
Work-related language learning in

Italy (Emilia-Romagna)

Majority language learning (L2) for newly-arrived migrants

Introduced in 2011, the law 'Accordo di integrazione' [Integration agreement] (D.P.R 179/2011), requires any new migrant arriving from outside the European Union to study basic Italian and gain some general knowledge regarding the organization of the state, civil rights etc. Migrants are required to pass a test two years after their arrival.

The most recent institutional reform of the lifelong learning system (D.P.R. 263/2012) made CPIA (centri provinciali per l'istruzione degli adulti / provincial centres for adult education) the pivot of the whole system: they provide Italian language classes to migrants, they act as examination centres (i.e. migrants sit the test in these centres) and now, as a result of the D.P.R. 263/2012, they are additionally charged with setting up a 'service network' ('Rete di servizio') that includes all the subjects involved in lifelong learning in their areas. However, the CPIA lack the capacity (i.e. infrastructure and funding) needed for migrants to comply with the 'Accordo di integrazione' law.

Work-related L2 provision for employees/workers

There is no related legislation, regulation or policy. Italian language provision includes Italian as a second language (L2), Italian for citizenship, Italian for study, Italian for tourists, but rarely Italian for work. Consequently, there is no formal structure or policy for work-related Italian.

In the Emilia-Romagna region, several large companies provide language classes for staff, e.g. Yoox, a big online retail company, who provide Italian classes for migrant staff at their Bologna warehouse.

CPIAs in Emilia-Romagna, when requested by vocational schools, provide language classes on an ad hoc basis. In these cases, however, (1) the learners are juveniles rather than adults; and (2) the Italian taught is 'general' Italian, rather than work-related Italian.

Practice examples of interest

In 1999, Bologna's Johns Hopkins University, in partnership with Formazione 80 and (in Spain) the Asociacion Comision Catolica Espanola De Migracion and (in France) AGERCEL/ACFCI, undertook the research project, 'Lifop – The language of professional training: fostering the participation of migrant workers in vocational education' (see Lifop entry in the Network's [resource centre](#)).

Work-related L2 provision for job seekers, unemployed

The public employment agencies, Centri per l'Impiego / Agenzia per il lavoro, provide free Italian classes based on a non-vocational, Italian for citizenship syllabus (level A1-A2). Normally these classes are funded by European Fund for the Integration of non-EU nationals (FEI).

Work-related L2 provision in vocational courses

Provision of Italian in conjunction with vocational learning is ad hoc and oriented to juvenile learners. Vocational courses for adults are only available from autonomous institutions. (For juveniles, there are two public vocational school systems, one national and one regional.)

A recent law (l 92/2012 art. 4, co. 66 e ss.) specified a new system for the certification of professional skills and may enable the inclusion of language and communication.

Practice examples of interest

The construction sector has a national training agency ([Formedil](#)) that has established a relatively standardised vocational training system used by adults, a high percentage of whom may be migrants. This system is based on training centres known as I.I.P.L.E. (Istituto Istruzione Professionale Lavoratori Edili). These exist in every Italian province. These schools were established after the Second World War and receive their funds from the trade unions.

Instructors at IIPLE have always recognised the linguistic problems of their students and tried to address them from a work-related perspective:

- How to facilitate communication on a construction site?
- How to teach occupational safety rules to workers with limited Italian language and/or limited literacy.

In response, instructors have provided Italian language classes and occupational safety classes, developing resources to support this provision including the app, [Babele](#), to support self-study.

Further information

[Cestim centro studi immigrazione](#)

[Council of Europe surveys](#) on member state policy and practice relating to the linguistic integration of adult migrants

[European Web Site on Integration country information sheets](#)

[German government information service \(Bundeszentrale für politischen Bildung/bpb\) country profiles](#) on migration in Europe and beyond

[CEDEFOP VET in Europe project country reports](#)

[European Migration Network country fact sheets](#)

[Migration Policy Institute](#)

[Global Forum on Migration and Development Migration Profiles Repository](#)

Italy (Emilia-Romagna) profile acknowledgement: Andrea Ghezzi (LfW Network member and LfW Workshop participant, 2015)

Participants at the Language for Work Workshop held at the ECML in Graz on 24-25 June 2015 were asked to prepare a brief review of policies and practice in their own country/region relevant to work-related language learning for migrant/ethnic minority workers and/or low-literate majority-language speaking workers. Reviews were completed for Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy (Emilia-Romagna), Kosovo, Macedonia, Malta, Norway, Romania (Bucharest), Sweden.