

Call for contribution

This number of LLL-Focus on lifelong lifewide learning invites contributions on the theme of NEET and Dropout.

As a consequence of the 2009 economic crisis, the percentage of NEET (considering the age range 15-29) has constantly increased in the Western World, particularly in Italy. In 2007 NEETs represented 19% of the 15 and 29 years old population in Italy; the percentage grew up to 36% in 2013 (according to Eurostat). Only Bulgaria and Greece have a higher rate. According to OCSE data, Italy is ranking second in the world rapport on NEETs, just after Mexico.

Only 28% of the Italian Neets is actively looking for employment.

According to Dr. Massagli (researcher and member of the Ministry of Work cabinet), Neets are quite differentiated: some of them have just finished their compulsory education and work without declaring it (especially in the south), there are people who are depressed because they could not find any job after leaving high-school and finally there are all the unemployed graduates who, according to Dr Massigli, cannot find a job because they are not well prepared.

The phenomenon cannot be analysed without also looking at the dropouts (age 16-19) and at juvenile unemployment. 42% of young Italian people, in fact, are jobless (the worst data since 1977, when records started).

According to the McKinsey Rapport (January 2014) not only a national system of long-life learning is almost non existent and not efficient, not only too many people leave school without completing their education in other institutions, but mainly the offer and request in the job market do not match.

This is not just due to the crisis, but is an endemic issue: 47% of employers claims that their companies are damaged by not finding the right person for the right position.

What does it mean? That young people are not able to market themselves, their skills and their competency, they do not know where to look and how to make themselves visible in the market. On the other hand, employers do not know where to find new employees and which skills and competencies they should look for in the candidates. Is there a problem concerning vocational or schooling guidance, information and company culture?

Again, the McKensy rapport highlights that the EU has the highest unemployment rate in the world after the Middle East and North Africa; and that Italy, Greece, Portugal and the United Kingdom have more and more students applying for courses related to the manufacture sector, even though this sector was highly struck by the crisis. In general, the report affirms, it is not a god sign that many people seek employment in slowly dying sectors.

Portugal, Italy and Greece have also the highest rate of young people who claim that they could not afford going to University or complete their education (more than 40%).

According to Eurostat data (2013) the dropout rate for the year 2012/13 reached 17,6% in Italy, meaning that thousands of young people are leaving school without a qualification. The European rate is about 12,8% decreasing towards the 10% established by the Lisbona Strategy 2012.

The drop-out phenomenon is not just an expression of teenagers' disadvantage, but an issue regarding families and the whole society. According to Save the Children-Italy, dropping out of school without gaining a qualification implies struggling even more to find a job and start a career; this also means that a drop-out teen will grow into an

adult who needs a strong support from the welfare state (and thus will increase the cost for the State).

Thus, if we prevent dropping-out of school, instead of making the community pay for the cost of recovering a drop-out, there will be not only a social benefit for the single citizen, but an economic gain for the State.

According to a research led by Fabiana Codiglioni, reasons for teenagers dropping out of school are: poor (or lack of) elementary skills and competencies; poor (or lack of) vocational or schooling guidance; insufficient motivation to study; poor (or lack of) support and engagement of the family; difficulty of entering in the job market; poor (or lack of) continuity between grades of education; low socio-cultural level.

On 21st April a seminar on this matter will be held in Perugia, to discuss new researches and approaches in the field.

Timetable for contribution:

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