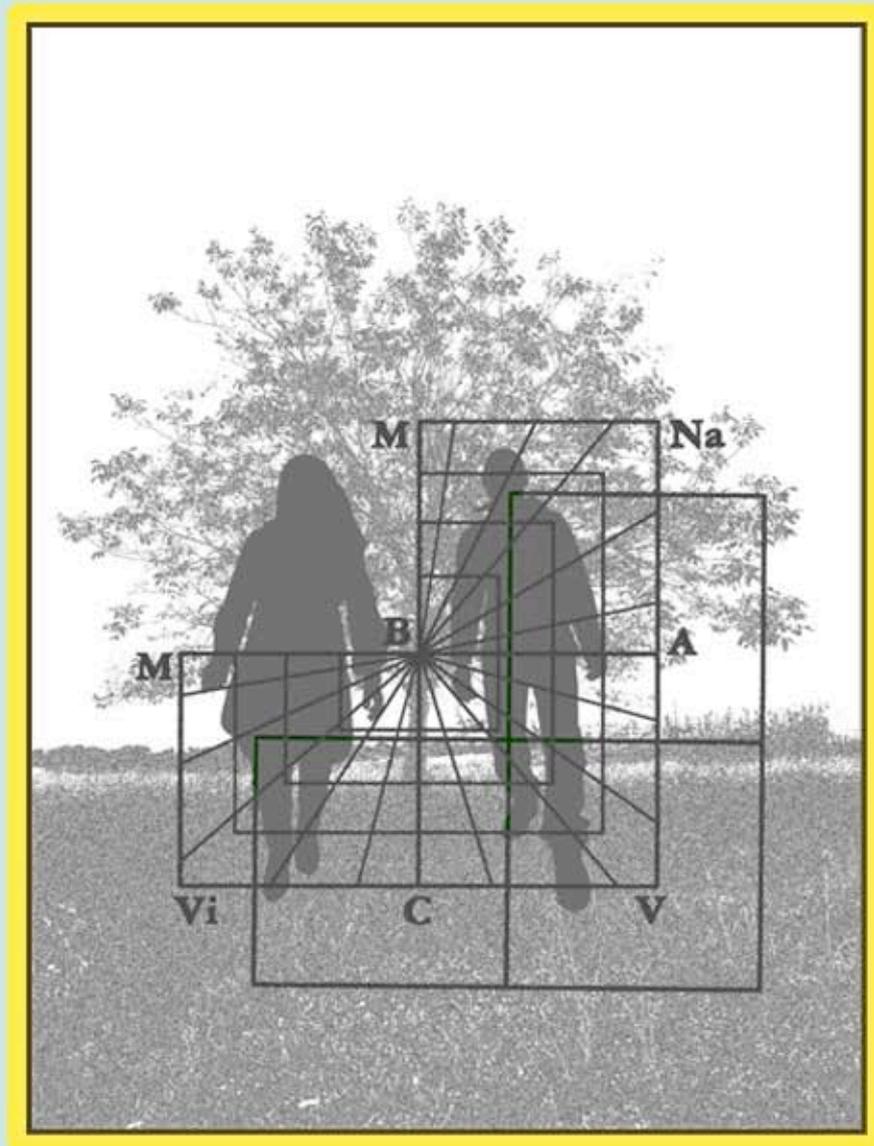


Italy - Comparative Report

Discussion paper 2013/7.3.

Michele Mariani & Antonella Epifanio





Tertiary Higher Education for People in Mid-life (THEMP)

Italy - Comparative Report

Discussion paper 2013/7.3

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List of abbreviations:

Abbreviation	Meaning
CFU	Credito Formativo Universitario
EUCEN	European Association for Lifelong Learning
FSE	European Social Fund
FPC	Continuing Vocational Training
HE	Higher Education
IFTS	Higher Technical Education and Instruction
INDIRE	National Agency for School Autonomy Development
L	Learner
LC	Lecturer
LLL	Lifelong Learning
MIUR	Instruction, Research, and University Ministry
P	Programme Representative
TLL	Tertiary Lifelong Learning

1. Introduction

Main challenges of the ageing knowledge economy are constant upgrading of the skills of the active population and mitigating new and old social risks. In the ageing society and in the globalised knowledge economy, the people in mid-life are increasingly exposed to social risks of exclusion from the labour market. The access of mid-life learners to Tertiary Lifelong Learning (TLL) and their retention in the system have an increasing relevance for the socio-economic sustainability of the European social model.

Designing flexible pathways from VET and professional experience to higher education, flexible learning arrangements conciliating family-work life and learning and the adaptation of didactical methods in HE are relevant challenges for opening Higher Education (HE) to mid-life learners.

The THEMP (Tertiary Education for People in Midlife) Project focuses on the education and training mission of the EUHEIs and investigates the measures taken by universities to expand their educational and training activities beyond the traditional students to a wider range of citizens and in wider range of learning environments.

The project compares TLL programs at universities in seven EU-member states (Germany, Italy, Spain, Hungary, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Netherland) with respect to inclusion of mid-life learners and social impact. It provides a description of the landscapes of TLL in these countries. The core contributions being case studies of three universities in each country. Main focus lies in the analysis of HE LLL practices as developed in the selected universities and their strategies in implementing education and training programs for adult learners.

In Italy, three HE Institutions have been chosen: the University of Bologna, the University of Bolzano, and the University of Genoa. At the core of each case study stands an analysis performed on the available data and a series of interviews with decision makers, stakeholders, lecturers and mid-life learners.

2. LLL and TLL in the Italian context

2.1 Short overview of the Italian HE system

The main principles that lay the foundations for the Italian education system, and in particular higher education (see: <http://www.miur.it/guida/guide.htm>), are set down in the Italian Constitution that was adopted in 1947. Article 33 of the constitution states that "... art and science are free and the teaching thereof shall be free". In defence of academic freedom, the article also states that all higher education institutions "have the right to establish their own regulations autonomously, within the limits set by national legislation". Furthermore, Article 34 of the constitution establishes the principle of the right of individual citizens to higher education: "All those who can prove the necessary competency and commitment have a right to pursue the highest levels of education, regardless of their financial means". As defined by law, the main purpose of higher education, is twofold - to promote scientific progress of the nation and to provide all citizens with education and training that will lead to employment.

The Italian higher education is structured as a binary system, consisting of two main articulations: the university sector and the non-university sector.

The university sector is made up of six different types of institutions:

- State universities;
- Technical Universities¹;
- Non-State universities²;
- Universities for foreigners³;
- Higher schools specialised in postgraduate university studies;
- Telematic universities.

The non-university sector includes four education typologies with their institutions:

- Higher Education in the Arts and Music (AFAM): polytechnics for the arts, academies of fine arts, higher institutes for applied arts (ISIA), music conservatories and recognised music institutes, higher institutes for musical and choreographic studies, national academies;
- Higher Education in Language Mediation: higher schools for language mediators;
- Higher Integrated Education: programmes of higher technical education & training

¹ In the Italian system those universities are named "Politecnici" (Technical Universities) that concentrate exclusively in the subject fields of the two Faculties of Engineering and Architecture. They adopt the same institutional model as that of State universities.

² Non-State universities may be recognised by a decree of the Minister of Education. Legal recognition takes place after an evaluation process concerning the university statute, its organisation model, budget, etc. The degrees awarded by non-State universities legally recognised by the State have the same legal value as those of State universities. Non-State universities have to comply with the same general principles and criteria as defined by the national university legislation for State institutions. The differences between State and non-State universities concern funding and governance.

³ Universities for foreigners are State institutions specialised in teaching and research for the development and diffusion of the Italian language, literature and culture.

(IFTS);

- A few specific fields (e.g. archiving, diplomatics, restoration, military studies, etc.) which, along with their respective institutions, fall under the supervision of ministries other than that of Education.

Since the 1990s, the Italian university system has been fully reformed so as to meet the objectives of the ‘Bologna process’. As a consequence, Universities in Italy are now organised on three main cycles of study (<http://www.unimi.it/ENG/courses/29553.htm>):

1. First Cycle (Primo Ciclo): Bachelor programme (Laurea - three years) or Single-cycle Degree (Corso di Laurea Magistrale a Ciclo Unico - five or six years);
2. Second Cycle (Secondo Ciclo): Master programme (Laurea Magistrale - two years) or 1st Level Vocational Master (Master Universitario di Primo Livello);
3. Third Cycle (Terzo Ciclo): PhD (Dottorato di Ricerca) or Specialisation School (Scuola di Specializzazione) or 2nd Level Vocational Master (Master Universitario di Secondo Livello).

Bachelor programme (Laurea): the 1st level degree course provides students with an appropriate mastery of general scientific methods and principles, even when the programme is oriented toward the acquisition of specific professional knowledge, and provides a solid base for those who wish to continue their studies with a 2nd level degree or a 1st level master. To be admitted to a 1st level degree course, candidates must have a secondary school diploma or a suitable equivalent foreign qualification. The 1st level degree course lasts three years. To obtain the qualification (1st level degree) it is necessary to accumulate 180 credits⁴ (60 for each year of the course). Single-cycle Degree courses (Corso di Laurea Magistrale a Ciclo Unico) do not draw a distinction between the initial three-year period of study and the subsequent two-year period of specialisation (Laurea Magistrale). The entire study cycle is structured over a single period of five or six years, at the end of which it confers a 2nd level degree (laurea magistrale). The single-cycle degree provides students with advanced education and training for professions in specific fields that require a high level of qualification (medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, pharmacy and architecture) and for access to legal professions. To obtain the final qualification (single-cycle degree) it is necessary to accumulate 300 credits, in the case of five-year courses, and 360 credits in the case of six-year courses (60 credits for each year of the course).

Master programme (Laurea Magistrale), provides students with advanced education and training for professions in specific fields that require a high level of qualification. To be admitted to a 2nd level degree course, one must have a 1st level degree or a suitable equivalent foreign qualification. The course lasts two years. To obtain the qualification (2nd level degree) it is necessary to accumulate 120 credits (60 for each year of the course). 1st

⁴ One credit (CFU) corresponds to 25 hours of work. Credits are obtained by passing examinations or through other forms of assessment established by each university. They do not count towards the overall mark and are therefore independent of the grade obtained with examinations or assessments of other kinds.

Level Vocational Master (Master Universitario di Primo Livello) aims at reinforcing, broadening and honing the skills and expertise of graduates and postgraduates, utilising and expanding upon previous training to meet the demands of the professional labour market. Both 1st and 2nd level vocational master courses are actually offered. To be admitted to a 1st level master course, which is part of the second cycle of university studies, one must have a 1st level degree. To be admitted to the 2nd level master course, which is part of the third cycle of university studies, one must have a 2nd level degree. A vocational master course generally lasts from six months to one year (500 didactic and experiential hours). To obtain the qualification (1st or 2nd level master) it is necessary to accumulate 60 credits. Vocational master courses have a limited number of students.

The PhD (Dottorato di Ricerca) provides the expertise necessary for high-level research activities in universities, public institutions and private associations. To be admitted to a doctoral programme one must hold a 2nd level degree. Candidates must also pass the selection examination, as only a limited number of places are available. A doctoral degree is awarded after a period of study lasting three to four years.

Specialisation School (Scuola di Specializzazione) provides students with knowledge and skills required in specific professional fields. To be admitted to a specialisation course candidates must hold a 2nd level degree. The length of the course and the number of credits required to obtain the specialisation qualification are defined by the academic structure of each course.

Advanced courses (Corsi di Perfezionamento) are refresher/permanent training courses that allow students to develop their expertise and skills in order to further improve their professional qualities. To be admitted candidates must hold a 1st or 2nd level degree. The courses vary in length. They differ from a master, in that no academic qualification is awarded; students will receive a certificate that details the skills that have been acquired.

2.2 LLL - TLL strategy, institutional settings and regulations

Adult education in Italy is regulated by two main institutional systems (Eurydice, 2010). The first system (adult education - mainly managed by the scholastic system) falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MURST), offering courses up to ISCED 3 levels through Permanent Territorial Centres (Centri Territoriali Permanenti – CTP) and evening classes (Corsi serali). The second system, which provides continuous professional (vocational) training (Formazione Professionale Continua – FPC) for adult workers⁵, falls under the responsibility of regional and local authorities, of social

⁵ Pursuant to art. 5 of Law no 53 of 8 March 2000, employees who work for public or private employers and who have worked for at least five years in the same company can request a suspension of the employment contract for training leave. This period cannot exceed eleven months throughout the worker's entire working life. Training leave is defined as training which is undertaken to complete compulsory education, to obtain an upper secondary school leaving certificate, to obtain a Laurea degree or to participate in training activities other than those offered by or financed by the employer. During the period of training leave, the employee keeps his post but is not entitled to receive a salary. The employer can refuse the training leave if he can demonstrate that there are administrative

partners and of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Policies. The notion of continuing vocational training in Italy includes all the training activities aimed to improve and update knowledge and competences which follow initial training. In recent years efforts have been intensified to consider continuing training as a fundamental component of LLL policies, connected with learning as a strategy for developing a knowledge-based competitive economy, focusing on people as citizens and workers. However, the actual legislative framework is still not complete and coherent. In the last decades, legislation has further developed and this has led to new policies (e.g. Joint Professional Funds for continuing vocational training) managed by social partners.

The range of Adult Education initiatives is completed with the Higher Technical Training (Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore - IFTS)⁶, established with Law 144/99 and Interministerial Decree 31 October 2000, n 436. IFTS is a post-secondary training pathway focusing on specific disciplines and parallel to University Education. It is articulated in programs aimed to the training of high level technical and professional profiles of the public or private sector. The courses are targeted to a quick insertion of students into the labour market. IFTS courses are targeted to young people and adults who, after having obtained a diploma, want to obtain a specialization corresponding to high level qualifications and specific professional skills. IFTS courses last from two to four semesters and release a specialisation certificate. IFTS are completely funded by regions, which assign - through public selection - the task to projects and offer training courses to previously accredited private or public educational centres. Educational centres selected by regions have to reach employment goals for enrolled students and must have signed a partnership agreement with a State University. The University partner has to corroborate the educational plan, to evaluate the quality of the teaching staff and to grant educational activities in university undergraduate courses. Even if in the last three years (2008-2010) IFTS have had large diffusion in order to curb spreading unemployment, their offering largely depend on regional educational plans and funding availabilities. Services, local authorities or productive districts involved in technical innovation processes and markets internationalization are among the primary targets. Access to higher technical training is granted to young and adult subjects, employed or unemployed, holding a secondary level diploma. Training is delivered in modular and flexible ways (but in general organized in two semesters and 800/1000 training hours), planned by Regions in agreement with local social and economic partners. It foresees credits recognition and certification of acquired competences in the labour market. In year 2008, new reorganization guidelines regulated by the Decree of the President of Council of Ministers of 25 January established the implementation of Higher Technical Institutes (under direct competence of the regions), the establishment of longer professional courses (four semesters; 1800/2000 hours), and new measures supporting the establishment of regional technical-professionals poles⁷.

constraints. Art. 6 of the same law stipulates that workers (employed or otherwise) are entitled to follow training courses throughout their life to upgrade their knowledge and vocational skills (Eurydice, 2010).

⁶ To date, 3501 IFTS courses have been implemented (source INDIRE). See also www.indire.it/ifts/nuovo/index.php

⁷ Source: INDIRE (<http://www.bdp.it/ifts/2003/home.php>).

The Reform law 53/2003 has introduced the term 'lifelong learning' among the principles and directive criteria of the education and training system. For its implementation, the reform law provided a programmatic plan to fund “interventions for the development of higher level technical education and training and adult education”. The actual policy promoting adult education in Italy is based on the general principle “to protect and guarantee to citizens of every age, social or professional status, the right to learn and grow, both humanly and professionally, for the entire life span”. This right doesn't only address the employability principle, but is also intended to embrace personal, civic and social purposes, making connections with key objectives, such as adaptability and active citizenship⁸. However, the above political declarations have left room to a slow integration of the available training instruments, and the achievement of a unique lifelong learning strategy directed to adults seems still far to be reached, with LLL continuing to lay behind the desired targets. In Europe, qualification levels have been growing and are expected to continue to grow in the near future. In year 2020 it is expected that in EU the 33,6% of the population will have tertiary level education, the 48,3% intermediate levels, and the 18,1% low educational levels. However, the actual 2020 national projections forecast that Italy:

- will be the Country (with Portugal) with the highest share of low-qualified workers (37,1% against a 18,1 EU average);
- will be almost in line with the EU average with respect to intermediate levels (45,4 against the 48,3% EU average);
- will have a huge scarcity of high qualified workers (17,5% against the 33,6% EU average).

At the moment, only the 6% of people aged 25-64 (that is those people who should theoretically be active on the labour marketplace) attend to LLL initiatives, a share that is well below the EU 15% benchmark to be reached by 2020, and below the EU average (9,3%)⁹.

The typical individual who attend continuous training and educational courses in Italy is a male between 26 and 40 years old, with a job and a diploma¹⁰. The attendance to LLL

⁸ Ministry of Labor and Social Policies web site:

<http://www.lavoro.gov.it/Lavoro/Europalavoro/SezioneOperatori/Formazione/FormazionePermanente/>

⁹ On overall, the potential beneficiaries of the national adult education systems are about 36 million people. If we consider the EU 15% benchmark, it is thus expected that adult education is supposed to serve the needs of about 5,5 million adults by 2020.

¹⁰ Lifelong learning for those over 45 years old does increase only for people in high managerial positions, while for the others it remains a 10% lower than those under 45. In the EU, the age structure of adult participation in formal education and training shows that young adults (25-34 years old) are more likely to participate in formal programmes than older sections of the population. On average, across the EU, 13 % of those who are aged between 25-34 years take part in formal education, while in the age groups 35-54 and 55-64 it is only 5 % and 2 % respectively. With regard to the data on adult participation in formal education according to the highest level of education attained, it can be observed that in all European countries, those with a lower educational attainment (i.e. those who have completed at most lower secondary education) have the lowest participation rates. On average, in the EU, only around 2 % of under-qualified adults participate in formal education and training, whereas the participation rate of those who have completed upper secondary education is 6%, and for those

initiatives is strongly correlated to workers' educational level, and to workers' position in the organizational hierarchy, with the higher positioned (managers) showing the highest attendance (54,7%) and distancing shop-floor workers of a striking 38%. In practice, such a situation means that training and education in Italy work just for those who already have had some, enforcing the social exclusion loop. Women and elderly are severely penalized. Those who do not have any school degree and the less favoured have almost no chances to enter (or re-enter) any educational path. The access to LLL in Italy thus seems more and more restricted to the 'strong' portion of the population, with the progressive marginalization of the weak segments (young workers, temporary employed; low qualified; over 45; etc.). At a company level, the gap between larger firms and smaller ones (SMEs and micro-firms) is increasing.

Insofar, different initiatives aimed at reforming the system and promoting the right to lifelong learning have been discussed in the Parliament for years, without being transformed into law.

2.3 Middle-age related TLL activities

In the Italian Higher Education debate, the importance of lifelong learning issues has been recently underlined in several circumstances, focusing on the need for a law for HE lifelong education. For Instance, the 2007 guidelines on new curricular design¹¹ issued by the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) called the university to a 'serious commitment' for lifelong education recognizing the fact that adult LLL has to become the new 'mission' of Italian Universities. This will also help, e.g. to contrast the negative effects of the Italian demographic trends. However, at the moment, at a practical level, Italian Universities seem to be 'diversely' aware about their 'new mission' and the concept of continuing education is intended and interpreted in extremely different ways, reflecting universities' different experiences and purposes. Italian universities actually open themselves only to a very low share of the market for continuing education, and an overarching legal formalization of the existing voluntary single initiatives would be needed. In sum, the movement towards the development of Italian tertiary lifelong learning initiatives seems in this phase to be led more by single academic initiatives than by Government Policies.

Although it is not possible to find any initiative specifically targeted to mid-life people, two recent TLL-related initiatives are summarised in the following. The first is the organization in Italy of the EUCEN's 42nd Conference which was held at the University of Genoa on 16-18 November 2011¹². The second initiative (linked with the first one) is the creation of the Italian University Network for Continuing Education (Rete Universitaria Italiana per l'Apprendimento Permanente – RUIAP: www.ruiap.it). The network have more than 33 Italian (out of a total of 55) Atenei as subscribers and exerts a continuous pressure on the Government to further promote the development of HE LLL. The main objectives of the

who have completed tertiary education, 12 %.

¹¹ MIUR, "Linee guida per la progettazione dei nuovi ordinamenti didattici dei corsi di laurea", Roma, July 26th, 2007.

¹² EUCEN, the European Association for University Lifelong Learning, is the largest European multidisciplinary Association in University Lifelong Learning.

network will be the promotion of the continuing education culture and the identification and sharing of methodologies and services aimed to support the reception by Universities of atypical students categories. As a consequence of this pressure, the Italian Government, under the Monti presidency, has recently issued a law proposal (see <http://www.ruiap.it/Novitaleggi.html>) that requires Universities to be the responsible for certifying prior learning and create new pathways for adult learners.

3. Case Studies and Methodology

3.1 Why case studies?

The research approach adopted by THE-MP project is the Case Study method. This method is deemed to be particularly well suited to study contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts, where the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated (Yin, 1994). More specifically, the project will adopt a Multiple-Case Study research strategy, which will compare different HE programmes oriented to TLL for >45 learners across a cluster of EU Universities. The study will be exploratory (rather than purely descriptive or fully interpretative) in nature, answering the following leading research question: ‘which are the conditions under which TLL programmes become viable instruments for mid-life learners to successfully pass through labour market transitions?’ It is important to note that the Multiple Case Study research design adopted by the project does not require the adoption of a probabilistic¹³ sampling strategy for selecting the cluster of programmes of interest. The Italian cases have thus been ‘conveniently’¹⁴ selected as a function of their relevance to project aims. About 15 Universities, all belonging to the RUIAP Network, were successfully contacted, with the final selection being based on the matching of the following three main criteria:

1. Programme with a relevant presence of >40 adults (‘mature’ students);
2. Programme designed and administered with a relevant contribution by Universities (i.e. those HE acknowledging LLL as third mission);
3. Programme with a focus on employment (professionalization).

3.2 The selected Italian case studies

The first case study is the “Occupational Campus”, a programme jointly developed by the University of Bologna (Department of Education) and FormArea&Partner, a private company

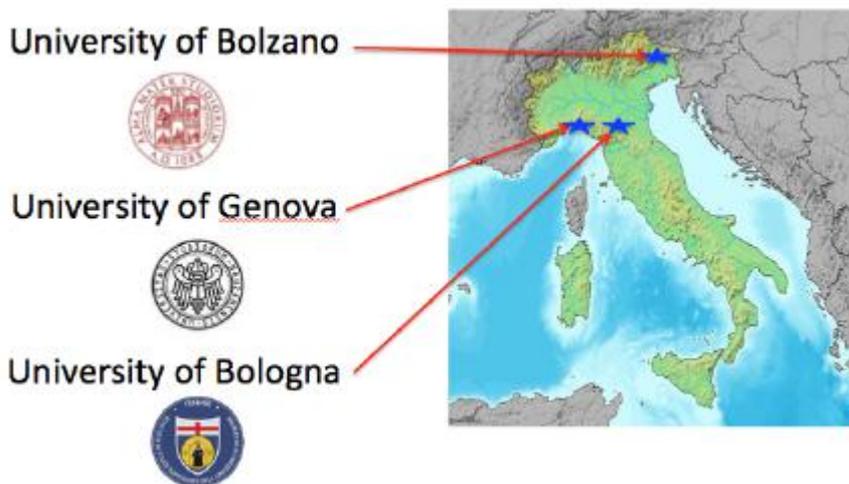
¹³ Sampling methods might be probability or nonprobability. In probability sampling (random, systematic, stratified, etc.), each member of the population has an equal probability of being selected. In nonprobability sampling (convenience, judgment, quota, snowball, etc.), members are selected from the population not at random.

¹⁴ Convenience sampling is a nonprobability sampling method (others include: judgment sampling, quota sampling, and snowball sampling). Convenience (opportunity) sampling involves the sample being drawn from that part of the population that is readily available and convenient. A researcher using such a sample cannot scientifically make generalizations about the total population because the sample would not be representative enough. For example, if the interviewer was to conduct such a survey at a shopping centre early in the morning on a given day, the people that she could interview would be limited to those who were there at that given time, which would not represent the views of the overall population visiting the shopping centre at different times of day and different days per week.

specialised in adult education and training. The programme started in 2009, being specifically targeted to support adults going through transitions in their professional lives. The Occupational Campus is implemented through a set of “Laboratories for Lifelong Learning” which constitute a programme of adult education. The Campus learning experience is mainly focussed to provide people with orientation skills by making them reflecting on their aspirations, match such aspirations with the opportunities offered by the local economical context, and co-define a path to acquire the needed competencies.

The second case study is the Second Level Master in ‘International Business Leadership’, developed by PerForm, the Centre for Permanent Education of the University of Genoa. The Master is targeted to managers, employed in international high-technology companies, who need to improve their leadership skills to manage competitive and client-oriented projects. It is also open to unemployed people with relevant experience in managerial positions.

The third case study is the Second Level Master in Environmental Design “CasaClima” (“ClimateHouse”; “KlimaHaus”), organized by the Free University of Bozen/Bolzano (Faculty of Science and Technology) in cooperation with private and public institutions and many companies located in the Trentino Alto-Adige region. The programme is an high-level course in environmental planning and on the use of renewable resources in architecture.



3.3 Methodology

At the core of each case study stands an analysis with statistically available data, documentary analysis, and a series of interviews with decision makers, stakeholders, lecturers and mid-life learners. All case studies were performed in the period between the beginning of 2012 and january 2013.

The following interviews were performed:

- Bologna: five students, two lecturers, two programme representatives and one institutions representative.

- Genoa: three students, three programme representatives and two lecturers.
- Bolzano: seven students, one lecturer, two programme representatives and a person who is at the same time a programme representative and a lecturer.

Almost all the interviews were conducted via phone calls and fully recorded.

The interview protocol was different for each interviewee category, however having the following general structure:

- General Information about the Institution and TLL-Strategy;
- Target groups;
- Decision Making;
- Implementation and Process Analysis;
- Didactical Aspects;
- Evaluation and Impact;
- Social inclusion and social impact;
- Recommendations and future developments.

4. Case Studies description

4.1 University of Bologna-Formarea

The “Occupational Campus” is a programme jointly developed by the University of Bologna – Department of Education - and FormArea&Partner, a private company specialised in adult education and training. The programme started in 2009 being specifically targeted to support adults going through transitions in their professional lives. The Occupational Campus is implemented through a set of “Laboratories for Lifelong Learning” which constitute a programme of adult education. The Campus learning experience is mainly focussed to provide people with orientation skills by making them reflecting on their aspirations, match such aspirations with the opportunities offered by the local economical context, and co-define a path to acquire the needed competencies. The case study is based on an analysis of available background data and documents as well as on interviews with people involved in the programme. Five students, two lecturers, two programme representatives and one stakeholder have been interviewed.

4.1.1 The University of Bologna and FormArea&Partner

The University of Bologna is regarded as being the first University in the western world. Its history is one of great thinkers in science and the humanities, making it a point of reference in the European culture panorama. Its origin dates back year 1088. Today the Ateneo is constituted by 11 Schools and 33 Departments¹⁵ that represent as a whole the cultural teaching and administrative axis of the University.

The University adopts a “multicampus” structure. University structures are located in five cities of the Emilia Romagna region: Bologna, Ravenna, Forlì, Cesena, Rimini. There’s also a campus in Buenos Aires, that offers interdisciplinary study programmes on different subjects.

The University of Bologna offers postgraduate vocational training courses (permanent and continuing education) for working people or people who have already started a career. In particular, in the academic year 2012/13, the University offer includes:

- postgraduate vocational training courses of an academic nature, open to all who wish to study specific cultural subjects in detail;

¹⁵ After the last University Reform (Italian Law no. 240/2010), Italian universities are constituted i) by Departments, that is organisational units which carry out scientific research, teaching and learning activities, and ii) by Schools, which coordinate the activities of different departments together.

- continuous education courses intended for working people, providing attendees with educational credits (ECM, etc.).

The Occupational Campus is issued by the Department of Education of the University of Bologna in partnership with a private company, FormArea&Partner (<http://formarea.it/>). The Department of Education consists of lecturers and researchers from the disciplines of Cultural Anthropology, Pedagogy, Psychology and Sociology who work together in the intent to pursue interdisciplinary research objectives. FormArea is a private company specialized in offering vocational education courses which jointly operate with the University of Bologna through yearly agreements. FormArea also acts in close collaboration with teachers and researchers from other Italian Universities and other National or International research centres. Specifically, FormArea deals with: actions for territorial social design; professional systems and organizational models for companies; models for LLL.

4.1.2 Target group

The “Occupational Campus” is open to all adults, however, its main focus is on those workers who have been adversely affected by crisis (people who have lost their job or are risking to lose it, people who are requested to acquire new competencies to maintain their occupation, etc.). Up to now, the Campus has had about 150 alumni, mainly aged between 40 to 50, mostly coming from manufacturing SMEs. For the most part, they have been employed in a single company during their life, and they have performed always the same job, or different jobs but always within the same company.

4.1.3 Initiative/Development

The programme is designed within the governmental framework regulating the national active policies for work. These citizens receive an unemployment insurance by the Italian Government but must participate to vocational education courses to continue to receive the insurance. The programme stems from agreements among social partners (representatives of employees and employers) who recognized the importance and the necessity to teach ‘soft skills’ within a programme targeted to adults who want to acquire/renew a set of work-related transversal competencies.

4.1.4 Structure

The courses are organised by creating homogeneous groups of students. Up to now, the Occupational Campus has been taught as a series of laboratories/learning modules which are embedded into larger training programmes with technical and professional contents (Corsi di Qualificazione Professionale), awarded by the Emilia Romagna Region.

As an example, one of these modules was made up of five subjects:

- To restart from ourselves (16 hours). Tools to redefine a personal life/work/educational path; tools to acquire better copying strategies; tools for self-motivation and self-analysis; tools to be able to plan a personal strategy to act.
- Knowing to choose (12 hours). Tools to find information that support personal decisions; tools to present oneself in front of others.
- New media and professional trajectories (8 hours). Tools to enforce communication skills; tools to be able to use new and social media to support personal projects.
- Labour market changes and reform (4 hours). Tools to acknowledge market labor changes and workers' rights.
- Local context (8 hours). Meeting with key testimonials and actors coming from the local labour context.

Thus, in general, each edition of the programme is articulated in traditional lessons focused on the development of transversal competencies like decision making, rationality, autonomy, team work, and communication. Other parts of the programme might be dedicated to activities like career counselling, skill balance and evaluation, enterprise culture, entrepreneurship, employability. The Occupational Campus is said to provide people not only with knowledge but also with a methodology to enable students' to redefine their occupational trajectories. In each edition, contents and activities of the laboratories are tailored to the group of participants at hand, on the basis of their specific work experiences, their background and their personal future objectives.

All courses are free of charge, as they are funded on public or private (Fondoimpresa) money. Prerequisites for access may vary, depending on the specific aim of the programme edition, being settled by the institution that funds the programme. For instance, if the programme is directly promoted by a private company, it is necessary to be or have been an employee of a company that is part of the funding pool. If the programme is publicly funded, then it's open to everybody (i.e. occupied and unoccupied workers).

The attendance to the learning programme is certified by the University of Bologna. The wider training programme is certified by the Regione Emilia Romagna. The course does not provide formal credits to the attendees.

4.1.5 Interview excerpts

Five students, two lecturers, two programme representatives and one institutions representative have been interviewed. A summary of the key information collected through the interviews is reported in the following.

Programme representatives

Two programme representatives have been interviewed: the FormArea director (P1) and the Dean of the Department of Education of the University of Bologna (P2). They are teachers and experts in adult education. Also a unionist (P3) has been interviewed, he is a representative of the CGIL Union (Italian Confederation of Workers), being local responsible for labour market, training and negotiation.

As reported by the interviewees, the most relevant and distinctive aspect of the Occupational Campus is to be found in its participatory methodology as well as in the course contents. To face the actual crisis, Italy, like other European countries, is mainly offering education programmes with technical and professional contents. Attention is principally focussed on hard skills, like technical and professional competencies. In this perspective, education is reduced to training, with the main aim to teach workers another job, and/or renew one's professional competencies. In many cases, these have been unsuccessful actions that didn't create the expected results, because of the lack of awareness of the structural character of the actual crisis.

[P2] "In Italy, the actual crisis is mainly managed by the Job Centres: people who have lost or are losing their job, and who are receiving public unemployment benefits, must go to Job Centres and attend to an educational programme. If they don't do this, they risk to lose the public unemployment benefit. At the Job Centre they can choose among different courses but the main contents are always technical and professional. We noticed that such actions are scarcely effective: in the Italian labour market there isn't a demand for a specific workforce, because the entire economic system is in crisis. So it doesn't make much sense to create professional workers, because of the lack of companies ready to hire them. We have understood that it could be more useful to offer people tools to achieve better orientation skills, starting from the consciousness of their own abilities and from a correct acknowledgment of the opportunities offered by the local setting".

[P1] "Because of the lack of a Country-wide Industrial Plan, it's not possible to create a direct link between training and the labour market. Thanks to the Occupational Campus, we try to replace the absence of an Industrial Plan with the creation of individual career plans, starting from personal life projects, and from an autonomous and active definition of own aspirations, even latent and unexpressed desires. We have put people at the centre of our laboratories because we want that persons choose the kind of education which best fits their aspirations".

Another key element of the Campus lies in its close link with the local context. The learning programme is oriented to enable people to remain in their own region. So people are provided with tools and strategies that allow them to recognize the opportunities offered by the local occupational landscape.

[P3] "All assets and opportunities are in the local setting and it's important for people to learn the peculiarities of the region in which they live and want to work, in order to recognize and be able to take opportunities".

Lecturers

Teachers can be both University Professors or professionals coming from the private sector and from consultancy, depending on the contents of the learning modules. Occupational Psychologists are responsible for contents related to change management, motivation and skills balance. Communication specialists teach subjects related to information seeking and new media. Sociologists and Jurists deal with matters related to labour market and workers' rights. Many teachers have previous experiences in the University, where they have worked as lecturers or collaborators in research projects.

Teachers actively participate to the definition of the course contents and the learning methodology. As reported by the interviewed teachers, the learning methodology for adults is more centred on practice and less on theory. Adults, especially those who are experiencing life transitions, need to face themselves with other people to become aware that they have to develop a personal strategy to successfully face life transitions. For this reason, in the Occupational Campus there are spaces for group discussion in which people have the possibility to talk together, to exchange points of views, to make comparisons about their previous experiences or about what they are planning to do. Audiovisual equipment, case discussions or simulation of real situations (for example a meeting with a potential employer) are used too. In an interviewer's words, the Occupational Campus methodology involves the following:

[LC2] "We invite people to rethink themselves, to make an assessment of their lives. We suggest them to try to imagine their future in the way they desire it. Our idea is that it's very important to stimulate workers to stick down on a paper their project for their personal and working life. We want people to walk in a new path and use the period of inactivity in a profitable way, in order to reflect on themselves. We invite them to take decisions autonomously and proactively".

In teachers' opinion, adults are more committed in education respect to younger students, because they are more conscious about the benefits they could gain from education.

Teachers recognize that previous experiences play an important role in LLL education. Adults use their past experiences to develop personal plans for the future, thus it's important to formally recognize the competences and skills developed within their former work experience.

Finally, teachers acknowledge the fundamental role that University could play in the LLL system. They think that the University is able to offer high quality education, with a strong connection with scientific research, something that is not very likely to be found in the other continuous education actors.

Learners

Occupational Campus learners are mainly people from 40 to 50 years old, without a University education (only middle or high school diploma), with a relevant work experience, mostly developed within one single company. Most of them come from companies affected by crisis and have already lost their job or are risking to lose it.

Learners are quite an heterogeneous group of people with respect to age, education and previous work experiences. They are more homogeneous with respect to the life transitions they are experiencing and to the motivation that convinced them participating to the programme.

Participants say they have appreciated the contents of the programme (e.g. the ‘soft skills’ focus), and its being practice-oriented. They report that, thanks the programme, they have become more aware about their competences, about what they can do to cope with the actual difficult labour context. By the programme they have acquired valid tools and instruments to search for another job and to improve their employability in the labour market. Those sections of the programme that were devoted to activities like career counselling, skills balance and evaluation and entrepreneurship were mostly appreciated.

In learners’ opinion, the room that was dedicated to group discussions was very useful, especially as a chance to compare one’s own personal and work experience with those of the others (social comparison).

Meetings with representatives of local institutions are highly appreciated, especially with representatives of public or private services offering job opportunities in the local context.

Many students report they would like to continue or repeat the Campus experience:

L1: “I was going through a very difficult phase of my life, I felt depressed because I lost my job and I didn’t work from a long time. I decided to participate to the Campus without any expectation, only to do something and to go out of my home. Now I can say that the results of this decision are very positive, I have a new confidence in myself, I know what I want and what I can do to achieve my personal objectives (...). At the Campus I met people experiencing life transitions similar to mine and the confrontation with them made me conscious that I’m not alone. Now I know there are persons who can help me and I can give myself a new challenge. Today I’m working for an entrepreneurial project with other students of the Campus”

4.1.6 Implementation and process analysis

Up to now, the effectiveness of the Campus Laboratories is evaluated both at the end of lessons and some months after course conclusion. The evaluation takes place through ad-hoc questionnaires which are jointly edited by the University of Bologna, FormArea and the funding institutions. The questionnaire evaluates both learners’ satisfaction and their occupational outcomes. The first assessment pointed out that about 30% of participants

successfully found a new job after attending the programme. One of the teachers reports his personal assessment of the programme:

[LC1] “As a teacher, I personally have seen students turning frustration into proactiveness. Many of them were subordinate workers, after the programme they have become self-employed workers, they have invented a new job, which is totally different from the previous one. They have demonstrated the capacity to completely rethink themselves”.

From the learners’ interviews, some critical aspects emerge:

- More connections with local labour market are required: participants suggest to increase the involvement of companies or institutions who are looking for new workers. In general, the placement service of the programme must be improved, to create a strong connection between participants and the available opportunities.
- Participants suggest to increase the offer of services and tools targeted to create a social network among participants and the ‘social actors’ involved in the programme. This could help learners to maintain the social relationships created during the Campus and could provide them some support to reduce social exclusion and to fulfil personal or collective projects.
- Participants underline the need to formally recognize previous competences, they think this could be a way to increase the value of previous work experiences and to improve their employability.

4.1.7 General conclusions

From the above described case study, some implications for the design of LLL programmes can be drawn:

- The importance of soft skills for people going through life transitions. Such competences are thought to be quite effective to cope with critical labour market conditions.
- The importance to give people opportunities for socialization with other persons who are experiencing similar life transitions.
- The relevance to design services and/or tools to facilitate the creation of a social network with the purpose to connect participants among them and with the social actors involved in the programme.
- The role of Universities in the LLL system, as institution able to offer high quality education, to connect different actors involved in LLL system, and to recognize prior learning.

4.2 University of Genoa-PerForm

This case study is related to the Second Level Master in ‘International Business Leadership’, developed by PerForm, the Centre for Permanent Education of the University of Genoa. The Master is targeted to managers, mostly employed in international high-technology companies, who need to improve their leadership skills to manage competitive and client-oriented projects. It is also opened to unemployed people with relevant experience in managerial positions.

The Master has been designed through a strong and productive partnership among the University of Genoa, local companies and research institutions. It was promoted by the Department of Economics, in conjunction with the “Fondazione Ansaldo”¹⁶ and Finmeccanica¹⁷.

The case study here reported is based on an analysis of available background data and documents and on the interviews with a sample of people involved in the programme. Specifically, three students, two lectures, and three programme representatives have been interviewed.

4.2.1 The University of Genoa/PerForm

The University of Genoa is located in Liguria, a region in the north-west of Italy. The University of Genoa was founded in the 14th century and today is one of the largest Italian Universities, with about 36.000 students, 1.800 teaching and researching staff and 1.600 administrative staff. The Ateneo is made up of five Schools and 22 Departments¹⁸ located in four cities in the Liguria region: Genoa, La Spezia, Savona and Imperia. Today the University offers about 130 degree programmes and a considerable number of Masters and vocational courses.

¹⁶ The Fondazione Ansaldo is founded by Finmeccanica SPA, the Municipality of Genoa, the Province of Genoa and the Liguria region. It is devoted to the development of an enterprise, labor and economical culture (for further information see <http://www.fondazioneansaldo.it/>).

¹⁷ Finmeccanica is Italy’s leading industrial group in the high technology sector and ranks among the top ten global players in aerospace, defence and security. The Finmeccanica Group focuses on three strategic sectors: Helicopters, Defence Electronics and Security and Aeronautics. Finmeccanica is Europe’s leading defence systems company and is well positioned at the international level, having a strong presence in the space sector (see <http://www.finmeccanica.it/>)

¹⁸ After the last University Reform (Italian Law no. 240/2010), concerning the reorganisation of universities, Italian HEIs are constituted by Departments, organisational units that carry out scientific research, teaching and learning activities, and by Schools, that coordinate the activities of different departments.

Since 1999, a Centre for Permanent Education called 'PerForm' is an integral part of the University of Genoa. The Centre focuses on the development of LLL programmes targeted to respond to specific professional needs coming from different companies. PerForm's activity is especially focussed on postgraduate education and specialisation courses for high-level professional profiles acting both in the public and in the private sector in scientific, medical, economic, technical, legal, humanistic and social domains. PerForm supports the educational activities of Faculties and Departments within the University, especially in the design of Masters and vocational courses. It also develops LLL programmes required by companies or institutions. PerForm operates in close cooperation with national and local companies, public and private institutions and acts to create a stronger relationship with the local territory with the intent to effectively respond to the needs of a changing labor market. Since its foundation, PerForm has followed more than 200 educational projects. Currently, PerForm is managing eleven Master courses.

4.2.2 Target group

The programme is targeted to middle managers employed or unemployed, in the sector of high-end technologies. In the last edition, the twenty students admitted to the programme came mainly from the Liguria region; they were mostly (19/20) employed people, with an average age of 42 years old. All employed participants covered managerial positions within big and middle Italian companies operating in the high-technology sector.

4.2.3 Initiative/Development

The Master is designed to respond to specific educational needs expressed by an Italian leading industrial group, that needed to train personnel for the companies of the group, to cover managerial positions and to learn how to manage human, technical and economical-financial resources within a given project.

Specifically, the Master has the following aims:

- to shape managers able to plan and coordinate international projects and customer-oriented activities, to manage a business unit within international companies operating in the high-technology domain;
- to improve the cooperation between University, private and public institutions, companies and stakeholders for the development of LLL programmes;
- to contribute to the development of a managerial culture in Italian companies, with specific reference to the high-technology sector.

The programme was designed and implemented following the scheme of a 'Temporary Enterprises Association' that was stipulated among Fondazione Ansaldo, University of Genoa (Department of Economics and PerForm), three companies (Ansaldo STS S.p.A., Oto Melara

S.p.A., SIIT Sistemi Intelligenti Integrati e Tecnologie) and the Italian National Research Council (CNR).

All partners actively participated to the definition of the educational objectives and of the contents of the programme, each one with specific tasks:

- Fondazione Ansaldo was the main coordinator of the project, being responsible for marketing and communication, internships and tutorial activities;
- PerForm was responsible for the definition of the didactical programmes, it provided lectures and coordinated project works and the final evaluation. It also dealt with administrative aspects and learner's recruitment;
- the Italian National Council of Research (CNR) looked after the didactical module on management of research and development projects;
- the other partners cooperated to the general development of the programme, to the marketing activities and provided professionals and top managers for seminars and meeting with students.

4.2.4 Structure

The didactical activities were designed to improve leadership skills through the acquisition of four main key competencies: Business Focus, Process, Knowledge & People Value, Execution, Innovation & Change. The master had a mixed didactical model: two days per week (12 hours) of 'classical' lecturing plus work experiences and stages in Italy and abroad. The programme lasts 1.500 hours on overall: 288 hours in class, 40 hours E-Learning, 40 hours abroad, 410 hours of Project Work and 748 hours of individual study. A second level degree in Technical, Scientific, or Humanistic disciplines was required to be admitted to the programme. The programme was free of charge, being funded through the European Social Fund (FSE) and by companies' funds. At the end of the programme students discussed a final project to pass the final exam. The programme provided 60 ECTS credits and a certificate awarded by the Italian Higher Education System.

4.2.5 Interview excerpts

In this section the main issues raised in the interviews conducted with three students, three programme representatives and two lecturers are discussed.

Programme representatives

One of the three programme representatives interviewed is the director of PerForm. He is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Genoa with a relevant experience in the design of LLL programmes. Also the Head Department of Perform and the Director of the Department for Higher Education, University and Professions of the Liguria Region have been interviewed. They report that one of the strength of PerForm activities is the close and stable collaboration with local companies and institutions. All programmes are designed to respond

to specific educational needs of partners involved, for this reason students are mainly employed workers coming from companies. In many cases, a programme originates from agreements among social partners (representatives of employees and employers) and the cooperation of University is required to design and develop the programme. Most of the programmes are free of charge, because they are funded by companies or by public funds. In general scholarships are available to students.

As programme representatives report, the most relevant value point of the Master is the massive support from a big business player (Ansaldo Spa), who strongly wanted the programme and actively collaborated for its development, providing human and financial resources. The Master was a successful experiment of cooperation among University, public institutions and local companies in the intent to create high level competencies, to increase the value and strengths of the territory at an international level.

In one of the programme representative's opinion, University plays a central role in LLL but it has to work much more to adapt its structures, organization and didactical contents to fit the needs of adults and workers.

PI: "Today Universities must cease to deal only with traditional students, who are young people, full-time involved in study, who can go to the university every day and can study hardly at home. Higher Education has to change, to adapt itself to a wider and different target. An adult learner wishes to find in lifelong education a path through which to rebuild his personal biography, a path in which it is possible to find competences related to real work experiences. University cannot offer to adults the same programmes designed for young people: an adult student cannot face learning as a young one do. We have to recognize the value of previous competences and formalize these through an educational path. Only in this way education could be effective. But we have to invest more effort in this direction"

Learners

As reported above, participants were mainly middle managers coming from companies of the Finmeccanica Industrial Group. The age of participants was ranging between 35 to 45 years old, most of them being engineers. One of the two learners interviewed (L1) is an engineer, covering a Project Manager position in Ansaldo STS, the other one (L2) is actually a professional consultant but, when he participated to the programme, he was receiving an unemployment insurance. The motivations of participants are very similar: both students report that they wanted to improve their managerial and leadership skills, which are quite difficult to find in the engineering profile.

L1 says that the role of his company was pivotal in the decision to participate, because his employer suggested him to enter in the programme and supported him financially, paying all board and lodging costs. Also, L2 didn't face any costs to attend the programme because he

had a scholarship. The evaluation of costs was reported as a fundamental feature in the decision to enter for both.

The general evaluation of the programme is good for both, they appreciated the contents, which matched their specific professional needs. Specifically, the module on decision making was very appreciated as well as the practical activities, like classroom exercises, case study analysis, and meetings with experts and top managers coming from high-end Italian companies. These seminars were very appreciated because top managers and professionals discussed in class examples of practical situations coming from their work experience and they explained students how they faced critical situations or resolved specific problems. Students suggest to increase these seminars and practical activities in general.

Most of participants complain about the high commitment requested by the programme, too much tough and demanding to be easily attended by working students. They suggest to modify the organization of activities, to reduce the time devoted to frontal lessons and study.

At the time of the programme, L2 was in a difficult employment situation and he reported that he didn't receive a real help from attending the course. After the Master he had difficulties to find another job at the level of his qualification. A placement service for learners was lacking and this was reported as a relevant weak point of the programme. About the role of Universities in the LLL system, L1 suggests the necessity of a strong relation with labour market:

L1: 'The weakness of Italian University is the lack of communication with companies. University is not able to effectively respond to the needs of local companies, because of the lack of an adequate confrontation with enterprises. I think that it should be necessary to create round tables in which all actors could meet and work together to design a more specific education with the aim to help people enter in the labour market.'

Lecturers

The teachers involved in the programme were University Professors or professionals with experience in teaching. Also some managers coming from companies were selected to teach lessons. All teachers were selected by PerForm with a public competition aimed to find the best experts in the field. The two lecturers interviewed are full professors of the University of Genoa.

On the side of the teaching methodology, teachers explained which were the main differences between teaching to adult and to young students. Adults are more committed and more interactive during lessons but, at the same time, they're also less flexible with respect to new learning contents because they are strongly linked to their previous education and work experiences. In this context, teachers need to adopt new methodologies, to help adults to overcome these barriers and to become more open. At the same time, teachers underlined the

importance to recognize and increase the value of previous knowledge, especially those who are already working, and to start from this to build new competences.

LC1: “Adult students are more responsible than the youngsters, they are well-motivated and their participation to lessons is more active. On the other hand, adults are less flexible and more hard-shelled, they have structured knowledge and ideas coming from their previous education and work-life experiences that make them less open with respect to new learning. So we need to change our traditional way of teaching, to find other methodologies and new ways of communication. We have to make value of their previous experience and start from there to create new knowledge”.

For these reasons, a mixed teaching approach was preferred, with the aim to put in evidence the practical aspects of learning: traditional frontal lessons were blended with presentation of case studies, discussions in group, practice-oriented exercises and groupwork. Teachers highlight that some students were facing difficulties faced in attending all courses, to find the time to study at home and to prepare the final project-work. Most of participants were middle managers with many responsibilities in their company and they expressed complains toward the high commitment requested by the programme. Teachers say that the final evaluation was changed to meet the requests of students who strongly opposed the concept of a written test or any kind of traditional final evaluations. For this reason it was decided to introduce individual project-works to be presented by students at the end of courses. The final project work focused on subjects related to students current job position or to their work experience in general and in this way students were able to complete their task.

Teachers conclude that it is necessary to find new modalities of teaching to adults and great attention must be addressed to the organization of didactical activities with the aim to facilitate the work-life-study time balance, especially for those who are already working. Finally, one of the lecturers underlined the role that the University could have to contribute to an effective lifelong education system:

LC2: “I think lifelong education is one of the biggest challenge that University today must face to increase the value of its role in the higher education system. Today we know that the cultural baggage we transfer to our student is doomed to become obsolete in a short time. So we must provide our students not with complete or definitive knowledge but with methods and criteria to make them able to improve their knowledge lifelong. At the same time, it is necessary to update workers’ and professionals’ knowledge who every day must face new problems in a fast-changing economy. University has the chance to cover an important position in this scenario, but it is necessary to create a strong cooperation with companies and public and private institutions. To Increase the knowledge of people is a crucial challenge for the development of our Country.”

4.2.6 Implementation and process analysis

The effectiveness of the programme was measured by two different means, an internal and an external auditing: the first one was made by Perform, the second was assigned to an external company. Four different tools were used for evaluation:

- a questionnaire at the beginning of the programme;
- a questionnaire six months after the beginning the programme;
- a questionnaire at the end of the programme;
- a questionnaire at the end of each didactical module.

Some critical issues for programme improvement did emerge from both the questionnaires and from the interviews:

- learners suggest to increase practical activities;
- learners also suggest to reduce frontal lessons, tasks assigned to students and the total duration of the programme, which were felt as too long and demanding to be easily attended by workers.
- tighter connections with the labour market are requested, to facilitate unemployed people or people who wish to change their job. A placement service would be highly useful.

4.2.7 General conclusions

From the case study here presented, some general implications for the design of LLL programmes can be drawn:

- LLL education must secure close links with territorial/local industries;
- More attention should be devoted to the design of placement services and other tools to facilitate the research of a new job;
- The role of practical experience must be carefully taken into account, and it is of the foremost importance to plan learning activities that could facilitate the participation of workers and work-life-study balance.

4.3 University of Bolzano

The last case study is related to the Second Level Master in Environmental Design “CasaClima” (“ClimateHouse”; “KlimaHaus”), organized by the Free University of Bozen/Bolzano. In year 2005, the University has started the post-graduate Second Level Master in Environmental Design “CasaClima” (“ClimateHouse”; “KlimaHaus”)¹⁹, an high level programme in environmental planning and on the use of renewable resources in architecture. The programme is implemented in cooperation with private and public institutions and many companies located in the Trentino Alto-Adige region, where there is great expertise and knowledge in the field of sustainable building. The case study is based on an analysis of background data and documents and of the interviews with people involved in the programme. Seven students, two lecturers and two programme representatives have been interviewed.

4.3.1 The Free University of Bozen/Bolzano

The Free University of Bozen/Bolzano (<http://www.unibz.it>) is an Italian non-state funded university, granted the authority to award university degrees by the state, in accordance with Italian law²⁰. This HEI is located in Trentino Alto Adige, a region in the north-east of Italy, close to the national boundary, in a multilingual and multicultural territory. It is an institution oriented to multilingualism and internationalisation, a feature emphasized by the presence of an international academic staff and an international student body and by the use of different teaching languages (Italian, English, German and Ladin²¹). The Free University of Bozen/Bolzano mission statement recognizes LifeLong Learning as a value for the social, cultural and personal benefits it brings. Currently, there are many courses and opportunities for people who want to get back into studying and ‘lifelong learning students’ account for 14% of the entire student population. In the academic year 2012/2013, the Free University of Bozen/Bolzano offers the following continuing education programmes:

¹⁹ See: <http://www.unibz.it/en/sciencetechnology/progs/master2ndlevel/casaclima/default.html>

²⁰ Non-State universities may be recognised by a decree of the Minister of Education. Legal recognition takes place after an evaluation process concerning the university statute, its organisation model, budget, etc. The degrees awarded by non-State universities legally recognised by the State have the same legal value as those of State universities. Non-State universities have to comply with the same general principles and criteria as defined by the national university legislation for State institutions. The differences between State and non-State universities concern funding and governance. Italy counts 27 non-state Universities.

²¹ Ladin is a language consisting of a group of dialects (which some consider part of a unitary Rhaeto-Romance language) mainly spoken in the Dolomite Mountains in Northern Italy in the provinces South Tyrol, Trentino and Belluno. It is closely related to the Swiss Romansh and Friulian. Source: Wikipedia.

Department of	LLL Programme
Science and Technology	2 nd level Master in Environmental Design “CasaClima”
Science and Technology	1 st level Master in Innovation Engineering
Education	Continuing education programme for English teacher in primary schools
Economics	Master’s degree in Economics and Management in Public Sector

The University also promotes the debate on permanent education as well as on the promotion of a culture of LLL through the organization of events, seminars and conferences at a national or international level.

4.3.2 Target group

The programme is both targeted to young graduates who want to develop specific competences to access the ‘green building’ labour market as well as to professionals who need to improve, widen and update their knowledge. In its first five editions, students admitted to the programme came from different Italian regions (north, south and centre) and also from Poland, Germany, Austria, Portugal and from other non-European countries. From 2005 to 2009 a consistent percentage of participants, almost one half, was constituted by adult students (on average of 38,8% of students from 37 to 45 years old in five editions)²².

4.3.3 Initiative/Development

The Master ‘CasaClima’ is designed to respond to specific educational needs expressed by the local labour market, and, more specifically, to meet the rising demand of ‘green jobs’. Even if the social and economical positive impact of the ‘green economy’ are well known, at the moment in Italy there are few university programmes specifically targeted to educate qualified workers for this sector.

²² Yearly percentage of 37- 45 years students:

2005: 55%

2006: 47%

2007: 45%

2008: 27%

2009: 20%

The Master takes place in Trentino Alto-Adige, a region with a great expertise in environmental design and in renewable energies. The Programme is designed in cooperation with ‘CasaClima’²³, a public company operating in the field of buildings’ energy certification and construction energy efficiency. A specific Department of the Italian National Research Council (CNR-IVALSA in Florence) also actively cooperates to the programme.

The main educational aim of the course is to create professionals able to plan and coordinate projects based on low-energy consumption, conserving energy in existing timber-made buildings. Specifically, the Master “CasaClima” has the following didactical and occupational aims:

- to provide specific competences in a sector with a great importance for social, scientific and occupational reasons;
- to facilitate the access and the transition of people into the labour market, providing participants with more specific and valuable skills;
- to test new teaching methods with more emphasis on practical experience;
- to improve the cooperation between University, private and public institutions and companies for the creation of a “Centre of Excellence” for Higher Education in the field of renewable energy and environmental planning in architecture.

4.3.4 Structure

The programme is articulated into basic courses (sustainable development and low energy consumption, efficiency, building physics, solar plants and others), for about 350 hours of lessons, and specific or complementary courses (timber buildings and architectures, fireproofing, waterproofing, marketing, management), for about 150 hours of lessons. In addition to traditional lectures, the programme includes a 150 hours internship in domain-related companies or institutions. External courses within industries, conferences, seminars, trips and activities in laboratories also contribute to the didactical offer.

²³ See <http://www.klimahaus.it/en/climatehouse/1-0.html>

CORE COURSE

Planning criteria – 28 credits

Building physics
Bio-compatible materials
Principles of climatology and meteorology
Town planning
Principles of planning
Natural lighting systems
Natural ventilation systems
Acoustic isolation
Planning criteria for low-energy thermal systems
Photovoltaic systems
Solar technology
Construction planning
Detail planning
Renovation and energy efficiency
Principles of thermal imaging
Radon pollution
Electromagnetic radiation pollution
Indoor pollution (IAQ)
Green roofing
Vegetation and fitodepuration systems
Regulations and legislation
Environmental and energy certification

WORKSHOP - 4 credits

SPECIALISED COURSE

Timber subjects – 12 credits

Basics of timber technology
Wood deformation and protection
Restoration: inspection and evaluation, criteria and intervention
Classification criteria
Compound materials
Construction systems
Connections and joints
Behaviour with fire and earth tremors
Timber roofs
Principles of calculus
Project management of timber constructions

WORKSHOP - 4 credits

INTERNSHIP - 12 credits

TOTAL CREDITS: 60

To facilitate the participation of workers, all activities take place in one week (six days) every month, eight hours every day. The programme lasts two years. Lectures are taught both in Italian and in English. Second level degree is required to be admitted to the programme. Only twenty students per year are admitted. Degrees in architecture, civil engineering and structural engineering are required but also economics, agronomics, buildings and other degrees are can participate. People who haven't a second level degree or a university education can participate to the programme as auditors only.

The programme is mainly funded by students' fees, the admission fee totally amount to 7.500 euros. Scholarships and other economic benefits for students, funded by Trentino Alto Adige

region or Italian state, are available. At the end of the programme students must discuss their final project to attend the final exam. The programme provides 60 ECTS credits and a certificate awarded by the Italian Higher Education System.

4.3.5 Interview excerpts

The analysis reported below are based on interviews with seven students, one lecturer, two programme representatives and a person who is at the same time a programme representative and a lecturer.

Programme representatives

Two of the programme representatives interviewed are experts in LLL, with a relevant experience in the design of HE programmes. Specifically, one of them (P1) is the Prorector for Studies at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano. She has been the Rector's Delegate for Student Centred Learning, involved in pilot projects for building an "University for All". We have also interviewed the Master's director (P2), who is a professor, an expert in Environmental Planning, and the main responsible for the programme. She is also a lecturer at the master. The CEO of CasaClima was interviewed too (P3).

As programme representatives say, private and public institutions of Trentino Alto-Adige played a central role in the decisional process to design the Master. They underline that the course answers to a specific need expressed by the territory: Trentino Alto Adige is one of the first Italian region for the production of renewable energies being at the forefront in the field of green building. Local institutions and companies wanted to formalize a Higher Education programme settled in the territory, to make Trentino Alto Adige a reference point in the field of sustainable building. Thus, the programme makes the most of knowledge and expertise coming from the territory (especially local companies), not only from the university. In the programme representative's words:

P2: *“The anomaly of this programme lies in the fact that in the Free University of Bozen doesn't exist the faculty of architecture or engineering, that is an academic community of experts on environmental design. Instead here there is a local community of expert, a territory full of best practices, well-known at a national or international level. The community was asking to the HE system to transform local know-how in a university programme, to provide professionals high level competences and knowledge.”*

P3: *“When we introduced in Trentino Alto Adige the energy certification for buildings, we needed of new professionals able to design low energy consumptions buildings. So we decided to invest in education and we asked for a cooperation with University. We made a big team, in which there were public and private institution. Our mission was to make our region an international reference point for sustainable buildings.”*

In the programme representatives' opinion, the Master 'CasaClima' has three main innovative aspects: i) didactical contents; ii) integration with the local context; iii) international approach. The Master is one of the few Italian University programmes related to green economy and for its specific and relevant contents it is able to attract a number of students coming from different parts of Italy and from foreign Countries. Second, the programme has a strong relation with the territory and the local community, as underlined before. Finally, a successful feature is the international and multicultural approach that guided its design and implementation.

Learners

As reported before, participants come from different Italian regions and from several European Countries. Learners' age is wide-ranging, from less than 30 to over 45 years old. Most of them are young graduates or professionals with a relevant experience in the sector. The learners who have been interviewed have completed the programme from few years and they reported overall a good level of satisfaction. The main motivation that has guided them to enter the programme was the need to develop specific skills to pursue a career in the environmental design. They have particularly appreciated the didactical approach, especially the practical activities, laboratories and meeting with professionals:

L1: *"I mainly appreciate those activities in which students see practical application of knowledge. Every architect faces practical problems, so it's very important to put theory into practise and to be able to use technical instruments to manage a plan, like software or other technologies. I suggest to increase the presence of practical courses into the programme".*

Also, students appreciated the organization of activities gathered in one week every month (eight hours a day), a setting that facilitated the participations of workers and the work-life-study balance.

Many students point out the difficulties to face the financial costs of the master, especially adults and workers, because scholarships and other economical benefits were available only for those people who have a degree, or for the unemployed. Also adult workers coming from other Italian regions or from other countries couldn't accommodate in students' residences, because of the limited availability of places. Many workers decided to pass from a full-time to a part-time job or to temporarily leave their job, because the programme study was tough and demanding. Therefore, in many cases, the financial costs for the participation to the master were supported entirely by students themselves.

People interviewed appreciated the heterogeneity of the learners' group, composed by students of different ages, with different education and work experience. They think

heterogeneity could be an asset, a value in education and a strong point for a high quality lifelong education system:

L3: *“During the master, I had the possibility to know people younger than me and with different work experiences. I think the master was a good opportunity to exchange points of view about work and to compare myself with others. This confrontations were moments for personal growth. Also I think this is what University could give to adult students: a chance to stay in a stimulating and rich environment in which education takes place from the exchange between students and teachers and between students as well.”*

Interviewees report that, thanks the master, they are now part of a professional network made up of students, teachers and people working in the environmental design sector. Also students who have finished the master long ago, say that even now the community that was formed along the Master is an important reference point for them, e.g. to solve problems related to work and to exchange information.

Lecturers

Teachers involved in the programme are University Professors or professionals who work in the field of sustainable building and who have experience in teaching. They are mainly coming from other Universities (not only from Italy but also from Germany, Greece, Switzerland, Austria). Teachers are selected by a public competition aimed to find the best experts in the field. On the side of the didactical approach, one of the teachers interviewed underlines the importance of practical experience:

LC1: *“I think that university, especially when facing with lifelong learning students, must be able to overcome the barrier between traditional education and work. Now we face adults and professionals with relevant work experiences, thus we need to tell them how they can do things, how they can implement a real project. Our students need to do, to make, to put into practice.”*

On the side of the teaching methodology, interviewed lecturers report that, to stimulate students' participation, they use different teaching methods mainly focussing on evidencing the practical aspects of learning. Thus, traditional frontal lessons are combined with the discussion of practical cases or with the presentation of tools and instruments used in the work practice.

4.3.6 Implementation and process analysis

The effectiveness of the programme is measured every year, at the end of activities, with a questionnaire aimed to investigate learners' satisfaction. Some important features for the implementation of the programme emerge both from the questionnaire and from the interviews:

- learners, as well as teachers, suggest to increase practical activities, especially laboratories and meeting with professionals;
- in general, all people acknowledge the importance to focus the programme on very specific contents, oriented to develop high quality skills;
- learners report good satisfaction with respect to the 'learners' friendly' organization of activities;
- learners ask to extend economical benefits and scholarships, to reduce the costs to attend the programme. It's also suggested to implement a set of services dedicated to workers and some social activities for adults.

4.3.7 General conclusions

From this third Italian case study, some general implications for the design of LLL programs can be drawn:

- the selection of contents should be guided by a previous analysis of labor market needs, at a national or local level. Education must provide people with such skills and competences as required by the growing economy sectors, in which there is a relevant demand of workers;
- in this connection, it's important the relation with territory and local community, to emphasize local strengths;
- didactical aspects must be taken into consideration, in particular emphasizing the role of practical experience;
- the costs supported by participants should be reduced to make easier the access to the program;
- the organization of activities should facilitate the participation of adults (mainly of workers);
- special attention should be devoted to the design of specific services and/or tools to facilitate the creation of a professional network between participants, teachers and all actors involved in the programme.

5. Comparison of the three cases

In this initial draft, for performing the comparison across the three Italian cases, we further developed the issues that were sketched out in the provided template. For each theme, we identified a number of possible parameters, each of which was qualified with one of the following quantifiers: low, medium, high, very high. It has to be noticed that three courses differ with respect to many issues/dimensions.

5.1 Organisation

In this section, we compare the three cases with respect to the degree of commitment that each HEI devoted to the implementation of the TLLL programme. We consider four parameters: i) the degree to which the programme is directly issued and managed by the University or through third party; ii) the degree to which the programme is officially certified by the University; iii) the share of teachers directly coming from the University; iv) Teachers' motivation.

Degree to which the programme is directly issued and managed by the University

- Bologna: Low, the programme is mainly the initiative of one Professor, and issued through a third party (FormArea), endorsed by University of Bologna.
- Genoa: Medium, the programme is provided through a third party (PerForm Centre). The Centre, in this case, is part of the University.
- Bolzano: High, the programme is officially certified and directly provided by the University.

Degree to which the programme is officially certified by the University:

- Bologna: Low, no official HE certification.
- Genoa: High, the programme is fully certified.
- Bolzano: High, the programme is fully certified.

Share of teachers directly coming from the University:

- Bologna: To be defined.
- Genoa: To be defined.
- Bolzano: To be defined.

Teachers' motivation:

- Bologna: Medium, social usefulness; extra salary.
- Genoa: Very High, international contacts; contacts with big companies and local players; community of practice; extra salary.
- Bolzano: Very High, international contacts; contacts with big companies and local players; community of practice; extra salary.

5.2 Social reach

To evaluate the social reach, in this section we compare the three cases with respect to their target groups. We use three parameters: i) entrance skills; ii) costs to participate; iii) access rules.

Entrance skills:

- Bologna: Low skilled.
- Genoa: High skilled.
- Bolzano: Medium and High skilled.

Costs to be faced by students:

- Bologna: High, the programme is fully paid by Fondi Impresa (part of Country's social safety funds)
- Genoa: High, the programme is fully free of charge (paid by the Regional Government through ESF funds).
- Bolzano: Low, students have to pay the full fee. Some Regional funding available for grants.

Access rules:

- Bologna: Low, the programme is only open for those students coming from those companies adhering to the specific 'Fondi Impresa' initiative .
- Genoa: Low, access is allowed only for those students having a specific diploma (Laurea magistrale or quinquennale).
- Bolzano: Medium, access is allowed for those students having both a Laurea and with a secondary school diploma (although, at the end of the programme, this last class of participants will not get an official certificate).

5.3 Curriculum development

In this section, we compare the three cases with respect to curriculum development. We use two main parameters: i) their ability to balance professional-oriented contents and scientific knowledge and ii) their effectiveness in providing occupational opportunities.

Ability to balance professional-oriented contents and scientific knowledge:

- Bologna: Low, the course is focussed on teaching transversal skills.
- Genoa: High, the course combines professional-oriented contents and scientific knowledge.
- Bolzano: High, the course combines professional-oriented contents and scientific knowledge.

Effectiveness in providing/strengthening employability:

- Bologna: Medium, 30% of attendees are reported to find a job after the course.
- Genoa: Medium, although most course attendants already have a job, the programme is intended to strengthen/enrich applicants' occupational position.
- Bolzano: High, the course opens up interesting prospects in one of the most promising sectors (i.e. the green economy).

5.4 Teaching and learning

In this section, we compare the three cases with respect to their ability to fit adult students' learning needs. We consider three main parameters: i) the degree to which the programme provided students with direct, hands-on professional experiences; ii) the degree to which the programme schedule was built to fit students' time requirements; iii) the degree to which the programme contributes to the setting up of a community of professionals.

Degree to which the programme provided students with direct, hands-on professional experiences:

- Bologna: Low, the course is not targeted to provide professional experience.
- Genoa: High, the course foresees the contribution of many teachers coming from the professional realm.
- Bolzano: High, the course foresees the contribution of many teachers coming from the professional realm.

Degree to which the programme schedule is built to fit students' time requirements:

- Bologna: High, short modules.
- Genoa: Low, participants must take a one year leave from their job.
- Bolzano: High, one week per month.

Degree to which the programme contributes to the setting up of a community of professionals:

- Bologna: Low, participants' heterogeneity and course contents do not allow the setting up of a community of professionals.
- Genoa: Medium, no specific contributions in this sense were pointed out.
- Bolzano: High, this was explicitly reported as one of the value points of the course.

5.5 Impact assessment

This section overlaps with former sections. Its contents have to be further discussed.

5.6 Pros and cons with respect to over 45 oriented TLL

In this section, we compare the main pros and cons for the three cases. First of all, as said elsewhere in this report, in Italy there's no TLL programme specifically targeted to adult workers in transitions. In the following, we recap the shares of adult (over 45) students attending the three programmes:

- Bologna: High, about 90%
- Genoa: High, about 90%.
- Bolzano: Medium, about 40%.

Second, we consider the extent to which the programmes are oriented to facilitate labour transitions:

- Bologna: Medium, orientation and transversal skills seem to be effective 'meta' skills to help people face with labour transitions.
- Genoa: Medium, the managerial skills acquired by attendees are likely to facilitate work transitions.
- Bolzano: High, the course opens up interesting prospects in one of the most promising sectors (i.e. the green economy).

Third, we compare the extent to which the programmes are oriented to professional employment:

- Bologna: Low, the course is not directly targeted to provide professional employment.
- Genoa: High, the course is directly targeted to enrich professional profiles.
- Bolzano: High, the course creates a new, promising professional profile.

6. Case Studies typology

	Case Study I	Case Study II	Case Study III
Institutional Setting	External Company	External Companyt	University
Target	Unemployed	Employed	Mixed
Access to the Program	Open	University Degree	University Degree
Program definition:	Individual initiative	Companies and University driven	Companies and University driven
Didactic Orientation:	Groupwork and lessons	Lessons and reported experience	Lessons and stages
Outcome:	No University official recognition	Master title	Master title
Intended Impact:	Improved personal initiative	Career maintenance	Career change
Generic or specific career pathways	Generic	Specific	Specific
Evaluation	Questionnaires	Questionnaires	Questionnaires
Impact (measured in what ways)	Questionnaires	Questionnaires	Questionnaires
Social inclusion:	Human capital	Professional capital	Professional capital
Quality of Life:	?	?	?
Future prospects:	?	?	?

7. Concluding remarks - Recommendations (3 Pages)

This section to be developed