



TESEUS Country snapshot:

Italy

Provided by:

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A. Executive summary and main findings

After completing the content of your country report, please summarize the key facts and main findings into a brief section (maximum 1 page long) that will be displayed in the beginning of the document.

In Italy, the VET system is co-managed by the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) and the local authorities (Regions).

The Ministry of Education provides the strategic guidance, also taking in consideration the European Commission policies, that are then applied by Regional authorities.

Entrepreneurship education in Italy is gaining more and more interest among policy makers and key stakeholders, and the Ministry of Education, University and Research recently released specific strategies and guidelines to give a new impulse to the Italian educational system in the digital age. However, this hasn't generated the operational change yet which would significantly provide youngsters with concrete, effective and innovative entrepreneurial education.

The **National Digital School Plan (PNSD)** is the main national strategy to foster efficiency of the Italian school system. Another crucial activity to help the transition from school to the world of work is the school-work alternating training, that becomes a mandatory activity to offer students the possibility to test their attitudes and competences on the job during their school path.

The main support to people who want to start a business in Italy is given through financial support for training, coaching and mentoring.

In 2018 the MIUR proposed a Syllabus to include entrepreneurship education in schools, built with the involvement of 40 stakeholders including business associations, the cooperative world, companies.

The syllabus is divided into 5 macro areas:

1. Forms and opportunities for doing business (interests, passions, propensities; the different forms of work and business, the role of business in society, etc.);
2. Idea generation, context and social needs;
3. From the idea to the enterprise: resources and skills;
4. The company in action: dealing with the market;
5. Economic citizenship.

As often happens in Italy, also start-up promotion and firm creation support suffer from geographical disparities among Northern and Southern Italy. Indeed, most of the initiatives are clustered in the North, with the South of Italy that suffers from lack of funding and involvement of local authorities.

B. Brief overview of IVET system in Italy

The Italian VET system in Italy is under the shared responsibility of the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) and the Regional Governments, as follows¹:

- Vocational upper secondary education (including technical education and vocational education) is managed by the Ministry of Education
- Initial vocational training is managed by the Regions and provided by recognised training agencies operating nationwide

The General Direction for the Education System² of the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR³), promotes an entrepreneurship education path oriented to the acquisition by students of an entrepreneurial mind-set, understood as ability to turning ideas into actions through creativity, innovation, risk assessment and assumption, the ability to plan and manage business initiatives⁴. Such entrepreneurial attitude of the MIUR directly derives from the **National Digital School Plan (PNSD)**, that represents the main national strategy to give a new impulse to the Italian educational system in the digital age.

The measures contained in the ministerial document, in addition to complying with the European Commission Communication of 2012 '**Rethinking education: investing in skills in view of better partner results economic reforms**'⁵ and renewed in the 2016 Communication '**A new skills agenda for Europe**'⁶, are intended to fill the emerging gaps due to the digital transformation, which requires continuous changes to the traditional organization of work, entrepreneurship and questions about the professional skills of the future⁷.

In 2015, the Italian Government approved a new law regulating the Education system (**Law no. 107/2015**)⁸. Through this law, the school-work alternating training has become a mandatory activity: students from secondary schools and from VET have to spend respectively 200 hours and 400 hours in the school-work alternating training⁹.

School-Work alternating training emphasised the importance of bringing together knowledge with know-how, intensifying schools' relations with their surroundings and the worlds of production and services. The partnership with businesses can encourage innovative teaching and the dissemination of educational processes that focus on acquiring useful skills for the world of work, while promoting educational and professional guidance, self-entrepreneurship, active citizenship, and greater involvement of the young in learning processes, also thanks to new technologies¹⁰.

Despite the institutional measures, Italy still appears quite far from European objectives, especially in stimulating digital entrepreneurship in upper secondary schools.

¹Eqavet, Brief description of the context of the VET system in Italy, 2017

²<https://www.miur.gov.it/web/guest/DGOSV>

³<https://www.miur.gov.it/>

⁴ Ministry of Education, University and Research, Circular letter.n. 244, 13.3.2018: Promotion of an entrepreneurship education path in secondary schools in Italy and abroad.

⁵Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions

⁶Communication from the Commission, New Skills Agenda for Europe, 2016

⁷Giffoni Innovation Hub, Entrepreneurship education in Italian secondary schools, 2018.

⁸<http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2015/07/15/15G00122/sg>

⁹ICEE, Comparative analysis of eight national strategies on entrepreneurship education, 2019

¹⁰<http://www.indire.it/en/progetto/school-work-alternation/>

Recently (January 2019) MIUR invested 22 million Euro to stimulate IVET through a very interesting initiative: the “Digital School” programme. The call for tenders is addressed to schools of all levels and will finance the design and creation of learning environments capable of integrating cutting-edge technology into teaching. All these measures aim to develop entrepreneurial skills of pupils through the implementation of learning environments and improved educational tools for trainers and teachers.

MIUR has also identified 60 education institutions located in risk areas to which 2.1 Million euros will be allocated for the creation of digital learning environments, especially starting from primary and secondary schools: the beneficiary schools have been identified among those with the highest levels of discomfort in learning, socio-economic family status, territorial deprivation and school dropouts. 7.5 million Euro will be also allocated to enhance the training of teachers and the skills of students on teaching methods related to the Digital School Plan¹¹.

¹¹<https://www.miur.gov.it/-/cs-scuola-da-bussetti-pacchetto-risorse-35-milioni-per-quella-digitale>

C. Brief overview of existing data and analyses for ITALY

Brief overview of existing data and analyses: Please provide overview of existing (if any) analyses, reports or data relevant for the context of start-up promotion and firm creation support for IVET students in your country and/or its regions. These may be found in policy, third sector, industry or IVET and entrepreneurship education resources.

Incubators and accelerators in Northern Italy currently offers the best overall conditions for the development of entrepreneurship, in particular for young professionals, but there is a general lack of coordination between these bodies and IVET system in Italy.

The Lombardy Region has the highest concentrations of accelerators and incubators in the Country while the Veneto Region hosts one of the most innovative development hubs in Europe. Central regions are doing well too, with Lazio and Emilia Romagna closely following Lombardy as for number and quality of their start-up accelerators and incubators.

Some statistics about incubators and accelerators in Italy:

- 171 incubators and accelerators
- 60% based in the North (23,5 % Lombardy, 10,6% Emilia Romagna, 8,8 % Tuscany)
- Southern Regions and the North-East are the areas with fewer incubators
- Legal Nature: 64.2% private, 13.9% public and 21% hybrid

Financing entrepreneurship

There are many laws in Italy that address access to finance for business creation for young people. Many of them also include provisions for training, coaching and mentoring with which will be discussed in the next section.

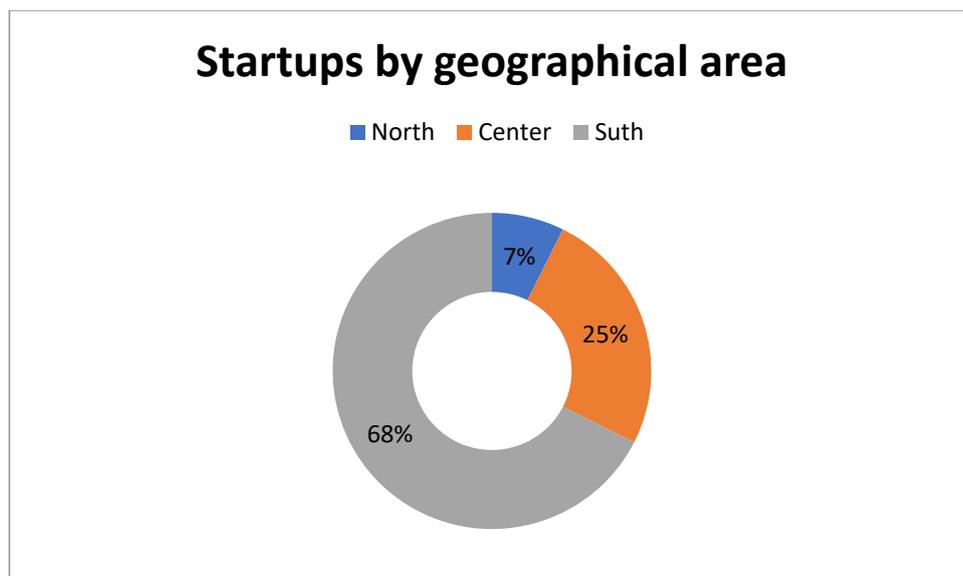
Many of these national policies have been evaluated and results are often positive (e.g. Observatory for Female Entrepreneurship, 2011). However, some studies highlighted that the benefits of the support is only realised in the short-term (Gennari and Lotti, 2013)¹².

Some examples are:

- Youth Guarantee Initiative (YEI) (2014-20): a long-term plan to promote the activation of youth on the labour market, to create new jobs and self-employment, as well as to combat social exclusion. Substantial support is expected for youth who are not in employment, education or training (i.e. NEETs), notably vocational training courses. It is implemented across all regions except for the Autonomous Province of Bozen, and it is financed under the European Social Fund (ESF). The Youth Guarantee is clearly one of the largest labour market initiatives and it faces a number of challenges due to its size. The most significant has been the in-take mechanism. A web portal has been launched to promote the initiative, but youth enter Youth Guarantee programmes through the public employment service, which is undergoing a very profound reform

¹²Gennari, E. and F. Lotti (2013), "Female Entrepreneurship and Government Policy: Evaluating the Impact of Subsidies on Firms' Survival", Bancad'Italia Occasional Paper, No. 192.

- Invitalia¹³ (www.invitalia.it) and ANPAL¹⁴ (<https://www.anpal.gov.it/>) have set up a network of consultants at central and local levels to support NEETs in developing their business ideas.
- Approximately 5.7% of the resources are dedicated to the promotion of self-employment and entrepreneurship, mainly within the **Crescere imprenditori** training initiative, ended December 31, 2017, and the **SELFImployment**¹⁵ financial instrument, still active
- SELFImployment It started its activities in March 2016 and is managed by Invitalia on behalf of the Ministry of Labour/ANPAL. Until March 2019, 1 844 funding requests were submitted by NEETs and 462 enterprises were financed for a total amount of EUR 853,64 million. Among these 56.3% were started by boys/men and 43.7% by girls/women. Most of the newly started enterprises (micro and small) operate in the retail and food and beverage service (production and sales)
- **Crescere imprenditori**¹⁶, was an initiative promoted by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies implemented with the support of Unioncamere which has an international level in the network of specialized structures of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture (see Entrepreneurship skills section)

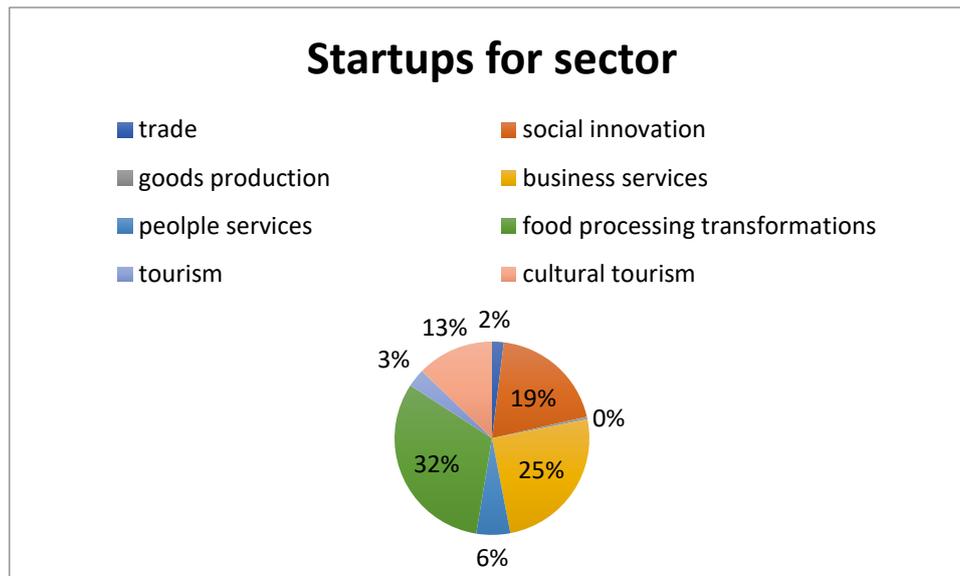


¹³ Invitalia is the National Agency for Investments and business development, managed by the Ministry of Economy

¹⁴ ANPAL is the National Agency

¹⁵<https://www.invitalia.it/cosa-facciamo/creiamo-nuove-aziende/selfiemployment>

¹⁶<http://www.filo.unioncamere.it/P42A0C0S10219/Crescere-imprenditori.htm>



Other interesting initiatives also for young people are listed below:

- **Nuove imprese a tasso zero**¹⁷ – for young people and women who want to start a micro or small business
- This incentive is an found for young people and women who want to become entrepreneurs. The benefits are valid throughout Italy and provide for the zero-rate financing of business projects with expenses up to 1.5 million euros which can cover up to 75% of the total eligible expenses
- **Resto al Sud**¹⁸ – for those under 46 who start up new businesses in the southern regions
- **Smart&Start Italia**¹⁹ – for innovative startups with projects between 100 thousand and 1.5 million euros
- **CulturaCrea**²⁰ - to create and grow businesses in the cultural-tourist industry

In addition, there are a large number of regional laws to support access to finance for youth and women entrepreneurs. Carree et al. (2009) assess the effect of regional policies supporting entrepreneurship in Italy on firm entry, exit, and net entry at the provincial level for six selected sectors. Their results show that entrepreneurship policies do not exert a consistent impact on firm and sector dynamics and unemployment is not significantly reduced by the start-ups from the unemployed. However, there are examples of success. In Tuscany, Mariani and Storchi (2017) examined the first phase (pre-2015) of the regional youth and female entrepreneurship support programme Fare Impresa, which offered to new firms a public guarantee and interest-rate rebates

¹⁷<https://www.invitalia.it/cosa-facciamo/creiamo-nuove-aziende/nuove-imprese-a-tasso-zero>

¹⁸<https://www.invitalia.it/cosa-facciamo/creiamo-nuove-aziende/resto-al-sud>

¹⁹https://www.incentivimpresa.it/landing-smartstart/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwj9LkBRDnARIsAGQ-hUdN3FuwuouEph8sxGaROSm-uFufF-pc06Fb3hNEcUFbt2Kp9GIICZ8aAsCHEALw_wcB

²⁰<https://www.invitalia.it/cosa-facciamo/creiamo-nuove-aziende/cultura-crea>

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for investment-related loans. The assessment results are positive: assisted loans actually lengthened firm survival, also providing the chance to the new entrepreneurs to offer additional permanent jobs. Some principle of subsidiarity with respect to different local needs should be adopted. In this sense, the first step is to build a thorough and up-to-date census of regional laws, along the lines of what has already been done for regional start-up funding (<http://www.finanziamentistartup.eu/>) by Italia Startup, the Italian National Startup Association, and the Warrant Group.

D. State of existing start-up promotion and firm creation support for IVET students in ITALY

State of existing start-up promotion and firm creation support for IVET students: Please provide an overview of situation in your country. Please consider country-level as well as regional-level perspective, and do not hesitate to enrich your overview with individual-level examples. When completing this part of mapping, you may consider the following questions as guidelines:

- *Are there entrepreneurship training initiatives aimed at start-up promotion and firm creation provided to IVET students? If so, who provides them and how?*
- *Are there general financial and business literacy training initiatives provided to IVET students?*
- *Is entrepreneurship training part of curricula at IVET schools?*
- *Are there support mechanisms and initiatives aimed at firm creation provided to IVET students? If so, who provides them and how?*
- *Do IVET students interested in entrepreneurship have access to mentoring and/or coaching? If so, who provides this and how?*
- *Are there initiatives aimed at developing entrepreneurial culture, atmosphere and spirit for IVET students? If so, who organizes them and how?*
- *Is entrepreneurship (incl. small business, freelancing etc.) considered and promoted as a career choice in career guidance counselling at IVET schools?*
- *Are there public initiatives that provide information on available support programmes or on business start-up procedures for IVET students?*
- *Are there business incubators for IVET students and/or fresh graduates?*
- *Is there an entrepreneurship strategy or action plan that explicitly covers the promotion and support of entrepreneurship for IVET students and fresh graduates?*

Main Italian, European and global institutions managing and coordinating the development of the educational processes have been working through these years to understand which variables are more related to the entrepreneurship education (Caggiano, 2015²¹; Caggiano, 2016²²). In its document EntreComp (Bacigalupo et al., 2016²³) Competence Framework (European Commission, 2016) the EU declares its commitment to elaborate a common theoretical and epistemological approach to promote entrepreneurship and to open a real dialogue of exchange between the education and the labour sectors.

In Italy seem to have interpreted the European institution's message on entrepreneurship education of the young people quite superficially, by reducing it to a specific core of subjects in university courses or to secondary schools projects. Except for higher education courses such as Economics, Management, and Industrial Engineering, along with Business and Administration Master courses (MBA), Italy appears to totally lack specific initiatives and centralized guidelines in favour of the promotion and diffusion of entrepreneurship education (Caggiano, 2016). Italy appears to be working slowly on this matter, especially with regards to the higher education sector. The uncertainty around

²¹Caggiano, V. (2015). *Entrepreneurial education: Psychological aspects of entrepreneurship*. Roma: Anicia.

²²Caggiano, V. (2016). *Teachability and entrepreneurship education: Summer school, teaching and learning way to be happy*. Ciudad Autonoma de Buenos Aires: Autores de Argentina.

²³Bacigalupo, M., Kamylyis, P., Punie, Y., & Van den Brande, G. (2016). *EntreComp: The entrepreneurship competence framework*. Luxembourg: Publication Office of the European Union.

the meaning of entrepreneurship education, the complexity in training academics and professors on the subject, the difficulties in involving professional entrepreneurs in training and educational courses and the traditional academic evaluation system (rating knowledge rather than competences and behaviours) are just some of the actual impediments undermining the spread of entrepreneurship education (Piazza, 2015²⁴). Another interesting research issue which relates to entrepreneurship education is the evaluation of the “external” education efficacy, in terms of employability of people enrolled in a course of study.

With the MIUR circular n. 4244 of 03/13/2018²⁵, Italy is one of the first countries to adopt the conceptual model "EntreComp". With this circular, the Ministry of Education promotes the paths of education for entrepreneurship **in secondary schools** and the structural introduction of entrepreneurship education in education.

The paths that in the MIUR circular are the paths, offered on a voluntary basis by the schools, aim to develop in the students attitudes, knowledge, skills and competences useful for their commitment in the entrepreneurial field, as well as in every work context and in every experience of active citizenship.

They can start as early as the first two years, with the enhancement of skills and abilities (creativity, self-awareness, motivation); in the second two-year period and in the last year the course will develop entrepreneurship through additional teaching and the strengthening of those present in the curriculum. The proposed approach favors both the "transversal" integration of learning aimed at entrepreneurial skills in the field of curricular teaching, and the offer of optional courses, proposed with the recourse to the autonomy of educational institutions.

As necessary, the teaching methods will privilege the practical dimension and the autonomy of the student.

The 'promotion' of the courses proposed by the circular is solidly accompanied by useful tools for the realization.

For the development of entrepreneurship, the experts of the MIUR have proposed a Syllabus, built through the involvement of about 40 stakeholders including business associations, the cooperative world, businesses.

The syllabus is divided into 5 macro areas:

6. Forms and opportunities for doing business (interests, passions, propensities; the different forms of work and business, the role of business in society, etc.);
7. Idea generation, context and social needs;
8. From the idea to the enterprise: resources and skills;
9. The company in action: dealing with the market;
10. Economic citizenship.

Each macro area is described in terms of content, and is accompanied by numerous examples of coherent and innovative educational activities (meetings, simulations, surveys and data searches, role plays, case histories, exercises in positive interdependence, project work, crowdfunding

²⁴ Piazza, R. (2015). Entrepreneurship education, orientation to the initiative. *PedagogiaOggi*, 1, 72-90.

²⁵www.miur.gov.it/

campaigns, digital marketing, business planning, debate, interviews, ...). The Syllabus is designed to be dynamic, open to updates with examples and practices implemented by schools.

This method anchors entrepreneurship education to real practices, and at the same time empowers civil society towards the school.

We do not yet know how schools have welcomed and will welcome the MIUR proposal. We will see the results in the coming years.

E. Short description of specific examples from ITALY

Short description of specific examples of existing start-up promotion and firm creation support practices (for example, you can look among categories of practices named above). Be very brief here, as the selected ones will be described in more detail as case studies.

- MIUR - The Ministry of University and Research recently released a manual to accompany schools in the construction of structured paths to give students the ability to turn ideas into actions and to unlock their entrepreneurial potential through creativity, innovation, evaluation and risk taking, ability to plan and manage business projects
- NIBI (New Institute of International Business)²⁶ is one of the very few institutes offering training courses to build and update the human capital of young entrepreneurs, export managers and consultants in the field of internationalization, following a business oriented approach. NIBI closely collaborates with high schools and universities to enhance entrepreneurial mindset of youngsters and to transfer innovative teaching methods to teachers
- 'Rome Capital of youngsters: New business ideas for the greater good': The initiative promoted by the Rome Municipality aimed to promote and support the creation of new companies to promote the self-employment of young people and the economic development of the local territory. The project entailed training activities and integrated entrepreneurial support such as: training courses, consultancy and tutoring interventions provided by subjects in possession of specific skills in training in business creation.

²⁶ New Institute of International Business (http://www.nibi-milano.it/chi_siamo/nibi/nibi.kl)

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