

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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This paper has been prepared by D^v Giuseppe Medusa Director-General of the Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori (ISFOL)

Published by :

Commission of the European Communities Directorate-General for Social Affairs Vocational guidance and training Division Rue de la Loi 200 1049 BRUXELLES

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This supplement is published in six languages : Danish, German, English, French, Italian and Dutch. Vocational training in Italy in relation to the National education system 1. Training opportunities for young people after completing their compulsory schooling

At the end of their compulsory schooling (five years at primary school and three years at lower intermediate school), young people have the following five possibilities:

- (a) immediate integration into employment through on-thejob training schemes;
- (b) apprenticeship, which involves following an occupation whilst attending supplementary — mainly theoretical courses for a limited number of hours per week;
- (c) enrolment at a vocational training centre to follow a short preliminary course or a normal training course (duration from 750 to 1 200 hours, representing one or two school years); in both cases the young person obtains a certificate and can take up a suitable job;
- (d) enrolment at a State vocational training institute for a two-year or three-year course as the case may be. Unlike the vocational training centres (now managed by the regions) the young person enters a real school and leaves with a recognized certificate entitling him to enrol for an additional fourth and fifth year course leading to a final examination giving access to university;
- (e) enrolment at a secondary educational establishment (liceo, teacher training school, technical institute, art school) followed by prolonged general studies (university) or secondary studies leading to an intermediate level occupation (skilled worker).

2. Options for young people who have completed compulsory schooling

The following list gives the training opportunities after compulsory schooling, divided into five main groups:

- individual on-the-job training;
- apprenticeship;
- vocational training;
- vocational training at State institute;
- classical or technical secondary education.

Survey of young people between 15 and 16 years carried out in 1974/75 showed that out of a population of 1 590 000:

- -5 % attended supplementary courses for apprentices;
- -7% enrolled at vocational training centres;
- 1.8 % were still attending intermediate school;
- 43 % enrolled at secondary schools;
- the remaining 37 % completed their compulsory schooling without availing themselves of any training opportunities and accordingly lacked skills.

On the whole, young people chose options falling into three groups, as follows:

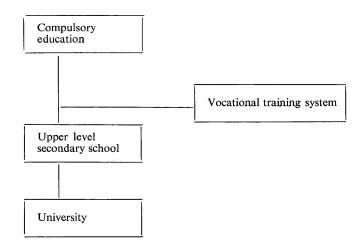
- 43 % continued secondary studies;
- 37 % were without training of any sort;
- a few i.e. 12 %, received training (supplementary courses for apprentices and normal courses for skilled workers).

3. Vocational training in schools and outside the school system

Italy has two systems of vocational training: a system not strictly confined to educational establishments, which includes all vocational training activities promoted by the Ministry of Labour (today by the regions), originally in the form of vocational training courses (Law No 264 of 24.4.49, later circ. No 8 of 12.8.1961) intended as a supplementary educational channel (with respect to the education system which the Ministry of Public Education established through the State vocational training institutes in those years).

This second channel was to be closely linked to employment, and guaranteed the minimum educational levels (two- or three-year courses with programmes relating to career briefs prepared by the Ministry of Labour and generally directed at young people of from fourteen to seventeen who had completed their compulsory schooling).

The diagram below shows the situation of vocational training system in relation to the school system:



Under DPR No 10 of 15.1.1972 relating to the transfer of administrative competence from the State to the regions in respect of craft and vocational training, the latter inherited a situation in which, throughout the country vocational training structures depended on a mixture of public and private bodies.

These bodies in turn were responsible to various trade organizations or trade unions.

Included under this heading are training schemes provided by undertakings (especially large ones) which, although often of high quality are at times too closely geared to short- and medium-term production programme objectives.

Almost all these activities concern young people aged fourteen to seventeen; two year or three-year courses are generally offered, the programmes being based on career briefs provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

4. Vocational training outside the school system: financial resources

The Italian State spends over Lit 215 000 million annually on vocational training outside the school system.

Financing is almost entirely from public funds, although the private sector does contribute in a small way.

Table 1 below compares the total financial resources devoted to training outside school, and the number of trainees, in two Community countries (Italy and France).

TABLE 1

Vocational training outside the school system

Financial resources (Mrd. Lit)				Trainees				
Public system	Private system	Total	Pubic system	Private system	Total			
Italy								
215	50	265	250 000	150 000	400 000			
France								
345	750	1 095	511 000	1 770 000	2 231 000			

5. Teaching systems

A thorough-going study on the systems followed by the various vocational training bodies is still lacking even today. These systems stem from ministerial circulars and directives, and in not a few cases from proposals made or experiments carried out by the bodies themselves.

For the most part the individual bodies are free to set the number of hours per subject. In preparing programmes they seek to combine academic education with practical training in the workshop.

Hours per week vary between 36 and 40.

Example of a model timetable for the first year (common to several skills) in the technical and engineering sectors (fitter, welder, carpenter) covering 18 hours per week, 612 hours per year.

- technical training (technical and mechanical drawing) 18 hours per week, 272 hours per year;
- scientific studies (mathematics and physics) -- six hours per week, 204 per year;
- general education (civic and social) four hours per week, 136 per year.

6. Teaching staff

The recent survey carried out by $ISFOL^1$ shows that the total number of teaching staff working in regional centres and vocational training centres financed by regional funds. was 17 500 in 1975.

ISFOL interviewed 14 938 teachers.

One interesting aspect of the structure of the teaching staff is the breakdown by age, as follows:

Teachers under 25 years of age	16.8
between 26 and 35 years	44.7
between 36 and 45	20.8
between 46 and 55	13.3
over 55 years	4.4

It can be assumed that the turnover of vocational training teachers is considerable — decidedly higher than in the school system; nevertheless the future of the teaching profession in the next ten to fifteen years will be determined by its structure today.

If it is recalled — as will be stressed below — that 63.5 % of teachers have permanent contracts (on conditions which have changed radically in their favour in recent years) and that 25.6 % are regional staff whilst a further 17.2 % are employed by other public bodies (or are on contract to the latter), the foregoing considerations take on even greater weight.

The problem therefore, is to maintain (and indeed extend) the guarantees given to teaching staff, in line with the requirements of the vocational training system. This implies a contractual system favouring some degree of turnover, encouraging some personnel to leave major centres to pursue other activities and others to return after acquiring solid practical experience. Contractual instruments should be found which would permit — and even promote — a type of occupational mobility which could be described as 'institutional' alongside another type which might be called 'cultural'. Alongside these measures to encourage occupational mobility in the institutional sense, an effort should at once be begun to devise, test, perfect and keep under constant review, a series of measures and instruments which will enable teachers to maintain and improve their capacity to respond to the problems of change and innovation which today affect all occupations to a greater or lesser extent. If in schools the increasingly tedious repetition of the same programme - unhappily the usual situation - does not appear to be sapping the life of the educational establishments (which are expanding — in numbers at least — and even flourish in the cultural desert to which they are confined, in vocational training it would be a self-defeating absurdity.

¹ Regional vocational training.

General report on the national survey carried out by ISFOL 1975 in conjunction with the regional authorities — Quaderno ISFOL No 26.

Without occupationa mobility both institutional and cultural i.e. without instruments to enable vocational training to be kept continually in tune with the requirements of the labour market and, of economic development, the guarantees given to staff would become merely a new form of public aid.

As has been stated, a low average age is general among teaching staff. It could, however, be worth noting some of the most significant differences revealed by correlating age with other variables, as follows:

- location: teaching staff in the northern regions are slightly older than in the centre/south. In the north, 60 % are under 35 against 66 % in the centre and 70 % in the Mezzogiorno;
- teaching: there is a marked difference between teachers of theoretical and practical subjects. The former tend to be younger than the latter (this holds good for all areas);
- contractual basis: permanent teaching staff are older than those with fixed-term contracts; ¹ at national level 58 % of the first group are under 35, against 67 % of the second (also holds good in all areas);
- except in the Mezzogiorno, women are clearly overrepresented in the youngest age group (under 25) and under-represented in the older age groups. This could be linked to the fact that there are more women teachers of theoretical subjects (younger on average than teachers of practical subjects, as has already been said) but it could also result from the higher turnover in female staff;
- type of training body: teaching staff of the VTC's managed by the regions and those coming under national training bodies is concentrated mainly in the first age group (under 35). It should be noted, however, that the latter have a higher proportion of teachers under 25, while, at the regional VTC's, the majority are in the 25-35 age group.

TABLE 2

Teaching staff by qualifications, sex and age

Another factor which plays a part in determining vocational training personnel structure today concerns the breakdown according to type of teaching provided (theoretical, practical, theoretical-practical), and therefore the function fulfilled within the VTC.

At overall national level the distribution is as follows: ²

teachers of theoretical subjects	48.9
teachers of practical subjects	24.6
teachers of theoretical and practical subjects	21.7
assistants and assistant instructors	3.7

The certificates held by teachers at vocational training centres not only represent formal qualifications but also provide a summary of their educational background and a rough idea of the social environment to which they were exposed in early years.³

		Total			Final situation					
Qualifications	Up to 25	26-35	36-45	46-55	over 55	м	F	MF	In regional VTC	unspecified period
Primary school certificate Lower intermediate school cer-	2.3	3.0	6.0	9.0	14.3	5.3	3.5	4.8	6.2	5.1
tificate	9.9	10.7	19.2	18.7	19.3	15.3	10.2	13.8	16.4	15.8
Upper secondary school cer-									1011	1010
tificate:	75.1	65.6	58.7	57.5	49.9	64.3	63.2	64.0	63.0	66.3
industrial/technical	25.5	28.0	18.0	16.2	10.7	31.8	1.4	23.2	26.0	24.6
commercial/technical	10.2	7.6	6.6	4.5	4.7	4.4	14.6	7.3	6.3	7.6
trades	6.8	6.2	7.5	6.6	6.4	7.0	5.6	6.6	7.1	7.3
science/classical	8.8	5.2	6.2	7.3	2.3	6.3	5.8	6.1	5.4	6.1
teacher training	10.2	6.3	6.5	8.8	8.0	2.9	18.6	7.4	5.8	7.6
Degrees:										
of which:	12.2	20.5	15.6	14.7	16.4	14.8	22.8	17.1	13.8	12.5
technical/scientific	2.2	5.0	4.7	4.4	4.9	5.4	2.0	4.4	2.2	2.8
literary	5.3	7.0	4.1	4.4	5.1	3.4	11.3	5.7	5.2	3.8
Other	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Overall total	2 500	6 638	3,085	1 970	652	10 632	4 256	14 938	3 825	9 094

¹ For many teachers a fixed-term contract probably represents an intermediate stage before integration into the system; this could explain the large number of young people in that situation.

² The percentages were calculated taking into account the fact that a number of teachers interviewed omitted to supply the information requested (a relatively small proportion: 1.1 %).

³ To obtain a more precise idea of the social background, however, it would have been necessary to seek information on teachers' families, social status, etc. This would have widened the scope of the study too much.

Slightly less than two-thirds (64 %) of all teachers hold certificates from upper secondary schools (including vocational establishments and former technical schools) while about one-fifth (15.1 %) hold a degree. A considerable number (13.8 %) of teachers hold the intermediate school final certificate while a small number (4.8 %) hold only the primary school certificate (Table 2).

7. The trainees

The ISFOL study revealed that a total of 126 166 trainees were attending the 1 499 training centres covered by the survey.

This figure understates the real numbers attending vocational training centres managed or financed by the regions in 1974-

TABLE 3

Number of trainees by branch and by region

75, because the number of absentees on the day of the survey was not taken into account, whilst the centres in Lombardy were only partially covered.

Estimates suggest that the real figure was 165- 170 000.

Table 3 gives a breakdown by region and branch of the trainees enrolled in vocational training courses.

If these figures are compared with the estimated demand for vocational training outside the school system, given in Table 4, it becomes clear that the Italian vocational training system is oriented towards young people preparing for their first job on finishing their compulsory schooling, whilst there is little in the way of recurrent training for adult workers already in employment (retraining and refresher courses).

	Course								Total			
Region	Engin- eeering trades	Electrical trades, elecronics	Other industrial trades	Caterng trade	Tourism adver- tising	Industrial design	Manage- ment	Shorthand Typing	Other tertiary sector	Geneal courses	%	Absolute figures
Piedmont	29.2	16.7	7.2	0.6	1.7	12.2	9.3	21.4	21.4	0.3	100.0	9 474
Lombardy (a)	21.9	12.8	6.3	3.1	2.5	13.8	14.8	15.8	7.7	1.4	100.0	14 629
Liguria	25.2	21.3	8.9	3.2	3.3	1.8	16.8	9.0	9.7	0.8	100.0	4 516
Bolzano	29.3	22.8		25.0	1.9	1.2	14.4	5.4	_		100.0	683
Trento	27.0	19.8	12.2	9.0	0.3	0.5	2.5	12.6	15.4	0.7	100.0	3 377
Veneto	33.8	19.4	8.7	1.5	1.0	2.8	9.2	20.8	2.8	_	100.0	15 407
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	27,7	20.1	11.1	12.0	_	2.6	11.4	11.7	3.4		100.0	1 680
Emilia-Romagna	24.5	16.6	9.8	7.6	1.7	4.6	12.9	12.7	7.6	2.0	100.0	9 555
Tuscany	19.1	30.7	6.0	2.0	3.5	0.6	19.0	11.3	5.3	2.5	100.0	4 021
Umbria	48.8	13.0	6.7	2.7	1.5	1.3	9.1	15.0	1.9		100.0	733
Marches	17.4	16.1	11.2	3.1	1.1	1.5	23.6	17.3	4.5	4.2	100.0	4 052
Lazio	21.5	23.0	9.4	2.2	5.2	1.7	12.8	16.3	4.5	3.4	100.0	11 911
Abruzzo	36.3	20.6	11.2	2.4	0,3	1.1	12.6	10.5	5.5	<u> </u>	100.0	5 404
Molise	54.2	18.6	12.4	_			3.4	11.4			100.0	581
Campania	29.9	18.3	15.0	0.9	3.7	2.8	8.9	18.4	2.0	0.1	100.0	14 486
Apulia	35.6	24.9	12.5	0.8	1.5	2.8	6.9	13.1	1.9	—	100.0	9 210
Basilicata	39.1	23.8	21.8	-			6.1	9.2			100.0	1 680
Calabria	31.2	17.1	20.7	4.5	1.1	1.4	4.6	14.4	4.7	0.3	100.0	3 948
Sicily	26.3	21.9	10.5	0.6	1.1	0.9	16.7	20.6	1.4		100.0	6 365
Sardinia	39.5	30.4	8.6	2.3	2.4	1.8	4.8	8.8	1.4	—	100.0	4 456
Italy	28.4	19.7	10.3	2.7	2.2	4.3	11.4	15.8	4.3	0.5	100.0	126 166

Source: ISFOL.

TABLE 4

Vocational training outside the school system

Young people	
Potential annual intake Present annual number, of	000000 ☆
which:	00 🕁
regional system	0 0
Adults	
Potential annual intake	000) 🕁
Present annual number	0 ☆
Total	
Potential annual intake	00000000000
Present annual number	0000
$\begin{array}{r} \text{Key} \\ 0 = 100\ 000\ \text{units} \end{array}$	
$\Rightarrow = 50\ 000\ \text{units}$	

The above data show that the old model of step by step training (all schooling in early years) predominates in the Italian education system although recent 'job/training' experiments (training leave granted under the main collective agreements, assistance by the European Social Fund for teacher training projects, measures enabling unemployed young certificate and degree holders to alternate study with work) reveal a progressive trend towards a 'diachronic' model, with training continued at various stages of working life.

8. Structures

As will be recalled, under the Decree of 15 January 1972 the regions took over the administrative and legislative powers relating to craft and vocational training formerly exercised by the central government.

TABLE 5

VTC's, number of courses and sectors

Sector		Total	% per sector				
	1-3	4-6	7-10	10-15	Over 15		
Single-sector centres:							
Industry-crafts Trade Catering Services Other	44.0 52.8 55.3 75.6 72.9	24.0 25.2 34.0 14.6 17.0	14.3 11.0 8.5 9.8 10.1	12.0 8.1 2.2	5.7 2.9 —	100.0 100.0 110.0 100.0 100.0	43.3 20.8 6.3 2.7 4.0
Total	49.9	24.4	12.6	9.1	4.0	100.0	77.1
Multi-sector centres:							
Industry-trade Trade - services Other	18.2 19.5 22.7	33.2 27.3 18.2	22.8 24.7 13.6	15.8 16.9 9.1	10.0 11.6 .36.4	100.0 100.0 100.0	16.2 5.2 1.5
Total Overall total	18.8 42.8	30.3 25.9	22.6 14.9	15.6 10.6	12.1 5.8	100.0 100.0	22.9 100.0

Source: ISFOL.

These centres are under

- direct regional management

- non-profit making bodies and trade organizations and trade-unions which run courses recognized and financed by the regions.

In 1975, the total number of vocational training centres financed by the regions was 1 643, distributed as follows over the national territory:

	N	%
North-western Italy North-eastern Italy Central Italy Southern Italy	460 338 260 585	28.0 20.6 15.8 35.6
Total	1 643	100.0

Table 5 shows the sectors covered in percentages (industry, trades, services, etc.) and the number of courses offered by the vocational training centres.

9. Problems and suggested reforms in the sector

The debate which has been in progress in Italy in recent years seems to be centred on one issue: whether or not vocational training centres should be brought under public control.

The dilemma, polarizing the opinions of the parties concerned, could easily deflect discussion from the real problems, since the so-called private structures operate more in name than in fact given that they are financed entirely at the discretion of the regions. The regions have the power of making the sector public if they wish, or of rationalizing the system by withdrawing funds from superfluous or inadequate centres not complying with current standards; however, in the absence of an alternative, tested socialized system, the State school would provide the only possible model — which would have the effect of levelling down the sector as regards the organization, programmes and personnel status of the VTC's.

The most informed debate, however, is tending to shift from the institutional aspects of the problem to the strategy for intervention.

Vocational training as an instrument of an active employment policy

In preparing the goverment action plan for employment two problems arose (unemployed young people and industrial reconversion) where the flexible use of the training machinery could encourage mobility and alleviate the imbalances on the employment market.

With a view to this, an attempt is being made to link the prospective legislative reform of the sector with the removal of administrative and financial obstacles which today complicate such action, by:

 making resources from the Wage Integration Fund (now operated by management bodies with the sole aim of granting assistance) available to the regions where the latter organize training activities for workers threatened with unemployment;

- abolishing procedural and parametric bottlenecks governing access to the State funds referred to in Article 9 p of DPR No 10 of 15 January 1972, which are largely responsible for the wasteful employment of ESF assistance in Italy;
- reorganizing the placement services to ensure a link between training structures (regional) and local placement offices (State). This could involve an exchange of information on the employment market, or the utilization of existing training structures for re-training unemployed workers in skills for which there is most demand;
- completing the transfer of powers to the regions.

The increase in resources available to the regions and the broadening of the latters' powers relating to teacher training, research and training experiments, vocational guidance (in conjunction with the placement services) and the management of special projects, no longer appear to be subjects of discussion.

Career briefs and levels of training

In connection with the transfer of powers, many regions found it necessary to define career briefs, i.e., the objectives of the training measures, on a local basis.

Looked at closely this requirement does not conflict with the free movement of workers, whether at national or Community level. At national evel, machinery must be established to define levels of training (corresponding to polyvalent groups of career briefs) continually up-dated in line with trade union requirements (groups of training levels = standardized wage levels). Individual job requirements could be drawn up at local level in relation to local needs to avoid the danger of proliferating qualification levels, placement should be made on the basis of groups of career briefs corresponding to equivalent groups of training levels.

Closely linked to this problem is that of strengthening the ISFOL (Institute for the Development of Vocational Training of Workers) which was set up (in 1974) as a public body for providing advice and technical assistance with regard to vocational training following the transfer of responsibility for this sector to the regions.

In two and a half years of operation it has proved its worth, even to those who were initially sceptical, by showing that:

- it is completely free of any administrative aspirations or desire to interfere in regional autonomy;
- it is capable of providing technical assistance, promoting training and research activities and experiments in teaching and methodology,
- it is well equipped to provide information on the employment situation;

— if suitably restructured (strengthening of the trade union element), it could become the meeting point for the social forces to discuss and examine the most important questions relating to employment policy.

The problems of the link between the regional vocational training system and the State school, and that of financing the training system, are still unsolved.

As regards the link with the State school, one acknowledged fact seems to be that vocational training is tangential, not parallel, to the various levels of the academic structure (compulsory schooling, diploma, degree); short courses are offered, aimed at training young people directly for occupations or re-training adult workers.

While the principle is not contested, the following series of questions remain unsolved:

- (a) how short should training modules be? At present a normal training cycle lasts two years. To shorten this period, it would not suffice to prolong compulsory schooling by two years; rather, the conditions would be:
 - that the system should no longer reject more than 40 % of pupils before obtaining the certificate (otherwise vocational training would become an 'infirmary' to the school system — clearly undesirable);
 - that the subject matter (programmes) of compulsory education (not only the two-year courses) should adequately cover the pre-vocational training which is now, in practice, part of vocational training proper. Considering that this would involve a massive retraining operation for teaching staff, it is obvious that the changeover would take a considerable time;
- (b) What kind of interchange machinery could be set up between school, work and vocational training to enable trained adult workers to re-enter the system without starting at the bottom of the educational ladder? Here, a laudable principle (interchange — i.e., re-entering the educational system) carries a serious danger; that the VTC's would rapidly degenerate into remedial schools.

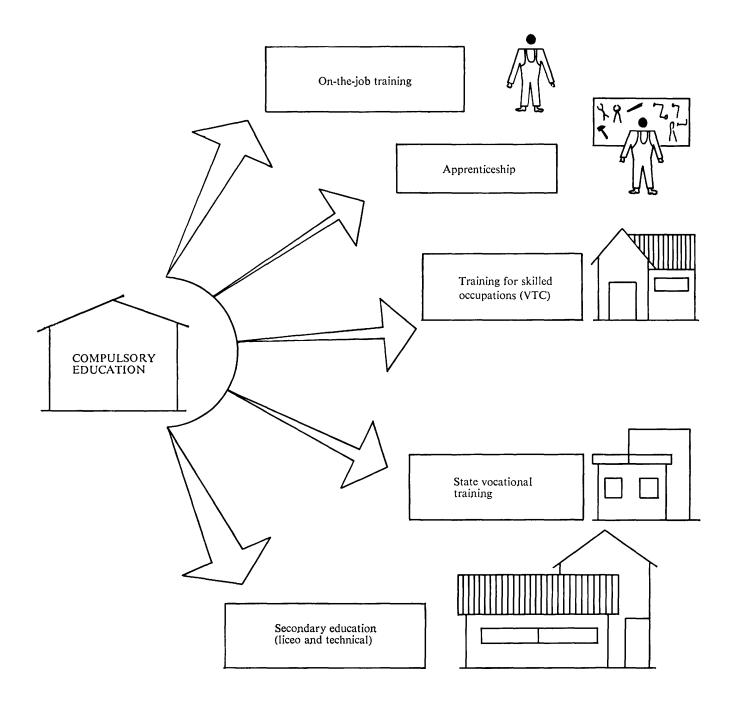
Where financing is concerned, apart from the widely acknowledged requirement that vocational training resources should not be drawn from social security funds, the question is far from being solved.

The most serious problem seems to be the following:

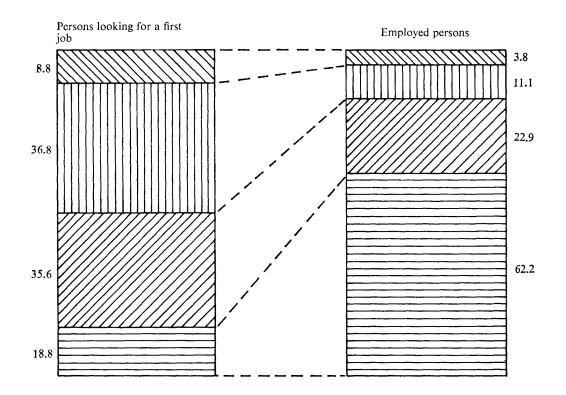
 in all European States, employers contribute to vocational training expenditure, refunds being granted (France, England) in some cases where training activities are carried out directly (levy-grant method).

In Italy this would be technically difficult because the grants would have to be made by the regions, while the central government collects the levies, corresponding to social contributions.

1. Training opportunties after compulsory schooling



2. Structure by qualifications of persons looking for a first job and employed persons in 1975



KEY



University graduates



Holders, diploma or certificate



Holders, intermediate certificate



Holders primary certificate and persons without qualifications

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	FI 4,80/FB 70		FI 24,20/FB 350

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