyone easy access to learning opportunities and guarantee the quality of related learning processes and services by monitoring and constantly evaluating the measures adopted.

The Council of the European Union's recent *Resolution on lifelong Learning* of June 2002, as a follow-up to which an Institutional Technical Group has been instituted at national level, confirms the strategies and priority areas for action identified in the Communication. It also underlines that priority must be given to measures to foster access for everyone to learning opportunities, provide continuing training for teachers, and enhance and recognise non-formal and informal learning.

Lifelong learning is not therefore just the premise for building a democratic society of knowledge - one in which everyone has the same opportunities for the whole of their lives and in every aspect of their professional and private life - it is also a way of fostering the employability of Europe's citizens. In fact, we should recall that unemployment affects some 15 million people in Europe (women and elderly workers being most at risk) and that the European Council of Barcelona reaffirmed the strategic objective of achieving 70% employment by the year 2010. That year is also the deadline for making the European Union's education and training systems a global quality reference.

It is to be hoped that people with low education and training attainment in particular will become increasingly involved in lifelong learning. Indeed, according to the figures quoted in the European Commission's Communication on *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality* nearly 150 million people in the EU have no basic education and as such are seriously at risk of marginalisation.

---

12 One of the key themes in regard is the certification of the qualifications and skills acquired through formal and other forms of learning. The European Union has introduced a number of tools for the recognition of academic and vocational qualifications. These include the Diploma Supplement, developed by the Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO, that takes into consideration the personal results obtained during studies and gives a description of the higher education system in the learner's country; the Certificate Supplement, recently developed for vocational qualifications; the European format for curriculum vitae that standardises the presentation of qualifications and individual experience; the EUROPASS-Training certificate, which records training periods spent outside the home Member State.

According to Eurostat data on adult participation (that is of people aged 25 to 64) in education and training programmes in the countries of Europe, the rate has risen from 5.7% in 1996 to 8.4% in 2001, representing an increase of 2.7 percentage points.

The European Commission, in the Communication *European Benchmarks in Education and Training: Follow-up to the Lisbon European Council*<sup>13</sup>, identifies a set of progress indicators for the education and training systems that will be used to monitor the achievement of the strategic objectives the EU has set itself for 2010.

Levels of investment in education have shown a tendency to increase in all countries. In the EU, education accounts for 11.2% of public spending, with peaks in Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands.

As to the gender disparity between university degrees in science subjects, considerable divergences exist among the Member States. The proportion of mathematics, science and technology graduates in 2000 (20 to 29 year olds) ranges from 23.9% in Ireland to a situation in Italy, Holland, Austria, Portugal and Luxembourg where they number only 8 per 1,000.

So, to compete at world level, Europe needs to strengthen its know-how and skills in innovation, given that the number of scientists and engineers working in the field of research in Europe is 25 percentage points lower than in, say, the United States.

The indicator of upper secondary education attainment shows that in Europe the percentage of students who have completed school to that level has been increasing gradually, from 50% in the 1990s to around 66% in 2000. This affects the adult population's overall level of education and guarantees the quality of schooling with a view to access the labour market as well. Germany, Denmark and Sweden perform best of all the countries. For this benchmark, 85% of the population of 22 year-olds is the target fixed by the European Union for the 2010 deadline.

Finally, the highest rates of participation of the adult population (25 to 64 year-olds) in education and training activities in 2001 were recorded in the United Kingdom, Finland, Denmark, Sweden and Holland. Participation in training activities is tending to rise, but not in a manner that is representative of people with low qualifications.

---

13 European Commission, *European Benchmarks in Education and Training: Follow-up to the Lisbon European Council*, Brussels, 20 November 2002, COM (2002) 629 final. The workplan established as a result of the Barcelona European Council held in November 2002 fixes the benchmarks for measuring and monitoring the average result achieved by the education and training systems of the 15 Member States in 6 areas: a) investment in education and training; b) the school drop-out rate; c) graduates in mathematics, science and technology; d) the population completing upper secondary school; e) basic skills; f) lifelong learning. More specifically, the Council has set the following objectives for the Member States to achieve by 2010:

- Halving the school drop-out rate compared with 2000, to reach a European average of 10% or less;
- Halving gender disparity between mathematics, science and technology graduates;
- Guaranteeing that the population of 25 to 64 year-olds completes upper secondary school (80% or more);
- Halving the percentage of 15 year-olds with poor reading skills and mathematical and scientific notions;
- Achieving a European Union average of at least 15% of the active adult population (25 to 64 year-olds) participating in lifelong learning.

The Member States' objective is to reach 12.5% of the active adult population by 2010, and not less than 10%.

This means that they must engage to reorganise their training systems in accordance with lifelong learning strategy.

In Italy, a new model of development has been taking shape in recent years. In accordance with EU directives it focuses on human resources as the target of investment for economic and social growth. This model gives learning a new centrality as an essential condition for living and working in the knowledge society; it takes the form of policies to reinforce the supply of training to the adult population and measures to help integrate the various training systems.

Already in the *Patto per il lavoro* (the Labour Pact) of 24 September 1996<sup>14</sup> and the later *Patto sociale per lo sviluppo e l'occupazione* (Social Pact for Growth and Employment) of 22 December 1998, the Government and the social partners had emphasised the increasingly key role of lifelong learning, partly in connection with the changes taking place in the competitive sphere and in the labour market; mobility and the emergence of new types of skills required people to be constantly willing and able to learn.

Retracing the crucial phases of transposing to the national context European policies to foster the creation of a system of lifelong learning, it is clear that one element of special importance was the Ministry of Education Order No. 455, 29 July 1997, *Educazione in età adulta - Istruzione e Formazione* (Adult Education - Education and Training), under which the Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education (PTCs) were instituted.

Subsequently, the Unified Conference of State, Regions and Local Authorities of 2 March 2000<sup>15</sup> gave priority, in accordance with the provisions of the 1998 Social Pact just mentioned, to the objective of bringing the existing education and training systems into line with a demand that had been evolving in recent years. The objective was to promote full employment integration for the population and acquisition of the basic knowledge, skills and abilities needed to engage in active citizenship.

Incorporating the indications of European Union policies, the document approved by the Conference and entitled *La riorganizzazione e il potenziamento dell'educazione permanente degli adulti* (Reorganising and Strengthening Lifelong Education for Adults) reflects the provisions of Law No. 59, 15 March 1997<sup>16</sup> and the subsequent Legislative Decree No. 112,

---

14 See *Accordo per il lavoro sottoscritto da Governo e parti sociali*, 24 September 1996, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, Rome, 1996.

15 See *Conferenza Unificata Stato-Regioni-Enti Locali*, *Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana* (Official Journal of the Italian Republic), No. 147, 26 June 2000.

16 See Law No. 59, 15 March 1997, "*Delega al Governo per il conferimento di funzioni e compiti alle Regioni ed Enti Locali, per la Riforma della Pubblica Amministrazione e per la semplificazione amministrativa*", *Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana* No. 63, 17 March 1997, delegating powers for the reform of the Public Administration.

31 March 1998<sup>17</sup> in defining the matters that the State reserves for itself and those delegated to the Regional Authorities and Local Bodies. Above all it reaffirms the need to enhance not only formal educational opportunities (certified education and training), but also the non-formal ones available to citizens (culture, health education, social activities, training for associations, and so on).

A not inconsiderable objective is also to overcome the lack of education and training of the adult population that is still such a major problem in our country. The way forward lies in the direction of lifelong learning, designed to assist people of every age and social condition return to the formal system of education and vocational training in order to broaden their basic knowledge and gain the specific skills connected with their work or social life.

The Ministry of Education Directive No. 22, 6 February 2001<sup>18</sup> stresses that the education system needs to move in harmony with the vocational training and non-formal education system to “accompany personal development by guaranteeing lifelong learning” in compliance with the right of citizenship. The right to lifelong learning, being a right of citizenship, is regarded as a measure that targets forms of social exclusion.

The right to education and training had already been formally acknowledged in the legislation by Law No. 53, 8 March 2000<sup>19</sup>. At Article 6, which regulates leave for continuing training, it confirms the right of workers, regardless of whether they are employed or not, to continue the training pathways throughout their lives in order to improve their knowledge and vocational skills by taking part in training activities, including courses other than those provided for by their company training plans or by local plans agreed between the Government and the social partners.

Following Law 53/2000, in many areas experiments in individual continuing training that had been implemented earlier under the specific measure embodied in Law 236/93<sup>20</sup> were placed on a firmer basis.

In response to the call of the European Commission, Italy began the process of disseminating the *Memorandum* and initiated national and local level consultation of all the actors concerned - institutional, social or representing civil society in the field of lifelong learning - in their

---

17 See Legislative Decree No. 112, 31 March 1998, “*Conferimento di funzioni e compiti amministrativi dello Stato alle Regioni ed agli Enti Locali, in attuazione del capo I della Legge 15 marzo 1997, N. 59*”, *Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana* No. 92, 21 April 1998, Articles 138 and 139.

18 See Ministerial Directive No. 22, 6 February 2001, “*Sull’educazione degli adulti*”, *Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana* No. 123, 29 May 2001.

19 The Law, which contains “*Disposizioni per il sostegno della maternità e della paternità, per il diritto alla cura e alla formazione e per il coordinamento dei tempi della città*” (Measures to support motherhood and fatherhood, to ensure the right to care and training and to co-ordinate the times of city life) is published in *Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana*, General Series No. 60, 13.3.2000, p. 3 ff.

20 Law No. 236, 19 July 1993 converting Decree-Law No. 148, 20 May 1993 “*Interventi urgenti a sostegno dell’occupazione*” (Urgent Actions in Support of Employment) is published in *Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana*, General Series No. 167, 19 July 1993, p. 1 ff.



respective spheres by setting up a national centre to co-ordinate and monitor the various initiatives<sup>21</sup>.

The consultation was followed by a national Conference entitled *“La formazione lungo tutto l’arco della vita. Le sfide del futuro”* (Lifelong Learning. The Challenges of the Future), which was held in Rome on 2 July 2001, and a report, *Rapporto nazionale sul processo di consultazione relativo al Memorandum europeo sull’istruzione e la formazione permanente*<sup>22</sup> (National Report on Consultation following the European Memorandum on Lifelong Learning) was drawn up and sent by the Government to the European Commission as support for the definition of common strategies in the sector.

Italy’s latest education and training policies directed at lifelong learning are also embodied in the National Action Plan for Employment (NAP) and the subsequent Pact for Italy.

The National Action Plan for Employment for 2002 incorporates the indications of the European Union, notably the Lisbon Agreements, and aims to raise the country’s rate of employment. The employment policies forcefully stress the close relationship between social inclusion and employability, on the one hand, and education and training, on the other. This is why the NAP accords priority to actions to foster employment that are geared to achieving a better cultural and vocational education for young people and adults to facilitate access to and retention in the labour market, thereby also helping to close the divide between Italy’s North and South.

In line with the NAP, the Pact for Italy, which the Government and the social partners signed on 5 July 2002<sup>23</sup>, draws on the earlier principles and objectives already agreed at the Lisbon and Barcelona summit meetings. It gives priority to enhancing human resources, not only to improve the cultural and vocational skills of young people and adults, but also to foster Italy’s economic growth, increase entry and retention in the labour market and at the same time encourage social inclusion by narrowing the gap between people who become promoters of development and those who are unable even to exercise their full rights of citizenship.

The Agreement confirms the close connection between education and training, on the one hand, and social inclusion and employability, on the other, and reiterates the Government’s firm commitment to design a vocational training system capable of remedying school failure and drop-out rates and providing for the acquisition of abilities and skills that can be spent in

---

21 The Centre for project co-ordination and monitoring is made up of representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of Education, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department of Social Affairs, the Ministry for University and Scientific and Technological Research and the Conference of Presidents of the Regions and Public Administration departments, with the technical assistance of *Isfol*. Its task is to promote and monitor the whole process, to collect documents on its progress and its outcomes, to organise the national conference, in agreement with the European Commission, and to distribute the resulting national report.

22 The report has been published and distributed widely to all the key actors in the field of education and training. It can be downloaded from the website [www.isfol.it](http://www.isfol.it) at the *‘Training Systems’ Area*.

23 The three-party agreement, which was signed on 5 July 2002 by the Government and the social partners, is significantly entitled *“Patto per l’Italia - Contratto per il Lavoro. Intesa per la competitività e l’inclusione sociale”* (Pact for Italy - Labour Contract. Agreement on Competitiveness and Social Inclusion).

the labour market. The primary objective is to equip everyone with a higher level of basic skills (language, mathematical, technological and social) by setting up 'lifelong education for adults' programmes capable of fulfilling the demand of 700,000 people a year from 2003 onwards.

In particular, enhancing human resources is accorded priority in the strategy for the development of Southern Italy and the Government has undertaken, in this connection, to place special emphasis on lifelong education for adults as an essential instrument for raising the rate of employment.

The Pact also addresses the question of improving primary and secondary literacy among the population, providing for specific "employability education", in other words promoting a long-term enhancement of human resources by reforming the education system and better co-ordinating public and private resources for lifelong learning. This will be the fruit of negotiation and collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, the Ministry of Education, University and Research, the Regional and Provincial Authorities and the Social Partners.

Following the Pact for Italy, in Law No. 53, 28 March 2003<sup>24</sup> the Government included lifelong education among the founding principles of the reform of the country's education system. Moreover, the programme of financial measures contains a special section reserved to adult education.

The document *Follow up of the Resolution of the European Council on Lifelong Learning* was drawn up in 2003 by the Institutional Technical Group consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, the Ministry of Education, University and Scientific Research, the Regional Authorities, the *Unione delle Province italiane (UPI)* (Union of Italian Provinces), the *Associazione nazionale dei Comuni italiani (ANCI)* (National Association of Italian Municipalities), and *Isfol*. It outlines the country's strategies and policies in the field of education and training.

This European and Italian scenario was taken into account in designing the three studies on the supply, demand and regional policies for lifelong learning.

The studies were carried out by *Isfol - Area Sistemi Formativi* as part of the action "Lifelong Learning" provided for in the NOP Ob. 3, Measure C.2 and NOP Ob. 1, Action II, 1B. Their purpose was to support the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies in the process of strengthening the lifelong learning system by offering an organic framework for the analysis of national and regional policies and measures relating to the supply and demand for lifelong learning in Italy.

The study of demand outlines what is known, at national level, about the demand for lifelong learning by adults aged 25 to 70, amounting to some 36 million people, and records the rate

---

<sup>24</sup> Law No. 53, 28 March 2003 "*Delega al Governo per la definizione delle norme generali sull'istruzione e dei livelli essenziali delle prestazioni in materia di istruzione e formazione professionale*" (Mandate to the Government to draw up general rules on education and establish basic standards for the provision of education and vocational training), in *Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana*, General Series No. 77, 2 April 2003, p. 6 ff.

of adult participation in training activities, the potential demand to be captured, and expectations regarding lifelong learning.

During the study research was conducted on the following aspects: a) the social and demographic characteristics of learners; b) the history of the adult population with respect to lifelong learning, not only in the world of formal and institutional training but also in the non-formal and informal sector; c) the propensity of adults to undergo training to refresh their vocational skills and/or for personal development; d) the experiences, expectations and suggestions of learners.

From the methodological point of view, the study was of a qualitative and quantitative type and conducted in three phases, consisting of CATI telephone interviews with 4,000 adults; 400 face-to-face interviews; and four focus groups involving immigrants, unemployed/non-employed workers, inactive people and women.

The study of lifelong learning supply was conducted entirely in line with European policies and used the breakdown adopted in the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* between formal, non-formal and informal learning systems. Within this classification, the field of study was further narrowed down into formal and non-formal learning, thus ruling out so-called "informal" activities, which were judged to be too unplanned and difficult to capture for a full and representative monitoring.

The study represents the first country-wide mapping that covers not only local training providers, but also the facilities disbursing training and the activities offered. It provides a composite frame of reference, embracing a multitude of actors, institutional and otherwise, engaged in different ways and to different extents in the sector.

In particular, the analysis covers typologies of providers, main activities of the organisations, experience in the education and training sector, as well as courses provided, human resources involved, certificates issued, sources of funding, forms of collaboration between different actors, and difficulties encountered in putting the training supply into effect.

The research study also contains detailed sectoral analyses of the training providers that responded in the largest numbers to the survey: Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education; school establishments holding evening classes; voluntary organisations; people's, senior citizens' and leisure-time universities; local libraries.

The main objective of the survey of regional policies was to identify the strategies adopted by Regional Authorities and Local Bodies in the field of lifelong learning and the role they fill in the present institutional scenario.

This objective was achieved by first collecting and analysing the literature and recent legislation on the subject, both national and regional, and then conducting in-depth field

research based on regional case studies (including the Autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bolzano).

More specifically, research covered the following areas: a) the state of implementation of the Agreement of the Unified Conference of State, Regions, and Local Authorities of 2 March 2000; b) integration policies adopted at regional and local level; c) choices incorporated in the Regional Operational Plans and subsequent use of EU funds specifically allocated for lifelong learning (Strand C, Ob. 3 Measure C.4 and Ob.1 Measures C.3 and 3.8); d) activities targeting adults and the integrated training pathways developed by the Permanent Territorial Centres; f) individual continuing training programmes.

The main results of the three studies of the supply, demand and regional policies for lifelong learning are described in synthesis in the following pages.

**Part I**

- **SOCIAL DEMAND  
AND LIFELONG  
LEARNING PATHWAYS**



## 1 • THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY\*

The research study draws a picture of the training needs of the country's adult population aged 25 to 70 by surveying the rate of participation in training activities within formal, non-formal and informal systems, the inclination to undergo training, and the requirements and concrete suggestions voiced by (potential) learners regarding the organisation of activities, including those run by institutions, particularly at the local level.

It has also helped to pinpoint the *typologies of learners*, some of whom belong to specific groups of the population - unemployed workers, women, inactive adults, and so on - others identifiable through a deeper analysis of the data.

The study includes research on the following aspects:

- The social and demographic characteristics of learners (the adult Italian population);
- The history of the adult population with respect to lifelong learning, not only within the formal and institutional system, but also within the non-formal and informal sectors;
- The propensity of adults to undergo training to refresh their vocational skills and/or for personal development;
- The experiences, expectations and suggestions of learners.

The resulting picture of the adult population's demand for lifelong learning is intended to provide support for national and local decision-makers in formulating their evaluations and choices concerning education and training policies throughout the country.

The areas surveyed are: Education, Employment, Personal Motivation, Attitudes to Lifelong Learning, and Cultural Activities.

The *Education Area* records the adult population's educational level (educational certificates and vocational qualifications) and proficiency in foreign languages. Questions are also asked about the reasons for dropping out from education; participation, during school years, in training courses or activities to pursue personal interests or geared to subsequent professional activity; participation, during the school years and after, in associations of various nature (sports, religious or other).

The *Employment Area* surveys the participation of employed adults in training either for professional or personal reasons from the viewpoint of subjects, times, choice and funding of the activity; special attention is paid to the question of training leave (Law 53/2000).

The *Personal Motivation Area* seeks to record the interest, or lack of interest, in obtaining higher educational qualifications (re-integration in training) and the factors indicated by learners who participated in training in the previous two years that probably encouraged them to do so: the choice of times, places and teaching methods, guidance and obstacles affecting their decision.

---

\* The research study was carried out in collaboration with Ludovico Albert, Roberto Angotti, Fiorella Farinelli, Vittoria Gallina, Adriana Luciano, Luisa Rimbolzi, Ornella Scandella and Bruno Scazzocchio.

The *Attitudes to Continuing Training* Area surveys the propensity of adults to undergo training, their preferences regarding subjects of study, times and places of learning, the financial and organisational obstacles, and the question of information on the local training supply.

The *Cultural Activities* Area provides a number of indications regarding the cultural products preferred by adults (books, theatre, and so on) and their exposure to the media and the Internet.

The 'Personal Motivation' Areas, Attitudes to Lifelong Learning and Cultural Activities are in reality more closely linked to the sphere of the expectations, needs, perceptions and experiences that adults express in relation to training.



## 2 • THE METHODOLOGICAL STRUCTURE

In view of the complexity of the phenomenon to be studied and the broad area of reference a top-down approach was used to analyse adults' needs by approximation followed by closer examination as the various phases were carried out.

Methodologically, the research study is structured in three phases:

- The quantitative analysis, based on CATI-telephone interviews with 4,000 adults forming a representative sample of all Italians aged 25 to 70 with a telephone at home (95% of adults);
- The quantitative-qualitative analysis, based on 400 face-to-face interviews with a sample of adults, conducted at home using semi-structured questionnaires;
- The qualitative analysis, using four focus groups involving specific target learner groups (immigrants, non-employed or unemployed workers, inactive adults, women).

The methods used were, respectively, the questionnaire, the structured interview, and the outline for conducting the focus groups. At the end of each phase of the research study a report was drawn up and separate dossiers prepared containing the statistical tables.

### 3 • FORMAL LEARNING PATHWAYS

Over the past decade a number of changes have taken place in Italy, some affecting the education and training systems, which are still in a phase of transition. The changes in this area have been not merely legislative and institutional but above all social. In particular, during the 1990s, as the level of schooling of the youngest sections of the population increased so did social demand, becoming structured in such a way that the young population began to close the gap in schooling that set it apart from equivalent age groups in other advanced countries.

At the same time Italian households have increased the level of their investment in improving the knowledge and skills of their younger members to compensate for a labour market that has little room for them. Increasingly, in fact, young people are spending long years in the education systems, especially 15 to 18 year-olds, largely because of their increased attendance in upper secondary school. A general statistic, the rate of progress into upper secondary school, which now stands at 99.3%, illustrates this. And indeed, as the Ministry of Education, University and Research points out, this rate has been increasing steadily, rising in ten years (from 1990 to 2000) by 12 percentage points, from 85.9% to 97.9%.

Table 3.1 highlights the gradual improvement in the cultural level of Italy's population. However, in 2001, there was still a discrepancy between people with a low or average educational attainment (no educational qualification or primary school and lower secondary school-leaving certificate), who account for 63.7% of the population, and those with average to high qualifications (upper secondary school-leaving certificate or university degree), who account for only 36.3%. The drop in the birth rate, moreover, is minimising the effect of an undoubtedly substantial increase in schooling on the educational levels of the population as a whole.

The most visible effects of the rise in schooling are mainly noticeable in the workforce, which excludes the older age groups. In 2001 the percentage of the workforce with at most a primary school certificate was 12%, while the percentage of workers with a lower secondary school-leaving certificate showed little or no change between 2000 and 2001. On the other hand, there was an increase in the proportion of workers with an upper secondary school-leaving certificate or university degree, up respectively by 0.4% and 0.5% between 2000 and 2001 and by 12.1% and 4.8% compared with 1991.

**Table 3.1 - Percentage Distribution of Educational Levels in the Italian Population 1981-2001.**

	1981	1991	1998	1999	2000	2001
<b>Population by edu. qualification (a)</b>	55.6	39.9	32.2	32.4	31.7	30.9
- None or primary school cert.	28.6	35.3	33.2	32.6	32.6	32.8
- Lower secondary school cert.	12.9	20.6	27.8	28.3	28.8	29.1
- Upper secondary school certificate	2.9	4.2	6.8	6.7	6.9	7.2
- University degree	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Workforce by edu. qualification (a)</b>	48.5	24.8	14.2	13.6	12.8	12.0
- None or primary school cert.	30.1	40.1	37.1	36.5	36.1	36.0
- Lower secondary school cert.	16.5	28.0	37.0	38.8	39.7	40.1
- Upper sec. school certificate	4.9	7.1	11.7	11.1	11.4	11.9
- University degree	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Job-seekers by edu. qualification (a)</b>	27.8	16.6	13.6	13.9	13.2	12.8
- None or primary school cert.	39.0	44.1	40.6	40.2	40.3	40.7
- Lower secondary school cert.	29.4	35.5	39.0	39.0	39.7	39.3
- Upper sec. school certificate	3.8	3.8	6.8	6.9	6.8	7.2
- University degree	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

a) Population aged 15 and over.

Source: *Isfol* processing based on Istat data.

Therefore, whereas the first half of the 1990s there was a large disparity between the proportion of people with average to low educational attainment, amounting to 64.9%, and that of people with average to high qualifications, equalling 35.1%, the two groups rapidly converged at the end of the decade, until by 2000 the proportions had become inverted, with average to low qualifications representing 48.9% and average to high 51.1%. This tendency continued in 2001, when the percentage of the workforce with average to high qualifications reached 52% and the percentage with at most a lower secondary school-leaving certificate was 48%.

These data clearly illustrate not only how educational levels in Italy have gradually approached those of the other advanced countries, but also how rapidly this process has occurred. However, the gap between the educational level of Italy's workforce and that of the other countries remains and is unlikely to disappear fast owing to the phenomena mentioned earlier. In fact, while there can be no doubting that the level of schooling has increased among young people, the drop in the birth rate has reduced their numbers in the total population.

The situation just described in relation to formal learning pathways is borne out by the results of *Isfol's* survey of demand. It shows that 38% of the 4,002 people interviewed<sup>25</sup> went on to higher education (9% reaching university and obtaining a degree or university diploma), while 32% completed compulsory lower secondary school education and 30% primary school only (or have no schooling at all).

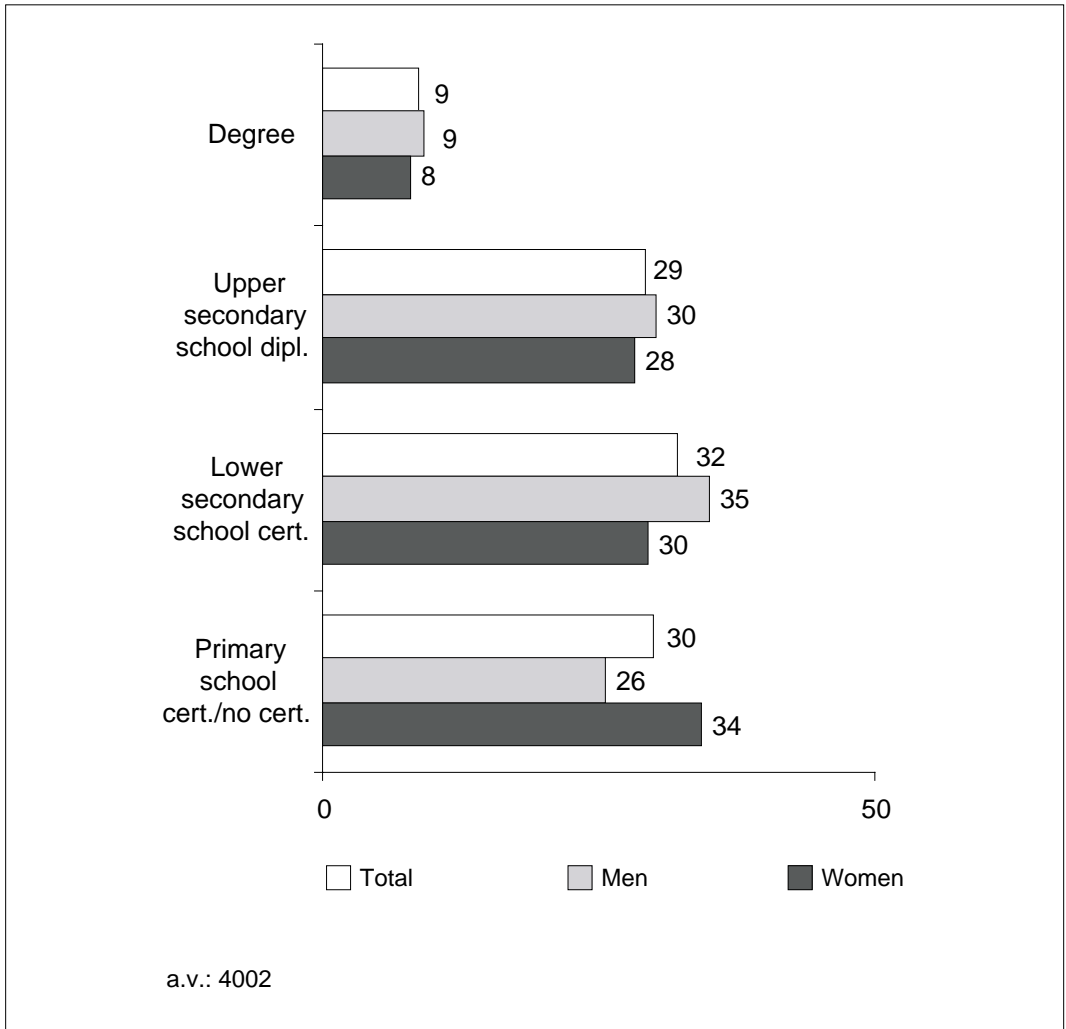
25 It is to be recalled that the survey covers the population of 25 to 70 year-olds.

According to the survey, the distribution continues to reveal a gender disparity in the possession of educational qualifications. A far larger proportion of women halted their education after completing primary school (34% compared with 26%) (Chart 3.1). Observing the distribution of educational qualifications by age (Chart 2) it is apparent that the percentage of interviewees who only completed primary school or did not attend school at all rises from 8% for adults under 45 years old to 33% for the 45 to 54 year-olds, 58% for the 55s to 64s and 77% after 64 years of age.

Chart 3.2 shows the correlation between the age of the interviewees and their educational attainment: we can note that it decreases with age.

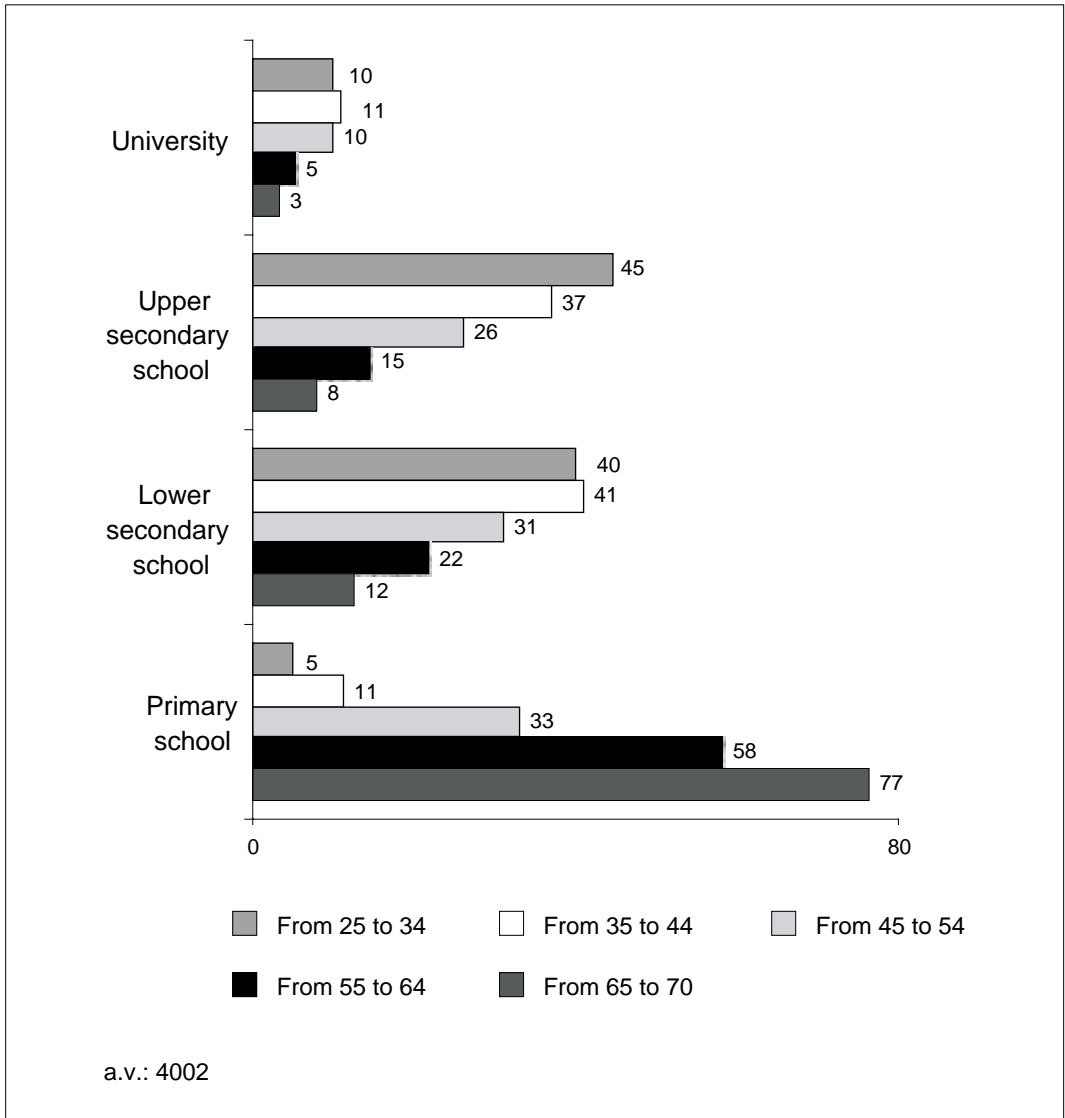
The analysis by geographical area points to a marked difference between Central Italy and Southern Italy (see Chart 3.3) in the proportion of people with an upper secondary school-leaving certificate (32% compared with 26%). By contrast, among people living in Southern Italy a far larger proportion has only a primary school certificate (33% against 26%).

Chart 3.1: Educational Qualifications of Italy's Adult Population by Gender (%)



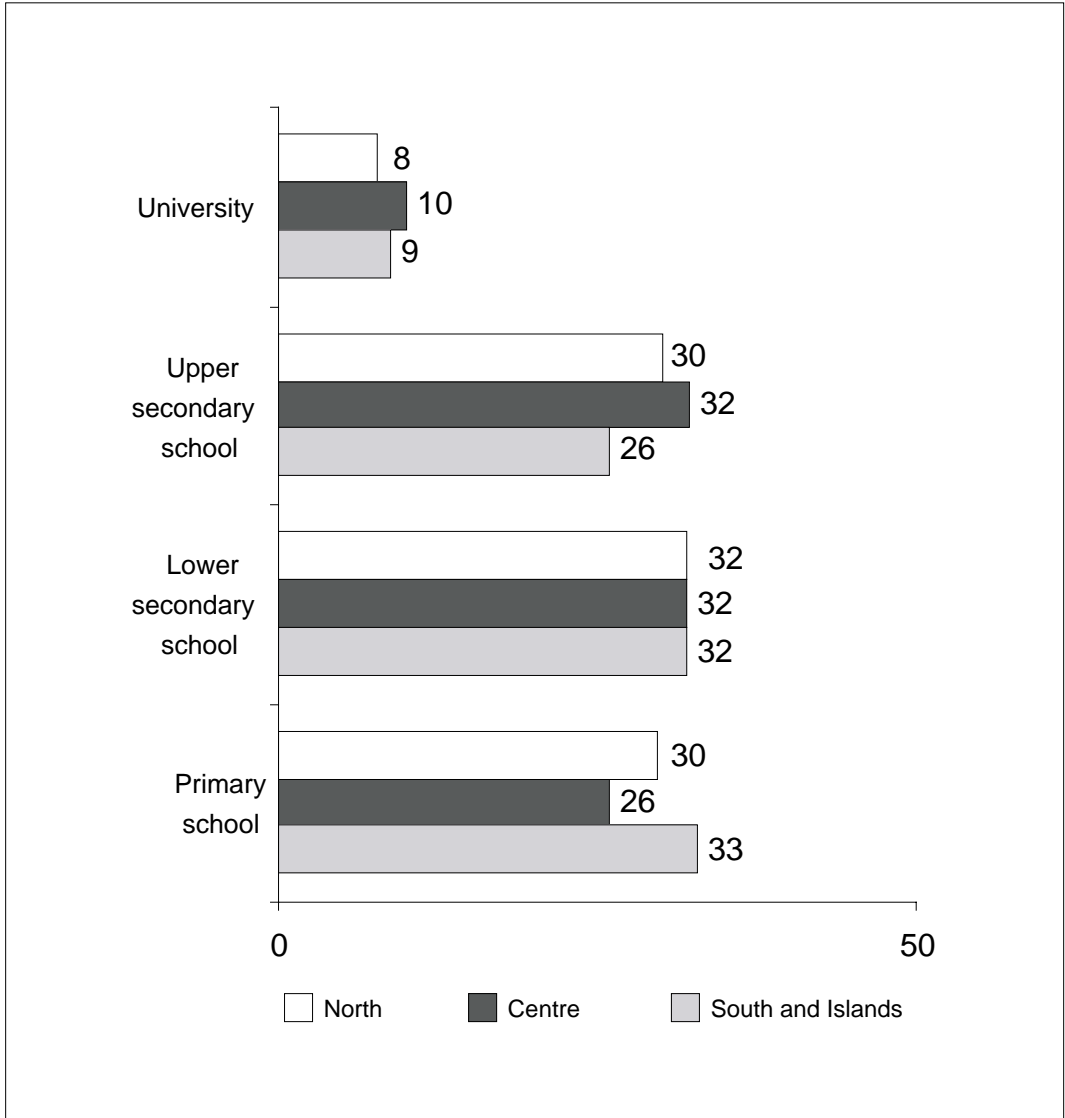
Source: Istat-DOXA 2002 survey.

Chart 3.2: Educational Qualifications of Italy's Adult Population by Age (%)



Source: Isfol-DOXA 2002 survey.

Chart 3.3: Educational Qualifications of Italy's Adult Population by Geographical Area (%)



Source: Isfol-DOXA 2002 survey.

The findings of the analysis of the educational levels of Italy's population by gender, age and geographical area confirm that there exists a gap to the disadvantage of women and older people. This indicates a lack of equal opportunity of access to education for these groups, which has prompted them to break off their studies, sometimes unwillingly, for family or financial reasons and to begin work at an early age. On the other hand, as we will see later when discussing re-integration in training, these people are still motivated (if only partly) to obtain a better educational qualification than the one they have and are therefore inclined to take advantage of a "second chance".

It is important to note, however, that the simple figures on the possession of educational qualifications do not give a full picture of levels of schooling in Italy. If we take into consideration all the people who attended the various levels of education, even without obtaining a qualification, the cultural level that emerges is actually slightly higher than educational qualifications would suggest; the percentage of people who at least attended university or upper secondary school rises to 47%.

In other respects this figure is evidence of the magnitude that the phenomenon of dropping out from school has always had in our country.

A small, but by no means negligible (4%), proportion of the interviewees currently attend courses with a view to obtaining an educational qualification.

In fact, 8.3% of under-29s are still attending a university-degree course and 91.7% of adults have re-entered the school or university system. Of these people 36.7% are at university, 41.3% are enrolled in upper secondary school, 6.4% are following regional VT courses, and 14.1% are attending lower secondary school.

Overall, the majority of the interviewees attending courses to obtain an educational qualification are in work (84.2%) and reside in the South and Islands (38.1%), the North-West (27.5%) and the Centre (23.2%), less often the North-East (11.2%).

The interviews were also used to assess the proficiency in foreign languages of Italy's adult population, including whether or not they hold a certificate.

Although half the interviewees (52%) stated they knew one or more foreign languages (34% English, 24% French, 6% German, 4% Spanish and a minimal percentage other languages) only 1 in 10 appeared to master all the skills involved in learning a language (reading, writing, conversation). Of those who declared some proficiency in the language, 19% of the respondents learning English had obtained a certificate, 10% of those learning French, 16% German and 18% Spanish.

### **3.1 • DROPPING OUT FROM EDUCATION**

Some 20% of interviewees were less than 12 years old when they dropped out from school, 26% between 12 and 14, 32% between 15 and 19 and 22% over 19. The average age at which they dropped out of education was 16 ?.

If we examine the phenomenon by age groups we can see that the average age for dropping out rises among the younger groups. The tendency of the younger generations to persevere longer in school than their elders should certainly be viewed positively (Table 3.1.1).



**Table 3.1.1 - School Drop-Outs by Age Group**

Age Group	Average Age
25 to 34	17.5
35 to 44	16.5
45 to 54	14.5
55 to 64	12.5
65 to 70	10.5

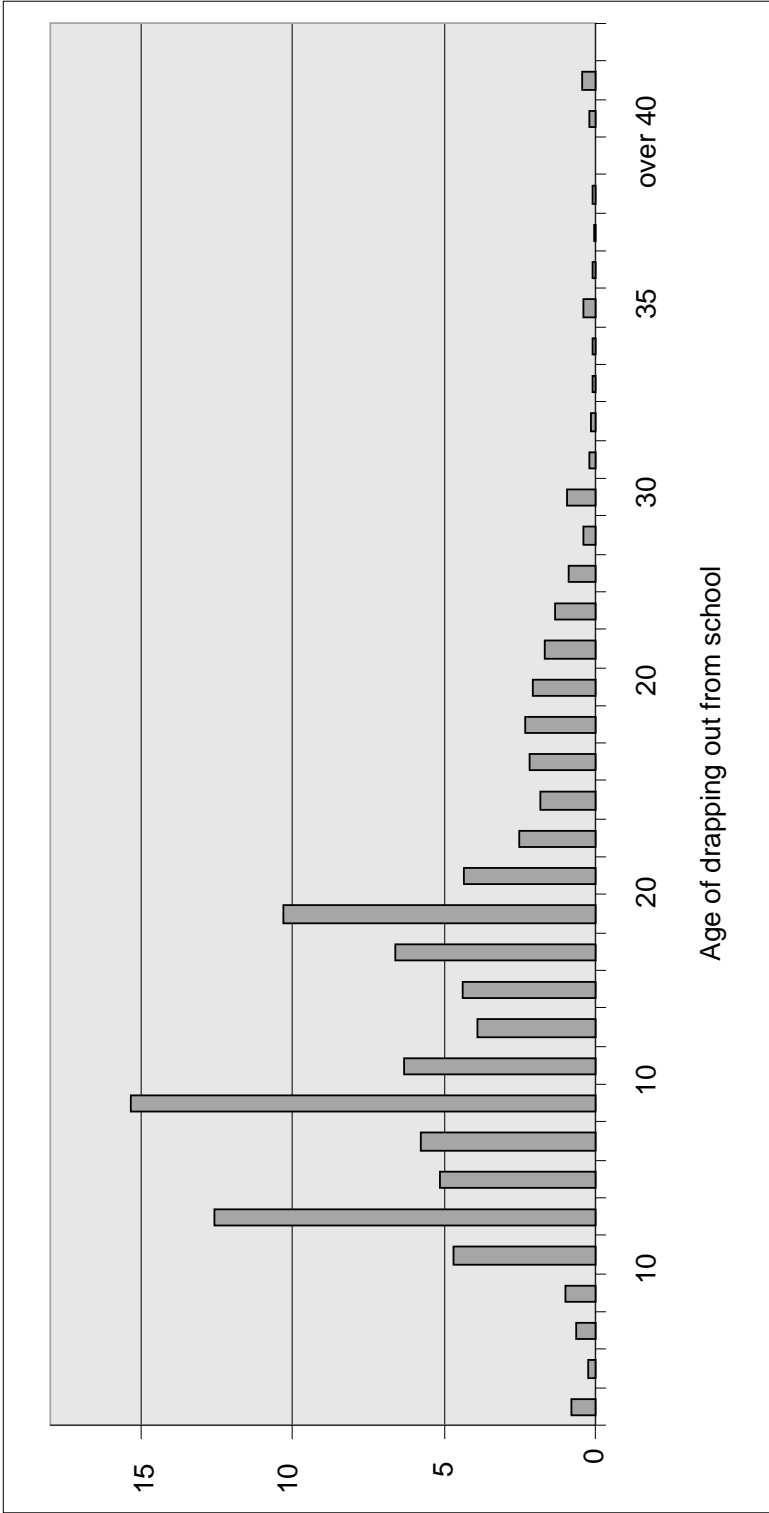
*Source: Isfol processing based on the Isfol-DOXA 2002 survey.*

The distribution of drop-outs by age group within the whole sample peaks very clearly at three points: the first at 14 years old, when 15.3% say they dropped out; the second at 11 (with 12.5% of drop-outs); the third at 19 (with 10.2% of drop-outs), as shown in Chart 3.1.2. This indicates that a cluster forms at the ages when the various school cycles end, even though the phenomenon is also “spread” among the other ages.

Almost half the interviewees (49%) wished they had been able to continue their studies when they left school. One quarter (25%) were “*very interested*” in continuing their studies and another quarter (24%) were “*fairly interested*”.

Women, older people and people living in Southern Italy, in other words those representing the largest percentage of interviewees who had to drop-out of education early, most often declare an inclination to take up their studies again.

Chart 3.1.2: Distribution of School Drop-Outs by Age (%)



Source: Isfol processing based on Isfol-DOXA 2002 survey.

If, instead, we examine the geographical distribution we can observe that 29% of respondents in Southern Italy were very interested in continuing their studies, 24% in the North-West, 22% in Central Italy and 21% in the North-East, an area where even now there is a widespread tendency to enter the world of work early after finishing compulsory education.

The interviewees usually put the reason for dropping out from school down to the need to start work and, in general, to financial problems in 29% of cases and family commitments (helping in the family business, marriage and pregnancy, care of relations) in 21%; others declared a lack of interest in their studies (17%), difficulty in studying with profit (4%), and even the decision to learn a trade (13%). Approximately 10% gave other reasons for dropping out from school, such as "there weren't any schools nearby" (2%), or "I wanted to be independent" (4%).

Older people are the ones who most often cite lack of money as the reason for dropping out. Among younger people, on the other hand, leaving school seems to have been the fruit of choice - a need to begin working right away - or of disaffection with school ("I didn't like studying", "I wasn't good at school").

Family reasons are mainly cited by women, whose generally recognised social role is as mother and family carer. Access to a higher level of education reaches the same plane among the younger generations, with the survey recording 8% of female graduates, which is close to the male figure of 9%. Indeed, while their social expectations remain focused on the family they also seek a different social status, starting with a desire for achievement in the world of work.

### **3.2 • RE-ENTRY IN TRAINING**

In addition to observing the educational attainment of the population and the reasons for dropping out from school, the study also surveys people's propensity, once outside the school and training system, to seek a "second chance" to obtain a higher educational qualification than their present one.

After leaving school 17% of the interviewees underwent training to obtain a higher educational qualification. However, only 6% of them actually obtained that qualification, while 11% dropped out from the courses and training activities.

Men, it appears, drop out from courses leading to a qualification more often than women: 14% compared with 8%. On the other hand, we found no differences between the interviewees in terms of geographical distribution (geographical area and type of municipality).

Of the 6% who re-entered school or training, 28.3% obtained a regional vocational qualification, 14.2% a three-year State certificate, 2% completed upper secondary school education, obtaining a school-leaving certificate, or went through primary school - teacher's training school, 9% obtained a technical school or other secondary school-leaving certificate and 29% completed university courses, leading either to a degree or university diploma (10%) or to a post-graduate diploma (14%), or attended university-equivalent courses, including *IUSM* (formerly *ISEF* - the training school for sports instructors).

The respondents who obtained a regional vocational qualification account for at least 40.7% of those with lower educational qualifications, most of them non-employed.

The findings indicate there are two precise objectives that the type of adults who resume training hope to achieve:

- Obtain better qualifications, which will be useful to enter the labour market;
- Pursue an individual desire to focus on personal improvement and maintain individual resources to cope with change and ensure personal cultural satisfaction.

In the last case the survey confirms the notion that people who already have a high level of education, and hence experience of a linear educational pathway, are more likely to have a positive attitude to "learning for their own sake".

A target that needs to be given priority consists of people who are motivated to resume formal education and training but, having approached those systems, are only partly successful in attaining a higher educational qualification.

What are needed here are measures to reorganise the times, places and ways of capturing this category of adults. In fact, those who are interested in obtaining higher qualifications<sup>26</sup> say they are willing to attend courses or lessons in public school-establishment (50%), private schools (9%) and recognised institutes (23%).

This means that the interviewees would be willing to re-integrate in formal or institutional training pathways, following school-based models.

The respondents who had not taken part in training activities described their reasons as: "*I thought about it, but didn't in the end*" (11.3%), "*I didn't because I already had a good enough qualification*" (15.9%), "*because a better qualification wouldn't have been of use*" (9.5%), "*because I hadn't got time*" (16.7%), "*because I couldn't afford it*" (13.8%), "*because I wasn't interested in continuing my studies or training*" (15.3%).

Most of the interviewees who believed their qualification was sufficient fall into the group of those with a higher educational level; the ones who believed an educational qualification would not alter their situation were mostly housewives, unemployed workers and retired people.

We found a higher proportion of people citing the following reasons among women than among men: "*I didn't consider it because it wouldn't have been of use*" (11.6%), "*I didn't consider it because I didn't have time*" (19.7%), "*I didn't consider it because I couldn't afford it*" (13.8%). On the other hand, the motive men gave more often than women was "*I didn't consider it because I wasn't interested*" (18.3%).

The interviewees with lower educational levels were the least interested in obtaining qualifications, with 19% stating "*I didn't think of it because I wasn't interested*" compared with

---

<sup>26</sup> This is the subject of in-depth research study on a limited sample of the 400 respondents.

9% of respondents with higher educational levels; they were more affected by financial considerations (19% said "*I didn't think of it because I couldn't afford it*" as opposed to 5% of those with higher educational levels) and lack of time (18% said "*I didn't think of it because I didn't have time*" compared with 14%).

## 4 • NON-FORMAL LEARNING PATHWAYS

### 4.1 • OUT-OF-SCHOOL TRAINING ACTIVITIES

We ascertained the degree of familiarity with activities not necessarily associated with the formal context of school by recording participation, during the school years, in training courses or activities to pursue personal interests or geared to a subsequent professional activity.

While at school 23% of the respondents attended courses and activities associated with their personal interests (10% on several occasions) and 19% attended courses related to professional activities (7% more than once). Generally, the percentages of adults attending such courses while still at school are much higher among the interviewees who completed upper secondary school and belong to the 25 to 44 age group. They are also high within the sub-group of people in work (respectively 29% and 23%) and of residents living mainly in the North and the Centre of the country and in the main cities.

Out-of-school training activities are another element that can contribute to lifelong learning. Promoting integrated school and vocational training and alternation between school and work could become a means of establishing, from the very first years of school or training, contacts with systems that have always functioned and been treated differently, unfortunately to the detriment of learners.

### 4.2 • ON-THE-JOB TRAINING AND TRAINING LEAVE

In the twelve months prior to the survey approximately 53% of the interviewees were in work and 47% not, with a fairly marked disparity between men and women: in fact, 70% of the men were in work but only 30% of the women. Almost 60% of them were employed in enterprises with fewer than 50 employees (35% in enterprises with fewer than 10), 20% in public or private organisations with between 50 and 250 employees, and the same again (20%) in organisations with a staff of over 250.

On the whole, the interviewees had a fairly positive opinion of their work. Taking all the opinions expressed into account we found:

- a** Most satisfaction regarding: 1) relationships with colleagues (42% were “very satisfied”); 2) interest in the work performed (40% were “very satisfied”); 3) relationships with superiors (37% “very satisfied”);
- b** Average, but still considerable, satisfaction regarding: 1) freedom of action at work (37% were “very satisfied”),
- c** Less satisfaction regarding: 1) possibilities of growth and career development (18% “very satisfied”); 2) training disbursed in the workplace (21% “very satisfied”); 3) earnings (13% “very satisfied”).

We attempted to gain further information on the work situation of the interviewees by asking if they had performed any type of work at all during the previous year. It emerged that among the whole sample interviewed just under 6 out of 10 (58.5%) had indeed engaged in some form of work during the previous year (see Tables 4.2.1 and 4.2.2). As we can see, in general, the employment level rises by 6 percentage points during the course of the year, from 52.5% at the time of the interview. Compared with those who declared they were not in work at the time of the interview, 16% were in some form of work during the year.

To a relative degree the increase mainly concerns women. From an age point of view, it is mainly the younger generations that have access to temporary jobs, although it is interesting to observe the increase of about 6 percentage points during the year (from 1.5% to 7%) among adults in the 65 to 70 age group. As far as the geographical areas are concerned, there is a tendency for the number of people in work to increase in all those considered, although mainly in the South and Islands, especially the main cities. There are also some signs that those who had worked in the previous year were more open to the idea of training (68.5%).

The interviewees who were in work, in whatever form, in the previous year break down by gender and age group as follows: three quarters (75%) of men and 42% of women were employed as were 76% of respondents aged 25 to 44, 67% aged 45 to 54, 31% aged 55 to 64 and 7% of over 64 year-olds.

**Table 4.2.1 - Work Situation in the Week of the Survey and During the Year (%)**

Work situation	Total	Gender		Age Group				
		Men	Women	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-70
- In work in the survey week	52.5	69.8	35.8	68.8	73.2	59.1	24.8	1.5
- In work during the year	58.5	74.9	42.5	75.3	76.9	66.7	30.7	7.0

Source: Isfol -DOXA 2002 survey.

**Table 4.2.2 - Work Situation in the Week of the Survey and During the Year (%)**

Work situation	Total	Geographical Area				Municipality size		Interest in training activities	
		North-West	North-East	Centre	South/Islands	Main City	Other	Interested	Not interested
- In work in the survey week	52.5	55.4	59.7	53.2	46.1	55.8	51.2	61.4	46.1
- In work during the year	58.5	61.0	63.5	58.0	53.9	62.3	56.7	68.6	50.9

Source: Isfol -DOXA 2002 survey.

As far as training is concerned, the research study shows that of the respondents who were in employment in the previous year, one third (29%) took part in training activities as part of their work: 15% once only and 15% more than once (see Table 4.2.3).

The percentage of those in work in the previous year who took part in training activities is relatively higher among men, at 32% compared with 26% for women. As to age groups, the highest percentage occurs among the 25 to 34 year-olds (32.5%) and the lowest among the 55s to 64s (9.8%). Finally, these interviewees have higher educational levels, with 41% of those who completed upper secondary school taking part in training activities, compared with only 18% of the other interviewees. The majority of training activities had the following objectives: a) specific refresher courses for work tasks; b) courses in computer languages or software packages; c) courses on workplace safety regulations.

Participation in training is almost invariably aimed at improving vocational skills or enhancing career status. Moreover, in a quarter of cases training was compulsory, such as when it concerned safety in the workplace or was part of practical training periods and traineeships. The average amount of time spent in these activities by the respondents who took part was 39 hours. There appear to be no differences regarding gender or age, although the average time is slightly higher among younger people, who spent 45 hours in training.



**Table 4.2.3 - Respondents who took part in work-related training activities in the previous twelve months, by gender, age and educational level (absolute values and %)**

Frequency	Total	Gender		Age Group					Educational Level	
		Men	Women	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-70	Higher	Lower
- Never	70.6	68.4	74.2	69.5	69.0	69.7	77.5	100.0	58.8	81.5
- Yes, once	14.9	16.1	12.9	15.4	15.9	14.6	12.3	-	19.3	10.7
- Yes, twice or more	14.6	15.5	12.9	15.1	15.0	15.7	10.3	-	21.9	7.7
- Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
- No. of cases	2,340	1,480	860	761	748	572	230	29	1,128	1,212

Source: Isfol -DOXA 2002 survey.

The findings also indicated that respondents generally have a favourable opinion of the usefulness of training from a professional point of view and also in terms of personal development.

The adults interviewed also gave information about the locations where training took place: 1) at the enterprise where they work (35%); 2) at an in-company training centre (15%); 3) at a public school-establishment (11%); 4) at a public VT centre (10%); 5) at the premises of vocational bodies, professional associations and trade organisations (9%); 6) at a Permanent Territorial Centre (2%).

In one third (34%) of the cases participation in training was decided by the interviewees themselves, in a third by their employer (32%) and in a third again jointly by the employer and the person concerned (33%). As far as the timing of the courses is concerned, 51% of the respondents attended the training course during their working hours, while 34% only took part in courses or other forms of training outside working hours and 3% asked for leave to undergo training.

Regarding the question of training leave, which is provided for in Law 53/2000, the research study reveals an extremely high level of misinformation. Just over half those in work (i.e., who were employed in the previous 12 months) knew about the opportunity for employed workers to apply to their employers for leave to undergo training for vocational or personal reasons. It is a highly valued opportunity, moreover, since 4 in 10 interviewees expressed some interest in the idea of a training leave. Among the subjects of study for which respondents were willing to apply for leave they cited: information technologies and languages as well as more specific areas of study relating to health, pedagogy and teaching. Some of them suggested a training leave would be a useful opportunity to obtain an educational qualification.

### 4.3 • TRAINING FOR PERSONAL PURPOSES

In this section of the study we used the results of the survey to examine the training activities the interviewees chose to attend in pursuit of personal interests. Their preferences related to the subjects studied and the times, places and methods of teaching.

In the previous two years, 17% of interviewees had undergone training to pursue a personal interest, with 13.3% attending one course or activity and 3.8% more than one. This covers all the types of activity engaged in, including attendance at classes or the purchase of courses in instalments and other products from newsstands or by subscription, and only excluding any activities designed to improve knowledge for work purposes or to obtain higher educational qualifications. The percentage of adults involved in training activities for personal reasons is much the same for the two genders.

Young people, up to 44 years old, are the ones who most often engage in this type of activity, accounting for 20-21% of participants in the span of two years. The percentage falls as age increases, reaching 7.2% among the 65 to 70 year-olds. The participation rate rises among people with a certificate or degree (27.4%), although the 10.9% of people with lower secondary school-leaving certificates should not be disregarded (see Table 4.3.1).

**Table 4.3.1. - Participation in Training for Personal Purposes in the Previous Two Years by Gender and Age (a.v. and %)**

School/Course Participation	Total	Gender		Age Group				
		Men	Women	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-70
- Yes, one course/activity	13.3	13.0	13.6	16.8	16.6	12.9	8.7	6.0
- Yes, more than one course/activity	3.8	4.0	3.5	4.8	3.8	4.3	3.3	1.2
- No, never	82.9	83.0	82.9	78.3	79.6	82.8	88.0	92.8
<b>- Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
- a.v.	4,002	1,977	2,025	1,008	974	859	749	412

Source: *Isfol -DOXA 2002 survey.*

We asked the interviewees who undertook training for personal purposes in the previous two years to give details regarding the locations, time and teaching methods associated with these activities and what category they belonged to.

In 27% of cases the training took place in the homes of the interviewees, who merely purchased courses in instalments, magazine supplements or software (see Table 4.3.2).

Home study is a method typically adopted by women rather than men, with 34% of women studying at home compared with 21% of men, and occurs predominantly in the 45 to 54 age group, which accounts for 30%, followed by the 25 to 34 group (28%).

Some 15.3% of the interviewees instead attended a school establishment in the area where they live, 2% a senior citizens' organisation (*Università popolare* people's university or other), and 20% various types of training centre: regional vocational training centres (5%), in-company training centres (3%), Permanent Territorial Centres (3%), or other training schools and centres (9%).

**Table 4.3.2 - Places Where Training Took Place, by Gender (a.v. and %)**

Place Where Training Took Place	Total	Gender	
		Men	Women
- Local school	15.3	16.8	13.9
- State university	2.6	4.0	1.2
- Senior citizens' university	1.7	0.5	2.8
- Library	1.1	0.9	1.3
- Private premises	25.6	25.7	25.4
- In-company training centre	3.2	5.3	1.1
- Regional training centre	5.5	6.2	4.9
- Permanent Territorial Centre	2.7	2.0	3.4
- Other training school or centre	9.1	10.9	7.3
- Home	27.4	21.2	33.6
- Gym/sports centre	2.6	2.9	2.3
- Other	3.2	3.6	2.8
<b>- Total %</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
- a.v.	684	337	347

Source: Isfol -DOXA 2002 survey.

The interviewees who took part in training activities spent an average of 50 hours on them, with 47% spending less than 30 hours, 34% between 30 and 100 hours and 19% more than 100 hours. The average amount of time spent on training for personal purposes did not differ significantly according to gender or age group, although the averages tended to be slightly higher among young people, who spent around 54 hours on training.

The subjects most often studied were: arts and music (24%), ICT-related subjects (17%), sports (13%), languages (9%), cookery/wine tasting (5.2%), dressmaking (5%), personal and community health problems (4.5%), gardening (4.4%).

In relation to educational qualifications, the percentages of interviewees studying ICT subjects and languages were largest among the group with higher educational qualifications, reaching 20% and 12% respectively. The percentages of people opting to study subjects to do with arts and music were similar for those with higher and lower educational qualifications.

The choice of subjects to study for personal purposes followed different patterns according to the gender of the interviewees: arts and music tended to be slightly more popular among women, as did subjects to do with food and wine. By contrast, ICT-related subjects were more popular with men. Interest in ICTs decreased as the age of the respondents rose. There appeared to be no difference in gender as regards the study of foreign languages.

Training activities for personal purposes were undertaken in 65% of cases with the assistance of a teacher, while in 20% of cases instalment courses were purchased, in 17% magazine supplements and/or other supports (i.e., videos, CD-ROMs or on-line courses, which

accounted for 3%). It was mainly women who resorted to self-teaching activities, for the reasons already listed on several occasions.

There seems, therefore, to be a split between people who choose training activities disbursed by traditional methods, with the presence of a teacher (65.3%), and those who opt for self-taught activities using instalments/magazine supplements/videos purchased at newsstands (around 20%).

Not to be forgotten, although small in number, are the 1.3% of interviewees who participated in on-line training courses.

## 5 • INFORMAL LEARNING PATHWAYS: PARTICIPATION IN ASSOCIATIONS AND CULTURAL BEHAVIOUR

### 5.1 • PARTICIPATION IN ASSOCIATIONS AT SCHOOL AND LATER

For some of the interviewees their school years were also the time when they took part in the activities of an association, whether engaged in sport, religious activities or voluntary work. One third (31%) of the respondents, divided into 37% of men and 25% of women, did so if we include activities engaged in only occasionally or for a limited period of time. Let us look closer at the rate of participation in associations during the school years and after.

During the school years the participation rate is highest among the interviewees who completed upper secondary school: 40% against 25.4% for those with lower educational qualifications. With regard to age, the highest participation rate (35%) occurs in the youngest age group, the 25 to 34 year-olds, while among older people participation in associations during the school years was much less frequent.

After the end of school participation in the activities of associations (sport, religious or voluntary) drops. At the time of the survey, only 12% participated in one or more associations often and 4% occasionally. The percentage of those who did not belong to any association at all is 82.1%. Current participation in associations is more common among men (15.2%) than women (around 10%) if we consider only activities that are not occasional. As far as age is concerned, 13.1% of the respondents who had often taken part in the activities of an association since they left school were in the 35 to 44 age group and 13.7% in the 45 to 54 group. It is interesting to note that participation in associations tends to increase slightly after the age of 64 (see Table 5.1.1).

**Table 5.1.1. – Adults Currently Belonging to an Association (Sports, Religious, Non-Profit etc.) by Gender, Educational Level and Employment Status (a.v. and %)**

Belonging to an Association	Total	Gender		Educational Level		Employment Status	
		Men	Women	Higher	Lower	In work	Not in work
- I'm a member but I don't participate	1.6	1.9	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.8	1.4
- I rarely participate	3.7	4.1	3.4	4.5	3.3	4.0	3.5
- I often take part in activities	12.6	15.2	9.9	16.7	10.1	14.5	10.4
- No	82.1	78.8	85.3	77.2	85.0	79.7	84.7
<b>- Total %</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
- a.v.	4,002	1,977	2,025	1,513	2,489	2,106	1,896

Source: Isfol -DOXA 2002 survey.

As the research study shows, participation in the activities of associations is not common among the adult population and does not attract young people much during their school years. Yet we know that it fosters a greater propensity to use social skills, which are indispensable for active citizenship once adulthood is reached. Participation in an association contributes to make people aware that they can rely on their own personal resources to handle dynamic and interpersonal situations, a practice, moreover, that is simulated in a socially protected environment. The results of the survey show that this opportunity is reserved to a particular profile, mainly people with higher educational qualifications.

## **5.2 • CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA**

The research study also produced a set of data on the extent that the interviewees use certain media and on their leisure interests.

These data can provide useful indications not only regarding the number and characteristics of adults who are interested in certain aspects of training but also for assessing the value of the various media as a means of communicating with potential learners.

In the previous week, in other words in the 7 days leading up to the interview, 64% of the interviewees watched television, 47% listened to the radio, 41% read the newspapers, 26% magazines and 25% books.

The following tables (Tables 5.2.1 and 5.2.2) describe the respondents' behaviour regarding the reading of books, magazines and newspapers etc. and use of the media, according to gender and educational level. The figures in the tables refer only to those interviewees who said they had engaged in the pursuit in question (*"reading books" and so on*) "often" in the week leading up to the interview.

As we can see there is a greater propensity to read books, magazines and newspapers among adults with higher educational levels, i.e. upper secondary school-leaving certificate or university qualification. Only among those who watch television is there a predominance of people with lower educational levels (lower secondary or primary school-leaving certificate). Moreover, as far as reading newspapers is concerned, a gender difference emerges: women read newspapers less than men.

Television is the most popular form of leisure-time media entertainment (63.8%), followed by the radio (46.6%) and newspapers (41.4%).

According to the interviewees, the television programmes they watch most often or find most interesting are the news (90%); films, television series and television plays (74%); documentaries and science programmes (62%); current affairs (58%); sport (48%); talk shows (42%); and variety shows (41%).

**Table 5.2.1 - Leisure-Time Activities of 25 to 70 Year-olds in the Previous 7 days (%)**

Activity	Often (*)	Some-times	Rarely	Never	Total
- Reading books	24.7	16.1	12.3	<b>46.9</b>	100.0
- Reading newspapers	<b>41.4</b>	23.4	11.3	23.9	100.0
- Reading magazines	26.3	<b>32.1</b>	14.3	27.3	100.0
- Listening to the radio	<b>46.6</b>	19.2	12.8	21.4	100.0
- Watching television	<b>63.8</b>	20.6	12.1	3.5	100.0

(\*) "often" in the week before the interview. The basis changes according to the activity surveyed.

Source: Isfol-DOXA 2002 survey.

**Table 5.2.2 - Leisure-Time Activities Engaged in Often by 25 to 70 Year-Olds in the Past 7 Days by Gender and Educational Level (%)**

Activity	Total (*)	Gender		Educational Level	
		Men	Women	Higher	Lower
- Reading books	24.7	23.1	26.2	39.9	15.4
- Reading newspapers	<b>41.4</b>	52.3	30.7	55.0	33.1
- Reading magazines	26.3	26.9	25.8	38.4	19.0
- Listening to the radio	<b>46.6</b>	49.7	43.5	54.3	41.8
- Watching television	<b>63.8</b>	65.7	61.9	56.9	67.9

Total number of interviewees: 4,002.

\* The total refers to those who often engaged in the activity during the week in question.

Source: Isfol-DOXA 2002 survey.

Listening to the radio is more popular with young people, while watching television increases with age; older people are more exposed to television than the young.

If we examine activities undertaken occasionally ("sometimes"), the percentages of adults engaging in them rises to 84% for television, 65% for the radio and newspaper, 58% for magazines and 41% for books.

Moreover, once or more during the previous year 47.7% of the interviewees went to the cinema; 35.9% to an exhibition; 34.2% to a museum; 25.6% to a concert; 23.4% to the theatre; 19% to a library; 16.5% took part in a meeting or debate on current affairs; and 16.5% went to a stadium to see a sports event.

**Table 5.2.3. - Participation in Cultural Activities by 25 to 70 Year-Olds in the Previous 12 Months (%)**

Cultural Activity	More than once	Once	Never	Total
- Took part in public debates on current affairs	11.6	4.9	83.5	100.0
- Took part in seminars on specific subjects	11.8	4.5	83.7	100.0
- Visited an exhibition (painting, photography, etc.)	24.7	11.2	64.1	100.0
- Went to the sports stadium	12.5	4.0	83.5	100.0
- Went to the theatre	16.5	6.9	76.7	100.0
- Went to a concert	17.0	8.6	74.4	100.0
- Visited a museum	24.0	10.2	65.8	100.0
- Went to the library	14.7	4.3	81.0	100.0
- Went to the cinema	40.2	7.5	52.3	100.0

Total number of interviewees: 4,002.

Source: Isfol-DOXA 2002 survey.

At this point we can advance some considerations regarding the use of cultural products and the propensity to learn in an informal context represented by daily life and personal life-style. Going to the theatre or the cinema, reading books, and taking part in political meetings contribute to improve individual knowledge and promote integration and social emancipation. In fact, adults who left the school environment many years earlier (except, of course, young adults) can be captured by new methods and during involvement in different situations: participation in politics and voluntary work, visits to libraries and learning centres, travel or studying abroad, participation in sports.

In general, the survey indicates that a large percentage of people have never taken part in similar group activities. More than 80% had never taken part in public debates or gone to a library and, as we said earlier, 82.1% of them did not participate in associations engaged in voluntary, sports or religious activities.

We are well aware that such forms of association are conducive to the practice of active citizenship and democratic participation in civil life, and that therefore it may become necessary to market cultural consumption. Since this fulfils objectives of cohesion and social wellbeing, it can only come within the sphere of local policy-makers, who are entrusted with the governance of cultural and social integration processes.

Moreover, promoting cultural occasions and activities is a means not only of bringing local government closer to the citizenry but also of building territorial networks, especially between major cities and rural areas<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> The Key Message number 6 of the EU Memorandum on Lifelong Learning "Bringing learning closer to home" aims to bring opportunities for lifelong learning as close as possible to learners. The Memorandum states, that "the provision of education and training is one of the policy areas destined to become part of this trend - for most people, from childhood through to old age, learning happens **locally**. Local and regional authorities are also the ones that provide the infrastructure of access to lifelong learning [...]. Equally, civil society organisations and associations have their strongest



Another aspect worth highlighting in connection with the results of the survey of exposure to the media is the generally selective attitude to information and its sources, which we have seen tends to vary with age and gender (listening to the radio/young people; television/older people; newspapers/men, and so on), geographical area (television/South and other combinations), employment status and educational level. This is probably another reason why it is important for policy-makers to take responsibility for ensuring equality of access to information and diversity of the sources of information on lifelong learning for all citizens.

---

*roots at local level, and typically possess vast reservoirs of knowledge and experience about the communities of which they are part.*" The general aim is to bring training closer to learners; therefore, it is suggested that methods such as regional and local partnerships and e-learning should be adopted to reach isolated or scattered segments of the population.

## 6 • THE PROPENSITY TO LEARN

So far we have looked at people who have been involved in some way in the institutional or continuing-training system or taken part in associations and attended courses on subjects of personal interest, motivated by the aim of obtaining an educational or vocational qualification, the hope of professional advancement to fulfil expectations generated in the workplace or with a view to future mobility or career moves, and the desire for individual development for personal wellbeing.

We will now examine the inclinations of people who, although never having undertaken training for personal purposes, would be willing to do so. We will concentrate on their declared preferences with regard to subjects, times, acceptable costs and finally the obstacles affecting their participation.

### 6.1 • PREFERENCES AS TO SUBJECTS, COSTS AND TIMES

Although in the previous two years 83% of the interviewees had not attended training activities, almost half of them (43%) declared they were interested (14% *“very interested”* and 29% *“fairly interested”*) in training activities designed to develop personal interests, while 57% repeated that they had little or no interest in such activities.

The percentage of the *“very interested”* drops from 18% around 30 years old to 11% from 45 to 64 and to just 4% after 64. Interest is greatest among interviewees with a higher cultural level, with 22% of adults who completed secondary school showing interest and 8% of the other respondents, mainly older people.

The interviewees who declared an interest in training activities indicated much the same subjects as those chosen by the people who attended courses and other training activities in the previous two years, or were still doing so. It is interesting to compare the subjects chosen and studied by those who had already engaged in training (17%) and those who declared an inclination to do so (43%) as these represent the real and potential learners to whom the supply of training could be directed with the greatest likelihood of success.

Table 6.1 compares the needs of the two categories of interviewees. We can see that priority is given to subjects relating to all things associated with communications, in particular ICT-related subjects (17.1%), as well as physical and personal wellbeing (sport, health education); the field most in demand is arts and music.

The main reasons for interest are a desire to *“learn something new”* and feelings of inadequacy with respect to certain subjects. Some of the interviewees also cited enjoyment in being involved in something and the pleasure of socialising.

The research study also recorded the interviewees' preferences regarding participation in training activities from the viewpoint of costs and times.

As far as concerns what is thought to be an acceptable *outlay* for taking part in training activities for personal purposes (see Chart 6.1), the average price quoted is 90 Euros, with

19% willing to pay up to 50 Euros, 11% between 51 and 100 Euros, 7% 101 to 200 Euros and 5% more than 200 Euros. On the other hand, 36% ruled out in principle the notion of paying to take part in courses or other training activities, apart from anything because they are only mildly interested in them, and 22% had no idea of the cost because of their lack of knowledge of possible training activities.

Regarding financial assistance to participate in training activities, we asked the interviewees if they were aware of the existence of coupons, allowances or vouchers for training (as provided for in Law 53/2000). Only 11% of the respondents remembered (or thought they remembered) hearing about such incentives. The percentage of adults who believed they knew something about the subject was slightly higher among men, who accounted for 14%, than among women, who represented 9%, but very close in almost all the age groups (ranging from 11% to 15%) and according to educational level and employment status.

We made a closer analysis of the respondents' interest in participating in training by assessing the amount of time they would be willing to set aside for this activity. The average amount of time was approximately six hours a month, although 3 in 10 interviewees said they could not participate in any activities because they absolutely did not have enough time.

The proportion of those not interested in spending time pursuing a personal interest was largest among the respondents with lower educational levels and increased with age. In fact, those who declared "*I haven't got time*" increased steadily from 28% among the 25 to 34 year-olds to 65% among the 65s to 70s.

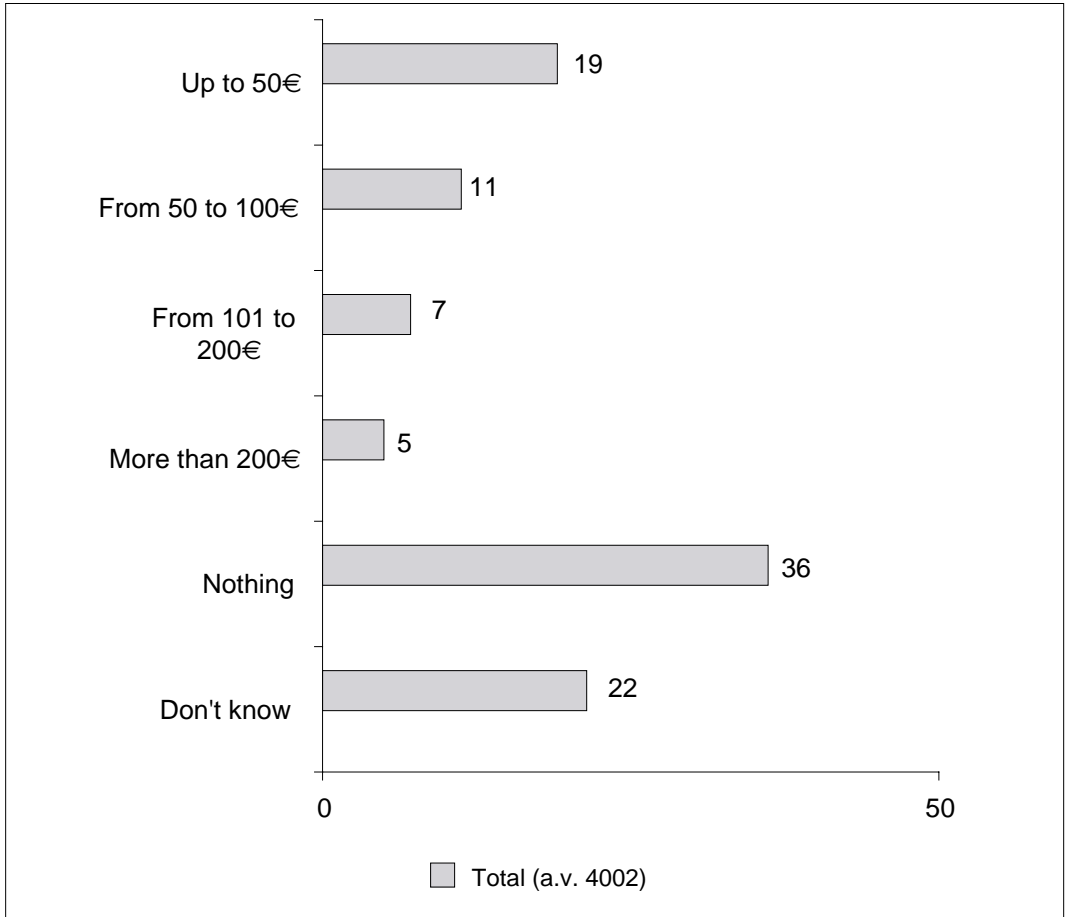
**Table 6.1 - Priority Subjects for Training Activities (%) \***

Subject Listed	By people who have participated in training	By people who are willing to participate in training
- Arts and music	24	24
- ICT-related subjects	17.1	25.6
- Sports lessons/activities	13.4	9.3
- Languages	9.4	21.1
- Health issues (individual and community)	4.5	5.1
- NICT-related subjects	0.9	4.5
- Italian language	0.1	3.3
- Cookery/wine tasting	5.2	8.3
- Sewing, embroidery, crochet	5.0	4.1
- Gardening	4.4	7.8
- Environmental issues	2.1	3.5
- Religious and spiritual matters	1.8	1.8
- Photography and graphic art	1.6	4.5
- Film and theatre	1.4	2.8
- Diet and nutrition	0.6	2.2
- Legislation on municipal associations (Local Health Agencies, town councils, borough councils)	0.8	2.3
- Italian political and social history	0.5	3.3
- History of the learner's Municipality, Region or Province	0.4	2.2
- Astronomy	-	1.3
- Astrology	-	0.6
- D.I.Y. (all types)	-	2.8
- Massage techniques	-	0.9
- Social welfare issues (problems affecting young people, the elderly)	-	4.4
-Updating training in the learner's field of work	-	6.4

\* The sum of the percentages is greater than 100% because of multiple answers.

Source: Isfol-DOXA 2002 survey.

Chart 6.1: Propensity to Spend to Participate in Training Activities (%)



Source: Isfol-DOXA 2002 survey.

A total of 64% of the people interviewed expressed preferences regarding the time of day they would like to attend training courses, with 18% wanting to spend either the morning (11%) or early afternoon (7%) on their activities, 17% the late afternoon and a few more (21%) the evening after supper. Only 8% preferred participating in courses and other activities at the weekend. The remaining 36% of the interviewees did not answer the question. Women tended to prefer early or late afternoon, men late afternoon or evening, people in work late afternoon or evening and those not in work any time of the day or after supper, young people the evening and older people the daytime and, very rarely, the evening.

If we compare these preferences as to time between the sub-group of those who had taken part in training activities (17%) and the sub-group of those who were willing to do so (43%) we see that they tend to cluster in the afternoon (respectively 30% of past learners and 35% of prospective learners) and the evening (respectively 34% of the first sub-group and 32% of the second).

## **6.2 • OBSTACLES TO PARTICIPATION**

Among the people interviewed who did not declare an inclination to participate in training we investigated the reasons for their attitude.

Three main reasons were generally given for the absence of any inclination:

- Lack of interest (44%);
- Lack of time for family reasons (29%);
- Lack of time for reasons of work (20%).

At the same time, less than half the respondents (40%) would not be interested in spending time on training for personal development even if they had assistance to cope with their family and household commitments.

When the main reasons cited in the last case are examined more closely it emerges:

- That the respondents had no interests to develop anyway (58%);
- Second, that they did not know about the training available (20%);
- Finally that they were not prepared, psychologically, to leave children or other members of the family with strangers to take part in activities for pleasure (14%).

The majority of the interviewees again declared that they were not interested in taking part in training.

Is it really because of a lack of interests? When the respondents were encouraged, as we saw earlier (Chapter 5, section 5.2.), to describe the subjects they followed most often on television, radio or in the press, 4 in 10 (44%) indicated sport, current affairs, health and medicine, music and scientific documentaries. Therefore, the adult population does in fact

express some form of interest. To be accurate, these interests were more often cited by interviewees with higher educational levels than by those with lower qualifications (64% against 41%) and by people in work more than by people not in work (51% against 40%). However, their existence tends to lessen the impression that such a large percentage of the population is not interested in taking part in training.

These in-depth observations point not so much to a general lack of time as, above all, to an inability to express needs. Moreover, 20% of those interviewed said they knew nothing about the training activities available at present. This raises the great question of guidance and information designed to reach the adult population, even categories who do not express an explicit need but nevertheless tend to pursue their own pathways to knowledge.

## 7 • THE INTERNET AND E-LEARNING

Having described the pathways of formal, non-formal and informal learning followed by Italy's adult population and the preferences as to subjects, costs and times indicated by those interested in participating in training, in this chapter we examine the propensity of the interviewees to use the Internet as a means of communication and a method or environment for training.

About 30% of the sample interviewed used the Internet (17% often and 13% occasionally); of the remaining 70%, 64% had never used the Internet and 6% had used it very little lately. The percentage of regular Internet users was much higher among men (72%) than women (28%) and dropped from a peak of 41.3% among the 25 to 34 year-olds to 35.1% among the 35s to 44s, 16.9% among the 45s to 54s and finally 5.5% among the 54 to 64 year-olds.

The economic, social and technological upheavals that have taken place, together with the increase in life expectancy, have a very significant impact on the not-so-young cohorts of the population with lower educational qualifications, and without the digital literacy to access knowledge. The findings of the survey indicate that adults generally have a poor relationship with the Internet, and lack of familiarity with the technology occurs among the age groups most at risk of expulsion from the labour market (the 45 to 54 year-olds).

About 79.4% of respondents who never used the Internet had lower educational levels, whereas 77.5% of those who used it "*often*" had higher educational attainment and were prevalently in work (82.4%), as Table 7.1 and Table 7.2 show.

In the previous month 8 in 10 users connected to the Internet from home and 4 in 10 also, or only, from work. Very few, only 1%, used the Internet at an Internet Café or elsewhere.

The main reasons for using the Internet were: a) to obtain information (69%); b) for work (34%); c) for amusement (27%); d) to chat with other people (12%); e) for training (12%); f) to use e-mail (14%); g) out of curiosity (15%).

Very few people in the age groups considered mentioned shopping or study among the usual reasons for using the Internet.



**Table 7.1 - Use of the Internet by Gender, Education Level and Employment Status (a.v. and %)**

Frequency	Total	Gender		Educational Level		Employment Status		Total
		Men	Women	Higher	Lower	In work	Not in work	
- Often	17.2	72.0	28.0	77.5	22.5	82.4	17.6	100.0
- Sometimes	12.5	58.5	41.5	62.6	37.4	77.8	22.2	100.0
- Not often	5.9	54.5	45.5	57.9	42.1	65.2	34.8	100.0
- Never	64.4	41.0	59.0	20.6	79.4	38.6	61.4	100.0
- a.v.	4,002	1,977	2,025	1,513	2,489	2,106	1,896	4,002

Source: Isfol -DOXA 2002 survey.

**Table 7.2 - Use of the Internet by Age Group (a.v. and %)**

Frequency	Total	Age Group					Total
		25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-70	
- Often	17.2	41.3	35.1	16.9	5.5	1.2	100.0
- Sometimes	12.5	35.3	34.6	20.2	9.3	0.6	100.0
- Not often	5.9	37.8	34.9	15.7	8.0	1.6	100.0
- Never	64.4	17.8	22.3	23.4	25.1	15.4	100.0
- a.v.	4,002	1,010	973	857	750	412	4,002

Source: Isfol -DOXA 2002 survey.

We examined the propensity to participate in training activities using the Internet: approximately 51% of current users declared an interest in the possibility.

In Chart 7.1, we compare the propensity to use the Internet for training purposes within the sub-group of respondents who had already participated in training and within the sub-group of those who said they were interested in doing so. Both groups of adults displayed a strong propensity. In the first sub-group the percentage was 57% (compared with 40% of people who were not interested) and in the second 61% (compared with 36% not interested). A far larger number of people were interested in Internet-based training in the younger age groups, ranging from a peak of 56% among 25 to 34 year-old users and 49% among 35 to 54 year-olds to a low of 37% among 55 to 64 year-olds and with very few interested after 64.

The Internet has not yet become a widespread communication tool but may soon develop into a means of tailor-made learning<sup>28</sup>.

28 In the latest *Rapporto Censis 2002* the comparison between the Censis survey for 2000 and for 2002 regarding "Goods that Italians plan to buy over the next six months" lists among the top places the purchase of a personal computer (up from 8.9% to 10.9%), a satellite dish or cable connection (from 6.6% to 8.6%), subscription to an Internet provider (from 5.4% to 8.4%), and subscription to a pay-TV channel (from 4.1% to 6%). As we can see the trend is

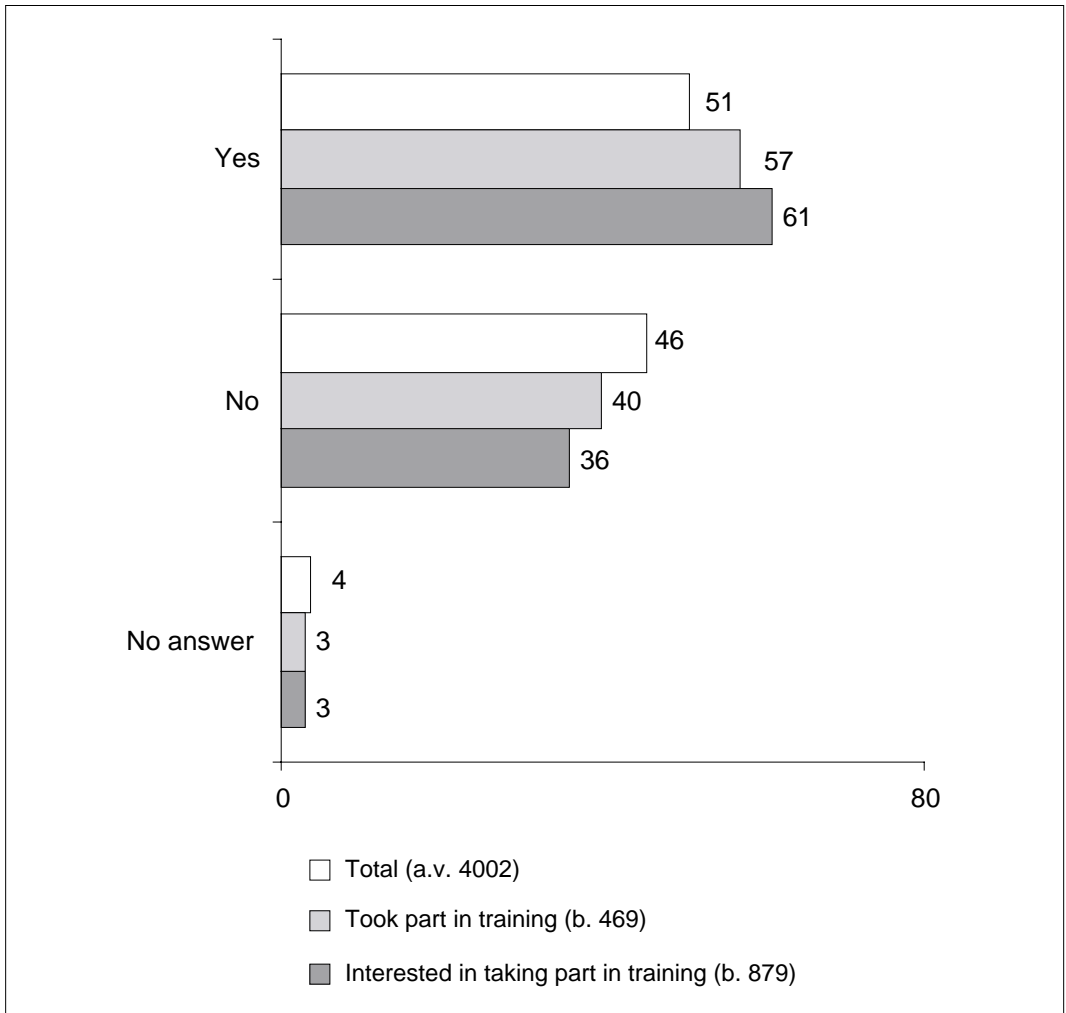
The spread of ICTs influences and conditions teaching and learning methods. By tradition, institutional school learning is textually and sequentially symbolic. Non-formal learning and learning as part of daily life involve a continuous exchange of stimuli and experiences that individuals are motivated to structure according to their own needs.

As the interactive aspect of ICTs develops it can contribute to reproduce this new cognitive model based on learner research and exploration, if, of course, it is channelled within carefully designed training and curricula.

---

for communication and transmission services to increase, in particular the Internet. Moreover, still comparing the two surveys for 2000 and 2002, use of the Internet at home has increased from 8.7% in 2000 to 14.3% in 2002, while there is a parallel decrease in the sub-group of people not using it, from 78.1% in 2000 to 73.9%, just over 4 percentage points, all people joining the world of surfers.

Chart 7.1: Propensity to Participate in Training Using the Internet (%)



Source: Isfol-DOXA 2002 survey.

We can deduce from this how important it is for designers, co-ordinators and teachers involved in training actions to become familiar with these different pedagogical methods so that they can fulfil the training needs of individual learners.

Use of the Internet and the diffusion of media through ICTs (on supports such as CD-ROMs, films or Websites) has fuelled the notion of e-learning. CEDEFOP suggests the following definition:

*learning with the aid of Information and Communication Technologies. E-learning is not therefore just digital literacy (acquisition of technological skills) but may include multiple formats and hybrid methodologies, notably the use of software, the Internet, CD-ROMs, on-line learning and any other electronic or interactive medium<sup>29</sup>.*

E-learning, therefore, is a learning context available to adults, either to use for self-teaching in pursuit of personal training aims, even informally on a home computer, or as active participants in intentional learning processes agreed with a teacher or provider and in which tutoring occupies a central role. E-learning resurrects the interactive nature of classroom training, creating learning communities and communities co-operating to build knowledge and skills (networks of individuals, professional communities, local communities). These are some of the reasons why we must close the digital divide, not only in terms of digital literacy but also of the necessary technical and specialist skills, to prevent future exclusion from more advanced forms of knowledge.

The European Union is aware of this danger and encourages the Member States to invest in technology, to finance programmes for promoting digital literacy and a technology culture, and to disseminate e-learning. The Programme E-Europe 2000 is a concrete example of this<sup>30</sup>.

---

29 CEDEFOP, *E-learning and training in Europe. A survey into the use of e-learning in training and professional development in the European Union*, Luxembourg, 2001 [www.cedefop.eu.int](http://www.cedefop.eu.int).

30 The E-Europe initiative aims to disseminate numeracy and ICT culture, especially among schools, teachers and students. The European programmes "Adapt Bis" and "Leonardo" have helped to spread and support ICT culture, as regards both developing distance learning and building ICT networks. For further details see the Communication of the European Commission of 24 May 2000 *E-learning. Designing tomorrow's education*, COM (2000) 318 final.

## 8 • KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

In this chapter we describe our findings regarding knowledge and information about training activities available to the adults interviewed and the issue of guidance to assist with decisions relating to training.

More than half the sample (62% of the respondents) had suggestions to make regarding the sources of information that can be used to foster participation in leisure-time training. The number of interviewees who were unable to make any suggestions in regard increased with age, from 31% of 25 to 34 year-olds to 55% of 65 to 70 year-olds.

Some 20% offered general indications while the other interviewees suggested:

- Mailing information and documentation to home addresses (10%);
- Using posters and external advertising in general (5%);
- Distributing hand-outs/leafleting (3%);
- Organising information areas, such as stands, kiosks, information offices (3%);
- Organising financial incentives to encourage participation in activities in the form of free or cut-price courses (4%);
- Organising meetings, discussions and surveys to obtain information about citizens' expectations (3%);
- Using radio and local TV stations (2%);
- Promoting specific information campaigns for older and/or young people (3%).

We tried to assess the extent of knowledge about local training initiatives by asking the interviewees if they knew what activities were organised in their municipality or borough. Less than half the respondents (44%) were able to name the public or private organisations that provided training for adults. The ones they indicated most often were the Municipalities (18%), school establishments (16%), cultural associations (12%), professional associations (9%), in-company training centres (5%), parish councils and other religious organisations (5%), and public libraries (3%).

In particular, the findings indicated that as age increased so does the number of interviewees who believe there are no public or private organisations providing adult education in the area where they live. The opinion that no such organisations exist was expressed much more often in the South (40% compared with 24% in the North and 32% in Municipalities with fewer than 30,000 inhabitants). The difference may be partly due to the fact that older people are less socially integrated or that the local public authorities are less committed to action.

Nearly two thirds (64%) of the interviewees who were asked where they would rather obtain information about training activities gave a list of possible sources of information (see Table 8.1). The sources most often cited were the local public bodies, i.e., Regional, Provincial or Municipal Authorities (27%), public training and guidance centres (7%), cultural associations (5%), professional associations (4%), private training centres (4%) and other local information points (3%), as well as information available on the Internet (11%), the experience and advice

of friends and colleagues (4%), newsstands for purchases of newspapers and magazines (3%) and libraries for consulting books on subjects of interest (2%).

The interviewees were also asked if they had ever received leaflets or brochures at home containing information on the activities promoted by their own Municipal or Provincial Authorities. One third of the respondents (33%) recalled having received in the mail information about the activities of their own or neighbouring local authorities. Among them 28% remembered receiving something from the Municipal (22%), Provincial (4%) or Regional Authorities (2%), 9% information from cultural associations (5%) or professional associations (4%) and 8% letters or leaflets from school establishments (5%) or VT centres (3%). Very few people recalled any other sources of information about the activities of these organisations.

Another aspect we examined was how the interviewees reached the decision to take part in a particular training activity. Almost all those interested in participating in training activities had decided by themselves to attend the course (73%) or on the advice of family, relations and friends (19%). In the North people were more likely to decide on their own than in the other areas of the country, just as, vice versa, in the South friends, colleagues and relations made a greater contribution to decisions.

Very few of the interviewees remembered information provided by newspapers or other sources (1%) or the active role played by course organisers, professional and trade associations (5% overall). As the age of the interviewees increased so did the proportion of respondents who declared they had never received any information about training activities in their city promoted by the Municipal or Provincial Authorities.

## **Part II**

- **THE SUPPLY  
OF LIFELONG LEARNING  
IN ITALY**





## 1 • THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The objective of the research study is to map the supply of education and training throughout the country as it stands today in order to analyse a system of provision that is still highly varied and fragmented and covers an extremely broad universe, many areas of which are still unexplored and whose confines are not yet fully drawn.

The supply of education and training in Italy is very varied. Some areas and actors are more visible than others, eliciting institutional attention (like the Permanent Territorial Centres) or with a history of well-established training supply (like the *Università popolari* people's and senior citizens' universities). In other sectors there is little information, as with voluntary work and non-profit organisations in general, or it is incomplete (for instance, the evening classes held in State technical and vocational schools).

The research study is therefore designed to provide a preliminary in-depth reconstruction of the sector of lifelong learning in Italy by acknowledging the supply that is currently available within the formal and non-formal systems, with particular focus on that addressing the category of weak individuals. We take account not only of recent data on educational attainment of the workforce, which indicate an urgent need to strengthen and improve basic skills (since half the employed population consists of workers without any educational qualification, only a primary school certificate or at most having completed compulsory education), but also of the phenomenon of return illiteracy, or rather "literacy risk" predominantly affecting the weaker segments of the population.

While the survey does not intend to produce a real census of training providers and typologies of supply, it does aim to provide a significant and representative overview, at national level, of the supply of lifelong learning, among other with the objective of supporting the integrated programming of activities throughout the country.

One of the aims of the research study, which develops the priority area for action set by the Unified Conference of State, Regions and Local Authorities of 2 March 2000, is to disseminate information in order to foster synergy between school system, vocational training system and non-formal adult education (civic networks, cultural associations, people's and senior citizens' universities and so forth) so that citizens can fully develop their skills.

Finally, the survey provides a significant and representative overview of the various types of training providers and their quantitative and qualitative characteristics as regards geographical coverage and purpose of the agencies identified, target groups, types of service provided, and volume of lifelong learning activities. In fact the study surveyed nearly 1,300 facilities and more than 17,000 courses disbursed in 2001-2002 - courses to obtain educational qualifications, literacy courses, pre-specialisation courses, ESF education and training courses - involving a total of about 355,000 learners.

This picture also makes it possible to implement effectively the policies adopted at European and national level and already mentioned in the introduction to the report.

## 2 • THE FIELD OF RESEARCH STUDY

Because of the difficulty of separating segments of training designed for specific learners it was decided to focus the field survey on the different types of training providers rather than on the learner categories. The current trend in both the formal and non-formal systems, in fact, is to put together a diversified supply that is not specific to any learner target. We also took into account the fact that a same provider might effectively offer courses for different types of learners.

In addition to this, a number of factors made it impossible to limit the population surveyed at the outset and therefore prompted us to find “alternative” criteria to restrict the field of research. Some of the main factors include:

- 1 The enormous diversity of providers involved and the different numbers of them;
- 2 The precarious nature of some providers in the long term. Often, especially in the non-formal system, they appear extremely volatile from one year to the next as they enter and leave the training market according to the financial assistance they receive, which is often unreliable;
- 3 The unreliability of the facilities used to disburse training. They may belong to the organisations directly in charge of the training supply or “host facilities” that merely lend premises to other bodies;
- 4 The danger of overestimating the magnitude of the phenomenon. This is partly due to the growing popularity of integrated projects involving a number of partners and partly because a same activity can be carried on in several facilities (for example, the people’s and senior citizens’ universities often run the same course in a number of separate facilities);
- 5 The difficulty of accurately defining the unit of analysis used in the research study. In addition to structured courses, whether long or short, seminar-style activities are very often offered or training based on “active” teaching methods and other educational activities more generically definable as “lifelong education”, such as guided tours, cultural tourism, talks by experts, conferences.

Consequently, when building the survey sample the broad panorama of education and training activities forced us to employ several coherent methods to identify them and circumscribe the different types of supply. This involved extensive desk research, interviews with representative associations, searches of institutional and non-institutional databases, and the collection of specific data from national and local organisations.

Because so many channels and methods were employed to collect the data and because the field of research is so broad and fluid one important point must be made. The list of all the providers we identified, containing the final sample of 5,305 organisations that answered the survey, should not be regarded as an exhaustive index of all the actors that “effectively” provide education and training in Italy. However, it is certainly indicative of the main organisations that are regarded as “potential providers” of training activities.

The resulting list allowed us to conduct the survey with the assistance of the following providers by analysing the activities they offer:

- *Università popolari* people's, senior citizens' and leisure-time universities;
- Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education and the school establishments holding evening classes;
- Voluntary organisations, social co-operatives and recreation and cultural associations;
- Women's associations;
- Local libraries of a sample of 426 Municipalities and the civic schools they have set up;
- National parks and environmental education centres;
- Organisations and agencies running projects that participate in regional and provincial calls for proposals under the ESF "lifelong learning" measure.

Basically, we decided to be "over-generous", knowing that some of the organisations included in the list would have to be excluded later because they fell outside the scope of the survey.

This was particularly evident in the case of non-formal training supply. In fact, while it was obvious from the outset that schools running evening classes and Permanent Territorial Centres played an active role in the field of adult education, the situation with regard to the non-profit sector, and its many manifestations, appeared much more complex.

Apart from the people's and senior citizens' universities, whose main objective and statutory purpose is precisely to provide education and training for citizens, most of the other actors cited earlier as belonging to the non-profit sector are not immediately recognisable as key figures in the lifelong learning system. Many do not provide training activities in the form of courses but limit their activities to various educational, or more generically "cultural" initiatives.

Moreover, in the non-profit sector even the more structured activities in terms of course format although normally directed at the citizenry in general, regardless of age, employment status or educational level, have very specific operational objectives. The typical participant in the courses provided by voluntary organisations is a "voluntary worker", who is equipped with the know-how needed to perform social and welfare tasks. In some cases that know-how merely means a "lesson in voluntary work" but in others it can involve real "specialised" training in that field. One need only consider all the courses run to train volunteers to perform specific tasks in their assigned field of action, such as caring for the elderly, community assistant, caring for the disabled, and so forth, or the training given to people in administrative positions, who have to acquire the administrative, organisational and managerial skills they need to set up and run a voluntary organisation.

Problems of this kind were also encountered among other types of training providers, such as libraries and national and regional parks. The majority of libraries do not regard themselves as representative of the lifelong learning system because they believe their field of action is broadly "cultural" rather than education- or training-related.

This is clear evidence of how the country still lags behind in promoting and building a supply of lifelong learning that embraces not just formal activities but equally non-formal educational activities.

Regarding the non-formal system in particular, we decided that an in-depth survey of this sector was necessary, partly in response to the suggestions gathered during interviews with a number of front-line experts. In fact, despite the importance of non-formal training experiences there is relatively little detailed information about the number of activities, target learners or sources of funding available.

## 3 • THE METHODOLOGICAL STRUCTURE

### 3.1 • THE QUESTIONNAIRE

On the basis of a careful analysis of the characteristics of the population surveyed it was decided to use a questionnaire as the only method of survey that would ensure the greatest coherence. In fact, the very numbers involved, their diversity and, above all, the difficulty of identifying them as participants to all effects in the phenomenon studied, as well as the actual nature of the mapping, indicated that a structured questionnaire would be the most appropriate instrument for collecting data.

Owing to this extremely articulated methodology, the problem arose of whether to build a number of different questionnaires, one for each type of training provider, or to use only one survey to the population. If we had adopted the first solution we would have been able to gather highly detailed information on the various types of provider, but at the cost of being unable to compare the data effectively. We therefore opted for a greater standardisation of data, using a single questionnaire divided into three sections:

- The first section was for identification purposes and designed to gather general information on the organisation or provider contacted: name, purpose, address, name and address of contact person for clarifications if necessary, type of organisation, main activities, etc.;
- The second section served to gather information on the training activities provided directly in the facilities of the organisation, association or institution contacted: number of activities provided, number of learners participating in each type, sources of financing, partners if any, etc.;
- The third section covered the training activities hosted by the organisation in its facilities but disbursed by other providers.

A number of control items were inserted in the questionnaire to divide the participants according to our requirements. This helped us not only to monitor the more structured training initiatives, whereby participants learn specific contents designed to improve their civic, cultural and vocational skills, but also the less structured and continuous initiatives that are nevertheless part of the broader sphere of supply of education and training. We were thus able to take into consideration such actors as cultural bodies (libraries, theatres, museums), which, while not actually providing course-based activities, do offer people opportunities for cultural development and study with a broad range of contents and participants and varying duration.

Once developed the questionnaire was given a preliminary test-run. Because of the diverse nature of the actors involved in our national system of education and training supply that emerged when we defined the field of research, it seemed appropriate to choose organisations operating in different categories of training supply for our testing. This operation allowed us to check the validity of the questionnaire and pinpoint any possible shortcomings with respect to the different categories of provider.

In parallel with the construction of the questionnaire it proved essential to draw up a glossary of the terms used during the survey.

### **3.2 • THE OBSERVATION PHASE**

The actual observation stage consisted in despatching the survey instrument to the various categories of education and training provider. This was done by post, and the questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter and a set of instructions for filling in the form. The observation process was divided into three phases.

A total of 1,295 valid questionnaires, equal to 24.4%, were returned out of the representative sample chosen for the survey, which consisted of 5,305 training providers.

Apart from this information on the number of completed questionnaires, it is worth mentioning that a few of those despatched, about 150 in all, were returned to the sender due to incorrect or change of address. Most of these were questionnaires sent to social and recreational clubs, voluntary organisations or branches of municipal libraries.

This fact confirms the peculiar nature of such organisations, many of which do not have a permanent address, being accommodated in makeshift facilities or providing training activities only on a temporary basis.

If we exclude from the total these 150 questionnaires returned to the sender and therefore not completed the percentage of replies rises to 25.1%.

All things considered, we believe we have achieved a significant and representative coverage of the supply of education and training in our country, not only in the formal sector but also from providers of non-formal activities.

One of the greatest merits of the survey is that it has allowed us to examine the characteristics of the training supply provided by the non-formal sector, whose educational centres represent almost 50% of those taking part in the survey. This is certainly a good starting point for reflecting on the synergetic relationship between the various segments of adult education supply on the basis of an understanding of areas less thoroughly explored by field studies to date.

## 4 • THE MAIN FINDINGS

### 4.1 • LOCAL TRAINING PROVIDERS

As we mentioned in the previous section, the number of organisations surveyed as part of the study, that is to say actors identified as potential providers of education and training activities that returned the completed questionnaire, totalled 1,295.

Table 4.1.1 gives an overall picture of the distribution of the questionnaires by typology of training provider and of those returned properly compiled.

A breakdown of this figure by provider shows a considerable disparity in the level of response and participation in the survey. Among educational organisations the highest percentage of questionnaires returned out of all those sent out was recorded for the Permanent Territorial Centres, which account for 52.7% of the total. Satisfactory levels of participation were also recorded for schools running evening classes.

A different situation emerges in the case of actors belonging to the non-profit sector or other providers with more broadly cultural objectives, such as libraries, for which the reply rate was around 20%.

The figure for “other” non-profit sector providers (58.8% of replies) might be overestimated because the diversity of sources used to build up the main list made it impossible to classify 879 actors potentially providing lifelong education, most of which anyway belong to the non-profit sector. In fact, when building up the list, several thematic databases produced the names of a number of actors potentially providing lifelong education and/or belonging to the non-profit sector that could not be assigned to a category at that stage. Only the organisations that completed the questionnaire have been put in categories and any classification of the remainder would be purely arbitrary.

Examining the geographical distribution of the 1,295 providers that answered the questionnaire (Table 4.1.2) it emerges that:

- 395 providers (equal to 30.6% of the total) are located in the South and Islands;
- 332 (or 25.7% of the total) in the North-East;
- 312 (24.2%) in the North-West;
- 251 (19.5%) in the Centre;
- 5 providers did not give any information on this point.

**Table 4.1.1 - Distribution of Questionnaires sent and Returned by Type of Provider (a.v. and %)**

Type of Provider	Questionnaires		% Replies
	Sent	Returned	
PTC and other training providers financed by the ESF	339	44	13.0
PTC	546	289	52.7
School establishments	663	238	35.9
Other education/training bodies	120	53	44.2
People's, senior citizens' and leisure-time universities	498	110	22.1
Voluntary organisations	1,257	236	18.8
Other non-profit sector	216	127	58.8
Libraries (a)	679	131	19.3
Other cultural infrastructure	n.d.	4	-
Regional public providers	106	22	20.8
National public providers	n.d.	3	
Provincial public providers	n.d.	4	
Municipal public providers	n.d.	10	
Not indicated	-	24	
Various categories (b)	879	-	
Total	5,305	1,295	24.4

(a) From a total sample of 426 Municipalities.

(b) When building up the list several thematic databases produced the names of a number of actors potentially providing lifelong education and/or belonging to the non-profit sector that could not be assigned a category at that stage. Only the organisations that completed the questionnaire have been put in categories and any classification of the remainder would be purely arbitrary.

Source: Isfol-Censis, 2002 survey.



**Table 4.1.2 - Distribution of Providers Participating in the Survey by Region (a.v. and %)**

Region	a.v.	%
Piedmont	98	7.6
Valle d'Aosta	2	0.2
Lombardy	171	13.3
Trentino Alto Adige	54	4.2
Veneto	84	6.5
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	52	4.0
Liguria	41	3.2
Emilia-Romagna	142	11.0
Tuscany	99	7.7
Umbria	22	1.7
Marches	35	2.7
Latium	95	7.4
Abruzzi	29	2.2
Molise	11	0.8
Campania	86	6.7
Abulia	71	5.5
Basilicata	23	1.8
Calabria	47	3.6
Sicily	95	7.3
Sardinia	33	2.6
<i>North-West</i>	<i>312</i>	<i>24.2</i>
<i>North-East</i>	<i>332</i>	<i>25.7</i>
<i>Centre</i>	<i>251</i>	<i>19.5</i>
<i>South and Islands</i>	<i>395</i>	<i>30.6</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,290</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Not indicated	5	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,295</b>	

Source: *Isfol-Censis 2002 survey.*

The data therefore indicate that actors operating in the lifelong learning sector in the northern Regions are more heavily represented (644 providers), despite some wide regional disparities. In fact, the number ranges from a maximum of 13.3% of the national total in Lombardy (followed by 11% in Emilia-Romagna) to a minimum of 0.2% in Valle D'Aosta.

In reality not all the actors who completed the questionnaire qualified themselves as providers of education or training. More specifically, 1,047 organisations, or 80.8% of the total, said they did engage in that type of activity, another 5.9% although defining themselves as training providers did not operate in the period considered (from 2001 to 2002), and finally the remaining 13.3% did not disburse education or training.

The last group does, however, include organisations that could potentially become points for the disbursement of training. We refer, for example, to the libraries that were contacted, many of which do not consider they provide lifelong education, not even in the broad sense, only a cultural service. In view of this we decided not to exclude them from the study of structural characteristics.

#### 4.1.1 • Categories of Providers

Many of the organisations taking part in the survey conduct their training activities from one or more centres, either permanent or temporary. To record the availability of training supply at local level, the unit of observation used to examine the characteristics of supply (in terms of courses, students and teachers) is the training centre. Information on category, purpose and fields of activity is only reported for the organisation contacted.

To distinguish them from the training centres, which are described later, the agencies that completed the questionnaire are generically defined as responding “agencies” or “providers”.

Some 79.7% of the agencies that responded have both administrative and operational functions; 11.3% consist only of training agencies and the remaining 9% of administrative offices that liaise between activities.

Of all the agencies contacted, at least 89.6% are permanent and 10.4% temporary.

As far as the specific nature of the organisation contacted is concerned, we identified four main categories, corresponding to formal as well as non-formal sectors of supply:

- 1 *Public and private training/education organisations*: this category includes Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education, technical and vocational schools holding evening classes, vocational training centres and organisations heading projects participating in regional and provincial calls for proposals under the European Social Fund's lifelong learning measure, and municipal education centres;
- 2 *Non-profit sector*: this is divided, in turn, into five separate sub-groups: people's, senior citizens' and leisure-time universities, voluntary organisations, recreation and cultural associations, social co-operatives and NGOs;
- 3 *Cultural infrastructure*: libraries, museums, theatres and so on;
- 4 *Other Public Administration departments*: national, regional, provincial and municipal providers.

Looking at the distribution of these providers according to the above classification we obtain a rough idea of the main types of providers operating in the formal and non-formal sectors.

Table 4.1.3 suggests that, as things stand, the “institutional” sector of education and training supply predominates with respect to the “non-formal” system represented by the non-profit sector and its various constituent parts. In fact, if we add the percentage of public and private education and training organisations (amounting to 48.8% of all the providers surveyed) to the percentage of cultural infrastructure (10.6%) and other facilities run by the Public Administration departments (3% of the total) we obtain an aggregate representing 62.4% of the total, compared with 37.1% of organisations belonging to the non-profit sector. Although the proportions of “institutional” and “non-institutional” may not be accurate because of the

difficulty of tracing the providers, their “impermanence” in the area and, as often mentioned, their reluctance to consider themselves part of a system of lifelong learning. In addition, it should not be forgotten that only a small proportion of Municipal Authorities were contacted for the survey.

**Table 4.1.3 - Distribution of Providers Surveyed<sup>(\*)</sup> by Typology (%)**

	%
<b>Public and private education/training organisations</b>	<b>48.8</b>
- Vocational training centres	3.1
- Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education	22.6
- Technical schools	10.3
- Vocational schools	4.0
- Other school establishments	4.4
- Municipal education providers	0.3
- Universities	0.3
- Other public and private education and training bodies	3.8
<b>Non-profit sector</b>	<b>37.1</b>
- People's, senior citizens' and leisure-time universities	8.6
- Voluntary organisations	18.6
- Recreation and cultural associations	6.0
- Co-operatives	0.9
- NGOs	0.5
- Other non-profit sector bodies	2.5
<b>Cultural infrastructure</b>	<b>10.6</b>
- Libraries	10.3
- Museums	0.1
- Other cultural infrastructure	0.2
<b>Other Public Administration departments</b>	<b>3.0</b>
- National	0.2
- Regional	1.7
- Provincial	0.3
- Municipal	0.8
<b>Other types of organisation</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Total respondents = 1,277 - not specified = 18	

*(\*) Surveyed indicates organisations that returned the completed questionnaire.*

*Source: Isfol-Censis 2002 survey.*

Both the first and the second group contain some of the most representative actors:

- On the one hand, the school system is strongly present in the formal sector, with the Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education in first place (22.6% of the total), followed by technical schools (10.3%) and vocational schools (4.0%), for an aggregate total of 36.9% of the agencies surveyed. In addition there is the percentage for the item "other school establishments" (4.4%), most of which are higher education institutes (which embrace several streams) not falling within the above categories;
- On the other, in the non-profit sector we find a majority of voluntary organisations (accounting for 18.6% of the total), followed by the people's and senior citizens' universities (8.6%) and recreation and cultural associations (6.0%).

The situation outlined allows us to make a preliminary consideration.

First, under recent legislation the main providers in the school system, the PTCs (and to a lesser extent schools running evening classes) are called upon to act as cornerstones of the national system of lifelong education. They therefore receive special funding allowing them to operate as providers of courses aimed at adult members of the population. The other actors forming part of the system (such as the people's and senior citizens' universities), which do not occupy an institutionalised role on the national scene and often rely of forms of self-financing by their members, encounter greater organisational and financial difficulties, with repercussions on the number and structure of the training activities they provide.

Moreover, it should not be forgotten that only part of the actors belonging to the non-profit sector included in the survey actually say they provide course-based education and training activities. Consequently, the percentage of people's and senior citizens' universities carries a greater weight in the general panorama of training supply surveyed because they normally offer courses, not only more generically educational and cultural initiatives, as do other providers belonging to the voluntary sphere or recreation and cultural associations.

Separate consideration should be given to the cultural infrastructure, notably municipal libraries, which represent around 10% of all the providers completing the questionnaire. When assessing what proportion of the overall supply they represent, two elements must be taken into account: first, that not the whole universe but only a sample of 426 Municipalities was surveyed; and second that many cultural bodies do not provide specifically course-based activities but promote a broader cultural product, often designed to encourage reading and literary appreciation. This last factor is useful for re-assessing the role of the people's and senior citizens' universities in the national panorama and sets them immediately after PTCs and schools as central players in the provision of lifelong learning in Italy.

This analysis is especially interesting when extended to the various geographical areas (Tables 4.1.4, 4.1.5 and 4.1.6).

The education and training organisations (624 providers) are distributed as follows:

- 20.2% in the North-West;
- 26.0% in the North-East;
- 17.1% in the Centre;
- 36.7% in the South and Islands.

In the non-profit sector (473 providers):

- 27.5% answering the questionnaire are located in the North-West;
- 22.9% in the North-East;
- 22.1% in the Centre;
- 27.5% in the South and Islands.

Finally, cultural infrastructure and other facilities linked to the Public Administration (174) are distributed as follows:

- 31.0% in the North-West;
- 28.7% in the North-East;
- 19.0% in the Centre;
- 21.3% in the South and Islands<sup>31</sup>.

---

<sup>31</sup> No information on the geographical location and/or category of organisation is available for the remaining 24 providers.

Table 4.1.4 - Distribution of the Different Categories of Education/Training Organisations Surveyed(\*) by Geographical Area (%)

Region	Public and Private Education/Training Organisations										Total Surveyed
	Vocational Training Centres	Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education	Technical Schools	Vocational Schools	Other School Establishments	Municipal Education Facilities	Universities	Other Public and Private Education/Training Organisations	All Education/Training Organisations		
North-West	15.0	18.1	24.6	26.5	23.2	25.0	0.0	16.3	20.2	24.2	
North-East	62.5	17.4	22.3	38.8	28.6	50.0	25.0	38.8	26.0	25.7	
Centre	12.5	16.7	20.8	18.4	14.3	25.0	25.0	14.3	17.1	19.5	
South and Islands	10.0	47.8	32.3	16.3	33.9	0.0	50.0	30.6	36.7	30.6	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

(\*) Surveyed indicates organisations that returned the completed questionnaire.

Source: Ifsol-Censis 2002 survey.

Table 4.1.5 - Distribution of Non-Profit Sector Organisations Surveyed(\*) by Geographical Area (%)

Region	Non-Profit Sector										Total Surveyed
	People's, senior citizens' and leisure-time universities	Voluntary Organisations	Recreation and Cultural Associations	Co-operatives	NGOs	Other Non-Profit Organisations	All of Non-Profit Organisations				
North-West	29.4	30.1	21.1	0.0	14.3	31.3	27.5	24.2			
North-East	17.4	23.3	23.6	58.3	14.3	25.0	22.9	25.7			
Centre	25.7	19.1	30.3	8.3	57.1	9.4	22.1	19.5			
South and Islands	27.5	27.5	25.0	33.4	14.3	34.4	27.5	30.6			
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

(\*) Surveyed refers to organisations that returned the completed questionnaire.

Source: Ifsol-Censis 2002 survey.

Table 4.1.6 - Distribution of Cultural Infrastructure and Other Public Administration Departments Surveyed(\*) by Geographical Area (%)

Region	Cultural Infrastructure			Other Public Administration Departments				All cultural and P.A. Dpts.	Total Surveyed	
	Libraries	Museums	Other Cultural Facilities	Total	National	Regional	Provincial			Municipal
North-West	32.2	100.0	-	31.9	-	31.8	50.0	20.0	28.2	24.2
North-East	28.2	-	33.3	28.1	33.3	27.3	50.0	30.0	30.8	25.7
Centre	19.8	-	-	19.3	33.3	27.3	-	40.0	28.2	19.5
South and Islands	19.8	-	66.7	20.7	33.3	13.6	-	10.0	12.8	30.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(\*) Surveyed refers to the organisations that returned the completed questionnaire.

Source: Isfol-Censis 2002 survey.

#### 4.1.2 • Main Activities of Providers

The providers contacted were asked to describe their main activity. As a result the various respondents identified themselves by their official social and/or cultural objective.

Table 4.1.7 shows that just over half the respondents (713 providers, equal to 55.1%) state their predominant field of activity is education and training. Of course, a large proportion of them are in fact education and training schools.

Second in order of importance are cultural activities, which are the declared purpose of 19.3%. A large part of this percentage consists of services provided by so-called "cultural facilities" (libraries, theatres and museums), which describe themselves not so much as operating in the education and training sector as in the broader cultural sphere. In fact, many of them say they are mainly involved in promoting cultural activities, reading, debates, shows, exhibitions and performances, relegating course-type activities to a secondary role. The same is true of many of the recreation and culture associations that completed the questionnaire.

In the voluntary and social sector, social welfare activities predominate (representing 9.2% of the total), followed by "legal rights and safeguards" (2.5%) and "health care" (1.9%). Environmental issues (3.5% of the total) are covered by the activities organised by national and regional park authorities and by environmental education centres.

The percentage answering "other" (4.3%) should in most cases be regarded as the sum of some of the other items. It was the answer given by providers that did not want to mark just one possibility because they believe they fall into several categories of activity (for example, social welfare and legal rights, or culture and education and training, and so on). Finally, 28 providers (2.2%) did not give any answer at all.

Of the 1,047 organisations declaring they had disbursed lifelong education activities in the period considered, which represent 80.8% of all the respondents to the questionnaire, 64.9% gave education and training as their main activity, 17.5% cultural services, and 6.8% social welfare activities.



**Table 4.1.7 - Distribution of the Providers Surveyed<sup>(\*)</sup> by Main Activity of the Organisation (a.v. and %)**

	a.v.	%
Education and training	713	55.1
Cultural activities	250	19.3
Social welfare	119	9.2
Environment	45	3.5
Legal rights and safeguards	33	2.5
Health	24	1.9
Sports and recreation	23	1.8
Civil defence	4	0.3
Other	56	4.3
Not stated	28	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,295</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(\*) Surveyed refers to the providers that returned the completed questionnaire.

Source: Isfol-Censis 2002 survey.

On the other hand, the 76 providers that declared they were not involved in lifelong learning activities in 2001 (or the 2001-2002 academic year) include 32.9% of all the respondents completing the questionnaire that gave "education and training" as their main activity; 34.2% are providers of "cultural"-type services and 15.1% are bodies that identify their main sphere of activity as the "social welfare" sector.

Finally, of the 172 providers that said they did not provide lifelong learning activities and were therefore outside the present field of research, 27.2% gave cultural activities as their main activity, 22.9% social welfare and only 13.3% cited education and learning.

#### **4.1.3 • A Long Tradition of Education and Training**

The recent process of reorganising Italy's education system has brought to light structural shortcomings on the supply side. The providers of education and training activities nevertheless appear to have a long tradition and vast experience in the sector that have not been properly valued until recently, at least as regards certain fields of action.

It appears that 44.9% of providers have been involved in the education/training sector for more than 10 years, 19.6% between 5 and 10 years, and 27.2% from 2 to 5 years.

Summing the first of these figures, which represents the more "established" segment of the system, and the figure for the next segment it emerges that at least 64.4% of providers say they have been operating in the lifelong education sector for more than 5 years. This means that these providers are firmly established in their area and boast a sound tradition.

If we break down this figure according to the different categories of provider the situation appears fairly varied, however:

- Almost half the PTCs (49.8%) began operating between 2 and 5 years earlier but at least 31.6% have been providing education/training for more than 10 years;
- Approximately 51.8% of the people's and senior citizens' universities say they have been operating in the sector for more than 10 years and 25.9% for 5 to 10 years;
- Libraries are among the services with the longest tradition in the sector, with 65.5% providing lifelong education activities for more than 10 years.

## **4.2 • TRAINING CENTRES AND PROGRAMMES**

The nature and organisation of the providers that say they operate in the lifelong education sector seem to determine their geographical structure. Most of those that completed the questionnaire have only one training centre, which in most cases, as we have seen, is the same as their administrative headquarters. Other providers have several centres at their disposal, including accommodation in school buildings or the premises of larger associations. For 1,123 providers reporting they provide lifelong education activities, the number of centres from which they operate totals 1,774.

The geographical distribution of the centres (Table 4.2.1) basically conforms to the distribution of the central offices and shows a concentration of centres in the Latium Region (12.1%), in Lombardy (11.7%), in Emilia-Romagna (11.3%) and in Sicily (7.5%).

As Table 4.2.2 shows, 35.8% of the centres are in premises used by the Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education.

Table 4.2.1 - Distribution of Training Agencies<sup>(\*)</sup> by Region (%)

Region	%
Piedmont	6.2
Valle d'Aosta	0.2
Lombardy	11.7
Trentino Alto Adige	3.1
Veneto	6.7
Friuli Venezia Giulia	2.9
Liguria	3.4
Emilia-Romagna	11.3
Tuscany	6.8
Umbria	1.6
Marches	2.6
Latium	12.1
Abruzzi	3.6
Molise	1.0
Campania	6.3
Apulia	5.3
Basilicata	2.3
Calabria	2.3
Sicily	7.5
Sardinia	2.5
<i>North-West</i>	<i>21.4</i>
<i>North-East</i>	<i>23.9</i>
<i>Centre</i>	<i>23.1</i>
<i>South and Islands</i>	<i>31.6</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(\*) The term "agencies" denotes the premises where the training service is effectively disbursed by the 1,123 providers reporting that they disburse education and training activities.

Source: Isfol-Censis 2002 survey.

**Table 4.2.2 - Distribution of Training Agencies (\*) by Type of Central Organisation (%)**

Region	%
Vocational training centres	2.5
Permanent territorial centres for adult education	35.8
Technical schools	7.6
Vocational schools	3.1
Other school establishments	3.3
Municipal education providers	0.2
Universities	0.3
Other public and private education/training bodies	3.0
People's, senior citizens' and leisure-time universities	12.4
Voluntary organisations	13.7
Recreation and cultural associations	4.3
Co-operatives	1.0
NGOs	0.4
Other non-profit sector	2.0
Libraries	7.6
Museums	0.1
Other cultural infrastructure	0.3
National providers	0.2
Regional providers	1.3
Provincial providers	0.2
Municipal providers	0.6
Other types of organisation	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(\*) The term "agencies" denotes the premises where the training service is effectively disbursed by the 1,123 providers reporting that they disburse education and training activities.

Source: Isfol-Censis 2002 survey.

Not all of the centres provide course-type education, or at least structured and restricted entry series of seminars, as part of their lifelong education activities<sup>32</sup>.

Specifically, 85.1% of the centres conduct classes while 33.2% organise "talks by experts". These are followed by "guided tours" (23.8%), "other teaching and cultural initiatives" (20.1%), seminars (17.3%) and "conferences" (15.6%).

The distance learning method is employed by barely 3.5% of centres to disburse training.

If we break down the figure according to the type of agency, we can analyse more in depth the characteristics of the various segments of supply.

At school and training establishments, classes certainly constitute the main type of education and training supply provided. In particular:

<sup>32</sup> The respondents were asked to refer either to the 2001-2002 academic year or, if not possible, to the 2001 calendar year. Some 85.1% of the agencies referred to the 2001-2002 academic year. Consequently, the information gathered is sufficiently homogeneous to enable an aggregate analysis.

- Almost all the technical schools (99.2%) and vocational schools (98%) offer lifelong education classes. The majority are schools that organise evening classes and/or courses leading to the ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence). A large percentage of these providers nevertheless offer a broader range of activities. For example, 35.3% of vocational schools also included “talks by experts” in their 2001-2002 lifelong education programme. Moreover, the percentage of schools combining traditional courses with distance courses is also above average, amounting to 4.2% of technical schools and 3.9% of vocational schools;
- Almost all PTCs (98.8%) hold classes, although an extremely small percentage did not run this type of activity in the year in question for a variety of reasons (recent institution, reorganisation, and so on). Again the aggregate supply of training tends to be diversified: 23.6% of PTCs also organise talks by experts, 15.2% and 12.6% combine traditional teaching activities with, respectively, guided tours and other initiatives (theatre outings, exhibitions, and so on). A minority of PTCs are also active in the field of distance learning (2.9%).
- The vocational training centres that are part of the lifelong learning system also diversify their supply, although obviously classes predominate (in 94.1% of cases), and make wider use of distance learning (8.8%).

In the case of the non-profit sector and, more generally, of non-formal training supply, the situation is more diverse:

- The aggregate “people’s, senior citizens’ and leisure-time universities”<sup>33</sup>, includes a large percentage of centres providing course-based activities (89.3%) but nonetheless tends to make greater use of alternative teaching methods, such as “talks by experts” (33.7%) and, above all, guided tours (39.8%);
- Within associations, whether voluntary or co-operative organisations, education and training often assume forms other than “traditional” course-type activity. Here again, the preferred method seems to be “talks by experts”, which is the most widespread activity of recreation and cultural associations, alongside traditional course-based activities (54.9%).

In most cases the non-availability of course-based training was a deliberate choice: 51.4% of providers reporting that they do not hold classes, distance courses or even structured seminar-type courses say the reason is that “the centre does not normally provide courses”.

Lack of funds is also a not inconsiderable reason since 25.4% of providers declare that financial considerations play a decisive role. Next come organisational, logistic and staff problems (22.0%) and last a lack of specific demand, with courses being organised only on request (10.4%)<sup>34</sup>.

---

33 In this category we have included some very diverse centres because, within the vast world of associations, they are in fact providers with expressly educational objectives.

34 Other reasons (16.2%) include the fact that the centre was only recently set up, the lack of any call for proposals for such activities, and the difficulty of locating prospective learners.

#### 4.2.1 • Education and Training Courses

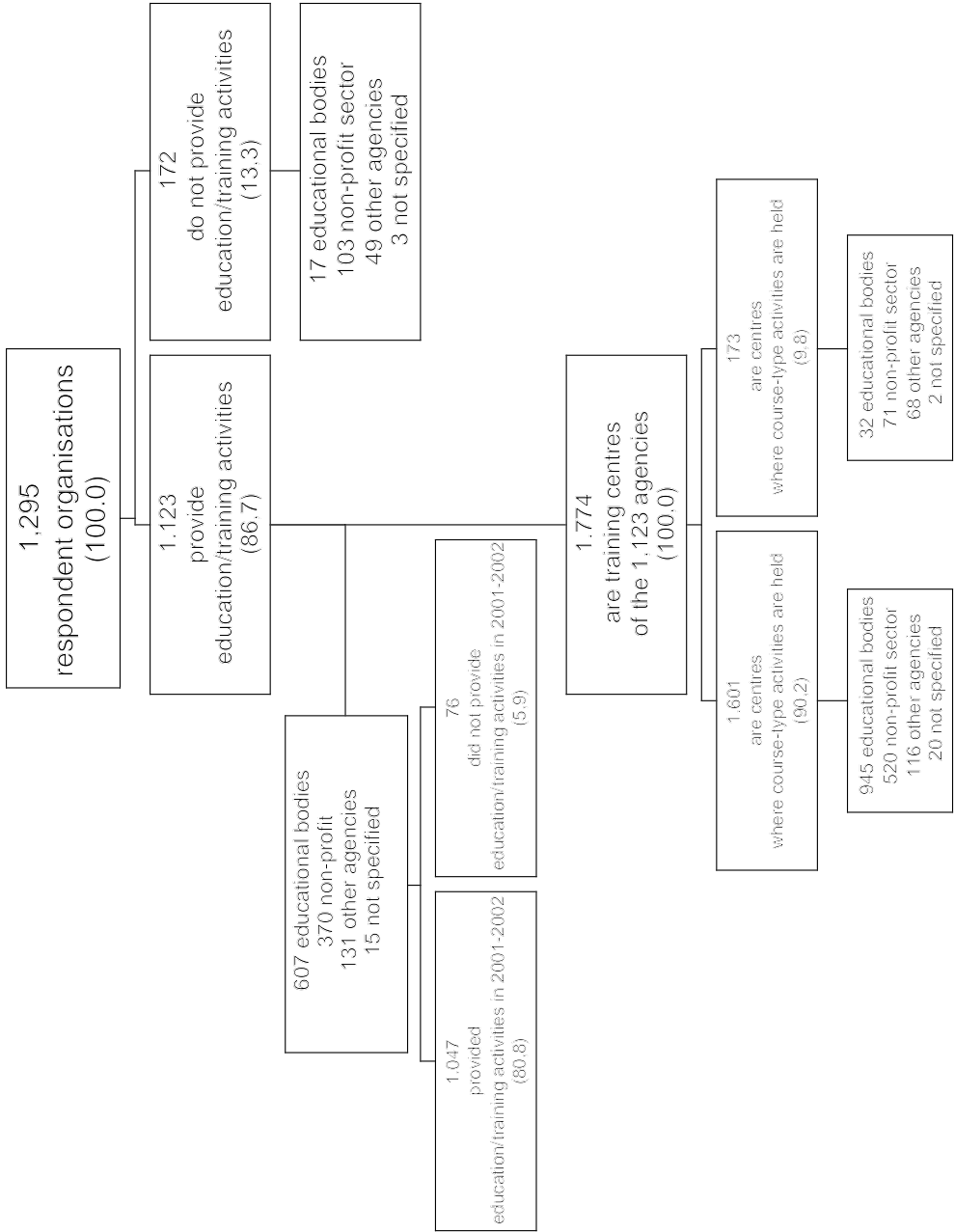
Overall, the survey examined 17,168 courses, in which a total of 354,419 people were enrolled. Excluding agencies reporting that they did not provide course-type activities and which, according to the chart describing the providers and agencies surveyed (Table 4.2.1), total 173, the courses are divided among 1,601 agencies, holding an average of 10.7 courses each. This finding must be viewed with care because obviously it does not refer to the whole panorama of education and training (considering that in PTCs alone, in 2001-2002, the number of learners was more than 380,000). It should be analysed bearing in mind that:

- Overall, the percentage of questionnaires completed out of all those sent averaged 24.4%;
- 289 PTCs out of 546 answered, equal to 52.7%;
- Some types of provider (for example, libraries and Municipal Administrative Authorities) were contacted only as part of a sample based on municipal stratification;
- Not all the respondents provided all the information requested, particularly as far as concerns the number of people enrolled<sup>35</sup>.

---

<sup>35</sup> The aggregate number of people enrolled in education and training activities in the reference year is estimated at 570,000.

**Table 4.2.1 - Diagram of Education and Training Providers (a.v. and % in brackets)**



It is therefore far more significant and representative of the state of the art of education and training supply to analyse the weight of the different systems and typologies and their usability to learners.

In line with recent policies in the field of lifelong learning, a substantial proportion of supply consists of courses to acquire and/or improve foreign language skills (in fact, foreign languages account for 21.8% of the total) and courses in digital literacy (24,6%), in which respectively 21.3% and 23.3% of learners are enrolled.

Regarding courses for obtaining educational qualifications, a large proportion (8,1%) still consists today of courses leading to a primary or lower secondary school certificate, most of which are attended by Italian citizens (67.4%). Considering that, given their age, the people enrolled in these courses must have attended school at least until the age of 14, it is evident that we are faced with a population that had a difficult relationship with school, having completed compulsory education without obtaining the associated qualification.

Pre-specialisation courses account for 7.1% of the activities provided in the various centres, while a clearly larger proportion (20.4%, occupying 20.4% of learners) is made up of more broadly educational courses, although they may have indirect vocational contents. Among the courses run during the period of study, there was a good percentage giving instruction in the use of the new European currency: 109 courses were disbursed to a total of 3,750 learners.

Turning to the characteristics of learners, it must be pointed out first that not all the respondents were able to provide all the information requested regarding age, gender, nationality, educational qualifications and employment status of their students. The reason most often given was that since the courses were not compulsory it did not seem right to add administrative duties to the work of centres that frequently rely on the individual contribution of their members. Even among more structured centres (such as PTCs and senior citizens' universities), the information was very often available only in aggregate form, without distinction between the different types of course, so that the data proved useless because of the lack of homogeneity<sup>36</sup>.

Nonetheless, the information available gives a sufficiently reliable picture of the characteristics of learners and the various typologies of supply.

Obviously, the majority of people participating in the different types of course activity are Italian. The number of foreigners enrolled becomes significant not only in Italian literacy courses, where they represent 95.4%, but also in courses leading to basic educational qualifications, such as compulsory education (32.6%). Literacy courses are also very popular among foreigners (24.4%) as well as some courses containing vocational elements, such as minor arts (15.4%) and basic guidance (27.4%).

---

<sup>36</sup> In particular, data were provided on nationality for 70.3% of total learners; on age group for 75.4%; for 66.2% of enrolment a breakdown by educational attainment was available and for 64.7% according to employment status.



Of particular significance is the presence of 16.9% of foreign nationals attending courses in citizenship and legal duties as well as the percentages of foreigners enrolled in musical education (13.4%), theatre production (22,8%) and movement and sport (11.4%).

From the point of view of age groups, a relative majority of learners (41.3%) are between 26 and 40 years old in almost all typologies of supply. The oldest age category, the over 65s, are more numerous mainly in courses of a general cultural nature (23.5%) and anyway never account for more than 10.0% of almost any "lifelong learning" course in the broad sense.

A greater diversity exists as far as educational qualifications are concerned. Apart from activities leading to educational qualifications (in which case the existing qualification is usually lower than the one sought, except in the case of people whose qualifications are not recognised in Italy), for the rest the distribution of learners shows a higher percentage of people with average to high educational attainment than is found in the aggregate Italian population of over 15 year-olds. In fact, while university graduates account for an average 7.2 per cent of the Italian population, in some courses they represent a much greater proportion of the participants. More specifically, there are 14.5% of graduates enrolled in photography/graphic design courses, 14.4% in minor arts, 14% in general culture, 13.7% in citizenship legal duties, 11.4% in foreign languages, and 12.7% attended activities for the training of volunteers.

Learners with lower (or no) qualifications are in the majority, as is to be expected, in Italian literacy courses as well as in certain pre-specialisation courses, such as those relating to joinery, where 28.9% of participants have at most a primary school certificate and 48.5% a lower secondary school certificate.

Even in literacy courses the percentage of university graduates tends to be fairly high:

- While in the case of Italian courses this may be due to the presence of foreigners with high educational qualifications;
- In the case of foreign languages and digital literacy there is probably a greater awareness of their importance among the younger better educated age groups or, more generally, those who are already following a vocational development pathway.

On the whole, therefore, the breakdown of the survey data by educational qualification is the combination of demand from mostly 26 to 40 year-olds, with higher educational levels and who are more open to the idea of training, and supply that tends to fulfil the requirements of the active population (i.e., the workforce) according to the limited interpretation possible with the survey methods and need for "contactable" providers.

Finally, with regard to employment status three main categories emerge, although not all the activities can be classified so simply:

- Courses attended above all by non-employed people, consisting, on the one hand, of courses leading to a primary or lower secondary school certificate and, on the other, of lifelong education. The first are probably attended by people who, faced with the reality of the labour market, realise that they need at least a basic qualification; the second reflect the presence of the typical users of traditional providers of such courses, i.e. senior citizens' universities, although subjects such as "basic guidance" are also included;
- Courses mainly attended by people in work. Foremost among these are courses leading to a higher educational attainment (qualification or school-leaving certificate) as well as some lifelong education courses evidently connected with a personal involvement in social issues (training in voluntary work, 53.4%) and pre-specialisation courses probably undertaken to improve individual employment status;
- Courses attended by a fairly balanced mix of employed and non-employed people, although in general the percentage of those in work is always the largest. This, for example, is the case of courses in foreign languages and computer skills (where the percentages of people in work are respectively 62.8% and 60.3%).

Table 4.2.3 summarises the characteristics of people participating in lifelong education activities from the different sectors of supply in relation to age, nationality, educational qualification and employment status.

Table 4.2.3 - Characteristics of Participants in Lifelong Education Activities by Sector of Supply (\*) (%). Year 2001-2002

Participants	Public and Private Education and Training Bodies			Non-Profit Sector			Other PA Agencies and Cultural Infrastructure		% Distrib. of Italian Pop. >15
	Total	of which:		Total	of which:		Total	of which: Municipal Libraries	
		PTCs	School Establishments		People's and Senior Citizens' Universities	Voluntary Organisations			
Age	27.1	24.6	49.1	12.5	3.0	31.1	24.4	24.6	14.0
16-25	<b>44.1</b>	44.5	37.4	19.6	8.0	40.1	28.8	25.3	28.2
26-40	21.2	22.8	10.9	18.4	19.0	14.4	<b>33.2</b>	37.3	15.9
41-50	6.2	6.7	2.3	<b>28.1</b>	37.7	9.6	11.2	10.7	21.7
51-65	1.3	1.4	0.3	21.4	32.3	4.8	2.3	2.1	20.2
over 65									
Nationality	<b>80.9</b>	78.7	91.9	<b>90.7</b>	95.1	82.2	<b>93.9</b>	n.s.	
Italian	19.1	21.3	8.1	9.3	4.9	17.8	6.1	n.s.	
Foreign									
Educational qualification	16.2	18.8	2.5	8.8	9.9	6.5	2.2	n.s.	30.9
None or primary school	36.4	30.8	75.6	29.3	35.2	23.2	21.5	n.s.	32.8
Lower secondary school	<b>39.4</b>	41.8	18.9	<b>49.6</b>	44.9	55.0	<b>58.7</b>	n.s.	29.1
Upper secondary school	8.0	8.6	3.0	12.2	9.9	15.3	17.6	n.s.	7.2
Degree									
Employment status	<b>56.7</b>	54.8	66.4	39.2	17.7	42.5	<b>61.0</b>	n.s.	
Employed	43.3	45.2	33.6	<b>60.8</b>	82.3	57.5	39.0	n.s.	
Non-employed									
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(\*) The modal value is in bold type.

n.s.= not significant

Source: Isfol-Censis 2002 survey

#### 4.2.2 • Human Resources

The 13,661 teachers and trainers covered by the survey who are involved in providing course-based lifelong learning activities have different relationships with the providing institution according to their degree of integration and type of employment contract.

A minority (some 5,448 teachers, equal to 39.9% of the total) are staff members of the institution, employed under permanent or temporary contracts.

The remaining 60.1% (8,213 teachers or trainers) belong to a variety of professional profiles, working for the institution in various forms ranging from so-called “continuous and co-ordinated collaboration” contracts to active participation in the life of the organisation as a partner/member or volunteer.

Considering that the figure includes the personnel of Permanent Territorial Centres, it is clear that the remaining supply of education and training, particularly of a non-formal nature, relies on the extreme flexibility, and precariousness, of the human resources employed to provide it.

It is apparent from a breakdown of external teachers according to type of contract that the professional profiles found most frequently in the lifelong learning sector are school teachers (28.7%) and so-called “experts from the professions” (23.9%).

A smaller but nonetheless significant contribution is provided by enthusiasts of the subjects and trainers from the vocational training system, who account respectively for 18.4% and 10.9%.

Moreover, if we analyse the forms of contract regulating the contribution of the various instructors, the “continuous and co-ordinated collaboration” contract is the type most often used for all the professional profiles engaged in the provision of education and training.

The percentages of this form of contract are in fact among the highest for all types of instructor, reaching 15.6% for school-teachers.

Finally, a significant proportion consists of contributions offered on a voluntary basis and free of charge by a variety of people working in the field of lifelong learning, including so-called “enthusiasts” (7.1%), experts from the professions (4.4%) and school-teachers (5.9%).

#### 4.2.3 • Financing

The education and training providers that completed the questionnaire benefit, in the first place, from State funding, which accounts for an average 37.5% of all the financial resources that help to pay for the training activities surveyed<sup>37</sup>.

---

<sup>37</sup> The average embraces a great diversity of situations: for example, the standard deviation for use of national funding is 41.8, while for learner contributions it is 36.2.

The second source of funds is private contributions by individual learners in the form of registration fees to take part in the activities and/or membership fees (24.6%).

In addition to State funding, a substantial contribution is provided by funds allocated by the Local Authorities (Regional, Provincial and Municipal), which account for 14%.

Little use is made, as yet, of the European Social Fund (ESF); in its 2000-2006 programming it introduced for the first time measures designed to strengthen and implement an organic system of lifelong learning. On average the ESF contribution accounts for 10.2% of the budgets of the providers surveyed, dropping to 8.3% if we only take into account measures expressly intended for the realisation of education and training activities.

A combined analysis of data on the source and size of funds and on the type of training provider reveals some considerable divergences regarding flows and sources of funding.

In general, public funds are mainly allocated to the "formal" training supply provided by educational bodies, while "non-formal" supply is mainly subsidized by contributions from learners themselves, although forms of public funding are not entirely absent.

In particular, among all the agencies completing the questionnaire the main recipients of State funds (almost all of which are granted by the Ministry of Education, University and Research from funds allocated by the Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning (ICEP - the Italian *C/PE*) and by Law 440/1997) are Permanent Territorial Centres and technical and vocational schools offering evening classes.

The funds allocated by the ICEP for training projects of PTCs and schools offering evening classes or structured activities for adults in 2001 totalled some € 12 million, 85% of which were distributed in Southern Italy and the remaining 15% in the Centre North<sup>38</sup>. The disparity is offset to some degree by the allocations of the Ministry of Education, University and Research for adult education activities under Law 440/1997 entitled "*Fondo per l'arricchimento e l'ampliamento dell'offerta formativa*" (Fund to enhance and extend training supply). The amount of funding under Law 440 is decided annually and can vary substantially depending on the ministry's priorities and the financial resources available.

Regarding the funds available for formal educational activities, there are also the funds available under the National Operational Programme (NOP) for Schools, Measure 6, the disbursements by the Ministry for teachers assigned to PTCs and evening classes, and the contribution of Local Bodies for premises, notably the Provincial Authorities, which provide premises for secondary schools, and the Municipal Authorities, that provide premises for nursery schools and compulsory education in accordance with Law 23/1996.

---

<sup>38</sup> ICEP funds are designed to finance schools located in depressed areas of the country. The percentage allocated to adult education is decided annually; for the 2002 financial year the allocation amounts to € 8,632,937.10.

Other "institutional" sources of funding are available, to different extents, for the various providers responsible for the supply of education and training, within both the "formal" and the "non-formal" sector.

The European Social Fund has come to play an increasingly important role in this respect, being a source of funds not only for public and private education and training bodies (PTCs, schools, training bodies, universities) but also cultural infrastructure, employment services, associations, foundations and so on.

Although actions based on European funding have been slow to get under way, as the figures of the survey confirm, the European Social Fund is being called on to play a decisive role in the process of building an organic system of education and training supply. In fact, the sums allocated for the period 2000-2006 are very substantial. In particular, Italy's Regional Authorities have allocated an aggregate sum of over € 486 million to measures for "lifelong learning", to which must be added the € 48.7 million at the disposal of schools located in the Regions of the South and managed by the Ministry of Education, University and Research through the medium of the Schools NOP, Measure for "lifelong education". It is not possible to establish beforehand what percentage of the "Technical Assistance" NOP contracted to the Welfare Ministry will be allocated to support the lifelong learning system over the whole of the period 2000-2006.

Another source of financing to support adult education activities equally in the formal and the non-formal sectors is the European programme Socrates - Action 3 Grundtvig.

Other funds allocated by Regional and Local Authorities, which, as we have seen, represent 14% of the aggregate budget of the providers completing the questionnaire, are basically intended to finance "non-formal" education. Various Regions, in fact, have passed specific legislation allocating funds to support lifelong education activities provided by organisations such as the people's and senior citizens' universities, social co-operatives, and welfare associations. Moreover, the cultural and equal opportunity committees of many Municipal Authorities allocate some of the funds at their disposal to the promotion of culture, including activities organised and run by libraries, civic schools, voluntary organisations and recreation and culture associations.

Navigating through the vast universe of so-called "non-formal" training supply to identify legal and administrative responsibilities and the destinations of funds is a difficult and laborious task.

On a general level, in the whole of the non-profit sector we found three methods of financing education and training activities:

- 1 A first, institutional level - in some cases minimal, in others more substantial - which is usually managed by individual Regional Authorities on the basis of *ad hoc* laws and provisions, or by Provincial and Municipal Authorities as part of their responsibilities. In the case of the

people's and senior citizens' universities, for example, several Regional Authorities have passed *ad hoc* legislation devolving funds to finance the lifelong education provided by them, while individual Municipal Authorities can allocate part of the funds at their disposal to promote culture, including activities organised and run by such universities as well as by civic schools, library networks and so on. This first, so-called "institutional" level includes the 2000-2006 Structural Funds. As mentioned, they can finance activities organised in both the formal and the non-formal sector;

- 2** A second level of private community funding, in which banks, banking foundations, savings banks and so on play a leading role. These, for example, provide the special funds used by the 'Voluntary Organisation Service Centres'. These Centres are financed with 1/15 of the contributions of banking foundations and savings banks deposited in the special funds for voluntary work set up by the Regional Authorities. In addition, although the size of their contribution is not known, banking foundations can contribute to finance education and training activities on the principle of representation and visibility and in order to fulfil needs emerging in the local area;
- 3** A third level is that of contributions provided by individual learners of the various institutions in the forms of membership fees or voluntary donations.

Table 4.2.4 shows the proportion of the various sources of funding for education and training by category of supply.

**Table 4.2.4 - Proportion of the Aggregate Budget Available Provided by Different Sources of Funding for Education and Training by Category of Provider (Average %)\***

Sources of Funding	Public and Private Education/Training Schools			Non-Profit Sector			Other Public Administration Departments and Cultural Infrastructure	
	Total	of which:		Total	of which:		Total	of which:
		PTCs	School Establishments		People's and Senior Citizens' Universities	Voluntary Organisations		
<b>Public funding</b>	<b>58.8</b>							
National	63.9	66.2	2.3	0.6	6.1	4.6	-	
Regional	3.9	3.5	7.9	7.7	8.7	6.2	7.3	
Provincial	1.7	3.7	3.5	0.8	3.4	4.8	4.4	
Municipal	4.0	1.1	4.3	3.0	5.6	21.9	29.2	
European Social Fund "continuing education measure"	10.6	5.3	2.1	-	1.1	9.8	1.9	
European Social Fund, "other measures"	1.9	2.6	0.6	-	0.3	6.3	6.2	
<b>Private funding</b>								
Banking foundations	0.2	-	2.6	0.7	4.1	0.6	-	
Other private sources	0.7	1.4	5.1	2.1	11.1	2.7	0.8	
Institution's own funds	4.0	5.7	18.6	3.9	40.1	8.9	0.7	
Participants (registration, membership fees, etc.)	8.5	10.5	52.1	79.6	19.4	34.3	49.6	

Year 2001-2002

(\*) The model value is shown in bold type.

Source: Isfol-Censis 2002 survey.



#### **4.2.4 • Inter-Institutional Co-operation**

A leading role in the field of co-operation between respondent institutions and other bodies for the organisation of training activities is played by school establishments.

In fact, at least 44.5% of institutions organising education and training initiatives declare they co-operate with schools and the percentage rises if Permanent Territorial Centres are included (23.9%).

These figures indicate that the supply of lifelong learning is highly correlated and involves a massive presence of so-called "institutional" and "formal" bodies.

Equally significant is the figure for vocational training centres. In fact 29.2% of those surveyed report that they work with similar institutions to disburse training.

Indeed, many trainers belonging to the vocational training system also operate outside that sphere, working with institutions engaged in continuing lifelong learning.

An analysis of disaggregated data for the category "other", which is warranted by the large percentage it represents (20.2%), reveals numerous instances of collaboration between the institutions surveyed (mainly Permanent Territorial Centres and voluntary organisations) and equally numerous bodies such as prisons, local health agencies, retirement homes, Municipal and Provincial Authorities, professional and trade associations.

Finally, it is interesting to note that institutions traditionally active in the field of lifelong learning, such as people's and senior citizens' universities, are relatively more isolated from the rest of the complex system of collaboration (9.3%).

#### **4.2.5 • Difficulties Implementing Training Programmes**

A wealth of indications for future action in the field of lifelong learning is provided by the scenario described in the table describing the main difficulties encountered by the providers surveyed in carrying out their activities in the field of education and training (Table 4.2.5).

The main difficulties include obtaining funds, which is reported by at least 55.1% of respondents, and relations with other bodies and institutions, reported by 32.1%.

These problems depend to a large extent on the structural characteristics of some of the providers of lifelong learning belonging to the broad and diverse "non-profit" sector, in other words "non-formal" institutions, including voluntary organisations, recreation and cultural associations, co-operatives and people's and senior citizens' universities.

Generally, these institutions rely heavily on the contributions of their members (learners, partners and in some cases volunteers) as well as on a fairly impromptu method of managing activities, which renders them more flexible but also more fragile. The lack of sufficient human resources, in particular specific and representative professional profiles, also means that many of them find the pursuit of their statutory objectives very arduous.

It is worth remarking, in this connection, the slow but gradual increase in the number and activities of the 'Voluntary Organisation Service Centres' that were set up under Law 266/1991 but in fact have only been in operation for a few years.

On the strictly logistical level, 26.9% of the institutions surveyed report difficulties due to deficiencies in the centres where they conduct their activities. This figure seems to reflect the fact that many providers have to disburse lifelong learning activities in premises that are not their own.

**Table 4.2.5 - Main Difficulties Encountered in Disbursing Activities (%)**

Main Difficulty Encountered	%
Fund raising	55.1
Relations with other bodies/institutions	32.1
Logistical features of the centre	26.9
Co-ordination of activities	21.9
Lack of technical teaching supports	16.3
Financial management	12.5
Human resource management	11.8
Lack of learners	9.0
Other	4.6

*The total does not equal 100 because 3 answers were possible.*

*Source: Isfol-Censis 2002 survey.*

## 5 • INNOVATORY INDICATIONS AND STRATEGIC CORNERSTONES

The picture outlined in the preceding pages refers to the structure of the research study and the main findings of the survey. It is worth considering, if only briefly, the innovatory indications that have been brought to light and the strategic cornerstones that might become the basis for future action.

The innovatory element is undoubtedly the fact that 89.6% of all the providers surveyed operate from permanent centres and only 10.4% from temporary ones.

Moreover, the institutions operating as education and training providers apparently have a long tradition and vast experience in the field that has been poorly recognised to date, at least in some sectors.

It is worth noting that 64.5% of providers report they have been operating in the lifelong education sector for more than 5 years, 45% of them for more than 10 years. This indicates that they are well established in their localities and boast a sound tradition.

The third novel piece of information emerging from the survey of supply at national level is that, apart from activities geared to primary literacy, the typical lifelong learner has a better average to high educational qualification than the Italian population of over 15 year-olds as a whole. In fact, 40.7% of learners have upper secondary school-leaving certificates compared with 29.1% of over 15s in the population according to the latest National Statistics Institute (*Istat*) data.

Finally, as we stressed earlier, although many organisations belonging to the non-profit sector provide lifelong education they do not consider themselves actors in the lifelong learning system. The same attitude is found among libraries, which declare that their field of operation is predominantly cultural rather than educational.

The problem, however, is not simply one of diverse fields of activity but rather a question of interpretation and self-representation. The very concept of lifelong learning has not yet become part of the semantic and conceptual universe of all the institutions potentially forming part of the lifelong learning system.

This framework provides us with a number of propositions for the future.

One of the first strategic objectives is to make the opportunities offered by the training supply more visible.

According to data from *Iso*'s survey of social demand for education by adults it appears that 57% of the sample surveyed, consisting of 4,000 Italian adults from 25 to 70 years old, do not know what bodies dispense lifelong learning. More specifically, according to 31% of the sample education and training activities are not organised anywhere in their Municipality and 26% of the sample answered that they did not know.

This means that the supply is in danger of reaching only those who can see and interpret it.

Moreover, measures are needed to monitor the population's participation in lifelong learning initiatives and conduct a census of all the available educational resources to assess what contribution each can make to building the system. The aim is to create a network that will prevent the fruitless instances of redundant and overlapping supply occurring today in the different systems in respect of the courses disbursed and learners targeted.

The system's spontaneity is a positive quality and produces results but careful local programming is needed.

The third and last consideration is that urgent action is needed to develop a system of social and institutional recognition for institutions providing "non-formal" education, particularly the most structured initiatives, so as to introduce *ex ante* recognition of their contribution. To this end it will be necessary to put in place mechanisms for accreditation and quality certification, on a par with the other sectors of education and training supply.

To conclude, the results of the in-depth survey show that the infinite potential to develop lifelong learning in our country offers similar opportunities for organising and structuring supply in line with the requirements of a constantly expanding demand.

**Part III**

- **REGIONAL POLICIES  
FOR LIFELONG  
LEARNING**



## 1 • THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY\*

The principal objective of the survey was to identify the strategies adopted at regional and local level to promote the development of lifelong learning and the role they occupy in the present institutional scenario.

To achieve this objective we collected and analysed the latest literature and body of national and regional legislation and regulations issued on the subject and then conducted in-depth field research in the form of regional case studies (including for the autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano). For the case studies, which began in September 2002, we held in-depth interviews with key actors, institutional and otherwise, operating in the lifelong learning sector<sup>39</sup>.

In particular, the following aspects were investigated during the survey: a) the decisions embodied in Regional Operational Plans and subsequent use of European financial resources specifically allocated to lifelong learning (Strand C, Ob. 3, Measure C.4, and Ob.1, Measures C.3 and 3.8); b) the state of implementation of the Agreement of the Unified Conference of State, Regions and Local Authorities of 2 March 2000; e) individual continuing training initiatives<sup>40</sup>.

---

39 After the field research, which was completed at the end of June 2002, the material collected was processed to produce a transversal interpretation, which is described in detail in *Isfol, Politiche regionali per la formazione permanente. Primo rapporto nazionale*, 2003.

40 During the field survey, we also focused on the integration policies adopted at regional and local level and on the measures enacted by the permanent territorial centres that were not included in this report. For a detailed analysis of the findings, the reader is referred to *Isfol, op. cit.*

\* The research study was carried out in collaboration with Fiorella Farinelli, Paola Nicoletti, Ornella Scandella, Vitalia Schirru, Pier Giacomo Sola and Giovanna Spagnuolo.

## 2 • EUROPEAN COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

### 2.1 • A MEASURE DEDICATED TO LIFELONG LEARNING

As an outcome of European policies on education and training, the new agenda for the European Social Fund (ESF) 2000-2006 programming period offers scope for action in the field of lifelong learning to promote active citizenship in the knowledge-based society and employability in the new economy.

Strand III "Human Resources", Policy Field C, of the National Operational Programme is dedicated, in line with Global Objective 3 of the Community Support Framework, to "Promoting and improving vocational training, education and guidance within the framework of a policy of lifelong learning for the purpose of facilitating and improving access and integration in labour market, improving and sustaining employability and promoting mobility in employment".

In the case of regional lifelong learning policies this signifies allocating specific resources to launch the transformation of the regional education and training system by adopting the general objective of the National Framework for Human Resource Development, that is to say "helping to increase the employability of the working-age population and the qualifications of human resources" by fostering "the modernisation and innovation of education, training and labour systems".

The reference texts for drawing up the Regional Operational Programmes appear, in principle, to have progressed beyond a view of lifelong learning as a follow-on from initial training. This has been replaced by a vision in which continuing training lasts a lifetime and includes learning acquired in non-formal and informal contexts as well as formal ones. As we will see, this vision has been given concrete expression by a number of Regional Authorities.

The objective of lifelong learning has been dedicated a specific measure of the 'Human Resources' Strand<sup>41</sup>.

The priorities of this measure are:

- To encourage re-entry in the formal education and vocational training system;
- To foster the extension of knowledge;
- To foster the extension of specific skills associated with work and social life.

The transversal objectives are those set by the ESF (equality of opportunity, local development, Information Society).

The types of action eligible for co-financing are those listed in the ESF regulations (Article 3): Assistance for individuals, Assistance to structures and systems, Accompanying measures.

---

<sup>41</sup> Specific objective No. 6 "Promote lifelong learning", "Lifelong Learning" Measure (C.4 for Ob. 3 Regions; C.3 or 3.8 for Ob. 1 Regions).



As established at the strategic programming level (Community Support Framework, National Operational Programme), the Regional Authorities and Autonomous Provincial Authorities have made their own programming decisions for the gradual implementation of these objectives based on local needs.

The macro objective underlying their programming decisions regarding the measure on lifelong learning is generally the intention to build a lifelong learning system. However, their stated strategic objectives embody some differences of approach, as emerged during the research study from our observation of the greater importance attributed to one or other of the three objectives recurring in the various programming documents:

- Build a system of lifelong learning supply;
- Facilitate learning demand by supporting individual pathways;
- Extend learning opportunities.

In some cases these approaches are proper lines of action, often rooted in the cultural and socio-economic specifics of the locality as well stemming from the nature of training policies adopted in the past by individual Regional Authorities and Autonomous Provincial Authorities. Evidence can be found in the choice of specific objectives and pursuable actions contained in the regional and provincial operational programmes and in the Programming Complements.

## **2.2 • PRIORITY LINES OF ACTION**

The operational programmes and Programming Complements indicate the lines of action identified and agreed with social partners and with any other stakeholders in the field of adult education and training, such as the Regional Schools Departments.

### **√ Actions addressing individuals: learning pathways for adults**

The actions listed in the category “assistance for individuals” focus on learning pathways, which are presented in terms of training contents and objectives and sometimes also of target group (workers, unemployed people, people at risk of exclusion, and so on). The objective and contents are almost invariably described in terms of acquiring knowledge and skills.

Digital literacy is one of the issues on which lifelong learning resources will be concentrated. It is a central objective and is strongly present in the programmes drawn up by all the Regional Authorities and Autonomous Provincial Authorities, being considered a prerequisite of active citizenship and work performance.

Vocational skills, together with IT and language skills, represent the other general objective, which relates to basic as well as more specialist skills.

The next objective, in order of importance, is the acquisition of transversal skills, which appears in 66.7% of programming documents. In many cases these skills are described as decision-making, organisational, communication and relational skills, or as social abilities when they relate to experience of voluntary work.

In about one quarter of Regions the objective of learning pathways is the acquisition of self-guidance skills (23.8%). Less frequently it is basic know-how and skills associated with particular cultural spheres or artistic professions.

Finally, individual incentives are envisaged to foster participation and support of learning projects (52.4%). The majority of these consist of vouchers and scholarships, as well as measures to revive tools such as training leave<sup>42</sup>.

### √ **Actions to support structures and systems and accompanying actions**

In general these actions involve studies and research activities, experiments to develop models of action, innovative tools and instruments for use in direct activities involving adults. Their aim is to put innovative measures in place or implement existing processes.

The specific contents of such actions relate to the following areas:

- Bringing together stakeholders in different systems and models of integration (present in 47.6% of Regions);
- Distance learning modules and multimedia software packages (42.8%);
- A system of credit and skill recognition and certification (33.3%);
- A voucher-based system (14.3%).

Training of trainers is another field of action present in almost all cases. It is intended as a means of guaranteeing that training actions move in the right direction and are effective. It is expressly cited in combination with others by Regions focusing on the construction of integrated training supply for adults that for a long time have played a leading role in integration policies.

Other system actions are expressly envisaged to develop the system of training supply for adults, such as:

- Training needs analysis (33.3%);
- Transfers of best practices (23.8%).

Mention is also made of technology services and the provision of documentary facilities, such as actions to reinforce the Region's statistical and information system (20%) and build a specific database of lifelong learning.

Finally, there are accompanying actions, designed in almost all cases to promote and publicise existing training opportunities.

## **2.3 • THE TARGET GROUPS**

The Programming Complements usually refer to a universe consisting of the active or working-age population, which is specified according to requirements in subsequent calls for proposals. The question arises whether the two expressions are in fact synonyms or whether they reflect a desire to reach different target groups. To avoid confusion some Regional

---

<sup>42</sup> As provided for in Law 53/2000 *"Disposizioni per il sostegno della maternità e della paternità, per il diritto alla cura e alla formazione e per il coordinamento dei tempi delle città"* (Measures to support motherhood and fatherhood, to ensure the right to care and training and to co-ordinate the times of city life).

Authorities have adopted such expressions as “citizens of all ages and employment status over 18 years old” or individuals “past compulsory education age”, or again “employed, unemployed and inactive working-age individuals”.

However, even when the Programming Complement was being drawn up the reference universe of adults was in many cases extended by explicit mention of young people (57%).

Sometimes the universe is narrowed down to specific targets, such as immigrants or entrepreneurs and so on, or particular geographical situations, such as users in Ob. 2 areas. However, it may also be defined in terms of priority lines of action for certain age groups - for example the population of over 45s, workers over 40 years old, the population of over 35s.

The allocation of financial resources decided in the programmes is examined only in broad lines here but it may indicate an intention to use this measure as an instrument of social policies and employability measures, as well as a means of continuing to learn in adulthood.

## **2.4 • THE IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATIONS**

A large range of providers was singled out in the first programming as recipients of funds under the lifelong learning measure.

It included accredited training schools and school establishments, which are indicated by more than half the Regional Authorities and Autonomous Provincial Authorities, followed by accredited training agencies and groupings of them (52.4%), Permanent Territorial Centres (47.6%), universities and their offshoots (47.6%), employment services (47.6%), enterprises and groupings of them (47.6%), and joint bodies (42.8%). They form a universe made up of the worlds of education and training and work and of new bodies responsible for the transition from training to work, particularly for certain sections of the population (the unemployed, drop-outs etc.).

The generic expression “public and private bodies” is used in many cases (47.6%) in conjunction with other types of public and private actors.

Over a quarter of Regions cite their own Regional Authorities as the final beneficiary.

Local bodies, especially Municipal Authorities, which are competent in matters of adult education (per Legislative Decree 112/1998), are listed among the final beneficiaries in approximately a quarter of the Programming Complements.

In one third of the Regions that put greatest emphasis on learning in non-formal contexts the implementing organisations include the Local Bodies’ cultural infrastructure (libraries, museums, theatres), cultural foundations and associations, voluntary organisations, leisure-time associations and households.

Even individuals can be included among the final beneficiaries of funds allocated by the measure, as in the case of recipients of vouchers and training coupons (28.6%).

## **2.5 • FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

To achieve the objectives defined at the programming stage under the “lifelong learning” measure, the Complements to the Regional Operational Plan set aside a total of € 493,017,521 for the whole programming period.

The Regions of the Centre North<sup>43</sup> were allocated € 324,286,096 in total. Of this sum 45% was borne by the EU and the remaining 55% came from national sources. If these national sources are further broken down it emerges that 80% consists of State financing and 20% of resources of the Regional Authorities and Autonomous Provincial Authorities.

In Southern Italy, the total budgeted cost of putting the lifelong learning system into operation involves a larger contribution from EU funds than in the Centre-North. Taking the total financial resources available for Ob. 1 Regions, which amount to € 168,731,425, the percentage contributed by the EU ranges from a minimum of 43% for the Region of Molise to a maximum of 70% for Campania, Basilicata and Sicily. The percentage of the remaining costs borne directly by the Regional Authorities ranges from 8% to 17% of total financial resources. Calabria, whose direct contribution covers 8% of the total costs budgeted, is the only Region where a contribution from private sources is envisaged, amounting to 10% of the total.

## **2.6 • CALLS ON 2000-2006 FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

Unlike the first programming year, when the process of issuing calls was slow to get under way, by November 2002 all the Regional Authorities had published calls on the financial resources for the first two years. While the present report was being drawn up there was still some delay in issuing calls on resources for 2002.

The method most often used by the Regional Authorities to give notice of the availability of resources has been to publish in the Official Bulletin annual directives for the realisation of projects to be financed with financial resources from the ESF. This is accompanied by a notice or public invitation to submit projects. In a number of cases it was decided to issue a Regional Multi-Measure Call for Proposals, except in Latium and Campania, which instead drew up *ad hoc* calls under the lifelong learning measure alone. The Regional Authorities adhering to the Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Defence to carry out the “Eurotraining” project also issued calls or directives specifically linked with the financing of actions forming part of that project.

The Regional Authorities of Marches and Umbria are the only ones not to have issued calls for proposals in the lifelong learning sector, despite having directly entrusted the Provincial

---

<sup>43</sup> These include Abruzzi because the distribution between Ob. 3 Regions and Ob. 1 Regions was taken into account.

Authorities with powers in that sphere in the same way as other Regional Authorities. Basilicata opted for a different system and in the first three years of programming only devolved actions addressing individuals to the Provincial Authorities (Measure C.3). The actions are carried out by the Provincial Guidance and Vocational Training Agencies set up after the Provincial Authorities were delegated powers in matters of vocational training.

Regarding the timing of calls for proposals, most of the Regional Authorities made the aggregate financial resources allocated for the first two programming years available only from 2001 (Piedmont, Valle d'Aosta, Lombardy, Veneto, Latium, Molise, Campania, Sardinia and Calabria).

To summarise, with the arrival of the third programming year most of the financial resources provided in the ESF ROP Programming Complements and set aside for lifelong learning have been allocated. Despite differences in methods and timing, almost all the Regional Authorities have therefore effectively launched actions in this sector<sup>44</sup>.

## 2.7 • THE ACTIVITIES FINANCED

We analysed more closely the types of activities receiving European funding from the Regional Authorities by examining the Directives, Public Notices and Invitations and Calls for Proposals issued by the Local Administrative Authorities<sup>45</sup>.

Under the heading actions to sustain structures and systems and “accompanying measures” most of the activities selected related to: a) the creation of links between providers belonging to different systems; b) the preparation of multimedia software packages and distance learning modules; c) the training of trainers; d) the use of contributions for individual participation in learning activities (vouchers).

Regarding actions addressing individuals, the types of project financed from ESF Ob.3 (Measure C.4) and Ob.1 (Measure C.3 or 3.8) resources basically had similar objectives. Most of the Regional Authorities put special emphasis on remedial learning of basic and transversal skills and on the acquisition of new literacy relating to basic and/or specialist IT know-how and foreign languages. Moreover, several Regional Authorities allocated part of the European financial resources to activities connected with vocational qualifications, designed to train new professional profiles requested by the labour market.

However, in addition to these areas of convergence, in many local situations increasing attention was paid to specific training needs experienced at local level. While this concern with local features is an interesting indicator of project-making abilities it does have several limitations. The most obvious is the failure to remain anchored to a concept of lifelong learning

---

44 The Regions of Latium and Campania do not conform to the national picture because at the time of drawing up the present report the projects were still at the evaluation stage.

45 For a detailed analysis, the reader is referred to *Isfol, Politiche regionali per la formazione permanente. Primo rapporto nazionale, 2003*.

system that takes due account of overall supply in the country, including by the school system, training schools, voluntary organisations and any other actors that have been operating in the sector for some time.

These considerations are based only on the training activities promoted by Regional and Provincial Authorities and naturally need to be supplemented with more precise information on the learning effectively disbursed when projects are put into effect. It is to be hoped therefore that in the future research will be undertaken to monitor the activities provided locally. This would produce detailed information to fuel the national debate on the development of lifelong learning in our country.

### **3 • IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT OF THE UNIFIED CONFERENCE OF STATE, REGIONS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF 2 MARCH 2000**

#### **3.1 • AN AGREEMENT TO REORGANISE AND REINFORCE LIFELONG EDUCATION FOR ADULTS**

The year 2000 marked a turning point in the European Union's policy on lifelong learning. It was the year of the European Councils of Lisbon (23-24 March) and Santa Maria da Feira (19-20 June) and of the publication of the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (30 October). In Italy it was the year the Agreement of 2 March 2000 on the reorganisation and reinforcement of lifelong education for adults was signed by the Government, the Regional Authorities and the Local Authorities.

In fact, it marked the completion of a reform process beginning at national level with the Labour Act of 6 September 1996, the *Patto sociale per lo sviluppo e l'occupazione* (Social Pact for Growth and Employment) of 1998 and at international level with the UNESCO World Conference on Adult Education held in Hamburg from 14 to 18 July 1997.

The Agreement outlines "the structure of the model for programming and management of the new system", taking up the message of the Social Pact, which called on the Government "... to prepare a specific project and *ad hoc* resources to experiment and put in place a system of adult education as a basis for discussion and experimentation, in agreement with social partners and representatives of the Regions and Local Bodies".

The cornerstones of this system are liaison among the institutions responsible for different sectors, although without altering the prerogatives and powers of each, and links between the different institutional levels.

The primary objectives of the system are to foster:

- Re-entry to the formal education and vocational training system;
- Extension of knowledge;
- Acquisition of specific skills related to work and social life.

Among its innovatory features the Agreement formally establishes as "seats" of adult education, the education system, the vocational training system (under existing legislation: Laws 845/1978, 236/1993 and 196/1997) and all the opportunities for non-formal education (civic networks, cultural infrastructure, associations, and so on).

In this model, however, the system of training supply hinges on the Permanent Territorial Centres, which are structures of the educational system. Their role as centres for co-ordinating activities and services for the adult population is confirmed and a project for their reorganisation is outlined.

Evening classes at upper secondary schools are indicated as another focal point of the

system, to be linked to the whole circuit of Adult Education in connection with a new demand based on higher educational qualifications.

### **3.2 • THE SYSTEM'S ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN**

In outlining the structure of the new integrated system of adult education the Agreement identifies the various levels responsible for guidelines and governance, their prerogatives, their financing and their "agents".

The system is divided into three levels: national, regional and local. They are interconnected, with each performing tasks that require the performance of others assigned to the previous level.

A committee is set up at each level as a forum for discussion and assigned functions to ensure the integration of education and training.

The National Committee<sup>46</sup> is the forum that establishes general policy, strategic priorities, available resources and criteria for their distribution, guidelines for setting standards, for monitoring and evaluation, and for the certification and recognition of credits. It will cover these points, in particular, during the launch of the system. The Committee will also be responsible for laying down policy for the experimentation of pilot projects at local level and relating to contents of common interest (training of trainers, advanced research and experimentation) with a view to producing a body of high quality and highly transferable models.

In accordance with the recommendations issued at the end of the Hamburg World Conference regarding the indispensable role of interministerial co-operation, the Committee will include representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the Department of Social Affairs, the Regional Authorities, the Local Bodies and Social Partners.

The Regional Committee will discuss and agree on the programming and promotion of integrated training supply and on the monitoring and evaluation of the system. More specifically, it will set out criteria for activities, based on information regarding training needs, and for monitoring and evaluation, decide measures to promote adult education and organise the resources to be allocated to the regional system. It will consist of representatives of the competent Regional Councils, Local Bodies, Regional Schools Departments and the Social Partners. It will be set up by the Regional Authority, which is responsible for planning and programming integrated training supply (per Legislative Decree 112/1998, Article 138).

The operational hub of co-ordinated programming is the Local Committee. This promotes adult education throughout the area, programmes activities according to the criteria issued at

---

<sup>46</sup> Under Ministerial Ordinance 455/1997 a National Technical Committee had been set up earlier with tasks of policy-setting, assistance, monitoring and assessment of initiatives. It consisted of representatives from the education system but there was no explicit provision for liaison with the other Committee instituted at provincial level.



regional level, decides and plans joint use of resources, draws up area projects, makes proposals relating to the calendar of training supply and the creation and location of new PTCs. It consists of representatives of the Province, Municipalities, Mountain Communities, Local Schools Departments, the Social Partners, Training Agencies operating in the non-formal learning sector and local schools board. It is set up by the Municipal Authorities and mountain communities in agreement with the local schools departments, the social partners and other institutional stakeholders.

### **3.3 • THE REGIONAL COMMITTEES: A STAGGERED START**

As far as implementing the Agreement of 2 March 2000 is concerned, a range of options were open for regional adult education policies. Let us examine the choices that the Regional Committees made in regard.

The failure to launch the National Committee did not prevent the creation of the Regional Committees. The Regional Authorities' prerogatives regarding the programming of integrated training supply (Legislative Decree 112/1998), as well as the need to reorganise the supply of adult education at regional level and decide the policy lines of the ESF lifelong learning measure for the 2000-2006 programming period and put them into effect, explain why it was essential to set up the Regional Committees.

In 8 Regions the Councils passed the necessary resolution, 6 in 2001 (Campania, Latium, Lombardy, Piedmont, Tuscany and Veneto), 2 in 2002 (Basilicata and Marches).

However, progress beyond that has not been the same among these Regions. In some the Regional Committee is fully operational, in others it has been instituted but has never met.

In all the other Regions, no committee has yet been created. However, again there are wide differences in regional policies.

Emilia-Romagna and Friuli-Venezia Giulia have signed agreements to create a regional integrated training system that incorporates the adult education sector.

The Region of Liguria has set up a single Committee for the various segments of integrated training.

Some authorities, such as Valle D'Aosta and the Provincial Authorities of Trento, have begun consultation on a system of adult education and training.

A separate case is that of the Autonomous Provincial Authorities of Bolzano, which had already launched its own system of adult education in the 1980s, passing separate legislation on lifelong education.

Finally, there are Regions that have not set up Regional Committees (Abruzzi, Calabria, Molise, Apulia, Sardinia, Sicily and Umbria) but have not formally declared their intention not to implement the provisions of the agreement.

### **3.3.1 • The Regional Committees for Integration**

A number of Regional Authorities have set up a single Committee for the various sectors of integrated education and training. Some have done so in addition to the Regional Committee, others have incorporated it within the broader body.

These are Regional Authorities that have put in place measures and signed agreements setting out general guidelines for a regional system of integration between separate training systems (Emilia-Romagna, Friuli-Venezia Giulia) or, more simply, that have united the various Committees (Liguria, Marches, Piedmont and Tuscany).

The Committees go under a variety of names: Permanent Conference on Education and Training (Emilia-Romagna), Joint Policy Committee (Friuli-Venezia Giulia), Committee for Consultation and Co-ordination with the Social Partners on Education, Training and Employment Policies (Liguria), Committee for the Organisation of Integrated Training Supply (Marches) and Regional Committee on System Integration (Piedmont).

The objectives of integrated education and training invariably include the creation of an adult education and training system to support the lifelong development and renewal of knowledge and skills.

In all cases emphasis is given to the certification of skills and credits as a tool to enable mobility between systems and re-entry to training. Provision is made for *ad hoc* experiments in this area.

It is a widely held opinion among policy-makers, managers and officers of Regional Authorities and Schools Departments and representatives of the Social Partners that the best method is to set up a single Committee to govern the supply of integrated learning, even in Regions where a single body for integration has not yet been instituted. The reasons given are many; they are connected with the implementation of Legislative Decree 112/1998, Art. 138, with the need for more effective measures and better liaison between stakeholders, but also, more simply, with a desire to make it easier for those appointed to the committee to participate in its work. In fact, many people, especially among the representatives of the social partners, believe that a proliferation of bodies makes it difficult to participate actively in all of them.

### **3.4 • THE LOCAL COMMITTEES: A SLUGGISH START**

The central functions of the Local Committees envisaged in the Agreement of 2 March are to establish a link between the various dimensions of learning - formal, non-formal and informal - and to activate system-based synergy and integration among locally present resources. The creation of a Local Committee is often viewed as an urgent necessity, especially to ensure local programming that is consistent with demand, co-ordinated use of resources and a better distribution of PTCs over the area.

In spite of this to date local committees have only been set up in Tuscany, which has 36 committees spread over the Region in conjunction with the social and health areas, and

in Naples. However, a number of Regional Authorities have made proposals for their location.

Failure to set up the national committee, disparities in the situation regarding Regional Committees, the present transitional phase in the application, or definition, of new administrative rules and learning and employment policy regulations (Legislative Decree 112/1998, amendments to Title V, Part II of the Constitution, Law 144/1999, laws on employability measures, and so on) explain the long delay in setting up Local Committees, whose operation depends on decision-making upstream.

Nonetheless, as many experts interviewed during the course of the study have pointed out, that failure and the prospect of new forms of governance for the system involving multiple stakeholders have unfortunately dismantled the forms of co-ordination put in place earlier by the old Local Education Offices.

In view of this situation, local movements are forming throughout the country calling for the creation of these committees, as indispensable forums for programming and co-ordinating learning supply at local level in accordance with training needs.

## 4 • INDIVIDUAL CONTINUING TRAINING

### 4.1 • THE CONTEXT

During the 1990s government policies combined far-reaching reform in the field of education and basic training with a set of initiatives to expand the opportunities for education and training.

The system of continuing training for workers was set up under Law 236/1993 and financed with national funds and by the ESF<sup>47</sup>. It gave centrality to the implementation of “company-level, sectoral and local” training plans drawn up on the basis of agreements between the social partners and local institutions to fulfil the requirements of local communities, economic sectors and enterprises. Training for workers was also encouraged and fostered by the Ministry of Finance, which rewarded enterprises that invested in training for their employees with tax incentives under the second “Tremonti *bis* Law”<sup>48</sup>. Against this background, in which the objectives of continuing training were primarily to develop the economy and the competitiveness of enterprises by enhancing human resources, the improvement in their skills that individual workers gained from participating in training activities was regarded as an important but indirect outcome, one that was inevitably conditioned by the productive context of origin.

The structure of the continuing training system that emerged following Law 236/1993<sup>49</sup> is now in the throes of far-reaching transformation. Whereas so far the Regional Authorities have been responsible for drawing up training plans, in the 2000 and 2001 Finance Laws the Government has implemented the provisions of Law 196/1997 by setting up the Joint Interprofessional Funds for industry, agriculture, crafts and services. The Joint Funds mainly receive the yield from corporate contributions to involuntary unemployment insurance and were set up under agreements signed by the social partners in the four major sectors. They will take over from the Regional Authorities in financing company-level, sectoral and local training plans. How they will link up with local development strategies and regional employment and training policies remains to be decided.

Towards the end of the 1990s, within the very context of continuing training designed to raise enterprises’ competitiveness, which gave workers access to “collective” training under agreements between the social partners, new opportunities opened up for a different type of training, one that was available at the request of individual workers, even outside agreements between social partners. Under a Circular issued by the Ministry of Labour in 1998<sup>50</sup>, the

---

47 National financial resources consisted of a portion (0.30% of the total wage bill) of the contribution due by enterprises for compulsory insurance against involuntary unemployment (Law 160/1975, Article 12). To date, the yield from the 0.30% contribution has been set aside to finance actions provided for by Law 236/1993, Article 9, and for national co-financing of the ESF.

48 The second “Tremonti *bis* Law” (Law 383/2001), which de-taxes investment as an incentive to revive the economy, also encourages expenditure on training and refresher courses for employees.

49 Between 1997 and 1999 Law 236/1993 financed over 12,000 in-company training actions involving 22,000 enterprises and some 300,000 workers.

50 Circular 37/1998 implementing Law 236/1993 allows the Regional Authorities to set aside up to 25% of financial resources to finance individual training projects of workers employed by enterprises paying the 0.30% contribution.

Regional Authorities were able to set aside a portion of the resources allocated to continuing training to experiment "individual" training for workers.

Pending the transition to the Joint Interprofessional Funds, which are yet to become fully operational, making Law 236/1993 obsolete, the experiments initiated in 1999 at first by a few Regional Authorities and then extended throughout most of the country<sup>51</sup>, are still under way. The initiative has been so successful that the Ministry of Labour and the Regional Authorities have allocated new and diversified financial resources from other sources to this type of training supply.

During the same period Law 53/2000<sup>52</sup> was passed. It lays down the right of employed and unemployed workers to lifelong learning and contains guidelines on using "continuing training leave" for this purpose (Article 6). It also establishes that, without prejudice to provisions concerning the right to study contained in the Workers' Statute of Rights (Law 300/1970), permanent employees can apply for "a suspension of their work contract for leave to train for a period not exceeding 11 working months, either continuous or distributed over the whole of their working lives" (Article 5 - "training leave"). Although the conditions and instruments needed to make the exercise of this new right effectively possible still have to be defined and adopted - at the level of labour contracts and possibly also in the legislation - it is evidently an innovation of enormous significance<sup>53</sup>. The right to lifelong learning does not apply only to continuing training, or even to the vocational skills needed to perform specific tasks, but also to unspecified training. Adult education represents not only an opportunity but a right: to exercise it learners must be able to combine work with participation in learning activities<sup>54</sup>.

## 4.2 • WORKERS' DEMAND

The simultaneous advent of the launch of individual continuing training, the approval of Law 53/2000, the creation of the Permanent Territorial Centres for Adult Education<sup>55</sup> and the agreement of the Unified Conference of State-Regions-Local Authorities of March 2000 on an integration-based approach have prompted a number of observers to emphasise that all these provisions are coherent with the European Union's strategies for lifelong learning.

---

51 In 2001 the regions involved in experimenting individual continuing training numbered 16: Valle d'Aosta, Piedmont, Lombardy, Autonomous Province of Bolzano, Veneto, Liguria, Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna, Marches, Abruzzi, Umbria, Latium, Basilicata, Apulia, Calabria and Sicily.

52 Law 53/2000, which receives the European Union Council Directive 96/34 of 1996, contains "Measures to support motherhood and fatherhood, to ensure the right to care and training and to co-ordinate the times of city life" and also introduces additional and innovative measures relating to training to foster not only "the division of duties within the family" but also the opportunity of personal and professional development for workers by making provision for training leave, including for continuing training and outside the enterprise.

53 In particular, regarding training leave per Article 5 the law lays down fairly restrictive conditions that must be the object of further regulation if the right is to become a reality.

54 In reality, the concept of training leave for workers had already become part of the world of work in Italy in the 1970s when the rule of "150 hours" was introduced. However, it was a right only sanctioned by contract and exclusively to be used to obtain compulsory-education certificates.

55 The conversion of the old "150 hours" schools into PTCs was called for in an Ordinance of the Ministry of Education issued in 1997.

They are, as we know, political and social strategies, which, in the name of “employability” and “active citizenship”, accord the utmost value to adult education for economic, social and civil development and make lifelong learning the expression of a new, universal right and duty<sup>56</sup>. This has major consequences. One is the interpretation that continuing training - that is, training for specific needs of technological or organisational innovation in the workplace - is only one dimension of lifelong learning. Another is that government policies must do everything to encourage and support not only continuing training to fulfil employers’ requirements, but also the individual investment of workers and other people in improving their vocational and cultural skills, so that everyone becomes responsible for the quality of their training background.

In reality, the initiatives launched in the 1990s have not yet created a proper system of resources and opportunities that can meet and respond to the European concept of lifelong learning and the right and duty of access for everyone. They have many limitations, most of which are due to accumulated delays in the field of continuing training and lifelong learning that affect not only their supply but also the promotion and channelling of demand and the introduction of measures to ensure easy and widespread access to training opportunities<sup>57</sup>. Even in the specific field of continuing training, although the percentage of Italian enterprises in which 10 or more employees participate in training rose from 15% in 1993 to 23.9% in 1999, it remains well below that of the majority of European countries with the exception of Portugal<sup>58</sup>.

Nonetheless, there is no doubt that the construction of lifelong learning is now under way, nor that the experiments with individual continuing training undertaken by the Regional Authorities in implementation of Law 236/1993 represent a major strategic innovation. By granting even individual workers the chance to submit their own “training projects” that can be recognised by a public stakeholder, regardless of any representation by enterprise or trade union (or mediation between the two), and can be accepted even if the training objectives relate to skills not needed for their specific work tasks or sector of production, a very important concept is being recognised. It is the principle that not just enterprises but the whole of the community benefit from the development of workers’ knowledge and skills. In fact they represent a crucial resource for growth and a means of preventing the social contradictions associated with obsolescence of vocational skills and of promoting the frequent conversion and mobility imposed by economic and labour market dynamics. Another principle that is recognised is the value of individual responsibility for investment in training, as recommended in the European Commission’s Memorandum on Lifelong Learning.

Individual continuing training represents an attempt to compensate for the “selective” effects of training promoted at company level and hence for the risks of discrimination between workers.

---

<sup>56</sup> See *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, European Commission, October 2000.

<sup>57</sup> In particular, as an analysis of national collective labour contracts shows, the link is still tenuous between worker training - to which even the social partners attribute strategic importance - and the contractual provisions that should implement the right to training (timetable, career position, certification of skills). These observations are the result of a study of continuing training in collective labour contracts conducted by *Isfol* in collaboration with *Cesos*, *Acpa Service*, *Fondazione Brodolini* and *Ires* (2001-02).

<sup>58</sup> See *Continuing Vocational Training Survey* (Cvts2 Istat -Eurostat 1999).

A recent survey of "Attitudes and Behaviour of Workers with respect to Continuing Training"<sup>59</sup> has not only found that in the past two years 1 worker in 10 has been involved in continuing training but also records that worker participation varies considerably according to such factors as position in the enterprise, enterprise size, educational attainment, age, gender, and to some extent area of residence. Training mainly reaches the stronger sections of the workforce. The participants in training actions have the following profile:

- Payroll employees of large enterprises (more than 249 employees): 54% participated in training activities compared with 17% of employees in micro-sized enterprises;
- Workers in the service sector (especially the financial industry and ICTs);
- Managers and technical staff more often than less skilled profiles (particularly, general production staff and salespeople). Middle managers are the largest targets of training actions (67%), compared with 10% of general production staff and 13% of salespeople;
- Men (34%) more than women (27%);
- Graduates (55.1%) compared with 11% of workers with only compulsory education.

On the other hand, the survey points to interesting trends in demand by workers. The majority of the interviewees (88%) were of the opinion that training should not take place at a specific moment but cover the whole of their working life. Moreover, the workers interviewed agreed in defining vocational training as an opportunity for personal growth, although just over 16% identified it as a corporate resource, as did 28.8% of middle managers, probably indicating that higher career levels tend to identify more with corporate objectives. Workers also regard training as an opportunity to improve their job security (15.5%) and career prospects (13.2%), while they show less interest in the training process as a chance to change work (7%).

Another aspect of interest concerns knowledge and expectations associated with continuing training. The findings of the survey bear out the assumption that there is widespread disorientation regarding existing opportunities and policies. In fact, 33% of the workers interviewed would not know who to approach if they realised they needed to renew their skills. The disorientation increases among the weakest segments of the workforce (those with low levels of schooling and a low position in the enterprise), most of whom do not regard training as an opportunity to improve their career position. At least 45% of the payroll employees interviewed were unable to identify anyone to contact. Public institutions were most often cited (the Regional Authorities by 19%, the Ministry of Labour also by 19%, followed by the European Union and the local authorities), enterprises to a lesser extent (9%) and the trade unions almost never. Regarding individual continuing training and training leave per Law 53/2000, over 98% of the interviewees possessed no information at all.

---

<sup>59</sup> The survey has been conducted by *Isfol* in collaboration with *Abacus* as part of the Continuing Training Project (2001). The telephone interviews, using CATI techniques, were made with a sample of 5,000 workers representing approximately 9,800,000 employees of private enterprises in Italy. The sample survey was preceded by qualitative phase involving focus groups with the workers.

Nonetheless, expectations regarding government policies are high. It is significant that the majority of the workers interviewed accepted the idea of contributing to the cost of training (in terms of time, 65%, and in terms of money too, 62%). Only 20% declared they were completely uninterested in investing time or money in training. Most of these were older people with a weak professional profile who had become extremely distrustful of the very idea of participating in training activities.

Finally, the proportion that agreed with the training choices of enterprises was fairly small (33%) and tended to occur among higher corporate positions.

Against this background, the Regional Authorities' experiments with individual training using the voucher system are not only a positive attempt to organise the training opportunities open to the adult population but an experience that may offer useful indications in a number of areas:

- Public policies for the development of lifelong learning;
- The tools, at labour contract level, that can make access to continuing training and lifelong learning a concrete reality for workers;
- The criteria for reconciling collective training plans and individual training pathways for financing by Joint Interprofessional Funds.

More generally, the fact that different types of individual training pathways - different as to type of financing, promoters, training sector but often similar as to type of learner and functional links - such as adult education within the main education sector and individual continuing training under the regional banner, coexist inside the same geographical areas should point to the need for local policies to co-ordinate and/or integrate supply. This is particularly true when both sectors generate fairly similar training activities (functional literacy courses in IT/multimedia and foreign languages, which are mainly attended by workers, even within the public adult education sector)<sup>60</sup>. It also applies to all those cases in which access to continuing training - be it collective or individual - is impeded by very poor basic literacy skills. Even for individual training, in fact, access is more widespread among the "strong" categories of workers, that is, younger people, those with higher educational attainment, managers and technical staff<sup>61</sup>. We all know how a background of basic training - and, more generally, an experience of school that has instilled familiarity with learning - affects people's propensity to repeat training experiences. Adult education, therefore, can offer - as in some cases effectively has offered - the sort of "alignment" or "consolidation" of basic skills that will ease access to continuing training and "re-motivate" even the weakest to re-integrate in training.

---

<sup>60</sup> Data on the characteristics of training supply for adults within the education sector and as individual continuing training point to a predominance of foreign languages and IT skills.

<sup>61</sup> See in this connection the results of the *Cras* study conducted on behalf of the Emilia-Romagna Regional Authorities (year 1999-2000) on the characteristics of users of individual continuing training.



### 4.3 • THE VOUCHER SYSTEM

Vouchers are not training coupons that workers use to pay for training themselves. It is the cost of training that can be financed for each worker.

The Regional Authorities have assigned different economic value to the vouchers, ranging from “up to 1 million lire” to “up to 2.5 million lire”, and they are issued by the Regional or Provincial Authorities to training bodies in respect of each learner. If the cost of the training is less than the value of the voucher, some Regional Authorities will accept applications by a worker to participate in several courses on condition that the various activities form an organic training pathway (as, for example, the Region of Emilia-Romagna has decreed). Other Regional or Provincial Authorities have accepted applications to participate in courses disbursed under the following call, up to the threshold value.

Piedmont, Lombardy and Veneto have introduced a system for workers to share in the costs of training, although not over 20% of the total, to increase their motivation to attend. In some Regions (Emilia-Romagna for one), the training provider can only cash in the voucher if the worker has attended at least 70% of the total number of hours envisaged in the training project. The provider can obtain protection by asking workers to pay a deposit when they enrol, which is returned to them at the end of training.

The voucher system allows Regional or Provincial Authorities to achieve two objectives: to introduce a market approach among vocational training bodies and to increase learners' sense of responsibility and motivation towards the investment in training.



• **CONCLUSIONS**



The research activity on the state of progress of national and regional policies for building a lifelong learning system and on the supply and demand of lifelong learning summarised in this paper has shown the complexities of developing a system of lifelong learning opportunities for adults.

Achieving that objective implies creating the conditions to make lifelong learning easy for everyone, regardless of age or employment status. It calls for the contribution of actors and stakeholders outside the training system, and consequently requires a system of governance open to dialogue and structured, not episodic, collaboration between institutions and social forces, between providers, organisations and stakeholders with a role in training and employment policies.

An institutional and social commitment in this direction is still necessary since a stronger system of adult education and training has implications for the empowerment of citizens in social life, apart from being a requisite for their entry and retention in the world of work.

Lifelong learning takes place in “seats” spanning the formal and the non-formal sector. It includes the informal sector, where learning occurs, not always intentionally, throughout people’s lives, in their workplaces, their family life, and the community.

Potential learners differ widely by age, social and employment status and their needs range from educational certificate or vocational qualification to exploiting opportunities for cultural learning and improving their functional literacy skills.

In particular, the skills that a citizen needs to move within the knowledge society are primarily strategic, basic know-how to support them through the transition and change they face continuously, not only in work contexts and processes but also in daily life.

European training policies have set concrete objectives designed to fulfil those needs. By 2010, according to the European Union, 85% of the population of 22 year-olds should have upper secondary school qualifications and at least 12,5% of the active population of 25 to 64 year-olds should have access to lifelong learning activities. According to Eurostat, at present almost 5 % of Italy’s adult population participates in lifelong learning.

It seemed, therefore, that an understanding of the channels of demand and profiles of potentials learners would offer useful practical support for stakeholders concerned with programming strategies by helping them satisfy a broad range of potential demand by sounding and interpreting trends regarding participation in lifelong learning.

The study of demand prompts some preliminary considerations concerning a macro breakdown of the section of the adult population that participates in lifelong learning to further personal interests. Out of a representative sample of 4,000 adults 17% had taken part in activities of this type in the previous two years. Some 60% of them had secondary or university education, an element that highlights the close link between training background and decision

to undergo additional training. It is evident that the training profile of the 83% of the adult population without access to lifelong learning contains a large proportion (67%) of less cultured people. The reasons for not participating in training were lack of interest in 37% of cases and family and work problems in 28% and 24% respectively, placing them among the main obstacles to participation.

However, for a broader reflection on the potential to involve more people in training activities, it is important to note that the large percentage of the non-participating population includes, within our sample, more than 40% of respondents who were fairly or very interested in doing so. Some of the sample also suggested the amount of time they could dedicate to training activities, the cost they would be prepared to accept and the training subjects that interest them.

In response to this open attitude, however, it emerges that potential students receive no support in their approach to learning. They do not know where to obtain information; few know where adult education courses are held and many believe it is in school buildings; and a very small number know of the existence of guidance services.

The research study also revealed an unmistakable trend in this area. There is a gap in access and participation that operates to the disadvantage of workers with low qualifications and poor education, in whom there is a decision not to invest for a series of reasons linked to age and enterprise size.

If we assume, as our conceptual frame of reference, that lifelong learning must become a reality for all the citizenry, in Italy we are faced with huge numbers of the population who must be guaranteed that right. Potential users of the lifelong learning system total some 38 million, spread among disparate socio-economic sectors, with very varied training backgrounds, obviously as well as differences in personal histories and hence in the objective and subjective obstacles encountered.

If Italy's training system decided to put into practice the dictates of the European recommendation and train at least 12,5% of the adult population by the year 2010 it would be faced with a demand from almost 4 million people.

To create a supply capable of matching that demand, we need to form a strong local network to govern the various stakeholders and agencies involved in lifelong learning. By studying the data, and especially by comparing observations of providers, supply typologies and users of training services with an analysis of demand, we gain an impression that there are opportunities of enormous training value but they operate within similar segments and without co-ordination. In an approach based on regional and provincial programming of lifelong learning, the Local Bodies, Municipal Authorities in particular, are called upon to interpret local requirements and organise a suitable response, taking into account the potential contribution of education, vocational training and non-formal providers.

Less visible demand must be brought into the open. This is why we need to plan and develop information and guidance services and find appropriate methods, instruments and locations. Some sections of the citizenry will have to be “approached” where daily life takes place. It is a matter of the local structure going to the demand, re-appropriating the adult education methods of earlier decades.

The survey of training opportunities and of the network of providers reveals a substantial volume of activities and a large number of training centres. In fact, it should be recalled that the survey of supply, which was based on a mailed questionnaire, reached over 24% of the reference universe of potential education and training providers and that in 2000-2001 the agencies surveyed ran more than 17,000 courses of various types, involving over 350,000 learners.

Our analysis of course typologies shows that there are more than 2,000 leading to educational qualifications, over 8% of which for primary and lower secondary school certificates and 3% the upper secondary school-leaving certificates. The majority, amounting to some 10,000 courses, consist of literacy education, approximately 10% of which in Italian and nearly 22% in foreign languages (mainly English), while about 25% are digital literacy courses. There are around 4,000 lifelong education courses on various cultural and artistic subjects and 1,200 pre-specialisation courses.

These figures suffice to outline the trend of supply already been described in the analysis of sectoral data for the formal system alone. Data from the latest monitoring of activities by Permanent Territorial Centres indicates a clear preponderance of short functional literacy courses, which are attended by a large number of upper secondary school certificate-holders, representing 50% of all learners; added to them are around 10% of learners with high educational qualifications. This is a far cry from traditional adult education in Italy, which thirty years ago was dedicated to teaching primary literacy to people who had been excluded from training processes. On the other hand, it is important to stress that with the increased participation of young people in education it is obvious that the demand for primary literacy will tend to give way to a demand for new know-how.

Our survey confirms that providers offering functional literacy courses in foreign languages and IT belong to the formal and non-formal sectors, both of which are responsive to the trend of demand from people with higher educational attainment.

Lifelong learning in the formal sector is shifting focus towards the provision of activities geared to a young and more highly qualified population, although some activities are still reserved for the socially disadvantaged. The non-formal segment is taking the same approach, although it tends to reach learners in the higher age groups.

More than 1,700 training centres were surveyed as part of the study, a large percentage of which (65%) provide a stable supply of activities, having between 5 and 10 years experience in the field. This is an important indication of the reliability of providers and a source of strength

to be taken into consideration. By contrast, a high degree of flexibility characterises the situation with regard to the other two system indicators: personnel and sources of finance. More than 60% of instructors are bound by co-ordinated and continuous collaboration contracts or offer their services as partners or volunteers. This indicates that employees work under extremely flexible contract forms, ensuring elasticity on the supply side, which does not have to be adjusted in response to the need to guarantee teachers' jobs. On the other hand, this situation also means the system may be unable to rely on stratified know-how that can guarantee the quality of supply since there are no accompanying activities to train the trainers.

At this point we are faced with a series of considerations regarding the best way to organise supply. As the instructors who have been coping for years with the needs of this segment of users of lifelong learning, teaching adults means taking up the challenge of a different approach to learning. Outside the forced circle of family pressures experienced in youth, adults learn and approach the "seats" of learning under their own, conscious, steam. And this step towards the "seats" of knowledge is more spontaneous if their personal perception and recollection of earlier training experiences is not one of failure. People approach training if it is contextualised, if it serves a purpose, such as entering the labour market, regaining a lost job, or achieving an objective such as the dream of obtaining an educational qualification abandoned in adolescence. Or again, as the research study tells us, it may be to enrich a baggage of personal knowledge in various spheres of the arts and culture.

Yet even a conscious decision is no guarantee of success: the pathways of adults are strewn with obstacles erected by the difficulties of everyday life and their attitudes to learning demand specific methodologies. The research study found that only 6% of the 17% of interviewees who had started on a pathway towards higher educational qualifications actually achieved their objective.

Attitudes tend to polarise: demand is explicit and continuous from people who already possess the minimum apparatus of knowledge. Those who already have that apparatus can diagnose their own needs, find the courses that best answer their expectations and personal and vocational projects, and not submit to but direct the guidance process from a skill balance in which they occupy a central role. If they are employed they have the stimulus of career advancement; if they occupy middle to high positions in an average or large-sized enterprise, there are experts ready to design training pathways for them that will assist their personal and professional development.

The supply of training has expanded rapidly in recent years but it is in danger of becoming available only to the people who can see and understand it and somehow determine and encourage its proliferation. Unfortunately, 60% of the active population have only primary or lower secondary school certificates, they are young but not very, they do not surf the net and do not participate in continuing training activities. These figures should prompt reflection on the guidance and tutoring processes that need to be put in place and on the methods of observing and listening to local roots: without them we run the danger of "aiming high" with our programming and losing sight of a less visible but equally important reality from the



viewpoint of the country's growth. Reflecting on these needs is an economic necessity and even before that a choice in favour of civil and democratic participation.

It is here that employment centres and other guidance providers can play an important role: people with occupational-mobility status, young and less young job-seekers, and the unemployed must become the targets of a system founded on principles of employability and social and occupational integration.

We must develop an awareness of the importance of mass communication media as vehicles of information about the supply of learning opportunities. It should be recalled that 40% of the sample interviewed for the survey of demand stated that they often read newspapers, while 46% often listen to the radio and 63% watch television.

Briefly, lifelong learning inside and outside the productive system exists but tends to be elitist and operate as a virtuous circle for a portion of the citizenry among the least disadvantaged. This consideration should naturally be accompanied by the observation that the Permanent Territorial Centres, which have inherited a long tradition in the field of adult literacy, continue to address the question of primary literacy, organising more than 2,500 courses leading to primary and lower secondary school certificates in 2001-2002, and that the non-profit sector, notably various associations and voluntary organisations, provides a large number of activities for sections of the population at risk of exclusion.

It would be appropriate, therefore, to reflect again on some underlying considerations. Lifelong learning is a global strategy involving a multitude of institutional actors and social stakeholders. Its priority is to guarantee social and occupational integration, objectives that strongly emphasise the role of local policies that are close to all groups of the population, regardless of gender or social class.

To fulfil these objectives there must be active co-operation between the central and local institutions responsible for education and training, enterprises and local providers and agencies. Their task is to support the many sources of social demand for lifelong learning with their various expectations, ranging from the attainment of higher educational qualifications to the acquisition of functional know-how, from the need for training to find and keep a job to the desire to take advantage of cultural services.

There is a pressing need for a form of governance that can satisfy demand without losing sight of local socio-economic development and accompany citizens through the process of acquiring emerging skills. It is no accident that the agreement to build a lifelong learning system embracing the central and local levels envisaged a widespread and articulated model of governance. Three years on from the agreement a few dozen local committees are now in place.

The findings of the survey of policies, which are described in outline here, highlight a number of crucial issues for the development of a lifelong learning system.

Compared with the regional situation described earlier, at national level nothing has been done to implement the framework drawn up in the Agreement of 2 March 2000. In particular, the failure to set up a National Committee has brought the process of designing the system to a halt. No shared guidelines have been developed by the various stakeholders to facilitate agreement on the decision-making and programming processes needed to determine methods, resources and common actions for adult education and training with a view to implementing the principle of lifelong learning.

The Regional Authorities have nonetheless instituted systems of collaboration at local level in the field of education and training policy. These systems are based on different models and adopt the forms and methods judged most appropriate: some Regional Authorities have opted for the model set out in the Agreement of 2 March 2000 while others have preferred different methods of integration based on co-ordinated programming bodies already operating in other segments of the training system.

The number of Local Committees already set up and in operation is small. With respect to the model of governance envisaged in the Agreement, the creation of forums for evaluating demand and programming supply as an outcome of collaboration between local institutions and other stakeholders has been the most neglected aspect.

Even the guidelines for identifying the typologies of local training agencies to act as providers have not been chosen on the basis of homogenous criteria, particularly as regards recognition of the Permanent Territorial Centres.

Nonetheless, system-based measures and actions have been launched at regional level, just as training initiatives that were the object of calls for proposals are now under way, with a large percentage dedicated to ITs and English courses.

Finally, a number of crucially important questions remain unanswered with regard to the adaptation of the lifelong learning system to accommodate:

- Specific guidance measures for adults;
- The channelling of demand through the definition and reorganisation of supply;
- The choice of priorities for the organisation of supply based on social and economic demand in a given area.

Briefly, the research study has shown that the success of these strategies depends crucially on action to:

- Foster the creation of a basic education and training system that prepares the way for a process of lifelong learning and can also instil a positive attitude throughout the lifecycle;
- Develop multi-faceted and flexible supply to meet the increasingly disparate needs of a growing target of learners with different social and demographic characteristics;

- Allow everyone in the country access to training opportunities, including through the use of ICTs, such as the Internet, e-learning and other ways of exploiting opportunities for culture;
- Increase sources of information and make local education and training opportunities more visible;
- Build a network of training agencies and providers to prevent overlapping and co-ordinate different types of training activities;
- Support links between different institutions responsible for education and training, and dialogue with the social partners.



- **REFERENCES**



- AA.Vv. (1975), *Education and Working Life in Modern Society*, OECD.
- AA.Vv. (1998), *L'educazione ovvero l'utopia necessaria. Il valore dell'apprendimento continuo nella società contemporanea*, in "Open Rivista Italiana di Educazione Continua", No. 1, Edizioni dell'Università Popolare, Rome.
- AA.Vv. (2001), *La 'nuova Eda' dei Ctp*, in "Percorsi", April, pp. 7-11.
- ALBERICI, A. (ed) (2000), *Educare in età adulta: percorsi biografici nella ricerca e nella formazione*, Armando Editore, Rome.
- ALBERICI, A. (2002), *Imparare sempre nella società della conoscenza*, Mondadori, Milan.
- ALBERICI, A. (2002), *Educazione degli adulti*, Carocci, Rome.
- ALBERT, L. - GALLINA, V. - LICHTNER, M. (1998), *Tornare a scuola da grandi. Educazione degli adulti e rientri scolastici: guida per gli insegnanti*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- ALBERT, L. (2000), *Lo sviluppo dei Ctp verso l'istruzione superiore*, in "Percorsi", June, pp. 12-15.
- ALBERT, L. (2002), *Formazione individuale e ruolo degli enti locali*, in "Formazione Domani", No. 43-44, pp. 27-32.
- ALESSANDRINI, G. (2002), *Pedagogia della formazione nella società della conoscenza*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- ANGORI, S. (2000) *L'educazione degli adulti tra ambiguità e prospettive di sviluppo* in "Prospettiva EP", No. 2-3, pp. 11-28.
- Assinform - Censis - RUR (2002), *Le città digitali in Italia*, Rapporto 2001, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- BDP - Unità italiana Eurydice (1999), *Educazione degli adulti nei paesi dell'Unione Europea*, "I Quaderni di Eurydice", No. 16.
- BÉLANGER P., FEDERIGHI P. (2001), *Analyse transnationale des politiques d'éducation et de formation des adultes: la libération difficile des forces créatrices*, Institut de l'Unesco pour l'Education, Hamburg.
- BOCCA, G. (1992), *Pedagogia e lavoro: tra educazione permanente e professionalità*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- BOCCA, G. (1993), *Educazione Permanente. Realtà e prospettive*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan.
- BONINI M.C. (2002), *L'orientamento nell'educazione degli adulti*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- BORIANI, M. (ed) (1999), *Educazione degli adulti. Dalle 150 ore ai Ctp*, Armando Editore, Rome.

- BRUSCAGLIONI M. (1991), *La gestione dei processi nella formazione degli adulti*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- CACCO, B. - PELLEGRINI, F. (2001), *Per un'analisi dei bisogni formativi dell'età adulta*, CDE, Rome.
- CALAMINICI, P. (2002), *Ripensare il tema della lettura nell'educazione degli adulti*, in "Percorsi", October, pp. 23-29.
- CEDE (1996), *L'educazione in età adulta - Primo rapporto nazionale*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- CEDEFOP (2001), *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning - Consultation: A Review of Member State and EEA Country Reports*, Luxembourg.
- CEDEFOP (2002), *E-Learning and Training in Europe. A Survey into the Use of E-Learning in Training and Professional Development in the European Union*, Luxembourg.
- CEDEFOP (2003), *Lifelong Learning: Citizens' Views*, Luxembourg.
- CEDEFOP/ Eurydice (2001), *Initiatives nationales en faveur de l'éducation et de la formation tout au long de la vie en Europe*.
- Centro Nazionale per il Volontariato - Osservatorio nazionale per il Volontariato - Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, *Volontari in Formazione* <http://cnv.cpr.it/formazione/index.html>.
- Council of the European Union (1970), *Education permanente*, Strasbourg.
- Council of the European Union (2001), *Resolution on e-learning*, OJ C 204 20.07.2001, p. 3 ff.
- Council of the European Union (2002), *Resolution on lifelong learning*, OJ C 163 09.07.2002, p. 1 ff.
- D'ORAZIO, E. - FLORENZANO, F. (ed) (1994), *Studiare da grande. Capire e fare le Università della terza Età*, Edizioni dell'Università Popolare, Rome.
- DE SANCTIS, F.M. (1978), *L'educazione degli adulti in Italia*, Editori Riuniti, Rome.
- DELORS, J. (1997), *Nell'educazione un tesoro. Rapporto Unesco della Commissione Internazionale sull'Educazione per il Ventunesimo Secolo*, Armando Editore, Rome.
- DEMETRIO, D. (1984), *Un curriculum integrato per la formazione di base degli adulti*, IRRSAE Lombardia, Milan.
- DEMETRIO, D. (1990), *Educatore di professione*, La Nuova Italia, Florence.
- DEMETRIO, D. (1991), *Tornare a crescere. L'età adulta fra persistenze e cambiamenti*, Guerini, Milan.



- DEMETRIO, D. (1995), *L'educazione nella vita adulta. Per una teoria fenomenologica dei vissuti e delle origini*, NIS, Rome.
- DEMETRIO, D. (1996), *L'età adulta. Teorie dell'identità e pedagogie dello sviluppo*, NIS, Rome.
- DEMETRIO, D. (1997), *Manuale di educazione degli adulti*, Laterza, Bari.
- DEMETRIO, D. - ALBERICI, A. (2002), *Istituzioni di educazione degli adulti*, Guerini, Milan.
- European Commission (1996), *White Paper on Education and Training: Teaching and Learning. Towards the Learning Society*, Brussels.
- European Commission (1997), *Communication Towards a Europe of Knowledge*, Brussels, COM (1997) 563 final.
- EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2000), *Lisbon European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 23-24 March* [http://www.europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/mar2000/mar2000\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/mar2000/mar2000_en.pdf).
- European Commission (2000), *Santa Maria da Feira European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 19-20 June* [http://www.europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/june2000/june2000\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/june2000/june2000_en.pdf).
- European Commission (2000), *Nice European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 7-9 December* <http://www.ue.eu.int/newsrooms>.
- European Commission (2000), *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, Brussels, SEC (2000) 1832 final.
- European Commission (2001), *Communication on Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality*, Brussels, COM (2001) 678 final.
- European Commission (2001), *Communication to the Council and the European Parliament on the eLearning Action Plan. Designing Tomorrow's Education*, Brussels, COM (2001) 172 final.
- European Commission (2001), *Stockholm European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 23-24 March* <http://www.ue.eu.int/newsrooms>.
- European Commission (2001), *Lifelong learning practice and indicators*, Brussels.
- European Commission (2001), *Report of the Eurostat Task Force on Measuring Lifelong Learning*, Brussels.
- European Commission (2002), *Barcelona European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 15-16 March*.

- European Commission (2002), *European Report on Quality Indicators of Lifelong Learning*, Brussels.
- European Economic and Social Committee (2001), *Opinion on the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, OJ C 311 07.11.2001, p. 39 ff.
- EURYDICE (1999), *Lifelong Learning: the Contribution of Education Systems in the Member States of the European Union*.
- FARINELLI, F. (2001), *L'Eda nell'istruzione pubblica, oltre i confini della scuola dell'obbligo* in "Percorsi", December, pp. 6-9.
- FARINELLI, F. (2002), *Obbligo formativo e CTP* in "Percorsi", October, pp. 3-5.
- FARINELLI, F. (2003), *Formazione continua ed educazione degli adulti*, in "Percorsi", March, pp. 13-15.
- FEDERIGHI, P. (1996), *Strategia per la gestione dei processi educativi nel contesto europeo. Dal Life-long-learning a una società ed iniziativa diffusa*, Liguori.
- FEDERIGHI, P. (ed) (2000), *Glossario dell'educazione degli adulti in Europa*, "Quaderni Eurydice", Parretti Grafiche, Florence.
- FEDERIGHI, P. (2000), *La nuova politica nazionale nel campo dell'educazione degli adulti*, in "Percorsi", June, pp. 5-11.
- FISSORE, G.- MEINARDI, G. (editors) (2002), *Certificazione delle competenze e riconoscimento dei crediti nell'educazione degli adulti*, IRRE, Turin.
- FIVOL (1998), *Le dimensioni della solidarietà. Secondo Rapporto sul volontariato sociale italiano*, Rome.
- FLORENZANO, F. (1996), *Scenari per una nuova educazione permanente. La formazione continua dei cittadini in Italia e la ricaduta sull'occupazione. Colmare una lacuna, produrre nuova ricchezza*, Edizioni dell'Università Popolare, Rome.
- FLORENZANO, F. (1998), *Manuale dell'educazione continua. La formazione per tutto l'arco della vita e gli strumenti per realizzarla*, Edizioni dell'Università Popolare, Rome.
- FLORENZANO, F. (2000), *Chi ha paura dell'educazione degli adulti? Un manifesto per l'Italia da formare*, Edizioni dell'Università Popolare, Rome.
- Fondazione Italiana per il volontariato (1995), *Il volontariato sociale italiano*, IGER, Rome.
- GALLINA, V. (ed) (1996), *Prospettive dell'educazione degli adulti in Europa: obiettivi e strategie politiche. Una ricerca comparativa*, Armando Editore, Rome.

- GALLINA, V. (ed) (2000), *La competenza alfabetica in Italia*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- GALLINA, V. - LICHTNER, M. (1996), *L'educazione in età adulta. Primo rapporto nazionale*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- GELPI, E. (1984), *Educazione permanente nel quadro internazionale*, in L., Pagnoncelli (ed), *L'educazione e l'adulto: nuove frontiere*, Giunti & Lisciani, Teramo.
- GELPI, E. (2000), *Educazione degli adulti. Inclusione ed esclusione*, Guerini, Milan.
- HESÉN, T. (1976), *La società che apprende. Verso un nuovo rapporto tra scuola e società*, Armando Editore, Rome.
- ISFOL (1996), *Apprendimento continuo e formazione. Contributi sulle dimensioni organizzative, sociali e tecnologiche dell'apprendimento*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- ISFOL (2002), *Rapporto ISFOL 2002, "Strumenti e Ricerche"*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- ISFOL (2003), *Politiche regionali per la formazione permanente. Primo Rapporto Nazionale. I libri del Fondo Sociale Europeo*.
- ISFOL (2003), *Formazione permanente: chi partecipa e chi ne è escluso. Primo Rapporto Nazionale sulla domanda. I libri del Fondo Sociale Europeo*.
- ISFOL (2003), *L'offerta di formazione permanente in Italia. Primo Rapporto Nazionale. I libri del Fondo Sociale Europeo*.
- ISTAT (1999), *Le organizzazioni di volontariato in Italia. Strutture, risorse e attività*, Istat, Rome.
- JARVIS P. (1999), *International Dictionary of Adult and Continuing Education*, Kogan, London.
- JARVIS P. (1995), *Adult and Continuing Education. Theory and Practice*, Routledge, London/New York.
- KNOWLES, M. (1993), *Quando l'adulto impara. Pedagogia e Andragogia*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- KNOWLES, M. (1996), *La formazione degli adulti come autobiografia*, Raffello Cortina Editore, Milan.
- LENGRAND, P. (1970), *Introduction à l'éducation permanente*, UNESCO, Paris.
- LICHTNER, M. (1990), *Soggetti, percorsi, complessità sociale*, La Nuova Italia, Florence.
- LICHTNER, M. (1999), *La qualità delle offerte formative*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- LUCIANO, A. (1999), *Imparare lavorando*, Utet, Turin.

- LUCIANO, A. (ed) (2002), *Politiche del lavoro - Linee di ricerca e prove di valutazione*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- MARCHIORO S. (2002), *Educazione permanente. La rilevanza delle azioni di orientamento*, in "Magellano. Rivista per l'orientamento", Iter - Institute for Training Education and Research, III, 1, Florence.
- MEGHNAGI, S. - SUSI, F. (1977), *Educazione permanente*, Guaraldi, Florence.
- Ministero del Lavoro e P.S. - Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione - Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, Dipartimento per gli Affari sociali - Ministero dell'università, ricerca scientifica e tecnologica - Conferenza dei Presidenti delle Regioni e P.A. - Isfol (ed) (2001), *Rapporto nazionale sul processo di consultazione relativo al Memorandum europeo sull'Istruzione e la Formazione permanente*, Rome.
- Ministero del Lavoro e Politiche Sociali - Ministero dell'Istruzione, Università e Ricerca - Coordinamento delle Regioni - Unione Province Italiane - Associazione Nazionale dei Comuni - Isfol (ed) (2003), *Follow up della Risoluzione del Consiglio dell'Unione europea sul lifelong learning*, Rome.
- Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione - Direzione Generale per l'Istruzione Professionale - Cooperativa insegnanti di iniziativa democratica - European Commission - Direzione Generale XXII (2000), *Educazione degli Adulti. Scuola e sistema integrato in Italia e in altri Paesi dell'UE*. Secondo Rapporto Ciid, Rome.
- Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione - Direzione Generale per l'Istruzione Professionale - Cooperativa insegnanti di iniziativa democratica (2000), *Educazione degli adulti negli istituti professionali e tecnici. Risultati e prospettive di una ricerca*, Rome.
- MONTEDORO, C. (ed) (2000), *La formazione verso il terzo millennio. Finalità, strumenti, metodologie di intervento*, Seam, Rome.
- MONTEDORO, C. (ed) (2001), *L'orientamento degli adulti sul lavoro - Linee guida e strumenti per gli operatori*, Monolite editrice, Rome.
- MORGAGNI, E. (2000), *Realtà e tendenze dell'educazione degli adulti in Emilia Romagna* in S. Marchioro, E. Morgagni, A. Spallacci (ed) *La scuola dietro l'angolo. Adulti e istruzione nei Centri territoriali permanenti dell'Emilia Romagna. Un'indagine conoscitiva*, Bologna.
- MUSSONI, G. (ed) (1996), *Compendium dei progetti cofinanziati dall'Unione Europea nell'ambito dell'Anno europeo dell'istruzione e della formazione lungo tutto l'arco della vita*, Isfol, Rome.
- NEGARVILLE, M. (2003), *Iniziative di qualità e ruolo della scuola pubblica per il lifelong learning* in "Percorsi", March, pp. 9-12.

- NICOLETTI, P. (2002), *Come favorire la formazione permanente*, in "Magellano", No. 13, pp. 7-12.
- NICOLETTI, P. (2002), *Più formazione iniziale per facilitare l'apprendimento permanente* in "Professionalità", No. 72, pp. 47-55.
- NOVAK, J.D. - GROWN, D.B. (1984), *Imparando a imparare*, Sei Frontiere.
- OECD (1973), *Recurrent Education: a Strategy for a Lifelong Education*.
- OECD (1974), *L' Education récurrente: tendances et problèmes*, Paris.
- OECD (1997), *Apprendere a tutte le età. Le politiche educative e formative per il XXI secolo*, Armando Editore, Rome.
- OECD (1998), *Alternative Approaches to Financing Lifelong Learning. Country Report - Italy*.
- OECD (1999), *Surmonter l'exclusion grace à l' apprentissage des adultes*, Paris.
- OECD (2000), *Where Are the Resources for Lifelong Learning?*, Paris.
- OECD (2000), *"Literacy in the Information Age: Final Report on the International Adult Literacy Survey"*, OECD-OCDE/Statistics Canada, Paris.
- OREFICE, P. (ed) (1997), *Formazione e processo formativo*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- OREFICE, P. (2001), *Il lavoro intellettuale in educazione*, La Nuova Italia, Florence.
- OREFICE, P. (2001), *Conoscenza e formazione*, Carocci, Rome.
- PAGNONCELLI, L. (1979), *Sistema formativo e educazione degli adulti*, Loescher, Turin.
- PIAZZA, R. -TUOZZI C. (ed) (2000), *La formazione diffusa. Il processo educativo in età adulta*, Pensa Multimedia, Lecce.
- PONTECORVO, C. - AIELLO, A.M. - ZUCCHERMAGLIO, C. (1995), *I contesti sociali dell'apprendimento*, Led, Milan.
- QUAGLINO, G.P. - CARROZZI, E. (1998), *Il processo di formazione*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- RANIERI, A. (2002), *Formazione permanente e politiche del lavoro*, in "Percorsi", October, pp. 6-8.
- SARACINO, V. (ed) (2000), *L'educazione permanente oggi*, Laterza, Bari.
- SCAGLIOSO, C. (2000), *L'educazione degli adulti alle soglie del terzo millennio* in "Annali della Pubblica Istruzione", No. 1-2, pp. 65-88.

- SCHETTINI, B. (2001), *L'educazione permanente e degli adulti oggi. La maschera, il volto e la metafora*, in "Studium Educationis", No1.
- SCHWARTZ, B. - DE BLIGNIÈRES, A. (1981), *Rapporto sull'educazione permanente. Documento finale presentato al Consiglio d'Europa*, Editrice Sindacale Italiana, Rome.
- SCHWARTZ, B. (1987), *Educazione degli adulti ed educazione permanente. 11 lezioni all'Università degli studi di Padova*, Liviana, Padua.
- SCHWARTZ, B. (1995), *Modernizzare senza escludere Un progetto di formazione contro l'emarginazione sociale e professionale*, Anicia, Rome.
- SERRERI, P. (2001), *Due indagini svolte a Roma. Esiste ancora l'educazione permanente?*, in "Valore scuola", No. 11, pp. 34-38.
- SPALLACCI, L. (2000), *Educazione permanente e terza età*, in "Prospettiva EP", No. 2-3, pp.3-10.
- SUSI, F. (1989), *La domanda assente*, La Nuova Italia Scientifica, Rome.
- SUSI, F. (1994), *La formazione nell'organizzazione*, Anicia, Rome.
- SUSI, F. (2000), *Il leader educativo. Le logiche dell'autonomia e l'apporto del dirigente scolastico*, Armando Editore, Rome.
- TRAMMA, S. (1997), *Educazione degli adulti*, Guerini, Milan.
- TREELLE (2002), *Scuola italiana, scuola europea? Dati e confronti*, "Quaderno", No. 1, May, Genoa.
- UNESCO (ed) (1976), *I documenti del rapporto Faure. L'educazione in divenire*, Armando Editore, Rome.
- UNESCO/CONFITEA (1997), *Final Declaration of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education*, Hamburg, 14-18 July 1997.
- UNESCO (2000), *The Right to Education. Towards Education for All Throughout Life. World Education Report*, Paris.
- UNESCO (2000), *Partnership in Action: Unesco's Educational Activities in the Europe Region 1998-2000*, Paris.
- VERTECCHI, B. (ed) (1999), *L'Educazione permanente degli adulti. Il confronto europeo e la strategia nazionale*, in "Studi e Documenti degli Annali della Pubblica Istruzione", No. 88.



Finito di stampare nel mese di maggio 2004  
dalla Rubbettino Industrie Grafiche ed Editoriali  
88049 Soveria Mannelli (Catanzaro)