

University of Catania

1) *Italian Legal framework*¹

The apprenticeship system has been reformed by the legislative Degree 81/2015 defining tasks and responsibilities of different institutional partners involved and by the legislative Degree 185/2016 is aimed at creating a dual system integrating education, training and work. The legislative Degree 81/2015 abrogated the comprehensive Act on Apprenticeships (Legislative Decree no. 167/2011), entered into force on 25th April 2012.

The apprenticeship system includes three types of contract:

1) Apprenticeship leading to a professional operator certificate and a professional technician diploma (*Apprendistato per la qualifica ed il diploma professionale*). This type of apprenticeship, applied in all private sectors, targets young people aged 15 to 25, without any further requirements. It enables apprentices to complete compulsory education and to acquire a professional qualification or diploma after three or four years of training (ISCED level 3). It is regulated by the Regions and Autonomous Provinces that, through a specific agreement signed at the State/Regions Conference, established 22 operator profiles for three-year courses and 21 technician profiles for four-year courses drawing on the 'National Register of Qualifications' (Repertorio nazionale delle qualifiche) already used in education and vocational training programmes.

2) Professional apprenticeship (*Apprendistato professionalizzante e di mestiere*)

This type of apprenticeship, applied in private and public (2) sectors, targets young people aged 18 to 29, enables apprentices to gain a professional qualification on completion of a three-year training programme (five in the case of the artisan sector). These qualifications are recognized in the labour market according to the collective agreement. Regions and Autonomous Provinces regulate and organize this kind of training, mainly related to ICT, a foreign language, workers duties and rights etc. and establish entry levels upon the apprentice's age and education level. Training is provided by training centres accredited and funded by the Regions, through national, regional funds or ESF. This formal training can be organized, even in part, by the enterprises which fulfil specific requirements fixed by Regional Authorities and are recognized as 'enterprises with training capacity'.

3) Higher education and research apprenticeship (*Apprendistato di alta formazione e ricerca*)

The third type of apprenticeship, applied in private and public sectors, targets young people aged 18 to 29, enables apprentices to gain secondary (ISCED 3) or tertiary level diplomas (ISCED 4 or 5) or a doctorate degree (ISCED 6) from the education system. These qualifications also enable students to continue their studies within the education system, as well as pursue the traineeship required to access the 'liberal professions' (lawyer, architect, business consultant), the latter has not yet been regulated by collective bargaining. The entry requirements and options to proceed in VET system follow the rules of the general Education System. Regions and Autonomous Provinces, in agreement with the social partners and public education and training institutions, decide the length of the contracts, agree on how to organize the training programmes ensuring the relation of the education system curricula. Furthermore they establish the higher education credits (crediti formativi universitari – CFU) to be acquired at schools, universities or training centres, and skills to be acquired through on the job training at the enterprise. Training cost coverage is defined by the local authorities, according to the national, regional and European Social Fund regulations. In accordance with the new Law, apprenticeship contracts have also been extended to workers registered in the so-called 'mobility lists' to enable them to qualify or re-qualify, without any age limit; usually, these people are inserted in the professional apprenticeship.

¹ Cfr. Romito A., *Apprenticeship-type schemes and structured work-based learning programmes*. Italy, Isfol, 2014.

2) *Support for companies offering company placements*

Since apprenticeship has been considered the main tool to help young people to get into the labour market, some measures were taken to promote and enhance apprenticeship, while others are part of the apprenticeship contract. Regarding the latter, it is referred to 'low wage and low contribution' to be paid by the employer. In fact, the apprenticeship contract allows the company to take on and train new qualified workers at labour favourable cost, as both remuneration and social security contributions are reduced.

The law permits the employer to take on an apprentice at a placement level for up to two levels lower than the final qualification to be obtained and/or to recognize a payment equal to a percentage of a qualified worker, according to the provisions of the collective agreement applied.

In addition, enterprises that hire apprentices can take advantage for reduction in social security contribution, according to enterprise's size. Companies with up to 9 employees (micro enterprises) are exempt from paying social contribution (100%) for the first three years of the contract (5); the fourth year there will be a contribution equal to 10% of taxable social security remuneration. Companies with over 9 employees pay a contribution, for the entire duration of the apprenticeship, equal to 10 % of the taxable social security remuneration.

Moreover, Law 78/2014, which amended the legislative decree n. 34/2014 – Jobs Act, set the remuneration, only for apprentices employed under the Apprenticeship leading to a professional operator certificate and a professional technician diploma contract, on the basis of the number of hours spent in training, that is calculated at 35% of its total number of training hours. It is reserved the right to collective bargaining to establish a different percentage. Whereas worked hours have to be paid at 100%.

The contribution to be paid by the apprentice is also reduced and is equal to 5.84% of taxable social security contribution.

Law 78/2014 set new limits to the maximum number of apprentices the enterprise can take on according to its size; enterprises with up to 50 employees, can hire apprentices if, in the previous 36 months, they have confirmed 20% of the previous apprentices.

This measure was introduced by Law 92/2013 and refers to apprentices hired from 1st January 2012 until 31st December 2016.

Finally companies, recruiting workers registered in the so-called 'mobility lists, through an apprenticeship contract, can benefit from a subsidized contributory scheme, corresponding to 10% of salary for 18 months of the contract and, in addition, receive an incentive equal to 50% of the mobility allowance, if perceived by the employee, for a period of 12 months (24 months if the employee is more than 50 years old).

3) *Enhance programme attractiveness*

Since 2012 two programs, promoted by the Ministry of labour, have been launched to promote apprenticeships: **FlixO** oriented to Higher and research Apprenticeship (ended on 2013) and **AMVA** addressed to the other apprenticeship typologies; these programs provided incentives for enterprises taking on apprentices.

Regions can establish further incentives for enterprises that take on apprentices.

Moreover, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, on March 2013, issued a decree setting up a technical body in order to create the 'Repertoire of apprenticeship professional profiles'.

The repertoire has the purpose of harmonizing the numerous professional qualifications obtained according to the different types of apprenticeship training. It also allows the correlation between educational standards, regulated by Regions, and professional standards, defined by the social partners in collective labour agreements.

Moreover, the Ministry of Labour has undertaken further initiatives for supporting and promoting the economic growth and for increasing employment rates.

On March 2014, the Ministry of Labour approved the *Italian Youth Guarantee Program*. The Programme, started on 1st May, establishing the provision to offer the opportunity to young people aged under 25 years for a training course or an effective job offer, even though the apprenticeships contract, within four months after becoming unemployed or ending education studies. Regions will regulate the measures to be taken at local level. This initiative can represent an important input for Regions, to enhance apprenticeships and other work base learning programmes.

Moreover, new features were introduced Law 78/2014, which amended the legislative decree n. 34/2014 – Jobs Act in order to simplify the completion administrative procedures for the professional apprenticeship, making it more attractive for enterprises.

Finally, the Ministry of education, university and research approved the law 128/2013 (which amended the Legislative Decree no. 104/2013), promoting apprenticeships and allowing students, attending upper secondary schools, to acquire a diploma through apprenticeship. A pilot programme started within 2014-2016. This programme can represent a stimulus for Regions/autonomous Provinces and educational institutions for regulating the Higher education and research apprenticeship's courses aimed at acquiring a diploma at secondary level, not planned yet.

4) *The governance level*

National governance, regulatory framework and social partners' involvement

The Italian apprenticeship system is governed both at national and regional level. The Minister of Labour and Social Policy has the authority to define the national legislative framework, to establish strategic policies, also in collaboration with local Authorities and Social Partners, and to allocate public funds to Regions and Autonomous Provinces.

Regions have exclusive jurisdiction over vocational training and for regulating apprenticeship system at local level, in accordance with the provisions of the national legislation.

Their role is more evident in the apprenticeship leading to a professional operator certificate and a professional technician diploma and Higher education and research apprenticeship, since they are asked to agree at local level with social partners and education institution on the regulatory framework and to establish their own legislation.

Social partners, beyond their advisory task at national and local level, perform a crucial role in professional apprenticeship's regulation. In fact they define, through collective bargaining, contents, provisions related to specific occupation, and tools to carry out professional training. They also establish the professional qualification to be acquired and the certification procedures, furthermore they can set out requirements that the tutor at the enterprise must have to fill the role (such as expertise in the same occupation, etc.).

5) *Quality assurance in apprenticeship*

Although there is not a systemic quality assurance system for apprenticeships, some instruments are used to monitor the on and off the job training and skills acquisition. Training activities must be defined in the Individual training plan, which represents a valuable tool to certify knowledge and skills acquired. The Individual training plan is also used by inspectors to verify if the apprentice's training is conducted properly.

To guarantee the quality of training provided by the enterprise, there is a tutor with sufficient training and competence, established by collective bargaining, to monitor the apprentice's progress within the company.

The main tasks of the enterprise tutor are defined as follows:

☑ managing reception and insertion of young apprentices in the company;

- ☒ projecting and supporting learning and in-service socialisation pathways, thus facilitating the acquisition of skills and competencies;
- ☒ conducting relations with the training centres, to enable positive integration between formal training and on the job experience;
- ☒ monitoring and assessing progress results achieved by the apprentices.

6) *Main strengths and weaknesses of the apprenticeship schemes in Italy*

Although apprenticeship is still underused, it represents the unique contract with a training aim, therefore it continues to be the main tool allowing young people to get into the labour market and to acquire a qualification or diploma nationally recognized.

Since the new Law entered into force (April 2012), there have been several efforts at national and regional levels to promote and improve the attractiveness of apprenticeships, however, some critical points still remain.

Apprenticeship related to Higher education and research apprenticeship implicates an active participation of both education institution and the enterprise to establishing specific training programmes matching the academic curricula with employer's skill needs. Moreover educational institutions play an important role in promoting these opportunities among students and enterprises.

Another set of problems regard employers. They often underestimate the importance and the effectiveness of the training of the apprenticeship contract and complain about a lacking of support in completion administrative procedures, as they have the whole responsibility to provide and monitor the apprentice's training.

7) Apprenticeship in the university of Catania

The University of Catania is involved in apprenticeship activities since 2014. Main services involve are the Centre for Guidance, Training and Placement (COF), Degree courses, Central Didactic unit, Rector.

- The Centre for Guidance and placement (COF) is in charge for supporting students during all the process.
- COF provides information for all the university community;
 - verifies the existence of contract engagement conditions;
 - provides, if necessary, the text of the contract to be stipulated with the company (research apprenticeship);
 - defines the Individual training plan (PFI) model to be used;
 - submits the FPI to the University offices;
 - monitors placement during the apprenticeship
 (see: <https://www.unict.it/it/servizi/apprendistato>; <http://151.97.23.135/ALL-COF/phdays/1 slide.pdf>).
- The Central Didactic unit approves the proposal received by COF and send it to the degree courses to be discussed.
- The degree courses define the PFI and nominate a university tutor.
- The Rector signs the final PFI.

The first contract was activated on January 1, 2014 and it was a high-level apprenticeship contract for PhD programs.

From then on, apart from some other few contracts aimed at achieving Master's Degrees, great part of those contracts were all aimed at conducting research activities (figures 1-2). The pushing factor in promoting apprenticeship contracts in Sicily (in particular for the Catania region) was the presence of a call of ItaliaLavoro (a national agency, now called ANPAL, <https://www.anpalservizi.it/>). It encouraged the recruitment of apprenticeship of high education and research recognizing companies a 6,000 euros one-time incentive for full time contracts and 4,000 euros for part time contract.

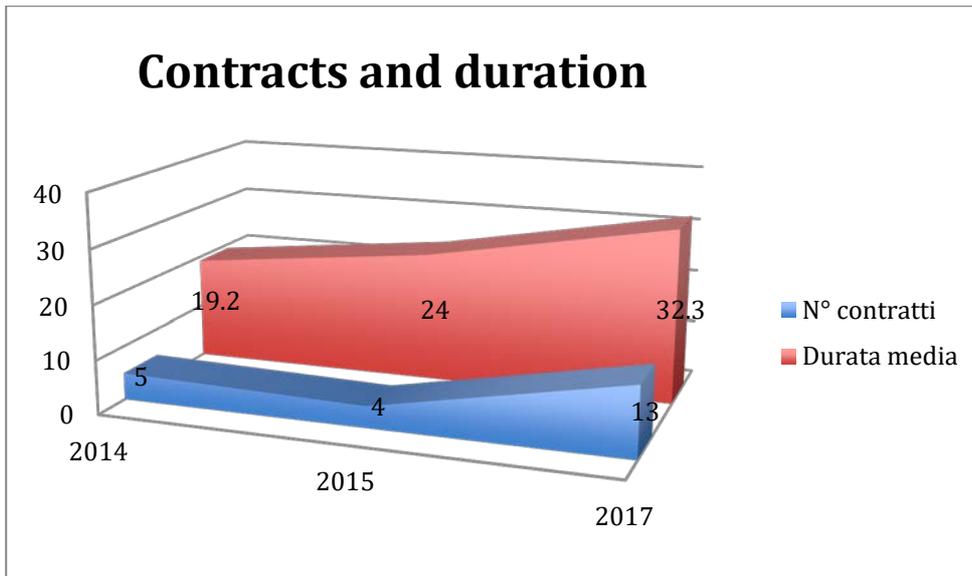
After the expiration of the call, local business context has reduced requests for asking for apprenticeship. In 2017 13 graduates have started their apprenticeship contract for research (http://www.bollettino.unict.it/articoli_in_breve/tredici-laureati-delluniversità-di-catania-assunti-tramite-contratti-di).

Recently (December 7, 2016), the University of Catania (together with the Universities of Messina, Palermo and Enna) has signed with the Sicilian Region the agreement for apprenticeship for qualification and professional diploma, diploma of secondary education and certificate higher technical specialization and high-level apprenticeship training and researching high-level apprenticeship training and research for access to the regular profession.

Fig 1 University of Catania Apprenticeship contracts (2014-2017)

	Cognome	Nome	Data di nascita	Finalità del contratto di alta formazione e ricerca (1)	Titolo di studio di provenienze	Denominazione del corso (secondo classificazione MIUR)	Ragione sociale azienda	Provincia azienda (sigla)	Comune azienda	Settore merceologico azienda (codici ateco)
1	Tamburello	Lucia	23.03.85	Dottorato di ricerca	laurea magistrale	DOTTORATO Biologia, Genetica Umana e Bioinformatica: basi cellulari e molecolari del fenotipo	MEDI - LAV Srl	ME	Mistretta	Attività professionali, scientifiche e tecniche
2	Scavuzzo	Sandro	10.02.89	Laurea magistrale	Laurea Triennale	Laurea Magistrale in Economia e Gestione delle Amministrazioni Pubbliche Classe n. LM-56 della laurea in scienze dell'economia D.M. 16/03/2007	STUDIO COMMERCIALE SCAVUZZO	EN	Leonforte	Attività professionali, scientifiche e tecniche
3	La Runa	Francesca	23.05.86	Laurea magistrale	Laurea Triennale	Scienze delle Pubbliche Amministrazioni	STUDIO PERASSO	SR	Siracusa	Attività professionali, scientifiche e tecniche
4	Di Guardo	Roberta	19.10.89	Laurea magistrale	Laurea Triennale	Laurea Magistrale in Lingue per la Cooperazione internazionale LM - 38 (Corso di laurea di Scienze Umanistiche)	FINIVEST CONGRESSI SRL	CT	Catania	Altre attività di servizi
5	Santangelo	Ionella	10.11.88	Pratica	laurea magistrale	Laurea Magistrale in biologia cellulare e molecolare	POLILAB SRL	CT	Catania	Attività professionali, scientifiche e tecniche
6	D'izzia	Luca	06.06.89	Pratica	laurea magistrale	Laurea specialistica in ingegneria edile-architettura	GEO R.A.S. SRL	CT	Catania	Costruzioni
7	Saraniti	Krizia Francesca	22.11.87	Pratica	laurea magistrale	LM-85 Scienze pedagogiche e progettazione educativa	VILLA SANTA MARIA DEGLI ANGELI coop. Soc. a R.L. ONLUS	CT	Catania	Sanità ed assistenza sociale
8	Giuffrè	Ivana	09.07.89	Pratica	laurea magistrale	Laurea Magistrale in Scienze e Tecnologie alimentari	DAIS SPA	CT	Belpasso	Costruzioni
9	Amore	Erika	10.10.89	Laurea magistrale	Laurea Triennale	Laurea in Scienze delle pubbliche amministrazioni	STUDIO FAVA SALVATORE	RG	Ispica	Attività professionali, scientifiche e tecniche
10	Di Grazia	Chiara	08/08/90	Pratica	Laurea Triennale	Laureanda in Scienze dell' Educazione e della Formazione	Cooperativa Prospettiva Soc. Coop. Sociale Onlus	CT	Catania	Sanità ed assistenza sociale
11	Coniglio	Stefania	30/08/88	Pratica	laurea magistrale	Psicologia	Cooperativa Prospettiva Soc. Coop. Sociale Onlus	CT	Catania	Sanità ed assistenza sociale
12	Scalia	Claudia	06.01.88	Pratica	Laurea Triennale	Scienze del servizio sociale	Cooperativa Prospettiva Soc. Coop. Sociale Onlus	CT	Catania	Sanità ed assistenza sociale
13	Troina	Giuseppe	09.01.88	Pratica	Diploma di scuola secondaria superiore	Maturità scientifica	Cooperativa Prospettiva Soc. Coop. Sociale Onlus	CT	Catania	Sanità ed assistenza sociale
14	Scandura	Arianna	12.04.91	Pratica	LM a ciclo unico	Architettura	Archiprogettistudio	ME	Roccalumera	Attività professionali, scientifiche e tecniche
15	Leonardi	Rosita Giovanna	02.10.89	Pratica	LM a ciclo unico	Odontoiatria	Studio dentistico Dott. Maria Francesca Pirrone	CT	Catania	Sanità ed assistenza sociale
16	Basile	Giuseppe	21.05.90	Pratica	LM a ciclo unico	Odontoiatria	Studio dentistico dott. Mario Caponcello	CT	Catania	Sanità ed assistenza sociale
17	Caruso	Giuseppe	19.05.88	Pratica	laurea magistrale	Automation and Engineering and control of complex systems	Classimo S.r.l	CT	Belpasso	Attività manifatturiere
18	Saitta	Oriana	01.07.89	Pratica	Laurea Triennale	Economia Aziendale	Classimo S.r.l	CT	Belpasso	Attività manifatturiere
19	Gambino	Gaetano	28.05.89	Pratica	laurea magistrale	Ingegneria gestionale	Classimo S.r.l	CT	Belpasso	Attività manifatturiere
20	Testa	Camillo Tiziana	17.12.91	Pratica	LM a ciclo unico	Architettura	Classimo S.r.l	CT	Belpasso	Attività manifatturiere
21	Rapisarda	Silvia	24.06.90	Pratica	LM a ciclo unico	Odontoiatria	Studio dentistico dott.ssa Franca Scala	CT	Catania	Sanità ed assistenza sociale
22	Di Maita	Andrea	23.02.88	Pratica	LM a ciclo unico	Informazione scientifica sul farmaco	Studio dentistico dott. Mario Caponcello	CT	Catania	Sanità ed assistenza sociale

Fig 2 Contracts and duration



Websites

Italy

CLIC Lavoro (Supported by Ministry of Labour)

<https://www.cliclavoro.gov.it/NormeContratti/Contratti/Pagine/Contratto-di-Apprendistato.aspx>

ItaliaLavoro now ANPAL (Agenzia nazionale delle politiche attive), National agency on active job policies <https://www.anpalservizi.it/>

[Www.fareapprendistato.it](http://www.fareapprendistato.it). It's a platform aimed at promoting apprenticeship in Italy. It offers national and regional data, researches and projects on apprenticeship

Sicilian Region (Regional Government website)

http://pti.regione.sicilia.it/portal/page/portal/PIR_PORTALE/PIR_LaStrutturaRegionale/PIR_Assessoratofamigliapolitichesocialielavoro/PIR_DipLavoro/PIR_Apprendistatoprofessionalizante (Sicily region Page on Apprenticeship)

http://pti.regione.sicilia.it/portal/page/portal/PIR_PORTALE/PIR_LaStrutturaRegionale/PIR_Assessoratoistruzioneeeformazioneprofessionale/PIR_PubblicaIstruzione/PIR_LapprendistatoDualeinSicilia/GuidaPratica.pdf (a practical guide on apprenticeship in Sicily)

<https://scuolalavoro.registroimprese.it/rasl/resultSearch?8>

Projects

APRIS

<http://www.progettoapris.com/il-progetto.html> Progetto Apprendistato Italia - Svizzera