



Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership for Youth

YOUTH TALENT TO MARKET

IT Needs Analysis Report on artist-artisan entrepreneurial training

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1. Artist/artisan entrepreneurial training needs in terms of common skills and competencies, and incidence of any better practice in partner nations.

In Tuscany there is a strong gap between the training needs of entrepreneurs and enterprises and the available training. This finding is supported by a research carried out in year 2015 by IRPET (a Tuscan study center for the institutions of the regional administration) titled "[Anticipating needs: The results of the survey addressed to the most dynamic companies in Tuscany](#)". The main objective of that study was to find out which were the professional figures that have helped the more successful companies to face the recent crisis. The companies surveyed (mainly small and medium enterprises) were about 400, a representative sample of a universe of 1.300 companies that, despite the general crisis, had grown in terms of employees and turnover between 2007-2011.

One of the most relevant finding of the research is that 40% of the training provided by Tuscan Region is not consistent with the actual productive vocation expressed by the territories.

In fact, the first element that stands out from the survey results is the significant heterogeneity of the business roles required by handicraft companies. This finding is important because it leads us to consider the need of a stronger link between educational and vocational training providers and the companies.

Moreover, the extreme differentiation of the business roles required by the companies is also the proof of the strategic value of human capital.

According to that, we clearly understand that vocational educational cannot be considered effective unless it is provided partially within the companies. Unfortunately, the lack of links between companies and the school and University's systems brings the companies to take on responsibility of the "learning-by-doing" training, even if they are less and less able to bear this additional costs.

Another key issue concerns the opinions of the companies regarding the training courses for unemployed people and job seekers. The answers on this topic were very varied, because they depend much on the specific experience of each company. To sum up, we can say that some companies underlined the importance of the soft skills more than the technical skills; others are more focused on the ways the training is provided to job seekers beyond the mere contents of the courses.

According to the companies inquired by IRPET, it would be important to strengthen some soft skills, such as the knowledge of foreign languages and ICT skills, which both schools and universities fail to provide properly. Companies complain again on the gap between them and education providers (both publics than privates). In addition to that, in their opinion, job seekers lack in autonomy, problem-solving skills and ability to work in team. In some cases, companies accused the mainstream culture, which has detracted from manual activities to intellectual professions, contributing to reduce the number of young people interested in the handicraft sector, which has historically represented one of the main business activities in Tuscany.

The 11% of the companies inquired suggested also a change in the organization of training courses. For these companies the main problem is not related to the professional figures trained, but the absence of



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direct training within the companies. What they wish is the diffusion of educational and training paths inspired to work-related learning and to the acquisition of the skills that can be developed just within the companies.

Other interesting information regarding training needs have emerged during a focus group organized in 2014 by Artex with some entrepreneurs of the craft and artistic sectors, on behalf of Tuscany Region, Confartigianato Imprese Toscana and CNA (two business associations of the craft sector).

The main objective of the focus group was to understand which could be the activities to implement in order to foster the creation of new business and to increase the skilled employment in the handicraft sector.

According to the participants, training is a key issue for the preservation of handicraft and it is important to encourage the generational change. However, in their opinion there is a lack of tools to support the entrepreneurial training in this sector.

In particular, entrepreneurs have focused on the importance of the formative internship within companies that must have duration variable according to the type of skills to be acquired. In some cases, as for example for acquiring manual skills (which implies a long learning process), it would be necessary to create learning paths with a duration at least of 3 years. In other situations, as in the case of more structured companies where the activity are more standardized, duration from 6 to 12 months would be enough.

Regarding the training opportunities offered by the education system, the participants underlined the importance of:

- Inter-professional training funds (these are funds jointly set up by the three leading Italian trade unions and the main business associations of the craft sector). Even if these funds are difficult to gain, they can be used to train employees on foreign languages, information technology and other basic skills.
- school system and professional training. They believe that the technical education is too weak and that it would be necessary to have a greater control over teachers' competencies.



2. An outline of the entrepreneurial skills offered by institutions and business support services, having regard to accessibility and how it is offered.

The Tuscany Region provides educational paths to encourage the study and training for young people. Here below some of the main actions carried out by the Region in the field of technical and vocational training:

Education and Vocational Training - leFP: leFP system in Tuscany is supplementary and complementary to the education provided by National Vocational Institutes and enables young people to absolve the right/duty of education, schooling and training. The Regional qualifications acquired through these paths are recognized both to National and European level.

Education Technical Training - IFTS: Tuscany Region finances courses of Education and Higher Technical Education (IFTS) aimed at ensuring a targeted and in-depth technical and vocational training. IFTS courses, on one hand, facilitate the integration of young people by offering a flexible and highly vocational training, through the acquisition of certifiable skills, immediately expendable in the labor market; on the other hand, they provide a channel for higher technical training to adults and unemployed people. This way they allow adults to extend their professional knowledge and improve the skills relevant to their activities.

International mobility and work experience: Tuscany Region finances mobility projects aimed at high school students, university students, unemployed people and job seekers. The aim of these projects is to support participants to increase their work-related competencies and soft skills.

Training vouchers for advanced training courses in Italy and abroad: Tuscany Region promotes also calls for vouchers aimed at facilitating young people's access to advanced training courses in Italy and abroad. In particular, the Region provides refunds to cover registration fees for Master's level I and II, PhDs and Specialization of level I and II, organized by Universities or other schools of higher education recognized by the competent authorities.

BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES

Here below you can find a list of public and private bodies engaged in the business support of the handicraft sector.

ARTEX - Centre for Artistic and Traditional Handicrafts of Tuscany

ARTEX is the the Centre for Artistic and Traditional Craftsmanship in Tuscany and promotes innovation and development of artistic and traditional handicrafts, which represents a unique heritage of manufacturing knowhow and a complex reality comprising 33.000 enterprises with 177.000 employees. Their main sector of activities is: Fairs, Exhibitions, Events; Markets and Internationalization; Design and Innovation; International Network of Arts and Crafts; Handicrafts and Tourism; Restoration and Cultural Heritage; Conferences, Research, Publications.

Confartigianato and CNA – two crafts associations, created Artex in 1987; over the years, it has developed and managed projects for the improvement of crafts enterprises and their manufactures, gaining a unique experience in this sector. Each Artex activity is sustained by the Steering Committee made up of experts, a



collaboration making it possible to consolidate synergies with prestigious national and international organizations, along with a constant analysis of the economic world and its markets.

Artex has worked closely with Regione Toscana, local agencies and chambers of commerce, the Institute for Commerce Abroad, and crafts associations.

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

In Tuscany there is one Chamber of Commerce for each Province and a common body, UnionCamere Toscana, which main aim is to coordinate the activities of all the local Chambers. They all provide support to the companies in the following sectors:

- regulation and market transparency
- international trade and for the promotion and protection of the “Made in Italy”
- women entrepreneurship
- innovation, research and technology transfer
- work-related learning
- analysis of professional needs of enterprises for career guidance and professionals training
- simplification of procedures for starting and running a business
- protection of industrial property rights
- support for SMEs for access to credit

CONFARTIGIANATO IMPRESE

Confartigianato Imprese is the largest European network that represents small business interests and provides entrepreneurs with services. Established in 1946, Confartigianato accompanies companies as they evolve, combining traditional ancient trades and innovative activities using advanced technologies.

Confartigianato assists the entrepreneur and his/her company in every phase: from the development of the business plan and formation of the company to financing and start-up, management of administrative duties, the implementation of technologies and positioning on the market, and also the transfer of ownership and company reorganization. Artisans, self-employed professionals, and small businesses can rely on Confartigianato for information, representation of their interests, and relations with government agencies and their counterparts in negotiations. Confartigianato is also a partner for companies, ready to supply customized services that are indispensable for launching a business and helping it grow and compete on a rapidly evolving market.

TOSCANA PROMOZIONE

Toscana Promozione is the Economic Promotion Agency of Tuscany, established in 2000 by the regional government.

Objective of the agency is to guide businesses toward a Tuscan approach to international markets more focused and aware, to point to an expansion of the international business that resist over time. At the same time, through the activation of high value-added services and training, the Agency works to create, among our entrepreneurs, a real culture of internationalization.



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In addition to that, thanks to a network of professional associations, institutions, enterprises, universities and research centers, Toscana Promozione is, today, a concrete platform for overseas enterprises interested in doing business in or with Tuscany.



3. An outline of any opportunities for recognition and certification of development of entrepreneurial skills

Professional training is designed primarily as a link between school education and the world of work in order to meet local companies' needs. Despite that, in many cases it is poorly connected with the production system and it just provides certificates necessary for contractual reasons.

The Italian regions, pursuant article n.117 of the Constitution, exercise the legislative power in the field of guidance and vocational training and this principle is reiterated by the "framework law on vocational training" (Law 845/1978). The role of the Regions in the field of vocational training has been further reaffirmed in the '90s with various laws. On this basis, every Italian region can work autonomously to create an independent training system through the establishment of courses, notices for internships, often in collaboration with educational institutions or business associations.

The regional activities of vocational training usually have articulated their interventions in four main directions:

- a first level of training for those people who have completed compulsory education;
- a second level of training for those people who are graduates at Secondary School Grade and aim to improve their knowledge and skills;
- Adult education, aimed at unemployed people or at those who wish to retrain to re-enter the world of work;
- Apprenticeship training

In this context, Tuscany Region has decided to build a specific and innovative system of recognition of skills and training based on the craft sector. Adopting this model, Tuscany Region wants to reach some main goals:

- Creating a system of recognition and certification of skills of the craftsman;
- defending production techniques and jobs which risk to disappear;
- providing an initial response to the problem of the generational change in the handicraft sector;
- expanding the technical skills of young graduates in design and artistic sector in order to promote entrepreneurship and creating new businesses.

This innovative educational system is based on the concept that in the handicraft sector it is important to work in the artisans' workshops and in a strict connection with the artisan themselves. This method was conceived not only to enhance and protect the cultural and productive crafts, but also to give the opportunity to young people to learn a job and enter the world of work as entrepreneurs.

This system allows also to certify skills that couldn't be recognized otherwise.

To reach these ambitious goals the Tuscany Region put in place two different actions:

- the creation of the title of "Master Craftsman"
- the creation of the system of the "Workshop-School"

[The title of "Master Craftsman"](#)



According to the Regional Law of Tuscany, the title of “Master Craftsman” is awarded by the Chamber of Commerce, following the indication of the Regional Commission for Tuscany Handicraft, to artisans which fulfill the following requirements:

- a) adequate professional experience as owner or partner of a craft company operating in the sectors of artistic and traditional handicraft;
- b) appropriate degree of professional capacity, according to the titles acquired;
- c) aptitude for teaching the crafts.

The methods and specification of the conditions for obtaining the title of “Master Craftsman” are established with regional regulation. The “Master Craftsman” can carry out teaching and be the tutor for practical training of students in the courses organized by accredited subjects. The task of the “Master Craftsmans” is to transmit their jobs and train new employees or new entrepreneurs.

The system of the “Workshop-School”

The main objectives of the “Workshop-School” training system are:

- Forming new generations of craftsman,
- passing the knowledge and know-how in order to preserve the traditional works,
- providing young people with new opportunities of business.

To be considered as “Workshop-School”, a company must be directed by a “Master Craftsman”, whose expertise is officially recognized on the basis of experience and expertise, as explained above. The “Workshop School” can thus provide with training in the specific field of artistic and traditional craft of the “Master Craftsman”.

The “Workshop-School” is a craft enterprise that, awarded with this title, is considered as a training agency accredited to the Regional System of Vocational Education and Training courses. This way, the training courses provided within the workshop can be funded with public resources and legally recognized according to the regional law. The training courses carried out by the Workshop School are addressed to all those who are interested in training and/or a specialization in artistic techniques and traditional and are aimed at the acquisition of a professional qualification or a certificate of competence.

Despite being strongly focused on learning-by-doing and on professional practice, the training provided within the “Workshop-School” is also addressed to soft and cross-sector skills such as safety in the work placement and communication. Anyway, entrepreneurship is not considered as a main topic in this additional training course to be realized outside the workshop.

At the moment being, the Province of Siena is testing this innovative model: CEDIT will monitor the results of the this pilot test.



4. An outline of opportunities for developing into European markets through engaging with European Mobilities

ERASMUS +

For the year the 2015 Erasmus+ framework has a total budget of 1 billion and 736 million euro to promote opportunities for students, trainees, teachers and other teaching staff, youth exchanges, youth workers and volunteers.

For the first time the program provides funding not only to universities and training institutions, but also to innovative partnerships, as the so-called "Knowledge Alliances" and "Sector Skills Alliances", which can provide synergies between the worlds of education and the work.

Erasmus+ is also focused in the field of VET - Vocational Education and Training, aiming at improving the quality and effectiveness of the systems and practices, by pursuing the following objectives:

- improving the level of key competences and skills,
- fostering quality improvements, innovation excellence and internationalisation at the level of education and training institutions
- promoting the emergence and raise awareness of a European lifelong learning area designed to complement policy reforms at national level and to support the modernisation of education and training systems
- enhancing the international dimension of education and training
- improving the teaching and learning of languages and promote the EU's broad linguistic diversity and intercultural awareness.

Possible actions:

- Mobility for individual learning (KA1), which provides opportunities for students, trainees, apprentices, graduates and newly qualified, as well as teachers, trainers, experts in the world of vocational training and civil society organizations to undertake a learning experience and/or professional in another country. Main: Individual Mobility for learning purposes - KA1
- Projects of cooperation for innovation and exchange of best practices transnational (Strategic Partnerships - KA2), which aim to develop cooperation initiatives aimed at one or more areas of education, training and youth and to promote innovation, the exchange of experiences and know-how between different types of organizations involved in education and training.

YOUTH GUARANTEE

The recommendation of the EU Council of 22 April 2013 on the establishment of a "Youth Guarantee" has called on States to ensure, for the years 2014 to 2015, an offer qualitatively good work, further education, apprenticeship or training or other measure of training, within four months after becoming unemployed primarily to young people under the age of 25 years.

In line with the National Plan of Youth Guarantee, Tuscany Region has prepared its Executive Regional Plan for years 2014 and 2015.



Priority actions for Youth Guarantee in Tuscany are as follows:

- taking charge, guidance and support for job placements;
- promoting internships;
- promoting experiences of civil service;
- promoting apprenticeship;
- promoting vocational and educational training courses;
- supporting transnational mobility;
- supporting the creation and the start-up of new business;
- promoting the employment of young people through bonuses targeted at employers.

Youth Guarantee in Tuscany proposes a number of measures already available through the project of Tuscany Region "[Giovani](#)", such as Internships, Civil Service, Job Placement, changing sometimes just the modalities of access and focusing also on the age group 15-18 years.

Youth Guarantee is in fact a project that is a part of a more general regional strategy for youth employment, which began with the Giovani project, and will continue beyond 2015, including other interventions financed by the ESF and other funds.

CREATIVE EUROPE – Cooperation projects

Creative Europe is the European Union program for the cultural and creative sectors.

This program supports:

- Cross-border cooperation projects between cultural and creative organisations within the EU and beyond.
- Networks helping the cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally and to strengthen their competitiveness.
- Platforms of cultural operators promoting emerging artists and stimulating a truly European programming of cultural and artistic works.
- Capacity building and professional training

The main objectives of the support for cultural cooperation projects are:

- to support the capacity of the European cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally and internationally and to promote the transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and transnational mobility of cultural and creative players, in particular artists;
- to contribute to audience development by helping European artists/cultural professionals and their works reach new and enlarged audiences and improve access to cultural and creative works in the European Union (hereafter 'the EU') and beyond with a particular focus on children, young people, people with disabilities and underrepresented groups, by engaging in new and innovative ways with audiences both to retain and enlarge them, and to improve the experience and deepen the relationship with current and future audiences;



- to contribute to innovation and creativity in the field of culture, for instance through artistic innovation, the testing of new business models, the use of digital technologies and the promotion of innovative spill-overs on other sectors.

5. Summary

According to the results of this research, it is possible to identify some key issues related to the needs of young artisans and craftsman to improve their business skills.

Need to build a network of relationships

In order to meet the training needs of the local economies it is important to act locally by building a network of established relationships between companies and the system of education and training. To do this, it seems useful to think in terms of chains, i.e. considering the individual companies as part of a production process increasingly open to collaborations and facilitate the matching of demand and supply of skills within the regional borders.

Understanding the specific needs of companies

All the entrepreneurs express differentiated and customized training needs, consistent with the specific needs of their activities. However, we noted the need of technical and professional skills, business practical knowledge, direct experience with the world of work: all characteristics that the vocational education and training are not currently guaranteeing.

Learning within the enterprise

In general, we noted an emerging dissatisfaction compared to the skills available in the labor market, penalized by the prevalence of a generic training, which is incompatible with the needs of businesses. The weak point is identified mainly in the modalities of acquisition of knowledge: in the opinion of the business actors it should take place within the companies and not outside them. Training contents should also be conceived through a stronger collaboration between local businesses and educational institutions.

All the elements analyzed bring us to realize that there are some business needs which remain unsatisfied. The public actors, on the one hand, should encourage the continued dialogue among sectors, schools, universities and training agencies to identify strategic skills and, on the other, stimulating the creation of opportunities for self-employment and business.