



ABSTRACT ON LIFELONG LEARNING

- What means LLL in your country? (Formal, non-formal, informal learning?)

Lifelong Learning in Italy includes formal, non-formal and informal learning and covers a lot of typologies: higher education, VET training system, schooling system (post-secondary courses), adult education. The Regions have 'exclusive' legislative powers over vocational education and training, apart from tasks connected with the EU, and parallel legislative powers over general education, although the State is responsible for deciding the basic principles.

- What importance does it have for the public?

The social need for Lifelong Learning is gaining ever more relevance, spurred by technological innovation, and comparisons and competitiveness at local, European and global levels. Nevertheless, Italy finds itself in greater difficulty than most other European countries, as it tries to fulfill the goals of the Lisbon Strategy in the field of lifelong learning. The reasons for this difficulty are well-known and are the result of different causes. These specifically include the non-flexible nature of Italian training systems (i.e., University, school, vocational training systems, etc.), together with the low percentage of people with university education which is less than half that of more developed countries. Given that, in Italy, a lower number of people have higher education qualifications, initiative and autonomous or self-directed learning are less frequent, hence the education-training systems and the individual are less able to react when faced with continuous restructuring and change which characterize the Networked Society. In addition, the participation of adult population to lifelong learning activities is significantly below the European average.

- What importance does it have in Education policy? Is there a mission for LLL?

The achievement of lifelong learning objectives in Italy is being mediated by a complex process of innovation in education and society, by the integration of institutional actions and by the major role of coordination that university has assumed. Most recent policy strategies are mainly focused on the strengthening of training offer for adults, also with the contribution of the European social fund, through: lifelong learning activities for employed, through a better coordination and improvement of the financial tools, a simplification of the access procedures

to these funds and a greater promotion among enterprises and workers increasing the attractiveness of VET in the framework of active citizenship.

- **Is there a strategy to involve more people in learning processes?**

There is a deep gap between institutional training agencies and non-formal ones. This means that there isn't a comprehensive mission in the matter of lifelong learning; on the contrary, the logic is often competitive, and not cooperative at all. At the present moment, the Third Sector bodies are the ones more interested in cultural and training growth of people. In addition, it's important to remember that vocational education and training are regulated at a regional level, and this implies that a "national strategy" doesn't exist.

- **Which bodies are responsible?**

Schools, universities, training agencies/bodies, popular universities, third sector bodies (in non-formal and informal learning).

- **How is it financed?**

The present Government in Italy is more and more cutting funds devoted to culture and education. This means that at a central level. Obviously, the most part of the funds is regulated and managed by the public authorities.

- **What is your personal relationship/experience to/in processes of LLL?**

As explained before, ARCI – like a lot of similar associations in Italy – has a key role in the processes of informal and non formal learning: in our activities, training is intended as a tool to promote inclusion, self-consciousness, self-esteem and equal opportunities. We are convinced that the empowerment of people pushes through the enhancement of their curiosity and creativity. Our clubs are integral part of social and cultural policies, thanks to their direct involvement in the construction of training opportunities.